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# Baha Mar fury at Pointe claim

**Construction firm 'deceived' officials at mega-resort**

By **RASHAD ROLLE**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

BAHA Mar's former President Tom Dunlap has hit out at China Construction America (CCA), accusing the company's Senior Vice President Daniel Liu of being a part of an organisation that gave little attention to Baha Mar. Mr Dunlap also alleged that CCA deceived Baha Mar officials, further alleging that The Pointe may be using equipment that was contracted for the stalled Cable Beach mega-resort. His views, in a letter published today in *The Tribune*, came days after Mr Liu said that the greatest difference between Baha Mar and The Pointe is that as there is no

shortage of money to fund construction the latter will be completed on time. CCA, which is developing The Pointe, served as Baha Mar's general contractor before the West Bay Street property filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in a US court last June. Since then, Baha Mar has accused CCA of performing sub-par work that caused the development to miss opening targets. Last week, Mr Liu said The Pointe will embrace Bahamians and not be "some private development that tries to keep the people away from the beach or tries to make it their own territory for their own ego."

SEE PAGE SIX

**VENDORS 'WILL NOT BOW OUT' IN FIGHT FOR BEACH ACCESS**

By **RICARDO WELLS**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rwells@tribunemedia.net

CABBAGE Beach Vendors Association President Monique Taylor said members of her association will not bow out or relent in their efforts to ensure that they remain on the Paradise Island beach. Ms Taylor told *The Tribune* on Friday that attempts are being made to undermine her leadership of the association, with well-placed operatives allegedly working to coerce members "that opportunities can be

found some place else." She alleged that Ministry of Tourism officials have conducted a series of secret meetings in which association members are being offered inducements to operate elsewhere. "We are not accepting it," Ms Taylor said. "They need to know we are together out here at Cabbage Beach. We are one and we will stick together. The majority of members here are against all of those promises that they are offering behind closed doors."

SEE PAGE 12

**STARTING THE COUNTDOWN TO JUNKANOO CARNIVAL**



**OUTFITS** on show at the launch of this year's Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival on Saturday ahead of the event in May. See page three for the full story. Photo: **Allan Jones**

**DOCTORS WANT DELAY FOR NHI INTRODUCTION**

By **RASHAD ROLLE**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

THE head of the Consultant Physician Staff Association praised the government yesterday for engaging doctors on National Health Insurance in recent weeks, but still said the scheme likely will not come on stream in April as the government plans. Dr Locksley Munroe said he intends to request an extension from the NHI Secretariat allowing doctors more time to review the NHI draft legislation in greater detail. Aspects of the legislation, he said, are unclear or insufficient.

SEE PAGE FIVE

**KILLING OF TIGER SHARK CONDEMNED BY BNT**

By **NICO SCAVELLA**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
nscavella@tribunemedia.net

THE Bahamas National Trust has "strongly" condemned the "targeted culling and ruthless killing" of a mature tiger shark in the Exuma Cays late last week. In a statement posted on its Facebook page, the BNT, which is mandated with the conservation of natural and historic resources of The Bahamas, warned that shark killings are illegal in the country. However, the BNT did not say whether officials would seek to have charges brought against those allegedly responsible for the shark's death. On Thursday, videos circulated on social media showing the bloody capture of a massive tiger shark at an unknown location in The Bahamas.

SEE PAGE TWO

**'DON'T MAKE SCAPEGOATS OF STUDENTS'**

By **NICO SCAVELLA**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
nscavella@tribunemedia.net

AN outspoken lawyer has slammed the government's plan to take court action against delinquent borrowers in order to collect outstanding student loans, accusing the Christie administration of seeking to "make struggling students the scapegoat of its dysfunctional tax regimes". Fred Smith, QC, criticised the government for focusing on "suing struggling students" when it is not "being effective in collecting taxes otherwise or is subsidising foreign private profit companies doing business in The Bahamas."

SEE PAGE 12

**SENATOR'S PUBLIC APOLOGY IS 'TOO LITTLE TOO LATE' SAYS MP**

By **RASHAD ROLLE**  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net


THE public apology Free National Movement Senator Lanisha Rolle made to her colleagues last week after previously criticising them attracted mixed reactions from FNM parliamentarians, with one saying it's "too little too late."

Montagu MP Richard

Lightbourn - who was among the first to condemn Mrs Rolle for claiming that some MPs in the party are "jealous" of FNM Leader Dr Hubert Minnis - seemed unmoved by Mrs Rolle's apology when contacted by *The Tribune* yesterday. He said while he had heard about her apology after the fact, he was not forewarned about it. "It's too little, too late

as far as I'm concerned," he said. "To take a month or however long, it's too late. That's a lot of time for her to rehearse what she wanted to say. If you wanted people to feel like it was an appropriate apology you'd at least tell them when you're going to give it so they can hear it. But I wasn't informed."

SEE PAGE SIX

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# BUILDING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

**THE FOCUS** was on leadership on Friday at Queen's College, with a leadership day aiming to cultivate the best skills of students. Visitors were guided around the school by students, and sat in on lessons during the day. Photos: **Shawn Hanna/** Tribune Staff





12 NOON SUNDAY, MARCH 13, 2016

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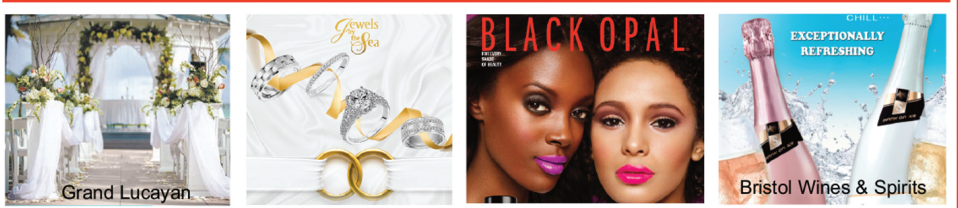
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# Prayers from our nation's defenders



THE ROYAL Bahamas Defence Force held its Annual Church Service at Bahamas Faith Ministries.

Photos: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff



SENATOR KEITH BELL, Dr Bernard Nottage and his wife, Prime Minister Perry Christie and Governor General Dame Marguerite Pindling at the service.



ATTENDEES at the annual church service.



PRIME Minister Perry Christie addressing the Royal Bahamas Defence Force service.



GATHERED members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force at their annual church service at Bahamas Faith Ministries.



THE RBDF Praise and Worship team leading the service.



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# Internet and smartphone safety

TWO of the most advanced inventions of our time are the computer and smartphone. Some may argue that they may be the greatest inventions ever. And even though these essential tools of communication positively affect many aspects of our daily lives - medicine, entertainment, mathematics, agriculture, business, etc - we have become too dependent on them.

Unfortunately, it has got to the point that we have become susceptible to computer hackers who are always trying to destroy all that we have created, along with the abuse of social media and chat rooms, which also has its negative effects because of its unfiltered information - pornography, murder and gang violence. As a result of this, families have been destroyed and personal lives have been shattered

## Police advice

By CORPORAL  
MAKELLE PINDER

For this reason, the Royal Bahamas Police Force wants to advise the public as to how they can protect themselves while using these devices.

**Safeguarding your privacy**  
You can never be too sure of who you are chatting with online. The friendly fellow movie fan or book lover in an online forum may actually be a clever criminal looking for his next cyber crime victim.

**How can you have fun online while protecting yourself?**



Do not post information that will identify you, including:

- Your full name.
- Your home address or phone number.
- Passwords.
- Credit card or bank account numbers.
- Names of family members or friends.
- Your workplace or favourite hangout, or the names of your clubs or organisations.
- Do not use a nickname that can be used to identify you.
- Never share your account password.

**Protect your computer system and smartphone**

- Shut down your computer when it is not in use - especially in public places.
- Keep your antivirus and anti spyware programmes, along with other software and operating systems, updated to protect against new attacks.
- Consider using a firewall on your system to protect against hackers accessing your system remotely.
- When using your webcam and smartphone, remember not to expose your genitals or indulge in any type of questionable activities.
- Lock your computer and smartphone with an encrypted password.

**Safety when using blogs, chat rooms, e-mail, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp etc**

Fast friendships are forged over the Internet

and there is no doubt that casual, online conversations sometimes are the foundation of good, lasting relationships.

However, the anonymity of the Internet may compel some individuals to reveal too much about their private lives or to make hurtful comments or accusations they would never make in person.

- Think about how your e-mail message will be read by others. Do not say anything online that is cruel or may damage someone's reputation.
- Do not give out personal information about someone else.
- Do not forward another individual's e-mail without their permission.
- Never allow anyone to photograph you in an embarrassing or compromising situation.
- Never post anything that would cause you em-

barrassment or shame.

- Do not send photos of yourself or family members to Internet acquaintances.
- Do not post or forward nude pictures of yourself or anyone else.

**Be smart, be safe when meeting someone you met online**

Do not accept friend requests from individuals whom you don't know personally. Remember, individuals misrepresent themselves online. Often the lies are small and harmless. But sometimes they are not.

Should you need more information on Internet and Smartphone safety or if you have information pertaining to any crime, please contact the police at 919 or Crime Stoppers at 328-tips (New Providence), 1-300-8476 (Family Island).

## Vendors ‘will not bow out’ in fight for beach access

from page one

The Tribune understands that vendors have claimed they are being induced by offers to carry out their operations at other beaches around New Providence.

Meanwhile, vendors have reported that the process to renew and acquire licences to operate on Cabbage Beach has been re-worked and made more stringent, which is likely to limit the number of vendors able to work at the site. Vendors are reportedly now required to present written approval by Access Industries to operate at the property and a letter of recommendation from the Ministry of Tourism to receive a business licence to operate at Cabbage Beach.

“It’s extremely hard now; everything they can



A FENCE is pulled down by protestors, angry at the closing off of an access point to Cabbage Beach.

Photo: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

do to us, they are doing,” Ms Taylor said. “I haven’t seen or spoken to (Minister of Tourism Obie) Wilcombe in months. No contact – nothing. But I hear he is meeting with vendors. I hear he is promising them the world. That isn’t going

to work because this is our livelihood. This beach is where we make the money we need.”

Currently there are more than 50 vendors operating legally at Cabbage Beach – those in line with the Business Licence Unit, the Min-

istry of Tourism and Access Industries.

When contacted for comment, Minister of Tourism Obie Wilcombe said he is working only to ensure that vendors are respected, provided an opportunity to earn a living and collectively improve on the delivery of quality service.

“I would think we are on the same page,” the West End and Bimini MP said. “The issue is not territorial. Everyone is in the same boat right now. We are together and together we must succeed.”

Last week, vendors clashed with security personnel and police for two consecutive days. Last Monday, vendors and taxicab drivers blocked traffic attempting to drive to Paradise Island over the Sidney Poitier Bridge after Access Industries, owners of the

One&Only Ocean Club who are looking to develop their property, fenced off the western easement to the beach.

Some protestors that day were punched, kicked and dragged away from the bridge by police officers.

In response to that incident, the following day FNM Leader Dr Hubert Minnis led protestors and supporters over the Sidney Poitier Bridge to Cabbage Beach.

He was joined by DNA Leader Branville McCartney, unionists and concerned citizens.

Some protestors tore down the fence blocking access to the Paradise Island beach.

On Tuesday, Mr Wilcombe said that he and Prime Minister Perry Christie worked late into the night last Monday to

convince Access Industries to allow vendors temporary access to Cabbage Beach through their usual point of entry.

A statement from the government on Tuesday morning explained that the controversy arose because Access Industries signed an agreement with Brookfield Asset Management, the owners of the Atlantis resort, that required Brookfield to close the existing beach path adjacent to the Riu resort. The statement added that Brookfield was supposed to relocate the vendors’ access point to the Brookfield-owned property on Garden Drive, off Paradise Island Drive.

Mr Wilcombe stressed that Bahamians still can access Cabbage Beach even though there are matters concerning the vendors that have to be worked out.

## ‘DON’T MAKE SCAPEGOATS OF STUDENTS’

from page one

He said while no one should be allowed to get off “scot free” after borrowing public funds, the government “should really focus on collecting taxes from people who have the money.”

Mr Smith suggested that the government “prioritise” what it seeks to collect first, which he said should be the collection of “half a billion dollars of real property

taxes due in The Bahamas” and the “hundreds of millions of taxes which they would otherwise earn in these anchor projects and heads of agreements to foreign developers who don’t need the tax breaks.”

Mr Smith’s statements came after Education Minister Jerome Fitzgerald announced last week that the Education Loan Authority (ELA) is owed \$155m in outstanding loan payments for its student loan scheme,

principal and interest included.

As a result, Mr Fitzgerald said he has instructed the ELA, which has assumed full responsibility for the loan scheme, to take court action “if and when necessary” to collect the outstanding funds. However, Mr Fitzgerald urged borrowers to arrange payment methods with the ELA to avoid such action.

“Struggling students should not be made to pay at the end of the day when the government is not being effective in collecting taxes otherwise or is subsidising foreign private profit companies doing business in The Bahamas,” Mr Smith said. “I’m not suggesting that people should get away scot free when they borrow money from the government.

“But I am suggesting that the government should pri-

oritise what they seek to collect first, and secondly stop giving away income that they don’t need to, such as these incentives to foreign developers in anchor projects.”

He added: “So my point is don’t make struggling students the scapegoat of dysfunctional tax regimes pursued by the government in failing to collect real property taxes, and secondly giving away concessions unnecessarily to private profit making companies. Get your priorities straight. Young Bahamian students who are just graduating into the workforce should not be hounded for the sins of others.”

According to Mr Fitzgerald, the \$155m represents approximately 4,300 outstanding loans, accounting for a delinquency rate of approximately 75 per cent amongst borrowers. Ap-

proximately 4,733 loans have been issued to date, he said.

Additionally, of that number, 16 per cent of borrowers are up to date on their payments, eight per cent are up to 270 days outstanding, and 76 per cent are 271 days or more behind on their payments.


However, Mr Smith said the “simple effective remedy to wiping out much of our national debt is the collection of real property tax arrears, not hounding poor students for education loans.”

“And indeed, rather than suing students, more efforts should be made to reach settlements and arrangements for payment which no doubt does occur,” he said. “But suing struggling former students should be a matter of last resort and the government should really focus on collecting taxes

from people who have the money.

“Any out of court reasonable arrangement which the Ministry of Education can promote is appropriate, but pursuing them in court is not,” he added. “The government subsidises all kinds of non-statutory initiatives and in particular gives away hundreds of millions of taxes which they would otherwise earn in these anchor projects and heads of agreements to foreign developers who don’t need the tax breaks.

“I am shocked that the government would focus on suing struggling students in order to collect student loans whilst ignoring and basically doing nothing to effectively collect a half a billion dollars of real property taxes due in The Bahamas,” he added.



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## \$50,000 GRANT TO PROTECT CONCH

THE Bahamas National Trust (BNT) has received a third \$50,000 grant from The Moore Bahamas Foundation (MBF) to support its work to protect the rapidly declining population of the iconic Queen Conch.

This is the third year that funding from the Foundation is supporting the partnership between the BNT, the government, corporate Bahamas and the conservation community which has formed the Conchervation Campaign. This year's donation brings the total of the MBF's grants to \$150,000 in the campaign to protect the conch population from depletion.

The Conchervation Campaign was formed in response to the startling results of research showing that traditional Queen Conch (*Lobatus gigas*) fishing grounds in The Bahamas were showing signs of possible collapse, according to BNT Executive Director Eric Carey.

