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# The Bahama Journal

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# PM Told 'Look Inward'

BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

**P**rogressive Liberal Party Chairman Fred Mitchell said the Free National Movement should take a good look at itself before lecturing the PLP about governance, as Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis should find a remedy to bring healing to the many unresolved national issues.

"Dr. Minnis who purported to have all of the solutions while in opposition, physician, heal thyself," Mr. Mitchell said yesterday while blasting the prime minister.

Last Friday, during the Torchbearers Youth Association's Convention, Dr. Minnis

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▶ PLP Chairman Frdd Mitchell

## PM: 'Load Shedding Crisis'

Acknowledging that consistent load shedding throughout New Providence is a 'crisis,' Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis toured the Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) Clifton Pier and Baillou Hills generation plants on Sunday.

During the tour, the prime minister was briefed by BPL CEO Whitney Heastie and the Minister of Public Works Desmond Bannister on the progress of work being carried out to return consistent power to the

■ See page 6...

## Gov't Approves Carnival Development

### PM Announces More Economic Opportunities

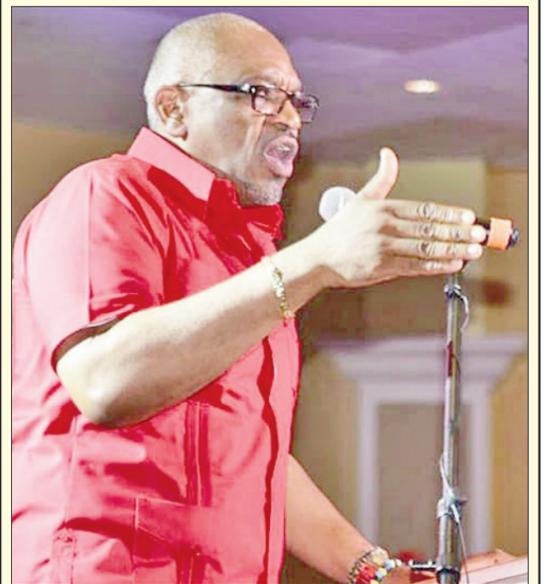
BY LEAH COOPER  
 Journal Staff Writer

In his announcement of a number of developments across the country, Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis provided an update on the Carnival project that would bring some economic relief to

Grand Bahama.

"This evening, I am pleased to inform residents of Grand Bahama, and the entire Bahamas that the Carnival Port Development is going full speed ahead," Dr. Minnis said last Friday,

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▶ Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis announced several economic opportunities for Bahamians during his address at the Torchbearers Youth Convention last Friday. (Photo/Free National Movement)

## Gov't Clarifies BPSU Negotiation

BY DEANDRE WILLIAMSON  
 Journal Staff Writer

Following a number of misleading voice notes, the Ministry of Finance clarified information concerning negotiations with the Bahamas Public Services Union (BPSU).

According to the Ministry of Finance in a statement released yesterday, the voice notes that were circulated purports to reflect a meeting held at the Ministry of Finance last Thursday

The meeting was held between the Ministry of Finance, the Public Treasury Department, the Ministry of Public Service (MPS) and the BPSU.

The statement confirmed that a meeting was convened at the Ministry of Finance following an earlier meeting between the prime minister and the BPSU, during which the matter was referred to the ministry.

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## PM VISITS BPL POWER PLANT



▶ Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis toured the Clifton Pier and Baillou Hills power stations on Sunday, August 18th, 2019. (BIS Photos/Yontalay Bowe)

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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

# 'Choose Immigrants Wisely,' Says McKenzie

BY LEAH COOPER  
Journal Staff Writer

Torchbearers Youth Association First Vice President Gabrielle McKenzie suggested that the government should learn from other countries and choose its immigrants wisely.

Ms. McKenzie shared her views on immigration yesterday during Love

97's Jones and Co. radio talk show.

"Canada only accepts the best and the brightest. We go around and compare different countries. While their demographics may be a little different, we look at different policies that we can possibly take and pull from," she said.

"They don't just take anyone. Anyone isn't just

going to drop on the doorstep of Canada and say, 'Listen, I'm going to be a Canadian.' They want the brightest and the best and people that will impact and build that country up. I believe that should be the same case here."

