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WEDNESDAY - JANUARY 9TH, 2019

75 CENTS

Crime Down By 8 Percent

Police Commissioner Holds Press Conference

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
 Journal Staff Writer

The Royal Bahamas Police Force reports a decrease of 8 per cent in crime in the country over the past 12 months.

The information was revealed in a 16-page report released during Police Commissioner Anthony Ferguson's Annual Meet the Press yesterday morning.

Mr. Ferguson said, "I am happy to report that the preliminary figures indicate an 8 per cent decrease in crimes across the entire Bahamas when compared to 2017," said Police Commissioner, Anthony Ferguson.

In New Providence, that decrease was six per cent; in the family islands; 30 per cent.

However, crime in Grand Bahama was unchanged at two per cent.

The Commissioner said a decrease in the

■ See page 3...



► Commissioner of Police Anthony Ferguson gave an overview of the Crime Statistics 2019 report and presented members of the media with copies of the document, on January 8, 2019 at the Paul Farquharson Conference Centre, Police Headquarters. The Royal Bahamas Police Force Senior Executive Leadership Team joined the Commissioner, and the event was simulcast to a number of police stations throughout The Bahamas for media representatives. (BIS Photos/Eric Rose)

Cold cases, not closed

BY JAMEELHA MISSICK
 Journal Staff Writer

In the Police Crime statistics for 2018, cold cases – those that have not been fully solved were not included in the report.

According to Police Commissioner, Anthony Ferguson, this is due to the fact that they remain open.

"There are any number of cases that are still outstanding.

"We refer to them as cold cases, but they are

■ See page 3...

New Oban Deal Soon

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

The Minister of Labour Dion Foulkes says that he anticipates the negotiations on the Oban heads of agreement to be complete in the next two to three weeks.

He added that the government is adamant about changing the terms of agreement for the heads of agreement regarding the Oban deal.

Mr. Foulkes told reporters outside of Tuesday's weekly cabinet meeting that Oban has agreed to discussions with the government to change those provisions. The original conditions, Mr. Foulkes said, placed Bahamians at a disadvantage.

"We want to make some extensive changes to the heads of agreement, if the principals of Oban and the board of Oban agree, then we will sign a

■ See page 7...

Illegal Migrants Pose Security Threat

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Darren Henfield, says unfettered and unchecked immigration is impacting the country on many fronts and that Bahamians have been tolerant so far.

Mr. Henfield made his comments eight days into the new year as more than 160 migrants have been apprehended in Bahamian waters.

Speaking with reporters outside the Cabinet, the Minister said, "You saw the Prime Minister lead a large con-



► Minister of Foreign Affairs, Darren Henfield (File photo)

tingent of his Cabinet ministers to Haiti where

■ See page 4...

Immigration Bill To Be Amended

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Immigration Minister, Brent Symonette, revealed yesterday that an amendment to the Immigration Bill was scheduled to be presented to Cabinet yesterday for input and sent out for discussion.

"On the agenda [yesterday] at Cabinet, we'll be getting a presentation from Dame Anita Allen from the Law Reform, the amended Immigration Bill, has been presented to Cabinet. We'll discuss,

■ See page 4...



► Immigration Minister, Brent Symonette (File photo)

Davis: "PM Must Treat Unions Fairly"

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Opposition Leader Phillip Davis yesterday said Bahamas Union of Teachers President Belinda Wilson has the prime minister hypnotized.

This comes after the success by the B.U.T in getting conditions improved at the C. H Reeves Junior High School, an extended

■ See page 4...




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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

San Salvador Residents Take Charge of Their Marine Protected Areas



► Capacity Building Workshop group at Idell Jones Hall, San Salvador. October 17th, 2018. L-R: Andiany Matthyssens, ICCF CFO, Todd Koenings, ICCF Director, Lashanti Jupp, BNT Conservation Planner, SSLJ Member Garnell Williams, Mel Turner, Global Parks, Eric Carey, BNT Executive Director, Michael Goffe, SSLJ President, Karen Fernander, SSLJ Treasurer, Lakeshia Anderson, BNT Director of Parks, Catherine Pinder, BNT Director of Finance & Operations, Derek Thompson, Global Parks and Brendalee Jones-Strachan, SSLJ Member (**Journal file photo**)

San Salvador is known as the place where the first steps into the New World happened and has long been globally recognized for its historical significance. This little island formerly known as 'Guanahani' has once again stepped into the forefront as the first island where a community group has entered a formal agreement with a national agency to share responsibility for managing the national parks on their island.

