

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

**June 12, 2010**

## **Aruba - Dutch, U.S., and Aruban Authorities Cooperate On van der Sloot Extortion Probe**

On the same day Chilean police caught Joran Van der Sloot, the lead suspect in Natalee Holloway's disappearance and in the death of a 21-year-old Peruvian woman, Joran was hit with extortion charges in connection with the disappearance of American teen Natalee Holloway in Aruba five years ago.

The criminal complaint filed in federal court in Birmingham, Ala., Thursday accused Van der Sloot of promising to divulge the location of Holloway's body and describing the circumstances of her death in return for \$250,000 last month, the Associated Press reported. The target of the alleged extortion plot was not named, but Holloway's family hails from Mountain Brook, Ala.

Dutch and Aruban authorities are cooperating with an Alabama investigation into Joran van der Sloot. Aruban Attorney General Taco Stein would not say exactly how Aruban authorities are assisting, saying it's an ongoing investigation. In the Netherlands, Dutch prosecutors today said they had raided two homes hunting for evidence linked to the extortion charges. They seized computers, cell phones and data-storage devices in the raid, which was carried out at the request of U.S. authorities, said national prosecutor's office spokesman Wim de Bruin. (Various media)

## **Aruba – Dutch Navy Seizes 1320 Kilos of Cocaine**

The Dutch navy seized 1320 kilos of cocaine from a ship off Aruba in cooperation with the U.S. and the NA&A Coast Guard, the Dutch Defense Ministry announced on Saturday. The Dutch frigate Van Speijk discovered the cocaine wrapped in 66 individual bags on board a Panamanian-flagged commercial vessel on May 24, some 35 miles from Aruba.

The U.S. ledet team aboard the Dutch frigate arrested the five Honduran crew and with Panama's permission sent them to the United States where the fight against drug trafficking in the region is being centralized, a navy spokesperson told AFP. The Dutch navy's biggest cocaine seizure was in 2008, when the Van Speijk discovered 4200 kilos of cocaine off the coast of Puerto Rico.

The news of the drug catch is only announced now due to the investigation and the subsequent legal proceedings. (Various media)

## **Kingdom – U.N. Positive About Alliance of Civilizations Forum**

Antillean Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage has returned from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where she represented the Kingdom of the Netherlands at the third forum of the Alliance of Civilizations. The theme of the forum was "Bridging Cultures, Building Peace."

A United Nations spokesperson said the Forum had achieved three main outcomes: it had helped to broaden the Alliance and extend the reach of its activities; it marked the expansion and globalization of the Alliance, having brought together more than 3,000

participants from over 100 countries and convened a “very powerful network of leaders”, the result of which was stronger momentum among political leaders and policymakers to put inter-cultural dialogue in its rightful place on the international agenda; and it had helped to deepen the reach and scope of the Alliance’s projects and initiatives. (Various media)

### **Antilles – Governor Goedgedrag in the Netherlands**

Netherlands Antilles Governor Frits Goedgedrag is in the Netherlands from June 4-14, for business. Adèle P. van der Pluijm-Vrede is acting during his absence. (Government Press Release)

### **Aruba - Valero Expects To Complete Refinery Work In September**

San Antonio-based Valero Energy Corp expects to begin planned work at its closed refinery in Aruba in the next week or so and to have it completed in early September, a company spokesman said on Monday.

The refinery, which was closed due to poor economics last July, has had ongoing maintenance for the past several months.

"We expect the turnaround to be complete around the first part of September," said Bill Day, a spokesman for Valero. (Various media)

### **Aruba – Van der Sloot Reportedly Confessed To Killing Flores**

Joran Van der Sloot, long the prime suspect in the 2005 disappearance of U.S. citizen Natalee Holloway in Aruba, has confessed to killing a young Peruvian woman in his Lima hotel room last week, a Peruvian police spokesman said.

