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WEEKEND: TRAVEL THE WORLD WITH WEEKEND'S NEW COLUMNIST, IANTHIA SMITH



What's all the fuss about?

Davis defends BPL gifting contracts to PLP faithful

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

OFFICIAL Opposition Leader Philip "Brave" Davis said he sees nothing wrong with awarding contracts to party supporters or the justified circumvention of the tender process a day after

it was revealed companies owned by Progressive Liberal Party supporters received lucrative Bahamas Power and Light contracts under the Christie administration.

In an interview with *The Tribune* yesterday, the PLP leader further attempted to remove the spotlight from the dealings of his party while

SEE PAGE THREE

'BOARD SETS EXEC SALARIES, NOT GOVT'

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

BAHAMAS Power and Light's former board of directors determined the remuneration packages of PowerSecure's senior BPL executives, Official Opposition Leader Philip "Brave" Davis said yesterday.

He said the Christie administration didn't adjust the salaries of the executives because doing so would have been seen as "political interference."

His statement came after Works Minister Desmond

Bannister revealed in Parliament Wednesday that some senior executives of BPL made more in a month than parliamentarians make in a year.

Former CEO Pamela Hill, fired by BPL in August, was paid \$25,000 a month, received \$6,000 a month in housing benefits and had monthly benefits of \$3,833.33.

Asked about the payments which some Bahamians have found inordinate, Mr Davis said: "Money paid to executives was a matter for the board."

His administration accepted the board's remuneration decisions, he said, because the administration didn't "interfere with that" because "If you do, they say it's political interference".

At the same time, Mr Davis said the former administration directed BPL's board to seek ways to cut costs that didn't include going through with PowerSecure's plan to fire employees. PowerSecure's desire to reduce BPL's staff by more

SEE PAGE THREE

FITZGERALD INSISTS HIS HANDS ARE CLEAN

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

FORMER Education Minister Jerome Fitzgerald yesterday accused Works Minister Desmond Bannister of making "defamatory" statements, while insisting he did not benefit from a Bahamas Power and Light Company Ltd brokerage contract awarded to Bahamas Courier & Logistics (BCL), a company owned by his father.

He said the minister's reference to him in Parliament

on Wednesday was "gratuitous" and not protected by the privileges of the House of Assembly.

He also threatened to bring legal action for "defamation" in reference to newspaper headlines and "skillfully misleading information" in the publications regarding the matter.

Rejecting the assertion contracts were given to BCL because of familial ties, the former Marathon MP pointed to "a long-standing commercial" relationship with his

father's company and the government owned electricity provider dating back to the 1980s.

This comes the day after Mr Bannister revealed to parliamentarians a forensic audit by Ernst & Young into BPL that unearthed glaring infractions of the tender process, showing BCL was awarded a contract for brokerage work in the absence of participating in the tender process. The electricity provider spent \$2,626,001 with BCL since 2012.

SEE PAGE FIVE

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NO GUN AT POLICE CHIEF'S HEAD

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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NATIONAL Security Minister Marvin Dames yesterday denied assertions that Commissioner of Police Ellison Greenslade is being forced into early retirement, saying "no gun is being held" to anyone's head pushing them to leave the police force.

In an interview with *The Tribune*, Mr Dames denied



COMMISSIONER Ellison Greenslade.

reports that he or the Free National Movement administration has a political

agenda against the police chief.

He said Commissioner Greenslade is still the head of the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) and despite the "malicious rumours," there is "no tension" between the two men.

Mr Dames said Commissioner Greenslade has been absent from RBPF events because he chose to use vacation days that were

SEE PAGE SIX

SOUTH ISLANDS BRACE FOR MARIA

SEE PAGE SIX

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Don't miss breaking news throughout the weekend and a video review of the week's most important stories with The Tribune's Top 5. And, on Monday, start the week as The Tribune returns to newsstands with a round-up of all the weekend news, business and sport. Plus Insight – news, analysis and comment on the big issues of the day. Check out the latest properties for sale and rent in the Home Buyers' Guide. And The Tribune's Classifieds Trader – the best guide to cars for sale, real estate, help wanted and more.



A PHOTO sent to *The Tribune* showing one of the vexing holes on Eastern Road.

Fix the streets

AN Eastern Road resident said he and his neighbours are fed up with holes which have been left open on the busy road for more than week. "We are all hollering about the two perfectly cut Water & Sewerage boxes that have been left for over a week now and already a major traffic hazard as well as a costly vehicle hazard if you can't go around them," the resident, who did not want to be named, said. "I have also seen others on less travelled roads so there is a serious problem island wide."

The resident said the "sharp edges" of the holes can blow out a tyre and is calling for the relevant officials to fix the issue. Although the resident said the holes were dug by Water and Sewerage, it is unclear which utility company is responsible.

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Commonwealth Bank applauds Mr. Brathwaite and Mr. Strachan on this outstanding professional achievement and is proud to support those exemplary staff members of the Commonwealth Bank family who, through perseverance and determination, aim higher in their pursuit of excellence.

'What's all the fuss about?'

from page one

it governed, questioning whether the contractor for work at the Stephen Dillet School went through the proper tender process.

Extensive repairs to the school on Wulff Road are still not complete and its opening was delayed, leading officials to this week assign students of the school to other campuses in New Providence.

Mr Davis was responding in the aftermath of several shocking assertions from Works Minister Desmond Bannister on Wednesday in Parliament.

"There is nothing wrong with not going through the tender process," Mr Davis told this newspaper yesterday. "I would be surprised if the board has no justification for it."

He continued: "Are you saying that because you are a PLP, that you are disqualified from engaging in works with the government because it's a PLP government?"

"I don't think that a PLP is disqualified from doing business with the government because the PLP is in government or any FNM, just as the Free National Movement is now doing business with FNM contractors. "They are not disqualified."

"As I indicated there must be some justification and again I would be surprised if there is none," he added.

During Wednesday's House meeting, Mr Bannister shed light on instances where the tender process was not followed under the former PLP administration. Ernst & Young highlighted this in a forensic audit into Bahamas Power and Light.

Among the troubling instances was a contract to Bahamas Courier & Logistics (BCL), a company owned by former Education Minister Jerome



LEADER of the Opposition Philip 'Brave' Davis in the House of Assembly.

Photo: Terrel W. Carey/Tribune Staff

Fitzgerald's father. BCL was handed the contract over Pinder's Customs Brokerage despite this company having the best bid.

The audit further found in two separate instances, J S Johnson was the winning contractor in the bidding process for insurance coverage, but both contracts totaling \$14,183,159 were ultimately issued to Sunshine Insurance, the company of Sir Franklyn Wilson, a Progressive Liberal Party supporter and financier.

In a statement yesterday, Sunshine Insurance

refuted assertions political influence was used in the awarding of its contracts with BPL.

"At no stage has Sunshine Insurance ever used any political effort to seek to influence the outcome of a tender process," the insurance broker said yesterday. "Sunshine Insurance prides itself on operating to the highest international standards and does not participate in any unlawful or unethical practice. Any statement to the contrary is simply false."

"Our sense of corporate citizenship and

contributions to our community are extensive and well-documented."

Earlier in its statement the company said: "Sunshine Insurance (Agents & Brokers) Ltd takes very seriously its role as a responsible corporate citizen. As a result, it is necessary to address the remarks made by the minister of works in the House of Assembly and the consequential comments in the press."

"At the outset, it is important to note that Sunshine Insurance is an insurance broker. As is

the industry norm, in this role as a broker, Sunshine Insurance does not retain clients' premium. The clients' premium is passed on to insurers, less the commission earned. Therefore, Sunshine Insurance earns commission on business it places with insurers.

"In the context of a broker, in 2013, Sunshine Insurance participated in the BEC/BPL sealed tender process for the provision of their insurance coverage and was awarded the bid."

"In 2017 – four years later – Sunshine Insurance again participated in the sealed

tender process. The insurance contract was renewed in June 2017 to the period June 2018. The current minister of works was in office at that time."

BPL also spent \$4,592,041 with Penta Industrial Services, the company of PLP Chairman Emeritus Errington "Minky" Isaacs. There was no indication a competitive process of obtaining alternative quotes or competing bids took place, Mr Bannister said.

Mr Isaacs was contacted yesterday but declined comment.

'BOARD SETS EXEC SALARIES, NOT GOVERNMENT'

from page one

than 200 workers, a revelation Mr Bannister made Wednesday, was highlighted in the company's business plan.

"(PowerSecure) looked at the corporation, identified what they saw as challenges that the corporation had to deal with in order to be successful at meeting its objectives of introducing reliable, affordable prices to the consumer," Mr Davis said. "One thing identified was the corporation could have done better if you were to separate a number of employees. "That was not a policy of the government and so, in fact, the board of directors was directed to find a path to avoid layoffs or redundancies or separation."

Mr Davis claimed the board achieved this "by taking into account savings as a result of the cost drop of prices of oil."

Mr Davis denied PowerSecure failed because his administration interfered with its work. In addition to planned cost-cutting measures like firing employees, PowerSecure believed a \$600 million rate reduction bond (RRB) to address BPL's legacy debt issues was central to reforming the company, warning that a delay in going forward with the RRB would prevent operational improvements at BPL. PowerSecure also wanted to hike rates.

Despite this, the Christie administration never proceeded with the RRB and said no to the company's rate plan.

Mr Davis said these plans were not rejected by the

former administration but were "just postponed."

He defended their PowerSecure arrangement, calling it "considered."

The company, he said, was chosen to manage BPL after a process that involved recommendations from a task force of both "private and public officials as well as the advisory firm KPMG."

"That RFP attracted a number of energy and power companies...and the companies shortlisted were China State Construction Engineering in partnership with SouthPort energy and Ozado Partners, Inter-Energy Holdings, and PowerSecure ING," he said. "The task force negotiated with each of the bidders and found that the best competing RFP was offered by PowerSecure. The \$900,000 mentioned by Desmond Bannister (as payment for the business plan PowerSecure) was a transition fee which was far less than what was proposed by the other bidders, including \$1.6m in one instance and \$5.8m in the other. In respect to the management fees, an analysis by the task force showed that PowerSecure's fees over the period of the five years under the management services

agreement (MSA) was \$16m less in expenses than one of the bidders and \$26m less than the other bidders."

