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Bahamian Fugitive To Be Extradited

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

A Bahamian man who is wanted in the United States for alleged sexual related crimes against a 13-year-old, was arrested at the Lynden Pindling International Airport attempting to leave the country.

The fugitive, Don Cyprian Martin, 45 of Martin Town, Grand Bahama, is wanted in the US State of Atlanta.

Martin, according to Atlanta Press, went missing during his trial and just before his sentence was to be handed down.

According to a Fulton County District Attorney's Office statement issued last Tuesday, in US media, Martin left the courthouse after five days of testimony and didn't return for closing arguments. His whereabouts were stated as "unknown".

Investigations on

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Twelve Migrants Arrested In South Bimini

Bahamian Boat Captain In Custody

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Twelve illegal migrants are in the custody of Immigration authorities after a joint operation between officers from the Bimini Division of the Royal Bahamas Police Force and Royal Bahamas Defence Force officers. They apprehended the men while in a vessel was moored at a resort in South Bimini.

Assistant Superintendent of Police in Grand Bahama, Tericita Pinder, reported that shortly after 11:00 Sunday morning - the joint team- acting on intelligence, went to a local resort on South

Bimini where they boarded a 36ft. vessel and discovered the 12 illegal immigrants. In the group were three females and nine males.

A further search of the vessel was conducted, and officers discovered a quantity of suspected marijuana.

The illegal immigrants one Dominican, a Venezuelan, three Ecuadorians and seven Chinese, were all handed over to Immigration.

According to ASP Pinder, the captain of that vessel, a resident of New Providence was also arrested and taken into police custody.

Investigations continue in the matter.

Exuma police are investigating an alleged drowning of an adult male, that occurred on Sunday in waters of Exuma Cay.

Reports from police indicate that, shortly before 11:00am, a group of persons were on a diving excursion in the Exuma Cays, between Highbourne Cay and Allan Cay, when one of the divers, an adult male, was discovered unresponsive in the water.

The man was pulled from the waters, CPR was administered, but it was unsuccessful. He was transported to a hospital on New Providence, where he was pronounced dead.

SEVEN MORE DOMINICANS APPREHENDED

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

Just days after seven Dominican poachers were picked up off Inagua and subsequently charged on several counts, Defense Force Officers apprehended another seven of them

yesterday morning for allegedly fishing illegally.

From all reports, officers were on routine patrol when they spotted the two Dominican small go-fast type boats just off

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URBAN RENEWAL DONATES \$5,000 TO BFN

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

The Ministry of Social Services leaves a special holiday treat for The Bahamas Feeding Network (BFN), donating

\$5,000 towards the "Feed 5,000 Families" Campaign.

Minister Frankie Campbell said he is grateful for the opportuni-

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THE GOVERNOR GENERAL HOSTS THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



Government-General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling hosted the Official Opposition to an Annual Christmas Luncheon at Government House on Monday, December 17, 2018. The Governor General is pictured seated centre, with Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Philip Davis, centre left; Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Chester Cooper, centre right; and from left: Picewell Forbes, Senator the Hon. Jobeth Coleby-Davis, Glenys Hanna-Martin, Senator the Hon. Frederick Mitchell, Senator the Hon. Michael Darville, and Senator the Hon. Clay Sweeting. (BIS Photos/Letisha Henderson)




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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

Graduating Fire Squad in Grand Bahama Makes History



► Minister of National Security, the Hon. Marvin Dames, was the keynote speaker during graduation ceremonies for D Squad 2018, at the Gerald Bartlett Police Complex. (BIS Photos/Andrew Miller)

FREEPORT, Grand Bahama - The first full Fire Squad to pass out from the Royal Bahamas Police Force in over a decade graduated on Thursday, December 13, 2018, in a special ceremony at the Gerald Bartlett Police Headquarters in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

D Squad, 2018 comprised of 34 graduates will be stationed within the Fire Branch of the Force.

This milestone, according to Minister of National Security, the Hon. Marvin Dames, marks a very special day, not only in the lives of the

34 young Bahamian men and women recruits, but also for the distinguished residents of the entire island of Grand Bahama.

"I remind you that you are entering a career that oftentimes becomes dangerous," Minister Dames told the police graduates.

"Firefighters don't just run into burning buildings, they are often first responders on the scene of explosions, natural disasters, wildfires, traffic accidents and other catastrophes. The demanding job can take both a physical and mental toll on those who perform it."

