

# Redistricting task force established



by *Khaila Gentle*

BELMOPAN, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

The Government of Belize is moving forward with an electoral redistricting exercise, according to a recent press release from the Elections and Boundaries Commission. Earlier this month, we reported that the redistricting case

Please turn to ▶ Page 15

## Four Maya villages sign inter-boundary agreements



Village leaders with the president and executive of the Toledo Alcaldes Association showcasing the signed inter-village boundary agreements

by *Marco Lopez*

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

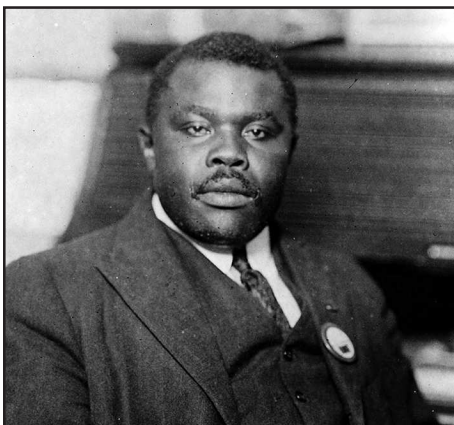
*The Honorable Words of Respectful Neighbors* was signed by representatives from four Maya villages last Friday—thus establishing an inter-boundary agreement among Santa Teresa, Jordan, Aguacate, and Laguna in accordance with traditional Maya principles. The signing of the

agreement by the four alcaldes of the four villages, was witnessed by villagers selected to represent the respective communities. This advancement is in line with steps 3 and 4 of the Delimitation: Principles and Methodology (DPM) agreed upon in 2020 by the Government of Belize, and the Toledo Alcaldes Association (TAA) and the Maya

Please turn to ▶ Page 15

## Justice for Marcus Garvey

A forum at the University of the West Indies focused on the Black History Month movement to posthumously exonerate civil rights activist and Jamaican icon Marcus Garvey



by *Khaila Gentle*

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Wed. Feb. 16, 2022

This past Wednesday, The University of the West Indies Vice-Chancellor's Forum, titled "Exonerating Garvey" held in collaboration with the P.J. Patterson Centre for Africa-Caribbean

Please turn to ▶ Page 14

## GoB meets with media on new defamation law



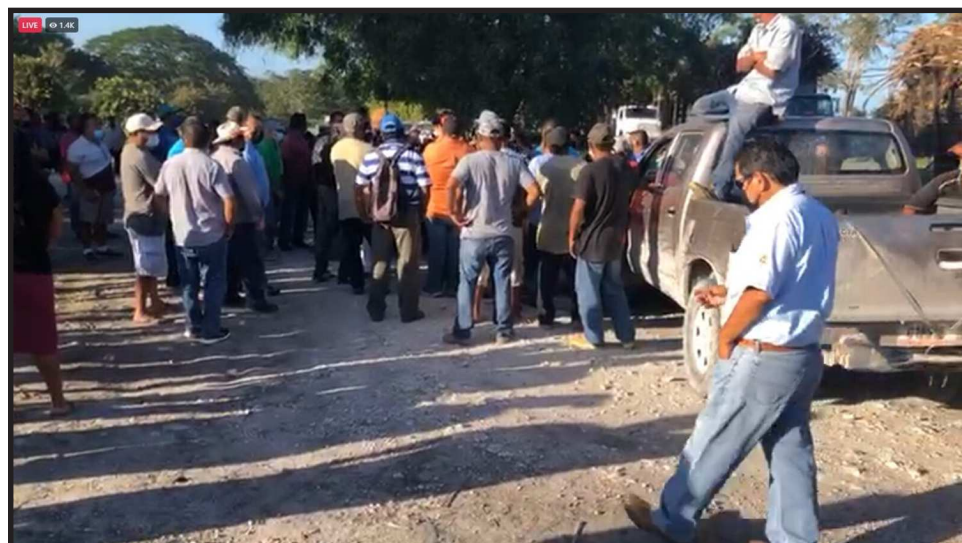
BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

Today, the Government of Belize hosted a meeting with the media where those entities were encouraged to share their views on the draft Defamation Bill 2022 with the chairman of the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee, Hon. Julius Eस्पат. The new bill will be used to repeal and replace the current Libel and Defamation Act, and, according to Eस्पат, it codifies the common law and legislates specific

Please turn to ▶ Page 15

## BSI sues BSCFA!

(See story on page 14)





# 120 acres donated to LIU

*Dr. Ariel Rosado has donated the huge tract of land to the Leadership Intervention Unit (LIU) for the creation of a farming homestead for at-risk youths from across the country*

BELIZE CITY, Sun. Feb. 20, 2022

A generous donation of 120 acres of near virgin land in the Belize River Valley has been given to the Leadership Intervention Unit (LIU) in an effort to provide a space for at-risk youths with an interest in farming – instead of the gun. The tract of land was donated by Dr. Ariel Rosado, founder of the Ariel Rosado Foundation and Scholarship Fund and father of famed cyclist, the late Ariel Rosado, Jr. Rosado shared in an interview that the land has been owned by the family since the 1950's when his father bought the first couple acres of land and created a homestead in the area of Grace Bank, and he said that he and his deceased son worked on the farm and fell in love with the riverside property, but this land would soon be reclaimed by the jungle, following the passing of the young

Rosado.

Dr. Rosado said that at his age it is now difficult to carry out the necessary upkeep of the property on his own, and as a result he was inspired to donate it to the LIU, after he became aware of the worthwhile purpose of the project. The coordinators of the LIU welcomed Mr. Rosado's offer to donate the land, and met with the philanthropist and government officials last Thursday to visit the property. Hon. Kareem Musa, Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries, accompanied them on the trip, and he commented on the nature of this new venture, ultimately geared toward curbing the scourge of crime and violence in Belize.

"We are working the details of this MOU, but basically it is farmland that we are looking at. We obviously will need a lot of support from other



members of the private sector as well as government in terms of the technical support for agriculture, setting up greenhouses, clearing the property, so Ministry of Infrastructure has also communicated their support for this initiative, and it's just, like I said, all in line with a very wholistic approach, a comprehensive approach that the

LIU is implementing, because a lot of our at-risk youth want opportunities to engage in farming, not all of them of course, but some of them do want that opportunity, and we have to ensure that we create those opportunities and find them," Minister Musa said.

At this point, approximately 10 acres of the land is somewhat cleared, according to reports, but the remaining 110 acres of virgin land will have to be cleared, and prepared for cultivation by the youths under the leadership of the LIU. As mentioned, the idea is to create a farmstead where local crops are cultivated and livestock is reared by youths who would otherwise be exposed to illegal enterprises and a life of crime and violence in their communities. While the project is open to whichever at-risk youth is interesting in learning and changing, Minister Musa noted that this approach to addressing the issue of crime and violence in the community is multifaceted, and that it is being deployed in conjunction with a firm, penal approach that will be aimed at those who refuse to change.

"There has to be two approaches we take. It cannot be that we are creating this positive, uplifting approach, offering these opportunities of education and employment, and farming and agriculture. There has to be a penal side to all of this, and so we are separating those that are just hellbent on wreaking havoc as terrorists on our society, we will go after them hard; there is legislation in place, and we're looking at further legislation when it comes to the illegal guns that are on the streets of Belize City, and so yes, I understand what you're saying that we are just creating these opportunities, but these young men might not want it. I can tell you that a majority of the young men are appreciative of this program, but for the others who do not want to change, we will ensure that they are dealt with by the law," Musa said.

Of recent we have also seen this second approach being put into motion, with 6 young men from the Antelope Street Extension area being arrested and pleading guilty to the crime of gang affiliation, for which they were handed a custodial sentence of 6 months in prison. Musa said that

## LOO just "doing his job" – Hon. Kareem Musa

*Hon. Kareem Musa responded to Hon. Shyne Barrow's call for his resignation, calling the Opposition Leader an absentee politician seeking to stay relevant*



**Hon. Shyne Barrow and Hon. Kareem Musa**

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Fri. Feb. 18, 2022

In the face of recent calls for his resignation by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Moses "Shyne" Barrow, after the country saw two murders in one weekend—that of 20-year-old Karina Andrews and 30-year-old Nimrod Fitzgibbons—Minister of Home Affairs, Hon. Kareem Musa, told local media last week that Hon. Shyne Barrow is "only doing his job."

"Thankfully, I serve as Minister of Home Affairs at the pleasure of the real Leader of the House of Representatives, not the 'play-play' one. So if Shyne thinks that he can remove me, he needs to think again. But as a matter of fact, I think that he's only doing his job, to be fair to him. He is an absentee politician—he does not stay in the country much—so he has to stay relevant and how best to stay relevant than putting out social media posts," said Hon. Musa to 7News reporter Courtney Menzies.

In Hon. Barrow's recent post, titled "Time for a New Police Minister", he claimed that, since November 11, 2020 (when the current PUP government replaced a UDP administration), violent crime has gotten worse throughout the country, with the murder rate increasing exponentially.

"How many more murders before the Prime Minister finds a new Police Minister?" questioned Barrow, who then went on to state, "Every time, he [Musa] gives the Nation elaborate speeches about crime-fighting strategies, yet the murders continue to rapidly increase."

Hon. Musa, however, has pointed to the complex root causes of crime, which are often inextricably linked with poverty, unemployment, lack of housing, politics, communities fighting over material resources, high cost of living, and the overall society. According to Hon. Kareem Musa, however, Hon. Shyne Barrow is fully aware of this fact and has even communicated this to Minister Musa.

"It is not as though he has not communicated to me that he understands the complexities of crime and how it has evolved so negatively, particularly in Belize City. He's fully cognizant, and it's not as though he's not aware that his father and his uncle and the last administration really abandoned and neglected Southside Belize City, creating a dependency system that has really grown out of control. And so he knows—he well knows that we are working hard to try to fix this, because he is there at every single opportunity to take photos with me. When we're at the prison, he's there as well. So it's not as though he does not recognize the problem that has been created over the last couple decades in Belize City, but I think it's just a matter of him trying to remain relevant as an absentee area representative," said Musa.

This is not the first time that the United Democratic Party has called for the resignation of the Minister of Home Affairs. In October 2021, after three murders were recorded in the country over the course of one weekend, a release issued by the party condemned the Minister for "a lack of control and direction in the prevention of violent crimes in the country." The release also noted that in 2020, during which the UDP was in power for 10 out of 12 months, the country saw fewer violent deaths.

In reference to the calls for Minister Musa's resignation, Commissioner of Police Chester Williams has gone on record to express support for Musa, and has stated that crime is something that should never be politicized.



# Unions meet with IMF



**Dean Flowers - president, PSU**

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

Last week, the union leaders affiliated with the National Trade Union Congress of Belize met with representatives from the International Monetary Fund to discuss the state of the economy as a part of the data-gathering process for the upcoming Article 4 Consultations expected to be released by the IMF sometime later this year. Dean Flowers, president of the Public Service Union (PSU), said that there were no significant developments to report on following the meeting, but he stated that the IMF is not in support of the reinstatement of the 10% salary cut at this time—instead recommending a gradual restitution of public workers’ full salaries.

“We went over the same topics of discussion that the IMF is interested in each year when they come to try to convince us that in essence workers are the cause of the financial crisis that the government is in, both from a wage bills perspective and from a pensions obligation standpoint. We said to them that we’re not the entity, we’re not the ministry that does the hiring, and so that fact that there is the perception that the wage bill continues to be high and growing is neither here nor there – that conversation needs to be had with the government for them to efficiently manage the human resources and manage how public officers are hired within the service. We cannot support, of course, any attempt or any suggestion for retrenchment or any similar exercise,” PSU president Dean Flowers outlined.

Flowers said he believes, however, that government can carry out an evaluation of the public service as they have said they would, in order to determine whether or not public servants are properly placed, and make the necessary adjustment.

“As it relates to pension, of course our position remains as it has always been: public officers are never paid what they’re valued. I don’t think any worker is paid what their value. Workers get paid what they can negotiate, and unfortunately, because we are paid from the public purse, we must give consideration to that fact and so, for the most part, we are underpaid. It cannot be that you take the group of employees which are in the public sector and want to put an additional burden of pension contribution on them when in fact they give of themselves, their service to

the country for many years at reduced wages and the little reward that they get, the end which is their pension, you want to now take away from them or have them contribute to that, when in fact this is the exact group of workers driving the economy where spending is concerned. So, we rejected that as we have always done, and we also made it clear that you cannot want to think about pension reform if you do not want to speak about tax reform, which is unbalanced,” stated Flowers.

“The workers of this country continue to bear the unfair burden of being taxed, and being taxed at source, while the private sector in our view is not treated in the same manner. There is also the issue of the tax rate that’s levied on workers versus that which is levied on the professionals who earn millions and millions of dollars,” Flowers further pointed out. He said that the conversation on that topic was lengthy, but they called for tax justice before any proposal for a reform of the pension scheme for public sector workers can be considered.

Also, another issue that was discussed that is close to the heart of workers paid by the government, was the 10% reduction of the wages of teachers and public servants that was implemented by the Briceño administration last year. Flowers said that the IMF representative made clear their position of support for the austerity measures.

“In relation to the 10% cut, I think what they are saying is that they do not support and they cannot support and will not be recommending the reinstating of the 10% and freezing increments. They did, however, say that they may consider informing the government that perhaps there could be gradual implementation of that, but I think that, in essence, what they said is they cannot and do not support the reinstating of the 10% or the unfreezing of increments at this point in time and so, in essence saying that we ought to continue sacrificing while the government gets to take money bill to the House to bail out the private sector,” Flowers outlined.

The Government of Belize has said that this Briceño administration is guided by a homegrown plan of economic recovery and, as such, would not categorically accept any recommendation handed down by the IMF. Flowers said that the PSU expects the government to maintain that position.