Peru's chief police spokesman, Col. Abel Gamarra, reportedly told The Associated Press that Van der Sloot admitted under police questioning Monday that he killed 21-year-old Stephany Flores on May 30. The case will be turned over to prosecutors who will present formal charges against Van der Sloot. Police planned to take Van der Sloot to the hotel on Tuesday to participate in a reconstruction of the events leading to Flores' slaying, Gamarra said. Her death came five years to the day after Holloway disappeared. (Various media)

### **Curacao – U.S. Investors Interested in GiroBank Take-Over?**

Venezuelan Totalbank, a majority shareholder in Girobank, reportedly wants to sell its shares. A group of Canadian/American investors is apparently interested in purchasing the shares. Reports concerning a possible take-over by a New York-based investor are circulating for nearly four months. Central Bank Netherlands Antilles and Girobank spokespersons confirmed ongoing take-over negotiations, but would not reveal any details. (La Prensa)

### **St. Maarten – MoJ Jacoba Discusses Dutch-American Friendship Agreement**

Netherlands Antilles Justice Minister Magali Jacoba met with advisors and various organizations within the community on Monday about the consequences of a recent court ruling concerning the Agreement between the U.S. and the Netherlands

Concerning Friendship, Commerce and Navigation. A judge recently ruled that U.S. citizens have the same entry rights in the Netherlands Antilles as the European Dutch citizens, based on the Friendship Agreement.

Also, she met with the Dutch technical assistants who support the St. Maarten Police Department, and representatives of the police union. (Daily Herald)

### **St. Maarten – Two New U.S. Designed Fire Trucks Have Arrived**

Two new fire trucks arrived from the United States on Tuesday. The pumper truck and ladder truck were designed by the Ocala, Florida-based E-ONE company. E-ONE is a worldwide designer, manufacturer and marketer of fire rescue vehicles with more than 23,000 vehicles in operation around the world. E-ONE staff will arrive on June 23, to train and support fire department personnel. (Daily Herald)

### **Bonaire – TSA Audit at Flamingo Airport**

Loretta McNeir, TSA Caribbean-South Representative met with Bonaire's acting Island Governor Peter Silberie after a May 18-21, Flamingo Airport audit. TSA's International Affairs office is responsible for representing TSA overseas, for leading the development of standards and practices that govern transportation security around the world, and for supporting DHS and TSA programs related to international transportation security. TSA ensures that air carriers and foreign airports meet U.S. security standards, those of foreign governments, and the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). TSA representatives verified documents, procedures, processes, training and qualifications during their audit on Bonaire. McNeir and Silberie discussed terrorism and security related items that could arise after Bonaire leaves the Netherlands Antilles and joins the Netherlands on 10-10-10. (Extra)

### **Antilles - 4 suspects, 7 firms Acquitted of Money Laundering in Dubai**

A court on Tuesday acquitted four suspects and seven companies of laundering nearly US \$218 million, an amount which the prosecutors have described as the largest in Dubai's history. The suspects are charged with intentionally acquiring, possessing and transferring US \$218 million which prosecutors claimed was earned from conning the UK's Revenues and Customs Prosecution Office (RCPO) and Netherlands Antilles authorities. (Antilles Post)

### **Curacao – Isla Refinery Loss US\$ 52 Million Since March 1**

The Venezuelan-operated Isla refinery has lost US \$52 million since the unexpected shutdown on March 1. The 320,000 barrel-per-day Isla refinery, leased and operated by Venezuela's PDVSA, has had serious issues since March 1, following a power cut. Various attempts to restart the BOO (Build, Own and Operate) plant - owned by Utility Company Aqualectra and Japanese Trading Company Marubini - that produces electricity, steam, desalinated water, and compressed air for the Isla Refinery and up to several megawatts for the national grid, failed. A recent explosion at the refinery added to the misery, a refinery spokesperson said. (La Prensa)

## **Aruba - Valero Unlikely To Sell Aruba Refinery**

San Antonio-based Valero Energy Corp is unlikely to find a buyer for its shuttered 325,000 barrel per day refinery in Aruba after two and a half years of trying, according to sources familiar with the matter. Valero is pursuing talks on forming a joint-venture with Latin American national oil companies in lieu of a sale, the sources said.

