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THURSDAY - JUNE 20TH, 2019

75 CENTS

PM Touts \$8 Billion in Investments

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis announced yesterday that \$8 billion in international investments have been approved as at May 2019. That amount includes the \$100 million Carnival Cruise Port for Grand Bahama, and new developments throughout the island chain, he said.

The Prime Minister was contributing to the 2019/20 Budget Debate in the House of Assembly.

He outlined achievements over the past two years and unveiled plans for the ensuing three years, aimed at the further development of the coun-



▶ Prime Minister, the Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis

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SKYBRIDGE FOR CLIFFORD PARK

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

The government yesterday revealed added details of its plans to breathe new life into the city of Nassau with its plans to capitalize on Arawak Cay and Junkanoo Beach.

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis, as he wrapped up debate on the 2019/2020 Budget in the parliament, said that the area will be zoned for major tax concessions similar to the inner city.

He said, "I note, Mr. Speaker, that there are plans in the works to transform Clifford Park into a central park for New Providence.

"So, I'm concerned about our guests moving along Bay Street and crossing to Clifford Park. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, to connect Clifford Park to the redeveloped waterfront area, we are proposing a skybridge," he said.

Using artist renderings

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D'Aguilar Tells of Andros Airport Bad Deal



▶ Aviation Minister, Dionisio D'Aguilar

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

Former Aviation Minister Glenys Hanna- Martin got a serious scolding for negotiating a "bad deal" to house the Andros Airport facilities in the Western Air terminal for \$5 per square foot per month.

According to Aviation Minister, Dionisio D'Aguilar, the decision came after the trailers that housed those facilities deteriorated to the point that workers walked out.

Minister D'Aguilar minced no words in calling Mrs. Hanna- Martin as not a very good business person.

"The Rolle's and the government agreed that its \$60 a square foot and if you look at the instructions that was given to the Airport Authority by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Transport by the Minister of Transport, it said in that instruction we know that if you charge \$25 a square foot it would be \$75,000 plus a year, but we're instructing you to over-

■ See page 3...

DAVIS CALLS PM'S ATTACK "DESPICABLE"

The leader of the Progressive Liberal Party, Philip Davis says the disparaging reference to Sir Lynden Pindling in the budget address of Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis "nothing short of despicable."

Mr. Davis said, "while Bahamians hoped against

hope for a budget presentation by the Prime Minister that would address their disappointment in his government and their increasing misery, like his national address, the Prime Minister flubbed it again, making his presentation more about his obsession

with the PLP than the concerns of ordinary Bahamians.

"His message fell flat because he is a stranger to the truth. His account of hospital repairs and especially the children's ward in the aftermath of

■ See page 4...



CROOKED ISLAND GETTING PORTABLE WATER STATIONS



▶ Adrian Gibson, WSC Executive Chairman and MP for Long Island, is shown holding contract with Peter Andrews, Chairman, BHM. Also shown from left in the first row: Miriam Emmanuel, MP for MICAL and Chairman, Education Loan Authority; Elwood Donaldson, General Manager, WSC. From left in back row: Cyprian Gibson, Assistant General Manager; Leonard Dames, Administrator; David Daxon, Chief Counselor; Karl McIntosh, N.O Whyte and Associates Ltd; Ashton Symonette and Ayla Isaacs, Project Management Unit; Bennett Minnis, Board Member and Paul Huckle, BHM. (BIS Photo/Patrick Hanna)



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GOV'T PLANNING RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGIES

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
Journal Staff Writer

The country's making strides in implementing renewable energy strategies which according to Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis, will save Bahamians money in paying electricity bills.

This, he said, would lead to more disposable income for Bahamians as well, as the government's planning to invest up to \$170 million in a solarized project which will see the establishment of commercial solar operations through the Bahamas.

"We proposed to

expand small scale solar production here in New Providence.

"Our goal is to capitalize on the makeup of our archipelago of islands by generating a substantial amount of solar energy on our Family Islands, which has ample land and relatively low populations,"

the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister noted that last year, the government spent \$761 million in oil imports for local consumption. This he noted could be reduced with solar energy.

He assured that this will have a significant impact on family

islands.

