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Top athletes get set for NCAA Outdoors

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BISHOP'S WIFE TELLS COURT . . .

'We had sex in same room as our children'

By NATARIO MCKENZIE
Tribune Staff Reporter
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ACCUSED: Bishop Randy Fraser

THE wife of Baptist Bishop Earl Randy Fraser testified yesterday that it was not unusual for she and her husband to have sex while in the same room as their children.

When asked by her husband's attorney Jiam Mangra whether she and her husband during their 22 years of marriage had ever had sex while their two children were in the same room Mrs Fraser replied, "Yes, sir."

Prosecutor Franklyn Williams questioned whether her testimony about having sex with her husband in his church office while in close proximity to their two children was a "concoction." Mrs Fraser claimed it was not.

In her previous testimony, Mrs Fraser corroborated her husband's evidence that during power outages at their Eastwood Estates home she, her husband, and their two daughters went to the bishop's church office. She said on some occasions, while their children were asleep in an inner room in the office, she and her husband were intimate.

Prosecutors have accused Fraser, 53, of abusing his position of trust by having a sexual relationship with a 16-year-old girl he had agreed to counsel.

It is alleged that Fraser, pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Temple on St James Road, had a sexual relationship with the girl between July 2005 and February 2006. Fraser denies the allegations and remains on \$10,000 bail.

Mrs Fraser claimed yesterday she did not see anything wrong with her husband counselling the complainant as he often counselled boys and girls and who were her age at the time of the alleged incidents.

Mrs Fraser told the court she never told anyone she and her husband had sex in his church office. Mrs Fraser also said that during a confrontation with the complainant's family on Palm Sunday, 2006, she never confirmed that the voice on a recording played in her presence was that of her husband.

The trial was adjourned to June 20 when attorneys in the case are expected to present their closing statements before Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethel.

CYNTHIA 'MOTHER' PRATT DEFENDS REPUTATION AGAINST ILLEGAL FIREARM 'INSINUATIONS'

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
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FORMER deputy prime minister Cynthia Pratt defended her reputation against "insinuations" regarding the discovery of an illegal firearm on her property.

During what was her final budget contribution in Parliament, Mrs Pratt passionately defended her record, reputation and character yesterday, denying she was connected to any criminal activity during her term as DPM and Minister of National Security.

Mrs Pratt, who is affectionately referred to by many Bahamians as "Mother", is

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PLP DEPUTY EXPECTS MURDER TOLL TO REACH 125 THIS YEAR

By PAUL G TURNQUEST
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AT THE present rate of murders being committed in the Bahamas, PLP Deputy Leader Philip Davis said he expects the death toll to reach 125 by the end of the year.

He claims the record-breaking figure will be reached so long as the government fails to make fighting crime a national priority.

During his contribution to the 2011/2012 national budget, Mr Davis, described the recent surge in violent crime as the "most serious problem" facing the country today.

"The most fundamental right any government owes its citizens is personal safety. The citizens of the Bahamas deserve the right to live, work and move about peace

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CHILD INJURED IN SANDILANDS VILLAGE FIRE DIES IN HOSPITAL

THE Sandilands Village fire claimed the life of another victim yesterday. One of the surviving children who was fighting for life at Princess Margaret Hospital died yesterday.

Funeral services were held last week for three other children killed in the tragic blaze.

The children remain ventilated and managed by a team of specialists in the Intensive Care Unit, including paediatricians, anesthesiologist, neurosurgeons, and critical care paediatric nurses.

SOLAR-POWERED BINS TO HELP CLEAN UP BAY STREET



IN THE BIN: Trash is placed in a new BigBelly Solar Compactor - a compacting trash receptacle completely powered by solar energy - on Bay Street yesterday. The device can hold 'five to six times' as much garbage as the regular bins now lining Bay Street.

SEE PAGE FIVE

'MILLIONS PASSED THROUGH STAFF' IN VEHICLE LICENSING SCAM

POLICE estimate "millions of dollars" have passed through the hands of employees at the Road Traffic Department involved in a vehicle licensing scam.

Ten employees were arrested by police in the fraud investigation that started six months ago.

Superintendent Paul Rolle, head of the Central Detective Unit (CDU) said the police took four employees into custody this week, with the others having been arrested last week. The scam has been in operation for about two years, according to police estimates.

Supt Rolle appealed to drivers who licensed

vehicles through this unauthorised scheme to bring their vehicles into CDU. He said the police have a list of well over 100 registrations.

"Either you come or we come and get you," said Supt Rolle.

The vehicles licensed under this scheme could be stolen, said Supt Rolle.

More arrests are expected in the investigation. One of the employees arrested was a 52-year-old woman, who had been 18 years on the job. One of the male employees arrested was

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LOCAL NEWS

EDUCATION SPECIAL REPORT

L W Young Junior High School makes technological leap

By NOELLE NICOLLS
Tribune Staff Reporter
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THE transition from typewriter to keyboard has been a success at L.W. Young Junior High School, which is leading the pack in computer education in the public school system.

While some students are still required to use typewriters to sit the annual keyboarding exam for the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE), students at L.W. Young have access to some of the most modern technology in the public school system.

Principal Janet Nixon said the school has some way to go before donning the title of cutting edge, but it is well on its way. Thanks to a major donation by Scotia Bank, the school is currently configuring a new modern languages lab that will have 30 networked computers by the start of the new school year.

Inside the lab, students will participate in inter-classroom exchanges with classrooms all over in the world. Language students will have access to online resources like vocabulary and word builders with audio and visual tools to assist in learning the "correct pronunciation" of words. Because of the contained lab environment, other classes will not be disturbed by class activities, according to modern languages coordinator Lynn Gibson.

"Once our Internet is up and once we set the monitors to it, the students in this room will get to see students from other classes in Latin America or wherever they are learning Spanish. They will see how they learn it and be able to join in



THE new technology at L W Young Junior High School.
Tim Clarke/Tribune staff

with them," said Ms Gibson, who is also teacher of the year at the school.

Not only will the new lab help to strengthen the language based skills of the students, it will allow teachers to take the classroom beyond the school's gates.

Internet

"We have had many kids this year who illness took the better part of them. So they were out of class for a very long time. Imagine this child having access to a computer at home with the Internet. All I have to do is email the activity to them and they can do the activity and email it back to me. Life is sweet. I can evaluate them and send their marks back to them. It gives us the opportunity to help the students beyond the classroom," said Ms Gibson.

"Let us get them seeing this language in action. Once they see it, I think their appreciation for a second language will be deepened and strengthened," she said.

Even teachers at L.W. Young have dedicated computers. The Teacher's Resource Lab is equipped with about 12 computers, where teachers can enter grades into the student information management software.

Ms Nixon said the Software Technology Inc (STI) system, used in about 18 public schools with varying degrees of success, works to satisfaction at L.W. Young.

The system is online at the school and enables teachers to enter grades at home. Parents have user accounts and can view student grades online. The three computer teachers at the school are trained to use the



software and provide technical support to teachers.

The primary lab at the school is administered by Linda Rahming, a computer teacher at the school. This lab was also privately funded. The 24 student computers are used in computer classes and during break times for student projects. The school does not have an independent lab administrator, so the lab's availability is based on the computer teacher.

Ms Rahming said she tries to have the lab open at least three to four times per week outside of class hours. Most times the lab is filled to capacity. There are no time limits on student use, and Internet usage is restricted by a software application.

The computers at the school are not networked. Ms Nixon said the school is working with Scotia Bank, which volunteered its manpower and expertise to assist with the process.

Networking all of the computers at the school will allow administrators to centralise an industrial printer on the network to save money on printing. Every student and teacher will receive a user account so they can save documents under a private account. School administrators also will be able to control user access and establish levels of privilege.

L.W. Young is one of the few schools in the public system that has a computer lab. A handful of schools have privately funded labs, and a handful have government funded labs. However, Director of Education (DOE) Lionel Sands said well below 50 per cent of the 160 schools have computer labs in any form.

The department is currently negotiating a deal with a private company that could see 20 schools get computer labs this year for about \$300,000.

If negotiations are successful, the combination of private sponsorship and department resources over the next few years could result in every school having a computer lab within the next five years.

Working hand in hand with the computerisation is a process of school renovations that the department is intending to have partially funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) loan facility.

Mr Sands said many schools are in need of major electrical rewiring in order to handle the electrical load of computer labs.

"We are having refurbishment of our physical plants every single year. H.O. Nash is a good example of where we have challenges. The school is about 41 or 42 years old; The mechanical and electrical had to be redone completely. L.W. Young, C.H. Reeves are similar. Government High, which is some 30 years old, is similar," said Mr Sands.

"If these are similar can you imagine a school in Majors Cay that was probably built in 190- whatever. Can you imagine a school in some parts of Eleuthera or Abaco. The government does in my estimation, and I am talking about government's throughput, a wonderful job trying to upgrade.

Last year the DOE budget for computers was \$600,000. Mr Sands said the department did not even spend half of the money. He said this line item in the department's budget is stringently administered by the Ministry of Finance, which limits the department's ability to engage vendors directly.

Finance

The added bureaucracy was brought into effect prior to 2007, when Mr Sands was brought into the director's chair. The department formerly had greater financial power during early 2000. Today, finance determines the type, make and model of computers bought by education.

"You have to rationalise why you want these things. If you are unable to, it is difficult to receive. Now here is the challenge I believe the Ministry of Finance has. In the past years, we have gotten all of these things and not much seemed to have been done with all of these things. So (they ask) why is it now that you are asking for all of these things. Can you show me where it will make a difference much more than it did in the past," said Mr Sands.

"So that is the challenge we have. Trying to justify why we need all of these things when in the past we so-called had all of these things and it did not work. So it is stringent and it should be that way. We ought to be able to justify it, and when we get something we should show how it benefited the system itself," he said.

As the Ministry of Education tries to keep pace with the demands of the time, L.W. Young is racing ahead with the

help of private sponsorship.

Computer teachers at the school have a vision for the school and the ministry on the whole. Ms Rahming said she hopes to see the programme expand beyond keyboard, and even Pitman, the computer certification system used in some schools to teach word process and data processing skills.

She said her utopian view is to see computer science as a department with multiple streams, like software, networking, hardware, animation. Students would be able to enrol in the various programmes within the department rather than just having one computer option.

Practically speaking, she said she would like to see the BGCSE expanded beyond keyboarding, and the computer programme focus on more than just Microsoft applications.

Ginger Pickstock, another computer science teacher, said her vision is to see students acquire a broader understanding of computer science and the power of the computer.

"When we teach them about Microsoft applications they think about that as the only other option other than social networking.

"Students need to realise the computer can spark their creativity.

"There is computer animation, computer programming, computer design and all of these things. They do not see the alternatives in using computers. They just think I can only write a letter, produce a card or listen to music," said Ms Pickstock.

"That is our hope that we will not only teach them the basics that they will be able to be employable but also to realise you can be the employer by creating these things that you go and buy from the game store. You can be the creator," she said.

For the many computer savvy students, she said it is her wish for them to realise, the 20 hours they may spend sitting at the computer playing games could be 20 hours spent designing a computer game and marketing it for sale.

"That is what we hope that one day we will actually have bred maybe 100 or more students that say those teachers actually sparked the idea that we can produce these things and market it not just in the Bahamas but abroad," said Ms Pickstock.

ANNOUNCEMENT



DR. MAUREEN ANN KELLY PhD BCBA-D

Maureen started her early education at St. Andrew's school here in Nassau then attended St. George's school in Newport Rhode Island. Maureen graduated from St. George's in 1998 and went on to attend Duke University in North Carolina. Maureen received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Duke in 2002. She then moved to Massachusetts to begin her career at The New England Center for Children, a school for autism treatment and education located 20 miles west of Boston. In 2005 Maureen graduated from Simmons College with a Masters Degree in Education and became a state licensed Special Education teacher. In 2007 Maureen completed course and testing requirements to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. In 2008 Maureen enrolled as a PhD student at Western New England College in Springfield Massachusetts and on May 21, 2011, as her family looked on, she received her Doctoral Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis. Maureen continues to enhance the lives of children with autism as a Program Specialist for the Staff Intensive Unit at The New England Center for Children. Maureen's mother Norma Kelly, father George Kelly, and brother Charles Kelly, all of Nassau, are very proud of all of her accomplishments.

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LOCAL NEWS

COURT NEWS
Prosecution discontinues murder case

A JUDGE yesterday discharged the murder charge against a former prison guard accused of killing his ex-girlfriend's boyfriend.

Jerome Bethel, 38, had been on trial for the murder of Gary Gardiner, who was stabbed in a fight on February 11, 2009.

Bethel's daughter had testified that her father and Gardiner had become involved in an argument at her mother's Cowpen Road residence that night.

Bethel was a prison officer from 1995 to 2001.

The prosecution entered a *nolle prosequi* in the case last Wednesday after Justice Vera Watkins delivered two rulings on the admissibility of evidence. Justice Watkins yesterday discharged the jury and notified Bethel that the prosecution had decided to discontinue his case.

Bethel was represented by attorney Murrio Ducille.

Jilian Williams prosecuted the case.

Gaming Board staff complain about senior officer's behaviour

Critical of 'unprofessional' and 'disrespectful' conduct

STAFF at the Gaming Board have expressed concern that a senior officer at that department is "treating the place as if it's his own company."

One example of this attitude, the staff claim, was seen on May 31 when a fire alarm was raised at the Gaming Board headquarters.

The staff were reportedly asked to leave the building while firefighters worked inside.

However, they told *The Tribune* yesterday that the senior officer in question demanded that they return to work - even though the firefighters had not yet completed their checks.

"This officer came outside and got mad at the union

shop steward, telling him that he runs the board and not the union and then stormed off before the fire trucks reached the office to give the OK for us to come back inside," one employee said.

The building, according to the staff, is very old, and in poor and dilapidated condition.

Disrespectful

Nevertheless, they claim that they always come to work, do not complain, and therefore feel the senior officer's behaviour was disrespectful and uncalled for.

