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# The Bahama Journal

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VOL. 31 - NO. 111

MONDAY - JULY 8TH, 2019

75 CENTS

# SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTS PROMISED

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMSON  
 Journal Staff Writer

**M**oving forward, Prime Minister Dr. H u b e r t Minnis said the government will focus on ensuring that smaller companies have access to contracts that were previously monopolized by larger companies.

Dr. Minnis made this comment following his return from the Caribbean Community's 40th annual Heads of Government Meeting in St. Lucia.

"The only way smaller companies can grow is if they are given the opportunity to bid for larger contracts," Dr. Minnis said. "This is necessary if our people are to advance from poverty, to middle class, to wealth."

■ See page 4...

## PM MINNIS HAS BILATERAL TALKS WITH PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY



▶ Prime Minister Minnis met with Her Excellency Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, in the margins of the 40th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). (BIS Photo/Yontalay Bowe)

## 'Remove Politics from Independence'



▶ V. Alfred Gray, Former M.P.

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

With the country's 46th Independence anniversary on the horizon, former Progressive Liberal Party cabinet minister V. Alfred Gray wants to bring an end to the politicization of

Independence Day in The Bahamas, as he said it does more harm than good.

"Unless the leadership of the FNM and the PLP come together and bring this country under the

■ See page 4...

# Helicopter Black Box Recovered

## Crash Victims Identified

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMSON  
 Journal Staff Writer

The Air Accident Investigation Department confirmed yesterday that the flight and data records, black box, for the helicopter which crashed last week off Grand Cay, Abaco have been recovered.

According to AAID, the flight and data records will be shipped to the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington D.C. for analysis.

The aircraft, which crashed with seven persons onboard, was an Agusta SPA helicopter, registration N32CC.

"The wreckage has

■ See page 4...



▶ The remains of helicopter N32CC was pulled from waters off Grand Cay, Abaco. Seven persons were onboard and died when the helicopter crashed on July 4. (Photo/ Air Accident Investigation Department)

## Bahamians Celebrate National Pride Day

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT  
 Journal Staff Writer

Braving scorching temperatures, scores of Bahamians – young and the not-so-young – came together in Rawson and Parliament Squares on

Friday to celebrate National Pride Day, the kick off to the country's 46th Independence anniversary celebrations.

The ceremony was marked by the sensational performances of the

■ See page 8...

## \$32,000 Outstanding at D.C. Consulate Office

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

An audited report of The Bahamas Consulate Office in Washington D.C. indicated that over the two year period of July 1, 2016 to June 2018 more than \$32,600 remains outstanding. Four cheques totaled

this amount – three of which did not have a cheque number available.

The description indicated that the cheques were used for "unforeseen expenses regarding transportation to bust unveiling, hotel accommodation on behalf of the Office of

■ See page 8...



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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

# IDB Partners with UB on Gerace Research Institute Digitization Project

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is helping to fund a digitization project that aims to centralize data collected over the last 50 years from the rich and diverse ecosystem that surrounds the Gerace Research Institute (GRI) in San Salvador. GRI is part of the University of The Bahamas (UB) system.

Over the last five decades, national and international researchers have uncovered treasure troves of information. However, accessing the research has presented a challenge. Although some of this work has been published in either peer-reviewed journals or conference proceedings, much of it has yet to be properly disseminated.

As part of an ongoing IDB initiative which commenced in 2016, Support to Climate-Resilient Tourism Development in San Salvador, the IDB is providing \$35,000 to support the digitization project which UB is undertaking in five phases.

