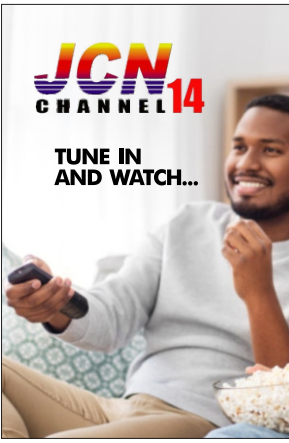




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FOCUS ON YOUNG INNOVATORS

BY MAKEIRA TUCKER
Journal Staff Writer

The government knows that young people will be the ones to take The Bahamas forward so several initiatives have been launched to allow them to succeed. The Young Innovators Club is one of those initiative and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with the Ministry for Grand Bahama launched the pilot for the Young Innovators Club at the Margaritaville Resort on Thursday morning.

The Young Innovators Club is an initiative that focuses on giving students opportunities to develop practical solutions through technology, entrepreneurship, environmental innovation and in other modern fields.

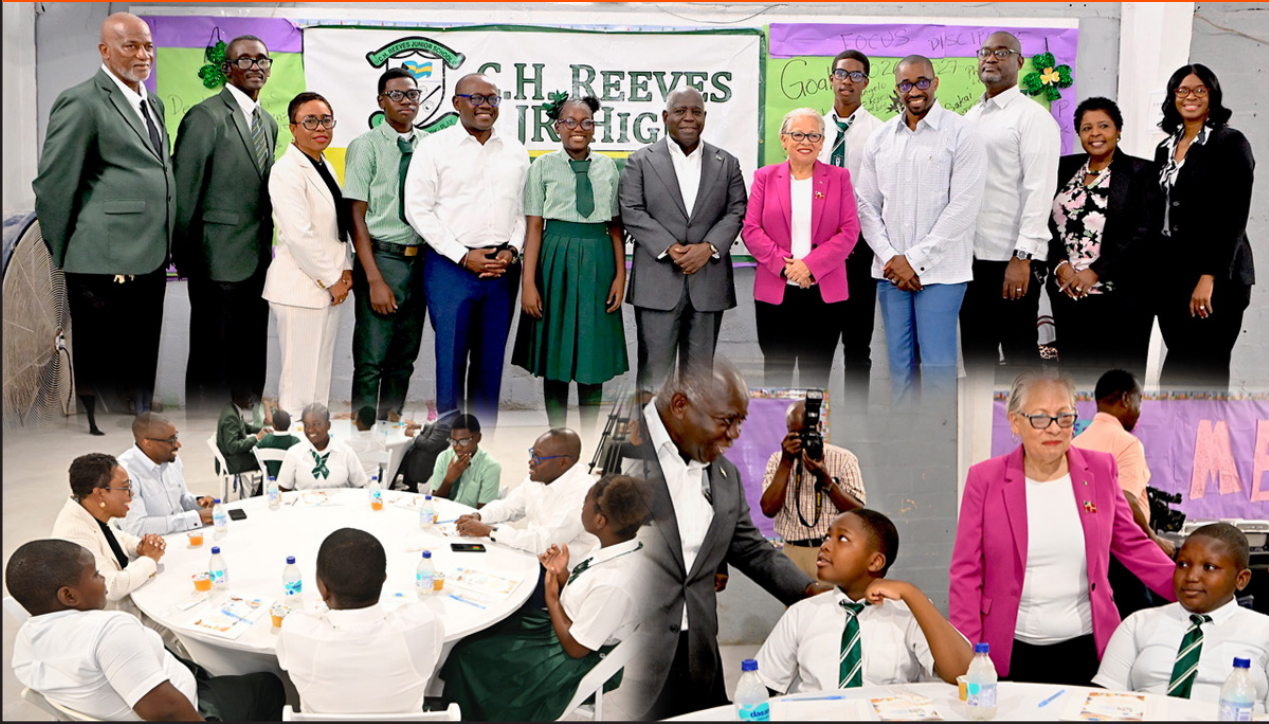
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Chester Cooper said, "It is an exciting initiative. We are nurturing innovators for today and for the future."

The program is for young people between the ages of 15 to 25 in an effort to teach problem-solving skills by not just identifying an issue but to start building real solutions for their schools and communities.

"We're not creating innovators for tomorrow. We're not asking them what they want to do when they grow up, we're asking them what they want to build right now," Cooper said.