“Remember this administration said to us that their plan, their fiscal strategy, was homegrown. It’s a home-grown plan, it’s not an IMF plan, and as such we don’t believe that there is any need for them, the government, to listen to what the IMF is saying as it relates to the 10% salary cut that we expect will be returned as a result of the rebounding of the economy, one, and two, the lack of discipline and authority by the government itself,” Flowers stated.

He went on to say, “Public officers are tired. We’re tired of the sacrifice

only for the benefit of the cemented private sector interest and government ministers and their friends and their cronies. We have to stop that, and we’re taking a stand that any discussion concerning any future sacrifice by public sector workers need to include everybody and their needs to be a clear demonstration that the workers, the public sector workers are not the only one sacrificing while others can continue to fleece and enjoy as if we are in a boom. So the IMF position is noted, but, like I said, the government said their plan is a homegrown plan. We expect that they will speak with the owners of the plan, which is the Belizean public, which includes public sector workers.”

He noted as well that during the discussion the IMF representatives made no comment on the responsibility of the private sector to shoulder some of the burden brought on by the austerity measures.

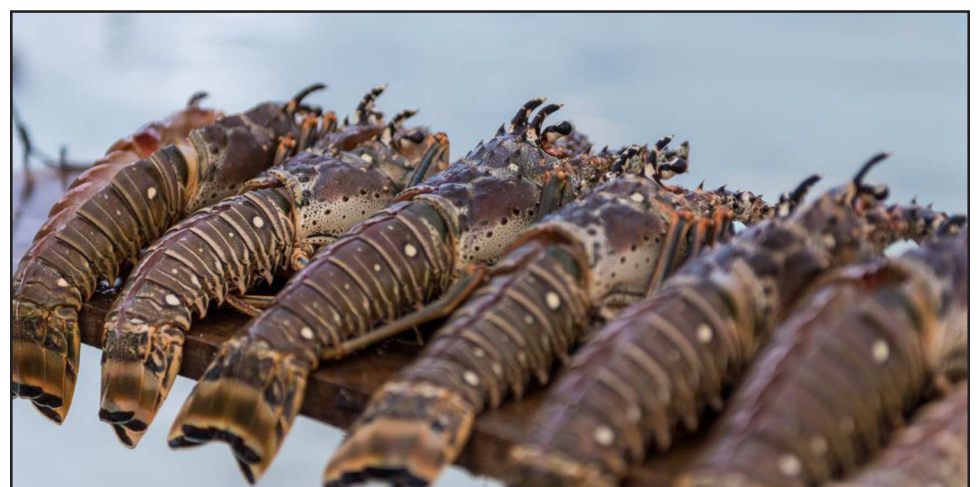
“I would say that they didn’t say much there, which is a damn shame. I don’t think said anything as it relates to that, other than to state that where the efficiency and the effectiveness of the amalgamated Tax Service Department are concerned, that we needed to be a bit more patient to be able to see that department really come alive and carry out its roles and functions in terms of better tax collection, in perhaps, three more years is what was said. But to be honest with you, they had absolutely

nothing to say as it relates to that kind of capitalistic mentality by this administration. As a matter of fact, we then informed that as it relates to these IBCs and the fact that Belize was blacklisted as a result of these IBCs that are created in the country who to date we don’t know what their contribution is to the economy other than again, I guess, pursuing the country to register here,” Flowers said.

In reference to the sharing of the economic burden across the private and public sector, Flowers remarked, “If you don’t want to address dealing with your private sector, which continues to cost and rob you via the GST, millions and millions of dollars, if you don’t want to address that, and we see, as a matter of fact, that members of this administration are pro-business, primarily, and when I say pro-business, they are neoliberals, they are private-sector driven and they are anti-labor, and so we have to highlight that as well, that we do not take lightly the fact every time there is a problem, austerity has to be thrown or is always thrown on workers.”

“There has never been one instance that the private sector helped to bail out this country from economic crisis ... not one time. It’s always the workers have to sacrifice, the workers have to sacrifice, and we are saying to them that we are not supportive of that narrative anymore, and we are going to stand against that,” Flowers said.

## Lobster season closes in a few days



by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

The Ministry of the Blue Economy, in conjunction with the Belize Fisheries Department, has announced that the lobster season will be officially closed on February 28.

In previous years, the season ended on February 15 and re-opened every 14th of June. This year, however, the re-opening of the season has been pushed back to June 30 following consultations between the Fisheries Department and industry stakeholders.

The Blue Economy Ministry has issued a warning to Belizeans that any person who is found in possession of

lobster during the closed season, will be prosecuted under the Resources Act, Chapter 210 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2020.

The Fisheries Department also reminds fishers that lobster traps should be removed from fishing grounds during the closed season, as the department will be actively enforcing the removal of traps from the waters during this period.

Notably, the closure of the season is in line with the harmonized regional lobster regulations (OSP-02-09) implemented by the Organization for Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (OSPESCA).



# Revised cannabis regulations headed to House

While many individuals and businesses are anticipating the launch of the new cannabis industry, Hon. Kareem Musa says we're not quite there yet

by Khaila Gentle

BELMOPAN, Fri. Feb. 18, 2022

The amended Misuse of Drugs Act, to which adjustments were made in order to provide the necessary legislation for the regulation of marijuana cultivation and distribution, has been further revised since being sent back for amendment by the Senate recently. The revised bill is set to be tabled at the next sitting of the House of Representatives in March, taking the country one step closer to achieving a fully legal cannabis industry. Now known as the Cannabis Control and Licensing Bill, 2022, the restructured bill was taken to Cabinet for approval, and according to Minister of New Growth Industries and Home Affairs, Hon. Kareem Musa, it will hopefully receive the same amount of support that the previous version of the amended bill was given by the House. Musa spoke with local media this past week and explained why the bill had to be revised.

"As you would recall, the amendments that we had made to the Misuse of Drugs Act had been passed in the House of Representatives. It was entirely supported by our side of the House, and I believe three out of the four parliamentarians on the Opposition had supported it, including the Leader of the Opposition. But when it got to the Senate, concerns were raised in terms of the structure of the bill. They preferred to see it as a standalone bill. And so, what we did, we just extracted what was contained in the Misuse of Drugs Act and created a Cannabis Regulation and Licensing Bill, and so that was taken back before Cabinet for approval as a standalone bill, which we'll now start the process over," he said.

The historic amendment, which provides for the legalization of marijuana in Belize, as some may remember, was first introduced to the House of Representatives back in early July 2021. It has been hailed as an improvement in comparison to the contradictory marijuana policy that currently exists, which allows for the decriminalization of up to 10 grams of marijuana and usage in private quarters but still subjects those transporting and selling the product to



the risk of prosecution for drug trafficking.

According to reports, several companies are already clamoring to register their cannabis-based businesses, ahead of the approval of the bill. To those companies and individuals, Hon. Kareem Musa says "hold tight".

"I'd like to advise those companies and individuals, because it's really an exciting time for a new industry for Belize. I try to encourage them to let us wait until the legislation is passed before we incorporate these companies," he stated, noting that while the level of excitement surrounding the introduction of the new industry is encouraging, the law is still the law.

"We still have to be very mindful that the law is what it is at this time. Even though the Leader of the Opposition is saying that we legalized weed, that is not the case. We have not gotten there yet," he added, referencing Hon. Shyne Barrow's appearance on the popular conversation show *Drink Champs* last month, during which he incorrectly stated that Belize has already legalized weed.

When the amendment was first introduced, Hon. Kareem Musa had expressed his hopes that in a few years the legislation would have gotten rid of the stigma and stereotypes that have justified the harassment and imprisonment of many at-risk and poor black males in the country. And while Hon. Shyne Barrow did misspeak in claiming that he had already legalized marijuana in Belize, it is indeed a fact that back in 2021, the Leader of the Opposition stood in agreement with Hon. Musa, expressing the need for the new legislation to be all-encompassing.

"We have to make sure that those lower-class working people who have had to engage in the marijuana trade in order to survive are not boxed out by the big men ...," he had stated.

The proposed legislation, if approved, will lay the groundwork for the establishment of a Cannabis Commission, which will oversee the issuing of Cannabis Program ID cards for those seeking to purchase marijuana for personal use along with various licenses for those who wish to cultivate, dispense, or deliver cannabis. While the Commission will ensure strict management of the marijuana industry, however, the rigorous application process and requirements might further marginalize those "small players" in the marijuana trade who will most certainly have a harder time meeting those requirements.

# Joint Sexual Violence Prevention and Response launched in security forces



by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

The Joint Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (JSVPR) programme was officially launched in the country on Thursday, February 17. The program is aimed at addressing sexual abuse within the country's security forces, including the Belize Police Department, the Belize Defence Force, and the Belize Coast Guard, and was created with the assistance of the Spotlight Initiative in Belize, whose mission is to ensure women enjoy their right to a life free from violence within an inclusive and gender-equitable community.

One component of the program is the provision of adequate response services when sexual crimes occur.

Minister of Home Affairs, Hon. Kareem Musa stated in his remarks at the launch of the program, "It's been too long now that we've had within our security forces the issue of sexual violence that oftentimes goes unreported because of fear and other reasons that oftentimes do not make it to the media because of our own internal protocols that we have within our security forces. It reminds me of an occasion about two years ago in the National Assembly. When there was a change to a particular legislation, the Prime Minister was proposing a change to the legislation that was setting out the procedure in instances of rape. And I remember

getting up in the House, and I said, 'But Prime Minister Barrow, the security personnel are human beings and Belize citizens just like all of us. Why are they subjected to a different standard and a different penalty for rape than a normal Belizean citizen? It should not be a Belizean citizen is sentenced to 15 or 20 years for rape but, then in the security forces, the penalty is less.' We have to put the same penalty in place for the security forces. It's no different."

At Thursday's launch, UNICEF Belize Country Representative, Alison Parker noted during her address that sexual violence is one of many issues that often go unnoticed.

"Estimates published by WHO indicate that globally about 30% of women a day are exposed to some sort of violence, especially sexual violence. Most of the violence is with close partners, whether in the office, in society, community, and sometimes in the home. And therefore it is very difficult, first of all, to report and, secondly, to respond, and thirdly to hold perpetrators accountable. So there's a lot that goes under the table, as you would say, and nobody speaks about it, and it continues to perpetuate a culture of violence within society. Violence against women affects them physically, mentally, sexually, their reproductive health and may even risk issues of infections such as HIV and AIDS," Parker said.

# 120 acres donated to LIU

Continued from Page 2

typically a fine is the normal sentence for those who plead guilty for that offence, but the infraction does carry a maximum sentence of 10 years for members of a gang and up to 20 years for gang leaders. He thus said he doubts that persons arrested and charged for gang affiliation offences will be pleading guilty in the future.

In regard to the crime and violence plaguing the society, Minister Musa remarked that crime is unpredictable like the weather, and he said flareups will occur despite the preventative efforts of the police. He went on to say that finding those persons

responsible for those crimes through proper investigations in order to hold them responsible is a key objective of the ministry. This means increasing the protection of eyewitnesses in order to bolster evidence as well as applying laws that are already in place.

As far as the law enforcement on the ground, he said that at least 100 persons have been dismissed from the Police Department, just as was reported last week by Commissioner of Police, Chester Williams, but he noted that, contrary to what was stated in some news reports, not all those persons were from the new intake squad of 225 new officers.





# Where to, Belize? A commitment to mediocrity?



(l to r) athletes Mario Rivas, Andre Armstrong and Daniel Myers with coach Greg Myers at the Marion Jones athletic track

Sun. Feb. 20, 2022

The sporting public in Belize is hungry for some measure of success, something to feel proud about on the international scene. The number one sport of football has seen dwindling fan turnout over the decades, as a once jubilant and energized national fervor has gradually subsided with repeated defeats and failure to advance in any major qualifying series. But sports in general in Belize has been sliding downward in competitive standards for some years, and it is almost as if the sociopolitical climate in Belize includes a degree of resignation to, and satisfaction with, a level of mediocrity in international competition that is not symbolic of the wealth of talent our people are known to possess. Our athletes/players are not to blame.

There may be some clues in the bureaucracy of some of our sporting organizations. For sure, our athletes, who have subjected themselves at the national level to all the demands and restrictions imposed on them by those in administrative authority, have found themselves outmatched by opponents who are seemingly at a higher level. Like the shell-shocked community, overwhelmed by the almost daily news of another murder, so has become our sporting community in regards to our athletes' performance on the international stage. What happened to our young women in El Salvador recently has become the norm,

despite efforts by FFB staff to try and create some hype and high expectation for our national teams. It is about time for Belizeans to make up our minds if we want to continue down this road; or perhaps we need a change of direction, starting at the top, where the pace is set, and the training regimen is designed to mold our athletes to be competitive internationally.

It is generally acknowledged by experts in the sporting arena, that track & field athletics comprise the backbone for excellence in most major sports, because this area of sport identifies the athletic talent potential from an early age, and harnesses such talent to maximize speed and endurance, which become essential tools for young athletes who choose to specialize in other sports like football, basketball, softball/baseball, volleyball, etc.; whatever sport they choose, the essentials of track & field training have an important role to play. With all the ball works and technique drills, if our footballers are not geared to maximize speed and endurance in performance, we will continue being led to the slaughter on the international scene.

Thirty-five years ago, Panama was in a place similar to Belize in football; but they have moved on, systematically dedicating themselves to excellence, while Belize has languished in a seeming commitment to mediocrity. All the stadiums built and coaching programs conducted with the FIFA money over the past two decades have not lifted up the standing of Belizean football beyond what was achieved in the 1990s.

