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HURRICANE COVERAGE ON PAGES 1-11 INSIDE

# Devastation left in Irma's wake

- RAGGED ISLAND HIT HARDEST
- TORNADOES LASH GRAND BAHAMA
- LAW TO ENFORCE EVACUATIONS

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**  
Deputy Chief Reporter  
[krussell@tribunemedia.net](mailto:krussell@tribunemedia.net)

While the island fared much worse when compared with the remaining southern islands, no lives were lost and no one was injured, Mr Cooper said.

"I am absolutely heartbroken by what I see because all of the structures are very familiar," Mr Cooper said.

"These are areas where I've spent quite a bit of time. But it's an indication of devastation on the island, but this is like the heart of the town and these buildings are very well-constructed – the school, the clinic, the Ponderosa Resort – and if this happened to those buildings, I can only imagine what the residences on the island look like.

"It is mindblowing. It's the kind of devastation you only see on TV. It reminds me of Joaquin in 2015 in the southeastern Bahamas."



**DESTRUCTION** in Ragged Island as seen in this photograph circulated on social media.

He added: "But in a nutshell, I am going there tomorrow (today). The winds were too strong today. If the winds subside hopefully I will be able to get in there tomorrow (today) to do a firsthand inspection and go to take some hurricane supplies for the residents who

stayed and those who are very anxious about what they left. So they are going to go in tomorrow on my flight."

Meanwhile, Capt Russell said based on various reports, he was encouraged by how well the southern islands fared during the hurricane.

**Inagua**

Apart from extensive damage to the Morton Salt compound in Inagua, island administrator Julita Ingraham said "God was really good" to the island.

However, Inagua remained without electricity yesterday.

She said: "What they have been able to do since the hurricane, because prior to the hurricane Morton Salt had put the machinery on the ground for us so the Defence Force officers and the Police officers they were

SEE PAGE THREE

## OKAY JOSE - STAY AWAY

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**  
Deputy Chief Reporter  
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WEATHER forecasters said yesterday Hurricane Jose does not currently pose an imminent threat to The Bahamas.

Speaking to *The Tribune* yesterday, local Meteorology Department forecaster Ian McKenzie said Jose's three-day cone has it located to the east of The Bahamas in a projected looping motion.

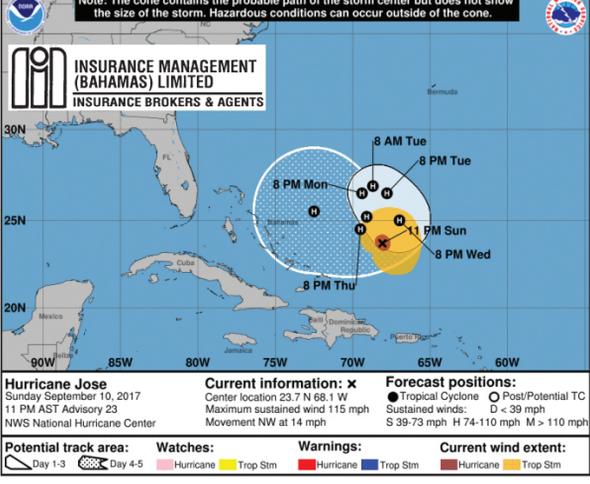
Even outside of this mo-

tion, Mr McKenzie said there is no expectation Jose will follow the same path as Hurricane Irma, which was now moving across the United States, causing flooding and tornadoes.

AccuWeather forecaster Dave Samuel added Hurricane Jose is something to watch, but not "worth any panic".

"Regards to Jose, most of the concern would be mainly the mariners," Mr McKenzie told *The Tribune*.

SEE PAGE SIX




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**DAMAGE** in Ragged Island following the impact of Hurricane Irma, in a picture posted to social media.

# Devastation left in Irma's wake



**RAGGED ISLAND**

from page one

able to clear the runway and the road, which is Gregory Street, the main street of Inagua they are able to clear that.

"They were also able to get the generator for the community clinic up and started and they were able to assess the various damage within the community.

"Inagua sustained just minimal damage."

Ms Ingraham said residents of the island are in need of several items, which include: rakes, shingles, ice, water, plywood, nails, chainsaws, wheelbarrow

and food. There was minimal damage to the Inagua airport, but the Bahamasair office sustained damage, she said.

### Mayaguana/ Crooked Island

In Mayaguana, island administrator Earl Campbell said of the island's 163 residents, 156 of them were evacuated. The remaining persons were left under the watch of three police officers.

"Some government buildings have roof damage (but) the high school in Abraham's Bay and Pirates Well (there is) no serious damage," he said.

"Mayaguana Airport

runway was free of any large debris and there was no flooding nor the area where the ramp is (had flooding).

"Power lines (are) down in three major settlements: Betsy Bay, Abraham's Bay and also Pirates Well.

"The sea wall in Pirates Well also had some damage."

He said the roadways to all docks and all settlements were blocked from debris from the sea, adding most of the light flooding in areas were receding.

The Abraham's Bay Police Station received roof damage and its communications tower is leaning, Mr Campbell said.

He added there were persons who are responsible for electricity and water who were evacuated last Wednesday and are now anxious to return home.

Telecommunications on the island is also in working condition.

Regarding Crooked Island and Long Cay, island administrator Leonard Dames Jr said there are numerous homes without shingles, which were blown off by Irma's strong winds.

Apart from this, the airport remains in good condition, one utility pole is down and there is roof damage to the school in Colonel Hill, Crooked Island.



**DESTRUCTION** on Ragged Island after Hurricane Irma.



**A ROOF** ripped off on Ragged Island.

## FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO REOPEN TOMORROW

PUBLIC schools will reopen for students on islands given the all clear from Hurricane Irma on Tuesday, with the exception of those on islands where evacuations have taken place, the Ministry of Education said.

Administrators and teachers on islands given the all clear by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) are asked to report to work today, except for those on islands with evacuations.

Hurricane warnings

were still in effect for the islands of Grand Bahama and Bimini up to press time yesterday, thus schools will remain closed on those islands until further notice.

All teachers and staff of Bahamas Academy are also asked to report to work on Monday at the usual time.

The campus will reopen for students on Tuesday.

Additionally, all government offices will reopen today at usual hours of operation except for those in islands that have had evacu-

ations as well as those in Andros, Bimini and Grand Bahama.

Further announcements on offices in those islands will be given at a later date.

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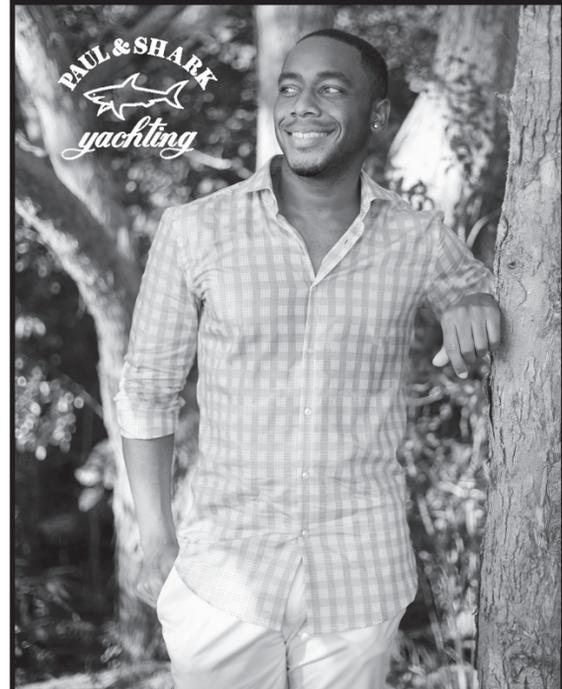
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IT	NEW	1:00	3:50	N/A	6:35	N/A	10:00
HOME AGAIN	NEW	1:10	3:35	N/A	6:15	8:40	10:45
ANNABELLE CREATION	T	1:05	3:35	N/A	6:05	8:25	10:45
THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD	C	1:00	3:20	N/A	6:00	8:20	10:40
THE DARK TOWER	T	1:15	3:45	N/A	6:15	8:45	10:50
EMOJI MOVIE	A	1:15	3:35	N/A	6:15	8:30	10:35
GIRLS TRIP	C	1:00	3:25	N/A	6:00	8:20	10:45

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## Politics has been put before patients at PMH

DURING the FNM's first Budget debate shortly after being elected this year, Cat island MP Philip "Brave" Davis was on his feet in the House of Assembly to defend his defeated government's decision to award \$11m in contracts to build three clinics in his Cat Island constituency. In fact it was significant that the contracts were awarded just before the May 10 election. In addition to clinics for Cat Island, contracts were also awarded for a clinic in Rum Cay and one for San Salvador, bringing the total cost to just under \$14m for Mr Davis' entire constituency.

This \$14m was the cost of construction alone. It did not include the additional cost of providing the necessary medical equipment, doctors, nurses — of which there is now a serious shortage — or janitorial staff. All this, Health Minister Dr Duane Sands pointed out, threatened to consume funds urgently needed to improve the Princess Margaret Hospital and other New Providence based clinics. He admitted that he had a hard time justifying the \$14m expenditure when he had real needs that affected thousands of Bahamians. Needs, he said, that he cannot solve for lack of funds.

Mr Davis took offence to Dr Sands' questioning the spending of \$14m on clinics for his district. "All Bahamians have the same rights as those in New Providence" to medical care, Mr Davis declared.

"The 80 people in Rum Cay, 72 in Ragged Island or the 700 in the Berry Islands all have the same rights as those in New Providence. They are all citizens. None has priority over the other," Mr Davis declared, speaking like the true politician with one eye on the next election, thus failing to understand the broader picture for the good of the nation. However, Dr Sands with no funds to spare, has to decide between spending millions for Cat Island clinics which on average would see only six patients a day or going without funds needed, for example, to repair a leaking roof in the Coconut Grove clinic that sees over 12,000 patients a year. "They do an amazing job and have to do so with a roof that is leaking buckets every day," said Dr Sands. But there are no spare funds to make the necessary repairs.

We agree with Mr Davis that the people of the Family Islands are entitled to the same medical care as those in Nassau, but if scarce funds are spent so foolishly on the show that Mr Davis proposes, then there will be no first class medical services for anyone in The Bahamas.

In growing up did Mr Davis' elders ever advise him that to manage his affairs wisely he had to learn to "cut his coat according to his cloth"?