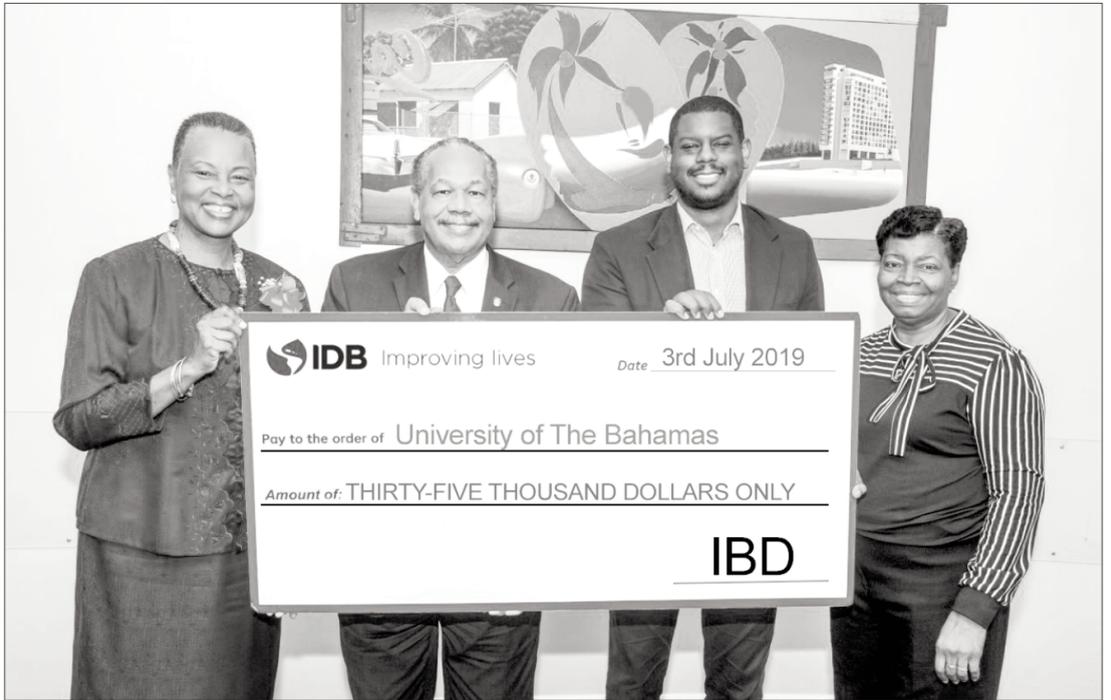
"This is going to help propel the research capabilities at Gerace," said

UB President Dr. Rodney D. Smith.

The GRI has been in operation as a scientific field station since 1971. Thousands of professors, researchers, and students have conducted research there to examine the natural world and the unique environment of the island of San Salvador. During that time, a wealth of information has been recorded in the fields of archaeology, climatology, geology, marine biology, natural history, and other areas.

"While I was there, I remember being told that there was information that was housed on floppy disks and an assortment of media that had no way of being processed and we knew that we wanted to be a part of this," noted Mr. Michael Nelson, COO at the IDB, who was pleased that the bank is able to support such an undertaking.

The IDB Country Strategy for The Bahamas 2018-2022 cites timely data collection and dissemination as a challenge. Successful implementation of the Gerace Research Institute project could serve as a pilot for system-



► (From L-R) UB Provost Dr. Linda Davis; UB President Dr. Rodney D. Smith; IDB Chief of Operations Mr. Michael Nelson and University Librarian Mrs. Berthamae Walker.

atic and regular scientific data collection on climate change and environmental indicators that could be replicated by other organizations in The Bahamas.

Data for tropical marine environments dating back to the early 1970's is available in the archives of the GRI. Given the changing climatic systems and eco-

logical disturbances that the world is currently experiencing, having access to pre-disturbance, or baseline data, is vital to measure the intensity of current impacts against their previous historical state.

Having this data publicly available will provide a unique glimpse into the

climate, environment, and biodiversity of a Caribbean island before global changes severely modified those conditions. This, in turn, will advance and promote current studies in climate change, overfishing, water resources, coral survivability, and other issues and inform mitigation strate-

gies.

The project will also have a capacity building component with other organizations having the opportunity to participate in a training workshop in San Salvador to share the methods being used to digitize the data at GRI and share them through an online platform.

## Man Shot on Gibbs Corner

BY LEAH COOPER  
Journal Staff Writer

Police are investigating a shooting incident that has left one male hospitalized.

According to police, shortly after 10 p.m. on Saturday, a man was walking on Gibbs Corner when he was approached by an armed man who shot him before running away.

Paramedics transported the injured man to hospital, where he is listed in stable condition.

Investigations are ongoing.

In other crime news, on Saturday, police recovered an illegal high powered firearm.

Police said shortly after

8 p.m., Anti-Gang and Firearms officers, acting on information, conducted a search of an abandoned building on West Street and Rupert Dean Lane and recovered an AK47 rifle which contained seven rounds of ammunition.

No arrests were made in this incident.

Investigations are ongoing.

Officers are also investigating two armed robberies and are also appealing to the public to assist with any information available.

Both of the shootings also took place this past Saturday.

