

Belize's leading newspaper

Belmopan man shot dead at home; son detained

by Charles Gladden

BELMOPAN, Mon. May 23, 2022

Belmopan resident, German Castellanos, 31, was in police custody over the weekend for the alleged killing of his father, 79-year-old Daniel Orlando Castellanos, which took place on Friday night, May 20, at 4 Garza Street in Belmopan, Cayo District.

It has been reported that earlier that night, prior to the deadly incident, German and his girlfriend had a domestic dispute, which caused both of them to leave the home. Moments later, German



Daniel Orlando Castellanos, deceased

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Koffee, Ernestine, & more to perform at Belize Int'l Music and Food Festival



(L-R) Koffee; Ernestine Carballo

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

May 23 was the date of the official media launch of the first-ever Belize International Music & Food Festival

(BIMFF), which some have already been hailing as a mega event and the biggest concert to ever take place in the country. The two-day festival is set

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Corozal man and cousin chopped by house guest

by Khaila Gentle

COROZAL TOWN, Mon. May 23, 2022

A man is dead and his female cousin critically injured following a chopping incident that took place in Concepcion Village, Corozal District this past weekend.

According to reports, 47-year old Juan Arturo Mendez, 34-year-old Wendy Mendez and one Jermaine Zuniga were all socializing on the afternoon of Sunday, May 22.



Location where chopping incident occurred

According to police, the assailant, Zuniga, was a friend of Juan Arturo Mendez who had been given lodging at

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CCJ orders release of Hillaire Sears

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) handed down a decision last Friday quashing the decision of the upper courts in Belize which upheld the revocation of parole and subsequent incarceration of Hillaire Sears at the Belize Central Prison. He was first charged for murder in

March 2001 and sentenced for manslaughter in December 2002, the following year. In December 2012, after serving 10 years he was granted parole and continued to work at the prison, managed by the Kolbe Foundation, up until April 2014,

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Robbers posing as police invade Hope Creek home

The four men reportedly got away with a crocus bag with cash from 57-year-old Esther Crispia.

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

Police are searching for persons they believe could provide information about a recent aggravated burglary that was carried out in Hope Creek, Stann Creek District, by four masked men dressed in military apparel who reportedly claimed to be police officers. Esther Crispia, a naturalized Belizean, said that three of the men, who were pretending to be police, entered her house on Thursday night, with the claim that they were searching for firearms and illegal drugs.

The three men seemed to have

known what they were looking for, since, according to Crispia, one of them went behind her bed and retrieved a cardboard box in which Crispia was storing a white and red crocus sack that contained approximately \$130,000, according to reports. The men told her that the money would be confiscated, since they believed that it was the proceeds from drug sales. They then headed to the door, before reportedly giving her back a cell phone that they confiscated at the start of the search.

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Nago Bank Road to be upgraded

Three miles of the Nago Bank Road will be getting an upgrade at an estimated cost of 1.75 million BZD.



Nago Bank Road ground-breaking

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

A three-mile stretch of the Nago Bank Road, located in the Belize District, will be getting an upgrade that is expected to cost 1.75 million BZD, courtesy of the Government of Belize.

On Thursday, May 19, the Nago Bank Road Enhancement Project was set into motion after the signing of a contract between the Government of Belize and Teichroeb & Sons Limited for the spending of \$1,734,102.34 BZD on the upgrade of the road. The enhancement project will cover the villages of Maskall and Bomba, which serve as the “vegetable basket” for the Belize District.

The Nago Bank Road Enhancement Project falls under the umbrella of the Resilient Rural Belize (RRB) Programme, a six-year program with the objective to minimize the impacts of climatic and economic events on micro, small and medium-sized farms and households.

Funds totaling 40 million BZD are being channeled into the RRB Programme during the six-year span, in agreement with the Government of Belize, through financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and participating beneficiaries.

Under the RRB Programme, similar projects will be implemented within 30 farming communities throughout Belize.

ASP Yearwood on Denise Pitts' police brutality claims



ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, Communications Director for the Belize Police Department

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

In the Friday issue of this paper, one article recounted the purported experience of Denise Pitts, a mother of four residing in Ladyville, who claims that a police officer on duty slammed her onto the ground and broke her collarbone.

The incident transpired almost three weeks ago when Pitts was socializing at MJ's Nightclub and a fight erupted outside of the establishment. When she went outside the club and was trying to return inside, the police

officer who responded to the call denied her entrance to the establishment and picked her up, and slammed her onto the floor.

Communications Director for the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, was asked by the local media about Pitts' claims and remarked that he was disappointed by the actions of the police officer who refused to take Pitts' statement.

“I saw an interview, I think on social media, and I am very disappointed in whichever officer gave her bad advice when she visited that station. Whenever you visit any police station to make a report or complaint against the police, we usually ask you to visit Professional Standards Branch. That officer was being mischievous for turning away that lady from the station, not recording a statement from her, or not advising her to come to PSB,” said ASP Yearwood.

“... I will have officers from PSB try to locate Miss Pitts in the course of today and record a statement from her. It is unfortunate, that this transpired so long ago, and she was not given the right advice,” continued ASP Yearwood.

Opposition Senator questions US \$25M climate mitigation loan

by Khaila Gentle

BELMOPAN, Sun. May 22, 2022

At this past Friday's meeting of the Senate, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development – Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project Loan Motion was one of the few issues up for debate. Through the motion, which was presented by the Leader of Government Business, Senator Eamon Courtenay, the Government of Belize seeks to borrow a total of US \$25 million dollars to help local farmers in implementing climate resilient and sustainable agriculture practices.

While several senators, including NGO senator Janelle Chanona, rose to support the motion, UDP senator Michael Peyrefitte raised several questions regarding the lack of clarity about how the funds would be used. The Opposition senator said that he would not argue against assistance to farmers but questioned how exactly the financial assistance expected to be provided through the loan would be spent and distributed.

“Funding for support to agricultural producers with an emphasis on individual smallholder farmers who are transitioning to more commercial production. What are you talking about? Funding how? What's the criteria for this funding? How do you determine who gets the funding? Who decides who gets the funding? Is there a panel? Is there a board? Is it decided by the Ministry of Finance? None of those details we don't know,” stated Senator Peyrefitte, who also expressed his belief that farmers will get nothing



Opposition Senator Michael Peyrefitte

out of the loan.

According to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the aim of the Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project is to increase agricultural productivity and the adoption of climate-smart agricultural approaches as well as to enable an effective response by beneficiaries to crises or emergency events.

While the loan motion reached the Upper House on Friday, the US \$25 million financing has been approved by the World Bank since early March of this year.

“The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved financing of US\$25 million for the Belize Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project, which will aim to increase food production capacity and the adoption of climate-smart agricultural approaches among project beneficiaries,” wrote the World Bank.

It also added that the project is supposed to provide over 7,000 farmers with weather data and technical information to help improve yields for crops and livestock and facilitate better planning as well as provide over 3,700 small farmers with grants.

No arrest for poisoning of San Vicente water

Police have yet to arrest and charge the person who may have poured Malathion into San Vicente's water supply.

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

The water system in San Vicente Village, Toledo District, was contaminated with an insecticide known as Malathion a little over a week ago, which resulted in the hospitalization of six residents of the village who experienced stomach pains after drinking the water.

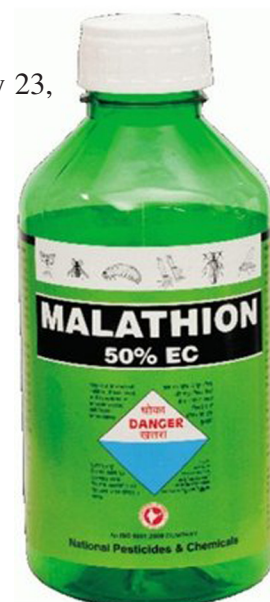
Malathion is a man-made organophosphate insecticide that is commonly used to get rid of mosquitoes and a variety of insects that attack fruits,

vegetables, landscaping plants, and shrubs.

Previously, the police had confirmed that one person was detained for the heinous act; however, that person was later released.

Currently, police have yet to arrest and charge the person possible for poisoning the water supply of over 400 villagers.

“I know that no one has been arrested and charged for that. Investigators are still doing their best to find the orchestrator of that crime. Poisoning a water system is like a public terror! You can cause harm to more than one person and in these villages, we know that they rely on the water for everything, so we are not letting up with this investigation,” stated ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, Communications Director for the Belize Police Department.



Malathion insecticide

Several police officers injured in traffic accident

by Charles Gladden

STANN CREEK DISTRICT, Mon. May 23, 2022

A number of police officers were injured, and one police officer lost his life, in a series of traffic accidents that took place over the last few days in various parts of the country.

The death of police constable Kevin Ack, 21, who died on Thursday night on the Southern Highway between Miles 35 and 36 while driving a motorcycle to Independence village in Stann Creek, where he was posted, is covered elsewhere in this issue of the AMANDALA.

Another traffic accident took place at around 12:15 a.m. on Sunday, May 22, when Jose Carabantes, attached to Maya Beach Police, was returning to his post after conducting patrols on a police-issued motorcycle. Another motorcycle, driven by 22-year-old Damian Avilez, was in front of him at the time, and Avilez is claiming that he had signaled that he was turning into Maya Resort, but as he was attempting to make that turn, Carabantes tried to overtake him to the left and the two motorcycles collided.

Carabantes was transported to the Independence Polyclinic and later rushed to the Southern Regional Hospital, where he was listed as being in a critical condition. A CT Scan was performed on him, and police are awaiting the results. It has been reported that Carabantes has since regained consciousness and is communicating with investigating police officers.

The third accident took place sometime around 6:00 p.m. on Sunday in the vicinity of Benque Viejo Town, Cayo District, where Police Constable Douglas Card and 10 other police officers from Precinct Two Eastern Division in Belize City were injured after their van overturned.

According to initial police reports, the group had traveled to Pontoon Falls on a recreational trip, but when they



Oscar Usher

arrived near the junction of the Arenal Road, Card, who was driving the van, felt the vehicle leaning and tried to restore it to a level position. However, during that attempt he lost control of the vehicle, which fell onto its left side.

Five police officers were injured as a result: Louise Longworth, Shanice Bevans, Tiffara Grant, Denique Banks, and Oscar Usher.

Four of the injured officers were treated and released, but Usher, who is reportedly suffering from breathing complications, remains at the San Ignacio Community Hospital.

The remaining officers, including Card, didn't receive any injuries.

Card told police that the van suffered mechanical failures, which caused the accident. The Police Department's communications director, ASP Yearwood, told reporters, however, that an inspection will be done on the vehicle to determine whether Card's statement was true.

"He is claiming that he experienced mechanical problems and he said they managed to flip back the van, and the van was taken to Benque Police Station, where we are expecting a full inspection to be done today on that vehicle to see if indeed he suffered mechanical errors," said ASP Yearwood.