For more than a decade the San Salvador Living Jewels Foundation, island residents, Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF) and the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) advocated to protect natural resources and special places on the island through the creation of national parks. Finally, in April 2015, the Government of the Bahamas announced the creation of five national

parks on that island to be managed by the BNT; Southern Great Lake National Park, Pigeon Creek and Snow Bay National Park, Graham's Harbour Iguana and Seabird National Park, West Coast Marine Park, and Green's Bay National Park.

BNT President, Janet Johnson noted "It was a long road that took more than a decade of perseverance by the BNT, San Salvador Living Jewels, BREEF and The Nature Conservancy, combined with decades of local knowledge and scientific research gathered through the Gerace Research Centre. In addition to these partners, we are also very grateful for funding support from Nancy Taylor, Jerry Bryant, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and Oceans 5. This collective effort gave us an understanding of the areas now designated as national parks and now enables us to

continue work to effectively manage these areas."

In 2017, under the Bahamas Protected project, the BNT worked with the local community to finalize the management plan which provides a long-term vision for overall management of these five parks. The plan will help to ensure that natural resources are protected, while supporting traditional sustainable uses by residents and visitors.

Following the completion of the management plan, BNT embarked on another phase of work to develop a co-management agreement with the San Salvador Living Jewels Foundation. During a capacity-building workshop on 19 October, 2018, both organizations signed the country's first formal agreement between a national protected area management agency and a community group which allows for sharing

the responsibilities, rights, and duties of managing a group of national parks; a novel approach to ensure residents will continue to be involved in the decision-making process and operations related to protected areas on their island.

"The amount of time, effort and money that went into getting these areas declared and finalizing the management plan was significant. But it was all worth it because we can now get started on ensuring these natural areas are properly managed and we can all continue to reap the benefits," said San Salvador Living Jewels Foundation President, Michael Goffe.

"The co-management agreement between our organizations is a template that can be used to develop agreements with community-based groups on other islands. Each island and park is unique, so every management plan and co-management

agreement must cover the needs of that area to ensure it is effectively managed and protected." said Bahamas National Trust Conservation Planner, Lashanti Jupp.

Collectively, the San Salvador National Parks cover 25,750 acres of marine and freshwater habitats with the aim of conserving native and endangered plants, animals and historical resources. This includes the critically endangered San Salvador Rock Iguana, Pigeon Creek - the only tidal creek and mangrove nursery area on the island, the greatest diversity of nesting seabirds found anywhere in The Bahamas and the Columbus landfill site.

"San Salvador has always been a shining example of a community working to protect their resources, said BREEFs Executive Director, Casuarina McKinney Lambert. "For more than 20 years, BREEF has had tremendous support from

the San Salvador community during our Teacher Training Workshops and Sea Camps held at Gerace Research Centre, to build an awareness and appreciation for our marine environment. With so much community support and the completion of the management plan for its national parks, San Salvador has set a great example that the rest of the country can follow."

In 2008, The Bahamas committed to effectively conserve at least 20% of its near-shore marine environment by 2020, as part of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative. In 2015, new MPAs were declared including the five parks on San Salvador, which brought The Bahamas to 10% protection. The new set of MPAs proposed under the Bahamas Protected project in September 2018 will bring the country to its goal of 20% protection, if all areas are declared and legally established.



► View from the dock at Graham's Harbour Iguana & Seabird National Park (**Journal file photo**)




CONGRATULATIONS BAHAMAS FOR WINNING THE CARIBBEAN TRAVEL AWARDS DESTINATION OF THE YEAR

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Crime Down By 8 Percent

Continued from / PAGE 1...

murder count is what led to the overall decline.

Figures showed that homicides dropped by 25 per cent from 122 in 2017 to 91 in 2018 – the first time the count has been less than 100 in nearly a decade.

“When we analyzed murder trends on a quarterly basis, we noticed some promising results,”

he said.