The National Security Minister, who was the keynote speaker during the graduation ceremony, noted that as with all agencies under the purview of the Ministry of National Security, the Royal Bahamas Police Force has been called upon to embrace the adoption of sound management, that will allow for the effective execution of anti-crime and law enforcement strategies in the short, medium and long terms.

"Earlier this year, the Ministry of National Security completed a

comprehensive Manpower Audit to determine the most effective establishment of the Royal Bahamas Police Force," said Minister Dames.

"We needed to determine, as a matter of urgency, what was required in the way of human resources to effectively operate stations and divisions throughout the nation, including Grand Bahama."

Key among the Audit's findings, according to Minister Dames, was that the Force's recruitment rate was not keeping pace with its attrition rate. The number of officers leaving the Force (whether by retirement, resignation, death or otherwise) was consistently higher than the number of officers being recruited.

Minister Dames noted that this imbalance resulted in a manpower gap of 1,020 police officers throughout the ranks, inclusive of 71 fire officers. He added that the Audit suggested that in order to operate at appropriate levels, the Police Force needed 791 Constables.

"The Audit further revealed that while approximately 500 or 18% of the Force is stationed here in Grand

Bahama, the island still needed 261 officers in order to operate at suitable levels, inclusive of 25 fire officers.

"Using these findings as our impetus, the Government began to lay the fiscal framework to begin correcting the manpower shortages in the Force. This fiscal year, funding was approved for the first 134 Recruits, 100 of whom will be completing their training in New Providence next Thursday and the other 34 officers of this Fire Squad.

"This is just the first step, and I am happy to report that Cabinet has also approved funding for another 130 recruits, 30 of whom will be trained right here in Grand Bahama."

Minister Dames added that based on the recommendations from the Manpower Audit, the Government's ultimate goal has been to facilitate the rebranding of the Royal Bahamas Police Force, with a strategic focus on developing "a lean and purposeful agency" that is able to effectively police in a robust society driven by technological advancements.

Minister Dames said that the contextual and structural rebranding of

the Police Force is directly linked to the future growth and development of the Bahamas.

"Therefore, my Ministry is committed to ushering the police force into the 21st Century law enforcement, so as to ensure the delivery of professional and uninterrupted policing services throughout our nation," said Minister Dames.

Commissioner Ferguson has assured me that the Force has engaged in the strategic deployment of officers in an effort to ensure sufficient manpower is available to provide policing services throughout all islands of The Bahamas. For this reason, a number of these new officers will be deployed to Grand Bahama.

"I admonish you to always do your job with integrity and in accordance with the law. The people of the Bahamas are depending on each of you to perform your duties with fairness, impartiality and professionalism.

"I want you to know that this Government supports your selfless service to our nation and no effort will be spared to provide you with the necessary tools to be successful."



► National Security Minister, Hon. Marvin Dames (center), along with Commissioner of Police, Anthony Ferguson; Assistant Commissioner of Police, Samuel Butler and other top brass of the Royal Bahamas Police Force, joined D Squad (2018) for an official photograph following graduation ceremonies on Thursday, December 13, 2018. Thirty-four officers graduated. (BIS Photos/Andrew Miller)

URBAN RENEWAL DONATES \$5,000 TO BFN

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ty to help add quality to the lives of the people of The Bahamas, whom he proudly serves.

He said, "I'm satisfied that no amount of government programs will catch everybody. So, we

rely on our partners to give us that extra boost as we attempt to put in place safety nets for various aspects of vulnerable persons within our community."

The Bahamas Feeding Network is a non-profit group of 13 separate organizations formed in

December 2013 to tackle the hunger rate in the country.

BFN aims to perform as a hub for collecting and distributing food throughout the archipelago.

Minister Campbell shared why his Ministry chose to team up with the

organization.

He said, "I had the privilege, a few months ago, to go on a Sunday afternoon to the building on Fox Hill Road, just next to the police station. I was privileged to be on the line taking up food and making up parcels."

He added, "I think

3,000 persons or there about were served and I saw first-hand the impact that the feeding network had."

Mr. Campbell said the ministry has pumped about 12 million dollars into food assistance, and the \$5,000 cheque came from the Urban Renewal

Commission.

This is the "Feed 5,000 Families" third annual campaign, and this initiative is in collaboration with AML Foods Limited, The Bahamas Feeding Network, The Bahamas Red Cross, and The Salvation Army.

SEVEN MORE DOMINICANS APPREHENDED

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North East Point, Inagua. After a search of the vessels, officers found

several air compressors and containers of gasoline.