“It is important to remember that we still have an opportunity to main-

tain viable conch fishery but we must develop a strategy that we can realistically police and we must conduct an education program to demonstrate why it is so critical that we do not deplete our conch population. We need to learn from Florida and Bermuda where the conch fisheries collapsed in the 1970s and despite full closure to fishing, have yet to recover,” said Mr Carey. “A parallel demise for the Bahamian Queen Conch fishery would devastate the nation ecologically, economically, and culturally.”

The Conchervation Campaign aims to prevent this outcome for the Bahamian fishery through research, education, and multi stakeholder collaboration.

The Queen Conch, commonly used to make conch salad and other dishes, plays a major role in the marine food web and loss of the Conch fishery would be detrimental to endangered and vulnerable species like sharks, turtles and spotted eagle

rays that feed on conch, as well as hermit crabs, damselfishes and other opportunists that use the shell of dead conchs as a habitat. In addition, the loss of the fishery would hugely impact the economy and the livelihood of countless Bahamians who rely on harvesting and sale of conch as an important source of income.

The Queen conch is also an essential cultural symbol uniting all islands of The Bahamas and the high demand by visitors greatly benefits the countries tourism economy.

“The Moore Bahamas Foundation has graciously supported Conchervation from its inception,” said Mr Carey, “because they understand and appreciate the significance of the Queen Conch to The Bahamas. This year’s renewed support will allow the Bahamas National Trust to continue its campaign through 2016. The Moore Bahamas Foundation provides support through Bahamas National Trust Fund Inc., a US 501c3 public charity.

“The Moore Bahamas Foundation responded immediately and effectively to the Conchervation Campaign with a pledge of \$150,000 over three years. This support has underpinned the campaign, providing important funding to get the campaign off and running. When we are successful in our efforts to save this iconic species from extinction, The Moore Bahamas Foundation will deserve significant credit for its visionary investment in the Conchervation campaign.”

Louis Bacon, Founder and Chairman of The Moore Charitable Foundation of which the MBF is a local affiliate, said: “We are proud to partner with Bahamas National Trust as they take key next steps in their campaign to preserve the iconic Queen Conch. Our multifaceted partnership brings to light the wide range of communities impacted by the health of this seminal species and the importance of their fight to protect it.”





STUART Cove flanked by, from left, Mubarak Abuhaimad and Reem Aleidan at the press conference on Friday in Sandyport about the divers' next world record attempt. Photos: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

# World records set by divers

By RICARDO WELLS  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rwells@tribunemedia.net

THE Bahamas took centre stage in the world of competitive diving last week, as two Kuwaiti divers - Reem Aleidan, a certified scuba instructor, and

Mubarak Abuhaimad - set world records for the longest shark dives by a female and male respectively.

Diving at Stuart Cove's Dive Bahamas in western New Providence, Ms Reem broke the world record for longest dive with sharks by a female with a five-hour

dive, while Mr Abuhaimad broke the male record with a seven-hour 49 minute shark dive.

On Friday, the pair described the record breaking experience as "a thriller", insisting that the warm, clear waters of The Bahamas provided the ideal conditions in

which to achieve the feat.

The Kuwaiti divers had been working to set four records to bring global attention to the rights and plights of Arab women in the Middle East but their two endurance dives ended in failure. According to their dive coach, Mark McCrum, the pair were beset by issues with their dive suits.

Mr McCrum indicated that the suits used by the divers did not arrive in The Bahamas in time to be tested and inspected prior to the record attempt and, as a result, the divers were not able to become accustomed to them.

"A suit is a very personal, unique piece of equipment," he said. "Every diver needs to have time to get used to the suit they are going to be using during their dive attempt. In this case, the divers didn't have that time but based on their skill sets we are confident that once we get all the kinks worked out we can travel back to The Bahamas and attempt that record again."

The world endurance dive records are 72 hours for males and around 58

hours for females.

Mr Abuhaimad said neither he nor Ms Reem were disappointed by this week's outcome. He explained that the opportunity to come to The Bahamas and dive alongside Ms Reem had created a massive following for the cause. He added that Arab people watching their attempts now know how important the rights of Arab women are.

"They all know now. I

went from coaching her to diving with her and now together we have done something amazing in hopes of improving the lives of so many others. She is a spectacular woman and I am happy that she asked me to do this with her," he said.

The divers are expected back in Nassau in September to attempt to break both the endurance records and improve on their shark dive records.



FROM left, Vernon Moss, general manager at Sandyport Beaches and Resort; Mark McCrum; Mubarak Abuhaimad; Stuart Cove; Reem Aleidan and Alharith Alateeqi.

## TIGER BEACH RESEARCH REVEALS ULTRASOUND AS WAY TO STUDY PREGNANT SHARKS

BIDDEFORD, Maine  
Associated Press

SCIENTISTS suggest ultrasound technology normally used on pregnant women can be used to gain insights about the reproduction of tiger sharks after conducting research off Grand Bahama.

Researchers from the University of New England

and University of Miami said their study of the use of ultrasounds on the sharks offers a less invasive way to investigate the sharks' biology. They say the ultrasounds allow scientists a way to determine the presence of embryos in sharks while keeping the animals alive. Previous efforts normally involved dissecting the animals.

The researchers performed in-water ultrasounds on live tiger sharks and took blood samples for hormone analysis at Tiger Beach off West End, Grand Bahama.

University of New England professor James Sulikowski says the research found that a high number of tiger sharks were pregnant during the winter months.

ARE YOU A BUSINESS OWNER?



~All Employers & Self-Employed Persons~


The National Insurance Board (NIB) will be conducting a Registration Drive for all Employers and Self-Employed Persons in New Providence. The primary purpose of this exercise is to update its records as part of the implementation of the new Insurance Administration System.

All Employers and Self-Employed Persons are encouraged to cooperate with the NIB Officers, who will all be wearing their official identification badges.

The Board wishes to thank you in advance for your full cooperation.

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# THIS WEEK IN The Tribune

## TODAY

Business - a Supreme Court judge has branded the businessman behind Blackbeard's Cay "evasive and untruthful" over his claim to own the project's dolphins. Neil Hartnell reports

Sports - the best of Bahamian basketball: the NWPBA All-Star game and a US college championship for Jonquel Jones

Insight - a foreign man married to a Bahamian woman

wanting to have a family gives his view of the gender equality issue

## TOMORROW

Woman and Health - weekly advice on taking care of your mind and body and women making waves in The Bahamas

Plus comment from Nicole Burrows and sporting mischief and mayhem by Inigo "Naughty" Zenicazelaya

## WEDNESDAY

Bridal guide 2016 - a free supplement

Tribune Tech - a weekly look at what's new in the world of technology

THURSDAY

Young Man's View - trenchant opinion from Adrian Gibson on the hot topics in the country

'On da Hook', a weekly review of fishing in the Bahamas

Plus Obituaries and Religion, a weekly review

Brent Stubbs

Plus A Comic's View - Naughty's unique take on the week in the Bahamas

## FRIDAY

Your 28-page guide to the Weekend and the best in arts, music, food, books, gardening, animal matters, fitness and interviews.

Sports - The Finish Line, a look at the local sports scene, by

## SATURDAY

The Tribune's Top 5. A special video review of the week's top stories by Khrisna Virgil on [www.tribune242.com](http://www.tribune242.com)

Every day in The Tribune, news, business, sports, lifestyle and Classifieds Trader.

# Human development key to alleviating poverty

IN a time of economic woes and of war and decline it is imperative that the world - and particularly The Bahamas - takes a closer look at sustainable development and where it intends to progress for future generations.

The year 2015 was historic as the government worked to implement a National Development Plan focused on sustainable growth to the year 2040. From a nationalistic standpoint, one can look at this as a substantial step in the right direction for the country; however, from an economic standpoint one can conclude a war still looms.

Globally, countries are aggressively seeking sustainability of their major industries. The reality is we have developed countries being challenged by developing countries and major industries being saturated by goods and services of inferior quality. Countries are polarised and gross domestic product (GDP) now takes a back seat to having



ROCHELLE Dean  
a brand.

This brings us to the idea that we must all be committed to the alleviation of poverty in order for there to be extensive growth in the Bahamas and the world. The United Nations continues to transition from the Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals - and the number one goal is poverty alleviation.

As a nation, we must look at the many different ways that poverty affects a country and its growth. There is something intrinsically and fundamentally human about being valued and

not about being valued for those traits that cannot be taken away from you. Traits that build your character. Those things that set your path, even those negative things that have to be weeded out to propel you toward your true being (self).

It is innate human nature that craves, desires and needs to build something, whether it's a family, business, even another human being. It makes us appreciate, it makes us empathetic and it's attributed to empowering others. This is what distinguishes true wealth from poverty.

Bill Gates, a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist, dropped out of university and started Microsoft, a company where he makes billions of dollars. He started the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where he is feeding his innate human nature and empowers other human beings as he alleviates poverty. He is committed to human development.

Human development is

the greatest indicator to poverty alleviation globally. Developed countries such as Norway, Canada and Russia - all very diverse in the industries that grow their GDP - all have human development indexes. Development eliminates poverty, first by changing the mindset of mankind, which produces different actions and better results.

We all must play a role in poverty alleviation. And we do this through adjusting our attitudes toward the poverty mindset, collaborating with like-minded individuals to introduce programmes but also to disseminate information that will bring a clear view of the impact the different forms of poverty are affecting the world at large.

Currently, one per cent of the world is wealthy. The other 99 per cent are headed to a marginalised poverty line.

The Bahamian people must begin to identify the interlinkages of poverty and how it affects the mind.

There is now a global initiative to eradicate poverty by disseminating its weakest link, our understanding of it. As a nation we must ask ourselves: "What are we truly committed to?"

We are unable to help people with a poor way of thinking. The world is in a state of poverty and as GDPs decline, so does human development. Our moral compasses must be adjusted or any other form of development is in vain.

We tell students education is the key, but self-knowledge and a strong value system builds prosperous nations. We must teach morality which builds strong character and fosters healthy competition and innovation. This builds a strong economic system of healthy individuals with a nationalistic view of country.

Every human being is created to part take in the development of something, whether it's people who will impact the world or some project that will do the

same.

We no longer can afford not to prepare ourselves or participate in the global framework. We must encourage real entrepreneurship. We must value each other's skills and not be close minded toward non-conventional innovators.

The Bahamas must shift and catch up with the rest of the world and, in some cases, have the fortitude to do something different, something unique.

Development is progress it alleviates poverty. Poverty alleviation comes through change. In order to alleviate poverty and move our homeland forward we must commit ourselves to change.

*Rochelle R Dean is a Bahamian scholar, research fellow and peer-reviewer and a theory writer of economics presently completing a Bachelors of Science dual degree in economics and public administration with Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia.*

# IS THE FUTURE OF CARS IN THE BAHAMAS ELECTRIC?

OWNERS of a Nassau car dealership who have invested in electric vehicles have received a boost with a prediction by Bloomberg News that the 2020s will be the decade of the electric car and nearly half the new vehicles in the world would have a plug by 2040.

"The story and video, which got huge play on Bloomberg, confirmed what we have believed since we first started investigating electric cars as the vehicle of the future," said Pia Farmer.

Along with her husband John, Mrs Farmer has led the way in championing the e-vehicle, declaring it should succeed for all the right reasons.

"Electric cars are better for the environment in two ways. First, what powers them is a battery instead of fossil fuels, and secondly, their impact on air quality," she said.

"We know, too, that the e-car is much easier and cheaper to maintain, it doesn't have a thousand parts that other cars need to run, making the e-car desirable for the pocket, as well as the

environment. But the reality is that long-standing habits do not change easily so this story by Bloomberg was really very welcome as an eye-opener for many readers."

The article - published by respected news agency Bloomberg - claims that the steadily declining price of batteries along with the glut of oil that will stifle production due to low prices, is driving the industry to develop "faster, safer, cheaper" electric vehicles. It pointed to major investment in research and design by electric car leaders Tesla, Nissan and Chevy.

Easy Car Sales on Gladstone Road is importing the Nissan LEAF, the best-selling electric car with more than 200,000 on roads worldwide, and bringing in slightly used models to keep the price tag down to \$20,000.

According to the Bloomberg piece, battery prices fell 35 per cent in 2015 and car manufacturers are developing systems for longer range driving between charges. The Nissan Leaf available in The Bahamas features a driving range of 80 to 100 miles

between charges with New Providence's traffic boosting the range with stop and go battery energy generation.

"When that article stated 'It's looking like the 2020s will be the decade of the electric car,' and that nearly half the vehicles would be electric by 2040 we felt that everything we have been saying about how electric vehicles are environmentally friendly, a pleasure to drive and financially attractive was confirmed," said Mrs Farmer.

"The one thing that I think the public does not fully appreciate yet is how luxurious these vehicles are. We are not talking about a golf cart. We want people to know that the Leaf is comfortable, roomy, has all the bells and whistles including Bluetooth technology and a Bose sound system.

"And can you imagine if everyone drove electric vehicles, buses and trucks, how quiet and clean the streets would be? Driving could actually some day have a calming effect on the culture of the country."




PIA FARMER, a director of Easy Car Sales, explains the benefits of environmentally friendly electric vehicles like the Nissan Leaf with Prime Minister Perry Christie.



# EXTENDED WORK NOTICE

NEW PROVIDENCE



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The Water and Sewerage Corporation advises the general public and the residents of **Coral Lakes and Boatswain Hill Subdivisions** that a Contract was awarded to Proline Underground Utilities and Construction Co. Ltd. to install new potable water supply systems in both subdivisions. The Contractor commenced works on **Monday, February 22nd, 2016** and the works are expected to continue for a period of approximately **eight (8) months**.


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# A Caribbean banking agency in the US: a risk worth taking

## World View

By SIR RONALD SANDERS



CARIBBEAN governments, indigenous banks and offshore banks located in the Caribbean are extremely concerned about the withdrawal of correspondent relations from Caribbean banks by banks in the United States of America.

Caribbean Heads of Government at a meeting in Belize in February made their concern very clear. The Caribbean Association of Banks have done so in separate statements. Their sense of alarm arises from the fact that, if all correspondent banking relations are withdrawn, the region will be isolated from the rest of the world and will be unable to carry out the most basic of bank transactions.

In many Caribbean countries there has been a steady decline in such correspondent banking relations, and there is no sign of an early abatement.

Caribbean governments and banks are not alone in their concern. Other regions of the world are also similarly affected. Countries in East Asia, the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia with significant offshore banking activities, are also affected.

What has caused the withdrawal of correspondent relations to the Caribbean and the other regions is the huge penalties that US banks would have to pay if any incidence of money laundering, terrorism financing or tax evasion passed through them from their respondent banks.

It is imperative that Caribbean banks cease their reliance on US banks alone for their correspondent relations in the US. It is time that they jointly, in groups, or individually establish an agency of their own in the US to be their correspondent bank and handle their transactions in the US and beyond. They have to ensure that they will be able to do business if US banks abandon them.

Regulatory and enforcement agencies have dealt harshly with such incidents, creating a strong deterrent to taking risks. The simplest form of “de-risking” is to terminate correspondent banking relations.

Paradoxically, the very rule-making bodies, such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) that created the rules and penalties that now terrify US banks and encourage them to “de-risk”, are themselves becoming concerned about the decline in correspondent banking relations.

Last November, the FSB released a statement saying: “At the extreme, if an individual bank loses access to correspondent banking services, this may affect its viability and if a country’s banks more generally face restricted access then it may affect the functioning of the local banking system. In addition, loss of correspondent banking services can create financial exclusion, particularly where it affects flows such as remittances, which are a key source of funds for people in many developing countries”. The report rightly observes that: “The ability to make and receive international payments via correspondent banking is vital for businesses and individuals, and for the G20’s goal of strong, sustainable, balanced growth”.