There was an old tradition, in the football culture in Belize, where, when a team had received a devastating defeat, it was quite the norm for the coach or captain to declare at the next training day that, "no ball today; wi going da road;" meaning that their training would be confined for a few days to running, distance and speed work, and jumping. And come next game day, the players were "hungry fi di ball".

Up until the late 1970s, track & field athletics was a major spectator sport in Belize, with the annual September national meet showcasing the highly anticipated sprints and long-distance races, and a special attraction also being the high jump. Some athletes stick to track & field as their sport of choice, but many others carry their athletic training into other careers in football, etc. And when there is a strong track & field program in Belize, its positive impact is felt throughout the wide spectrum of sports, but most noticeably in our number one sport of football.

Our Belize women national team just lost 6-0 to El Salvador, and 8-0 to Panama in Group D of Concacaf World Cup Qatar 2022 Qualifiers. And where our men's team is concerned, our fellow Caricom nations Jamaica and Trinidad are way ahead of us; we already got knocked out of the men WC qualifiers. Is Belize satisfied with mediocrity?

Why would our athletic associations or Olympic committee not take advantage of the opportunity to welcome the input of our Belizean talents in the diaspora who have undergone high intensity training abroad or garnered top-level coaching skills in the U.S.? We saw what happened in the 1970s to Pulu Lightburn, already a star when he left on a basketball scholarship to the U.S., when he returned to Belize, how he was shunned by the authorities. And then there was Kaina Martinez in the new millennium, Belize and Central American 100-meter record holder, who went to Texas A&M on an athletic scholarship arranged through Belizean 1968 Olympian and current track coach Colin Thurton; Kaina was given the cold shoulder by the local authorities and denied the opportunity to represent Belize at the 2016 Olympics.

There may be a clue to this peculiar malady that depresses athletics, and by extension sports in general in Belize. Currently on a ten-day visit from New York is 43-year-old Belizean American Greg Myers, who is a highly accomplished All-American track athlete and athletics coach at the university level

Please turn to **Page 13**



(estb. 1969)

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# Back to basics. back to the land!

Dr. Alvaro Rosado has donated land that will be used to teach disadvantaged children to become self-sufficient, and find pride in growing and producing food! Such a noble gesture from a man I met when I was at Belize Teachers College, 1970/71. He was ahead of me in classes. He hung out with Gordon Knowles and Smitty (R.I.P). Can't remember his first name, but they were all dedicated educators. Dr. Rosado has come a long way since those days, and although he has experienced great tragedy in his life, his actions speak for themselves. A true Belizean patriot!

I remember in history lessons in college, it was always the dictators that preached agrarian reform. Stalin, Mao, Ghandi, Jerry Rawlings. The last 2 weren't dictators, but they all believed, in one way or the other, that we should be able to feed ourselves in order for the country to prosper. Of

course, Stalin starved his people, in order to export what they grew. Mao starved over 30 million of his people during the Great Famine, 1958-1962, because of bad choices. They had the right idea, they just abused and misused their power, Stalin and Mao, that is. George Price preached the same thing, to a much lesser extent—agrarian reform.

This noble gesture by Dr. Rosado has to be accompanied by some serious educating of these young men/women before the intended results can be harvested. They have to be taught why what they're doing is necessary, how much it will assist them as adults, to go on this alien adventure, to know that they can make an honest living, for most of them. I also believe that once they see the results of their labor—when tomatoes or lettuce or cabbage, beans, that they planted, start to grow—that at least 25% of them

will want to stick to it, become farmers. I also hope that people like brother Nuri Muhammad, who has his own programs, helping the less fortunate, get involved! And please, no government bureaucracies to mess up what could be a great solution to easing the cycle of violence that rages on, incessantly!

What a boon that would be to the economy of this struggling democracy. To see young people become dedicated to planting and growing and reaping the fruits of their labor! The pride they will feel, the absolute high from knowing that they are worthy, not throwaways from the hood, but great contributors to

the growth of their nation. Making it unnecessary to import fruits and vegetables which can be easily grown in the Jewel! No more of "the Mexican lettuce or avocado or potato is better!" No more of that! Support your local farmers! Buy Belizean!

With this program, not only will young lives be saved, from gangs and crime and from uncertainty about their future, but theirs will be a life of pride and accomplishments! They will have a sense of purpose, a reason to lead positive, productive lives! What could be better than that?

Glen

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

**Position Name:** Maintenance Mechanic (Generator Mechanic)  
**Vacancy number:** Belmopan-2022-03-R  
**Closing date:** February 25, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

**Note 1:** Resumes **will not** be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

**Note 2:** Candidates **must** submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.



### OBREGON COCONUT COMPANY LTD.

Main Office Located in Bella Vista Village - Local Tel: 501.780.2626  
 hr.obregoncoconutcompany@gmail.com

#### CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Obregon Coconut Company Limited one of Belize's largest coconut farms located in Bella Vista Village, Toledo District, via the Southern Highway is seeking to recruit a **Fruit Estimate & Harvest Supervisor** to join our dynamic team. Interested parties should send Resume addressed to HR Manager via e-mail to [hr.obregoncoconutcompany@gmail.com](mailto:hr.obregoncoconutcompany@gmail.com) by 28, February 2022.

The successful candidate should be able to perform and have qualifications according to the following:

#### GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsible for all harvesting process. Work involves responsibility for planning, coordinating, and directing all cyclical activities (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) in coconut and soursop farm.

#### SPECIFIC TASKS:

##### PLANNING

- Use and maintain a harvest projection model for estimating volume of fruit to be harvested weekly, monthly and annually, this model includes age of fruit, recovery and field losses.
- Weekly planning of stem identification and fruit harvest work by the areas of coconut and soursop
- Participate in weekly, monthly meetings on planning and results of the Farm focusing on improving the crop.

##### DIRECTING

- Supervise coconut stem identification and soursop fruit bagging, and harvest process of both coconut and soursop in the field assuring quality of fruit and specifications.
- Optimize the use of the resources available in your work area: labor and materials.
- Schedule and distribute personnel and materials in the farm according to the programs and according to the weekly planning of identification, bagging and harvest work.
- Prepare the daily payroll of the personnel under your supervision.

##### CONTROLLING

- Evaluate the performance of the personnel under your supervision.
- Effectively control expenses according to the approved budget.
- Approve weekly payroll for accounting and payment

##### TRAINING

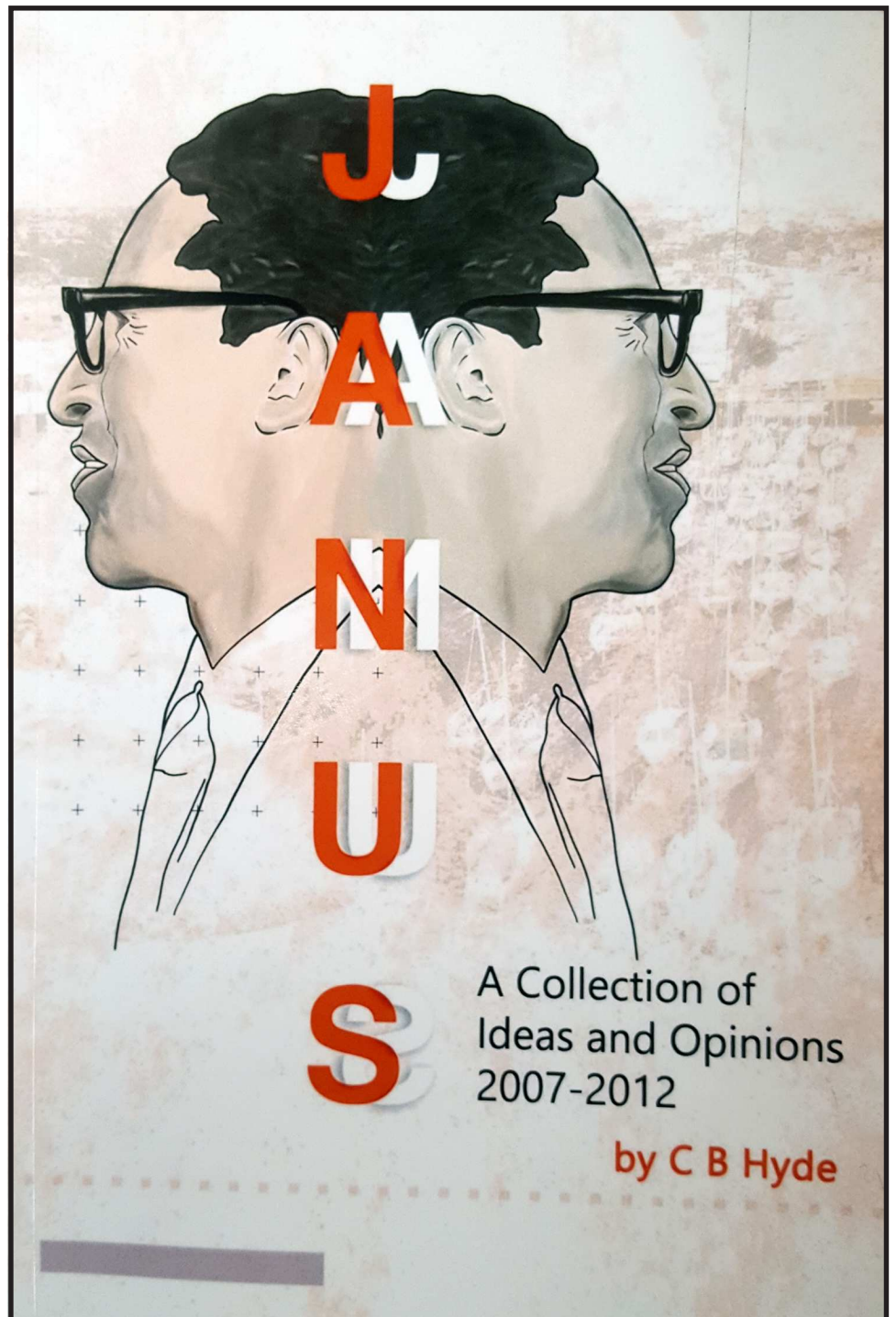
- Train and ensure compliance with the programs established in the farm for the harvest of coconuts and soursop.
- Train in theory and in practice all workers under your supervision 2 times a year
- Identify training needs and define actions and activities to implement.
- Secure the Socio-Environmental Certifications (Global gap, Rain Forest, SA-8000,) of your area.

##### HUMAN RELATIONS

- Promote an optimal work environment that allows mutual respect in worker-employer relations.
- Ensure that working conditions are safe and adequate for workers.
- Maintain communication with the Human Resources and Administration Departments to optimize their support.

##### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelors Degree in Agricultural Science, or Agric Economics; and/or working experience in fruit production. (Preferably Coconut & Soursop)
- Associates Degree in Agricultural Science, or Agric Economics; Two years working experience in fruit production. (Preferably Coconut & Soursop)
- Experience in agricultural estimating and harvesting production processes. (Preferably Coconuts & Soursop)
- Experience supervising farm workers
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to prepare statistics and forecasts
- Familiar and comfortable using Microsoft Office Programs
- Spanish Speaking would be an asset





# We used to think the girl ran off with a beau

by Colin Hyde

I don't know about you, but when I see a notice of a missing young female, my first thought is what she's about, if she has run away with a beau, and when I see a notice of a missing young male, my first response is to start praying for his safety. Of course, I don't stop at first thoughts. No one does.

It has always been so that young men engage in more dangerous activities than young women, and young men are always about seducing young women to leave the safety of their homes, for a tryst or for a long-term commitment. For sure, three decades or more ago, the consensus would have been that the young lady had run off with a young man, and the concern would have been about the guy's character, if he was honorable or despicable, not if he was

homicidal.

If you look at the longevity records of the nations of the world, women always outlive men. Well, almost. The Population Reference Bureau (PRB), at the website prb.org says it's 79 to 72 in the developed world, and 66 to 63 in the less developed world, but in Afghanistan, Nepal, Papua-New Guinea, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, men actually outlive women. Wow, in Russia women outlive men by 13 years!

PRB says men's habits, like smoking, and risk-taking, which exposes them to life-threatening injuries, explain their shorter life spans, but also plugging for women might be biological factors, such as better immune systems and estrogen, which helps reduce levels of harmful cholesterol. Of course, I was thinking that their being less likely to get killed would be a big factor in their

better endurance numbers.

We know that a number of men have been hung in Belize, but we know of only one woman who walked to the gallows, Miss Nora Parham. Looking at the last century, the 1900s, there weren't many murders back then, and the notorious stories, as far as I know they all involved men, men who were murderers and men who were killed.

Back when Therese Blake was murdered, women were rarely victims of this crime. When Richard Hoare was killed in 2007, the *Amandala* described it as "the most sensational" hit in the city without pity since the heiress to the James Blake fortune, was gunned down at Newtown Barracks in the early afternoon of October 12, 2000." I can't pass by Mr. James Blake, and the Blake family, not just like that.

In the story, "25 years ago on Ambergris Caye", by Angel Nunez, he says the original James Blake was a British magistrate who bought all of San Pedro in 1869 for \$625. We CAN'T imagine how much the extended Blake family made selling off lots on that island since, but today \$625 could probably buy you 30 square feet of beach front, a 6 x 5 space to hang your hammock. There's a fascinating story about how the main suspect in the Therese Blake murder got off. But if he was guilty of the crime, he can't tell, because he was murdered in 2014, execution-style ... and that one's just facts, no insinuation that his death was connected to what had happened years earlier.

Getting back on course, what was, in the 1900s, no longer is, in these 2000s. That first thought that a missing young lady quite likely ran away with a man is now followed immediately, almost simultaneously, by a second thought: serious concern for her safety. I veer off here just a moment to ask how the hell our country has not produced any new information on the murders of five very young girls around the turn of the century. There are people in our country who know lots of things. But they don't say.

