

# **News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending May 14, 2011**

## **Curacao – Blackout At Isla Refinery Causes Pollution Increase**

The Curaçao Utilities Operating Company (CUOC), that manages the Build Own and Operate (BOO) power plant for owner Curaçao Utilities Company (CUC) could not supply sufficient power for refinery plant operation last Friday due to an unplanned blackout, a Venezuelan State-owned Oil Company PdVSA-operated Isla Refinery spokesperson Gregory Donato said.

The blackout caused a pollution increase in the neighborhood of the refinery. The pollution was visual, because of the meters-high flames causing thick black smoke. The refinery has reportedly initiated a restart of its operations after the BOO resolved their issues. (Various media)

## **Curacao – Refinery Pollution Protest March Results in Altercation**

A protest march of about two hundred people against pollution by the Venezuelan State-owned Oil Company PdVSA-operated Isla Refinery ended in a squabble with a group of about 50 refinery employees, who blocked the Isla Refinery entrance road. The employees believe the protesters endanger their livelihood which resulted in an altercation; police prevented escalation of the encounter. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Authorities Seize Narcotics Aboard Venezuelan Vessel**

Aruban authorities reported a drug seizure onboard Venezuelan vessel “Samurai.” The Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard, in cooperation with the Aruba Police’s Organized Crime Unit, and Aruba Customs, stopped and checked the motorboat. The crew was arrested and the drugs were confiscated. There was no disclosure of the size of the seizure and the total arrests made. (Various media)

## **Curacao – 46 Kilos of Cocaine Seized and 6 Arrested in Narcotics Case**

Law Enforcement Agencies raided a home in Curacao and arrested six persons in an international investigation into drug trafficking. They confiscated 46 kilos of cocaine and arrested three crew members of the speedboat “Claudia C” at Caracasbaai last Friday. The suspects are reportedly charged with trafficking cocaine from Venezuela and Colombia via Curacao. A police spokesperson said other arrests should not be excluded, but could not comment on the case pending the investigation. (Various media)

## **Aruba – American Artists Perform at Soul Beach Music Festival**

The 11th annual Soul Beach Music Festival will bring top American R&B acts to the Caribbean island, including Grammy Award winners Jennifer Hudson, and Chrisette Michele, along with Heads of State, made up of New Edition’s Bobby Brown, Johnny Gill

and Ralph Tresvant. The week will also be filled with beach parties, live radio broadcasts and special events at local nightclubs May 25-30. For more information please visit: [www.soulbeach.net/2011/](http://www.soulbeach.net/2011/) (Various media)

### **Statia – Government Takes Control in Negotiations With NuStar**

The Statia Executive Council will have the final say in the negotiations with San Antonio-based NuStar Energy L.P. concerning the expansion of Statia Oil Terminal and not the Dutch government, Commissioner Clyde van Putten said during a press conference held after the visit of the new Representative of the Dutch government Wilbert Stolte. NuStar announced their expansion plans in November 2010. NuStar Energy, operator of a storage and transshipment facility of crude oil and petroleum products in St. Eustatius, wants to build a tank farm to improve its capacity on the island. The entire construction project would include 15 to 40 tanks and a new jetty. Construction of the new tanks would provide 25 to 40 new, full-time jobs and 250 to 500 jobs in construction which may be finished by 2013, a NuStar spokesperson said. (Daily Herald)

### **Aruba – Valero Refinery Nearing Planned Rates**

San Antonio-based Valero Energy Corp.'s oil refinery on Aruba is nearing planned rates of production after recently restarting one of two crude distillation units that was shut last week to repair a leak, according to an email from Bill Day, a company spokesman. Valero's Aruba refinery is able to process up to 235,000 barrels of crude oil a day into products such as finished distillate products and intermediate feedstocks, which can be marketed in the U.S. Gulf Coast, Florida, New York harbor, as well as Caribbean, South American and European markets. (Various media)