"Right now, the hunter is telling the story," Mr Davis said.

He called on the Minnis administration to disclose the list of PowerSecure's alleged MSA breaches and to inform Bahamians of the consequences of the business separation between PowerSecure and the government.

The ouster of PowerSecure is the latest blow to the legacy of the Christie administration.

Reforming the Bahamas Electricity Corporation by hiring the American company was often touted by that administration as an example of the "heavy lifting" being done.

This, however, is not the first time the administration's attempts to fix a long-standing national issue has borne no long-lasting fruit.

Although in 2014 it contracted Renew Bahamas to remediate the New Providence Landfill, that company pulled out of the contract two years after it was signed, leaving the country with a landfill that remains a cause for concern.



PUBLIC NOTICE STOCK SPLIT

Pursuant to the Resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting of Ordinary Shareholders held on May 31, 2017, the Board of Directors of Commonwealth Bank Limited ("the Company") wishes to advise the public that the voting members have approved the subdivision of the Company's shares such that the Two Hundred and Twenty Five Million (225,000,000) Common Shares of par value two cents (\$0.02) each in the capital of the Company be subdivided into three (3) Common Shares for each Common Share presently authorized so as to create a total of Six Hundred and Seventy Five Million (675,000,000) Common Shares having a par value two-thirds cents (\$0.00667) each and that the Company do issue to all holders of Common Shares Two (2) additional Common Shares for each Common Share held, which two Common Shares when added to each Common Share held at as at the date of record for such subdivision shall create a total of Three (3) Common Shares.

And advise further, the following dates relating to the share split:

- i. The Announcement Date: September 22, 2017.** The date the Company disclosed the intention to perform a share-split to the public.
- ii. The Record Date: September 29, 2017.** The date determined by the Company when shareholders become entitled to receive shares pursuant to the Shareholder split. Shareholders do not receive shares on this date.
- iii. The Trading Date (Ex-Split Date): October 6, 2017.** The date when trading will begin using the split-adjusted basis for the new Share on BLSX.
- iv. The Effective Split Date: October 12, 2017.** The date the shareholder register is updated with the split-adjusted shareholdings by shareholders and, thereafter, notices are mailed to shareholders advising them of their holdings.

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Global attention on UN meeting

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is appealing to the international community, especially Russia and China, to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, calling North Korea a case study of the failure to prevent rogue states from obtaining weapons of mass destruction.

Tillerson said Thursday that North Korea never came into compliance with and cheated on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty it joined in the mid-1980s — but was never held accountable.

He said there were also lessons for Iran "which was on its own path to develop nuclear weapons" and "seems keen to preserve for itself the option to resume such work in the future," an allegation strongly denied by Iran's President Hassan Rouhani.

Tillerson spoke at a ministerial meeting of the UN Security Council called by the United States on "the acute threat" posed by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

He said that "as we look to the future, the international community's record of enforcing compliance with nonproliferation obligations and commitments is not what we need it to be".

Tillerson said all nations must work together "bilaterally, regionally and globally to stem the tide of proliferation".

Germany condemns "egoism"

Germany's top diplomat is defending international institutions and agreements, condemning "egoism" on the world stage.

Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel told the UN General Assembly that the existing nuclear accord with Iran should be honoured in order to encourage other countries, especially North Korea, to adopt limits on nuclear programmes.

Appearing to indirectly take on US President Donald Trump's philosophy of "America first", Gabriel gave a full-throated defense of multilateral agreements as the best path to ensure global security.

He said: "We need more international cooperation and less national egoism, not the other way around."

China wants negotiations

China says negotiations offer the "only way out" of the standoff over North Korea's nuclear programme.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi said there should be no new nuclear state on either side of the divided Korean Peninsula. He urged North Korea not to go further on a "dangerous direction".

Wang also called for the US to honour its commitments and for all parties to ease tensions and meet each other "halfway".

He said: "There's still hope for peace."

Wang was speaking Thursday at the annual gathering of world leaders at the UN, where North Korea's recent rapid pace of nuclear and missile tests has drawn international condemnation. Aid-for-disarmament talks have been in limbo for years.

President Donald Trump warned Tuesday that North Korea would be destroyed if it attacked the US or its allies, and on Thursday, he announced new sanctions against Pyongyang.

Russia wants nuclear deal.

Russia's top diplomat is calling the Iran nuclear deal one of the "more important factors of regional and international security" today.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov tackled a variety of international crises, including the tensions in North and South Korea in his address Thursday to the UN General Assembly.

Condemning North Korea's recent rocket launches and nuclear tests, Lavrov says there's no alternative to

diplomacy in resolving the tension.

He said "military hysteria isn't an impasse. It's a disaster".

Lavrov is blaming what he calls the "hideous expansion of NATO to the east" for the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Addressing the civil war in Syria, Lavrov says all instances of the use of chemical weapons in that conflict must be investigated. Russia is a key ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Trudeau on injustice

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has used his speech at the UN General Assembly to talk about the injustices that indigenous people face in his country.

Trudeau said Thursday their experience has been one of "humiliation, neglect, and abuse". It is rare for a Canadian leader to talk about the plight of the country's indigenous people in a global forum.

Trudeau says Canada is not a "wonderland," but a work in progress. He says there are indigenous people who don't have safe drinking water or who say goodnight to their children and then hope that the youths don't run away or take their own lives in the night.

He spoke of Canada's former residential schools — government-sponsored religious institutions established to strip aboriginals of their native language and culture. He says his government is taking steps to improve the plight of indigenous people and noted that more than two dozen long-term drinking water advisories in indigenous communities have been eliminated.

Scandals in Haiti

Haitian President Jovenel Moise has rebuked the UN over two scandals that will leave a dark cloud over the peacekeeping mission in the Caribbean country when it leaves next month.

Moise thanked the UN mission for helping to stabilise Haiti but said Thursday he lamented "the odious acts of sexual violence and exploitation committed" by some peacekeepers against Haitian children.

He also told the General Assembly that the UN should follow through on its promise to help victims of a cholera outbreak that UN troops from Nepal are widely blamed for introducing.

The cholera outbreak has afflicted over 800,000 people and killed more than 9,000 since 2010.

An AP investigation detailed how at least 134 Sri Lankan peacekeepers sexually abused and exploited nine Haitian children between 2004 and 2007. Sri Lanka never jailed any soldiers implicated in the abuse. This week, Sri Lanka joined a new UN "circle of leadership" aimed at preventing more abuses.

Pressure, not dialogue needed

Adopting a less confrontational stance than key allies, South Korea's president has urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and seek dialogue to prevent conflict breaking out on the divided peninsula.

President Moon Jae-in voiced support Thursday for stronger sanctions in response to the North's recent weapons tests, but his tone was in stark contrast to President Donald Trump's dark warning at the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday that North Korea would be "totally destroyed" if it attacked.

Another U.S. ally, Japan, said Wednesday that pressure, not dialogue, was needed.

Moon cautioned that North Korean nuclear issues need to be "managed stably" to prevent a spike in tensions and military clashes — a prospect that has overshadowed this year's gathering of world leaders.



Anti-trust laws and competition

EDITOR, The Tribune.

LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

IN most countries which espouse capitalism there are anti-trust laws and unfair competition laws in place. I am a trained economist with a Bachelors in Finance from Walbrooke College in London, England. I do believe, therefore, that I am 'qualified' to speak to these issues. Under capitalism, market forces prevail and the extent of supply depends on the demand of consumers as they should be.

In most industries there are clear economic demarcations. One may chose to be a manufacturer; a distributor or a retailer. Here, there are three economic units where everyone is able to chose which one to enter and, hopefully, earn good revenues. A manufacturer, especially a large or medium one, is often prohibited by legislation from entering distribution or retail units. This applies in the USA; the European Union; Canada and most Central and South American nations, including Mexico.

There are no 'known' anti trust laws in our wonderful nation. Anyone, seemingly, like Commonwealth Brewery, partially owned by the government of The Bahamas, is able to manufacturer it's assorted products; inclusive of Kalik and Heiniken; sell it to distributors and wholesalers, who in turn, logically, would sell them to retailers who, ultimately sell to the individual consumer. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this case.

Where the 'problems' come in is where the manufacturer (Commonwealth Brewery) has now opened scores of retail liquor stores, (wholly 'owned' by Commonwealth Brewery) all over New Providence (save an except for the so-called 'white' enclaves) and in most of the populated Family Islands. This means that the manufacturer, who would have received massive governmental subsidies and concessions, and is partially 'owned' by the government of the day, this Minnis administration included, is now competing, directly, with those retailers who are 'obliged' to buy from it! This is astounding and possibly could only happen in The Bahamas.

The retail liquor

merchants pay utilities; taxes; NIB; insurance for their businesses and themselves, et al, and employ hundreds of individuals in their stores and businesses. The 'pushing' out of the retail trade by the 'big boys' in the liquor industry is a clear case of anti-trust protocols. We need urgent legislation on these two issues if this sector is to survive. The other day 700 Wines & Spirits, God bless them too, had a great wine sale....Bare Foot or something like that. A selected package was being offered, after huge discounts, for about B\$80.00 The retailer, with his/her discount, would have to purchase that same package, wholesale, from Commonwealth Brewery for about B\$100.00

So, common and economic sense would dictate that a retail consumer patronise one of the 700 Liquor Store outlets. Simple as that.

As a firm believer in and practitioner of capitalism, I assure you, my fellow Bahamians and friends, that I endorse manufacturing in The Bahamas and applaud those individuals and corporate entities which are able to fund such enterprises. Yes, they too, pay all of the above mentioned bills etc and provide jobs for hundreds of Bahamians who otherwise may not have had a secure job in a highly rewarding and technical field. Having said this, however, they should stick to simple manufacturing and wholesale distribution and leave the retail sector alone.

