P

time Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis announced last evening the government’s plans to employ 130 new police recruits this year in an effort to combat crime. The Prime Minister indicated that 100 are slated to be stationed in New Providence and the remaining 30 will be sta-

Six persons were arraigned on murder charges before Deputy Chief Magistrate Debbey

Ferguson in Grand Bahama yesterday. Twenty-three-year-old Natoma Deano Taylor, Kivan Wilkinson, and Kyle Jamaal Forbes, both age 20, and a 17-year-old juvenile, all of Pioneers Loop, Grand Bahama, appeared in court. They were not...
In his national address to the Bahamians last night, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis said his government “is continuing our school modernization program, with expanded and new school facilities that will improve the learning environment as facilities are built, renovated and upgraded.”

He said education is at the very core of our economic and social development.

“We cannot, and we will not advance as a country, if we fail to make great strides in education and training, at every level. Since majority rule, we have made tremendous progress in universal access to education. Today’s challenge is to build on our success and to make far-reaching progress to improve and transform Bahamian education for the 21st Century. Education, is vital for our development, and productivity as a nation,” the Prime Minister said.

“Our great ambition and mission as a country must be to harness these talents and human capital, economic energy, to make our Bahamians proud, to build successful small countries in the world.”

“We must reform, transform, and improve every stage of learning: primary school, primary school, junior and senior high school, as well as BTU, the University of the Bahamas, and other education and training agencies.”

“We have to think big, and set boldly to secure our future! Beginning this September qualifying students will be able to attend the University of the Bahamas. We will make more announcements on this at a later date.

“We are committed to expanding access to technical and vocational skill training for many more Bahamians.”

“In August 2018, we allocated $25,000 scholarships for Bahamian students at BTU. The President awarded, $1,000 scholar- ship, to students enrolled in full-time programs, inclusive of preparatory programs, certificate programs, diploma programs, and associate degree programs.

“The scholarship, which is known as The Bahamas Be Your Own Boss (BBYB) scholarship, is geared toward providing students mainly between the ages of 13 and 18 years old with the requisite technical and vocational training, in order to secure employment in the business sector.

“The Prime Minister said, “approximately eighty percent of the scholarships, were awarded to students 18-25 years old, who met the criteria. Special consideration was given to Family Island students, who reside in areas, where full-time programs are not available. The remaining scholarships, will be awarded to individuals over the age of 25 years old, on a case-by-case basis.”

“The Government’s Bahamas Early Start or BES Project is designed to enhance the early child- hood sector by strengthening, the equitable delivery of comprehensive, and quality childhood develop- ment for all children from the earliest stages of development.

“This project will impact both public and private schools through the revision of the national early childhood curriculum, the training of teachers, and the teacher’s aide’s, on effective strategies of the more childhood education; and through parent informa- tion and education,” said Dr. Minnis.

“In August 2018, the Ministry of Education launched the Pre-Primary Education Initiative to key education stakeholders. The initiative will increase access to pre-primary education for three and four year olds throughout the country.

“At the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year these new preschool classrooms were opened to every Providence, with an additional four new state-of-the-art preschool classrooms just completed.

“In late 2017 more than 700 additional students were enrolled in both public and private preschools through the Universal Pre-Primary Education initiative. Of these just under 400 vouchers have been paid to the Ministry of Education-approved private preschool providers through the Private Preschool Partnership Program.

“These and four year olds whose parents could not afford to send them to preschool now have access to pre-primary edu- cation, to prepare them for first grade.

“We have launched a Lord Lyndsay PreSchool Literacy effort,” said Dr. Minnis.

“The goal, is to implement strategies to increase the percentage of students achieving A-D in Language Arts in the Grade Level Assessment Test, known as GLAT. After our administration came to office the Ministry of Education, launched a pilot pro- gramme to introduce tablets to preschoolers in public preschools.

“Three preschools including on New Providence, Grand Bahama, Long Island, Andros, Cat Island, and Abaco, participated in the pilot project.

“A laptop and LCD projector were given to each teacher, and an Assmu Fintilt Tablet, to each student. These devices are being used to support the teaching and learning process in preschools, by providing students, and teachers, with technology that may help to develop and to enhance 21st Century learning skills.

“Teachers and teacher’s aides, were trained in the use of the technology and the WhisperSoft Management system.

“Students use selected educational software on the devices for a maxi- mum of thirty minutes three days per week to support the current inter- active preschool program.

“This exercise provides them with the opportunity for hands on discovery, play, creative expres- sion, and outdoor physical activity.