### **Curacao – Insel Air Expects Delivery of Fifth MD-82 Aircraft**

Curacao-based Insel Air International B.V. (Insel Air) expects delivery of a fifth MD-82 aircraft later this week. Since January 2007, Insel Air serves regional destinations as well as Miami, Orlando, and Charlotte in the U.S. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

### **Aruba – FinMin De Meza: 3 Companies Interested in Gas Exploration**

Oil drilling and exploration discussions in Aruba's territorial waters have started again in parliament. Finance Minister Mike de Meza stated San Antonio-based Valero Oil Refinery is not one of the three companies interested into oil drilling research and exploration. One of the potential partners is the Dutch GasUnie, but a MOU has not been signed yet, De Meza said. (Extra)

### **Aruba – Valero in Talks With PetroChina Regarding Refinery Sale**

San Antonio-based Valero Energy has confirmed reports that it is in talks to sell a refinery in Aruba. According to Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman, the potential buyer is PetroChina. The Aruba refinery produces 235,000 barrels of crude oil per day and accounts for a third of Aruba's gross domestic product, according to media reports. (Various media)

## **Aruba - Dr. Phil To Appear In Court For Defamation Lawsuit In Natalee Holloway Case**

A Los Angeles Superior Court judge has finally set a court date in the defamation lawsuit against talk show host Dr. Phil McGraw over his coverage of the Natalee Holloway case. The suit was filed nearly five years ago by two Surinamese brothers who claim the television psychologist aired a segment on his show that depicted them as "guilty of committing criminal acts against Holloway."

"The judge entered a ruling setting the case for trial for October 12," Dr. Phil's attorney, Charles Babcock, told HuffPost.

Babcock had filed a motion to have the high-profile case thrown out of court but the judge recently dismissed the request.

"Her reasoning was that there were fact issues precluding throwing the case out right now," Babcock said. "Of course, it's not a decision on the merits, but she's going to let it go forward to trial."

Holloway, from Mountain Brook, Ala., was 18 when she disappeared May 30, 2005, while on a trip to Aruba to celebrate her high school graduation. Her body has never been found. Holloway's classmates said they last saw her leaving a night club with Joran van der Sloot, then a 17-year-old Aruban, and his two friends, brothers Deepak and Satish Kalpoe. All three young men were arrested, but they were later released without charge. (Various media)

## **Aruba - Movie 'Justice for Natalee Holloway' On Lifetime Channel**

Lifetime returned to popular and troubling turf Monday night with a workmanlike follow-up movie on Natalee Holloway, the Alabama teenager who disappeared on a 2005 trip to Aruba. "Justice for Natalee Holloway," a title that sadly suggests more optimism than the movie delivers, picks up Holloway's case where it left off in Lifetime's 2009 "Natalee Holloway." (Various media)

## **Curacao – Minister Lia Willems-Martina Resigns**

Curaçao Governance, Planning and Service Provision Minister Lisa Willems-Martina confirmed she turned in her resignation after Sovereign Party (PS) management lost confidence in her because of alleged unethical behavior. Willems-Martina is the third PS minister, following Rene Rosalia (Education) and Norman Girigorie (predecessor of Willems-Martina), who was forced to resign since the MKF-led Schotte cabinet took office in October 2010.

Minister Willems-Martina submitted a voucher for a business class ticket to the Netherlands for her husband and she promoted one of her close friends without following due diligence rules. Those two acts are sufficient grounds for her dismissal, PS political leader Helmin Wiels said. PS management is expected to name a replacement minister soon; one of the candidates is Governance, Planning and Service Provision Ministry Implementation Manager Carlos Monk. (Various media)

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### **Curacao - CG Belon Hosts General Fraser and Ambassador to the Netherlands Hartog Levin**

U.S. Consul General Valerie Belon hosted a visit of Commander U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) General Douglas M. Fraser and U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands Fay Hartog Levin, May 9-10, 2011.