It is alleged that a 700 Liquor Store branded location is/was planned for The Oakes Field Shopping Center, just across the street to The University of The Bahamas. A huge sign is/was prominently displayed 'announcing' the location. It is also alleged that previously the Licensing & Inspection Unit of The Royal Bahamas Police Force had 'denied' it's 'approval' for that site to be licensed some months ago. It is now alleged that 'approval' has now been given and the original decision reversed.

The University of The Bahamas is just across the

street. Do we need a retail liquor store directly in it's front door? On the Poinciana Drive side, there is a building which used to house a Spotless Cleaners, directly opposite the Southern entrance to UB. Allegedly there is a pending application to open a Chinese restaurant selling the usual menu along with wine and beer.

Under capitalism there is 'nothing' inherently 'wrong' with any of this but, consider the following. Our students at UB may or not be alcoholics across the board but we Bahamians all know that teen age drinking and public drunkenness exists, big time due to any number of societal and genetic circumstances. Grant the applicants, if it has not already been done so, a license to sell all the Chinese food possible, especially conch fried rice, to all and sundry. No liquor license, however, in that immediate area, for reasons of public policy.

Competition is good. Monopolies are bad. If Commonwealth is able to secure a larger percentage of the manufacturing inventory from other manufacturers like Sands Brewery or large wholesalers like Bristol Cellars more power to it. It cannot and must not, however, be allowed to expand any further into the retail liquor business. To add insult to injury, it is alleged that yet another 700 Liquor location is being proposed on the Charles Saunders Highway, just across the way from Sadie Curtis Primary School!

It is the people them time, Prime Minister Minnis. I, as Executive Director of Common Cause, request that you direct your legislative team to draft appropriate anti trust and unfair competition bills at the earliest opportunity. If you fail or refuse to do so, ertswhile leader, History will be most unkind to you and you would never be absolved. To God then, depolye Himself being A Monoply, in all thing, be the glory.

Would we want half drunken students at UB getting into altercations and possible serious infliction of bodily harm to the point of death?

ORTLAND H BODIE, Jr
 Nassau,
 September 16, 2017.

Outstanding utility bills

EDITOR, The Tribune.

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Christie & Co spent millions on Consultants for BP&L for what?

Dr Minnis - take some full page advertisements

in The Tribune - Guardian and shame and collect....It worked previously almost instantly \$300,000.00 was paid for Real Property arrears or do you forget?

Utility bills - Real Property taxes same medicine no concessions no payment plans.

The people have been paying in full if they got in arrears.

Publish and shame, Mr Prime Minister - even your MPs. Confirm you mean business.

J SAWYER

Nassau,
 September 18, 2017.

PowerSecure business plan shows depth of BPL struggles

By RASHAD ROLLE
Tribune Staff Reporter
rrolle@tribunemediate.com

A STRUGGLING and financially burdensome Bahamas Power & Light has been a nuisance for Bahamians for many years, and PowerSecure's business plan, finally released Wednesday, details in depth the extent of the challenges that plague the company.

"Electricity is a critical problem in The Bahamas," the company, whose business relationship with the government ended this week.

"Reliability is low, not measured well, and has been characterised as a crisis in newspaper reports. Some areas of The Bahamas have suffered outages as frequently as once a week. Most of the issues of power reliability are a result of poorly maintained and operated generation, transmission and distribution assets and resources. In addition to system issues, customers do not experience consistent, accurate, reliable interactions with the utility, which has led to a customer delinquency rate of 85 per cent."

A chief problem with BPL, a subsidiary of the Bahamas Electricity Corporation, is that the two major plants – at Clifton Pier and Blue Hills – don't function the way they were intended.

Clifton Pier plant was intended to cover base load generation but the condition of its assets prevents it from meeting base load demand. As a consequence, the Blue Hills plant, "designed to provide secondary power and peak demand," has been used to "supplement generation" instead of just providing for peak demand.

This is costly, PowerSecure noted, because the assets at the Blue Hills plant run on an expensive fuel source: automotive diesel oil.



THE UNVEILING of the BPL sign at the company headquarters - but problems from before the transition have bedeviled the electricity provider.

"The Bahamas is lagging in almost every major indicator of utility performance relative to other countries of similar size and maturity in the region and is far behind leading practice in the power sector globally," PowerSecure noted.

These indicators include average cost in cents per kilowatt hour, fuel costs in dollars per megawatt hour, system losses, generation availability, system load factor, system reliability, labour productivity, incident rate, customer complaints and bad debt.

Fuel costs are the main reason for BPL's high expenses. Fuel charge, in the utility provider's 2015 budget, comprised 62 per cent of the cost customers paid.

PowerSecure also said the excess costs were the consequence of oil leaks at Clifton Pier, the limited operations reliability of

dirty fuel, the fact that tank cleaning is not performed on regular schedule and "engine cooling water from boreholes has been contaminated with oil resulting in full load limitations," among other reasons.

Operating units at the Clifton Pier Power Station are aging.

The four Sulzer units at Clifton Pier's "Building A," identified as DA5, DA6, DA7 and DA, were installed in 1981 "with an original rated capacity of 10mw each," PowerSecure noted. "Due diligence indicates these units and their auxiliary equipment are in relatively poor condition due to their age and maintenance practices. Spare parts, especially for controls, are obsolete and extremely difficult to find. BEC staff commented that on a good day the Sulzers might produce a total of 10mw collectively.

According to BEC staff, these units have been designated in the past for retirement but continue to operate to meet demand due to the condition of the rest of the generation fleet." PowerSecure revealed an intention to retire the Sulzer units.

Clifton Pier's non-Sulzer unit's controls are also "starting to become obsolete and more difficult to procure." Indeed, for the various listed units at the Clifton Pier plant, PowerSecure listed a litany of problems impacting them. The DA9 for instance is one of three MAN B&W units held in Building B at the plant that were installed in 1992 and needed numerous repairs, including an

auto lubrication system, an exhaust valve, a cooling water piping replacement, a PLC upgrade, overhauled turbochargers, boiler repairs, fuel separators replacement, lube oil fuel separators replacement, viscosity system upgrade, lube oil coolers replacement, crankshaft damper replacement and generator inspection and cleaning, all of which was slated to have been ordered and/or taken place between late 2015 and this year.

"The poor current status of the assets," PowerSecure said, "causes line losses as high as 15 per cent, a figure well above comparable industry levels of four per cent to seven per cent. This is a costly performance

shortfall at current rates, burdening customers with as much as \$14 million annually for energy they do not consume."

Its business plan shows PowerSecure hoped to reduce the cost of electricity rate from about \$0.41/kWh in 2012 to \$0.236kWh by 2020.

On Wednesday, Minister of Works Desmond Bannister announced that the government's management services agreement with PowerSecure had been terminated due to alleged breaches of the deal.

PowerSecure has agreed to leave their personnel in place until as late as December 31, 2017, to facilitate an orderly transition, he said.

FITZGERALD INSISTS HIS HANDS ARE CLEAN

from page one

It was done against a recommendation that Pinder's Customs Brokerage, a company with the best bid, should be awarded the contract.

Mr Fitzgerald was minister of education in the last Christie administration.

"I understand that the minister of works, the Honourable Desmond Bannister, made certain comments about one of my father's companies and its relationship with BPL in the House of Assembly, gratuitously interposing my name in his statement," Mr Fitzgerald said yesterday in a press statement.

"I have made it unequivocally clear both inside and outside the House of Assembly on numerous occasions, that I do not own any shares in any of my father's companies and this most recent assertion, in light of all that has been previously communicated, is defamatory and is not protected by the privileges of the House of Assembly.

"I am not a beneficiary of any of the proceeds of any such contract, if indeed there was one.

"I am advised that Bahamas Cargo and Logistics, formerly Global Custom Brokers of which my father is the beneficial owner, has maintained a long-standing commercial relationship with BEC/BPL which dates as far back as the late 1980s. The inference that the familial connection with me was the reason for the contract or that I influenced or benefitted from the contract are both false and defamatory."

Earlier in his statement

he said: "I wish to advise the public that upon review of the headlines of the local dailies, September 21, 2017, and the egregious and skillfully misleading information contained therein, I have consulted my attorneys, with the clear objective of bringing a legal action for defamation."

The audit, Mr Bannister said Wednesday, identified numerous irregularities in the manner in which the contracts were awarded since 2012, when the PLP took office. The document is dated August 15, 2017 but has not been tabled in Parliament as a police investigation into its findings are ongoing.

"First the report identified numerous instances where the tender process was not followed," the Carmichael MP told parliamentarians. "Many contracts were awarded in excess of \$100,000 for which no formal tender had been performed. In other instances, there was no evidence of any procurement analysis or of other quotations being obtained.

"There were also instances where contracts were awarded to vendors who had not been selected in the tendering process, thereby rejecting the companies that had actually submitted better bids and in one egregious case, a company that did not even bid was awarded a contract over the company that had followed the process and to whom the tenders committee had approved the award of a contract," he said.

It is ironic the former MP has argued he was defamed and the comments read into the record of the House of Assembly by Mr Bannister

were not protected by Parliamentary privilege.

In a landmark ruling last August, Supreme Court Justice Indra Charles declared that Mr Fitzgerald was not legally justified when he tabled the private emails of environmental action group Save The Bays (STB) in Parliament, and therefore could not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Justice Charles, who presided over an historic constitutional motion, ruled that the former MP's actions were an infringement of the constitutional rights of the applicants and ordered Mr Fitzgerald to pay \$150,000 in damages for the breach.

Mr Fitzgerald was permanently banned from disclosure and publication of any further material belonging to Save The Bays and was ordered to delete all electronic and hard copy material within 14 days.

The Office of the Attorney General, under the former Christie administration, said it would appeal the ruling and was granted a stay pending the appeal.

