

Belize's leading newspaper

Ras Ben killed on Father's Day

Benjamin Hyde, 49, a security guard, and father of well-known gang leader, was killed on Father's Day between King Street and East Canal

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

Benjamin Hyde, Sr., also known as "Ras Ben", 49, a security guard, was killed on Father's Day while riding his bicycle near King Street and East Canal on Sunday, June 19.

According to initial police reports, at about 2:58 Sunday afternoon, Hyde was riding his bicycle on King Street as he headed towards Albert Street when an unknown lone gunman emerged from a nearby yard and fired several



Benjamin Hyde, Sr., deceased

Please turn to ► Page 15

Major flooding up North!



BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

The rains over the weekend from the remnants of a low-pressure system that was being monitored since last Friday

have caused major flooding in the northern districts of Orange Walk and

Please turn to ► Page 15

BDF soldier caught transporting undocumented migrants

After being caught transporting thirteen undocumented migrants, a BDF soldier is now awaiting both a criminal and an internal investigation.



Hon. Oscar Mira

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

Just over a week ago, a Belize Defence Force soldier was detained in the Cayo District for transporting thirteen undocumented migrants, and according to the Minister of National Defence and Border Security, Hon. Oscar Mira, that soldier has since been

Please turn to ► Page 15

Mother and son knocked down in Lord's Bank



Tessa Myvett

by Khaila Gentle

LORDS BANK VILLAGE, Belize District, Sun. June 19, 2022

A teacher from the Bernice Yorke Institute of Learning, Ms. Tessa Myvett, is seeking the public's assistance after she and her five-year-old son were knocked down by a vehicle in Lords Bank Village last Monday. Having suffered multiple fractures on her hip, the Belize City teacher is currently bedridden

Please turn to ► Page 14

Belize City man killed while buying food

BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

In the early hours of Saturday morning, a man was killed while he was with a group buying food from a restaurant in Belize City. Jeffery Buller, 26, was fatally shot in the neck when a lone gunman fired at a group with whom he was standing outside Wong



Jeffery Buller - deceased

Gok Restaurant, in Belize City, where they were in the process of buying food. He was rushed to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMH) a little after midnight along with Akeem Bermudez, 28, who was shot in his hand.

Buller passed away while receiving treatment a little after 1:00 on Saturday morning, reports say. Several expended shells were found by police at the

Please turn to ► Page 14

CHOGM 2022 in Rwanda!

BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

The 2022 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2022) commenced yesterday in Kigali, Rwanda, with day 1 of the Commonwealth Youth Forum. Commonwealth Youth Council Regional Representative for the Caribbean and Americas, Dominique Noralez, and Deputy Mayor of Belize Allan Pollard are among the two Belizean youth representing the country at the bi-annual meeting.

This year's CHOGM is being held under the theme, "Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming," and will run from Sunday, June 19, 2022, which was the day on which the forum commenced, to Saturday, June 25, when the final high-level talks between the heads of Commonwealth nations



Belize City's deputy mayor Allan Pollard at the closing session of CHOGM 2022 in Kigali, Rwanda. (Fourth person from the right)

will be concluded. This official meeting among those heads of state starts on Friday, but is preceded by four days of forums touching on key areas affecting all Commonwealth nations.

The focus of this year's meeting will be on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, tackling climate change and poverty, boosting trade, and promoting sustainable development. Today, the Commonwealth Women's Forum will begin, and it will continue

into tomorrow, June 21. The Youth Forum which started yesterday, on Sunday, June 19, 2022, will also continue. A business forum is also scheduled to start on that day and end on June 23.

On Wednesday, the ministerial meetings will begin with a meeting of the ministers action group and a gathering of small states. A side event on climate change will also take place during a breakfast meeting on that day. Ministerial

and high-level meetings are set to begin on Thursday. On Friday, the official opening ceremony of the CHOGM 2022 will take place, followed by the executive sessions, which are set to continue into Saturday night before the closing of this year's meeting.

Commonwealth leaders will meet for the first time in four years since the meeting was canceled in June 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic; this meeting is held every two years, since the first in 1971.

In 2018, the last meeting was held in the United Kingdom. Several side events covering a wide range of topics will be held in conjunction with the main scheduled events.

Actions on policies to improve the quality of life for all people living in the Commonwealth member states are to be agreed on. Those decisions will guide the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

BDF soldiers complain about the food

Minister of State in the Ministry of National Defence, Hon. Oscar Mira, says that the viral video of an unsightly mixture of food was shared by mischievous soldiers.

by Charles Gladden

BELMOPAN, Mon. June 20, 2022

Last week, there were social media reports of substandard food being served to Belize Defence Force soldiers at Price Barracks in Ladyville.

A viral video was circulated of what is described to be a combination of lumps of white rice, boiled eggs, and journey cakes—all mixed together.

Some of the reports indicate that the proper protocols on how the food is to be served to the soldiers were not followed and that this is reflective of a food shortage because the BDF has not been able to pay its providers.

After the viral video made its rounds on social media, the BDF issued a press release which stated, "The BDF has protocols on how food should be packaged for consumption outside of the dining facilities. The matter is being investigated and those responsible for not adhering to the protocols will be held accountable."

The press release also explained that a chain of command should be followed when addressing concerns.

Minister of State in the Ministry of National Defence & Border Security, Hon. Oscar Mira, has confirmed that the viral video was shared by soldiers out to do mischief.

"All I can say is that is mischief. We have very highly trained cooks and chefs in the Belize Defence Force and they



Clumps of food

would never serve the BDF soldiers anything like what we saw in the videos or those pictures. There are units that would go and get food in containers because they are out in the fields or they are outside of Price Barracks, but no chef in their right mind would mix everything together. I think it's just mischief, I believe, and from experience, I know," explained Minister Mira.

Minister Mira added, "I just think it's mischief and unfortunately, in this age and time of technology, we can get a picture and interpret it in any way you want, but I can definitely say that for the Belize Defence Force, we're doing our best to ensure that we renovate to ensure to give them the best living conditions that we possibly can."

According to Minister Mira, the culprits who produced the viral video were soldiers in training. He mentioned that when soldiers would be training in small groups, a cook wouldn't be provided to them, and thus soldiers have gone to the kitchen and gotten their meals in containers.

While this wasn't the first time members of the BDF have complained about the condition and the food served to them, a majority of the

Marin, Sr. says the youth will have their time

According to Florencio Marin, Sr., over the past four months that he has been working in the sugar industry, he has been able to identify problem areas for cane farmers and has been able to establish a communication channel with the ASI/BSI management hierarchy. There have been reports of progress being made toward a new commercial agreement since the senior statesman became involved as a mediator.

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. June 16, 2022

Former PUP Cabinet member and area representative, Florencio Marin, Sr., has reported that BSI/ASR is cooperating fully with him in his work as advisor to the chairman of the Belize Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB), Marcos Osorio. Marin has revealed that he started work as a consultant to the board in March of this year, after a meeting in which Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño invited him to play a role in assisting the various stakeholders in the industry to develop a productive relationship and to reach consensus on key issues. He shared that despite the perception that he had totally withdrawn from public life, he has been working behind the scenes in the international community, representing the PUP.

"I met with Prime Minister John Briceño on the 4th of January of this year. I sought an audience with him to brief him on my international work on meetings with the COPAL group of political parties, with which the People's United Party is affiliated. That was from my side. Then the Prime Minister, after that, said, 'I am glad we are meeting. I have an invitation for you. I would like you to assist me with the sugar industry.' That came from the Prime Minister. And I said, 'Well, what is it about, Sir?' He said, 'Well, I want you, in particular, to liaise between the cane farmer associations and the manufacturing side of sugar. And being the Prime Minister and being the leader of my party, I couldn't say no. I agreed to assist the Prime Minister. And he said



Florencio Marin, Sr.—advisor to Chairman of Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB)

to me, 'You will report directly to me.' And I said, 'Of course.' And later on, he sent Minister Mai to finalize the issue. And I started to work on the 1st of March of this year," Marin, Sr. said.

As mentioned, the senior statesman was appointed to serve as an advisor and mediator at this critical juncture in the sugar industry due to his insights into the interests, concerns and circumstances of various groups which are stakeholders in the industry and also because of how influential he continues to be in northern Belize and in the sugar industry. The hope, at the time of his appointment, was that he would use his sharpened diplomatic skills to bring the parties back around the table and chart a part forward for the negotiation of a

Gramoxone container found in sugar cane delivery

by *Khaila Gentle*

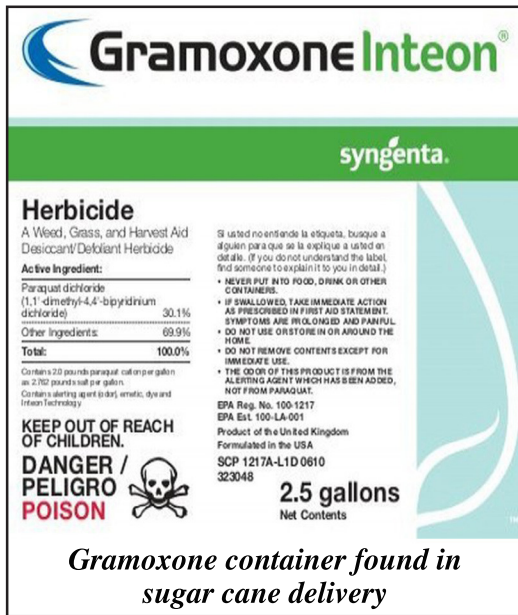
ORANGE WALK TOWN, Sun. June 19, 2022

The Corozal Sugar Cane Producers Association (CSCPA) has raised the alarm about potentially hazardous materials being found inside sugar cane deliveries after a two-gallon Gramoxone container was reportedly found at the Tower Hill factory last week. Gramoxone, also known as Paraquat, is a highly toxic herbicide that is commonly used to control grass and weed growth.