“Infrastructure upgrades have taken place at most of the preschools, to accommodate the increased demand for W i-Fi and connectivity in the Preschools. The remaining schools will be upgraded by 2020, through the Smart School Initiative.

“We will launch a pilot program at the Anatol Rodgers High School for the use of tablets in high schools. The pilot will test the efficacy of digital literacy, on student achievement at the high school level, and examine student attitudes, toward using technology across the curriculum and subject disciplines.

“Digital media provides significant learning opportunities for students, to enhance their deep understanding of curricular content, and to adapt current and future trends to improve student learning as a digital world.

“As of December 2018, the Ministry of Education acquired 12,000 digital devices for distribution in our schools.

“Contracts have been signed with the country’s two major internet serv- ice providers to install high speed internet serv- ices, in all government-operated schools.

“This high speed serv- ices, will enhance telecon- ferencing and closed-circuit television.

“Teleconferencing, will help us to expand e- learning, and meetings base- d between district superin- tendents, principals, and others with the Ministry of Education.

“We also intend to boost distance education, which will enable schools throughout the country to engage on a video conference instruction that may not be available at their school. This may include instruction from other jurisdictions,” stated the Prime Minister.

“We are continuing our school modernization program, with expanded and new school facilities that will improve the learning environment as facilities are built, renovated and upgraded.”

“A new San Salvador High School was com- pleted in 2018. A.F. Adderley High, CH Reeves Jr. High, Eva Hilton Primary School, and North Eleuthera High School, have been expanded and renovated.

“We are reviewing, urgent structural repairs, to be addressed before the start of 2019/2020 school year,” said Dr. Minnis.
Commissioner of Police Anthony Ferguson said he does not think the investigation into the missing Oban file is taking too long.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister informed the administration of a plethora of significant sustainable development projects in areas such as Tourism, Education, Healthcare, Agriculture and Fisheries. Such developments, according to Dr. Minnis, include the government exploring the opportunity to establish a transshipment port in Mayaguana, as well as the development of Poultry Farm and Processing Plants in North Andros and Eleuthera with a distribution center on New Providence, an incentive that will be started through the Bahamas Striping Group of Companies. ‘Abaco Islands and Abaco Cays will receive significant new investments. These include the proposed Tycoon Family, $580 million investment in South Abaco for the development of a five star residential resort and the development of a five star eco resort by Star Resorts with 515 luxury residences,’ Dr. Minnis said.

Fouls has since told reporters that he felt Oban was receptive to the proposed amendments made by the government.

Oban officials and the government met at the table two days last week. Chairman of the Oban sub-committee Dion Forbes has since told reporters that he felt Oban was receptive to the proposed amendments made by the government.

The controversial Oban Heads of agreement was signed in February of last year for a $5.5 million oil refinery in Grand Bahama. Since then it was revealed that the former Oban Non Executive Chairman forged a signature on the document.

Following this midsip Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis in the house of Assembly admitted that government made some missteps with the deal.
GOV’T ENHANCES NATIONAL SECURITY

SIX ARRAIGNED FOR MURDER IN GRAND BAHAMA

Chief Magistrate Subsalsa Swan and charged with the murder of Alvardo Thompson, AKA "JoJo" on Sunday, March 17th, 2019.

Thompson’s body was found near the Fox Hill roundabout, and his alleged killers escaped on a Moped scooter through neighbouring streets. The two accused are also being held for the attempted murder of Antonio Moloney that same day.

Meanwhile, 21 year old Ishmael Forbes of St. Andrews Beach Gardens was also charged before Deputy Chief Magistrate Subsalsa Swan for the murder of Xiang Song and the armed robbery of Ziming Ruan. Ruan was allegedly robbed of $200.00. Bail was also denied and all were remanded at the Bahamas Department of Corrections until Tuesday, April 14th, 2019.

In other news, Tanisly Lottey Wynn, age 42 years and Deniko Neil Batch, age 36 years of Pioneers Loop, Grand Bahama, were both arraigned on charges of attempted murder. They were not required to enter a plea and the matter was adjourned to June 28th, 2019 for a Preliminary Inquiry.

Bail was denied, and they were all remanded to the Department of Corrections.

In other news, Tanisly Lottey Wynn age 42 years and Deniko Neil Batch, age 36 years of Pioneers Loop, Grand Bahama, were both arraigned on charges of attempted murder. They were not required to enter a plea and the matter was adjourned to June 28th, 2019 for a Preliminary Inquiry.

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