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# The Bahama Journal

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# "NO CONFIDENCE IN RBPF WITH DAMES"

The Progressive Liberal Party claims that it has no confidence in the Royal Bahamas Police Force under the direction of Minister of National Security Marvin Dames. A statement from the Party released yesterday said, "the PLP has taken note that the Prime Minister has referred the matter of the Auditor General's report on the National Sports Authority to the police."

"We want to make it abundantly clear that the PLP has no confidence that the Police Force under the direction of Marvin Dames can conduct an impartial, non-partisan and independent investigation. Any investigation in these circumstances will be tainted by

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## MINISTERS UPBEAT ON LANDFILL

BY LICEC BASTIAN  
 Journal Staff Writer

The proposed restructuring of the New Providence Landfill and the revelation from the group tasked with transforming it, that foreign workers will be brought in to manage its day to day process have been critical points for Bahamians. However, Minister with responsibility for the Landfill Romauld Ferriera told reporters that he

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Minister of the Environment and Housing, the Hon. Romauld Ferriera

## New Post Office Delayed Until May

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
 Journal Staff Writer

The deadline for the relocation of the General Post Office has again been pushed back to the third week in May.

Minister responsible, Renward Wells said at this point, construction at the new Town Centre Mall location is 99 per cent complete.

"The executive offices are done, the Post Office boxes are done, the warehouse is completed, the air condition units are in, the electricals are installed, the cafeteria is up and running, and the Post Office Bank has been up and running.



Minister the Hon. Renward Wells

"Our issue is we are now having to install the low voltage design which has to do with really the CCTV cameras and the

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## INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) ARTICLE IV MISSION MET WITH PLP LEADERSHIP



The Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Philip Davis, and members of his parliament team met with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV Mission at the Office of the Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday, 9th April 2019. Seated from left are Fabian Bornhorst, IMF Mission Chief for The Bahamas; Mr. Philip Davis MP; and I. Chester Cooper MP, Deputy Leader of the PLP. Standing from left are Senator Fred Mitchell; Barbara Cartwright, Secretary General of the PLP; Rina Bhattacharya, IMF Senior Economist; and Serhan Cevik, IMF Senior Economist.

## Nat'l Child Protection Council Launches NETSMARTZ

BY LICEC BASTIAN  
 Journal Staff Writer

The National Child Protection Council in conjunction with the Ministry of Social

Services launched its educational programme NETSMARTZ yesterday which aims to teach children how to navigate the internet safely while also providing safety tips.

It's all a part of Child Protection Month. Noted child psychiatrist, Dr. Novia Carter-Lookie, and her team launched the programme at the St. Francis-Joseph Catholic

school during an interactive session with upper elementary students. Dr. Carter-lookie expressed to the students

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## No Movement with Grand Lucayan VSEPs

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
 Journal Staff Writer

Tourism Minister Dionisio D'Aguilar is inviting the Bahamas Hotel Managerial Union to call him after having no luck reaching its executives for the past seven to eight days.

This all stemmed from ongoing negotiations between managers of the Grand Lucayan Resort and the government over voluntary separation packages.

Minister D'Aguilar called the entire situation

alarming, considering the recent productive meeting. Since then, he said, things have gone quiet.

"I keep calling their phones and they don't respond to me. I don't know what's going on, so it's very interesting, I can tell all the people in Grand Bahamas, the managers that there representatives are not speaking to me as the Minister and I had a very cordial meeting with them.

"When we left that meeting, they were to get

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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

# NO CONFIDENCE IN

Continued from / PAGE 1...

political bias and therefore will not be worth the paper it's written on. The PLP once again called for Mr. Dames to resign or be dismissed.

Former Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Doctor Daniel Johnson says that the Auditor General of The Bahamas dropped the ball in auditing the affairs of the National Sports Authority.

A report released recently showed a number of discrepancies in the

accounting of the affairs of the Authority.