In the statement, sent to the group of powerful nations - the G20 - the FSB said that a World Bank



survey of jurisdictions and banks finds that roughly half of the emerging market and developing economies surveyed have experienced a decline in correspondent banking services. Three quarters of the 20 large correspondent banks participating in the survey responded that the number of correspondent accounts they hold for other banks had declined between the end of 2012 and mid-2015.

The FSB report did not end there. Significantly, it stated that “the main drivers given by the large banks for their reduction in correspondent banking were concerns about money laundering and terrorism financing risks in the jurisdictions of their counterpart banks”. In other words, even though US banks are aware that, in the case of the Caribbean, organisations such as the FATF and the OECD Global Forum on Tax Matters have found jurisdictions to be compliant with rules and enforcement, they are unwilling to take the risk.

The FATF has given an undertaking to the FSB that it will “clarify regulatory expectations, as a matter of priority, including more guidance, on the application of standards for anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) to correspondent banking, especially on the customer due diligence expectations for correspondent banks when faced with respondent banks in ‘high-risk sce-

narios’, as well as additional work on remittances, financial inclusion and non-profit organisations”.

That work will be ready in two stages, in June and October 2016. Whether it will make any difference to banks in the US is left to be seen. In any event, at the rate at which correspondent banking relations are being withdrawn, any FATF recommendations in October 2016, even if they are helpful, may come too late to help some Caribbean banks that are already reduced to tenuous relations with just one correspondent bank.

In this scenario, it is imperative that Caribbean banks cease their reliance on US banks alone for their correspondent relations in the US. It is time that they jointly, in groups, or individually establish an agency of their own in the US to be their correspondent bank and handle their transactions in the US and beyond. They have to ensure that they will be able to do business if US banks abandon them. And, it must be the banks themselves - not

Caribbean governments - that undertake the establishment of such an agency. Governments can advocate for the agency with US authorities and provide any non-financial assistance that may be helpful, including diplomatic and political spadework, but it must be the banks that look after their own business.

Establishing a Caribbean-owned Agency in the US to provide correspondent relations for regional banks is not impossible, though it is difficult and will require investment in time, money and professional advice. An application for such an entity would have to be made concurrently to the Federal Reserve Bank and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. If the application is approved by these two bodies, a licence to operate can then be sought from the Northeast District Licensing Division in New York. There are strict and onerous criteria that would have to be satisfied in each case, including extensive background checks on the

banks and their affiliates and reviews of the effectiveness of the regulatory regimes of the jurisdictions in which they are located. The procedure could take longer than six months and would require the banks to dedicate staff or employ qualified consultants to see them through the process.

But there is no swift or easy solution to the present problem. If Caribbean banks believe that there is no risk to US banks in the provision of correspondent relations, then they should be prepared to take the risk themselves by setting up their own agency to facilitate their business. They might even make more money.

Sir Ronald Sanders is Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to the US and the Organisation of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London and Massey College, University of Toronto. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com)

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# SENATOR’S PUBLIC APOLOGY IS ‘TOO LITTLE TOO LATE’ SAYS MP

from page one

Mrs Rolle’s apology was made last week Thursday during an appearance on the 96.9 FM talk show “The Conversation,” the same show on which she had made her initial controversial comments.

She said in January: “Some sitting MPs are, and let’s call it what it is, they are jealous, some are envious of the favour Dr Minnis has with the masses and they are in positions

of power.”

She had also made direct criticism of Long Island MP Loretta Butler-Turner, saying the country would not support her as leader over Prime Minister Perry Christie, adding that the parliamentarian should “humble” herself before Dr Minnis.

She also said Dr Minnis had the support of FNM councillors and “thousands of voters,” adding that only a few MPs “who are holding seats for now” did not

back him.

In apologising publicly for her remarks last week, Mrs Rolle said she and Mrs Butler-Turner have a cordial relationship.

Mrs Butler-Turner, however, declined to comment on her apology when asked yesterday about it.

Central Grand Bahama MP Neko Grant – who had released a statement in February calling for Mrs Rolle to apologise publicly for her “unprovoked attack” on him and his colleagues

– said he has accepted her public apology.

“I’m prepared to move on,” he said yesterday. “It’s never too late to do the right thing.”

Meanwhile, Mrs Rolle said she hoped the party could focus on unseating the Christie administration instead of internal bickering.

“I did think at the time that certain things needed to be said but, in hindsight, I think it could have been done a different way,” she

said on Thursday. “What I was trying to convey, and I hoped that I conveyed, was that the Free National Movement had followed a democratic process according to the (party’s) constitution and I wanted to encourage all.”

“I wanted the (negative) talk to actually cease because our focus is on the Progressive Liberal Party and the fact that they are failing the Bahamian people,” she added.

“To the extent that any

person would have been offended by any part or to the extent they would have been offended by my comments, I do apologise; but certainly that was not the intent.

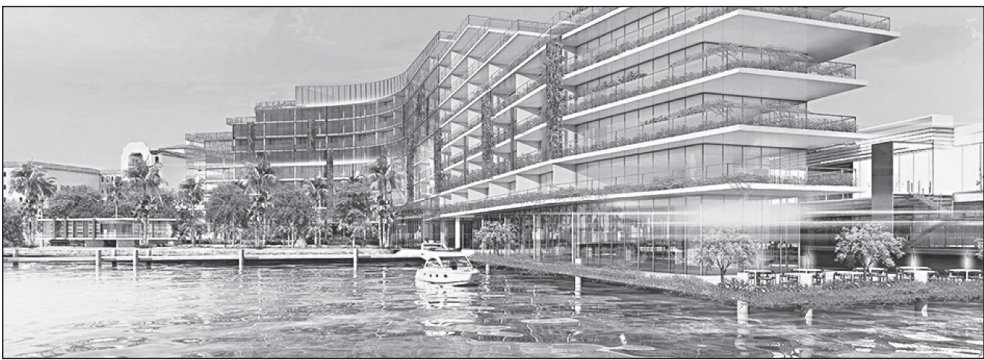
“Certainly I am here to build the party and I support every Free National Movement member of Parliament 100 per cent and certainly I follow and support the leader 110 per cent because he pushes us to the 100 per cent,” Mrs Rolle said.

from page one

“There is no short of the money,” Mr Liu said at a media reception at The Pointe’s newest restaurant, Summer Palace, on Wednesday. “It will be done on time.”

Mr Dunlap responded by saying he was “flabbergasted at the outrageous and inaccurate reference by Mr Liu to Baha Mar as ‘some private development’”.

Mr Dunlap said in his letter: “Had Mr Liu spent more of the time that Baha Mar paid for him to spend on our project instead of gallivanting about the Car-



AN ARTIST’S impression of The Pointe development.

ibbean looking for new projects, he would realise that Baha Mar is very public.

“With over 40 restaurants, clubs and retail shops, it was for all to use ... including the very golf course that

CCA was busy playing the days of the missed opening while we were hunkered down trying to address the catastrophe of their failure to meet the opening date. I would expect The Pointe to be on time. CCA has enjoyed a head start, having started construction before receiving building permits.”

Last October, *The Tribune* reported that the Ministry of Works’ Buildings Control Division issued a stop order after a site visit at The Pointe revealed that construction had progressed further than the permits issued for ground preparation allowed.

“Just (last) week, CCA proudly shared that they are close to finishing their Environmental Impact Statement. They must be sure that it is going to be approved. There is a lot of construction to remove if it

is not,” said Mr Dunlap.

Mr Dunlap alleged that The Pointe appears to be using the same construction equipment that Baha Mar paid for and had shipped from China. “This significant head start and apparent free equipment and supplies will help assure an on time, on budget 2017 completion,” he alleged. “A little free material and equipment goes a long way.”

Leslie Pindling, director of external affairs for The Pointe, on Wednesday said the property is adhering to the heads of agreement signed with the government which allowed for 70 per cent Bahamian workers and 30 per cent Chinese.

However, last Monday, he told reporters that the agreement called for 60 per cent Chinese workers and 40 per cent Bahamians,

but only during the development’s superstructure phase or start-up construction.

Sceptical of this, Mr Dunlap called on the company to be more specific about who it has hired and when it has done so. “Show us the work permits,” he said. “By now I must believe that the people of the Bahamas are tired of reading about the numbers of Chinese workers. One day it is 60 per cent Chinese workers ... a few days later it is 70 per cent Bahamian workers. Stop insulting the collective intelligence of the public. CCA knows how many total workers are required for the project, how many Chinese workers have already been engaged over the course for the project and how many more CCA wishes to bring, how many work permits have been obtained and how many are allowed, and what subcontractors are doing what work with what labour.

“Why can’t CCA just reveal those facts, for the total arc of the project, not just the percentages on any given day or skewed to look good? Baha Mar lived with this ‘coconut and pea’ game by CCA for four years.”

“CCA (allegedly) deceived us and the govern-

ment, abandoned Baha Mar without a hint or warning, and did not, could not and have not finished their job. One year later, even with the obligation of two completion guarantees, they have ignored their responsibility,” Mr Dunlap added.

“We can only hope that CCA will do a good job completing The Pointe and not leave another mess at the gateway to Nassau.”

The war of words highlights the bad blood that continues to exist between the two parties, even as developer Sarkis Izmirlian expressed interest in returning to the negotiating table to discuss Baha Mar’s future with the government.

CCA broke ground on The Pointe development by the British Colonial Hilton in August 2015 while engaged in a dispute with Baha Mar over the stalled \$3.5bn Cable Beach project.

Scheduled for a 2017 launch, the Bay Street project is expected to provide some 500 jobs within the 200-room entertainment hotel, oceanfront residences and 80-slip marina. The development will also have a 1,000-car garage, a bowling alley and movie theatre.

See Letters to the Editor, page four



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## Psalm 144

### A Song to the Lord Who Preserves and Prospers His People

Blessed be the Lord my Rock,  
Who trains my hands for war,  
And my fingers for battle—

My loving kindness and my fortress,  
My high tower and my deliverer,  
My shield and the One in whom I take refuge,  
Who subdues my people[a] under me.

Lord, what is man, that You take knowledge of him?  
Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?

Man is like a breath;  
His days are like a passing shadow.

Bow down Your heavens, O Lord, and come down;  
Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

Flash forth lightning and scatter them;  
Shoot out Your arrows and destroy them.

Stretch out Your hand from above;  
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,  
From the hand of foreigners,

Whose mouth speaks lying words,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

I will sing a new song to You, O God;  
On a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,

The One who gives salvation to kings,  
Who delivers David His servant  
From the deadly sword.

Rescue me and deliver me from the hand of foreigners,  
Whose mouth speaks lying words,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood—


That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;  
That our daughters may be as pillars,  
Sculptured in palace style;

That our barns may be full,  
Supplying all kinds of produce;  
That our sheep may bring forth thousands  
And ten thousands in our fields;

That our oxen may be well laden;  
That there be no breaking in or going out;  
That there be no outcry in our streets.

Happy are the people who are in such a state;  
Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!

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Tracy Reifel

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# DOCTORS WANT DELAY FOR NHI INTRODUCTION

from page one

“It won’t come on stream in April. The whole business about medical homes, that has been changed up,” he said, referring to a comprehensive form of healthcare delivery that is no longer a requirement for doctors hoping to participate in NHI.

“There are a lot of things that originally they spoke about needing to be in place, that aren’t in place.”

Dr Munroe said the Bahamas Insurance Association (BIA) has also requested a delay in bringing the NHI legislation to Parliament, although BIA Chairman Emmanuel Komolafe did not respond to questions about this before press time yesterday.

Even so, the government has been much less accommodating to the BIA than it has been to the various medical associations, Dr Munroe noted.

“Two weeks ago, the Sec-

Two weeks ago, the Secretariat said we had eight days to look at the legislation. I didn’t bother to respond because to me that was nonsense. The BIA asked for 12 weeks extension.’

retariat said we had eight days to look at the legislation,” he said. “I didn’t bother to respond because to me that was nonsense. The BIA asked for 12 weeks extension. We have a couple of lawyers looking at the legislation but I don’t think we’ll need 12 weeks.”

Dr Munroe said NHI officials have been coy about the costing of NHI and have not shared with the doctors their plans to introduce the third phase of the scheme, the vital benefits package.

He also expressed frus-

tration with KPMG, the advisory firm the government hired last month to determine whether the Christie administration’s NHI plans are well thought out.

“I had the opportunity Thursday past to speak with them,” he said. “I think it’s a biased situation. They (are) from England (and) Canada, where you have a system set up that has its own intrinsic problems. But they didn’t come to advise the government on the problems that exist but instead to see if we have the insights into what the problems are. They’re not indicating what the problems are.

“And if we can’t articulate to them what the problems are then they’re going to push this thing through because we didn’t say anything. But I didn’t allow that to pass. I didn’t accuse them of being biased, but I said one thing the government must look at in detail and depth is why these systems fail.”

# Sewell is granted bail

By RASHAD ROLLE  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

SUPREME Court Justice Bernard Turner granted 27-year-old Matthew Sewell bail on Friday, the latest turn of events in the Jamaican’s years of encounters with the law.

After being shuffled between prison and the Detention Centre for more than nine years without facing a hearing on sexual assault, housebreaking and murder charges, Sewell was ordered to be released from prison last October.

However, he was soon arrested again for allegedly having sex with a 15-year-old-girl.

Chief Magistrate Joyann Ferguson-Pratt granted him \$6,500 bail last week.

However, prosecutors



MATTHEW Sewell at court previously.

for the Attorney General’s office appealed the bail ruling, and Justice Turner subsequently ruled that it was unconstitutional for Magistrate Ferguson-Pratt to grant him bail.

Nonetheless, in his ruling on Friday, Justice Turner issued a fresh ruling on the matter, granting Sewell bail at \$9,000 with one surety. He indicated that he would give his written reasons for his

ruling on Monday, according to his lawyer, Adrian Gibson of Callenders & Co.

Sewell will be required to be electronically monitored. It was ordered that he report to the East Street South Police Station every Tuesday and Saturday on or before 6pm.

He must also be within 200 feet of his house between 9pm and 6am, the justice ordered.



PANDORA Knowles receives her prize for correctly identifying the Secret Sound from 100 Jamz on-air personality and Director of Promotions/Online Marketing at Radio House JJ McKenzie (left) and Island Luck Marketing Executive Michelle Fox (right).

## THE SECRET’S OUT - FOR ONE \$1,000 WINNER

PANDORA Knowles is the first winner of the 100 JAMZ Secret Sound, which has returned to the airwaves with big money prizes courtesy of Island Luck.

Pandora won \$1,000 after practicing at home trying to recreate the sound. When it came time to call in to 100 JAMZ she used her work phone and two cell phones to get through.

Jatonde will have a new Secret Sound with the prize fund - which builds until the correct answer is given - starting at \$400 at 2pm today on 100 JAMZ.

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Published daily Monday to Friday

Shirley & Deveaux Streets, Nassau, Bahamas N3207

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Circulation Department	(242) 502-2386
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## Christie calls sex discrimination against women ‘abhorrent’

LORD save us from politicians!

It is difficult to understand how Prime Minister Christie could have spoken the following words without a twinge of conscience.

Commenting after the passing of government’s four Constitutional (Amendment) Bills in the House of Assembly on Wednesday, Mr Christie found it “abhorrent” to The Bahamas’ fundamental values that more than 53 years since women won the right to vote, they still do not have constitutional protection against discrimination based on sex. Did he not recall that he and his party had contributed 14 of those 53 years to women being relegated to second class citizens in their own country?