"Another example of his unprofessional ways is that he is using three vehicles by

himself. The first is the Honda Accord.

"The second is the little Suzuki that no one knows where to find it and it pops up when he drives it. And the staff in Freeport claim that he has the office jeep for the Freeport office parked at the airport at all times for when he is town and nobody else is allowed to use it," one of the employees claimed.

Repeated attempts to reach the chairman of the Gaming Board Kenyatta Gibson before press time last night were unsuccessful.

Messages were also left for the senior officer in question, however these were not returned before press time either.

New HIV/AIDS threat for people aged 50 and over

By **TANEKA THOMPSON**
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DR. HUBERT MINNIS

MEN and women age 50 and over are a growing group of new HIV/AIDS victims, Health Minister Dr Hubert Minnis said.

As he gave his contribution to the 2011/2012 budget debate, Dr Minnis said new cases in this previously "immune" group grew out of relationships between older men and younger women, and vice versa.

"A new threat has emerged for persons over 50 years of age. Before we were seeing most, if not all, of our AIDS cases in the younger population. But we're now seeing AIDS cases in the 50-year-olds and older. This occurs both in male and female as a result of the older male going out with the younger female and (vice versa).

"So that group that was essentially immune yesterday is now being infected, so we're seeing a trend now in the older population."

This demographic has been left out of the Ministry of Health's targeted prevention strategies, said Dr Minnis, as adolescents have long been the targeted focus of the ministry's prevention strategies with lectures and initiatives throughout the nation's schools.

As of December 31, 2010, there were 12,095 HIV infections: 6,335 cases of AIDS and 5,760 persons who are non-AIDS but HIV positive. Of the total infections, 4,333 occurred in young adults between the ages of 15 and 44 years old.

Dr Minnis said while just 10 years ago, a positive diagnosis was considered a painful death

tics, Dr Minnis said. "As a result of their life expectancy we have a pseudo increase and individuals from countries that does not have a great health care system as we do. They would have a higher death rate and as a result less individuals with AIDS".

The country is also making great strides in preventing the transmission of HIV from mother to child, with no reported cases last year. Antenatal care and atiretrovirals are available at no cost to HIV-positive pregnant women.

This has played a pivotal role in the decline in HIV transmission from mother to child, from 30 per cent in 1995 to less than 2 per cent in 2006, said the MP for Killarney.

The antiretroviral pharmacy at the HIV/AIDS centre supplies medication to 2,146 persons - 35 prescriptions are filled per day in the centre and 65 to 70 are filled once a week at the Infectious Diseases Clinic.

He added that more than 500 persons in Grand Bahama and Abaco who would not ordinarily have access to HIV testing were screened recently under new health care initiatives.

sentence, today's treatment means those with the illness can live a long life.

At the end of December 2009 some 2,152 people were receiving antiretroviral therapy at no cost - a seven fold increase over the 300 people receiving the same treatment in 2002. The now prevalent treatment has led to a reduction in new HIV infections, a decrease in the number of new AIDS cases year-on-year, and a dramatic fall in reported AIDS-related deaths, said Dr Minnis.

Dr Minnis said only 59 persons died from the disease or AIDS related complications last year.

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS therapy in the country has increased the life expectancy for victims of the disease, which adds to the total number of persons living with the disease. Other countries with less sophisticated health care systems have higher HIV/AIDS death rates and subsequently lower numbers of persons living with AIDS, which could lead to confusing statis-

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Paul Adderley's view of court sentences

INSTEAD OF assisting the police in crime solving, many Bahamians like to sit back and fingerpoint, blaming one or other political party for its cause.

While crime and its root causes are complex, Prime Minister Ingraham told House members last week that society cannot expect change if it continues to accept the practice of politicians receiving gifts from criminals to support an election. During the last two general elections, he said, there were claims that some politicians took money and gifts from drug dealers and other disreputable characters. We can add that no matter how hard these politicians might deny these claims, these disreputable characters, proud of their new found importance, don't mind chatting with reporters about their generosity to their "friends" in high places.

It's fairly easy to chart the source and escalation of crime through the columns of The Tribune.

Serious crime started in the sixties with politics. Suddenly Bahamians denied each other the democratic right of free speech, association and security. The advent of the PLP's "goon" squads at political rallies, escalating into burning of property, injury of citizens and general mayhem, started the ball rolling, followed in the seventies and eighties by the advent of the drug traffickers, fast boats, retaliatory killings, and a general breakdown of all the rules that held a Christian society together. Fast money was a badge of success and in schools some children expressed their dreams in schoolroom essays of one day following a family member into the drug trade.

The 1984 Commission of Inquiry summarised the corruption that had society in its grip—a corruption that had infiltrated even to the ministerial level of government and a "drug trade that caused persons to 'wink their eyes' or look the other way." It also left us with a Prime Minister who—according to the Minority Report of the inquiry into drug transshipment—"did not exercise sufficient care to preclude the possibility of drug-related funds reaching his bank account or being applied for his benefit."

We recall the lone voice of then Assistant Police Commissioner Paul Thompson who predicted the very murder that we see on our streets today if society did not come to grips with the reality of those times.

In 1981—30 years ago—then Attorney General Paul Adderley complained of the leniency with which drug offenders were being dealt with by the courts. His was the same complaint that we have today. He felt that the courts were contributing to society's breakdown.

Taking as his theme "Crime and its dirty companion corruption," Mr Adderley, in addressing the House on the appointment of a select committee to investigate criminal

activities, took a dim view of the decision of some Supreme Court judges to allow probation for persons who had been convicted of armed robbery and other serious offences. As for the magistrates he wanted to know what they were thinking in their light sentencing of drug dealers.

Mr Adderley reminded the courts that a short time before the legislature had significantly increased the penalty for drug offenders. The prison term, he said, was increased five-fold and the maximum fine was increased twenty-fold.

"So there was no question as to how Parliament wished the court to view the seriousness of the drug offence," said Mr Adderley. "Notwithstanding that fact, that has been persistently ignored by the sentencing practice by the Magistrate's Court."

"The bench in the Magistrate's court," he said, "appears not to be aware of the fact of what the law was amended to. It is not for the bench to ignore the wishes of Parliament."

He recalled a particular case when a man pleaded guilty to more than six offences of armed robbery and was released on probation.

"That is wrong," he thundered. "It is right that it be said in this place (House of Assembly) that that kind of sentencing is bad, is destructive of public confidence in the system, is frustrating to police and totally inconsistent with what ought to be the morality of the community."

Today the situation is even worse—many rogues are roaming our streets with one or more murder charges pending.

Mr Adderley knew of no way to protect society against that "small minority of persons who are terrorising the Bahamian community, except by long terms of imprisonment."

Mr Adderley was also harsh on Bahamian lawyers, who, he said, had neither a good nor high reputation. His views are interesting. We shall let Mr Adderley vent fully on them in this column tomorrow. Our readers know that nothing has improved with time, although we are confident that we have an Attorney General's office manned by lawyers fully aware of the problem who are trying to do something about it and a government that has vowed to amend the Bail Act.

We can only agree with the Commission of Inquiry's report of 27 years ago that "apathy and a weak public opinion have led to the present unhappy and undesirable state of affairs in the nation."

So don't send to inquire as to who is to blame for the country's crime. It is you, Mr Joe Q. Public. And no one can improve society's lot until Mr and Mrs Joe Q. Public bestir themselves and assist the police force with information to help fight the crime.

I challenge young Bahamians to keep their dates at the polls

EDITOR, The Tribune.

Recently, the Parliamentary Commissioner, Earl Bethel disclosed that of the 65,000-plus Bahamians added to the new registry about 14 per cent fell in the 18-35 demographic.

While political analysts may be encouraged, 9,100 young people is less than impressive when thousands more Bahamian youth are still refusing to participate in a free electoral process.

Sadly, I can relate.

I once was an apathetic, disinterested Bahamian. Tired of the political see-saw between the major parties and stagnant national growth, I stood up the polls on two election dates since becoming the legal age.

Even worse, while studying in the US and asked what it was like politically in my homeland, I compared it to Cuba, referencing that nation's political meddling in most sectors.

While that assessment may be exaggerated or, to some, unjustified, I still feel the ongoing political climate

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

mirrors such corrupted and non-progressive nations—unless the youth take the reins and redirect it.

Unlike my date in 2002 and 2007, you and I have a rare opportunity—one I never thought I'd get in my young age—of more options and thus, less excuses for not showing up at the polls.

Like you, my resumé boasts of degrees and experience that elsewhere would rev up a lucrative and successful career, but instead has gone unrewarded by employers and the government of my own country.

We ask: "How can the nation that drapes my heart, the same that produced Dr Keva Bethel, Dr Myles Munroe and Jackson Burnside dismissively ignore my bursting passion to follow their lead in advancing these islands through my talents?"

We can no longer sit and watch our futures fade, but

rather take control of our divine destiny.

If we are truly tired of the political dinosaurs and have shaken the mentality of "unworthiness" then we should proactively research or, if you so wish, interrogate these political newcomers.

Rather than huddle amongst naysayers who poke holes at the problems, we must now become the solution and secure our destiny while the fruit for change is so ripe.

I challenge all young Bahamians to keep their dates at the polls and express their frustrations and hope before July 14. Call (242) 325-2888/9 for registration spots, time slots and required documentation for registering.

Conduct in-depth research on those vying to push your ideas and desires forward and, most importantly, lift up your head, young Bahamaland.

K K POITIER

Kennedy Constituency, May 28, 2011.

A sad day in the history of the PLP

EDITOR, The Tribune.

Today is a sad day in the life of its PLP history when the grandson of Sir Milo Butler made such a courageous move when some people in the party believe he is unfit to run in the upcoming election on the PLP ticket, the party his grandfather and ancestors fought for.

I come from a PLP family and am stronger than most of those who call themselves PLP today.

My cousin was denied a nomination, he is very popular, is able to talk to everyone no matter what religion, colour or creed and he is so honest he could almost be nominated for sainthood.

I know about two years ago when the PLP name was a shame if you associated yourselves with the party, a group called the Caucus built up of young professionals, grassroots, Rastas and other Caribbean countries came together and met Tuesday nights at the Sir Lynden Centre in Farrington Road.

It was like a big festival every Tuesday.

That Group went from town to town and island to island campaigning for Perry Christie as Leader and Brave Davis for Deputy Leader leading up to the 2009 Convention.

Early February 2010, Sundays, cold and raining would find the Caucus Group out putting up PLP posters.

This group of brothers and sisters took a lot of abuse, including some from the present Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham and his followers, but it was no surprise when our leader of the Caucus arrived the confrontation ceased and they backed off and left, including the PM because he knew the leader well and knew he could not be intimidated by anyone on the planet.

At that point our PLP leader as usual was at home.

The only ones came to the Caucus defence was the Deputy Leader Brave Davis, Frank Smith, Fred Mitchell, Fish McKenzie and Jerome Fitzgerald and at that moment I saw people passing by on that cold morning booing the FNM and giving the Caucus support and saying that is what they call courage.

After the Elizabeth bye election members on the Candidate Committee and Leadership of the PLP for whatever reason started rumours about my cousin and did not give him the nomination for South Beach so his older brother, Adrian, decided to go "Green."

Had the party checked they would have found amongst many other relatives in the south our uncle and his wife lives in South Beach and even though their daughter is married to an FNM Minister, never left the PLP and cannot support the candidate Hamilton the LaRodas have family from Inagua, Acklins chain including the Hanna, Heastie, Tynes, Moss, McKinnays,

Andros – Coakley Town, Johnson, Darling and the list goes on.

We can understand how you, Craig Butler, feel because we were betrayed by the party.

I am family, a Caucus member and the Caucus is big and strong. Over the next weeks there would be many more families hurt by action of an uncaring leader. The night when my cousin won the election run off I stepped outside and heard the Chairman of the PLP telling someone that the leadership did not want Myles and that my cousin would not get the nomination, but would not give the reason for this.

I felt like going inside and get my boys and give him a good you know what.

This is why Adrian and Craig Butler with other long time PLPs are leaving the PLP for the DNA and they say it's all because of Christie the young people don't want to waste their time working and wondering when their time comes if they would be treated like they see others are treated.

Remember when you touch one you touch all.

CHRISTOPHER MCKINNEY

Caucus Member Nassau, June 1, 2011.



Share your news

The Tribune wants to hear from people who are making news in their neighbourhoods. Perhaps you are raising funds for a good cause, campaigning for improvements in the area or have won an award.

If so, call us on 322-1986 and share your story.

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NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that SAINT JULIS TANIS of JAMES CISTERN, ELEUTHERA, BAHAMAS, is applying to the Minister responsible for Nationality and Citizenship, for registration/naturalization as a citizen of The Bahamas, and that any person who knows any reason why registration/naturalization should not be granted, should send a written and signed statement of the facts within twenty-eight days from the 7th day of June, 2011 to the Minister responsible for nationality and Citizenship, P.O. Box N-7147, Nassau, Bahamas.

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Solar-powered bins to keep Bay Street shining

By LAMECH JOHNSON

CO-FOUNDERS of an environmentally sensitive business have joined forces with the Downtown Nassau Partnership to introduce an eco-friendly device for the upkeep of Bay Street.

Torry Ferguson, 26, and Dewit Duncanson, 24, of the two-year-old company Clean-Green Bahamas, yesterday unveiled the BigBelly Solar Compactor – a compacting trash receptacle completely powered by solar energy.

Mr Ferguson said the receptacles can hold "five to six times" as much garbage as the regular bins now lining Bay Street.

"Regular garbage bins holds about 20-25 gallons of garbage.

"The solar compactor can hold up to 120 gallons. That's five to six times as much garbage, so it eliminates the number of times trucks have to come to Bay Street and most importantly it saves energy and is environment friendly."

The increased capacity cuts operating costs, fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions.