According to the CSCPA, the discovery of the container could pose a serious risk to the certification and status of Belize's sugar industry, as Gramoxone is listed as a prohibited hazardous material under the Fairtrade International criteria.

"The CSCPA would like to express that such actions can be the cause to create a very unfortunate situation with our major development partners. The entire industry certification agreement and status can be jeopardized and even be exposed to the entire country's sugar industry Fairtrade commitment under certification, either to be suspended or to be decertified," said a press release from the association.

Just one week prior to the discovery of the container, the Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI/ASR) issued a notice that a bicycle had been removed in parts from a cane carrier after having been spotted by factory personnel. BSI/ASR warned cane farmers that the presence of foreign material in deliveries



Gramoxone container found in sugar cane delivery

can be detrimental to the sugar mill—with the potential to halt processing for hours on end and possibly damage factory machinery.

In January of this year, BSI/ASR also issued a public statement to express concern at the excessive quantity of extraneous material—rocks, sticks, and various pieces of metal—that was being found in the sugarcane deliveries. In an interview, BSI's Communication Officer, William Neal, stated that the company was looking at ways in which it could enforce greater due diligence on the part of cane farmers to prevent a potentially "catastrophic" situation.

Last week, CTV-3 News asked Minister of Agriculture, Jose Mai about the ongoing issue. Minister Mai called the discovery of the Gramoxone container "bad news" and expressed his hopes that it was not intentionally put there in an effort to sabotage the mill.

BTB hosts ambassador training programs across the country



by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Sun. June 19, 2022

The Belize Tourism Board (BTB) has been conducting ambassador training workshops in various communities across the country this month, including one held in Belize City on Friday, June 17, at the Best Western Belize Biltmore Plaza. The workshops are a part of the BTB's new Elevate Training Program and are being held under the theme "Defining Customer Service & Leadership".

The Ambassador Training Program seeks to equip stakeholders in positions that involve interaction with visitors to the country, such as tour operators and hotel staff, with the best practice techniques and customer service concepts needed to effectively act as the country's tourism ambassadors.

Bill Castaneda, the BTB's Director of Quality Management Capacity Development, spoke with the media about the program. He explained that

Please turn to **Page 11**



VACANCY Layout and Design Artist

A vacancy exists at Amandala Press for a Layout and Design Artist, who is competent in Adobe Pagemaker, Photoshop, InDesign and Microsoft Office Suite. The applicant must be serious about his or her work.

Requirements:

- Competency in Adobe Pagemaker, Photoshop, InDesign, Microsoft Word, Publisher, and Excel
- Ability to create advertisements
- Attention to detail and accuracy
- Well organized and has great time management skills
- Ability to multitask, work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Honest, dependable and a team player with excellent communication skills

Applications along with resume and two references must be addressed to the Manager, P.O. Box 15, 3304 Partridge Street, Belize City or emailed to amandalapress@yahoo.com, no later than Friday, June 27, 2022.

Traffic wardens sworn in as Special Constables

After a two-week training exercise, several members of the Traffic Department in various parts of the country were sworn in as Special Constables.



by *Charles Gladden*

BELMOPAN, Fri. June 17, 2022

During the closing ceremonies of a two-week training exercise coordinated by the Department of Transport and hosted at the National Police Training Academy, a number of traffic wardens from various municipalities throughout the country who had participated in the training were sworn in as Special Constables.

The key subject areas covered during the training session were the Belize Constitution, Criminal Liability, Power of Search, Observation and Perception, Method of Search—all of which were aimed at equipping traffic officers with a skill set that will expand their roles as law enforcement officers serving their respective municipality.

Dian Vasquez, Chief Transport Officer for the Department of Transport, noted that the authority held by traffic officers is similar to that of police officers, except that it is used solely to address traffic infractions and violations.

"Our wardens do have a similar power of a police officer, but our wardens enforce traffic infractions mainly, and so we thought it very prudent if we would have them undergo a Special Constable training that would

basically amplify their effectiveness as law-enforcing officers. And so it would not only be that they would only focus on traffic violations or traffic infractions but have this additional training authority bestowed on them now, they could execute effectively while doing these checkpoints," said Vasquez.

During the closing ceremonies, Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, Minister of Transport, remarked, "Only the police can arrest, and again don't take advantage of any opportunity that is given to you, because when we feel like we have all the power, then we say how and what we want. You must always use your discretion and apply your power to the best of your ability, because we are all citizens of this country and we all have our own rights as human beings."

"I have had numerous requests for Special Constable, but it's not everybody who can be given that responsibility, because it's a huge responsibility, but you have been chosen to attend this two-week course and you have been successful in the course and now you have this responsibility. And remember, with this responsibility you are now held [to] a higher standard," Hon. Oscar Mira, area representative for Belmopan, told the newly appointed special constables.

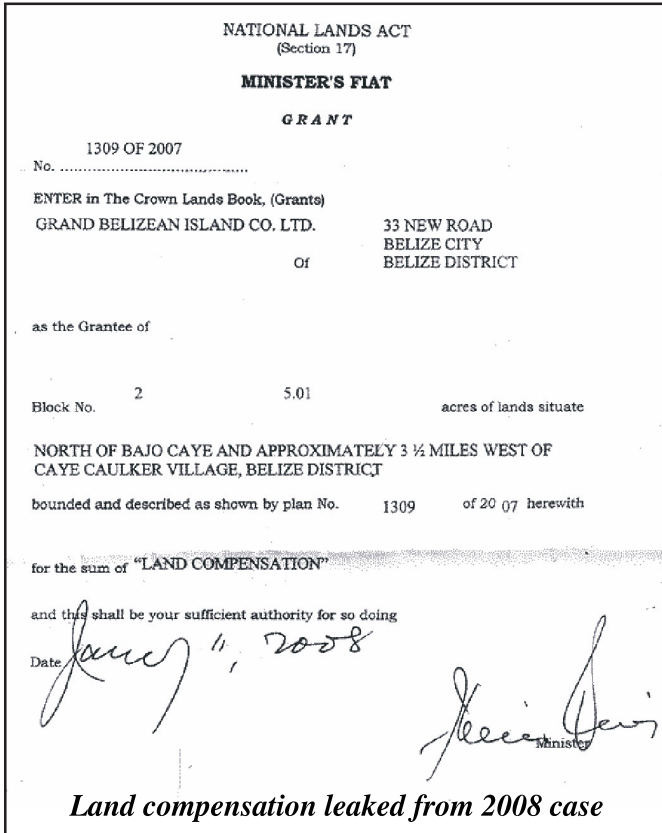
Land compensation claims battering government, Hon. Hyde says

BELIZE CITY, Sun. June 19, 2022

At this time, the government of Belize is considering the drafting of legislation that could protect its coffers from exploitative land compensation claims, which, according to Lands Minister, Hon. Cordel Hyde, are appearing almost on a daily basis at the Natural Resources Ministry. He told local journalists that a significant amount of time and energy is being expended by the ministry to address such claims—not to mention government funds to settle these claims, many of which have arisen due to decisions made by the previous UDP, administration, Hyde says.

Many of the claims stem from duplicated land sales, a costly oversight. Hyde said that they are making a diligent effort to ensure that the current administration does not make errors similar to what were made by previous governments.

“Every other day we get, my desk is filled with letters from lawyers, from attorneys representing people from all over the country. Where there were duplications, the past government gave away the land for someone that had a title. They didn’t search hard enough or didn’t care to search hard enough to verify that that person had the title,



and those chickens are coming home to roost, and those are primarily from, entirely from, the previous government,” Hyde said.

One such case, Hyde said, involves a person claiming compensation for land in Stann Creek and currently suing the government for 17 million dollars.

“Cases keep coming, keep coming, keep coming—it’s scary, the amount of millions people are demanding from us, and in fact, right now the government is engaged in trying to look critically at the law to see how we can amend it to kind of protect the government from times when we make a simple mistake and not have to pay market value for that, so it’s lots of millions, man,” Hyde said.

Famed footballer busted with contraband

Popular football defender Ian Gaynair was caught with over a thousand cans of contraband Mexican beer in his Toyota Corolla this weekend.

