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VOL. 31 - NO. 71

WEDNESDAY - APRIL 24TH, 2019

75 CENTS

STALEMATE PERSISTS AT WSC

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

The stalemate between the Unions of the Water and Sewerage Corporation and the Executive Board continues with the Bahamas Utilities Services and Allied Workers Union (BUSAWU) President Dwayne Woods saying that he and his union followed the proper procedure when the Union's strike poll was conducted a week ago.

Mr. Woods was responding to claims by Water and Sewerage Corporation's Board

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Business Owners Warned Over NIB

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Delinquent business owners are forewarned that the government is cracking down on those who deduct National Insurance contributions from employees, but yet fail to actually pass that money along to NIB.

"It is perhaps bordering on criminal if I take your money from you to make a contribution to the social security net-

work and you get sick, then suddenly find out that your contributions were not paid, then that's an issue.

"What we say to every single employee though is there is a means by which you can go to NIB and go online to see whether your contributions are being paid," he said.

According to NIB Minister, Brensil Rolle, NIB is paying out more in benefits than it col-



lects in contributions, an issue he accepts the government must look into. After all, there could

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Hotel Union Issues Unresolved

BY LICEC BASTIAN
 Journal Staff Writer

Issues faced by hotel workers are still being negotiated, according to Bahamas Hotel Catering and Allied Workers Union (BHCAWU) President, Darren Woods.

Giving an update, Mr. Woods said that the Union and the Atlantis Resort are negotiating through the Department



▶ BHCAWU President, Darren Woods

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PLP Against New Immigration Bill

The Chairman of the Progressive Liberal Party, Senator Fred Mitchell says when the House of Assembly meets today the PLP will not support the Amendments proposed by the Government to

the Immigration Act. "We will vote against the Bill.

"The PLP opposed the Commercial Enterprises Act and this amendment now pro-

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Twenty Year Old Charged With Murder

BY LISA KNOWLES
 Journal Staff Writer

A 20-year-old resident of Rupert Dean Lane was arraigned yesterday on a charge of murder before Magistrate

Samuel McKinney in Court #1.

Donovan Brennan, was charged with the March 7th shooting of a 37-year-old father of

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CARIFTA TRACK AND FIELD TEAM ARRIVES HOME WITH SECOND PLACE WIN



▶ The Bahamas CARIFTA Track and Field Team returned home today from the Cayman Islands, where they competed in games during the Easter holiday weekend. They placed second overall (Jamaica was first) with 26 medals. The team is pictured in the LPIA Hall of Champions after disembarking their Bahamasair Charter. Standing with them, at centre, are Minister of Social Services and Urban Development the Hon. Frankie Campbell, and Ministry of Youth Sports and Culture Permanent Secretary Rhoda Jackson, who accompanied the athletes. Also pictured is Director of Sports (centre right) Timothy Munnings. (Photos/Kristaan Ingraham & MOYSC)




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SEARCH CONTINUES FOR MISSING BOATER

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

Search efforts continue for missing boater James Green, but there is no telling how long it will continue.

At last report, Green's vessel had been recovered. Green, a resident of Sandy Point Abaco, was last seen on Tuesday on a 17-ft open hull boat.

Since then, there have been extensive search efforts by a US Coast Guard helicopter and a Defence Force aircraft.

"We have gone as far north as the southern and eastern portions of Grand Bahama, to the west; we have also covered the eastern portion of the Berry's, of course the entire west and southern portions of mainland Abaco, including Great Sturup Cay, the areas near Castaway Cay which is believed to be where the events had occurred," says Commander Shone Pinder.

"We have pretty much searched that entire area and we continue to con-

duct our search today until such time as we are directed otherwise," Commander Pinder said.

According to the Defence Force Officer in Charge of Dive Operations, there's also been help from family members and volunteers.

"With all these combinations of assets involved and not forgetting of course, the most recent system that passed through the holidays which did impact the area.

"So what we wanted to

do was continue to have a search going on to ensure that there is full saturation and efforts were comprehensive, so that when the Commander of the Defense Force decides upon extension or any other changes to the operation, he will direct me, until then we continue our search," he said.