I was surprised when I read in a 2019 Belize Crime Observatory (BCO) report that 19 females were murdered in our country in 2018, and that "there have been at least 130 females murdered in Belize since 2009, an average of 12 to 13 victims each year." Wow! I can think of only one reason for not knowing the number of women victims was so high: for almost the last two decades we have been averaging around 130 homicides per year.

In a sober Belize, we mightn't be too ugly to say female murder victims make up ONLY 10% of fatalities per year, but because homicides in Belize are astoundingly high in number, we are talking about, wow, 19 female murders in 2018! The BCO said 9 of the victims were shot and, shockingly, "more than half the cases were clearly femicides."

It is so that with 90% of murder victims being male, I/we are not off if we still have less concern for the safety

of a missing female than we have for a missing male. But my, increasingly safety concerns for a girl reported missing are coming to the fore. We are living in a country which we don't recognize.

## **Bright yellow paint, patching holes, suffocating plastic**

Former Tourism Minister, Henry Young told me that at the very least the facings of these road crossings should be brightly painted. I think there must be a bet going on in the traffic or transport department over when the first vehicle will run on top of the roundabout at the junction of the George Price Highway (GPH) and the John Smith Link Road. That thing desperately needs some paint, and almost all the road crossings are begging for a paint job too. We are strapped for cash, but we must be able to stretch a gallon and paint the facings so drivers don't run up on these crossings all of a sudden.

Congratulations to the Works Ministry for sending out a pickup with a crew to deal with little holes popping up in spots on the GPH. I gave credit to a former Cayo South area rep, the late Agripino Cawich, for saying, my mas o menos, that when you look at the consequences of little things you realize there are no little things. I read that major piece of wisdom in my late area rep's manifesto which he presented for the 1998 general election, but in looking up the exact quote (I don't have the manifesto) I found through Google that it is attributed to an American politician, Bruce Barton, who died in 1967.

Barton's quote is: *Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things, I am tempted to think there are no little things.* No, it's not impossible that Barton borrowed it from Cawich. But another time for that, in the here and now we have to say good going to the Works Ministry, because those little holes not only grow quickly into great ones, but even in their little state they can cause big accidents.

Aha, if the price of fuel gets too high, they can get some mules with carts. They can use one mule to haul a cart with the guys who will fix the holes, and one mule to haul a cart with the materials and equipment. While the guys work, the mules can keep the grass down on the roadsides.

Bah, the Ministry complained that their guys picked up tons of suffocating plastic containers and other garbage while getting the crucial hole-filling jobs done. I think if we'll defeat garbage we'll need to whip our children into line. They are to get no monetary incentives. Give teachers the right to use the tambran whip on any child who litters. Soft pops parents will run to school, some overzealous reporter will get the news and make a story, but we'll drive them back; we'll all chime in and say, 'tell yu child, if they don't want dem batam to get wap, don't litti'. I bet that will help garbage-spreading adults to get the sense too.



## TRADEWINDS

### Captain and First Mate required...

TradeWinds is a global yacht chartering company that offers high-end 7-day consecutive charters ( 2 or 3 weeks contiguous sailing ) to its guests with the result of: "Best Vacation Ever." We're looking for an experienced Captain and First Mate (crew couple) that are willing to commit for a minimum of one year on one of our sailing vessels based in Placencia.

You both will be expected to demonstrate first class boat handling skills. Captains should have the RYA (commercially endorsed) Sailing Skipper's license or its practical equivalent. The First Mate must hold the level 2, Basic Food Hygiene qualification. Both of you will have a valid STCW qualification and one of you should be a qualified Dive Master (or quickly become one). **Captains** should demonstrate sound leadership and hosting skills, have solid charter delivery experience, together with a good grasp of boat maintenance. They are expected to Assist the First Mate, and split the cleaning chores, such as dishes, cabins, and midweek turnaround. **First Mates** need to go the extra mile in food delivery, taste, presentation and being a well-rounded hostess, are their passion while able to assist the Captain where needed and with boat handling.

Interested crew couples should send an up-to-date CV containing reference contacts, together with a covering email stating why they should be considered for the positions to:

[geoff@trade-winds.com](mailto:geoff@trade-winds.com)

Occasionally we have need of Relief Captains or First Mates, if the above criteria fit your experience and flexible personality, kindly send your Resume & References with availability.





## Hacia dónde, Belize? ¿Un compromiso con la mediocridad?

Domingo 20 de febrero de 2022

El público deportivo de Belize tiene hambre de éxito, algo de lo que sentirse orgulloso en la escena internacional. El deporte número uno del fútbol ha visto disminuir la participación de los fanáticos a lo largo de las décadas, ya que el fervor nacional que alguna vez fue jubiloso y energizado se ha calmado gradualmente con derrotas repetidas y la falta de avance en cualquier importante serie clasificatoria. Pero los deportes en general en Belize han estado descendiendo en los estándares competitivos durante algunos años, y es casi como si el clima sociopolítico en Belize incluyera un grado de resignación y satisfacción con un nivel de mediocridad en la competencia internacional que no simboliza la riqueza de talento que se sabe que posee nuestra gente. Nuestros atletas/jugadores no tienen la culpa.

Puede haber algunas pistas en la burocracia de algunas de nuestras organizaciones deportivas. Sin duda, nuestros atletas, que se han sometido a nivel nacional a todas las exigencias y restricciones que les imponen las autoridades administrativas, se han visto superados por oponentes que aparentemente están en un nivel superior. Al igual que la comunidad conmocionada, abrumada por las noticias casi diarias de otro asesinato, así se ha convertido nuestra comunidad deportiva en lo que respecta al desempeño de nuestros atletas en el escenario internacional. Lo que les sucedió a nuestras mujeres jóvenes en El Salvador recientemente se ha convertido en la norma, a pesar de los esfuerzos del personal de la FFB para tratar de crear algo de entusiasmo y gran expectativa para nuestros equipos nacionales. Ya es hora de que los beliceños tomen una decisión si queremos continuar por este camino; o tal vez necesitemos un cambio de dirección, comenzando desde arriba, donde se establece el ritmo, y el régimen de entrenamiento está diseñado para moldear a nuestros atletas para que sean competitivos internacionalmente.

En general, los expertos en el ámbito deportivo reconocen que el atletismo constituye la columna vertebral de la excelencia en la mayoría de los deportes principales, porque esta área del deporte identifica el potencial del talento atlético desde una edad temprana y aprovecha ese talento para maximizar la velocidad y la resistencia que se convierten en herramientas imprescindibles para los jóvenes deportistas que optan por especializarse en otros deportes como fútbol, baloncesto, softbol/béisbol, voleibol, etc.; sea cual sea el deporte que elijan, los elementos esenciales del entrenamiento de atletismo tienen un papel importante que desempeñar. Con todo el trabajo con el balón y los ejercicios técnicos, si nuestros futbolistas no están preparados para maximizar la velocidad y la resistencia en el desempeño, seguiremos siendo llevados a la matanza en el escenario internacional.

Hace 35 años, Panamá estaba en un lugar similar al de Belize en el fútbol; pero han seguido adelante, dedicándose sistemáticamente a la excelencia, mientras que Belize ha languidecido en un aparente compromiso con la mediocridad. Todos los estadios construidos y los programas de entrenamiento llevados a cabo con el dinero de la FIFA en las últimas dos décadas no han elevado la posición del fútbol beliceño más allá de lo que se logró en la década de 1990.

Había una vieja tradición, en la cultura del fútbol en Belize, donde, cuando un equipo había recibido una derrota devastadora, era bastante normal que el entrenador o capitán declarara en el próximo día de entrenamiento que "hoy no hay balón; vamos a la calle;" lo que significa que su entrenamiento se limitaría durante unos días a correr, trabajo de distancia y velocidad, y saltos. Y llegado el siguiente día de partido, los jugadores estaban "hambrientos del balón".

Hasta finales de la década de 1970, el atletismo era un deporte importante para los espectadores en Belize, con el encuentro nacional anual de septiembre que presentaba las muy esperadas carreras de velocidad y de larga distancia, y una atracción especial que también era el salto de altura. Algunos atletas se apegan al atletismo como su deporte de elección, pero muchos otros llevan su entrenamiento atlético

a otras carreras en el fútbol, etc. Y cuando hay un sólido programa de atletismo en Belize, su impacto positivo se siente en todo el espectro de los deportes, pero más notablemente en nuestro deporte número uno, el fútbol.

Nuestra selección femenina de Belize acaba de perder 6-0 ante El Salvador y 8-0 ante Panamá en el Grupo D de las Eliminatorias de la Copa Mundial Qatar 2022 de Concacaf. Y en lo que respecta a nuestro equipo masculino, nuestras naciones amigas de Caricom, Jamaica y Trinidad, están muy por delante de nosotros; ya nos eliminaron de las clasificatorias masculinas para la Copa Mundial. ¿Está Belize satisfecho con la mediocridad?

¿Por qué nuestras asociaciones atléticas o el comité olímpico no aprovecharían la oportunidad de dar la bienvenida a los aportes de nuestros talentos beliceños en la diáspora que se han sometido a un entrenamiento de alta intensidad en el extranjero o han adquirido habilidades de entrenamiento de alto nivel en los EE. UU.? Vimos lo que le sucedió en la década de 1970 a Pulu Lightburn, ya una estrella cuando se fue con una beca de baloncesto a los EE. UU., cuando regresó a Belize, cómo fue rechazado por las autoridades. Y luego estaba Kaina Martínez en el nuevo milenio, poseedora del récord de 100 metros de Belize y América Central, que fue a Texas A&M con una beca atlética organizada a través de Colin Thurton, atleta olímpico de Belize en 1968 y actual entrenador de atletismo; las autoridades locales le dieron la espalda a Kaina y le negaron la oportunidad de representar a Belize en los Juegos Olímpicos de 2016.

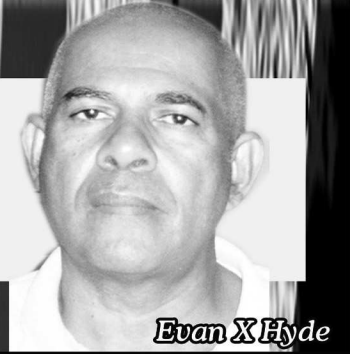
Puede haber una pista de esta peculiar enfermedad que deprime al atletismo y, por extensión, al deporte en general en Belize. Actualmente, en una visita de diez días desde Nueva York, se encuentra Greg Myers, beliceño-estadounidense de 43 años, quien es un atleta de atletismo *All-American* altamente exitoso y entrenador de atletismo a nivel universitario en los EE. UU. Alguien necesita armar las piezas de este rompecabezas para dar sentido a una situación ridícula en la que, lamentablemente, la broma no tan graciosa recae sobre Belize. ¿Por qué la Asociación de Atletismo de Belize no está dando la bienvenida a Greg?

Según Greg, mientras estaba en la cima de su desempeño hace más de dos décadas en la Universidad de Rutgers, también se le dio la espalda y, por lo tanto, no pudo representar a Belize en esos Juegos Olímpicos. Ahora pasa unos días en su casa de Burrell Boom y también supervisa algunas serias sesiones de entrenamiento matutinas en la pista de Marion Jones con su hijo Daniel, de 15 años, y otros dos jóvenes beliceños, Andre Armstrong, de 16 años y Mario Rivas, de 19 años. Un veterano de la guerra de Irak que se jubiló con lesiones sufridas después de dos mandatos y medio en el frente de batalla, Greg se ha dedicado a entrenar y está particularmente inspirado por ver algún día a su hijo hacer lo que él no pudo: representar a Belize en los Juegos Olímpicos. Recientemente, en una competencia certificada, la Rutgers Invite el 11 y 12 de febrero, su hijo Daniel logró el estándar de los Juegos Carifta en la carrera de 800 metros (2:03.69), y espera representar a Belize allí. Pero hay un pequeño obstáculo; Durante el último año, Greg ha intentado en vano obtener una respuesta a sus numerosos esfuerzos por teléfono y correo electrónico para comunicarse con el actual presidente de la Asociación de Atletismo de Belize (BAA por sus siglas en inglés), Deon Sutherland, quien certifica a los atletas para representar a Belize a nivel internacional.

Extrañamente, el entrenador Greg Myers está en excelentes términos con el actual entrenador de atletismo de Texas A&M, el beliceño Colin Thurton, así como con los ex presidentes de BAA, Nelson Hyde e Ian Gray, quien también fue ex olímpico beliceño. Los esfuerzos por contactar a Sutherland para invitarlo a la sesión de entrenamiento de Myers a las 6:00 a.m. en la pista de Marion Jones el lunes no han tenido éxito. Padre e hijo Myers regresan a los Estados Unidos el martes. Y se dice en los círculos atléticos que el titular busca otro mandato como presidente de BAA. ¿Hacia dónde, Belize?



# From the Publisher



Evan X Hyde

There are many, many extraordinary stories of cruelty, greed, barbarism, megalomania and heroism in the history of Latin American politics. One such story is the historical novel entitled THE FEAST OF THE GOAT, by the Peruvian Nobel Prize in Literature laureate, Mario Vargas Llosa. You should read it.

The novel tells the story of the assassination of Rafael Trujillo, the absolute dictator of the Dominican Republic, in 1961. Trujillo had ruled his country, which adjoins Haiti to the east on the island of Hispaniola, for decades. He preached and practised anti-communism, and for this reason was always supported by the State Department of Washington, despite his domestic excesses and crimes.

After Trujillo's assassination, there was a period of instability in the Dominican Republic, and the U.S. government sent in Rangers in 1965. Among these Rangers was one Charles Good, who was in the army of the republic of Honduras. He saw active action in Santo Domingo, then, before he migrated to British Honduras, where he became a prominent member of the new Special Forces, known in the streets of Belize as "the paramilitary."