Well the cloth that Bahamians have been given is a coral-based archipelago of about 700 islands and islets and more than 2,000 cays or coral reefs. About 30 of these islands are inhabited. If it could have been one land mass, we would not be having this discussion, because the nation would be able to afford at least one first class, well equipped central medical compound to take care of the whole island. But Bahamians do not have that luxury, and instead of hav-

ing politicians with one eye focused on their election advantage we need sound statesmen who will use our limited funds wisely and plan for the next generation.

Let's just take Mr Davis for a walk down the halls of the Princess Margaret Hospital. To put it mildly, if some very sound decisions are not soon made this hospital is a major accident just waiting to happen. It was a blessing that Hurricane Irma passed us by because our hospital is not equipped to handle any major catastrophe.

The hospital's halls are lined with patients, in varying stages of medical needs. They lie on gurneys — no beds available in the entire hospital - the numbers range from 15 to 30 patients on any given day. Then there are about 30 permanent residents who have been abandoned at the hospital because they have no one to take care of them. Young children also have been abandoned - no one willing to give them shelter. One has been there a year, another five years and yet another for nine years. They don't need hospital care, they need parenting.

Then there is the Corey Newbold Ward, which looks like an abandoned building site - ceiling torn down, dust and rubble everywhere. Its reconstruction having been suspended because funds allocated to it were probably diverted to some dumb political venture to impress the public. The male surgical, paediatrics and maternity wards all in need of urgent structural attention — but money committed to do the reconstruction also has been diverted to other ventures. In all, 67 beds have been out of commission for many months. And then there is the "step down" clinic in the Critical Care block, at the end of which is a comfortable board room with a magnificent view of the town below and a large cruise ship in port. This section is indeed the PLP's folly. This area was designed as a "step down" clinic for at least 20 beds. In fact, it was for urgently needed beds that the new Critical Care Unit was built. The unit was nearing completion when the Christie government was elected and the much needed space for these beds was reconfigured into plush offices. This decision alone should have stirred the wrath of the Bahamian people against PLP politicians. But the truth was again hidden from the public.

However, there is one very impressive looking section — the Neonatal Intensive Care unit. We understand that technically it can match, if not be regarded as superior to anything in the Caribbean. But even here there is a problem — a shortage of nurses.

What our archipelagic land needs is a first class, well endowed hospital in Nassau with satellite clinics throughout the islands - clinics that can provide primary care for a patient, backed up by a well equipped and staffed Princess Margaret Hospital in Nassau to which more serious cases can be flown.

Also what is needed are leaders to take the initiative — not politicians — but statesmen who are dedicated to making the right decisions for what they believe to be best for the country and its people, and not for what they hope will secure their own political future.

## PLP leadership

**EDITOR, The Tribune.**

CAN'T believe Ms Glenys Hanna-Martin launched her bid to be leader of the PLP using transformation in education as part of her platform. Hasn't transformation in education been a part of the PLP manifesto propaganda machine since it was founded in 1953? That's sixty-four years of no-can-do. No news there.

A renewed fight against poverty? Tell that to the former constituents of what used to be Ann's Town. Tell that to the many Ba-

hamian men and women suffering in Fox Hill prison. Tell that to the disenfranchised youth contemplating suicide because there is no way out. Tell that to the teeming masses who just voted against PLP lies and con games. Tell that to the many PLP's still waiting for the return of the Black Moses notwithstanding the fact that he returned 10 May, 2017!

An effort to combat the deteriorating health of Bahamians? I think this FNM government pretty much has that under control.

Can't the persons interested in leading the PLP

come up with something progressive AND liberal?

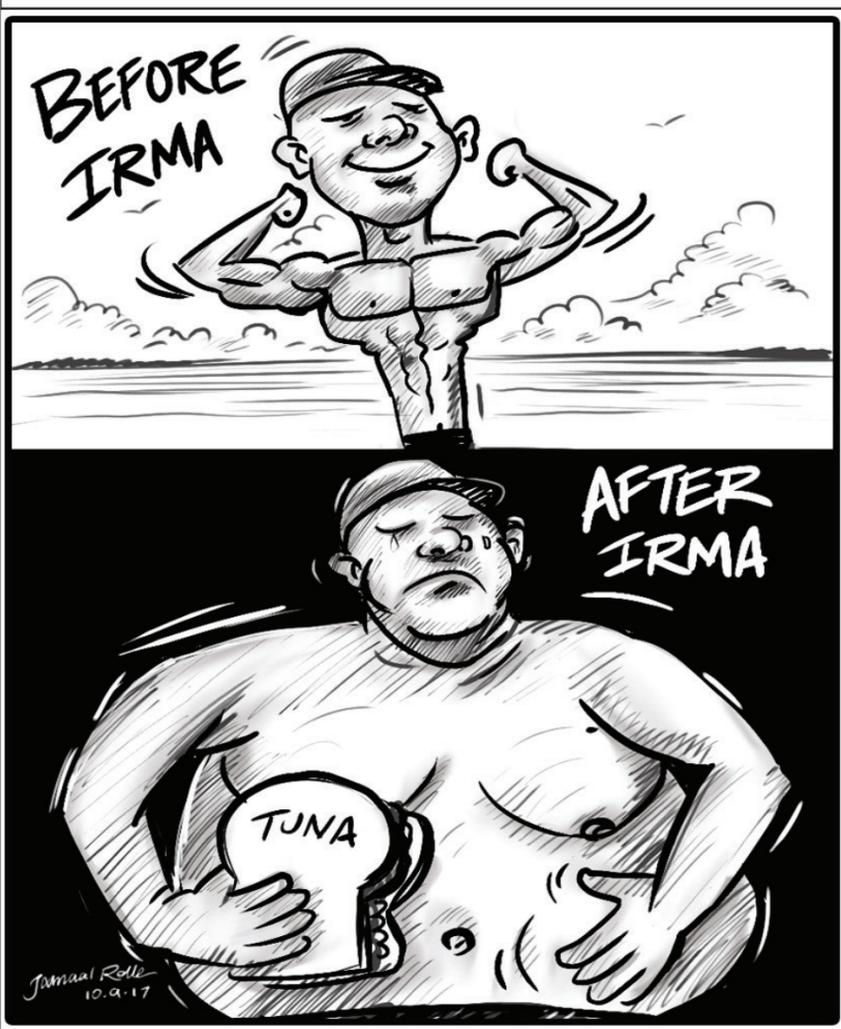
Poly marriage.  
 Tax breaks for atheists.  
 Legalised abortion.  
 Legalised prostitution.  
 Legalised marijuana use.

A moratorium on churches being built in the Bahamas.

Making it illegal for the government to seek or take advice from persons of religion.

The same ole same ole just won't do.

**KIRK CATALANO**  
 Nassau,  
 September 3, 2017.



# After the hurricane

**EDITOR, The Tribune.**

NOW that Irma has passed through the country, we who are alive and above ground have much to be thankful for. Material damage can be corrected. Lives lost cannot be replaced. The Minnis Administration along with the Official Opposition, led by the Hon Philip "Brave" Davis (PLP-Cat Island) both rose to the challenges in a mature and unified manner. The PM and Brave, et al, are to be congratulated on a job well done. The initial preparations were in fits and starts but better late than never at all. NEMA needs an urgent make over and possibly a change in managerial personnel.

The hurricane season is just beginning in earnest and I would hope that measures are in place to ensure that supplies and essential items are made available and delivered, where possible, by Bahamians and others who might be in need. The members of The Royal Bahamas Police Force and The Royal Bahamas Defense Force are to be complimented on their state of preparedness and assorted plans to assist with rapid and safe evacuation where necessary.

Commodore Tellis Bethel Jr, finally the substantive holder of that office, is a no nonsense individual who has long been preparing himself and his team to do what they do best: protect our borders and, of course, disaster relief and search and rescue efforts. Acting Commissioner of Police, Anthony Ferguson, is an untested quality but I am certain that he is the man for the progressive evolution of the force. It is so distressing, however, to see that a man like Elliston Greenslade seems to have been pushed aside ever since the election of the FNM. Sad. The FNM promised transparency and accountability but, clearly, they were bogus electoral mantras.

In any event, we survived, again. We must now get on with the real business of the people. Hurricanes come and go, just like the run of the mill politicians. Yahweh has, again, seen fit to bring us through. Minnis and his people them have been baptised by water. If they fail to be saved or accept political salvation, they will be baptised by fire next time around. I am more than persuaded that the prayers of the ascribed anointed and deluded prayer warriors did an effective and credible job in making supplications to the great I AM THAT I AM to steer the de-

## LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

structive forces of Irma away from The Bahamas.

Now we should get back to the real business of the people. The Official Opposition is about to go into yet another convention. The Hon. Glenys Hanna Martin (PLP-Englerston) is a mere distraction and on an ego trip to become leader of the NEW PLP. Heritage is just that but not an automatic qualification for leadership. What will she or could she bring to the NEW PLP? The FNM sung its way into power but the songs now have the same, or so it seems, refrain of the songs sung by the now defunct Christie led PLP. Glenys, with all due respect, is being selfish and petty, in my view.

She was incapable of running Road Traffic and some other agencies which fell under her watch. Millions went missing, allegedly, from the Post Office Savings Banks. Some other millions went missing, so they say, from a safe at Road Traffic on a weekend. No repercussions or ministerial acknowledgement? Yes, Brave had some unfortunate challenges at BAMSIS but, I submit, the Permanent Secretary, my good friend, Collin Higgs, et al, should have suffered administrative consequences. There were none. The now Minister of Agriculture signed an agreement or letter or whatever when he was created up with Christie them. Minnis cussed him out and called him many political names. today, Wells is a cabinet minister around Minnis' banquet table, living large and, so they say, in charge.

Only in The Bahamas. And so, the Official Opposition will be challenged to formulate and present a sensible alternative to the fake agenda, so far of the clueless moon beam FNM administration. I still hold out high hopes for Minnis dem, but I am fast losing hope that they know what the hell they are doing. Brave has his job cut out for him and THE NEW PLP. I support him for leader. I support Chester Cooper for Deputy. I will hold my nose and support Fred Mitchell for National Chairman. These three persons will form the core of the block that should and must be cemented to lay the corner stone and foundation of THE NEW PLP.

During the approach and passage of Irma, Brave, showed just as much leader-

ship capabilities and empathy as the PM, with all due respect, and more, in many instances. Brave, with limited resources and without the purse strings of the state, was all over The Bahamas with his team ensuring that as many Bahamians, especially Family Islanders, as possible were safe and in possession of all necessities. Dr Minnis was ok but, that is what we would have expected, and more.