Mr. Johnson, appearing on the Radio Love 97 Programme "On Point" on Monday, said that there is no impropriety on his part in anything he has done in public life.

On accusations that expenditures to support stadium readiness upgrades lacked transparency, strategic management was inadequate, and contacts lacked formalized process and transparency; Mr. Johnson said that is

something always for the audit department of the government to be involved in on an ongoing basis.

"That's every year. That's not ten years later. Every year they're to look at the operations you're doing and improve operational efficiency. That's not a ministerial portfolio job," he said.

The former Member of Parliament for Carmichael added, "if they [the auditor general] noticed that from 2011, they should have insinuated in that process."

process.

However, Mr. Johnson also noted that his comments implied anything untoward the auditor general.

The report also noted that the procurements process lacked levels of delegation authority and, as a result, under the contract may not have been properly monitored to ensure that deliverables were fulfilled before payments were given.

Mr. Johnson responded by saying this can be the case in any procurement

process.

He said, "we put on a number a mega events. When those things are coming and we have international standards to reach.

"At one point, we had Iran and Israel sitting about 15 feet apart from each other in our stands. Well, we had to get some security measures in place to meet their standard," he added.

The report also noted that a contract was signed on February 16th 2014 for fencing the National

Stadium.

A company was selected based on their lowest bid of \$275,000. It further explains that the attached invoice totaled \$308,000 or \$33,500 more.

That stands at 12.3 percent over the approved contract.

Additionally, none of the invoices were authorized by an agent of the company. On that point, Mr. Johnson said that those types of things do not come before a Minister.

# MINISTERS UPBEAT

Continued from / PAGE 1...

respects the company's business plan and model and sees nothing wrong with the transfer of information and the transfer of skills and knowledge.

"In terms of Mr. Dean's work plan, it's his work plan [and] it's not just him it's a whole group, it's Waste Resources Development Limited and Providence Advisers. Of course, you know the govern-

ment has brought about a transformative change at the New Providence Sanitary Landfill.

"We've executed, probably the first of its kind in the country; certainly maybe even in the region, a public private partnership where this entity takes over the day to day management of the New Providence Sanitary Landfill. So, obviously there are things that are within their discretion that are within their business

model, within their business plan that they have to execute.

"There is actually nothing wrong with the transfer of information and the transfer of skills and knowledge I find that as a good thing," Mr. Ferriera said.

The Environment Minister insisted that "the most important thing" is to ensure that there is "effective management" of the landfill "one that results in minimal amount of intermit-

tent fires.

"I think that that is the real rut, the [real] crux of the matter, because you had persons whose lives were disrupted for weeks, schools, businesses, residents and I mean that's the real issue.

"How effectively will this be run, will we have fires, will we have recycling on land, will we have streaming of waste? and all of these things are a part of the business model that they

intend to bring on stream," Mr. Ferriera said.

As for Waste Resource Development Group's future work force, Mr. Ferriera said there will be hiring of Bahamians.

"In terms of hiring Bahamians for the job, of course Mr. Dean is a Bahamian and so is Mr. Kerr and so, they will be very concerned about bringing Bahamians in.

"I respect that, I

respect their business plan and I am very confident that they will do as they project and at the right time Bahamians will be brought on stream to take over the full management.

Just recently, United Sanitation President Henry Dean said if all goes as planned, the recycling programme will be introduced at the New Providence Landfill within six to 12 months.

# No Movement with Grand Lucayan VSEPs

Continued from / PAGE 1...

some information back to me and I called them on the phone even today and no response from anyone."

He added, "I don't know what's going on. I don't know what strategy they're pulling, but I'm an open and transparent guy, ready to talk and I want the people in Freeport to know that I am doing my endeavour best to get the matter settled and their representatives for whatever reason

haven't gotten back to me and don't know why."

A few weeks back members of the union took the matter to court as they were still not pleased with payouts for the managers.

