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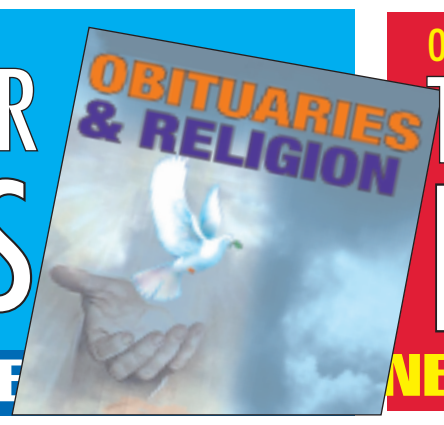

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Haitians told to use their vote

Visiting leader says 'protect your interests'

By AVA TURNQUEST
Tribune Staff Reporter
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HAITIAN president Michel Martelly yesterday advised Bahamians of Haitian descent to band together and lobby for a political party that they feel would best protect their interests.

During his two-day stopover in The Bahamas, President Martelly held frank discussions with officials and the Haitian community with the view to develop trade opportunities and improve the conditions of Haitians residing legally in the country.

"I told them to organise themselves and identify in this upcoming elections who is on their side," he said.

"By being determinate in the elections they may have people taking care of them, this is the democratic way. I promised them to work for them to better their possibilities to remain in Haiti so I had a very open discussion with officials as to how can we protect those who at least have the legal papers."

President Martelly said he was committed to working with the Bahamian government to find responsible and humane solutions to reports of mistreatment of legal resi-

SEE pages 2&3

THE PRESIDENT of Haiti, Michel Martelly, pictured during his visit yesterday. For more photos and details, turn to pages 2&3. Photo: **Kristin Heinichen**

SEX ATTACK ON BOY INVESTIGATED

POLICE are investigating an alleged sexual assault on a male child.

The incident reportedly occurred around 7.30pm on Tuesday involving an adult male.

Police are following significant leads into the matter and have launched an intensive search for the culprit.

The child is presently receiving medical care. Active investigations continue.

DNA WEIGHS UP DEPUTY OPTIONS

POLITICAL sources have revealed that the Democratic National Alliance has set its sights on at least four of its 38 candidates as potentials for the deputy leadership of the party.

While leader Branville McCartney has not announced who the party is courting for the position, the source said Wayne Munroe, Dr Madeline Sawyer, Randy

SEE page 13

PARTY LOSES ANOTHER CANDIDATE

By PAUL G TURNQUEST
Chief Reporter
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THE Democratic National Alliance will be putting forward a new candidate for the MICAL constituency, after the previous political hopeful, Delano Munroe was dropped by the organisation.

DNA Leader Branville McCartney revealed last evening that his party has decided to replace Mr Munroe with another candidate who *The Tribune* has learned is 35-year-old Jervis Williams, a local contractor in Inagua.

Mr Williams is also the nephew of Vernon Symonette, a former FNM Member of Parliament and Speaker of the House of Assembly.

While Mr McCartney would not speak about the court case in which Mr Munroe has been charged with stealing by reason of employment, the DNA leader said that the decision to replace him was based primarily on the "best interests" of the people of MICAL.

SEE page 13

TWO DEAD IN SEPARATE INCIDENTS

By SANCHESKA BROWN
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POLICE are investigating two separate incidents which have left two Nassau men dead.

The latest incident took place around 12.10am yesterday on Hay Street, off East Street.

Police say the victim was sitting in the driver's seat of a green Honda, when he was approached by five men, two of whom were armed with handguns. The men opened fire on the vehicle resulting in the victim being shot twice in his head.

A friend of the victim jumped into the vehicle and drove the man to hospital. He was pronounced dead on arrival.

Police have not officially identified the victim, however sources say he is 25-year-old Tristan Bartlett.

SEE page 13

MAN IN COURT OVER CHINESE WORKER'S DEATH

By LAMECH JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

A MAN was arraigned in court yesterday in connection with the shooting death of a Chinese man.

Cleophas Clarke, 19, appeared before Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethell at Court 8, Nassau Street, accused of killing 45-year-old Wing Hong Chan outside his home on Village Road on Monday, January 23.

Mr Chan, who worked at the VIP Chinese restaurant and was related to one of its owners, was shot and killed during an armed robbery.

SEE page 13

PLP DEFEND GIBSON CHOICE

IT is up to the Bahamian public, not the FNM, to decide if PLP Golden Gates candidate Shane Gibson will once again sit in the House of Assembly, according to FNM Chairman Carl Bethel.

Mr Bethel's statement follows one from the DNA that claimed last week the main reasons why the PLP lost in 2007 was because of corruption, scandals and Mr Gibson's "issue" concerning Anna Nicole Smith.

The DNA said it pulled this

SEE page 13

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LOCAL NEWS

Ministerial talks over immigration

HAITIAN Foreign Affairs Minister Laurant Lamothe met with Bahamian Foreign Affairs Minister Brent Symonette and Minister of National Security Tommy Turnquest to discuss immigration matters and trade opportunities.

Mr Lamothe is a member of the delegation of Haitian President Michel Martelly, who engaged in a series of meetings with government officials yesterday.

Thanking the Bahamian people for hosting the delegation, Mr Lamothe said he is very excited to re-energise the bilateral relations between Haiti and the Bahamas.

He said: "We feel that we have a lot in common, there are a lot points to develop, especially in the area of trade negotiations, and we are going to review some migration issues.

"We feel that Haiti has a lot of good things happening and we are here to talk about them – investments are now happening especially in the northern side of the Haiti that will have a positive impact on the region."

Mr Symonette said the Bahamas government looks forward to continuing to build on the diplomatic foundations that already exist, and strengthening the relationship with Haiti for a better future.

"We are pleased with the drive the government has taken since the bad effects of the earthquake," he said. "We trust discussions will be fruitful and we will move forward with a better working relationship."

This trip is President Martelly's first official visit to the Bahamas since he was elected last April.

Speaking with members of the Haitian community at a packed Church of God auditorium on Farrington Road on Tuesday night, President Martelly said he is working to bring international investment and further employment opportunities to Haiti.

According to Mr Martelly, the Bahamas government was engaged in discussions with Haiti about importing mangoes prior to the 2010 earthquake.

He said during his visit, he hopes to resume talks regarding the export of agricultural produce from Haiti.

HAITI PRESIDENT Michel Martelly shakes the hand of Governor General Arthur Foulkes yesterday at Government House during his visit. Photos: Felipé Major/Tribune Staff

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HAITIANS TOLD TO USE THEIR VOTE

from page one

dents and persons born in the Bahamas of Haitian descent.

However, he explained that his ultimate focus was to stem the flow of Haitian migrants by creating jobs and restoring economic independence.

"I have reports that at times people with legal papers have been arrested, I have reports that kids who are born here and who have to wait until they turn 18 to choose whether they will become Haitian or Bahamian. Until they are 18, they don't belong to anywhere and yet they were born here.

"Do I have to tell anyone if you send them back to Haiti they will not know anybody, and that they probably won't recognise the place where they land. This could be considered as a crime, but that's not the issue to talk about crime, the issue is to stop migrants and find better solutions."

He added: "To make sure that Haitians do not have to leave their country anymore looking for opportunities."

Speaking to hundreds from the Haitian community at the Church of God auditorium on Joe Farrington Road Tuesday, President Martelly advised Haitians in the country that The Bahamas government was not responsible for their problems.

"[Haitians] came here to look for opportunities that they could not get at home so I did ask them to follow the law, to be respectful," he said.

"We spoke with officials about solving the issues of the migration of Haitians here, it's not just about closing the doors, it's also about improving their lives in Haiti."

President Martelly met with both Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham and Leader of the Opposition Perry Christie yesterday. Along with Haitian Foreign Affairs, Tourism, and National Security delegates, he also met with Governor General Sir Arthur Foulkes, Minister of Foreign Affairs Brent Symonette, and Minister of National Security Tommy Turnquest.

Part of a world tour to reshape Haiti from "aid to trade", the Haitian president explained yesterday that the embattled nation was "open for business".

Down from the estimated 1.6 million displaced after the 2010 earthquake, President Martelly said there are currently some 500,000 still living in tents.

He underscored numerous economic and social initiatives launched in the country over the nine months since he took office. Among those include the construction of an industrial park and a decentralised airport; free education for some 1 million children; and assistance for mothers to purchase locally produced goods.

He noted that there was specific focus to develop the northern side of the country as this was where most of the migrants in the Bahamas were from.

