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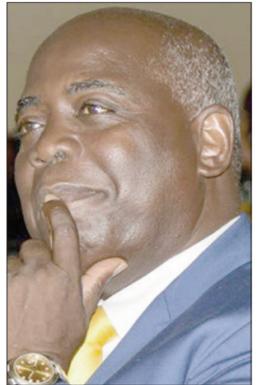
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75 CENTS

PM Defies Opposition

'Sword of Damocles Hangs Over PM'



▶ PLP Leader Philip Davis

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMSON
 Journal Staff Writer

Progressive Liberal Party Leader Philip Davis warned Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis that the vote of no confidence "hangs over his head like the sword of Damocles".

In his response to the prime minister's encouragement to the PLP to bring on

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Gov't Supports Haitian Commission of Inquiry



▶ Min. Darren Henfield

BY EARYEL BOWLEG
 Journal Staff Writer

Minister of Foreign Affairs Darren Henfield confirmed on Monday that the government will support the Haitian Commission of Inquiry into the alleged corruption at the Haitian embassy.

Henfield was informed by Haiti that a team of three is expected to carry

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PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET VIEW SCHOOL REPAIRS



▶ Prime Minister Hubert Minnis, accompanied by Minister of Education Jeffrey Lloyd and Minister of Works Desmond Bannister, other members of the Cabinet, Secretary to the Cabinet Camille Johnson, Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister Nicole Campbell, and other technical officers, inspected repairs of four Government schools, July 30, before the start of the new school year. The schools are: C.H. Reeves Junior High, Montell Heights; C.I. Gibson Senior High, Marathon Road; L.W. Young Junior High, Bernard Road; and D.W. Davis Junior High School, Wilton Street. Scope of works for the repairs is an estimated \$8.9 million. The government is confident repairs are on target for the start of school.
 (BIS Photos/Yontalay Bowe)

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis is confident that the drama surrounding the deal to rent the Town Centre Mall to house the General Post Office will not affect his party being reelected.

When pressed on the issue yesterday the prime minister assertively said "no".

"The people realize that everything was done in a transparent manner and that's why it is essential for the opposition to go forth with the no confidence vote so that certain things can come out again and the public can see how we do things versus how they did things," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to show what they did

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Mitchell Denies PLP Internal Conflict Claims

BY EARYEL BOWLEG
 Journal Staff Writer

Progressive Liberal Party Chairman Fred Mitchell denied claims on Tuesday of an internal conflict within the PLP.

In a local daily, former Tall Pines Member of Parliament Leslie Miller accused Mitchell of not looking out for his colleagues who want to run again in the 2022 general election.

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School Repairs Cost \$9 Million

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Cabinet ministers yesterday toured four of nine schools that are undergoing extensive renovations, which according to Minister of Education

Jeffrey Lloyd, come at a cost of approximately \$9 million.

The money for the work, he added, is available.

"The resources are now being distributed as necessary and what we mean by

resources is money of course, the quality, experience and competencies of the contractors and their own resources, which of course means people," Minister Lloyd said.

"They have quality people. They have suffi-

cient persons on these sites to get the work done."

According to the minister, the government is prepared in the event there's a need for additional fund-

■ See page 2...

Gov't Firm in Decision on Lighthouse Point

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Although the Stop Disney online petition garnered more than 33,000 signatures, Minister of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar said the government has made its decision concerning Disney's development of a cruise port at

Lighthouse Point.

Minister D'Aguilar minced no words when he stressed that Disney's multi-million dollar South Eleuthera project at Lighthouse Point will be pushed ahead.

"I think that Disney is, like I said before, a stellar



▶ Minister of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar

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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

School Repairs Cost \$9 Million

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ing.

Further, a contingency plan is in place if the works are not completed by the opening of new academic year. Still, the minister said he was assured this will not be the case.

"There's no such thing as if it should finish in time. The contractors have assured us, the engineers have assured us and the project managers have assured us that these projects will be completed in time," Minister Lloyd said.

"Obviously, as a system we have contingencies in case something arise, maybe a hurricane passes that delays us for a couple of days.

"Naturally, the ministry and the government have contingencies in those events, but we are fully anticipating that the schools will be ready.

"These contractors, because of their experience, because of their capabilities and competencies know that there might be some delays.

