

News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending July 24, 2010

Kingdom - Venezuelan and Dutch Kingdom Diplomats Discuss Differences

The foreign ministers of the Netherlands and Venezuela agreed to strengthen cooperation after Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's government protested what it called violations of its airspace by a Dutch military aircraft, authorities said Saturday. Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen met with his Venezuelan counterpart, Nicolas Maduro, who called it a welcome opportunity to discuss "the differences we have and to be able to communicate more closely and build an agenda," the Venezuelan government said in a statement.

The semi-autonomous islands of Aruba, Curacao and Bonaire lie off Venezuela's coast, and Chavez's government complained that a Dutch military aircraft violated its airspace three times earlier this month. The Dutch reportedly acknowledged a helicopter entered a flight information region (FIR); an aviation term used to describe airspace in which a flight information service and an alerting service are provided. The FIR is not sovereign territory of any specific country. The Kingdom of the Netherlands and Venezuela agreed to create a commission to review the air operations conducted by the two countries.

Verhagen is willing to disclose flight information of the alleged violations. Chavez on Wednesday publicly questioned how long the Dutch islands off Venezuela's coast will remain part of the Netherlands and said he believes they will one day be independent. Verhagen was accompanied by Aruban PM Mike Eman and Netherlands Antilles Foreign Affairs Director Carel de Haseth for the talks Friday night.

A joint government statement released by Venezuela said the foreign ministers reaffirmed a commitment to "absolute respect of territorial integrity and sovereignty." It said they also agreed to study the possible construction of a natural-gas pipeline from Venezuela to Aruba, and expressed support for maintaining a cooperative relationship between Venezuela's state oil company and oil refineries in Aruba and Curacao.

Hugo Chavez said on several occasions that the Dutch islands are in Venezuelan territorial waters, and last year he accused the Netherlands of planning aggression against Venezuela by U.S. military forces operating from Curacao and Aruba. The Dutch government says about 250 U.S. personnel are on Curacao and Aruba to fight drug trafficking conduct surveillance operations over Caribbean drug smuggling routes. (Various media)

Curacao – 10 Political Parties Qualify For 8/27 Elections

Three of the five political parties, currently not represented in the Curacao Island Parliament, have gathered sufficient support to qualify for Island Elections participation on August 27.

Partido Laboral or Labor Party of Errol Goeloe, Partido Adelanto i Inovashon Soshal or Social Progress and Innovation Party (PAIS) of former PNP Finance State Secretary Alex Rosario and Movementu Futuro Korsou or Movement for the Future of Curacao (MFK) headed by MAN MP Gerrit Schotte have met the minimum requirements to participate. The Aliansa Curaçao Independiente (ACI) and ARTE Rebolushonario did not make the cut. The parties with current representation automatically qualify.

Partido Antia Restruktura (PAR) - Ms. Emily de Jongh-Elhage
Frente Obrero Liberashon 30 di Mei (FOL) - Mr. Anthony Godett
MAN – Ms. Eunice Eisdén
Partido Nashonal di Pueblo (PNP) – Mr. Humphrey Davelaar
Niun Paso Atras (NPA) - Mr. Carlos Monk
Partido Laboral Krusado Popular (PLKP) - Mr. Errol Goeloe
Pueblo Soberano - Mr. Helmin Wiels
Partido Democraat (DP) - Mr. Norberto Ribeiro
Partido Adelanto i Inovashon Soshal (PAIS) – Mr. Alex Rosaria
Movementu Futuro Korsou (MFK) – Mr. Gerrit Schotte

Curacao – World Premiere “Boys of Summer” Baseball Documentary in NY

Launched in 1999, the New York International Latino Film Festival (NYILFF) is now the premier Urban Latino film event in the United States. The festival will feature the world premiere of the documentary “Boys of Summer”, featuring a scrappy band of Curacao boys who dream of the big time: Winning the Little League World Series at Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

The tiny island of Curaçao, in the Caribbean, manager Vernon Isabella has sent his Little League All-Stars to the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania for seven consecutive years, routinely defeating such baseball powerhouses as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. How does he do it?

<http://www.boysofsummerfilm.com/about.html>

Curacao - U.S. Owners Sunset Waters Resort to Appeal Court Decision

The lawyer for the U.S. owners of the bankrupt Sunset Waters Resort said he will appeal the latest court decision regarding outstanding utilities debts. A judge ruled U.S. Urban Investment Research Corporation (UIRC) has to pay approximately US \$500,000 to Utility Company Aquaelectra. UIRC will plead the statute of limitations as a defense, the lawyer stated. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

Caribbean - Dengue Epidemic Threatens Caribbean

Mosquito-borne dengue fever is reaching epidemic stages across the Caribbean. Health authorities are concerned it could get much worse as the rainy season advances. The increase in cases is being blamed on warm weather and an unusually early rainy season, which has produced an explosion of mosquitoes. Healthcare officials are worried the cases of the more severe hemorrhagic dengue will increase this year. The more people are repeatedly infected, the greater the chance they will develop the hemorrhagic form, which can be fatal.

