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# FOOD COUPONS AND SPECIALS

NEWS SPORTS FASHION FOOD TRAVEL MOVIES MUSIC TV NY TIMES



# PLP accused of bribes for votes

## BISHOP APPEAL RULING REVEALED

By LAMECH JOHNSON  
Staff reporter  
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

THE Court of Appeal rejected the bail appeal by Bishop Randy Fraser because he failed to show any exceptional circumstances to justify being released on bond.

The Court released its detailed ruling yesterday on the rejection of bail to the convicted sex offender, who returns to the court in a month to appeal his conviction.

At the time of the hearing last December, appellate court president Justice Anita Allen said the reasons for the bail rejection would be released at a later date.

Yesterday, Justice Allen informed defence attorney Jiarum Mangra and Fraser they would be presented with a printed copy of their ruling.

**SEE page 10**

## SYMONETTE SAYS NO OVER CITIZENSHIP LIST

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Brent Symonette was yesterday called on in Parliament to produce a list of everyone granted citizenship during the FNM administration.

On the final day of debate on amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act, Bain and Grants Town MP Dr Bernard Nottage said that in a country like the Bahamas, where people "move in and out," individuals who are not entitled to vote in an election can sometimes end up becoming registered.

He said any issues of this kind would be avoided if a list of persons who were granted citizenship was made public.

**SEE page 9**

## PM PLEASSED BY BUSINESS IDEAS

PRIME Minister Hubert Ingraham said he is encouraged by the "diversity" of those awarded grants to support their enterprising business ideas under the new Jump-Start programme.

The 72 recipients are men and women - young and old - Mr Ingraham said at the official launch of the initiative, which aims at helping fledgling entrepreneurs get their dreams off the ground.

**SEE page 10**

## House in uproar after minister makes claims

By CELESTE NIXON  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

THREE men have come forward claiming a bribe was offered by "political operatives" of the PLP trying to drum up support for their party ahead of the upcoming general elections, a heated House of Assembly session was told yesterday.

Education Minister Desmond Bannister claimed these individuals have sworn in affidavits that cash was offered by campaigning members of the opposition in return for political support.

Mr Bannister agreed to withdraw the comments, but warned it was not the last that Parliament would hear of the matter.

Asked if he could prove the claims, Mr Bannister said: "I am fully able, in fact the information has been put into affidavits, I have three of them to date. I know the people that have been offered and I know the people that offered it and at the appropriate time

I will deal with this."

The allegations came during Mr Bannister's contribution to amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act debate yesterday, in response to claims that the Prime Minister told FNM supporters to accept the opposition's bribes and then vote FNM anyway.

Mr Bannister said he was recently informed by an FNM supporter that while the PLP was campaigning in Staniel Creek, Andros, they got into a disagreement with one of Mr Bannister's supporters and were asked to leave. Mr Bannister said he was told they returned the next day and offered his supporters \$1,000.

Dr Bernard Nottage eventually rose to ask if Mr Bannister could produce any proof. If he could not, the Bain and Grants Town MP said, the comments should be withdrawn.

Speaker of the House Alvin Smith ordered Mr Bannister to withdraw his claims unless

**SEE page 8**

## BABY TWIN HEALTHY AFTER LANDMARK OPERATION



PARENTS Osee and Chantal Joseph at a press conference yesterday at Princess Margaret Hospital, where it was announced that doctors had successfully separated an underdeveloped conjoined twin from the couple's baby daughter, Shakera.

By DANA SMITH  
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

A PARASITIC twin was successfully removed from the back of a three-week-old baby girl on Wednesday evening, marking an "historic milestone" in Bahamian medicine.

Doctors and nurses from the obstetrical, neonatal, and neurological units at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) were joined by the baby's parents to announce the success, noting it was the first time in the country that such a surgery had been performed.

Baby Shakera was born at PMH to Chantal and Osee Joseph on January 3, with a

parasitic twin attached to her back.

The partially-formed mass had a "small leg with some toes" and was "completely binned" with Shakera's spine.

Neurosurgeon Dr Magnus Ekedede, who led the operation to separate Shakera from the underdeveloped twin, said he "had tremendous stress" at first because he "didn't believe we could do it in the Bahamas".

But, he felt more "at ease" following prayer, careful surgery planning, and "excellent support" from his team.

"Everybody did everything right," Dr Ekedede said, thanking the doctors and

nurses who assisted in the surgery. "It's not about me ... I thank everybody that has to do with this."

He continued: "The Bahamas should be happy that we could accomplish this here. Every Bahamian should be happy because if you read through texts book and google this - it's not easy. From my records, nothing like that has been done in the Caribbean."

Ms Joseph called her child a "miracle baby" and thanked PMH's doctors and nurses profusely.

"Thank you to all the doc-

**SEE page 8**

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LOCAL NEWS

# Election battle begins in Grand Bahama

By DENISE MAYCOCK  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FREEPORT – The battle is now on for the five seats on Grand Bahama as some 17

candidates prepare to launch their campaign in the respective constituencies here on the island.

A total of 15 candidates have been officially ratified and named by the FNM, PLP,

and DNA parties, and two persons have entered the race as independent candidates.