The paramilitary, under the leadership of the late Fred Gill, was formed by the People's United Party (PUP) government in 1968 after the street uprisings in Belize City earlier that year in protest against the Seventeen (Webster) Proposals.

A senior football team, called the "Invaders," was soon formed, and the face of that basically paramilitary team was Charlie Good, who was the goalkeeper. He was also the face of the paramilitary itself, as a public institution, because of his classic physique and flamboyant personality. It was said in the streets that he kept a bayonet in the back of his goal during football games in case anyone became too aggressive.

Good also boxed professionally in Belize, his most famous bout being against Edward "Thor" Middleton at Bird's Isle. Middleton, himself a man of incredible physique, had been a paramilitary soldier under Good's command, and it was said that he had a personal rivalry with Charlie: Thor, a native of Ontario village, wanted to prove something to Good. It was a brutal fight. Thor floored Charlie, but Good ended up winning.

In any case, Charlie Good's career in the paramilitary was practically spectacular, and then in 1978 the Belize Defence Force (BDF) was formed, with the paramilitary as the core of the new Belize army. The Belize Volunteer Guard (BVG) was incorporated into the BDF.

When Charlie Good came to see me on First Street, and we will say in 1982, for argument's sake, because it had to be after Belize's independence in 1981, I explained to you in last week's newspaper that he was agitated because Tom Greenwood of the Volunteer Guard was being jumped over him for first Belizean command of the BDF.

So now, how was it that this same Charles Good had reached the stage in late 1984 where he was being offered a contract by Maxwell Samuels, then the Commissioner of Police, to "murder or maim" Evan X Hyde? No member of the Belizean media has ever touched this story, and Sir Manuel Esquivel, when he became Prime Minister just weeks afterwards, refused to investigate the incident.

Well, to a certain extent Good's life had fallen apart between 1982 and 1984, because his common-law wife, Olive, mother of four of his children, was harassing him in Magistrate's Court for maintenance, and she was receiving highly favorable judgments from the Magistrate, a Guyanese by the name of Yakub Gaznabbi. Over a period of time, under the crushing weight of these judgments, the great Charlie Good had become financially desperate.

Before I proceed, let me say that the reason this story has to be told, almost four decades afterwards, is because a man named Rufus X risked his life in 1984 in order to save mine. This same Rufus X, a foundation member and loyalist of the United Democratic Party (UDP) in 1973, in 1987 was denied the right by the Sir Manuel-led UDP to contest the leadership of the UDP's Belize Rural North constituency, then represented by Sam Rhaburn, who had been one of Net Vasquez's accounting employees.

I first met Maxwell Samuels in 1970 after the late Ismail Shabazz and I had been acquitted one July night of seditious conspiracy in the Supreme Court. Samuels was the police photographer that night, and he later did me the favor of giving me a couple of the photos he had taken of the jubilant crowd which swarmed the court, and grabbed and hoisted Shabazz and myself and the successful defence attorneys — Assad Shoman and Said Musa.

I guess during the 1970s, Samuels had risen through the ranks of the Belize Police Force. And when Ronald Reagan's United States government began running cocaine operations through Belize in the early 1980s in order to raise funding to support the so-called contras in their civil war against the Sandinista government which had come to power in Nicaragua in 1979, Samuels

was Commissioner of Police in Belize.

The longtime PUP Minister of Police, Hon. C. L. B. Rogers, had been replaced as Home Affairs Minister in January of 1984. His replacement, Hon. V. H. Courtenay, fell ill around April of that year, so the question of who was Samuels' Minister in late October/early November of 1984, when he gave Good the Evan X assignment, is a most intriguing one.

At the September National Day celebrations in 1984, such had been the family and financial pressure (to which we previously referred) on Charlie Good that he collapsed in the sun. For such a macho man, this was a huge humiliation, and only this newspaper reported the story.

Perhaps the powers-that-be felt that such a story in this newspaper would infuriate Good to the point where he could be contracted for a hit. In these types of situations, the hitman himself is often eliminated afterwards in order to prevent any evidence from being provided by him.

I suppose I will have to continue

this story in another column. Charles Good took out his pistol in the Magistrate's Court one morning and fired at Magistrate Gaznabbi and his common-law, Olive. I think Olive was hit in the hip. Dr. Leroy Taegar always insisted that Good could not have intended to kill any of them, because he was a trained marksman.

In any case, Good then left the Magistrate's Court in the old Paslow Building and came to this newspaper's office looking for me. My printer, Noel Ferguson, called me at home and said Good had a gun and had blood on him. It was after 11:00 that morning.

In the Radio Belize 12:30 p.m. news that day, they reported that Charles Good was still at large, and that's when I went looking for help. (A week or two before, I had been indirectly warned at Mike's Club by a friend named Arthur "Tureto" Neal.) I went to Rufus X.

Charlie Good was sentenced to twelve years in Her Majesty's Prison

Please turn to **Page 10**

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BELIZE A.D. 2021**

**CLAIM NO. 343 OF 2021**

**BETWEEN THE BELIZE BANK LIMITED CLAIMANT**  
**AND**  
**GUSTAVO CARDENAS DEFENDANT**

**TO: GUSTAVO CARDENAS of 13 San Andres Street, Orange Walk Town, Orange Walk District, Belize**

Take Notice that an action has been commenced against you in the Supreme Court, Claim No. 343 of 2021, by The Belize Bank Limited of 60 Market Square, Belize City, Belize, in which the Claimant's claim is for payment of the total sum of \$94,694.10 inclusive of interest at the rate of 12 percent per annum as well as bank charges and expenses being the total sum due as of the 20<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2019 in respect of a loan extended by the Claimant to the Defendant pursuant to the terms of a written loan note dated 27th November, 2017 and for continuing interest and costs.

And that it has been ordered that service of the said claim in the said action on you be effected by this advertisement. If you desire to defend the said action you must within 14 days from the second publication of this advertisement, inclusive of the day of such publication, enter an acknowledgement of service at the office of the Supreme Court. In default of such, judgment may be entered against you.

DATED the 21<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2022.

Barrow & CO. LLP  
Attorneys-at-Law for the Claimant

PER:



# REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

## Why most Ukrainians don't believe Biden's warnings, distrust West



by **Mansur Mirovalev**

KYIV, Ukraine, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022 (Al Jazeera) - The White House's increasingly worrying warnings about an imminent Russian invasion in Ukraine are nothing but a political game designed to help Democrats win Senate seats in the autumn.

This is not an opinion of a Capitol Hill political pundit, but what a Ukrainian woman who fled the rebel-controlled Donetsk region

thinks about statements US President Joe Biden made in recent weeks – only to allegedly gain political brownie points for deescalating the crisis come election time.

“By the autumn, Biden will look like a super hero, a superman. Because he – think about it – prevented World War III,” Oksana Afenkina, who lives in the

Ukrainian capital Kyiv after leaving Donetsk in 2020, told Al Jazeera.

Although Capitol Hill pundits may disagree with her, Afenkina is among the majority of Ukrainians who simply do not believe that Russia is going to invade.

Even as tensions boil with more than 150,000 Russian troops along the border in annexed Crimea and in neighbouring Belarus, just one in five Ukrainians think the full-scale conflict is inevitable.

Only 20.4 percent of Ukrainians believe that a “full-scale invasion” will happen soon, and only 4.4 percent are adamant it is “definitely” taking place, according to a survey by the Gorshenin Institute, an independent pollster, conducted between February 2 and 14.

A staggering 62.5 percent think the invasion is not going to happen “in the nearest future”.

Instead, some Ukrainians such as Afenkina contend that their ex-Soviet nation of 44 million is but a pawn in the geopolitical games in the US, a useful tool to consolidate support and gain votes.

“[US politicians] play, they bluff, because such messages move the stock market, help the business and solve personal problems” of politicians, said the 35-year-old, who still has a piece of shrapnel in her left palm.

Disbelief in war goes hand in hand with mistrust in the West, an

observer said.

“There is a critical attitude to predictions from the West, namely, the alarmist notes of the ‘Everything is lost, there will be an invasion’ kind, as well as an assessment of [Ukraine’s] own might,” Kyiv-based Ihar Tyshkevich, a Belarusian political analyst at the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, told Al Jazeera.

Thousands of Ukrainians fought in the last war with Russia and many now are active reservists, ready to return to the front lines. They are preparing to counter the Russians – the way they have been pushing back against Moscow-backed separatists since 2014.

Full article can be viewed at : <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/21/why-ukrainians-dont-believe-in-war-with-russia-distrust-west>

First published by Al Jazeera

## Mali's army says eight soldiers and 57 fighters killed in clashes

*Troops targeted by 'unidentified armed men' in the Arham region near the border with restive Burkina Faso and Niger*

**MALI, Sat. Feb. 20, 2022 (Al Jazeera)**

Eight Malian soldiers were killed, 14 others injured and four are missing following a clash with fighters in the northeast of the West African nation, the defence ministry said.

The ministry said late on Friday that columns of fighters on motorbikes had pinned down the unit, but the army, backed by the air force, killed 57 of them in the tri-border area near Burkina Faso.

The troops were targeted by “unidentified armed men” in the Arham region near the border with restive Burkina Faso and Niger, the statement said.

About 40 civilians were killed this week in this zone where rival armed groups, including ISIL (ISIS), operate, locals told AFP news agency.

The civilians were considered to

be loyal to rival armed groups, according to the local sources.

Mali is at the epicentre of a Sahel-wide conflict, which has killed thousands of soldiers and civilians and displaced some two million people.

Rebel groups linked to al-Qaeda and ISIL control swaths of territory in the porous border areas of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

The latest attack comes as Mali's ruling military government asked France on Friday to withdraw troops from its territory “without delay”, calling into question Paris's plan for a four to six-month departure and highlighting the breakdown in relations between Paris and its former colony.

Mali has struggled to regain stability since 2012, when ethnic Tuareg rebels and loosely aligned armed groups seized the northern two-thirds of the country.



Forces from former colonial power France intervened and helped defeat the armed groups in 2013, but the fighters regrouped in the desert and began carrying out regular attacks on the army and civilians. They have since exported their methods to neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger where violence has skyrocketed in recent years, leaving a grave humanitarian crisis in its wake.

France has about 4,300 troops in the Sahel region, including 2,400 in Mali. Its so-called Barkhane force is also involved in Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

A statement signed by France and its African and European allies on Thursday said that “multiple

obstructions” by Mali's ruling military government meant that the conditions were no longer in place to operate in the country.

France and 15 European countries in December condemned the Malian authorities' decision to allow the deployment of personnel from Russia's Wagner Group, which has reportedly started operating in the country and is accused of rights abuses in the Central African Republic, Libya and Syria.

The withdrawal decision applies to both Barkhane and the Takuba European force that France had been trying to forge along with its allies.

Published by Al Jazeera New

## From the Publisher

Continued from **Page 9**

for the Magistrate's Court shootings. The then Governor-General, Dame Minita Gordon, reduced the sentence to two years. Charlie opened a business in Cayo after the prison time, but life became harder and harder as time went by, and no one up top was

looking out for him. At some point, he began talking to Rufus X, and then he began talking to me. (To be continued.)

NOTE: Charles Good, Maxwell Samuels, C. L. B. Rogers, V. H. Courtenay, Dame Minita Gordon, Dr. Leroy Taegar, and Noel Ferguson are all deceased.



# Africa — the wealthiest continent

The African continent has 1 billion 370 million people, among them, and 490 million of them live in dire poverty. Why? Africa is the richest continent, with the poorest population in the world. There is an elite class of corrupt African billionaires who have allowed transnational corporations to plunder the wealth of the African continent. That is something that has not started recently but has been occurring for several hundreds of years. The African continent exports annually minerals, agricultural products, petroleum, gold, diamonds, carbon and platinum. Permit me, our dear readers of this column, to present to you the following information which was extracted from CTXT (contenido y acción):

## Companies steal wealth

*The \$68 billion that has been stolen from Africa using illicit international capital flows accounts for approximately 6.1% of the entire GDP of the continent. Multinational*

*companies are stealing \$48.2 billion through misleading invoicing alone, according to figures obtained by Global Financial Integrity. Previous investigations by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa came up with similar figures: multinational companies stole close to \$40 billion a year from African countries using false commercial invoicing in the decade before 2010. Another tremendous problem is buying of concessions by companies at false bargain prices, often linked to cases of corruption and tax havens. In 2013, the Africa Progress Panel and Global Witness reviewed five major mining rights sales operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whose deals included companies registered in the British Virgin Islands. They found that the companies paid at least \$1.36 billion below actual market value (nearly double what DR Congo spends each year on healthcare and education*

*combined).*

## Those who control tax havens enable Africa's wealth to be stolen

*Wealth is being stolen from the people of Africa through a process that allows a small minority of Africans to get rich by letting the wealth flow out of Africa. In this sense, according to a recent report on the wealth of Africa, there are currently around 165,000 individuals with high purchasing power in Africa, who together have accumulated possessions worth 860,000 million dollars. In 2016, there were 24 billionaires in Africa with a combined wealth of \$80 billion. Where do these people mostly keep their wealth? In secret places registered in tax havens with low taxation, such as the Channel Islands, Switzerland or the United Kingdom. Gabriel Zucman, a professor at the London School of Economics, estimated in 2014 that*



by Clinton Canul Luna

*Africa's wealthy held as much as \$500 billion in tax havens, equivalent to 30% of all Africa's financial wealth. Since this wealth is untaxed, that means African elites have stolen \$15 billion from their own countries, according to Zucman's conservative estimate."*

I only hope that we do not have this type of culture in Belize. At the same time, I ask myself, who owns 174 miles of Belize's sea front?