“During the first quarter of 2018, there were 26 murders representing a decrease of 35 per cent.

“The 2nd quarter, there were 28 murders representing a decrease of 15 per cent.

“The 3rd quarter, there were 16 murders representing a decrease of 48 per cent.

“However, in the 4th quarter, there were 21 murders that showed an increase of 17 per cent.”

The majority of murders occurred in New Providence.

“I wish to bring to your attention that solvency for murder was 73.63 per cent in 2018.

“Compared to 57.38 per cent for 2017, 53.15

per cent for 2016 and 46.58 percent for 2015 – a notable increase,” the Commissioner said.

There were 19 cases of attempted murder last year, compared to 13 the year before.

Meanwhile 2018 recorded no cases of manslaughter.

There were, however, 55 reported cases of rape,

up from the 52 over the 2017 period.

There were also an unchanged 11 reported cases of attempted rape, 113 cases of unlawful sexual intercourse, and 474 cases of armed robbery – a reduction of 18 percent over what occurred in 2017 – 108 cases of robbery and 13 cases of attempted robbery.

Cold cases, not closed

Continued from / PAGE 1...

not closed, a murder case is always open. It's just that you are not able to find the witnesses or the relevant evidence then at that particular time.

“And then at the rate that we were going, that Bahamians were killing one another, sometimes you would find that it takes a longer time to address, to bring it to a conclusion.

“But it's never cold as such, that's just a terminology that we use, it's always open,” the Commissioner said.

Though encouraged by the noted reductions in crime, the Commissioner said that this did not happen by mere coincidence, but as a result of analyzing trends, re-focusing policing operations and developing valuable intelligence.

“The operations and training of all areas of the force working together in support of my anti-crime strategy and my policing plan were deliberate and impacted the reduction in overall murders and other serious crimes.”



▶ The Royal Bahamas Police Force Senior Executive Leadership Team joined the Commissioner, and the event was simulcast to a number of police stations throughout The Bahamas for media representatives. (BIS Photos/Eric Rose)



MINISTRY OF FINANCE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND REVENUE REAL PROPERTY TAX NOTICE for 2019

In accordance with the Real Property Tax Act, Chapter 375 as amended, the Chief Valuation Officer hereby gives notice:-

- (a) that copies of the assessment lists are available as required by Section 7 subsection 7 of the Act, and may be inspected at the Office of the Chief Valuation Officer;
- (b) that a notice of assessment addressed to each owner of property liable to tax under the Real Property Tax Act is available at the Valuation Office, located at rear of the shops at Carmichael Plaza, Carmichael Road and may be collected therefrom by or on behalf of the owner of such property during normal working hours;
- (c) that pursuant to subsection (3) of Section 7 of the Act, upon the expiration of five days after the publication of this notice, a notice of assessment shall be deemed to have been served on every owner of property liable to tax under the Act;
- (d) that without prejudice to the provision of subsection (3) of Section 7 of the Act, the Chief Valuation Officer may at any time after the publication in the Gazette of this notice send by post, a notice of assessment addressed to any owner of property liable to tax under the Act;
- (e) that pursuant to Section 11(1) of the Act, any person aggrieved by a notice of assessment deemed to have been served under this Act may object thereto by serving on the Chief Valuation Officer within thirty days after the date on which the notice of assessment is deemed to have been served, a notice in writing of such objection stating the grounds upon which he relies;
- (f) that pursuant to Section 18 of the Act, the tax is due and payable by the owners of property not later than sixty days after the date on which notice of assessment is deemed to have been served. Accordingly, it is the duty of each taxpayer to ensure that he receives a Notice of Assessment;
- (g) that the exemption has been allowed for 2019 on those which have been declared as owner-occupied residences, and have satisfied the conditions. However, under Section 43 of the Act, the owners are required to disclose to the Chief Valuation Officer any change in the circumstances which does not entitle the property for the exemption allowed;
- (h) that pursuant to Section 10 of the Act, every owner of property shall not later than the thirty-first day of December in each year, make to the Chief Valuation Officer in the prescribed form a return of such particulars of that property as may be prescribed, for the purpose of enabling that Officer to compile and maintain accurate assessment lists, and such owner shall declare to the correctness of such return before an authorized person.