St. Maarten, and other Caribbean Islands have registered a high number of dengue cases, and more than 16,700 total cases had been reported across the Caribbean through early June, according to the latest statistics available from the Pan American Health Organization. There are four types of dengue, and all cause fever, headaches and extreme joint and muscle pain. Most victims recover within a week, and while they become immune to the specific type of dengue they caught, they are still vulnerable to other types, a Health Department spokesperson said.

The principal vector mosquito, *Ae. aegypti*, is most frequently found in or near human habitations and prefers to feed on humans during the daytime. It has two peak periods of biting activity: in the morning for several hours after daybreak and in the late afternoon for several hours before dark. The mosquito may feed at any time during the day, however, especially indoors, in shady areas, or when it is overcast. Mosquito breeding sites include artificial water containers such as discarded tires, uncovered barrels, buckets, flower vases or pots, cans, and cisterns.

Dengue fever is characterized by sudden onset after an incubation period of 3-14 days (most commonly 4-7 days), high fevers, severe frontal headache, and joint and muscle pain. Many patients have nausea, vomiting, and rash. The rash appears 3-5 days after onset of fever and can spread from the torso to the arms, legs, and face. The disease is usually self-limited, although convalescence can be prolonged. Many cases of nonspecific viral syndrome or even subclinical infection occur, but dengue can also present as a severe, sometimes fatal disease characterized by hemorrhagic manifestations and hypotension (DHF/ dengue shock syndrome). (Various media)

Aruba - Venezuela Restricts Vegetables and Fruits Export

Vegetables and fruits are scarce in the super markets, after the Venezuelan government enforced a rationing policy. There were no shipments of vegetables and fruit from Las Piedras to Aruba last week, as a result of the Venezuelan policy, a supermarket owner said.

The captain of the cargo ship *El Maracucho* said, "We were not given permission to sail to Aruba last week." The Venezuelan government reportedly issues certificates indicating the kilos of a certain product a ship may load for export. There is a different stipulated quantity for each product; no certificate, no cargo, the boat owner said. The Venezuelan government not only regulates the export of vegetables and fruit, but also fish, rice, grains, cheese, coffee and all other exportable products since 2007. The import of fruits and vegetables has reportedly resumed since yesterday. (Amigoe)

Aruba – LNG or Gas Pipeline Between Venezuela and Aruba?

US-owned Valero refinery, Utility Company WEB and the Aruban government are researching the financial feasibility of a gas pipeline between Aruba and Venezuela. Also, the parties are looking into the possibility of a Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) installation. "We have received a positive response from Venezuela and we are planning to form a committee to brainstorm about a gas pipeline and LNG," Aruban PM Mike Eman said. The Venezuelan government wants to diversify its energy sector by developing the natural gas industry, according to the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. (Amigoe)

St. Maarten - Half-Year Figures Show Air Arrivals Increase

289,037 tourists visited St. Maarten's by air during the first six months of 2010, an increase of 53,360 (22.6%) compared to the same period in 2009. Every market contributed to the increase, in particular Europe and South America, a St. Maarten Tourism Bureau spokesperson said. St. Maarten's main market, North America (US and Canada), recorded a 2% increase – 158,008 arrivals – compared to the same period in 2009. (Daily Herald)

Curacao - First Step Towards Realizing Spaceport

Curaçao Airport Holding (CAH) announced it will finance two projects in an attempt to realize the establishment of a „spaceport“ on the island. The Chairman of the CAH Board, Economic Affairs Commissioner David Dick (PAR) will sign the letter of intent between CAH and Space Experience Curaçao today. CAH director Maurice Adriaens explained that if Curaçao wants to realize its own spaceport, someone will have to take the first step. Potential foreign investors want to see that Curaçao commits itself to such a project. An amount of 70,000 dollars will be made available to draw up the necessary space travel legislation. According to Adriaens, Curaçao does not have any legislation in this field yet, and laws will have to be made to enable space travel via Antillean airspace – if the island wants a spaceport. A Dutch professor associated with an American university will receive the order to draw up the draft legislation. The second project, worth 350,000 dollars, will be awarded to the American builder of the spaceship in order to acquire the necessary government permits. “We have to consider how to go about this exactly, whether the government becomes a majority shareholder in the project, or that we leave it in the hands of foreign investors as much as possible”, said Adriaens (Amigoe).

Aruba - Hotel Sector Slowly Recovering

The biannual figures from Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA), which were published yesterday, show that the hotel sector is slowly recovering from the economic crisis. Hotels associated with AHATA had an occupancy rate which was six percent higher in the first half of 2010 compared to 2009. However, the average price of a hotel room decreased from 197 dollars to 190 dollars. As a result, and despite a nine percent growth in stayovers, the revenues per available room – an important indicator for the health of the hotel industry – only increased with 3.7 percent compared to the first half year of 2009. Aruba received 3.9 percent more tourists from the U.S. market and the number of transit stayovers increased with 2.4 percent compared with the first six months of 2009. Tourism from Canada increased with 17.7 percent, but that from Venezuela decreased with 19.3 percent because of that country's travel and withdrawal restrictions. AHATA expects to see a slight but consistent growth in the number of guests over the next six months. Hotels, however, are concerned about the decreasing frequency of reservations in the past weeks, and the relatively higher ticket prices of flights particularly from the United States, which are currently up to 20 percent more expensive compared with one year ago (Amigoe).

"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."