The candidates contesting in West Grand Bahama are ZNS Freeport anchorwoman Pakesia Edgecombe (FNM); businessman Roger Rolle (DNA); and West End MP Obie Wilchcombe.

Mr Wilchcombe, a veteran politician, will face off with newcomers Edgecombe and Rolle, who are both young and offer a fresh perspective for voters. Interestingly, Rolle and Edgecombe are also second cousins.

Edgecombe was born in West End. She grew up in Deadman's Reef and attended the Holmes Rock Primary and Eight Mile Rock High schools. She completed her tertiary education abroad in 1996. Edgecombe is married and has two children.

Roger Rolle is owner of Rags to Riches Consultants. He is a successful businessman.

Obie Wilchcombe has served in parliament for 10 years as MP for West End and Bimini, having been elected as the representative in 2002 and 2007.

Contesting the new Central Grand Bahama seat are businessman Neko Grant (FNM); accountant Julian Russell (PLP); and Howard Grant Jr (DNA).

Veteran politician Neko Grant is also going up against newcomers Russell and Howard Grant Jr, the son of FNM Eight Mile Rock MP Vernae Grant.

Grant, 30, is the youngest of the three candidates. The youth leader says his entire family, including his mother and father, supports his decision to join the DNA.

"I know...there are many persons saying 'how Vernae Grant's son could do that.' I am her son. She loves me and she knows I am a passionate person and I go hard after what I believe in. I believe in

the DNA; it is here to revive our people. Her affiliation with the FNM is an affiliation I can't say anything about.

"She supports me; my entire family supports me; we have been through hell and high water with the FNM personally. I know you heard her speech in the House and it runs very deep."

Russell, an accountant, is a native of Eight Mile Rock. He is the son of Rev Ralph Russell.

In Marco City, the candidates are Educator Norris Bain (FNM); attorney Gregory Moss (PLP); aspiring law student Tolonus Sands (DNA); and community activist Troy Garvey (Independent).

The race is expected to heat up in Marco City as the four men vie for one of the most coveted and historic seats on Grand Bahama. It was once held by the FNM's founder the late Sir Cecil Wallace-Whitfield. The seat is cur-

rently held by Zhivargo Laing of the FNM who will contest the Fort Charlotte seat.

In Pineridge, the candidates are lawyer Kwasi Thompson (FNM); Dr Michael Darville (PLP); and Attorney Osman Johnson (DNA).

In East Grand Bahama, the candidates are businessman Peter Turnquest (FNM); attorney Tanisha Tynes (PLP); Ferline Bridgewater-Thomas (DNA); and independent candidate Philip Thomas.

Voter registration on Grand Bahama continues at a steady pace. Last week, over 21,000 persons had registered on the island.

Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said he expects that there would be some 25,000 registered voters in Grand Bahama.

Although New Providence has the majority of seats, the three parties believe Grand Bahama will play an important part in these elections.



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## POLICEWOMAN HURT IN ACCIDENT

**POLICE OFFICERS** lost control of their vehicle on the road leading to the domestic section of the airport yesterday.

A female officer was taken to hospital to be treated for minor injuries.

Photo: **Felipe Major**/Tribune Staff

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Completed forms for the APD offering may be returned to the aforementioned RBC Royal Bank branches in Long Island, Governor's Harbour, Spanish Wells and Harbour Island before 5 p.m. January 31st, 2012. RBC Royal Bank is not responsible for any incomplete applications and will not accept any applications after **5:00 p.m. on January 31st, 2012.**

Potential APD investors may also drop off completed application forms and cheques to branches of Colina Insurance, Bank of The Bahamas International, CFAL and Providence Advisors Ltd.

Application forms must be completed in their entirety and cheques should be made payable to Providence Advisors or CFAL. Only certified cheques and bank drafts will be accepted by APD.

For more information visit [www.nassaucontainerport.com](http://www.nassaucontainerport.com) or call **242.323.7066** or **242.323.7064**

LOCAL NEWS



MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE Larry Cartwright briefs members of the media on the upcoming 2012 Agri-business Expos. Photos: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

# Agriculture Expos to showcase nation



MANUEL MESSINA, IICA Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture representative, speaking yesterday.

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AGRICULTURE minister Larry Cartwright announced the details of the 2012 Agri-business Expos yesterday.

At a press conference at the Ministry of Agriculture on Bay Street, Mr Cartwright said the expos will showcase the products, skills and expertise of the farming and fisheries industries. He said: "An important aspect of these events is the opportunity each individual Family Island or district is provided to show off its unique character."

"Because of different geography and geology, each Family Island offers comparative differences and distinctions."

This year's theme will be: Progressing Towards Food Security.

"It will be a reminder of our needs as well as our progress and determination to improve and grow the sector," he said.

According to Mr Cartwright, the ministry has been working constantly to ensure that its programmes and policies are consistent with the theme.

He said achievements of note include:

- the creation of marine protected areas;
- the institution of closed fishing seasons;
- the launch of a livestock embryo transfer programme;
- the enactment of the Animal Control and Protection Act.