It stemmed from Mr Fitzgerald's accusation that STB was a political organisation seeking to "overthrow" the Progressive Liberal Party government under the guise of an environmental group. In the House of Assembly in March 2016, Mr Fitzgerald read private emails from STB members and others, which he said bolstered his claims.

However, in July of this year the parliamentary privilege appeal lodged by the Crown under the former government was formally withdrawn and dismissed in the Court of Appeal.



NHI Bahamas

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National Health Insurance Bahamas is seeking to employ qualified candidates for a number of current opportunities.

About National Health Insurance (NHI) Bahamas

We are seeking qualified candidates for new openings at the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). All our roles require individuals who have strong communications skills, are results and action oriented, technology savvy and are accustomed to working in a fast moving, collaborative environment. We are also seeking candidates of high integrity and are able to conduct themselves in a manner that supports NHIA values of respect and diversity.

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Deputy Director, Human Resources and Facilities

Provider Network and Quality Assurance Manager

Customer Services Manager

Communications Manager

Finance and Accounting Officer

Systems Network Administrator

Benefits Analyst

Administrative Assistant to Senior Deputy Director, Health Benefits and Provision

Customer Service Representatives

Detailed job descriptions can be found at www.nhibahamas.gov.bs/careers.

If you feel your competencies, experience and personality characteristics match the postings, please submit your resume with a cover letter, quoting the role for which you are applying by October 6, 2017 to careers@nhibahamas.gov.bs.



Man cleared in Blair raid case

By **NICO SCAVELLA**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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A SUPREME Court jury yesterday acquitted one of two men accused of the October 2014 shooting death of Blair Estates resident Andre Cartwright after finding insufficient evidence to convict him for the role prosecutors alleged he played in the crime.

Kevin Andrews, of Montell Heights, was acquitted after the jury returned a unanimous not guilty verdict on the three charges with which he was faced – murder, attempted armed robbery and burglary.

Andrews' acquittal came during the trial before Justice Renae McKay. He was represented by attorney Murrio Ducille during the

four weeks he stood trial.

Meanwhile, Tiano D'Haiti, Andrews' co-accused, was called upon to make a defence to the Crown's case against him concerning his alleged involvement in the incident in question. However D'Haiti, faced with charges of murder and attempted armed robbery, elected to exercise his right to remain silent.

The matter was ultimately adjourned to today at 11am, at which time both the Crown, led by Kendra Kelly and Destiny McKinney, and D'Haiti's attorney Jairam Mangra will make their final submissions to the jury.

Andrews was initially arraigned with D'Haiti on November 11, 2014 in connection with the 2014 home invasion and murder.

According to initial reports from police, Andre Cartwright, 44, was at his Blair Estates home around 1.40am with his mother and father on the morning in question, when men kicked in the door of the house.

When he heard the noise, the deceased got his licensed shotgun and went to investigate, police reported. He encountered

the suspects, one of whom was armed with a handgun, police said.

There was a brief exchange of gunfire, which resulted in the victim being shot multiple times. He died at the scene. One of the suspects was also shot, however, initial reports from police said he and the other men escaped in a silver-coloured Honda Accord.



THE CAPTAIN Cook restaurant lies damaged on Cofrecito Beach after the crossing of Hurricane Maria over Bavaro, Dominican Republic, yesterday. A hurricane warning is in effect for the south-east Bahamas as the storm moves closer. Photo: **Tatiana Fernandez/AP**

SOUTH ISLANDS BRACE FOR HURRICANE MARIA

By **RASHAD ROLLE**
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A HURRICANE warning remains in effect for the southeast Bahamas, including the islands of Mayaguana, Crooked Island, Acklins, Inagua, Long Cay and Samana Cay, according to the Department of Meteorology in an advisory yesterday.

A tropical storm watch is in effect for the central Bahamas, including Cat Island, Exuma, Rum Cay and San Salvador. A tropical storm watch means tropical storm conditions can affect these areas within 48 hours.

A hurricane warning means that hurricane conditions are affecting or can affect these areas within 36 hours.

Weather officials said Hurricane Maria strengthened on Thursday, with winds of 120mph as it headed towards the Turks and Caicos.

The storm dumped 30 inches of rain on parts of Puerto Rico, where millions of residents won't have power for months, according to cnn.com.

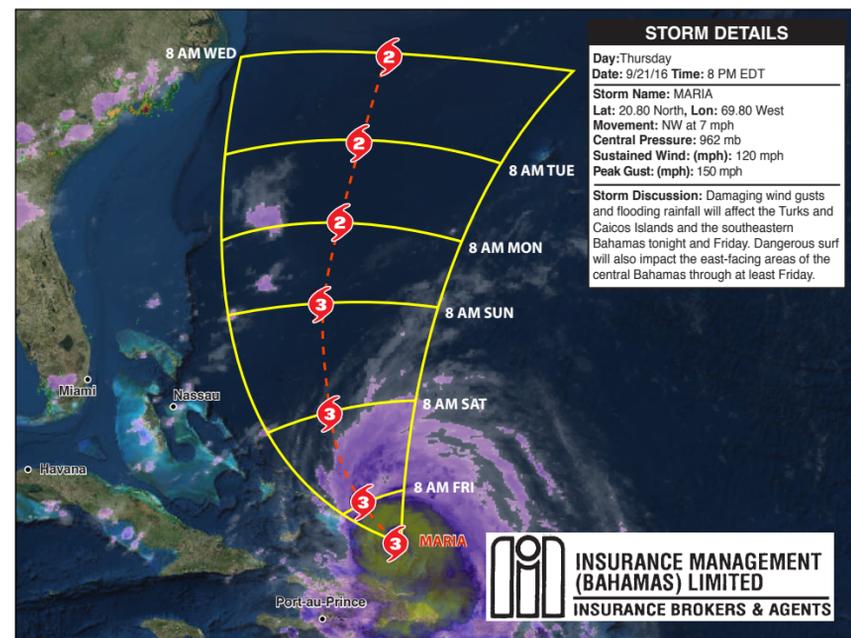
"How severe impacts are in the Turks and Caicos and the

southeastern Bahamas from Maria will depend on how much (strengthening) occurs and how close the hurricane

tracks," AccuWeather.com reported yesterday.

Maria, a category three storm up to press time, is

expected to bring lots of rain and wind as it churns past the southern Bahamas this weekend.



Career Opportunity

Scotiabank (Bahamas) Limited

is seeking the services of a

Senior Client Accounting Officer Bahamas Trust & Wealth

Position Summary:

The Senior Client Accounting Officer is responsible for the accurate and timely preparation and presentation of all assigned client accounts. Primarily this entails preparation of financial statements for Trust clients, especially those of a complex nature, and also includes preparation of special reports for clients as necessary.

Under the direction of the Assistant Manager Client Accounting, the officer will be responsible for assisting a team of account administrators through the performance of, and advice on, a wide variety of medium to complex accounting/record keeping tasks contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the client accounting section.

Key Accountabilities for this role:

- Ensure prompt and accurate preparation of financial statements for trust, company and agency accounts.
- To comply with and contribute to the maintenance of effective internal controls relating to accounting.
- Provide effective assistance to account administrators.
- Contribute to the development of Client Accounting Section.
- Meet Regulatory Compliance, Anti-Money Laundering/Anti-Terrorist Financing and Bank Policies and procedures for Customer transactions.

Functional Competencies:

- The Senior Client Accounting Officer requires a thorough knowledge of accounting principles and applications for trusts and companies incorporated in various jurisdictions.
- He/she should have a sound knowledge of international reporting standards and must know how to utilize computer systems.
- The Senior Client Accounting Officer requires the ability to perform in-depth analysis of information received from time to time, which may arise as a result of inquiries made.
- The Senior Client Accounting Officer must apply proper accounting principles and treatments to complex situations, ascertaining the accuracy and proper categorizing of information to be included in financial statements, and ensuring the accurate and timely production of all financial reports and statements.
- The individual is required to make decisions with regard to the appropriate handling of various entries. This will include securing independent confirmation of correctness of information contained in ledgers and performing calculations where required.
- The Senior Client Accounting Officer is also required to ensure proper accounting treatment and financial statements disclosures are applied.
- The individual is required to confer with supervisor or other senior officers on uncertain matters.

Educational Requirements:

- University undergraduate and/or equivalent degree/diploma in Accounting or related discipline.
- At least two years of experience in the area of financial statement preparation and related functions.
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Chartered Accountant (CA), or STEP designation would be an asset.

Qualified candidates should submit C.V. via email to:

hrbahamas@scotiabank.com on or before September 29, 2017.

Please note that only those individuals short-listed for an interview will be contacted.



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NO GUN AT POLICE CHIEF'S HEAD

from page one

owed to him and "no one put a gun to his head, forcing him to do that".

However, Mr Dames refused to comment on speculation that Commissioner Greenslade has been offered the post of high commissioner to London and will be replaced by Deputy Commissioner Anthony Ferguson, who is currently acting commissioner of police. He said when the time is right, Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis will make an announcement on the "future of the police force".

"At the appropriate time, the prime minister will make his comment, but no gun is being held to anyone's head to say they must leave. Mr Greenslade is still the commissioner," Mr Greenslade said.

"The commissioner is still the commissioner. He is currently on leave, he has a large amount of leave. Listen, the force functions this way and has been functioning this way for a very long time. The commissioner takes leave and there are provisions for an acting commissioner so that the force doesn't miss a beat. The force is bigger than any one individual. He is not being forced out, the commissioner cannot be forced out. He is entitled to his leave, he took his leave and so an acting commissioner assumes that position because the force is not built on one person.

"It is built on thousands of individuals at various ranks and so if one takes leave there are provisions for someone else to assume that position."

Mr Dames said he is not in the business of making the RBPF political and said his only job is to ensure that he does what was promised prior to the election.

"The RBPF continues to operate and continues to remain focused. We continue to build and have not missed a beat because the commissioner is on leave. He did not have to go, that was the choice he made," Mr Dames said on the sidelines of an event at the prison.