In 2002, then Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham invited Mr Christie as leader of the Opposition PLP to sit down and agree the terms by which the Constitution could be amended to bring women into the fold as equal citizens. The Ingraham government dropped all the proposals to which Mr Christie and his party disagreed. The then prime minister wanted to make certain that government and opposition went to the floor of the House with a united voice. It is for this reason that today Prime Minister Christie has been anxious to secure an assurance that the FNM will not do the same about face as he did in 2002.

On the floor of the House in 2002, government proposed the agreed amendments and both sides voted that the proposal should be presented to the people in a series of town meetings. At his first town meeting, Mr Christie shocked the town when he claimed that he was led astray in parliament, was mistaken in his “yes” vote and would vote against the amendments in a referendum. He said that the matter should be left to the new government — the 2002 election was only a few months away. And so an election and the ambition of a politician whose goal was to become prime minister, got in the way of giving Bahamian women equal status to their menfolk.

Prime Minister Ingraham, who lost the election, later remarked that “Perry Christie and I agreed on behalf of our political parties that these are the amendments we were both going to support and he agreed on the list of items. And now he is saying that he was seduced.”

No, he was not seduced. He was ambitious. And although he won the 2002 election, his five years passed without a mention of Bahamian women’s rights under the Constitution. And so we agree with DNA Leader Branville McCartney that should this referendum be won — and it must be won— no credit should go to Mr Christie or his party. After all they were the ones who delayed it for another 14 years — and regardless of what retired Archbishop Drexel Gomez says, the excuse for the delay was frivolous. They have even been foot dragging during this current term— their second chance as a government to get the job done — and yet it has been delayed another four years. So, yes the delay was and is still “abhorrent”. On this we are in full agreement with Mr Christie.

However, having said that we urge that the past be forgotten – it was tragic, it was “abhorrent”, but don’t let’s muddy the waters by dragging it into the future.

In a letter on this page, a former *Tribune* reporter writes:

“I want to congratulate the Members on both sides who supported these measures. On the same day, I read with dismay a letter urging the public not to support a Referendum on this issue because of the manner in which the Gaming ‘referendum’ was handled.

“While I understand the hurt this has caused, my question to the writer is this:

Would you punish an entire population of Bahamian women and their families to get revenge on something that was beyond their control?

“The writer may not be aware that the anomaly in the Constitution has been used in the past to target and victimise families for various reasons. It has created utter anguish and heartache for Bahamian men, women and children and as a people, we must make sure this is never allowed to happen again.”

Athena Damianos Mabon knows first hand of these many heartaches as she has interviewed the tragedy inflicted on many families, especially during the Pindling regime. If you were targeted as having not voted for the “Chief” you were marked for destruction.

Ms Damianos – as she is known to *Tribune* readers — reported many interviews with emotionally battered families. On June 1, 1992, she reported a story that shocked the nation when at an FNM convention a young woman stood up and told the tragic story of how her family had been torn apart by PLP immigration discrimination. The young woman, who had lived in The Bahamas from the time she was four weeks old, told the story of her father’s forced separation from his family and her struggle for citizenship. She told how her father, a well-known doctor, was forced to leave his Bahamian family for 12 years because the PLP government would not allow him to work here. He had worked at the Princess Margaret Hospital for many years and was well know and well liked. His Long Island wife, also a doctor, was also well known, but unfortunately for the family she was an active FNM. This was her undoing. After the young woman’s heart wrenching speech, *The Tribune* was told that Immigration claimed that her application for citizenship had been approved a month before. Her mother is now dead, but her father now practises medicine here.

Her story opened the floodgates. An Abaco woman called to tell how she had lived a 20-year nightmare for having married a foreigner. A Bahamian man recalled how his sister-in-law who had lived here for 30 years could not get immigration status. She had married a Bahamian and had two Bahamian children. Two years after she had died of cancer, government invited her to attend an interview for either permanent residence or citizenship.

On April 24, 1997, our editorial started as follows:

“The front door flew open. A woman ran into the road and headed for the graveyard.

“Frank it’s over! It’s over! It’s finished. Frank, it is really finished,” she screamed. She laughed. She cried and she screamed some more. For her it was a joyous moment.

“Neighbours opened their doors and looked out to see what had happened.

“Mrs Drucilla Higgs of Mathew Town Inagua had gone to her husband Frank’s graveside to share her good news with him. It was March 14 and ZNS had just announced the results of the general election, The FNM had won 34 seats. Mrs Higgs did not wait to hear the PLP’s results. Instead she was off to tell her Frank the good news...”

There are too many stories to tell. We are tempted to reprint many of them during the run up to the referendum so that Bahamians will truly understand the pain and suffering of many families because women dared marry a foreigner and even worse vote for the government of their choice. In other words their future was in the hands of a tyrant and if they didn’t vote right their family was destroyed.

The publication of these stories might be an eye-opener for many family whose daughters in the future might have to face the same injustice only because they do not have equal status with their male Bahamian counterpart.

Mr Christie finds it “abhorrent” to the The Bahamas’ fundamental values. We all find it abhorrent. And so no frivolous excuse should be allowed to block the passing of this referendum.



## BAHAMAS MAINTAINS CREDIT RATING



# In answer to Pointe builders

EDITOR, *The Tribune*.

WE should all wish The Pointe project well. The people of The Bahamas don’t need another unfinished China Construction America project looming on their skyline, especially one at the gateway to its historic downtown.

At the same time, I am flabbergasted at the outrageous and inaccurate reference by Mr Liu to Baha Mar as “some private development.” Had Mr Liu spent more of the time that Baha Mar paid for him to spend on our project instead of gallivanting about the Caribbean looking for new projects, he would realize that Baha Mar is very public. With over 40 restaurants, clubs and retail shops, it was for all to use ... including the very golf course that CCA was busy playing the days of the missed opening while we were hunkered down trying to address the catastrophe of their failure to meet the opening date.

I would expect The Pointe to be on time. CCA has enjoyed a head start, having started construction before receiving building permits! What other corners have

## LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

been and are being cut? Just this week CCA proudly shared that they are close to finishing their Environmental Impact Statement. They must be sure that it is going to be approved. There is a lot of construction to remove if it is not!

The same construction equipment that Baha Mar paid for and paid to have shipped from China now seems to have found its way to the construction of The Pointe. This significant head start and apparent free equipment and supplies will help assure an on time, on budget “2017 completion.” A little free material and equipment goes a long way.

Show us the work permits! By now I must believe that the people of The Bahamas are tired of reading about the numbers of Chinese workers. One day it is 60 per cent Chinese workers ... a few days later it is 70 per cent Bahamian workers. Stop insulting the collective intelligence of the public. CCA knows how

many total workers are required for the project, how many Chinese workers have already been engaged over the course for the project and how many more CCA wishes to bring, how many work permits have been obtained and how many are allowed, and what subcontractors are doing what work with what labour.

Why can’t CCA just reveal those facts, for the total arc of the project, not just the percentages on any given day or skewed to look good. Baha Mar lived with this “coconut and pea” game by CCA for four years.

CCA deceived us and the government, abandoned Baha Mar without a hint or warning, and did not, could not and have not finished their job. One year later, even with the obligation of two Completion Guarantees, they have ignored their responsibility.

We can only hope that CCA will do a good job completing The Pointe and not leave another mess at the gateway to Nassau.

**TOM DUNLAP**  
 Past President, Baha Mar  
 March 4, 2016.

# Closer to equality

EDITOR, *The Tribune*.

THE Bahamas took a giant step forward Wednesday when House members put political differences aside to overwhelmingly support the four gender equality Bills.

This was a victory for the Bahamian people and it takes the country one step closer to changing the discriminatory anomaly in the Constitution that has allowed for families to be ripped apart.

I want to congratulate the

Members on both sides who supported these measures.

On the same day, I read with dismay a letter urging the public not to support a Referendum on this issue because of the manner in which the Gaming “referendum” was handled.

While I understand the hurt this has caused, my question to the writer is this:

Would you punish an entire population of Bahamian women and their families to get revenge on something that was beyond

their control?

The writer may not be aware that the anomaly in the Constitution has been used in the past to target and victimise families for various reasons.

It has created utter anguish and heartache for Bahamian men, women and children and as a people, we must make sure this is never allowed to happen again.

**ATHENA DAMIANOS**  
 Nassau,  
 March 2, 2016.





# COUNTDOWN TO CARNIVAL

SOME of the costumes on show at the launch of thi year's Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival.

NASSAU'S Western Esplanade resounded to the sound and colour of Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival on Saturday afternoon and evening as the public enjoyed a sense of what is to come in May at the official launch of this year's event.

More than 20 Junkanoo Carnival groups displayed their costumes and paraphernalia at Da Cultural Village as the Bahamas National Festival Commission began the countdown to the second event, which it promises to be "even better than the first, with more opportunities to amp up the music, soak up the culture and turn up the vibes".

The official launch on Saturday was an opportunity for the public to sample the music, the culture and the vibes that define Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival. The Road Fever companies had booths to exhibit their 2016 costumes and accepted orders from people interested in participating in the street party on Saturday, May 7.

The launch event also featured live music from top Bahamian bands, a precursor to the entertainment lineup for the Music

Masters Mega Concert on Friday, May 6. Last year's event hosted 50,000 partygoers.

Like last year, the Carnival will start at Taino Beach, Grand Bahama, on April 15 and 16. The Music Masters semi-final competition is the signature event at the Grand Bahama Carnival Kick Off. Aspiring Bahamian musicians will perform the top 20 songs in the competition for a chance to secure a spot on the mega stage in Nassau three weeks later and win the \$20,000 grand prize. The music for the competition is currently being produced

by Julien Believe while the artists are engaged in artist development programmes as part of their boot camp.

When Junkanoo Carnival comes to Nassau from May 5 to 7, it will take over Da Cultural Village, the centre of cultural activity. Free admittance will be allowed inside Da Village during the day, before 5pm. Throughout the day there will be live cultural demonstrations and interactive exhibits.

The registered Road Fever companies are: Bahamas Masqueraders; Empire of Love; Enigma; Euphoria Madness Junkanoo Carnival; Explosion; Fetish Junkanoo Carnival Company; Friends of Gus; Fusion Mas Band; Indigenous Road Fever Carnival Band; JunkaBations Limited; Junkanoo Commandos; Karisma Bahamas Carnival Company; Kebasy; Reckless Pirates; Rhythms Bahamas Carnival Band; Sidjoyney; Spillgate; Starz; Sting Carnival Band; Starz; Sting Carnival Group; Vindi Dynasty; Xtasy; Xtreme Junkanoo Carnival, Barabas and the Tribe; Eden Carnival Group and Fun Carnival Group.

Photo: Allan Jones

# Amnesty: No answer from Mitchell to group's requests

By AVA TURNQUEST  
Tribune Chief Reporter  
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

HUMAN Rights group Amnesty International has defended the objectivity of its 2015 report following government criticism that claims of abuse were not fully investigated.

The group said on Friday it was concerned by comments made by Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister Fred Mitchell, who claimed the organisation appeared to have uncritically accepted allegations of abuse.

The 2015 report raised concerns about "excessive force" and "killings" at the hands of police officers as it highlighted problems in this country's criminal justice and immigration systems.

Amnesty said some circumstances of deaths at the hands of police could be seen as "extrajudicial executions".

Pointing to its international record and independence, Amnesty said it repeatedly requested information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration but received no response.

"Amnesty International aims to ensure the highest level of objectivity, independence and veracity in its reporting about the state of human rights in the Bahamas, the Caribbean, and the rest of the world," the organisation's statement said.

"We have repeatedly sought the government's

view and explanation regarding serious allegations of human rights violations happening in recent months, in order to ensure that the official perspective is taken into account in our reporting, yet we have yet to receive a response from the government in the Bahamas.

It added: "Amnesty International remains open to a continuous dialogue with the Bahamian government, and particularly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, to discuss how best to advance the protection and promotion of human rights in the country."

Mr Mitchell said the report was under government review in a statement last week. However, he pointed

out that one of the claims in the report sounded like the "usual pabulum spun by the detractors of the Immigration Department". He was referring to an incident in Eleuthera that involved 27-year-old Jean-Mary Justilien being shot by an officer during an immigration exercise in early June last year. Mr Justilien, a Haitian, was taken into custody on suspicion of assaulting a police officer and an immigration officer as they executed their duties. He was later cleared of the charges, but was deported.

In a statement sent to The Tribune, Amnesty said it contacted the government last year on March 17 to request more information about immigration reforms being designed and

implemented by the country. A second attempt was made October 22 to both the Ministry of Environment and Housing and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration asking for further information about the Gamble Heights shanty town removal.

In December, Amnesty issued an urgent action on behalf of Mr Justilien, who was at risk of arbitrary deportation. The action was directed to both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Immigration and the Office of the Prime Minister, but did not receive any response.

Amnesty continued: "Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where

human rights are enjoyed by all. Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations."

The 2015 report's release comes against the backdrop of questions again being raised about detention practices of the Bahamian government, with controversy erupting after two Cuban prisoners were recently released on a judge's order after being unlawfully detained for three years.

## POLICE HUNTING FOR TWO SUSPECTS AFTER ARMED ROBBERIES

By NICO SCAVELLA  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
nscavella@tribunemedia.net

POLICE are searching for two men responsible for committing an armed robbery over the weekend.

According to police reports, shortly after 9pm on Saturday, a woman had just pulled up to her Stanford Drive home when two men armed with a handgun approached her and robbed her of her handbag containing cash, two passports and other personal items.

The assailants fled the scene in a white Mitsubishi.

Meanwhile, two men have been taken into custody in connection with the seizure of an illegal firearm and ammunition, police said.

According to reports, around 10pm Saturday officers from the Western Division intercepted a Honda with two suspicious men on West Bay Street. The vehicle was searched and a .40 pistol along with three rounds of ammunition were seized.

The two men were subsequently taken into custody in connection with the seizure.

Police also said an American man is in custody after he was arrested for drug possession in Harbour Island.

The suspect is from Boston, police said.

According to police reports, shortly after 9pm Saturday, officers in Harbour Island conducted a search of a suspicious adult male and found a quantity of marijuana in his possession.

Investigations continue.

## FIVE HELD FOR GAMING BREACH

By DENISE MAYCOCK  
Tribune Freeport Reporter  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FIVE people were arrested in Grand Bahama for breach of the Lottery and Gaming Act and possession of dangerous drugs on Friday, police reported.

Inspector Terecita Pinder said that police stopped a number of persons who were allegedly caught with handheld gaming devices

and cash while in their vehicles at various locations on the island. Insp Pinder said some were also found in possession of illegal drugs. Investigations are continuing.

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WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT	NEW	1:00	3:30	N/A	6:00	8:30	10:45
LONDON HAS FALLEN	NEW	1:10	3:35	N/A	6:15	8:40	10:45
ZOOTOPIA	NEW	1:05	3:25	N/A	6:05	8:25	10:35
GODS OF EGYPT	T	1:00	3:25	N/A	6:00	8:20	10:45
DEADPOOL	C	1:05	3:35	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:45
RISEN	B	1:05	3:25	N/A	6:05	8:25	10:45
TRIPLE 9	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8:25	10:45
KUNG FU PANDA 3	A	1:15	3:45	N/A	6:15	N/A	N/A

GALLERIA 6 - JFK DRIVE

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LONDON HAS FALLEN	NEW	1:15	3:40	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:45
ZOOTOPIA	NEW	1:00	3:30	N/A	6:00	8:25	10:35
GODS OF EGYPT	T	1:00	3:20	N/A	6:00	8:20	10:50
TRIPLE 9	C	1:00	3:25	N/A	6:00	8:25	10:45
DEADPOOL	C	1:10	3:30	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:45
KUNG FU PANDA 3	A	1:10	3:40	N/A	6:15	8:30	10:30

There will be no 1:00pm showings at J.F.K. from Monday thru Thursday except holidays

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Mohs Micrographic Surgery is an advanced procedure for skin cancers located on the head or neck or for very large or recurrent skin cancers. It offers the highest cure rates for basal and squamous cell carcinomas and simultaneously minimizes the sacrifice of normal, unaffected tissue surrounding the skin cancer.