As trash collects inside a Big-Belly solar compactor, an internal "eye" senses when the bin is filling and automatically triggers a compaction cycle. As the compacted trash reaches the level where pick-up is necessary, a message is sent through the CLEAN notification system, which essentially "calls home" to indicate that it needs to be emptied.

"We discovered it two years ago and we contacted Mr Gevon Moss to work out a proposal to use them. We're targeting the corporate businesses for now but if persons want them for their homes, we can work something out," Mr Ferguson said.

Externally visible LED indicator lights also communicate information about a bin's



remaining capacity to sanitation crews.

A green light indicates "empty", yellow means "almost full" and red means "full".

Mr Ferguson said the compactors are "low maintenance" and inexpensive to maintain.

Charles Klonaris, co-chairman of the Downtown Nassau Partnership "DNP", said the initiative is good for downtown.

"We think it is very economical and environment friendly. It reduces the number of trucks that have to come in and they are run by solar energy.

"The garbage and smells are contained better and the sight of the garbage is dealt with."

DNP project manager Gevon Moss said the idea is "fresh and

innovative" and addresses one of the many issues that have plagued the area.

"A lot of people have complained about the garbage and rodent problem in downtown and this helps to deal with that," he said.

Two of the solar-powered receptacles have already been placed outside the John Bull store on Bay Street.

Mr Moss explained the reason for this: "Ferguson and Duncanson came to us and presented a proposal on the solar compactors and we asked John Bull because they have had problems with garbage in that area of the store. John Bull agreed, we ran it by them (CGB) and they leased the



ABOVE: Co-CEO's of Clean Green Bahamas Torry Ferguson Dewit Duncanson show how the Solar Compactor operates.



FAR LEFT AND LEFT: The new BigBelly Solar Compactor can hold 'five to six times' as much garbage as the regular bins now lining Bay Street.

Tim Clarke/Tribune staff

power on other areas where they need to better improve their services."

Mr Ferguson said the aim is not to take jobs, but rather to create opportunities for young people to have a stake in the future of the Bahamas.

"We're trying to implement renewable energy and recycling initiatives and once we get bigger we're going to need persons – Bahamians – to work. We're trying to encourage especially more young men to get in on this positive investment," he said.

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BODY FOUND IN WATER IS IDENTIFIED

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – The body discovered floating near Williams Town Beach on Saturday has been identified as that of 17-year-old Keith Wallace Jr, who disappeared while riding a jet ski over the Labour Day holiday.

The teenager, who is a resident of Coral Reef Estate, left the Lucaya area on the jet ski around 6pm on his way to Williams Town.

A search was conducted by BASRA, Police, and concerned citizens, who discovered the jet ski near Silver Point, but there was no trace of the teen.

The body was discovered floating in shallow waters near Williams Town shortly after 7am on Saturday.

Police are awaiting the results of an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

ARREST AFTER FIREARM AND AMMUNITION FOUND

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

GRAND BAHAMA POLICE arrested a 37-year-old Freeport man after discovering a firearm and ammunition in the Garden Villas area on Sunday.

According to reports, DEU offices were on patrol in the Weddell Avenue area around midnight when they saw a man acting in a suspicious manner.

Officers conducted a search and discovered a black 9mm pistol with a magazine clip and six rounds of ammunition.

MAN CONVICTED OF FORMER GIRLFRIEND'S MURDER SET TO BE SENTENCED

A MAN CONVICTED of murdering his former girlfriend is expected to be sentenced today.

Angelo Poitier, 24, was convicted last October of the murder of Shanice Adderley, 19.

The young woman's body was discovered inside a grave at the Bahamas Veteran's Cemetery on Infant View Road on

May 27.

According to an autopsy report, Ms Adderley died as a result of blunt force trauma to the body.

Poitier was expected to be sentenced yesterday, however, his psychiatric report was not available.

His sentencing hearing has now been adjourned to June 7.

Poitier, in an unsworn statement from the prisoner's dock, denied killing his former girlfriend.

He claimed that he had unwillingly signed a confession because he feared police would brutalise him.

Poitier is expected to appear before Justice Vera Watkins this morning.

WINNING SAXONS RUSH BACK FROM FREEPORT



WINNERS: Saxons chairman Toby Auster, member Javon Clarke and director of operations Anton Dean brought the winning cheque yesterday from the Grand Bahama Port Authority 'Rush For Peace' Junkanoo parade held in Freeport over the Labour Day holiday.

Felipé Major/Tribune staff

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LOCAL NEWS



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT: Commissioner Ellison Greenslade speaks to the 2011 graduating class of Sandilands Primary School at the Church of God Auditorium.

Police commissioner encourages students to 'follow their dreams'

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

THE Commissioner of Police saluted primary school graduates, encouraging them to follow their dreams into the future.

Addressing the 2011 graduating class of Sandilands Primary School at the Church of God Auditorium, Commissioner Ellison Greenslade said: "I want you to know that you are the future of the Bahamas and

that we are depending on you – our hopes and dreams are tied up in you."

Highlighting the ceremony's theme, "Born to win", Mr Greenslade said that each student is born with special gifts and talents and can achieve anything they put their mind to.

He told the students that as they prepare for high school, they should remember their early lessons in manners, respectfulness and obedience to God, parents,

teachers and authority figures.

He said: "Obedience will cause you to listen before you speak and think before you act – these are very important life skills that you must understand if you are to have any chance of a meaningful future".

Mr Greenslade said that these important life skills can often take a person further than they think – adding that when looking to hire a young person, companies will often go for someone "with manners and

respect rather than a very educated person who is rude and disrespectful.

"I believe that a caring, kind, loving, and respectful young person will not use drugs, alcohol, smoke cigarettes, curse and engage in premarital sex," Mr Greenslade said.

He noted that in today's Bahamas, the minimum requirement for many jobs is a bachelors degree, and for some even a masters degree – neither of which can be achieved through mediocrity.

The commissioner added that it is up to all Bahamians to do their part and join together to "make the Bahamas a safer place to live, visit, work, and play."

Mr Greenslade also thanked the parents and teachers, saying he appreciates the sacrifices they make in the pursuit of education and a better life for the students.

He said that they must continue to be "guideposts" for the children, so they can develop and grow into healthy and productive adults.

Cable Bahamas Cares Foundation donates van to Children's Emergency Hostel

THE Cable Bahamas Cares Foundation came to the rescue of the Bahamas Children's Emergency Hostel with the gift of a brand new eight-seater passenger van.

"We could not, as a company committed to serving our community, stand by and allow this very important institution not to be able to carry out its daily responsibilities because of a lack of basic transportation," said Anthony Butler, president and CEO. "The 26 children currently resident in the hostel have an almost daily need for transportation and Cable Bahamas was happy to fulfill that need."

Partnering with the Cable Bahamas Cares Foundation (CBCF) in the initiative was Insurance Management.

"We wish particularly to thank Neil Cadman and Insurance Management once again for working with the Foundation through the provision of insurance for the vehicle we are donating today. They have offered us assistance previously and continue to share our interest in serving our community philanthropically," said Sandra Knowles, newly elected Chairman of CBCF.

The Children's Emergency Hostel, founded in 1962 by the Bahamas Christian Council, was set up as a temporary shelter for Family

Island mothers who were coming to New Providence to give birth.

However, in 1970 the Kiwanis Club of Nassau established it as a home specifically for children temporarily or permanently displaced due to a family crisis.

The safeguarding of children is what current manager of hostel Nikita Smith describes as the main mission of the institution.

"We have some 26 children currently in the home so whatever you have in your home we can use, times 26. It's hard but we are here for a purpose so we are asking the public to do just a little bit more," she said.



PICTURED FROM LEFT: Anthony Butler, president and CEO of Cable Bahamas; Ronald Thompson, board member at the hostel; Sandra Knowles, CBCF chairman; Nikita Smith-Adderley, asst administrator of the hostel; Marita Ferguson, administrator of the hostel; and Stephen Rose, hostel driver.

Notice!!

Due to the lack of a quorum, on Friday, 27th May, 2011, the 31st Annual General Meeting of the Public Workers' Co-operative Credit Union Limited will be held on Friday, 10th June, 2011 at the British Colonial Hilton Hotel, Bay Street, beginning at 6:30 p.m., for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Board of Directors' Report
2. To receive the 2010 audited accounts
3. To discuss, and approve, the 2011 budget
4. To elect members of the Board of Directors
5. To elect members of the Supervisory Committee
6. To elect members of the Credit Committee
7. To take action on all matters that may come before the meeting

This is the 2nd call, and FINAL MEETING!

All members are encouraged to attend.

Refreshments will be served!!!



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RBC Royal Bank (Bahamas) Ltd. INVITES TENDERS

RBC Royal Bank (Bahamas) Ltd. invites tenders for the purchase of the following:

"All THAT" piece parcel or lot of land being Lot No. 112 situate in Westridge Estates Subdivision situate in the Western district of the Island of New Providence one of the islands of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Property Size: 22,000 sq. ft.
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All offers should be forwarded in writing in sealed envelope, addressed to the Manager, Royal Bank Commercial Financial Services, P.O. Box N-7549, Nassau, Bahamas and marked "Tender 7939". All offers must be received by the close of business 4:00 p.m., 17th June, 2011.

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Colton Harris-Moore

'Barefoot Bandit' suspect injures ankle at Federal Detention Centre

SEATTLE
Associated Press

THE MAN accused of being the Barefoot Bandit injured an ankle while playing volleyball at the Federal Detention Centre in SeaTac.

Attorney Emma Scanlan told The Seattle Times Thursday that Colton Harris-Moore is on crutches.

The 20-year-old from Camano Island is accused of a crime spree that stretched from Puget Sound to the Caribbean, including burglaries, and boat and airplane thefts. He earned the nickname because he allegedly committed some of the crimes while barefoot.

Harris-Moore was arrested on July 11 in the Bahamas and is awaiting trial on six federal charges and more than 30 state felonies. Attorney John Henry Browne says a plea deal is in the works.

Students excelling in hospitality programmes

By LAMECH JOHNSON

HOSPITALITY is the order of the day at one high school in New Providence, where students are excelling in a number of innovative hotelier programmes.

Janelle Cambridge, lecturer of the hospitality department at the Anatol Rodgers High School, the school has been working hard to make sure its students are prepared for the future.

She said: "The aim of tourism hospitality programme is to develop future leaders in the industry. As such, we have

embarked on a number initiatives to expose our students to the myriad of opportunities that await them."

One of those initiatives is the Junior Hotelier Programme, open to ninth grades students.

"It is a 10-week programme that seeks to explore careers in hospitality, meet with industry professionals to learn about the industry and link classroom learning and experiences to the workplace," Ms Cambridge said.

Another of the programmes offered by the school is known as CaribCert.

Ms Cambridge explained that this is a regional certification programme designed by the Caribbean Hotel Association and offered by the Bahamas Hotel Association.

It aims to train students in core tourism industry, including professionalism, health and safety, customer service and sustainable tourism.

Anatol Rodgers, Aquinas, and St Anne's School were selected to pilot the programme.

Ms Cambridge added: "We are also a part of the BahamasHost programme. It promotes tourism awareness,

offering courses in customer service skills, shaping attitudes, understanding the visitor voice, problem-solving, communications and tourism sustainability."

The Skills, Tasks, and Results Training programme (START), developed by the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AH&LA), is also offered at Anatol Rodgers.

It is a one-year curriculum that aims to give students the real-world knowledge and skills needed for a long-term career in the industry.

The Lodging Management

Programme (LMP) is a continuation of the START programme in grade 10.

"It provides 11th and 12th grade students with the classroom learning and real-life work experiences needed to take advantage of the boundless opportunities in lodging," Ms Cambridge said. "After the three year programme, students are able to qualify as Certified Room Division Specialists.

"As a requirement, students must complete over 320 hours for their designation."

The programmes are already bearing fruit, she

added, explaining that 28 students have already completed the Junior Hotelier Programme and 24 students have passed CaribCert.

"Two students received distinction. Sasha Greene received 100 per cent and Shekinah Ferguson received 92 per cent. All others passed with a B average. They did well."

"Our tourism industry is in good hands. And the hospitality department at Anatol Rodgers is setting the pace in tourism education in the public schools," Ms Cambridge added.

Anatol Rogers High school places seventh at annual International Lodging Management competition

By LAMECH JOHNSON

TWELFTH grade Tourism Study students at the Anatol Rogers High school participated in the eighth annual International Lodging Management competition in Orlando, Florida in which the Bahamas placed seventh out of 12.

The three-day event, held at the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel, hosted students from around the world and challenged them to solve problems based on real life job scenarios.

Janelle Cambridge, lecturer of the hospitality department, noted that no school from the Bahamas has ever before participated in the competition, now in its eighth year.

"We were a bit skeptical because we didn't know what to expect as it was the first time for us and the country, but during the competition I thought the students performed well. They did their best," she said.

Delnika Stuart, one of the school's three participants, said: "My experience was overwhelming considering at first I didn't know what to expect because it was our first time. Not only our first time but the country's first time as well.

"I feel very honored to have been one of the first persons to represent my country at this competition. It was a lot of pressure but we did well."

Another participant, Lakeyia Adderley, said the group put considerable effort into preparing for the competition.

She said: "It was rough throughout the days because it was a lot of hard work but we pushed and put a lot of effort in it even though we didn't get much sleep."

Christoff Hall, the only male student representing the Bahamas in the competition, agreed with his

classmates.

He said: "Although we placed seventh in the competition, I think we did exceptionally well representing the Bahamas. We received many positive comments and we met a lot of people, so there was a lot of networking."

Delnika is hoping to become a cruiseship captain while Lakeyia and Christoff want to become head and pastry chefs respectively.

The International Lodging Management competition saw students take part in three contests.

The hotel operations portion involved:

- room inspections (students had 10 minutes to find 10 housekeeping errors in a typical guest room)
- a night audit (teams undertook front desk accounting responsibilities)
- case studies in food and beverage and sales and marketing (students had 15 minutes to find solutions to various scenarios)

The hospitality portion allowed teams to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in event planning. They were given various tasks to complete, within budget parameters, including invitation design, banquet organisation, menu development and floor plan design.