"He is still the substantive commissioner of police and we have to be careful not to make it about an individual. The organisation is bigger than any one individual. There is no tension between us to my knowledge. Why would there be? I am the minister of national security and I know my role. I am very cognisant of my role and I will not play politics with the RBPF. I am the servant of the people and right now the people are concerned about the high levels of crime in the country and I have a mandate to ensure that the government's policy is carried out. That is my responsibility, to ensure that the people of the Bahamas are satisfied that we are doing what we promised prior to the election that is my only responsibility."

Earlier this week, former Prime Minister Hubert

Ingraham, also former leader of the FNM, said it is well known the government would like the commissioner to step aside.

"It is well known that the government will like the commissioner of police to discontinue being commissioner, and it is well known that the commissioner of police has agreed to step down as commissioner," Mr Ingraham told The Nassau Guardian's National Review.

According to the newspaper, Mr Ingraham also said uncertainty over Commissioner Greenslade's future is affecting police morale.

Commissioner Greenslade was appointed the sixth commissioner of police on January 4, 2010 after serving as the acting deputy commissioner of police from January 1, 2009 upon completion of a one year secondment with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Canada.

Mr Dames also took part in this training in Canada when he was a member of the RBPF.

In January 2009, Mr Dames, then senior assistant commissioner of police, was appointed commander for Grand Bahama. Mr Dames was later promoted to deputy commissioner while Commissioner Greenslade ascended to the RBPF's top post.

Mr Dames quit the RBPF in May 2011 to take up a post at the Baha Mar resort.

He won the Mount Moriah seat in the House of Assembly in the May 10 general election.

Church and prison service join forces to offer Hope

By **SANCHESKA DORSETT**
Tribune Staff Reporter
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THE Archdiocesan Catholic Church Men's Association in collaboration with the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services yesterday launched the "HOPE" programme aimed at rehabilitating inmates by providing them with mentorship, legal aid and jobs during and after their release from prison.

At a ceremony at the BDCS on Thursday, National Security Minister

Marvin Dames said the "Helping Our People Excel" programme is aimed at reducing the high rate of recidivism as well as combat crime.

The programme will target persons on remand or first-time offenders with non-violent crimes. There are nearly 300 persons on remand, some inmates are as young 14.

"These programmes would reduce the degree of recidivism and would counteract the revolving door syndrome. The Department of Correctional Services has to play a critical role in

our overall efforts in crime reduction," Mr Dames said.

"We seek to improve the effectiveness of correctional services and improve our capacity for rehabilitation and reintegration for offenders. We understand the need to unify the criminal justice system in order to improve its efficiency as well as the prison service. The objective is to protect the innocent, to deter criminals and to rehabilitate offenders. We have to redirect the minds of the inmates in preparation for their release and re-entry. "The government supports

this bold initiative which is geared to assist young men by developing counselling and religious programmes that provide mentorship among other things."

Commissioner of Corrections Patrick Wright said a change in the prison means a change in the country.

"We will continue to partner with the church for the rehabilitation of all inmates for a safer Bahamas. We will also ensure the living conditions for the inmates are improved as well as programmes for the inmates to assist with rehabilitation of all inmates in our care. We

recognise that change in the correction facility means a change in the country and if the Bahamas is going to see a reduced recidivism rate each of us has to play important roles," he said.

ACCMA President Edwin Thompson said he hopes the programme can grow through the years and assist as many persons at finding a "new and better" life.

"We have developed an application form for the inmates to fill out and the correctional officers will give it to those they feel are ready for the programme," he said. "We will review it and

those who qualify will come into the programme. We will have mentors and also, we will have an officer who will guide them and keep them away from crime. We will help first with legal aid and then once they get their freedom then we will assist them while they are searching for a job. We will be calling upon corporate Bahamas to assist these young men with finding a job. In the meantime, we want them to get reunited with their church, and reconnect with their family. We will offer them a stipend until they find this job as well."

GRAND BAHAMA 'SHOULD BE CENTRE FOR ARBITRATION'

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**
Tribune Freeport Reporter
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MINISTER of State for Grand Bahama Kwasi Thompson believes the island should be the centre for arbitration in the Bahamas and commended ADR Bahamas for holding a training seminar for Bahamians in Freeport.

He encouraged the business community and residents to view arbitration as an alternative to the courts in resolving disputes.

"I also encourage legal practitioners to utilise this process," Mr Thompson said. "If we want to sell ourselves as an international destination for arbitration, we must first expand the local practice. Second, we must be prepared to adjust our investment and immigration policy."

ADR Bahamas is committed to the resolution of disputes and issues by means other than litigation.

The organisation is conducting a training seminar for persons in

Grand Bahama.

"It is my hope that ADR Bahamas will grow in popularity, and eventually lead to an international arbitration centre that we seek to have operating here in Grand Bahama. This will bring opportunities for Bahamians as well as travelers," the senator said.

He said there are always persons looking for a confidential, quick and convenient settlement, and waiting for a court appointment or going through the process can be tedious at times.

"Arbitration seeks to resolve disputes fairly and quickly. The resolution is recognised as equivalent to a court decision, and both parties can move on having dealt with the dispute.

"As we continue to work toward making Grand Bahama the centre for industry and innovation the entrepreneurial hub it is destined to be, it is important to embrace new ways to resolve matters and maintain respect and peace

among community members. And as with all new initiatives, local support is needed," he said.

Senator Thompson indicated that the Office of the Prime Minister would also support the growth of this new industry by assisting with training of Bahamians to take advantage of these opportunities.

He commended the Grand Bahama Port Authority for its commitment to provide a facility for the centre.

Mr Thompson also said the government is committed to the revitalisation of Grand Bahama.

"Today's training is the nuts and bolts of the revitalisation process. It starts with local initiatives and changes within our own communities that will make us more modern and productive.

"We need new industry and a radical change. However, preparation is first required before opportunity will come," he said.

The Bahamas passed the Arbitration Act in 2009.



DONNALEE Musgrove appeared in a Freeport court earlier this week to face charges. Photo: **Vandyke Hepburn**

WOMAN ACCUSED OF THEFT

A 50-YEAR-OLD woman of South Bahama, Freeport, was charged in the Freeport Magistrate's Court this week with several counts of stealing.

Donnalee Musgrove,

of Blue Marina, appeared before Magistrate Rengin Johnson in court three on ten counts of stealing by reason of service.

She pleaded not guilty

to the charges and the case was adjourned to November 29 for trial.

She was remanded to the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services in New Providence.

DOUBLE MURDER TRIAL DELAYED

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

FIVE men accused of the double murder of a Holmes Rock couple were in the Supreme Court for what was supposed to be the start

of their trial, however it was postponed to October 3.

Paul Belizaire, Devaughn Hall, Allan Alcime, Virgil Hall, and Kevin Dames appeared in the court on Thursday, with their attorneys.

The courtroom and upstairs lobby were filled

with persons reporting for jury duty, however the selection of a jury panel did not proceed as planned.

The men are accused of killing Barry and Sheena Johnson, who were found murdered at their residence on September 12, 2015.

MOBILE NETWORK CONNECTS WITH PARADISE PLATES EVENT

IN an effort to continue expanding its corporate responsibilities, new mobile network ALIV has made a significant donation and is a presenting sponsor for Paradise Plates 2017.

Paradise Plates is in its eighth year and is hosted by the Hands for Hunger organisation, a non-profit humanitarian group focused on eliminating unnecessary hunger and significantly reducing food waste.

"ALIV will continue to fasten its increasing commitment to the people of the Bahamas. A key part of the ALIV brand encompasses creating meaningful experiences not only for customers but also for those in our communities. This marks a shared effort to grant every man, woman and child three nutritious meals a day through Hands for Hunger," ALIV Events & Sponsorship Manager Bianca

Bethel-Sawyer said.

Hands for Hunger Executive Director Zeleka Knowles said she is grateful for the donation from ALIV and hopes for continued support from the company in the future.

"The most fulfilling part about planning Paradise Plates is the amount of support Hands for Hunger receives," she said.

"Our partnership with ALIV is exemplary. ALIV has proven to be dependable, they care about our

mission and they invest in our programmes even beyond this one event. Partnerships like the one we have with ALIV will leave a lasting impact in the community and will inch is closer to a hunger-free Bahamas."

Paradise Plates is the largest fundraiser for Hands for Hunger and is a unique evening of gourmet food, wine, beer and cocktail tastings, complemented by an assortment of live entertainment, a thrilling live and silent auction and

a raffle.

Paradise Plates is scheduled for September 30 at Atlantis Grand Ballroom, Paradise Island beginning at 7pm.

For more information please visit <http://www.handsforhunger.org>.

BAHAMAS LINKS WITH ARMENIA

THE Bahamas formally established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Armenia on Thursday, through the signing of a joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The joint communique was signed on behalf of the government by Minister of Foreign Affairs Darren Henfield and Edward Nalbandian, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Armenia. The signing ceremony took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

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Concern over temporary pull-out by Celebration

By AVA TURNQUEST
Tribune Chief Reporter
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

THE temporary suspension of the Grand Celebration cruise ship to Grand Bahama for the next three months was yesterday described as another "big blow" for the beleaguered second city.

The ship is headed for the US Virgin Islands to assist with recovery efforts in the wake of Hurricane Irma,

and will not resume its two-night excursion from Palm Beach to Grand Bahama until December 23.

Yesterday, Grand Bahama tour operators and vendors lamented the likely negative impact to the island's already depressed economy, and limping tourism market due to shuttered hotels and stalled projects.

"It's a big blow to Grand Bahama," according to a veteran tour operator who requested anonymity, "not

only for us as tour operators, but also for us as hotels because the Celebration has been the main vehicle for getting tourists to the island.

"As a tour operator, it's a big deal for all of us, for some of the hotels that are still open, it's a big deal."

The tour operator continued: "Once we heard about this being cancelled we all panicked here. What started off with minimal business, has really grown to where we really have

become dependent on the business. Their numbers are often much better than the major cruise lines."