See Story Cont. Pg.2

THE BNSBP EXPANDS TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS



Prime Minister the Hon. Philip Davis, pioneer of the Bahamas National Breakfast Program recently joined Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Science and Technology the Hon. I. Chester Cooper, Englerston Member of Parliament the Hon. Glenys Hanna Martin, and Parliamentary Secretary the Hon. Keenan Johnson at C.H. Reeves Junior High School for the pilot launch of the programme into Junior High Schools in New Providence. Other Ministry of Education executives were also participated in a taste testing with students at C.H. Reeves Junior High School. Since its inception, the BNSBP has served over 2.1 million breakfasts to more than 20,500 students across 118 schools on 17 islands, including all special, all-age, pre-primary, and primary schools. Now, that support is growing to reach even more of our students.

MINISTER OF LABOUR: COME BACK HOME

BY MAKEIRA TUCKER
Journal Staff Writer

Minister of Labour, Public Service and National Insurance. Pia Glover-Rolle is calling skilled Bahamians working abroad to return home after recent statistics show underemployment is on the rise.

"Where there are Bahamians skilled at the highest levels we're asking them to come back home," said Glover-Rolle outside this week's cabinet meeting where she acknowledged the underemployment increase.

The Bahamas National Statistical Institute reported that while unemployment decreased to 8.1percent from 8.7 percent, underemployment has risen to 11 percent from 2025.

Despite latest figures Glover-Rolle emphasized that the government is especially looking for Bahamian specialists working abroad to return home.

"We don't want to engage Bahamians in only entry level work. We want to see Bahamians engaged at the highest levels," Glover- Rolle said.

One of the contributing factors for Bahamians not returning home is financial prospects that are better abroad. Glover- Rolle acknowledges that factor but says that the government is working to address the issue.

"We know that compensation is sometimes a challenge when people are working abroad or they have a very high-level skill set and they are saying the compensation does not match what they are looking for in the job market, but we're working on that as well" she explained.

"We want to ensure that Bahamians not only have jobs, but they have quality well paid careers, so that we can continue to see the unemployment figures decrease," Glover-Rolle added.

According to the minister, another contributor to underemployment is the lack of qualifications for the available job openings.

"Jobs are available but not necessarily for the skillsets that exist," said Glover-Rolle

"Then you see where underemployment speaks to persons who have engaged work but maybe not in their field or skillset," Glover- Rolle added.

She also noted that the government is taking steps necessary to get citizens qualified for the available job fields on the market.

"We are working as an administration, as a government, to ensure that we are getting the skills to match the jobs that are available and we are preparing citizens with skills for the jobs that are emerging," she said.



Hon. Pia Glover-Rolle
Minister of Labour

SWEETING UPDATES PUBLIC ON INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS

BY TYNIA BROWN
Journal Staff Writer

Minister of Works and Family Island Affairs Clay Sweeting has provided updates on several major infrastructure projects across The Bahamas, including airport, bridge and road works.

Sweeting said temporary repairs to the North Eleuthera Airport runway are moving ahead after concerns over its condition affected airline operations. He said equipment is already on the ground and the work is expected to take about 12 days, weather permitting.

The temporary repairs are intended to keep the airport operational while plans progress for a new runway, runway extension and apron capable of accommodating larger aircraft.

Sweeting also gave an update on the Fresh Creek Bridge in Andros, saying the government will temporarily reinforce the existing structure while moving ahead with plans for a permanent replacement. He said a temporary bridge was estimated to cost between \$10 million and \$15 million, which the government determined was not practical.

On New Providence, Sweeting pushed back against claims that recent Shirley Street roadworks are only being carried out because of the upcoming visit of King Charles III. He said the road was already part of the ministry's paving programme and argued that road works have been increasing across the country for several years.

Meanwhile, preparatory work for improvements to Gladstone Road has been completed and the project is expected to move to the Request for Proposals stage.

Sweeting also said the government has completed plans for a wider New Providence road improvement scheme aimed at easing traffic congestion. The proposal, which could include overpasses, is now being priced and divided into phases before being tabled in Parliament.



Hon. Clay Sweeting
Minister of Works

GOLDEN YOLK PRODUCE 200,000

While it was criticized for what many said was excess spending, and doubt was cast on its viability, the government's Golden Yolk Project is now a veritable success having produced 200,000 eggs, 10,000 laying hens in production and approximately 8,000 pullets (female chicks under a year) Prime Minister Philip Davis KC visited the facility this week to review progress as the Government advances its commitment to increase local egg production, reduce dependence on imports and strengthen national food security.

The Prime Minister said, "Increasing domestic egg production is a key part of the Government's broader strategy to strengthen Bahamian agriculture. The aim is to replace a greater share of imported food with local products, retain more spending within the Bahamian economy and expand opportunities for farmers and agricultural businesses."

