

# **News Items and Public Crime Summary for Week Ending July 31, 2010**

## **Aruba – Ambassador Dunn Bids Farewell**

Departing U.S. Consul General Timothy Dunn met with Aruban PM Mike Eman last week during his farewell visit to Aruba. (Various media)

## **Saba - Saba Bank Oil Exploration**

The board of Saba Bank Petroleum Resource N.V. has granted Emerald Petroleum, a small oil drilling company, approval to explore the Saba Bank for crude oil. About one third of the Saba Bank lies within the Saban territorial waters (12 mile zone), while the remaining two thirds fall within the limits of the Economic Fisheries Zone (EFZ) of the Netherlands Antilles.

The Saba Bank (17o25' N, 63o30' W) is the largest submarine atoll (coral island) in the Atlantic Ocean. It is an undersea elevation with a flattened top, located 3 – 5 kilometers (km) southwest of the island of Saba and 25 km west of St. Eustatius. (Various media)

## **Aruba - From Venezuela to Miami via Aruba**

The Aruban Minister of Tourism, Labor and Transportation Otmar Oduber announced that Aruba will serve as a 'hub' for passengers traveling between Venezuela and Miami. The Aruban government and Fort Lauderdale-based Vision Air signed such an agreement last Wednesday. Vision Air will fly three times per week from Caracas and Maracaibo and Valencia to Miami, via Aruba. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten – New Island Constitution Adopted Unanimously**

The St. Maarten parliament unanimously approved the mandatory new Island Constitution. St. Maarten is scheduled (10-10-10) to become a semi-autonomous entity within the Kingdom of the Netherlands after the Netherlands Antilles dismantles. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Dolfi Richardson New Chief of Police**

Dolfi Richardson will be the new Chief of Police in Aruba; the Aruba Council of Ministers approved his nomination last week. Richardson is the acting Chief of Police since former Police Commissioner Peter de Witte took the same position in St. Maarten earlier this year. (Various media)

## **St. Maarten - Two Held for Money Laundering**

Two suspected money launderers were held last week in St. Maarten. Public Prosecutor Rienk Mud said the two men from the British Virgin Islands remain in custody during the investigation (Daily Herald).

## **Aruba - Dutch Filmmaker Shoots Movie About Natalee Holloway Case**

The unsolved disappearance of American teenager Natalee Holloway from Aruba in 2005 has been made into a film, with an expected release early next year.

In a case that sparked widespread media publicity in the U.S., Holloway disappeared from Aruba during a high school graduation trip. The key suspect is Joran van der Sloot, a Dutch national from Aruba. He was arrested twice in the case but never charged after giving different stories about her disappearance.

At the same time Joran van der Sloot was being detained in Peru for the murder of Stephany Flores, 21, a Dutch filmmaker was hard at work making a movie about the Natalee Holloway case. Van der Sloot is accused of murdering Stephany in a Lima hotel room on May 30. He confessed to the killing, according to Peruvian police, however he now disputes such an admission.

The English-language film "Me & Mr Jones" is about an undercover journalist who breaks into Van der Sloot's home on Aruba to force a breakthrough in the Holloway case, producer and director Paul Ruven said in a statement. The movie was shot on location in Aruba, "apparently without publicity because of sensitivity on the island about the Holloway case and criticism of the handling of it by Aruban authorities," according to CBS. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Valero On Track to Resume Operations in September**

San Antonio-based Valero Energy Corp. plans to restart its shut 235,000 barrel per day (bpd) Aruba refinery in September after completing an overhaul currently underway and if the plant can operate at a profit, Chief Executive Bill Klesse said in a statement. Valero has been trying to find a buyer for the Aruba refinery since November 2007.

The refinery was shut last summer due to poor economic conditions as the sharp drop in demand for gasoline and distillates, rebounding crude oil prices, and excess inventories caused margins to collapse. The site also has 63 tanks with 12 million barrels of storage capacity.