In a statement to customers yesterday, cruise operator Bahamas Paradise Cruise Line (BPCL) announced that the ship has been contracted by Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide housing for the US National Guard and first responders working to rebuild devastated communities on St Thomas.

According to the Sun Sentinel, the company is being compensated to cover its "loss of business and revenue over the period."

The BPCL statement read: "We hope that you will understand and agree that this disruption to our business is overshadowed by the magnitude of need and humanitarian support required to help the people of St Thomas rebuild their devastated communities."

It continued: "We

apologise for any disappointment around your cruise vacation plans this change may have caused. We thank you in advance for your support and flexibility during this time. This was not an easy decision for us to make and we sincerely appreciate your understanding."

BPCL offered to fully refund customers that have made direct bookings within that period, or a \$100 on board credit if they reschedule their trip.



ABOVE and below, members of the Rotary Club of New Providence during their work helping youngsters at the Simpson Penn School and Willie Mae Pratt Centre for Girls.



VACANCY NOTICE SENIOR TRANSPORT ENGINEER

Cable Bahamas Limited is seeking to employ an experienced Senior Transport Engineer. The successful candidate must have Engineering and Telecom Network Experience and the ability to lead in a technical environment.

JOB SUMMARY

The Senior Transport Engineer is a highly technical position who supports multiple projects as both a contributor and a leader. In this position the engineer will review network architecture, hardware, and system designs. The engineer will also support the review and analysis of technical transmission documentation such as specifications, interface documentation, and system link budgets. Test witnessing/verification and data review of transmission hardware and systems is included as a function of the Senior Transport Engineer. The Engineer will demonstrate technical skills in Transport networks with a focus in fiber optic communications transport technologies and its applications. This position requires the engineer to interface with associate contractors, customers, and vendors as the project team's technical representative. Technical report generation is also included as functions of this position. Regular travel to off-site locations is required.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Plan and implement network changes in a high availability environment
- Work with deployment teams and data center operations providing support during new capacity additions and changes on the optical network
- Review OTDR/CD/PMD test reports for inside plant and outside plant fiber acceptance
- Own optical network infrastructure documentation, responsible for updating and maintaining network drawings and plans for both operational purposes and new builds
- Create and maintain optical network designs for metro, regional and long-haul DWDM systems
- Work with engineering team to define optical standards and best practices for deployment
- Maximizing network performance by troubleshooting network problems and outages, scheduling upgrades and collaborating with network architects on network optimization

SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- Minimum a four-year College Degree in Engineering
- At least fifteen (15) years Telecom Network Experience
- Proficiency in the MS Office suite of tools including MS Visio, CRM & Ticketing Systems
- Ability to respond effectively with a variety of functional teams and strong interpersonal skills for supporting cross functional teams
- Familiarity with optical communication systems, linear and nonlinear impairments such as OSNR, CD, PMD and transients.
- In-depth knowledge transmission systems and similarly complex optical subsystems and protocols i.e. SONET, SDH, OTN, EDFA, ROADM, Raman Amplifiers and Gigabit Ethernet
- In-depth understanding of optical sub-sea systems, including wavelength selective switches, optical monitors and dispersion compensators
- Experience with a variety of test and measurement equipment including optical spectrum analyzers and Gigabit testers
- Experience with Fiber test procedures i.e. OTDR, Power Loss, Reflectance and Connector Inspection
- Proficient analytical, organizational, and time management skills, including the ability to effectively prioritize assignments and work unsupervised
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills are critical for document creation and vendor interaction. Strong organization skills and data analysis skills are required
- Proficiency with Microsoft's suite of software, database tools and equipment product life-cycle management systems
- Experience leading technical teams, mentoring junior engineers, and managing technical development projects is highly desired.

This position interacts with executives, department managers, and network operations center (NOC), and vendors on a daily basis, with regular interaction with the Outside Plant Team and Sales Engineering. Qualified applicants should submit Resumes on or before **Thursday, September 28, 2017**, to the Director of Human Resources, PO BOX CB-13050, Nassau, Bahamas or send electronically with **Ref: Senior Transport Engineer** to humanresources@cablebahamas.com.

Rotary Club of New Providence

Rotary Club of New Providence. - On Saturday, September 16, the Change Makers of the Rotary Club of New Providence (RCNP) came out in full force to once again bring positive intervention to the lives of more than 20 young boys between the ages of 13 and 17 boarded at the Simpson Penn School. In fulfilling their underlying charge to aid in youth rehabilitation and to ensure that no juvenile is left behind, the Change Makers have expanded the Penn project to also provide mentorship and assistance to the Willie Mae Pratt Centre for girls. The girls school is currently home to more than 14 young women between the ages of 13 and 17. The Change Makers are committed to continuing their efforts to ensure that these young people are given a second chance to smoothly assimilate on their return to open society by equipping them with the tools needed to become assets and future leaders of this great Bahamaland.

The Change Makers of RCNP strongly believe that mentorship is the key to providing the rehabilitative tools needed for these young people who have found themselves at risk in a system of juvenile punishment which does not often look promising for their future aspirations. It is this very need which gave rise to the first stage mentoring program offered by Rotarians to the Simpson Penn School a few months ago and which in turn has

JOIN THE CLUB

OUR Clubs and Societies page is a chance for you to share your group's activities with our readers.

To feature on our Clubs and Societies page, submit your report to clubs@tribunemedia.net, with "Clubs Page" written in the subject line.

For more information about the page, contact Stephen Hunt on 502-2373 or 447-3565.



refueled their motivation to also include the young women housed at the Willie Mae Pratt Girls School. Giving back is embedded in the DNA of all Rotarians worldwide and they are called to "Service above Self".

RCNP members along with the boys of the Penn/Pratt School dedicated a full day to arresting disrepair on the grounds and to prepping, priming and painting several benches which will be installed as interior perimeter seating in the School's Peace Pavilion which is another ongoing initiative undertaken by the Rotary Club of New Providence to beautify the grounds at the school and to provide an environment of Peace and serenity for the enjoyment of the young residence. Throughout the day, the Change Makers of RCNP were dispatched in teams to separate locations as the boys were housed in one location while the girls were kept at another. Each RCNP team engaged and inspired the young men and women of the Penn/Pratt Schools by offering them practical career guidance, life lessons and words of wisdom and encouragement.

The day culminated with Rotarians catering to the Co-ed group by entertaining them with recreational discussion, Rotarian styled fellowship and of course providing tasty grilled food, snacks and drinks

Notwithstanding the obstacles that these juveniles might face in a broken system it is clear that they all have the hope

of a bright future ahead of them and appear to be eagerly awaiting their opportunity to show society that everyone deserves a second chance!

In the past, RCNP has forged an ongoing and lifetime partnership with the stakeholders and staff at the Simpson Penn School and will continue to do so by integrating their efforts with the Willie Mae Pratt Girl's School. On Tuesday, 19th September, 2017 the Change Makers proudly revealed the fruits of their ongoing labour through the unveiling of the Penn/Pratt Co-educational Unit signage, donation of drums and restored benches at a special assembly held at the Penn/Pratt school which was attended by RCNP's dedicated President and Service Project Chair along with a team of Rotarians. To say the least it was a moment of crowing glory to an initiative which has spiraled into a great RCNP service project effort!

Rotary brings together a global network of volunteers dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 35,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and regions. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world among other worldwide initiatives. The Rotary Club of New Providence meets every Tuesday at 7:00 at Poop Deck, West Bay Street.

Unpaid bills and political scandals - what's new?

WHAT a week of revelations this has been. According to reports, certain parliamentarians go for what must be years without paying their electricity bills. Other reports suggest some go for what must be years without paying their water bills. And (if that weren't enough) other 'privileged' individuals are 'lucky' enough to have big-time government contracts land in their laps even when it is claimed they should be given to other legitimate bidders.

A Comic's View

By INIGO 'NAUGHTY' ZENICAZELAYA



word? Not object to any of the backbreaking taxes we have been saddled with? Not object to the dirty, polluted air we suck up in order to go about our business of absorbing costs for your free AC? Not object to the incompetence, and wastefulness, and fraudulent transactions at government corporations that further robbed Bahamians of our treasure?

I understand there is a similar list of "privileged" politicians who are on a "do not disconnect" list at the Water and Sewerage Corporation. Does Bahamasair have a similar list of freeloaders who have been allowed to travel (along with their family, friends and lovers) on the public dime?

What about BTC? Was there political pressure to maintain a 'do not disconnect' list there? And since we have a stake in the company, what about NewCo? Where else have these greedy politicians been abusing their privilege to shirk their responsibilities? Banks? Real Property Taxes? Business Licenses?

I suspect I know the answer to these questions. I also suspect the list we saw this week is nowhere near complete.

Take note of them, though. Take note of all the names associated with this practice of living 'above' the struggles and consequences everyday Bahamians have to go to bed fretting over. Take note of all the people defending this contemptible practice because they probably benefited too. And when these same people come knocking on your door, begging for votes again (as many will have the gumption to do), remember that these self-serving, 'honourable' individuals are the reason why the country is in the mess we are in today.

Who made the list?

A myriad of the usual suspects made the list, one would expect veteran, seasoned politicians to be on the list, but Arnold Forbes, a veritable "Johnny come lately".

How did he make it? But he did, The Credit and Collections Department listing of MPs, senators and board members for the period ending July 31, revealed that former State Minister in the Ministry of Works owed BPL \$62,023.14.

\$62,023.14????? What was Forbes running, a motel?

The list obtained by *The Tribune* contains delinquent accounts of six former PLP Cabinet ministers, two former PLP MPs, two private entities, and one sitting Cabinet minister: Bamboo Town MP Renward Wells.

Wells has since settled his balance, allegedly. While Forbes, meanwhile, was reportedly in talks with BPL to settle the balance over a three-month period.

But they will still disconnect us for \$200.00. Go figure.

Bannister pulls the plug on BPL

Well I can't say I'm not glad that the contract between BPL and the Government of The Bahamas, has been terminated.

However, shock waves can still be felt in the aftermath of this monumental decision.

