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75 CENTS

Ex-Prime Ministers Offer Help

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

Former Prime Ministers Hubert Ingraham and Perry Christie are standing in solidarity, stressing that the task of restoring Abaco after the devastation left behind by Hurricane Dorian is too great for one man or one government.

In fact, former Prime Minister Christie said he told Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis that he

would be overwhelmed by this task.

As a result, they're calling on the prime minister to source the knowledge of those who preceded him to assist.

On this point, Christie suggested Ingraham be given the duty of leading the charge as he represented the island for 35 years.

An independent body, he added, should also be formed to handle this matter.

The same, both former prime ministers said,

should be done for Grand Bahama which they both said isn't as badly damaged as Abaco.

"One man reporting to the prime minister with two permanent secretaries cannot do it. This is too great a task ahead," Christie said.

"We need to establish a unit. I call it an authority with legislative authority that reports to the prime minister, so therefore, there is no question about

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► Former Prime Ministers Perry Christie and Hubert Ingraham during a press conference yesterday, where they offered their assistance to the government following the deadly devastation of Hurricane Dorian. (Journal Photo)

Ingraham: 'Death Toll in the Hundreds'

Former PM Clarifies Mandatory Evacuation

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

In Abaco alone, former Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said the death toll from Hurricane

Dorian is in the hundreds, although the government announced that the death toll stands at 50.

Mr. Ingraham revealed the high death toll yesterday during a press confer-

ence following his trip to Abaco to assess the damages left by the hurricane.

While sharing his sentiments on mandatory evac-

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2,500 Missing After Hurricane Dorian

BY EARYEL BOWLEG
 Journal Staff Writer

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) announced on Wednesday that 2,500 individuals are registered missing on the government's register.

During the daily press

conference at the agency's headquarters, NEMA Spokesperson Carl Smith said the list is compiled based on reports of who is missing and had not been checked against the government's records of persons who are in shelters or

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PM Appoints Hurricane Relief Team

BY BERTHONY MCDERMOTT
 Journal Staff Writer

The drastic devastation left by Hurricane Dorian has forced Prime Minister Dr. Hubert to appoint individuals to spearhead relief efforts.

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5,500 EVACUATED: NEW SHELTER OPENS



► Hundreds of Abaco residents await evacuation following Hurricane Dorian. (Journal Photo)

BY EARYEL BOWLEG
 Journal Staff Writer

More than 5,500 persons were evacuated to New Providence, according to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), which announced that another shelter opened in the capital to accommodate the growing number of evacuees.

The Enoch Beckford Memorial Auditorium on Carmichael Road opened its door to 46 evacuees who were left displaced following the destruction of Hurricane Dorian in Abaco and Grand

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ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED TO READ IN THE MORNING

Another BPL Fire

BY LEAH COOPER
Journal Staff Writer

Firefighters yesterday responded to a blaze at Bahamas Power and Light's (BPL) Blue Hills Station.

According to Chief Superintendent Walter Evans, officer in charge of Fire Services, officers received information about the fire shortly before 1 p.m.

Eight minutes later, he said, they met thick, black smoke billowing from an Aggreko generator.

"Fire officers immediately set up operation and began an aggressive attack. They were able to extinguish the fire," Chief Superintendent Evans said.

"There were several generators that were in a nearby facility, but none of them received any fore-

damages. So, we're grateful for that."

He said an investigation has since been launched to determine the cause of this blaze.

Chief Superintendent added that the generator has suffered significant damage. However, he cannot confirm whether it was totally destroyed.

As residents continue to cope with increased power outages across the capital,

Chief Superintendent Evans advised the public to exercise extreme caution when operating generators.

"We want to say to persons that they need to ensure the generators are not to be fueled while they're hot. Persons ought to ensure that persons who would be conducting the wiring are trained and certified," he said.

"We also want to ensure

that persons do not have generators stored on the inside of facilities like in their bedrooms where carbon monoxide, which is a deadly gas emitted from fossil fuels, is present."

He also said there have been several generator-related fires in the past, but not to the extent where there is major damage.

"We want to ensure that life is preserved, particularly with the load shed-

ding exercises over the next few days or months ahead," he explained.

BPL issued a statement confirming that the fire reportedly damaged a 1-megawatt rental generator owned and operated by Aggreko.

The company added that it does not anticipate that the loss of this rental unit will significantly impact the need for load shedding.

Ex-Prime Ministers

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the prime minister's influence and control, but that has the capacity to make quick decisions, have the capacity to import into the authority expertise that may not be in government."

The Bahamian people, Christie said, are bewildered, despaired, deeply concerned and there appears to be deep uncertainty as to who they should turn to.

Christie added that while touring the devastation in Abaco yesterday, he and Ingraham encountered some young men.

The way the young men spoke of their former member of parliament, Christie said, gave credence to his recommen-

dations and not accepting their advice would be unwise.