Anyone with information on Green's whereabouts is urged to call the Defence Force at 424-9414 or the Police at 328-8477.

PLP Against New Bill

Continued from / PAGE 1...

posed to the Immigration Act will support the work permit process under the Commercial Enterprises Act," said Mr. Mitchell.

He said, "the public will recall that we opposed the Commercial Enterprises Act, because it was a back door way to entertain and allow the free movement of people without the appropriate consultation with the

Bahamian people or with the professional sectors in our country.

"Against this background, we will oppose the Amendment to the Immigration Act in the House," said the Senator.

The government through the Law Review Commission headed by Dame Anita Allen has been consulting widely with various organizations and members of the public on the new Bill.

Hotel Union Issues Unresolved

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of Labour on the issue of the 12-point disciplinary system and a new house-keeping system the hotel tried to implement.

"We are still in discussions with them, as it relates to the IAP or the 12 points [system].

"They [Atlantis Resorts] have discontinued that. We're still in negotiations with them as it relates to the shift.

"We have some matters that we are dealing with through the channels [Department of Labour]. We are using the process of negotiations.

"When those negotiations breakdown, you will hear from us," Mr. Woods said.

In November of last year, the hotel workers were on a work to rule after the resort attempted to implement the new shift system.

In December, the resort requested more time to consider its decision.

Mr. Woods noted at the time that the resort attempted to bring on the new disciplinary system without negotiating with the union to have it incorporated into BHCAWU's industrial agreement.

Mr. Woods said barring a favourable outcome, the union will decide its next move.

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STALEMATE PERSISTS

Continued from / PAGE 1...

who questioned whether the Union met the requirements stipulated in its constitution and subsequently dismissed the Union's results of a vote to strike.

A press release following BUSAWU and the Water and Sewerage Management Union's [WSMU] strike poll, cited particulars of the unions constitution that states, in both cases, that in order to take such action "no less than 60 percent or two-thirds of the bargaining unit must vote in favour".

However, based on poll counts, "32% of the managers voted in favor, 19% against and 49% abstained" for WSMU. With a compliment of 73 managers, only 23 voted in support with 14 against strike action.

Similarly, for BUSAWU members, "nearly 34% voted in favour, 9% voted against and nearly 57% or 177 abstained". Data provided indicated that the union has 312 [non-managers]; 106 voting in favor of a strike and 29 voted against the strike.

With these numbers, WSC Board said that the lawful threshold for issuance of a strike certificate was not met.

However, BUSAWU

President, Mr. Woods said that proper procedures were followed as the Department of Labour conducted the poll.

"We did all the due diligence and the strike poll was conducted by the Ministry of Labour, which is the government run organization for strike poll.

"So, I don't see how executives of the corporation can question the government.

"The Director [of Labour], conducted my poll [and] there shouldn't be a question with my poll. I'm expecting a strike certificate from the Ministry in short order," Mr. Woods said.

When asked about the next step once the strike certificate is in hand, Mr. Woods said "we'd like to go to the table and sit down with the matter, but if not, then we have to do what we have to do".

Mr. Woods further insisted that WSC's Executive Chairman, Adrian Gibson, "is trying to muddy the water.

"He can't direct the Ministry of Labour, and what he is trying to do is direct the Ministry of Labour.

"How could you question the government organization responsible for strike poll? Who is responsible for strike polls

in The Bahamas?

"So, if I didn't follow the right procedure, wouldn't the Department of Labour not conduct the poll? They conducted the poll, the people voted, the voice of the people is the voice of God and they have spoken.

"What wrong have I done when the official persons to conduct the poll [is] the Minister of Labour?" Mr. Woods said.

He called the Executive Chairman disingenuous, charging that he is "campaigning for public opinion" and questioned why, the chairman, is meddling in the internal affairs of the

union.

"However, the law will take its course. If we are wrong, then allow the Department of Labour to determine the illegality of the poll, and not him," Mr. Woods said.

In its press release, WSC also said, " Mr. Woods continues to bemoan the Board's decision to end his administrative leave and direct him to return to work. Mr. Woods is well aware that he submits yearly requests for administrative leave (by letter) and that it is within the discretion of the Board.