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Sun. June 19, 2022

This past Friday, popular football player Ian Gaynair—who has played on the country’s National Team for several years—was found in possession of over a thousand cans of contraband beer after being stopped by police officers in the Orange Walk District. According to police reports, a low-riding Toyota Corolla was spotted somewhere between San Antonio and Santa Cruz Village. Upon intercepting and inspecting the vehicle, which was being driven by Gaynair, police found several cases of Mexican beers, including forty-two cases of Corona beer (containing a total of 1008 cans), six cases of Superior beer, and two cases of Barrillito beer.

Gaynair was taken to the Belize Customs Department and has since agreed to a settlement. In cases where persons are caught with contraband, settlements usually amount to three times



Football defender Ian Gaynair

the value of the items confiscated by Customs.

Over the weekend, the football star jokingly posted on his Facebook account, “so I cant have my party again then?”

Former Speaker of the House, Carlos Castillo, passes

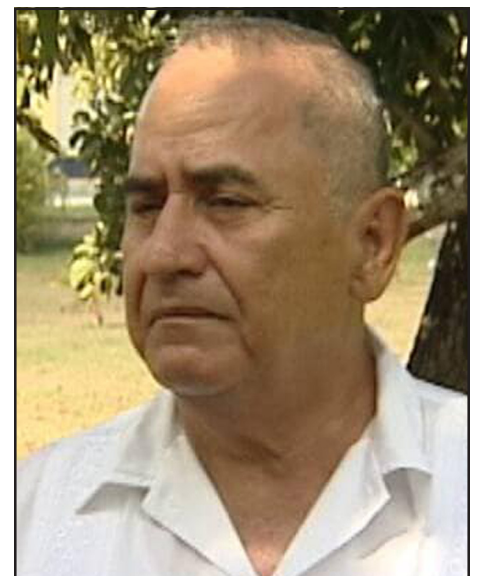
BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

Yesterday, June 19, former Speaker of the House and lifelong educator Carlos Castillo passed away. Castillo was a UDP stalwart of the Corozal District and the principal of Wesley High School in the 1970s, before becoming principal of Escuela Secundaria Tecnica Mexico in Corozal.

He was the president of the Belize Teachers Union for a while, and also a lifelong supporter of the United Democratic Party. He was appointed Speaker of the House during the first UDP government from 1984 to 1989. He also served as 2nd Deputy Party Leader of the UDP and was a standard-bearer for Corozal Bay.

“The UDP Corozal Bay Executive Committee expresses its Deepest Condolences to the Family of the late Mr. Carlos Orlando Castillo,” a post from the committee shared by Albert area representative Tracy Panton says. In her post Panton stated, “The UDP Albert ACTION Committee joins other Members of our extended United Democratic Party Family in expressing our most heartfelt condolences to the Family of Mr. Carlos Orlando Castillo. May his soul RIP and Rise in the Fullness of God’s Glory.”

Current UDP leader, Hon. Moses



Carlos Castillo – deceased

“Shyne” Barrow, in a post on Facebook said, “REST IN PEACE HON. CARLOS CASTILLO!!! Deepest sympathies to the family of our former Speaker of the House of Representatives and UDP stalwart. We are grateful for your contributions to the United Democratic Party and the many lives you’ve touched in Corozal!”

Reports are that a wake will be held in the Corozal District on June 21, with a state funeral to follow on the 22nd and 23rd of June.

Well-known Brodies employee killed

Glenn Theodore Vernon, 44, a security guard for Brodies Supermarket, was shot in Buttonwood Bay.

by Charles Gladden

BUTTONWOOD BAY, Belize City, Mon. June 20, 2022

Glenn Theodore Vernon, 44, a well-known employee of Brodies Supermarket in Belize City, was shot near his left rib cage and on his thigh in Buttonwood Bay on Thursday, June 16, and died shortly before 2:00 p.m. on Friday, June 17, after being transported to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, where he was placed on life support.

An initial police investigation has revealed that Vernon left work that evening, but prior to going to his home on Independence Avenue in Buttonwood Bay, he made his routine stop at the yard of his friend, Richard Alvarez, on Dolphin Drive.

At around 7:00 that night, however,



Glenn Theodore Vernon, deceased

two men on a motorcycle approached the gathering, and one of them opened fire.

Since the night of the murder, police have questioned several persons who they believe could have carried out the shooting, but so far no one has been detained or arrested for the crime.

So far, police investigators know that Vernon wasn’t the intended target, and

that the shooting was likely prompted by an altercation that involved the men in Alvarez’s yard and that took place prior to his arrival at that location.

“Well, as I said, apparently in his absence, the persons that he [was] associating with had a problem with other persons, known to them, and apparently these persons returned, and unbeknown to Mr. Vernon that something took place before he arrived there. So we know that he could not

have been the intended target because he had no knowledge of what took place before,” highlighted the Communications Director of the Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood.

Residents of the neighborhood in which the shooting occurred have said that Vernon was not a troublesome person and was a well-respected resident.

Vernon had been an employee of Brodies for twenty-four years.



Rediscovering the wheel, as the murders continue

Man shot on Fabers Road; man shot on Dolphin Street; man shot on Sixth Street; man shot on King Street... "The good, the bad," or the innocent. R.I.P. all!

Sun. June 19, 2022, Mon. June 20, 2022

If ever there was need for a serious "intelligence" body among our law enforcement agencies, the time is definitely now, when impunity has become the order of the day among coldblooded murderers in the streets of Belize City. Guns for hire, gang-related, or not; when a "gunman" can be so brazen and callous, seemingly with no fear of being held accountable, when taking another's life in a public setting, we know we are in a very bad place indeed. Crime, poverty, lack of education, malnutrition, unemployment, corruption, unjust wealth distribution, inadequate health care ... everything is related, and there are no easy answers or quick fix solutions. But we still need to be going forward in tackling the problems, rather than going around in circles. Why do we keep discarding good approaches and strategies, and refuse, as a people, to "grab the bull by the horns" and tackle the problems with focus and intensity? Is it, as Assad Shoman opined back in 2018 in Punta Gorda (Krem broadcast on Saturday evening), that we only became politically "independent" in 1981, but our Belizean mentality has not yet been "decolonized"?

While there can be debates on crime-fighting methods and intervention techniques to reduce the level of retaliation among the various gangs after each murder, there is this feeling among helpless and frustrated citizens that we're fighting a losing battle, like trying to bail a badly leaking boat by a bucket in the stern area, while a big hole has water gushing in from the bow region.

We would be tempted to engage a discussion on the intelligence strategies in the interdiction side of crime fighting, and question the wisdom of dismantling the much maligned "SIS" (Security Intelligence Services) of a former UDP administration. There is a danger of any intelligence-gathering agency of government being manipulated for party political purposes; but that does not mean a great need does not exist to monitor and gather undercover information on these individuals who seem to be roaming our streets with utter disregard for the possible presence of undercover intelligence, which could surprise them when least expected, and at least give them one more thing to think about when making their move to end an innocent life. With an already terrorized citizenry, these guys often strike their targets in broad daylight, with full confidence that none of the apparently frightened onlookers may turn out to be an armed undercover agent. There are none such in Belize, it seems, thanks to the heavy politicizing in the PUP election campaign a few decades ago against the UDP-instituted SIS.

In the name of politics and political expediency, the Belizean people have over the

years seen a number of good projects disbanded or derailed, only to see later attempts to resurrect them in a different form. At one time the campaign slogan was "Vat is a killer!" But after the election, the new party in government soon did a few modifications and came out instead with GST. One party in government tried to address the gang warfare problem with a Youth For The Future initiative, but this was soon scrapped by the incoming party in government in favor of a new thing called Conscious Youth Development Programme. Continuity and building of institutional knowledge remains a problem each time an initiative is discontinued due to politics, and then the new group has to start all over again. Perhaps the most egregious act due to political expediency was the dismantling of BELCAST (Belize College of Arts, Science and Technology) by the incoming UDP government in 1984 in favor of a new business-oriented UCB (University College of Belize), which was affiliated with an American university. If ever there was a destructively backward move for a young, developing country, that was it. Nurses Training School, Belize Teachers College and the renowned Technical College soon became casualties.

The Crimes Commission Report and Recommendations of 1992 during a PUP administration focused a lot of its attention on intervention strategies with gangs, interdiction efforts of the Police Department, and the judiciary; and while it did recommend the enactment of some social, educational and community programs as well as creating employment opportunities, the incoming UDP administration in 1993 saw the usual redirection of focus and the backburner status for that report. Subsequent efforts to draft detailed approaches and plans to try and bring escalating crime, especially murders, under control have been slow to bear fruit, despite different scientific studies and recommendations from foreign experts (Gayle and Crooks) and dedicated local visionaries. In June 2022, we are still plagued by execution-style murders, home invasions, burglaries and other economic crimes. It thus begs the question, is it that there is no political will, or have we been "barking up the wrong tree"?