The expos will begin in Nassau on March 1 and end on March 3.

In addition to New Providence, expos will be held in Eleuthera, North Andros, Long Island, Grand Bahama and San Salvador.

This year, organisers expect more than 20,000 people to visit the various sites. Last year, there were 15,000 visitors.

## 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.

## Scotiabank (Bahamas) Limited is seeking the services of a Director, Retail Banking

### Position Summary:

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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;
- Provide direction to maintain effectiveness and efficiency of operations and ensure adequate controls are in place to mitigate risks and safeguard the Bank's assets;
- Ensure effective utilisation and development of human resources to support short and long term business objectives;
- 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:

- The incumbent requires a thorough knowledge of the financial services marketplace and detailed knowledge of the market areas, customers segments, and competitive positioning within the Retail and Small Business Banking segment;
- Expert knowledge of sales management techniques and disciplines;
- Highly skilled coaching skills with a demonstrated track record of developing individual and team talent;
- Expert knowledge of Retail and Small Business Banking products and services;
- The incumbent must possess very strong strategic thinking, planning and influencing skills, and excels in building relationships and partnering with and supporting diverse stakeholders;
- Sound knowledge of financial planning concepts;
- Strong PC skills are necessary, including a thorough 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: Senior Manager, Human Resources at Scotiabank.bs@scotiabank.com on or before February 3, 2012.



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HAWAII	C	1:10	3:35	N/A	6:15	8:30	10:40
UNDERWORLD	C	1:15	3:40	N/A	6:15	8:40	10:45
THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TAT	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8:30	N/A
THE IRON LADY	T	1:10	3:35	N/A	6:10	N/A	N/A
RED TAILS	T	1:05	3:40	N/A	6:30	N/A	10:00
EXTREMELY LOUD AND INCREDIBLY CLOSE	B	1:00	4:00	N/A	7:00	N/A	10:00
CONTRABAND	C	1:10	3:30	N/A	6:05	8:25	10:45
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HAWAII	C	1:15	3:40	N/A	6:15	8:40	10:45
REDUCEDS	T	1:00	4:00	N/A	7:00	N/A	10:00
UNDERWORLD	C	1:10	3:40	N/A	6:10	8:35	10:50
CONTRABAND	C	1:05	3:35	N/A	6:10	8:25	10:40

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## Leaders look to China's investments abroad

CHINESE investment abroad is drawing scrutiny as global leaders increasingly look to China to prop up the world economy, even though some remain wary of the country's dominance.

The head of one of China's biggest private equity firms said at the World Economic Forum on Thursday that foreign prejudice about Chinese investment is unfair and that Chinese investors are still learning a game that much of the world has been playing for decades.

With China's "state capitalism" booming and Western economies lagging, business and political leaders also discussed the prospects for democracy worldwide, at an Associated Press debate.

Attention at the invitation-only gathering in the Swiss Alps turned Thursday to China, and how and whether it could help developed economies in Europe and the United States avoid a new recession.

Chinese companies and government funds have been using vast reserves of cash to buy up foreign companies and invest in foreign government bonds in recent years. But with billions of dollars in Chinese investments pouring into their countries, some governments have accused China of seeking to exploit the economic weakness of others to grab valuable natural and technological resources at rock bottom prices.

President Barack Obama's administration also has repeatedly accused China of breaking global trade rules by giving unfair protection to its companies and domestic workers.

"The vast majority of Chinese companies are trying to follow the rules as they understand it," said John Zhao, CEO of Hony Capital. "But many Chinese companies are still trying to learn the rules." His company controls PC maker Lenovo, which bought IBM's computer division in 2005.

The director general of the World Trade Organisation, Pascal Lamy, said China will continue to face "public perception problems" from its investments abroad.

"We will see in the years to come, as China's investments grow and grow. ... We will have the same sort of political turbulences as we have had on trade for the last 10 years," he said.

One way for China to ease the rest of the world's fears about its extravagant corporate shopping sprees is to be more open about its vast poverty problem at home, said Lamy.

"In order for this to result in a win-win game, a number of public perception issues have to be addressed," he said.

Nasdaq CEO Robert Greifeld reminded listeners that China's companies aren't the only ones with a reputation problem.

"We in the Western world have had a long tradition of corporate misdeeds," he said, citing Enron in the United States and

Parmalat of Italy — both of which collapsed after years of hiding massive holes in their accounts.

Yale President Richard C Levin suggested the rest of the world could be grateful for China's investment interest, as eventually the country of more than 1 billion people will have to start spending more of its cash on problems at home, including the lack of proper social security for an aging population.

"Some fraction of these trillions could be used domestically," he said.

The head of the Asian Development Bank said Asia already has been affected by the ongoing European financial crisis in two ways — through the withdrawal of credit in Asia by many European banks and financial institutions, and a drop in trade, which will impact China because Europe is its largest export market.

"I really hope that the European financial crisis can be overcome," Haruhiko Kuroda told the AP.

British Prime Minister David Cameron, whose country doesn't use the troubled euro, urged the eurozone to impose fiscal discipline and integrate its budget policies more, and expressed support for jointly issued eurobonds.