The Dominicans were all taken into custody and handed over to police and

immigration officials at Great Inagua to be brought to the capital, where they are expected to be charged with various fishing offenses.

Meantime, both skiffs and the fishing apparatus were confiscated and handed over to the police for further processing.

GOT NEWS?
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Bahamian Doctor Named to Join Cleveland Clinic's Top Ranked Urological & Kidney Facility



► Darius Unwala, M.D.

In what is believed to be a first, a Bahamian surgeon has been named to join the faculty of the Cleveland Clinic's Glickman Urological & Kidney Institute in the United States, a facility that is

part of the award-winning Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. The honour is being bestowed on Darius Unwala, M.D., who will take leave from The Princess Margaret

Hospital and Doctors' Hospital, where he has served as a consultant urologist since 2011. He specializes in treating kidney and urology-related conditions, including sophisticated, minimally invasive laparoscopic and endoscopic procedures.

"We are pleased to welcome Dr. Unwala to the world-class faculty of the Glickman Urological and Kidney Institute at Cleveland Clinic, which has been ranked as the No. 1 or No. 2 urology program in the nation by U.S. News and World Report every year since 2000," said Eric A. Klein, MD, Chairman of the Glickman Urological and Kidney Institute at Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Unwala has been sought after by some of the most prestigious hospitals in the United States over the past several years. In his post at Cleveland Clinic's Glickman Institute, he will spend part of his time at the main campus and part of his time developing and enhancing the

urological programme of a regional hospital of the Cleveland Clinic.

In addition to his expertise in urological procedures, Dr. Unwala is considered among the premier reviewers of the academic medical literature. He has written numerous editorials on a wide range of subjects in urology and was recently named a Top Reviewer for the Urology Gold Journal, a designation reserved for a select few.

According to a source close to Dr. Unwala, the decision to take leave was a difficult one. "Darius has dedicated his academic career, his knowledge, his medical life to trying to find better ways to treat those who suffer from kidney and urology-related conditions," the source said. "Given the extraordinary rate of diabetes in this country, the expense and nature of dialysis, he has always searched for a kinder, gentler way and perhaps his exposure to a facility that can afford the kind of equipment that is

not available in a community as small as The Bahamas will strengthen his ability even more and allow him to return home with greater knowledge and some of the answers we all seek to deal with the scourge of kidney-related diseases."

A graduate of the University of Manchester Medical School in the U.K., Dr. Unwala graduated with Honours in all subject areas. He is a board-certified urologist in the United States, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Canada, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, a member of the Medical Association of The Bahamas and The Bahamas Medical Council. Dr. Unwala was recognised in The Bahamas '40 under 40' awards in 2013 and he was awarded the Bahamian Icon Award for his outstanding contributions to health in 2016. He serves on the

Executive Board of Directors of the Cancer Society of the Bahamas and is a Director and Treasurer of the Brighter Bahamas Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to improving life, health and well-being through reading and wider availability of books for all.

Dr. Unwala is married to Rashmi Unwala, MD, FAAD, Consultant Dermatologist and Assistant Professor, Mayo Clinic. She has practiced at both Princess Margaret Hospital and Doctors Hospital for several years. Dr. Rashmi Unwala will be taking up the post of Assistant Professor of Dermatology at the Cleveland Clinic.

Both Drs. Unwala will see their last patients at the end of this month and encourage all seeking records to contact their offices prior to December 31. They will take up residence in Ohio – in the midst of January and snow – with their three children, Nikhil, Yasmin and Cyrus.

Minister Thompson: 'Significant progress has taken place in GB in 2018'

FREEPORT, Grand Bahama -- One of the visions of the Free National Movement Government for Grand Bahama in 2018 was to help place the island on a path of economic recovery, and then move it towards financial growth, "that was the goal of this government in Grand Bahama and we believe that significant progress has taken place – although there remains much more work to be done.

"For the most part, we believe this government has begun to move Grand Bahama to the place where we would like to see it in the future," said Minister of State for Grand Bahama, Senator Kwasi Thompson.

The Minister's remarks came during a year in review by the Office of the Prime Minister in Grand Bahama to members of the local media on Sunday. Minister Thompson said the year in review was a glimpse of a full year for the FNM Government, and thus it was necessary to point out some of the accomplishments for Grand Bahama in 2018.

Minister Thompson noted that Grand Bahama has played, and will continue to play a pivotal role in the overall economic resurgence of The Bahamas, and said that significance explained why the Prime Minister has taken a very personal and keen interest in Grand Bahama.