He added, "the approximately 8,000 pullets—young female chickens that have not yet begun laying—represent an investment in future output. As these birds mature, they will support the project's capacity to sustain production and supply the domestic market."

"Our Government is committed to producing more of what we eat here at home. Two hundred thousand eggs produced, 10,000 laying hens in production and another 8,000 pullets being raised show the capacity we are building. Our focus is to turn that capacity into a consistent supply of Bahamian-produced eggs, reduce our reliance on imports and create more opportunities for our people. Golden Yolk is a key part of our commitment to greater food security," Prime Minister Davis said.

In a statement, the Office of the Prime Minister said the Prime Minister's visit underscores the Government's focus on ensuring that agricultural investments deliver practical results. Sustained egg production requires healthy birds, well-managed facilities and dependable processing and distribution to bring local products to consumers.

The statement continued, "through Golden Yolk, the Government is working to establish a stronger foundation for domestic egg production and reduce the country's exposure to disruptions in overseas supply.



FOCUS ON YOUNG INNOVATORS

Story continued from pg 1.



The five pillars of the initiative include technology, environment, entrepreneurship, arts and heritage and maritime innovation.

The program was already launched in Grand Bahama and will be extended to other family islands like Cat Island, Bimini, Andros, Eleuthera, Abaco, and Exuma.

"We are pushing all across the country," Cooper said. Prime Minister Philip Davis who believes that the greatest investment is in young people and that the future of The Bahamas is shaped by their creativity said, "It is our government's duty to empower youth by offering opportunities and support they need to foster their ideas," Davis said.

He believes that the Young Innovators Club creates a space that encourages curiosity and challenges them to ask why and what if. Davis also urged young people not to underestimate the value of their ideas.

"You don't need all the answers now. You don't need the perfect idea now. All you need is enough curiosity to ask the

questions, the willingness to learn and the courage to try," Davis explained.

The New Providence schools involved are C.R. Walker, Government High, Windsor Upper School, Aquinas College and Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI). More than \$50,000 in prize money is available for the top three teams.

The government has also begun intergrading some of the innovation topics into the educational system as well, Cooper explained.

"We have many of these initiatives in our curriculum already. C.R. Walker for example they have a fantastic environmental club," Cooper added.

"They've been talking with the Prime Minister about how their work at the environmental club tie into his international advocacy. I was very impressed by that," he continued. The minister also acknowledges that the country currently has a very vast and successful Maritime Industry.



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TWO KILLED IN SEPARATE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

BY TYNIA BROWN
Journal Staff Writer

Two people lost their lives in separate traffic accidents in New Providence since Monday, October 5, raising fresh concerns about road safety across the island.

The first fatality occurred on Monday, October 5, when 37-year-old Tyrone Paul was killed in a motorcycle collision along Gladstone Road, just south of John F. Kennedy Drive.

According to police, Paul was travelling north on a Honda motorcycle when he allegedly entered the southbound lane and collided with an oncoming Subaru. The impact threw him from the motorcycle, and he died at the scene.

Paul, a father of two originally from Grand Bahama, had reportedly relocated to New Providence within the past two years.

Two days later, on Wednesday, October 7, a male passenger was killed after the vehicle he was travelling in crashed into a seawall along Western

Esplanade, West Bay Street.

Police reported that the accident occurred shortly before 2 a.m., just east of the Arawak Cay Police Station.