The PLP has no time for playing doll house and we have no time for sitting back passively while clueless people continue to shove it down our throats just like Christie them did. As I have said, ad nausea, before, I do not like Fred Mitchell at all. He is on a different run than most Bahamians. He is also a man with severe failed political ambitions. Not only does he have "a lean and hungry look" but, he too, if Brave is not careful, could emerge as 'et tu Brutus...?' He would, however, make an excellent National Chairman for the NEW PLP. He has nothing much to do and he appears to have plenty energy so he would be vital in restructuring and rebuilding constituency branches, one on one.

Brave, while not a natural orator, is possessed of common sense and has a degree, often submerged, of empathy for regular people. it is a regret of epic proportions that we as a people have come to look to smooth talking politicians as our Great God In the Sky when they are mere mortals, just like you all. This is his last and only chance to become de facto and de jure leader of the NEW PLP.

I would be grossly remiss if I did not thank the Lord God for having once again spared us the ravages of a major hurricane. Truly, His mercies and goodness endureth forever. Prayers have been answered as never before. Are the hands of The Lord too short to save?

The Triumverate of Brave; Chester and Mitchell, the latter who I will reluctantly endorse for the post of National Chairman of the new PLP, will be the catalyst that secures the return to office by the new PLP. A triumvirate does not, mind you, of necessity, mean a rule by three but rater an amalgamation where the best three branches of the NEW PLP will be bought together. Brave is and will be primus inter pares, for those of you who know no Latin, first amongst equals.

**ORTLAND HBODIE JR**  
 Nassau,  
 September 8, 2017

# Tornadoes hit Grand Bahama

By RASHAD ROLLE and DENISE MAYCOCK  
Tribune Staff Reporters

ABOUT 100 people in Grand Bahama were affected by surprise tornadoes yesterday, some who "completely lost their homes" after the funnel clouds ripped roofs off structures as the island experienced tropical storm conditions from Hurricane Irma, according to Minister of State for Grand Bahama Kwasi Thompson.

East Grand Bahama MP Peter Turnquest said on Twitter there was tornado damage at Tamarind Street where 33 persons were affected, but said there were no injuries.

Ian McKenzie, forecaster with the Department of Meteorology, confirmed that several tornadoes touched down on the island on Sunday afternoon.

There were also reports of a tornado in Bimini. An official from that island said local representatives were called about a tornado shortly before 5pm in Bailey Town and upon investigation, found roof damage in the area.

In Grand Bahama, a funnel cloud was spotted around 1pm in the Imperial Park area, where it reportedly ripped off the roofs of three houses before making its way to the East Sunrise Highway area and caused severe roof damage to the Masonic Lodge Hall.

The tornado travelled in a northward direction along the Mall Drive where several structures, including the Imperial Gardens Apartments and the Colina Imperial Building sustained

damage.

Tornadic activity was also reported at Garden Villas, causing some persons to seek shelter at the Central Church of God.

A ZNS news team was preparing to leave the Harold DeGregory Complex on the Mall Drive to gather news footage when they saw a tornado approaching and had to run back inside for cover.

"We watched it coming towards us," said ZNS reporter Kimberly Munnings. "It broke up over the First-Caribbean building before hitting the Harold DeGregory Complex."

One Grand Bahama resident explained her surprise after seeing a tornado.

"My oldest son came home running and said there was a tornado coming, I thought he was exaggerating," the woman told ZNS' Northern Service, adding that she later saw the funnel cloud for herself. "... As it got closer we all ran inside the house. I felt the house actually (shake), after it shook, I heard a big boom, I thought that was it."

Some Bahamians expressed concern that the tornados caught people by surprise and questioned why there was no prior warning from weather officials.

However, Trevor Basden, director of meteorology, noted that his department released an advisory Saturday warning that there was a tornado risk for Grand Bahama and Bimini.

"There is risk for water-spouts and strong to severe thunderstorms in our area," the advisory said.

When it hits land, a wa-

terspout is known as a tornado, Mr Basden said.

An assessment of the damage in Grand Bahama will have to be done to determine the scope of the tornado, Mr Thompson said.

Mr Thompson said after the tornadic activity there were reports of minor injuries, though everyone was accounted for and no one suffered life-threatening injuries.

"The police and defence force officers immediately responded (to reports of the tornado), as well as NEMA and a social services team," Mr Thompson told *The Tribune*.

"They are continuing those rapid assessments. A number of persons have completely lost their homes. A number have received minor damage. They were given tarp temporarily to save what materials they are able to save."

At a later press conference broadcast live on ZNS Sunday night, Mr Thompson added: "We were sitting here at the (Emergency Centre) when we witnessed tornado activity right on the outside of the building. Quite honestly, it shook up a number of us here and by the time we were able to run outside to see what sounded like a freight train, we saw the tornado in the distance."

He said that was followed by a number of calls from persons who received major damage to homes from the tornado.

He said approximately 100 persons, including children, senior citizens and disabled persons were affected.

He said a number of them had to be relocated, some with family and friends.

"There are some whose entire roof just been lifted off, leaving the house uninhabitable. We will do our best to ensure that those persons are taken care of to the best of our ability here in Grand Bahama," Mr Thompson said.

### Danger

Despite the dangerous weather, many people in Grand Bahama were seen on the streets yesterday morning and afternoon. Power lines were down in Freeport, leaving some ar-



TORNADOES forming in Grand Bahama during Hurricane Irma.



DAMAGE in Grand Bahama after Irma's passage.

reas without electricity. There was also a house fire in the Ridge area of Freeport.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Emrick Seymour said there was no flooding at the Fishing Hole Road as of 1pm when police went to assess the area, which is prone to flooding.

He also confirmed tornado activity in Freeport.

"It started in the area of Imperial Park Subdivision where several homes were damaged. It made its way across to Lodge Hall on East Sunrise Highway and then into the downtown area where several businesses were damaged.

"We know these activities can occur during this time during this weather."

The deputy commissioner said police were concerned about the number of people roaming the streets and noticed some businesses were open.

He said police shut down those businesses.

## DOWNED TREES AND BIMINI LEFT WITHOUT POWER

By DENISE MAYCOCK  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

AS Hurricane Irma barreled into Florida, the nearby island of Bimini experienced tropical storm conditions on Sunday with wind gusts of about 80mph, heavy flooding and reports of a tornado tearing roofs off homes.

The storm downed trees and uprooted vegetation, and left the island without power and telephone service up to press time.

Administrator Kate Williamson said at least two homes were damaged by a reported tornado on Sunday afternoon.

"At about 4.55pm, we

were called regarding what is believed to be a tornado that touched down," Ms Williamson told *The Tribune*. "Our superintendent, Wendell Smith, along with the team went to investigate the matter in the Bailey Town area and the observation was severe damage in the Bunker's Hill area.

"They noticed there was roof damage, they checked and made sure there were no injuries but the initial call regarding a tornado, upon arrival the roof was blown off and three persons who occupied that house had already taken shelter to the neighbour and they were found shaken up, but there were no injuries.

"Then east of that structure, in Bailey Town about 200 feet away, the roof of an elderly gentleman was compromised and he was taken to (a shelter)."

Ms Williamson said weather conditions began to deteriorate on the island around 8.40am Sunday.

"We are experiencing sustained winds of 40 mph to 60 mph with gusts of 80 mph, and we are seeing 20ft waves," Ms Williamson told *The Tribune*.

"We have lots of flooding, especially on the lower level which is the King's Highway, large trees that's blown down. All the small vegetation has been disturbed, the road in Alice Town area, some part is

carpeted with seaweed, so we experienced some severe damage, power lines, BPL as well as BTC down. We do not have any light or phone lines."

Despite the poor conditions, while out doing assessments of the island on Sunday morning, she said officials saw a man walking on the road with a bicycle and the water had already reached his calf.

According to reports, some 1,500 residents are on the island, and about 100 persons are in a shelter. A number of Bimini residents were evacuated to New Providence last week ahead of the storm.

Ten individuals, who had remained on Cat Cay

to ride out the storm, were well and accounted for up to 1pm on Sunday.

Chief Superintendent of Police Wendell Smith said that King's Highway was inundated with water as a result of spring tides being pushed onto the road by strong winds.

"That's not associated with the surge, it is a spring tide, and the winds are pushing the water on the road," he explained.

He stated that trees had been blown down, as well as power and telephone lines.

"We have no reports of any injuries, and when I last spoke to the manager on Cat Cay, they were all well and accounted for."

Mr Smith said that the

manager and a small skeleton crew had remained on the cay to ride out the storm.

Administrator Williamson stated that residents are faring well despite the deteriorating conditions.

"People are safe and quite content in the shelter," she said. "But, there are some elderly residents who have called us to say that they are afraid of the sound of winds and we are trying to encourage them and keep them calm by telling them that God is in the storm with us."

Bimini and Grand Bahama were both under a tropical storm warning Sunday, as Irma lashed parts of Florida.

## MORTON SALT FACILITIES ON INAGUA DAMAGED

MORTON Salt, the largest employer in Inagua, sustained "extensive" roof damage as a result of Hurricane Irma's powerful winds.

Inagua was among the southern islands in The Bahamas first affected by Irma last Thursday. At the time, the hurricane was a category five, registering 185mph winds.

While Royal Bahamas Defence Force marines and Royal Bahamas Police Force officers were unable to gain access to the property to assess the damage, island administrator Julita Ingraham confirmed yesterday the roof of Morton's facilities on the island was seriously damaged.

Ms Ingraham declined further comment until she is able to return home and assess the damage with

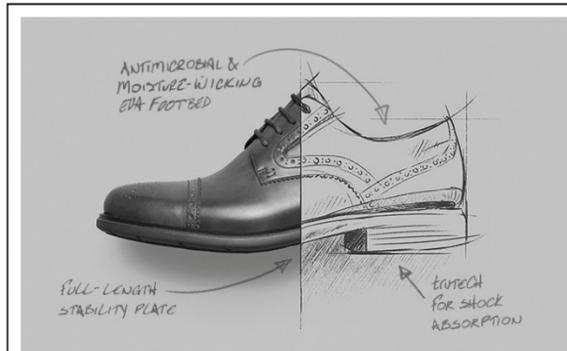
Morton Salt officials.

On Friday, it was suggested that many homes in Inagua sustained some degree of roof damage. This was confirmed by Police Superintendent James Moss.

Supt Moss said based on his initial tour of the island Friday evening, roofs were lost and the Inagua All-Age School had severe damage.

