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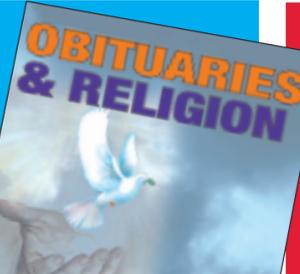


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Fury as girl, 4, killed by bus

Angry mob is held back after tragic accident

By **SANCHEKA BROWN**
Tribune Staff Reporter
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

EAST STREET erupted into chaos yesterday after a four-year-old girl was struck by a bus and killed. Police were forced to restrain an angry mob from attacking the driver of the bus. The man was taken into custody for his own safety and is said to be assisting police with their investigations. The mother of the child was inconsolable and was also taken from the scene. Sergeant Chrislyn Skippings, police spokeswoman, said officers are unsure of the circumstances surrounding the accident as they are still in the preliminary stages of their investigations. She said: "We are investigating a traffic accident that has left a four-year-old female toddler dead. "The incident reportedly occurred around 4.15pm," said Sgt Skippings. "Initial reports at this time are that a 21A bus was travelling north on East Street in the area of

Lewis Street, when the incident occurred. Of course we are in the preliminary stages of our investigations and so I am awaiting additional information from our officers." Sgt Skippings said police are not sure if speed was a factor. An eyewitness, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed the bus was attempting to overtake another car when the little girl was hit. "A car stopped to let the mother cross the road. The bus was in the back of the car. After the mother got across the road, the bus tried to get around the car and did not see the little girl running behind her mother. He wasn't speeding or anything, but because the girl is so small she went under the back tyre. He never saw her coming," the witness said. The Tribune understands the toddler was a student at See Saw Christian Academy and lived in the Carmichael Road area. Sgt Skippings said police

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A CROWD gathers at the scene yesterday after a four-year-old girl was killed after being hit by a bus in an accident on East Street. Photo: **Felipe Major/Tribune Staff**

MAN KILLED IN HAIL OF BULLETS

POLICE were last night investigating the country's eighth homicide for the year. The bullet-riddled body of a man was found lying on the side of Adelaide Road, near the Oasis Restaurant, shortly before 5pm. After receiving reports of gunshots being fired in the area, police discovered the victim's body with multiple wounds in his upper body and head. Last night, police appealed for anyone who can help with their investigation to contact them at 919, or Crime Stopper at 328-TIPS.

AIR TRAFFIC RADAR 'ERRATIC'

By **DANA SMITH**
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

A FAILING and "erratic" air traffic control radar system has been plaguing Lynden Pindling International Airport for years and poses a "serious" problem, it was claimed last night. Roscoe Perpall, president of the Bahamas Air Traffic Control Union (BATCU), said that in recent weeks "the radar's returns have become erratic" and he warned of the potential danger to passengers. The radar, which displays the position of aircraft to air traffic controllers as "targets," sometimes shows planes "jumping" around or disappearing, leaving air traffic controllers to simply "hope" planes are where they should be.

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RUSSELL BOWS OUT

By **CHESTER ROBARDS**
Tribune Senior Reporter
crobards@tribunemedia.net

FORMER Minister of Housing and MP for High Rock Kenneth Russell made his final contribution to Parliament yesterday, touting his role in securing two seats for the FNM in Grand Bahama. "I believe that I was effective and played a role in bringing in that constituency for the FNM on at least six separate elections," Mr Russell said.

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PM: 'ECONOMY TO GROW BY 2.8%'

DESPITE the economic challenges of 2011, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham indicated last night that the Bahamas' economy is expected to grow by 2.8 per cent for 2012 - up from the near two per cent growth experienced in the previous year. Addressing the nation for his new year's live radio and television broadcast, Mr Ingraham said the Bahamas is doing all it can in the face of the worst economic crisis in the lifetime of the country.

He said: "Despite the severity of the global economic crisis on the Bahamas, we are still a most fortunate country. During my travels overseas to represent the Bahamas, I was struck by the number of leaders who informed me of the high number of civil servants laid off in their respective countries over the past four years. "I am very pleased to say that not a single civil servant in the Bahamas was laid off as a result of the global economic downturn."

During this severe downturn, the Prime Minister reminded the public that many countries slashed social assistance and social protection programmes. However, in the Bahamas, he said, such programmes were increased, particularly for more vulnerable Bahamians. "And, we significantly strengthened social protections with the addition of two

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LOCAL NEWS

Mother's tears in court for murder victim

By LAMECH JOHNSON
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

THE MOTHER and grandmother of a 30-year-old woman who was sexually assaulted and murdered on a Friday morning two years ago broke down in Supreme Court during a pathologists' testimony.

Christina Swain, mother of murder victim Chrishonda Swain, wailed after Princess Margaret Hospital pathologist Dr Caryn Sands described the extent of the injuries that caused the death of the victim, whose body was found on a track road in southern New Providence on August 13, 2010.

During the afternoon session of yesterday's trial, Dr Sands told the court that the cause of the victim's death was the result of "blunt force injuries to the head, torso and extremities (hand and legs)".

She explained that blunt force injuries are caused by the human body coming in contact with or "being hit by a hard surface or object".

Referring to her autopsy report and the photos taken of the victim by police, the physician said that Chrishonda had received multiple cuts and bruises to her head, along with multiple skull fractures, muscle tearing and internal bleeding in the left eye and brain.

When Dr Sands told the jury that the severity of the force injuries had caused her left temple bone to depress into the brain, the mother started wailing to the point that a lawyer assisting lead prosecutor Jillian Williams in the trial, left her seat and helped her from the court room. Two police officers assisted.

Before the proceedings could continue, the grandmother also started sobbing. She too was escorted from the court on the suggestion of Ms Williams and defence lawyer Ramona Farquharson-Seymour.

On her way out of the court, the distraught grandmother cried: "Chrissy! Lordey do Chrissy bad! Why they do Chrissy like this?"

Justice Bernard Turner presiding judge over the murder trial of 29-year-old Philip McCartney, reminded the jury of their oath and that they were to "disregard any matters that do not come from the witness box."

Dr Sands resumed her testimony and was then cross-examined by Mrs Farquharson-Seymour, who questioned the state of the victim's nails during the autopsy.

The physician noted that she did not take specific notice of the nails, only recalling to have clipped them but she said the hands were "clean" and fingernails "intact".

The defence attorney also questioned whether any "dust, debris, leaves or twigs" were found on her body during examination that would indicate that the victim was found on a track road.

Dr Sands admitted that she did not notice those things and concluded that she had taken vaginal and rectum swab samples from the victim and put them in a special kit, along with other samples, for the police's forensic laboratory.

The trial resumes today at 10am in Supreme Court, Ansbacher House on Bank Lane. McCartney, who is accused of the killing, is on remand at Her Majesty's Prison.

TWO ARRESTED

TWO Ecuadorian men are in police custody in connection with the unauthorised sale of goods.

The men were detained for questioning at around 8.45pm on Tuesday by officers of the Central Division.

The officers reportedly executed a search warrant on a hotel room and confiscated blankets, bags, sweaters, dolls and souvenirs.

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LOCAL NEWS

PM invites election observers

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

PRIME Minister Hubert Ingraham has called his invitation to international observers to monitor the 2012 elections part of a continual effort to strengthen Bahamian democracy.

Along with amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act which aim to clarify the

process of overseas voting, amendments have also been put forward that would permit the elections to be scrutinised by foreign entities.

Speaking in Parliament yesterday, Prime Minister Ingraham invited the Organisation of American States (OAS) and other recognised groups to accept the opportunity.

He said: "We are proud of our democracy and we are pleased to invite international

scrutiny of our process.

"We are resolutely committed to being a government in the sunshine, transparent and accountable to the people, whose benefit we serve."

Other CARICOM States, including St Lucia, Guyana and Jamaica, have recently allowed international observer missions to monitor elections, Mr Ingraham said.