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Illegal Migrants Pose Security Threat

Continued from / PAGE 1...

we sat and had good fruitful discussions with the Haitian government.

"Since then, not much has happened because in Haiti there have been quite a number of disturbances which sort of distracted the government.

"Ultimately we are working on all fronts to mitigate and alleviate this issue of unfettered Haitian migration into The Bahamas," Mr. Henfield said.

He added that the issue

cannot be stopped just by enforcement and more must be done on the diplomatic level and with help of countries where illegal migrants flow from.

Mr. Henfield acknowledged that the influx of migrants poses a threat, begging the need for an investment in security.

"We have to invest in security and then the social aspects of it. There is a threat to our national security along the lines of our economy as well.

"Socially, people come in and they have to go to

school. That impacts us; they have to have health-care, that impacts us.

"There are other issues where you have to focus your law enforcement in that particular area which is a challenge for us.

"We're a small developing country, but we will not stand idly by and allow us to be overtaken by any country," Mr. Henfield said.

He added that the issue of illegal migration is not only a problem in The Bahamas, but a global phenomenon.

"The issue of illegal migration is such a ripe topic all across the globe. Everywhere you go, people are talking about it, because there has to be controlled migration.

"A government does not plan for illicit migration or illegal migration into its territories. We plan for what we know and so we are going to have to find more ways in which to mitigate and to stem the flow," he said.

Mr. Henfield also said the ministry is doing what it can to reach out to

Haitian officials, despite futile calls to the newly appointed Minister responsible for foreign affairs in Haiti.

Mr. Henfield said the goal is to get them to understand the implications mass migration is having on The Bahamas.

"The Haitian government has appointed a new Foreign Minister, Minister Bocchit. I have been trying to reach him, but to no avail.

"We will continue to speak with the Embassy officials here, locally, to

see how we can begin to revitalize the talks," Mr. Henfield said.

As for the quick response to apprehension, Mr. Henfield commended the Royal Bahamas Defence Force for their efforts.

"I think the Defence Force is doing a good job. I think we are going to work as assiduously as we can on the diplomatic front to cause the Haitian government to come to the table and appreciate the efforts we are trying to make," he said.

Immigration Bill

Continued from / PAGE 1...

[and] it'll be sent out for discussion in short order after Cabinet.

"This is purely for input purposes. There are issues in Immigration and we hope to get that out," Mr. Symonette said.

His comments come after nearly 170 Haitian migrants have already been apprehended in Bahamian waters eight days into the new year.

Mr. Symonette also alluded to the fact that the recent influx of migrants, particularly Haitian migrants is not unusual during this time of year.

"Usually during the holiday periods, bad weather, they choose those times to come here.

I think you've found that we've apprehended a number of them.

"Certainly, the other day a flight with one hundred and some odd Haitians were repatriated.

"They went before the courts and were found guilty and they were repatriated and so we are being very successful on that issue," Mr. Symonette said.

Mr. Symonette added that because of recent court cases regarding illegal migrants, those apprehended are immediately taken to court, charged and found guilty which gives them a criminal record.

"Regrettably for some of the persons who earlier, took some very high-

profile cases to the court, we are now taking them to court when they are found, when before we used to deport them, which now means all of those Haitian persons and others, that get deported have a criminal record.

"Under my watch, to the best of my ability, no one will get a work permit that has a criminal record. So those persons have been put in a bad position because of the previous cases this year," Mr. Symonette said.

He added that "the lawyers were quite right to bring them; if they wanted to that's their business, but now persons will be prosecuted and will have criminal records".

Mr. Symonette said that these illegal migrants entering The Bahamas are not doing it alone.

"There are people who live amongst us that are facilitating these people, and one thing the Immigration Act goes to deal with is harbouring of illegal immigrants.

"I ask the Bahamian people, if you're concerned about it, to report anyone that you realize is harbouring or facilitating these people being here and we will prosecute them accordingly, because they don't just turn up," Mr. Symonette said.

Over 400 Haitian migrants were reportedly apprehended in 2018.

Davis: "PM Must Treat Unions Fairly"

Continued from / PAGE 1...

Christmas break for teachers, a newly renovated A. F Adderley Junior High School and during continued tension on the labour front.