“They say they are looking for a buyer, but they are only talking about joint-venture partners,” one of the sources said. Even if unable to find a joint-venture partner, Valero would be able to operate the Aruba refinery without losing money, assuming current economic conditions continue, according to the sources.

Valero said on Thursday it would soon begin a 90-day overhaul of production units at the Aruba refinery, which was shuttered in July 2009, to prepare for a restart. Valero spokesman Bill Day said the company was prepared to continue running the refinery alone. “Valero continues to explore all options for the Aruba refinery, and an operating refinery may be more attractive to a potential buyer than a shutdown one,” Day said.

The Aruba refinery, which cannot make finished refined products, has been called unattractive by refinery brokers because it would require an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars for it to make finished refined products like gasoline or diesel fuel.

Prior to shutting the refinery as the recession crushed U.S. consumer demand for motor fuels, Valero used Aruba to make feedstocks that were sent to Gulf Coast and East Coast refineries to be made into finished fuels.

### **PDVSA, PETROBRAS AMONG POSSIBLE PARTNERS**

Among the potential joint-venture partners are Venezuela’s state-owned oil company PDVSA, Petrobras of Brazil and Pacific Rubiales of Colombia, the sources said.

Aruba’s government, which recently approved the settlement of a tax dispute with Valero, has identified those companies as having engaged in talks to buy the plant. One company missing from the joint-venture partner list was PetroChina which was touted as a potential buyer of the refinery. “They’re out of it,” one of the sources said about PetroChina. Petrobras came close to a purchase of the refinery, but the deal fell through in 2008 after a fire at the plant.

Valero would not lose money if it simply restarted the refinery, assuming motor fuel demand continues to recover in the United States. “They think they can break even,” one of the sources said. Valero does plan to cut back on salaried employees and contractors at the refinery following the restart, the sources said.

The refinery’s hourly workers are covered by a contract with the United Steelworkers union. Valero is the largest independent refiner in the United States. (Various media)

## **Kingdom – Dutch Elections: Shift to the Right; Balkenende steps down**

The conservative Liberal party (VVD-31) outdueled its main rival, the left-of center Labor Party (PvdA-30) of Job Cohen at the June 9 parliamentary elections in the Netherlands. The biggest winner of the elections however was the anti-Islam Freedom Party (PVV) of Geert Wilders winning 15 seats. Dramatic were the election results for the center-right Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) of Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende scoring the worst result ever. Balkenende announced his immediate resignation as party leader, but he will stay on as Prime Minister of the caretaker government until a new government has been formed.

### **Next Coalition?**

Three coalition options appear possible. In light of the victory of both the Liberals and Wilders, the first option that is most likely to be explored is a center-right coalition of VVD-PVV-CDA. Before the elections, however, CDA virtually ruled out such a coalition, given major differences with PVV on reforms that CDA regards as essential and the party's anti-Islam stance. Moreover, given the party's historic defeat, CDA may well prefer to remain in the opposition to regroup. VVD too may come to the conclusion that the differences with Wilders cannot be bridged.

VVD must subsequently choose for either a center-left coalition with PvdA, D66 and Greenleft or a so-called "national" coalition with PvdA and CDA. Both coalitions would be extremely hard to bring about, for one because VVD has been campaigning against a coalition with PvdA. Rutte conceded that the formation of a new government was going to be "very difficult, given the fragmentation of the Dutch political landscape."