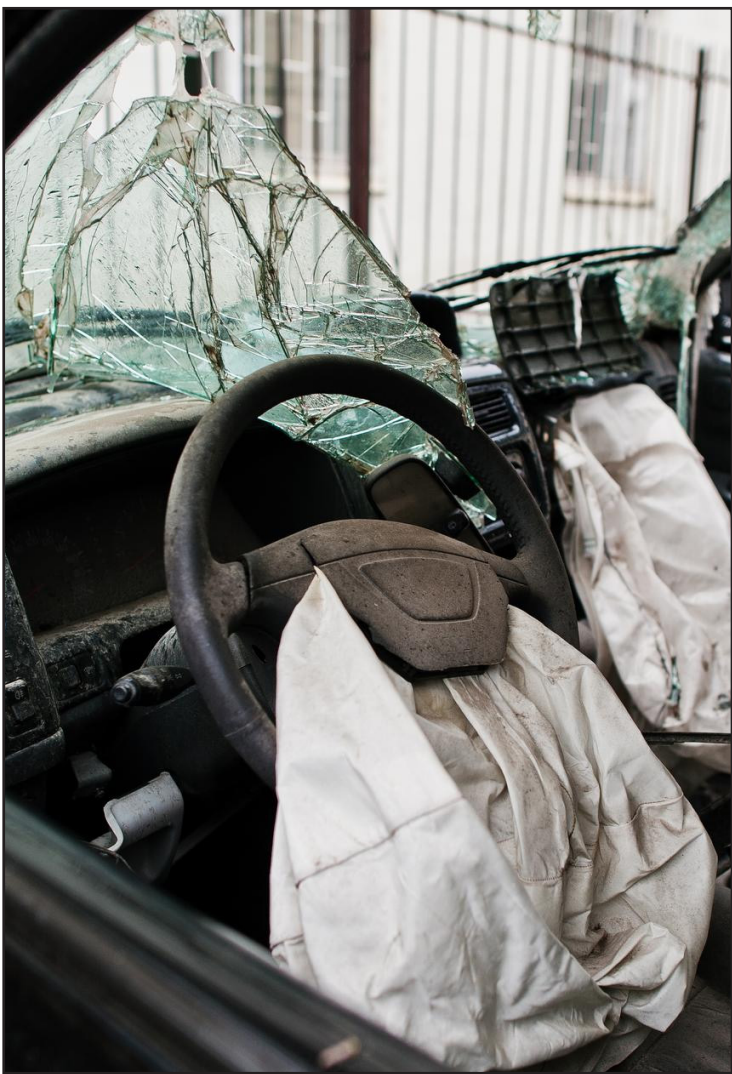
Preliminary investigations revealed that a 22-year-old man was driving a black Nissan Cube westbound when he reportedly lost control and collided with the seawall.

The impact caused the passenger to be ejected from the vehicle. Emergency Medical Services personnel examined him and confirmed that he showed no signs of life.

The driver sustained injuries and was transported to hospital for medical treatment.

The two fatalities, occurring just days apart, have once again brought attention to the dangers on the country's roadways.

Police investigations into both accidents remain ongoing.



THE BAHAMAS ELECTED VICE CHAIR OF THE CARIBBEAN TOURISM ORGANIZATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Bahamas has been elected to serve as a Vice Chair on the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Board of Directors for the next two years, securing one of two seats representing CARICOM member countries. The election took place during the CTO Annual General Meeting held as part of the State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) in Georgetown, Guyana, where The Bahamas delegation was led by Parliamentary Secretary Randy Rolle. The appointment places The Bahamas in an important leadership role within the Organization, with the Board providing governance and oversight of CTO's operations and helping to guide the implementation of its strategic priorities on behalf of the regional tourism sector. In this capacity, The Bahamas will be represented by Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Glenys Hanna Martin, with Director General Jackson Weech serving at the technical level, further strengthening the country's contribution to regional tourism cooperation and the work of the CTO.



Hon. Glenys Hanna Martin
Minister of Tourism



Jackson Alexander Weech
Director General of Tourism

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GOVERNMENT MOVES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTION FOR ELDERLY

BY TYNIA BROWN
Journal Staff Writer



*Hon. Michael Darville
Minister of Health
and Wellness*

Members of Parliament on Wednesday passed the Older Persons Rights, Protection, Care and Support Bill 2026 to ensure that senior citizens get the care that they deserve.

Darville said too many senior citizens remain in hospital beds, not because they require continued medical treatment, but because their families may have no suitable alternative for their care.

Minister of Health and Wellness Dr. Michael Darville

He said the situation has placed additional strain on the public healthcare system and highlighted the need for stronger community-based and home-care services.

Darville said the bill followed extensive public consultation, including more than 800 visits to the Bahamas Laws Online website, along with submissions from legal professionals, faith-based groups, advocates and families.

He said the legislation would establish protection officers, improve oversight of residential care facilities and create mechanisms for investigating physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse.

The bill would also seek to expand community nursing, caregiver training and home-based services, while improving coordination for elderly residents traveling from the Family Islands to New Providence for medical appointments.

Darville said the proposed law would recognize older persons as rights holders,

preserving their ability to make decisions concerning their finances, healthcare and place of residence.

Minister of State for Social Services Bacchus Rolle, highlighted several cases of elder abuse and neglect which he said demonstrated the need for the legislation. Rolle told Parliament that some elderly Bahamians have been abandoned, exploited financially or left without adequate care.

He highlighted the case of an 85-year-old former public servant who, he said, became ill while visiting a granddaughter abroad and was allegedly left at a hospital after being discharged.