Police have gathered urine samples from Card as part of their investigation.

Mayor Wagner inspects Barbados' buses



Mayor Wagner inspects Barbados' buses

by Khaila Gentle

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, Sun. May 22, 2022

On Friday, May 20, Belize City mayor Bernard Wagner took part in a city tour of Bridgetown, Barbados, as a passenger in one of its new electric buses and also inspected the latest additions to the country's fleet of public transportation vehicles. Joined by Jose Urbina, CEO of the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, and E-Governance, and Ryan Cobb, Energy Director in the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, and E-Governance, Mayor Wagner was hosted by the Barbados Transport Boards' John Springer and Gena Boyce, who gave some insight on the country's experience with the buses so far as well as Barbados' plans for the expansion of its new electric bus initiative.

According to a statement made by the Belize City Council, Mayor Wagner and his team made several positive observations during the city tour, including the quietness of the buses, the

absence of toxic emissions, the adherence of the buses to their schedules, and the overall satisfaction of citizens.

Much like Barbados, the Belize City Council will soon obtain its own fleet of electric buses as part of the Council's Electric Bus Pilot Project. The Council has said that the buses being utilized on the Caribbean island nation are similar to those that will be introduced to Belize, with features such as fire suppression systems, dual 40kv chargers, air suspension to aid wheelchair accessibility, bumper sensors and more.

The pilot project is an effort to provide citizens with a reliable e-transit system while reducing air pollution and carbon emissions and is being implemented by the United Nations Development Project with funding from the European Union.

The city tour and bus inspection came as part of the Mayor's official visit to Barbados, during which he also attended and spoke at the Caribbean Local Government Conference.

Senators comment on Nora Parham pardon



(L-R) Senator Elena Smith and Senator Beverly Williams

by Khaila Gentle

BELMOPAN, Mon. May 23, 2022

In last week's issue of the AMANDALA we reported on the successful passing of the motion to instruct the Belize Advisory Council to advise Her Excellency the

Governor-General to exercise the Prerogative of Mercy on behalf of Nora Parham, which would result in the issuance of a pardon that would remove culpability from her for a crime she reportedly did not commit. And on Friday, May 20, the Members of the Senate unanimously

supported that motion.

Parham was a 36-year-old mother of eight who was wrongly accused and charged for the death of her abusive partner, Ketchell Trapp. And she would soon after—following her conviction—become the only woman in Belizean history to be executed by the state.

Upon the granting of the Prerogative of Mercy, Nora Parham's death sentence, which led to her being hanged on June 5, 1963, will be revoked.

Senator Elena Smith and Senator Beverly Williams were among those who rose to support the motion, both sharing that Parham was their relative.

"Nora Parham was my cousin. I very vaguely remember her. She was an abused woman. Many times, she showed up at my home, as my mother recalls very often to us, bruised and battered. This egregious miscarriage of justice has

caused an indelible stain that is forever etched in the annals of our Belizean history," said Senator Williams.

Like Nora's children, Williams maintained that the 36-year-old mother was innocent. Senator Elena Smith expressed similar sentiments—stating that Nora Parham was not given a fair chance at her trial, nor was she listened to.

"We will not forget that the system failed Nora Parham. The persons who were supposed to be her help, the persons who were supposed to understand her situation unfortunately didn't. And as we look around, Madame President, and we hear of all other cases of domestic violence—we recently heard the case of the mother and her daughter who were murdered—we realize that the system that failed Nora Parham back then is the same system that is failing these women now," said Senator Smith.

CCJ orders release of Hillaire Sears

“We don’t want to look at what appears, we want to see what was done, and what was done according to the affidavits is that the prison authorities have a parolee, who happened to be working at the prison at the time when they suspect he had engaged in a violation of his parole and they simply took him and put him in a cell...”, Justice Adrian Saunders stated during last week’s proceedings.

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when he was detained and thrown in a cell following the Parole Board’s suspicion that he had violated one of the conditions of his parole (the use of cannabis).

He was detained for 55 days without an opportunity to plead his case to the Parole Board at the Belize Central Prison or magistrate, as is required under the regulations, and on May 28, the board informed him that a test of his urine sample confirmed the presence of cannabis and that his parole was revoked. Sears took his case to the Supreme Court, which dismissed the action on the grounds that it was to be brought as a judicial review application, and not a breach of constitutional rights claim.

The Court of Appeal upheld the decision of the Supreme Court, agreeing that the matter was brought via a wrong procedure, but the CCJ today set aside the judgment of its junior courts and issued a declaration that the nature of Sears’ re-incarceration was a breach of Section 5 of the Belize Constitution.

“The CCJ quashed the Parole Board’s order which revoked Mr. Sears’ parole and ordered that he be released from prison forthwith,” a release from the CCJ stated.

The state argued that clear proof of his parole violation, results of the urine test which confirmed the use of marijuana, “legally empowered” the Parole Board under the Prison Rules to revoke Sears’ parole. And while the Supreme Court dismissed the mandatory requirement that an oral hearing be granted to a parolee before the revocation of parole, Assistant Solicitor General, Samantha Matute-Tucker admitted that Sears should have had some sort of opportunity to plead his case but contended that it should have been by way of judicial review.

“I cannot shy away from that position that there ought to have been in this case, an opportunity for the appellant to at least explain why it is that the matter transpired



that way that it did; however, in light of that submission considering the nature of the claim, when you look at the substance of the claim and what it is that the appellant is seeking, that is to be released forthwith and to have the decision of the parole board quashed, then we say it would have proper to have been brought by way of judicial review proceeding,” Matute-Tucker said.

But the CCJ focused on the fundamental breach of Sears’ right to personal liberty and equal protection

under the law and determined that, according to the regulations, Sears should have been taken before a court before any decision was handed down against him, in essence, that the state had no legislative authority to re-incarcerate him.

Sears was represented by attorneys Leslie Mendez and Hector Guerra. He was not granted the damages he sought in the matter but was awarded the cost for the appeal before the CCJ and has likely already been released from the prison.

Belmopan man shot at home; son detained

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Castellanos returned home, but by that time his father had locked the door. German then began banging on the door, and it appears that at that point his father went to the door but refused to allow him to enter. Instead, the elderly man told his son to stop making so much noise, as he was going to sleep.

At that point, it is alleged that the enraged son took out a firearm and shot his father several times, then left the house.

At about 12:23 a.m., police found Daniel Castellanos lying face-down in a pool of blood in the living room of the house.

Initial reports from police had pointed to German Castellanos as the assailant who caused his father’s death, but subsequent statements from the police, including recent remarks by the Communications Director of the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, seem to be indicating some hesitation on the police’s part to definitively identify German Castellanos as the triggerman. The department has retracted its initial report in which it pinpointed German Castellanos as the shooter, in light of the fact that a total of 10 persons occupied the home.

“There are about 10 residents in that home, and working with their statements and after seeking the advice from the DPP office, our investigators were instructed to do an in-depth investigation before levying any charges. We want to be absolutely certain that we have the

person that is responsible without a doubt so as to do not do any injustice to Mr. Castellanos’s family. So our investigators are at this time recording other statements and hopefully, we could say accurately who is responsible for this crime,” said ASP Yearwood.

“... in not so many words, we are saying when the police believe that they have absolutely no doubt, then is where you usually charge someone, that you believe is the orchestrator of that crime. And at this time, we are sniffing out other probabilities, so that we could get to an accurate account, and then we would be seeking the advice of the DPP office as to which direction we should go,” ASP Yearwood further said.

ASP Yearwood indicated to local reporters that German Castellanos had been in police custody and was to be released sometime on Monday, May 23.

“I know sometime this morning he will be released, and if we need to re-detain him then that will be done. But at this point, we are not going to charge him, so he will be released from police custody,” said Yearwood.

One of the sons of the victim shared today that the family is reluctant to believe that his brother is the person who pulled the trigger, killing their father. He shared that they got some information along those lines last night, but today received information that it may have been someone else so the family is confused. He maintains that he never saw his brother at the time of or following the shooting.

Corozal man and cousin chopped by house guest

Continued from **Page 1**

the Concepcion village residence. Zuniga and Juan Arturo got into an argument, however, after Zuniga was asked to leave the residence but refused. That was when Zuniga attacked both cousins with a machete.

Upon arrival at the scene at around 1:00 p.m., police found Wendy Mendez lying unconscious on a bed with

apparent chop wounds to her face, while Juan Arturo Mendez lay dead on the floor with wounds to the neck, chest, shoulders, stomach and hands.

Wendy Mendez was transported to the Corozal Community Hospital, where she remains in critical condition.

While Zuniga had fled the scene of the crime, he has since been detained by police and is expected to be charged soon.

Robbers posing as police invade Hope Creek home

Continued from **Page 1**

She followed them outside, where she reportedly saw another masked man also dressed in camouflage clothing waiting. According to Crispia, the four entered a white Ford F-150 which resembled a police truck. The following day, when Crispia made a report to the police, the department quickly sounded the alarm on the imposters.

Today, during the weekly police press conference, the Police Department’s communications director, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, reminded the public that officers must present their identification cards before entering a person’s premises.

“Each officer has been issued with an ID like this. They have their name tags that were issued. If the police come to

your house not displaying or showing you their identification card, then you know that they are not police officers. This was recently issued. It is the latest edition of our police ID, signed by Commissioner of Police Chester Williams. It has all your personal information on it, down to the date of enlistment and your date of birth. I don’t know why a police officer would be moving around without their ID...,” ASP Yearwood said.

At this time the department is looking for two persons from the Bullet Tree area in connection with this report. They have been identified as Oscar Flamenco and Rowley Badillo.

According to unconfirmed reports, the cash in Crispia’s house was reportedly the proceeds from the sale of a house in Guatemala and was not declared when it was brought into the country.



“By the might of truth, and the grace of God”

(from the Belize National Anthem)

Monday, May 23, 2022

There is no other place on planet earth, with so much diversity and so little economic/military might, despite having so much “wealth untold,” that still projects so much love and ethnic harmony, as Belize. Perhaps that is why the late visionary, Dr. Leroy Taegar, liked to refer to our little Jewel as The New Jerusalem. Our layman’s instinct would suggest that his reference was intended to hold up the principles and enduring harmony of human relations in our otherwise backward country as a light to the developed and advanced nations of the world who are currently engaged in a dangerous dance with a disturbingly increasing crescendo toward MAD (mutually assured destruction) possibilities. As the rhetoric gets more ominous with each passing week of the continuing Russia-Ukraine catastrophe, would they listen to a small voice of peace in this part of the world? With ancestral links to all sides, and no restrictive commitment to either, it just may be that little Belize has the moral authority to assume a peacemaking role in luring both sides away from the road to planet destruction.