He said: "In the past, we were able to pay our independence, that debt was $41 billion, we paid it with coffee. Today we import everything we have. We need to organise ourselves. We feel that Haiti is open for business, we are putting together laws, we are giving tax incentives.

"Digicel has invested $450 million and plans to inject another $150 million. Heineken just built a brewery, Marriott is building a hotel and the Best Western is coming. Things are moving."

President Martelly listed numerous investment opportunities in Haiti's relatively "virgin" industries of construction, electricity, and agriculture.

"We want trade, we need to create jobs, as we create jobs, companies make money, they pay their taxes, and Haiti prospers," he said.

"We have this culture of immobility, of accepting everything, our mission is to stand up and build our country, not run and go to The Bahamas, not run and go to New York. To believe that we Haitians, only we can change our country."

President Martelly added: "If I don't change that mentality, in 25 years my successors could be standing here talking about the same problems.

THE President of Haiti leaves Government House

PRESIDENT of Haiti Michel Martelly signs the book at Government House.

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LOCAL NEWS

PRESIDENT Michel Martelly speaks to Perry Christie yesterday at his home.
Photos: **Felipé Major**/ Tribune Staff

President aims to stop illegal migrants

By CELESTE NIXON
Tribune Staff Reporter
cnixon@tribunemedia.net

HAITIAN President Michel Martelly wants to work with the Bahamas government to stop illegal immigrants from his country taking jobs from Bahamians.

Visiting with opposition leader Perry Christie yesterday, President Martelly said while he looks forward to reinforcing relations between the two island nations during his visit, he will also be discussing illegal immigration, changes to the local Haitian Embassy and other issues.

He said: "It is a pleasure for me to be here to address these issues and also the problems of Haitians living here.

"We know it is not easy for them, they came here looking for opportunities.

"We also know that being here, they sometimes take the jobs of the natives.

"We want to work with both governments to see how we can facilitate and solve these issues."

As the official opposition, Mr Christie said it is particularly important for the PLP to establish good relations with leaders of countries that have close ties to the Bahamas.

President Martelly's visit "provides a wonderful opportunity" to forge such a relationship, he said.

Mr Christie said he hopes to speak with the president concerning a number of initiatives and ideas that were previously discussed with Haiti's former leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Among these is the possibility of establishing a bilateral commission that would meet twice a year, to "ensure that we had harmony in our relations where we can sit, talk and address the challenges".

Another measure discussed was allowing Haitians to apply for Bahamas work permits at the Bahamian consulate in Haiti, Mr Christie said.

President Martelly arrived with his delegation on Tuesday evening. His first event was a meeting with members of the Haitian community at the Church of God auditorium on Joe Farrington Road.

Police estimate thousands of people were in attendance to welcome the president to the Bahamas.

He spoke of changes that they are making in Haiti and implored people to support him in the reconstruction process following the earthquake that devastated the country in 2010.

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THE WOMAN IN BLACK	T	1:10	3:30	N/A	6:15	8:30	10:45
CHRONICLE	C	1:15	3:35	N/A	6:10	8:40	10:50
MAN ON A LEDGE	C	1:05	3:30	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:50
THE GREY	C	1:00	3:25	N/A	6:00	8:25	10:40
HAYWIRE	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
REDTAILS	T	1:05	3:40	N/A	6:30	N/A	10:00
CONTRABAND	C	1:10	3:30	N/A	6:05	8:25	10:45
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JOURNEY 2	NEW	1:05	3:30	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:35
THE WOMAN IN BLACK	T	1:10	3:35	N/A	6:00	8:40	10:45
CHRONICLE	C	1:150	3:40	N/A	6:15	8:35	10:50
MAN ON A LEDGE	C	1:10	3:25	N/A	6:15	8:25	10:55
UNDERWORLD	C	1:10	3:40	N/A	6:10	8:35	10:50

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Russians reach Antarctic lake

OPENING a scientific frontier miles under the Antarctic ice, Russian experts drilled down and finally reached the surface of a gigantic freshwater lake, an achievement the mission chief likened to placing a man on the moon.

Lake Vostok could hold living organisms that have been locked in icy darkness for some 20 million years, as well as clues to the search for life elsewhere in the solar system.

Touching the surface of the lake, the largest of nearly 400 subglacial lakes in Antarctica, came after more than two decades of drilling, and was a major achievement avidly anticipated by scientists around the world.

"In the simplest sense, it can transform the way we think about life," NASA's chief scientist Waleed Abdalati told The Associated Press in an email Wednesday.

The Russian team made contact with the lake water Sunday at a depth of 12,366 feet, about 800 miles east of the South Pole in the central part of the continent.

Scientists hope the lake might allow a glimpse into microbial life forms that existed before the Ice Age and are not visible to the naked eye. Scientists believe that microbial life may exist in the dark depths of the lake despite its high pressure and constant cold — conditions similar to those believed to be found under the ice crust on Mars, Jupiter's moon Europa and Saturn's moon Enceladus.

Valery Lukin, the head of Russia's Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute, said reaching the lake was akin to the Americans winning the space race in 1969.

American and British teams are drilling to reach their own subglacial Antarctic lakes, but Columbia University glaciologist Robin Bell said those are smaller and younger than Vostok, which is the big scientific prize.

At 160 miles long and 30 miles wide, Lake Vostok is similar in size to Lake Ontario. It is kept from freezing into a solid block by the more than two-mile-thick crust of ice across it that acts like a blanket, keeping in heat generated by geothermal energy underneath.

Lukin said he expects the lake to contain chemotroph bacteria that feed on chemical reactions in pitch darkness, probably similar to those existing deep on the ocean floor but dating back millions of years. "They followed different laws of evolution that are yet unknown to us," he said.

Studying Lake Vostok will also yield insights about the origins of Antarctica, which is believed by many to have been part of a broader continent in the distant past.

And the project has allowed the testing of technologies that could be used in exploring other icy worlds. "Conditions in subglacial lakes in Antarctica are the closest we can get to those where scientists expect to find extraterrestrial life," Lukin said.

Drilling through the ice crust in the world's coldest environment brought major technological challenges.

Temperatures on the Vostok Station on the surface above the lake have registered the coldest ever recorded on Earth, reaching minus 128 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 89 degrees Celsius). Conditions were made even tougher by its high elevation, more than 11,000 feet above sea level.

The effort has drawn fears that the more than 60 tons of lubricants and antifreeze used in the drilling may contaminate the lake's pristine waters. Bell said the Russian team was doing its best "to do it right" and avoid contamination, but others were nervous.

"Lake Vostok is the crown jewel of lakes there," said University of Colorado geological sciences professor James White. "These are the last frontiers on the planet we are exploring. We really ought to be very careful."

Lukin said Russia had waited several years for international approval of its drilling technology before proceeding. He said that, as anticipated, lake water under pressure rushed up the bore hole, pushing the drilling fluid up and away, then froze, forming a protective plug that will prevent contamination of the lake.

Russian scientists will remove the frozen sample for analysis in December when the next Antarctic summer season comes. They reached the lake just before they had to leave at the end of the Antarctic summer, when plunging temperatures halt all travel to the region.

Lukin, who made numerous trips to Antarctica, said the physiological challenges of extreme cold and thin oxygen were aggravated by isolation.

Martin Siegert, a leading scientist with the British Antarctic Survey, hailed reaching Lake Vostok as "an important milestone ... and a major achievement for the Russians".

The British are trying to reach another subglacial lake, Lake Ellsworth.

"The Russian team share our mission to understand subglacial lake environments and we look forward to developing collaborations with their scientists and also those from the US and other nations, as we all embark on a quest to comprehend these pristine, extreme environments," Siegert said in an email.

Americans scientists are drilling at Lake Whillans, west of the South Pole.

Some voiced hope that studies of Lake Vostok and other subglacial lakes will advance knowledge of Earth's own climate and help predict its changes.

By Seth Borenstein and Vladimir Isachenkov of the Associated Press.

Nation building is hard work

EDITOR, The Tribune.

LETTERS
letters@tribunemedia.net

WE ARE entering a season where some of our most able citizens take leave of their senses and profess their chosen political ideology with such a passion that the question of demonisation comes up.

In years past, I gave this anomaly little consideration, but having come face to face with it in the past decade I feel the need to comment.

This activity really pinged my radar, when one of the local pastors, used some very inappropriate language as a "man of god", as he "directed" his flock in a previous election.

I will admit that at the time I saw his behaviour as normal, when you consider his upbringing within that "political community".

In that same year, I watched as several persons that I have been in ministry with, went out on political limbs and started cutting on the wrong side of the limb they were standing on; they would have done irreparable harm to themselves and their families, if not for intervention.