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# KILLING OF TIGER SHARK CONDEMNED BY NATIONAL TRUST



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(Thigh, Leg or Wing)  
+ Individual Fries  
+ Biscuit  
+ 16 oz. Pepsi

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NASSAU

from page one

According to pictures obtained by *The Tribune*, the shark had been shot at least once in the head and had sustained other injuries to its left pectoral fin.

Although the circumstances surrounding its death and subsequent capture were unclear, the BNT said the shark was reportedly “frequenting an area where stingrays were being fed” prior to its death.

Nonetheless, the BNT said the “targeted killing” of the shark did not “appear to be justified,” and it did not condone the “needless, intentional killing of sharks”.

“Although the BNT is sensitive to the needs of local people who may accidentally catch sharks and choose to consume it, the BNT does not condone the targeted culling and ruthless killing of such valuable, sentient beings,” the organisation said. “This shark was reportedly frequenting an area where stingrays were being fed. The targeted killing of this shark does not appear to be justified.”

The BNT also went on to highlight how the country benefits economically from flourishing shark populations.

“Shark tourism generates some \$78m per year in the Bahamas, and is responsible for countless jobs across the entire country, including and especially dive shop employees,” the statement said. “Many film and documentary makers also travel to The Bahamas in order to capture sharks on film, and when their movies reach others it is, in a sense, a form of marketing our sharks and our country. In simpler terms, a single, dead shark is worth only about \$60 for its meat and organs, while a single, living shark is valued at \$250,000 over its entire lifetime.

“The BNT strongly condemns the needless, intentional killing of sharks.”

Environmental activist Sam Duncombe, founder of activist group reEarth, also weighed in on the matter when contacted yesterday, calling it a “lack of respect




**A TIGER** shark reportedly killed in the Exuma Cays.

for any living thing in this country.”


She said if the shark was posing a threat to anybody it could have been caught and moved to another location.

“The reality is there’s no reason for that animal to have been killed; it could have easily been caught and transported somewhere else if it was creating a problem for swimmers or something like that,” Mrs Duncombe said. “But we need to stop

being ridiculous – that’s where they live. Are we going to start shooting every live animal that comes into our proximity because maybe it might hurt us? Thank God we don’t have lions and tigers – they’d all be dead.” She added: “It’s just a lack of understanding of the animals. I understand people’s fears, but just because you’re frightened doesn’t mean the first reaction to your fear is to go kill the animal.”



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An International Baccalaureate World School



## COME ON HOME

**INTERNATIONAL**  
Model United Nations; SAS was represented at the Harvard Model United Nations this year. Our students were among 3,000 students from 60 different countries. 37 Nationalities.

**ACADEMICS**  
TOP BGCSE & IB RESULTS. Our students attend top universities Including; Georgetown, Dalhousie, McGill, University of Kent, Boston University, and many others. 1.5 Million in Scholarships

**BAHAMIAN**  
1<sup>st</sup> runner up for BAISS Spell-a-thon Participate in sports Debate Team Young Chefs Competition Primary Students of the Year Competition BAISS sports teams



## INTERNATIONAL YET PROUDLY BAHAMIAN

### ENVIRONMENT

- 35 Acre campus
- Safe and friendly environment
- Eco Friendly
- Awarded the Green Flag (only school in New Providence)
- Community orientated
- Butterfly garden
- Native garden

### PERFORMING ARTS

- Sound of Music Production
- Aladdin Jr.
- 200 Participants in the National Arts Festival
- Band
- Choir
- Chamber Choir
- Dance

### SPORTS

- BAISS sports
- Softball
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Track and field
- Swimming
- Won 3 out of 4 soccer championships for soccer last year.

### CAS

Creativity, Action and Service are a big part of what our students do here at SAS. This year our fund-raising efforts at school as well as service in the community have gone to support the Hurricane Relief efforts in the Southern Bahamas.

Join us for Open Day  
Thursday 10th March, 2016

Learn more about St Andrew's School at [www.StAndrewsBahamas.com](http://www.StAndrewsBahamas.com) 9:00am in the Library. Pre-School to Year 6.



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**SOME** of the costumes on show at the launch of thi year's Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival.

NASSAU'S Western Esplanade resounded to the sound and colour of Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival on Saturday afternoon and evening as the public enjoyed a sense of what is to come in May at the official launch of this year's event.

More than 20 Junkanoo Carnival groups displayed their costumes and paraphernalia at Da Cultural Village as the Bahamas National Festival Commission began the countdown to the second event, which it promises to be "even better than the first, with more opportunities to amp

up the music, soak up the culture and turn up the vibes".

The official launch on Saturday was an opportunity for the public to sample the music, the culture and the vibes that define Bahamas Junkanoo Carnival. The Road Fever companies had booths to exhibit their 2016 costumes and accepted orders from people interested in participating in the street party on Saturday, May 7.

The launch event also featured live music from top Bahamian bands, a precursor to the entertainment lineup for the Music

Masters Mega Concert on Friday, May 6. Last year's event hosted 50,000 partygoers.

Like last year, the Carnival will start at Taino Beach, Grand Bahama, on April 15 and 16. The Music Masters semi-final competition is the signature event at the Grand Bahama Carnival Kick Off. Aspiring Bahamian musicians will perform the top 20 songs in the competition for a chance to secure a spot on the mega stage in Nassau three weeks later and win the \$20,000 grand prize. The music for the competition is currently being produced

by Julien Believe while the artists are engaged in artist development programmes as part of their boot camp.

When Junkanoo Carnival comes to Nassau from May 5 to 7, it will take over Da Cultural Village, the centre of cultural activity. Free admittance will be allowed inside Da Village during the day, before 5pm. Throughout the day there will be live cultural demonstrations and interactive exhibits.

The registered Road Fever companies are: Bahamas Masqueraders; Empire of Love;

Enigma; Euphoria Madness Junkanoo Carnival; Explosion; Fetish Junkanoo Carnival Company; Friends of Gus; Fusion Mas Band; Indigenous Road Fever Carnival Band; JunkaBations Limited; Junkanoo Commandos; Karisma Bahamas Carnival Company; Kebasy; Reckless Pirates; Rhythms Bahamas Carnival Band; Sidjoyney; Spillgate; Starz; Sting Carnival Band; Starz; Sting Carnival Group; Vindi Dynasty; Xtasy; Xtreme Junkanoo Carnival, Barabas and the Tribe; Eden Carnival Group and Fun Carnival Group.

Photo: **Allan Jones**

# Amnesty: No answer from Mitchell to group's requests

By **AVA TURNQUEST**  
**Tribune Chief Reporter**  
aturnquest@tribunemedia.net

HUMAN Rights group Amnesty International has defended the objectivity of its 2015 report following government criticism that claims of abuse were not fully investigated.

The group said on Friday it was concerned by comments made by Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister Fred Mitchell, who claimed the organisation appeared to have uncritically accepted allegations of abuse.

The 2015 report raised concerns about "excessive force" and "killings" at the hands of police officers as it highlighted problems in this country's criminal jus-

tice and immigration systems. Amnesty said some circumstances of deaths at the hands of police could be seen as "extrajudicial executions".

Pointing to its international record and independence, Amnesty said it repeatedly requested information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration but received no response.

"Amnesty International aims to ensure the highest level of objectivity, independence and veracity in its reporting about the state of human rights in the Bahamas, the Caribbean, and the rest of the world," the organisation's statement said.

"We have repeatedly sought the government's

view and explanation regarding serious allegations of human rights violations happening in recent months, in order to ensure that the official perspective is taken into account in our reporting, yet we have yet to receive a response from the government in the Bahamas.

It added: "Amnesty International remains open to a continuous dialogue with the Bahamian government, and particularly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, to discuss how best to advance the protection and promotion of human rights in the country."

Mr Mitchell said the report was under government review in a statement last week. However, he pointed

out that one of the claims in the report sounded like the "usual pabulum spun by the detractors of the Immigration Department". He was referring to an incident in Eleuthera that involved 27-year-old Jean-Mary Justilien being shot by an officer during an immigration exercise in early June last year. Mr Justilien, a Haitian, was taken into custody on suspicion of assaulting a police officer and an immigration officer as they executed their duties. He was later cleared of the charges, but was deported.

In a statement sent to The Tribune, Amnesty said it contacted the government last year on March 17 to request more information about immigration reforms being designed and

implemented by the country. A second attempt was made October 22 to both the Ministry of Environment and Housing and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration asking for further information about the Gamble Heights shanty town removal.

In December, Amnesty issued an urgent action on behalf of Mr Justilien, who was at risk of arbitrary deportation. The action was directed to both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Immigration and the Office of the Prime Minister, but did not receive any response.

Amnesty continued: "Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where

human rights are enjoyed by all. Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations."

The 2015 report's release comes against the backdrop of questions again being raised about detention practices of the Bahamian government, with controversy erupting after two Cuban prisoners were recently released on a judge's order after being unlawfully detained for three years.

## POLICE HUNTING FOR TWO SUSPECTS AFTER ARMED ROBBERIES

By **NICO SCAVELLA**  
**Tribune Staff Reporter**  
nscavella@tribunemedia.net

POLICE are searching for two men responsible for committing an armed robbery over the weekend.

According to police reports, shortly after 9pm on Saturday, a woman had just pulled up to her Stanford Drive home when two men armed with a hand-

gun approached her and robbed her of her handbag containing cash, two passports and other personal items.

The assailants fled the scene in a white Mitsubishi.

Meanwhile, two men have been taken into custody in connection with the seizure of an illegal firearm and ammunition, police said.

According to reports, around 10pm Saturday officers from the Western Division intercepted a Honda with two suspicious men on West Bay Street. The vehicle was searched and a .40 pistol along with three rounds of ammunition were seized.

The two men were subsequently taken into custody in connection with the seizure.

Police also said an Amer-

ican man is in custody after he was arrested for drug possession in Harbour Island.

The suspect is from Boston, police said.

According to police reports, shortly after 9pm Saturday, officers in Harbour Island conducted a search of a suspicious adult male and found a quantity of marijuana in his possession.

Investigations continue.

## FIVE HELD FOR GAMING BREACH

By **DENISE MAYCOCK**  
**Tribune Freeport Reporter**  
dmaycock@tribunemedia.net

FIVE people were arrested in Grand Bahama for breach of the Lottery and Gaming Act and possession of dangerous drugs on Friday, police reported.

Inspector Terecita Pinder said that police stopped a number of persons who were allegedly caught with handheld gaming devices

and cash while in their vehicles at various locations on the island. Insp Pinder said some were also found in possession of illegal drugs.

Investigations are continuing.

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DEADPOOL	C	1:05	3:35	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:45
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TRIPLE 9	C	1:00	3:25	N/A	6:00	8:25	10:45
DEADPOOL	C	1:10	3:30	N/A	6:10	8:30	10:45
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 Publisher/Editor 1972-

Published daily Monday to Friday

Shirley & Deveaux Streets, Nassau, Bahamas N3207

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Advertising Manager	(242) 502-2394
Circulation Department	(242) 502-2386
Nassau fax	(242) 328-2398
Freeport, Grand Bahama	(242)-352-6608
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## Christie calls sex discrimination against women ‘abhorrent’

LORD save us from politicians!

It is difficult to understand how Prime Minister Christie could have spoken the following words without a twinge of conscience.

Commenting after the passing of government’s four Constitutional (Amendment) Bills in the House of Assembly on Wednesday, Mr Christie found it “abhorrent” to The Bahamas’ fundamental values that more than 53 years since women won the right to vote, they still do not have constitutional protection against discrimination based on sex. Did he not recall that he and his party had contributed 14 of those 53 years to women being relegated to second class citizens in their own country?

In 2002, then Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham invited Mr Christie as leader of the Opposition PLP to sit down and agree the terms by which the Constitution could be amended to bring women into the fold as equal citizens. The Ingraham government dropped all the proposals to which Mr Christie and his party disagreed. The then prime minister wanted to make certain that government and opposition went to the floor of the House with a united voice. It is for this reason that today Prime Minister Christie has been anxious to secure an assurance that the FNM will not do the same about face as he did in 2002.

On the floor of the House in 2002, government proposed the agreed amendments and both sides voted that the proposal should be presented to the people in a series of town meetings. At his first town meeting, Mr Christie shocked the town when he claimed that he was led astray in parliament, was mistaken in his “yes” vote and would vote against the amendments in a referendum. He said that the matter should be left to the new government — the 2002 election was only a few months away. And so an election and the ambition of a politician whose goal was to become prime minister, got in the way of giving Bahamian women equal status to their menfolk.

Prime Minister Ingraham, who lost the election, later remarked that “Perry Christie and I agreed on behalf of our political parties that these are the amendments we were both going to support and he agreed on the list of items. And now he is saying that he was seduced.”

No, he was not seduced. He was ambitious. And although he won the 2002 election, his five years passed without a mention of Bahamian women’s rights under the Constitution. And so we agree with DNA Leader Branville McCartney that should this referendum be won — and it must be won— no credit should go to Mr Christie or his party. After all they were the ones who delayed it for another 14 years — and regardless of what retired Archbishop Drexel Gomez says, the excuse for the delay was frivolous. They have even been foot dragging during this current term— their second chance as a government to get the job done — and yet it has been delayed another four years. So, yes the delay was and is still “abhorrent”. On this we are in full agreement with Mr Christie.

However, having said that we urge that the past be forgotten – it was tragic, it was “abhorrent”, but don’t let’s muddy the waters by dragging it into the future.

In a letter on this page, a former *Tribune* reporter writes:

“I want to congratulate the Members on both sides who supported these measures. On the same day, I read with dismay a letter urging the public not to support a Referendum on this issue because of the manner in which the Gaming ‘referendum’ was handled.

“While I understand the hurt this has caused, my question to the writer is this:

Would you punish an entire population of Bahamian women and their families to get revenge on something that was beyond their control?

“The writer may not be aware that the anomaly in the Constitution has been used in the past to target and victimise families for various reasons. It has created utter anguish and heartache for Bahamian men, women and children and as a people, we must make sure this is never allowed to happen again.”

Athena Damianos Mabon knows first hand of these many heartaches as she has interviewed the tragedy inflicted on many families, especially during the Pindling regime. If you were targeted as having not voted for the “Chief” you were marked for destruction.

Ms Damianos – as she is known to *Tribune* readers — reported many interviews with emotionally battered families. On June 1, 1992, she reported a story that shocked the nation when at an FNM convention a young woman stood up and told the tragic story of how her family had been torn apart by PLP immigration discrimination. The young woman, who had lived in The Bahamas from the time she was four weeks old, told the story of her father’s forced separation from his family and her struggle for citizenship. She told how her father, a well-known doctor, was forced to leave his Bahamian family for 12 years because the PLP government would not allow him to work here. He had worked at the Princess Margaret Hospital for many years and was well know and well liked. His Long Island wife, also a doctor, was also well known, but unfortunately for the family she was an active FNM. This was her undoing. After the young woman’s heart wrenching speech, *The Tribune* was told that Immigration claimed that her application for citizenship had been approved a month before. Her mother is now dead, but her father now practises medicine here.

Her story opened the floodgates. An Abaco woman called to tell how she had lived a 20-year nightmare for having married a foreigner. A Bahamian man recalled how his sister-in-law who had lived here for 30 years could not get immigration status. She had married a Bahamian and had two Bahamian children. Two years after she had died of cancer, government invited her to attend an interview for either permanent residence or citizenship.