Nuclear Armageddon is not something that is beyond possibility when conflicts are spiraling toward zones of desperation. By pretending the danger is not real, it only increases the odds in favor of human frailty manifesting itself in reckless impulses under duress. Intervention is needed both in reducing hostilities between feuding gangs, as well as in ratcheting down the rhetoric between nations in conflict. As Marvin Gaye once sang, “War is not the answer... We don’t need to escalate.”

Belize may not be a leader of the world in any sphere of human endeavor, neither in the area of science and technology, the arts

and sports, business and industry, or economic and military might. We have a bundle of natural human talent, for sure, but we have not developed that talent to create an impact on the world stage in any sport, partly due to our still primitive development structure and a prevailing colonialist mentality among sports bureaucrats that shies away from engaging our own foreign-trained experts in pushing our athletes to the next level.

Our still small population, and the ready avenue to personal advancement by emigration to the U.S., has consistently hampered the growth and economic development of the entertainment industry, be it music, theater or dance, on the Belize stage. And state sponsorship, with many other pressing financial challenges, has been almost nonexistent; so, with limited opportunities for growth and meaningful earnings, some of our most promising artists, like our most brilliant academic and scientific minds, often join the exodus north to seek greener pastures. And the struggle continues at home in the Jewel, with a disturbing number of

unemployed youth yielding to the temptations of the crime/drug/gang business.

There have been a few bright lights, Belizeans who have made their singular mark, and caused the name of Belize to be registered as one capable of producing at world class levels. The reigning Miss Earth is a Belizean woman from Punta Gorda, the beautiful, intelligent and resourceful Miss Destiny Wagner. Belize’s most outstanding artistic achievement on the world stage has been that by Andy Palacio and the Garifuna Collective over a decade ago, when their critically acclaimed *Watina* album led to Palacio being named “UNESCO Artist for Peace” and winning “the prestigious WOMEX Award in 2007” (Wikipedia).

Even more astounding has been the achievement of Belizean-American inventor Andre Gray, who in 2021 was named by *The Washington Mail* newspaper as their “2021 Person of the Year” after being “the No. 1 ranked inventor in the world for the past 33 consecutive years”

In its December 16, 2021 editorial, *The Washington Mail* said Gray’s “...revolutionary inventions have transformed the world from an analog society to a digital one with far reaching and deeply profound implications that will last for many centuries to come.” It is indeed mind-boggling the tectonic impact that Gray, who attended primary and secondary school in Belize before migrating to the U.S. at age 15 in 1981, has had on the world scene with his many inventions. For example, *The Washington Mail* article said that, “In 1995, Andre Gray invented the electronic press kit, or EPK for short, that was originally intended as an online marketing and branding tool” and that “...Once the blogging and sharing features were added to the EPK, social media was born. So without the invention of the EPK, there would be no Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, YouTube and all other social media platforms which have now grown to become a multi-trillion dollar industry.”

Wow!! And he came from little Belize, the son of late attorney Joseph Gray and his wife, Eleanor. And this brother is not done yet. (See also the *Amandala* story, “The Godfather of internet inventions is a Belizean-American, Andre Gray,” of July 1, 2017, on amandala.bz.com.)

So, world, don’t take this little Jewel too lightly. Yes, we have a high murder rate, but poverty is also way above 50% of our population, and many murders are related to stressed-out individuals under financial pressure, crimes of passion, burglaries gone wrong, or gang-related rivalries over turf in the drug trade. Still, there are no lines drawn due to ethnicity or religion or even politics, as Belizeans generally go about their daily chores with an open mind and willing hearts to lend a helping hand where requested. With all the trials and tribulations, ours is still a good country, still extending the hand of friendship to our neighbors in distress, even embracing migrants from our “enemy” to the west who is still pushing its “unfounded” claim against our territory at the ICJ. And still Belize is offering amnesty to around 40,000 undocumented residents, many from the said Guatemala.

This “milk of human kindness” that still emanates from the Belizean spirit, despite our difficult circumstances, has so impressed our northern neighbor, according to our prime minister, Hon. John Briceño, that Mexican president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) during a recent visit to the Jewel, was moved to waive the 15% import duty on cattle being imported from Belize into Mexico, a gesture most welcomed and appreciated by the Belize government and citizens in the agricultural sector.

Recently also, Belize and Mexico have been co-hosting the multinational military training exercise, Tradewinds 2022, which is being sponsored by the United States Southern Command (U.S. SOUTHCOM). Some “22 countries and just over 1,800 military personnel are participating ... in an effort to both maintain and improve security across the Caribbean region.” (See the story, “Military personnel from 22 countries forge bonds in Belize” on page

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A Healthy Diet

I was watching an episode of Stanley Tucci's series, *Searching for Italy*. It is mostly about the different types of food in all the regions of Italy. It occurred to me that Europeans are much more creative, and inventive, in being able to nourish themselves with healthy, natural food. Not only cheap and easy to cook, but beneficial for everyone. In fact, most of their more tasty dishes were invented through desperation and starvation. Maybe it's because they have limited plots of lands, but everything that grows on those plots are edible—fruits, plants, flowers, everything! Nothing is wasted. If they slaughter a pig or a goat or a cow, and cows are rare in most of these countries, they use every part of the animal, or bird or fowl; nothing is wasted. Same with the fish! In other words, they waste not, want not! In the end, they have a much healthier way of life, with far less chronic diseases, that are so rampant on this side of the planet!

The sociologists and academics in Grenada have figured out why black people, and people of color in general, suffer from such high rates of diabetes, hypertension, heart and kidney diseases! According to them, it all stems from our diets, which were forced upon us by our slave masters, and became indispensable after slavery, and was passed down from generation to generation. They fed us heavy doses of carbohydrates and fats, to give us the energy to produce more for them, at minimal costs. The greasier and saltier the food was, the more we enjoyed it. The slaves didn't have time to grow fat and lazy; they were too busy toiling all day in the fields to let their bodies become overwhelmed with the results of this unhealthy diet. Today, without those constraints against us, we

fill our bellies with garbage, and then take a little siesta, instead of going for a walk, or doing exercises to stay healthy.

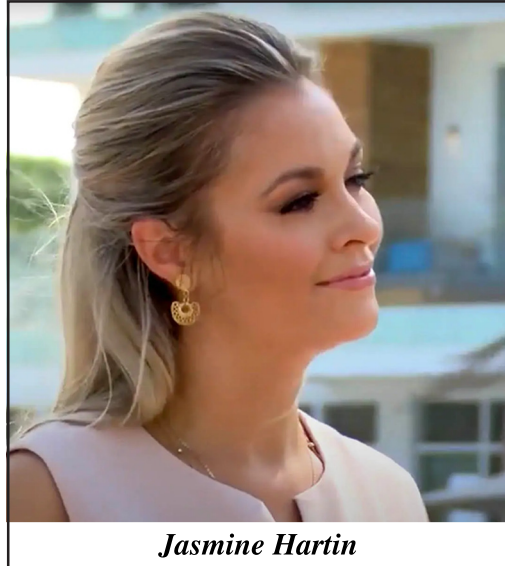
Well, slavery is long gone, and we are responsible for our bodies, our diets, our lifestyles. Some of us have no choice but to eat whatever is in front of us; the poor in most cases, don't have a choice. I don't care whether it's in America, Africa, the Caribbean or in Belize, if you are poor, you are malnourished and probably overweight. In most cases, people aren't aware of the effects of an unhealthy diet; like I said, you eat what you can afford! My dad, and most of his 13 siblings, died of diabetes! Imagine that, a whole family, wiped out by the same disease! I have been blessed, through diet and exercise, to escape that curse, so far!

I don't want to hear anyone say that well, it's hereditary. No, it's not; we can all make choices about what we put in our bodies, our temples. But we need help. Nutrition should not only be taught at every level of our educational system, but should be treated as a national emergency! Our children should be drilled on the subject of healthy eating and exercise! They should learn to respect their bodies, to grow their own food. Have gardens and rooms for physical activities in every school in the nation. That's where the government should tax the rich and those cheats that aren't paying their fair share. This should be done in order to generate funds for these programs. In the long run, it would make such a difference for the health of a promising nation!

But what do I know? I'm a dreamer.

Glen

Jasmine Hartin released without charges



Jasmine Hartin

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

Police were unable to issue any comment on the matter today, but all indications are that Jasmine Hartin is back on Caye Caulker following days of detention at the Queen Street Police Station for questioning in connection with allegations that arrangements had been made with a local "inner-city" gang to have the Commissioner of Police, Chester Williams, and a local magistrate killed. According to her, this allegation was a malicious attempt to defame her

by her former maintenance worker, Lionel Neal, who is claiming he was her lover, and who later admitted that he did not see Hartin order a hit but noted that she did speak of killing some high-profile persons when in an intoxicated state.

She has since filed charges against Neal for an alleged burglary with intent to rape, and he was arraigned last week for those charges and met bail. Neal maintains that they were in a romantic relationship, but Hartin and her lawyer, Richard "Dickie" Bradley, claim Neal is mentally disturbed, and that he is attempting to blackmail and extort Hartin. Neal has been banned from any interaction with Hartin or her family and can only go to Caye Caulker with a police escort.

While there are doubts as to whether or not a hit was ordered in the first place, this recent public episode puts Hartin back in the Belizean public spotlight just ahead of her first appearance in her Supreme Court manslaughter trial for the shooting death of Senior Superintendent of Police, Henry Jemmott that occurred on a pier in San Pedro, Ambergris Cays, in May 2021.

Police constable loses life in Southern Highway RTA

by Charles Gladden

STANN CREEK, Mon. May 23, 2022

PC Kevin Ack, a 21-year-old police constable, lost his life on the Southern Highway on Thursday, May 19, after losing control of his motorcycle between Miles 35 and 36.

According to initial police reports, at around 7:16 that night, PC Ack was making his way from San Juan Village to the Intermediate Southern Formation (ISF) in Independence Village in the Stann Creek District, where he was posted. Between Miles 35 and 36, Ack approached a speed bump and lost control of his motorcycle. When police arrived at the scene, they found him lying 19 feet away from his motorcycle, and he was bleeding from his mouth and ears.

Ack was rushed to the Independence Polyclinic and later transported to the Southern Regional Hospital.

Sometime before midnight, however, he passed away as a result of the head and body injuries he sustained.

According to the Communications Director of the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, some social media users had been suggesting that PC Ack was a victim of a hit and run, but ASP Yearwood



Kevin Ack, deceased

said those rumors were false.

"We initially saw some post on social media that it was suggesting a hit and run, but when I received the formal report, I sent it out clarifying to them that it was not a hit and run. While in fact, he lost control of his motorbike," said Yearwood.

Ack graduated from the Police Academy last December, as a member of intake #95, and was attached to the Independence Police Station. He is originally from San Teresa Village, Toledo District.



"By the might of truth, and the grace of God"
(from the Belize National Anthem)

Continued from Page 5 6 of *Amandala* dated Friday, May 20, 2022.)

We are in "America's backyard," and it is said that when the USA sneezes, Belize catches a cold. It's a small world, and Covid-19 is upon us once again. But little Belize is still a nation, with one people, one flag, one anthem...