I think demonisation is an accurate term, because when we attempt to talk about those "past" incidences they claim to have no memory of it.

This could be the year that we get some answers about the true function of political ideology in a social context, as a younger voting population asks the questions that have nothing to do with jobs, entitlement, dependency or Exodus as we have evolved into the new pharaohs.

The populace who see themselves as a majority will have to experience their own personal exorcising as they battle the social and cultural influences that have allowed particular biases to be inserted into their psyches.

In my opinion, this is worse than being a drug addict. In a recent sermon during the Majority Rule celebration, Pastor Timothy Stewart reminded the listeners that we who consider ourselves the majority came into a circumstance that allowed us to exercise our freedom as Bahamians, but some of us were more comfortable in securing our own "Pharaohs", as we ventured into the new land.

What his sermon also implied that what we call a Bahamian Majority, has nothing to do with skin colour – although some politicians would want to tell you different as they spread their own gospel of fear and mistrust.

What was preached as a confusing black and white issue, has been further confounded by the additional colours of yellow, red and green.

Are we going to get past ourselves and the biases that beset us every five years?

Or are we going to nail those who lead us to wall and demand that they fulfil their obligation to us and we can make it easier for them by fulfilling our obligations to ourselves (buyin' ya oon fridge and stove. Sic.)

If we are to get from where we are and put all of this new infrastructure to work, jobs are the least of our worries.

Right now we have to fight the battles that matter, so that we and those who follow us do not find themselves back in Egypt, and, there is nothing wrong in doing the hard work required.

Do not believe the lie that all you have to do is be Bahamian and let those who lead do the rest. Nation building is hard work and it must be intentional; especially in the four and a half years between the silly season.

EDWARD HUTCHESON
Nassau,
February 7, 2012.

Bahamas improvements

EDITOR, The Tribune.

THANK you for allowing me space in your daily to commend the present government on its vision and one or two of its many accomplishments since 2007.

I start by saying that I am a proud Bahamian from off East Street. I am 35 years old. I left The Bahamas to attend university in 1994. I have not lived in Nassau since as, once qualified, I was offered a job as a teacher. (I do plan to return home to contribute to my society, but, meanwhile, I am proud to be a Bahamian competing in the global work force). I read the newspapers online, and listen to ZNS when I can. I was forced to write when I noted that people were saying that the government has done nothing in the last five years. I wondered if they were mixing up the PLP government with the FNM government.

I return home at every opportunity.

Imagine my extreme delight when I alighted at LPIA just before Christmas 2011. When I saw the new airport facility, I could not believe my eyes… and the park was full of seemingly happy children and their guardians. I passed the new Straw Market and marvelled at the architecture and the new face of Bay Street.

The following day, I went to the Marathon Mall and could not get over the Robinson Road/Marathon/East-West Highway junction. My mother even drove me around and showed me the new and improved schools that had been built since 2007, the first since May 2002.

Leaving Nassau, the airport was equally impressive…I bought Bahamian soaps and candies in the airport to take back to my friends.

I live in the US, I also watch world news and am aware of how many government employees have lost their jobs all over the world. I am so happy that my mother, a public servant, still has her job, she and all the other 20,000 public servants in the Bahamas.

My only regret is that I will not be able to vote in the next election.

Bahamians, take the scales from your eyes. Do not listen to the noise in the market. Hop a bus and drive around your country. See for yourselves the improvements that have been made in Nassau. Next time I come, I want to visit the Family Islands so that I can see those improvements too.

PROUD TO BE A BAHAMIAN
Nassau,
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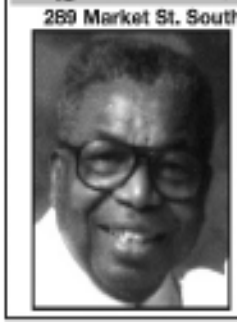

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LOCAL NEWS

Jail for runaway drugs importer

By LAMECH JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Reporter
ljohnson@tribunemedia.net

A MAN who disappeared for a significant portion of his trial concerning nearly $1 million in drugs was convicted and sentenced to four years in prison yesterday.

Omar Chisholm, 34, along with co-defendant Valentino Johnson, 33, stood before Deputy Chief Magistrate Carolita Bethell to receive their sentences. The matter has been before Court 8 since October 2009, when they first faced four drug charges and one charge of stealing.

They, along with two other defendants already convicted, were accused of conspiring to possess and import more than 900 pounds of marijuana.

They were further accused of importing and being in possession of the large quantity of drugs from Jamaica along with theft of a $100,000 boat, though the latter charge was thrown out.

These offenses occurred on April 11, 2009 in waters off Barre Tarre, Exuma. The accused men had denied the allegations and pleaded not guilty.

Before giving her ruling, the judge summarised the facts of the case and Johnson's statement to police.

She said officers on patrol in Barre Tarre harbour saw two men offloading items before getting on a vessel and heading out to sea.

Police pursued the vessel and saw four men aboard, Omar Chisholm being the driver.

After numerous attempts to evade police, Chisholm jumped overboard, followed by Valentino Johnson.

Officers caught the boat and found 16 sacks filled with marijuana. Johnson was pulled out of the water and arrested.

According to Johnson's statement to police, Chisholm had approached him days before the incident to discuss making money in an operation, and said if Johnson was interested, he should meet him in Exuma.

The accused said he did not know what the vessel contained but needed the money.

He and Chisholm, who was deemed the organiser of the scheme, were convicted on the possession and conspiracy charges.

Chisholm's attorney Jiaram Mangra asked the magistrate to be lenient to his client, who he said is a "very pleasant young man".

He said the father of three operates a boat and jet ski business and has a supportive family that has been at court throughout the trial.

Mr Mangra asked the judge to take into consideration that his client had no previous convictions and the length of time the matter had been before the courts.

Johnson's attorney Calvin Seymour also noted that his client had no previous or pending matters before the courts – which he said is an accomplishment for any 33-year-old in this society – and noted that Johnson is a carpenter with a supportive family.

Magistrate Bethell said she was very disappointed that Chisholm, despite being raised in a good home by teachers, turned to crime and caused his family to pay the $50,000 bail bond – which he then breached.

She said all of the evidence suggested he was in control of the vessel.

The judge accepted that Johnson was not the major player in the smuggling operation, but did not accept that he did not know the cargo was drugs.

Chisholm was sentenced to four years in prison on each count, but the sentences are to run concurrently starting on January 17, the day that he was brought before the court after violating his bail conditions.

Johnson was sentenced to serve two years, starting yesterday.

UNION LEADER WARNS GOVERNMENT TIME RUNNING OUT FOR NEGOTIATIONS

By DANA SMITH
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

TIME is running out for negotiations between the government and the Bahamas Public Service Union, according to union president John Pinder.

Mr Pinder said yesterday that the BPSU is still waiting for Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham to renegotiate its industrial agreement ahead of this year's general election.

The agreement expired in June 2010 and the union has been working under a "verbal promise" from Mr Ingraham that a new one is coming, but the union is looking for a written contract.

"Time is running out now, we're trying to get them to give us something prior to the election," Mr Pinder said. "If a new government comes into play, there's still a waiting process.

"The prime minister has verbally promised us some things but again the system is such that you cannot hold another government on a verbal agreement from the prior government, if the government should change. We want it in writing and signed off."

Following earlier threats of industrial action if this demand is not met, Mr Pinder said the union has a meeting with Mr Ingraham next Monday to continue discussions.

He said he will "wait to see" what Mr Ingraham will say before considering any protests – which would only occur if "the majority of the membership" agrees.

However, the union wants to "proceed in an aggressive manner to get something ironed out quickly," he said.

Among the issues Mr Pinder wants to address with Mr Ingraham is health insurance for both "high risk" and "low risk" jobs. He also wants to talk about salary increases.

Last Tuesday, Mr Pinder accused the government of "cherry-picking" who they take care of in the public service.

"We heard through the press that the nurses got a $700 lump sum payment as well as $700 added to their salaries and health insurance. What about the police officers, the prison officers, the driving instructors and all of the other government agents? All we want is for it to be fair across the board – no cherry-picking," he said.

Proverbs 21:3

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Wetlands Day to protect flora and fauna

THE Bahamas National Trust and the Ministry of Tourism joined forces to celebrate World Wetlands Day by introducing Bahamian tour operators to two national parks on New Providence that protect wetlands and their associated flora and fauna.

The workshop was held on January 30 and included a visit to two New Providence National Parks.

" This was a wonderful way to celebrate this annual event' said Lynn Gape, BNT Deputy executive director. "Over half of international tourists travel to wetlands of all types but particularly in coastal areas the expenditure linked to wetlands can be quite significant.