The Knowledge Bowl, which all three Bahamian students agreed was their favourite, had teams demonstrate their knowledge through a multi-round Jeopardy-style quiz.

Armed with this experience, Ms Cambridge said she and the department can now begin planning for future events.

"Moving forward, I know what to do with the present students that I have so we know what to prepare for with next year's competition," she said.



MINISTRY OF WORKS MOVES TO INSTALL 24-INCH WATER MAIN

MINISTRY of Works officials informed business owners and residents of the Eastern District that Fox Hill Road to the Pine Barren junction is presently closed for phase one of the installation of a 24-inch water main.

A two-week full road closure is anticipated for this junction as the work heads west.

To date, the ministry has completed the installation of service ducts, laterals, and drainage systems from Fox Hill Road to Pine Barren.

Road reconstruction will begin once the 24-inch water main is installed.

The ministry hosted an information meeting at New Life Christian Centre on Prince Charles Drive on June 1. Charlene Collie, public relations representative for the New Providence Road Improvement and Infrastructure Project, and Francis Clarke, project engineer for the Ministry, facilitated the meeting.

"We need you to appreciate the challenges including the heavy volume of traffic, underground utilities and that this is an important road and a major east/west link," said Ms Collie. Business owners called for work to be carried out during evening hours, additional signage indicating access to businesses, flashing beacons around open trenches and a water truck available on a consistent basis to keep dust at a minimum. During the closure, access will be granted only to businesses and persons residing in the area.

Full road closure will be enforced from Pine Barren Road to Beatrice Avenue in the second phase of the water main installation.

BUSINESS OWNERS: Pictured are those in attendance at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport's information meeting.



Letisha Henderson/BIS Photos

ADDRESSING CONCERNS: Charlene Collie, public relations official and engineer at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, talks about roadworks on Prince Charles Drive.

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We thank all applicants, however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Minister thanks OAS for students' scholarships

THE Organisation of American States (OAS) has spent close to a million dollars on scholarships for Bahamian students in the past four years, for which Education Minister Desmond Bannister thanked OAS Secretary General Jose Insulza during a courtesy call last Tuesday.

Director of the OAS Department of Human Development, Education and Culture Marie Levens was also at the meetings in the US capital, and discussed with Minister Bannister the possibility of the College of the Bahamas becoming a part of the OAS consortium of colleges and universities.

Mr Bannister noted that a natural area of collaboration for the Bahamas and the OAS would be in the area of tourism studies. Mr Insulza welcomed the idea, saying that tourism studies is among

Close to a million dollars spent in past four years

the most popular areas in which requests are made for development assistance.

"That would be very important," Mr Insulza added. "That would satisfy an area that some countries have been asking for."

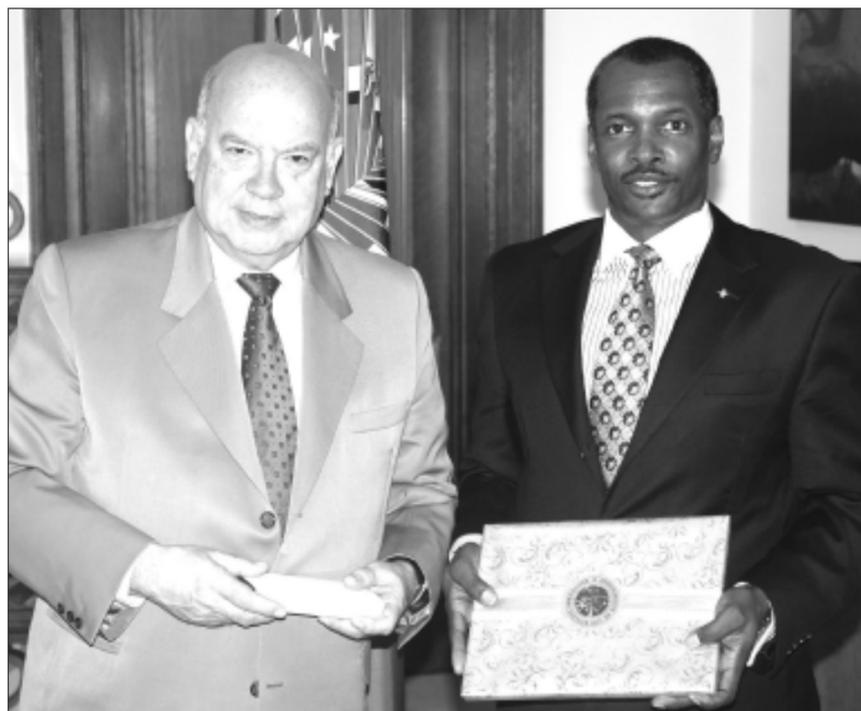
Technologies

Another area in which Minister Bannister expressed an interest was that of special education, which he called "a critical area" for the Bahamas. He discussed the importance of teacher training, particularly to take advantage of the new technologies that can be used as tools in education.

Minister Bannister also had a meeting with DC's Deputy Mayor for Education, De'Shawn Wright, where the area of special needs education was a main focus of the discussion.

Mr Bannister again stressed the importance of teacher training and noted that the Bahamas was open to the idea of exchange programmes or other partnerships with the District of Columbia.

Deputy Mayor Wright welcomed the overture, and in the area of special education explained that there is a fairly high degree of integration of students with special needs in the DC public school system.



MINISTER OF EDUCATION Desmond Bannister (at right) thanked OAS Secretary General Jose Insulza (at left) for the organisation's support of Bahamian education through the awarding of scholarships during a courtesy call on Tuesday in Washington, DC.

He also took note of the minister's interest in technology. He questioned the minister about the difficulty inherent in the fact that the Bahamas is an archipelago.

Minister Bannister talked about the need to duplicate efforts so many times to ensure that each child in the

Bahamas has access to a top quality education, including those children with special needs.

"There are great disparities (in the populations of school districts around the Bahamas), but there are wonderful opportunities for innovation in education," he said.

While in town, Minister Bannister will visit Neval Thomas Elementary School, which the Embassy of the Bahamas has "adopted" for the academic year.

He will also seek opportunities to examine best practices in specific areas of the DC public school system.

BONEFISHING 'CONTRIBUTING \$140M TO ECONOMY A YEAR'

EVEN outside of Coastal Awareness Month, the Coastal Awareness Committee said it is continuing to stress the need for bonefishing protection in the Bahamas, pointing out that bonefishing contributes approximately \$140 million to the economy a year.

Earlston McPhee, chairman of the National Coastal Awareness Committee, said law enforcement and education are important factors in the protection of the industry.

Minister of Tourism Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace and Minister of Agriculture Larry Cartwright were recently presented with the committee's new bonefishing protection poster.

Minister Vanderpool-Wallace said that bonefishing is an important factor in Family Island tourism and it is a growing and lucrative industry that needs protection.

Jared Dillet, the sub-chairman of the National Coastal Awareness Committee, said that bonefish are given some protection in the Bahamas, and just like grouper and conch, they benefit the economy. Mr Dillet said Bahamians need to be educated on the issue.

He said that it is illegal to catch Bonefish by net.

If caught breaking these protection laws, one can be fined \$3,000 or one year in prison. He added that some people ignore the catch-and-release rule by selling bonefish at \$10 per pound.

If catch-and-release is obeyed, one bonefish could be worth thousands of dollars since sports fishermen travel to the Bahamas and spend thousands of dollars to fish for them.

Minister Cartwright said that with the new protection laws, room must be left for Bahamians who may catch a



MINISTER OF TOURISM Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace and Minister of Agriculture Larry Cartwright are presented with the committee's bonefishing protection poster.

few bonefish for consumption.

He said just like grouper season, Bahamians need to be made aware of new size limitations.

April was observed as Coastal Awareness Month.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MILLIONS DISPLACED BY NATURAL DISASTERS LAST YEAR

OSLO, Norway
Associated Press

ABOUT 42 million people were forced to flee their homes because of natural disasters around the world in 2010, more than double the number during the previous year, experts said Monday.

One reason for the increase in the figure could be climate change, and the international community should be doing more to contain it, the experts said.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre said the increase from 17 million displaced people in 2009 was mainly due to the impact of "mega-disasters" such as the massive floods in China and Pakistan and the earthquakes in Chile and Haiti.

It said more than 90 percent of the disaster displacements were caused by weather-related hazards such as floods and storms that were probably impacted by global warming, but it couldn't say to what extent.

"The intensity and frequency of extreme weather events is increasing, and this trend is only set to continue. With all probability, the number of those affected and displaced will rise as human-induced climate change comes into full force," said Elisabeth Rasmusson, the secretary general of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The monitoring centre and refugee council presented the report at an international conference about climate change and displacement in Oslo.

The number of people displaced last year — about 42 million — is roughly the size of Argentina's entire population, and the onslaught of natural disasters so far this year also has been grim.

The March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan left more than 10,000 people dead, some 17,500 missing and about a half-million homeless.

In the United States, tornadoes have wreaked havoc on Alabama, Massachusetts, while floods have inundated states from Montana to Louisiana. In the southwest Missouri city of Joplin, the U.S.'s deadliest tornado in six decades killed at least 141 people and destroyed more than 8,000 homes in a city of about 50,000 people.



U.N. HIGH COMMISSIONER for Refugees Antonio Guterres speaks during the opening of the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement in the 21st Century in Oslo Monday. (AP)

Speaking at the Oslo conference, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres called the issue of climate-related displacement "the defining challenge of our times" and criticised the international community for lacking the political will to reduce to pace of climate change.

"There is increasing evidence to suggest that natural disasters are growing in frequency and intensity and that this is linked to the longer-term process of climate change," Guterres said.

Asia was the hardest hit region last year, with the largest number of displaced people seen in countries such as India, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia, China and Pakistan.

In China alone, more than 15 million people were forced to leave their homes following floods, while 11 million people were displaced in Pakistan, the report said. The large floods in India in 2009 also continued to force people to leave their homes in 2010.

"This report provides us with evidence of the extent and urgency of the problem that we cannot ignore."

"We must increase collaborative efforts to prevent displacement by natural disasters, and do a better job of protecting those displaced," Rasmusson said.

Tribune Trivia

Yesterday's Question

How many lionfish were caught in last weekend's Central Abaco Lionfish Derby? Give the exact number.

Yesterday's Answer

2957

Yesterday's Winners

Janeen Mills	3pts
Jacqueline Brown	2pts
Tasia Blair	1pt

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LOCAL NEWS

PLP Deputy expects murder toll to reach 125 this year



PLP DEPUTY LEADER:
Philip Davis

FROM page one

ably, secure in one's person and property. Without personal security, we cannot have economic security. Without personal security, we cannot build successful communities. Without per-

sonal security, we cannot accomplish great things as a nation. And so this government's failures on crime are serious and fundamental.

"Crime has dissolved the social fabric that binds Bahamians together. It has turned strangers into ene-

mies, unfamiliar grounds into dangerous turf and random social contact into risky business. When crime afflicts a neighbourhood – those who can avoid it, stay away; those who cannot suffer terribly. This is a new fact of life, and it is a national tragedy," he

said.

Mr Davis said that in the Bahamas today, the increase in violent crime over the past four years under the Hubert Ingraham administration is "shocking and unacceptable."

In fact, he said, in every major category of crime, there has been an increase between the years 2007 to 2010.

"Murders increased from 78 to 94. Attempted murder almost doubled from seven to 13. Robbery increased from 194 to 334. Armed robbery increased from 817 to 919. Housebreaking increased from 2510 to 3120. And unfortunately, the increasing trend continues for the first half of 2011.

"There have been over 377 murders since May 2nd, 2007. Fifty-seven murders have been recorded so far for 2011. This does not include the numbers of deaths over the past few months that remain unclassified or termed 'suspicious'.

"At this present rate we are on track for over 125 murders this year. One hundred and twenty-five lives lost. No one would have ever imagined such a day in the Bahamas 20 years ago," he said.

Turning to the Prime Minister, Mr Davis said the Member of Parliament for North Abaco (Hubert Ingraham) has provided the House of Assembly with a list of measures to address crime over the last four years. This list, however, he said, does little to help those who have already lost their loved ones to crime.

"His lists are a flimsy defence, and they do not obscure the truth: this government has failed to make fighting crime a priority. If the Member for North Abaco were the type to consult citizens, to care about what Bahamians really want, he would have thrown his special interests out the door and made this crisis his first concern.

"Instead, we have a party in power which has different priorities. When they get behind closed doors, they ask: How can we benefit the special and foreign interests who will support our contin-

uation in power? But when it comes to this top priority, fighting crime, they have offered only band-aids for our gushing wounds. The result is a nation in crisis. No clever political marketing, no attacks on the PLP, no political propaganda or fanfare can mask the fact that this government has failed on crime. The facts are the facts!

"When confronted with its failures on any issue, this government has a standard response ready: blame the PLP. If water leaks in a government bathroom, even a government bathroom built at great taxpayer cost by companies connected to FNM interests, the FNM will blame the PLP. It is not a creative response, it is not a truthful response, but it is a consistent response on their part – blame the PLP," he said.

Turning to the PLP's Urban Renewal Programme which was shelved by the current government, Mr Davis said it was unfortunate that such a successful programme became a "political football."

The results of this fact, he said, speak for themselves.

"After the next election, the PLP will reintroduce an urban renewal programme with full resources, with multiple community partners, with the capital and personnel needed to make both a short-term and a long-term impact. In fact, we have plenty of advice for this government. Under the Christie administration, school policing was introduced, because if our children are afraid, they cannot learn. Under the FNM, school policing was ended.

"The Member for North Abaco likes to brag about his ability to make decisions. Well this decision, and so many others, were the wrong ones, wrong for our children, and wrong for the Bahamas. Reverse your bad decision, reintroduce the Christie plan for school policing, make our schools safe for learning.