"Family Islands solar generations will have a significant impact on the islands of which it is deployed.

"This will reduce the cost of electricity nationwide, as the level of effective subsidies to those islands by BPL will decrease when

smaller generating plants with limited economies of scale, which will not have to be utilized as much," Dr. Minnis said.

The Prime Minister asserts that he is confident this project will improve the standard of living on the Family Islands.

GOV'T WORKING TO GRANT MORE BAHAMIANS CROWN LAND

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis yesterday announced in the House of Assembly that the government is making efforts to ensure that all Bahamians have access to and the opportunity to own land.

He added that efforts are ongoing with respect

to the regularization of crown land leases and grants.

In fact, he said, the Land and Surveys Department is currently engaged in an extensive exercise.

This, in due course, will enable the government to better manage the process, particularly outstanding approvals.

He said, "we will com-

mence, in short order, with the settling of matters for approved crown land leases and grants within the MICAL district, the islands of Great Inagua, Mayaguana, Acklins, and Crooked Island. We will continue island by island, leaving no island behind."

He added, "I wish to inform those who have applied for Crown Land

leases or grants, that their applications will receive attention in the next phase; but it is only right and fair that we first deal with those who have already paid for their land or who have been granted land, but who are awaiting final documents. We will continue to do all we can to have Crown Land leases and grants in the hands of the Bahamian people."

To ensure that this land remains in the hands of Bahamians; Dr. Minnis said, "My fear is that if an individual receives a piece of crown land for \$1,000, they will flip it tomorrow to a foreign national for \$100,000. That's human nature, and if that happens, we are defeating the purpose because we will be giving the land to foreigners."

"What I'm proposing that can be done, is that crown land remain within the hands of Bahamians," he added.

The government, according to the Prime Minister, will begin this process from the islands in the south and gradually move further north to ensure that all islands have an equal opportunity.



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ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING HOSTS 'SHOPPING BAG GIVEAWAY'



The Ministry of The Environment and Housing hosted a free Reusable Shopping Bag Giveaway at Centreville Food Market on Saturday, June 8, 2019. The giveaway was in preparation of the upcoming ban on Selected Single Use Plastics to take effect on January 1, 2020. The ban on plastics will include four prohibited items: point of sale plastic shopping bags, plastic

cutlery (forks, knives, spoons), plastic straws, and Styrofoam food containers and cups. Customers that day also received literature on the upcoming ban.

According to Environmental Officer Kendria Ferguson, "Bag giveaways provide an opportunity for us to engage the general public about the upcoming ban while simultaneously pro-

viding free reusable bags. We are delighted to have partnered with Aliv, who continues to be committed to corporate social responsibility."

For more information about the ban, visit "plasticfree242.com" or contact the Ministry of the Environment and Housing at (242) 322-6005 or email them at moehplastics@bahamas.gov.bs



► Pictured holding a sample reusable bag is Environmental Officer, Lyndee Bowe

PM Touts \$8 Billion in Investments

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try.

"We now have the lowest annual deficit in 10 years, as the country turns the page on the reckless spending and financial wasteland that was a hallmark of the past government," the Prime Minister said. "We are in negotiations for a mega project that will transform Freeport, including the Grand Lucayan properties, into one of the pre-

miere destinations in our region."

The Prime Minister noted that his Government is also investing in jobs, education and training, home ownership, and granting access to land for Bahamians.

"We are investing in the Family Islands, crime-fighting, social assistance, young people, roads, airports, Over-the-Hill development, Bahamian entrepreneurs and small business people," he said.

Further investments include young environmental monitors in Over-the-Hill area who have been employed to help rebuild their communities, to Spring City, Abaco, where young people in their 20s have received conveyances and deeds for new homes, to preschool students in poorer neighborhoods, he further outlined.

"This Government is building a better, brighter Bahamas for all

Bahamians. We are building a more just society, in which the needs and the aspirations of the poor and the disadvantaged, are a priority," the Prime Minister said.

He then reported that The Bahamas has had two straight years of positive growth.

"In the last two years we have improved revenue across the board. These are funds that can now be invested in young entrepreneurs, preschool

students, Family Island airports, poverty reduction and Over-the-Hill," he said.