In the first incident, according to police, short-

ly after 10 p.m., two men were sitting in front of a home on Ferdinand Avenue, when they were approached by two armed men, who robbed them of cash before running away.

In the second incident, according to police, shortly after 11 p.m., a man was standing outside a home on Bedrock Court, off Bacardi Road, when he was approached by two men, one armed with a firearm who held him at bay and robbed him of cash and other items, before getting into his white 2010 Chevy Silverado truck, license plate number AP9449, and speeding away.

Investigations into these matters are ongoing.

## Two Men Shot in GB

Two men were shot on Sunday in Grand Bahama.

According to police, shortly before 4 a.m., police were called to a business establishment on East Sunrise Highway

where it was reported that a lone gunman opened fire hitting two males.

One of the males sustained injuries to the upper body and the other to the lower body.

They were both transported to the Rand Memorial Hospital via Emergency Medical Services.

Both victims are listed in serious condition.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT**



**Government Digital Transformation to Strengthen Competitiveness: Component Coordinators / Components 1 and 2**

**Country:** The Commonwealth of The Bahamas  
**Supporting Institution:** Inter-American Development Bank  
**Programme:** Government Digital Transformation to Strengthen Competitiveness  
**Project Number:** BH-L1045  
**Loan Number:** LO-4549 / OC-BH  
**Sector:** Reform / Modernization of the State  
**Sub-Sector:** E-Government  
**Deadline:** 8 July 2019

**Post:** Component Coordinator  
**Reports to:** The Programme Coordinator

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), toward the cost of the Government Digital Transformation to Strengthen Competitiveness and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the consulting services of a Component Coordinator. The consulting services ("the Services") include serving as the technical lead for one Component of the Project and assisting the Programme Coordinator in ensuring that activities are addressed effectively so as to achieve project goals within the prescribed timeframe.

**Main responsibilities include:**

- Clearly envisioning and communicating what determines Component success and advising on methodology, infrastructure and applications, inter alia to achieve success
- Ensuring PEU compliance with the IDB/GoBh loan agreement w.r.t Component execution by developing, managing and executing the project plan, in phases, from inception to completion across The Bahamas using the MS Projects software tool.
- Preparing, updating, managing and controlling Component implementation by developing and/or determining cost, quality and risk assessments, project proposals and requirements, required documentation, effective use of the required resources (human, financial and technical), and performance measurements
- Communicating project status to stakeholders through presentations as needed fortnightly project performance reports, intermediate reports on phases and a final report on the individual projects and the Component.
- Supervising and evaluating PEU staff assigned to the component as well as designing and implementing a plan for the continuous transfer of skills to permanent staff to include skills' development and certification.
- Creating and maintaining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the job function as well as leading project exercises designed to adjust, organize and streamline project procedures/schedules/plans
- Ensuring effective coordination with, and reporting to, the Programme Manager with particular respect to the procurement, financial and project staff to ensure that disbursement projections are accurately updated in line with GoBh and IDB timelines.
- Leading and directing working groups developed to expedite project implementation.
- Participating in regular project evaluation and post mortem meetings to identify current and future bottlenecks/challenges/risks, successful and unsuccessful project elements and initiate resolutions.
- Managing organizational and process change in a planned coordinated and structured manner by including all stakeholders

**The successful candidate should have the following**

- A minimum of a Master's Degree in an Information and Communications Technology Field or Engineering. ICT certifications are required. Project Management Certification, PMP considered an asset. At least five (5) years working experience with project management within the private / public sector or with international development institutions. Sound working knowledge of project management techniques, tools and software including MS Projects.
- Proven People Management and Communication skills across diverse team members, vendors and contractors
- Ability to employ analytical and problem-solving capabilities to effectively prioritize and execute multiple tasks in a high-pressure environment and react to project adjustments and alternations promptly and efficiently in the context of shifting priorities, demands and timelines

The Office of the Prime Minister now invites eligible Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. Consultants will be selected in accordance with the National Competitive Bidding Selection procedures set out in the IDB's: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the IDB and it is open to all eligible bidders as defined in these policies. Consultants will be selected in accordance with the International Competitive Bidding Selection method set out in Selection and Contracting of Firms Policies. Further information can be obtained by E-mail: [opmodernizationunit@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:opmodernizationunit@bahamas.gov.bs) Submit all CVs and qualification documents must be submitted Re: **Component Coordinator** to E-mail: [opmodernizationunit@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:opmodernizationunit@bahamas.gov.bs) on or before 5:00 pm on 8 July 2019.