"And some more advice – take a national youth service programme seriously. This government has invested in the success of its special friends, but it has not invest-

ed in the success of an entire generation of Bahamians. Mr Speaker, fighting crime deserves more than the shallow or cosmetic or too-little-too-late measures offered by this government. We need to be serious about prevention, serious about prosecution, and serious about rehabilitation," Mr Davis said.

With more than 250 persons on bail for murder, and some of them on bail for more than one murder, Mr Davis highlighted that under the best scenarios, a murder case could last for as long as one month. With this in mind, he said that it would take approximately six years to hear all of these cases under our current judicial system – which doesn't take into account that there is on average 100 murders being committed annually in the Bahamas to be added to the numbers.

"Nor does it make allowance for the increasing number of retrials in recent years. This calculation also does not take into account all the other serious and violent criminal offences to be tried by the same judges before the same courts.

"Do the math! You will realise that we have a very, very, serious problem. A drastic shock is needed to the system. It cannot be business as usual. It cannot be politics as usual. We cannot ask the families of murder victims to wait years for justice," he said.

DR NOTTAGE: GOVT CRIME FIGHTING POLICIES 'HAVE LITTLE EFFECT'

By TANEKA THOMPSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
tthompson@tribunemedia.net

GOVERNMENT'S crime fighting policies have had little to no effect on violence and illegal activity throughout the country, former education and health minister Dr Bernard Nottage said.

The Bain and Grants Town MP noted some of the initiatives put in place by the Ingraham administration since 2007 – such as introducing a nine person jury to bring about speedier trials, electronic monitoring of persons on bail, deploying more police cars and personnel – but said they have not been as successful as hoped.

"All of these things the government talks about they have done, but the bottom line is what impact does that have on crime? We're not blaming the government for crime (but) it's their responsibility to deal with crime, to reduce crime, to find solutions to crime. That's their job.

"All of that I outlined has made no difference in incidents on crime or fear of crime. All the new police vehicles, the new police officers, the new laws, the nine man jury, the ankle bracelets – in spite of all the government's initiatives crime and the fear of crime have never been greater," said Dr Nottage, as he gave his contribution to the 2011/2012 budget debate.

"The Bahamas has never felt as unsafe as it feels today. Criminals have never been bolder, there have never been so many guns on the street in spite of all of the initiatives. I'm not saying they are not investing in crime reduction strategies because they appear to be, all I'm saying is the (things) have had little or no effect."

The country's murder count reached 57 after four men were killed during the Labour Day weekend.

Mr Nottage said with more than 50 murders in just over five months the country needs a different approach in order to stem violent crime.

Mr Nottage also criticised job creation and employment training programmes introduced in the upcoming budget as general election ploys.

"In election year, I would have been surprised

if government had not used whatever strategies it could to create some jobs for the thousands of unemployed. And so the targeting of the 1,000 youth who will be employed for up to a year to prepare them for work by which time the general election will be over is not unexpected."

He said instead of training graduates with basic skills government's money would be better spent fixing the country's ailing public educational system – an area which routinely produces school leavers who lack basic reading and arithmetic capabilities.

"What we need to do is fix the education system so that they can acquire these skills while they are in highschool."

Evidence of the broken educational system is seen in his constituency, an area where only 55.6 per cent of residents studied beyond the ninth grade, according to the most recent statistics Dr Nottage said.

Bain and Grants Town has a population of just over 9,000 people, about 3 per cent of the country's population, he added.

"The last survey that was done showed that educational attainment among our residents was not impressive. Only 0.8 per cent of residents of that constituency had three or more years of college. Five per cent at least had an Associate's Degree but 11 per cent had only a kindergarten or elementary education and 23.5 per cent attended school up to the 9th grade. Only 55.6 per cent went beyond the 9th grade which means that 44 per cent or so of the total did not complete their secondary education.

"This explains many of the difficulties we face attempting to ensure that residents have a fair shot at securing employment in times such as these."

"We can brag about building schools, we can brag about how much money we spend on education but if in a country where free education was introduced long ago where in a constituency where we have almost four or five primary schools where we have access to senior secondary schools if we cannot (do) better than getting 55 per cent of our residents beyond 9th grade, something is wrong with this."



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'MILLIONS PASSED THROUGH STAFF' IN VEHICLE LICENSING SCAM

FROM page one

found in possession of "licensing paraphernalia and an assortment of inspection stickers and decals."

When police searched the employee's home they found "a pack of registration

disks, several telephones and license plates" that were all property of the Road Traffic Department.

Police say a 42-year-old resident of the Grove was the "primary person" in the ring. He operated a "one stop shop" from the back of his car.

Cynthia Pratt defends reputation against illegal firearm 'insinuations'

FROM page one

planning to step away from front-line politics after 14 years representing the people of St Cecilia. She told the House she has always served the Bahamian people, and will not be painted as a criminal.

She said: "One thing a man has in their name – my name will live on and I do not want it to be said that I am a crook or a criminal. I am woman who gave my best to the Bahamian people."

Regarding the discovery of a stolen firearm in her yard, Mrs Pratt explained that a young man was working in her garden when he came across shotgun casings and a gun in a dog cage.

Mrs Pratt said after she was notified by her husband, she immediately called the police, who discovered the gun belonged to a man who had brought it onto her property.

The matter has been raised several times in



CYNTHIA PRATT

the House by High Rock MP Kenneth Russell, and the former DPM said his comments amount to an insinuation that she is either involved in the gun trade or allows people to hide guns at her home.

"This matter has been raised on several occasions like I have done something wrong when I was sitting in the chair as Minister of National Security," said Mrs Pratt.

She said if she had anything to hide, she would not have called the police – which was "the right thing to do".

"I might be poor but I am not a criminal, there are still some fair people in this party, not all are crooks like people try to make it out to be," said Mrs Pratt.

She added that during her time as a Member of Parliament, while she did not always agree with what members opposite said, she has always been respectful, never referring to anyone in a disparaging manner.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ARIZONA
FOREST FIRE
EXPANDS WITH
STRONG WINDSSPRINGERVILLE,
Arizona
Associated Press

AN ENORMOUS wildfire that forced the evacuation of several mountain communities in eastern Arizona grew Monday to more than 300 square miles (780 square kilometers), sending smoke and haze across five states, authorities said.

Crews were expected to encounter tough conditions, with strong winds, low humidity and lightning storms expected.

Officials said the blaze has burned thousands of acres (hectares) since it started more than a week ago near the White Mountain town of Alpine. Authorities believe an abandoned campfire may have sparked the blaze.

So far, the flames have destroyed five buildings. No serious injuries have been reported.

Roughly 2,500 firefighters, including many from several western states and as far away as New York, are working to contain the wildfires, fire information officer Peter Frenzen said.

In Arizona, the fire and heavy smoke created pea-soup visibility, forcing the closure of several roads, including about a stretch near the New Mexico line.

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Supervisor Chris Knopp speculated at a community meeting on Friday that an abandoned campfire was responsible for the fire.

Fire officials expect the fire will grow given a windy forecast and expected dry lightning Monday.

The state also has another major wildfire, in southeastern Arizona that threatened two communities.

SYRIA SAYS POLICE, SECURITY
FORCES KILLED IN PROTESTSBEIRUT
Associated Press

ARMED men attacked Syrian security forces in a tense northern city on Monday, Syrian officials said, and 120 policemen and security forces were killed in a region where the army has carried out days of deadly assaults on protesters calling for the end of President Bashar Assad's rule. The government vowed to respond "decisively," setting the stage for a new crackdown.

Communications were cut to the area around Jisr al-Shughour on Monday and the details of the attack were impossible to verify, but there have been unconfirmed reports in the past by residents and activists of Syrians fighting back against security forces and even mutinous troops.

Security

Adnan Mahmoud, the chief government spokesman, acknowledged that Syrian forces had lost control of some areas for "intermittent periods of time" and promised that the army would restore security in the area.

"We will deal strongly and decisively, and according to the law, and we will not be silent about any armed attack that targets the security of the state and its citizens," said Interior Minister Ibrahim Shaar.

The government's response set the stage for an even stronger crackdown against a popular uprising that began in mid-March and poses a potent threat to the 40-year regime of the Assad family. The possibility of a mutiny would show new cracks in a rule that has held out through weekly protests of thousands of people.



State television added the armed groups carried out a "real massacre," mutilating some bodies and throwing others in the Orontes River.

Jisr al-Shughour, about 12 miles (20 kilometers) from the Turkish border, has been the latest focus of Syria's military, whose nationwide crackdown on the revolt has left more than 1,200 Syrians dead, activists say. The town was a stronghold of the country's banned Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s. Human rights groups said at least 42 civilians have been killed there since Saturday.

Syria's government has a history of violent retaliation against dissent, including a three-week bombing campaign against the city of Hama that crushed an uprising there in 1982.

Jisr al-Shughour itself came under government shelling in 1980, when it was a stronghold of the banned Muslim Brotherhood, with a reported 70 people killed.

Assad's decision to allow pro-Palestinian protesters to storm the Israeli border twice in recent weeks indicates he may be trying to deflect focus from a serious crisis at home, and possibly divert international attention from a new crackdown.

State television broadly carried Sunday's protest at the Golan Heights to the south frontier, which left as many as 23 people dead

FUNERAL PROCESSION FOR PALESTINIAN PROTESTER



PALESTINIAN MOURNERS carry the coffin of Palestinian protester Enas Shreiteh — who was killed when Israeli soldiers opened fire on Sunday at protesters who tried to burst across Syria's frontier with the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights — during a funeral procession at Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp, in Damascus, Syria, on Monday. Syrian police blocked dozens of pro-Palestinian protesters from approaching the Israeli frontier on Monday, a day after 20 demonstrators were reported killed trying to break through into the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights. (AP)

in fighting with Israeli forces, but it has not carried any footage of the protest, crackdown or ambush at the northern edge of Syria.

Monday's state television report said the officers were ambushed as they responded to calls from residents for protection from the armed groups. It said 20 policemen were initially killed, and then the groups blew up a post office and attacked a security post, killing other forces.

Hiding

The report said the armed groups were hiding in homes and firing at security forces and civilians alike, using residents as

human shields.

The TV reports could not be independently confirmed. The Syrian government has severely restricted the media and expelled foreign reporters, making it nearly impossible to independently verify events.

Details of the operations in Jisr al-Shughour and nearby Khan Sheikhoun have been sketchy and attempts to reach residents of the town were unsuccessful.

Human rights activist Mustafa Osso cast doubt on the government accounts.

"The protesters have so far been peaceful and unarmed," he said. Osso said there were unconfirmed reports of a few army deserters who

switched sides and were fighting security forces.

Ahead of Monday's report, another activist said gunmen had successfully kept security forces out of the area, but he had no details. Fearing retaliation, the activist requested anonymity.

Amnesty International criticized Syria's "brutal treatment of protesters" and called on the UN Security Council to condemn the killings and refer Syria to the International Criminal Court.

"Those responsible for the brutal crackdown of pro-reform protesters must no longer be allowed to get away with murder," Philip Luther, Amnesty's deputy director for the Middle East and North Africa, said in a statement Monday.

FIVE US SOLDIERS KILLED IN BAGHDAD ROCKET ATTACK

BAGHDAD
Associated Press

FIVE American troops serving as advisers to Iraqi security police in eastern Baghdad were killed Monday when rockets slammed into the compound where they lived. The deaths were the largest single-day loss of life for American forces in two years.

The U.S. military announced the deaths in a brief statement, excluding details. Two Iraqi security officials later said the troops died when three rockets hit near the U.S. forces' living quarters at a joint U.S.-Iraqi base in the Baladiyat neighborhood where American troops were partnering with Ministry of Interior police. The Iraqi officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

American forces said the incident is under investigation. Names of the dead were withheld pending notification of family. The deaths raised to 4,459 the number of American service members who have died in Iraq, according to an Associated Press count.

With the 46,000 U.S. forces still in Iraq scheduled to depart by year's end, American troops and their bases in Baghdad and southern Iraq have increasingly come under attack and threats from Shiite Muslim militias, hoping to construct a narrative that they were responsible for driving out the Americans.

At the height of the surge of U.S. forces four years ago to combat sectarian violence that nearly tore Iraq apart, there were about 170,000 American troops in the country. The number then was gradually drawn down to about 50,000 when Washington announced it had ended its combat operations ten months ago.

U.S. troops still in the country focus on training and assisting Iraqi security personnel, but are to shun combat. Nevertheless, the American forces still come under almost daily attack by rockets and mortars in their bases and gunfire and road-



SECURITY CONTRACTORS inspect their armored vehicles after a roadside bomb attack in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday. A suicide bomber in the northern Iraqi city of Tikrit and gunmen in the country's capital killed a total of eight people on Monday morning, demonstrating the simmering violence that threatens Iraq's stability. (AP)

side bombs when moving around the country.

The Baladiyat neighborhood where the five Americans were killed is a predominantly Shiite district near Sadr City, a Shiite slum that was the heart of Muslim sect's opposition to U.S. forces in Iraq.

Less than two weeks ago, tens of thousands of supporters of anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr marched through the streets of Sadr City, demanding an end to the American military presence in Iraq.

The show of force was accompanied by a threat from al-Sadr himself. During an interview with the BBC he said he would unleash his militia, called the Mahdi Army, on American forces if they do not withdraw. He said his supporters were already targeting U.S. bases and vehicles in Iraq.

U.S. officials have been pushing Iraq to decide whether it wants some American forces to remain beyond December 31, and Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has said

he'll discuss it with the country's main political blocs. But so far there has been no request from the Iraqi side on the extremely sensitive topic.

The five fatalities Monday were the largest on a single day since May 11, 2009, when five forces died in a noncombat incident. On April 10, 2009, six U.S. troops died — five in combat in the northern city of Mosul and one north of Baghdad in a non-combat related incident.

Elsewhere, a total of 11 people

were killed in the northern city of Tikrit, the capital and near the western city of Ramadi Monday.