He said independent reviews and suggestions can improve

and enhance the electoral process and make Bahamian democracy stronger.

According to Mr Ingraham, the general aims of OAS electoral missions are: to promote and enhance the democratic process, to study the media and its function, to examine election laws, to work with all stakeholders to ensure impartiality in the process, to lend credibility to the process when the process is found to

be reliable, and to make independent recommendations on how the process might be improved.

Mr Ingraham noted that OAS mission participants must be objective and must not interfere with the election process – respecting domestic law, culture and traditions.

He also warned that anyone who interferes with the work of international observers or attempts to

impersonate an international observer will be subject to a fine up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for 18 months.

Encouraging every Bahamian eligible to register to vote, Mr Ingraham said he is pleased with the number registered so far, which stands at 147,871.

The Prime Minister said he expects the number to rise to between 160,000 to 170,000 by the elections.

MAN GUILTY OF INCEST HAS APPEAL THROWN OUT

By LAMECH JOHNSON
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

THE COURT of Appeal reaffirmed the sentence handed down by Senior Justice Jon Isaacs last year to a man convicted of committing incest with a relative and making child pornography.

Cedric Miller, who pleaded guilty, was appealing the sentences handed down by Senior Justice Isaacs on February 4, 2011.

The acts occurred for more than a year, between June 2008 and July 2009.

He was sentenced to 12 years in prison for having sex with a known blood relative and three years in prison for producing digital images of the sex acts.

Both sentences were to run concurrently.

Miller and his attorney Craig Butler challenged the sentences on the basis that a plea bargain was made guaranteeing him six years in prison if he pleaded guilty.

Their secondary argument was that the 12-year sentence was "too severe".

In yesterday's hearing, Justice Christopher Blackman told Mr Butler his client was lucky he did not receive the full penalty for the offence – which is life in prison.

He said: "I would've been sympathetic if it was 30 years. Consider yourself lucky."

Justice Abdulai Conteh agreed, as did appellate court president Justice Anita Allen, who advised the attorney that his client should "take his 12 years and try to reform himself".

The court said Miller should be ashamed of himself disregarding the blood bond that existed between himself and the victim, and told him he had abused his position of trust.

Regarding the plea agreement, the justices asked if it was a "written, signed and filed agreement". Mr Butler admitted that it was not.

In response, Justice Blackman said: "If you don't have that, I think this is over."

Justice Conteh added: "If you don't have a signed agreement between the prosecutor and the accused, it is over."

Mr Butler reiterated that there was indeed a plea agreement and argued that a failure to respect it and acknowledge the principle behind it would undermine the trust between the Bar and the Bench.

The justices disagreed and the appellate court president told the attorney: "Just get over it, Mr Butler. All these arguments you're putting before us make no sense."

It was ordered that Miller's sentence begin from the day of conviction, which was February 4, 2011.

STAB SUSPECT IS QUIZZED

POLICE are questioning a 31-year-old Flamingo Gardens man in connection with a stabbing that left a 24-year-old woman in hospital. The incident reportedly took place at around 5.30pm on Monday.

Police say the woman was at Graham Drive, Yellow Elder Gardens when she got into an argument with a man she knows. She was stabbed several times in the chest, back and face.

Her 78-year-old grandmother attempted to intervene and was cut on the arm.

Both women were taken to hospital. The 24-year-old is in stable condition and the 78-year-old was treated and released.

NEW JUSTICE OF THE PEACE LOOKS TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE



By LAMECH JOHNSON
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

NEW Justice of the Peace Abner Pinder sees his appointment as an opportunity to assist those who are less fortunate.

He said many Bahamians are unable to pay the prices charged by other Justices of the Peace for their services, but he doesn't intend to charge a dime.

Mr Pinder, who was also recently reappointed Chief Councillor of Spanish Wells, was speaking yesterday just after being sworn in by Chief Magistrate Roger Gomez in Court One, Nassau Street.

He said: "It's a wonderful feeling because now I will have the ability to help all of the poor people that I come in contact with."

As a Chief Councillor for 15 years, Mr Pinder said he performed the functions of a local Justice of the Peace, "and I have never yet charged anybody one single dollar for

any time I'd had to seal a document.

"That's not what being a Justice of the Peace is about to me – it's about being able to help our fellow brothers and sisters each and every day," he said.

He explained that during his previous terms as Chief Councillor, he placed his seal on 400 to 500 documents a year.

"So you could imagine the amount of money I could've received in that time. But I'm happy to say that I do not regret any of it," Mr Pinder said.

He also acknowledged the great responsibility that being a Justice of the Peace for the entire country carries, and expressed gratitude for being given the opportunity to help magistrates perform their duties.

"It makes provision for me to fill in for a magistrate if they deem it necessary and they are unable to perform for whatever reason, to keep the peace at all times and abide by the laws of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas," Mr Pinder explained.

When asked about some critics characterising his appointment as a political move, he said: "All I can say to them is, being envious of other people is a very serious thing."

"I think I have demonstrated very capably for the last 28 years of my life, that I have lived helping my fellow Bahamian seven days a week – it shouldn't be only at election time because I don't agree with that at all. I live seven days a week trying to help other people."

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CHIEF MAGISTRATE Roger Gomez and newly sworn-in JP Abner Pinder after the ceremony in Court One of the new Nassau Street Court Complex.

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THE GREY	NEW	1:00	3:25	NA	6:00	8:25	10:40
ONE FOR THE MONEY	NEW	1:15	3:40	NA	6:15	8:40	10:50
THE ARTIST	NEW	1:05	3:30	NA	6:10	8:35	10:45
HATWIRE	C	1:10	3:35	NA	6:15	8:30	10:40
UNDERWORLD	C	1:15	3:40	NA	6:15	8:40	10:45
THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TAT	C	NA	NA	NA	NA	8:30	NA
THE IRON LADY	T	1:10	3:35	NA	6:10	NA	NA
RED TAILS	T	1:05	3:40	NA	6:30	NA	10:00
EXTREMELY LOUD & INCREDIBLY CLOSE	B	1:00	4:00	NA	7:00	NA	10:00
CONTRABAND	C	1:10	3:30	NA	6:05	8:25	10:45
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HATWIRE	C	1:15	3:40	NA	6:15	8:40	10:45
REDTAILS	T	1:00	4:00	NA	7:00	NA	10:00
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Obama speech puts him in campaign arena

PRESIDENT Barack Obama, having watched his Republican adversaries pound him for weeks, got his turn Tuesday, using his State of the Union speech to land the first major counterpunch of the still-forming 2012 election.

It came before a prime-time audience of millions that the GOP candidates can only envy, even if their fiery debates are turning heads.

Obama didn't mention Mitt Romney or Newt Gingrich in his third State of the Union address. But the GOP contenders were never far from mind. Obama demanded economic fairness for Americans on the same day that Romney revealed paying a relatively modest 14 per cent in taxes on his \$21 million in 2010 income.

"You can call this class warfare all you want," Obama said, chiding Republicans. "But asking a billionaire to pay at least as much as his secretary in taxes? Most Americans would call that common sense."

Obama could not use the State of the Union's formal setting for a purely political speech, of course. But he invited a symbolically telling guest to the crowded House chamber: the secretary who works for investor Warren Buffett, a billionaire who says the US tax code unwisely lets him pay a lower tax rate than his clerical staff.

Obama called his new proposal for a minimum 30 per cent tax on millionaires the "Buffett rule".

It would have doubled Romney's tax bill. It also dings Gingrich, who wants to eliminate the capital gains tax. As Romney noted in Monday's GOP debate in Tampa, Fla, he would pay essentially no income taxes under Gingrich's plan.

The tax quarrel is one of the philosophical differences splitting the two parties, which have grown so hostile in Congress that it's impossible for the president to pass anything but the blandest of initiatives. Last year's showdowns over spending bills and the debt ceiling brought the government to the brink of shutdowns and triggered a credit rating downgrade.