On April 24, 1997, our editorial started as follows:

“The front door flew open. A woman ran into the road and headed for the graveyard.

“Frank it’s over! It’s over! It’s finished. Frank, it is really finished,” she screamed. She laughed. She cried and she screamed some more. For her it was a joyous moment.

“Neighbours opened their doors and looked out to see what had happened.

“Mrs Drucilla Higgs of Mathew Town Inagua had gone to her husband Frank’s graveside to share her good news with him. It was March 14 and ZNS had just announced the results of the general election, The FNM had won 34 seats. Mrs Higgs did not wait to hear the PLP’s results. Instead she was off to tell her Frank the good news...”

There are too many stories to tell. We are tempted to reprint many of them during the run up to the referendum so that Bahamians will truly understand the pain and suffering of many families because women dared marry a foreigner and even worse vote for the government of their choice. In other words their future was in the hands of a tyrant and if they didn’t vote right their family was destroyed.

The publication of these stories might be an eye-opener for many family whose daughters in the future might have to face the same injustice only because they do not have equal status with their male Bahamian counterpart.

Mr Christie finds it “abhorrent” to the The Bahamas’ fundamental values. We all find it abhorrent. And so no frivolous excuse should be allowed to block the passing of this referendum.



## BAHAMAS MAINTAINS CREDIT RATING



# In answer to Pointe builders

EDITOR, *The Tribune*.

WE should all wish The Pointe project well. The people of The Bahamas don’t need another unfinished China Construction America project looming on their skyline, especially one at the gateway to its historic downtown.

At the same time, I am flabbergasted at the outrageous and inaccurate reference by Mr Liu to Baha Mar as “some private development.” Had Mr Liu spent more of the time that Baha Mar paid for him to spend on our project instead of gallivanting about the Caribbean looking for new projects, he would realize that Baha Mar is very public. With over 40 restaurants, clubs and retail shops, it was for all to use ... including the very golf course that CCA was busy playing the days of the missed opening while we were hunkered down trying to address the catastrophe of their failure to meet the opening date.

I would expect The Pointe to be on time. CCA has enjoyed a head start, having started construction before receiving building permits! What other corners have

## LETTERS

letters@tribunemedia.net

been and are being cut? Just this week CCA proudly shared that they are close to finishing their Environmental Impact Statement. They must be sure that it is going to be approved. There is a lot of construction to remove if it is not!

The same construction equipment that Baha Mar paid for and paid to have shipped from China now seems to have found its way to the construction of The Pointe. This significant head start and apparent free equipment and supplies will help assure an on time, on budget “2017 completion.” A little free material and equipment goes a long way.

Show us the work permits! By now I must believe that the people of The Bahamas are tired of reading about the numbers of Chinese workers. One day it is 60 per cent Chinese workers ... a few days later it is 70 per cent Bahamian workers. Stop insulting the collective intelligence of the public. CCA knows how

many total workers are required for the project, how many Chinese workers have already been engaged over the course for the project and how many more CCA wishes to bring, how many work permits have been obtained and how many are allowed, and what subcontractors are doing what work with what labour.

Why can’t CCA just reveal those facts, for the total arc of the project, not just the percentages on any given day or skewed to look good. Baha Mar lived with this “coconut and pea” game by CCA for four years.

CCA deceived us and the government, abandoned Baha Mar without a hint or warning, and did not, could not and have not finished their job. One year later, even with the obligation of two Completion Guarantees, they have ignored their responsibility.

We can only hope that CCA will do a good job completing The Pointe and not leave another mess at the gateway to Nassau.

**TOM DUNLAP**

Past President, Baha Mar  
 March 4, 2016.

# Closer to equality

EDITOR, *The Tribune*.

THE Bahamas took a giant step forward Wednesday when House members put political differences aside to overwhelmingly support the four gender equality Bills.

This was a victory for the Bahamian people and it takes the country one step closer to changing the discriminatory anomaly in the Constitution that has allowed for families to be ripped apart.

I want to congratulate the

Members on both sides who supported these measures.

On the same day, I read with dismay a letter urging the public not to support a Referendum on this issue because of the manner in which the Gaming “referendum” was handled.

While I understand the hurt this has caused, my question to the writer is this:

Would you punish an entire population of Bahamian women and their families to get revenge on something that was beyond

their control?

The writer may not be aware that the anomaly in the Constitution has been used in the past to target and victimise families for various reasons.

It has created utter anguish and heartache for Bahamian men, women and children and as a people, we must make sure this is never allowed to happen again.

**ATHENA DAMIANOS**

Nassau,  
 March 2, 2016.



# DOCTORS WANT DELAY FOR NHI INTRODUCTION

from page one

“It won’t come on stream in April. The whole business about medical homes, that has been changed up,” he said, referring to a comprehensive form of healthcare delivery that is no longer a requirement for doctors hoping to participate in NHI.

“There are a lot of things that originally they spoke about needing to be in place, that aren’t in place.”

Dr Munroe said the Bahamas Insurance Association (BIA) has also requested a delay in bringing the NHI legislation to Parliament, although BIA Chairman Emmanuel Komolafe did not respond to questions about this before press time yesterday.

Even so, the government has been much less accommodating to the BIA than it has been to the various medical associations, Dr Munroe noted.

“Two weeks ago, the Sec-

Two weeks ago, the Secretariat said we had eight days to look at the legislation. I didn’t bother to respond because to me that was nonsense. The BIA asked for 12 weeks extension.’

retariat said we had eight days to look at the legislation,” he said. “I didn’t bother to respond because to me that was nonsense. The BIA asked for 12 weeks extension. We have a couple of lawyers looking at the legislation but I don’t think we’ll need 12 weeks.”

Dr Munroe said NHI officials have been coy about the costing of NHI and have not shared with the doctors their plans to introduce the third phase of the scheme, the vital benefits package.

He also expressed frus-

tration with KPMG, the advisory firm the government hired last month to determine whether the Christie administration’s NHI plans are well thought out.

“I had the opportunity Thursday past to speak with them,” he said. “I think it’s a biased situation. They (are) from England (and) Canada, where you have a system set up that has its own intrinsic problems. But they didn’t come to advise the government on the problems that exist but instead to see if we have the insights into what the problems are. They’re not indicating what the problems are.

“And if we can’t articulate to them what the problems are then they’re going to push this thing through because we didn’t say anything. But I didn’t allow that to pass. I didn’t accuse them of being biased, but I said one thing the government must look at in detail and depth is why these systems fail.”

# Sewell is granted bail

By RASHAD ROLLE  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rrolle@tribunemedia.net

SUPREME Court Justice Bernard Turner granted 27-year-old Matthew Sewell bail on Friday, the latest turn of events in the Jamaican’s years of encounters with the law.

After being shuffled between prison and the Detention Centre for more than nine years without facing a hearing on sexual assault, housebreaking and murder charges, Sewell was ordered to be released from prison last October.

However, he was soon arrested again for allegedly having sex with a 15-year-old-girl.

Chief Magistrate Joyann Ferguson-Pratt granted him \$6,500 bail last week.

However, prosecutors



MATTHEW Sewell at court previously.

for the Attorney General’s office appealed the bail ruling, and Justice Turner subsequently ruled that it was unconstitutional for Magistrate Ferguson-Pratt to grant him bail.

Nonetheless, in his ruling on Friday, Justice Turner issued a fresh ruling on the matter, granting Sewell bail at \$9,000 with one surety. He indicated that he would give his written reasons for his

ruling on Monday, according to his lawyer, Adrian Gibson of Callenders & Co.

Sewell will be required to be electronically monitored. It was ordered that he report to the East Street South Police Station every Tuesday and Saturday on or before 6pm.

He must also be within 200 feet of his house between 9pm and 6am, the justice ordered.



PANDORA Knowles receives her prize for correctly identifying the Secret Sound from 100 Jamz on-air personality and Director of Promotions/Online Marketing at Radio House JJ McKenzie (left) and Island Luck Marketing Executive Michelle Fox (right).

## THE SECRET’S OUT - FOR ONE \$1,000 WINNER

PANDORA Knowles is the first winner of the 100 JAMZ Secret Sound, which has returned to the airwaves with big money prizes courtesy of Island Luck.

Pandora won \$1,000 after practicing at home trying to recreate the sound. When it came time to call in to 100 JAMZ she used her work phone and two cell phones to get through.

Jatonde will have a new Secret Sound with the prize fund - which builds until the correct answer is given - starting at \$400 at 2pm today on 100 JAMZ.

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# SENATOR’S PUBLIC APOLOGY IS ‘TOO LITTLE TOO LATE’ SAYS MP

from page one

Mrs Rolle’s apology was made last week Thursday during an appearance on the 96.9 FM talk show “The Conversation,” the same show on which she had made her initial controversial comments.

She said in January: “Some sitting MPs are, and let’s call it what it is, they are jealous, some are envious of the favour Dr Minnis has with the masses and they are in positions

of power.”

She had also made direct criticism of Long Island MP Loretta Butler-Turner, saying the country would not support her as leader over Prime Minister Perry Christie, adding that the parliamentarian should “humble” herself before Dr Minnis.

She also said Dr Minnis had the support of FNM councillors and “thousands of voters,” adding that only a few MPs “who are holding seats for now” did not

back him.

In apologising publicly for her remarks last week, Mrs Rolle said she and Mrs Butler-Turner have a cordial relationship.

Mrs Butler-Turner, however, declined to comment on her apology when asked yesterday about it.

Central Grand Bahama MP Neko Grant – who had released a statement in February calling for Mrs Rolle to apologise publicly for her “unprovoked attack” on him and his colleagues

– said he has accepted her public apology.

“I’m prepared to move on,” he said yesterday. “It’s never too late to do the right thing.”

Meanwhile, Mrs Rolle said she hoped the party could focus on unseating the Christie administration instead of internal bickering.

“I did think at the time that certain things needed to be said but, in hindsight, I think it could have been done a different way,” she

said on Thursday. “What I was trying to convey, and I hoped that I conveyed, was that the Free National Movement had followed a democratic process according to the (party’s) constitution and I wanted to encourage all.”

“I wanted the (negative) talk to actually cease because our focus is on the Progressive Liberal Party and the fact that they are failing the Bahamian people,” she added.

“To the extent that any

person would have been offended by any part or to the extent they would have been offended by my comments, I do apologise; but certainly that was not the intent.

“Certainly I am here to build the party and I support every Free National Movement member of Parliament 100 per cent and certainly I follow and support the leader 110 per cent because he pushes us to the 100 per cent,” Mrs Rolle said.

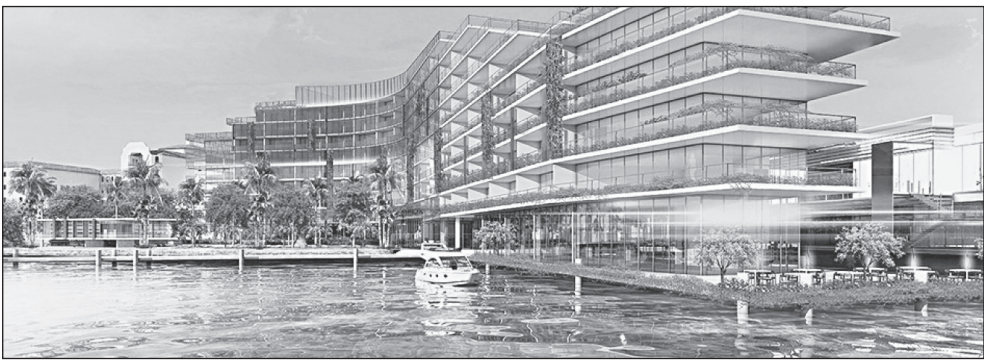
# Baha Mar fury at Pointe claim

from page one

“There is no short of the money,” Mr Liu said at a media reception at The Pointe’s newest restaurant, Summer Palace, on Wednesday. “It will be done on time.”

Mr Dunlap responded by saying he was “flabbergasted at the outrageous and inaccurate reference by Mr Liu to Baha Mar as ‘some private development’”.

Mr Dunlap said in his letter: “Had Mr Liu spent more of the time that Baha Mar paid for him to spend on our project instead of gallivanting about the Car-



AN ARTIST’S impression of The Pointe development.

ibbean looking for new projects, he would realise that Baha Mar is very public.

“With over 40 restaurants, clubs and retail shops, it was for all to use ... including the very golf course that

CCA was busy playing the days of the missed opening while we were hunkered down trying to address the catastrophe of their failure to meet the opening date. I would expect The Pointe to be on time. CCA has enjoyed a head start, having started construction before receiving building permits.”

Last October, *The Tribune* reported that the Ministry of Works’ Buildings Control Division issued a stop order after a site visit at The Pointe revealed that construction had progressed further than the permits issued for ground preparation allowed.

“Just (last) week, CCA proudly shared that they are close to finishing their Environmental Impact Statement. They must be sure that it is going to be approved. There is a lot of construction to remove if it

is not,” said Mr Dunlap.

Mr Dunlap alleged that The Pointe appears to be using the same construction equipment that Baha Mar paid for and had shipped from China. “This significant head start and apparent free equipment and supplies will help assure an on time, on budget 2017 completion,” he alleged. “A little free material and equipment goes a long way.”

Leslie Pindling, director of external affairs for The Pointe, on Wednesday said the property is adhering to the heads of agreement signed with the government which allowed for 70 per cent Bahamian workers and 30 per cent Chinese.

However, last Monday, he told reporters that the agreement called for 60 per cent Chinese workers and 40 per cent Bahamians,

but only during the development’s superstructure phase or start-up construction.

Sceptical of this, Mr Dunlap called on the company to be more specific about who it has hired and when it has done so. “Show us the work permits,” he said. “By now I must believe that the people of the Bahamas are tired of reading about the numbers of Chinese workers. One day it is 60 per cent Chinese workers ... a few days later it is 70 per cent Bahamian workers. Stop insulting the collective intelligence of the public. CCA knows how many total workers are required for the project, how many Chinese workers have already been engaged over the course for the project and how many more CCA wishes to bring, how many work permits have been obtained and how many are allowed, and what subcontractors are doing what work with what labour.”

“Why can’t CCA just reveal those facts, for the total arc of the project, not just the percentages on any given day or skewed to look good? Baha Mar lived with this ‘coconut and pea’ game by CCA for four years.”

“CCA (allegedly) deceived us and the govern-

ment, abandoned Baha Mar without a hint or warning, and did not, could not and have not finished their job. One year later, even with the obligation of two completion guarantees, they have ignored their responsibility,” Mr Dunlap added.

“We can only hope that CCA will do a good job completing The Pointe and not leave another mess at the gateway to Nassau.”

The war of words highlights the bad blood that continues to exist between the two parties, even as developer Sarkis Izmirlian expressed interest in returning to the negotiating table to discuss Baha Mar’s future with the government.

CCA broke ground on The Pointe development by the British Colonial Hilton in August 2015 while engaged in a dispute with Baha Mar over the stalled \$3.5bn Cable Beach project.

Scheduled for a 2017 launch, the Bay Street project is expected to provide some 500 jobs within the 200-room entertainment hotel, oceanfront residences and 80-slip marina. The development will also have a 1,000-car garage, a bowling alley and movie theatre.

See Letters to the Editor, page four



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## Psalm 144

*A Song to the Lord Who Preserves and Prospers His People*

Blessed be the Lord my Rock,  
Who trains my hands for war,  
And my fingers for battle—

My loving kindness and my fortress,  
My high tower and my deliverer,  
My shield and the One in whom I take refuge,  
Who subdues my people[a] under me.