Mr. Davis said he is advised that everything asked for by Mrs. Wilson has been approved while other labour unions concerns are falling on deaf ears.

This prompted the opposition leader to bring to light what he calls unfair treatment to other unions that are facing issues as well.

"All the union leader

has to do is go to the PM and the instructions are sent down. With education being one of the most important pillars in the country, why would cabinet agree to delay the opening of the school year? How does it benefit the country? How does it benefit our children?" he asked.

Mr. Davis is calling on the prime minister to treat all union officials fairly.

This Journal sought Mrs. Wilson for comment, but no calls were returned up to press time.

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From The Cabinet Office

Regarding the Observance of Majority Rule Day

An Ecumenical Service in observance of Majority Rule Day will be held on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, West Street, at 10:00 a.m.

The general public is invited to attend.

Nassau, The Bahamas

WARNING SHOT



By Jerry Hutchinson

Don't Twist the Tail of the Eagle

By Jerry Hutchinson

There was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They returned from the ride

With the lady inside, and the smile on the face of the tiger.
William Cosmo Monkhouse (?)

Every now and then in a rare spasm of national introspection, Bahamians acknowledge the increasing economic and some say political influence exerted by the Chinese on the Bahamas. Historically, the Chinese have bestowed its commercial, educational and economic largesse on our country primarily in its bid to offset the influence of Taiwan at the UN and, secure Caribbean votes. In recent times, the Taiwanese influence has declined in the Caribbean save for in a handful of countries. So, the question must be what do the Chinese want from us?

A hint can be gleaned from a 2013 report on the Chinese Presidents visit to Trinidad and Tobago. According to the report:

"In June 2013, during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Trinidad and Tobago, the then Prime Minister of the Caribbean nation, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, in a fawning speech, had lauded President Xi's vision saying, "We see in your China Dream a splendid opportunity for China to become a model for the world.". Like a royalty holding court, President Xi thereafter hosted the leaders of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Suriname and Jamaica in Port of Spain, capital of Trinidad and Tobago. There he announced soft loans and investments worth US\$ 3 billion as well as grants of up to \$8 million for the region. President Xi's visit was an effective and a graphic demonstration of China's growing influence and outreach in the English-speaking Caribbean region, coming at a time when the United States (US) had been somewhat less forthcoming with financial grants for the region "Institute for Défense Studies and Analyses.

There is a view that the United States is gradually withdrawing from engagement with Caribbean countries as it focuses on other, more pressing priorities in other parts of the world.

The reality however is that the endemic and systemic corruption in many Caribbean countries, compounded by poorly designed or increasingly, partially completed projects financed by UN agencies has made the US wary of any large-scale investment initiatives in the Caribbean. In contrast, China appears not to have any such reservations and is currently pumping Billions of dollars into numerous Caribbean countries through its Belt and Roads Initiative.

So, whilst at first glance the US may appear to be complacent and ambivalent about the Chinese acquiring growing Caribbean influence through its check book diplomacy, nothing could be further from the truth. For the Bahamas at least, a good, mutually beneficial and solid relationship with the US is existential. Complain as we might, the US has always looked out for the interest of the Bahamas especially when our interests aligned with theirs. Our main economic activity tourism is underpinned by American tourists; US medical technology and expertise is readily available for our more difficult medical cases; many Bahamians receive their tertiary and professional education in the US while travelling on US Visas; Visas which coincidentally, many of the world's population risk their lives daily to obtain; just watch the world news sometime!

With this as a backdrop, lets address the premise of the article which is "Don't Twist the tail of the Eagle" or, why are we Bahamians so thin skinned and quick to take offence? Why are we so quick to slap away the hands which assists in providing us with one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean?

I know from experience that the annual barrage of US travel advisories and other international bodies can be disconcerting and troubling on many levels. The various threats from the OECD as an example, seem misplaced, unfair and arbitrary and we have had to cope with these for the past 20 years. However, if we expect to have a productive relationship with the country which provides over 75% of our tourism arrivals it would not hurt that relationship to be as civil, professional and cooperative as our laws allow us to be. Alas, we take personal offence to the travel advisories and at the official level we appear to regard these warnings as a nuisance! After all these years, we still fail to accept the truism that

"when America sneezes, the Bahamas catches pneumonia"!