He told *The Tribune* on Friday: "Several structures, including the school, have lost sections of their roof. The issue at the school is of major concern. Based on what I could see, the administration block and several of the classrooms have sustained extensive roof damage."

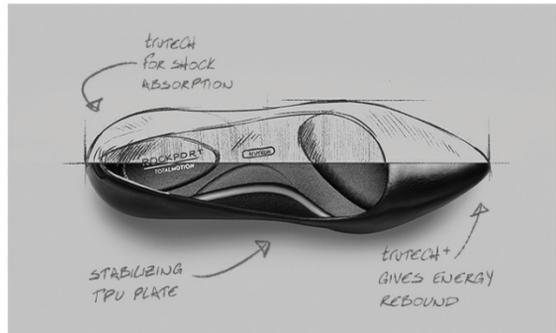
"There is some concerns at other places, mainly Morton Salt, but we are unable to clarify what exactly happened or the extent of it."



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# THE SEA GOES MISSING AT LONG ISLAND

PHOTOS and cell phone video of the shoreline in Long Island receding because of Hurricane Irma went viral on the weekend, with the phenomenon being reported by multiple international news outlets.

There were also reports that the water was sucked away from the shoreline in Exuma and Acklins as well during the passage of the monster storm.

Local meteorologist Wayne Neely explained that the phenomenon was not normal, but had occurred decades ago during hurricane season.

“Why (has) the water receded during Hurricane Irma on Long Island, Acklins, and Exuma?”

“A hurricane is a low-pressure area and at the centre of the hurricane, you have a buildup or the piling up – a bulging effect – of water called the storm surge,” Mr Neely posted to Facebook yesterday.

“At the centre of the hurricane – in this case Hurricane Irma – the water builds up at 10 to 15 feet above the normal high tide. That water must come from somewhere else and for this case, it came from the outskirts or the outer boundaries of Hurricane Irma and which for us it came from the islands of Long Island, Exuma, and Acklins which were on the boundaries of Irma. Basically, there is a surplus of water at the centre of the storm and a deficit of water around the outer bounda-

ries of the hurricane.”

Mr Neely said this has happened before, specifically during “hurricane #5” in 1936 on Acklins, when he said “persons went out and collected conch and fishes that were stranded on dry land when the water receded out of the harbour near The Bight.”

Mr Neely added: “In fact, in my book called ‘The Great Bahamas Hurricane of 1929,’ I interviewed the former Governor General of the Bahamas Arthur D Hanna, who recalled growing up as a child on the island of Acklins and experienced a hurricane in 1936, where early that morning the water receded out of the harbour in The Bight, leaving all the boats stranded on dry land for several hours and by midday it came rushing back in. Others recalled going out on the newly exposed dry land and collecting fishes and conch, which were left stranded.”

Twitter user @Kaydi\_K posted the video on Saturday, saying: “I am in disbelief right now... This is Long Island, Bahamas and the ocean water is missing!!! That’s as far as they see #HurricaneIrma.”

The video showed people walking along a stretch of the receded shoreline, with conch shells exposed. It has been retweeted more than 130,000 times and viewed millions of times on Facebook.

The receded water has since returned to the affected shorelines.



AN IMAGE from a video after the sea receded at Long Island.

# Legislation to be brought to allow mandatory evacuations

By RASHAD ROLLE  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

THE Minnis administration will table legislation establishing mandatory

evacuation procedures for natural disasters when Parliament resumes this week, Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis confirmed yesterday.

“I’ve spoken to the attorney general and they are drafting it,” he said. “I think it’s essential we have mandatory evacuation. Not only that but we must now have a manual for evacuation so we have guidelines; guidelines for category one, for category two which may not require evacuations. A requirement may be category four or five; that’s things that have to be discussed. We’ve learned quite a bit from this procedure therefore our manual will tell us exactly how individuals are dispatched, how people are collected, how facilities are set up, etc.”

Official Opposition Leader Philip “Brave” Davis said he supports legislating mandatory evacuation procedures, but added that it was unnecessary to evacuate Bahamians from danger zones ahead of Hurricanes Joaquin and Matthew when the Progressive Liberal Party was in power, as the Minnis administra-

tion did prior to Irma’s arrival.

In 2015, Hurricane Joaquin in particular devastated some of the same southern islands from which people were evacuated before Irma, with many residents complaining two years ago that they were unprepared for the storm.

That year, former Prime Minister Perry Christie said the Office of the Attorney General had drafted an order empowering the director of NEMA to declare a state of emergency and instruct mandatory evacuations. The idea resurfaced in 2016 after some residents in southern New Providence resisted calls to evacuate flood zones, prompting officials to perform emergency rescues once Matthew hit.

“Joaquin and Matthew were not as dangerous as this hurricane,” Mr Davis told reporters yesterday.

“What one has to look at in each category is the estimate of what kinds of damage may happen. In category one certain damage may be sustained; in category two or four (other kinds) of damage may be sustained so it depends on the category and the level that’s coming. No doubt the decision to evacuate (this time around) was not made by the prime minister alone. That information would’ve been gathered from the technical people. No such recommendation was made from the tech-

nical experts with respect to Joaquin and Matthew. Had it been made the decision would’ve been supported.”

During mandatory evacuation procedures, law enforcement officers will be empowered to physically remove people, Mr Davis said. People could also be expected to be charged with an offence.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Dr Duane Sands said several people in the Family Islands were injured before Hurricane Irma’s arrival but could not be airlifted to New Providence until NEMA gave the “all clear.”

“There were accident victims in Exuma, some with very serious fractures and head injuries that we could not evacuate,” he said. “When we got the all clear yesterday (Saturday) we were able to mobilise aircraft shortly after 4pm and they were able to retrieve patients from three islands, Exuma, Eleuthera and Abaco and the patients were safely administered to PMH. In Exuma we had three victims of a vehicle collision. At the time of the accident airports in Exuma and LPIA were closed. The medical team in Exuma did the best they could.”

Dr Sands said there will likely be more effort in the future to remove medical professionals from the pathway of a dangerous storm as was done this time around when they were evacuated

from MICAL and Ragged Island.

“I think there’s a difference between police, defence force and health professionals,” he said. “Those are all essential services. However, the police and defence force have a different approach, different training for surviving these kinds of circumstances. At this time, the position of the minister of health is not to maintain staff in a situation where their safety is at risk. Obviously as we draft the policy for mandatory evacuations, the specifics will have to be determined.”

For his part, Dr Minnis said he’ll refrain from giving a definitive statement on how the country fared from Hurricane Irma until he sees some of the harder hit islands for himself and gets a proper assessment of them.

Plans for him and a government delegation to visit the southern islands yesterday were scratched amid high winds in New Providence. A delegation is expected to visit the islands today.

“A leader is only as great as his team,” Dr Minnis said in response to a question about how the government and its agencies responded to his first major test as prime minister. “I had a very, very good team. The team worked, they were on point. Once the team continues to do the work... then I think we’re in good hands.”



**Quote of the week**

*Education makes a difference in life. It gives the answers to puzzles, and shapes the world with all of the necessary requirements it needs to control it.*

~ Betty Taylor ~  
Original Author

Betty Taylor  
Journalist / Entrepreneur

**MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING**



**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

**OPENING OF THE WILD BIRD HUNTING SEASON FOR 2017 – 2018**

The public is reminded that in accordance with Wild Birds Protection Order of 1994 (under the Wild Birds Protection Act, Chapter 249), the opening date of the 2017 – 2018 hunting season for various wild birds is as follows:

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 for the following wild birds ONLY:**

Eurasian-collared or “Ring-necked” Dove  
Mourning or “Florida” Dove

Hunters are reminded that these are the only two (2) species that can be hunted at this time. Hunters should exercise great care to avoid shooting other species. Enforcement officers will be closely monitoring hunting activity.

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 for the following wild birds:**

White Crowned Pigeon  
Ringed-necked Pheasant  
Zenaida Dove  
Guinea Fowl  
Bob-White Quail  
Chukar Partridge  
Wilson’s or Jack Snipe  
Coot

All Ducks and Geese **EXCEPT** the Whistling, Bahama and Ruddy Ducks.

The hunting (that is, the capture and or killing) of **ALL** other wild birds is prohibited.

The public is asked to cooperate by adhering to the observance of the stated dates, as well to all other provisions of the Wild Birds Protection Act. Hunters are asked to pay careful attention to ensure that they shoot only those birds indicated above. The Ministry wishes to register grave concerns at the reports of illegal shooting of non listed-species, and of shooting in excess of the Bag Limits. Hunters are reminded that the bag limit is fifty (50) birds per day. Any persons found acting in contravention to the provisions of the Act will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Signed



Hon. Romauld S. Ferreira  
**MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR WILD BIRDS PROTECTION**

## BPL TEAMS IN ACTION TO RESTORE POWER SUPPLY

BAHAMAS Power and Light Company Ltd (BPL) said yesterday its teams are continuing efforts to restore supply on New Providence and the Family Islands as a result of the passage of Hurricane Irma.

On the Family Islands, supply has been fully restored to Abaco and its cays, Cat Island, Crooked Island, Exuma and its Cays, Eleuthera and Long Island.

BPL said due to strong gusts of wind in Bimini and South Andros, a controlled shutdown of supply was executed on those islands to prevent damage to its network. BPL reminded its customers that a particular vulnerability exists with overhead power lines and supply will be restored once it is safe to do so.

Response teams have been formed and will be traveling to Acklins, Maya-

guana, Ragged Island and Inagua to address electricity concerns and begin restoring supplies as soon as it is practicable.

BPL teams will continue to respond to power related emergencies in New Providence and customers can contact 302-1800 if they have a power related concern.

Further updates will be provided on BPL’s Facebook page.

## OKAY JOSE - STAY AWAY

from page one

“Within the next 72 hours we would get a better picture of Jose in terms of posing any immediate threat to the country at this time.

“The three-day cone still has it to the east of us moving parallel. Even with the loop now beyond the projected loop that has everyone in hysteria that remains

the question right now.

“Even outside the loop it won’t be the same path as Hurricane Irma. Because Irma moved towards the west and then across Cuba and then across Key West and (also) Irma didn’t do a loop. So there is no duplication in track.”

Mr McKenzie continued: “The loop stops midway in the southwest Atlantic. It doesn’t continue to pen-

trate through the island chain as some persons are suggesting. That’s why beyond the 72 hours we would get a better picture in terms of a more accurate or a better confidence in terms of the path of Jose.