### **NA&A Impact**

Netherlands Antilles PM Emily de Jongh-Elhage was disappointed over the CDA loss, but congratulated the VVD on their win. She applauded the CDA support during the past years and trusted that any future coalition would treasure the special relationship between the Kingdom partners. Also, she said the dissolution process is unstoppable and the push by Balkenende to accelerate the process was crucial. MAN party opposition leader Charles Cooper believes the shift to right in the Netherlands could seriously impact to position of Antilleans in the Netherlands. The right wing parties will try to increase their influence in the Netherlands Antilles. Also, he is of the opinion that the CDA should go into the opposition after the electoral loss. (Various media)

### **Aruba - FBI Paid Joran Van Der Sloot At Least \$15,000 In Sting Operation, Private Investigator Says**

The FBI thought it was closing in on Joran van der Sloot in the notorious Natalee Holloway missing-teenager case, and he was videotaped and paid \$25,000 in a sting operation. But when the agency delayed his arrest to help build a criminal case, he took the money and headed for Peru, where authorities say he now has confessed to killing a different young woman.

The investigation of Van der Sloot in the Alabama teenager's case simply was not far enough along to have him arrested, the FBI and the U.S. attorney's office in Birmingham said Wednesday. Holloway disappeared on the island of Aruba on May 30, 2005.

Van der Sloot is now expected to be charged with murder in Peru in the killing, exactly five years later, of 21-year-old business student Stephany Flores, the daughter of a Peruvian circus promoter and former race car driver whom he met playing poker at a casino.

Police will formally ask prosecutors Thursday to charge Van der Sloot with murder, for which he would face from 15 to 35 years in prison if convicted.

U.S. law enforcement officials and a private investigator said the work on Holloway's disappearance was revived in April when Van der Sloot reached out to a lawyer for Holloway's mother and requested \$250,000 in exchange for disclosing the location of the young woman's body on the island of Aruba.

He got \$25,000, and the private investigator says the suspect was taped saying he pushed her down; she hit her head and died. But the statement from the FBI and U.S. attorney's office said the law enforcement probe "was not sufficiently developed to bring charges prior to the time Van der Sloot left Aruba."

Aruba authorities have been frustrated in their efforts to prosecute Van der Sloot because they have been unable to find Holloway's remains. According to the private investigator, Bo Dietl, messages started coming in to John Kelly, a lawyer for the Holloway family who had hired Dietl, around Easter of this year from Van der Sloot. Van der Sloot, for years the prime suspect in Holloway's disappearance, wanted to give details of where Holloway was buried and how she died. The family said they wanted closure and Kelly contacted the FBI, which sent 10 to 12 agents to Aruba to meet Kelly, Dietl said Wednesday in an interview with The Associated Press.

They set up a sting operation and told Van der Sloot he would receive \$25,000 immediately and \$225,000 more once the body was found. Kelly and Van der Sloot met in a hotel room in Aruba and were secretly videotaped by the FBI. Van der Sloot said on tape that after Holloway died, he contacted his father who helped him bury the body, the investigator said. Van der Sloot's father died in January. "He wanted to come clean, but he also wanted money," said Dietl. "So now, not knowing if this was true or not, if there was a chance of recovering the body, we wanted to do that."

Under surveillance by the FBI, Kelly and Van der Sloot went to where the body supposedly was buried. No body has been found. Van der Sloot has told investigators in Aruba that he left the 18-year-old Holloway on a beach, drunk. For years, he has denied involvement in her disappearance. Van der Sloot was the last person seen with Holloway before she vanished during a high school graduation trip to Aruba. He was arrested but has been released twice because of a lack of evidence. The day of his arrest in Chile, he was charged in the United States with trying to extort \$250,000 from Holloway's family. The federal criminal complaint in that case, filed in Birmingham, alleged an arrangement to pay the money for disclosing the location of Holloway's body. According to a sworn statement, Van der Sloot got a partial payment of \$15,000 wired to a Netherlands bank soon after, but the complaint did not say where the money came from. The FBI said only that the payment came from private funds. The U.S. government's involvement in the payment to Van der Sloot was first reported by the New York Post. (Various media)