This came after the line staff at the hotel had already reached an agreement on their settlement.

Bahamas Hotel Managerial Union President Obie Ferguson said that was the Hotel Corporation Chairman was attempting to give the workers were unrealistic

and unlawful.

Amidst the ongoing tension surrounding the VSEPs, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis in January asserted that the government intends to follow the law it relates to the VSEP packages.

Minister D'Aguilar stepped into the negotiating process after union members were reportedly at odds with Hotel Corporation Chairman, Michael Scott having made a "take it or leave it" offer to the workers.

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# Nat'l Child Protection Council Launches NETSMARTZ

Continued from / PAGE 1...

four key points they should be aware of, including cyber bullying and request for adults to meet them offline.

"Today we're focusing on NETSMARTZ, which is the National Child Protection Council's programme designed to instruct children on how to behave on the internet.

"As you all know many children are challenged on the internet in terms of how to behave on the internet. They're exposed to inappropriate language, pornography and also a lot of violent behaviour.

"The purpose of our programme is to inform children of what is inappropriate, how to behave on the internet and also what to be careful of. So, in the event that a child encounters let's say pornography, let's say they encounter violent behav-

our, our programme is designed for children to teach them to go to their parents and inform their parents and make sure their parents see what they've been exposed to and then how to react to it," Dr. Carter-Lookie said.

Other key points that Dr. Carter-Lookie said are extremely important are inappropriate content, and sharing personal information.

"One of the key things we talk to the children about is the releasing of personal information on the internet and strangely so a lot of the children say, 'I see my mummy and daddy doing it...' our whole purpose is to educate the children in the hope that they go home and talk about it with their parents," Dr. Carter-Lookie said.

Chairman of the council, Bishop Arnold Josey,

reiterated that the initiative is not Nassau centric.

"We want everybody to understand that we are out in the islands, in the communities, speaking to them about how we are going to take care of our children.

"This is National Child Protection Month and so all of our emphasis is going to be about making sure that everybody gets the message that we have a responsibility to take care of our children," Bishop Josey said.

The programme has already been launched in one school in Long Island.

It uses colouring books 'Say No Then Go' and 'Stop and Think', both written by Dr. Carter-Lookie and illustrated by Stevie Burrows, as tools to help children understand the importance of internet safety.

## Agriculture's 'Expo 2019' Announced

The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources held a press conference Tuesday, April 9, at the Ministry's offices to announce its Bahamas National Agri-Bahamas Expo for 2019 at the Gladstone Road Agricultural site Thursday, May 9, thru Saturday, May 11.

Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources the Hon. Michael Pintard said the shorter title, 'Expo 2019,' will be used; and this year's theme is "Embracing change, improving lives through agriculture." The theme is reflective of the mission in Agriculture, which is to use the natural resources of land and sea to empower the Bahamian people.

The intent of Expo 2019 is to expose the nation's farmers, artisans, craftsmen, processors, agri and marine business people to the consuming public, as well as provide opportunities to learn,



► Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Hon. Michael Pintard

important and valuable part of the global economy while at the same time, an essential pillar of national economies of

ourselves, reduce import bill on food, while increasing exports, the Minister noted: and to achieve these lofty goals



enhance and grow their approaches to their business.

Agriculture is an

countries like The Bahamas. Expo 2019 will represent a coming of age for the efforts to feed

we must be prepared to embrace change. (BIS Photos/Raymond A. Bethel, Sr.)

## New Post Office Delayed Until May

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data links.

"So, after those wires would have been pulled by the contractor, BTC has to come in with its telephones and hook up its telephones to the requisite desks and Cable Bahamas would have to come in and run its cable lines," he said.

The government will foot the \$70,000 bill for all new furniture along with a \$130,000 high voltage design.

The update comes a few weeks after the Opposition toured the new location, at the time noting that it seemed far from complete.

Minister Wells said since then, there's been a complete turnaround.