“We will continue to monitor the system closely. When and if the need arises, we will then go with the watch and warnings if necessary.”

# 'Unacceptable' that Baha Mar closed doors to guests in storm

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
sdorsett@tribunemedia.net

PRESIDENT and managing director of the Atlantis resort Howard Karawan has said it is "unacceptable" and "surprising" that Baha Mar would close its doors to "customers and the community" during the passage of a major category four hurricane.

In an interview with *The Tribune* on the weekend, Mr Karawan said the only reason a hotel should close because of a hurricane is if "the hotel was not built up to standard."

He said when you operate a major hotel on an island you have a "moral obligation" to provide shelter to guests and to support the community.

In preparation for Hurricane Irma that was projected to hit the capital as a

category four storm, Baha Mar's guests were told to seek alternative "local shelter" if they were unable to leave The Bahamas, as the resort was temporarily closing its doors until after the passage of Irma.

On Thursday, Robert Sands, Baha Mar's senior vice-president of government and external affairs, told Tribune Business the hotel had already arranged the early departure of "almost 100 per cent" of guests ahead of the super storm's potential strike.

New Providence was spared the brunt of Hurricane Irma that caused catastrophic damage in several Caribbean islands, killing at least 27 people and leaving thousands homeless.

However, the storm brought significant damage to Ragged Island in the southern Bahamas, as well as Grand Bahama in the

north.

Mr Sands confirmed that Baha Mar was "suspending services" at "end of business" on Thursday because of Irma's strength and size, describing the storm as an unprecedented event that had never been witnessed before in The Bahamas.

"As an island resort, we see it as our moral responsibility to shelter our guests and be there to support the community as best we can, not to close our doors on them," Mr Karawan told *The Tribune*.

"We were prepared to keep our guests safe during the storm's passage and the hotel was fully operational. I do not believe you should ever close your doors, you have to support the community and we will help whenever we can. I don't know why a newly built hotel would close. The only time a hotel would close is if

it was not built up to standards or the building was not made to sustain potentially bad weather.

"It is unacceptable and surprising to hear that the hotel closed its doors to customers and to the community during a storm," he told *The Tribune* when asked about Baha Mar's closure.

Mr Karawan said the Atlantis resort housed nearly 1,200 guests and 100 employees during the hurricane. He also said there is no damage to any of the resort's hotels.

On Sunday, Graeme Davis, president of Baha Mar said he is thankful to report all Baha Mar guests were safely evacuated off the island and Baha Mar sustained no damage as a result of Hurricane Irma.

"Our team did an exceptional job of preparing Baha Mar for the storm," Mr Davis said in a statement. "I

am personally grateful for their tremendous efforts in executing our emergency response plan, and in ensuring the safety of our guests and associates.

"Now, with the passage of the storm through the Caribbean, we are ready to resume full hotel, casino and retail operations and look forward to welcoming guests back to Baha Mar on Tuesday, September 12. The island of New Providence was spared during this storm, but we know that some of our Family Islands were less fortunate. We are working with government authorities as well as local aid organisations to provide financial and other assistance to support those communities in need and to aid our community here in New Providence."

Last year, thousands of guests at the Atlantis resort on Paradise Island were

evacuated from their hotel rooms in preparation for the impact of Hurricane Matthew.

The 2,100 visitors and residents, who were evacuated from the Coral Towers, Beach Towers, Harborside, Ocean Club and The Cove, spent nearly two days in the Imperial Ballroom which had been sectioned off into dozens of sleeping quarters.

At the time, executives at the hotel said the move was just a precaution to ensure that people were safe during the category three storm.

Guests were provided with pillows, blankets and sleeping mats as well as a complimentary meal and water last year. Guests were also not charged for the two days of Matthew's passage and all meals on those days were also free of charge.



PRIME Minister Dr Hubert Minnis with some of the youngsters sheltering at the New Providence Community Centre from the storm.

Photo: BIS

## 'WE BROUGHT EVACUEES HERE - WE'LL GET THEM HOME'

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**  
Deputy Chief Reporter  
krussell@tribunemedia.net

THE Bahamas government is footing the costs associated with returning all evacuees from Mayaguana, Inagua, Crooked Island, Acklins, Long Cay and Ragged Island to their respective homes, National Emergency Management Agency director Captain Stephen Russell has said.

"We brought them here and we'll get them back to their islands," Capt Russell said at a press conference on Saturday amid some concerns regarding the evacuees' return to their re-

spective islands.

However, their return home is hinged on how soon officials are able to carry out initial damage assessments and the return to the country of various aircraft, including Bahamasair planes. Bahamasair's planes in particular were temporarily housed in Jamaica while Irma made its way through The Bahamas, Captain Russell said during a press conference at NEMA on Saturday.

The national flag carrier resumed limited operations on Sunday.

Capt Russell said: "Here in The Bahamas we know we brought a number of

persons here that were evacuated from their respective islands and the aim now is how soon can we get those persons back to their respective islands.

"The government will return them to their islands. There are some concerns as to who will pay for what, we brought them here and we'll get them back to their islands."

He also said: "As soon as we are comfortable that persons are able to go to those districts we will arrange a series of flights.

"We don't want to go transporting persons into the islands if the islands are not in the condition to re-

ceive them as it should be. So that's one of our first orders of priority.

"In the event that their homes are not up to the state where we can return them we are looking at some alternative here in New Providence where we can house persons separate and apart from the gymnasiums.

"There was some talk about one of the hotel towers not necessarily Baha Mar but one of the adjacent towers, The Wyndham. (We are) looking at one of those towers to house a section of those persons who are in the gymnasiums."

Ahead of Irma's arrival,

some residents of MICAL, Ragged Island and Bimini residents were evacuated into New Providence. Some areas of Grand Bahama were also evacuated into inland communities.

A total of 1,223 persons arrived in New Providence on 15 flights Wednesday and three hurricane shelters were earmarked for these residents. Capt Russell said only 10 per cent of them needed to use these facilities.

On Thursday, an additional 21 people from Mathew Town, Inagua and about 300 others from Bimini requested evacuation. A total of eight planes - two

to Inagua and six to Bimini - were sent for the evacuations.

At the time, Capt Russell told The Tribune officials were working with a small window of opportunity limiting the number of aircraft that could be sent to Bimini.

Capt Russell said many of those evacuated from Bimini - seniors, disabled, women and children - were expected to be housed at the Sir Kendal G L Isaacs Gymnasium, but that decision was placed on hold after the majority of the evacuees were able to take up residency with family and friends in New Providence.

## BAHAMIAN FAMILY FLEES TO CANADA TO ESCAPE IRMA

By **KHRISNA RUSSELL**  
Deputy Chief Reporter  
krussell@tribunemedia.net

A BAHAMIAN mother and her two sons claimed they fled to Canada last week to escape possible devastation to the country by Hurricane Irma.

According to CTV News Barrie, Desiree Johnson and her sons arrived at Pearson International Airport in Ontario, Canada around 10.30pm last Thursday, the same day the southern islands began to experience adverse weather

conditions from Hurricane Irma.

Although they have no relatives or friends in Canada, the family reportedly said they know the country is one with a caring reputation. It was said they left The Bahamas without a plan and their decision, made on impulse, came because they felt there was no other choice.

CTV News Barrie reported they do not know what tomorrow will bring, but they have already reached out to several community agencies in Canada looking for help.

CTV Barrie said the family is now planning on asking the federal government to remain in Canada, adding that Ms Johnson wants an opportunity for two of her three sons to start a new life.

Her third son was said to have been left behind in The Bahamas, as the family didn't have enough money to escape all together, CTV Barrie reported.

John Gargis, associate pastor of Evangelism at Fountain City United Methodist Church, established a GoFundMe page to raise funds to cover the

cost of plane tickets, hotel accommodations and food for the family.

"We charged tickets to allow Desiree and her two sons to leave Nassau before the hurricane. We then sent money for food and hotel in Toronto. One hundred per cent of these funds go to help cover these expenses," Mr Gargis said on the fundraiser website.

Up to press time, 159 people raised \$8,147.

While the move attracted ridicule on Facebook from some Bahamians, there were others who offered the

family words of support on GoFundMe.

"My family came to Canada 30 years with nothing and Canada has done nothing but love us. I hope and pray the same for your family. Would love to know how things turn out for you," said one user, Mitxay Phanvongsa.

Another user, Pete Grychuk, said: "Sad to hear you had to leave your home. But I hope Canada provides a warm welcome."

Lisa Grubestic also said: "I hope the Johnson family get their chance to stay in Canada. God bless you all!

Would love to know how you make out and if I can be of any assistance please email me!"

"Desiree, I wish you and your family the best for the future. Welcome to Canada," Emilia Moon-de Kemp added.

New Providence escaped Irma's wrath without damage, however there were reports of structural damage in the southern Bahamas, such as Ragged Island, as well as in Grand Bahama in the north.

It has been claimed that the Johnson family lived in New Providence.

# Caribbean hit hard by Irma

**ST JOHN'S, ANTIGUA**  
Associated Press

STRUNG like beads along the northeast edge of the Caribbean, the Leeward Islands are tiny, remote and beautiful, with azure waters and ocean breezes drawing tourists from around the world.

The wild isolation that made St Barts, St Martin, Anguilla and the Virgin Islands vacation paradises has turned them into cut-off, chaotic nightmares in the wake of Hurricane Irma, which left 22 people dead, mostly in the Leeward Islands. Looting and lawlessness were reported Saturday by both French and Dutch authorities, who were sending in extra troops to restore order.

The Category 5 storm snapped the islands' fragile links to the outside world with a direct hit early Wednesday, pounding their small airports, decapitating cellphone towers, filling harbors with overturned, crushed boats and leaving thousands of tourists and locals desperate to escape.

The situation worsened Saturday with the passage of Category 4 Hurricane Jose, which shuttered airports and halted emergency boat traffic through the weekend.

Looting, gunshots and a lack of clean drinking water were reported on the French Caribbean territory of St Martin, home to five-star resorts and a multimillion estate owned by President Donald Trump.

Federal officials deployed C-130s to evacuate US citizens from the French Caribbean island of St Martin to Puerto Rico. Nearly 160 were evacuated on Friday and approximately 700 more on Saturday.

The amphibious assault USS Wasp evacuated hospi-

tal patients from St Thomas in the Virgin Islands to St Croix and Puerto Rico. The Norwegian Cruise Line turned a cruise ship into an ad-hoc rescue boat, sending a ship with ten restaurants, a spa and a casino to evacuate 2,000 tourists from St Thomas in the US Virgin Islands. The Norwegian Sky cruise ship was due to arrive Tuesday and take its charges to Miami.