# GOT NEWS?

Please call The Bahama Journal's News TIP LINE at 356-7254 and let us know!

# Nation Can Only Advance with Common Purpose, Says Senate President

WEST END, Grand Bahama -- "Whatever the true meaning of national progress may be, or by whatever measuring stick used, one thing is certain, we can only advance as a nation when people are unified with one common purpose," said President of the Senate, Katherine Forbes-Smith.

The President's comments came during her address at the official ceremony for National Pride Day in West End on Friday, July 5, 2019.

Senator Smith said that Bahamians will not accomplish as much as they would like, nor advance as much as they would like, until all Bahamians come together and decide that what they desire for The Bahamas is the very best.

She noted that as individuals Bahamians all have their respective political and religious preferences and may differ on what each person's civil rights should be, but added that one thing for sure is that as Bahamians, each will feel the effects of the success or failure of the country.

Continuing her call for unity, she said: "After winning the

United States elections and becoming America's first black President, Barack Obama said 'to those Americans whose support I have yet to earn, I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices. I need your help and I will be your president too.'

"In essence, he was admonishing the American people that once the elections were over, it was time to move away from the everyday politics and instead lend a hand in moving America forward. I echo those sentiments for our beloved Bahamaland.

"I am home in West End, the capital of Grand Bahama, and I say we need that same civility to grow this community. We owe it to the children of this community. As I said at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church on Sunday past, as leaders our goal should be to leave this community better than we met it."

Making reference to the ceremony many years ago in Nassau during which time the country was honouring Oscar winner Sir Sydney Poitier and naming the Paradise Island bridge in his honour, Senator Smith noted some remarks that were made

by the Oscar award-winning actor.

During that event, Sir Sydney called on the young people to take The Bahamas to levels unimagined by their ancestors. He told school children gathered at the event that they were golden gifts and the future of The Bahamas. "Sir Sydney went on to tell the students 'you will design the country's future. You, and the education that you will provide to the culture, to the history, to the on-going strength of the country of your birth, will also be remembered.'

"I leave that with you today.

"As July 10th approaches and we raise our Flag on this National Flag Day, let us stand together in unity, faith and hope. And remember the differences we have as a people helped us to get to where we are today.

"Those differences did not stop our forefathers from coming together in the interest of The Bahamas and a people 46 years later. As we raise our Bahamian Flag today, we do so with pride, excitement and hope in our country, which we call home - The Bahamas."



► President of the Senate, Mrs. Katherine Forbes-Smith was the keynote speaker during Flag Raising Ceremonies in West End on Friday, July 5, 2019, which was a part of National Pride Day. The ceremony in West End was held simultaneously with ceremonies in Freeport, East End and Sweeting's Cay. (BIS Photo/Andrew Coakley)



► Senate President stands at attention as the Bahamian Flag was raised by Police Constable 3255 Wells to culminate Flag Day in West End on Friday, July 5, 2019. Joining Senator Smith were Administrator Christian Palacios and Chairman of the West End Township, Ken Barr.

## UWI Chancellor Robert Bermudez visits The Bahamas

Chancellor of The University of The West Indies (UWI), Robert Bermudez is scheduled to visit The Bahamas from 14-16 July 2019. Mr. Bermudez is the 6th Chancellor of The University, and highest office-holder in The UWI system. His seven-year term officially began on July 16, 2017. A national of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Bermudez has been an entrepreneur for over 40 years. He led the growth of his family-owned business to a regional business throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, and has enjoyed a distinguished career in business, serving as either Chairman or Board Director for several other corporate bodies in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean.

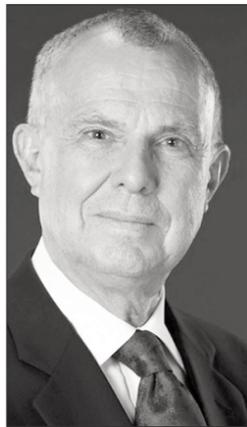
The Bermudez Group, which the new Chancellor led was started by brothers Jose Rafael and Jose Angel, who voyaged from Venezuela to Trinidad in the 1960's and launched a company that began producing "salt biscuits." Four generations later, the Bermudez Group has more than 3000 employees spread across the Americas. The Group is comprised of six manufacturing companies and two distribution companies, including Bermudez Biscuit Co., Holiday Snacks Ltd., Kiss Baking Co., The Jamaica Biscuit Co., The West India Biscuit Co and Alimentor Bermudez.