One clue that our methods are not sufficient to arrest this problem, is evident from the mouth of the Commissioner of Police himself, when he responded to a suggestion from reporter Cherrisse Halsall (7News) that some of his "... police officers may be involved with cartels?" Commissioner Williams retorted that "... we are dismissing police officers everyday." From decades ago, we have been hearing of crooked cops confiscating drugs from individuals, to give to other individuals to sell on their behalf. We sympathize with the Commissioner, because, hard as they are to find, a "few good men" in the force could be more effective than a whole battalion of officers riddled with crooks.

A most unlikely source, the sports memoirs of American Peace Corps, Ted Cox, who was stationed in Belize between 1971 and 1973, and which was just published in 2014 under the title, "When British Honduras became Belize," has unearthed some very interesting facts, including a report which, it now appears, provided a golden opportunity to chart a course that could have perhaps saved a whole generation of our youth lost to gun violence.

As Cox describes it, "In 1966 the United Nations, through UNICEF, embraced the concept of 'responsible parenthood.' ... The U.N. expert, Vin Lawrence, arrived on September 13, 1972... Many organizations, social workers, citizens, youths and youth leaders collaborated on the preparation of his report ... for three months." The final report, "... a 180-page booklet entitled *National Youth Programme: Youth in Belize - Moving Towards Development* ... was presented to the Ministry of Local Government, Community and Social Development." Whatever became of that report?

Even before the advent of crack cocaine and gangs in Belize, and with no mention of police, "The study observed that large-scale unemployment tends to create an angry generation that often finds



(estb. 1969)

Business and editorial offices:
3304 Partridge Street, Belize City, Belize, Central America is printed twice weekly by the Amandala Press.
Telephones: 501-280-4703/
501-202-4477

Publisher: Evan X Hyde
Editor-in-chief: Marco Lopez
Business Manager: Jacinta Hyde
Make-up & Design
Artist: Dwayne Murillo
Executive Secretary: Eden Cruz
Compositor: Tyra Welch
Lithography: Clive Smith
Printer: Kent Brooks

Please email Correspondence:
editor_amandala@yahoo.com

Advertisements to:
amandalapress@yahoo.com

Mailing Address:
Amandala Press
3304 Partridge Street
c/o P.O. Box 15,
Belize City, Belize

Amandala's website:
amandala.com.bz

Half-mil and early exemption request

Document showing payments to Courtenay Coye LLP and Douglas Mendez SC which together amounted to roughly half a million dollars were sent to the chairman of the UDP, Michael Peyrefitte, who said that the premature request for exemption by Courtenay and Coye shows an intention to receive huge payouts from government coffers. Courtenay says it's a matter of routine.

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. June 16, 2022

The government of Belize has sent an official response to Senator Michael Peyrefitte, who made two requests under the Freedom of Information Act last Friday for documents indicating the amounts paid to the Courtenay Coye LLP law firm for legal representation it has provided to GoB. Attached to the letter from the Office of the Prime Minister are documents showing the exemption letters granted to the senior members of Courtenay Coye LLP by then Governor-General Sir Colville Young, after Senator Coye, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance, and Senator Eamon Courtenay, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration, asked that the firm be given leave to be hired by the government without their having to vacate their seats within the Senate. (Senator Chris Coye is the founding partner of the firm, and Senator Courtenay is the managing partner.

Peyrefitte is thus claiming that the letters, which according to Peyrefitte were sent to the Governor General just 5 weeks after the PUP victory in the 2020 general election, purportedly show that the individuals went into government with the intention that their law firm would be retained for its legal services.

"The 18th of December 2020, five weeks after the general elections, the ink barely dry pan the oath weh they sign fi be minister, senator and prime minister, and this is what Senator Courtenay wrote to the Governor-General. Now, remember, this is the 18th of December 2020, you know. There are no cases against the government by nobody; nobody nuh di sue they...so you know, a little bit more than 30 days after being elected, Senator Courtenay wrote to the Governor-General Young this letter: 'I am the senior partner in the firm of Courtenay Coye's LLP, attorney-at-law. I am also a senator appointed by Your Excellency....I am not aware that the firm is currently party to any contract with the government; however, it is likely that Courtenay Coye LLP will be engaged by the government from time to time to advise it on the sensitive legal matters when it is deemed appropriate.' This letter indicates clearly, ladies and gentlemen, that these people came into government with a plan!" Peyrefitte said at a UDP press conference on Tuesday.

Yesterday, Senator Courtenay, in his remarks during a press conference hosted by the PUP, dismissed Peyrefitte's claims and referred to the exemption letter as merely a matter of routine.

"Every time I am appointed to the Senate, I write that letter to the Governor-General, and I get a response, every single time, cause I don't know whenever somebody... There are nine lawyers in that firm. Somebody calls them, they get business, I don't know what's gonna happen, so I write that letter to make sure I am covered in the event that my firm is asked to do any work. It's as simple as that, nothing more complicated

or secret," Courtenay said.

Peyrefitte said that a similar letter was penned for the founding partner of the law firm, Hon. Chris Coye. He noted that the letter specifically highlighted the need for an urgent response to the request outlined in the document.

"These people know that when they were coming in, they were leaving their law firms and had to make sure that they secured employment for their firm with the government. That is plain to be seen. It's not like something happened and then they reached out to them and say, 'bwai, we have to plug you in fi dis'. No, man, before anything happen, we done wa get permission... The letter for Senator Coye, they cut and paste it, yo know. The only with the letter da this: Eamon says 'I am a senior partner'; Chris Coye says, 'I am a founding partner'," Peyrefitte said.

During his remarks at a press conference held by the Prime Minister yesterday, Minister Courtenay explained the reasons for hiring legal representatives from outside the public service but maintained that the crown counsels in the Attorney General's ministry are the utmost legal professionals.

"What we have here are examples, not all, some of the cases that is dealing with things on which they had advised under the UDP. It is very difficult to go back to any professional—'now that the tables have turned, I want you advise on the same thing'. Secondly, some of these issues are politically sensitive, and you, just for obvious reasons, don't go to somewhere whether by design or accident, information goes out. You have to deal with things in a way that is practical. I would not go to a law firm where my opponent has somebody in there who is working there and they have a loyalty to somebody I'm against. What is the point I am making? There are people in the Attorney General's ministry, like every single ministry in Belize, who have connections direct and otherwise to the previous administration. I am not questioning the loyalty or competence of any of the crowns, but it is uncomfortable for them. That's the point, because the minute something leaks, you point on somebody if these issues are politically sensitive... The long and short of it is this, in the government service, there are frequently times when you have to outsource, or you choose to outsource all kinds of services....," Courtenay said.

The letter from the Office of the Prime Minister to Peyrefitte shows that up to June 10, 2022, \$277,842.50 was paid to Courtenay Coye LLP and \$224,745.73 to Douglas Mendez SC, a Trinidadian senior counsel, in legal fees. The letter states, "Some of these engagements are ongoing court matters which will require further legal work to be performed. The additional work to be done cannot yet be determined."

The letter goes on to make a shocking claim that law firms owned either by former Prime Minister Dean Barrow or members of his family collected tens of



(L-R) Senator Eamon Courtenay and Senator Michael Peyrefitte

millions of dollars from the government as payment for legal services they provided during the previous Barrow administration.

The letter sent out from the Office of the Prime Minister alleges, "In total, the Barrow family of law firms received over \$30,000,000.00 (\$30 million) in taxpayer dollars from the Government of Belize, of which over \$20,000,000.000 (\$20 million) was for legal fees."

The letter also claims that the former prime minister's law firm secured payments from the UDP government "to his firm's clients for land acquisition by the Government."

It then went on to point to a need for further enquiry in order to arrive at a more complete assessment of the amount paid to the law firms owned by members of the Barrow family. "It would surely be in the public interest to ascertain what additional amounts, over and above this \$30 million, the Barrow family of law firms were paid by statutory bodies and government-owned entities like BTL, BEL, BWSL, the Social Security Board and the Central Bank of Belize," the letter from the Prime Minister's office stated.

"In the interest of transparency and accountability, I would expect that these institutions might find it in the interest of the respective entities and the public interest that such information should also be disclosed in due course," the Prime Minister's letter went on to say.

At the UDP's press conference, Peyrefitte implied that the statements in the letter had set the stage for what he said would be a slam dunk defamation case—although there have been no indications by Rt. Hon. Dean Barrow or any of his family members of any intention to bring a lawsuit against the government to challenge the contents of Prime Minister Briceño's letter.

"This man is saying in writing that the Rt. Hon. Dean Barrow steered clients to his law firm and while he is the head of a UDP government made sure that his law firm and their clients benefitted from the government. Really? I mean, really....If there was ever a slam dunk defamation case—you really would put that in a letter?

Mean this person is mad. Not true!" Peyrefitte said.

The letter from the Office of the Prime Minister claims that Barrow and Co., the law firm owned by former PM Barrow's brother, Denys Barrow, received \$20 million in payment from the government of Belize, \$14 million of which was for legal fees. Peyrefitte argued, however, that Andrew Marshalleck, who is believed to be closely affiliated with the PUP government, has been the face of that company for the past 10 years.