"This was an amazing opportunity to focus on key stakeholders who can insure that tourism in wetlands is sustainable and that tourism development in and around wetlands follows Ramsar's principles of wise use."

The workshop was well attended by local tour operators including Majestic Tours, Leisure Tours, Bahamas Experience and by Ministry of Tourism representatives.

More than 30 persons participated in a special presentation on wetlands and a number of interactive activities including Wetland Jeopardy.

The group then visited the Harrold and Wilson Ponds, and Bonefish Ponds national parks which protect an inland wetland and mangrove wetland area respectively.

According to executive director Eric Carey: "The BNT has through corporate and government support has been able to provide infrastructure at both of these parks which encourage visitation and nature tourism activities.

SEE page 20

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He is married to Eulease Beneby nee Rigby, a career educator and Principal of C. V. Bethel Sr. High School. They are the parents of four sons, Nathaniel III, Norrie, Neilsen and Nolan.

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LOCAL NEWS

Mitchell calls for more action to protect trial witnesses

By DANA SMITH
dsmith@tribunemedia.net

FOX HILL MP Fred Mitchell said more should be done to combat witness intimidation as it has become a serious obstacle to the criminal court system.

Speaking outside the Supreme Court on Tuesday, Mr Mitchell announced the PLP will reinstate the Witness Protection Programme should they win the up-coming general election.

The programme still exists under the FNM, but the MP contends that it has been neglected by the Ingraham administration.

Mr Mitchell said the Bahamas recorded more than 450 murders since 2007 as well as numerous other violent offenses – a "stark contrast" to the low rate of convictions.

He could not offer an exact figure, but claimed only a small percentage of those responsible for the crime wave have been convicted and sentenced.

"One of the hindrances to the swift administration of justice and the trial process is the intimidation of witnesses," Mr Mitchell said. "We have even seen where persons who were to have given testimony lost their lives before doing so – in fact, they were killed."

He revealed prosecutors have complained their cases "can't get off the ground" because witnesses "suddenly become reluctant" to testify before the courts.

Mr Mitchell reminded the press of the Justice Protection Bill which the PLP introduced and passed in 2006. After taking office in 2007, the FNM "stopped this programme," he said.

"(The Bill) made it a criminal offence to use violence against, threaten, damage or cause loss of employment to a person because they will be a witness, with a penalty of 10 years in prison," he said. "The legislation went so far as to offer identity changes in the cases where it was warranted."

Because they stopped the programme, the FNM "must be held accountable for this gross neglect of duty which unfortunately has resulted in the loss of the lives of many Bahamian brothers and sisters," Mr Mitchell said.

FRED MITCHELL MP

Asked if there are any witness protection procedures currently in place, he said: "The Witness Protection Programme is there in theory. I know that several of our members of Parliament have raised this matter with the Minister of National Security, but at the end of the day the programme does not seem to be as it was envisioned when we first put it in place and we believe witnesses are vulnerable still and much more attention needs to be paid to it."

The PLP appreciates the great need for witnesses to be able to carry our their civic duty "without fearing for their lives," and condemns the FNM for "allowing so many to be lost to witness tampering before lifting a finger to protect such persons," Mr Mitchell said.

Last October, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said 19 witnesses in serious crime cases have suffered intimidation or harm as a result of their testimony in 2011.

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LOCAL NEWS

Rolle attacks FNM for the party's 'monumental' failure

By KHRISNA VIRGIL
kvirgil@tribunemedia.net

THE Progressive Liberal Party's Pinewood Gardens candidate Khaalis Rolle castigated the FNM for "monumentally failing" the people of the Bahamas.

Speaking with Bahamians living or studying in Florida, Mr Rolle said the government is causing people to suffer because it has taken too narrow an approach to solving the country's economic problems.

He said: "Too many people are being left out of the equation. The PM spoke a lot about roads and infrastructure developments, but what are the benefits of roads and buildings if people are losing their cars, their homes, and the electricity in 5,000-plus homes is off?"

Mr Rolle said that to many people, the ability to deliver new roads may be just as important as the ability to fight crime, but true success only comes for a government when every promise is kept.

"You are not a success if you are only able to deliver on 50 per cent of the concerns. If you don't deliver on the other 50 per cent, you are a failure.

"When you look at how they have addressed all of the concerns, they are monumental failures.

"I want to see how you are going to take care of all of the people. I don't want you to just pick the pockets of success and neglect anything else," he said.

Mr Rolle also criticised the government for its "extremely exorbitant" spending and borrowing, which he claimed has wreaked havoc on the country's finances.

KHAALIS ROLLE said the government was causing people to suffer because of its narrow approach in solving the country's economic problems.

"When you've raised as much taxes as we've done in the past few years, there's absolutely no reason the government's fiscal house should be in the position that it's in," he said.

Mr Rolle added: "We go into these communities, talk to people and see the widespread level of suffering. You have people that have to go and stand on a welfare line and beg for food. You have people that are angry.

"The quality of life has diminished significantly over the past couple of years. We don't understand the level of frustration. The level of frustration is directly correlated in the rise of criminal activity."

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Christie makes pledge on Urban Renewal

By KHRISNA VIRGIL
kvirgil@tribunemedia.net

OPPOSITION leader Perry Christie said Urban Renewal will be re-implemented within 48 hours of his party's election.

The joint police and Social Services programme, aimed at breathing new life into inner city communities, won acclaim internationally and was one of the major reasons for the decrease in crime seen under the last PLP administration, from 2002 to 2007, Mr Christie said.

He said: "This programme has educated people in knowing that they have to protect themselves, get involved with the police and take the appropriate direction.

"We got an annual report saying crimes against persons were decreasing dramatically because of this programme."

However, Mr Christie said "the thriving social initiative" was sabotaged by the FNM because of politics.

"Because it had my handprint on it, the new government came in 2007 and gutted the programme and changed the whole course," he said.

Mr Christie highlighted Urban Renewal's "multidimensional mentoring programmes", saying they provided young men who were expelled from school with an opportunity to reform their attitudes and approach to life.

Urban Renewal's school policing arm, he said, played a part in revealing that school-aged boys were taking guns and other weapons into the classroom.

"I went into the House of Assembly and dumped on to the table, as prime minister, the kinds of weapons that were being taken in and we knew the day would come when students would be getting killed," he said.

Mr Christie said the PLP made a "fundamental decision" to begin school policing knowing that one day, the officers assigned to the unit would evolve into individuals able to mediate disputes and promote conflict resolution.

The FNM has always insisted it never cancelled Urban Renewal, but rather made it more efficient and focused in the wake of accusations that the PLP used the programme's personnel as campaigning assets.

However, school policing was in fact cancelled after the 2007 election, the governing party arguing that making students feel as if they were prisoners under guard would have a negative effect on their development.

> 'This programme has educated people in knowing that they have to protect themselves, get involved with the police and take the appropriate direction.'
>
> **Perry Christie**

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LOCAL NEWS

13 new ambulances expected by the end of next year

By CHESTER ROBARDS
Tribune Senior Reporter
crobards@tribunemedia.net

BY the end of the government's 2012/2013 budget cycle, the Public Hospitals Authority expects to have 13 brand-new ambulances, three of which were purchased last year.

Herbert Brown, the PHA's managing director, said another five ambulances will be bought almost immediately as the money for them has already been approved, while the other five will be purchased during the next budget cycle.

He said the PHA is hoping to begin replacing its ambulances every three years in a bid to ensure there are enough properly maintained vehicles to respond to emergency calls.

He revealed in a statement released on Monday that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responded to almost 18,000 emergency calls last year, and as of last month, they had already logged 1,400 emergency calls for 2012.

He said the high volume of calls, the vast majority of which stemmed from violent incidents, inevitably led to extreme wear and tear on the PHA's ambulances.

"This in any country would place incredible strain on these vehicles," he said.

Last Thursday, it took two ambulances to get a man to the emergency room after the first responding vehicle broke down on the way to hospital.

And many other ambulances in the PHA's fleet have serious maintenance issues, according to EMS personnel.

Mr Brown said the five new ambulances soon to be acquired by the PHA will cost $72,000 per vehicle. He said when the vehicles arrive, they will each have cost the PHA a total of $124,000.

While the PHA is upgrading its ambulance services for normal reasons, Mr Brown said it has also had to conduct investigations into possible vehicle sabotage and unauthorised use of ambulances.

"We've had reports of vehicle abuse and persons collecting their children in these vehicles, this is simply unacceptable and will not be tolerated, and we invite the public to team up with the PHA on that," he said.