Getting our arms around the crime issues which effect our tourism product [perceived or actual] is especially urgent as the Caribbean Journal has recently recommended the Abaco's and Nassau as one of the 19 must visit Caribbean islands in 2019.

But, the recent allegations of rampant and systemic Bahamas Immigration Department corruption contained in a US Federal indictment seems to have unsettled us more than usual. Brief, carefully worded reports on the accusations was printed in the dailies in early October. The real bombshell reporting was supplied by the St. Lucia News (with photos). A follow up analysis was done on 15 October 2018, by the Centre for Immigration Studies which laid bare and in excruciating detail the nature and scope of the alleged scheme but, did not include the names of any Bahamian official. Then, on 11 November 2018, Caribbean News, added another element to the report on alleged Immigration corruption this time in Freeport Grand Bahama.

Unless I missed it, there has been no substantial response to these accusations save for the usual old saw of "waiting" on more information, and, the sending of a non-ambassadorial team to Washington. I would suggest that this may turn out to be the incorrect approach. The Bahamas has been described as "an aircraft carrier orbiting along the east coast of the United States". Any perceived national security threat from this quarter will most likely receive the undivided attention of our neighbours to the north.

We should know by now that America treats the safety and security of its citizens and its territorial integrity as national security issues. Whilst the Bahamas takes are more leisurely approach to national security in the vain hope that the problem will disappear over time.

I say vain hope because some of the drug era activities in the Bahamas and, the continued influence of some of the alleged malefactors, still informs US foreign policy on the Bahamas. Even a rudimentary knowledge of US national security concerns then, should inform us that the alleged facilitation of the entry of unknown foreign, aliens into the US is a grave concern to our ally. It does not ease their concerns that the current Bahamas response appears to have been tepid at best.

The brutally cold reality of the matter is this. We desperately need the Americans; in contrast, they tolerate us and our various foibles because of our strategic proximity. There is nothing in this country the US could not acquire or shutdown overnight if they wished to. If our officials through negligence, official lethargy, incompetence or alleged systemic public corruption poses a security threat to the US, we are in for a world of hurt. None of the countries we like to cater to can help us; they are busily scheming to acquire that which we appear to be willing to throw away in a fit of pique! Indeed, many Caribbean nationals can't obtain US Travel Visas!

Imagine this, if Bahamians are prepared to come to blows over limited, precious bottled water during a hurricane, what would they do to acquire food for themselves or families? The Bahamas has little to no food security and we know where our food comes from. I know that there are some who would call my conclusions a bit hysterical and overblown; maybe they are correct; then again, maybe they are not.

In the current, highly politically charged atmosphere, we must not prejudge anyone or anything. However, Bahamians must be satisfied that their institutions and its employees warrant our trust and confidence. This is necessary for our national survival. If there is proof that there is corruption in our immigration or any other government department, then, it should be removed root and branch and we must have the courage to do the pruning in public.

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The Bahama
Journal
Quo Vadis, Bahamas?

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E D I T O R I A L

More Speed Needed!

With electricity costs already high and for sure, also set to rise, we can all expect lower rates of profitability for any number of now fledging businesses.

For the record [and also as vitally important Bahamas-related information pertinent to helping us understand the deep roots of our current plethora of challenges, with the IDB we note that: "Although the country is fairly prosperous, its high levels of human development and per capita GDP1- both among the highest of IDB borrowing member countries - mask important structural, economic and social challenges faced by a developing country, including significant income inequality, high unemployment, a weak skills base, an inefficient public sector, and inadequate infrastructure.

"Although the poverty rate is among the lowest in the region, it has been growing in the context of inadequate social safety nets..... with 45 per cent of the poor gainfully employed but not earning enough to sustain their families.

Making matters even worse the facts show that: "With a total population of 369,700 in 2015, the internal market of the Bahamas is small, its productive base is narrow and unable to benefit from economies of scale, and its regulatory environment is weak in important sectors.

No matter the metric chosen; the fact of the matter is that, moving forward, our path [as a people is strewn with obstacles; and for sure, some of these are amenable solution.

But as in all life's multiplicity of challenges to be faced, some problems must be dealt with here and now; thus the urgent need for they who would lead to understand that -as regards taxes and levies like the Value added ones are sometimes far too stringent.