[fincasolan@gmail.com](mailto:fincasolan@gmail.com)

February 19, 2022

Finca Solana

Corozal Town

## FROM THE PUBLISHER en Español

Hay muchas, muchas historias extraordinarias de crueldad, codicia, barbarie, megalomanía y heroísmo en la historia de la política latinoamericana. Una de esas historias es la novela histórica titulada LA FIESTA DEL CHIVO, del premio Nobel de Literatura peruano, Mario Vargas Llosa. Deberían leerlo.

La novela cuenta la historia del asesinato de Rafael Trujillo, el dictador absoluto de la República Dominicana, en 1961. Trujillo había gobernado su país, que linda con Haití al este en la isla Hispaniola, durante décadas. Predicó y practicó el anticomunismo, por lo que siempre fue apoyado por el Departamento de Estado de Washington, a pesar de sus excesos y crímenes domésticos.

Después del asesinato de Trujillo, hubo un período de inestabilidad en la República Dominicana, y el gobierno de los Estados Unidos envió Rangers en 1965. Entre estos Rangers se encontraba Charles Good, que estaba en el ejército de la República de Honduras. Entonces, vio acción activa en Santo Domingo antes de emigrar a Honduras Británica, donde se convirtió en un miembro destacado de las nuevas Fuerzas Especiales, conocidas en las calles de Belize como "los paramilitares".

El grupo paramilitar, bajo el liderazgo del finado Fred Gill, fue formado por el gobierno del Partido Unido del Pueblo (PUP) en 1968 después de los levantamientos callejeros en la Ciudad de Belize a principios de ese año en protesta contra las Diecisiete Propuestas (Webster).

Pronto se formó un equipo de fútbol senior, llamado "Invaders", y la cara de ese equipo básicamente paramilitar era Charlie Good, quien era el portero. También fue el rostro del propio paramilitarismo, como institución pública, por su físico clásico y personalidad extravagante. Se decía en las calles que guardaba una bayoneta en la parte de atrás de su portería durante los partidos de fútbol por si alguien se ponía demasiado agresivo.

Good también boxeó profesionalmente en Belize, siendo su pelea más famosa contra Edward "Thor" Middleton en Bird's Isle. Middleton, él mismo un hombre de físico increíble, había sido un soldado paramilitar bajo el mando de Good, y se decía que tenía una rivalidad personal con Charlie: Thor, un nativo de la aldea de Ontario, quería demostrarle algo a Good. Fue una pelea brutal. Thor derribó a Charlie, pero Good terminó ganando.

En cualquier caso, la carrera de Charlie Good en el paramilitarismo fue prácticamente espectacular, y luego en 1978 se formó la Fuerza de Defensa de Belize (BDF por sus siglas en inglés), con los paramilitares como núcleo del nuevo ejército de Belize. La Guardia Voluntaria de Belize (BVG por sus siglas en inglés) se incorporó a la BDF.

Cuando Charlie Good vino a verme en la calle First, y diremos que fue en 1982, por el mor de la discusión, porque tenía que ser después de la independencia de Belize en 1981, les expliqué en el periódico de la semana

pasada que estaba agitado porque Tom Greenwood de la La Guardia Voluntaria estaba siendo saltado sobre él para el primer comando beliceño de la BDF.

Así que ahora, ¿cómo fue que este mismo Charles Good había llegado a la etapa a fines de 1984 donde Maxwell Samuels, entonces el Comisionado de Policía, le ofreció un contrato para "asesinar o mutilar" a Evan X Hyde? Ningún miembro de los medios de Belize ha tocado esta historia y Sir Manuel Esquivel, cuando se convirtió en Primer Ministro pocas semanas después, se negó a investigar el incidente.

Bueno, hasta cierto punto, la vida de Good se había derrumbado entre 1982 y 1984, porque su esposa de unión libre, Olive, madre de cuatro de sus hijos, lo estaba acosando en el Tribunal de Primera Instancia por manutención, y ella estaba recibiendo sentencias muy favorables del Magistrado, un guyanés de nombre Yakub Gaznabbi. Durante un período de tiempo, bajo el peso aplastante de estos juicios, el gran Charlie Good se había vuelto financieramente desesperado.

Antes de continuar, permítanme decir que la razón por la que se debe contar esta historia, casi cuatro décadas después, es porque un hombre llamado Rufus X arriesgó su vida en 1984 para salvar la mía. A este mismo Rufus X, miembro fundador y leal del Partido Demócrata Unido (UDP por sus siglas en inglés) en 1973, en 1987 el UDP dirigido por Sir Manuel le negó el derecho a disputar el liderazgo del

distrito electoral Rural Norte del Distrito de Belize para el UDP, entonces representado por Sam Rhaburn, quien había sido uno de los empleados de contabilidad de Net Vasquez.

Conocí a Maxwell Samuels en 1970 después de que el finado Ismail Shabazz y yo fuéramos absueltos una noche de julio de conspiración sediciosa en la Corte Suprema. Samuels era el fotógrafo de la policía esa noche, y más tarde me hizo el favor de darme un par de las fotos que había tomado de la multitud jubilosa que invadió la corte, y agarró y levantó a Shabazz, a mí y a los exitosos abogados defensores: Assad Shoman y Said Musa.

Supongo que durante la década de 1970, Samuels había ascendido en las filas de la Policía de Belize. Y cuando el gobierno Ronald Reagan de los Estados Unidos comenzó a llevar a cabo operaciones de cocaína en Belize a principios de la década de 1980 con el fin de recaudar fondos para apoyar a los llamados contras en su guerra civil contra el gobierno sandinista que había llegado al poder en Nicaragua en 1979, Samuels era el Comisionado de la Policía en Belize.

El Ministro de Policía PUP desde hace mucho tiempo, el Honorable C. L. B. Rogers, había sido reemplazado como Ministro del Interior en enero de 1984. Su reemplazo, el Honorable V. H. Courtenay, se enfermó alrededor de abril de ese año, por lo que la cuestión de quién era el



# Health & NUTRITION

## 8 Caribbean Cultural Foods for Combating Inflammation

Inflammation is the body's natural response to injury and infection.

However, chronic inflammation — which may be influenced by diet, inadequate sleep, and high stress levels — is linked to overweight and obesity, insulin resistance, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Fortunately, studies have shown that some cultural foods common to the Caribbean region, as well as overall lifestyle habits, fight inflammation.

Here are 8 anti-inflammatory foods common to the Caribbean and its diasporas.

### 1. Cocoa and dark chocolate



The Caribbean has a longstanding history of producing quality cocoa products, with the Trinidad & Tobago Fine Cocoa Company among the oldest.

Flavanols — antioxidants found in cocoa products — have anti-inflammatory properties that may protect blood vessel health, potentially reducing your risk of developing heart disease and stroke. They may also improve exercise performance and recovery.

Furthermore, flavanol-rich cocoa and dark chocolate guard against blood vessel damage from oxidative stress, which occurs with age and in people who smoke, by increasing nitric oxide production.

Nitric oxide is a compound that may reduce inflammation and support healthy blood flow (10Trusted Source).

The higher the percentage of cocoa that dark chocolate contains, the more flavanols and greater antioxidant properties it has — although it may be slightly less palatable, as high percentages of cocoa increase bitterness.

Enjoy dark chocolate bites for a snack or sip a warm cup of cocoa tea at night.

### 2. West Indian cherry (acerola)

West Indian cherry, also called acerola (*Malpighia emarginata*), is lauded for the high levels of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) that it provides.

One cup (98 grams) of this fruit contains 1,650 mg of vitamin C. That's 18 to 22 times the daily intake recommendation of 75 mg for women and 90 mg for men.

Vitamin C fights inflammation by reducing the number of free radicals — the by-products of metabolism —

in the body. Current research is exploring its potential to reduce the risk of developing some cancers.

West Indian cherry is rich in other anti-inflammatory compounds, such as carotenoids, polyphenols, and flavonoids, and may have anti-aging properties.

The fruit blooms between the spring and autumn and may be enjoyed raw or made into a juice.

### 3. Pimento pepper

Peppers of the capsicum family, including pimento pepper (*Capsicum annum*), contain phytochemical compounds that may have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

These include flavonoids, quercetin, alkaloids, carotenoids, and capsaicinoids.

In animal studies, capsaicin — the spicy component of mild and hot peppers — reduced the release of pro-inflammatory compounds by adipose tissue in rats with obesity. It also reduced cell damage in the guts of mice.

However, human research is needed.

The pimento pepper is related to the habanero pepper (*Capsicum chinense*), but it's less spicy. It's traditionally used to add flavor to myriad cooked dishes, including stews and soups.

### 4. Red sorrel



Red sorrel (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*), also called roselle, is a mainstay in traditional medicine.

Both animal and human studies found that red sorrel may lower blood pressure and cholesterol. It may also reduce body weight, insulin resistance, and markers of inflammation

One study determined that the plant is a good candidate to investigate for its role as an herbal supplement for cancer prevention and treatment. More human clinical trials are needed, though.

The benefits of red sorrel may be attributed to its abundance of anthocyanins, in addition to other polyphenols, and hibiscus acids

Roselle tea is quite popular as a hot or cold beverage. In the Caribbean, fresh and dried leaves of the plant are primarily used to make the traditional Christmastime drink sorrel juice.

### 5. Passion fruit

Extracts of the *Passiflora* family, including passion fruit (*Passiflora*

*edulis*), have long been used in herbal medicines to treat anxiety and convulsive disorders.

It contains potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds, such as flavonoids, piceatannol, and triterpenoids, which may lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and high blood sugar levels.

One study found that piceatannol extract from passion fruit improved insulin sensitivity, blood pressure, and heart rate in men with overweight. However, it didn't have the same effect on women with moderate weight or women with overweight.

More human research is needed.

Passion fruit is tart, but you can eat it raw or make it into juice or lilikoi jelly, a staple breakfast food in Hawaiian culture.

### 6. Curcumin (turmeric)



Curcumin may have anti-inflammatory health benefits that protect brain health and fight against diabetes, heart disease, bowel disease, arthritis, obesity-related inflammation, and cancer

Curcumin is the active compound in turmeric that provides the spice with its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Combining curcumin with piperine, the active ingredient in black pepper, may enhance your body's curcumin absorption, making more of this powerful compound available to reduce inflammation.

In the Caribbean, turmeric is commonly added to dishes prepared with Indian spices, including curry and geera (ground cumin).

### 7. Ginger

Ginger is common in cooked foods and hot beverages throughout the Caribbean.

Its major active components — 6-gingerol and 6-shogaol — improve enzyme pathways related to obesity-induced inflammation, rheumatoid arthritis, aging, and neurocognitive diseases.

Studies show that whole ginger extract, or 6-shogaol, may reduce chronic lung inflammation. One in vitro study suggests that it could be used as a therapeutic treatment for asthma in the future.

However, more human research is needed.

### 8. Cinnamon

Cinnamon is well-known for its role

in reducing blood sugar levels.

Rats on a high fat diet supplemented with polyphenol extracts from cinnamon bark experienced a reduction in inflammation from adipose tissues and improved insulin resistance.

However, human studies have yielded conflicting results.

For instance, one review showed that supplementation with cinnamon significantly reduced most markers of inflammation.

But on the other hand, two clinical trials in people with type 2 diabetes showed that cinnamon supplementation reduced cholesterol levels, but inconsistently reduced markers of inflammation.

More research is needed, but studies suggest that cinnamon may be used as an adjunct to conventional medicine to combat inflammation.

Lifestyle modifications: Sleep and stress management

In addition to fueling your diet with nutritious, anti-inflammatory foods, it's important that your lifestyle habits do not contribute to high levels of inflammation.

Poor sleep — specifically, sleep disturbances — is linked to compromised immune health and increased inflammation.

Furthermore, emotional and psychological stress are associated with poor cardiovascular health and may raise your risk of experiencing acute coronary heart disease events (56Trusted Source).

What you can do:

**Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep per night.** The National Sleep Foundation recommends that adults 18 years and older get a minimum of 7 hours of sleep per night.

**Move your body.** Moderate-intensity exercise may reduce inflammation and depression. Most people should engage in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise each week, along with at least 2 days of muscle-strengthening exercises.

**Manage your stress levels.** Take care of your emotional health by making time to unwind, connecting with friends and family, or seeking support through therapy with a licensed professional.

The bottom line

Chronic inflammation can increase your risk of chronic illnesses, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Cultural foods, such as red sorrel, turmeric, and passion fruit, contain phytochemicals with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that may support your health.

Be sure to support an anti-inflammatory diet by getting enough sleep, exercising, and managing your emotional health.

First published by [www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)



# FROM THE PUBLISHER en Español

Continúa de página 11

ministro de Samuels a fines de octubre o principios de noviembre de 1984, cuando le dio a Good la orden de Evan X, es muy intrigante.

En las celebraciones del Día Nacional de septiembre de 1984, la presión familiar y financiera (a la que nos referimos anteriormente) sobre Charlie Good había sido tal que se derrumbó bajo el sol. Para un hombre tan macho, esto fue una gran humillación, y solo este periódico reportó la historia.

Quizás los poderosos sintieron que tal historia en este periódico enfurecería a Good hasta el punto de que podría ser contratado para un asesinato. En este tipo de situaciones, el propio asesino a sueldo suele ser eliminado después para evitar que proporcione pruebas.

Supongo que tendré que continuar esta historia en otra columna. Charles Good sacó su pistola en el Tribunal de Primera Instancia una mañana y disparó contra el Magistrado Gaznabbi y su pareja de hecho, Olive. Creo que Olive recibió un golpe en la cadera. El Dr. Leroy Taegar siempre insistió en que Good no podía haber tenido la intención de matar a ninguno de ellos, porque era un tirador entrenado.