More than 1,100 police, military officials and others were deployed to St Martin and the nearby French Caribbean territory of St Barts, where they used helicopters to identify the cars of people looting stores and homes. French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe announced Saturday night that France would be sending more Foreign Legion troops, paratroopers and other reinforcements to St Martin starting Sunday.

Philippe said the several hundred gendarmes, soldiers and other security forces there were working in "difficult conditions" and needed help.

The government told all residents to stay inside and put the island and St Barts on its highest alert level as Hurricane Jose rolled through the area.

The island is divided between French St Martin and Dutch St Maarten, where the Dutch government estimated Saturday that 70 percent of houses were badly damaged or destroyed, leaving much of the 40,000 population in public shelters as they braced for the arrival of Jose.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the situation remained "grim" on the island where widespread looting had broken out and a state of emergency was in force.

Rutte said some 230 Dutch troops and police



PEOPLE move through flooded streets in Havana after the passage of Hurricane Irma, in Cuba, yesterday. Photo: Ramon Espinosa/AP

were patrolling St Maarten to maintain order and deliver aid and a further 200 would arrive in coming days. The government evacuated 65 dialysis patients from St Maarten's hospital, which also was hard hit by Irma.

The islands' woes increased as the airport on St Barts was closed, and those in Anguilla and St Martin were open only to the military, rescue crews and aid organizations. Others, including St Thomas in the US Virgin Islands, banned flyers.

Late Saturday, St Maarten Prime Minister William Marlin said about 1,600 tourists had been evacuated and efforts are being made to move 1,200 more.

Marlin said many countries and people have offered help to St Maarten, but authorities are waiting on the weather conditions to see how this can be coordinated.

Before the hurricanes, St Maarten's Princess Juliana International Airport was one of the former Dutch colony's major tourist draws thanks to a runway that ended just a few meters (yards) from the sandy crescent of Maho Beach, where people could stand and watch as arriving jets skimmed low over their heads.

After Irma, aerial footage shot by Dutch marines showed that Maho Beach's sands had washed away and the airport was badly damaged. The Dutch military are using the runway, which was inundated by high tides during the hurricane, to ferry in aid supplies but say it's not yet open to civilian flights as there are no runway lights or air traffic control. The Canadian low-cost airline and tour agency Sunwing evacuated some Canadian tourists from St Maarten to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic on Saturday.

Ports in St John, St Thomas and elsewhere remained closed.

As Jose neared, the last airplane flew in to St Mar-



ASSILIA JOSEPH, right, and her son Wisner Jean Baptiste, carry their belongings after the passing of Hurricane Irma, in Fort-Liberte, Haiti, on Friday. Photo: Dieu Nalio Chery/AP

tin's battered Grande-Case airport Friday carrying workers to help re-establish the island's water supply and electricity. French authorities said some 1,105 recovery workers were deployed on St Martin and St Barts. A tanker with 350 tons of fresh water was also on its way.

By Saturday, damage was estimated to have already reached 1.2 billion euros (\$1.44 billion).

France said it hoped to allow commercial boats to go to and from St Martin and nearby Guadeloupe on Monday, when waters are expected to calm.

French President Emmanuel Macron came under criticism for his government's handling of the crisis.

Once known for pink sandy beaches that attracted celebrities and royalty, the island of Barbuda is now a disaster zone. Virtually all of its 1,500 residents left for the sister island of Antigua, a 1.5-hour boat ride away, ahead of Jose with assistance from

"The biggest problem in Barbuda now is the fact that you have so many dead

animals in the water and so on, that there is a threat of disease. You could put all the people back in Barbuda today ... but then you'll have a medical crisis on your hand," Foreign Affairs Minister Charles Fernandez said.

UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson announced a package of 42 million pounds (about \$55m) for the relief effort in the British overseas territories of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Turks & Caicos. "The UK government is doing everything it possibly can to help those affected by the hurricane," he said.

But Anguilla's former attorney general, Rupert Jones, criticised Britain's response to the disaster.

"It is an insufficient drop in the Caribbean ocean for islands subject to devastation and inhabited by its own citizens," he wrote in an email. "The rebuilding effort is bound to cost a vast amount more and it is hard to see this making a real difference to the three islands."

Meanwhile, in Cuba, Irma collapsed buildings with deafening winds and relentless rain on Saturday.

Across a swath of Cuba, utility poles were toppled, trees uprooted and roads blocked. Witnesses said a provincial museum near the eye of the storm was in ruins. And authorities in the city of Santa Clara said 39 buildings collapsed.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

As Irma rolled in, Cu-

ban soldiers went through coastal towns to force people to evacuate, taking people to shelters at government buildings and schools — and even caves.

Video images from northern and eastern Cuba showed uprooted utility poles and signs, many downed trees and extensive damage to roofs.

Eastern Cuba, a major sugarcane-growing area and home to many poor, rural communities, faced a staggering recovery, with its economy in tatters even before the storm hit due to years of neglect and lack of investment.

Civil Defence official Gergorio Torres said authorities were trying to tally the extent of the damage, which appeared concentrated in banana-growing areas.

More than 5,000 tourists were evacuated from the keys off Cuba's north-central coast, where the government has built dozens of all-inclusive resorts in recent years.

In Caibarien, a small coastal city about 200 miles (320 kilometers) east of Havana, winds downed power lines and a three-block area was under water. Many residents stayed put, hoping to ride out the storm. The Turks and Caicos Islands were battered early on Friday, with waves as high as 20 feet (six metres) expected.

Irma rolled past the Dominican Republic and Haiti on Thursday and spun along the northern coast of Cuba on Friday morning.



RESCUE staff from the Municipal Emergency Management Agency investigate an empty flooded car during the passage of Hurricane Irma through the northeastern part of the island in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. Photo: Carlos Giusti/AP

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**CONGRATULATIONS**

to **Mr. Christopher E.A. Klass**, husband of Marva S. Klass (née Bowe) who was granted the State New Year Annual Award 2017 in The Military Division by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace, England. Christopher is the son of Mrs. Carlotta Z. Klass



STORM damage in St Maarten. Photo: Gerben Van Es/Dutch Defense Ministry via AP



**SAILBOATS** moored near Watson Island ride out the winds and waves as Hurricane Irma passes by in Miami Beach, Florida, yesterday.

Photo: Wilfredo Lee/AP

# Bahamians in Florida brace for impact of storm

By **RASHAD ROLLE**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
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**BAHAMIANS** in Florida braced for Hurricane Irma yesterday, a hurricane described by forecasters as the most dangerous storm to hit the state since the category five Hurricane Andrew did so in 1992.

Although Irma had been weakened from its impact on northern Cuba over the weekend, it brought storm surges and category two and three winds to Florida.

Dr Donald McCartney, a long-time Bahamian educator and professor at Barry University in Florida, was among the Bahamians in Florida affected by the storm. He said he spent 24 hours travelling with his wife from his home in Coconut Creek, Florida to Stone Mountain, Georgia where his daughter lives.

"We left Florida on Thursday once we thought we would get a direct hit,"

he said. "We left because we figured that even with a slight blow there would be some impact. It took 24 hours to travel from Coconut Creek. We had to come out. Fort Lauderdale was right in the storm's path. We're north of Miami and it looks like you need to take a boat to move along Brickell Avenue. We're not too far from the beach either. Anything that's near to the beach I suspect will feel some affects of the hurricane."

Although by 6.30pm indications were that at least the area near Coconut Creek experienced little more than some flooding and fallen trees, Dr McCartney said it was "up in the air" when he would return home.

"I hope by Thursday the latest," he said. "That will depend on the condition of the roads. In these places, even though they are getting the remnants of the hurricane, they tend to have a lot of trees down."

Dr McCartney didn't regret not taking more items with him on the trip.

"I treat material things as they ought to be treated: if I lose it, I replace them," he said.

One part of the experience he would not want to do again: waiting in line for gas.

"The night before we left we got in a tremendously long line at a gas station," he said. "Every service station in the parameters where we live was out of gas. We found this one that I usually go to but left because the line was long. We had to go back to that one. It took half an hour before we actually reached the pumps. But I think we did the sensible thing by simply coming out."

Dr McCartney said his wife, who rode out two hurricanes by herself here in The Bahamas, didn't want to repeat the experience again so she headed to Florida before Irma struck this country.



**A CRANE** atop a high-rise under construction in downtown Miami collapsed yesterday amid strong winds from Hurricane Irma.

Photo: Gideon J. Ape/AP

## POWER OUT AND HOMES SWAMPED IN FLORIDA

**MIAMI**  
Associated Press

**HURRICANE** Irma gave Florida a coast-to-coast pummeling with winds up to 130 mph yesterday, swamping homes and boats, knocking out power to millions and toppling massive construction cranes over the Miami skyline.

The 400-mile-wide (640-kilometer-wide) storm blew ashore in the mostly cleared-out Florida Keys, then marched up its western coast, its punishing winds extending clear across to Miami and West Palm Beach on the Atlantic side.

Irma was nearing the heavily populated Tampa-St Petersburg area late yesterday, though in a much-weakened state. While it arrived in Florida a Category 4 hurricane, by nightfall it was down to a Category 2 with winds of 100 mph (160 kph). Meanwhile, more than 160,000 people waited in shelters statewide as Irma headed up the coast.

There were no immediate reports of deaths in Florida. In the Caribbean, at least 24 were people were killed during Irma's destructive trek.

Bryan Koon, Florida's emergency management

director, said last night that authorities had only scattered information about the storm's toll, but he remained hopeful.

"I've not heard of catastrophic damage. It doesn't mean it doesn't exist. It means it hasn't gotten to us yet," Koon said.

In the low-lying Keys, where a storm surge of over ten feet (three metres) was recorded, appliances and furniture were seen floating away, and Monroe County spokeswoman Cammy Clark said the ocean waters were filled with navigation hazards, including sunken boats. But the full extent of

Irma's wrath there was not clear.

The county administrator, Roman Gastesi, said crews would begin house-to-house searches Monday to check on survivors. And an airborne relief mission, led by C-130 military cargo planes, was gearing up to bring emergency supplies to the Keys.

Storm surge was a big concern. The National Hurricane Center said a federal tide gauge in Naples reported a 7-foot (more than 2-meter) rise in water levels in just 90 minutes.

