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MONDAY - FEBRUARY 5TH, 2019

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CB Governor: Local Economy Strengthening

BY LEAH COOPER
 Journal Staff Writer

Central Bank Governor John Rolle says that the economy's strengthening enabled higher employment, but unfortunately; not impressive enough to reduce the unemployment rate.

He said, "this is an important indicator concerning the health of the lending environment and prospects around the speed of non-performing loans reduction."

He added,

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Central Bank Governor John Rolle (File photo)

Haitian Community in Grief

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

The local Haitian community in Abaco have rallied together in deep grief for memorial services in the

wake of scores of their fellow citizens who perished in a fatal shipwreck off Fowl Cay.

Officials in the Bahamas have put the count of the Haitian

nationals who died in a tragic boating accident on Saturday in Abaco to 27, with survivors standing at

See page 3...

"Gov't Abused Power," Says PLP Senator

Progressive Liberal Party Senator JoBeth Coleby-Davis says, "the strength of our judicial system has prevailed against the outright executive overreach and abuse of power by this Minnis led administration. We have every reason to be deeply concerned by the attempt of this government to circumvent our democratic systems by meddling with government agencies, witness coaching, and

aiding and abetting of innocent individuals to participate in this political witch hunt against the Progressive Liberal Party former senior Government members."

Her comments come on the heels of the acquittal of former Chairman of The Public Hospitals Authority, Frank Smith by Magistrate Joyann Ferguson-Pratt on bribery

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Police Investigate Another Shooting

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Police in the New Providence are again appealing to the public as they investigate a shooting that took place on Sunday night.

Police say they are looking for the assailants who left an adult male with gunshot wounds about the body.

According to reports, shortly after 7:00pm, a man was standing at a car wash on Balfour Avenue,

when a gray car pulled up.

The occupants of the car opened fire in his direction, hitting him about the body before speeding away.

He was subsequently transported to hospital where he is listed in seri-

ous condition. No one else was injured during this incident.

Investigations are ongoing.

On Sunday police also recovered another illegal

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Dames: Crime still trending down

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

A look at the numbers show there was a reduction in homicides last month compared to what was recorded on the books this same time last year.

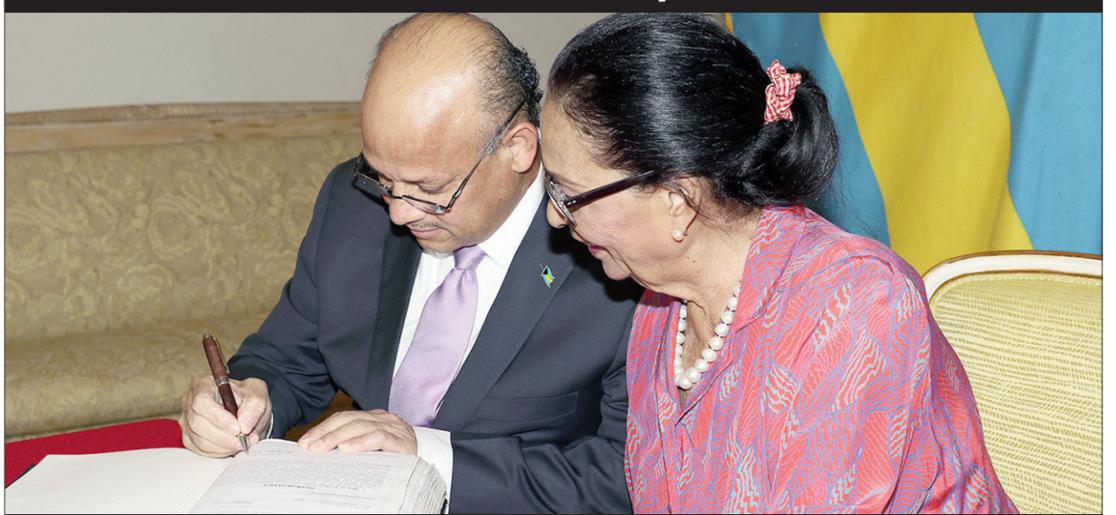
According to National Security Minister Marvin Dames January 2018 saw some 12 killings while this year there was only three.



National Security Minister Marvin Dames (File photo)

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MICHAEL FOULKES, SWORN IN



Mr. Michael Foulkes was sworn in as Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development by Governor General, Her Excellency the Most Hon. Dame Marguerite Pindling at Government House, February 4, 2019. (BIS Photo/Letisha Henderson)




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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

PLP Senator Points To Safety issues and health hazards at C.W. Sawyer Primary School

Progressive Liberal Party Senator Michael Darville says information has come to his attention concerning a number of lingering safety issues and health hazards at the C. W. Sawyer Primary School that make for an unfit learning environment and workplace.