"That is why they have factored in those considerations and they can give

us those assurances."

Independent consultant engineers evaluated the school campuses. According to Minister of Public Works Desmond Bannister, it was determined that some schools needed immediate attention.

"It is not a practical thing to keep a full team at every school. It doesn't make economic sense for the country and for you as tax payers," Bannister said.

"So what we do is the Ministry of Public Works has a team of air-conditioning specialists. We

have a team of plumbers. We have a team of carpenters. We have full teams and where there are challenges in the schools, we have the teams come out to the schools and they work in the schools."

Optimism aside, Bahamas Union of Teachers President Belinda Wilson doubts school repairs will be completed on time.

"I would have spoken to the minister of education today, along the lines at looking at alternate sites for our students and our teachers when school

reopens," she said.

The BUT president, however, stressed that she's grateful of the efforts made to get the schools repaired.

Mrs. Wilson also called for the Ministry of Works to station a maintenance team at school locations.

"There needs to be maintenance teams that are working all year round. I saw you all interview the minister of works," she said.

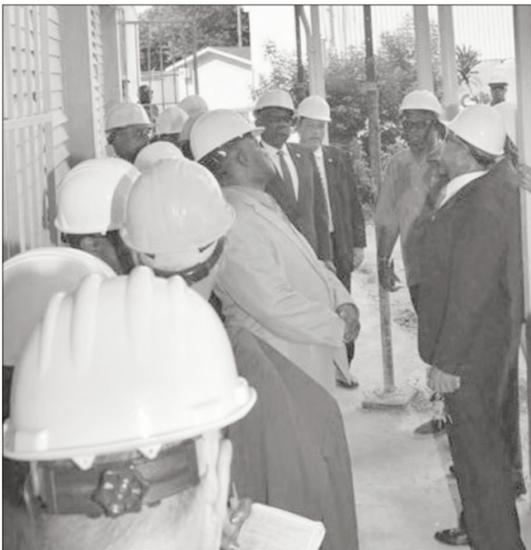
"They need to get the Ministry of Works to do their job year round, so when you have a leaver

that is missing or you have a faucet that may be broken or there is a leak.

"These are minor repairs that can be done during the school year and it will not cause us, the taxpayers so much money, at the end of every year where everyone has a mad rush, scrambling around trying to repair schools three weeks before schools open."

The schools toured yesterday were CH Reeves, DW Davis, CI Gibson and LW Young.

The 2019/2020 school year begins September 2.



► Prime Minister Hubert Minnis is pictured viewing the repairs being done on schools in the community. He was accompanied by Cabinet Ministers. (BIS Photos/Yontalay Bowe)



Request for Proposals (RFP) for services to conduct surveys of the Pay TV and Radio Broadcasting markets in The Bahamas.

The Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) is the independent regulator for the electronic communications sector (ECS) in The Bahamas, comprising fixed and mobile telecommunications services, spectrum, numbering and broadcasting (which includes radio broadcasting and pay television).

One of the main policy objectives of the Communications Act 2009, requires URCA to further the interest of persons in The Bahamas by promoting availability of a wide range of content services which are of high quality. The pay television and radio broadcasting markets in The Bahamas have undergone certain structural and technological changes since September 2009, which give consumers access to a greater variety of media and communications products and services available to consumers on multiple platforms.

To ensure the continued promotion of the availability of a wide range of high quality content services, URCA seeks to measure consumer listening and watching habits and their opinions on the quality of available services and programming provided over pay tv and radio.

It is URCA's objective to obtain empirical data that can provide representative parameters on the listening and watching habits of consumers and their opinions on the quality of available services and programming provided to consumers over pay-tv and radio in The Bahamas.

URCA therefore invites interested entities to submit proposals for services to conduct surveys of the pay tv and radio broadcasting markets in The Bahamas.

A copy of the RFP and TOR may be downloaded here, https://www.urbahamas.bs/rfp_tor-broadcast-market-survey/ or collected from URCA's offices Frederick House, Frederick Street, Nassau, The Bahamas.

The deadline for submission of proposals is no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday 2 August 2019.

PM Defies Opposition

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and the wrong they did to the country.”

A resolution to rent the General Post Office was brought to the House of Assembly and noted that then sitting Cabinet Minister Brent Symonette

was not consulted on the decision, neither was he in on the Cabinet discussion.

