

Exports of illegally aquired metals up

Even though the Dominican Republic does not produce copper, it is exporting the metal to other countries such as China, where in the last 3 months alone, 145,421 kilos, approx US\$100,000 of copper was sent.

Compare this to the 20.44 million kilos of ferrous-nickel, worth US\$109.12 million, that was exported in 2006, and the 107.51 million kilos (US\$39.82 million) of steel in a 3 month period.

The high level of export of a metal not even mined here has raised concern at the DGA (Customs Agency).

According to some reports, this exported metal is derived from the repeated thefts of electrical and telephone cables as

reported in the Gringo Times last month. Also bolstering the exports are stolen manhole covers, fences, monuments, plaques and other items.

These thefts are fuelling the lucrative copper export business which is sustaining the rise in drug trafficking and street crime in the barrios. Some reports are suggesting that copper is being bartered by drug addicts in the barrios for drugs and food, and that it's competing with cocaine, crack and marijuana for the 'underworld's' money. The stolen copper is worth up to 70 pesos per pound on the export market.

The power utility companies are reporting RD\$600 million worth of thefts from their transformers, networks and lighting posts during 2006, and the telephone companies have reported a further RD\$200 million.

The thieves' main targets so far have been the Juan Bosche and Duarte bridges in Santo Domingo, the avenues Las Américas, Jacobo Majluta, 27



A length of copper cable as it may appear. If someone offers to sell you some cable like this, please get in contact with the police or email us at the Gringo Times - er, unless it's not stolen cable.

de Febrero, and the Duarte highway and others in Santiago, San Cristóbal, Baní, Azua and Monte Plata provinces.

Occidental Sale as Foriegn Investment Grows

The Occidental hotels chain has recently been bought out by a Spanish investment bank bolstering the number of foriegn investors *continued on next page*

continued from previous page

relaxing in his house, wearing his clothes and watching his TV.

Parents leave 3 year old on plane alone

A 3 year old boy was left by his parents on a China Southern Airlines flight from Guangzhou to Dalian city after it landed. The parents had apparently forgotten the child and only remembered when they heard other people in the airport relating the tannoy announcement enquiring after the parents whereabouts. "We were in such a rush to meet our relatives that we didn't realise we were going without him," said the father.

Crocodile Undercoat

A woman was stopped by guards at the Gaza-Egypt border as she looked "strangely fat". The reason? She had three crocodiles strapped to her waist! Even though she was veiled and covered with clothing, her appearance drew attention and she was searched by a female border guard. The finding sparked panic at the border crossing. The female guard screamed and ran out of the room, and then other women began screaming. But after the hysteria died down, everybody was admiring a woman who was prepared to tie crocodiles to her body. The 20" reptiles had their jaws tied shut with string and were probably destined for sale in Gaza.

Illegal Immigrants

We're used to hearing about illegal immigration, but have you ever thought of giving it a go yourself? Well now, Parque EcoAlberta, a new theme park in Hidalgo, Mexico is giving everybody the opportunity to pretend to be a Mexican attempting to illegally cross the border into the US. For around \$20, you get to hike through undergrowth, run up and down steep hills, across rivers and through barbed wire fences, whilst avoiding the crossfire of border guards. The park is actually 700 miles from the border, but so far, more than 3000

continued on page 8

Cruise Passengers Surge Ahead

The news is positive on the cruise ship front. More than 25,000 tourists visited the



Legend of the Sea

country on cruise ships during the last season ending March 2007 bringing around RD\$3 million into the country, announced Sans Souci Holdings who are developing the new terminal in the Santo Domingo port. Up to 40 ships a months have been docking at the port.

The intention, according to Sans Souci Holdings director, Luis Molina, is to expand their operations and lengthen the current 6 month season to a year round operation.

More construction is planned to provide a new tourist marina and a residential development. Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's famous 'Legend of the Sea' is expected to use the Santo Domingo port during the new 2007-2008 season.



Come along and watch all the latest sporting events. Meet the new owners & our lovely bar staff

*Happy Hour
Every Friday Night
5pm—8pm*

Tell all your friends about us & come and join us for a social occasion. See you all soon.

*Eddy's Sports Bar
Ayuntamiento # 49
El Batey Sosua
www.eddysportsbar.com*

