

Anti-traveller accusations**LA LAGUNA DENIES RACISM**

• La Laguna council flatly denies racist attitudes lie behind its decision not to allow travellers to set up a market in the city.

Leaders of the local traveller community have been pushing for months to add La Laguna to the list of fixed weekly markets for them to sell clothing, footwear and other items. However, in a heated session attended by the travellers and members of the public, mayor Fernando Clavijo refused permission again. "I will not allow a market until a serious proposal is tabled for consideration. The travellers say the livelihoods of 300 families depend on the market but I have to consider the thousands of small traders living in the city, whose livelihoods are equally important".

The travellers say a petition submitted to the Council was ruled inadmissible because of a dispute over the validity of the signatures.

Los Rodeos**DRUG ARRESTS**

• Detaining travellers suspected of carrying drugs in their luggage or within their bodies is becoming an almost daily routine at Los Rodeos, the north airport in Tenerife.

However, the specially trained police become more watchful than usual during the carnival season when there is a bigger demand for drugs. A 49 year old man was spotted acting in a very nervous manner having just come off a flight on 12th February. He was searched and questioned before a scan revealed he was transporting 54 capsules containing cocaine within his body. A week earlier a young Polish citizen was arrested. Police found nothing in his luggage or on his body but another scan revealed 101 similar capsules containing cocaine. In another incident two women in their twenties were searched by a police woman. Both were found to be transporting cocaine internally.

Storm fallout**ISOLATION**

• A small community of three families in Los Realejos is still cut off from the rest of the town in terms of transport.

The families feel they have been abandoned by their town council. The problem is that the heavy rains last November destroyed the home-made road they had created for themselves fifty years ago. It joined their properties with a country road on the other side of a ravine. When the torrent came down the ravine it sliced through the road, known as El Camino de las Angostas, which joins Los Realejos with farmland above. The families, who are still unable to use their cars, are understandably concerned about what might happen in an emergency. Nevertheless, despite apparently having approval from the authorities to create their road, it may be officially considered as private and therefore not the responsibility of the public administration.

AITANA

Prosecution call

The mother of a young girl who died at the end of November several days after a fall in a playground is demanding legal action against doctors who wrongly accused her partner of child abuse and allegedly disclosed the information to the media.

The toddler, 3 year-old Aitana, suffered internal bleed-

ing and multiple bruises in the fall but doctors failed to realise the seriousness of the injuries when she was taken to the El Mojón health centre in Arona. Her condition deteriorated five days later and she was taken by her stepfather to hospital, where she died shortly afterwards.

Doctors at the hospital contacted police with con-

cerns that the injuries may have been caused by her stepfather, who was subsequently arrested and vilified in the media until the true origins of the injuries emerged. The family of the girl have hired a lawyer to press for prosecution of the medical staff who released the stepfather's details to newspapers, triggering a media frenzy for

over two days. They also want a formal investigation to determine the liability of the health centre which did not carry out a proper examination on Aitana.

Reacting to the news, the regional Department of Health said it would provide "all necessary legal support" to the doctors concerned in the event of possible action against them.

HELICOPTOR HOLD-UP

Rivero's scandal row grows

Air traffic controllers in Tenerife have denied government accusations that they deliberately held up a helicopter carrying the Canarian president on in inter-island flight.

Paulino Rivero, who had publicly criticised controllers here for the disruption caused by a work to rule in December and January, was late for an appointment after his flight from Tenerife to Gran Canaria was delayed due to the tower's insistence on clarifying the reason for the trip, which was to open a new primary school in Las Palmas.



The helicopter is normally used for medical emergencies and rescues

"The flight plan filed indicated an emergency, which is the status the Bell helicopter has since it is normally used for medical emergencies and

rescues. When we realised it was simply carrying dignitaries, we asked the pilot for a new flight plan to be filed. Imagine the scandal if a real

emergency had occurred while the helicopter was away from its Tenerife base just to let the President get to another island more quickly" said a controller in reaction to the news that the government had asked the Airport Authority to investigate and, if necessary, discipline the persons involved in the hold-up.

The incident has prompted calls for an investigation into Rivero's use of the helicopters, which were contracted by the regional government for emergencies at a cost of 40 million euros over eight years, according to the *La Opinión* newspaper.

HEALTH

More doctors required

Ramón Miranda, mayor of the old town of Garachico, has complained that there is a lack of doctors at medical centres in the north western lowlands of Tenerife.

He said the situation was a special cause for concern in his municipality, especially in terms of child specialists.

He told reporters that many people were forced to go to Icod for medical treatment as a result. The mayor was disconcerted by a sign on the door at the local health centre announcing that it would be closed during carnival week due to the absence of a doctor and a nurse. Although funds are supposedly available to pay for substitutes when

health staff are ill or on holiday, they are frequently not replaced. It would appear that health management staff of the various areas are rewarded financially if their section saves money in areas such as replacement staff. The service to the tax paying public would seem not to have any importance whatsoever.



FROM 44€ PER PERSON

HOTEL JARDÍN TECINA**SPRING PROMOTION**

- Double Standard room with breakfast.
- Stays until 28th March 2010
- Only for Canary Islands Residents.



Information and Reservations
902 222 140 tecina@fredolsen.es
www.jardin-tecina.com
or travel agencies

