

# **News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending**

**April 24, 2010**

## **St. Maarten – Inmates Riot; Order Quickly Restored**

Inmates briefly seized control over the watch and communications post at the Pointe Blanche House of Detention on Monday, but order was quickly restored by riot police. Forty prisoners rioted in protest against plans to send two inmates to Bonaire's prison, a police spokesperson said. (Various media)

## **Aruba – European and Venezuelan Tourism Declines; U.S. Up**

The total of arriving passengers dropped at Aruba's Reina Beatrix airport during Q1 2010; in particular the European and Venezuelan market contributed to the decline. The U.S. market increased by 4.9% compared to Q1 2009, despite a drop in charter flights from the U.S. this past winter. (Various media)

## **Curacao – Grand Opening Hyatt Regency Today**

The Hyatt Regency Curacao Golf Resort, Spa & Marina, built on 27 acres at Santa Barbara plantation, welcomes its first guests today. The 350-room resort features a spa, a marina, three restaurants and a world-class golf course. (Various media)

## **Netherlands – July 6 and September 9, Key Dismantling Dates**

The Dutch Senate has, conditionally, scheduled its plenary meeting (July 6) to discuss the pending Consensus Kingdom Laws. Dutch First Chamber parties have until June 8 to submit written responses to the Kingdom Consensus Laws, which include the necessary changes to the Kingdom Charter to dismantle the Netherlands Antilles and establish the new Kingdom entities. If the Senate approves the legislation which is considered a formality a final pre-dismantling Round Table Conference (RTC) between all Kingdom partners will be held. The RTC is scheduled for September 9, 2010, and is a mandatory last step in the Netherlands Antilles dismantling process. The 10-10-10 dismantling date is still a viable goal, according to the various actors in the process. (Various Media)

## **Caribbean - Caribbean Islands Approve Ban on Ocean Dumping**

Countries in the Caribbean have agreed to bar the dumping of all garbage at sea, ending rules that allow the disposal of metal, glass and other refuse a short distance from shore and almost any trash farther out. The nations adopted the new requirement under the U.N.'s International Maritime Organization and it will take effect in May 2011, IMO consultant Jeff Ramos said Wednesday.

The United Nations created the ban to protect areas that are vulnerable because of heavy ship traffic or sensitive ecology. It has already taken effect in the Antarctic, the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean.

"It's a big deal," said Jeffrey Ramos, a U.S. Coast Guard commander based on Curacao. "Especially in the Caribbean, with all the tankers and the traffic going to the Panama Canal, it will make a big impact."

Environmentalists say debris dumped in the ocean can entangle sea creatures, damage water quality and hurt local economies by threatening tourism.

The U.N. outlawed dumping in 1993 for the Caribbean, but it could not take effect until the region's nations reported their capacity for receiving trash from ships. After a lengthy U.N. awareness campaign, member countries gave notice last month that enough receptacles were in place.

Under current Caribbean regulations, ships can begin dumping garbage 3 miles (5 kilometers) from shore as long as it is ground into pieces less than an inch across.

Almost anything but plastic can be dumped beyond 25 miles (40 kilometers).

The new ban will outlaw discharging of any solid waste at any distance except for food, which could still be dumped 3 miles from shore. It will be up to individual countries to check ships' logs and verify compliance. Lanie Fagan, a spokeswoman for the Florida-based Cruise Lines International Association, said its members will not be affected because they handle solid waste as if the ban was already in place. (Various media)

### **Kingdom – Dutch MoF: Aruba Not A Tax Haven For U.S. Defense Contractors**

U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) auditors revealed in its 2008 report, updated in January 2010, that U.S. corporate subsidiaries in tax havens such as the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, and others "helped the 29 contractors reduce taxes, with about one-third decreasing their effective U.S. corporate tax rates in 2008 in part through the use of foreign affiliates, lower foreign tax rates, and indefinite reinvestment of foreign income outside of the United States."

Citing reports by the GAO, Dutch MPs from left-wing PVDA party asked Dutch Finance Minister De Jager if he is aware that the Netherlands Antilles and/or Aruba are used by U.S. firms to avoid taxes and how this might influence the Dutch Defense acquisition policies. In his answer to parliament De Jager said the GAO did not, in any way, designate Aruba as a tax haven for U.S. defense contractors. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

### **Aruba – George Mason University Conducts Mammal Research**

The Arlington, VA based George Mason University (GMU) is conducting a wild dolphin research on Aruba. The research is aimed at the social patterns and voice use of the Rough-toothed Dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*), but will also focus on other sea mammals and seabirds. The GMU research is a continuation of previous activities by the Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation. (Amigoe)

### **Antilles – Dudley Lucia Nominated As Justice State Secretary**

The Curacao PNP party has nominated former Antillean Parliament Chairman Dudley Lucia as the new State Secretary of Justice. Lucia will be tasked with the youth correctional facility GOG in Curaçao, the Court of Guardianship, and the Rehabilitation Foundation. DP-Statia's State Secretary of Justice Ernie Simmons is in charge of law enforcement matters, including the Police and Prisons. Lucia was an MP for 18 years. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – Chamber of Commerce Interested in U.S. Food Market**

The St. Maarten Chamber of Commerce is exploring opportunities, to improve the quality of food products at cheaper prices for consumers, together with a U.S. food manufacturer and supplier.

Chamber President Glen Carty and Chamber Director Ludwig Ouenniche met with representatives of the company in April. The unnamed company distributes and exports approximately 2,000 different types of food products and other consumer items. (Daily Herald)

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*“The Weekly Press Summary is a compilation of stories running in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruban press that is intended to alert readers about items of interest to them. There is no interpretation or verification of the facts contained therein.”*