In early June, Valero said it expected to restart the plant in 90 days after completing a turnaround. But in the earnings release this morning, Valero Chief Executive Bill Klesse said the plant wide maintenance work "will provide us the option to resume operations at the Aruba refinery if conditions are profitable and will enhance strategic alternatives for the refinery. When complete in September, this work will provide us the option to resume operations at the Aruba refinery if conditions are profitable and will enhance strategic alternatives for the refinery," Klesse said.

"The reason they haven't written off the value for the refinery is there is an assumption that it will restart in 2011," said RBC Capital Markets analyst Jacques Rousseau. "It would be much easier to sell the refinery if it is running," but if the economics don't work out then Valero would be forced to shut it down and take a write-down, he added.

Also, Valero will invest US \$1.8 million in a new Nitrogen Production Plant to be operated by Venezuelan Gas Company Oxicar, Aruban PM Mike Eman stated in a press release. The plant should be ready to produce 30,000 cubic feet of natural gas and 1,200 gallons of liquid nitrogen per day in September. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Delta Airlines To Expand Service; Weekly Service From NY**

Delta Airlines will increase its airlift from the U.S. to Aruba. Effective December 18, 2010 until April 30, 2011, Delta will operate a weekly La Guardia, NY flight on Saturdays in addition to its current service to Aruba. (Various media)

## **Antilles – U.S. Consul: “Excellent Relationship Between U.S. and N.A.**

Departing U.S. Consul General Timothy Dunn met with Netherlands Antilles PM Emily de Jongh-Elhage yesterday during his Netherlands Antilles and Aruba farewell tour. The PM thanked him on behalf of the Netherlands Antilles for his efforts throughout the past three years. Ambassador Dunn applauded the excellent relationship between the U.S. and the Netherlands Antilles. (Various media)

## **Curacao – MLAT Request Filed in Former ISC School Teacher Case**

U.S. authorities filed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) request in an attempt to receive the confiscated belongings of Stephen Wayne Sudduth. Sudduth, a former International School of Curacao (ISC) teacher, is indicted in the U.S. after law enforcement officials in Texas found 57,000 images of child pornography and 1,000 videos of sex involving young children on his computer. He faces 30 counts of possession of child pornography and 10 counts of promotion of child pornography. Sudduth was arrested in July 2008, and remains in jail in lieu of US \$500,000 bail. The court in the U.S. denied his attempt to get his bail reduced. Sudduth taught kindergarten at ISC from 2006 to 2009. (La Prensa)

## **Aruba – Venezuela Arrests Wanted Drug Trafficker Ceballos**

Venezuela's justice ministry announced the capture of a purported Colombian drug trafficker, Gloria Esther Chavez Ceballos, alias "Gloria Amparo." Chavez Ceballos leads a group of smugglers known as "Los Indios" that moves drugs to the Caribbean and Europe, it said. Esther Chavez, who police nabbed in Tachira's capital of San Critobal, is wanted on drug trafficking charges in Aruba, the statement said. Venezuela is a major hub for traffickers smuggling Colombian cocaine to the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Renovation Project Radisson Hotel**

Over the next two years, the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa will undergo a \$35 million renovation project that will include all guest rooms, the Grand Caribbean Ballroom and the hotel's 15,000 square feet of meeting space. National Investment Bank Netherlands Antilles (NIBanc) director Steven Graybill said his bank is the mandated lead arranger and agent of the project. He referred to Radisson general manager Rob Smith for detailed project information. Minnesota-based Carlson Corporation, a leading global hotel company, is the owner of the Radisson. (Antilliaans Dagblad)

## **Curacao – Man Sentenced For Smuggling Drugs**

The Court of First Instance sentenced Duarta Da Cova to a four-year jail sentence for using the boat “Baby Tutu” to smuggle 23 kilos of cocaine between Bonaire and Curacao on March 12, 2010. (Amigoe)

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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.”*