Lord, what is man, that You take knowledge of him?  
Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?

Man is like a breath;  
His days are like a passing shadow.

Bow down Your heavens, O Lord, and come down;  
Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

Flash forth lightning and scatter them;  
Shoot out Your arrows and destroy them.

Stretch out Your hand from above;  
Rescue me and deliver me out of great waters,  
From the hand of foreigners,

Whose mouth speaks lying words,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

I will sing a new song to You, O God;  
On a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,

The One who gives salvation to kings,  
Who delivers David His servant  
From the deadly sword.

Rescue me and deliver me from the hand of foreigners,  
Whose mouth speaks lying words,  
And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood—


That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;  
That our daughters may be as pillars,  
Sculptured in palace style;

That our barns may be full,  
Supplying all kinds of produce;  
That our sheep may bring forth thousands  
And ten thousands in our fields;

That our oxen may be well laden;  
That there be no breaking in or going out;  
That there be no outcry in our streets.

Happy are the people who are in such a state;  
Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!


## March is COLON CANCER Awareness Month




Tracy Reifel

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# A Caribbean banking agency in the US: a risk worth taking

## World View

By SIR RONALD SANDERS



CARIBBEAN governments, indigenous banks and offshore banks located in the Caribbean are extremely concerned about the withdrawal of correspondent relations from Caribbean banks by banks in the United States of America.

Caribbean Heads of Government at a meeting in Belize in February made their concern very clear. The Caribbean Association of Banks have done so in separate statements. Their sense of alarm arises from the fact that, if all correspondent banking relations are withdrawn, the region will be isolated from the rest of the world and will be unable to carry out the most basic of bank transactions.

In many Caribbean countries there has been a steady decline in such correspondent banking relations, and there is no sign of an early abatement.

Caribbean governments and banks are not alone in their concern. Other regions of the world are also similarly affected. Countries in East Asia, the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia with significant offshore banking activities, are also affected.

What has caused the withdrawal of correspondent relations to the Caribbean and the other regions is the huge penalties that US banks would have to pay if any incidence of money laundering, terrorism financing or tax evasion passed through them from their respondent banks.

It is imperative that Caribbean banks cease their reliance on US banks alone for their correspondent relations in the US. It is time that they jointly, in groups, or individually establish an agency of their own in the US to be their correspondent bank and handle their transactions in the US and beyond. They have to ensure that they will be able to do business if US banks abandon them.

Regulatory and enforcement agencies have dealt harshly with such incidents, creating a strong deterrent to taking risks. The simplest form of “de-risking” is to terminate correspondent banking relations.

Paradoxically, the very rule-making bodies, such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) that created the rules and penalties that now terrify US banks and encourage them to “de-risk”, are themselves becoming concerned about the decline in correspondent banking relations.

Last November, the FSB released a statement saying: “At the extreme, if an individual bank loses access to correspondent banking services, this may affect its viability and if a country’s banks more generally face restricted access then it may affect the functioning of the local banking system. In addition, loss of correspondent banking services can create financial exclusion, particularly where it affects flows such as remittances, which are a key source of funds for people in many developing countries”. The report rightly observes that: “The ability to make and receive international payments via correspondent banking is vital for businesses and individuals, and for the G20’s goal of strong, sustainable, balanced growth”.

In the statement, sent to the group of powerful nations - the G20 - the FSB said that a World Bank



survey of jurisdictions and banks finds that roughly half of the emerging market and developing economies surveyed have experienced a decline in correspondent banking services. Three quarters of the 20 large correspondent banks participating in the survey responded that the number of correspondent accounts they hold for other banks had declined between the end of 2012 and mid-2015.

The FSB report did not end there. Significantly, it stated that “the main drivers given by the large banks for their reduction in correspondent banking were concerns about money laundering and terrorism financing risks in the jurisdictions of their counterpart banks”. In other words, even though US banks are aware that, in the case of the Caribbean, organisations such as the FATF and the OECD Global Forum on Tax Matters have found jurisdictions to be compliant with rules and enforcement, they are unwilling to take the risk.

The FATF has given an undertaking to the FSB that it will “clarify regulatory expectations, as a matter of priority, including more guidance, on the application of standards for anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) to correspondent banking, especially on the customer due diligence expectations for correspondent banks when faced with respondent banks in ‘high-risk sce-

narios’, as well as additional work on remittances, financial inclusion and non-profit organisations”.

That work will be ready in two stages, in June and October 2016. Whether it will make any difference to banks in the US is left to be seen. In any event, at the rate at which correspondent banking relations are being withdrawn, any FATF recommendations in October 2016, even if they are helpful, may come too late to help some Caribbean banks that are already reduced to tenuous relations with just one correspondent bank.

In this scenario, it is imperative that Caribbean banks cease their reliance on US banks alone for their correspondent relations in the US. It is time that they jointly, in groups, or individually establish an agency of their own in the US to be their correspondent bank and handle their transactions in the US and beyond. They have to ensure that they will be able to do business if US banks abandon them. And, it must be the banks themselves - not

Caribbean governments - that undertake the establishment of such an agency. Governments can advocate for the agency with US authorities and provide any non-financial assistance that may be helpful, including diplomatic and political spadework, but it must be the banks that look after their own business.

Establishing a Caribbean-owned Agency in the US to provide correspondent relations for regional banks is not impossible, though it is difficult and will require investment in time, money and professional advice. An application for such an entity would have to be made concurrently to the Federal Reserve Bank and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. If the application is approved by these two bodies, a licence to operate can then be sought from the Northeast District Licensing Division in New York. There are strict and onerous criteria that would have to be satisfied in each case, including extensive background checks on the

banks and their affiliates and reviews of the effectiveness of the regulatory regimes of the jurisdictions in which they are located. The procedure could take longer than six months and would require the banks to dedicate staff or employ qualified consultants to see them through the process.

But there is no swift or easy solution to the present problem. If Caribbean banks believe that there is no risk to US banks in the provision of correspondent relations, then they should be prepared to take the risk themselves by setting up their own agency to facilitate their business. They might even make more money.

Sir Ronald Sanders is Antigua and Barbuda’s Ambassador to the US and the Organisation of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London and Massey College, University of Toronto. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com)

BEHIND ON YOUR INSTALLMENT AGREEMENT?

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The National Insurance Board has extended its operating hours to **SATURDAYS** between the hours of **9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.** until further notice.

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THIS WEEK IN The Tribune			
<b>TODAY</b>  Business - a Supreme Court judge has branded the businessman behind Blackbeard's Cay "evasive and untruthful" over his claim to own the project's dolphins. Neil Hartnell reports  Sports - the best of Bahamian basketball: the NWPBA All-Star game and a US college championship for Jonquel Jones  Insight - a foreign man married to a Bahamian woman	wanting to have a family gives his view of the gender equality issue  <b>TOMORROW</b>  Woman and Health - weekly advice on taking care of your mind and body and women making waves in The Bahamas  Plus comment from Nicole Burrows and sporting mischief and mayhem by Inigo "Naughty" Zenicazelaya	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>  Bridal guide 2016 - a free supplement  Tribune Tech - a weekly look at what's new in the world of technology  <b>THURSDAY</b>  Young Man's View - trenchant opinion from Adrian Gibson on the hot topics in the country	'On da Hook', a weekly review of fishing in the Bahamas  Plus Obituaries and Religion, a weekly review  <b>FRIDAY</b>  Your 28-page guide to the Weekend and the best in arts, music, food, books, gardening, animal matters, fitness and interviews.  Sports - The Finish Line, a look at the local sports scene, by Brent Stubbs  Plus A Comic's View - Naughty's unique take on the week in the Bahamas  <b>SATURDAY</b>  The Tribune's Top 5. A special video review of the week's top stories by Khrisna Virgil on www.tribune242.com  Every day in The Tribune, news, business, sports, lifestyle and Classifieds Trader.

# Human development key to alleviating poverty

IN a time of economic woes and of war and decline it is imperative that the world - and particularly The Bahamas - takes a closer look at sustainable development and where it intends to progress for future generations.

The year 2015 was historic as the government worked to implement a National Development Plan focused on sustainable growth to the year 2040. From a nationalistic standpoint, one can look at this as a substantial step in the right direction for the country; however, from an economic standpoint one can conclude a war still looms.

Globally, countries are aggressively seeking sustainability of their major industries. The reality is we have developed countries being challenged by developing countries and major industries being saturated by goods and services of inferior quality. Countries are polarised and gross domestic product (GDP) now takes a back seat to having



**ROCHELLE** Dean is a Bahamian scholar, research fellow and peer-reviewer and a theory writer of economics presently completing a Bachelors of Science dual degree in economics and public administration with Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia.

This brings us to the idea that we must all be committed to the alleviation of poverty in order for there to be extensive growth in the Bahamas and the world. The United Nations continues to transition from the Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals - and the number one goal is poverty alleviation.

As a nation, we must look at the many different ways that poverty affects a country and its growth. There is something intrinsically and fundamentally human about being valued and

not about being valued for those traits that cannot be taken away from you. Traits that build your character. Those things that set your path, even those negative things that have to be weeded out to propel you toward your true being (self).

It is innate human nature that craves, desires and needs to build something, whether it's a family, business, even another human being. It makes us appreciate, it makes us empathetic and it's attributed to empowering others. This is what distinguishes true wealth from poverty.

Bill Gates, a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist, dropped out of university and started Microsoft, a company where he makes billions of dollars. He started the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where he is feeding his innate human nature and empowers other human beings as he alleviates poverty. He is committed to human development.

Human development is

the greatest indicator to poverty alleviation globally. Developed countries such as Norway, Canada and Russia - all very diverse in the industries that grow their GDP - all have human development indexes. Development eliminates poverty, first by changing the mindset of mankind, which produces different actions and better results.

We all must play a role in poverty alleviation. And we do this through adjusting our attitudes toward the poverty mindset, collaborating with like-minded individuals to introduce programmes but also to disseminate information that will bring a clear view of the impact the different forms of poverty are affecting the world at large.

Currently, one per cent of the world is wealthy. The other 99 per cent are headed to a marginalised poverty line.

The Bahamian people must begin to identify the interlinkages of poverty and how it affects the mind.

There is now a global initiative to eradicate poverty by disseminating its weakest link, our understanding of it. As a nation we must ask ourselves: "What are we truly committed to?"

We are unable to help people with a poor way of thinking. The world is in a state of poverty and as GDPs decline, so does human development. Our moral compasses must be adjusted or any other form of development is in vain.

We tell students education is the key, but self-knowledge and a strong value system builds prosperous nations. We must teach morality which builds strong character and fosters healthy competition and innovation. This builds a strong economic system of healthy individuals with a nationalistic view of country.

Every human being is created to part take in the development of something, whether it's people who will impact the world or some project that will do the

same.

We no longer can afford not to prepare ourselves or participate in the global framework. We must encourage real entrepreneurship. We must value each other's skills and not be close minded toward non-conventional innovators.

The Bahamas must shift and catch up with the rest of the world and, in some cases, have the fortitude to do something different, something unique.

Development is progress it alleviates poverty. Poverty alleviation comes through change. In order to alleviate poverty and move our homeland forward we must commit ourselves to change.

# IS THE FUTURE OF CARS IN THE BAHAMAS ELECTRIC?

OWNERS of a Nassau car dealership who have invested in electric vehicles have received a boost with a prediction by Bloomberg News that the 2020s will be the decade of the electric car and nearly half the new vehicles in the world would have a plug by 2040.

"The story and video, which got huge play on Bloomberg, confirmed what we have believed since we first started investigating electric cars as the vehicle of the future," said Pia Farmer.

Along with her husband John, Mrs Farmer has led the way in championing the e-vehicle, declaring it should succeed for all the right reasons.

"Electric cars are better for the environment in two ways. First, what powers them is a battery instead of fossil fuels, and secondly, their impact on air quality," she said.

"We know, too, that the e-car is much easier and cheaper to maintain, it doesn't have a thousand parts that other cars need to run, making the e-car desirable for the pocket, as well as the

environment. But the reality is that long-standing habits do not change easily so this story by Bloomberg was really very welcome as an eye-opener for many readers."

The article - published by respected news agency Bloomberg - claims that the steadily declining price of batteries along with the glut of oil that will stifle production due to low prices, is driving the industry to develop "faster, safer, cheaper" electric vehicles. It pointed to major investment in research and design by electric car leaders Tesla, Nissan and Chevy.

Easy Car Sales on Gladstone Road is importing the Nissan LEAF, the best-selling electric car with more than 200,000 on roads worldwide, and bringing in slightly used models to keep the price tag down to \$20,000.

According to the Bloomberg piece, battery prices fell 35 per cent in 2015 and car manufacturers are developing systems for longer range driving between charges. The Nissan Leaf available in The Bahamas features a driving range of 80 to 100 miles

between charges with New Providence's traffic boosting the range with stop and go battery energy generation.

"When that article stated 'It's looking like the 2020s will be the decade of the electric car,' and that nearly half the vehicles would be electric by 2040 we felt that everything we have been saying about how electric vehicles are environmentally friendly, a pleasure to drive and financially attractive was confirmed," said Mrs Farmer.

"The one thing that I think the public does not fully appreciate yet is how luxurious these vehicles are. We are not talking about a golf cart. We want people to know that the Leaf is comfortable, roomy, has all the bells and whistles including Bluetooth technology and a Bose sound system.


"And can you imagine if everyone drove electric vehicles, buses and trucks, how quiet and clean the streets would be? Driving could actually some day have a calming effect on the culture of the country."



PIA FARMER, a director of Easy Car Sales, explains the benefits of environmentally friendly electric vehicles like the Nissan Leaf with Prime Minister Perry Christie.



**EXTENDED WORK NOTICE**  
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## Coral Lakes and Boatswain Hill Subdivisions


The Water and Sewerage Corporation advises the general public and the residents of **Coral Lakes and Boatswain Hill Subdivisions** that a Contract was awarded to Proline Underground Utilities and Construction Co. Ltd. to install new potable water supply systems in both subdivisions. The Contractor commenced works on **Monday, February 22nd, 2016** and the works are expected to continue for a period of approximately **eight (8) months**.

During this period, there may be some road closures, detours and single lane traffic around the work area.

The Corporation apologies for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciates your continued support as we provide potable water supply systems for both subdivisions.

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- William Woods University

**To Learn More**  
**Plan to attend an information session this Tuesday March 8th at 6:00 p.m. at the British Colonial Hilton Hotel downtown. Representatives from the consortium of universities will be in attendance.**

**For additional information contact**  
**The Bahamas Institute of Business & Technology**  
**323-4347 or 323-2448**





STUART Cove flanked by, from left, Mubarak Abuhaimad and Reem Aleidan at the press conference on Friday in Sandyport about the divers' next world record attempt. Photos: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff

# World records set by divers

By RICARDO WELLS  
Tribune Staff Reporter  
rwells@tribunemedia.net

THE Bahamas took centre stage in the world of competitive diving last week, as two Kuwaiti divers - Reem Aleidan, a certified scuba instructor, and

Mubarak Abuhaimad - set world records for the longest shark dives by a female and male respectively.

Diving at Stuart Cove's Dive Bahamas in western New Providence, Ms Reem broke the world record for longest dive with sharks by a female with a five-hour

dive, while Mr Abuhaimad broke the male record with a seven-hour 49 minute shark dive.

On Friday, the pair described the record breaking experience as "a thriller", insisting that the warm, clear waters of The Bahamas provided the ideal conditions in

which to achieve the feat.