Cameron defended "genuine market capitalism" against those who favour "state capitalism" such as that practised in China or Russia. He said free-market countries with rule of law where governments can be successfully challenged in court "have got to stand up and shout about their values. ... I don't think we should give up in this battle at all".

Cameron also joined Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel in backing the idea of a free-trade deal between the European Union and the US, claiming that a trans-Atlantic pact could deliver a much-needed boost to global commerce.

The annual Davos forum is under growing criticism by those who feel it's too removed from the real world. Activists from Occupy Davos are camping out in igloos and yurts to call attention to income inequality.

"This is a man-made crisis and the people who have caused the crisis, many of whom are in Davos, should be held to account," Salil Shetty, the secretary general of Amnesty International, told AP.

At the democracy debate, a range of leaders agreed that Western-style democracy is still a valid model for the world, as long as it draws in all segments of society and takes social equality as a central tenet.

US Rep David Dreier, a Republican from California, said activism such as the Occupy movements needs to be a part of the democratic process. "We can't say to people be patient. We need to figure out how to address this," he said.

*This article is by Frank Jordans, of the Associated Press.*

# Is the PLP for the small man?

EDITOR, The Tribune.

THEY say that they are for the "small man" or the ordinary worker in this country. The PLP has made that claim for years and years, but is it really so?

The reality is that the PLP, prior to Majority Rule in 1967, had as part of its platform, a major plank regarding the implementation of minimum wage. But in 25 years they did nothing about it. It was the FNM government, led by the Rt Hon Hubert A Ingraham, that made minimum wage a reality, most importantly for the "small man."

The FNM, not only created minimum wage, which over the years has caused many workers wages to be increased, but it did so primarily for the most challenged in our society: those at the bottom of the totem pole, who, over the years were most in need of their government's action in this regard.

Let's we forget, the Pindling-led PLP was in government from 1967 to 1972, 1972 to 1977, 1977 to 1982, 1982 to 1987, 1987 to 1992. That is 25 years consecutively and it did not find minimum wage sufficiently important to pass the necessary legislation to make it a reality. What a crying shame. And the PLP has the audacity to claim that they are for the "small man".

Minimum wage is only the beginning of the 25 years of shameful and scandalous lack of caring and compassion by the PLP government. The FNM also ushered in the 40-hour work week. Can you imagine? Prior to that, employees were required to

**LETTERS**  
letters@tribunemedia.net

work 48 hours a week, before one cent of overtime was paid to them. And that was at a time when most of the world had long moved to the 40-hour work week.

But that is not all, in fact, the FNM government also ushered in employment protection for pregnant women in the workplace. Today, as a result of the FNM's groundbreaking employment legislation, passed by a caring, compassionate and progressive FNM government, women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or soon after giving birth, cannot legally be terminated by their employer.

Unfortunately, we lived (less so today) in a time when employers, all too often, saw women who became pregnant as a burden. Clearly, these were discriminatory practices and some of the worst kind. But, that has ended for the most part, and where and when it rears its ugly head today, because of a caring, compassionate and progressive FNM government, women can seek legal redress and be compensated.

But it does not end there. In fact, the FNM government created a legislative right not to be fired without cause. The employer, in other words, is now required by law to have cause to terminate your employment. They can't legally, simply just "let you go" as we say. This is important because if you are a good worker, you should have some expectation of continued employment.

## The debate about debates

EDITOR, The Tribune.

HERE we go again. The debate about debates has begun with all of the usual posturing and promotion of self-interests. Some have cast debates between party leaders in overwrought moral tones. This is nonsense. It is curious that the PLP supporters, who are moralizing on the need for debates now that they are out of government, were not so bullish when they were in office.

How come they have now conveniently found religion? We all know why, this serves their political interests; interests they are dressing up as being in the public interest. This is what Branville McCartney is all about, no matter how much he feigns the public interest.

We have national debates

year round in Parliament. In those debates Prime Minister Ingraham is always prepared. Perry Christie and Branville McCartney are typically unprepared and rambling.

What these latter gentlemen seem to want is a manufactured debate format geared towards performance, sound bites and one-liners. What they should have been doing in Parliament is engaging in substantive debates.

We do not need the sort of staged performances we are seeing in the debates in the Republican primary process where Newt Gingrich attacks journalists and plays to the crowd.

Those debates may have excited partisans, but there is little of substance. We mostly see events geared towards entertainment that degenerate into a trading of attack-

lines on touch-button issues. Today, if an employer terminates your employment unfairly, apart from unlawfully, you can seek legal redress and be compensated because of a caring, compassionate and progressive FNM government.

It still does not end there. In fact, the FNM government in this term made unemployment compensation a reality, as it exists in most, if not all, developed countries. Just imagine, for the first time ever in our nation, employees who lose their jobs could seek unemployment benefits.

In other words, they can be paid for a period until they find other employment. It was long overdue and needed for a very long time but it was made a reality under this caring, compassionate and progressive FNM government.