Yet a number of lawmakers, especially those elected with tea party help, answer to constituents who detest compromise and say a federal government meltdown might not be a bad idea.

Congress' GOP leaders declared Obama's ideas dead in dismissive statements early Tuesday, hours before his speech. Obama went through the motions anyway, pitching ideas for job training, clean energy and other topics.

These issues will play a role in the general election, once the GOP picks its nominee. But the dominant issue will be Obama's handling of jobs and the economy.

That severely limits his ability to focus on his first three years in office, except for foreign achievements such as the killing of Osama bin Laden. And it forces him to argue that he still can accomplish good

things despite a bitterly gridlocked legislative branch.

Until Tuesday, the Republicans' wildly unpredictable presidential race had dominated political news, leaving Obama largely on the sidelines. Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, and Gingrich, the former House speaker, express open disdain for the president, blaming him for nearly every lost job and foreclosed home.

Romney was particularly pointed Tuesday in Tampa, one day after a Republican debate widely seen as his best in a while.

"High unemployment and record home foreclosures," Romney said. "Debt that's too high and opportunities that are too few. This is the real state of our union. But you won't hear stories like these in President Obama's address tonight."

Obama "will make the opening argument in his campaign against a 'do-nothing Congress'," Romney said. "It's shameful for a president to use the State of the Union to divide our nation."

Actually, a "do-nothing Congress" is only one of Obama's planned campaign themes. His aides know the economy might undo him, but they also detect big vulnerabilities in the Republican candidates.

Gingrich has a long history of unorthodox ideas, combative relations with supposed allies and lucrative Washington consulting contracts, which Romney is highlighting this week.

Romney's record at the corporate-restructuring firm Bain Capital proved to be a ho-hum issue in the Republican primary. But it might trouble independent voters next fall, when Democrats would paint Romney as an uncaring plutocrat who pays low taxes and eliminates jobs with barely a thought.

The approaching campaign might emancipate Obama in a sense. The gridlocked and toxically divisive capital can be a dreary place. He may not relish another grueling year of campaigning across the country. But at least he can get away from Washington and utter a few ideas without having them immediately declared dead, foolish or worse.

Obama likes the phrase, "You campaign in poetry but govern in prose." Today's more apt rendering might be, "You campaign in Reeboks and govern in leg irons."

Running shoes surely aren't the preferred attire of any president. They'd rather use the office's power and prestige to pursue policy goals.

In Washington's poisonous atmosphere, however, running for re-election might give Obama his best chance to break free from the logjams for a while and try to recapture the enthusiasm and joy of 2008.

Romney, Gingrich or some other Republican will be waiting, eager to make him answer for a nation still trying to turn an economic corner.

This article was written by Charles Babington, Associated Press.

PM missed chance to close issue

EDITOR, The Tribune.

IN A very interesting front page article which was published in the January 19th edition of *The Freeport News*, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham spoke somewhat candidly about the work permit issue surrounding former Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA) Chairman Hannes Babak.

As most Grand Bahamians should know by now, the Ingraham administration refused to renew the work permit of Babak in December of 2009 for some unknown reason.

In the interview with *The Freeport News'* Ledetra Marche and other members of the local press, Ingraham still refused to say why his administration is adamantly opposed to renewing the work permit of the former chairman of the port.

By all accounts, Babak is a very wealthy man. Even the prime minister said in the interview that Babak "was a monied person who didn't need to work".

Babak was the owner of Freeport Concrete Company Ltd and The Home Centre. Both of these businesses have closed down during the past two years, leaving scores of Grand Bahamians on the unemployment line.

There is a school of thought that suggests that Babak might have intentionally allowed his two companies to go belly up in order to get back at the Ingraham administration for not renewing his work permit.

Further, critics of the Free National Movement (FNM) have pointed out that had the prime minister renewed the work permit of Babak, Grand Bahama's economy would have been in much better shape.

It has been repeatedly said by Ingraham's critics that Babak had several investments on the drawing board; and that Ingraham's refusal to renew Babak's work permit has caused these investments to either be shelved or cancelled outright.

Perhaps the chief critic of the Ingraham administration is former editor of *The Freeport News* and *The Nassau Guardian* Oswald Brown.

The loyal readership of *The Freeport News* would have come across many anti-Ingraham articles that were writ-

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

ten by Brown.

Brown has repeatedly chided the Ingraham administration over its handling of the Babak work permit issue. He has also taken Ingraham to task for not dialoguing with the Honorary Chairman of the Port Authority Sir Jack Hayward.

As far as Brown is concerned, the blame for Grand Bahama's economic woes must be laid at the doorstep of the Ingraham administration.

I think the Ingraham administration has made a crucial error in not responding to Brown. I think the FNM has grossly erred in underestimating the former editor.

While the FNM public relations machine has remained mum, Brown has continually chipped away at the governing party's base in Grand Bahama through the print media, particularly *The Freeport News*.

Too often, diehard supporters of the FNM have dismissed Brown's criticisms as the ranting of a man who has a vendetta with the Ingraham administration.

Sometimes, loyal FNM supporters are guilty of giving the articles of the former *Freeport News* editor an offhand analysis without even reading them.

However, I am of the view that we can learn more from our critics than from our rabid supporters.

Diehard supporters of the FNM will never see anything wrong with their party. The same thing can be said about radical supporters of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) also. Sometimes it takes a critic, even if he doesn't mean well, to show us where we have gone wrong.

That being the case, I think Oswald Brown has made several valid points in his contributions to the press. I believe that the Ingraham administration's policy of not dialoguing with Sir Jack and the other principals of the port has been counterproductive.

While the prime minister and Sir Jack remained in their standoff, hundreds of Grand Bahamians were brought down to their knees because of the sorry state of the economy.

While I am glad that Ingraham and Sir Jack are finally talking, this no doubt be of very little comfort to the

hundreds of Grand Bahamians whose lives have been devastated financially.

However, real or imagined, the Babak work permit issue could very well figure prominently in the minds of the Grand Bahamian electorate on election day, thanks to the literary output of Brown.

However, Brown and the other critics of the Ingraham administration must appreciate the fact that the prime minister could very well have a valid reason for not wanting to renew Babak's work permit.

Also, the prime minister's refusal to divulge the reason for his decision could be equally as valid.

Perhaps if he does go ahead and say why he has made this controversial decision he could end up opening a can of worms. Who knows?

As far as I am concerned, I find it absolutely inconceivable that Ingraham would want to hold 40,000-plus Grand Bahamians hostage just because of one man.

Yet this is the gist of many of Brown's articles. The prime minister has to know something that he doesn't want the rest of us to know.

Moreover, the question that Brown and the other critics of the Ingraham administration must ask themselves is this: How is it possible that the success of the Port Authority is contingent on Babak being there? Grand Bahama used to be very successful before Babak joined the Port Authority.

If the island of Grand Bahama, particularly Freeport was successful before he was chairman, why all of a sudden it cannot be successful now without him (Babak)?

Yet with that being said, I still believe that Ingraham should have said why Babak's work permit hasn't been renewed.

While such information would not have erased the memory of the many hardships that hundreds of Grand Bahamians have had to endure over the past four-plus years, it would have at least explained to us, including Brown and the other critics of the FNM, why the prime minister had made the decision in the first place.

In the final analysis, Ingraham has missed a grand opportunity to put the Babak issue to rest once and for all. Thank you!

KEVIN EVANS
Freeport,
Grand Bahama,
January 19, 2012.



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Former Exuma MP joins calls for national debate

LENDING his support to the calls for a national debate between all party leaders, former member of parliament for Exuma, George Smith, encouraged Bahamians to choose their representatives "wisely" as the 2012 general election draws near.

In a statement issued to the press yesterday, Mr Smith claimed any objective individual would acknowledge that the Bahamas is in "deep trouble" given the difficult economic times.