A DOCTORS HOSPITAL ambulance - the Public Hospitals Authority expects to buy 13 new ambulances by the end of the 2012/2013 budget period.

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LOCAL NEWS

PLP defend Gibson choice

from page one

information from a Greenberg Quinlan Rosner report conducted by the PLP's foreign consultant to determine what caused their loss.

When asked if he thought the PLP was making the right decision in running Mr Gibson again, Mr Bethel stated: "That's not for someone outside of the PLP to judge, that's for the PLP to judge. I'm not getting into these personality-based issues."

He said Mr Gibson's win is for "voters in Golden Gates to determine."

"You have to remember that Mr Gibson was re-elected (in 2007), not withstanding his past."

The statement from the DNA said: "The DNA now asks of Mr Christie, how do you expect to achieve success in this election when you have not addressed any of the issues that plagued your party in 2007?"

According to the DNA, Mr Christie has yet to display the fortitude required to curb the scandal and corruption in his party.

And, it said, Shane Gibson, after bringing international shame and humiliation on the Bahamas, has again been ratified as the PLP's candidate for Golden Gates.

"If Mr Christie is serious about the advancement of the PLP and the Bahamas' progress, then he should resign as the weak, fledgling, indecisive leader that brought the party defeat and make way for innovative, vibrant leadership that is capable of restoring its reputation," the DNA said.

Last month, Mr Gibson, former Housing Minister, dismissed the possibility of facing legal action over allegations of corruption in the Ministry of Housing.

His comments came after an investigation into the mismanagement of the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation (BMC) was launched following a series of articles in *The Tribune* several years ago which questioned expenditure at the Ministry of Housing.

SHANE GIBSON, the PLP candidate for Golden Gates.

Dr Duane Sands, chairman of the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation, has claimed the sinking fund at BMC was grossly mismanaged under Mr Gibson and could not perform its function – to make overdue bond payments.

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INSURANCE COMMISSION OF THE BAHAMAS

PUBLIC NOTICE

No. 2 of 2012 **7th February, 2012**

This NOTICE is issued by the Insurance Commission of The Bahamas ("the Commission") pursuant to **sections 8, 75A(3) and 75A(4) of the Insurance Act, Ch. 347 (2009 Consolidated Statute Laws)**.

The general public is hereby notified that the time period for the Statutory Administration of **ATLANTIC FIRST INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED,** has been extended pursuant to a Supreme Court Order dated the 30th January, 2012. In this regard, the Commission will continue to carry out such functions on its own behalf.

Any questions in this regard may be directed to the Superintendent of Insurance, in writing, at P.O. Box N-4844, Nassau, Bahamas or delivered to the Insurance Commission, 3rd Floor, Charlotte House, Charlotte & Shirley Streets, Nassau, Bahamas.

Signed
Superintendent of Insurance

THE MALL AT MARATHON

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We will announce daily our Lucky Winners on Facebook & those selected can claim their Prize or Surprise on or before 5:00pm, Tuesday, February 14th at the Mall Offices!

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Saturday, February 18th • 9:30pm

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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.

Two dead in incidents

from page

The second incident took place shortly after 4pm on Tuesday.

Police say two men were at Marshall Road when they got into an argument resulting in both of them being stabbed.

The victims were taken to the South Beach Clinic where one of the men died of his injuries. He is believed to be 37-year-old Kevin Burrows.

The other man was taken to hospital where he is listed in stable condition.

Superintendent Paul Rolle, head of the Central Detective Unit, said the man in hospital is being guarded by police. He said that despite media reports, police have not classified the stabbing as a homicide.

"He is in police custody," he said.

"Yes, he is a suspect but he is also a victim. We have not classified this incident as murder.

"Just because one person is dead does not make it murder.

"Something could have happened, there could be other circumstances. We haven't had an opportunity to speak to the guy in hospital.

"After we do, we will continue our investigations and then make a decision. Until then the matter will remain unclassified."

The country's murder count stands at 10 for the year.

Investigations continue.

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Written by Kateca Graham
1st Vice President NACB

Paradise Island
Club Land'or
Blue Lagoon Seafood Restaurant
Club Lander

VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER MENU

Tuesday, February 14th 2012

Appetizers

Neptune Shrimp Salad
or
Conch Chowder
~O~
Garden Green Salad

Entree

Roast Tenderloin of Beef Au Jus
Or
Poached Grouper White Wine Sauce
Or
Stuffed Chicken Breast with Mushroom, Spinach & Shrimp,
Garlic Mash Potatoes
Asparagus Red Pepper Corn with Ginger Sauce
Or
Surf & Turf (Steak & Lobster)
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Desserts

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- Open to learning new skills with a desire for improvement.

PG131

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What does it mean

TALKING SENSE
KHALILA NICOLLS

By KHALILA NICOLLS
Khalilanicolls@gmail.com

THE other day I stumped a politician by asking him a simple question: What is Africa? The question emerged because he responded to another question I posed, are you African, by saying, "No, I am a Bahamian with African heritage." So naturally, I pressed, and asked, well what does it mean to have Africa heritage?

He fumbled for a response, claiming that regrettably, he had not done the research to know which tribe in Africa he came from. He said if he were asked the same question by one of his children, he would say, let us go and research it together.

Being perturbed by my unbridled dissatisfaction, he gave it another go. This time, he responded with the politically correct answer, speaking to Africa's wealth, in terms of her beautiful and bountiful natural resources and the many venerable world leaders she has given birth to.

The reason I was perturbed by his response was not because I felt he gave a poor answer initially, which he did, or that I was unsatisfied with his answer in the second instance, which I was not. It was because he seemed not to have understood the question.

What does Africa mean in the context of your identity? The question completely went over his head. I was not totally surprised, because when it comes to questions of identity and the study of meaning, many Bahamians seem to be uninterested or simply clueless.

As a street scholar with a professed love for questions of identity, I am often starved for engagement on these questions. It is a challenge arriving at a common understanding of Majority Rule, because without an interrogation of meaning it is difficult to arrive at a full understanding of one's identity or a consensus of worth.

As a Bahamian, I feel personally slighted, not having had the opportunity within the framework of my state-mandated educational career to interrogate the meaning of Majority Rule or any number of other concepts that are central to my identity.

Needless to say, engaging in the process of inquiry is part of the reason for creating my own platform, and of great interest to me is the idea of blackness and its relationship to the concept of Majority Rule.

The last time I wrote about Majority Rule, I argued that its assumed meaning, a symbol of black liberation in the Bahamas, failed to stand up in the face of scrutiny. That Majority Rule represented an expansion of our democratic system; the shattering of a glass ceiling for black Bahamians seeking political office; a milestone in political progress, but not a transformation in black consciousness or an ideological awakening of black people.

Evidence suggests that at the time of its coining, our nation's leaders were conflicted in the concept of their own blackness, and the real worth of that identity. Certainly, our leaders recognised the political power of the black association, but they also accepted that blackness was a political liability. It was something they were willing to bargain with.

All in all, I suggested, our collective vision of a black nation was ideologically tame, and so too was the impact of the black majority government on the progress of black Bahamians as a collective body.

So what is left to be said? Lots, because when it comes to understanding our own blackness in a country that celebrates Majority Rule and recognises itself as a majority black nation, I feel our nation's leaders, when they led us into the era of self-governance, failed to set the record straight on a number of important race issues.

First, racial solidarity is not a form of discrimination against white people or some kind of reverse-racism.

Second, blackness does not have meaning only where racial discrimination exists.

Third, to speak about white racial prejudice and how it was used to justify genocide, to disfranchise and dehumanise indigenous people across the globe, and to enrich white people and their generations yet to come is not an act of denigrating white people; it is basic world history.

On the first issue, I need to reflect on another interview I recently conducted. When I asked the person the meaning of being black, his first instinct was to say, let me see how to answer this without sounding like a racist. He then fumbled on to answer the question in line with the politically correct things to feel and say.

I had a similar encounter when listening to Freddy Munnings Jr on the radio programme *Matters of the Heart*. He recounted a time when he asked the Minister of Education (he did not specify which one) why Bahamians do not learn African history in school.

The minister replied by saying he did not want to teach racism. Mr Munnings rightly asked what is racist about teaching our children that their ancestors brought the world astrology, astronomy, mathematics and medicine, among other great contributions to world history.

I am with Mr Munnings on this one: what is racist about African pride? What is racist about affirming a black identity? Why have we chosen to accept the view that racial solidarity is somehow a destructive and divisive concept; that affirming a connection to one's blackness is somehow racist? It is an apologetic view of being black that black people would be better served to reject.