The Kuwaiti divers had been working to set four records to bring global attention to the rights and plights of Arab women in the Middle East but their two endurance dives ended in failure. According to their dive coach, Mark McCrum, the pair were beset by issues with their dive suits.

Mr McCrum indicated that the suits used by the divers did not arrive in The Bahamas in time to be tested and inspected prior to the record attempt and, as a result, the divers were not able to become accustomed to them.

"A suit is a very personal, unique piece of equipment," he said. "Every diver needs to have time to get used to the suit they are going to be using during their dive attempt. In this case, the divers didn't have that time but based on their skill sets we are confident that once we get all the kinks worked out we can travel back to The Bahamas and attempt that record again."

The world endurance dive records are 72 hours for males and around 58

hours for females.

Mr Abuhaimad said neither he nor Ms Reem were disappointed by this week's outcome. He explained that the opportunity to come to The Bahamas and dive alongside Ms Reem had created a massive following for the cause. He added that Arab people watching their attempts now know how important the rights of Arab women are.

"They all know now. I

went from coaching her to diving with her and now together we have done something amazing in hopes of improving the lives of so many others. She is a spectacular woman and I am happy that she asked me to do this with her," he said.

The divers are expected back in Nassau in September to attempt to break both the endurance records and improve on their shark dive records.



FROM left, Vernon Moss, general manager at Sandyport Beaches and Resort; Mark McCrum; Mubarak Abuhaimad; Stuart Cove; Reem Aleidan and Alharith Alateeqi.

## TIGER BEACH RESEARCH REVEALS ULTRASOUND AS WAY TO STUDY PREGNANT SHARKS

BIDDEFORD, Maine  
Associated Press

SCIENTISTS suggest ultrasound technology normally used on pregnant women can be used to gain insights about the reproduction of tiger sharks after conducting research off Grand Bahama.

Researchers from the University of New England

and University of Miami said their study of the use of ultrasounds on the sharks offers a less invasive way to investigate the sharks' biology. They say the ultrasounds allow scientists a way to determine the presence of embryos in sharks while keeping the animals alive. Previous efforts normally involved dissecting the animals.

The researchers performed in-water ultrasounds on live tiger sharks and took blood samples for hormone analysis at Tiger Beach off West End, Grand Bahama.

University of New England professor James Sulikowski says the research found that a high number of tiger sharks were pregnant during the winter months.

ARE YOU A BUSINESS OWNER?

~All Employers & Self-Employed Persons~


The National Insurance Board (NIB) will be conducting a Registration Drive for all Employers and Self-Employed Persons in New Providence. The primary purpose of this exercise is to update its records as part of the implementation of the new Insurance Administration System.

All Employers and Self-Employed Persons are encouraged to cooperate with the NIB Officers, who will all be wearing their official identification badges.

The Board wishes to thank you in advance for your full cooperation.

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DATE: Thursday, March 10, 2016


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For the online application form, eligibility and required documents, please visit [www.lyfordcayfoundation.org](http://www.lyfordcayfoundation.org).

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# Internet and smartphone safety

TWO of the most advanced inventions of our time are the computer and smartphone. Some may argue that they may be the greatest inventions ever. And even though these essential tools of communication positively affect many aspects of our daily lives - medicine, entertainment, mathematics, agriculture, business, etc - we have become too dependent on them.

Unfortunately, it has got to the point that we have become susceptible to computer hackers who are always trying to destroy all that we have created, along with the abuse of social media and chat rooms, which also has its negative effects because of its unfiltered information - pornography, murder and gang violence. As a result of this, families have been destroyed and personal lives have been shattered

## Police advice

By CORPORAL  
MAKELLE PINDER

For this reason, the Royal Bahamas Police Force wants to advise the public as to how they can protect themselves while using these devices.

**Safeguarding your privacy**  
You can never be too sure of who you are chatting with online. The friendly fellow movie fan or book lover in an online forum may actually be a clever criminal looking for his next cyber crime victim.

**How can you have fun online while protecting yourself?**



Do not post information that will identify you, including:

- Your full name.
- Your home address or phone number.
- Passwords.
- Credit card or bank account numbers.
- Names of family members or friends.
- Your workplace or favourite hangout, or the names of your clubs or organisations.
- Do not use a nickname that can be used to identify you.
- Never share your account password.

**Protect your computer system and smartphone**

- Shut down your computer when it is not in use - especially in public places.
- Keep your antivirus and anti spyware programmes, along with other software and operating systems, updated to protect against new attacks.
- Consider using a firewall on your system to protect against hackers accessing your system remotely.
- When using your webcam and smartphone, remember not to expose your genitals or indulge in any type of questionable activities.
- Lock your computer and smartphone with an encrypted password.

**Safety when using blogs, chat rooms, e-mail, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp etc**

Fast friendships are forged over the Internet

and there is no doubt that casual, online conversations sometimes are the foundation of good, lasting relationships.

However, the anonymity of the Internet may compel some individuals to reveal too much about their private lives or to make hurtful comments or accusations they would never make in person.

- Think about how your e-mail message will be read by others. Do not say anything online that is cruel or may damage someone's reputation.
- Do not give out personal information about someone else.
- Do not forward another individual's e-mail without their permission.
- Never allow anyone to photograph you in an embarrassing or compromising situation.
- Never post anything that would cause you em-

barrassment or shame.

- Do not send photos of yourself or family members to Internet acquaintances.
- Do not post or forward nude pictures of yourself or anyone else.

**Be smart, be safe when meeting someone you met online**

Do not accept friend requests from individuals whom you don't know personally. Remember, individuals misrepresent themselves online. Often the lies are small and harmless. But sometimes they are not.

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## Vendors ‘will not bow out’ in fight for beach access

from page one

The Tribune understands that vendors have claimed they are being induced by offers to carry out their operations at other beaches around New Providence.

Meanwhile, vendors have reported that the process to renew and acquire licences to operate on Cabbage Beach has been re-worked and made more stringent, which is likely to limit the number of vendors able to work at the site. Vendors are reportedly now required to present written approval by Access Industries to operate at the property and a letter of recommendation from the Ministry of Tourism to receive a business licence to operate at Cabbage Beach.

“It’s extremely hard now; everything they can



A FENCE is pulled down by protestors, angry at the closing off of an access point to Cabbage Beach.

Photo: Tim Clarke/Tribune Staff

do to us, they are doing,” Ms Taylor said. “I haven’t seen or spoken to (Minister of Tourism Obie) Wilchcombe in months. No contact – nothing. But I hear he is meeting with vendors. I hear he is promising them the world. That isn’t going

to work because this is our livelihood. This beach is where we make the money we need.”

Currently there are more than 50 vendors operating legally at Cabbage Beach – those in line with the Business Licence Unit, the Min-

istry of Tourism and Access Industries.

When contacted for comment, Minister of Tourism Obie Wilchcombe said he is working only to ensure that vendors are respected, provided an opportunity to earn a living and collectively improve on the delivery of quality service.

“I would think we are on the same page,” the West End and Bimini MP said. “The issue is not territorial. Everyone is in the same boat right now. We are together and together we must succeed.”

Last week, vendors clashed with security personnel and police for two consecutive days. Last Monday, vendors and taxicab drivers blocked traffic attempting to drive to Paradise Island over the Sidney Poitier Bridge after Access Industries, owners of the

One&Only Ocean Club who are looking to develop their property, fenced off the western easement to the beach.

Some protestors that day were punched, kicked and dragged away from the bridge by police officers.

In response to that incident, the following day FNM Leader Dr Hubert Minnis led protestors and supporters over the Sidney Poitier Bridge to Cabbage Beach.

He was joined by DNA Leader Branville McCartney, unionists and concerned citizens.

Some protestors tore down the fence blocking access to the Paradise Island beach.

On Tuesday, Mr Wilchcombe said that he and Prime Minister Perry Christie worked late into the night last Monday to

convince Access Industries to allow vendors temporary access to Cabbage Beach through their usual point of entry.

A statement from the government on Tuesday morning explained that the controversy arose because Access Industries signed an agreement with Brookfield Asset Management, the owners of the Atlantis resort, that required Brookfield to close the existing beach path adjacent to the Riu resort. The statement added that Brookfield was supposed to relocate the vendors’ access point to the Brookfield-owned property on Garden Drive, off Paradise Island Drive.

Mr Wilchcombe stressed that Bahamians still can access Cabbage Beach even though there are matters concerning the vendors that have to be worked out.

## ‘DON’T MAKE SCAPEGOATS OF STUDENTS’

from page one

He said while no one should be allowed to get off “scot free” after borrowing public funds, the government “should really focus on collecting taxes from people who have the money.”

Mr Smith suggested that the government “prioritise” what it seeks to collect first, which he said should be the collection of “half a billion dollars of real property

taxes due in The Bahamas” and the “hundreds of millions of taxes which they would otherwise earn in these anchor projects and heads of agreements to foreign developers who don’t need the tax breaks.”

Mr Smith’s statements came after Education Minister Jerome Fitzgerald announced last week that the Education Loan Authority (ELA) is owed \$155m in outstanding loan payments for its student loan scheme,

principal and interest included.

As a result, Mr Fitzgerald said he has instructed the ELA, which has assumed full responsibility for the loan scheme, to take court action “if and when necessary” to collect the outstanding funds. However, Mr Fitzgerald urged borrowers to arrange payment methods with the ELA to avoid such action.

“Struggling students should not be made to pay at the end of the day when the government is not being effective in collecting taxes otherwise or is subsidising foreign private profit companies doing business in The Bahamas,” Mr Smith said. “I’m not suggesting that people should get away scot free when they borrow money from the government.

“But I am suggesting that the government should pri-

oritise what they seek to collect first, and secondly stop giving away income that they don’t need to, such as these incentives to foreign developers in anchor projects.”

He added: “So my point is don’t make struggling students the scapegoat of dysfunctional tax regimes pursued by the government in failing to collect real property taxes, and secondly giving away concessions unnecessarily to private profit making companies. Get your priorities straight. Young Bahamian students who are just graduating into the workforce should not be hounded for the sins of others.”

According to Mr Fitzgerald, the \$155m represents approximately 4,300 outstanding loans, accounting for a delinquency rate of approximately 75 per cent amongst borrowers. Ap-

proximately 4,733 loans have been issued to date, he said.

Additionally, of that number, 16 per cent of borrowers are up to date on their payments, eight per cent are up to 270 days outstanding, and 76 per cent are 271 days or more behind on their payments.


However, Mr Smith said the “simple effective remedy to wiping out much of our national debt is the collection of real property tax arrears, not hounding poor students for education loans.”

“And indeed, rather than suing students, more efforts should be made to reach settlements and arrangements for payment which no doubt does occur,” he said. “But suing struggling former students should be a matter of last resort and the government should really focus on collecting taxes

from people who have the money.

“Any out of court reasonable arrangement which the Ministry of Education can promote is appropriate, but pursuing them in court is not,” he added. “The government subsidises all kinds of non-statutory initiatives and in particular gives away hundreds of millions of taxes which they would otherwise earn in these anchor projects and heads of agreements to foreign developers who don’t need the tax breaks.

“I am shocked that the government would focus on suing struggling students in order to collect student loans whilst ignoring and basically doing nothing to effectively collect a half a billion dollars of real property taxes due in The Bahamas,” he added.



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## \$50,000 GRANT TO PROTECT CONCH

THE Bahamas National Trust (BNT) has received a third \$50,000 grant from The Moore Bahamas Foundation (MBF) to support its work to protect the rapidly declining population of the iconic Queen Conch.

This is the third year that funding from the Foundation is supporting the partnership between the BNT, the government, corporate Bahamas and the conservation community which has formed the Conchervation Campaign. This year's donation brings the total of the MBF's grants to \$150,000 in the campaign to protect the conch population from depletion.

The Conchervation Campaign was formed in response to the startling results of research showing that traditional Queen Conch (*Lobatus gigas*) fishing grounds in The Bahamas were showing signs of possible collapse, according to BNT Executive Director Eric Carey.

“It is important to remember that we still have an opportunity to main-

tain viable conch fishery but we must develop a strategy that we can realistically police and we must conduct an education program to demonstrate why it is so critical that we do not deplete our conch population. We need to learn from Florida and Bermuda where the conch fisheries collapsed in the 1970s and despite full closure to fishing, have yet to recover,” said Mr Carey. “A parallel demise for the Bahamian Queen Conch fishery would devastate the nation ecologically, economically, and culturally.”

The Conchervation Campaign aims to prevent this outcome for the Bahamian fishery through research, education, and multi stakeholder collaboration.

The Queen Conch, commonly used to make conch salad and other dishes, plays a major role in the marine food web and loss of the Conch fishery would be detrimental to endangered and vulnerable species like sharks, turtles and spotted eagle

rays that feed on conch, as well as hermit crabs, damselfishes and other opportunists that use the shell of dead conchs as a habitat. In addition, the loss of the fishery would hugely impact the economy and the livelihood of countless Bahamians who rely on harvesting and sale of conch as an important source of income.

The Queen conch is also an essential cultural symbol uniting all islands of The Bahamas and the high demand by visitors greatly benefits the countries tourism economy.

“The Moore Bahamas Foundation has graciously supported Conchervation from its inception,” said Mr Carey. “because they understand and appreciate the significance of the Queen Conch to The Bahamas. This year’s renewed support will allow the Bahamas National Trust to continue its campaign through 2016. The Moore Bahamas Foundation provides support through Bahamas National Trust Fund Inc., a US 501c3 public charity.

“The Moore Bahamas Foundation responded immediately and effectively to the Conchervation Campaign with a pledge of \$150,000 over three years. This support has underpinned the campaign, providing important funding to get the campaign off and running. When we are successful in our efforts to save this iconic species from extinction, The Moore Bahamas Foundation will deserve significant credit for its visionary investment in the Conchervation campaign.”

Louis Bacon, Founder and Chairman of The Moore Charitable Foundation of which the MBF is a local affiliate, said: “We are proud to partner with Bahamas National Trust as they take key next steps in their campaign to preserve the iconic Queen Conch. Our multifaceted partnership brings to light the wide range of communities impacted by the health of this seminal species and the importance of their fight to protect it.”



# Prayers from our nation's defenders



THE ROYAL Bahamas Defence Force held its Annual Church Service at Bahamas Faith Ministries.

Photos: Shawn Hanna/Tribune Staff



SENATOR KEITH BELL, Dr Bernard Nottage and his wife, Prime Minister Perry Christie and Governor General Dame Marguerite Pindling at the service.



ATTENDEES at the annual church service.



PRIME Minister Perry Christie addressing the Royal Bahamas Defence Force service.



GATHERED members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force at their annual church service at Bahamas Faith Ministries.



THE RBDF Praise and Worship team leading the service.



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# BUILDING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

**THE FOCUS** was on leadership on Friday at Queen's College, with a leadership day aiming to cultivate the best skills of students. Visitors were guided around the school by students, and sat in on lessons during the day. Photos: **Shawn Hanna/** Tribune Staff





12 NOON SUNDAY, MARCH 13, 2016

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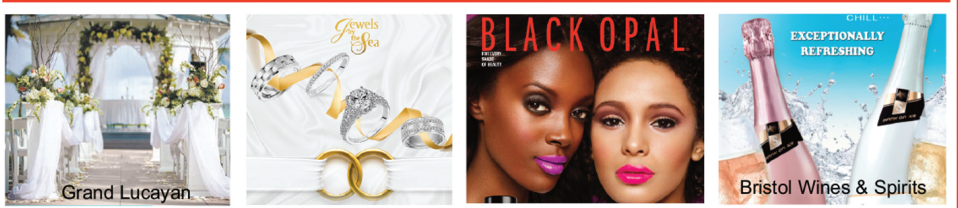
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