Later on a ZNS talk show, Mr. Symonette revealed that the prime minister called him while he was out of the country and discussed details surrounding the deal.

The deal presented a

conflict of interest and sparked outrage from the opposition and even members of the Free National Movement namely, Pineridge MP Fredrick McAlpine.

The opposition intends to put forward a vote of no confidence in the prime minister at the next sitting

of the House of Assembly, on October 2, when members of parliament return from their summer break.

However, Dr. Minnis seemed unfazed by Opposition Leader Philip Davis' plan.

The PLP chief announced the plan during his address on the final

night of his party's national convention on Friday, citing varied reasons for doing so, mainly the controversial lease agreement for the Town Centre Mall.

The mall is partly owned by Symonette, who is also the St. Anne's MP.

“We look forward to it,

on October 2. It will be an exciting day. It will be an interesting debate,” Dr. Minnis said.

“The opposition will have an opportunity to see how together and focused the FNM is and come 2022, they will also see that the people are still with us.”

Sword of Damocles

Continued from / PAGE 1...

the vote of no confidence, Davis said yesterday that the opposition will move the no confidence motion when its members are “good and ready”.

“The prime minister and his deputy prime minister can

best be described as jokey leaders. The prime minister with his clumsy fake bravado dares us to ‘bring it on’ with the no confidence vote. His deputy called it a ‘fool's errand,’” Davis said.

“As for the deputy prime minister, he has plenty of experience with fool's

errands. He has been trying to balance the budget since he came to office and after two years he is still adding two and two together and making it five.”

According to Davis, the prime minister, the deputy prime minister and the Free National Movement are

“puffed up” about the numbers, having 35 seats in the House of Assembly and the opposition only having four.

However, David said the vote of no confidence, to the PLP, is not about numbers.

“Each FNM will have their vote recorded and we will see who stands for the

corrupt behaviour of their government and who does not. With the wind of proper ethical conduct against our backs, four will be greater than 35,” he explained.

“Finally, to our deputy prime minister who chose to be personal, I remind him of the old saying, ‘It takes a fool

to know a fool.”

Last Friday, during Davis' address at the PLP National General Convention, he announced that the opposition intends to move a vote of no confidence against the prime minister concerning the Town Centre Mall lease agreement.

Commission of Inquiry

Continued from / PAGE 1...

out the probe.

“On Friday past, I received a phone call from the Haitian Minister of Foreign

Affairs Edmond Bocchit, who indicated to me that he wanted to send a team to the Bahamas to look into allegations reported in one of our local papers,” Mr. Henfield

said.

Reports surfaced of corruption involving Haitian diplomats on July 25. The Haitian commission announced the investigation this

past weekend, but the minister is unaware if the investigation has actually started.

Henfield received a diplomatic note by the minister on Monday, but

is not certain if the team has arrived.

The probe will consist of interviewing employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Bahamian authorities.

Henfield noted that as a CARICOM country, the Bahamas will assist on the request of Haiti, but will be careful how it proceeds before the court.



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Mitchell Denies PLP Conflict Claims

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The chairman said all members are on the same page and the party is more united since the 2017 election.

"We believe the organization is decided on its leadership, where it's headed, where it wants to go. If you look at the empirical evidence of the one contest at the very top

that turned out to be 807 to 341, that's a convincing victory," Mr. Mitchell explained.

"It says that the party is going in a very specific direction and I think that all the members will go forward in that direction."

He went further to refute reports published in the local daily about a civil war sparked within the opposition party.

"That's not so – that's a figment of their imagination. Of course, they'd want it to be that way. They also said that we don't have females elected and of course, females are throughout the system," Mr. Mitchell rebutted.

"We have vice chairs who were just elected. We have people who were just elected to the leadership council. Robyn Lynes, as

the deputy chair. So, that's not true either."

Mitchell cautioned of picking isolated quotes from individual members and turning them into sensational headlines, as it is a tactic for selling papers, but not an example of the reality within the party.

The party is currently trying to recruit persons to represent the party, especially in the St. Barnabas,

Centreville, and Marathon constituencies.

Mitchell, who is also a former Fox Hill MP, has put out a call to the public to get familiarized with neighbourhoods and with the election process.

The chairman continued, "We want the candidates who end up running for office for the Progressive Liberal Party to represent the full demo-

graphic of the country across the generations, so there's a mix of people who actually end up in the government.

