

Haiti News Roundup

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Violence Continues In Haiti

Hardbeatnews, PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Mon. Jan 17, 2005: A U.S. travel warning remained in place for Haiti last night, on the conclusion of a weekend that was marked by robbery and violence in this strife-torn Caribbean nation.

On Friday, reporters Claude Bernard Serant and Jonel Juste, of the *Le Nouvelliste* newspaper, were beaten and robbed by several men in the slum of Bel Air.

And yesterday, Raymond Lafontant, the chief adviser to interim prime minister, Gerard Latortue, was shot and wounded during a failed carjacking attempt in Port-au-Prince.

Government spokesman, Mike Joseph, was quoted in wire reports as saying Lafontant was shot in the stomach when a small group of men trying to steal his car could not get it started.

The robbery and violence continues in several sections of the capital, despite the presence of 7,400 U.N. peacekeepers and as Juan Gabriel Valdes, the top U.N. envoy to Haiti, urged followers of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to reject violence and take part in elections slated for later this year.

Meanwhile, Barbados' foreign minister, Dame Billie Miller, has told the United Nations Security Council on Haiti, that while CARICOM remains committed to the people of Haiti, concerns persist over breaches of fundamental rights by a persistent failure to prosecute the "rebels" for their criminal activity.

While calling for free and fair elections, Miller said, the "... building of democracy in Haiti and the creation of a stable political, social and economic order require the long term commitment of the Haitians and of their partners in the international community."

The United Nations Security Council agreed to organize a mission to Haiti before 1 June, possibly in conjunction with a mission of the UN Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. – Hardbeatnews.com