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# The Bahama Journal

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MONDAY - APRIL 29TH, 2019

75 CENTS

# HOMICIDE AT GOV'T HOUSE

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

Royal Bahamas Defense Force (RBDF) officers are coping with what Commodore Tellis Bethel

described as a "real blow" following the murder of one of its very own on Government House grounds.

The victim was identified as Petty Officer Phillip Perpall, who served on the force for 30

years.

According to Police Commissioner Anthony Ferguson, police officers received word of the incident around 3am yesterday.

He said, "responding officers, upon arrival,

spoke with the officers of the RBDF, who reported that around 2:30 am a male accessed the premises of Government House and made his way to the guard house where the Guard Commander and other officers were.

"I was told that the Guard Commander was sitting in the administrative area along with another marine, while others were on break in the room area."

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## PLP Call For Answers

The Progressive Liberal Party offered its condolences to the family of Petty Officer Phillip Perpall, the marine fatally shot yesterday morning on the grounds of Government House.

The leader of the PLP, Philip Davis said, "The Prime Minister must publicly state that this fatal shooting is not an attack on the state that exposes safety and security weaknesses at public institutions and public

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# BUSINESSMAN SHOT AND KILLED IN BIMINI

Among the disturbing reports of homicides this past weekend is one of the shooting death of an American businessman in Bimini. Reports are that

on Sunday after 1:00am, Alain Perez, the owner of Big Johns Restaurant and Bar was shot multiple times in the upper part of his body, while at his res-

idence in Bimini.

Police say shortly after arriving home the 47 year-old businessman heard a knock on his door while he was preparing

for bed. When he opened the door, he was confronted by a gunman who shot Perez several times in the right chest. The victim was taken to the Bimini

Clinic where he later succumbed to his injuries.

The Member of Parliament for Bimini, Pakesia Parker-Edgcombe in a state-

ment yesterday said, "the death of the well known businessman and resident has sent shockwaves

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# NEW PROGRAM TO INCREASE BAHAMIAN OWNERSHIP OF GOV'T ASSETS

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis announced a new public-private program this past Friday geared towards increasing Bahamian ownership of government assets.

He added that the plan is to curb the amount of complaints surrounding government buildings maintenance issues.

He said, "I would like to at this time to personally thank Mr. Greg Cleare, who is leading the government in a new and innovative programme where we will establish an independent company where all government buildings will be permanently located and

■ See page 7...



► Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis on Friday, April 26, 2019 addressed the official opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for Poinciana House corporate centre on East Bay Street, which houses the Insurance Commission of The Bahamas, Securities Commission of The Bahamas, and Compliance Commission of The Bahamas, as well as other financial offices. Prime Minister Minnis said the move into Poinciana House by the various commissions opens the door to a bright future. The Prime Minister cut the ribbon and also toured the offices. (BIS Photos/Yontalay Bowe)

## DPM DEFENDS IMMIGRATION BILL

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Peter Turnquest this past Friday labelled claims that the recently passed Immigration Bill 2019 allows for free movement of

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## UNIONS WAIT FOR STRIKE CERTIFICATE

BY B. MCDERMOTT  
 Journal Staff Writer

The bickering between Water and Sewage Corporation Corporation and two unions continues, with Union leaders promising that if they are not granted a strike

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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

# Grand Lucayan Separation Talks Progressing

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
Journal Staff Writer

The Bahamas Hotel Managerial Union and the government are now seeing eye to eye with negotiations for Grand Lucayan voluntary separation packages.

According to Union President Obie Ferguson negotiations could be completed within a month. He added that negotiations are at a sensitive stage in finalization.

"It's progressing, but I can assure you that we will complete within a reasonable period of time because the people in Grand Bahama are very much interested in the matter being concluded like yesterday.

"So, we were working up to last night trying to finalize the other areas and I wouldn't want to deal with anything specifics because it may prejudice the outcome of it and I would want the members to know before the public becomes aware of the details," he said

When asked if the relationship between the union and the government has improved Mr. Ferguson said he is moving passed any issues, as he wouldn't want anything to hinder the workers from receiving their pay.