In January, the Arizona State legislature won its battle to outlaw the Tuscon Unified School District's Mexican American Studies (MAS) programme, on the grounds that it "promotes activism against white people, promotes racial resentment and advocates ethnic solidarity".

Best-selling classics like *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by Paulo Freire, and *Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years*, by Bill Bigelow, were banned from the curriculum.

It seems white people still fear that blacks and other subjects of white oppression might one day turn the tables and exact bitter revenge. In a school district where 60 per cent of the students are Latino, the fears must run high. But quite frankly, I find this fear to be arrogant, delusional, self-absorbed and downright ignorant, but completely unsurprising.

It is on the same basis of Arizona's objection that a black man would find it uncomfortable to give meaning to his own blackness. Not wanting to sound racist is a euphemism for not wanting to make white people uncomfortable; not wanting to evoke their misplaced fears.

Whether a black man's racial resentment is real or perceived, warranted or not, he should have the right and the space to feel as he may, and process his own experience, without having to be politically correct about it.

Denying him his right to feel does more to promote racial resentment than allowing him his space to heal. I think that is worth repeating (and I hope people at Arizona State are reading): Denying him his right to feel (which includes inquiring into and processing his own experience) does more to promote racial resentment than allowing him his space to heal.

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Freire states: "Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence," and a "violation of their humanity". When I spoke earlier about feeling personally slighted, it was this violation I alluded to.

For all of our accomplishments, blacks are still negotiating the right to think, speak and feel for ourselves about our experience of being black.

As a society, we do not have a humanising pedagogy in which students of the former oppressed and oppressor classes can deepen their consciousness of their situation and be responsible for their own liberating process.

The failure of inquiry is one of the primary racial dilemmas of the 21st century, and our blind longing for a post-racial world only exacerbates

MINISTRY OF WORKS & TRANSPORT
NOTICE
SECTION 23
ASPHALT PAVEMENT

Jose Cartellone Construcciones Civiles S.A wishes to advise the motoring public that temporary road closure & traffic diversions will be carried out on sections of Robinson Road between **CLARIDGE ROAD** & the intersection of **EAST WEST HIGHWAY & MARATHON ROAD** from **Sunday February 12, 2012,** to facilitate the final layer of Asphalt Pavement.

Stage 1: MARATHON ROAD will be temporarily closed, *from Samana Dr. to East West Highway.*

Motorists heading north on Marathon Road should use:
ROBINSON RD. → CLARIDGE RD. → MARATHON RD

Motorists heading south on Marathon Road should use:
SAMANA DR. → GRACE AVE.→ PRINCE CHARLES DR.
East & Westbound traffic will be reduced to single lane. Motorists should follow the traffic Management in place.

Stage 2: EAST WEST HIGHWAY will be temporarily closed, *from Abundant Life Road to the intersection of Robinson & Marathon Road.*

(East & Westbound along ROBINSON RD. & PRINCE CHARLES DR.
Motorists should continue on **ROBINSON RD. & PRINCE CHARLES DR.** and follow the traffic management system in place.

Southbound traffic on ROBINSON RD. & PRINCE CHARLES DR should use :
OLD TRAIL RD. →PRINCE CHARLES DR. →ABUNDANT LIFE RD. →EAST WEST HWY

Northbound traffic on EAST WEST HWY should use:
ABUNDANT LIFE RD. → OLD TRAIL RD. → PRINCE CHARLES DR.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience that may be caused and look forward to the full co-operation of the motoring public throughout this project.

Jose Cartellone Construcciones Civiles S.A
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00am to 4:00pm
Office: (242) 323-4040/ 322-3610
Email: bahamasneighbor@cartellone.com.ar

Ministry of Public Works & Transport
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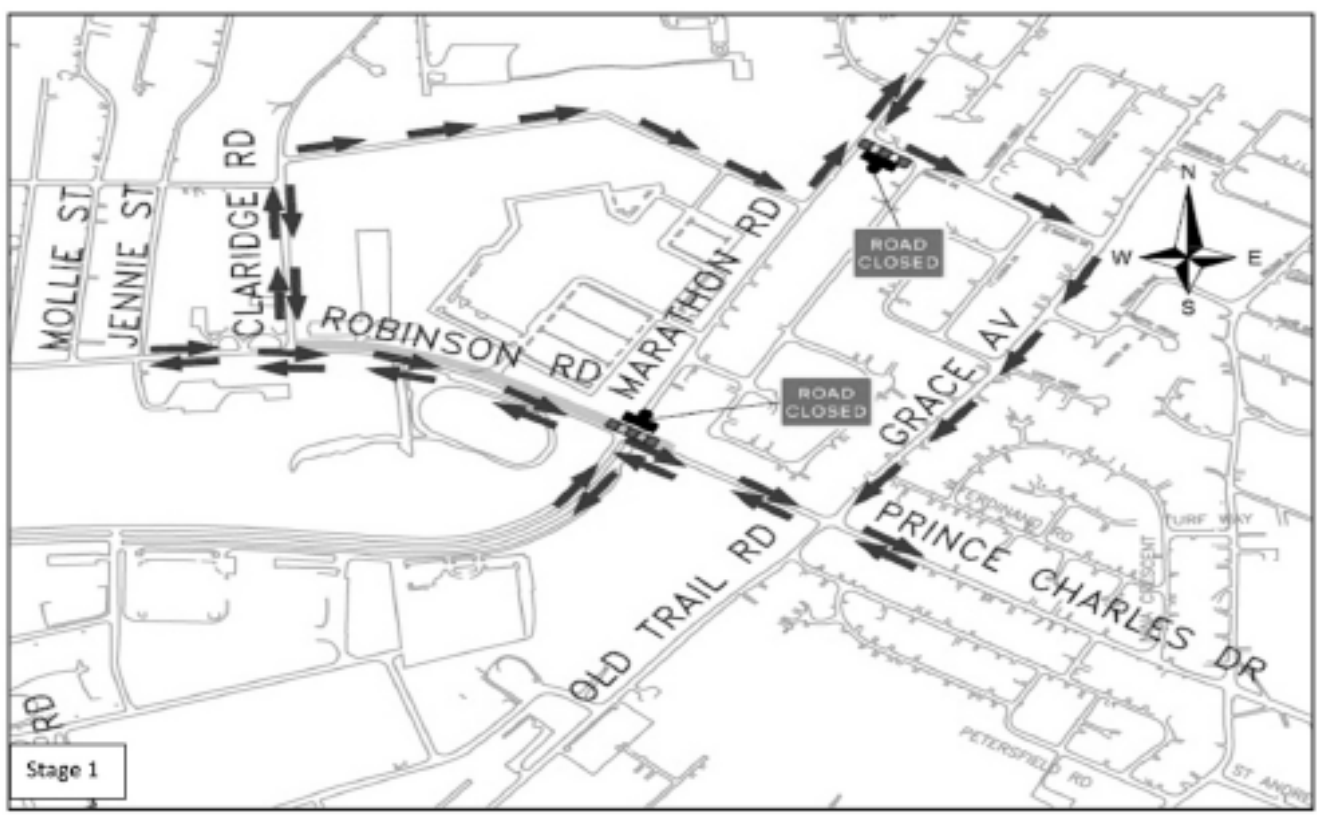