He said Bahamians expect and demand that the major political parties put forward candidates of character and commitment who are capable of offering "ideas for growth."

"These are perilous economic times. Many Bahamians are hurting. Our communities are engulfed in criminal activity; a serious fear is pervasive among citizens for

their personal safety; the overall quality of education is in decline; inadequate health care is offered; a high and growing poverty level lowers the standard of living; illegal migration still afflicts our shores; and, sadly, a tragic lack of confidence and proper investment in Bahamians seems to be the order of the day.

"If we are to come out of this malaise, all thinking and patriotic Bahamians must demand that political parties offer candidates of a high standard – in ability, character and commitment – capable of advancing new ideas for growth.

"They must have a clear vision of a better Bahamas. At the end of the day, these are who the people ought to elect. Any 20 members of a party's candidates list ought to be able to form a credible

government. To offer less is to insult the citizenry," Mr Smith said.

This proposed national debate has already been agreed to by the PLP's leader Perry Christie and the DNA's leader Branville McCartney.

The governing Free National Movement's leader, Hubert Ingraham, while not outright declining, said he does not "talk foolishness" and that he debates every day.

Such a debate would not be the first of its kind – PLP leader Perry Christie, then BDM leader Cassius Stuart, and then FNM leader-elect Tommy Turnquest took part in two debates before the election in 2002.

Mr Smith said the upcoming election must be about issues which impact the lives of the Bahamian people and not about the inflated ego of any party leader or the aggrandisement of any individual or privileged class.

"People must be put first," Mr Smith said. "The general election should be about electing a government dedicated to working for the good of the Bahamian people and the Bahamas."



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LOCAL NEWS

Anger at politicians from victims of tragedy

By AVA TURNQUEST
Tribune Staff Reporter
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

condemned politicians for exploiting their tragedy for political gain.

Bain and Grants Town residents affected by the

blaze that killed a man and left two children in hospital, explained that party candidates often offer victims of various tragedies charitable donations in a shallow attempt to score political mileage.

Despite numerous promises of relief aid from major political parties, Audric Colebrook, affected resident and cousin of the deceased, said that no action from the Free National Movement or Progressive Liberal Party was taken.

Yesterday, a volunteer team jointly coordinated by Bain and Grants Town Urban Renewal and St Andrews Presbyterian Kirk began reconstruction efforts.

Mr Colebrooke, 40, said: "It's all about Saxons and the Valley Boys, the PLP and the



FNM. We tired of that stigma they keep throwing on us. If you say you for the PLP or FNM and you here to help, you don't have to bring no t-

shirt to do that.

"If you doing it from your heart, you'd come just like an ordinary citizen and do what you have to do."

Mr Colebrook added: "These [volunteers] came with their own strength, their own will power, their own feelings for how the people suffering and they're just doing it."

Firefighters were alerted to the blaze at Heritage Drive off Baillou Hill Road shortly after 1am last week Tuesday.

Firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze and rescue the two children inside, however, the home and its contents were completely destroyed. The body of 36-year-old Rebiro Colebrooke was burnt beyond recognition, according to fire services.

The 15-year-old boy suffered severe burns to eight per cent of his body, including his hand, neck and face, and the 11-year-old girl is recovering from smoke inhalation.

The compound housed 11 people, six of whom were said to be young children.

Esther Colebrook, 69, said: "People coming taping up and saying what they're going to do but ain't nobody doing nothing. I really want the light on, a lot of small children in

BAIN AND GRANTS TOWN Urban Renewal partnered with St Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk to provide assistance to fire victims in Black Village yesterday. Volunteers from Hope Church of Memphis, Tennessee, were part of the team established to help refurbish the severely damaged home.

Photo: Ava Turnquest/
Tribune Staff

the house. Some of my furniture gone, all my curtains burned up."

"But through all things you have to give Him thanks," she added.

Mr Colebrook said that telephone and cable services were restored last week; however the electricity is still off.

"My cousin," said Mr Colebrook, "died inside this house, burn up in the house, and we're going to have the funeral real soon, and who helping us with that?"

"The only people helping us now is Urban Renewal and Rodney Moncur was helping with rakes and stuff," he added.

Longtime activist in the community, Mr Moncur is the Democratic National Alliance candidate for the area.

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LOCAL NEWS

'Election on course'

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said preparations for the 2012 general election are going very well and that attention is now being directed to registering Bahamian students overseas.

He noted that the government will have to make "a little tweak" in the law to accommodate the situation with students in Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad who are entitled to be registered to vote.

"The way we wrote the law only permits it to happen at a place where we have a mission, and we don't have a mission in any of those places so we have to tweak the law to be able to accommodate them," he said.

Mr Ingraham said the parliamentary commissioner has already travelled to Miami where he was able to explain the voter registration process to representatives from Atlanta, Washington and New York.

"We will be going to Canada, and I think London has already been done," he said.

The prime minister said

that the government wants the maximum number of persons to register to vote.

"We would like to encourage full participation by the citizenry of the Bahamas in the electoral process; those who are qualified to vote.

"You will note in recent times a story in the newspaper about a Jamaican who had a voter's card and passport.

"I expect that in due course when investigations are completed that charges are likely to be made against persons who facilitate such a thing," said Mr Ingraham.

Mr Ingraham stressed that the government wants an orderly election process and many things still need to happen before an election date is set.

"We are taking time to make sure that the election procedures and other things can be done prior to calling an election.

"It is unthinkable, and it happened the last time, for the parliamentary commissioner to hear the House of Assembly resolved by an announcement on the radio.

"The first thing a prime minister does is to find out how are we in respect to

preparation for election and what else do you need to do; and once we are satisfied that all those things are done, then we fix dates.

"We don't fix dates because we wake up one morning and say, 'let's go.'"

Prime Minister Ingraham welcomes any international organisation wishing to monitor the elections in the Bahamas.

"For the first time in the history of the Bahamas, the Government of the Bahamas will say publicly that any international organisation that wishes to monitor elections in the Bahamas, they can send monitors to the Bahamas to see how the process goes and to be able to comment on it, are free and welcome to do so.

"If they let us know we will facilitate and accommodate them whether it's the United States or the United Nations; whoever monitors election, the Jimmy Carter group who monitors elections around the world, can come to the Bahamas to see how the election is done. They can come because we will have an open, fair, and transparent process," he said.

MOVE TO IMPROVE DISABILITY RIGHTS

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

MINISTER of State for Social Services Loretta Butler-Turner tabled a Bill in the House of Assembly yesterday which she said will bring the rights of persons with disabilities into the 21st century.

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities) Bill seeks to "establish the framework for equal treatment within the cultural, domestic, economic, educational, health, industrial, legal, political and social arenas in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, as it relates to disability discrimination".

Some 30 years in the making, Mrs Butler-Turner said

the "important, landmark piece of legislation" will fully define the rights of the disabled and endeavor to eliminate discrimination against them.

With this legislation, the Bahamas "can move forward and begin to break down the barriers for all persons, whether it is based on disabilities or gender, in the Bahamas," she said.

The Bill's provisions guarantee and protect the fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities as defined in the United Nation's Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It covers: the promotion, protection and full and equal enjoyment of human rights

for persons with disabilities; elimination of discrimination on the basis of disabilities; provisions for welfare and rehabilitation; provisions for the registration of persons who are disabled; and the establishment of the Bahamas Disabilities Rights and Commission.

Mrs Butler-Turner said the Advisory Council on Disabilities was consulted, as well as all parties and stakeholders.

She said their suggestions have been considered and many will be incorporated into the Act.

Encouraging the full participation of the public, Mrs Butler-Turner said the Bill can be read on the government's website.

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LOCAL NEWS

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The incumbent is required to frequently travel to branches in the designated market area, including the Family Islands.