There is the upcoming Summit of the Americas being hosted in Los Angeles by U.S. president Joe Biden in June of this year. And there is a call from the Mexican president, as well as from CARICOM, which includes Belize, that the Summit should be all inclusive, and thus Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela should be invited. The situation is in flux, with some countries threatening to boycott, as the U.S. weighs its options in light of the hoped-for success of the Summit.

When Mexico talks, the U.S. usually lends an ear. But not much weight is likely given to words from little Belize and our prime minister in these regional debates, except maybe a quiet gesture to "put us in our place." But when our P.M. Briceño talks about peace, it is something which he knows about, and his advice to the big powerful nations may one day prove more valuable than all the nuclear weapons they have amassed. None is without sin, but when Belize speaks to the leaders of nations who have issues with each other, our P.M. speaks from a high moral ground. And little Belize has been proven capable of producing great things in this global world that keeps getting smaller. "Listen, world leaders! Listen!"

AMANDALA
the newspaper with the greatest circulation in Belize!

Dear church bro/sis, why do you set table for gangsters?

by Colin Hyde

Now we all know we come short of the glory. On this round hole thing, there really are some near perfect fits, and then, and then there are the many, many strugglers, and, ahem, then there are a few bad eggs.

Talking bad eggs, if the “thing” is illegal, there will be gangsters, and these gangsters will become rich for doing what those in the strugglers group will not do, and with their riches the gangsters will corrupt both police and government. It’s not rocket science. It’s history. There are hundreds of books and magazines in which you can read about the tale of Prohibition in America, that time when overzealous churchgoers foolishly tried to deny drinkers their liquid spirits.

The list of things people want to ban is long. Consuming too much sugar is strongly linked with obesity, diabetes, kidney disease, cancer, and many other deadly diseases. Aha, to save his people from deadly diseases caused by excess sugar consumption, the former mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, proposed or passed a law banning the sale of large soft drinks some ten years ago.

The serious political leader, Bloomberg, looked at the physical

stress excess sugar consumption was causing his people, and the giant hospital bills brought on by the debilitating diseases — bills his city had to pay, and he moved to take away the big ones. Well, the US soft drink makers went to court, and the New York courts said Bloomberg had no right to take away Big Coke.

On the health scale, weed is junior league compared to excess sugar. I haven’t heard of the Rastafarians becoming a burden on our health system because of smoking too much pot. Faiya, you heard this nonsense about weed making people want to work less? Please, not everyone fits into the dog-eat-dog system. Some are content to live “environmentally.”

I don’t know if the gangsters in New York would have stepped in to supply Big Coke if the courts had upheld the Bloomberg ban. Really, the simple math is that two or so small cokes make a big one. Talking about what we know, we know that if there was a ban of the poisonous soft drinks altogether, the soda makers would scream to their politicians, and the soda drinkers would look to gangsters for their sugar fix. And we know how that tale would have ended. It’s in the lesson of Prohibition.

I almost got to the important

Positives in the new trade bill

The architects of the new trade bill, a proposal to replace an old structure, should be identified and lauded, and the UDP brain trust that spat on it (2014) should be examined with a mind reader named “what the hell were you thinking.” Yes, we have to look at the fees, and tune some other keys, but look at all the great things this bill is bringing/will bring.

I didn’t get a chance to read the UDP release on the bill, nor did I hear their press conference, but I got this bit from *Breaking News*, from the pen of Aaron “I made Dohgi Singh throw in the towel at SSB” Humes. Brother Aaron said Orson called the GoB “tax suckers”, and that Hugo Patt said the inventors of the bill were only about coming up with something to help “town councils collect more revenue”, never about “increasing or adding any tax to the people of Belize”, and Pere said, “it flies in the face of the government’s insistence on trying to grow the economy.” It’s lack of aptitude that made the UDP flat out waste our Petro Caribe and our BNE taxes. My, my, they saw a good thing and didn’t know it.

Ms. Khaila Gentle, in the *Amandala*, reported the UDP saying in their press release that when they saw the bill back in their time – thank gudnis their time is over – it was “vehemently rejected”, and that at their press conference UDP leader Shyne wondered about the thought processes of our new leaders, for their introducing the bill in tough times, and that “entertainers are underpaid as it is...have not been properly invested in, historically...”

Sticking to entertainers, really, really, the caring UDP, they had 13 years, in 10 of those years this brother was Music Ambassador, and what did our entertainers and the industry get? Following the former GG’s lead, did he ensure that bugles and drums were in all the schools? Was a program to train music teachers set up? Were tidy funds guided to Alcoser, Flores, Mes, Nabor, Palacio, Peters, Rhaburn, Wright and/or their families?

Oh brother, the overeager and greedy elements of PUP 1998-2008 let us down. But the Good Lord was still with us. In the greatest largesse He directed blessings from our friends in Venezuela, and a bonanza in taxes from the gushers in Spanish Lookout, all into the coffers of the new red regime, for them to make the people of Belize win. The UDP was as miserable in creating opportunities for our people as our national football team is at defending

our dignity at the regional tournaments. I really have to stop regurgitating these miserable stories. Sometimes the past is best left alone.

The UDP needs to be quiet on a lot of things. But the BCCI has rights to its voice. Red, blue, any hue, they have to keep chugging, because they don’t get their pay from the GoB fund. Ms. Gentle reported BCCI president Mr. Blake sharing that they have a problem with the financial structure, are sympathetic with the need of municipalities to be funded so they can carry out their duties, are pleased with the direction the GoB is going, and wished they had been given more time to study the bill. Hmm, the BCCI agreed with the reds, “that the timing of the bill is unfortunate.”

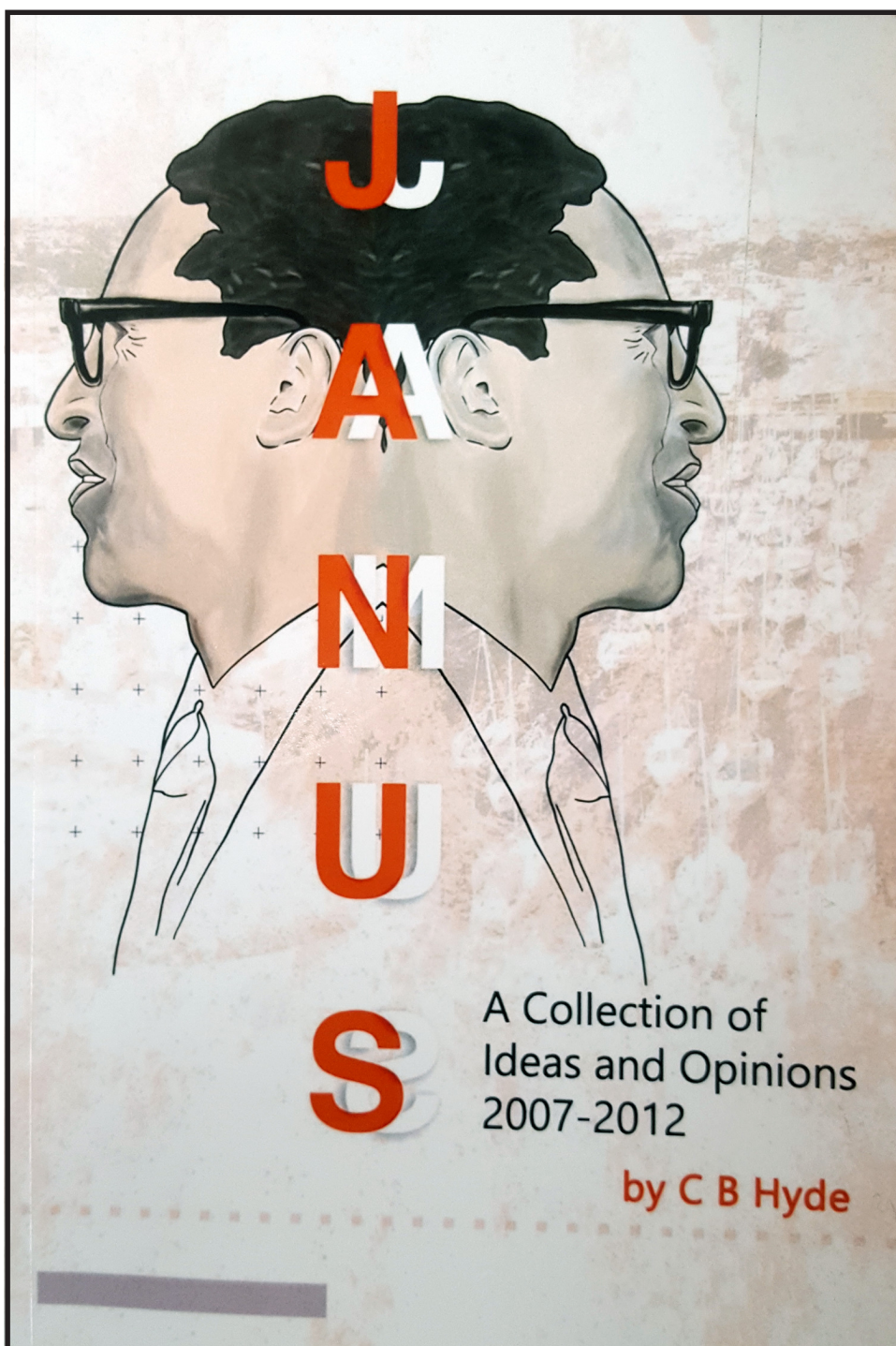
We all know what is unfortunate – the UDP and those 13 years. We hired these people to save us, after 10 years of suffering under the PUP. Those bohgaz multiplied our pain. The blue is right to label their 13 years as the sorrow under Barrow regimes.

Aha, the new blue – oh how we pray that they have left their bad old days behind them – yes, the new blue should have dropped the bill with a couple spoonfuls of sugar, some in-depth explanations of the aims, and details of who all the cap fits in the immediate. Nobody likes a tax, definitely not one that comes without introduction, and the most vocal of the *hog weh get lik* — the talented, hardworking, but starving artists of Belize — had Brother Requeña and Brother Shal on the explanation campaign all week.

You all know that Vaughan Gill is trained to spin the sins of the blue camp into virtues. Yes, he went to school for that. And Hilly Bennett is a man from the trenches, a bulldog fighter like Albert Vaughan. They had a battle on their hands last week. But if it was up to Mike Rudon, he would have just pulled the plug on all of them that had Requeña and Shal in the crosshairs.

Oh bah, what a distraction these pudup are. How they wasted my space. The bill, the bill, the GoB said one of the positives was that it would help small entrepreneurs satisfy the requirements of banking and other financial institutions. Hmm, let the big money winners speak about the banks, my dos centavos will come from the ground floor. But I’ll have to do that on Friday, because I’m all out of space, thanks to the red and blue.