According to Rolle, Bahamian authorities eventually helped return the woman home, where she remains in state care.

He also detailed the case of a 92-year-old retired nurse who allowed a woman into her home after the woman said she needed somewhere to stay for a few days.

Rolle said the arrangement reportedly continued for about 10 months and the elderly woman's debit card was later used to purchase approximately \$20,000 worth of goods and services.

He said concerned neighbors eventually contacted Social Services, leading to a welfare check and police involvement.

Rolle said the cases demonstrate that elder abuse does not always involve physical violence, but may also include abandonment, misuse of pensions and bank cards, financial manipulation and exploitation of elderly persons experiencing cognitive decline.

Both ministers said the legislation aims to strengthen the legal and social support framework for senior citizens while providing greater assistance to families and caregivers responsible for their care.

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MINISTER COLEBY-DAVIS MAKES HISTORY WITH ELECTION TO SIDS DOCK EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Bahamas Minister of Energy, Utilities and Aviation, the Honourable JoBeth Coleby-Davis, was elected to the SIDS DOCK Executive Council for the 2027–2029 term at the 10th

Session of the SIDS DOCK Assembly, held in Belmopan, Belize.

This historic and significant appointment makes Minister Coleby-Davis the first Bahamian and the only female among the four distinguished regional leaders elected to the Executive Council. The other members include His Excellency Dr. Milan Jaya Nyamrajsingh Meetarbhan of Mauritius; His Excellency Mr. Carlos Fuller of Belize; and His Excellency Dr. Philbert Aaron of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

"It is an honour to have been elected to the SIDS DOCK Executive Council.

This is a great achievement for our country and a recognition of our country's regional leadership in energy reform and transformation," said Minister Coleby-Davis. Minister Coleby-Davis' appointment comes at a pivotal time for SIDS DOCK, as the organisation has affirmed its commitment to strengthening institutional leadership among Small Island Developing States as they advance climate resilience and energy transformation.

According to the SIDS DOCK Secretariat, Minister Coleby-Davis' election to the Executive Council recognises her dynamic leadership in modernising national energy policy and accelerating renewable energy investment.

"With an LL.M. in Energy Law and Policy and a record of major legislative

reforms, including the Electricity and Natural Gas Acts (2024), she brings a forward-looking perspective on energy transition and infrastructure resilience," said Christine Neves Duncan, Chief of Staff, SIDS DOCK Secretariat.

The election of these four distinguished leaders signals renewed momentum for SIDS DOCK as it enters its second decade of supporting Small Island Developing States and Coastal Developing Nations in achieving energy security, climate resilience and sustainable economic growth.

It is expected that their combined expertise will help guide collaborative action across regions and deepen partnerships with global institutions committed to advancing the priorities of Small Island Developing States.



*Hon. Jobeth Coleby-Davis
Minister of Energy, Utilities and Aviation*

TWO KILLED IN NEW PROVIDENCE SHOOTINGS THIS WEEK

BY MAKEIRA TUCKER
Journal Staff Writer



Police are working to solve yet another murder in the country. On Monday, a shooting incident took place in the Wilson Tract area where 22-year-old male was killed and two other males, ages 17 and 20, were hospitalized.

In a Royal Bahamas Police Force press release, sometime around 10:30p.m., police were alerted via ShotSpotter technology to gunshots detected in the Wilson Tract area.

Upon arrival, officers discovered that three males had been shot, two of whom were already transported to hospital. The third male, clad in a grey hooded jacket, black shirt and black pants, sustained gunshot injuries to the upper body and was pronounced dead at the scene after showing no vital signs of life.

Preliminary information suggest that a group of males were gathered in front of a residence when the occupants of a silver Japanese-model vehicle pulled up. Three males reportedly exited the vehicle, produced firearms and open fire in the direction of the group.

The 17-year-old sustained injuries to his right lower back, while the 20-year-old victim sustained injuries to his buttocks and his conditions remain unknown.

In a second incident, on Wednesday, police launched an investigation into a shooting that claimed the life of a 28-year-old male in the area of Rupert Dean Lane and Dunmore Street.

According to another RBPF press release, shortly before 11:00 p.m., police were alerted to the incident and dispatched to the scene. Upon arrival, officers found an adult male, in a white shirt and grey short pants, suffering from gunshot wounds about the body.

Medical Services at the scene, examined the victim, and confirmed that he showed no sign of life.

The initial investigation revealed that the victim was seated outside his residence when an unknown male riding a moped approached. The suspect reported produced a firearm and discharged it in the direction of the victim, fatally wounding him, before fleeing in an unknown direction.