And, over the next three years, he envisioned that plans would be made manifest throughout The Bahamas.

"We will not rest in our efforts to create a better, brighter, more prosperous and safer country for all Bahamians. We seek to build a country intolerant of mass corruption by public officials. We seek

to build a country filled with opportunity for all."

The Prime Minister said that it is his great privilege to lead the effort in building a fairer and more just society.

"Today, because of our crime strategy, crime is finally coming down. But, there is still much work to do to make our people safer.... Let us continue to pray that the God of New Beginnings may continue to bless our Bahamas," he said.

SKYBRIDGE FOR CLIFFORD PARK

Continued from / PAGE 1...

as illustration, the prime minister stressed that the proposed skybridge will not disturb the cannons on Clifford Park.

There is the added proposal to introduce water taxis.

He said, "we intend to enter discussions with the taxi union executives and taxi and tour drivers to

become owners of these water taxis. This has the potential to boost income for many taxi drivers, with many more cruise passengers coming off the ship.

"The government will fund travel for taxi union executives to visit areas like St. Thomas and or St. Martin to see how water taxis work in those destinations," he added.

The Prime Minister said that while speaking with various cruise lines, they informed him that their passengers will not walk a distance beyond 2.5 to three times the

length of the vessel.

He said that water taxis can potentially solve this issue, as many Bahamian businesses are well beyond that distance.

D'Aguilar Tells of Andros Airport Bad Deal

Continued from / PAGE 1...

ride that and pay them \$60 per square foot, which equates to \$183,000 a year.

"That's what was done; there's no bone about it and she's saying well they included the electricity and other costs.

"However, if you're paying \$25 per square foot and you include those, in most leases that would add another \$7 or \$8, not take it to \$60 a square foot," he said.

Hitting back with a speedy response, the PLP MP charged that the FNM administration paid the lease for two years.

To that Minister D'Aguilar said he only recognized this issue

because in 2018, Western Air sought a renewal and an increase to the rent to \$84 per square foot.

"There is no lease. This all came through a cabinet conclusion and yes the cabinet conclusion came down on May 4th 2017. I wasn't even appointed until May 15th and then a week later it was paid."

"I didn't know about it. I was just getting to the Ministry of Tourism; I hadn't even delved into that yet.

"So this happened right at the cusp of the election. May 4th the decision came down to pay them the money and Western Air was saying that we haven't paid them any cash.

"Well, we've been looking at the charges that they've been accruing; flying into all of the Airport Authorities, other airports, landing fees and rental fees, and we've been offsetting the rent that we're obligated to pay them, this \$202,000 a year against those charges," he said.

But Mrs. Hanna-Martin maintains the Western Air story's simply a distraction from the \$20 million contract awarded to Bahamas Hot Mix.

She added that the Minister should instead focus on addressing the working conditions of firemen at the Lynden Pindling International Airport.



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DAVIS CALLS PM'S ATTACK "DESPICABLE"

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Hurricane Matthew is a bold faced lie and this statement must be withdrawn forthwith and struck from the hansard.

"Another outrageous lie told by the Prime Minister was that the PLP government reduced the scholarship allocations. To the contrary, the PLP government increased the scholarship allocations.

"His disparaging reference to the father of the nation to score cheap political points is nothing short of despicable. The Prime Minister as do many of his FNM col-

leagues sit where they are today because of the vision and fight of Sir Lynden and the principled stance he took against the dreaded UBP and the ruling oligarchy of the day.

They all owe Sir Lynden a debt of gratitude as Brent's father, Sir Roland, would have had the course of our history travel in a very different direction.

It then stands to reason by the general public - what else is the nation's Leader lying about or whether anything in his budget presentation credible or remotely believable for that matter?

"Further, the people of Grand Bahama saw no help and have lost hope even as our brothers and sisters to the south, the entire island of Inagua, a company town, remain in a state of panic under the looming threat of a worker lockout, effecting shutting down the economy of that island.

"Inagua saw no hope or felt optimism in this Prime Minister's uninspiring presentation," said the Opposition leader.

He said, "As tens of thousands of hotel workers ready themselves for an industrial strike, the Prime Minister continues

his false and error-riddled narrative about PLP corruption and mismanagement, descending into the irrelevance of the 1980's, all as deflection from the current abysmal performance of his government.