Hn, blame squeaky clean Paul Morgan, Patrick Rogers, and Bobby Lopez for this miserable two-party system. If they had accepted dirty campaign money we could have turned those bohgaz out.



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“Por el poder de la verdad, y la gracia de Dios” (del Himno Nacional de Belize)

Lunes, 23 de Mayo de 2022

No hay otro lugar en el planeta tierra, con tanta diversidad y tan poco poder económico/militar, a pesar de tener tanta “riqueza incalculable”, que aún proyecte tanto amor y armonía étnica, como Belize. Tal vez por eso al finado visionario Dr. Leroy Taegar le gustaba referirse a nuestra pequeña Joya como La Nueva Jerusalén. Nuestro instinto sencillo sugeriría que su referencia tenía la intención de sostener los principios y la armonía perdurable de las relaciones humanas en nuestro país, por lo demás atrasado, como una luz para las naciones desarrolladas y avanzadas del mundo que actualmente están involucradas en una danza peligrosa con un inquietantemente creciente crescendo hacia posibilidades de destrucción mutua asegurada. A medida que la retórica se vuelve más ominosa con cada semana que pasa de la continua catástrofe entre Rusia y Ucrania, ¿le pondrían atención a una pequeña voz de paz en esta parte del mundo? Con vínculos ancestrales con todos los bandos, y sin un compromiso restrictivo con ninguno de los dos, es posible que el pequeño Belize tenga la autoridad moral para asumir un papel de pacifista y alejar a ambos bandos del camino hacia la destrucción del planeta.

El Armagedón nuclear no es algo que esté más allá de la posibilidad cuando los conflictos están en espiral hacia zonas de desesperación. Al fingir que el peligro no es real, solo aumenta las probabilidades a favor de que la fragilidad humana se manifieste en impulsos imprudentes bajo coacción. La intervención es necesaria tanto para reducir las hostilidades entre bandas enfrentadas como para reducir la retórica entre naciones en conflicto. Como cantó una vez Marvin Gaye: “La guerra no es la respuesta... No necesitamos escalar”.

Belize puede no ser un líder mundial en ninguna esfera del esfuerzo humano, ni en el área de la ciencia y la tecnología, las artes y los deportes, los negocios y la industria, o el poderío económico y militar. Tenemos un montón de talento humano natural, sin duda, pero no hemos desarrollado ese talento para crear un impacto en el escenario mundial en ningún deporte, en parte debido a nuestra estructura de desarrollo aún primitiva y una predominante mentalidad colonialista entre los burócratas deportivos que rehuyen de involucrar a nuestros propios expertos capacitados en el extranjero para impulsar a nuestros atletas al siguiente nivel.

Nuestra aún pequeña población, y el camino listo para el progreso personal mediante la emigración a los EE. UU., han obstaculizado constantemente el crecimiento y el desarrollo económico de la industria del entretenimiento, ya sea música, teatro o danza, en el escenario de Belize. Y el patrocinio estatal, con muchos otros apremiantes desafíos financieros, ha sido casi inexistente; por lo tanto, con oportunidades limitadas de crecimiento y ganancias significativas, algunos de nuestros artistas más prometedores, al igual que nuestras mentes académicas y científicas más brillantes, a menudo se unen al éxodo hacia el norte en busca de pastos más verdes. Y la lucha continúa en casa en la Joya, con un número inquietante de jóvenes desempleados cediendo a las tentaciones del negocio del crimen/drogas/pandillas.

Ha habido algunas luces brillantes, beliceños que han dejado su marca singular y han hecho que el nombre de Belize se registre como uno capaz de producir a niveles de clase mundial. La reinante Miss Tierra es una beliceña de Punta Gorda, la hermosa, inteligente e ingeniosa Miss Destiny Wagner. El logro artístico más destacado de Belize en el escenario mundial ha sido el de Andy Palacio y Garifuna Collective hace más de una década, cuando su aclamado álbum *Watina* hizo que Palacio fuera nombrado “Artista por la paz de UNESCO” y ganara “el prestigioso premio WOMEX en 2007”. (Wikipedia).

Aún más sorprendente ha sido el logro del inventor beliceño-estadounidense Andre Gray, quien en 2021 fue nombrado por el periódico *The Washington Mail* como su “Persona del año 2021” después de ser “el inventor número uno en el ranking mundial durante los últimos 33 años”. En su editorial del 16 de diciembre de 2021, *The Washington Mail* dijo que los “...inventos revolucionarios de Gray han transformado el mundo de una sociedad analógica a una digital con implicaciones profundas y de gran alcance que durarán muchos siglos por venir”. De hecho, es alucinante el impacto tectónico que Gray, quien asistió a la escuela primaria y secundaria en Belize antes de emigrar a los EE. UU. a los 15 años en 1981, ha tenido en la escena mundial con sus muchos inventos. Por ejemplo, el artículo

de *The Washington Mail* decía que, “En 1995, Andre Gray inventó el kit de prensa electrónico, o (Electronic Press Kit, EPK), que originalmente fue pensado como una herramienta de marca y marketing en línea” y que “...Una vez que las funciones de blogs y de compartir fueron sumadas a la EPK, nacieron las redes sociales. Entonces, sin la invención del EPK, no habría Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube y todas las demás plataformas de redes sociales que ahora han crecido hasta convertirse en una industria multimillonaria”.

¡¡Guau!! Y vino del pequeño Belize, hijo del finado abogado Joseph Gray y su esposa, Eleanor. Y este hermano aún no ha terminado. (Consulten también la nota de *Amandala*, “El padrino de los inventos de Internet es un beliceño-estadounidense, Andre Gray”, del 1 de julio de 2017, en amandala.bz.com).

Entonces, mundo, no tomes esta pequeña Joya demasiado a la ligera. Sí, tenemos una alta tasa de homicidios, pero la pobreza también está muy por encima del 50% de nuestra población, y muchos asesinatos están relacionados con personas estresadas bajo presión financiera, crímenes pasionales, robos que salieron mal o rivalidades entre pandillas por territorio en el tráfico de drogas. Aún así, no hay límites debido a la etnia o la religión o incluso la política, ya que los beliceños generalmente realizan sus tareas diarias con una mente abierta y corazones dispuestos a ayudar cuando se les solicita. Con todas las pruebas y tribulaciones, el nuestro sigue siendo un buen país, aún extendiendo la mano de la amistad a nuestros vecinos en apuros, incluso abrazando a los migrantes de nuestro “enemigo” del oeste que aún continúa con su reclamo “infundado” contra nuestro territorio en la CIJ. Y aún así Belize está ofreciendo amnistía a alrededor de 40.000 residentes indocumentados, muchos de la dicha Guatemala.

Esta “leche de bondad humana” que aún emana del espíritu beliceño, a pesar de nuestras difíciles circunstancias, ha impresionado tanto a nuestro vecino del norte, según nuestro primer ministro, el Honorable John Briceño, que el presidente mexicano Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) durante una visita reciente a la Joya, se sintió impulsado a eximir el arancel de importación del 15% sobre el ganado que se importa de Belize a México, un gesto muy bien acogido y apreciado por el Gobierno de Belize y ciudadanos en el sector agrícola.

Recientemente, Belize y México han sido coanfitriones del ejercicio de entrenamiento militar multinacional, Tradewinds 2022, patrocinado por el Comando Sur de los Estados Unidos (U.S. SOUTHCOM). Unos “22 países y poco más de 1.800 militares están participando... en un esfuerzo por mantener y mejorar la seguridad en toda la región del Caribe”. (Consulten la nota, “Personal militar de 22 países forjan vínculos en Belize” en la página 6 de *Amandala* con fecha del viernes 20 de mayo de 2022).

Estamos en el “patio trasero de Estados Unidos”, y se dice que cuando Estados Unidos estornuda, Belize se resfía. Es un mundo pequeño, y Covid-19 está sobre nosotros una vez más. Pero el pequeño Belize sigue siendo una nación, con un solo pueblo, una sola bandera, un solo himno...

Está la próxima Cumbre de las Américas organizada en Los Ángeles por el presidente de los Estados Unidos, Joe Biden, en junio de este año. Y hay un llamado del presidente mexicano, así como de CARICOM, que incluye a Belize, que la Cumbre debería ser todos incluidos, y por lo tanto Cuba, Nicaragua y Venezuela deberían ser invitados. La situación está cambiando, con algunos países amenazando con boicot, mientras Estados Unidos sopesa sus opciones a la luz del esperado éxito de la Cumbre.

Cuando México habla, Estados Unidos suele prestar oídos. Pero es probable que no se le dé mucho peso a las palabras del pequeño Belize y de nuestro primer ministro en estos debates regionales, excepto tal vez un gesto silencioso para “ponernos en nuestro lugar”. Pero cuando nuestro P.M. Briceño habla de paz, es algo que él conoce, y sus consejos a las grandes naciones poderosas pueden algún día ser más valiosos que todas las armas nucleares que han acumulado. Ninguno está libre de pecado, pero cuando Belize habla con los líderes de las naciones que tienen problemas entre sí, nuestro P.M. habla desde un alto terreno moral. Y el pequeño Belize ha demostrado ser capaz de producir grandes cosas en este mundo global que se hace cada vez más pequeño. “¡Escuchen, líderes mundiales! ¡Escuchen!”

Democracy is quite broad



by Clinton Canul Luna

In my point of view, the meaning of the word democracy is quite broad, and I do not believe that there is any country, up to now, that is practicing it in its entirety. There are those who name certain people or nations who say they are practicing democracy, but in reality, in my point of view, I believe that they have not yet put it into practice, either because they do not want to or because there are other influences that do not allow the people to be the ones who rule. There are those who are proclaiming that their system of government is democratic and have been trying to get other peoples to put their philosophy into practice. There's nothing wrong with them wanting the world to be like them, but it's the way they do it.

For others to accept an ideology, it must be done in a convincing, subtle way, and rationally, not by force, not by imposing it in a dictatorial way. That is not a democratic practice. That a people has the right to vote for the representatives to form a government, is only a beginning of a democracy; it does not end there, since in a democracy the people are the ones who rule, not the

representatives. In a democracy, the people are the ones who decide on the internal and external affairs of their country. Not a few. Not because they were elected as representatives gives them the right to make decisions on how a community or a people of a nation should be managed.

On several occasions through these pages, I have said that the Constitution of this country, Belize, has not worked, since it was not made by the people but was given to govern the country based on a system of another nation. A nation that does not have a constitution. So, Belize needs to make its own constitution, but not by a few, be it lawyers or the elite class. No. The people must be informed, presented and educated about each article and the people should decide if they agree or not. And, of course, in a democracy, the majority has the say. We also have to take into account the percentages. If the majority is 51% and the minority is 49%, then we need to dialogue. We need to know why that 49% does not agree and through dialogue reach a rational agreement so that things go well. There are those who will say that it

will take a long time, but a constitution is not made overnight; it is analyzed. It takes time for it to come out for the benefit of all the people in general, not for the good of a few. We are all equal, or rather we should be equal.