After 25 long years in government, the PLP did not do any of the above to aid the "small man" or the ordinary worker (women in particular, a lot of them being the sole breadwinner), to help those of little and challenged means, but they would like us to buy their story and one they tell often, as if we are expected to believe it because they say it so often — that they are for the "small man". But we know better. As the saying goes, "because you say it often, it does not make it so."

The "small man" knows who is for him and that is the Rt Hon Hubert A Ingraham and the Free National Movement.

**MICHAEL A FOULKES**  
Secretary General  
FNM  
Nassau,  
January 22, 2012.

We need to grow up and stop trying to copycat everything the Americans do. Thankfully, in our parliamentary system Bahamians get to see more than the theatrics of politics when it comes to those who may serve as prime minister. We get to see live the thrust and parry on issues of public policy and governance.

If we are serious, we would be promoting roundtables where substance is discussed, not the sort of US-styled debates, where substance is usually a casualty. Let's see how much policy detail a person has, not just whether they can play to the cameras, flash a broad smile and deliver rehearsed lines.

If we are to have such roundtables, they would need to be hosted by an independent and credible group like the Catholic Church. Few of the media houses have the credibility with the public or political leaders to host such an event.

The moderator for such an event would need to be an adept individual, nonpartisan and highly credible who would not let any debate participant get away with nonsense.

Let us raise the bar on the debate about debates. We deserve more than staged events. Let's have some roundtables that are like the classic debates of old where substance is the star and not personalities. Let us have real conversations instead of shouting matches.

The current silly talk about debates is not encouraging. It appears to have more to do with partisan concerns than the public interest.

To advance the genuine public interest, we might look to the famous Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858 in the US instead of the Romney-Gingrich-Santorum-Paul silly-season.

After all, we are choosing a governing party and prime minister, not an entertainer-in-chief.

**BLS**  
Nassau,  
January 24, 2012.



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# PLP accused of bribes for votes

## BISHOP APPEAL RULING REVEALED

By **LAMECH JOHNSON**  
Staff reporter  
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

THE Court of Appeal rejected the bail appeal by Bishop Randy Fraser because he failed to show any exceptional circumstances to justify being released on bond.

The Court released its detailed ruling yesterday on the rejection of bail to the convicted sex offender, who returns to the court in a month to appeal his conviction.

At the time of the hearing last December, appellate court president Justice Anita Allen said the reasons for the bail rejection would be released at a later date.

Yesterday, Justice Allen informed defence attorney Jiarum Mangra and Fraser they would be presented with a printed copy of their ruling.

**SEE page 10**

## SYMONETTE SAYS NO OVER CITIZENSHIP LIST

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Brent Symonette was yesterday called on in Parliament to produce a list of everyone granted citizenship during the FNM administration.

On the final day of debate on amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act, Bain and Grants Town MP Dr Bernard Nottage said that in a country like the Bahamas, where people "move in and out," individuals who are not entitled to vote in an election can sometimes end up becoming registered.

He said any issues of this kind would be avoided if a list of persons who were granted citizenship was made public.

**SEE page 9**

## PM PLEASSED BY BUSINESS IDEAS

PRIME Minister Hubert Ingraham said he is encouraged by the "diversity" of those awarded grants to support their enterprising business ideas under the new Jump-Start programme.

The 72 recipients are men and women - young and old - Mr Ingraham said at the official launch of the initiative, which aims at helping fledgling entrepreneurs get their dreams off the ground.

**SEE page 10**

## House in uproar after minister makes claims

By **CELESTE NIXON**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

THREE men have come forward claiming a bribe was offered by "political operatives" of the PLP trying to drum up support for their party ahead of the upcoming general elections, a heated House of Assembly session was told yesterday.

Education Minister Desmond Bannister claimed these individuals have sworn in affidavits that cash was offered by campaigning members of the opposition in return for political support.

Mr Bannister agreed to withdraw the comments, but warned it was not the last that Parliament would hear of the matter.

Asked if he could prove the claims, Mr Bannister said: "I am fully able, in fact the information has been put into affidavits, I have three of them to date. I know the people that have been offered and I know the people that offered it and at the appropriate time

I will deal with this."

The allegations came during Mr Bannister's contribution to amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act debate yesterday, in response to claims that the Prime Minister told FNM supporters to accept the opposition's bribes and then vote FNM anyway.

Mr Bannister said he was recently informed by an FNM supporter that while the PLP was campaigning in Staniel Creek, Andros, they got into a disagreement with one of Mr Bannister's supporters and were asked to leave. Mr Bannister said he was told they returned the next day and offered his supporters \$1,000.

Dr Bernard Nottage eventually rose to ask if Mr Bannister could produce any proof. If he could not, the Bain and Grants Town MP said, the comments should be withdrawn.

Speaker of the House Alvin Smith ordered Mr Bannister to withdraw his claims unless

**SEE page 8**

## BABY TWIN HEALTHY AFTER LANDMARK OPERATION



**PARENTS** Osee and Chantal Joseph at a press conference yesterday at Princess Margaret Hospital, where it was announced that doctors had successfully separated an underdeveloped conjoined twin from the couple's baby daughter, Shakera.