Mr. Bermudez's vision for the University outlines a keen sense of the mission, effectiveness, relevance and interdepend-

ence of academia and the economy.

The UWI Alumni Association, Bahamas Chapter Members will host Chancellor Bermudez's visit to the islands. During Chancellor Bermudez's visit, he will host a public discussion themed, UWI: One University, A Family of Graduates - Building Nations with a Global Impact. The event is aimed at students, and alumni of The UWI. His schedule also includes a tour of The UWI's Center of Hotel and Tourism Management; Open Campus and School of Clinical Medicine and Research, along with a series of courtesy visits with UWI Alumni and other University stakeholders.

For over 70 years The University of the West Indies has provided service and leadership to the Caribbean region and wider world. The UWI has evolved from a University College of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948 to an internationally respected, regional university with near 50,000 students and four campuses: Mona in Jamaica, St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago, Cave Hill in Barbados, and an Open Campus. As part of its robust globalization agenda, The UWI has established partnering centres with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, and Africa including the State University of New York (SUNY) - UWI Center for Leadership and Sustainable Development;



► Robert Bermudez

the Canada-Caribbean Studies Institute with Brock University; the Strategic Alliance for Hemispheric Development with Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES); the UWI-China Institute of Information Technology, the University of Lagos (UNILAG)-UWI Institute of African and Diaspora Studies and the Institute for Global African Affairs with the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The UWI offers over 800 certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options in Food & Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities & Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science & Technology, Social Sciences and Sport.

As the region's premier research academy, The UWI's foremost objective is driving the growth and development of the regional economy. The 2019 Times Higher Education ranked The UWI among the top 1,258 universities in world for 2019, and the 40 best universities in its

Latin America Rankings for 2018. The UWI was the only Caribbean-based university to make the prestigious lists.

The 2019 Times Higher Education ranking puts UWI in the elite band of the top 5% of

universities worldwide based on data showing that there are over 25,000 recognized universities, globally. From a field of over 100 Caribbean universities, UWI received the number one ranking, and in a field of over

2,000 universities in the Caribbean and Latin America, UWI ranked in the top 3%.

The Chancellor will be leaving The Bahamas on the second anniversary (16 July 2019) of his appointment.

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# SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTS PROMISED

Continued from / PAGE 1...

The prime minister's comments also follow the controversy surrounding former Minister of Financial Services, Trade and Industry and Immigration Brent Symonette's resignation, as many believed he resigned because of a contract awarded to his company.

Recently, the government has been under severe criticism over a number of contracts that companies in which Symonette is a shareholder would have received.

According to the Progressive Liberal Party, the contracts total approximately \$53 million.

Among them are the

new General Post Office at The Town Centre Mall and a number of contracts that have been awarded to Bahamas Hot Mix, including one for the resurfacing of runways at the Lynden Pindling International Airport.

Since Symonette's resignation, he explained publically that his decision to resign wasn't because of the contracts awarded.

Symonette said his decision to resign was a simple issue, as he wanted to resign before his 65th birthday.

However Prime Minister Minnis agreed that governments must find ways to empower people, by improving access to capital and

assets.

"[The Bahamas] is on the right track when it comes to providing free education at the tertiary level, but we must find a way for smaller companies to access more opportunities to grow their businesses," the prime minister said.

## PM Joins CARICOM's Mission to Haiti

Also following the Caribbean Community's Heads of Government Meeting in St. Lucia, Dr. Minnis announced that he will be a part of a CARICOM prime ministerial fact-finding mission to Haiti to inform regional leaders on the situation in that country.

CARICOM leaders are concerned about the esca-

lation of violence in Haiti. The fact-finding mission will also include the prime ministers of St. Lucia and Jamaica.

Dr. Minnis returned to The Bahamas on Saturday following discussions with regional leaders that covered such issues as tourism, finance, blacklisting, the Caribbean economy and the Small Island Development States (SIDS) Resilience Foundation.

On the issue of blacklisting, CARICOM leaders agreed to refine their strategy and approach by making greater efforts to secure a more collaborative relationship with the European Union and the United States on tax governance and related matters.