He said staff members have complained that parts of the school build-

ing are not structurally sound and secure. Specifically, the stairs are moving away from the building. There are also reports of a suspected sink hole near or under the building housing grade four students.

Doctor Darville who is the Opposition's spokesman on Education says, "Additionally, teachers have reported visible

evidence of mold infestation and teachers in the lower school have suffered respiratory ailments and have taken sick leave.

"These concerns in addition to others have already been documented and reported in writing to both the school principal and district superintendent, but to date no corrective action has been taken. So unbearable and

protracted are these conditions that teachers in these affected classroom areas are threatening a demonstration and sit out."

The Senator is calling on the Minister of Education to move with alacrity in addressing these longstanding issues that are putting the health and safety of our public school teachers and students at risk.



▶ PLP Senator, Michael Darville (File photo)

CB Governor: Local Economy Strengthening

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"International fuel prices rose through most of 2018, but closed lower to December. Whether this also moderated the year-long trend in the fuel surcharge is not yet known as the electricity price data is not yet available."

Mr. Rolle was giving his first quarterly economic briefing yesterday.

However, the governor said preliminary exchange control data revealed that the hike in prices did not contribute to any increase in the total oil bill for 2018.

He added that both the fuel surcharge and the recent increase in Value Added Tax last year

caused an elevated consumer price inflation through September compared with the same period in 2017.

Mr. Rolle said, "in public finances, the reduction in the fiscal deficit was evident during the first half of the fiscal year. However, the relative switch to domestic financing through the banking system and at least one public entity's swapping of foreign currency to local currency has caused a larger seasonal decline in bank liquidity than normal during the final month of the year.

"External reserves followed the same pattern ending both December and 2018 lower near \$1.2

billion.", he added.

He said the Central Bank, however, anticipated the outcome, as the public sector largely drew down on liquidity created in 2017 through the external borrowing which occurred.

He added, "the country's Reserves, however, remains at healthy levels and continues to experience a net positive contribution from the private sector in 2018.

"Beyond the expansion and credit to the public sector, commercial bank lending to the private sector contracted again in 2018, even though at a moderated pace. This was across mortgages, consumer lending, and commercial loans.", he said.



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD (USCG) ACADEMY 4 YEAR MILITARY DEGREE PROGRAM

The Bahamian Government in collaboration with the United States Embassy (Nassau) invites all qualified persons who are interested in applying for a four-year degree scholarship at the United States Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut, United States, to submit their applications to the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Headquarters, Coral Harbour Base by 31st January, 2019.

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be a Bahamian citizen
- Be between the ages of 17-22 years old
- Be unmarried and with no dependents
- Be willing to serve in the Royal Bahamas Defence Force for a minimum of five years on completion.
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- Management

Deadline for submission of application is 31st January, 2019.

Deadline for registration for SAT examination is 8th February, 2019 for the 9th March, 2019 test date (results from March test are only accepted if results from previous test are received by 1st March, 2019).

Students may register at:

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register/international>

The USCGA code number for the SAT exam is 5807.

Deadline for ACT registration is 11th January, 2019 for 8th February, 2019 test date.

Students can register at <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act-non-us.html>

The USCGA code number for the ACT exam is 0600.

Applicants can make application to sit the SAT/ACT at local SAT Centers in New Providence as follows: Aquinas College, St. Andrew's School, St. Anne's School, The University of The Bahamas, Government High School and Queen's College.

For further information, please contact the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Human Resource Officer, Lieutenant Commander Michael Hanna at telephone 362-3705 or 362-3711 or via email at michaelhanna@rbdf.gov.bs or visit the website www.rbdf.gov.bs

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Haitian Comm. in Grief

Continued from / PAGE 1...

18. In what is labelled one of the worst boating accidents, is a tragedy reminiscent of a similar chain of event in November 2013 when a number of Haitian nationals were killed and more than 100 rescued after their dangerously crowded wooden sloop capsized near Staniel Cay in the Exuma chains.

The migrants that time were on their way to the United States.

In this case, details are sketchy, and officials cannot say where the 40ft conventional sailing yacht, was headed, when it ran aground early Saturday morning outside the entrance of Marsh Harbour channel.