En cualquier caso, Good salió del Tribunal en el antiguo edificio Paslow y vino a la oficina de este periódico a buscarme. Mi impresor, Noel Ferguson, me llamó en casa y me dijo que Good tenía un arma y estaba manchado de sangre. Era después de las 11:00 de la mañana.

En las noticias de las 12:30 p.m. en Radio Belize ese día, informaron que Charles Good todavía estaba a la fuga, y fue entonces cuando fui a buscar ayuda. (Una semana o dos antes, un amigo llamado Arthur "Tureto" Neal me había advertido indirectamente en Mike's Club). Fui a Rufus X.

Charlie Good fue sentenciado a doce años en la Prisión de Su Majestad por el tiroteo en el Tribunal de Primera Instancia. La entonces gobernadora general, la Dama Minita Gordon, redujo la sentencia a dos años. Charlie abrió un negocio en Cayo después del tiempo en prisión, pero la vida se hizo cada vez más difícil con el paso del tiempo y nadie en la cima estaba pendiente de él. En algún momento, comenzó a hablar con Rufus X y luego comenzó a hablar conmigo. (Continuará.)

NOTA: Charles Good, Maxwell Samuels, C. L. B. Rogers, V. H. Courtenay, la Dama Minita Gordon, el Dr. Leroy Taegar y Noel Ferguson han fallecido.

## Belize City man shot at Albert Street car wash

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

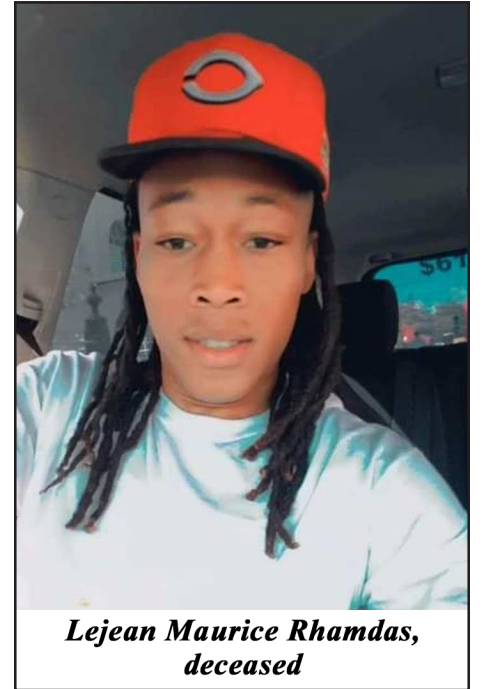
On Friday morning, February 18, sometime around 10:25, 25-year-old Lejean Rhamdas was wounded by a hail of bullets that were fired at him by two gunmen while he was at the Minds and Hearts Car Wash on Albert Street.

Rhamdas started to run after being wounded, and he later collapsed near Anglican Cathedral College. He was transported to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMH) by police officers who responded to a report of the incident.

A little after 6:00 p.m. that day, police confirmed that Rhamdas had succumbed to his injuries while receiving treatment at the KMH.

At Monday's police press briefing, the Communications Director for the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, told reporters that he believes Rhamdas' death may have been gang-related, and several persons have been detained at this point.

"Well, indications at this point would suggest that it may be gang-related. We have several persons detained, persons of interest that have come in contact with the law on more



Lejean Maurice Rhamdas, deceased

than one occasion. Hopefully we could identify his assailants very soon and bring some form of closure to the family," Yearwood said

Lejean Rhamdas was recently released from prison on December 2021 on charges of possession of an unlicensed gun and ammunition late last year.

Police are pleading with the public to assist them to identify the shooters who took Rhamdas' life, since the incident occurred in broad daylight.

## Where to, Belize? A commitment to mediocrity?

Continued from Page 5

in the U.S. Somebody needs to put the pieces of this puzzle together to make sense of a ridiculous situation where the not-so-funny joke unfortunately is on Belize. Why isn't the BAA embracing Greg?!

According to Greg, while at the peak of his performance over two decades ago at Rutgers University, he was also given the cold shoulder and thus could not represent Belize at that Olympics. Now he is spending a few days at his Burrell Boom home, and also supervising some serious early morning training sessions at the Marion Jones track with his 15-year-old son, Daniel, and two other Belizean youths, 16-year-old Andre Armstrong and 19-year-old Mario Rivas. An Iraq war veteran retired with injuries sustained after two and a half terms on the battle front, Greg has dedicated himself to coaching, and is particularly inspired to someday see his son do what he couldn't: represent Belize in the Olympics. Recently, in a certified meet, the

Rutgers Invite on February 11-12, his son Daniel achieved Carifta Games standard in the 800-meter race (2:03.69), and is hoping to represent Belize there. But there is one small obstacle; for the past year Greg has been trying in vain to get a response to his numerous phone and email efforts to communicate with current Belize Athletics Association (BAA) president Deon Sutherland, who certifies athletes to represent Belize internationally.

Strangely, coach Greg Myers is on excellent terms with current Texas A&M athletics coach, Belizean Colin Thurton, as well as with past BAA presidents, Nelson Hyde and Ian Gray, Ian being also a past Belizean Olympian. Efforts to contact Sutherland to invite him to Myers' 6:00 a.m. training session at the Marion Jones track on Monday have been unsuccessful. The Myers father and son return to the U.S. on Tuesday. And the word around athletics circles is that the incumbent is seeking another term as BAA president. Where to, Belize?!

## Woman killed in Orange Walk RTA

Elderly Chinese man charged for multiple traffic offenses

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Sun. Feb. 20, 2022

A 26-year-old woman, Veronica Elizabeth Quischan, lost her life on Thursday night, February 17, on the Blue Creek Road in San Lazaro, Orange Walk, when the vehicle in which she was traveling with her cousin and a child collided with an Isuzu Trooper as they were passing San Felipe village on their way to Trial Farm (where Quischan lived).

The Isuzu Trooper was being driven by Gouli Chen, 75, a businessman of Orange Walk, who was driving from Orange Walk to Blue Creek, and who reportedly, upon reaching an intersection, made a left turn into a feeder road without first clearing traffic in the oncoming lane. It was at that point that the car in which Quischan had been traveling, which was coming from the opposite direction and was being driven by Quischan's cousin, 23-year-old Mario Barrera, hit the left front corner of the Trooper, and flipped several times.

Quischan was flung out of the vehicle and reportedly died on the scene. Barrera and the child in the vehicle survived and received only



Gouli Chen

minor injuries.

A postmortem examination was conducted on Quischan's body, and the cause of her death has been certified to be multiple blunt force trauma as a result of the road traffic accident.

Since then, police have formally arrested and charged Chen with one count of manslaughter by negligence, one count of negligent harm, one count of driving a motor vehicle without due care and attention, and one count of failure to give way when changing directions.

Veronica had been working as a babysitter for Barrera.

AMANDALA is cream!



# BSI sues BSCFA!

(From page 1)

*Belize Cogeneration Energy Limited, a BSI company, is claiming a financial loss of \$564,926 that it says was the result of the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association's blockade in late 2021.*

by Marco Lopez

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

A lawsuit has been initiated by a subsidiary of Belize Sugar Industry (ASR/BSI) — Belize Cogeneration Energy Limited — against the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) in an attempt to force the association to pay the company a little over half a million dollars for alleged losses caused by the December 2021 blockade staged by the BSCFA at the entrance of the BSI compound at the Tower Hill mill in Orange Walk. The blockade was an act of protest by the members of the association after a breakdown in negotiations between the BSCFA and ASR/BSI which should have led to the signing of a new commercial agreement between the parties, which then prompted BSCFA to insist that the duration of a proposed interim agreement be extended. ASR/BSI's legal claim will likely place additional strain on the working relationship between the parties, which is currently being held in place by a fragile interim agreement, set to expire in a little over 5 months. Of note, during negotiations between the parties the government of Belize had committed in an indemnity clause to support BSCFA in the event that any legal claim arose as a result of the protest action. This could mean that any possible judgement award might be paid by the Belizean people.

The claimant, Belize Cogeneration Energy Limited, is asserting that the BSCFA “instructed and encouraged” four of its members, also named as defendants in the claim along with the association, to trespass over BSI land and unlawfully block cane farmers from entering the mill. The company is now seeking damages for the tort of unlawful interference, and is claiming that the actions of the defendants directly caused a financial loss for the subsidiary of their enterprise that supplies electricity to both BSI and Belize Electricity Limited. The blockade, which prevented the start

of the sugar crop, also resulted in a halt to bagasse production, the by-product of which is used to generate the electricity that is sold to BEL under a power purchase agreement.

In total, the company claimed \$564,926 for lost electricity sales during the days of the blockade and the cost of the company's energy imports. Specifically, the company is claiming \$48,889 for loss of energy sales caused by the blockade, \$456,037 for the losses caused by the delay in the operation of boiler #1, and \$60,000 for the cost of the energy imports procured by the company for the restarting of the mill on January 3, following the signing of the interim agreement and end of the blockade.

The claim, dated February 18, states that the blockade prevented deliveries from the Corozal Sugar Cane Producers Association, the Northern Sugar Cane Growers Association, and the Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association, which disrupted Belize Cogeneration Energy Limited's business of supplying energy to BSI and BEL.

The claim form states that BSCFA, “at all material times, authorized, instructed and encouraged the second through fifth defendant to commit trespass over BSI's land and unlawfully block cane farmers' access to the mill.”

The defendants are listed as the BSCFA, Pablo Burgos, Fortunato Gonzalez, Foroteo Correa Jr. and Canuto Alpuche.

The BSCFA has been demanding that the mill adjust the revenue-sharing formulas that determine how much the cane farmers are paid by the mill and that it include these adjusted terms in a new commercial agreement. The mill, however, is insisting that at this time its principals are unwilling to incur more expenses in light of the significant investments it is claiming it has made to upgrade the machinery and processes at BSI.

We will continue to follow this case.

# Watchman killed in Toledo

by Charles Gladden

BLADEN VILLAGE, Toledo District, Mon. Feb. 21, 2022

An elderly man was shot and killed on a farm in Bladen Village, Toledo District, this past Sunday. Police found the motionless body of Transito Villalobos, 73, who worked as a watchman on the farm, with apparent gunshot wounds to the body.

At around 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Villalobos reported to work as usual, and it is believed that sometime that

evening he encountered his assailant(s) and was fatally shot on the farm.

According to police, the assailant(s) not only killed Villalobos but also burglarized a building located on the farm, and stole two weed whackers from the property.

Police are yet to find the murder weapon used to commit this recent murder and are asking anyone who has any information regarding this incident, to contact the nearest police station or call 911 or 922.

# Justice for Marcus Garvey

Continued from Page 1

Advocacy, focused on the recent movement to have Jamaican hero, Marcus Garvey, exonerated posthumously. Garvey, who played a pivotal role in the Black Nationalist movement in the 20th century, was arrested in the US, charged with mail fraud, and ultimately deported. Subsequent research has shown, however, that Garvey was wrongfully convicted, with the charges laid against him merely being an attempt to derail his advocacy by those who saw the movement as a threat. Recent research has also revealed that Garvey was never even allowed a fair trial.

Present at the forum was Dr. Julius Garvey, son of Marcus Garvey and organizer of the campaign titled “Justice4Garvey”. He explained the goal of the campaign—obtaining 100,000 signatures to petition President Joe Biden for the exoneration of Marcus Garvey through the Posthumous Presidential Pardon.

“We have been at this for a very long time, and we've accumulated significant legal evidence that there was no crime committed. My father spent approximately three years in jail, and his movement and his career were somewhat blunted by what J. Hoover and the Justice Department, the FBI, did in these United States of America,” he said.

Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of The University of the West Indies, shared opening remarks at the opening of the forum, moderated by Professor Verene Shepherd, Director of The Centre for Reparation Research. According to the Vice-Chancellor, Marcus Garvey was not only the Father of Caribbean civil rights, but a believer in freedom for all.

“Coming close to the centenary of the abolition of slavery, the Rt. Excellent Garvey mobilized the Caribbean people towards a vision of democracy and freedom. He is indeed a Caribbean hero. He is a Caribbean regional hero. And, in my judgement, should be so recognized in every nation-state, in every community in this Caribbean as a regional hero,” he stated.

For his commitment to humanity, said Professor Beckles, Garvey was persecuted and prosecuted, ultimately being convicted on the basis of evidence that has been proven to have been fabricated. He expressed that the University of the West Indies is honored to be able to join forces with the Marcus

Garvey Institute to call upon the U.S. government “to exonerate our Garvey for the injustices meted out to him.”

The Hon. P. J. Patterson, who is a former prime minister of Jamaica, director of the P. J. Patterson Centre for Africa-Caribbean Advocacy, and Statesman in Residence at the UWI, echoed Professor Beckles' sentiments in addition to referencing some of the many instances of injustice and brutality that Black Americans have suffered at the hands of white supremacists, including the Tulsa race massacre and the lynching of countless African Americans—all moments that Garvey openly denounced and condemned.

“As his denunciation of these evils intensified, as he raised funds to assist the victims of racial violence, as he started to publish the weekly *Negro World* newspaper, and dared to launch the African Community's League to become a business arm of the UNIA, the white supremacists came to realize that his message and power of mobilization were repugnant to their evil designs. Garvey came to be known as ‘the Black Moses’,” stated the former Jamaican prime minister.

One of those who saw Garvey—who would go on to be described by Martin Luther King Jr. as the first man of color in U.S. history to lead a mass movement—as a threat was the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover reportedly sought to “deport Garvey as an undesirable alien.” He, along with the FBI, would eventually accomplish that goal in 1923 after Garvey, charged with fraud on the basis of one empty envelope, was made to face an all-white male jury along with a hostile judge and a hostile federal prosecutor. This ultimately led to three years of imprisonment and Garvey's subsequent deportation in 1927.

Dr. Julius Garvey along with the UWI has issued a call to all young persons to make a stand by signing and sharing the Justice4Garvey petition.