Ms. McKenzie said while she sympathizes with the plight of illegal immigrants in the country,

she said Bahamians ultimately fund their citizenship endeavors without knowledge of what they bring to the proverbial table.

"We don't know if they are going to be contributing to society. Are they going to be the doctors that we need? Are they going to fill the teachers gap that we need? Will they be the nurses that we

need?" she said.

"Will they contribute to the crime aspect of the economy? I'm not saying that they do."

As for those born in The Bahamas to foreign parents, Ms. McKenzie suggested revamping the process to accommodate those entering the job market, as the law requires these people to apply for citizenship at

the age of 18.

"Persons are saying they have already been here and they have to wait until they are 18. Then they say that they don't get accepted until 21, which keeps them from finding a job," she explained.

"Maybe that process needs to be looked at for that grouping of persons."

## Vendors Ready for Back to School

BY EARYEL BOWLEG  
Journal Staff Writer

With the reopening of school less than three weeks away, vendors are lined up at RM Bailey Park with loads of school supplies ready for sale.

The vendors have paid a fee of nearly \$500 to set up shop selling uniforms, underwear, hair accessories and schoolbags.

Despite being just a stone throw away from Kelly's and John Bull, Evans Uniform Marketing Manager Khashan Culmer believes her store, along with the other vendors can compete with the big department store.

"We don't bring in anything from foreign. One of the things you could find with jumpers and skirts that are brought in from

China is that after a few washes they shrink. Also our prices are what differentiate from our competitors," Culmer said.

"One of the things our customers say to us year after year is that the skirt and jumper was already pressed and can be worn on the first day of school."

Although Culmer acknowledges that Bahamians and the govern-

ment have started to support small owned local businesses, Anna Sophia Armbrister, owner of Anna's Pleasure, believes Bahamian's are apprehensive about buying from vendors.

"A lot of them will come and say, 'Is this bag real' and then I'll say to them, 'Did you ask John Bull if their bags are real' because you can't tell the differ-

ence," Armbrister said.

"Why would you come to me as a small business person and ask me if my bag is real, but you would not to Land and pay whatever they charge. They would not query the big merchandise prices."

Some school supplies are duty free, but there is still the 12 percent value added tax that vendors, like the owner of "I Want It," is

feeling the pinch from.

"It affects us because we obviously, our inventories are imported. So it would affect us in that we pay VAT on everything and we import," the owner of I Want It said.

"We try not to pass that on to the customer. That's something that we absorb in cost of our business without passing it on to customer."

# \$1 Million for Preschool Development

## Crown Land for Preschools

BY LEAH COOPER  
Journal Staff Writer

Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis this past Friday announced that the government is providing \$1 million through the Small Business Development Centre and the Bahamas Entrepreneurial Venture Fund for the development of preschools.

He added that this funding will support equity and loans up to

\$150,000 to qualifying educational institutions that offer preschool education and that are participating in the Ministry of Education's Universal Preschool program.

"These sums will provide private preschool operators the means to expand their facilities, to meet the demand for preschool seats that will be created by this program," Dr. Minnis said.

"Listen to me carefully. We will also promote

access to crown land for the development of preschools. This is especially important for our Family Islands, where education entrepreneurs, who meet the requirements and standards of the Ministry of Education, will be able to build preschools duty free."

The prime minister's comments came during his address at the 2019 torchbearers Youth Convention.

# Gov't Clarifies BPSU Negotiation

Continued from / PAGE 1...

"The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the government's ability to finance a payment to public officers for back to school preparations. The government sought to negotiate a good faith resolution which would be presented to Cabinet for approval. The union proposed a lump sum payment of \$1,200 for the benefit of public officers. The total value of payments was estimated by the government at approximately \$20 million," the statement read.

"The BPSU was advised that any proposal emerging from the meeting would be subject to the final approval of the

Cabinet and availability of financial resources to accomplish it in the time-frame being sought. The Ministry of Finance could not authorize or make payment without exploring the options and challenges such a payment would present and before receiving Cabinet approval.

"Considering the government's cash flow needs, the Ministry of Finance offered to recommend to Cabinet, splitting the payment into two lump sums of \$600 each, in August and December, 2019. The union refused to consider the offer, indicating \$1,200 was already a concession. The BPSU was advised that due to

the scale of the funding requirements, meeting an end of month demand would be a challenge in all instances."