### **Aruba - Joran's Arrest Possible Breakthrough in Holloway Case**

Aruban PM Mike Eman believes the Joran van der Sloot developments in Peru could possibly lead to a breakthrough in the Natalee Holloway case. "Our police are in close contact with the FBI to assist by all manner of means. Perhaps we will now find answers to questions that had previously remained unanswered." Eman said to Beth Holloway, the mother of Natalee, this week. In that conversation, he expressed his sympathy for „the pain and the sorrow the murder case in Peru had caused” and emphasized on Aruban solidarity. “She appreciated it”, Eman said. He hopes the recent developments and the cooperation between the Aruban authorities and the FBI will lead to a better relationship than in previous years. The publicity around the case in Peru has placed the Natalee Holloway case in the media spotlight again. Various U.S. media outlets have reportedly arrived on Aruba to report on the case. Also, Joran Van der Sloot may be investigated in the disappearance of two Colombian women, according to news that broke on CNN. Before making his way to Peru, Van der

Sloot made a stop off in Colombia, were two women coincidentally went missing from a casino. (Various media)

### **Antilles - Dutch-American Friendship Agreement**

Netherlands Antilles Justice Minister Magali Jacoba said after a meeting with advisors and various other organizations that the Agreement between the U.S. and the Netherlands Concerning Friendship, Commerce and Navigation is sensitive and could have a lot of consequences. She has not decided on the treaty's implementation, but said the islands need to decide how to apply the treaty based on local legislation. A judge recently ruled that U.S. citizens have the same entry rights in the Netherlands Antilles as the European Dutch citizens, based on the Friendship Agreement. (Daily Herald)

### **Aruba – Businesses Searched for IPR Violations**

The Public Prosecutors Office, in cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies, has raided 33 businesses in search of Intellectual Property Rights violations. Various counterfeit products and other merchandise were confiscated, according to a Public Prosecution spokesperson. It is not uncommon that counterfeit merchandise is illegally sold on the market. (Extra)

### **Curacao – Association of Caribbean States Regional Integration Seminar**

Association of Caribbean States Secretary-General H.E. Luis Fernando Andrade Falla arrived in Curacao to attend a Regional Integration Seminar organized by the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export), European Commission, and the Government of the Netherlands Antilles. Also, he met with Netherlands Antilles PM Emily de Jongh-Elhage to discuss recent developments. (Various media)

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

Former Antillean Parliament Chairman Dudley Lucia was inaugurated as the new State Secretary of Justice, yesterday. Lucia is 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)

## **CURACAO**

### ***Crime June 4 – June 10***

On June 4 a woman was robbed in her home in Souax. The victim was also beaten by the lone suspect. On June 10 a man was shot and injured in De Savaan. The motive for the shooting was not known (Extra).

## **ARUBA**

### ***Crime June 4 – June 10***

On June 4 a lottery ticket selling business in Oranjestad was robbed (Bon Dia Aruba, Diario Aruba).

## **ST. MAARTEN**

### ***Crime June 4 – June 10***

On June 4 a man was beaten during an altercation with four other men outside a bar in Philipsburg. The following day, a man was stabbed and injured during an altercation with several men near a gas station in Cul-de-Sac. On June 6 a vehicle driver was robbed in Philipsburg. Two days later a man was shot and injured near Jump Up Casino in Philipsburg. On June 10 a Chinese grocery store in Philipsburg was robbed (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time).

### ***High expectations for new Chief of Police***

Justice officials expect a lot from new Windward Islands Police Department Chief of Police Peter de Witte. GONA Justice Minister Jacoba wants him to build a “strong and resilient police organization” and to “achieve some stability”. De Witte, a 26-year police veteran, took the oath of office on June 8, replacing former acting Chief of Police Ademar Doran. Also promoted to the rank of Police Commissioner was Chief Inspector Carl John. In his inaugural speech, De Witte promised to assess the state of the police within three weeks, prepare an action plan for improvement, and write an overall plan to strengthen police for the next three years. He reiterated his guarantee to rebuild police integrity and restore the public’s confidence in the police (Daily Herald, St. Maarten Island Time, 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.”*