Photo: **Felipe Major**/Tribune Staff

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

A PARASITIC twin was successfully removed from the back of a three-week-old baby girl on Wednesday evening, marking an "historic milestone" in Bahamian medicine.

Doctors and nurses from the obstetrical, neonatal, and neurological units at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) were joined by the baby's parents to announce the success, noting it was the first time in the country that such a surgery had been performed.

Baby Shakera was born at PMH to Chantal and Osee Joseph on January 3, with a

parasitic twin attached to her back.

The partially-formed mass had a "small leg with some toes" and was "completely binned" with Shakera's spine.

Neurosurgeon Dr Magnus Ekedede, who led the operation to separate Shakera from the underdeveloped twin, said he "had tremendous stress" at first because he "didn't believe we could do it in the Bahamas".

But, he felt more "at ease" following prayer, careful surgery planning, and "excellent support" from his team.

"Everybody did everything right," Dr Ekedede said, thanking the doctors and

nurses who assisted in the surgery. "It's not about me ... I thank everybody that has to do with this."

He continued: "The Bahamas should be happy that we could accomplish this here. Every Bahamian should be happy because if you read through texts book and google this - it's not easy. From my records, nothing like that has been done in the Caribbean."

Ms Joseph called her child a "miracle baby" and thanked PMH's doctors and nurses profusely.

"Thank you to all the doc-

**SEE page 8**

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# Convicted! Convicted! Convicted!

By LAMECH JOHNSON  
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

MAGISTRATE Carolyn Vogt Evans sent the punishment of a convicted child rapist, who pleaded guilty to a robbery last November, back to the Supreme Court as she had initially done last year.

Andrew Bridgewater, 38, had been arraigned before Magistrate Vogt-Evans on November 22 when he pleaded guilty to robbing a 52-year-old woman of a handbag containing \$100 worth of personal items.

The magistrate, after listening and watching the unremorseful attitude and conduct of the accused, told Bridgewater that she would refer the matter to the Supreme Court for sentencing. She said because of his attitude and his previous convictions, he deserved more time in prison than she was allowed to give.

However, when the matter was being heard before Senior Justice Jon Isaacs on Monday January 16, Magistrate Isaacs once more sent the case back to the magistrate's court, this time for a technical error to be corrected.

Because the Court Six magistrate was not the one who had originally convicted Bridgewater, but only accepted his guilty plea, Senior Justice Isaacs said that as regards the law, he could do nothing.

According to the Criminal Procedure Code, a Magistrate referring a matter to the Supreme Court for sentencing must have all preconditions met, which includes conviction of the accused.

However, before remitting Bridgewater back to the higher court to be dealt with, the Court Six, Nassau Street Magistrate, who was on circuit in the family islands recently,

made it clear that she made no error in November.

Addressing Bridgewater, she said: "I understand that some exciting things have been happening in my absence and unfortunately or fortunately for you, you have been remitted to this court for conviction."

"I am of the view," she said, "that my conviction of the defendant was in order with the guidelines set out in the Magistrates Act."

Nevertheless, she emphasised that he was "convicted" and said that "you are to be remitted to the Supreme Court for sentencing".

"If you did not get it the first time, let me repeat it again; Convicted! Convicted! Convicted!"

Prosecutor Kevin Farrington requested a copy of yesterday's transcripts. She said she would check the transcripts to make certain her signature was on them compared to the previous one which had been given away without her signature or permission.

"Would you like a copy of my minutes," she asked the prosecutor. Mr Farrington smiled and replied, "Yes your worship."

Bridgewater, who, when asked by the magistrate, said he was fine, was remanded to prison until he reappears before Senior Justice Isaacs.



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LOCAL NEWS

# Baby twin healthy after landmark operation

from page one

tors, thank you so much – especially to the nurses,” she said. “From when my baby was born, they help my baby, so I say thank you so much.”

Mr Joseph said waiting to hear news about his daughter during the surgery was “very difficult.”

“I was nervous and shocked because I didn’t know that it was going to be the way it is today,” Mr Joseph said. “When they told me that they already took off the other part and they only closing, I start to get happy – excited. But at first it was very hard for me and I was really nervous.”

According to Dr Geoffrey Pennerman, medical chief of staff at PMH, the surgery was performed in “record time” and without complications. The surgery only took eight hours rather than the planned 15.

“Our patient is comfortable and recovering in our neonatal intensive care unit,” Dr Pennerman said. “At this very early stage in her recovery there are no indications of complications as a result of the surgery.”

Baby Shakera is presently on a ventilator at PMH and doctors are confident she “will continue to do well.”

Dr Gwen McDeigan, director of PMH’s neonatal intensive care unit, echoed Dr Pennerman’s comments and also spoke on what’s to be expected in the “immediate post operative period.”

“The surgery was a very prolonged surgery, very ardu-



BABY Shakera’s parents, Osse and Chantal, pictured yesterday.

ous... but an uncomplicated surgery so the baby came back without any post-operative complications and I’m happy to report that the baby had, remarkably, a very stable course of a night,” she said. “But we’re still early yet, it’s always the first 96 hours after surgery that can be a very complicated time, but I’m really pleased to see that so far this baby has done very well.”