This just two weeks ago Tourism Minister Dionisio D'Aguilar told reporters outside cabinet that he could not get in

contact with union representatives.

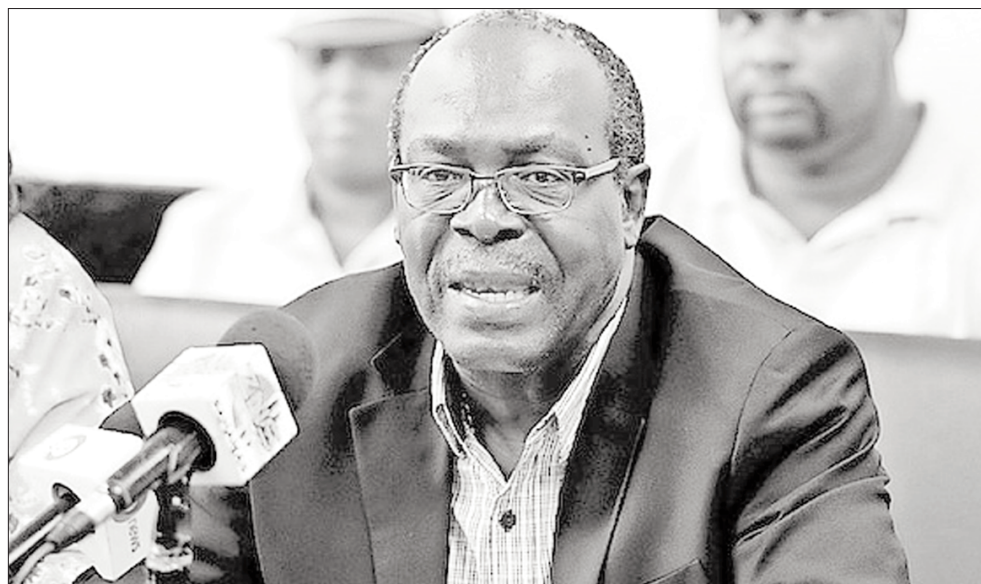
To union members Mr. Ferguson said, "rest assured it will be resolved very shortly."

The Union leader's comments follow those of Tourism Minister Dionisio D'Aguilar who affirmed that his meeting with the union was productive and that a resolution could come in the coming weeks.

Last month 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.

Mr. Ferguson at that time said that what the



► Union President, Obie Ferguson

Hotel Corporation's Chairman was attempting to give the workers was 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 negotiat-

ing process after union members were reportedly at odds with Hotel Corporation Chairman, Michael Scott who made a "take it or leave it" offer to the workers.

## BUSINESSMAN SHOT AND KILLED IN BIMINI

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through our community.

"This incident is truly tragic and a rare occurrence in our beautiful island. We are hopeful that investigations by

Police will result in the capture of the person or persons responsible and they are brought to justice."

She said, "I have spoken to the officer in Charge of the Bimini District, who has indicat-

ed that Police are actively on the ground," said the MP

Police are actively investigating this matter and are appealing to the general public for any information that can assist in this investigation.



### ROAD TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT PUBLIC NOTICE

The Road Traffic Department would like to remind all Franchise Holders - Private Schedule, Public Schedule, Private Charter, SD Cars, SD Scooters, Taxi and Livery. To present registration documents for the annual Licensing and inspection documents for the annual inspection and registration for **MAY 2019/2020**.