Many streets were flooded in downtown Miami and other cities.

## MANATEES STRANDED AS IRMA SUCKS WATER FROM SARASOTA BAY

**TAMPA, FLORIDA**  
Associated Press

**TWO** manatees were stranded after Hurricane Irma sucked water out of Sarasota Bay, in Florida's Manatee County.

Several people posted photos on Facebook, hoping rescue workers or wildlife officials would respond. Michael Sechler posted that the animals were far too massive to be lifted, so the rescuers gave them water.

Marcelo Clavijo posted that a group of people eventually loaded the manatees onto tarps and were able to drag them to deeper water.



**A STRANDED** manatee in Manatee County, Florida, yesterday. The mammal was stranded after waters receded from the Florida bay as Hurricane Irma approached.

Photo: Michael Sechler/AP

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THE BODY of a man is taken from the scene after Friday's fatal shooting.

Photo: Terrel W. Carey/Tribune Staff

# Shot dead in front of abandoned home

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
sdorsett@tribunemedia.net

POLICE are still on the hunt for the person responsible for an early morning shooting on Friday that left one man dead and another man in hospital.

The shooting took place

shortly after 7am off South Street and brought the country's murder count to 97 for the year, according to *The Tribune's* records.

According to police, two men were standing in front of an abandoned house near Hospital Lane, when a man armed with a handgun approached them and fired

several shots at them before fleeing the area on foot in an unknown direction.

One of the men died on the scene, the other was taken to hospital where he remains in serious, but stable condition. Police have not identified the victim, but *The Tribune* understands he is Delano Frazer.

The murder came less than 24 hours after a man was found shot to death in the passenger's seat of a stolen vehicle that was parked in the driveway of a home in the Mackey Street area early Thursday morning.

According to Chief Superintendent Solomon Cash, officer in charge of

the Central Detective Unit (CDU), sometime around 8.30am, police received reports of a man left in a vehicle on Hillside Street/Benico Road with an apparent gunshot wound to the head.

Police have not released an identity of the victim, but *The Tribune* understands he is Marvin Woods.

Chief Supt Cash said the car, a black Honda Stream, had been stolen sometime after 6am Thursday.

Anyone with information on any of these homicides is asked to contact police at 911 or 919, the Central Detective Unit at 502-9991 or Crime Stoppers anonymously at 328-TIPS.

## ARMED ROBBERS SHOOT VICTIM AS HE RUNS AWAY

POLICE are seeking the public's help in locating the suspects responsible for a shooting and armed robbery that left a man in hospital on Sunday.

Police were told that shortly after midnight, a man was at his home on Cowpen Road west of Faith

Avenue, when five men armed with firearms approached and robbed him of cash. The man attempted to run, but was shot. The suspects then fled on foot. The victim was taken to hospital where his condition is listed as stable.

Police also said a suspect

on bail for armed robbery was arrested after he was found with an illegal handgun.

He was arrested shortly after 1.30pm on Sunday.

Officers assigned to the Mobile Division were on routine patrol in the area of Buttonwood Avenue in

Pinewood Gardens when they saw a man who aroused their suspicion.

Police searched the man and found a Smith and Wesson pistol with 17 rounds of ammunition. The man was also being electronically monitored at the time of his arrest.

Police also arrested a man after seizing marijuana from a home in Yellow Elder.

Around 10am on Sunday, officers assigned to the Mobile Division acting on information conducted a search of a man's home on Derby Road where they uncovered a quantity of

marijuana. The man was subsequently taken into custody. Additionally, Mobile Division officers took 11 other persons into custody over the past 24 hours for firearms, murder and outstanding criminal warrants.

Investigations into these incidents continue.



GN-1943

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#### Please pay special attention to the schedule below:-

Franchise businesses are asked to report to the Franchise Unit in the following order depending on the Franchise/Owner Names beginning:-

- A to G - are to bring documents - Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>**
- H to M - are to bring documents - Oct 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>**
- N to S - are to bring documents - Oct 16<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup>**
- T to Z - are to bring documents - Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup>**

\*You are requested to adhere to the above schedule to avoid overcrowding. If the following documents have been updated since May registration exercise please provide to update the franchise file:-

- Updated franchise Receipt payment**
- Updated Business License (Tin Number)**
- Up to date insurance certificates (if not on file)**

Our inspection team will be visiting establishment with larger fleets, therefore, we invite you to submit your spreadsheets to the Franchise Department, located at the Eastern End Grandstand of the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium (Section 3). Smaller fleets are requested to report for inspection during October, 2017.

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR DIES WHILE TRIMMING TREES

By **RASHAD ROLLE**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

*The Tribune* understands.

Contrary to social media reports, Rev Clarence Knowles did not fall off of a ladder to his death.

AN associate pastor at New Destiny Baptist Cathedral died yesterday while trimming trees in his yard,

An official at his church in Nassau said the cause of his death is not yet known.



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# Parasites in Paradise

By FREDERICK SMITH, QC

**B**AHAMIANs, like the citizens of young developing nations, place emphasis on the idea of national sovereignty. Gaining independence in 1973 remains a source of pride and our tourism industry continues to boast it is 'Better in The Bahamas'.

But, all is not well in paradise. The country may possess incredible natural beauty and vast economic potential, but half a century after achieving political autonomy, the citizens find themselves relegated to the status of ECONOMIC PARASITES, subsisting on the periphery of a system that negates their chances of financial success and rules out any notion of meaningful ownership of the economy.

Due to an excessive, oppressive and prejudicial regulatory regime, Bahamians are prohibited from owning any stake in the large-scale tourism projects that underpin the national economy – yet any individual, group or entity based outside The Bahamas can own shares in resort developments located here.

For example, the Atlantis Resort, the largest employer after the government, is owned by a publicly traded Canadian company with some \$159 billion in assets. The shareholders of Brookfield profit from the resort's success – but not a single one of them is Bahamian.

It is nothing short of perverse that we continue to maintain a legal framework which prevents Bahamians from owning a piece of their own economic pie.

Likewise, trillions of dollars in offshore banks are headquartered in this country, yet Bahamians have been condemned to an alternate reality where the concept of abundant affordable capital simply does not exist.

Meanwhile, the development strategy adopted by successive governments, the so-called 'Anchor Project Model,' destroys local industry while siphoning off the profits to other jurisdictions. This has a huge impact, especially on Family Islands which already struggle under a regressive tax regime that redirects all revenue to Nassau.

Over the years, there have been rare moments when the enormous economic potential of this country could be glimpsed.

For example, Freeport, the nation's second city, which boomed from 1955 until the first PLP government broke it back in 1969.

In the heyday of Freeport, every resident, every licensee, every land owner could buy shares in the parent company, Intercontinental Diversified traded on the NY Stock Exchange.

The economic climate was open and participatory. Believe it or not, there was a time when a foreign person did not have to get approval from the Office of the Prime Minister to do



**THE ENTRANCE** to Atlantis - the country's largest private employer and owned by a Canadian company, with not a single Brookfield shareholder being Bahamian.

business in the Bahamas, particularly in Freeport. The local economy thrived and Bahamians benefitted as a result.

The people who worked and lived in Freeport – both local and foreign – had a real stake, a real interest in seeing this ambitious project succeed.

But beginning in the late 1960s, the central government illegally seized the administrative and regulatory powers reposed in the GBPA under the Hawksbill Creek Agreement, negating Freeport's attractiveness as a free trade zone and creating a mass exodus of entrepreneurs and capital.

Ironically, after "Bahamianisation", the GBPA was allowed to convert into a private company, pervasively depriving every Bahamian of the opportunity of owning shares.

Almost overnight, Freeport devolved from a thriving, outward looking international trade zone into a crippled, stagnant, semi-deserted trading post with no prospects for meaningful growth.

Don't get me wrong, Freeport is still home to an international economy. A Chinese company owns the Harbour; American companies own the Shipyard; a Canadian company owns Freeport Power; a French outfit controls Sanitation Services and, of course, the English still own the GBPA and so on. But now, none of the profit goes to Bahamians; instead, it is drained from the pockets of Bahamians, then shipped overseas to the benefit of others.

Freeport is in this sense, a microcosm of what has happened across The Bahamas: citizens have been pushed to the fringes, with

all the real profit enjoyed by foreign interests along with their friends in local politics who are always eager to lend a hand in return for a handout.

The result of this depressing scenario has been social and economic alienation; a sense of isolation, detachment and antagonism among regular Bahamians. Citizens do not feel they are beneficiaries of the economy, and rightfully so. They feel cut off and used, mere cogs in someone else's machine.

Some very big companies and banks are headquartered in this little country, making it a huge profit centre, just not for Bahamians. Yet other countries with far less per capita wealth than the Bahamas actually pave the way for their citizens to benefit from foreign investment.

Indonesia has set initial capital expenditure at \$1m for any foreign entity, unless it takes on local partners. A similar law exists in Ghana, where the investor must also commit to hiring a minimum number of skilled local workers.

In Hungary, efforts have been made to increase the public's share in the value added by large foreign investments, by giving concessions and technical assistance to local suppliers and encouraging large foreign businesses to rely on them.

In the Philippines, certain enterprises whose capital is at least 60% Filipino-owned are entitled to special services such as a streamlined business registration, credit financing and capacity building programmes.

In most countries, citizens are simply allowed to invest in whatever they want, anywhere in the world. The Bahamas joins a handful of Middle Eastern, African and Eastern European states that still adhere to the outdated model of exchange control.

Then, we bend over backwards for the foreign investor, grant him millions of

dollars in concessions, even as Americans, Canadians, Englishmen, Russians, Mexicans, Brazilians, Mongolians – literally anyone, provided they are not Bahamian – buy shares and profit from the companies operating in The Bahamas.

In other countries, casino taxes represent a huge revenue stream for the local and state governments. For example, in 2014, more than \$2 billion in taxes and fees were paid by Nevada hotel-casino operators. Generally, Nevada hotel casinos account for nearly half of state revenue – more than any other industry.

Closer to home, that same year, Jamaica reported an increase in casino tax revenue from J\$2.9 billion last year to J\$4.1 billion. Recent studies show that casino tax is becoming a stronger generator of government revenue across the region.

Yet in The Bahamas, casino tax goes to central government and/or is waived, or we don't bother to collect. Family Islands where casinos operate do not benefit. Only the foreign investor benefits and exports the profit abroad.

This is the evil of the Anchor Project model, which holds that attracting foreign developers and making them happy is the single most important economic factor. Everything else – the local environment, culture, the well-being of the community – is a distant second, if considered at all.