"Obviously lost on this Prime Minister in the midst of his political bluster was the judicial condemnation of two of his ministers; growing unemployment; stagnant wages; the increasing cost of living and the fact that his policies of tax hikes, mass separations, cronyism, self dealing, refusal to pay contractors

and a dogged pursuit of an elusive fiscal deficit target have all contributed to misery, discontent and dissatisfaction Bahamians have with this administration."

Mr. Davis in a statement yesterday said, "none of these critical issues that are important to everyday ordinary Bahamians were resolved or for that matter adequately and directly addressed by the Prime Minister.

"Further, much of the Prime Minister's debate content were essentially recycled material from the past two budget com-

munications and funding of much of what he promised cannot be readily found in the budget heads.

These promises will be vigorously tested during the committal stage of the debate.

"This is sad and highly unfortunate because many of these issues and the general malaise were the direct result of actions or inaction by this Prime Minister and his maladministration.

"Nobody is listening to or buying what this Prime Minister or his government is selling any more," Mr. Davis said.

Foreign Affairs Ministry Gives Update On Ramsey and John

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has confirmed that the Foreign Service Officer in Turin, Italy, is now in receipt of the death certificates and passports

of Mr. Alrae Ramsey and Mr. Blair John. The two young Bahamians were found dead in a river in Turin some two weeks ago.

The official autopsies on the cause of the deaths have not been released. Bahamian High Commissioner to London, Ellison Greenslade has

been working with the Italian authorities on the matter.

The Ministry said it is at present working assiduously with the funeral

homes in Turin and Nassau to have the bodies repatriated to The Bahamas as quickly as possible, so that they can be turned over to their

family members.

The Ministry will provide further updates as soon as additional information becomes available.

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Investar Opens Grand Bahama Office



Interest was high in Grand Bahama with a steady stream of customers inquiring about the Titan Balanced Fund and Titan Fixed Income Fund, the first two investment funds offered by Investar Securities Ltd. with the Balanced Fund the first to include a percentage of Playtech Systems, parent company of Island Luck.

In keeping with its promise to "provide access to wealth for all Bahamians," Investar Securities Ltd. opened its office in Grand Bahama June 17, its second in the nation following the successful launch of its new investment funds that opened for public participation in Nassau two weeks earlier.

On hand for the Grand Bahama opening was financial services veteran Ansel Watson, Investar Securities President & CEO.

"The Titan Funds are a unique opportunity for Bahamians to grow their wealth by investing in proven successful businesses and private or government bonds and securities," said Watson. "Residents of Grand Bahama seem eager to invest. We've been very pleased with the steady stream of persons coming through and with the investment levels which we saw in the first few days since opening on

Monday."

First through the door of the new office at East Sunrise Plaza was Hiram Pinder.

"I wanted to invest in Island Luck a long time ago and I couldn't wait for them to come to Freeport!"

The Titan Balanced Fund is the first to include participation in the revenue from the highly successful Island Luck gaming and entertainment enterprise.

Since its launch on June 3rd, Investar Securities Limited, through the sponsorship of the Titan Investment Funds, is making good on its promise to introduce all Bahamians to the capital and securities market, providing "economic democracy" for all. "My vision is that all Bahamians will be provided with access to wealth and given the opportunity to create better futures. With the launch of these funds, we've demonstrated that commitment", said Sebas Bastian, major shareholder and Director

of Investar Securities Limited.

Investar Securities offices will be open in Nassau and Freeport to accept subscriptions from interested persons through to the initial closing date of July 3. Interested persons are asked to bring to bring passport and additional photo ID, either NIB card or driver's license and a recent utility bill.

Investar Securities also stated that it will continue to make subscription to the funds available throughout the Family Islands. From June 21st - July 2nd the Investar Securities Team will be traveling the Family Islands to collect subscription information from interested persons. Islands included in the visits are Exuma, Abaco, Long Island and Eleuthera. Persons may also subscribe in New Providence to the funds at Cash 'n Go on Carmichael Road or on Rosetta Street. The funds are being managed by Leno.

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