However, if 90% of the citizens agree with it, be it an article or part of it or an entire constitution, then there is no reason for dialogue. That majority is overwhelming. I have come to realize that most Belizeans take the constitution of the United States of America as a model to follow. I would like to invite you to read and analyze article 123 of the Mexican constitution, which can be found through Google at the link <https://www2.juridicas.unam.mx/constitucion-reordenada-consolidada/en/vigente> and is as follows:

TITLE SIX. Labor and Social Security

Article 123

Every person has the right to have a decent and socially useful job. Therefore, job creation and social organization of work shall be encouraged according to the law. The Congress of the Union, without contravening the following basic principles, shall formulate labor laws, which shall apply as follows:

A. Workers, day laborers, domestic servants, artisans and, in a general way, to all labor contracts:

I. The maximum duration of the working day shall be eight hours.

II. The maximum duration of night work shall be seven hours. The following jobs are prohibited for persons under sixteen years: unhealthful or dangerous work, industrial night work and any work after ten o'clock at night.

III. The use of labor of minors under fifteen years of age is prohibited. Children older than fifteen years old and less than sixteen shall have a maximum working day of six hours.

IV. For every six days of work a

worker must have at least one day of rest.

V. During pregnancy, women shall not perform such work that requires excessive physical effort and could be dangerous regarding pregnancy. Women have the right to enjoy a disability leave due to childbirth, which shall cover six weeks previous to the birth and six weeks thereafter. During such disability leave, women shall receive their full wages and retain their employment and the rights acquired under their labor contract. During the nursing period, they shall have two special rest periods per day, consisting of half hour each one, to feed their babies.

VI. The minimum wage shall be established in a general way or according to the occupation. General minimum wage shall govern over the different economic zones. Professional wages shall apply on specific industries, professions, trades or special works. The general minimum wage must be sufficient to satisfy the normal material, social, and cultural needs of a family, and to provide the compulsory education of children. The professional minimum wage shall be fixed by taking into account the conditions of the different industrial and commercial activities. A national commission composed by representatives of the workers, employers, and the Government shall fix minimum wages. This national commission may be assisted by special advisory committees if it considers them necessary for a better performance of its duties.

(To Be Continued)
fincasolan@gmail.com
 May 22, 2022
 Finca Solana
 Corozal Town



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- Responsible for general housekeeping of procedure rooms and work areas.
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- Applies the ALARA principle for all procedures.
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- Ensures efficient running of their area of responsibility.

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Vacancy number: Belmopan-2022-12
Closing date: June 8, 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.

Integrity Commission members appointed

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

On Friday, the Senate approved the appointment of the members of the Integrity Commission after a number of years of dormancy of that body. Andrea McSweeney McKoy was appointed as the commission's chairperson along with 6 other commissioners, who will serve a two-year term.

The other commissioners on the 7-member body are Katherine Meighan, Zoe Roberson Zetina, Ricardo Mogul, George Swift, Payal Ghanwani, and Jaraad Ysaguirre. Their term begins retroactively, starting April 1 this year.

"Honorable Members, the question is now, therefore, be it resolved that this Honorable Senate, ... being satisfied that they are fit and proper persons to be appointed as the chairperson and members of the Integrity Commission, hereby, approves the said appointments for the period of 2 years with effect from 1st April 2022. All those in favor, kindly



Andrea McSweeney McKoy – Chairperson, Integrity Commission

say 'aye'" stated Senate president Carolyn Trench Sandiford at the meeting of the Senate on Friday, when members of the Senate were asked to indicate whether they supported the appointments.

No member of the Senate expressed any objections to the appointments of the persons selected to sit on the new Integrity Commission.

CPAN supports boycott of Summit of the Americas



BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

An open letter sent to the Secretary-General of CARICOM, Dr. Carla Barnett, from the Caribbean Pan African Network (CPAN) commends the Caribbean Community's stance that all the independent nations of the Americas should be invited to the upcoming Summit of the Americas being hosted by the United States early next month. This is following the unilateral decision by the US to refuse to invite Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. As a result of this, various nations have publicly rejected the invitation from the US, and are demanding that all nations in the Americas be included in the Summit.

"The nations of Antigua and Barbuda, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Mexico, Bolivia, Guatemala, Chile, Honduras, and even Brazil have all publicly confirmed that they will not be attending the Summit – and certainly not at the level of their Heads of Government – if the USA persists with its policy of excluding Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua," the open letter from CPAN stated.

As previously reported, during the CARICOM Heads of Government conference hosted in San Pedro, Belize, earlier this year, the Chairman of CARICOM, Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, announced that the nations have resolved to boycott the Summit if the US insists on excluding certain countries.

No official response on the matter

has been released by the US, but there have been reports, from Prime Minister Briceño himself, of the US applying pressure on the Caribbean communities to ensure that they attend the conference.

The first Summit of the Americas was called by the US in 1994 when Bill Clinton was president, and the US at that time had refused to invite Cuba, but by the time the 6th Summit was held in Colombia in 2012, a resolution had been passed that every independent nation of America would be invited.

"A Summit of the Americas is not the property of any particular nation or Government, and must not have inserted into it any political or ideological principle that is used to exclude nations, peoples, or Heads of Government of our region. All right-thinking people of the Caribbean were therefore horrified when we learned that the USA – the host nation

of this year's Summit of the Americas – had unilaterally determined that the nations of Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua were not going to be invited to this year's Summit. And that they were not going to be invited simply because the USA does not approve of the governments of these nations!" the letter from CPAN states.

CPAN calls out President Joe Biden for this decision in the open letter.

"This piece of high-class folly on the part of President Biden and his Administration must not be facilitated or accommodated by the nations and governments of our hemisphere! Indeed, even former US President, Donald Trump, did not sink to this low level in relation to the 2018 Summit of the Americas!" it stated.

At this point, a number of nations have boycotted this hemisphere-wide Summit because of the stance held

Koffee, Ernestine, & more to perform at Belize...

Belize's first-ever International Music & Food Festival is set to take place in San Pedro on July 30 and 31 and will feature a host of local and international talent, including rising reggae star Koffee, Belizean soca icon Ernestine Carballo, Supa G, Barrington Levy, Patrice Roberts, TR Shine, and more.

Continued from Page 1

to take place in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, on July 30 and 31 at the Saca Chispas Football Field.

Tourism stakeholders, government officials, and several Belizean musicians all gathered in the Toucan Hall Room at the Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza on Monday, where, as part of the launch, 15 local artists signed contracts with the Ministry of Tourism and the Belize Tourism Board (BTB). Those artists included Supa G, TR Shine, Ernestine Carballo, Stig Da Artist, King Rome, and more. After signing their contracts, all the artists were given a moment to share a few words and express their thanks.

Minister of Tourism, Hon. Anthony Mahler spoke at the media launch about the return of on-stage performances following a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as his hopes that Belize's music industry will one day be comparable to that of Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and other nations.

"Music is important for Jamaica, music is important for Trinidad, music is important for the continent of Africa with Afrobeats, with Reggaeton out of Puerto Rico. And I believe with a creative environment that we can use Punta and other music from Belize to create an international music where people can embrace it internationally," he stated.

"It is important for us as a country to support our musicians. This music festival is to create a platform whereby we can build exposure for our local artists. It is being supported by international artists, but as we continue to develop and evolve, we want the headlines to be Belizean artists," he added.

The festival is expected to feature a wide range of local and international talent spanning a variety of genres, from reggae and dancehall to punta rock and afrobeats. Among the headliners are international artists Patrice Roberts, Koffee, Farmer Nappy, Timaya, Demarco, Barrington Levy, and Ricardo Drue. Other local performers will include Flaco Leslie, Yas Thalia, Denise Castillo, J Cas, Dajah, Brithney Starr, Don Doe, Den Z, Papa John, and TLC Band, to name a few.

by the USA. There is no clear indication whether some countries will attend or not, but the executive board of the CPAN, which comprises members from across CARICOM, is calling on Heads of States to stand on principle.

"We, the people of the Caribbean, want a CARICOM that we can be

According to the BTB, the festival will also showcase Belize's diverse culinary landscape, featuring vendors and businesses from across the country. At Monday's media launch, Hon. Anthony Mahler also spoke on the importance of local cuisine:

"Food is also an important part of what we do in the tourism industry and just on a whole. The other day I was traveling and I sat next to this gentleman not knowing who he was and I said 'why are you visiting Belize?'. He said, 'well, I came to dive, and I brought my brother for the first time and his two young sons'. And I said, 'what was your takeaway from the trip?' and he said the food and the music and the culture," he stated.

The aim of the festival is not only to promote Belize's culture, food and music to international and regional visitors but to do so at a time of the year when tourism activity in the country is slow.

And while news of the International Music & Food Festival has been received with much celebration and anticipation by tourism stakeholders, everyday Belizeans, and local artists alike, some entities, including the United Democratic Party, remain skeptical.

A press release issued by the UDP on the evening following the media launch criticizes the festival, which it calls a "hurry come up" that neglects local artists while hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent on international artists.

"It is obvious that the festival is not really designed to improve the tourism product. A two-month window to advertise this event will make absolutely no impact on the tourism market, influence zero additional booking of flights to Belize and barely energize even the domestic tourism market," stated the UDP.

Both at the media launch and in a press release issued shortly after, however, the Belize Tourism Board reiterated its aims, one of which is to use the festival as a platform for Belizean artists to showcase their talent, network with each other, and build relationships for international growth. The BTB also hopes to use the festival to support the future creation of state-of-the-art music studios throughout the country.

proud of – a CARICOM that stands for principle; a CARICOM that does not abandon loyal friends like Cuba; a CARICOM that does not permit one or two principled CARICOM member states to have to stand alone to a mighty power like the USA; a CARICOM of collective security." the open letter from CPAN stated.



May 18 2022

Press Release

The Public Sector Workers Trust (PSWT) was created via an agreement between the Public Service Union, Belize National Teachers' Union and the Government of Belize to create projects for those individuals whose increments were frozen from 1995 to 1997. The Trust has launched its first project which is the Preventative Healthcare Project, which aims to provide a complete range of modern diagnostic tests to all its beneficiaries, inclusive of laboratory tests and a consultation with a physician to discuss the test results. For beneficiaries who opt not to access these services, an alternative option is a health care credit which provides a specific sum to their preferred medical provider to defray costs of services and medication.

The PSWT has now signed agreements with the Belize Healthcare Partners, Belize Medical Associates and Northern Medical Specialty Plaza.

All beneficiaries of the PSWT who would like to access the project to contact the PSWT at 223-7799/223-2877/ 673-7798 to set an appointment. A list of beneficiaries has been published on the PSWT website at <https://pswt.org.bz/new-publications/#>. Beneficiaries are asked to kindly review the list to determine if their names are there to access the service. In the event that a beneficiary's name is not on the list certified documents must be submitted to the office of the PSWT for verification before these services can be accessed.