According to the Ministry of Finance, while it is true that the BPSU was not encouraged by the recommended action, it was made clear at the end of the meeting that the minister would present the results of the meeting and the positions taken by both negotiating sides at the earliest meeting of Cabinet for a decision on August 20.

"The government stands by its commitment to work with BPSU towards a satisfactory long term agreement," the statement read.

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# 'The Brenton Story' Honours Man Shot by Police



► 'The Brenton Story' art collection remembers the life of 18-year-old Brenton Smith, who was shot by police in 2009. (Photo/The Brenton Story)

BY EARYEL BOWLEG  
Journal Staff Writer

It's been 10 years since 18-year-old Brenton Smith was tragically shot by police. Now, his family is trying to heal from the wounds in an art collection called "The Brenton Story: Through Our Eyes".

The art collection displays an array of paintings at the Central Bank Art Gallery depicting his brief

life and the impact of his untimely death. It is the brainchild of renowned Bahamian artist Timothy Nottage and Hector Smith, Brenton's father.

"Eight years ago, Mr. Timothy Nottage, well he reached out to us and was talking about kids being involved and seeing what's going on in the community and seeing what they can do, so he read our story. He used it as inspiration for his

group of young artists' students," Mr. Smith explained.

For the past year, the family has done a number of events largely focused on youth initiative. The family held a chess championship, a primary school basketball classic and recently a martial arts tournament - all of Brenton's hobbies.

After the shooting, the Smith's spent years trying

to clear their son's tainted reputation. Police were looking for two armed robbers, who robbed City Market food store on Village Road when they shot the teen as he walked towards the store.

Initial reports painted the 18-year-old as the robber until he was cleared of any wrongdoing. Police officer Leslie Munreo was found by the jurors of Coroner's Court to have acted in self-

defense.

"Lies from the beginning and these are things that were documented. These are things that shown not be have been true and no one has step forward to say, 'Hey, you know what, we're sorry'. Nobody, it's 10 years," Mr. Smith said.

Now the family wants their son's legacy to be defined by the unity Brenton was known for.

"He cared about people.

The majority of his friends were disenfranchised kids people," Mr. Smith said.

"We only doing a part of what we think he would have done. What is so sad is what he could have done over the years and that is so sad. We need to embrace our youth. We need to show our youth that their life has value and that there is justice."

The collection runs August 16 - 30.

# Gov't Approves Carnival

Continued from / PAGE 1...

during his address at the Torchbearers Youth Convention.

"Grand Bahama the change you asked for is about to happen!"

The Central Bank of The Bahamas' Quarterly Economic and Financial Developments (QED) report indicated last month that HAL Properties

Limited, the owner of Carnival Corporation, was sanctioned to develop an entertainment facility on Half Moon Cay.

This also included plans to build more facilities like a cruise pier.

These projects and renovations are expected to cost \$80 million.

On that note, the prime minister said, "Tonight, it is also my pleasure to report

to the nation that the Half Moon Cay development project is also proceeding swiftly."

Within a few weeks, Dr. Minnis added that there will be a major economic announcement for New Providence that "will provide more economic opportunities for Bahamian businesses, more jobs for construction workers and more long-term jobs."

In an effort to fully revamp the Over-the-Hill area, the prime minister also announced that the government is aiming to provide new water connections to homes in the Over-the-Hill community without one.

He said, "It is estimated that this amounts to approximately 1,065 homes. The estimated cost for each home is approxi-

mately \$740 plus, a \$115 security deposit. The total estimated cost for this component of the project for new metered connections is approximately \$900,000."

Additionally, the prime minister said new water mains are required along a number of streets to facilitate these connections.

He added that this will cost approximately

\$230,000.

"I am very pleased that the government has secured donations for both the new water connections and the new water mains that will total approximately \$1 million," he said.

The Water and Sewerage Corporation, he said, has made its first assessment and is finalizing a strategy to execute this project.



► Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis is captured with a group of supporters after his address at the Torchbearers Youth Convention last Friday. (Photo/Free National Movement)

# PM Told Look 'Inward'

Continued from / PAGE 1...

lectured the PLP on other issues including democracy and vision.