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- 2 Update Franchise receipt payment
- 3 Up to date business License
- 4 Inspection/Copies of License Discs
- 5 Up to Date Insurance Certificates
- 6 Vehicle color and right/left hand drive (for new vehicle)

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

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

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# CLIFTON HERITAGE PARK ESTABLISHES A LUCAYAN VILLAGE

BY LISA KNOWLES  
Journal Staff Writer

A Lucayan Village was established at the Clifton Heritage National Park last Friday in a ground breaking ceremony. A Billboard depicting the simple life of Lucayans was also unveiled. The Clifton Heritage Authority Board, along with the wife of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, were present at ceremony which marked the first in a series of events intend-

ed to revitalize, recognize, celebrate and preserve the historical and cultural legacy of the Lucayans, Loyalists and Africans.

Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Lanisha Rolle said the Clifton Heritage site is intricately woven into the fabric of Bahamian History and Culture. She said, "Today's launch is evidence that the Authority's, since its establishment in June Of 2004, has not wavered in its purpose, but is continuously committed to

upholding the mission of and mandate, as promulgated by the government of The Bahamas, which is to preserve our heritage and culture in this distinguished area of The Bahamas. The Lucayan people are recorded at the original inhabitants of The Bahamas, dating back to the 12th century.

Chairman of the Heritage Authority, Shonel Ferguson thanked those involved with the saving of the Clifton Heritage Site from the very beginning, including

The Rev. C.B. Moss and Freddie Munnings, Jr. She said that the cost of the Authority \$100,000 to develop 'Clifton Rising'.

Miss Ferguson informed those present, "this is the second phase of the project entitled, 'Clifton Rising' which will introduce new experiential tours called 'Portals From The Past'. These excursions will reflect the cultural traditions of the Lucayan Ameri-Indians, the Loyalists, the African Slaves, and the Free Black Loyalists. Each platform

will educate our visitors about our country's rich, proud, and diverse history. They will allow both our local and international visitors to become part of our history through rigorous and exciting interaction and will serve as creative classrooms to our students.

"Today's ground breaking is the first in a series of events, as we bring, not only the Lucayans to life, but revitalize the heritage, history and culture of our African and European ancestors," she said.

A book entitled "The Lucayan Story" was presented to Shonel Ferguson, Chairperson of the Clifton Heritage Authority, by the Commodore of the Royal Bahamas Defense Force, Mr. Tellis Bethel.

Historian Dr. Keith Tinker also presented three (3) books to Miss Ferguson, as well as another three (3) books authored by him to the students that were there from Gambier Primary and Windsor Preparatory School.

# HOMICIDE AT GOV'T HOUSE

Continued from / PAGE 1...

He also said that the suspect open fire on the Guard Commander, hitting him multiple times to the upper body before fleeing the scene.

Mr. Ferguson added that the suspect was pursued by marines, however he was somehow able to escape.

Paramedics later arrived on the scene where they later pro-

nounced Officer Perpall dead.

Mr. Ferguson said, I also wish to say that there is a person of interest that we are talking to, and hopefully from talking to this person, we are able to bring some resolve to this investigation."

Commodore Bethel described Perpall as a hardworking, dedicated man, who has certainly left his mark in the RBDF.

He added that Perpall was a Peacekeeper, serving overseas in Haiti with the United Nations.

Not too long ago, Perpall also was a part of a team that adopted the cemetery of the British Legion, investing a lot of time into modernizing the property. This, he said, was a reflection of Perpall's heart and his commitment to service.

Responding to multiple speculations circulat-

ing on social media, Commodore Bethel said, "I think they are doing more harm than good.

"It's very irresponsible and it dampens the morale of those who want to do better. So, I encourage all of those in the social media world to act responsibly, and as mentioned by the Commissioner of Police, let's stick to the facts."

Investigations into this matter are ongoing.

The Bahama Journal

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# PLP Call For Answers

Continued from / PAGE 1...

safety generally.

“Further, this attack raises serious questions about the protocols in place by the government regarding the emotional and psychological fitness of individuals who hold

sensitive positions in the uniform branches of the government.”

Mr. Davis says “the Foreign Minister should by now have given assurances overseas about the ability to secure Government House. No word from that Ministry.

“Within twelve hours after the fact the National Security Minister held a press conference in which more questions were raised than answered.