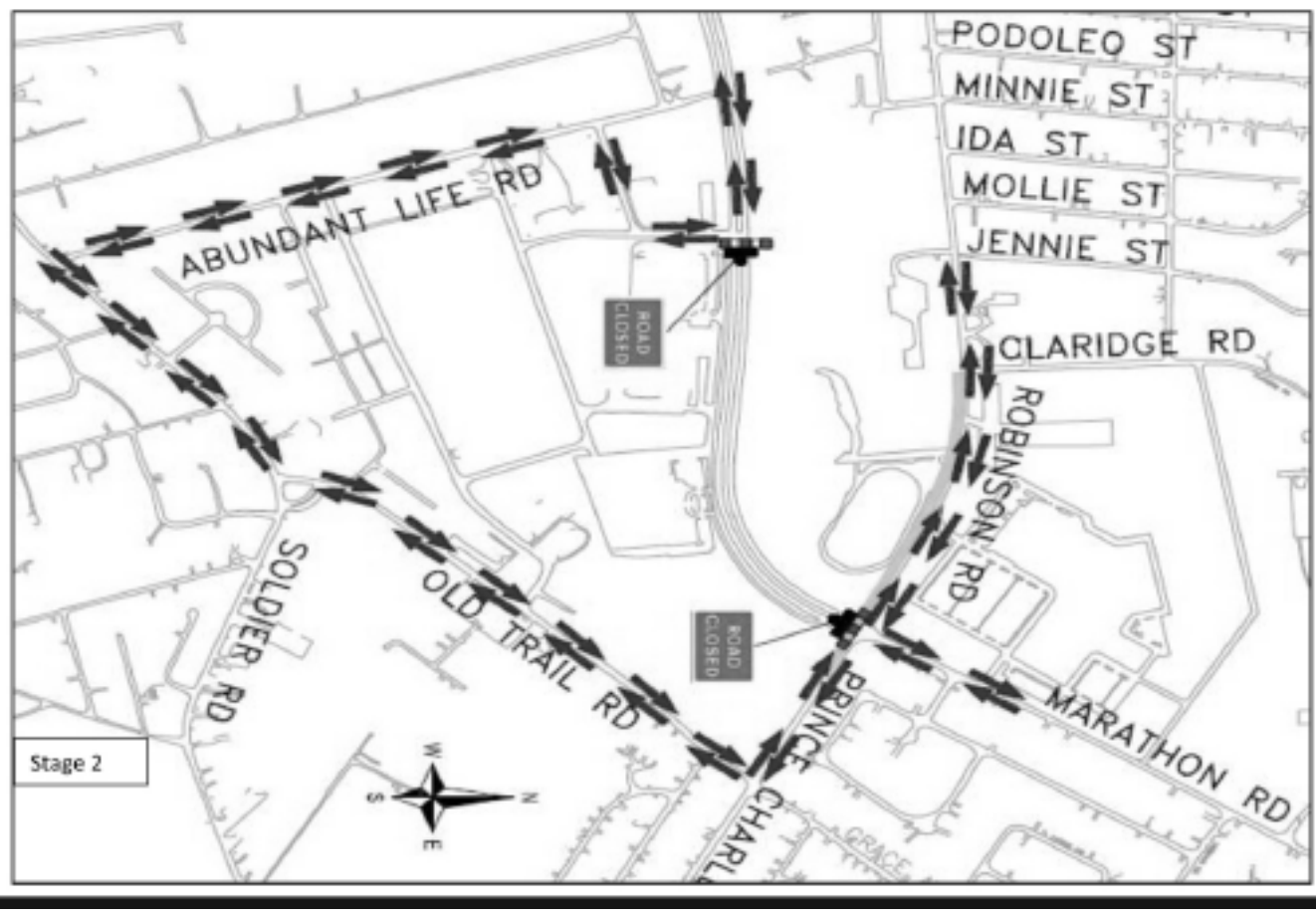

LOCAL NEWS

to you to be black?

the problem.

Race is an important means by which people in a post-1942 world are able to recognise, understand and celebrate their collective identity (an identity I must note that predates 1942 by millennia); race has been a great source of pain and is now the basis on which there is need for great healing; race was the mode in which white people established their position of superiority and wealth, and it is the basis on which the former oppressor class must now humble itself.

For all of the post-racial idealism of the Obama age, race is far from being an irrelevant concept.

This leads me to my second contention: The suggestion that blackness only has meaning as a means of political organisation or as an object of someone's oppression, whether in a state of subjugation or resistance.

Basically, the argument goes like this: because we do not believe there is any longer racial discrimination, or because we no longer believe we have to fight for our rights, we no longer need to hold on to a black identity. It is the "we are one" argument.

The problem is, black people are not mere objects of someone's oppression, and seeing blackness solely as such is a shallow way to conceive of one's identity. Sadly, this is how we have been taught: to identify with each other based on struggle. That is why, typically, those who feel the struggle is over, celebrate the good fight, but feel little to no need for race association. They see no fallacy in the concept of One Bahamas. On the other hand, those who feel the struggle continues, see the world more pronouncedly through a racial lens, and experience dissonance in the concept that we are one.

The black identity does not exist only because white people once were the authors of our oppression. The experience of the Maafa (a term used to collectively describe the history, effects and legacy of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and the various atrocities on African people as a collective) has no doubt shaped how we understand race, but prior to the perverted introduction of the post-Maafa racial construct, there was still a black identity to which black people are inextricably linked.

> 'Whether a black man's racial resentment is real or perceived, warranted or not, he should have the right and the space to feel as he may, and process his own experience, without having to be politically correct about it.'

The reason I say the black consciousness of our leaders, and our nation as a whole, in the era of Majority Rule was skin deep is because it was not an affirmative ideology that defined our blackness; it was a concept of our biological likeness, otherwise known as skin colour, combined with a common experience of oppression under white control and a common political objective. It was around that identity that black political leaders were able to carve out a black constituency and mobilise the masses.

Many black Bahamians to this day still find it difficult to answer the question, "What does it mean to be black?"

Many black Bahamians still cannot reconcile the concept of being Bahamian and African. It pains them to assume that identity unless it is qualified, as in Bahamian with African heritage or Bahamian who is a descendant of Africa.

The black experience of the Maafa created in black people such a hatred of Africa and all things African, but to this day, blacks who claim to be liberated have yet to reclaim their mother. I am no Bible scholar, and usually I avoid Bible quotes, but I make an exception to cite Exodus 20:12, a verse Bahamians are well familiar with: "Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the lord thy God giveth thee."

What about restoring the love for our earth mother? Despite our discomfort with claiming a "one (Bahamian or African)" identity, there is no conflict of identity or need for a dichotomous relationship. Think, after all, about our mothers who marry – they take on a new legal name (Bahamian), but they never lose their maiden name of birth (African). My birth mother, for example, has every right to claim her Gage identity as she does to her Nicolls identity. Her being a Nicolls does not negate her being a Gage. Her being a Gage does not deny her being a Nicolls.

The main point in all of this is how we understand our blackness as black people. I maintain that Chinese people do not hold a concept of being Chinese because they have been caricatured as having slanted-eyes. An Indian's concept of being Indian is not because of an accent. The recognition of their Chinese or Indian identity is based on a shared understanding of heritage, language, food, culture, history, geography, legacy and the likes.

Black people do not have a consensus of identity, not because no commonality exists, but because we have chosen to deny our very existence.

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LOCAL NEWS

Man in court over Chinese worker's death

CLEOPHAS CLARKE is escorted into court by police.

Photo: **Tim Clarke**/Tribune Staff

from page one

He had reportedly just returned home after celebrating the Chinese New Year with family and friends when he was approached by a gunman at around 3.30am.

After being robbed of his cell phone, Mr Chan was then shot.

He died a short time later in hospital.

At yesterday's hearing, Clarke was not required to enter a plea to the charge due to the nature of the offence. He was informed by the magistrate that the prosecution would present a Voluntary Bill of Indictment against him on April 19.

The Bill will directly forward the case to the Supreme Court for trial, bypassing a lengthy pre-trial in Magistrate's Court.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Bethell told the accused he could not be considered for, or granted, bail due to the nature of the offence.

Clarke was also charged with housebreaking, theft and arson all alleged to have taken place on the same day as Mr Chan's murder.

It is claimed he broke into a house at Winton Meadows, Yamacraw Beach Estates, and stole a Toshiba TV and gold ring together valued at $3,200.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Bethell told the accused he was not allowed to enter a plea to those charges or select where he wished to have the matters tried as they had all been tied to arson, which cannot be tried in the Magistrate's Court.

The prosecution will present a Voluntary Bill of Indictment regarding this matter on the same day that Clarke returns to court, April 19.

Bail was not an option for him, the magistrate said, as he already had been denied a bond on the murder charge he has against him.

Clarke, who did not have an attorney present during his arraignment, was remanded to Her Majesty's Prison, Fox Hill.

PUBLIC NOTICE

INTENT TO CHANGE NAME BY DEED POLL

The Public is hereby advised that I, **TISH NANETTE MARIA SIMMONS,** intend to change my name from **TISH NANETTE MARIA SIMMONS** to **TISH NANETTE MARIA SHERMAN**. If there are any objections to this change of name by Deed Poll, you my write such objections to the Chief Passport Officer, Passport Office, P. O. Box F-43536, Freeport, Grand Bahama, The Bahamas no later than Thirty (30) days after the date of publication of this notice.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Applications are invited from suitable qualified individuals to fill the position of Executive Director.

Minimum requirements for the post are a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Psychology, Social Work or a health related field, and or at least five years of relevant experience in designing and executing education and community awareness programs. Candidate must be sales driven and have the ability to promote the products and services of the organization.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the overall coordination of the organization, which includes a Medical Clinic and a Community Outreach Centre.