Both investigations remain ongoing, making them the country's 58th and 59th murders of the year.

Police are appealing to member of the public for an information that may assist with these investigations.

GRAND BAHAMA FERRY MEETS WITH THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM



The Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Glenys Hanna-Martin meets with Kenneth Lewis and executives of Grand Bahama Ferry Holding Company Ltd., October 2, 2026 at the ministry's offices. Also attending the meeting were Lorraine Armbrister, Permanent Secretary of Tourism; Jackson Weech, Director General of Tourism; and Robert D.L. Sands II, Director of Cruise for Tourism. (BIS Photos/Kemuel Stubbs)

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AIMS FOR BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH PTAs



Hon. I. Chester Cooper
Deputy Prime Minister & Minister
of Education

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Science and Technology the Hon. Chester Cooper said the Ministry understands that parenting is not easy. “Families are dealing with real pressures. Some parents are working multiple jobs. Some are raising children alone. Some are caring for children with special educational or developmental needs and may not know where to turn for assistance. Some families are facing financial difficulties, behavioural challenges, mental and emotional concerns or other circumstances that affect a child’s ability to succeed in school,” the DPM said during the Ministry’s Virtual Parents Meeting on Monday, October 5, 2026.

He said, “The Ministry cannot simply say, ‘Parents, do more,’ without also asking, ‘What do parents need in order to do more?’”

The DPM explained that is where he wants the Ministry’s relationship with the PTA to become even more meaningful. “We want to work with you to provide parent education and practical training. We can help parents better understand the education system, how to communicate effectively with schools, how to support literacy and numeracy at home, how to monitor academic progress, how to support children with additional needs, how to navigate educational transitions and how to prepare young people for the different pathways available to them.”

He said where the need extends beyond the Ministry of Education, they will help parents connect with the people and agencies that can assist.

The DPM noted that education does not exist in isolation and sometimes what presents itself as an education problem is connected to a social problem, a health concern, a family difficulty, a developmental need, a financial challenge or another circumstance requiring specialized support. “Parents should not have to wander from office to office trying to determine where to go or whom to call.”

He said, “We want to strengthen the bridges between families and the agencies, services and professionals available to support them. Where appropriate, we will facilitate access and referrals so that parents can be connected to the assistance their families need. Our objective must be to make the system easier for families to navigate, not more difficult.”

The DPM said the PTA should help the Ministry to build stronger communication between the Ministry and parents. “Tell us where parents are confused. Tell us where information is not reaching families. Tell us where processes are unnecessarily difficult. Tell us what training parents need. And help us communicate with families who may not ordinarily attend meetings or participate in traditional parent organizations.”

He noted that the Ministry cannot build its parental engagement strategy around the parents who already show up. “We must also reach the parent who has never attended a PTA meeting, the parent who may feel intimidated walking into a school, the parent who had a difficult educational experience and therefore does not feel comfortable engaging with educators, and the parent who wants to help but simply does not know how.”

The DPM said, “That is the next level of this partnership. And I want our schools to understand this as well. Parents must be welcomed as partners. Communication must be respectful and timely. We should not contact parents only when there is a problem. We should create opportunities for families to understand what their children are learning, celebrate their progress, raise concerns, ask questions and contribute constructively to the life of the school.”

STATE MINISTER ROLLS OUT MAJOR COMPONENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE OLDER PERSONS BILL



Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Services, the Hon. Bacchus A. Rolle, Wednesday (October 7, 2026), rolled out six major components of the Older Persons Rights, Protection, Care and Support Bill, 2026, that will, among other key measures, guarantee access to healthcare for Older Persons, including support for those living with dementia and other cognitive impairments, as well as palliative and end-of-life care.

Palliative care is the specialized medical care for people living with serious illnesses, focusing on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both patient and their family. Specialized care is provided by specially-trained teams of doctors, nurses, social workers and other specialists who work with a patient’s other doctors to provide an extra layer of support and is based on the patient’s needs and not their prognosis.

The Bill’s focus on support for persons living with dementia and other cognitive impairments, comes at a most critical time as statistics from regional and international bodies (including the Pan American Health Organization and World Health Organization) highlight that cognitive decline and neurocognitive disorders (like Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias) represent a substantial and rapidly growing health burden for older persons in The Bahamas.

It is estimated that between 1,920 and 2,000 persons currently live with dementia in-country. Dementia cases are anticipated to grow to 6,000 by the year 2050.