In this regard, we need only bring in evidence a recent IDB report which concluded that: "The Bahamas remains somewhat disconnected from the rest of the world in respect to trade, even though its imports represent one-third of GDP..."

In a dread sense, then, there is now afoot some of what seems to be our ver-

sion of a fool's paradise; due in no small measure to the fact that [as the IDB suggests]: "...The Bahamas remains somewhat disconnected from the rest of the world in respect to trade, even though its imports represent one-third of GDP,"

And, thus the beat goes on and on!
"An uncertain future relates to the cost structure of the industry relative to competitors, skills deficiencies, and potential environmental problems," the IDB said of tourism, noting that the sector and related industries accounted for 60 per cent of GDP, employed half the labour force and produced nearly 30 per cent of government taxes.

Turning to specific weaknesses, the IDB not surprisingly identified energy as a "significant hurdle to private sector development [that] raises the cost of doing business".

"The state-owned Bahamas Power and Light Corporation (BPL), which controls the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity through its subsidiary, Bahamas Power and Light (BPL), has no regulatory incentives to operate on a profitable basis, and its supply is unreliable and insufficient.

In a related sphere, we find that "A key constraint on economic development and growth is the weakness of skills. Even though the Bahamas qualifies as a high-human-development country, gains in education have not produced an adequately skilled workforce as evidenced by low graduation rates and poor test performance.

"The resulting shortage of skills has led to very low productivity, which affects the public and private sectors alike.

In other words, we are in very bad way!

In sum, then this situation which is now ours can and will only be remediated once sufficient numbers of us wake up and do even more to help resolve thing in a way that is conducive to making the Bahamas one of the greatest little nations in the world

And clearly, then as the late Sir Clement T. Maynard once advised, we have to put on more speed!

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The Bahama Journal
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The advertisement shows a copy of The Bahama Journal with headlines: "Four Bodies Claimed", "22ND MURDER VICTIM Identified", "Brush Fire Scorches Acres of Land", "Alleged Credit Fraudster Held Over In Court", "GO TANKLESS", "Debris Hinders Business For Ferry Operators". The background is a beach scene with the text "THE BAHAMAS Sun, Sand, Sea ... and the The Bahama Journal NO BETTER READING".

BAIN & GRANTS TOWN ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

On The occasion of the 128TH Anniversary of the death of Alexander Bain 11, Co-Founder of Bain Town, Officers of the Bain Grants Town Advancement Association held the Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at his Tomb in the Bethlehem Cemetery, Meeting and Augusta Streets on Tuesday, January 8, 2019.

The following remarks were given by Rev. Dr. C. B. Moss, President:

Alexander Bain 11 along with his brother Charles Henry Bain established Bain Town and while by all accounts Charles Henry Bain was also buried in this Cemetery in 1854 his grave, unlike Alexander's, has lost its clear markings.

Alexander Bain 11 was born in Nassau on

March 6, 1812, to Alexander Bain senior a Scottish Loyalist who came to Nassau about 1790, and Heddy Plummer a free black woman. Alex 11 became a prominent businessman, principally through shipping. He was married to Adelle Crockett, a Black French Woman who also lived in Bain Town.

In the early 1840's Alex and Charles Bain purchased a 160 Acre Tract of Land adjacent to Grants Town, known as the Weatherspoon Estate from Susanna Weatherspoon and named it Bain Town. The property was divided into lots which were sold to black people. The area was settled principally by members of the Yoruba and Congo tribes from West Africa.

It is said that Alexander Bain 11 became one of the wealthiest men, black or white in the Colony. There is a report that following the 1866 hurricane that devastated Nassau, the government was in a financial crisis and that Alexander bailed them out by purchasing huge amounts of government bonds. When he died in 1891, he owned most of the Government Bonds.

Alexander Bain never strayed far from his roots and spent his life in and around Bain Town. He has contributed much to the development of Bain Town and the Bahamas and we now lay this wreath to honour his memory and to commemorate his contributions. May his soul rest in peace.