Minister of Works Desmond Bannister revealed this week, in the HOA, that foreign BPL executives had been paid more than any Bahamian parliamentarian or executive at the electricity provider.

Former BPL CEO Pamela Hill, (a favourite of this column, for all the material she provided) was paid a monthly salary of \$25,000 and received \$6,000 monthly in housing benefits.

This part is laughable, that's actually less than the \$8,719 she initially used to receive monthly.

Hill also received monthly benefits of \$3,833.33.

With all that "bub" flowing in monthly, no wonder Ms Hill could stay at the Atlantis during Hurricane Joaquin, and she never experienced "blackouts", it's obvious she could afford about six generators!



PAMELA HILL, the former CEO of BPL.

Photo: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

If paying Hill \$34,833.33 monthly hasn't got your goat, I'm sure this will. In addition to the monthly amount, Bahamian taxpayer dollars also paid \$27,322.46 in travel costs and \$23,637.55 in relocation costs.

Minister Bannister also said in parliament, that sadly, "Bahamians paid travel costs for a CEO who only lived in the Bahamas for five days each week - from Monday to Friday, but spent weekends elsewhere."

Hill travelled more than, Fred Mitchell when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs.

But wait there's more, according to an article in Thursday's *Tribune* by Krishna Virgill. The executive vice president of generation and operation at BPL received a \$33,583.33, with a salary of \$23,750, housing benefits of \$6,000 and other benefits of \$3,833.33.

The executive vice-president of transmission and distribution operations at BPL received, \$26,083.33. This included a salary of \$18,750, housing benefits of \$6,000 and other benefits of \$1,333.33.

All of that, has got my goat carried now!

Minister Bannister must be commended on a job well done.

Saving Bahamian taxpayers money, exercising transparency by revealing all the particulars.

Taking nothing from Minister Bannister's efforts, the joke is still on us Bahamians, because we had to foot the bill from here to North Carolina and back, with nothing to show for it but the same piss poor,

power provision and disgruntled consumers.

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Bahamian Spicer

At this stage we know BPL made the hit list, nonetheless Bahamians at large want to know "who all" in the PLP and FNM was on the list, and receiving free electricity for years.

Skirting around the fact that the Minnis administration failed to deliver on yet another campaign promise, of holding the elected officials accountable who didn't comply with the Public Disclosure Act,

Press Secretary Anthony Newbold stated Tuesday, Bahamians can be assured that the Minnis administration will get rid of BPL's "do not disconnect" list for elites who owe substantial arrears.

Seems like the strategy for this administration, when failing to deliver on a campaign promise, is either to send some politico from the previous administration to court, or derail a certain political gravy train?

Newbold also said: "This special list came to the public's attention not just when this administration took over, this list came to the public's attention before that."

"It is being dealt with now... the same way that list came to the public's attention, if it is not dealt with, if it remains in place, the public will be aware of that as well. I don't know that this prime minister and his government intends to be

beaten with that stick and so you can have all confidence that those people (will be dealt with like everyone else)."

Seriously Mr Newbold, how will they be dealt with? The same way they've been dealt with and disciplined by previous administrations?

I think this was another political, smoke and mirrors manoeuvre at play here. Let's keep it real here, Mr Newbold was trying to deflect, in order to explain why there has been no movement on punishing officials who missed the disclosure deadline.

"The public disclosure, one challenge was with the make-up of the (Public Disclosure) committee," Mr Newbold said yesterday. "I know that has been handled. If you call the chairman I know he would be happy to talk about that."

In June, Mr Newbold announced that June 30 was the deadline for former and sitting MPs to file their disclosures or face prosecution. Newbold's announcement affected more than twenty MPs.

Penalties for non disclosure include being fined \$10,000.00, face two years in prison or both. Or possibly have their land confiscated.

The deadline has come and gone, with no mention of compliance, one way or another, by any of the parties involved.

Anyway, I'm off to restock my snacks and Jack Daniels, I've got that list for Water and Sewerage to track down.

READERS REACT TO BPL REVELATIONS

BAHAMAS Power and Light continues to make the headlines this week with new revelations of glaring infractions in the tender process. Readers had their say on tribune242.com.

Watcher said: "The time for revelations is drawing to a close. I think I speak for the vast majority of people when I say that NOW is the time for the law to decide that the punishments fit the crimes. We struggle every day to pay our bills (on time) whilst the 'privileged elite' treated our national coffers as if they were their personal piggy bank. Enough talk - action now !!!"

TheQuant_In_Hiding had this to say: "Good. This is the discovery phase. Now, let's transition into the phase where we draft legislation and policies that would prevent this kind of thing from ever happening again."

There was this from Happyfly: "The American forefathers assumed that mere mortals would be running the country so they included many checks and balances within the constitution that they drew up. Unfortunately in The Bahamas, the mere mortals got to make their own rules up and turn them in to the constitution."



Former BPL CEO Pamela Hill's salary package of \$34,000 a month also raised eyebrows among those commenting on *The Tribune's* website.

Screwedbahamian joked: "If you cannot win the lottery in the USA, no problem, man, just come to The Bahamas."

Jackbnimble said: "Come on people. Why are we shocked? We all know in The Bahamas FOREIGN is always better. It's promoted through our culture from Government down. Why do you think they get all the best jobs and benefits? Nothing new."

And there was this from DEDDIE: "Her compensation is according to industry guidelines. You don't attract persons with her expertise and pay them peanuts. The analogy with politicians was unfortunate due to the fact that most politicians are woefully unqualified to run a petty shop."

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NO TURNING BACK ON IRAN DEAL - UN

UNITED NATIONS
Associated Press

TOP diplomats from Germany, Russia, China and Italy insisted Thursday there can be no turning back on the Iran nuclear deal after President Donald Trump suggested that he may seek a renegotiation or simply walk away from the pact.

"How are we going to convince countries like North Korea that international agreements provide them with security — and in so doing make them commit to future disarmament efforts — if the only international example for such an endeavor being successful, the agreement with Iran, no longer has effect?" asked Germany's Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel.

Italy's UN Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi said the escalating situation with North Korea should serve as a cautionary tale for not abandoning the Iran deal.

SANDERS WARY ON FOREIGN POLICY

ONCE and possibly future presidential candidate Sen Bernie Sanders said Thursday that President Donald Trump accentuates the worst aspects of generations of US foreign policy, arguing that diplomacy and human rights must drive the US approach to the world.

The Vermont independent chided Trump on everything from his rhetoric and proposed foreign aid cuts to his handling of North Korea, Iran and terrorism. Speaking at Missouri's Westminster College, he said: "The goal is not for the United States to dominate the world. Nor on the other hand is our goal to withdraw from the international community and shirk our responsibilities under the banner of 'America First'."

Powerless: Puerto Rico faces weeks without electricity

SAN JUAN,
PUERTO RICO
Associated Press

THE sky was darkening Thursday afternoon as ten-year-old Sarah Jimenez laid out three plastic buckets on her grandmother's patio in hopes of capturing rainwater.

"We can use it to at least flush the toilets," she told her grandmother.

A day after Hurricane Maria ravaged Puerto Rico, flooding towns, crushing homes and killing at least two people, millions of people on the island faced the dispiriting prospect of weeks and perhaps months without electricity. The storm knocked out the entire grid across the US territory of 3.4 million, leaving many without power to light their homes, cook, pump water or run fans, air conditioners or refrigerators.

As a result, Jimenez and others hunted for gas canisters for cooking, collected rainwater or steeled themselves mentally for the hardships to come in the tropical heat. Some contemplated leaving the island.

"You cannot live here without power," said Hector Llanos, a 78-year-old retired New York police officer who planned to leave Saturday for the US mainland to live there temporarily.

Like many Puerto Ricans, Llanos does not have a generator or gas stove. "The only thing I have is a flashlight," he said, shaking his head. "This is never going to return to normal."

Maria's death toll across the Caribbean, meanwhile, climbed to at least 19, nearly all of them on the hard-hit island of Dominica. In Puerto Rico, the government said at least two were



A COMPLETELY ruined house is seen in the El Negro community a day after the impact of Hurricane Maria, in Puerto Rico.

killed but media on the island were reporting additional deaths and the actual toll appeared unlikely to be known for days.

As of Thursday night, Maria was moving off the northern coast of the Dominican Republic with winds of 125mph (205kph). The storm was expected to approach the Turks and Caicos Islands and The Bahamas early today.

From there, it is expected to veer into the open Atlantic, no threat to the US mainland.

In Puerto Rico, the grid was in sorry shape long before Maria — and Hurricane Irma two weeks ago — struck.

The territory's \$73 billion debt crisis has left agencies like the state power company broke. It abandoned most basic maintenance in recent years, leaving the island subject to regular blackouts.

"We knew this was going to happen given the vulnerable infrastructure," Gov. Ricardo Rossello said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said it would open an air bridge from the mainland on Friday, with three to four military planes flying to the

island every day carrying water, food, generators and temporary shelters.

"There's a humanitarian emergency here in Puerto Rico," Rossello said. "This is an event without precedent."

He said his administration was trying to open ports soon to receive shipments of food, water, generators, cots and other supplies.

The government has hired 56 small contractors to clear trees and put up new power lines and poles and will be sending tanker trucks to supply neighborhoods as they run out of water. The entire island has been declared a federal disaster zone.

Mike Hyland, senior vice president of engineering services for the American Public Power Association, a utility industry group that is sending repair crews into the Caribbean, refused to speculate on how long it would take to restore power in Puerto Rico.

"Let's see what the facts tell us by the end of the weekend," he said. But he acknowledged: "This is going to be a tall lift."

Sarah's grandmother, Maribel Montilla, already

had two large barrels filled with water but worried about how long it would last for her, her daughter, her son-in-law and six grandchildren.

"You know what I think? We're going to be without power for six months now," she said.

Cellphone and internet service collapsed in much of Puerto Rico. The only radio station that remained on the air during the hurricane — WAPA 680 AM — was relaying messages to help connect friends and families.