The Bill also addresses the financial exploitation of Older Persons which carries a penalty of \$50,000, or five years’ imprisonment, or both:

- Establishes “clear and enforceable prohibitions” against physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse of Older Persons.

- Addresses the abandonment of elders in hospitals and care facilities.

- Prohibits any unfair restriction of access to places or services on the basis of age alone.

- Requires next of kin to ensure a safe living environment, adequate food and water, clothing and essential care. And requires next of kin to make arrangements when an elder is discharged from hospital -- within seventy-two hours.

- Holds caregivers -- whether family, informal or professional -- to a standard of transparency, honesty and legal accountability.

- Creates a comprehensive framework for social assistance -- including a digital portal for

services, day care programmes for older persons, community nursing, home-based health services, caregiver training and support, designated liaison officers to help elders navigate the system, priority access in businesses and on public transportation, legal assistance on a pro bono basis for wills and powers of attorney.

- Allows for the integration of assistive technologies, including emergency alert devices, health monitoring and location assistance for persons living with cognitive impairment.

- Establishes a complaints mechanism through the National Hotline and the Department of Social Services, with mandatory investigation timelines -- twenty-four hours for emergencies, seventy-two hours for general cases.

- Continues the National Council on Older Persons as the formal advisory body, appoints protection officers with the power to visit and inspect residences and care facilities, and provides for court-ordered care and protection -- including emergency removal to a place of safety when an elder is in imminent danger,

- And includes a National Dementia Strategy. This Bill accords priority to the development, implementation and monitoring of a National Dementia Strategy -- developed in meaningful consultation with persons living with dementia, caregivers and relevant stakeholders.

“This is not an afterthought.” State Minister Rolle told Parliament. “It is a centre-piece of this legislation, recognizing the growing challenge of cognitive decline in an ageing population.”

State Minister Rolle said Part III of the Bill affirms the fundamental human rights of every older person in The Bahamas --the right to equality before the law, to live with dignity and security, to protection of privacy, and to full participation in the social, economic and cultural life of the nation.

“It affirms their right to autonomy in personal, financial and health decisions. It creates a framework for anonymous reporting of suspected abuse, with legal protections for those who report in good faith. And critically, it tackles -- head-on -- the financial exploitation of our older persons, the theft of their pensions, the misuse of their savings, the coercion to sign over property.”

BRITISH LEGION BAHAMAS BRANCH PRESENTS POPPY TO GG



Mrs. Adina D. Munroe-Charlow, Chairman of the British Legion Bahamas Branch, presented the Governor General, Dame Cynthia A. Pratt with a Poppy in recognition of Remembrance Day during a courtesy call at Government House on Thursday, October 1, 2026. Pictured from left: Harriet Hart (Jr. Volunteer Officer), Valentino Griffin (Jr. Volunteer Officer), Jeffrey Pinder (Senior Volunteer Officer), Adina Munroe-Charlow (Chairman), H.E. Governor General Dame Cynthia Pratt, Franklyn Brown (Senior Volunteer Officer), Derek Neymour (Senior Volunteer Officer), and Charles Hepburn, II (Jr. Volunteer Officer).

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MINISTER MOXEY INSPIRES NEXT GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS AT JA ORIENTATION IN GRAND BAHAMA

Minister for Grand Bahama, the Hon. Ginger Moxey gave an inspiring talk to scores of highschoolers at the 2026/27 Junior Achievement (JA) Orientation on October 3, 2026 at Champs Community Center under the theme, “Inspire. Prepare. Achieve.”

Minister Moxey told the youth that it was their chance to learn, lead and discover what they can accomplish.

Junior Achievement teaches young Bahamians more than how to start a business. For decades the Programme has mentored students in entrepreneurship and financial literacy, fostered innovation and critical thinking — preparing them for careers on the global stage,” the minister said.

She encouraged the next generation to embrace leadership, explore entrepreneurship and take advantage of the opportunities presented to them as their future is not something they wait for but something they prepare for, pursue and create.

The budding entrepreneurs heard of the exciting period of growth and opportunity, from investment in tourism, infrastructure, maritime, technology, to health, the creative industries and other sectors, taking place on their very island and transforming the economy.

Minister Moxey noted, however, that that transformation will only be impactful if Grand Bahamians are prepared to participate in it.

“That is why programmes like Junior Achievement play a critical role in our island’s transformation now more than ever. The Government doesn’t want young Grand Bahamians to watch opportunities happen around them. We want you prepared to take part,” she said.