"What they saw, there were aspects of the Post Office that could not be completed because we

needed to have the boxes installed. When they were here, there the boxes were still in boxes. We installed those boxes in a matter of two and a half days over a weekend.

"So the boxes are completely installed. I saw someone who snuck into the Post Office and took a video of it, believing they were going to find something that is untoward and what was put out to the public, the comments that was put out in social media were very positive. Folks were surprised at what they saw," Minister Wells said.

As for employment, Minister Wells said the upcoming budgetary period will speak to that.

"We're going to requisitely staff the Post Office as is a number of departments and authorities that happen to come under the Ministry of Transport,

whether it's the Port Authority, whether it's the Road Traffic Department, whether it's the Met Office, or whether its Local Government.

"All of these agencies that happen to be under my remit in varying degrees are excessively understaffed and where we have some staff more than others, is areas where really we can do without, and so what we need are persons in the executive management and we need some line staff and we're going to fix that," said the Minister.

In 2012, revenue sourced from the Post Office was around \$5 or \$6 million dollars.

Today, that has dropped to about \$2 million. Minister Wells said they are looking to again increase that figure with a modernized Post Office.

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# PM Maintains UB Tuition Will Be Free

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Ingraham has assured that tuition at the University of the Bahamas will be free to qualifying students come this fall. The Prime Minister added that the commitment to assist UB's Family Island students still stands.

He made the comments on Monday

responding to concerns stemming from the pending increase in tuition and fees at The University.

Referring to Family Island students he said, "we understand the stress and strain that they and their family undergo in terms of looking for accommodations.

"So we made a commitment that we will help our brothers and sisters coming from the Family

Islands and we provide them will \$500 per month to assist them with their lodging; so the commitment that we have made we will adhere to," he said.

The government, said the Prime Minister, has also moved to provide free pre-school education for Bahamians.

"We know that with pre-school education, our citizens have greater opportunities to become

better leaders, managers and presidents.

"So we're providing free pre-school education for Bahamians; so we will be known as the government who will provide education from birth to departure," he said.

UB fee increases do not impact students currently enrolled and continuing students.

The University of the Bahamas recently announced to its students

that beginning fall 2019, all first time, first year students will pay an additional 15 per cent in tuition, with increased charges only on fees which have not been adjusted since the institution's inception in 1974.

For example, the fee for graduation evaluation forms are set to increase from \$100 to \$250.

A breakdown of the fee increase revealed that the total cost of these

fees combined is to increase from \$365 to \$925.

UB President Dr. Rodney Smith said the fee increase is because the University is continuously developing.

The Opposition has criticized the government on the fee hike, saying the Minnis administration is stepping back on their campaign promise of free tuition for students at UB.

## PROGRESS IN TALKS BETWEEN WSC BOARD AND UNIONS

BY LEAH COOPER  
Journal Staff Writer

Some progress was made on Monday in mediation talks between the two Unions and the management of the Water and Sewerage Corporation. Former President of the Bahamas Christian Council Reverend Ranford Patterson along with Labour Director John Pinder and his assistant director served as mediators.

The Bahamas Utilities Services and Allied Workers Union (BUSAWU) and the corporation's managerial union had an opportunity to voice their grievances in hopes of receiving some amicable resolution.

On the meeting with BUSAWU President Dwayne Woods, Mr. Pinder said, "that meeting had to do with the two suspensions. The corporation was supposed to conclude those matters and the two members that were suspended were supposed to have returned to work (Monday).

"Some added information is necessary now for

the corporation to really make a clear decision on that. The employee that was suspended for five days; the chairman and the board have agreed to reduce that suspension to three days," he added.

He also said, "it appears that the union is still not satisfied with that. They wanted to squash it, indicating that there was no policy as it relates to the property of the corporation versus the premises itself."

He added that there is a clause in their Industrial Agreement to implement such policies.

Both parties, however, accepted that this was probably being abused.