He added, "Let's be frank: the face of the Barrow and Company law firm for the better part of the last decade is none other than Andrew Marshalleck, who was the chairman of the PUP commission of inquiry early into their term and the quintessential PUP insider..."

Peyrefitte went on to insist that during his, Peyrefitte's, term as attorney general, Trinidadian senior counsel Douglas Mendez's legal services were never retained, despite the assertion in the letter from PM Briceño that he also worked under the UDP's administrations.

Prime Minister Briceño has said, however, that the information they received indicated that SC Mendez was indeed retained by the previous UDP government, and in reference to Senator Peyrefitte's allusions to a possible defamation lawsuit, he said, "They are taking out endless lawsuits against the government, so it's just going to another one, should they decide they want to do that, but I'm not sure they want to go down that road."

Notably, Peyrefitte has requested additional documentation from GoB.

"So nuh tell da just so much the man di get pay, show we the check, show we the wire transfer, so we need those things so we can verify and follow if any more check or transfers were done in that line. That is where we are; and let me tell you something: ih nuh done deh, you know, because other government ministers supposedly have permission too, we are hearing, and it should be more fees coming for other firms and other things coming, and we still nuh find we 15 million dollars yet, so these issues will not die," he said.

Just don't tarnish the Jewel

by Colin Hyde

No applause for Hon. Shyne Barrow, the present leader of the opposition, for declaring that the presentation PM Briceño made at the 9th Summit of the Americas on behalf of Belize and the Caribbean was dictator-loving. Did he really charge the present government with diplomatic prostitution for its stance on Cuba and Venezuela? My, my, the PM was speaking for us, the Caribbean, and Central America except for Guatemala, when he shared how we felt about the exclusion of those countries. The opposition leader clearly didn't consult with the other leaders of the UDP before he spouted off. I guess some people feel you can't go wrong if you try to please the world's biggest power.

Following up on the speech condemnation, next thing we know the UDP has a press conference at which the opposition leader, according to reports in the *Guardian*, says the PUP looks like it is slipping into authoritarianism, Belize is becoming dictatorial and autocratic, people are dissatisfied with the PUP, and low voter turnout in the recent village council elections is a testament that people are fearful of showing dissent to our present rulers.

Full exploration of this voter turnout statement in this piece will take me over my word limit, so for now I'll just say that if individuals are afraid of the government, they have absolutely no fear of being found out in a village council election.

On the heels of, or just before throwing all that mud, making his authoritarian/dictatorship charge, the opposition leader appeared at the doorsteps of the US Embassy, or wherever the officers of that powerful country hang out. His rotten objective is obvious. Some interesting cases are coming up; it is all about protecting the caucus that engaged in corruption and

brought shame upon the nation and the UDP. Fair enough to defend your crooks, but the main opposition has to choose its tools carefully, so our international image doesn't get smeared.

Mr. Shyne made some clarifications, one of them being that some opinions he shared are his and his alone. The present PM "seemingly" was the only politically active member of his party who supported going to the ICJ. But that vote was an internal matter. The 9th Summit was the international stage, and that made the comments of the representative of the main opposition also big stage. The UDP has much responsibility here. When a ball club sends a rookie onto the field, they don't know that the novice will succeed but they know that he/she has prepared for the job. That leader's job isn't for a trainee.

Politicians are in the arena to win, but as there are laws that govern the conduct of war and sports (simulated war), there are lines that politicians must respect. In our quest to win, we must know that the Jewel must not be tarnished.

There's precedent for this, in the local LGBT book. More than once, the local LGBT leader has thrown us out there as a nation that is in the habit of being physically violent to the gay community. Most everyone will tell you that that is not true. There are numbers out there on many bad things in our society. If a child/youth is molested, most likely it is a family member who did it. If a woman gets hurt, most likely it is her male partner who did it. There's no hard data, but the consensus is that when a gay man is physically assaulted/wounded/tragically killed, it is the act of another gay man.

There is no truth that we are in the habit of depriving gays of jobs. Wait a minute, people who claim to have access to information say that the biggest plum jobs in our country are

held by our brothers and sisters who belong to that community! The only issue is when overt gays try for jobs as teachers. There are aggressive types who will teach children falsehoods. It's really incredible that some don't accept that God only made one orifice for sexual expression, and the female of our species have it. Everything else is from the minds of man.

It's true that some of us are guilty of the serious crime of verbal assault. We are far from perfect, and we must work to improve ourselves. Gay is very strange, and there are people who don't accept that this is 100% a wiring thing. Those of us who don't understand this need to check ourselves, so we don't do wrong to people.

Our country is very small, a little jewel, and we must protect it. We have issues to deal with at home, and we must do so without crossing certain lines. It is unfair, even criminal, to carry our name abroad as gay enemies. But you know what it is about. It's about selfish gain. How we look abroad matters naught to those who will satisfy their selfish ends.

As per the condemnation speech, it is good that not one UDP leader cheered. That game was to curry favor with the Americans. Of course we all want their love, but it's a bad page for a political party to try and win that affection with the charge that we are sliding away from democracy.

Me noh andastan Ms. Griner

I see where mighty famous retired middleweight champion boxer Roy Jones, Jr. has offered to put his freedom on the line – I think that means go to Russia – to try and get American basketball player, Brittney Griner, out of a prison there. Roy has dual US and Russian citizenship, and he is a lot more famous than Brittney. I'm not about raining on Jones' desire to try and be a hero, and I don't lack compassion for Brittney; I'm just about discussing a matter for its potential to influence

people about why we must think hard before making decisions that can impact others.

Brittney entered Russia to play basketball a week before that country invaded Ukraine. The young woman plays in both the US and Europe, reportedly because two salaries are better than one. When she arrived in Russia, there were reportedly a couple marijuana things in her possession, one of them oil.

I was extremely surprised when I learned she had gone to Russia, for that country had amassed massive amounts of artillery on its border with Ukraine, and war was imminent. If there is a war ongoing or likely, and it doesn't concern you, get the hell out or don't go the hell in.

I should apologize for using the word "hell". Those are not the kinds of terms I use around a lady. I am not carrying any bias against Ms. Griner because she is full blown LGBT, with wife/husband, a marital situation that definitely does not help her cause in Russia. I think over there that "felony" is eased some because the wife/husband stayed home, in the US, but if Ms. Griner felt that she would have been accorded gentlemanly treatment for being of the gentle sex, you bet her not being a "regular" woman hurt her position.

My big beef in all this is that in going there, she set up innocents, like Roy. I've read that Russia was offering to trade her for someone in a US prison that might be a big gun and ammunitions agent. Of course I feel for her, but her ignorance or selfishness has put her country in a spot, and could cause Roy to lose his freedom, even endanger his life.

On the reverse side, there is always a reverse side, the US might be glad to see Russia looking so bad, so unmanly to treat a lady so cruelly, and Mr. Jones might be in desperate need of a cause to fight. But let's keep it simple. What the hell was Ms. Brittney thinking when she entered a country on the brink of war?



SUMMARY PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Contract Title: Consultancy for the Conduct of an ICT Sector Gap analysis in CARICOM and Development of Digital Cooperation and Digital Agenda Frameworks for Member States and Associate States of CARICOM

Contract reference no.: EU/SFCICP/RICT4D/2022JB

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat intends to award a service contract for the **Consultancy for the Conduct of an ICT Sector Gap analysis in CARICOM and Development of Digital Cooperation and Digital Agenda Frameworks for Member States and Associate States of CARICOM**. The contract will be implemented at the CARICOM Secretariat (Guyana) Office with financial assistance from **11th European Development Fund**. The detailed Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) is available at <https://caricom.org/procurement-notice/>

The deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest (EOIs) is **27 June 2022**.



Rediscovering the wheel, as the murders continue

Continued from Page 5

vandalism and violence the easiest ways to alleviate frustration." And a couple of the study's findings from way back in 1972 jump out at us: "The education system was unsuited to achieve the needs of the nation. It was geared too much towards academic goals, lacking in student preparation for social and economic development ... There were inadequate vocational facilities ... There was a lack of usable play fields ..." And this was before BEC field was "developed" and the Barracks was "saved." Moreover, the study did propose "a blueprint and overview of a national youth program through the year 2000."

We've lost a whole lot of time along with a couple generations of our youth, all because the demands of the task at hand may not have been deemed politically expedient. But it's never too late to start. It is time for some serious soul-searching and atonement on the part of our government leaders, both red and blue. Let us as Belizeans discard forever that "colonized mentality" and embark on some decisive action to save our youth, beginning with remodeling our whole education system "to achieve the needs of the nation."



Redescubriendo la rueda, mientras los asesinatos continúan

Hombre baleado en la Calle Faber's; hombre baleado en la Calle Dolphin; hombre baleado en la Sexta Calle; hombre baleado en la Calle King... "El bueno, el malo," o el inocente. ¡Q.E.P.D. todos!