► Headstone inscription reads:- Sacred to the memory of Alexander Bain for many years a merchant of this city who departed this life January 8, 1891. Aged 79 years Sleep on now. Take your rest. PHOTO SHOW: REV. MOSS & OTHERS PLACING THE WREATH (Journal file photo)

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New Oban Deal Soon

Continued from / PAGE 1...

new head of agreement.”

Some specific changes Mr. Foulkes said that the government will be looking at while in negotiations include the economic provision, environmental provision and the legal provision.

“I do not want to get into the details until we have had an opportunity to present our terms to Oban so that they can have an opportunity to respond,” he said.

To environmental concerns regarding this Oban deal, Mr. Foulkes said, “we realized that the whole future for the generation of energy is agreed based on a template. We’re aware of this, but we know this is going to take time to move from a fuel based

supply of energy to a green based renewable energy.

“We’re looking at 10 or maybe 15 years before that is completed. In the meantime, we have to supply energy to our consumers,” Mr. Foulkes said.

Meantime, Opposition Leader Phillip Brave Davis is calling the government’s decision to renegotiate the Oban deal a grave mistake and a bad idea.

“There are too many unanswered questions, fraud and scandal surrounding this deal with very little economic benefit for Grand Bahama.

“What is most concerning is that this company made a contribution to a Junknaoo group in Grand Bahama in a questionable attempt to sway public

opinion about their real objective,” he said.

Mr. Davis called the Oban deal an illegal and illegitimate one, as the contract, he said, remains a mystery.

Heading of the negotiation committee on behalf of the government is Consultant Counsel in the Office of the Attorney General Lauren Klein. The head negotiator for Oban is Alexander Grikitis.

The original Heads of Agreement was signed back in February 2018.

Shortly after, it broke headlines that the signature on the document was forged.

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis told parliament that there were some serious missteps in the deal, with government still trying to clinch that deal.

DEPT. OF ENVIRO. HEALTH ANNOUNCES TWICE WEEKLY GARBAGE COLLECTIONS



Garbage collection on New Providence will be increased from once to twice weekly starting next month, the Department of Environmental Health Services (DEHS) announced today.

The increase in collections is expected to significantly reduce the collections backlog normally experienced over the holiday season, said DEHS Director Melony McKenzie.

“It is not unusual to see a larger than usual accumulation of garbage because

of the extra festivities over the holidays. We anticipate that the new system will result in a much smoother collections operation and adequately address the extra build-up of garbage that is normally seen every year around the Christmas holidays,” said Ms. McKenzie.

“As of around 2 o’clock Monday afternoon, the vast majority of the 61 collection routes on New Providence had been completed and we expect that very shortly, the entire island will be done.”

Over the weekend, eight of the contracted garbage collection companies worked overtime to remove excess garbage. Routine collections will begin tomorrow (Tuesday), said Ms. McKenzie.

Once the new twice-weekly system is implemented more collection companies will be added to the roster, she said.

Ms. McKenzie reminded residents that the DEHS does not collect garbage from commercial businesses or apartment buildings with four or more units.

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GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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ROAD TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

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NASSAU, N.P. BAHAMAS

The Road Traffic Department would like to remind all Franchise Holders – Taxi, Tour, Public Schedule, Private Schedule, Private Charter, Livery, Self-Drive Cars and Scooters that we are now accepting registration documents for the Bi-annual inspection period of October 2018 to May 2019.

The Following documents are required:

1. Passport/Voters Card and N.I.B Card (for holders not registered in the new system)
2. Up to date Franchise Receipt
3. Up to date Business License
4. Inspection Slip/Copies of expired Inspection Discs
5. Completed Inspection Forms for Companies with five (5) or more Vehicles that require On-site Inspection (forms Can be picked up at the Road traffic Department Franchise Unit).
6. Up to date Insurance Certificates
7. Vehicle Color and right/left hand drive (for new vehicles)

All Franchise Holders with a fleet of five (5) or more vehicles are invited to submit their packages to the Road Traffic Department, Franchise Unit Section 3 Eastern Grandstand of the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium. All Packages will be processed on a first come first serve basis.

Please note that the Department will only receive payments in the form of:

- a. Certified cheques payable to the Public Treasury (No personal or company cheques)
- b. Visa, Master, Debit, Credit Cards
- c. Cash

[Signature]
Controller

Road Traffic Department