General Fraser is Commander of USSOUTHCOM based in Miami, Florida. USSOUTHCOM is responsible for all United States Department of Defense security cooperation in the 45 nations and territories of Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea, an area of 16 million square miles.

Consul General Belon said "I was delighted when we learned that General Fraser would be coming to Curacao and even more delighted when Ambassador Hartog Levin was able to make arrangements to join him. This high-level visit demonstrates the importance that the U.S. attaches to our bilateral cooperation with the Dutch Caribbean islands and reinforced the mutually-beneficial partnerships we have on a number of important issues."

Based in The Hague, Ambassador Fay Hartog Levin is the 65th Ambassador of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Appointed by President Obama, she is also Chief of Mission for an Embassy in The Hague that includes many diverse U.S. Government agencies. Unlike most U.S. Consul Generals, Valerie Belon is also Chief of Mission, responsible for all six islands of the Dutch Caribbean as the senior representative of the United States Government. This was only the second U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands to visit the Dutch Caribbean in the last 20 years, the last visit being in 2005 along with the then-head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The visitors had scheduled meetings with Governor Frits Goedgedrag, Acting Representative of the Netherlands Patricia Grollé, Dutch Marine Brigadier General Dick Swijman, and U.S. Forward Operating Location Commander Lieutenant Colonel Brian Bell. Ambassador Levin's visit began with a joint meeting with Curacao Prime Minister Schotte, Aruba Prime Minister Eman, Aruba Infrastructure Minister Sevinger, and Curacao Economy Minister Hakim. The meetings covered topics of common interest including tourism development and regional security.

Ambassador Hartog Levin was also able to visit the historic Mikvé Israel-Emanuel Synagogue and Museum Kura Hulanda including its exhibits on the history of the slave trade. The Ambassador said that she was very impressed with the unique beauty, culture, and architecture of Curacao and hopes to make a return visit to the Dutch Caribbean as soon as possible.

### **Aruba – Extra Security After Arrest Medellin Mafia Lieutenant**

Aruba Police has increased security at its detention center Dakota, after the arrest of Gustavo Alvarez Tellez, aka "El Gordo" or "Tavo". He is the lieutenant of Commander Maximilano Bonilla Orozco, aka "Valenciano," who leads the Colombian Oficina de Envigado neo-paramilitary drug cartel. Tellez is wanted in the U.S. on charges of conspiracy to traffic cocaine, and money laundering and has an extradition order pending from the U.S., police said. The entire arrest operation was carried out in cooperation with U.S. Drug enforcement Administration agents. (Various media)

### **Aruba – Murder Suspect Van Der Sloot Could Serve Possible Sentence In The Netherlands**

Under an agreement signed Thursday, Aruban murder suspect Joran van der Sloot could serve part of his sentence in the Netherlands if he is convicted of murdering a Peruvian student nearly a year ago. The foreign ministers of the two countries agreed that Dutch prisoners in Peru and Peruvians jailed in the Netherlands can apply to complete their prison terms in their homeland once their appeal process has been completed.

Peruvian prisons now hold 117 Dutch citizens, mostly serving time for drugs offenses. It was not immediately clear how many Peruvians are in Dutch jails.

Van der Sloot is awaiting trial on a first degree murder charge in the slaying of 21-year-old student Stephany Flores on May 30.

Van der Sloot, 24, also is a key suspect in the 2005 disappearance of U.S. teenager Natalee Holloway on Aruba. Flores was killed five years to the day after Holloway disappeared. Her body was found in Van der Sloot's Lima hotel room and a coroner's report said she had been bludgeoned and asphyxiated.

Under the accord, if a prisoner received a longer sentence in Peru than the maximum under Dutch law, the sentence would be reduced, the Dutch ministry said. But each country has the right to deny the prisoner's transfer request.

