



Public Relations Unit

P.O Box N-831

Mount Royal House

Mount Royal Avenue Nassau Bahamas

Tel: 242-225-5337 Fax: 242-326-0977

Email: immigrationpublicrelationsunit@bahamas.gov.bs

BAHAMAS IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

337 Migrants in Lawful Custody

The Department of Immigration reports that over the past several days, four (4) Royal Bahamas Defence Force interdictions have occurred within the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, involving suspected smuggling operations of illegal migrants from various nations; included are migrants from Haiti, Hong Kong, Columbia and Peru.

One interdiction occurred off Grand Bahama with the remaining three (3) occurring off Inagua. As a result, a total of three hundred and thirty-seven (337) illegal migrants are in lawful custody; thirty (30) migrants on Grand Bahama, and three hundred and seven (307) on the island of Inagua.

All Northern District's matters have been addressed and successfully concluded.

The remaining 307 migrants consisting of adult males and females, as well as children are presently being addressed in a mass joint law enforcement exercise, consisting of officials from the Immigration, Police and Defence Forces, Social Service, medical team (Ministry of Health), and volunteers from the local community.

Every risk mitigating protocol has been enacted in an effort to contain this unforeseen situation in Inagua so as to avoid any health risks to residents, and officers, as well as migrants.

After processing and receipt of medical clearance for communicable diseases, all migrants will be repatriated to their homeland in accordance with local and international human rights protocols as soon as practicable via our national flag carrier, as all relevant Embassy Officials have been notified.

The Department expresses special thanks to our fellow local law enforcement colleagues as well as the U. S Coast Guard, the local church community on Inagua, medical personnel, and all citizens who have gone above and beyond to assist in these unique circumstances.

As events evolve, the media will be further updated.

The public is reminded that we are committed to executing the mandates of our agency by effectively coordinating efforts with other Law Enforcement agencies, and international stakeholders to ensure compliance with the Statute Laws of The Bahamas.

For further information, you may visit our website at www.immigration.gov.bs or call our hotline anonymously at 1-242-502-0574.

End.

Mission Statement: *To regulate the movement of people across the borders of The Bahamas so as to ensure the security, facilitate economic advancement and promote the harmonious social development of The Bahamas through the collaborative efforts of responsible government and non-government agencies both nationally and internationally*