Four of them died when a bomb exploded at a checkpoint outside a government compound in Tikrit, the hometown of Saddam Hussein. It was the second attack in four days against the compound and the government employees who live and work there.

The deaths were announced by a media adviser to the provincial governor, Mohammed al-Asi. A military official in the Salahuddin Operations Command, which oversees security operations in the province, said a suicide car bomber blew himself up near the entrance to the compound. It had been a palace and support buildings constructed by Saddam, but now serves as a hub for government offices in the city.

Monday morning's attack is the second in Tikrit in recent days. On Friday, a suicide bomber blew himself up in a mosque inside the government compound, killing 16 people. Hours later, another suicide bomber walked into the Tikrit hospital and blew himself up near the emergency room, where family members had gathered. Five people were killed and 16 were injured in that incident.

Four others died in Baghdad, where officials said gunmen in speeding cars opened fire on two security checkpoints. The early morning attack took place in the Azamiyah district, a Sunni Muslim enclave, according to military and medical officials. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Attackers bombed the house of a police colonel near Ramadi, the capital of the mostly Sunni Anbar province.

The colonel survived the attack and was taken to the hospital.

His wife, mother and son were all killed, Iraqi police said on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WHITE HOUSE BRUSHES OFF HOUSE LIBYA RESOLUTION

WASHINGTON
Associated Press

THE WHITE HOUSE brushed off congressional demands for a detailed report outlining U.S. objectives in Libya, a move likely to stoke further anger among lawmakers over President Barack Obama's decision not to seek their consent for the military operation.

White House spokesman Jay Carney said Monday that administration officials were already answering questions about Libya in briefings with lawmakers. A House resolution calling on Obama to provide more detailed answers was "unhelpful," Carney added, suggesting that the administration has no plans to formally respond within the 14-day window outlined in the measure.

However, the spokesman said the White House could continue to hold regular consultations with Congress on Libya.

"To the extent that within those consultations there are questions asked that we can answer, we will answer," Carney said.

Several House members have expressed their dissatisfaction with those briefings, saying more of them won't suffice.

On Friday, the House passed a non-binding resolution chastising Obama for failing to provide a "compelling rationale" for the Libyan mission and demanding a report "describing in detail" the operation's objective, its costs and its impact on the nation's two other wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Forty-five Democrats joined the Republican majority in passing the resolution.

Obama ordered air strikes in March after a U.N. resolution, and consultation with Congress has been limited. The Constitution says Congress has the power to declare war, and the 1973 War Powers Resolution requires the president to obtain congressional authorization within 60 days of the start of military operations, a deadline that passed last month.

The White House says it believes the Libya campaign is still in compliance with the War Powers Resolution.

The House resolution is

unlikely to be taken up by the Senate. White House officials are pushing for passage of a Senate resolution introduced by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry, a Democrat, and Republican Sen. John McCain that would express support for the Libya campaign.

However, the ranking Republican senator on Foreign Relations is urging the administration not to take that approach and instead address the concerns raised by the House resolution.

"Because the president has not made his case to Congress, the American people have no clear understanding of the U.S. interests at stake in Libya, how much this will cost and what other priorities will have to be sacrificed," Sen. Richard Lugar wrote in a column for Monday's edition of *The Washington Post*.

IN THIS PHOTO taken on a government organized tour, Libyan soldiers walk past Moammar Gadhafi's portrait seen next to a damaged building in Tripoli, Libya, on Monday. (AP)



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A BOY RIDING HIS BIKE looks at a plume of smoke and ash merging from the Puyehue-Cordon Caulle volcano in Rininahue near Lago Ranco, over 500 miles south of Santiago, Chile, Monday. (AP)

SANTIAGO, Chile
Associated Press

AN ERUPTING Chilean volcano sent a towering plume of ash across South America on Monday, forcing thousands from their homes, grounding airline flights in southern Argentina and coating ski resorts with a gritty layer of dust instead of snow.

Booming explosions echoed across the Andes as toxic gases belched up from a three-mile-long (five-kilometer long) fissure in the Puyehue-Cordon Caulle volcanic complex — a ridge between two craters just west of the Chilean-Argentine border that began erupting Saturday.

Winds blew a six-mile-high (10-kilometer-high) cloud of ash all the way to the Atlantic Ocean and even into southern Buenos Aires province, hundreds of miles to the northeast.

Authorities in Chile went house to house, trying to persuade stragglers near the volcano to leave because of an increasing danger of toxic gas and flash floods. By Monday, about 4,000 people had been evacuated from more than 22 communities. They began fleeing as swarms of earthquakes Saturday heralded the eruption and hundreds more fled Monday to shelters farther away.

Some refused to leave, wanting to protect their homes and livestock. Chile's verdant lakes region is a centre for dairy farming, with more than 9,000 cows and sheep.

Deputy Interior Minister Rodrigo Ubilla said about 50 families in the Rininahue area refused to abandon their homes.

"Everything is prepared with shelter and transportation for them to immediately leave the danger zone," added Vicente Nunez, director of Chile's emergency preparedness office, urging them to leave.

Just north of the complex of volcanoes, the city of Futrono and the communities of Lago Ranco and Entre Rios were particularly vulnerable to flash floods. Some people also refused to leave Mantilhue, along the Rio Bueno, or "Good River," just six miles (10 kilometers) from the eruption. And while the evacuation order wasn't yet mandatory, a group of Mapuche Indians said they would seek the regional governor's authorization to enter the area to pray for the volcano to stop erupting.

Enrique Valdivieso, the director of Chile's

National Geology and Mines Service, said the fissure was belching toxic gases and material that could clog rivers and force them to overflow.

Spectacular displays of lightning flashed in the volcanic clouds during the weekend, and while the amount of ash falling east of the volcano subsided significantly by Monday, experts said it was too early to predict how long it will take before the volcano falls silent.

Volcanic dust coated ski slopes above San Carlos de Bariloche and Villa la Angostura two weeks before the official start of the winter skiing season. The resorts' trade group said it was too early to say how it would affect the local economy, but for now, residents were told to stay indoors and tourists were asked not to come.

The Cordon Caulle is nearly 620 miles (1,000 kilometers) south of Santiago, in Chile's lakes region, just west of Bariloche. Authorities went on alert before the eruption Saturday when as many as 240 tremors an hour struck the region.

The volcano's last major eruption was in 1960, shortly after a 9.5 magnitude earthquake, the most powerful in recorded history, struck Chile.

Some scientists have said that last year's 8.8 quake in Chile increased the likelihood of volcanic activity due to shifts in pressure along the Earth's tectonic plates.

The ash cloud first blew over Argentina and then circled back over Chile on Sunday. By Monday, however, prevailing winds had spread the ash eastward as far as Bahia Blanca, in southern Buenos Aires province on the Argentine coast.

During the weekend, the volcano spat out pumice rocks nearly eight inches (20 centimeters) in diameter.

Because airborne ash can severely damage jet engines, all flights between Buenos Aires and the Andean resorts of Bariloche, Esquel and Chapelco were canceled until June 12.

Seven other airports in Argentina were closed through Thursday, effectively isolating the southern Patagonia region from the rest of the country. Aerolineas Argentinas also cancelled nighttime flights well to the north of the volcanos, from Buenos Aires to Santiago, Chile, and Mendoza, Argentina, as a precaution.

LAN airlines suspended more than 35 flights from Chile to southern Argentina, and some highways in Argentina also were closed.

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THE TRIBUNE • SECTION B • business@tribunemedia.net TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2011

BAHAMAS TOPS REGION'S PER HEAD TOURISM FDI IN 2020

By ALISON LOWE
Business Reporter
alowe@tribunemedia.net

More than 32,000 people were employed in the tourism industry in 2010, while 91,000 people, or 56 per cent of all Bahamians, were employed in jobs "indirectly" related to the sector, according to a report by a UK-based economic consultancy firm.

According to Oxford Economics, growth is projected on an annual basis in the GDP produced by the Bahamian tourism industry - directly and in the economy overall as a result of spin-off activity - between 2010 and 2020, as well as in employment both directly and indirectly stimulated by tourism. However, the contribution of tourism as a proportion of overall GDP and employment is to decline from 2008 levels.

Oxford Economics' projection that the contribution of tourism to Bahamian GDP, and as an engine of employment in this nation, will be lower in 2020 than it was in 2008, would seem to indicate that the economy will be creating more non-tourism related jobs and GDP, suggesting greater economic diversification.

The findings of the Oxford Economics' report, *Travel and Tourism's Economic Impact Across the Caribbean*, prepared for the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), were presented at the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Conference in Barbados last week.

While the report's findings

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Robin Hood closing Prince Charles store

* Further lay-offs imminent, as retailer's boss pledges: 'We're off the market'
* Quiet on reasons for Finlayson deal end, only saying there were issues 'outside' both parties' control
* Promises to rebuild and win back customers

By ALISON LOWE
Business Reporter
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Robin Hood president Sandy Schaefer yesterday met with staff to announce further lay-offs as he confirmed the closure of the company's \$7 million Prince Charles Drive location, a day after City Markets' chief

Mark Finlayson announced he had pulled out of a deal to buy the company's food retail business.

Mr Schaefer, however, blamed the closure of the store on ongoing road-works on Prince Charles, rather than the termination of the deal with Mr

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\$45-\$50m 'pumped' into private sector



DIONISIO D'AGUILAR

* Rate cut likely to have \$60-\$70m impact, as gov't debt servicing costs also to drop \$15-\$20m
* But former Chamber chief calls for 'more rhyme and reason' in Central Bank decision-making
* Hopes funds released back into economy used for 'productive purposes'

By NEIL HARTNELL
Tribune Business Editor

The Central Bank of the Bahamas' move to slash the Discount Rate by 75 basis points "just pumped \$45-\$50 million" back into the hands of Bahamian businesses and consumers, a former Chamber of Commerce president told Tribune Business yesterday, with the Government's

debt servicing burden also likely to be slashed by \$15-\$20 million.

With between \$60-\$70 million set to be released back into the Bahamian economy and public sector via this interest rate cut, Dionisio D'Aguilar also called for more transparency when it came to the monetary policymaker's decision-making, saying it was unclear why the Central Bank had chosen this moment to act. Still, adding that there was

"nothing negative" in the move, Mr D'Aguilar said that based on the \$6.077 billion outstanding in local currency loans at end-April 2011, the 0.75 percentage point rate cut "just pumped \$45 million into the economy, assuming the banks reduce every variable rate loan by 0.75 per cent."

"The critical issue is whether the banks follow through and

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GOVERNOR: RATE CUT TO 'SUPPORT RECOVERY'

By ALISON LOWE
Business Reporter
alowe@tribunemedia.net

The Central Bank of the Bahamas' governor yesterday dismissed speculation that the timing of yesterday's 75 basis point Discount Rate reduction was linked in any way to the upcoming general election, adding that the move would make it easier for more Bahamians to access credit and "support the economic recovery".

Wendy Craig said she foresees the lowering of the Discount Rate by the Central Bank - the interest rate applied to money lent by the Central Bank to domestic banks it licenses - will create a lending environment providing more opportunities for Bahamian-owned businesses to "be a part of the spin-off" effect from major foreign direct investment (FDI)-driven projects, such as Baha Mar.

The Discount Rate reduction, which should lower the Bahamian Prime Rate - the benchmark used by all commercial banks to price loans - from 5.5 per cent to 4.75 per cent, effectively reduces the

Denies timing influenced by politics

cost of money, the cost of capital and credit, in Bahamian society. It will also lower the cost of borrowing for those already holding debt, likely saving businesses and individual borrowers millions of dollars in interest payments.

"The direction of the economy is positive, and you will have businesses linking into the

developments that are currently surfacing in terms of FDI activities. You will see the benefits. There will be some trickle-down effects from (FDI projects), and businesses will have an opportunity to be a part of that," said Mrs Craig in a

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WENDY CRAIG

RATE CUT NO 'SILVER BULLET'



KHAALIS ROLLE

* Chamber chief says should have happened two years ago
* While grateful, believes unlikely have dramatic impact on private sector recovery
* Ex-banker adds that record \$1.134bn reserves and \$918m system liquidity forced Central Bank to act

By NEIL HARTNELL
Tribune Business Editor

The Central Bank's move to slash the Discount Rate by three-quarters of a percentage point should have taken place two years earlier and is unlikely to be a "silver bullet" for private sector recovery, the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers Confederation's (BCCEC) chairman said yesterday.

Describing the announcement as "a modest bit of good news", Khaalis Rolle added, though, that he was "not complaining" since the reduction in the cost of capital/money would aid the cause of reducing the cost of doing business in the Bahamas.

"Every little bit helps," Mr Rolle told Tribune Business. "This is a move that should have taken place a while back. I think this is two years after it really should have taken place."

"I'm not complaining, but we need to be a bit more reactive. It's never too late. But

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BUSINESS

A Grand Bahama-based timeshare executive tells Tribune Business how the island lost its lustre when the regulators failed to find a royal partner for the Princess

By JACK GROBOWSKY
President, Freeport
Resort & Club

It is disheartening to reminisce on what could have been over the Labour Day weekend of 2011. My first observance of Bahamian Labour Day was in 1978, spent in Nassau finalising the purchase of what was about to become the Freeport Resort & Club, Grand Bahama's pioneer timeshare resort. Those were the glory days, when success bred and spread more success by adhering to the time treasured, universally accepted 'Golden Rule'.

When the Grand Bahama business model no longer followed the prerequisite fundamentals, first cracks started to appear, then serious deterioration crept in and overtook the culture and fabric of the business society.

Time has proven that history repeats itself when lessons learned are not heeded. The results of a bad habit are predictable. Grand Bahama relied on Wallace Grove's development vision, and the proven track record of such sub-developers as Princess, the creators of Bahamia, El Casino, Princess Tower and Bahamas Princess, the Bahamia Beach Club and the two 18-hole golf courses, Emerald and Ruby. Thereafter, memory lane began to turn into a series of nightmares.