"It's important to note that this year the tourism numbers for Grand Bahama are up," said Minister Thompson. "According to the Ministry of Tourism and as reported by the Central Bank's latest report,

tourism stopover visitors in Grand Bahama have increased, year-over-year by 3.5 percent.

"The reason why this is significant is because last year's numbers were a plunge of over 30 percent. What's even more important is the Airbnb information and report, which has suggested that those numbers for the country overall has increased. But in particular for Grand Bahama, the bookings for Airbnb has increased this year for Grand Bahama by 44 percent.

"This represents the largest increase in that sector for the entire country."

Also, this year, Minister Thompson noted that there has been a significant increase in revenue at Customs – an increase of \$15 million with respect to Customs revenue in Grand Bahama.

Minister Thompson noted that the offering of free registration at Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) for all qualifying Bahamians across the county has been significant. For Grand Bahama, in particular, Minister Thompson said there has been an overall increase in enrollment by 70 percent as a result of this initiative by the government.

In the technology courses and degrees at BTVI, there has been a 97 percent increase in the Institute's enrollment.

"So, we see that there has been a significant impact by the BTVI initiative [on the part of] the government and next year, the Prime Minister has committed that he will make the University of The Bahamas free for qualifying Bahamians as well," added Minister

Thompson.

The Minister pointed out that throughout 2018, a number of new businesses have opened in Grand Bahama by both local and foreign investors helping to stimulate the island's economy. Those companies include GIBC (a digital company); Bahamas Zipline at Pirates Cove (a \$1.4 million investment); Eco-Oil broke ground for its new offices in Grand Bahama in June 2018 (a \$10 million investment); Home Fabrics of Nassau, opened a branch in Freeport (a \$2 million investment); Fowlco Marine Logistics Company (a \$1.4 million investment); Goombay Land Skating Rink and entertainment Centre (a \$500,000 investment) was renovated and reopened; Elnet Maritime Company broke ground to construct their new offices, (a \$2.5 million investment); Coral Vita broke ground for its first land-based commercial Coral Farm; and Pharmachem began work on their \$180 million expansion project.

As a result of these new businesses, employment on Grand Bahama has gone up as well, as Grand Bahamians were hired to work at these new and expanding businesses. Labor on the blocks, which was a huge success in Nassau, came to Grand Bahama and saw the same success. Some 1,500 Grand Bahamians turned out and registered and there were a number of people who were able to obtain employment on the spot, and many more received appointments for job interviews, as a result of the Labor on the Blocks program.

"We held a Job Fair and some seventy Grand

Bahamians were hired by Quality Services and are employed at the expansion project at Pharmachem," said Minister Thompson. "Itelbpo's expansion has opened the door for more Grand Bahamians to be hired, as the company moves towards its goal of hiring an additional 100 Bahamians.

"The OPM's summer program was launched in June, which gave 500 young people job opportunities for the summer. The government's new ICT Summer program also took effect in 2018. This program not only allowed students an opportunity to be trained at BTVI in Information, Communications and Technology courses, but a unique aspect of the program was that these students were paid a stipend to participate in the program. The program is expected to be expanded to New Providence."

Minister Thompson pointed out that the Small Business Grant Program, which was launched by the Office of the Prime Minister, allowed 197 people to go through the Small Business Grant Program, where they obtained better business development skills. Out of that number 87 people were given Small Business Grants, to the tune of over \$370,000.

Perhaps one of the biggest events to take place in Grand Bahama during 2018 was the government's decision to purchase the Grand Lucayan Resort.

"This was an investment to preserve the jobs of the employees working at the Resort, but also as a step to continue the redevelopment of Grand Bahama's tourism mar-

ket," said Minister Thompson.

"The government has put in place an independent board that is now managing the resort. As a result, that board has offered voluntary separation packages now in process, and negotiations between the two unions with respect to those voluntary separation packages.

"The government has approved a three million dollar renovation for the Resort. Bids are out and the Board is evaluating those bids. The government has received over 20 interests and potential offers for the purchase of the resort and we will begin to narrow that list down shortly.

"Let me stress that the government does not intend to continue to run the resort, but what we want to do is sell the resort to a qualified buyer as soon as possible."

In November of 2018, Grand Bahama held its Second Annual Technology Summit, which brought together local, national and international experts and companies in the field of technology to exchange ideas about advancing technology around the world.