"The administrative leave applies solely to the president and is separate

from the union leave.

However, even if the union leave and administrative leave were the same—as per Article 14.01 of the Industrial Agreement—it states that "an employee, elected to a permanent Union Office, which requires Union Leave, may be granted such leave, as the Corporation determines...." Given the same, it is evident that that remains within the purview of WSC.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Woods has been disruptive ever since his administrative leave was terminated and he was ordered back to work. Last month, given his failure to report for duty, his \$60,000 salary—

which he enjoyed for nearly 8 years without coming to work—was stopped. This, it appears, resulted in some of the recent actions.

"President Woods is encouraged to report for duty, the release stated.

In response to this, Mr. Woods said his leave is applied for every three years and not yearly.

"It is only the renewal of it. It's a benefit under the Industrial Agreement for every three year term in office, and we go to election, and whoever wins the election then applies for the renewal.

"I have won the three year term in office on three

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Business Owners Warned Over NIB

Continued from / PAGE 1...

come a day when NIB runs out of resources.

"I think our actuarial have suggested 10 years from now, I can't remember specifically what the drop dead date is, but again we're not a money making institute, we collect contributions from

you to payout benefits to you and that's all we do," Minister Rolle said.

In hopes of avoiding this, the Minister gave this suggestion for Bahamian workers.

"If our contributions are not equal to our benefits, then only two things can happen, either we can

ask you to increase your contribution so that we can pay your benefits or we have to decrease your benefits to become equal to your contributions," the Minister said.

The Minister's strongly advising everyone to ensure NIB payouts are up to date.

STALEMATE

Continued from / PAGE 3...

consecutive elections and that's what is granted me; nine years of being able to do the people's work, with pay.

"The chairman is attempting to roll back that benefit in the middle

of a term," Mr. Woods said.

Mr. Wood said that it's an attempt to "change the rules of the game, in the middle of the game".

He added that in order to make the change, there has to be negotiations and it must be mutually agreed

upon and cannot be changed unilaterally.

Meantime, WSC's Board also claims that by law, WSC'S Managerial Union's president, Ednell Roll should not have been allowed to have a strike poll as his term in office expired last month.

Twenty Year Old Charged With Murder

Continued from / PAGE 1...

three, Alexander Bullard, AKA "Nonks." The incident happened on

Ferguson and Augusta Streets.

Brennen was not required to enter a plea to the crime. Bail was denied and he was remanded to

The Bahamas Department of Corrections until May 30th at noon. Brennen was not represented by an attorney.

MINISTER ROLLE OFFICIALLY OPENED 'CARIBBEAN KINGS' BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS



► Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture the Hon. Lanisha Rolle, joined by senior staff members, officially opened and tossed up the ceremonial first ball for the First Annual 'Caribbean Kings' Inter-Caribbean High School Basketball Championships, on April 18, 2019. The Street Legends Organization, led by President Wilton Russell, Jr., hosted the championship, held at the Kendal Isaacs National Gymnasium. Street Legends brings together inner city youth in sport. (BIS PHOTOS / ERIC ROSE)

Technology and Multilateral Partnerships help Protect the Country

During the The Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) and United States Northern Command (Northcom) Radar Commissioning Ceremony in Matthew Town, Inagua, on April 17, 2019, Minister of National Security the Hon. Marvin Dames pointed out that, for The Bahamas, increasing regional and international threats meant decentralization of the RBDF for the sustainment of security operations and humanitarian assistance.

"Decentralization of both the operational and administrative components of the Defence Force commenced in three phases in the northern, central and southern Bahamas for effective interdiction at strategic locations," Minister Dames said. "All three phases are operating concurrently."

He added: "The first phase included the acquisition of patrol crafts and dredging of harbours. The second phase focused on the expansion of existing and the construction of new bases. Specifically, focus will be given to the expansion of the Inagua base and the construction of a Ragged Island base, where most of the security threats originate. The third phase is the acquisition of detection and tracking technologies."