Fast forward a bit more than two decades to the year 2000, when Driftwood became Princess's successor. Its myriad mistakes, under the wanting scrutiny of both the Government and the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA), led to the most rapid decline and sustained neglect of any city in modern time.

The ill-advised diversion of Sunrise Highway, violations of the Bahamia Land Prospectus, greed and callous disregard for the rights of others, and other bad decisions were just some of the ills. Sports coaches are terminated for a single non-performance mistake, but hardly anyone takes time to analyse the repeated, prolonged abuse of power and, perhaps worst of all, ignoring the most elementary fundamentals of business. Grand Bahama residents have painful memories of the failures of the top economic watchdogs. Why are they still feeling the pains of neglect and apathy, and not awakening those who have fallen asleep at the switch? They remember Labour Day 2005 all too well – they were forced to forego celebrations due to a double whammy – Driftwood's indiscretions and the aftermath of the hurricanes, both devastating to the well-being of Grand Bahama residents.

A cry from the heart on Freeport's travails



The front of the GBPA.

Yes, there is another election coming, around Labour Day 2012. For Grand Bahama, it has been eight years of 'scorched earth' economic damage, including the loss of the 1,300 jobs.

Is it a coincidence that when any good news of progress is announced, it is most often timed to coincide with an impending election campaign? When was the last election – oh yes, it was around Labour Day 2007. Now that is when Harcourt was approved

to buy the abandoned shipwreck known as Driftwood's Royal Oasis. Instead of holding Driftwood's feet to the fire, the citizens, directly or indirectly, are paying for their power bill arrears, the casino tax delinquency, the salaries, National Insurance and pension abuses. Why did it come from Government coffers and not from Driftwood/Lehman Brothers? Why was the debtor not held accountable or controlled due to its obvious state of bankruptcy. Despite a solid Timeshare Law, why was it not enforced, leaving thousands of PVCi timeshare owners in peril?

But, truth be told, it was the Grand Bahama

economy that was the catastrophic loser. Why was Driftwood/Lehman Brothers allowed to keep the insurance proceeds, as opposed to honouring a 'mandatory non-disturbance clause' to renovate and re-open at least the PVCi Timeshare operation and some of the amenities, as the timeshare law required?

Instead, everything closed down and remained so for four years while Driftwood was fleeing the scene. Both the Government and the Port engaged themselves and approved both successor transactions. Fundamentals were ignored, and when the going got tough, they simply dropped the ball. This should have been a real wake-up call. As it turned out, it was no wake-up call at all, and everyone must have thought it cannot and will not happen again. Well, it not only did, but the damage was even greater the second time under the Harcourt label.

The enormous expectations brought about by the Harcourt purchase, touted during the 2007 election campaign, almost seemed to trigger a replay of Murphy's Law. How could that be? The Royal Oasis portfolio was reportedly sold for

some \$33 million, and it was admitted by government that Harcourt was given some \$80 million in concessions. You do the math and ask yourself what terms must be required of Harcourt for the deal to make sense and work. Don't you think someone in Government or the Port would have insisted, for all of this, that Harcourt agree to immediately renovate and re-open? Ask PVCi timeshare owners, the shop owners in the Bazaar and the 1300 abandoned employees (and other victims) what they expected and relied on the authorities to do on their behalf. It was mandatory and prudent for Government to ensure this was done, but Harcourt built their Suffolk Court instead. Everything remained closed for another four long, agonising years and no one wants to relive those Labour Day Celebrations. But there is hope and promise coming – at least that is what the papers report.

Yes, there is another election coming, around Labour Day 2012. For Grand Bahama, it has been eight years of 'scorched earth' economic damage, including the loss of the 1,300 jobs. How does that failure add to the 2011 Labour Day celebration? There are so many unanswered questions, so many strange decisions, that it is mandatory that the Government come clean and disclose to the public not only the terms of the agreements between the successor developers of Bahamia/Royal Oasis, but also the Heads of Agreement (HOAs) they engaged in. The administrations of both parties have been involved, with the complicity of the GBPA.

Harcourt seems to have abandoned Grand Bahama, and if so has squandered its opportunity – and forfeited the right – to try to revive the island's economy. A Harcourt buyer must be told the facts, and told to truly fulfill the expectations that both Driftwood and Harcourt failed to meet. Do you know how many times a study has been launched to fix the Grand Bahama economy? To put things into perspective, a 10-year loss of 1,300 jobs amounts to several years of staffing levels for Baha Mar, the largest single project in all of the Caribbean. New Providence, you had something to celebrate on this Labour Day.

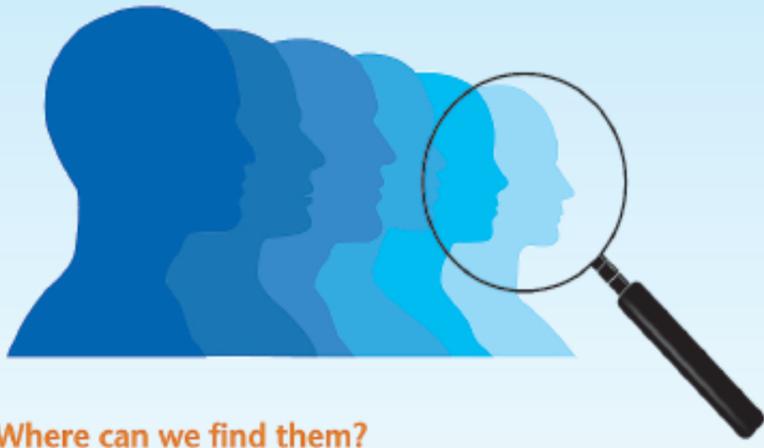
This letter doesn't just criticise – it specifically identifies many obvious problems, errors and mistakes of the past, and offers a suggestion that might provide tremendous relief to so many victims and Grand Bahama residents who need help now. A legitimate Harcourt successor was needed long ago – as early as 2008, so this is where the emphasis should be. If you agree, write to or call your MP of either party to express your view. As recent international events have shown, peaceful democratic action by individuals gets attention, especially if the case made is compelling. If Grand Bahama residents do so, along with some help from New Providence residents, there will be happier Labour Days to come for them.

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TIME:	12:30 p.m. GENERAL MEETING 12:45 p.m. SPEAKER'S ADDRESS
LOCATION:	THE BRITISH COLONIAL HILTON HOTEL GOVERNORS A ROOM
SPEAKER:	MILTON A. EVANS, LLB EVANS & CO.
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Speaker Bio:

Milton Augustine Evans LL.B (Hons) is currently a member of the Rules Committee of the Supreme Court and serves as one of the Commissioners of the Insurance Commission of The Bahamas appointed under the Insurance Act 2005. He is currently the Managing Partner of Evans & Co. as well as an associate tutor for the law of Evidence at the Eugene Dupuch Law School. He has provided guidance to various government ministries, serving as crown counsel, Assistant Director, Deputy Director of Legal Affairs, and a member of the Social Security Reform Commission, as well as the Judicial Review Commission. He has appeared in all courts of the Bahamas, including the Privy Council located in London, as well as serving as Justice of the Supreme Court of the Bahamas in an acting capacity.

Mr. Evans holds a Bachelors of Law Degree with Honors from the University of the West Indies and a Certificate of Legal Education from the Norman Manley Law School. He was admitted to the Bahamas Bar in October 1968. His practice areas have included Commercial Litigation, Civil Litigation, Immigration, Administrative and Constitutional Law, Employment Law, Personal Injury Claims, Real Property, Mortgages and Conveyancing, Company Incorporations and Insurance Law.

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BUSINESS

FROM page 1B

\$45-\$50m 'pumped' into private sector

reduce the rates by three-quarters of one per cent on all credit they've extended. I'm sure they'll come up with a number of reasons why they will delay that change."

With almost \$3 billion in outstanding mortgage debt at end-April 2011, if all these home loans are linked to Bahamian Prime and the rate cut passed along by the commercial banks, total repayments will reduce by around \$22.5 million annually.

For consumer loans and commercial loans, respectively, if the same happens collective debt servicing payments will drop by \$16.12 million and \$6.99 million per annum.

"That, to me, is at least a significant help to businesses that are struggling with debt payments, and people with mortgages tied to variable rate loans," Mr D'Aguilar told Tribune Business.

"It should pump another \$40-\$50 million into the economy, giving consumers a little more to spend without taking on more debt. It will take a few businesses on the edge away from the edge, and give them room to be eligible for loans they may not have been eligible for, in addition to allowing consumers - based on their income - to qualify for loans."

The former Chamber president expressed hope, though, that if \$45-\$50 million was returned into the hands of Bahamian consumers, it would be chan-

nelled into the productive sectors of the national economy, such as the housing market. "If that money is deployed into the productive sectors of the economy, I think it could be very useful," Mr D'Aguilar said. "But there is nothing more profitable for the bank other than to lend it out in consumer loans.

"There needs to be a shift to put it into the productive sectors of the economy, business and housing, but after this recession the banks will be even less willing to put money into business loans, given they hell they've caught this time around.

"The housing sector is a productive sector of the economy. It employs a lot of people, and has a lot of flow through in building materials and supplies."

While mortgages and commercial loans were generally tied to the Bahamian Prime rate, consumers loans were sometimes not, and Mr D'Aguilar urged the commercial banks to extend rate cut benefits to personal borrowers.

"It's not only the businesses, but also the consumers, because their employees

are leveraged up to the hilt," he explained. The impact from the 0.75 percentage point drop, which takes the Discount Rate to 4.5 per cent, and should push the Bahamian Prime Rate down to 4.75 per cent from 5.5 per cent, will also take some three-six months to filter down into all levels of the economy. Questioning why the Central Bank's monetary policy committee would "pick now" to reduce the Discount Rate, and whether there were concerns over the US economy's health, Mr D'Aguilar was quick to add: "I don't think anyone can find any negative in this one. It's long overdue."

Still, calling for more transparency in the policymaking and decision-making process, the former Chamber president said: "The thing I find odd is there's no rhyme or reason. There should be method to the madness.

"Has something drastically changed to make them think they now have to do it? I'm glad they did it. I think it's good for the economy. There's nothing anyone can say negative about it."

FROM page 1B

Governor: Rate cut to 'support recovery'

phone interview yesterday.

The adjustment sees the Central Bank of the Bahamas reduce the Discount Rate, effective immediately, by 75 basis points, to 4.50 per cent.

The Bank said it anticipates financial institutions will "follow suit" with a corresponding reduction in the Prime Rate from 5.5 per cent to 4.75 per cent, coupled with "similar adjustments in their lending rate schedules" and therefore the cost of credit to borrowers, whether they be a business, households or individuals.

Mrs Craigg acknowledged that adjusting the Discount Rate to impact interest rates is "not a typical policy instrument" of the Central Bank. The last time the Discount Rate was adjusted - in a downwards direction - was in six years ago.

Explaining the move, the Central Bank said in its statement that a number of factors were "carefully considered in its decision to adjust monetary policy, including the signs of a more positive outlook for global growth and the implications for domestic economic activity."

"Based on an improving performance of tourism and foreign direct investment activity, the Bahamian economy is poised to grow by nearly 1.5 per cent in 2011, and in excess of 2 per cent in 2012 - with broadening medium-term benefits for employment and opportunities for the productive sector," the Central Bank said. Interestingly, the 1.5 per cent real GDP growth estimate for 2011 is some 0.5 percentage points lower than the 2 per cent projection given by the Government in its recent 2011-2012 Budget, although there was no

explanation for that yesterday. The Central Bank's estimate is more in line with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF).

From a monetary perspective, the Central Bank said it "took into consideration the improvement in the external reserves position over the past two years, to historic levels, and the opportunities for this position to be sustained in the short to medium term by net inflows from the foreign exchange earning sectors".

Elaborating on this statement, Mrs Craigg told Tribune Business the Central Bank perceives that the "outlook from tourism and the foreign direct investment (FDI), from which the Bahamas' earns the bulk of our [foreign reserves], is improving and will continue to add to our external reserve position".

This was partly in response to suggestions from Tribune Business sources, who questioned the Central Bank's decision to lower the discount rate now, given that the high levels of external reserves cited by the Central Bank have been the case for some time and are not primarily available as a consequence of activity in the "real" economy, but due to higher levels of foreign currency borrowing and the provision of additional special drawing rights (SDRs) - an international reserve asset created by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to supplement its members' reserves - to this nation. They have also been boosted to record highs by the proceeds of the Bahamas Telecommunications Company's (BTC) sale. Maintaining a certain level

of foreign currency reserves is critical to providing the support necessary for the Bahamian dollar's parity with the US dollar, so it is key that the Central Bank deems levels to be high enough and the demand for credit to be such that it would not threaten this situation.

In this regard, the Bank said the existence of "significant slack" in the economy "removes the near-term threat to the external position (foreign currency reserves) from an expansion in credit growth (loans and mortgages offered by domestic banks)".

Credit growth has "been muted at some 0.7 per cent for the six-month period to end-April 2011", it noted. And the Central Bank added in its explanatory press release that the financial sector's performance "remains stable, supported by a strong capital ratio of nearly 26 per cent".

"Even so, the Bank maintains a close watch on the persistence of credit risk, as evidence in the high loan arrears rate, although conditions have stabilised over the past two years," it said.

Effectively, what the Central Bank is saying is that with foreign reserves at \$1.134 billion and excess commercial bank liquidity at more than \$900 million, these funds - especially the latter - have to be released somehow, and are at high enough levels to prevent any dramatic shock or drawdown.

And the high unemployment levels and reduced incomes, with borrowers focusing on meeting existing obligations, means demand for new credit will remain muted. Essentially, existing borrowers will benefit, not new ones.

Mrs Craigg said the decision came about following the most recent monthly meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank, given a determination by that commit-

tee that "conditions did not exist previously (which would have allowed for a rate reduction), but that in the present context we are seeing more positive growth momentum in the economy".

She explained that the outcome of the adjustment in the Discount Rate is that the public will benefit from "a more favourable lending environment" in which they can "acquire credit much more easily".