Just last week WSC Managerial Union President Ednell Rolle called for an investigation after it was suspected that WSC may have been recording employee phone conversations.

Mr. Pinder said, "in addition to those allegations, it was said that the corporation had people following their members after they got off from work to their homes.

"We had no substantial evidence to suggest any of that happened, but the corporation still

agreed to allow the Police department to conduct a sweep to determine if there were any hidden devices," he added.

Mr. Pinder also said that the corporation's IT manager has already contacted Police on the matter.

They are now awaiting a date from the police.

On the topic of pay cuts for those involved in last week's industrial action, the Labour Director said that the board remained unmoved.

He added that both parties will have to negotiate that point on their own, as that is beyond his jurisdiction.

There is also a clause in both union's industrial agreements speaking to employees being off for four consecutive days.

This, he said, this leads to automatic dismissal.

Mr. Pinder told reporters that he thinks both parties' working relationship needs improvement. Only if this occurs, he says, industrial harmony is possible.

## Minister Commends Police In Abductions Probe

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
Journal Staff Writer

National Security Minister Marvin Dames on Monday commended the Royal Bahamas Police Force for the arrest of those believed to be responsible for the abductions.

"This is a clear example of where we're trying to take the Royal Bahamas Police Force and all of our law enforcement agencies. We have the confidence in the men and women of those agencies to do their job and to do it well.

"Kudus goes out to members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force as well as all of those persons who would have

assisted somehow, including the community," he said.

The Minister's comments came one day after Police announced that they had two women in their custody who are alleged to be responsible for the abduction of four children.

Chief Superintendent Solomon Cash told reporters that one of the alleged abductors was arrested in New Providence, while the other was arrested in Eleuthera.

One of the women, a 29-year-old is alleged to be responsible for the abductions between February 16th and March 30th.

The other is said to be

an accomplice to one of the abductions.

Superintendent Cash added that the Department of Public Prosecution has been consulted on these matters.

He is hopeful that the police would be able to identify which charges will be laid against them and have them brought before the courts soon.

When asked about a possible motive behind the abductions, he said that he is not at liberty to disclose anything the suspect communicated to the police.

Police are awaiting the arrival from Eleuthera of that 35-year-old accomplice for further questioning.



## PILOT CONVICTED ON FAILURE TO DECLARE \$10,000.00

BY LISA KNOWLES  
Journal Staff Writer

Twenty-five year old Stephen Hanna of Hopkins Drive, Coral Harbour pleaded guilty before Deputy Chief Justice Subulsola Swain in Magistrate Court Monday on charges of failure to declare over \$10,000.00 to a Customs Officer.

It is alleged that between Thursday, January 31, 2019 and Friday, February 1, 2019, during the course of travel from Haiti to the Bahamas, knowingly, acquired \$10,019, which represents proceeds of

crime.

Further, that on Friday, February 1, 2019 at Exuma, with intent to evade the requirements of the law, failed to declare to a On Friday, February 1, 2019, went into Bimini, knowingly being in possession of the sum of \$10,019 which represented the proceeds of criminal conduct.

Then on Friday, February 1, 2019, at Bimini, he was charged with knowingly having possessed \$10,019, which represented the proceeds of criminal conduct.

When asked by Deputy Chief Justice Subulsola Swain where he had acquired the amount of

money, he said that the monies came from a Marshall in Haiti.

When further questioned on the reason why he did not complete the proper paper work and declare the funds to a Customs Officer, he said that he was not aware of the amount he had in his possession at the time and that he had not done paperwork that day.

He was fined \$500.00 on the first two counts or would face three months in prison. On the third count he was discharged.

The funds were confiscated.

He was represented by Attorney Jomo Campbell.

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4	Geralde Gabriel Joe Farrington Road Nassau Bahamas	1 Private Schedule Plates
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8	Daniel Moss Mark Ave, Buttonwood Nassau Bahamas	3 Private Schedule Plates
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