"It is foolish not to recognize the strength of what I have recommended. It would be foolish because at the end of the day, results are influenced heavily by people's belief that restoration is on the way, that I can be helped and you are going to have to be involved in determining duty free regimes," Christie said.

While they both offered their assistance to Dr. Minnis, Ingraham said Dr. Minnis is not carving out a role for him in this process.

He emphasized though that Dr. Minnis needs to pull on the resources available to him.

"To pull on those resources and let me just

say one point that may perceive criticism and if it is that's too bad, too sad. Some people have the views that listen, 'I have this job, so no, I don't need any help from you, I got it,'" Ingraham said.

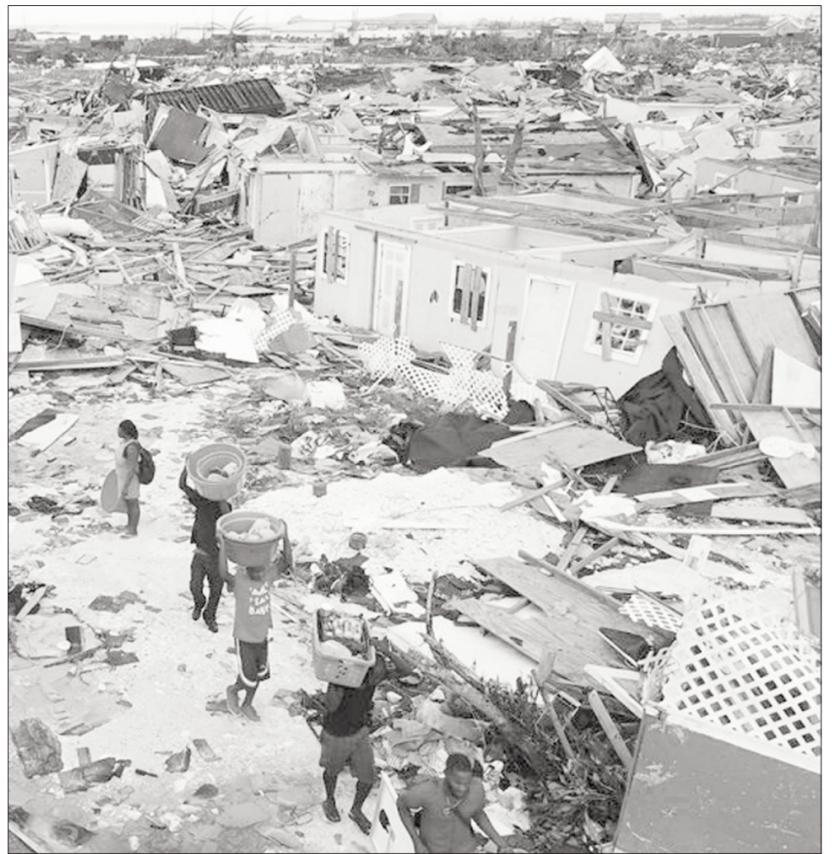
"It's big. It's bigger than any one man. It's bigger than any one government. It's bigger than any one group and it's our country, all of our country. So we all have a duty to support."

Christie added, "If he does not respond positively in this crisis in the way that we have said, unfortunately history will judge him harshly in that regard. He is in one of a kind situation."

Still, they both said they are willing to assist where necessary.



► Former Prime Ministers Perry Christie and Hubert Ingraham tour Abaco on Wednesday to assess the damages of Hurricane Dorian. (Photo/Progressive Liberal Party)



► Devastating scenes of a destroyed Abaco after Hurricane Dorian made landfall.

Ingraham: 'Death Toll in the Hundreds'

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uations and clarifying what the proposed legislation will mean, Ingraham said The Bahamas is not accustomed to having substantial deaths from hurricanes.

However, mandatory evacuations can save lives.

"Let us get something straight, all mandatory evacuation means that the government says you

must move. If you do not move, at a certain point in time, we are not going to come and collect you. But we can't make you move," Mr. Ingraham said.

"How can the government pass a law that says, 'If you don't come, I am going to arrest you, handcuff you and carry you where, to a shelter and have the police watch you or take you to Fox Hill Prison?'"

"So mandatory evacuation means the government can say move, we urge you to move, if you don't move, we won't be able to come and get you after a certain time."

He further noted that the notion that persons will be forcibly removed from their homes is not going to happen.

"To be more proactive in reaching out to people and getting them to move, I think the Abaco experi-

ence will oblige people to know that their lives will be at risk in certain types of hurricanes," Mr. Ingraham said.

"I think that is going to be another big step forward in people being given more effective responses."

Mr. Ingraham added, "Of course the government has tremendous influence and authority without the use of force just by virtue of being the

government. So the government can maximize the number of people who evacuate from a place."

Attorney General Carl Bethel told reporters that the legislation allowing for mandatory evacuations would be brought to the parliament in October.