According to Dr McDeigan, what remains to be seen is “the function of some of the organs” following the surgery and baby Shakera being “weaned” off the ventilator.

“We anticipate that once we get her out of the immediate post operative period, remember she’s being sedated and getting pain medication, she may not make the best respiratory effort on her own,” Dr McDeigan said.

“So we’re not trying to be aggressive in getting her off the ventilator – not right yet. We’re trying to get her past this post operative period.”

Once she is past this period, doctors will be able to start withdrawing her pain medications so she can wake up and begin further tests.

“There’s still much of the story to be told,” Dr McDeigan said. “We are encouraged and very positive in our outlook that when we get to each of those bridges to cross, that we will cross that bridge, even with difficulty, we will get to the other side.”

Dr Ekedede said he doesn’t anticipate baby Shakera will have any “major deficits” following the surgery.

“I do anticipate this baby to do well,” he said. “There are things that would of told me, or told us, that there would be a problem. Now there are things we may not know – time will say... The first important thing is to make sure she comes out of the ventilator which I think will be very soon.”

It was during a routine ultrasound that baby Shakera was diagnosed by doctors with an “abnormality.” She was 30

weeks in utero.

According to chief obstetrician, Dr Mildred Hall-Watson, the ultrasound had to be repeated so that she, along with her team, could “confirm what we were dealing with.”

It was after repeated ultrasounds and “several” consultations with the parents, that they realized they needed assistance from other PMH departments.

“We looked at what our possibilities were,” Dr Hall-Watson said. “One of the important things that we try to pay attention to when we manage patients is inter-department consultation and so we immediately went to the neo-natologist (and) as a result of that we realized that we were going to have to have consultation with the neurosurgical team.”

Together, this team of doctors from the various PMH departments carefully planned the delivery of the baby and “the appropriate time” for a surgery to remove the abnormality that was attached to Shakera’s back.

“The delivery itself, needless to say, was challenging,” Dr Hall-Watson said. “Imagine trying to get out say a baby who weighs maybe 11 or 12 pounds – not easy... but a baby who also has another extensive attached parasitic twin on its back, that was even more challenging.”

Shakera was born by cesarean section surrounded by obstetricians, paediatricians, and neurosurgeons, before being immediately placed in PMH’s neonatal

intensive care unit.

Dr McDeigan said Shakera was “very stable” following her birth, but paediatricians still classified it as a “very challenging case” as they had to “maintain the integrity” of the parasitic twin.

“Any loss of integrity – any infection in the parasitic twin could have led to the demise of this baby,” she said. “It is really with due credit to our nurses who are at the bedside of the baby, 24 hours a day, and our doctors who are on call monitoring the baby, that this baby was able to survive and make it to surgery.”

Now that the surgery has been successfully completed, Dr Ekedede believes baby Shakera could make it home in as little as two to three weeks.

## PLP ACCUSED OF BRIBES FOR VOTES

from page one

he could prove them to be true.

Mr Bannister said: “On your advice Mr Speaker, I will withdraw the statement but everything I have said in this House is true.”

Following the House session last night, an FNM source claimed PLP operatives are engaging in a number of underhanded election tactics. In some Family Islands, he said, voters are being offered money and asked to turn their voter card over to the party’s campaign generals.

“That’s a very serious thing, especially since international entities have been asked to come to monitor the elections,” the source said. Amendments to the Parliamentary Elections Act, which were passed yesterday in the House of Assembly, aim to clarify the process of overseas voting and permit the elections to be scrutinised by foreign observers.

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LOCAL NEWS

# BISHOP APPEAL RULING REVEALED

from page one

According to the ruling by Justice Allen, Justices Stanley John and Abdulai Conteh, the court was not convinced Fraser and Jiam Mangra presented any "exceptional circumstances" to justify the 54-year-old being granted bail, despite being satisfied by other arguments presented.

It read: "While we were satisfied that the applicant was of previously good character, that the offence of which he was convicted, although serious, was not such as would provide a powerful incentive to abscond, and that it was improbable that he would abscond given his connections to The Bahamas and the fulfilment of all his obligations under his previous grant of bail, we could not find any exceptional circumstances which drive us to the conclusion that the justice of the case required that the applicant be granted bail pending his appeal."

The document continued on to say that "indeed, in the absence of the applicant showing the decision of the magistrate's court was obviously in error, it must be treated by us as correct unless and until we find it to be wrong on appeal."

"Further, we felt justice could be achieved by expediting the hearing of the appeal rather than by the granting of bail."

This ruling came six weeks after announcing their decision at the end of Fraser's bail hearing. The senior pastor of Pilgrim Temple Baptist Church appeared before the appellate court on December 16 seeking to be granted bail pending the outcome of his appeal, which will be heard on February 27.

In November, he was convicted in Magistrate's Court of having sex with a minor between July 2005 and February 2006.

Prosecutors argued that he abused his position of trust by having sex with a girl he had agreed to counsel.

He was originally charged

in the summer of 2006, but freed a year later after a mistrial. His retrial started in 2008.