In his address, the prime minister said the PLP only seeks power to enrich itself and the FNM is continuing to confront the culture of corruption.

Dr. Minnis said, "Though previous governments, including the last PLP government, promised to reduce crime and murder, it is this FNM administration that has reduced crime over the

last two years, but we still have more work to do to make The Bahamas safer and to secure a better future for all. The pain and suffering of the victims of crime must continue to propel us all to relentlessly and aggressively combat crime and violence."

Mitchell, who wasted no time responding to the prime minister, suggested that Dr. Minnis "try to keep the lights on" and "take a good look in the mirror" before advising the PLP.

The PLP chairman also

pointed out the national challenges he said was "poorly handled" by the Minnis administration.

"The prime minister whose fake youth convention couldn't fill the hall, the prime minister who could not be heard by 50 percent of the population because BPL had us all plunged into darkness, the prime minister in a country where more people are unemployed than when he came to office, the prime minister where the hospital has no beds, no medicine and where elective

surgery had to be canceled," Mr. Mitchell replied.

"The prime minister, who raised taxes on the Bahamian people by 60 percent after coming to office and (after) saying he would do the opposite, the prime minister whose government will cost us \$17 million in penalties for cancelling a contract to get a post office and then turns around and gives a contract to his minister together in aggregate, \$53 million in public monies (to compa-

nies owned by the minister and his family).

"A prime minister who promised free University of The Bahamas education which was free already, a prime minister who presided over a fake signing ceremony for Oban and it wasn't until The Guardian found him out that he fessed up, a prime minister that cannot dismiss two rogue public servants who are clearly unfit for office because of their racist and abusive language and conduct.

"A prime minister who

has the distinction of being dismissed by his parliamentary colleagues as leader of the opposition and in the process being denounced as someone whose word cannot be trusted, a prime minister whose ministers have been judicially condemned for their role in a case against Frank Smith."

Mr. Mitchell also called on the prime minister to "stop talking, fix the problems confronting us, and govern the country".

# Eye-Opening Aquaponics Experience for GB Campers

Twenty-one young people were part of an Aquaponics Summer Discovery Programme held recently at Sir Jack Hayward High School, where they were introduced to new advances in agricultural science and technology. The students learned about aspects of farm operations and engaging in best practices

in aquaponics from experts and trained professionals.

Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Hon. Michael Pintard, on Friday, August 16, encouraged the summer campers to become a part of the agricultural industry where they could become self-employed, stating: "we know

beyond a shadow of a doubt that agriculture and marine resources hold opportunities for decent work for decent pay, as well as ownership.

"New varieties, new technologies such as grow houses, green houses, what we call 'climate-smart agriculture' -- being able to protect what you are growing so that

you and those who follow you are not discouraged when there are catastrophes that can in a single day wipe out years of investment -- aquaponics is a critical part of the future thrust of The Bahamas in agriculture."

He said an upcoming Agriculture Cadet Programme will be designed for young people to learn various areas of agriculture and eventually marine resources.

It is hoped that at the end of the programme, participants will be able to obtain scholarships to study locally and internationally.

According to Minister Pintard, approximately 90 per cent of the food consumed in the country is imported, and many of the items can be grown locally with vacant land available on islands like Andros and Grand Bahama.

"The challenge to you

is, if you truly wish to celebrate Independence, a part of our independence is food security," he said.

"This area could make a huge impact if most of what is being consumed by the millions of visitors to the country is grown locally. That way, most of the money would be kept at home."

Following the brief ceremony, students were presented with certificates of participation.



► Jaden Simmons, a 10th grade student of Tabernacle Baptist Academy, said the Aquaponics summer programme is unique. Even though she wants to become a Marine Biologist, the programme helped her by exposing a new branch of science she has never experienced before. Jaden is pictured with programme facilitator Charles Wayne Hall and Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Hon. Michael Pintard. (BIS Photo/Lisa Davis)



► During the closing ceremony of the 1st Aquaponics Summer Discovery Programme at Sir Jack Hayward High School on August 16, 2019 Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Hon. Michael Pintard announced an Agriculture Cadet Programme will be introduced to expose young people to all areas of agriculture and eventually marine resources. (BIS Photo/Lisa Davis)