Key Accountabilities for this Role:

- Ensure the profitable development and maintenance of banking business by identifying market potential, and developing objectives and plans to profitably grow the market area in support of Country and Regional goals;
- Develop and implement measures to ensure the delivery of a consistently high level of customer service;
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- Monitor financial performance of the branches on an ongoing basis to maximize market/business potential and ensure that corrective action is taken when required;
- Contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the Bank's image and develop a high profile in the community by participating in the social and professional life of the community served;
- Keep the Managing Director and Vice President, Retail Banking informed of developments within the market area.

Educational Requirements:

External education and/or licensing prerequisites: A Bachelors or Masters Degree or equivalent professional designation.

Functional Competencies:

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Two face court over armed robberies in Grand Bahama



HUBERT SMITH, 21, being escorted to court by police.

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – Two men accused of a string of armed robberies on Grand Bahama were arraigned in the Freeport Magistrate's Court on Wednesday.

Hubert Smith, 21, of Columbus Drive, and Renaldo Roberts, 23, of St James Place, were charged with 10 counts of armed robbery.

The matters were heard between courts one, two and three. K Brian Hanna represented the accused men.

The men were arraigned before Magistrate Debby Ferguson in court one on two counts of armed robbery and one count of possessing a firearm while committing an offence.

It is alleged that on December 19, 2011, the men committed an armed robbery at McClean's Town, robbing persons of cash and cell phones.

It is also alleged that on January 20, 2012, the accused, while armed with a gun, robbed a man of his vehicle, wallet and cell phone.

The accused were not required to enter pleas to the charges. The matters were adjourned to April 11, 2012.

In court two before Magistrate Andrew Forbes, Smith and Roberts were charged with four counts of armed robbery.

The men are accused of robbing three customers of a fast food restaurant on November 27, 2011.

They are also accused of committing an armed robbery on December 19, 2011, robbing a man of his vehicle.

Photo: Vandyke Hepburn

The matters were adjourned to April 10, 2011.

Smith and Roberts were also taken to court three, where they were arraigned before Deputy Chief Magistrate Helen Jones on three armed robbery charges.

The men were charged with the armed robbery of Burger King on Yellow Pine Street on December 24; the armed robbery of Cora's Place on November 11, 2011; and an armed robbery at the International Bazaar on December 19, when a man was robbed of his vehicle.

The pair was not required to enter pleas to the charges. The matters were adjourned to February 21, 2012.

Smith and Roberts are also expected to be arraigned, along with five others, in the Gun Court in New Providence this week.

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LOCAL NEWS

STAYED TOO LONG, NOW STAYING IN JAIL

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT - A Haitian man was convicted and sentenced to serve two years in prison for overstaying his time in the Bahamas following an arraignment in the Freeport Magistrate's Court.

Jackson Saintil appeared before Magistrate Andrew Forbes in Court Two on Wednesday.

A translator read the charge in Creole to Saintil, who does not speak English.

Saintil told Magistrate Forbes that he first came to the Bahamas illegally in 2000.

At that time, he said, his boss told him to return to Haiti.

He said he waited on a call asking him to return to the Bahamas, but his boss never called back.

Saintil said he again entered the country without the permission of the Department of Immigration in June 2011.

Magistrate Forbes told Saintil that by his own admission he had entered the country illegally.

He told the accused that he was also charged and found guilty of overstaying his time in the Bahamas.

Mr Forbes sentenced Saintil to pay a fine of \$3,000 or spend two years in prison for overstaying his time.

Saintil was unable to pay the fine and was sentenced to two years.

Bahamas Constituency Party to field ten candidates in election

By AVA TURNQUEST
Tribune Staff Reporter
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

BAHAMAS Constituency Party leader Ali McIntosh yesterday announced that a newly-formed coalition of independent candidates aims to either directly contest, or support a candidate in all seats in the upcoming general elections.

Determined to encourage a "conservative agenda", Ms McIntosh said, the coalition will endorse candidates from mainstream political parties who represent its values.

"Despite being disadvantaged by financial constraints, direct sabotage by political operatives of other political parties, the BCP will not be deterred in its efforts to provide hope for the Bahama-

land," she said.

"Independent candidates involved in collaborations, and several candidates from other parties that we believe will represent the type of values and integrity we believe is necessary for good governance - the BCP will not offer candidates in those areas, it will provide an endorsement of the candidacy of the individual, despite their party affiliation."

BCP candidates announced so far include: Colin Miller, Exuma and Ragged Island; Brenda Harris, Seabreeze; Dr Shandy Andrews, Bamboo Town; Dr James Lowe, South and Central Abaco; Simone Smith, Pinewood; Roderick Smith, Fox Hill; Paul Rolle, Englerston; Troy Garvey, Marco City; Philip Thomas, East Grand Bahama.

Ms McIntosh, a former journalist and youth counselor, will contest the North Abaco seat against Free National Movement leader Hubert Ingraham.

With 12 years of planning



THE BAHAMAS CONSTITUTION PARTY leader Ali McIntosh announced 10 candidates for BCP yesterday in Rawson Square yesterday.

Photo: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

and development behind it, Ms McIntosh said, the party represents a new and enlightened effort to support the core values embraced by the nation's founders.

These values include: Self-discipline, industry, loyalty, unity, and an abiding respect for Christian principles and the rule of law.

Ms McIntosh said: "When we bring that out as a mandate for the BCP, it gives not

only politicians and leaders a new look at how they should be governing but it gives the people, the electorate, an opportunity to view what the founders intended in terms of how we create a country, and to look at candidates based on those core values and how they should elect people."

More information on the party's platform and mandate can be found at www.bcpbahamas.com.

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LOCAL NEWS

FURY AS GIRL, 4, KILLED BY BUS

from page one

are appealing to parents with young children, as well as the motoring public to be more vigilant when on the road.

She said: "As you know, young children are very quick, you can see them one moment and the next moment they are moving away very, very quickly. Pay attention to your kids. Watch

your young children. If you are walking on the street ensure that you are holding their hand and at all times walk with them facing traffic. Also, it is important that you teach them how to use the streets properly.

"For the motoring public, I want to encourage you to please drive with extreme care and caution. I know the roadworks are going on and some-

times we tend to get very furious or we leave late from home and so we are speeding trying to hurry and get to our destination. I want to encourage you to leave a little bit earlier, drive within the confinement of the speed limit and drive with the view of driving to reach your destination safely."

Three people have been killed in traffic accidents this year.

from page one

"I leave with the knowledge that I have served my people to the best of my ability."

Mr Russell was recently terminated from his ministerial post after reportedly discussing a project that was before Cabinet with one of his generals in Grand Bahama.

Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham explained he fired Mr Russell for acting inconsistently with the protocols of the Bahamas Cabinet. Despite this, Mr Russell thanked Mr Ingraham yesterday for allowing

him to serve as the Minister responsible for Public Works and National Insurance. He also thanked his constituents.

"I want to thank the residents of that great constituency for giving me the opportunity on three occasions to serve as the Member of Parliament," he said.

While he outlined what he had accomplished as MP for High Rock, he also said he regretted the things he could not get done for his con-

MITCHELL BOWS OUT

stituents, including getting potable water to several areas.

Mr Russell announced last month that he will no longer be putting his name forward for consideration of the FNM's nomination for the East Grand Bahama constituency.

At that time, he maintained he had been treated unfairly by his party and by "those persons" who have determined that his time was now up. "I will go back to my life. I had a life before ya' know," he said last month.