Other concerns were more prosaic. Across the street, someone yelled at a neighbor, "Listen, do you have Netflix?!"

Jaime Rullan, a sports commentator, has a gas stove at home but tried not to think about the lack of air conditioning on an island where the heat index has surpassed 100 degrees (37 Celsius) in recent days.

"We're used to the lights going out because of storms here in Puerto Rico, but this time, we're worried," he said. "We should prepare ourselves mentally to be at least a month without power."

Deysi Rodriguez, a 46-year-old caretaker for

elderly people, does not have a gas stove. And unlike others who have been lining up at the few fast-food restaurants that have reopened, Rodriguez is a diabetic and has to be more careful about what she eats.

Rodriguez said she might temporarily move to New Jersey if the situation gets worse.

Pedro Cartagena, 57-year-old dock supervisor, said he planned to shower, eat and sleep at his company's office. He plans to buy food at the few restaurants that are open and operating on generators.

"That's going to drain my bank account," he said, "but if I want to eat, that's my only option."

In an upscale neighborhood in San Juan, 69-year-old retiree Annie Mattei's condominium has a generator. But she said maintenance will shut it off between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. to save fuel.

"This has been devastating," she said as her eyes welled with tears.

In the Dominican Republic, Maria knocked down trees and power lines. But Joel Santos, president of the country's hotel association, said the hurricane did not damage the tourism infrastructure, even though it passed close to Punta Cana, the major resort area on the eastern tip of the island.

In Dominica, where Maria laid waste to hundreds of homes and was blamed for at least 15 deaths, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit wept as he spoke to a reporter on the nearby island of Antigua.

"It is a miracle there were not hundreds of deaths," he said. He added: "Dominica is going to need all the help the world has to offer."

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- **Risk Management:** All trading and transactions must be conducted in accordance with prevailing Treasury Risk Management policies and practices.
- **People Development:** Contribute to the performance and development of all supervised FO staff.

Educational Requirements:

- A postgraduate degree in Finance or related discipline, preferably, completed the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) program and at least 5 years' experience in a Treasury environment.
- Thorough knowledge of the foreign exchange market, products and trading activities, as appropriate to assigned portfolios gained through formal training and /or on-the-job experience.
- Thorough understanding of local financial markets and economic, political, social, business environment and competitive trends.
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- Working knowledge of personal computers and spreadsheet programs
- Clear, concise communication skills (both verbal and written) for day-to-day communication in English

Qualified candidates should submit C.V. via email to: hrbahamas@scotiabank.com on or before September 29, 2017. Please note that only those individuals short-listed for an interview will be contacted.



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HUNT FOR SURVIVORS IN MEXICO

MEXICO CITY
Associated Press

AS painstaking attempts to reach survivors in quake-ravaged buildings across Mexico City stretched into a third day Thursday, desperation mounted among loved ones who earlier had high hopes for quick rescues and some complained they were being kept in the dark about search efforts.

And what many had clung to as the unlikely triumph of life over death was revealed to be a case of some very high-profile misinformation: A top navy official announced there were no missing children at a collapsed Mexico City school where the purported plight of a girl trapped alive in the rubble had captivated people across the nation and abroad.

President Enrique Pena Nieto's office raised the death toll from Tuesday's magnitude 7.1 earthquake to 273, including 137 in the capital. In a statement, it said there were also 73 deaths in Morelos state, 43 in Puebla, 13 in the State of Mexico, six in Guerrero and one in Oaxaca.

More than 2,000 were injured and more than 50 people rescued in Mexico City alone, including two women and a man pulled alive from the wreckage of a building in the city's center Wednesday night.

Still, frustration was growing as the rescue effort stretched into day three.

Outside a collapsed office building in the trendy Roma Norte district, a list of those rescued was strung between two trees. Relatives of the missing compared it against their own list of those who were in the building when the quake struck — more than two dozen names — kept in a spiral notebook.

Maria del Carmen Fernandez's 27-year-old nephew, Ivan Colin Fernandez, worked as an accountant in the seven-story building, which pancaked to the ground taking part of the building next door with it.

She said the last time the family got an update was



RESCUE workers search for survivors at an apartment building in Mexico City yesterday after Tuesday's magnitude 7.1 earthquake.

Photo: Natacha Pisarenko/AP

late yesterday, when officials said about 14 people were believed to be alive inside. Three people have been rescued from the building since the quake.

"They should keep us informed," Fernandez said as her sister, the man's mother, wept into her black fleece sweater. "Because I think what kills us most is the desperation of not knowing anything."

Referring to rumors that authorities intend to bring in heavy machinery that could risk bringing buildings down on anyone still alive inside, Fernandez said: "That seems unjust to us because there are still people alive inside and that's not OK."

"I think they should wait until they take the last one out," she said.

Seeking to dispel the rumors, National Civil Protection chief Luis Felipe Puente tweeted that heavy machinery "is NOT being used" in search-and-rescue efforts.

"The (hashtag)Search and Rescue is not being suspended anywhere it is believed that trapped people exist," Puente said in a separate tweet.

Since early Wednesday, the eyes of the nation had been focused on the Enrique Rebsamen school in southern Mexico City, where rescuers told reporters a girl, identified only as Frida Sofia, had signaled

she was alive deep in the rubble by wiggling her fingers in response to rescuers' shouts.

Numerous rescuers at the school site spoke of the girl, with some saying she had reported several other children alive in the same space, and the child became a symbol of hope amid a disaster that has shocked the country. But with TV cameras and journalists kept a block away from the precarious site, the only images broadcast live around-the-clock of the purported rescue showed long-distance shots of rescuers digging and no images of a child.

As the rescue effort continued into Thursday, no family members came forward to identify the girl, and some officials had begun to say the identity of the person trapped in the rubble was not clear.

Then on Thursday afternoon, Navy Assistant Secretary Enrique Sarmiento announced that while there were blood traces and other signs suggesting someone could be alive beneath the school, all its children had been accounted for.

"We have done an accounting with school officials and we are certain that all the children either died, unfortunately, are in hospitals or are safe at their homes," Sarmiento said.

32 years of visiting The Bahamas - and loving it

PETER and Joan Davis have been visiting The Bahamas for the past 32 years, and on their recent trip to Nassau the British couple promised Minister of Tourism and Aviation Dionisio D'Aguilar they will return for years to come. Their love affair with Nassau began in 1985 when they first visited on a weekend cruise from Miami. It was the same time that Queen Elizabeth II visited on board the Royal Yacht docked just nearby, a memory that is forever etched in their hearts. Mr and Mrs Davis visit each year and typically stay

for two weeks at a time. Mr Davis even attends weekly meetings at the Rotary Club of West Nassau when he is in town. "We love it here, Bahamian people are very friendly and they make us feel welcomed every time we come here, and this year is no exception," Mrs Davis said. This year, their visit was perfectly timed around Mr Davis' birthday. He celebrated in grand style at Government House with a delicious lunch at the People to People Tea Party and saw an exciting changing of the guard experience. Topping it all off, the Royal

Bahamas Police Force Band played a lively rendition of the Happy Birthday Song in his honour. "The police band played Happy Birthday and I couldn't ask for anything more. It was absolutely fantastic and a weekend, I'll never forget," he said. "It was also a lovely lady's 90th birthday and they made them dance," Mrs Davis said with a chuckle. She said that the couple constantly recommends The Bahamas as a vacation destination, telling everyone they interact with that it is an unforgettable place. "The hospitality in The Bahamas has been truly amazing, I'll recommend Nassau to anyone as you will never regret it."

The couple was presented with a gift basket courtesy of the Ministry of Tourism's Visitor Relations Unit. The Visitor Relations Unit was established in 1972. One of its missions is to acknowledge frequent visitors to the Bahamas. Gift baskets with Bahamian made products and certificates of appreciation signed by the minister of tourism are presented to tourists who have visited The Bahamas 25 times or more.



MINISTER of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar presenting a thank you gift to Peter and Joan Davis.



PETER Davis dancing with Beverley Wallace Whitfield.

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FROM left, Reserve Woman Marine Adina Munroe, executive secretary at the British Legion Bahamas Branch and RBDF representative, Comrade George Collymore, World War Two veteran, Father Andrew Topin, executive committee member, Comrade Leonard Knowles, World War Two veteran and Commander Fredrick Brown, commanding officer of the RBDF's Military Police and Force Protection Unit.
Photos: Marine Seaman Michael E. Turner II



MEMBERS of the RBDF cleaning the World War Two cemetery.

Today's soldiers clean up World War Two cemetery

THE military police section of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF), in a joint effort with the US Embassy Marine Corps, Bahamas Branch, spent this past Saturday sprucing up the country's World War Two Cemetery, which they recently adopted.

This joint effort was the direct result of a conversation between Chief Petty Officer Lincoln Rolle and Gunnery Sargent Walter Merrith, head of the United States Embassy Marine Corps, Bahamas Branch who both agreed that cleaning and maintaining the cemetery on a more consistent basis felt like their honourable duty.

They removed weeds,

mowed grass and painted the entrance to the cemetery, located on Infant View Road. However, this initial effort is only the beginning of what is expected to be a larger project to overhaul the space. There are plans for reviving the landscape and repairing broken grave stones.

Commanding officer of the military police section Commander Fredrick Brown said the project comes with no difficulty and that it was an honour to be a part of the effort.

Chairman of the British Legion, Bahamas Branch, Comrade Cephas Ferguson was also there and in an interview expressed his appreciation and thanked

RBDF Commodore Tellis Bethel and all parties involved who made the effort a success.

Commander Brown extended heartfelt thanks to members of his unit and the United States Embassy Marine Corps Unit.

"We are grateful for your kind gesture in adopting our small military cemetery," he said.

Also in attendance were Comrade George Collymore, Comrade Leonard Knowles, both World War II veterans, Father Andrew Topin, executive committee member, and Adina Munroe, executive Secretary at the British Legion Bahamas Branch and RBDF representative.



RBDF officers taking part in sprucing up the country's World War Two Cemetery on Infant View

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