So, we give away Crown land for free or next to nothing, grant exemptions on Customs duties, casino tax, real property tax, stamp tax, business license tax, VAT and so on.

Consider what has hap-

pened to Bimini. A massive presence on such a tiny island, Resorts World operates like an alien entity, totally disconnected from the Bimini community; a gated plantation where hundreds of foreigners occupy luxury homes and Bahamians enter only to work mostly menial jobs. When their shift is done, they leave and the gates close behind them.

Inside, huge profits are generated for a Malaysian conglomerate and its partners in Miami who have benefitted from "double casino tax break" as The Tribune termed it, under the Christie administration. This effectively meant that in addition to waiving a significant part of the taxes the developer owed, the public also paid for upgrades to the airport and island infrastructure which the resort was originally supposed to cover.

What little the resort does pay in taxes goes to central government in Nassau, and does not benefit the people of Bimini in the slightest.

Nor can they own shares in the company and thereby claim some of the profit.

Meanwhile, their marine and terrestrial environment have been destroyed, the bone fishing flats ruined and whole reef systems torn up by the developers, meaning that fishing guides, dive instructors and fishermen – homegrown entrepreneurs – are out of work.

They have no choice but to go and apply for modest wages on the Resorts World plantation, but the irony is there are already so many foreign workers that few jobs for Bahamians exist!

Meanwhile, just 90 miles away in south Florida, tour-

ism, housing and urban development schemes all pay city, state and federal taxes to be used for infrastructure, public services, medical care, schools, police, fire and rescue, education entertainment and cultural activities. Those who live and work in the area can invest in these companies if they are publicly traded, and thereby have a stake in the success of these developments and the overall community.

We simply must change our investment and economic model so that Bahamians can own a piece of their own country, a piece of every development, a piece of their own and their children's future.

If The Bahamas is to make the most of its incredible economic potential, nothing less than a total paradigm shift in the country's approach to investment, taxation and economic empowerment is required.

In an inclusive, universally beneficial economic model, unions and hotels would not have to constantly be at odds over what amount to scraps for the workers – a bit more holiday, slightly shorter hours, minuscule raises.

Workers could own a piece of the action, as could union funds and co-operative credit institutions; and all could work together towards making the hotel a success. The same goes for industrial harbours, shipyards, power and harbour companies, factories, breweries and virtually any other business likely to attract foreign ownership.

In Freeport, the 1965 HCA Amendment provided for transfer of all infrastructural and local government assets to the residents and licensees so everybody would have a political, social, economic and cultural vested interest in working together for the success of a collective venture.

What we have instead, in Grand Bahama and across the country, is a negative, antagonistic, suspicious atmosphere, where everyone is at odds with each other and only concerned with scraping together what crumbs they can for themselves.

Bahamians are relegated to the status of parasites in our own paradise.

But the Minnis administration has an amazing opportunity to convert this toxic atmosphere into a positive, thriving, opportunistic investment environment. To do so, it must make dramatic legal and policy changes that send a clear message to Bahamians that there is economic freedom and hope on the horizon for each of them personally.

The government should repeal exchange control; make developers pay taxes to local communities; find creative and inclusive alternatives to the Anchor Project model and evolve other policies from the abundant international examples to help The Bahamas become a place where we can work together to make tourism, business, industry and commerce, succeed and grow for the good of all, foreign investor and Bahamians!

**It is nothing short of perverse that we continue to maintain a legal framework which prevents Bahamians from owning a piece of their own economic pie.**

**We simply must change our investment and economic model so that Bahamians can own a piece of their own country, a piece of every development, a piece of their own and their children's future.**



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# Back to school - but sadly not for all our children

ONE of the happiest months of the year for Bahamian parents is September for it means - back to school.

It's the month when houses and neighborhoods go quiet for most of the day and the refrigerators can stay filled longer. It's also the month we are most likely to be affected by a hurricane and most of us know a lot of families who are still recovering from Matthew and Joaquin.

With some government schools not being open to accept students last week due to ongoing repairs and Hurricane Irma posing a threat to even more school buildings, things were not

## The Disenfranchised

By JEFFREY BUTLER



as we would have hoped them to be.

But for many children in our beloved nation, their reason for not being able to attend school last week had nothing to do with Irma or over-running school repairs.

While I personally applaud every business, civic organisation and private citizen that has headed a back-to-school drive which

assisted hundreds of students, they have not been able to reach everyone who needs their help.

Unfortunately, not every child will be making it to school when classes resume this week simply because their family cannot afford the basic necessities that are needed.

But one Farm Road/Centreville resident and a group of her friends have been

doing all they can to assist those in need.

Stephanie St Fleur along with CA Newry, Maletie Etienne and Keslaine Francoeur sent out a social media appeal on her Facebook page, zoebah, asking everyone on her Facebook account and all of her WhatsApp contacts to assist in anyway they can by donating \$20 or the equivalent sum in school uniforms, shoes and other supplies.

Stephanie knew of one family which was only able to send one of their four children to school and another that was unable to send any of their four children to classes.

In the week running up to the new school year, Steph-

anie and her team went to homes in the Carmichael and Joe Farrington Road areas visiting families and finding out what their individual needs were. As she moved into the Farm Road community, her mission became more personal as this was where she grew up, the families she was calling on friends and neighbours.

What I find disturbing is that not all of the constituency offices gave the support they could have, indeed much more is left to be desired.

It's discouraging that even with a selfless effort to assist the less fortunate, donations can be judged on political affiliations or support.

Every child who resides in any country has the right to an education. They should all be equipped with what they need to compete with the best and brightest anywhere around the world.

Basic education is a necessity of every child not a chosen luxury.

A national D average will not contribute to the world class status we are aspiring towards as a nation.

• Jeffrey Butler, 33, grew up in the Kemp Road area, where he now runs a daiquiri stand, and is writing regularly in The Tribune about life in the inner city. Share your stories by emailing to disenfranchised@tribunemedia.net

# Safety tips for pedestrians

WALKING is a healthy activity, but you need to know the rules of pedestrian safety. Especially if you are walking in an area where there are no sidewalks or paths separated from the road. To stay safe while walking, please adhere to the following safety rules.

**1. Walk facing traffic when walking on the side of the road**

If there is no sidewalk and you must walk on the side of the road, choose the side where you are facing oncoming traffic. This gives you the best chance to see traffic approaching near to you.

**2. Cross safely**

Look both ways before crossing any street. Make eye contact with all drivers who may be turning. Give

## Police advice

By SERGEANT 3150 NATHALIE RANGER

them a wave. Make sure they see you.

**3. Walk single file when not separated from the road**

Unless you are on a sidewalk separated from the road or you are in a wide pedestrian lane, you should always walk in single file. This is especially important on a road with curves and where traffic has only a split second chance of seeing you before colliding with you.

**4. Stay aware of bikes and runners**

Share the road and paths

with bikes and runners. Bike riders should alert you when approaching from behind with a bike bell. Listen for them, and move to walk single file, allowing them to pass safely.

Runners should also call out for passing.

**5. Be visible**

Wear bright colors when walking in daytime. When walking at night, wear light-colored clothing and reflective clothing or a reflective vest to be visible. Drivers are often not expecting walkers to be out after dark, and you need to

give them every chance to see you. Be just as cautious at dawn or twilight, as drivers still have limited visibility or may even have the setting or rising sun directly in their eyes.

**6. Be predictable**

Make a practice of staying on one side of the path while walking rather than weaving randomly from side to side. Watch your arm motions, or you may end up giving a black eye to a silently passing walker, runner, or biker.

**7. Keep the volume down**

Don't drown out your environment when listening to your headphones. Keep the volume at a level where you can still hear warnings from other walkers, bikers and runners.

**8. Hang up and eyes up**

Chatting, texting, or

playing games on a mobile device while you walk is as dangerous as doing those things while driving. You are distracted and not as aware of your surroundings. You are less likely to recognise traffic danger, passing joggers and bikers or tripping hazards. Potential criminals see you as a distracted easy target. Adopt habits that can keep your phone in your pocket, or at least stop in a safe place to complete your phone tasks before moving on.

**9. Walk dogs on short leashes**

It is terrifying and tragic to witness dogs running out into traffic or getting into a fatal dog fight, whether on leash or off leash. But there is also a danger when walking your dog on a long leash that you will trip other walkers or bikers.

**10. Know when to stop walking**

Heat sickness, dehydration, heart attack or stroke can strike walkers of any age. Learn the symptoms of medical emergencies and carry a cell phone to dial 919 or 911

**11. Be aware of stranger danger**

Choose your walking route for paths frequented by other walkers, joggers, and bikers. If you see someone suspicious, be prepared to alter your course or go into a store or public building to avoid them. Acting alert and aware can convince bad guys to choose an easier target.

• For more information, contact the National Crime Prevention Office on 302-8430, 3028431, 3028154 or visit www.royalbahamaspolice.org.

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A BRUISED Pope Francis visits the Sanctuary of St Peter Claver, in Cartagena, Colombia, yesterday

# A BLACK EYE FOR THE POPE

**CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA Associated Press**

POPE Francis wrapped up his Colombia trip Sunday by honoring a fellow

Jesuit who ministered to African slaves and urging Colombians today to follow his lead in working for a more peaceful future.

Francis' visit to Cartagena got off to a rocky start when he bonked his head on his popemobile when it stopped short amid swarms of well-wishers. Francis, who had only a hip-high bar to hold onto, lost his balance and suffered a bruised, black left eye and a cut on his eyebrow that dripped blood onto his white cassock.

The cut was quickly bandaged with a butterfly patch and Francis carried

on without incident with his program, sporting a shiner that got increasingly dark as the day wore on.

The highlight of the day was a very personal stop for the Jesuit pope: He prayed at the tomb of St Peter Claver, the 17th century missionary who ministered to hundreds of thousands of African slaves who were brought through Cartagena's port during Spanish colonial times to be sold.

Francis, known for his own simple and austere style, said Claver was "austere and charitable to the point of heroism".

Claver, the self-described "slave of the slaves forever", has been revered by Jesuits, popes and human rights campaigners for centuries for having insisted on recognizing the inherent dignity of slaves, treating them as children of God when others considered them mere merchandise to be bought and sold.

Francis said the legacy of the Spanish priest should serve as a model for the Catholic Church today to "promote the dignity of all our brothers and sisters, particularly the poor and the excluded of society, those who are abandoned, immigrants and those who suffer violence and human trafficking".

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