It was during that Summit that the Government of The Bahamas signed an MOU with Cisco Systems to provide further educational opportunities for Bahamians to be trained in the technology sector.

"One of the unique things that came out of this year's Summit was the announcement by the Grand Bahama Power Company, who will be offering a GB Tech Hub special power rate particularly for those tech busi-

nesses who intend to open offices in Grand Bahama," said Minister Thompson.

"It will also be offered to existing tech businesses who are expanding and hiring more employees. They will also be able to take advantage of this special tech hub electricity rate."

Minister Thompson said that there were a number of other events, projects and programs that have taken place in Grand Bahama to help stimulate and move the economy forward, including the continuation of projects like the building of the junior high school in Holmes' Rock, the building of the Seawall in Smith's Point, and the building of the bridge at the Fishing Hole Road.

He said he is excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for Grand Bahama in 2019 and looks forward to even more new businesses, particularly in the technology sector, to be opened in Grand Bahama.

Minister Thompson said that it is his belief that the special church service, which was held on Watch Night before the start of 2018 had very positive effects on the island. The event, which gathered pastors, preachers and believers from throughout the island, was held at the Independence Park, where the New Year for Grand Bahama was ushered in.

"We believe that all of the achievements and success for Grand Bahama in 2018, is as a result of what God is doing in Grand Bahama. And there is no doubt that the church service that was held to start off the New Year had a lot to do with that success," said Minister Thompson.

SDA Church Caribbean Union Administrators Pay Courtesy Call on the Governor General



► Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling received the Executive membership of the Caribbean Union Administrators of the Seventh Day Adventist Church during a Courtesy Call, December 14, 2018. **(BIS Photo/Patrick Hanna)**

AAAWU Signs Industrial Agreement with Nassau Flight Services

Executives of the Airport Airline and Allied Workers Union (AAAWU) and the management of Nassau Flight Services signed an industrial agreement on Friday, December 14, 2018 at the Department of Labour's, City Corporate Office on Rosetta Street.

The signing of the industrial agreement was witnessed by Nassau Flight Services executives and AAAWU officials. Among those witnessing the signing was Mrs. Yolantha Yallop, Legal Counsel in the Department of Labour and Ms. Veronique Evans, Notary Public with Nassau Flight Services.

s. Jewel Fountain, President of the AAAWU said that today, "brings closure to a long awaited contract negotiations. Our members will certainly be happy that after negotiating for some time they will be able to have a Merry Christmas as we sign this document and register the document."

s. Fountain continued, "I would like to thank Nassau Flight Services Management team. Even though we may have fought sometimes, at the end of the day we left the table on mutual grounds." Ms. Fountain also thanked her officers and counsel members.

r. Ricardo Adderley,

Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nassau Flight Services apologized for the Chairman of Nassau Flight Services, Mr. Ricky Mackey who was unable to attend the signing. Mr. Adderley commented, "...We would like to thank Mr. (Huedley) Moss our consultant for Flight Services and as the madam president would have said, these negotiations was going on from 2015, so indeed this is a great day that we are here to have these documents signed with all of the negotiations going on from 2015 to now. So this is a great day for the AAAWU..."



► The Airport Airline and Allied Workers Union (AAAWU) signed an industrial agreement with the management of Nassau Flight Services on Friday, December 14, 2018 at the Department of Labour, City Corporate Center on Rosetta Street. Pictured from left to right are Mr. Ricardo Rolle, General Manager of Nassau Flight Services; Mr. Ricardo Adderley, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nassau Flight Services; Ms. Jewel Fountain, President of the Airport Airline and Allied Workers Union and Mr. Huedley Moss, Labour Consultant with Nassau Flight Services. **(BIS Photo/Raymond A. Bethel, Sr.)**

Bahamian Fugitive To Be Extradited

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Martin dates back to 2011. That's when police were contacted about the alleged inappropriate touching of the young girl who Martin had allegedly abused for six years.

"Martin was arrested in 2014, held on a \$15,000 bond and initially was required to wear an ankle monitor follow-

ing his arrest. He was indicted in 2015, but two years later, a judge removed that condition" according to US media report.

He has since been found guilty of rape, aggravated sexual battery, child molestation, and cruelty to children in the first degree.

According to the Atlanta Press, sentencing for Martin is currently on

hold because the victim has requested to address Martin during the sentencing testimony proceedings.

According to police here in the capital, Martin was attempting to leave the country shortly after 5:00pm Saturday, when they were called to the international terminal at LPIA.

He is expected to be extradited to the US.

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