Yesterday, this Journal reached out to the Haitian Embassy, here in the capital, but was told officials were locked down in a serious meeting in the wake of this weekend's horror at sea.

An update into the inci-

dent by the Royal Bahamas Defence Force says the vessel that was carrying an unknown number of Haitian migrants, was just six nautical miles off Abaco.

Although dive operators continued their search efforts yesterday, there were no new developments following Saturday and Sunday's search.

Commenting on the incident, Minister of National Security, Marvin Dames called it an unfortunate and tragic one.

"Our agencies have been working over the entire weekend.

"I want to take this opportunity as well to express our gratitude and appreciation to residents of the community of Abaco, who stepped up and worked side by side with our law enforcement officers from the Defence Force, the Police Force and Immigration.

"This is what collective responsibility is all about. It is very sad, very unfortunate," Mr. Dames said.

The minister further

assured that as investigations continue, officials will work hand in hand with the Haitian Embassy.

"This is not the first time.

"We've had incidents over the years very much the same. So, we just have to make sure that as we carry out our investigations to ensure to that those persons who would have been recovered, that we go through the proper process and we are currently doing that now.

"We are working with the Embassy of Haiti, we are working through the Coroner as well as the respective law enforcement agencies to ensure that we do what is necessary to put this unfortunate incident behind us," Mr. Dames said.

The 18 rescued persons and 27 bodies were subsequently transported to the clinic in Marsh Harbour for evaluation, and handed over to Immigration and police officials for further investigation.



West Bay Street Road Rehabilitation Project Important Notice Traffic Diversion

West Bay Street between Blake Road and Tropical Gardens Road will be closed to traffic on Thursday, January 24th 2019 between the hours of 9:30am and 8:00pm. The motoring public is asked to adhere to all posted diversion routes. Provisions will be made to accommodate all necessary local traffic during the duration of the work.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused to the public during this period. For further information or assistance please contact any of the following:

Bill Simmons Construction & Heavy Equipment Co. Ltd -
Tel. 323-7920

Ministry of Public Works - Tel. 322-4830/1 or
Email - publicworks@bahamas.gov.bs

Water & Sewerage Corporation -
Tel. 302-5599 or Visit our Website - www.wsc.com.bs

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Bahamas Signs MOU With Canada

The government has made another step in its efforts to transform the Bahamas Department of Corrections (BDC) from a penal institution to a correctional organisation as the Ministry of National Security signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Correctional Services Canada (CSC).

The Correctional Services Act 2014, according to National Security Minister Marvin Dames was a milestone as it turned the BDC into a leader of treatment programmes.

Minister Dames said the partnership between the BDC and Correctional Services Canada is one way that transition will be realized.

He said, "already, collaborative exchanges between CSC and the BDC have resulted in the development of an automate system to ensure that our application of resources in the treatment of inmates are effective and efficient and the extensive training of case management staff for assessments of new



► Minister of National Security the Hon. Marvin Dames signs a Charter of Commitment between his Ministry and Correctional Services Canada (CSC), on February 4, 2019, at the Paul Farguharson Conference Centre, Police Headquarters. Correctional Services Canada Commissioner Anne Kelly signed on behalf of CSC. Also present for the event were Acting Permanent Secretary Eugene Poitier, Acting Commissioner of The Bahamas Department of Correctional Services (BDOCS) Charles Murphy and his Executive Team; and BDOCS Consultant and Retired Deputy Commissioner of Correctional Services Canada Mike Ryan.
(BIS Photo/Eric Rose)

inmates."

The National Security Minister added that under this new partnership, a parole system will be established. Training for parole officers began in fall of 2018.

"The Inter- American

Development Bank through its Citizens Security and Justice Programme (CSJP) conducted a training seminar for representatives of all branches of law enforcement stakeholders.

"During the seminar,

the parole legislation as expressed in 2016 Conditional Release of Offenders Bill was analysed and recommendations for adjustments were made.

"CSJP is currently funding research on

parole and recidivism through the University of The Bahamas," he said.

Canada Correctional Services Commissioner Anne Kelly noted that the CSC has hosted a number of BDC staff in an effort to ensure that

correctional services Risk-Responsivity Model could be adopted to the realities experienced in The Bahamas.

Commissioner Kelly outlined what the next steps in this partnership will entail which she said will include training to address issues relating to sex offenders.

"Specific training for a small group of staff to address the criminogenic factors of sex offenders.

"Specific training and program delivery for women offenders, and training to develop the BDC's staff who will train other staff to be case management officers and program officers.