Minister Moxey noted a number of the initiatives launched by her ministry, in collaboration with key stakeholders, to ensure Grand Bahama’s youth play a key role in the island’s future, namely the Innovate242 AgriTech Programme, the Maritime 101 Cadet Programme, Innovate Grand Bahama High School Career Fair and the recently launched Young Innovators Club National Pilot.

She further encouraged the newly-installed Junior Achievers to enthusiastically seize their new chapter ripe with opportunities in Grand Bahama.



CARTWRIGHT: DISABILITY INCLUSION MUST MEAN ACCESS, OPPORTUNITY AND PROTECTION

Minister of Social Services, Senator the Hon. Barbara Cartwright, has reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to strengthening protections and expanding opportunities for persons with disabilities, declaring that inclusion must extend to the workplace, schools, transportation, housing and full participation in community life.

Minister Cartwright recently addressed persons with disabilities, advocates, government representatives and members of the public during the “Let’s Talk Disability Affairs” Town Hall Meeting, led by the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) at D.W. Davis High School.

The town hall brought government agencies, advocates and members of the disability community together for direct dialogue on issues affecting persons with disabilities, including social assistance, disability awareness, registration with the NCPD, the AccessAbility Bahamas app, Urban Renewal services, National Insurance benefits, accessibility, advocacy and equal opportunities.

Minister Cartwright used the occasion to highlight provisions contained in the recently tabled Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities) Amendment Bill, 2026, which proposes strengthened measures addressing employment, workplace accommodations, abuse, accessibility and enforcement.

Among the proposed changes are expanded employment requirements for companies with 50 or more workers, moving toward a two per cent staff quota for persons with disabilities, as well as provisions requiring employers to reassign workers who develop a disability on the job when they can no longer perform their original duties.

The amendments also propose stronger accessibility requirements for new public buildings and criminal penalties for physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse of persons with disabilities. They further provide for strengthened employment tracking and placement through collaboration between the Department of Labour and the Commission.

The Minister said the importance of continued action is underscored by national statistics showing that 38,551 people, or 10.3 per cent of the population

aged five and older, live with a disability in The Bahamas.

She acknowledged that persons with disabilities continue to experience barriers to employment and economic participation, along with physical challenges accessing public spaces and transportation where appropriate infrastructure is unavailable.

Minister Cartwright said the Government remains committed to equal opportunities and community inclusion and noted existing assistance available to persons with disabilities, including disability benefits and duty-free concessions on assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walking canes and hearing aids.

She also encouraged persons with disabilities to register and engage with Social Services and the NCPD so that government can better understand the community it serves and develop laws, programmes and services that respond to their needs.

“I see you. I will continue to work for you and ensure that your rights are protected and that there are opportunities for you,” Minister Cartwright told attendees.

She reminded the wider public that disability can occur at any stage of life, making accessibility and inclusion an issue that ultimately affects everyone. She called on Bahamians to treat persons with disabilities with love, respect and consideration and to support greater accessibility and inclusion.

The town hall also highlighted AccessAbility Bahamas, the NCPD’s mobile app designed to help connect persons with disabilities with information, services and resources. Participants were encouraged to use the app and remain connected with the Commission as part of efforts to improve access to disability-related information and services.

The town hall was moderated by Dr. Deborah Bartlett, Communications Consultant, and featured a presentation by Dr. Anthony Hamilton, Chair of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, on the human rights of persons with disabilities. Dr. Hamilton has also been involved in other national initiatives aimed at expanding employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.



Presentations were also made by Ertha Charlow, Assistant Director, Disabilities Affairs and Seniors Division, representatives of the Ministry of Urban Renewal and Community Relations and the National Insurance Board, and a representative of the Deaf Association.

Members of the NCPD team participating in the initiative included Executive Secretary Mrs. Desiree Clark, Mr. Townsley Roberts, Mr. Thorne Clark and Ms. Nabbie, as the Commission continued its work to connect persons with disabilities directly with information, programmes and services.

Dr. Marcellus Taylor, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social Services, introduced Minister Cartwright, while Minister of State for Social Services, the Hon. Bacchus Rolle, delivered the vote of thanks.

Through the town hall, the NCPD provided a forum for persons with disabilities and their families to hear directly about available services and programmes, raise concerns, ask questions and engage representatives of agencies whose work affects their daily lives.

The initiative reflects the Commission’s continuing mandate to advance advocacy, equality and inclusion and to help ensure that the voices and rights of persons with



disabilities remain central to the national conversation.

Persons seeking additional information on the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, its programmes and services may visit disabilitiescommissionbahamas.org. The AccessAbility Bahamas app is also available for mobile devices.