Finally, the health project will be extended to the western and southern part of the country on a phased basis.

Ends

FOUR STEPS TO ACCESS PSWT HEALTH CARE

1. Check PSWT website at <https://pswt.org.bz/new-publications/#>. to ascertain if name if on the list
2. If name is on list, call PSWT Offices at 223-7799/223-2877/ 673-7798 to schedule appointment to obtain the required forms
3. After obtaining forms, visit the medical provider of your choice
4. If name is NOT of the list, certified documents are to be provided to the Trust Office including but not limited to an employment declaration provided by the Belize Social Security Board, years of service document signed by management/ ministry or any other documentation that provides proof you were working with GOB during the period 1995-1997.

A: NGO Crescent, Belize City
T: 223-7798 • F: 223-0977
E: publicsectorworkerstrust@gmail.com

We don't see the new Belize...

by Marco A. Lopez

There will come a time when this country, no matter the odds, will become the land of the free it once was or was envisioned to be. The time is really upon us; sooner or later, all Belizeans will have to grasp a collective national identity in order to survive the external forces that will rise up against us. We call this place, "Jewel" and "Land of the Gods" and feel as if our place in this land of immense wealth is carved in stone, when we see the realities of oppressed peoples all over the world, and when sadly our Jewel is being sold from under our feet.

There is no question, this land is the birthright of us who have made it our home, regardless of the circumstances that led to us being here— whether or not our "navel string is buried" in this land, as our old people put it — we are kin and this nation is ours. I think that is easy to understand, and an easy starting point to determining friend from foe, brother from an imposter, if you will. And in any case, all peoples, from any and all walks of life, are our brothers and sisters, and we have an intrinsic duty to ensure life is fostered and suffering is reduced; however, the question of *home*, is a personal one, and one we equally have a duty to safeguard with our own lives.

This duty we all have oftentimes dropped the ball on. Yes, everyday life is hard, but seeking out "earth and water", bare sustenance, has led us to lose sight of the responsibility we hold as citizens of this land, and as caretakers of this birthright. Who can blame us: try looking after anything or anyone on a hungry stomach, or without a roof over your head or clothes on your back. See, we continue to spread the story of Belize having a happy history when we live with colonial imprints in our society glaring at us. This extreme rat race we find ourselves in here at home to merely survive is an apparent one.

Don't get me wrong; our country has had a relatively peaceful history, up to now, and that is something we should

all be proud of, that the mass bloodshed that has taken place across Latin America, has not made its way to our doors. But those massacres are a result of people directly rising against systems of repressions. The murders in our streets, on the other hand, tell a story of victims socially oppressed and suffering in silence until they implode then turn against each other. There is a fundamental difference when the man draws the sword against his brother while the hangman has a noose tightening around his neck.

Are we called "peaceful" because we refuse to stand up against the injustices we live with every day? Because the bloodshed in the southside of Belize City has been said to have surpass "civil war" benchmarks. Our young men and women have lost hope to the point that so many relegate their function in society and live an almost sub-human existence, so many constantly drugged and willing to do whatever it takes to feel a little more human just for the day. If that means getting a decent meal, wearing some decent clothing, or just the feeling of having some cash in their pocket. This is alongside the struggle they see their families face every day to survive. We have so much work to do *for* home; so much work to ensure the safety of our people, and a sound future for them, and at this point to truly give them back some hope, before a new Belize can be seen. The political patchwork carried out by both parties over our years of independence is not development; it is not driving this nation and its people forward; it has not given us true national objectives and solutions to the social ills we face. In fact, the system in place, and practices across the political divide in Belize, are pushing the majority of the population nearer to indigence, hopelessness, and a horrible inevitability we've never seen before. All this while we are constantly reminded of our happy history. We need goals for our country that are demanded and blessed by our citizenry, not international players seeking to pass off their own responsibilities to us.

Slavery: Harvard's \$100 million reckoning

Harvard has delivered the nation an important lesson on healing the "deep wounds" left by slavery, said Peniel Joseph on CNN.com. School officials last week issued a report that "casts new light on how slavery helped forge one of America's most prestigious universities." The report revealed that Harvard faculty and administrators held more than 70 slaves before Massachusetts banned slavery in 1783, some of whom served generations of students. It documented how money derived from slave labor did much to build the university's wealth during its first two centuries, and how faculty taught "race science," asserting whites' innate superiority.

The school pledged \$100 million to fund reparation efforts, including identifying the campus slaves' modern descendants, creating a memorial, and building exchange programs with

historically Black universities.

Harvard's reckoning is a meaningful step "toward a path of healing" at a time when dozens of state legislatures are trying to ban any discussion of America's dark history of "structural and institutional racism."

Harvard's \$100 million splurge to absolve itself of guilt "won't solve anything," said Arjun Singh in NATIONAL REVIEW. The report merely imposes a burden of "false guilt" on current students and faculty, who bear no responsibility, "moral or otherwise," for the sins of the dead. "They wielded no whips; traded no slaves; bought and sold no proceeds of bondage." If Harvard really wanted to help descendants of slavery, it could have skipped the self-flagellation and invested in Black businesses in inner-city opportunity zones. That would actually improve Black lives "through

Extended House committee session on Trade License Bill



Hon. Tracy Panton

BELMOPAN, Mon. May 23, 2022

Today, during a marathon session of the Public and Constitutional Reform Committee, there were at least 30 statements made by Belizean artists, entertainers, and other interested parties on the proposed Trade License Bill, 2022. The bill was tabled for its first reading at the last sitting of the House of Representatives and is not expected to be legislated until January 2023, and until some wider consultations have taken place with the interested parties who will be directly affected by the new taxes.

Area representative for the Albert constituency, Hon. Tracy Panton, sits on the committee and remarked that today's session, though long, was very fruitful.

"It was a marathon session for a House Committee meeting, that is because there were quite a number of stakeholders who had various concerns about the proposed trade licensing bill, about its content, about the fact that there was a lack of consultation, particularly with the

music industry and entertainers, promoters, and DJs and those who would be taxed very heavily as what is being proposed in this bill," Hon. Panton shared.

She added that representatives of municipal government, particularly for Belize City, were also present, and in all about 30 or so "interventions" were made by stakeholders, all of whom were given an audience while they presented their views.

Hon. Panton said, "What the committee agreed to do

was that these interventions would have to go back to relevant ministry for consideration, further consultations, wider consultations, particularly with the stakeholders that were present today and then come back to the committee before it is returned back to the House."

She said that there is still an opportunity for greater consultations to be had and for the bill to be reviewed by all stakeholders before it is returned to the House of Representatives, since the government does not intend to pass the new tax until January 2023.

"We can't keep putting on layers of taxes and expect for sectors to be able to grow and develop and to create opportunities and jobs, so we will certainly stay on top of the further consultation that will happen. We will continue to engage with stakeholders and interested parties ourselves so that when the draft of the bill comes back to committee, we can ensure that those considerations are taken into account," Hon. Panton said.

Mental patient allegedly sets fire to Mary Open Doors

Mary Open Doors, a safe house in San Ignacio Town, was reportedly set ablaze by a mentally disturbed man.



by Charles Gladden

SAN IGNACIO, Cayo District, Mon. May 23, 2022

In the wee hours of Friday, May 20,

Mary Open Doors, which is located on Church Street in San Ignacio Town, Cayo District, and is known throughout

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market-based solutions."

Facing the truth is never pointless, said Eugene Robinson in THE WASHINGTON POST. Harvard is reminding us of a historical reality "many Americans prefer to ignore" -- that "the whole nation, not just the South, grew rich and powerful from the unpaid labor of enslaved African-Americans." Cotton picked by slaves supplied mills in the Northeast, and slavery-based agriculture enriched Wall

Street. The slavery-derived wealth "compounded over the decades and centuries," like "money in an interest-bearing bank account," while slavery's brutal legacy was perpetuated through racial discrimination in discrimination in education, health care, property, and income. Harvard deserves credit for acknowledging its debt and redressing some of "the grievous harm" it inflicted.

(from page 17 of THE WEEK, May 13, 2022)

Calypso Rose releases rendition of Andy Palacio's "Watina"

The 82-year-old calypsonian will be releasing her first album since 2018 this August. Its first single is a rendition of Andy Palacio's "Watina" and features music legends Carlos Santana and The Garifuna Collective.

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Sun. May 22, 2022

The Queen of Calypso music, Calypso Rose, has announced the launch of her latest album, *FOREVER*, which is scheduled to be released on August 26 of this year. The album's first single is a cover of Andy Palacio's "Watina", performed by Calypso Rose alongside the Garifuna

Collective and famed guitarist Carlos Santana. And since its premiere on May 19, the single's music video, which was shot in Belize, has received some 20,000 views on YouTube alone.

The release of the album *Watina* by Andy Palacio and the Garifuna Collective back in 2007 was a pivotal point in time for Belizean music, as the album, an instant classic, brought Garifuna music to an international



Calypso Rose press photo by Fifou

REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

Palestine asks ICC to investigate Shireen Abu Akleh's killing

Palestinian FM al-Maliki says Abu Akleh's case, along with other Israeli violations, has been submitted to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

The Palestinian foreign ministry has announced it has formally asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the killing of veteran Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

On May 11, Abu Akleh, 51, was covering an Israeli military raid near the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank when she was shot dead. Eyewitnesses and colleagues who were present at the scene said she was killed by Israeli forces.

"We have documented [the crime] and submitted a file about it to the ICC prosecutor alongside other Israeli violations," Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki told Anadolu Agency on Monday.

Al-Maliki called on The Hague-based court to add Abu Akleh's death to other crimes committed by Israel against Palestinians to facilitate an official investigation and bring Israel to accountability.

"Palestinians say the killing of Abu Akleh is war crimes indeed. They have referred the case to the ICC in addition to the dozens of other cases that have been filed over the last year or so..." said Al Jazeera's Nida Ibrahim, reporting from Ramallah in the occupied West Bank.

Al Jazeera says Abu Akleh was "assassinated in cold blood" by Israeli forces. The news network and the Palestinians have called for an independent and impartial probe into the killing, which has attracted



'We have documented [the crime] and submitted a file about it to the ICC prosecutor alongside other Israeli violations,' Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki told Anadolu Agency on Monday [File: Ahmad Gharabli/AFP]

global condemnation.

Mustafa Barghouti, general secretary of the Palestinian National Initiative, accused the ICC of a "double standard" in its handling of cases submitted by Palestinians.

"We have been providing information for the past 13 years but investigation has not been started yet. And in less than two months the ICC has sent 42 investigators to Ukraine," Barghouti, a former Palestinian information minister, said.

Barghouti said that there was a need for strong international pressure on the ICC to initiate its work and investigate the crimes, including the crime of killing Shireen Abu Akleh.