Among those present for the Commissioning Ceremony were: Prime Minister the Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance the Hon. K. Peter Turnquest; Minister of

Education the Hon. Jeffrey Lloyd; Minister of Foreign Affairs the Hon. Darren Henfield; Acting Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of National Security Mr. Eugene Poitier; Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), including Commissioner of Police Anthony Ferguson, Commander of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Commodore Tellis Bethel, Commissioner of the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services Charles Muphy, and Comptroller of Customs Dr. Geannine Moss; Senator the Hon. Renard Henfield; MICAL Member of Parliament Miriam Emmanuel; U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires Stephanie Bowers; North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and Northcom Commander General Terrence O'Shaughnessy; RBDF Principal Officer Administration Captain Clyde Sawyer; RBDF Chaplain Rev. Prince Bodie; senior uniformed officers and Government officials; and various stakeholders.

Minister Dames said that the Government was appreciative to the Government of the United States, particularly the Department of Defense (DOD), for the donation of a \$2.1 million Long-Range Coastal Radar, as an added dimension to the augmentation of The Bahamas' multi-layered programme.

"To ensure that the entire base at Inagua is brought up to standard

and to complement this new technology, contracts were signed totaling \$573,000 with three construction companies on the island for the rebuilding of new units," he noted. "The new structures will include a sick bay, detention centre and a mechanical building. The total proposed projected capitalization and development including the decentralization programme over the next three budget cycles is expected to cost approximately \$133 million."

Minister Dames pointed out that, as it relates to the installation of the Kelvin Coastal Radar, it fell into the framework for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, commonly referred to as the C4ISR.

"This coastal radar will serve to enhance the Defence Force's efficiencies and effectiveness of its interdiction efforts," Minister Dames said. "Note that the agency will not operate in silos but, as necessary, in conjunction with Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos known as OPBAT."

"This longstanding, multilateral counter-drug operation between the United States, The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands focuses on narcotics interdiction and other forms of trans-organized crimes."

Minister Dames stated that past experiences had proven that no single asset or equipment could adequately combat the threats and challenges of the day.



► Minister of National Security the Hon. Marvin Dames addresses the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) and United States Northern Command (Northcom) Radar Commissioning Ceremony in Matthew Town, Inagua, on April 17, 2019. (BIS Photo / Eric Rose)

"Hence, today's installation is part of a broader multi-layered security programme asset, equipment acquisition, and collaboration," he said. "At this time, let me take this opportunity to thank the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) for the donation of the Over-The-Horizon Tracking System at the Coral Harbour Base and aboard patrol and aircraft which preceded this donation."

Minister Dames pointed out that the technologies, as part of the multi-layered approach, would also incorporate the use of a multi-agency drone technology programme.

"The Government of The Bahamas is in the process of finalizing a \$17 million contract with a vendor for the acquisitions of short and medium range drones to assist with interdiction and surveillance efforts under a multi-agency drone programme," he stated. "Under the Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies

(HONLEA), this programme symbolizes the continued need for local law enforcement institutions to eliminate silos and make concerted efforts to improve communication and collaboration. The drone programme will be led by Royal Bahamas Defence Force."

Minister Dames said that keeping one's country safe is challenging for any nation, regardless of its size; and that the task is mammoth, and it is only expected to become more complex and multi-faceted.

"Therefore, law enforcement agencies are expected to become more team oriented, flexible and resilient in their defences, while being capable to respond to any call for assistance with speed and agility. In addition, the reliance on technology will only continue to grow and so will multi-lateral partnerships," he said.

Minister Dames noted that the day was a testament to

both, and persons could be rest assured that the Government of The Bahamas was committed to advancing the security of the country, through regional partnerships and technological investments as they were paramount for enhancing security.

"Again, I would like to thank our regional partner the United States of America, in particular the Department of Defense, the Department of State, U.S. Northern Command and NORAD led by General O'Shaughnessy, and the U.S. Embassy in The Bahamas led by Chargé d'Affaires Ms. Stephanie Bowers, all of whom play a key role in the security of our region."

"The world is watching and today the commissioning of this long-range coastal radar system on the island of Great Inagua reflects a pivotal milestone in the history of the country," Minister Dames added. "I am extremely pleased that we all can be a part of this momentous historical event."