Caribbean leaders heard from chairman of the CARICOM Commission on the Economy (CCE) Professor Avinash Persaud, who stressed the need for CARICOM countries to develop more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable development.

The prime minister also held bilateral talks on climate change and early education with the Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg, who also addressed CARICOM leaders as a special guest of the meeting.

The prime minister took part in a working dinner between heads of government and United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who addressed the opening ceremony on

July 3, and Prime Minister Solberg.

The Prime Minister's Delivery Units of The Bahamas and St. Lucia also took part in a learning exchange.

Prime Minister Minnis led a delegation to the conference which included Minister of Foreign Affairs Darren Henfield, Minister of Tourism Dionisio D'Aguilar, The Bahamas Ambassador to CARICOM Reuben Rahming, Water and Sewerage Corporation Executive Chairman Adrian Gibson, Senior Policy Advisor Joshua Sears, COO of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit Viana Gardiner and Ministry of Tourism Director General Joy Jibrilu.

# Helicopter Black Box Recovered Crash Victims Identified

Continued from / PAGE 1...

been shipped to the United States where it will be laid out, documented and cataloged at the facility to verify all of the craft was recovered," an AAID statement read.

"Following confirmation of the complete craft at the site, analysis and further documentation including sampling and removal of certain parts or components will occur, where these parts or components will be sent to other facilities (as appropriate) for further analysis under more controlled conditions.

"Assisting in the investigation includes representatives from Italy - State of Design and Manufacture of the craft, Canada - State of manufacture of the engine, the USA - State of Registry and the Bahamas - State of Occurrence."

According to AAID, it is too early to determine cause or contributing factors of the deadly helicopter crash.

Since the crash, police have released the identities of the seven victims who lost their lives.

The victims are pilot Geoffrey LeePainter, of Barnes Staple, United Kingdom, Kameron Nicole Cline, of Washington, D.C.,

Brittney Layne Searson, of Palm Beach, Florida, Jillian Nicole Clarke, of Los Angeles, California, Davis Jude, of Kentucky, Wykyle Delaney Lee, of Washington, D.C. and Christopher Cline, of New York.

International reports indicated that 60-year-old Christopher Cline was a billionaire coal magnate from West Virginia. Twenty-two-year-old Kameron was his daughter and the other young women were her friends.

Their bodies of the victims were brought to New Providence on Friday.

According to police, the helicopter took off from Big Grand Cay around 2 a.m. on July 4 en route to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The missing helicopter was reported to police around 2:53 p.m. on July 4 after it did not arrive at its destination.

Police and residents of Grand Cay later discovered the aircraft overturned in 16 feet of water off Grand Cay.

The bodies of four females and three males were retrieved from the helicopter.

The Department of Civil Aviation and the Royal Bahamas Police Force, along with AAID, continue their investigations.



The victims have been identified as pilot Geoffrey LeePainter, of Barnes Staple, United Kingdom, Kameron Nicole Cline (Far Right), of Washington, D.C., Brittney Layne Searson (Middle), of Palm Beach, Florida, Jillian Nicole Clarke, of Los Angeles, California, Davis Jude, of Kentucky, Wykyle Delaney Lee, of Washington, D.C. and billionaire Christopher Cline (Left), of New York.



# 'Remove Politics from Independence'

Continued from / PAGE 1...

umbrella of The Bahamas, my grandchildren will probably never know The Bahamas that I knew in the early 70s and 80s," Mr. Gray said.

"Those men and women had a knack for bringing people together. Now, I believe that the UBPF factions of our country still do not celebrate

independence. When you go to Clifford Park, you have 15 percent of the UBPF attending. They don't come. They must be still hurt that we got independence through Sir Lynden, but this is our country. It's about time they let go of that and be a part of the celebrations."

Mr. Gray, who was a guest on Love 97's Jones and Co. radio talk show,

asked then if independence is a matter of race.

He also insisted that someone has to be bold enough to say that from the halls of parliament.

"Even the police force doesn't have a good mix of white and black people. The black people are only working, it seems, to protect the white man, but he doesn't want to join the force," Mr. Gray said.

"Look at the mix. You may find one in every thousand. Something is wrong with that! Are they too good to be police officers and prison officers and immigration officers? They refuse to mix and mingle at that level."

Despite retiring from frontline politics, Mr. Gray said this is one time he wishes he was still in parliament.

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