“How was it possible to breach the security of the nation's highest valued property, with a weapon,

kill an officer and for that individual to get clean away and depart the premises without being brought down? The Minister had no answer.

“Further why with all the social media commentary that another Royal Bahamas Defence Force

officer was involved, why couldn't the minister confirm that?” asked Mr. Davis.

The PLP leader stated: “We draw attention to the recent fatal stabbing incident of a student near the school campus, given the level of gang activities

and retaliatory fights in the public school system.

“The PLP will continue to monitor the government's response to this particular incident, school policing protocols and the unacceptably high levels of traffic accidents and fatalities,” he said.

# DPM DEFENDS IMMIGRATION BILL

Continued from / PAGE 1...

labour as “erroneous and mischievous”.

This followed Bahamas Bar Association President Khalil Parker describing a significant point of the bill as destructive and a move against the country's best interest.

Mr. Parker added that

the reforms could potentially threaten the legal profession.

In response to this, Mr. Turnquest told reporters that he believes there is a misunderstanding of what the bill is trying to accomplish.

He said, “the fact of the matter is what we're looking at is attracting to The Bahamas profession-

als and investors who are involved in industries that are not represented in The Bahamas or that are underrepresented in The Bahamas.”

He added, “these are specialty firms. So, if you look at the list of professionals that are listed in this bill, and you look at the reference to the Commercial

Enterprise Bill, it sets out the kinds of industries that we are interested in attracting to The Bahamas.”

Mr. Turnquest added that this would aimed at the high level technical professionals and executives of corporations that may be operating in the country wanting to visit their establishment.

This, he said, will enable them to be able to conduct business easily.

This is all a part of the government's plan to ensure that the country is an attractive investment destination.

He reiterated that the bill does not allow for the free movement of individuals.

The Minister said,

“Immigration retains control of the borders of The Bahamas, and they have the right to admit or reject any person that comes to The Bahamas. All we are trying to do is to make it convenient and efficient to allow those persons coming to visit their installations, to be able to do that without being harassed.”

# UNIONS WAIT FOR STRIKE CERTIFICATE

Continued from / PAGE 1...

certificate, they will take the matter to court.

This following a strike vote last week that the Unions claim was in their favour. This is disputed by the Corporation's management. To date, the Unions are without necessary paper work to take such industrial action if necessary.

The Unions say that the Director of Labour has not issued the strike certificate. “It's not John Pinder, the Minister under section 24 which says that for the purpose of this section, a designated officer means a public officer designated in writing by the Minister.”

“So, he could be a designated officer, but he can't be giving direction. It's the Minister, the pub-

lic needs to know that, because he's all over the air saying he won't issue the certificate, but he has no authority to hold the certificate. His job is to supervise the polls,” said one union executive.

As for claims that two thirds of WSC's union members who did not vote on the issue, Trade Union Congress President Obie Ferguson said, “well, holy smoke, how

can the Minister determine how the union should function. Certainly, if Woods and Ednel Rolle were able to tell the board how to function, then we wouldn't be here.

“So, I want to make that clear, there is no legal basis for what's being put to the public as being accurate,” he said.

Meantime Bahamas Utilities Services and

Allied Workers Union President Dwayne Woods maintains WSC Executive Chairman Adrian Gibson has to go.

“He has gone as far as meddling into the internal affairs of both managerial and non-managerial unions, attempting to misdirect the Minister and the Department of Labour on the strike polls conducted, as well as being disingenuous and campaigning for

public opinion, rather than allowing the law to take its course.

“For these reasons we see him as unfit for public office and appeal to the stakeholders once again for his removal,” said the BUSAWU President.

If and when the strike certificate is issued, the unions – line staff and managers – have vowed to strike as one.



## THE PORT DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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no later than 5:00 pm on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2019.

Tenders will be opened at 10:00 am on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 at the office of the Tender's Board, Ministry of Finance.

\*THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL TENDERS.



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