"We think that one of the issues that faces this government is that there is too much inexperience. So they've just been but around, just trying to get hold of what is actually happening. So what we're trying to do is avoid that."

Firm Decision on Lighthouse Point

Continued from / PAGE 1...

company that is world renowned for its reputation on the environment, on employment matters and on labour issues," the tourism minister said.

"They've given us a commitment that they

are going to keep it low density. They are very mindful of the environment.

"This is Disney after all. They are not prepared to jeopardize their incredible reputation over a project like this and so we are very confi-

dent that if there is one company that could develop this property and do it with the environment in mind and being sensitive to environmental matters, Disney is that company."

When asked if he is concerned about the peti-

tion, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis told The Bahama Journal he has yet to actually see it.

The online petition was launched on July 15 when local environmentalists partnered with the New York based environment group

Waterkeepers Alliance.

Waterkeepers Alliance Executive Director Marc Yaggi recently called on Disney to do more than just go through a minimal government process in The Bahamas.

Disney, however, insisted it's only moving

forward with its plans if the company can do so in an environmentally responsible manner.

Disney plans to construct a \$400 million cruise port and entertainment facility at Lighthouse Point.

Work of BNT's Discovery Club Praised at their Leaders Symposium

Minister of the Environment and Housing the Hon. Romauld Ferreira congratulated the Bahamas National Trust (BNT) and said that the future and the future of Bahamian children will depend on the society's ability to adapt and change, to change the mindset of people.

"The Bahamas National Trust has a long history of pioneering the innovative educational programmes for young people," Minister Ferreira said during the BNT Discovery Club Leaders Symposium, held at SuperClubs Breezes, Cable Beach, July 29, 2019.

"Because you believe as we do that we will never have the change that we need, the change we want to see, the change that will bring about a better Bahamas – cleaner air and plastic-free oceans – unless we impact a critical mass of our young people," he added.

"I congratulate the Discovery Club, who have been on the front lines, as it were, since 1995 – on the front lines of a war which requires all hands on deck."

Minister Ferreira pointed out the role that the Discovery Club plays in helping its members to acquire the knowledge, values and skills needed to a respect for nature and the environment.

He said that he was well aware of the initiative's contributions, with 60 Discovery

Clubs on nine islands throughout The Bahamas. He also noted that his Ministry is doing its part.

"That is why we brought transformational change at the New Providence Sanitary Landfill, resolving once and for all the vexing issue of landfill fires," Minister Ferreira said.

"That is why we installed approximately one megawatt of renewable energy (solar) at the Thomas A. Robinson Stadium, with other installing at Anatol Rodgers and T. G. Glover (schools) slated to come on line before the end of the year.

"We know and understand our moral obligation as a Small Island Developing State to reduce greenhouse emissions, whether methane from landfills or carbon dioxide from fossil fuels."

Minister Ferreira pointed out that society could not accept inaction as a course of action, to maintain the "status quo" in the face of "the greatest threat to mankind's existence in a generation."

"There is more to come from the Ministry of the Environment and Housing, as we push forward with the ban on single-use plastics and Styrofoam, doing our part to combat microplastics," he said.

Minister Ferreira said that he could assure those in attendance that his Ministry would not rest until the remaining 10% of Marine Protected Areas (MPA)

are declared, which would raise the nation's total to 20% of its near-shore areas protected. He also noted that Bahamas National Trust Act Amendment is also a priority.

"This should give us hope, hope that we can put aside any differences we may have, and work together for a better tomorrow," Minister Ferreira said. "I want everyone in this room to know that the next generation is watching."

He pointed out that as he visited schools across The Bahamas as part of the Ministry's "Be a Hero" initiative, he can share that, without a doubt, young people were very concerned about their environment – as if, he noted, that they knew instinctively that something was wrong and their future was at stake.

Minister Ferreira stated that he believed, as those present did, that the "hour is upon us" and they must act together to ensure cleaner air, safer food and water, that would sustain the hopes and dreams of the next generation.

"Between the BNT and its Discovery Clubs and the Ministry of the Environment and Housing, we have found that common purpose," he said. "I encourage you all to draw strength from the fact that we are here to support you, to work with you, to put our shoulders to the wheel along side you as we build a better Bahamas."



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