After several delays, Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethell handed down the guilty verdict and sentenced

Fraser to serve three years at Her Majesty's Prison.

At the bail hearing, Mangra was unable to persuade the justices that his client deserved to be freed pending the outcome of his appeal.

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## LOCAL NEWS

## PM PLEASSED BY BUSINESS IDEAS

## from page one

He noted that 47 are from New Providence and 25 from Grand Bahama. They were funded to a total of \$530,000, representing one third of the \$1.5 million the government has allocated for Jump Start for this fiscal year.

"Your applications have been approved to provide funding for tourism-related businesses engaged in a wide variety of activities: manufacturers of straw goods – handbags, hats, floor mats, place mats, etcetera, operators of sports fishing tours, rentals of fishing gear and of yachts, producers of sea-shell craft, manufacturers of jewellery and other accessories, producers of fruit juices and operators of fruit and cocktail juice stands, persons engaged in the sale of souvenirs, the rental of snorkel gear and beach towels and including musicians engaged at resorts and other places of entertainment," Mr Ingraham said.

He said awards will soon be made to Family Island applicants as well.

The programme, open to individuals over 30, is meant to encourage aspiration and "help facilitate the dreams flowing from the imaginations

of Bahamians desiring to go into business but who lack the necessary capital funding to do so," Mr Ingraham said.

He said other programmes introduced by his government include the Self-Starter programme, which targets budding entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 29; and the National Job-Readiness and Skills (NJRST) programme.

Mr Ingraham told of his meeting with a young business owner who got his start through Self-Starter, and who was recently subcontracted to do electrical work on the new Office of the Prime Minister.

"He told me how grateful he was for the assistance provided to him through the Self-Starter Programme. He said that the funding made available to him made the difference between his being able to open his own business and employ others and remaining an employee of somebody else. Self Starter made him a successful businessman," the prime minister said.

He also noted that the NJRST has provided employment and skills training to 3,000 Bahamians who were previously unemployed.

"Without this programme many of these persons would have been 'on the blocks' or

otherwise idle, out of work and in financial difficulties.

"Through these two initiatives, even in these very trying times, thousands of Bahamians are being provided with employment, skills training and also opportunities to become business-owners and employers of additional Bahamians," Mr Ingraham said.

He said Jump-Start is another "bold step" in the government's efforts to foster greater entrepreneurship, private sector business development and Bahamian ownership of small businesses providing valuable services to the economy.

Each hopeful can apply for a grant of up to \$7,500, to make payments on current invoices for goods and supplies required for their approved business enterprise.

Mr Ingraham said: "Every approved applicant would not need \$7,500. We will only pay up to what is justifiably required for your business. The monies may only be used in respect of the approved business; you cannot pay other bills unconnected to the approved business with monies from this programme."

He said that, eventually, 200 applicants will be approved to participate.

## SYMONETTE SAYS NO OVER CITIZENSHIP LIST

## from page one

He said: "I would like the Minister of Foreign Affairs to disclose those persons who have received citizenship up to now, disclose them to the public, so that when we check the register we know who is a citizen and entitled to be registered."

However, Mr Symonette refused to name new citizens, saying he has already told the press how many persons were regularised under the FNM.

He said the protocol for registering has been clear since Independence – an applicant gets a certificate of citizenship, which he submits in order to get a passport and then uses the passport to register.

Dr Nottage also claimed people have said they are having difficulties registering to vote, often because of inconsistencies in what is accepted as correct documentation.

As a way to fix this and other problems, Dr Nottage said, he supports the idea of a permanent register.

He said: "Unless they can show cause why persons who have voted before ought not have voted before, there should not be an impediment to that person registering again."

"That is one of the reasons I favour a permanent register. If you go through the process for the very first time – have all the necessary documents, they should not have to go through the process over and over again."

Dr Nottage said he has no issue with the amendments to the Act, but believes they do

not go far enough.

A resolution was also passed yesterday, authorising the Ministry of Finance to accept a \$41 million loan from EXIM Bank of China to provide funding for the North Abaco Port Project and Little Abaco Bridge Project.

The design and construction of the Little Abaco Bridge will cost \$6.5 million and the North Abaco Port is estimated to cost upwards of \$33m.

Environment Minister Earl Deveaux said the project will provide economic opportunity and growth for Abaco, lead to environmental restoration and wetland preservation, and improve international relations. The new bridge will be constructed on the north side of the existing causeway.

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## 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.





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LOCAL NEWS

If you go down to the park today...



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**Horrible surprise**



THE PUBLIC TOILETS at Centreville park pictured yesterday in a disgusting, run-down state, filled with rubbish, covered in graffiti and even with the electric meter ripped out.  
Photos: **Felipé Major/Tribune Staff**

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**NOTICE**  
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If you have already applied for a Government loan with salary deductions through your Payroll Department, you will not be considered for shares unless you have also submitted an APD share subscription form to CFAL or Providence Advisors Ltd. **before 5 p.m. on January 31st.**

Public Servants may also drop off completed subscription forms to branches of Colina Insurance, Bank of The Bahamas International and, in selected Family Islands, to branches of RBC Royal Bank.

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