Domingo 19 de Junio de 2022, lunes 20 de junio de 2022

Si alguna vez hubo necesidad de un cuerpo de "inteligencia" serio entre nuestras agencias de aplicación de la ley, definitivamente el momento es ahora, cuando la impunidad se ha convertido en el orden del día entre los asesinos a sangre fría en las calles de la Ciudad de Belize. Mercenarios, relacionados con pandillas o no; cuando un "pistolero" puede ser tan descarado e insensible, aparentemente sin temor a rendir cuentas, al quitarle la vida a otra persona en un lugar público, sabemos que, en verdad, estamos en el suelo. Crimen, pobreza, falta de educación, desnutrición, desempleo, corrupción, distribución injusta de la riqueza, atención médica inadecuada... todo está relacionado y no hay respuestas fáciles ni soluciones rápidas. Pero aun tenemos que seguir adelante para abordar los problemas, en lugar de dar vueltas en círculos. ¿Por qué seguimos descartando buenos enfoques y estrategias, y nos negamos, como pueblo, a "agarrar el toro por los cuernos" y abordar los problemas con enfoque e intensidad? ¿Es, como opinó Assad Shoman en 2018 en Punta Gorda (transmisión de Krem el sábado por la noche), que solo nos volvimos políticamente "independientes" en 1981, pero nuestra mentalidad beliceña aún no ha sido "descolonizada"?

Si bien puede haber debates sobre los métodos de lucha contra el crimen y las técnicas de intervención para reducir el nivel de represalias entre las distintas pandillas después de cada asesinato, entre los ciudadanos indefensos y frustrados existe la sensación de que estamos peleando una batalla perdida, como tratar de rescatar a un bote con una grave fuga con una cubeta en el área de popa, mientras que un gran agujero tiene agua brotando desde la región de proa.

Estaríamos tentados a entablar una discusión sobre las estrategias de inteligencia en el lado de la interdicción de la lucha contra el crimen, y cuestionar la sabiduría de dismantelar el muy difamado "SIS" (Servicios de Inteligencia de Seguridad) de una antigua administración UDP. Existe el peligro de que cualquier organismo de recopilación de inteligencia del gobierno sea manipulado con fines políticos partidistas; pero eso no significa que no exista una gran necesidad de monitorear y recopilar información encubierta sobre estos individuos que parecen estar deambulando por nuestras calles con total desprecio por la posible presencia de inteligencia encubierta, que podría sorprenderlos cuando menos lo esperan, y al menos darles una cosa más en que pensar al hacer su movimiento para acabar con una vida inocente. Con una ciudadanía ya aterrorizada, estos tipos a menudo atacan a sus blancos a plena luz del día, con plena confianza de que ninguno de los espectadores aparentemente asustados puede resultar ser un agente encubierto armado. Parece que no hay ninguno en Belize, gracias a la fuerte politización en la campaña electoral del PUP hace unas décadas contra el SIS instituido por el UDP.

En nombre de la política y la conveniencia política, a lo largo de los años el pueblo beliceño ha visto cómo se dismantelaban o descarrilaban una serie de buenos proyectos, solo para ver intentos posteriores de resucitarlos de una forma diferente. En algún momento, el lema de la campaña fue "¡El IVA es un asesino!" Pero después de las elecciones, el nuevo partido en el poder pronto hizo algunas modificaciones y en su lugar presentó el Impuesto General a las Ventas (IGV). Un partido en el gobierno trató de abordar el problema de la guerra de pandillas con una iniciativa de Juventud para el Futuro, pero pronto fue descartada por el partido entrante en el gobierno a favor de una nueva cosa llamada Programa de Desarrollo para una Juventud Consciente. La continuidad y la construcción del conocimiento institucional sigue siendo un problema cada vez que una iniciativa se discontinúa debido a la política, y luego el nuevo grupo tiene que empezar de nuevo. Quizás el acto más atroz debido a la conveniencia política fue el dismantelamiento de BELCAST (Colegio de Artes, Ciencias y Tecnología de Belize) por parte del entrante gobierno UDP en 1984 a favor de un nuevo Colegio Universitario de Belize (UCB por sus siglas en inglés) orientado a los negocios, que estaba afiliado con una universidad americana. Si alguna vez hubo una acción retrógrada destructiva para un país joven en desarrollo, fue esa. La Escuela de Formación de Enfermeras, el Colegio de Profesores de Belize y el renombrado Colegio Técnico pronto se convirtieron en bajas.

El Informe y Recomendaciones de la Comisión de Delitos de 1992

durante una administración del PUP centró gran parte de su atención en las estrategias de intervención con las pandillas, los esfuerzos de interdicción del Departamento de Policía y el poder judicial; y si bien recomendó la promulgación de algunos programas sociales, educativos y comunitarios, así como la creación de oportunidades de empleo, la entrante administración UDP en 1993 vio la redirección habitual del enfoque y el estatus de segundo plano para ese informe. Los esfuerzos posteriores para redactar enfoques y planes detallados para tratar de controlar la escalada del crimen, especialmente los asesinatos, han tardado en dar frutos, a pesar de diferentes estudios científicos y recomendaciones de expertos extranjeros (Gayle y Crooks) y dedicados visionarios locales. En junio de 2022, todavía estamos plagados de asesinatos estilo ejecución, allanamientos de morada, robos y otros delitos económicos. Por lo tanto, surge la pregunta, ¿es que no hay voluntad política o hemos estado "ladrando al árbol equivocado"?

Una pista de que nuestros métodos no son suficientes para detener este problema, es evidente en la boca del propio Comisionado de Policía, cuando respondió a una sugerencia de la reportera Cherisse Halsall (7News) de que algunos de sus "...oficiales de policía pueden estar involucrados con carteles?" El comisionado Williams replicó que "...estamos despidiendo a oficiales de policía todos los días". Desde hace décadas, hemos oído hablar de policías corruptos que confiscan drogas a personas para dárselas a otras personas para que las vendan en su nombre. Nos solidarizamos con el Comisionado porque, por difíciles que sean de encontrar, unos "pocos hombres buenos" en la fuerza podrían ser más efectivos que todo un batallón de oficiales plagado de ladrones.

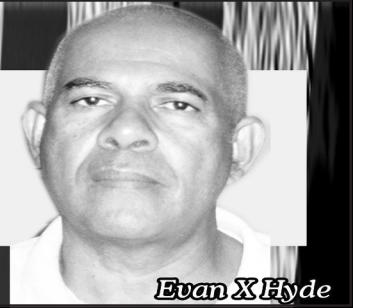
Una fuente muy improbable, las memorias deportivas del Cuerpo de Paz Estadounidense, Ted Cox, quien estuvo estacionado en Belize entre 1971 y 1973, y que se acaba de publicar en 2014 bajo el título "Cuando Honduras Británica se convirtió en Belize", ha sacado a la luz algunos hechos muy interesantes, incluido un informe que, ahora parece, brindó una oportunidad de oro para trazar un curso que quizás podría haber salvado a toda una generación de nuestra juventud perdida por la violencia armada.

Como lo describe Cox, "En 1966, las Naciones Unidas, a través de UNICEF, adoptó el concepto de 'paternidad responsable'... El experto de la ONU, Vin Lawrence, llegó el 13 de septiembre de 1972... Muchas organizaciones, trabajadores sociales, ciudadanos, jóvenes y jóvenes líderes colaboraron en la elaboración de su informe... durante tres meses". El informe final, "...un folleto de 180 páginas titulado *Programa Nacional de la Juventud: Jóvenes en Belize - Avanzando hacia el desarrollo...* fue presentado al Ministerio de Gobierno Local, Comunidad y Desarrollo Social". ¿Qué pasó con ese informe?

Incluso antes de la llegada del crack y las pandillas en Belize, y sin mencionar a la policía, "el estudio observó que el desempleo a gran escala tiende a crear una generación enojada que a menudo considera que el vandalismo y la violencia son las formas más fáciles de aliviar la frustración". Y un par de hallazgos del estudio desde 1972 saltan a la vista: "El sistema educativo no era adecuado para satisfacer las necesidades de la nación. Estaba demasiado orientado hacia los objetivos académicos, carecía de la preparación de los estudiantes para el desarrollo social y económico... Había inadecuadas instalaciones vocacionales... Faltaban campos de juego utilizables..." Y esto fue antes de que se "desarrollara" el campo BEC y los Barracones fueran "salvados." Además, el estudio propuso "un modelo y una descripción general de un programa nacional para la juventud hasta el año 2000".

Hemos perdido mucho tiempo junto con un par de generaciones de nuestra juventud, todo porque las exigencias de la tarea en cuestión pueden no haberse considerado políticamente convenientes. Pero nunca es demasiado tarde para empezar. Es hora de un serio examen de conciencia y expiación por parte de nuestros líderes gubernamentales, tanto rojos como azules. Como beliceños, descartemos para siempre esa "mentalidad colonizada" y emprendamos alguna acción decisiva para salvar a nuestra juventud, comenzando con la remodelación de todo nuestro sistema educativo "para satisfacer las necesidades de la nación".