- **A strong administrative background with experience in public relations and youth work**
- **Strong supervisory, interpersonal and counseling skills**
- **Excellent oral and written communication skills**
- **The ability to plan and prepare annual budgets, project proposals, funding requests, and reports**
- **Creative and innovative ability to organize, implement, and evaluate ongoing and new projects as required**
- **The ability to liaise with stakeholders at the national and international levels**
- **Up to-date knowledge of sexual and reproductive health & education issues**

Salary will be determined, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Interested candidates are requested to submit a resume via email to **executivedirector73@yahoo.com.** Also, three letters of professional references are required.

Deadline for application is Monday, February 20th 2012.

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LOCAL NEWS

Party loses another candidate

from page one

"In light of the circumstances that would have come to light, we thought it was best for the people of MICAL and for the party to move in a different direction and that is what we did. We made a determination and acted on it.

"Unfortunately in politics today. we see persons on the other side who do not make such decisions.

"In Parliament today, we have persons who have admitted wrongdoing – which amounts to a criminal act – and nothing has been done. Persons who have even submitted their resignations, those resignations have not been accepted.

"When we become the government we want to be in a position to amend the Constitution to recall MPs if they are not acting as good representatives and, of course, that determination would be made by the constituents because we believe that is vitally important for good governance," Mr McCartney said.

The DNA leader added that the Bahamian people now only seem to see their respective Members of Parliament every five years when they are canvassing for the people's votes. This kind of "absentee representation", Mr McCartney said, is what his party will do away with.

"We want to put the power in the hands of the constituency. So if your MP is not doing right, they can be recalled. I think that would cause these MPs to be more responsive to their constituency. What I did in Bamboo Town, from day one was to continue to do things in the constituency. I can let my record speak for itself."

With Mr Munroe being the third DNA candidate having to be withdrawn by the party, Mr McCartney said he does not think that this reflects poorly on his party or the selection process under which his candidates have been put.

"This is nothing new. This has happened before. Candidates can be moved and even moved to different constituencies. We want what is best for the relative constituencies. We want the best representation. We are making these decisions now. I don't think it should be looked at as something untoward. If we did not, then I could see people looking at this in a negative light," he said.

On February 13th, the DNA is expected to hold elections for its deputy leadership post – a race Mr McCartney expects will be "hotly contested."

This event is expected to be followed by an official "reveal" of the deputy leader at the Wyndham Nassau resort on February 15th.

"I think we are positioning ourselves quite well. What we have done in the past nine months is historic. We are a major party in nine months. I would dare say that has not been done in this entire region. God willing we will be the government soon," he said.

DNA DEPUTY LEADER candidates Dr Madeline Sawyer, Wayne Munroe, Rodney Moncur and Randy Butler.

DNA WEIGHS UP DEPUTY OPTIONS

Butler and Rodney Moncur each have a fair chance of being nominated for the post.

The four are the candidates for the Mount Moriah, Southern Shores, North Andros and the Berry Islands and Bain and Grants Town constituencies respectively.

Admitting that he has thought about "occupying" the party's second-in-command position, Mr Butler said he could not confirm if he was being considered.

He said: "Democracy in the DNA is alive and well. Folks will have to be nominated and it will go from there. There will be a process, but I am always willing and ready to serve my country if I am nominated."

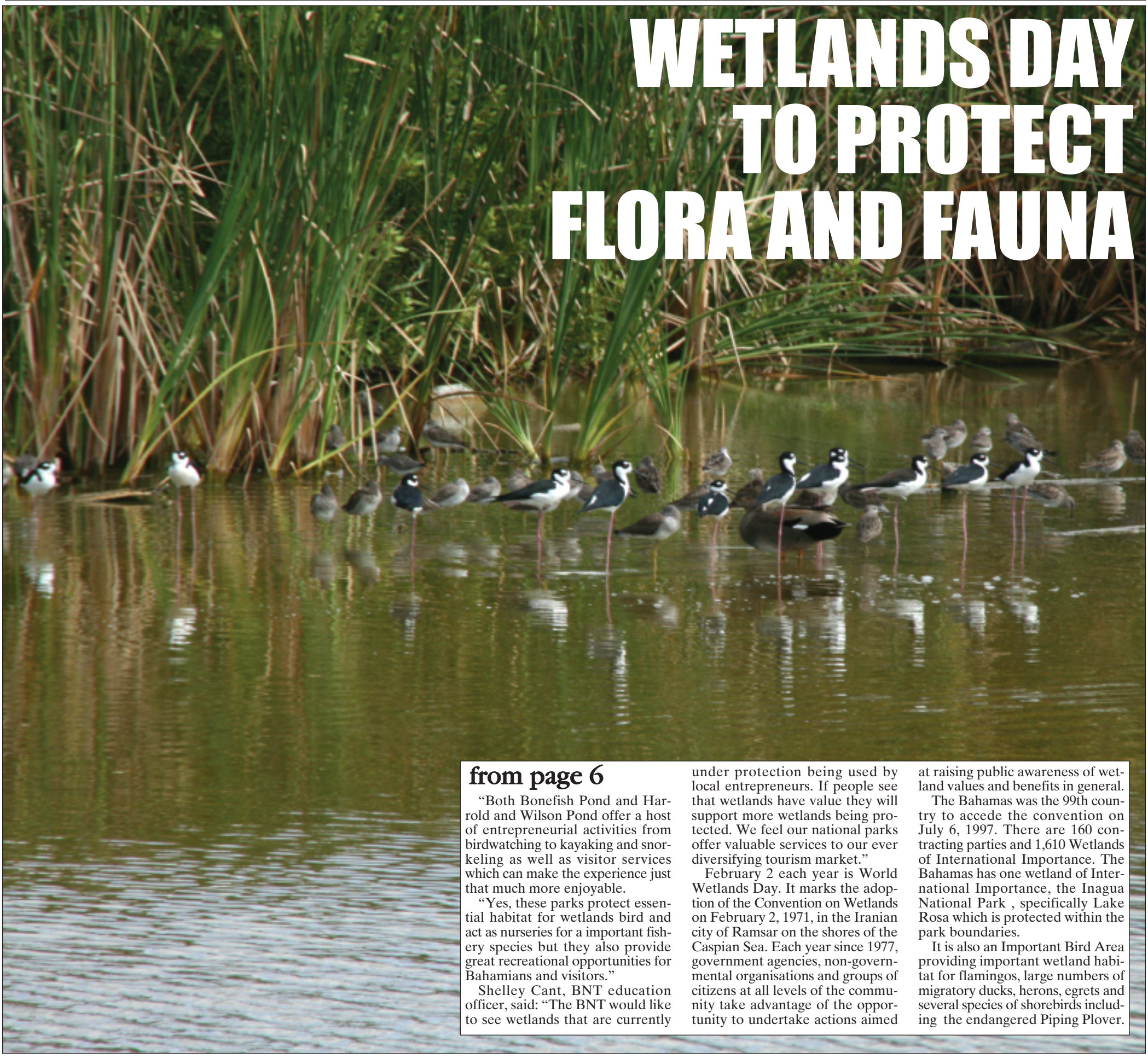
When asked what he would contribute as the party's deputy, Mr Butler said his major objective would be to offer support to the DNA leader.

"As such, I would offer my support to our leader, as any deputy would do. I am a team player and visionary, with that I know how to execute a vision.

"I also believe in supporting the plans of the candidates and ensuring that they can achieve the things needed to carry this country to its fullest potential."

He added that the DNA is "filled with people who would be ideal for the position".

WETLANDS DAY TO PROTECT FLORA AND FAUNA



from page 6

"Both Bonefish Pond and Harrold and Wilson Pond offer a host of entrepreneurial activities from birdwatching to kayaking and snorkeling as well as visitor services which can make the experience just that much more enjoyable.

"Yes, these parks protect essential habitat for wetlands bird and act as nurseries for a important fishery species but they also provide great recreational opportunities for Bahamians and visitors."

Shelley Cant, BNT education officer, said: "The BNT would like to see wetlands that are currently under protection being used by local entrepreneurs. If people see that wetlands have value they will support more wetlands being protected. We feel our national parks offer valuable services to our ever diversifying tourism market."

February 2 each year is World Wetlands Day. It marks the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Each year since 1977, government agencies, non-governmental organisations and groups of citizens at all levels of the community take advantage of the opportunity to undertake actions aimed at raising public awareness of wetland values and benefits in general.

The Bahamas was the 99th country to accede the convention on July 6, 1997. There are 160 contracting parties and 1,610 Wetlands of International Importance. The Bahamas has one wetland of International Importance, the Inagua National Park , specifically Lake Rosa which is protected within the park boundaries.

It is also an Important Bird Area providing important wetland habitat for flamingos, large numbers of migratory ducks, herons, egrets and several species of shorebirds including the endangered Piping Plover.