"This will ensure that the BDC will become self-sufficient. Co-development of an automated case management system that will support all of the activities noted previously," she said.

Minister Dames said significant strides are being made to refine the corrections model being used to drive the corrections process in the BDC.

Police Investigate Another Shooting

Continued from / PAGE 1...

firearm from the streets of New Providence, shortly after 8:00pm.

Police say Western Division Officers, acting on information conducted a search of a bushy area in

Sandy Port, West Bay Street and recovered a .40 Austria Pistol. No arrest was made in this incident.

In Grand Bahama, Drug Enforcement Unit Officers took a 30 year old into custody on Sunday after he was found in pos-

session of an illegal firearm.

Police say that shortly after 1:00pm, DEU officers while armed with a search warrant, went to a residence on Waterfall Drive, where they discovered a .380 pistol with five

rounds of ammunition.

Subsequently, the male was arrested and will be formally charged before a Magistrate Court this week.

In a separate incident, Grand Bahama police also recovered a quantity of

dangerous drugs in bushes near East Atlantic Drive.

Reports are that on Saturday, shortly before 2:00pm and acting on information, Drug Enforcement Unit officers went to an area on

East Atlantic Drive opposite Garden Villas, where they discovered in bushes four pounds of suspected marijuana with a street value of \$4,000.00.

No arrests was made in this incident and investigations continue.

Dames: Crime still trending down

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"Our law enforcement officers are very in tuned with what is happening; we're not going to stop every murder, that's reality.

However, we are well on tract to ensure that we continue to pull those numbers down, that we continue to make our streets and our community safe so that our people can move about without any fair or concern of becoming a victim to a crime," he said.

When asked if he anticipates a continued down-

ward trend, the National Security Minister responded with this.

He said, "it's not a matter of anticipating; it's just doing what we are mandated to do. Looking at our strategies, looking at our policies, all of those things that we would have promised the Bahamian people that we would deliver on, we are well ahead of schedule with respect to man of those."

However, National Security Minister Marvin Dames again stressed the need for everyone to join in the fight against crime.

"When you look at the

profile of persons who are engaging in these activities, they are kids. It's always what the police is going to do, but whose child is that? What are they doing?"

"So, we have to come to that place where we understand that it is all our responsibility if we're going to keep our country safe," he said.

Just this past weekend there were three homicides in Nassau, still the National Security Minister maintains that law enforcement agencies are doing a better job with the fight against crime.

"Gov't Abused Power," Says PLP Senator

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and extortion charges.

The Senator said, "the misapprehension of Frank Smith built on innumerable administrative irregularities, the collusion of senior cabinet officials, and the authoritarian nature of the Prime Minister at the public expense for the public shaming of PLPs in handcuffs, falsifying charges, and false imprisonment is inconceivable.

"I have had no confidence in this administration's ability to inquire into the malfeasance; the abuse of public office and the public trust. They are all complicit in conspiring to pervert the course of justice by distorting law and administrative practices through the staging of trials. This government and its collaborators will be guilty of using its influence for narrow political interest," she said.

Mrs. Coleby-Davis said, "the office of the Attorney General has failed in its duty to protect the rule of law and safeguarding our institu-

tions from public abuse perpetrated by this government. The political targetting of the former members of the PLPs administration is unjustified. It is unfortunate, both financially and personally. Cutting corners to get a conviction and being hellbent on bringing punishment for political purposes in the eyes of Free National Movement supporters is a very treacherous and divisive direction to carry our country.

"I remind the Attorney General that he vowed to preserve our democratic institutions, especially from government officials who disrespect and dismiss our legal procedures. It would be nakedly complicit if the Attorney General participated in politically motivated criminal investigations built on partisan gamesmanship or retaliation rather than on the due process of the law in the public interest. Any efforts by senior government officials to interfere with the investigation process would be contrary to the rule of law. It

must be strongly opposed by the Bahamian people."

She said, "The Progressive Liberal Party will remain vigilant of the politicization of prosecution and crossings of politics and law enforcement. The Attorney General has been entrusted to carry out the functions of his duties faithfully, despite his political associations and today he himself has fallen short.

"Leaders are called to a higher standard. Leaders are to lead with integrity! However, when there is an abuse of power or evidence of political interference, those responsible should do the honorable thing and resign. The wrongful castigating of a Bahamian by the evident misuse of public office by senior officials necessitates the need for resignations.

"Therefore, I join the Leader of the Progressive Liberal Party in calling for the resignations of two sitting Cabinet Ministers, Duane Sands and Marvin Dames," she said.

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