From the Publisher



Evan X Hyde

Don Hector Silva, a man gifted with a truly remarkable mind for his age (he's around 90), was doing a lot of talking on PLUS TV last week, and the interim host, Kerm Thimbriel, was lapping it all up.

The thing is that Don Hector was so enthusiastic, he spoke authoritatively about the movements and incidents of 1969, and referred to the late Louis Sylvester and the late Fred Hunter, People's United Party (PUP) Cabinet Ministers of that era, as heroes for their role in fighting off whatever was the threat to the party and the country.

The problem is that no one who knows the real ever, ever speaks about 1969, about PAC and RAM, about the slaughter of the students in Mexico City in October of 1968, the Walter Rodney matter at the University in Jamaica around the same time, and about the ideological issues which sprang up in the region.

Don Hector also said that the Guatemalan guerrilla leaders, Yon Sosa and Turcios Lima, posed a real threat to the Guatemalan government around this time.

Now the primary people who should have informed younger generations of Belizeans about these matters over the decades are the Rt. Hon. Said Musa, who was Prime Minister of Belize from 1998 to 2008, and Assad Shoman, a PUP Cabinet Minister from 1979 to

1984, who has been the energy and the brain behind Belize's entry into the International Court of Justice (ICJ) arbitration with respect to the claim Guatemala has argued that it has to the territory of Belize.

But Musa and Shoman, who were appointed by PUP Premier George Price to the Senate in 1974 after they were unsuccessful PUP general election candidates in the October 1974 general election, have never spoken publicly about the Ad Hoc demonstration, about PAC and RAM, and those matters which may be somewhat ideological in nature.

In fact, after the PUP lost power for the first time in 1984, and both Musa (Fort George) and Shoman (Cayo North) lost their seats, it would seem that Musa's subsequent political career, in which he was closely aligned with Ralph Fonseca, indicated that he had become neoliberal in thinking.

Shoman left the PUP after the 1984 defeat and led the activist intellectual group, Society for the Promotion of Education and Research (SPEAR), for some years before he migrated to Havana, Cuba, where he has lived for some three decades or so.

Because it was Shoman who replaced Don Hector as the PUP candidate in Cayo North, after Don Hector had

starred for a couple decades, it is necessary for Kerm to get some of the other side of this story.

UBAD, under my presidency, was peripheral to this clash, "peripheral" I would say because I was a political innocent compared to Shoman and Musa, Belizeans of Palestinian descent who had spent five years studying law in London between roughly 1963 and 1968.

I am calling for this conversation because it seems to me that this peaceful little Belize where I grew up is headed, seemingly inexorably, to violent class struggle because of the ever widening gap between the elitist rich and our poverty-stricken masses. In British Honduras when I was growing up, all of us saw ourselves as poor or middle class. Today, there are mighty oligarchs who run the show here, and they are often ostentatious with their wealth. We do have a sort of democracy which allows the masses always to hope for change at election time.

But the world itself sometimes appears to me as it did in 1968 -- terribly tumultuous. The United States boasts of its mighty democracy and lectures some specific countries in the region about their lack of said democracy. But something happened in the American capital of Washington, D. C., on January 6, 2021, that indicates a fracturing of the

vaunted American democracy. The more the present hearings about January 6 continue, the more it appears that the legally elected government of the U.S. cannot impose its legitimate will upon Donald Trump and his forces.

The United States survived Watergate in 1973. The sitting president, Richard Nixon, was forced to resign because the American democratic structure held firm. At the beginning of the Watergate hearings, Richard Nixon seemed awesomely powerful. The American media, because they want to understand January 6 better, are taking prolonged looks back at the history of the Watergate drama.

Younger generations of Belizeans need to know the issues sparking confrontation and provoking division at the Cabinet level in the PUP between 1969 and 1984. This is because there are developments taking place in The Jewel today which have exposed a level of greed around which is dangerous.

And this is not only a problem at the ruling party level. Inside the United Democratic Party (UDP) there has emerged a family which now sits on Mount Olympus financially. Belize is not the way it used to be.

The long and short of it is, Kerm: there are views which are at odds with Don Hector's.

FROM THE PUBLISHER en Español

Don Héctor Silva, un hombre dotado de una mente realmente notable para su edad (tiene alrededor de 90 años), estuvo hablando mucho en PLUS TV la semana pasada, y el presentador interino, Kerm Thimbriel, lo estaba disfrutando todo.

La cosa es que Don Héctor estaba tan entusiasmado que habló con autoridad sobre los movimientos e incidentes de 1969, y se refirió al difunto Louis Sylvester y al difunto Fred Hunter, Ministros del Gabinete del Partido Unido del Pueblo (PUP) de esa época, como héroes por su papel en la lucha contra lo que fuera la amenaza para el partido y el país.

El problema es que nadie que conoce la verdad nunca, nunca habla de 1969, de PAC y RAM, de la masacre de los estudiantes en la Ciudad de México en octubre de 1968, el asunto de Walter Rodney en la Universidad de Jamaica en la misma época, y sobre las cuestiones ideológicas que surgieron en la región.

Don Héctor también dijo que los líderes guerrilleros guatemaltecos, Yon Sosa y Turcios Lima, representaban una amenaza real para el gobierno guatemalteco en esa época.

Ahora, las principales personas que deberían haber informado a las generaciones más jóvenes de beliceños sobre estos asuntos a lo largo de las décadas son el Muy Honorable Said Musa, quien fue Primer Ministro de Belize de 1998 a 2008, y Assad Shoman, Ministro

del Gabinete del PUP de 1979 a 1984, quien ha sido la energía y el cerebro detrás de la entrada de Belize en el arbitraje de la Corte Internacional de Justicia (CIJ) con respecto al reclamo que Guatemala ha argumentado que tiene sobre el territorio de Belize.

Pero Musa y Shoman, quienes fueron designados como senadores por el Premier PUP George Price, en 1974 después de que no tuvieron éxito como candidatos PUP a las elecciones generales de octubre de 1974, nunca han hablado públicamente sobre la manifestación Ad Hoc, sobre PAC y RAM, y esos asuntos que pueden ser de naturaleza algo ideológica.

De hecho, después de que el PUP perdiera el poder por primera vez en 1984, y tanto Musa (Fort George) como Shoman (Cayo Norte) perdieran sus escaños, parecería que la posterior carrera política de Musa, en la que estuvo estrechamente alineado con Ralph Fonseca, indicaba que se había vuelto neoliberal en pensamiento.

Shoman dejó el PUP después de la derrota de 1984 y dirigió el grupo intelectual activista Sociedad para la Promoción de la Educación y la Investigación (SPEAR por sus siglas en inglés) durante algunos años antes de emigrar a La Habana, Cuba, donde ha vivido durante unas tres décadas.

Debido a que fue Shoman quien reemplazó a Don Héctor como candidato del PUP en Cayo Norte, después de que Don Héctor había sido protagonista

durante un par de décadas, es necesario que Kerm obtenga algo del otro lado de esta historia.

UBAD, bajo mi presidencia, fue periférico a este choque, "periférico" diría porque yo era un inocente político en comparación con Shoman y Musa, beliceños de ascendencia palestina que habían pasado cinco años estudiando derecho en Londres entre aproximadamente 1963 y 1968.

Hago un llamado a esta conversación porque me parece que este pequeño pacífico Belize donde crecí se dirige, aparentemente inexorablemente, a una lucha de clases violenta debido a la brecha cada vez mayor entre los ricos elitistas y nuestras masas afectadas por la pobreza. En Honduras Británica, cuando yo era niño, todos nos veíamos como pobres o de clase media. Hoy en día, hay poderosos oligarcas que mandan aquí y, a menudo, son ostentosos con su riqueza. Tenemos una especie de democracia que permite que las masas siempre esperen un cambio en el momento de las elecciones.

Pero el mundo mismo a veces me parece como en 1968: terriblemente tumultuoso. Estados Unidos se jacta de su poderosa democracia y sermonea a algunos países específicos de la región sobre su falta de dicha democracia. Pero algo sucedió en la capital estadounidense de Washington, D.C., el 6 de enero de 2021, que indica una fractura de la

cacareada democracia estadounidense. Cuanto más continúan las audiencias actuales sobre el 6 de enero, más parece que el gobierno legalmente electo de los EE. UU. no puede imponer su voluntad legítima sobre Donald Trump y sus fuerzas.

Estados Unidos sobrevivió al Watergate en 1973. El presidente en funciones, Richard Nixon, se vio obligado a dimitir porque la estructura democrática estadounidense se mantuvo firme. Al comienzo de las audiencias de Watergate, Richard Nixon parecía increíblemente poderoso. Los medios estadounidenses, porque quieren entender mejor el 6 de enero, están echando largas miradas a la historia del drama de Watergate.

Las generaciones más jóvenes de beliceños necesitan conocer los asuntos que provocaron la confrontación y provocaron la división a nivel de gabinete en el PUP entre 1969 y 1984. Esto se debe a que actualmente se están produciendo desarrollos en La Joya que han expuesto un nivel de codicia que es peligroso.