"What we also need here is real pressure on Israeli establishment, a serious effort to establish sanctions and punitive acts against Israel, not to allow it to continue to be above international law."

First published by Aljazeera.

stage. Now, almost fifteen years later, this legendary collaboration will see the album's titular track revived, with Rose paying homage to the Garifuna language and people.

On the day of the song's debut, a media release from Calypso Rose's long-time producer, Belize-born Ivan Duran stated that "with 'Watina', she pays homage to the Garifuna, a Caribbean people scarred by slavery, excluded from memory, and part of whose population now lives not only in the US, but also on the coasts of four Central American countries: Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Belize."

The release also noted that Calypso Rose was perhaps the only person who could successfully recapture the "frenzy and impact" of "Watina" while still respecting the legacy of Andy Palacio.

"By recording and reimagining the song with the same musicians, she reaffirms her Belizean ties and once again exploits the contrast between the festive spirit and the social dimension of the music," it said.

The Garifuna Collective was co-founded and led by the late Andy Palacio and even after his passing in

2008, they have continued to tour and perform in his memory. The band is the embodiment of Palacio's commitment to keeping Garifuna language and traditions alive despite threats to its existence.

"We are so honoured that the queen, Calypso Rose, has done a version of our song 'Watina', accompanied by the legend Carlos Santana with the production from Stonetree Records," expressed the band on their official Facebook page on the eve of the single's release date.

World-renowned guitarist Carlos Santana previously stated that "Calypso Rose is a goddess of música del Caribe: a person who offers her heart & changes people's lives & destiny."

The album *FOREVER* will see the Calypsonian revisit some of her greatest classics and bring original material with a "distinctly modern approach". It will consist of fourteen songs total and will feature artists from a wide range of genres, including Soca king Machel Montano and Dancehall icon Mr. Vegas.

FOREVER was produced by Ivan Duran of Stonetree Records in Benque Viejo.

Mental patient allegedly sets fire to Mary Open Doors

Continued from **Page 12**

the community as a haven for women and children who are victims of domestic violence abuse, was set on fire.

Just after 1:00 a.m., the two-story wooden structure was set on fire, and it is currently believed that it was a mentally disturbed man who started the blaze.

Communications Director for the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, told local reporters that when mentally unstable persons are the perpetrators of crimes, the Police Department faces a number of constraints in its ability to apprehend and prosecute such persons.

"When it comes to dealing with mental patients, our hands are tied. We have to get the permission of the court,

where they would need to go in front of a magistrate to say whether or not they are fit to stand trial. You know that it is very difficult when dealing with mental patients in Belize, because most of these institutions that house these people don't have the security to keep these people on the compound, and they tend to wander back to the community that they are used to," he said.

He went on to explain, "... I know that we are waiting for advice for that one also. We cannot detain for more than 48 hours, and if we don't get advice within that 48 hours, it is that person's right to be released if no charges are brought against them. But I can tell you, we do follow up on all these cases and where the court would make a decision, we would re-detain and we would be directed by the court on what to do."



Kulture crushes BDF in Over-40 season opener at MCC

by Rudolph "Bolo" McKoy

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

Only one game was played in the season opener of the Westline Over-40 Football Tournament 2022 at the MCC Grounds on Saturday, May 21. Defending champions Kulture Yabra defeated BDF by a score of 14 to 1. Kevin Rowland netted 7 goals and Jason Gilharry scored 3. The tournament continues this coming Saturday with one game only again. (The veterans are

not comfortable with playing under the 2:00 p.m. hot sun, so the next double header will have to wait until the lights at the MCC are fully functional.) Below is the schedule outlook for the next couple weeks.

Saturday, May 28

4:30 p.m. – Plaza vs Pickstock Lake

Saturday, June 4

3:30 p.m. – Plaza vs Kulture Yabra

5:30 p.m. – BDF vs Pickstock Lake

Bay City FC unstoppable through Week 7 of Women's League Opening Season

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

This is a relegation 2022 Opening Season for the National Amateur Women's League (NAWL), and after 7 weeks of the 10-week regular season defending champions Jewel Fury is on top of Group A, while Bay City FC of Corozal has an unblemished 6 and 0 record in Group B. Moreover, Bay City FC is yet to concede a goal in what is considered the weaker group. At the end of the Opening Season, the Group B winner will advance to Group A, while the last place team in Group A will be relegated to Group B for the Closing Season.

It was a peculiar scoring scenario at the M.A. Stadium on Saturday, May 21, in the Mid-South Group A clash between Sagitun Girlz and Rumberas FC which ended in a 1-1 stalemate. Sagitun Girlz scored in the very first minute of play through Jurshia Zuniga (1'), and the equalizer for Rumberas came in injury time from Shendra Casimiro (90+').

In the other Group A encounter on Saturday, Jewel Fury FC visited the Ambergris Stadium and came away with a 3-0 victory over home standing San Pedro Pirates. The visitors got a goal each from Jesselle Conoquie (4'), Fatima Romero (6') and Khalydia Velasquez (45').

Meanwhile, in a Group B clash at the FFB Stadium, it was Cayo Dreamers hosting and beating Corozal United Warriors by an 8-0 score with goals coming from Maria Pineda (6'), Ilyn Cruz (11'), Daysi Paiz (24'), Sara Torres (57', 70' & 76') and Jehnia Arnold (80' & 83').

The only NAWL game on Sunday was in Group B at the Norman Broaster Stadium, where Bay City FC from Corozal crushed Santa Elena Strikers, 9-0, with goals from Anahie Blanco (6' & 18'), Kaite Jones (17', 66', 76' & 90+1'), Miriam Villamill (21' & 43') and Darina Tzul (88').

With 3 more weeks of regular season remaining, Verdes Rebels are in serious danger of being relegated, while Bay City FC is on a rampage, but will still have to

survive the playoffs to clinch first place and a berth in Group A for the Closing Season. (See standings below.)

Nat'l Amateur Women's League 2022 Closing Season								
Standings at Week 7, Sunday, May 22, 2022								
GROUP A	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff	Pts
Jewel Fury FC	6	4	1	1	13	3	10	13
Sagitun Girlz	6	3	1	2	11	11	0	10
Rumberas FC	5	2	2	1	6	2	4	8
San Pedro Pirates	6	2	1	3	6	11	-5	7
Verdes Rebels	5	0	1	4	5	14	-9	1
GROUP B	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff	Pts
Bay City FC	6	6	0	0	53	0	53	18
Cayo Dreamers	5	4	0	1	21	6	15	12
Wagiya United SC	5	2	0	3	14	12	2	6
Santa Elena Strikers	5	1	0	4	2	40	-38	3
Corozal United Warriors	5	0	0	5	1	33	-32	0

Upcoming Week 8 schedule:

Saturday, May 28

4:00 p.m. – (A) Rumberas FC vs Verdes Rebels FC – M.A. Stadium in Independence

4:00 p.m. – (B) Bay City FC vs Cayo Dreamers – Ricalde Stadium

Sunday, May 29

4:00 p.m. – Sagitun Girlz vs San Pedro Pirates – M.A. Stadium in Independence

4:00 p.m. – Santa Elena Strikers vs Wagiya United SC – Norman Broaster Stadium

Week 8 scores from NSC 2022 Recreation & Wellness Basketball Tournament

BELIZE CITY, Mon. May 23, 2022

The National Sports Council (NSC) Sports Competition for Recreation and Wellness Basketball Tournament continued with Week 8 games on Friday, May 20, at the Marion Jones Sports Complex in Belize City. Following are the results for the 3 games played in Group B on Friday night.

In the opener, Department of Youth Services (DYS) blew out Central Bank, 82-24. Raheem Thurton scored 47 points for DYS, while Francis Sutherland led Central Bank with 12 pts.

Game 2 was a close contest, with National Sports Council "Valley" prevailing, 59-55, over BWS. Top scorer for "Valley" was Ashton Edwards with 19 pts, while BWS was led by Alejandro Baptist with 17 pts.

And in the nightcap, KHMH "Injectors" won a 63-61 nail-biter over Bowen & Bowen "Belikin Bruwers." Godfrey Arnold was high man for the "Injectors" with 21 pts, while "Belikin Bruwers" was led by Kadeem Olivera with 20 pts.

Upcoming Week 9 Group-A schedule:

Friday, May 27

6:00 p.m. – Belize City Council "Dragons" vs Customs & Excise Department

7:15 p.m. – Belize Healthcare "Shooting Stars" vs Belize Defence Force "Snipers"

8:30 p.m. – Digi vs Belize Tax Services "Kollectaz"

GROUP-A	GP	W	L
Belize Healthcare "Shooting Stars"	4	1	3
Belize Tax Services "Kollectaz"	4	1	3
Belize Defence Force "Snipers"	4	1	3
Digi	4	2	2
Belize City Council "Dragons"	4	4	0
Customs & Exercise Department	4	3	1

GROUP-B	GP	W	L
Department of Youth Services	4	1	3
K.H.M.H "INJECTORS"	4	2	2
National Sports Council "Valley"	4	3	1
Central Bank	4	0	4
BWS	4	3	1
Bowen & Bowen "Belikin Bruwers"	4	3	1



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Argentina found guilty of massacre of Qom and Moqoit people

A landmark criminal trial in Argentina has found the state guilty of the massacre of more than 400 indigenous people nearly a century ago.

The Qom and Moqoit communities had been protesting inhumane living and working conditions on a cotton plantation when authorities shot them dead in 1924.

Until now, no responsibility had ever been officially acknowledged.

A judge has now ordered historical reparations to be awarded to the communities.

The Qom and Moqoit peoples in Argentina's northern Chaco region were living partly-enslaved on a plantation settled by immigrant farmers from Europe.

They were underfed, paid with vouchers, taxed for the cotton they

harvested and were mostly denied the freedom of movement, the Buenos Aires Times reports, citing court documents.

According to survivor accounts, many children and elderly people died in the massacre, AFP reports. And those who were wounded and could not escape were killed "in the cruellest form possible with mutilations and burials in common graves," Judge Zunilda Niremperger said.

A federal judge had previously ruled the mass killings a crime against humanity, but no criminal trial had ever been held because the defendants had already died.

But on Thursday, after a month of hearings, a guilty verdict was delivered.

"The massacre provoked grave consequences, [those people] suffered



A woman holds an indigenous Wiphala flag during the trial in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 10 May

the trauma of terror and were uprooted with the loss of their language and their culture," Judge Niremperger is quoted

as saying in the Buenos Aires Times.

The reparations ordered by the judge include the massacre being added to Argentina's school syllabus and continuing forensic efforts to find the victims' remains. No financial reparations were sought.

Reacting to the ruling, Raquel Esquivel, a descendant of the Qom community, told AFP it was high time that "indigenous voices are heard" and that "the truth be told".

The BBC's South America correspondent Katy Watson said this is the first trial of its kind in Latin America, and could pave the way for more cases which recognise crimes committed against indigenous communities across the region.

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