“Now I'm asking you, young people ... to participate and to strike a blow for freedom. You know, Marcus Garvey is our first national hero, but all of our national heroes have fought for freedom—freedom from slavery, freedom from colonialism ...,” he stated.

To learn more about the global campaign to exonerate the Rt. Excellent, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, please visit the petition at [www.justice4garvey.org](http://www.justice4garvey.org).



## Future Football Club U-10 & U-13 Little League Football Tournament 2022

BELIZE CITY, Sat. Feb. 19, 2022

The Future Football Club will be hosting its third Football Under 10 and Under 13 Little League Football Tournament. The tournament will kick off on Saturday, March 5, at the I.T.V.E.T. Football Field in Belize City commencing at 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. A team trophy will be awarded to each of the first, second and third place teams; and individual medals to the players of the first, second, and

third place teams. Individual awards will be given to (2) Best Goalkeeper (2) Most Goals (2) Best Defense (2) Best Midfielder (2) Best Forward and (2) Most Valuable Player.

Please feel free to contact Tournament Coordinator Mr. Edon “Yellowman” Rowley at +501 635-4484 or at email: [edon.rowley@yahoo.com](mailto:edon.rowley@yahoo.com)

- press release -



# Redistricting task force established

Continued from Page 1

brought by the Belize Peace Movement (BPM) to address the disproportionate number of voters across various constituencies was set to go to the Supreme Court on February 24, despite the government's motion to strike out the proceedings on the grounds that it had already begun preparing for the exercise. The Commission's press release, however, has indicated that the government has already provided funding for the exercise, and as a result, a task force has been appointed to set the groundwork. That task force had its inaugural meeting today, February 21, ahead of the upcoming court date. In response to this revelation, the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB) issued its own press release, expressing support for the BPM in its efforts to take the matter to court and urging the Government of Belize (GoB) to comply and thus to "implement the fair representation

principles of the Belize Constitution." "The principle of fair representation has been eroding since 1984 and now, this issue is front and centre of our democracy, and the GoB has an obligation to address this issue. The NTUCB requests that the GoB take action to implement this policy and changes that are needed for the proper representation for all Belizeans. This issue has been ongoing for some time now, and it seems that the GoB is not interested in addressing this major problem of the erosion of our democracy. The NTUCB calls on the GoB to address this issue now and to support the efforts of the BPM in finding an amicable solution to this issue," said the NTUCB release.

The Elections and Boundaries Commission has also listed the names of the members of its five-person task force: Paula Hender, Crown Counsel, Attorney General's Ministry; Shirley Humes, Principal Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining; Alfred Cal, Senior Lands

Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining; and Martin Aldana, Statistical Analyst, private sector; along with Josephine Tamai, Chief Elections Officer, Elections and Boundaries Department, who will be acting as chairperson.

"Upon receipt of recommendations from the task force, the Commission, in accordance with Section 90 of the

Belize Constitution, will make proposals to the National Assembly for boundary redistricting," stated the release. According to the Commission, the re-districting exercise has been given high priority and is expected to conclude in 2023. The press release made no mention of the upcoming court date. We will further cover these new developments in Friday's issue.

## Four Maya villages sign inter-boundary agreements

Continued from Page 1

Leaders Alliance (MLA).

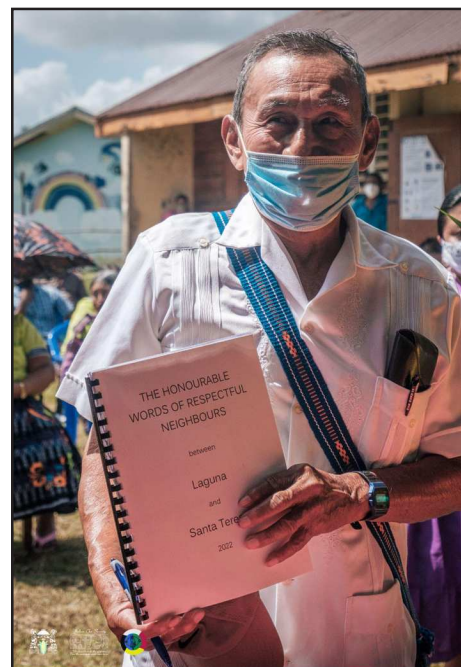
"The signing of boundary agreements is the culmination of a step in the Delimitation: Principles and Methodology (DPM) agreed between the Government of Belize and the Toledo Alcaldes Association and the Maya Leaders Alliance to auto-delimit, demarcate, and title the lands of the Maya villages of southern Belize. The identification and titling of Maya village lands is one of the orders of the CCJ Order and the Judgment," the TAA/MLA informed *Amandala*.

The auto-delimitation process is led by the Maya villages, each appointing a community field guide with ancestral knowledge of the ways in which the land has been traditionally used by each village.

"The community field guides have ancestral knowledge of the use and enjoyment of their village lands. Once the village lands have been sketched, meetings with the neighboring villages are established to harmonize the boundary with the neighboring villages. Where disputes exist with neighboring villages, these are harmonized between the disputing villages. If it cannot be resolved, the disputing villages invite the Toledo Alcaldes Association's boundary harmonization council to assist to mediate and harmonize the dispute. The council uses Mayas' traditional forms of mediation to harmonize the boundaries," the document states.

The TAA and MLA have indicated that the community field mappers which were nominated by the Maya villages possess years of continuous training from the University of Colorado's Geography Department.

The twenty-two (22) Maya communities engaged in the auto-



**Mr. Cayetano Ico, an elder of Laguna village, who witnessed *The Honourable Words of Respectful Neighbours* on behalf of his village**

delimitation of their village land are currently at step 3, identifying community guides, and 4, harmonizing with neighboring villages. At this time, 10 villages have signed inter-village boundary agreements that now need verification from the Government of Belize.

It goes without saying that to commence the auto-delimitation, each village must consent. All twenty-two (22) villages consented with a supermajority. The MLA and TAA have said that with the submission of the government's "Map for the Implementation of the CCJ order" that was sent to the Caribbean Court of Justice with the proposed FPIC, "The Government of Belize, via the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, seeks to undo the DPM that is currently being used by the twenty-two (22) villages."

## GoB meets with media on new defamation law

Continued from Page 1

defenses in the tort of defamation. The meeting with the media follows an outcry voiced by a number of media houses who had expressed objection to what had appeared at the time to be an "under the table" approach by this administration to the drafting of this new defamation law – which largely affects their work – without any consultation with those entities. A major concern is that this new law could be used as an upgraded muzzle that restricts the free flow of information, since traditionally public figures and high-profile persons have used the threat of defamation lawsuits to intimidate and at times even quiet established media houses.

The meeting today was geared at getting feedback on the draft legislation that has been released by the Government, and according to Minister Julius Espat, the bill will go back to the Attorney General's ministry for additional tweaking, and they will await individual comments from the respective media houses by March 15.

"By the 15th of March, that information will be taken into account, and then we will send back the revised or proposed revised bill so that you can review it again. I think that is healthy for our democracy," Espat commented. While defamation law has traditionally been a remedy to protect the reputation of persons, Minister Francis Fonseca, Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, has indicated that this new law seeks to strengthen the freedom of the press.

"I really want to make the point, this bill is really to strengthen freedom of the press, strengthen the rule of law, and the media is a fundamental part, component, of the rule of law in our country, and I think the bill goes a long way in achieving that objective. Obviously, as the Chairman just said, the purpose of these committee meetings is to get feedback on the bill to get your substantive comments on them. We will await those comments in writing. Once we receive those, obviously those will be taken into due consideration, those will be shared with the AG ministry and then taken back to Cabinet for further discussion, and so we want the bill to work for you. We want the bill to work for Belize; we want, as we said, a strong press that is protected," Fonseca said.

Fonseca stated that while the provisions in this updated act will further protect the media, enshrining freedom of the press within our Constitution is a goal that will likely be met with support.

"In terms of the constitutional amendment, again that is something that you know the government is embarking on a constitutional reform commission, and certainly I believe that will be one of the recommendations put forward. I've heard it from others as well, so I think that it's something that will certainly meet with support from many different parties,"

said Fonseca.

As mentioned, the defamation law has traditionally been used by various high-profile individuals and organizations to restrain media houses from reporting factually on newsworthy occurrences and issues. A number of highly placed individuals in Belizean society have traditionally thrown their weight behind defamation lawsuits to intimidate media houses into submission. Fonseca said that this consultation stage with the media houses is an opportunity to address those ever-present concerns, but in his view, the bill will provide more protection to media houses.

"We are going through the process. It's not too late for that type of input. We had a good meeting today. You provided very good, I think you know, comments on the bill. Those will be taken fully into account, but in my view, my respectful view, the bill seeks to provide greater protection to the media," remarked Fonseca.

He added, "In the past, under the common law, what we had sort of in a sense, greater leverage being given to the reputation of individuals, greater preference in a sense to the reputation of individuals at the expense of freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and this bill seeks to correct that."

The Attorney General, Hon. Magali Marin Young, in a media appearance stated that the bill is largely geared toward reining in rogue media platforms who use social media as their mode of dissemination.

"What the bill does provide for is it brings under the law unestablished media, so where you have Facebook pages or social media pages that are holding themselves out to be media houses or operating as media outlets, they are, of course, held accountable," Fonseca said.





# VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Belize Water Services Limited invites applicants to fill the vacant post of **Customer Service Manager** in the Customer Service Department.

## SUMMARY:

Manages, plans, organizes, integrates and evaluates the service activities and operations of assigned branch; ensures that at the branch level customer expectations are being met and exceeded by team, and performs related duties as assigned. Implement policies and procedures and the company mission, vision and core values is carried out effectively.

## DEPARTMENT DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Administer a comprehensive complaint policy and procedures system guided by the Codes of Practice and Water Industry Act.
- Improve our efficiency - Reduce customer waiting time wherever possible and manage all customers' queries and complaints professionally.
- Build and maintain an excellent Customer experience whilst focusing on the company's mission, vision, and core values.
- Improve our customer base – whilst ensuring continuous reduction in the company's Account Receivable and at the same time retain and increase our customer base
- Empower our workforce – Provides coaching, guidance, and feedback that works to develop and retain a highly competent, team of customer-service oriented staff through selection, training and day-to-day management practices which support the Company's mission, vision and values
- Address and solve complaints and queries received in a way that is a win-win for both the customer and the company and provide the necessary follow-up to customers.
- Quality assurance through monitoring of policies and procedures and providing feedback to staff members.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** - The incumbent may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.

- Plans, manages, controls, evaluates and administrative assistance to the Customer Service area at the branch offices countrywide.
- Assist the manager with the day-to-day management and reporting.
- Recommend and assist in the implementation of goals and objectives; establish schedules and methods for customer service; implement policies and procedures.
- Evaluate operations and activities of assigned responsibilities; recommend improvements and modifications; prepare various reports on operations and activities.
- Coordinate, analyze and implement strategies to ensure that all key accounts countrywide are properly monitored.
- Review and analyze meter reading, field service, and collections activities in relation to billing reports to assess unit production at the district level.
- Make adjustments as necessary with regard to billing problems; and communicate directly with customers to resolve difficult or complex service/billing issues for the district offices.
- Participate in the selection of staff; provide or coordinate staff training; work with employees to correct deficiencies; implement discipline procedures.
- Answer questions and provide information to the public; investigate complaints and recommend corrective action as necessary to resolve complaints.
- Conduct monthly district visit to branch offices to ensure that they are adhering to policies and processes.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers and the public using the principles of good customer service.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates will need to show evidence of the following:

- written and spoken communication skills that allow you to inform, help and advice customers, and liaise with other professionals;
- listening skills, to understand exactly what customers require; problem-solving skills;
- confidence, patience, politeness, tact and diplomacy, when dealing with difficult situations;

- motivational skills and an ability to supervise and lead a team of customer service assistants;
- creative thinking, to be able to come up with new ideas to improve customer service standards;
- an ability to work well under pressure;
- organizational and planning skills to develop customer services policies;
- good personal presentation, especially when working with customers face to face

## COMPETENCIES TO BE EVALUATED ON:

1. Technical and Functional Skills
2. Understanding of the Business
3. Ability to achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

## EXPECTATIONS:

- Prepare, maintain, and submit monthly reports on operational and personnel matters.
- Maintain a schedule of month end reports outlining the date received and errors identified on the reports.
- Make recommendations to management concerning staff matters and improvement to procedures and policies.
- Communicates with other departments and management to resolve problems and expedite work.
- Train and instruct staff members, assist with hiring of staff members and make recommendation to discharge staff members whenever necessary.
- Required to have an excellent knowledge of the company's mission, vision, core values, Codes of Practice and the Water Industry Act and possess the ability to communicate such to employees and customers verbally and in writing whenever necessary.
- Ensures that adjustments are prepared for (over-estimated customers, wrong reading, high bill or others).
- Ensures that jobs in JTS are closed one day after work in completed in the field and all jobs are moved from created to pending status and pass to Operations Department.
- Keep record of the time refund of security deposit request is received from the district to process the payment.
- Ensure that DISN and Inactive meters are dealt with monthly.
- Ensure that all accounts are billed timely and efficiently conduct random (25%) check of all cycles to identify inconsistencies.

## EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in Accounting or Business Management with at least 5 years' experience or Bachelor's degree with at least 10 years' experience in customer service activities or accounting duties and managerial responsibilities will be an asset.

Interested persons can send your application letter with your detailed resume **March 4, 2022** to:

**Human Resources Manager**  
**Belize Water Services Limited,**  
 P.O. Box 150, Central American Boulevard, Belize City, Belize  
 Email : [hr@bws.com.bz](mailto:hr@bws.com.bz)

**BWS: Delivering water and more...**