Mr. Ingraham insisted that persons, when asked to evacuate, must have safe places to evacuate to.

"For instance, take Marsh Harbour, take

Abaco, there were no safe places to evacuate them to, other than the government clinic and the government administrative building," he said.

"There were no other safe places to evacuate them to and they took advantage of those two buildings. They maximized the space in them. They came in there by the thousands and what not, but where else were you going to put them?"

2,500 Missing After Hurricane Dorian

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have been evacuated.

He added that the database processing is underway.

"Some individuals who

evacuated from Abaco and Grand Bahama have not yet registered with Social Services. We encourage them to do so at the Department of Rehabilitative or Welfare

Services," Smith said.

"Some of the government lists still have to be converted into a digital format to allow for more effective crosschecking. As we are able to cross-

reference our datasets we will be able to inform family members and reunite survivors with loved ones.

"At the shelters, we are facilitating individuals

who are able to reach out directly to family and friends to let them know where they are."

Smith added that NEMA will provide regular updates to the public

on how the missing persons register is being managed.

The public is able to register a missing person by calling the Missing Persons Hotline.



In the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian many of the missing are feared dead under debris. Search and recovery efforts are underway, but officials are skeptical that those missing could still be alive after the deadly storm hit Abaco and Grand Bahama. (Photo Mario Bello/Reuters)

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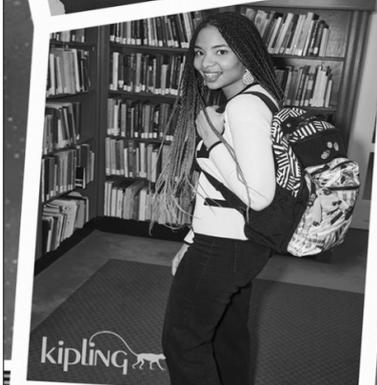
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PM Appoints Hurricane Relief Team



► Prime Minister Minnis (fourth right in group photo) and persons helping with hurricane relief are pictured as they left for Abaco yesterday. (BIS Photos/Yontalay Bowe)

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During his televised national address yesterday evening, Dr. Minnis announced that Permanent Secretary Jack Thompson and Bahamas Aquatics Federation President Algernon Cargill have been appointed as hurricane relief coordinators for Abaco.

In addition, the prime minister said Senate President K. Forbes Smith

will lead restoration in Grand Bahama as a part of the recovery efforts.

He added that a national day of mourning will be held where the Bahamian flag would be flown at half mast on all public buildings.

Dr. Minnis said the government is working to eliminate the red tape that frustrated many that wanted to help in restorations efforts but couldn't.

"We are fixing these

problems and bringing in extra personnel and capacity to direct the air from private citizens, corporate donors, international agencies and foreign governments," he said.

"Let me also note that because of the need for coordination and to get assistance to Abaco and Grand Bahama as effectively as possible, there is the need to follow certain procedures."

Dr. Minnis further

explained that restrictions had to be placed on flights flying in the disaster zones to eliminate the possibility of in air collisions.

The prime minister is encouraging those who want to donate to give directly to the National Emergency Management Agency or a reputable charitable group like The Bahamas Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

He added that an

accounting firm will have oversight of the funds donated.

Further, some 900 Royal Bahamas Police Force and Royal Bahamas Defence Force officers have been sent to Abaco to maintain law and order.

"We are also being assisted by the defence force officers from CARICOM which when fully deployed will total approximately 220 security personnel," the prime

minister said.

"Because of the massive devastation, The Bahamas could not and cannot face this tragedy alone.

"We have mobilized the entire government to meet this challenge in partnership with the international community."

The prime minister again stressed the need for Bahamians to come together and not spread rumors on social media.

5,500 EVACUATED: NEW SHELTER OPENS

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Bahama.

The Kendal GL Isaacs National Gymnasium has a growing population of evacuees with two tents holding nearly 150 persons and a third tent is in the process of being

added.

Director of Social Services Lillian Quant-Forbes said on Wednesday, at NEMA's press conference, that the department is trying to meet the daily demands of new evacuees.

"Persons are constantly

coming in and we're having to quickly prepare as many shelters as we can. We had some challenges meeting the demand because many of our shelters were not available to us for various reasons, but we've moved beyond on that," Quant-Forbes said.

"Persons are now coming to assist us as well, in terms of our private public partnerships and so that is one thing we're appreciative of.

"I would have met, just before I came here this morning with a church group who's offering to

assist us with identifying apartments or homes that are available for persons who are in the shelters to move to because a shelter is not a permanent home."

Before the new addition, there were nine active shelters which include the Fox Hill Community

Center, Calvary Haitian Baptist Church, The Salvation Army on Mackey Street, Pilgrim Baptist Church and the Bahamas Baptist Gym.

If not at a shelter, some of the evacuees are staying with relatives and friends.



► Many Abaco residents are packing up what little they have left and hoping for better elsewhere. (Journal Photos)