The deal signed must be approved by both countries' parliaments. (Various media)

### **Curacao – Government Prepares to Take Over All BOO Plant Shares**

Curacao PM Gerrit Schotte said that the Curacao government is in the process of taking over all BOO (Build, Own and Operate) plant shares from Japanese Trading Company Marubeni (51%) and move them to Refineria di Korsou RdK (Curacao Refinery) in an attempt to improve the core efficiency of both companies. The BOO is now owned by RdK (49%) and Japanese Trading Company Marubeni, through its wholly owned subsidiary, Marubeni Caribbean Power Holdings, Inc. (Atlanta, GA), since August 2007. The only way to prevent blackouts and other related issues at the BOO is to take full control of its operations, PM Schotte said.

The BOO produces electricity, steam, desalinated water, and compressed air for the Venezuelan State-owned Oil Company PdVSA-operated Isla refinery and up to several megawatts for the national grid. (Various media)

### **Aruba – Environmental Organizations Lose Lawsuit Vs. Ritz-Carlton**

The four ecology organizations that had instituted proceedings against the government last September to block the construction of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel have lost their lawsuit.

The administrative judge dismissed the latter because the ecology organizations had not submitted an official notice of objection against the permit.

The environmental organizations want to stop the Ritz-Carlton from developing a resort at Fisherman's Wharf and to preserve the proposed hotel location for other, more environmentally friendly, purposes, but the previous MEP administration has signed a development contract with Ritz-Carlton that would reportedly be too expensive to terminate. The four ecology organizations are now considering whether to take their case to a higher court.

The Ritz-Carlton Aruba resort will consist of 320 luxury rooms, including a variety of suite configurations. The property sits on the last developable plot of land in the northwest corner of the island along Palm Beach, adjacent to a protected conservation area and the existing Marriott Hotel. Ritz-Carlton management indicated that they will respect the environment. (Various media)

## **CURAÇAO**

### ***Crime May 6 – 12***

On May 7, two men attempted to rob home owners in Rio Canario. When one victim began to scream, they shot and injured him and subsequently fled the area. On May 12, three men attempted to rob a home owner in Jan Sofat. When a security guard approached the residence, the suspects fled the area. (Amigoe, Extra, Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **ARUBA**

### ***Crime May 6 – 12***

On May 7, a money courier was robbed in the parking lot of a Subway Restaurant in Shiribana. (Diario Aruba, Amigoe)

## **ST. MAARTEN**

### ***Crime May 6 – 12***

On May 7, a man was severely beaten during an altercation in Middle Region. The victim later died of his injuries. The following day, two men attempted to rob a home owner in Fort Willem. The suspects fled the area when the victim resisted and shouted for help. (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time)

### ***Skimming activities at ATMs***

The Windward Islands Bank (WIB) has filed a complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO) concerning an attempt to defraud the bank. The bank's security monitoring systems detected skimming activity at its ATMs in two different locations frequented by tourists. As a precautionary measure, the bank had cancelled all WIB-issued ATM cards which were used at the two machines during the period that the suspicious activity was detected. In the meantime,

affected customers have received new ATM cards with new pin codes. WIB introduced its new ATM card with chip technology to its customers in December 2010. The new card makes use of Europay, MasterCard and VISA software. However, it still has the magnetic strip, which leaves the possibility open for skimming. WIB opted to continue using the strip to ensure that the new card would continue to be accepted everywhere, particularly at places where chip technology is not yet in use. (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time, Amigoe)

## **BONAIRE**

### ***Increase in vehicle thefts***

The Caribbean Dutch Police Department announced that they have noticed a significant increase in vehicle and scooter thefts in Bonaire. There were 32 registered cases between January and April 2011. The vehicles are usually stripped for parts and then abandoned in overgrown areas. (Extra)

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*"The Weekly Press Summary is a compilation of stories running in the Dutch Caribbean press that is intended to alert readers about items of interest to them. There is no interpretation or verification of the facts contained therein."*