"In terms of growth itself the economy is starting to grow, so this is certainly an opportune time to support the recovery by having a change in the monetary policy," she added.

The Governor said the Central Bank expects that credit in the domestic economy will expand at a moderate rate "over time" as a result. "It's not going to happen tomorrow or next week," she said.

The top banker denied some suggestions - put to Tribune Business yesterday - that the policy adjustment's timing is in any way political - given the potential benefit to economic conditions from cheaper access to credit, which could spur consumer spending and business investment prior to next year's general election.

"The Central Bank strictly looks at the facts. This is a matter that the Monetary Policy Committee (of the Bank) looks at on a monthly basis. We had a monetary policy meeting for the month of May just last week, and so this is in line with that," she said.

As for the Central Bank's stance on the Discount Rate going forward, Mrs Craigg said it is a matter that the Monetary Policy Committee of the institution will "continue to review".

"The Bank remains committed to responding appropriately to ongoing economic and monetary developments, in its goals to achieve monetary stability and contribute to sustainable economic growth," she added.

Robin Hood closing Prince Charles store

FROM page 1B

Finlayson. Robin Hood's second outlet is thus closing within four-five months of opening, a sharp contrast to expansion plans announced close to 2010's year-end.

Mr Schaefer, meanwhile, asserted his renewed commitment to turning around the retail company and "win back customers", telling Tribune Business: "We're off the market for the foreseeable future."

He would not go into details on the reason for the collapse of the deal in principle that he signed in mid-May with Mr Finlayson and his family investment vehicle, Trans-Island Traders.

Mr Finlayson cited "irreconcilable differences" in a brief statement released over the weekend as the cause of the termination of his bid to acquire the food retailer. Tribune Business, though, understands that Trans-Island decided not to proceed after its due diligence exercise did not confirm the initial beliefs it held regarding the benefits Robin Hood's business could bring to it and its City Markets chain.

However, this newspaper also understands that Mr Schaefer and Robin Hood became unhappy with some of the terms Mr Finlayson was offering. Under the terms of the now-defunct deal, Mr Finlayson was to take over the food retail business at Robin Hood's two stores, sub-leasing the food selling space from Mr Schaefer. Mr Schaefer, as well as becoming a landlord, was to have retained ownership of Robin Hood's high-margin, heavy duty appliance business, effectively going back to the company's roots when it first started in the Bahamas in 1999 and 2000.

And Mr Schaefer and his partner, Miami-based Suresh Khilnani, would have provided supply chains to Mr Finlayson and his City Markets business from the US, helping them to source product and providing logistics support. In an interview with Tribune Business yesterday, Mr Schaefer said the decision to abandon the acquisition came about as a result of "issues that were beyond (Finlayson's) control and beyond ours".

"The deal was no longer financially viable for ourselves or them, as some of the conditions changed," he added.

Respect

Mr Schaefer spoke amicably of Mr Finlayson yesterday, telling this newspaper: "I would say that I certainly still maintain utmost regard and respect for Mark and his family, and we certainly stand ready to help them in any way we can."

In the meantime, he confirmed that inventory from Robin Hood's Prince Charles Drive location, which opened in January, has now been moved to the company's flagship Tonique Williams-Darling Highway store, paving the way for the former site to be closed for the foreseeable future.

Linking the closure to the roadworks on Prince Charles Drive, he said that when and whether the location is re-opened is "completely contingent" on the completion of works which he has blamed for an 80 per cent reduction in business at that location.

"Our business was spectacularly successful there, and I don't have to tell you about the impact of the roadwork," said Mr Schaefer. The businessman said some staff from the Prince Charles Drive location will be relocated to Tonique Williams-Darling Highway, while others will be laid off.

"Clearly there will be redundancies," he said, declining to provide any figures.

He also added that the closure of the store presents an "opportunity" in this regard, as he will "take the best from both places" to man that store.

"Hardship presents opportunity. We can look at our staff and who are 'A players' and who are 'B players'. The opportunity we have now is to recommit ourselves with the loyal and honest staff that want to give service we are known for," said Mr Schaefer.

He said he has received indications that the roadworks may be completed within "three to four months", and as such anticipates the possibility of a "grand re-opening" of the Prince Charles Drive Robin Hood location at that time.

Mr Schaefer said the company is now "revamping" itself, as he now "feels reinvigorated to get us back to where we were before".

He added: "I think I am human like everyone else, and the pounding we were taking over the last six or seven months saps your interest and desire. We had lost our taste for the battle." He suggested the company suffered over the last six months as he had been "in a selling mode", seeking a buyer for it.

"You take your eye off the ball and the quality suffers and the variety suffers," Mr Schaefer claimed he was "reinspired" to make the business successful by his daughter, Kyra.

He suggested that the extent to which the company will be successful in this endeavour depends on whether the Bahamian public can "forgive us for messing up as we have over last year (and) be patient with us as we rebuild".



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C-155 Car Rental, Taxi and Bus/Limousine Buildings

Nassau Airport Development Company (NAD) is pleased to announce the release of Tender C-155 Car Rental, Taxi and Bus/Limousine Buildings for Stage 2 of the Lynden Pindling International Airport Expansion.

The scope of work includes:

- Construction of three independent masonry building structures;
 - o Car Rental Building - 3,730 sq ft
 - o Taxi Building - 1,100 sq ft
 - o Bus / Limousine Building - 1,100 sq ft
- Civil works including excavation, bedding, supply and installation of conduit / pipe, backfill, compaction, cutting and patching for service connections to all buildings.
- Supply and installation of power cabling for Taxi and Bus/Limousine buildings from NAD Warehouse, and
- Coordination of all work with the C240 Stage 2 General Contractor and C150 Landside Civil Contractor.

The C-155 Tender Documents will be available for pick up after 1:00pm, Tuesday June 7th, 2011. A bidders meeting will be held at 10:00 am, Thursday June 16th, 2011. Please contact Traci Brisby, Contracts and Procurement Manager to register at the NAD Project Office.

Contact: TRACI BRISBY
Contracts and Procurement Manager
LPIA Expansion Project
Ph: (242) 702-1066 | Fax: (242) 702-7368
P.O. Box AP 59225, Nassau, Bahamas
Email: traci.brisby@nas.bs

NOTICE

STANIEL CAY RIDGE COMPANY LTD.

(In Dissolution)

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 138(4) (a), (b) and (c) of The International Business Companies Act, notice is hereby given that: -

(a) STANIEL CAY RIDGE COMPANY LTD. is in dissolution.

(b) The date of commencement of the dissolution is the 30th day of May A.D., 2011.

(c) The Liquidator for the above-named Company is James F. Ellis, c/o Callenders & Co, One Millas Court, P.O. Box N-7117, Nassau, Bahamas.

Thomas M. Bligh
Director

STANIEL CAY RIDGE COMPANY LTD.
(In Dissolution)

BUSINESS

Outgoing gaming chief warns of challenges ahead

MOLLY DAVIS,
Associated Press
JACKSON, Miss.

Mississippi's top casino regulator said on Monday that his replacement will face major challenges in keeping gambling revenue up across the state.

The Mississippi Gaming Commission is looking for a new executive director to replace Larry Gregory, who said whoever succeeds him will be responsible for overseeing a time of increased competition from online gambling and new markets that attract out-of-state tourists.

"Every state has gaming now," he said at a John C. Stennis Institute of Government luncheon in downtown Jackson. Pennsylvania began to allow gambling a few years ago and has now surpassed Mississippi in market share. Ohio will begin to allow gambling this year, and Florida is considering the move, he said.

Also, Internet gambling could become a major market force in the future, even though it is currently illegal under state and federal law. Gregory said that Mississippi's "conservative approach" to gambling — avoiding racier-themed slot machines and restricting locations to within 800 feet of waterfronts, for example — means the state is unlikely to sanction online gambling within its borders.

A 2006 federal law effectively banned Internet gambling. It prohibited banks and credit card companies from processing payments from gambling companies to individuals. But gambling experts say it created enough gray areas to open the door for a deeper expansion into the multibillion dollar industry, and the District of Columbia in April became the first U.S. jurisdiction to allow Internet gambling.

D.C. lawmakers plan to use revenue — estimated at between \$13 million and \$14 million through fiscal year 2014 — to offset budget cuts and fund social services.

Despite missing out on a piece of what could be a billion-dollar market, Gregory endorses a continued ban in Mississippi. He said that inter-



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

net gambling carries a risk of online security breaches and would make wagering too accessible, fostering addiction problems. He said that online casinos could also open up gambling to minors.

"That is a scary, scary thing," said Gregory. "And how are you going to stop it? To me, I don't think you can."

Construction

Mississippi uses tax revenue from gambling to support highway construction and improvements. The state has the fourth largest gambling industry in the nation, with over a \$2.5 billion market employing roughly 20,000 people.

Hurricane Katrina, the massive BP oil spill and the recent flooding have all taken their toll on the industry.

Mississippi casinos closed for three weeks, which Gregory said cost some \$10 million in tax revenue. No casinos were damaged, and associated hotels had little damage.

"It was just major devastation having 15,000 people out of work," he said. "Thankfully most of the casinos paid for the workers."

Once considered a "recession-proof" industry, gambling has also been hit hard by the economic downturn, Gregory said.

In April 2011, casinos across the state earned \$189 million in revenue, according to state records. That compares to \$195 million in April 2006 — before the Great Recession is consid-

ered to have started — and \$222 million in April 2005.

Gregory said lawmakers must find other ways to help the industry compete, especially since Mississippi is unlikely to sanction online gambling within its own borders or promote brick-and-mortar casinos to its own citizens. "We cannot exist on bringing people to play blackjack anymore," he said, adding that at least one casino in Las Vegas now generates more revenue from non-gambling activities than casinos.

He said that Mississippi will need to invest heavily in other tourism attractions — such as convention centers, water parks and racing tracks — near its waterfront casinos.

"There's been talk on the coast, but also Tunica, of bringing some mega race track into the facilities," he said.

Despite economic and other challenges, gambling continues to grow.

"We are still doing well in development," said Gregory. "We've got 10 approved sites down on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. In addition, we just approved the Margaritaville with Jimmy Buffett. That was very, very exciting."

The commission hopes to replace Gregory by August. He said he has not yet made plans, but doesn't intend to retire.

He has worked as the executive director since 2001, starting as the chief of staff of the agency in 1995. Gregory has also worked for the state's transportation commission and personnel board.



(AP Photo/Mel Evans, File) **AGE OF THE MACHINE:** In this Sept. 13, 2007 file photo, a woman smokes while playing slot machines at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort in Atlantic City, N.J.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TENDER – EMPLOYERS LIABILITY INSURANCE 2011 - 2012

The Bahamas Telecommunications Company Ltd. (BTC) is pleased to invite Tenders to provide the Company with insurance coverage for its Employers Liability policy.

Interested companies/firms may collect a Tender Specification document from the Security's Desk located in the Administrative building on John F. Kennedy Drive, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The deadline for submission of tenders is June 28, 2011. Tenders should be sealed and marked "TENDER – EMPLOYERS LIABILITY INSURANCE" and should be delivered to the attention of the CFO, Mr. David Kelham.

BTC reserves the right to reject any, or all Tenders.

connected anytime... anywhere...



CALL BTC 225-5282
www.btcbahamas.com
www.facebook.com/mybtc



ENTERPRISE | WIRELESS | BROADBAND | VOICE | DIRECTORY

BAHAMAS TOPS REGION'S PER HEAD TOURISM FDI IN 2020

FROM page 1B

suggest that The Bahamas will become less dependent on tourism by 2020, it is also evident that only the British Virgin Islands, Aruba, Antigua and Barbuda and Anguilla are to be more dependent on tourism in terms of its contribution to the overall economy and employment than the Bahamas.

This nation is projected to have tourism-related activity account for 49.9 per cent of total GDP in 2020, and 60.3 per cent of all jobs, up from 46.5 and 56 per cent at present.

The report also shows that Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Puerto Rico are projected to be getting more tourism-related investment in dollar value in 2020 than the Bahamas.

However, since each of these countries have significantly larger populations than the Bahamas, this nation - with a projected \$1.703 billion annual FDI inflow in 2020 - will be getting the highest investment in tourism per capita at that time in the Caribbean, according to the report. The figure is down as a proportion of total investment in the Bahamian economy from the 45.1 per cent recorded in 2008, to 41 per cent, however.

Oxford Economics predicts that after accounting for an estimated \$1.1 billion or 14.4 per cent of this nation's GDP in 2010, the GDP contribution from the 'direct' tourism industry in the Bahamas will grow by an annual rate of 3.4 per cent between 2010 and 2020.

Negative

This follows negative growth of 4.2 per cent in 2008, 10 per cent in 2009 and 0.6 per cent in 2010. The proportional contribution to GDP from the tourism industry directly in 2020 will then be 15.3 per cent - still down from 2008's 15.4 per cent.

The firm's analysis indicates that tourism's contribution to the 'broader' economy in terms of GDP will grow by an average annual rate of 3.5 per cent over the next 10 years. This measure takes into account both direct and indirect effects, along with the impact of investment, government collective consumption and merchandise exports related to travel and tourism.

Again, the proportional contribution of tourism in this broader sense will be 49.9 per cent, down from 2008's 51.6 per cent.

In terms of employment in the industry directly, Oxford Economics projects this will grow by an annual rate of 2.8 per cent between 2010 and 2020, to ultimately amount to 21.2 per cent of all employment by 2020. This is down slightly from 21.6 per cent in 2008.

In 2010, employment in the tourism industry directly accounted for 32,200 jobs or 19.8 per cent of all employment, suggests the report.

Employment in the broader economy, which is related to tourism activity, will grow by 2.8 per cent annually, the report projects, but at 60.3 per cent will remain two percentage points lower than the proportionate contribution of travel and tourism-related employment to total employment levels in 2008.

In 2010, this type of employment was said to account for 91,000 jobs in the overall economy, or 56 per cent of all employment.