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THE WEEK IN MEXICO

Baja California Sur recovery

2:00 a.m. September 13, 2009

Baja California Sur recovery:

• Rescue teams returned to Tijuana on Friday after spending a week helping communities in Baja California Sur recover from the beating Tropical Storm Jimena gave them. Tens of thousands of residents in Santa Rosalia, Mulege, Loreto, Lopez Mateos, Campo Rene and other communities in Baja California Sur and in Guaymas and Empalme in Sonora state were reportedly left homeless. The Baja Bush Pilots was continuing to fly in aid from San Diego and other areas. The National City-based International Community Foundation is partnering with the Mexican Red Cross to aid victims; pictures of the destruction can be seen and donations can be made at the foundation's Web site, icfdn.org.

Swine flu school closures:

• Officials closed 1,400 schools in Culiacan in Sinaloa state Friday after 19 students were tested for swine flu after showing symptoms of the disease. Officials will decide when to resume instruction Thursday after the Independence Day holiday.

\$16.3 million in cash seized:

• Colombian customs agents seized \$11.3 million in cash from a shipping container in Buenaventura, Colombian authorities said Wednesday. The cash was hidden in a shipment of ammonium sulfate that arrived from Mexico. On Friday, Mexican authorities said they found at least \$5 million hidden in a shipment of ammonium sulfate at the port of Manzanillo.

Marijuana profits up:

• Border czar Alan Bersin said Thursday that U.S. marijuana use is up. "That is the huge cash crop feeding the cartels," Bersin told a large gathering at the Institute of the Americas at the University of California San Diego. Bersin is an assistant secretary in the Department of Homeland Security.

Body identified:

• A body found with its severed arms crossed and placed on its chest in Ciudad Juarez was identified by authorities Wednesday as a Texas man kidnapped from his Horizon City home outside El Paso. Sergio Saucedo, 30, was kidnapped Sept. 3.

Journalists arrested:

• Two rural journalists in Tabasco state were arrested on suspicion of working as informants for a drug cartel. Roberto Juárez and Lázaro Abreu Tejero Sánchez were being held on charges that they accepted thousands of dollars from the Zetas, a drug gang aligned with the Gulf cartel, the state court system said. The reporters work near the Guatemalan border for the Villahermosa newspaper *Presente*.

Cabinet shake-up:

• President Felipe Calderón proposed eliminating three government ministries Tuesday, part of a midterm Cabinet shake-up that included the resignation of the attorney general. Dropping the three departments and other austerity measures, which need Congress' approval, would save an estimated \$6 billion next year, freeing up money for anti-poverty measures, Calderón said. The Tourism Ministry would be rolled into the Economy Ministry, the Public Administration Ministry would be reduced to a comptroller's office, and the duties of the Agrarian Reform Ministry would be split between the Agriculture and the Social Development ministries.

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