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LOCAL NEWS

PM: 'Economy to grow by 2.8%'

from page one
 landmark benefits, an unemployment benefit and the national prescription drug benefit.
 "My second impression and indeed conviction, is that the Bahamas is on the right track. In saying this, I am not suggesting for a moment that all is clear. Nor am I suggesting that there are no more difficult days ahead. What I do believe, is that we are making significant and meaningful progress," he said.
 Looking forward to this upcoming year, Mr Ingraham said the recovery experienced in 2010 and 2011 continues to

be propelled primarily by construction and tourism activity.
 "No responsible government could have followed the path of delay, indecision and half measures. We had to act decisively and comprehensively. Not only was a collapse prevented. We are now moving forward.
 "This intervention necessitated an increase in government borrowing and consequently government debt. However, government debt relative to the size of the economy remains well below the danger level and well below the level of our regional neighbours and most of the developed and

developing world.
 "Nevertheless, we will, as soon as it is safe to do so, reduce the rate of growth in government debt and over the medium term return the debt ratio to a more desirable and sustainable level," Mr Ingraham said.
 The Prime Minister also touched on the recent default by Atlantis on its \$2.5 billion loan.
 "In 2006 all of Kerzner International's properties on Paradise Island were used as collateral for the loan. Some of the proceeds from that loan were used for developments on Paradise Island; the remainder was used on other

Kerzner International developments elsewhere around the world.
 "One of the seven lenders sought to take over the ownership of the Paradise Island properties with the backing of 4 of the other lenders. The other two lenders objected. The lenders are in discussion among themselves as to an agreed way forward. They fully understand and are of one accord that the continued successful operation of the Kerzner International properties on Paradise Island is in their mutual benefit and essential for them to realise repayment of their loan.
 "Atlantis is enjoying a very

successful winter season. Hence, notwithstanding any conclusion which the lenders may arrive at, all are interested in ensuring that the properties continue to perform well. The lenders have agreed that Kerzner International will continue to manage the resort properties. The future of Atlantis is bright given its value as one of the leading resorts in our region.
 "The overriding responsibility for us all is the protection of Bahamian jobs and the long-term viability of Atlantis. I am assured that the jobs of Bahamians at Kerzner International are secure," he said.
 The Prime Minister also highlighted that the redevelopment of Cable Beach, the Baha Mar mega-resort are on target and gathering pace. As the construction of the core of this project advances during 2012, Mr Ingraham said that he expects new additional jobs to come on stream. To date, nearly 1,500 Bahamians have been engaged on the project and subcontracts valued at \$84.2 million have been awarded to Bahamian contractors.
 Along with the Arawak Cay Port development, and the development of the Lynden Pindling International Airport, Mr Ingraham said that 380,000 new airline seats have been added from major tourism markets into Bahamian destinations giving us more non-stop connections to more destinations in the Bahamas

than ever before. This includes new flights from destinations in North and Central America, and restored non-stop flights from Frankfurt, Germany, after an absence of more than 20 years, and to Grand Bahama from Toronto after more than a 30-year hiatus.
 The Government in 2011 also promoted the SelfStarters programme, and the 52-week National Job Readiness and Training Programme. Investments in healthcare and education were also seen for the fiscal year.
 "Over the past several years, and markedly during the past year, these investments have amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars spent to improve the quality of life of Bahamians.
 "These comprehensive investments in our Family Islands are being made in hospitals and clinics, schools and athletic facilities, roads in Acklins and North Andros, bridges in South Andros, airports in Abaco, seaports and docks in Long Island, North Eleuthera and Central Andros and Current Island and government administrative offices in Abaco and Grand Bahama among other facilities.
 "We are continuing to upgrade electricity and water supply, and helping to cause the greater reliability of telecommunications, cable television and internet services," he said.

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Art for the Parks

AN elite group of talented Bahamian artists will exhibit their works at Abaco Beach Resort during the Art for the Parks Festival, to be held January 27-29.

The annual event, a collaboration between Abaco Beach Resort, the Bahamas National Trust and corporate sponsors, brings together more than 30 artists and craftsmen.

The festival provides residents and visitors with a unique opportunity to view and purchase artwork while raising awareness and funding for the preservation of Abaco's six national parks.

Some of the featured artists will include: Andy Albury, Gail and Bruce Barton, Brigitte Bowyer

Carey, Kim Roberts, Trevor Tucker, Marco Mullings, Bruce Pinder, John Paul, Anthony Morley, Kristen Pearce, Dave Lowe, Stephen Knowles, Jo-ann Bradley, Nicole Angelica, Kent LeBoutillier, Tami Cash, Paulette Mortimer, David Lowe, Shammond Hanna, Stacey Adderley, Attila Feszt,

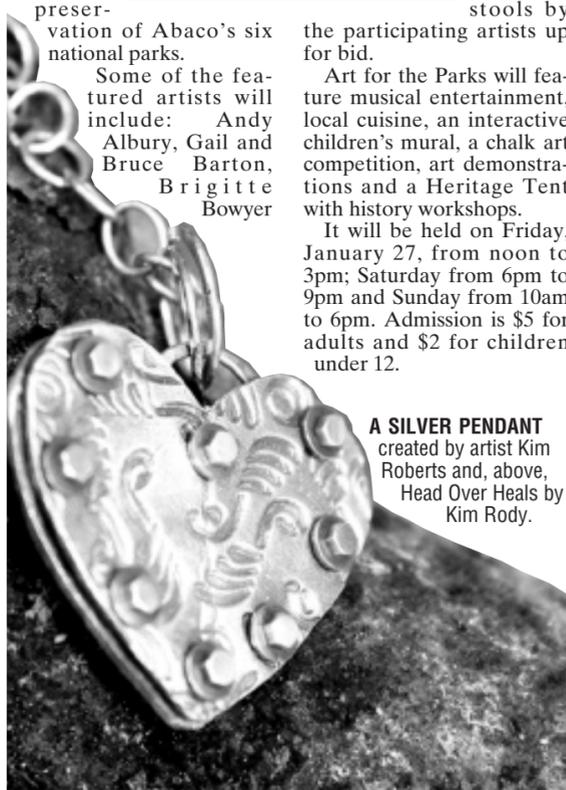
Roshanne Minnis Eyma, Ritchie Eyma and Kim Rody.

A feature of the Friday night will be the special "Take a Seat for Conservation" silent auction with original hand-painted stools by the participating artists up for bid.

Art for the Parks will feature musical entertainment, local cuisine, an interactive children's mural, a chalk art competition, art demonstrations and a Heritage Tent with history workshops.

It will be held on Friday, January 27, from noon to 3pm; Saturday from 6pm to 9pm and Sunday from 10am to 6pm. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children under 12.

A SILVER PENDANT created by artist Kim Roberts and, above, Head Over Heals by Kim Rody.



ARTIST PAULETTE MORTIMER will be among those whose work will be on show.

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LOCAL NEWS

MP claims elections not 'transparent'

By **DANA SMITH**
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

FORT Charlotte MP Alfred Sears said the Bahamas has been "plagued with controversy" for years because of secret campaign

contributions in elections.

He also believes the general elections have not been conducted in "a fair and transparent manner".

"The election process in the Bahamas has come under severe criticism over the past

forty years due to the influence of secret campaign contributions, especially by foreigners, often resulting in the allegation that the Bahamas is a country 'for sale' and, more recently, for the administration of the elections, raising a concern about the integrity and fairness of our elections," Mr Sears said.

Mr Sears was speaking in the House of Assembly, yesterday, where he told the House he is in support of the Parliamentary Elections Amendment Bill, but raised a few questions concerning it.

As an example of concerns about election administrations' fairness, Mr Sears recalled the 2008 case of Allyson Maynard Gibson v Byron Woodside, where "the court had to decide the lawfulness of the votes cast by 183 voters in Pinewood".

And two years later, in the case of Leo Ryan Pinder v Jack Thompson, "the issue before the Court was the lawfulness of six protest ballots".

Mr Sears stated that in the first case, the votes were found to be unlawful. In the



ALFRED SEARS MP has spoken of the "plague" of secret campaign contributions in elections in the Bahamas.

second, the court found the Parliamentary Commissioner to have "disfranchised" a voter.

"It is our hope, Mr Speaker, that the Parliamentary Commissioner has sufficient resources for the conduct of the 2012 General Elections to restore public confidence in

the Parliamentary Commissioner and our electoral process to avoid future criticism of the kind that was directed at the Parliamentary Commissioner by the Supreme Court," Mr Sears said.

Several examples of alleged secret campaign contributions were also brought up by Mr Sears, including an incident in 2008 where Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham allegedly "conceded that he and his party had indeed received secret campaign contributions from the Grand Bahamas Port Authority".

He also brought up the Commission of Enquiry of 1967, otherwise known as the "Bacon Commission". He stated it was revealed in the commission that a member of the senate, the speaker of the house, and a member of the house "had received or were about to receive some financial benefit" from Port Authority or Amusements casino company.

"If we are not to repeat the political mistakes of the past and ensure the integrity of our

political process, we must regulate campaign contributions in our election process, as a safeguard against corruption in our governance process," Mr Sears said.

Regarding the Parliamentary Elections Amendment Bill, he said: "There are a number of questions, relevant to the Bill before us, which we should consider."

Mr Sears stated that overseas voters should not be "limited" to only students and government employees, but all Bahamians working overseas.

Also, a fixed date for the general elections should be enforced and the right to vote "which currently is merely statutory right", should be a fundamental right in the Bill of Rights.

"I recommend, therefore, that we support constitutional reform to amend our Constitution so that the right of every citizen to vote in an election of members of the House of Assembly be entrenched in the Constitution as a fundamental right," Mr Sears said.

POLICE WARNING AFTER ROBBERY ARRESTS

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – Following the arrest of two suspects in connection with a number of armed robberies, Police chief Emrick Seymour has issued a stern warning to persons committing crimes and breaking the law.

"We want to send a clear message to any perpetrator breaking the law that we are determined to catch you and bring before the court," ACP Seymour told the media on Wednesday.

He indicated that police officers are on "high alert" and they are reaping extremely good results in targeting criminals and putting them before the court.

Mr Seymour said police made an arrest this week in connection with a string of armed robbery matters in the Grand Bahama District.

He said that as a result of investigations police have also recovered two stolen vehicles.

"These matters were of concern to us...and a team of officers were able to recover the first vehicle on the Grand Bahama Highway which resulted in the arrest of a suspect," Mr Seymour said.

He said a second vehicle was recovered on Monday, January 23, leading to the arrest of another suspect.

The two men were arraigned in the courts on Wednesday.

ACP Seymour said police were also successful in recovering a firearm that also

resulted in the arrest of several additional persons.

The suspects are expected to be charged in New Providence on Thursday.

Mr Seymour said the commissioner of police and the minister of national security have both expressed their concerns about the crime situation.

He stressed that the police are committed to fighting crime and bringing criminals to justice.

Mr Seymour said police are still searching for Eunice Morris of Morris Travel Agency.

He said a warrant of arrest has been issued for Morris, who left the island last September following complaints of stealing.

Morris is being sought by police allegedly accused of

stealing by reason of employment.

Several complaints were filed with police against the local travel agent in July, alleging that she collected some \$60,000 for payment of a vacation cruise for three large groups of people.

It was later discovered that the funds were never paid to the cruise line on their behalf.

Police have been searching for Morris since July for questioning in the matter.

According to an all points bulletin issued by police Morris, 47, is of slim build. She has medium brown complexion, dark brown eyes, and long black hair.

Anyone with information concerning her whereabouts is asked to contact police at 350-3106/7/8.

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Union says air traffic radar 'erratic'

from page one

"If I can explain, we are normally required to provide generally a three-mile separation between aircraft. That is represented on our radar display by a distance of about one centimetre or thereabout," Mr Perpall said.

"The targets that are supposed to be separated by one centimetre, thereabout – which represents three nautical miles – are jumping."

According to the radar, aircraft sometimes jump "somewhere near ten or 15 centimetres" or might even disappear completely off the radar.

"Meanwhile, the air traffic controller has to maintain basically a mental picture of where the target was last and hope that the information upon refresh would be somewhere in the vicinity of where we thought it ought to be," Mr Perpall said.

"Although there are safety mechanisms within the job to take care of some of those things, the air traffic controller is put under additional strain to continue to provide separation. Bearing in mind that the communication at the Nassau international airport is not the best."

The government has three contractors who are looking into the replacement of the radar, Mr Perpall confirms, but it's not something they expect to be done within the next year.

"We are in trouble," he said. "We do not know when the radar will fail totally but we anticipate it will be soon."

A failing radar system has been plaguing the airport for years, and in one instance, the government purchased a system for around \$10 million which, it is claimed, didn't help.

"It was a used radar, it was installed at the Nassau international airport, it never worked, we have no use for it, I believe now it will be probably scrapped," Mr Perpall said. "It will not be used anywhere else in this country, we don't know what will happen to it, but we are intending to purchase a new radar to replace this."

He believes the only way the government will take heed to their problems is if "God forbid" a fatal plane accident occurs.

"The only way that we think the attention needed will be given to the air traffic control profession, it appears, (is) if we were to suffer a fatal accident – especially involving one of the US carriers," Mr Perpall said.

But he explained the controllers "work very hard to ensure that it doesn't happen".

He believes the airport is in violation of about 35 aviation infractions, but said the controllers "try to make it seamless" and do their best at their jobs.

"We do not want anything to happen and to the extent possible, we bend over backwards to ensure that every operation conducted in this airspace is done as safe as possible," Mr Perpall said.

Another problem air traffic controllers face include a small "communication area" – limited to about 50 or 80 miles. Meaning that a flight leaving Nassau for Long Island can only communicate with the Nassau airport within that range.

MAN HELD AS GUN FOUND

By SANCHESKA BROWN
Tribune Staff Reporter
sbrown@tribunemedia.net

A 22-YEAR-OLD Kingston Street man is in police custody after the discovery of a handgun and ammunition.

Police say at around 9.20pm on Tuesday, police patrolling Montrose Avenue noticed a man acting suspiciously.

The officers reported that the man ran when he saw them, causing them to give chase. They followed him to a home, searched it, and found a handgun and ammunition.

They also found two other men at the house. The 45-year-old Hospital Lane man and a 41-year-old Carew Street man were both arrested in connection with outstanding warrants.

'We are in trouble. We do not know when the radar will fail totally but we anticipate it will be soon.'

Roscoe Perpall

Upon landing in Long Island, Mr Perpall said the pilot would have to use a telephone to call the Nassau controllers to "let us know they are safe".

The union has a proposed meeting today with Minister of Aviation Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace to discuss outstanding matters following the recent "work to rule" action.

Mr Perpall said the relationship between BATCU

and the government is "strained" and they want the Minister to "deliver on those commitments he made during the Christmas holiday break."

Issues plaguing air traffic controllers include outstanding promotions, outdated equipment – including the faulty radar, and a "damaged" air traffic control facility.

Mr Vanderpool-Wallace was not available for comment.

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Scotiabank (Bahamas) Limited is seeking the services of a Director, Human Resources

Position Summary:

The Director, Human Resources (HR) is a member of the executive management team and works closely with the Managing Director, executive team, and line management to develop and lead the local HR and People strategy. In addition, the Director HR serves as an internal consultant on human capital challenges and opportunities that affect business performance and relationships.

This position is responsible for leading the People functions and strategies in accordance with local laws, regulations and best practices, which are in alignment with global policies and practices of the Scotiabank Group. Through designing and leading these activities, the Director, HR will seek to engage and maintain a skilled and motivated workforce capable of, and committed to, executing the company's business strategies.

The Director, HR leads a team of human resource professionals with a goal of earning a high level of credibility as an effective and responsive internal consulting group and fosters a workplace environment consistent with Scotiabank's core values.

Key Accountabilities for this Role:

The Director, HR oversees the development and implementation of HR policies, programs and services, which include:

- Development and maintenance of the company's short and long term HR / People strategies;
- Ensures legal and regulatory compliance and strong corporate governance of all HR programs and policies;
- Leadership resource and workforce planning;
- Employee experience, communication and engagement strategies;
- Learning & Development – works in collaboration with the Learning & Performance Consulting team in the design and delivery of learning and development programs;
- Staffing & Recruitment – develops and implements staff recruitment strategies and programs;
- Employee relations and employment law;
- Total Rewards – compensation and benefits.

Educational Requirements:

External education and/or licensing prerequisites: A university/college degree. A professional human resources designation (or equivalent education) is preferred.

Functional Competencies:

- The incumbent must have progressive business experience, including 3-5 years, at a senior management level, working in a corporate HR or business line HR relationship management capacity;
- The incumbent has experience with the creation, development and execution of strategic initiatives, possesses very strong strategic thinking, planning and influencing skills, and excels in partnering with and supporting diverse stakeholders;
- Strong PC skills are necessary, including a working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

The Scotiabank Group is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all interested parties. We thank you for your interest, however, only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Qualified candidates only should submit applications via e-mail to: Managing Director, Scotiabank (Bahamas)Ltd. at Scotiabank.bs@scotiabank.com on or before February 3, 2012.

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Worship Experience Schedule

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Sundays - 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am

Telephone: (242) 364-6266

E-mail: info@bahamasharvestchurch.org

www.bahamasharvestchurch.com

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LOCAL NEWS



BRANVILLE MCCARTNEY pictured in Parliament yesterday. Photo: Felipe Major/Tribune Staff

DNA leader says Bahamas has fallen behind in tourism

By DENISE MAYCOCK
Tribune Freeport Reporter
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – DNA leader Branville McCartney says the Bahamas has slipped from the top position in tourism to third place in the region.

He believes that not enough is being done to market the rest of the Family Islands in the Bahamas, including Grand Bahama.

“The only way you get business from tourism is if they know about you. They don’t know about Grand Bahama and they don’t know about the rest of the Bahamas unfortunately,” Mr McCartney said in Grand Bahama.

“Like any other business you have to market your country, you have to market your island, and you have to

really market your people,” he said.

Mr McCartney said that Reggae legend Bob Marley was able to sell Jamaica to the world.

He stated that while on a trip to Thailand in 2006 persons there knew about Bob Marley and Jamaica, but they didn’t know about Ronny Butler and the Bahamas.

“I made the point of Bob Marley and Ronny Butler because Jamaica was sold through Bob Marley, and we have so much talent in The Bahamas.”

“We are doing all this advertising for New Providence over and over again and we have slipped to third place for tourism in the region.”

“We were the ones in the lead, just like...we were the ones in the lead for Gaming

back in the 1950’s. Atlantic City came here for the blue print and they ran with it and made a big industry.

Mr McCartney stated that Barbados is now considered a developed country and has left the Bahamas behind.

He said: “We have slipped, and what has happened over the last 20 years is not working for the future. We know who were there (in office) for the last 20 years.”

“We need to move the country so that we are on the world stage. Before we advertise we need to make sure the environment is clean and that it is a safe place.

He believes that in addition to sun, sand, and sea, the culture must be able to sell the country.

Grand Bahama tourism has suffered. Major tourism developments such as Ginn and the development plans for the Royal Oasis property by the Harcourt’s Group have stalled.

Mr McCartney believes that East and West Grand Bahama should be looked at more for development of the tourism sector.

He is confident that the DNA can bring real change to the Bahamas. He said the candidates selected by the party are made up of Bahamians with a fighting spirit for positive change.

Mr McCartney said their slate of candidates consists of accountants, architects, educators, engineers, electricians, taxi-cab drivers, youth leaders, humanitarians, entrepreneurs, CEOs, general managers, lawyers, and every day Bahamians who are passionate about where the country is headed.

“We have an election to win...and we must remain focused,” he said.

“It is time for us as a people and a nation to join the rest of the changing world ensuring our present authority that the power of the people is greater and will always be greater than the people in power,” he said.



THE BRIDGE AUTHORITY

~ NOTICE ~

Paradise Island Employers & Employees, Paradise Island Residents, Transportation Companies and the General Public are hereby notified that The Bridge Authority has commenced renovations to its Toll Plaza office. These renovations have resulted in the relocation of the Transponder office to One Marina Drive, Paradise Island, next door to Royal Bank of Canada. Office hours are 8:00am – 3:45pm. The telephone numbers remain 363-5569 or 363-5554 extension 27.

These renovations are expected to continue for the duration of 2012 and WILL NOT hamper traffic travelling over the bridge.

The Bridge Authority apologizes for any inconvenience caused, and assures its customers and stakeholders, that all efforts will be made to maintain safe and easy access to Paradise Island.

Billy Scavella
General Manager
The Bridge Authority

HELP WANTED

SUCCESSFUL AND ESTABLISHED RETAIL COMPANY WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS IS LOOKING FOR A
WAREHOUSE MANAGER

The successful candidate must have experience managing a busy warehouse, as well as supervising, scheduling and motivating no less than 10 staff members.

S/he will be responsible for maintaining the security of the warehouse, as well as receiving and distributing all merchandise coming into the company.

Must be honest and reliable above reproach, computer literate, and should be able to work flexible hours and overtime as necessary.

Resumes should be sent to: The Tribune,
P.O. Box N-3207, quoting Ref # 99361
Or by e-mail to: bahamasjob@hotmail.com
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Wulff Rd and Montrose store will be officially closed on January 22nd. Any orders left will be transferred to our Mackey & Madeira store, 322-2352

Scotiabank (Bahamas) Limited
is seeking the services of a
Senior Manager, Client Relationships for its Corporate & Commercial Banking Centre.

Position Summary:

The Senior Manager, Client Relationships must possess a broad knowledge of Corporate & Commercial financial products and services, and a strong focus on the cross-sell, up-sell, and retention of existing commercial customers. He/she is responsible for identifying prospects in target markets, developing prospect acquisition strategies, maintaining prospect relationships, maintaining a sustainable prospect sales pipeline, conducting prospect sales calls, qualification of opportunities based on customer information and due diligence. The incumbent is on the coverage team with the Credit Solutions Group with responsibility for deal structuring, financial modeling, negotiation and pricing for new and existing corporate and large commercial customers.

Key Accountabilities for this Role:

- Promotes the development and profitable growth of the commercial banking portfolio in the assigned market area.
- Pursues an aggressive business development program within the assigned market area according to agreed upon growth objectives.
- Builds and maintains a high market profile in the assigned market area with both internal and external contacts.
- Ensures all aspects of assigned relationships receive ongoing attention, as required to maintain, improve, grow and retain the relationship.
- Safeguards the Bank’s assets and liabilities.
- Executes the Branch Compliance responsibilities as reflected in the Branch Services and Procedures Manual.

Educational Requirements:

External education and/or licensing prerequisites: Graduate degree in business or economics or work equivalency. Other training requirements as determined by the Bank from time to time.

Functional Competencies:

- The incumbent must have at least 5 years of corporate and commercial banking experience; Strong knowledge of the corporate and commercial banking marketplace and a detailed knowledge of the assigned market area’s key prospects, major companies and competitive positioning within the assigned market area.
- Strong credit skills and sound judgement as demonstrated through previous track record and experience.
- The incumbent must also have a strong understanding of the Corporate & Commercial Bank’s objectives, strategies, structure, as well as its lending and deposit products and services.
- Very strong interpersonal skills and communication skills are essential to this position. The incumbent must be able to effectively articulate views both within the Bank and externally in the market
- Strong PC skills are necessary, including a working knowledge of MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and all commercial systems and platforms.
- Ability to conduct due diligence on strength of customer financials

The Scotiabank Group is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all interested parties. We thank you for your interest, however, only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Qualified candidates only should submit applications via e-mail to: Senior Manager, Human Resources at scotiabank.bs@scotiabank.com on or before February 03, 2012.