Y esto no es sólo un problema a nivel del partido gobernante. Dentro del Partido Demócrata Unido (UDP por sus siglas en inglés) ha surgido una familia que ahora se sienta financieramente en el Monte Olimpo. Belize no es como solía ser.

En resumidas cuentas, Kerm: hay puntos de vista que están en desacuerdo con los de Don Héctor.

John has Big Dreams - Part 2



by Clinton Canul Luna

In the underworld, in which John lived, he had several experiences. One of those was when he did errands for the man who had advised him to go to study. Every week, he sent him to buy an item at a specific store. That item cost \$30, and John, every time, would give the receipt for that item to the man, but one of many times, when he went to the store, it was not in stock. So, John had to go to several different stores to get the item that had been entrusted to him. He was able to find it in a store, and they gave him a discount by charging him \$29. So, they gave him a receipt, plus the item for \$29. He went and gave it to the man and the man asked him,

- "Why did you bring a receipt for \$29?"

John explained and handed over the dollar that was given to him as a discount. The man told him,

- "You know John, go back to that store and get a receipt for \$30. Give him the dollar, because I have to submit a report every month, and the report has to have a receipt for \$30."

John complied and went back to the store and asked them to please give him a receipt for \$30. He also handed them the dollar. The store owner handed John the receipt for \$30, but he gave him back the dollar, since it was a discount. John

came back and gave the man the receipt for the \$30 plus the dollar. The man was a fair person, so he told John,

- "John, that dollar is for you. It's a discount they gave you, so take the dollar. It's yours."

John took it and continued going to that store, because there he earned the dollar discount they gave him. Another experience that John had was when he once went to buy a machete, since he used it to do his work when he went to chop a yard. He sharpened the machete and when he used it, when he started chopping, it broke into half. John went to the store and told the owner that the machete was useless and had broken. The owner told him that once an item was bought and left the store, he was not responsible. John, seeing that, realized that he had bought something that was useless and he had nowhere to go to report or take his complaint, because there was no place where there was consumer protection, so John automatically lost his money. He went with a friend and asked for a loan to buy a machete, because he needed it to work. The friend lent him the money, but told him that he was going to charge a commission. John agreed, because he needed it. He thought that in a month's time he could pay the loan plus interest to his friend. But it turns out that

it was not possible, and it took 3 months to pay him. Those 3 months of payment of what he borrowed plus interest, made him realize that he paid more interest than what he had borrowed, and he said to himself, "With that interest I could have bought two more machetes."

In short, he had another experience, since he also did errands for another person and that person did humanitarian activities such as cooking food for poor people who had nowhere to sleep or where to eat. They slept in the park or slept in some corner around there, and this person, since she was charitable, she fed them, but she didn't have any money either. So she asked other people, mostly stores, to help her get the items to cook to feed several people. In that, John helped that person by running the errand of picking up the things she needed, but in one of those, the stores gave away things that were about to expire, which was a danger because if she used that, she could sicken people. But that happens when one asks, or is a beggar. They are given anything, since it is a donation. In one of those, they had given her a box of chocolate, and the lady told him,

- "John, that chocolate is useless. It's already expired. Throw it in the trash."

He felt saddened and said to himself, "How am I going to throw this away?" He didn't understand. He put it in a backpack that he always carried and took it home. He ate one of the chocolates and it tasted good and kept eating more, but got sick. It gave him a stomach infection. John ended up at the clinic, where he was attended by a doctor who asked him what he had eaten. John explained, and thereafter the doctor told him that he could have been poisoned. The thing is, they gave him medicine so that he could be cured, but at the same time, John was so weak that he couldn't work, and if he didn't work he wouldn't eat. The type of work he did was not entitled to social security, where he was paid for the days he did not work. So thanks to divine providence, he was cured. He ate whatever he always did, but he was cured. That experience was going to help him in the future, but at that moment John did not understand. It was obvious that he was not going to understand at that moment; he was going to understand later, in the future.

Since he was already working with the government, he was earning \$100 an hour, which is \$800 for 8 hours, but sometimes he had to work overtime and was compensated. This job required a lot of travelling from one place to the other, since he was supervising jobs from companies that had government contracts. Due to so much travelling, John had to spend his own money for doing such activities. One day, he decided to report to his boss the amount of money he had to spend from his pocket. The government then decided to buy him a 4x4 pickup truck, since he needed something strong to go to different areas such as villages, where the roads were full of dust and potholes, which during the rainy season would fill

with water and become thick mud. In addition, they gave him a personal driver. In case something happened on the road, he had someone by his side who could help him out of any problem that happened on the trip.

One day, his boss had called him to sign some documents. John did not understand why he had to sign those documents, but he signed them, since they were paying him a salary for his work. He realized that the document he was signing was for a large amount of money, and since he was of confidence, he was present during the signing of a cheque. However, that cheque was made for an amount which was less than what he had signed in the document. There, John realized that it was no longer a discount, but rather, it was a commission, and that commission was for his boss. He had several bosses. It was not just one, and he began to realize that those bosses earned a good commission on each contract or when they bought a certain amount of products, be it medicines, or anything else they needed. John became aware of the crafting of government finances. He didn't know about that. But what he had learned in the underworld, he realised, that there was also up in the elite class; the big bosses also earned their share.

On one occasion, John was passing by a court of law, where the judge was hearing a case. The courtroom was closed, but it was not sound-proof. However, people were outside sitting on rocks that were under the trees, where there was shade, waiting for their turns to testify or family members waiting for a verdict. Anyways, while John was walking by, he inadvertently wanted to sneeze, and he couldn't hold it in, since it is human nature. John wasn't the kind of person who knew how to sneeze quietly, so instead, a big sound came out. "AAACCHUUUUU!" And the authority had called his attention for making such noise in front of the courthouse. But over time, as John traveled from one place to another, he realized that in front of a court of justice, the same court where he had sneezed, there, gringos made lots of noise with their loudspeakers, preaching, while the judge was in session and the authorities did not say anything; nobody said anything. And John began to think, "Well, how is it that gringos can come here in Belize to do whatever they want, to cause scandals there in front of the court of justice? Who gave them such right or license? How can they do that? And I, as a Belizean, can't sneeze; well, I could, but I got my good scolding. But why? What kind of justice is this?"

fincasolan@gmail.com

June 18, 2022

Finca Solana
Corozal Town

EDEN SDA HIGH SCHOOL

Eden Drive, Santa Elena Town, Cayo District
Tel. 824 – 2966 / 824 – 4479

Applications are invited from suitable qualified individuals to fill the following teaching vacancies for the 2022 – 2023 school year.

Office Administration / Spanish	Part time (September to November 2022)
Music / Spanish	Full Time
Mathematics	Full time
Bible / Spanish	Full time

Qualification for the teaching position: Bachelor's Degree in Education in the subject area. Persons with associate degree may be considered.

Salary is based on qualifications and in accordance with the government payscale.

Interested persons must submit a letter of application, résumé, two recommendations letters, certified copies of transcripts and diplomas, and certified copy of a valid teacher's license.

Application package should be delivered at the principal's office or sent to the address below by **July 1, 2022**.

The Chairman
Eden SDA High School Board
P.O. Box 68
San Ignacio Town, Cayo District

“Heed the warning signs”, Min. Habet cautions

BELIZE CITY, Sun. June 19, 2022

Last Friday, the Minister of Sustainable Development and Disaster Risk Management, Hon. Orlando Habet, was present at the 10th National Climate Outlook Forum, where he gave local media an update on the preparedness level of the ministry response agencies, given projections of an above-average hurricane season this year. He shared that since January of this year they have been doing assessments and carrying out refurbishment of hurricane shelters and have also been training new and long-time first responders.

He noted that limitations in mobility may be an issue for the response activities of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO).

“We might have some problems maybe in terms of NEMO itself having sufficient vehicles. But, because we have committees and then NEMO employs the assistance of various committees, so you have, Human Development, Ministry of Infrastructure, Agriculture, so when it comes together, then it makes a complete team,” Habet said.

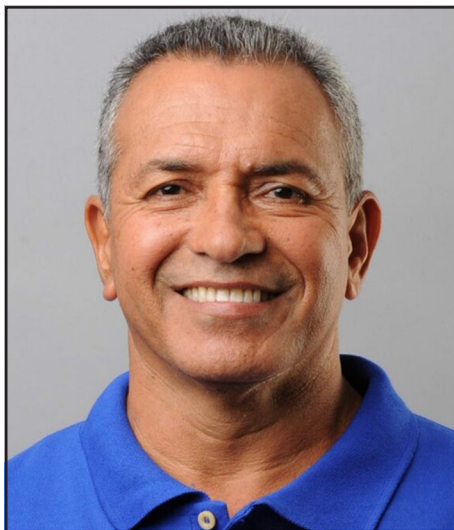
Aside from those challenges, he said, the organization is very much prepared and, as mentioned, has been updating its responders with new and up-to-date training material.

“I think from NEMO’s standpoint we are very prepared. We started very early looking at from January they did the assessments of the hurricane shelters, tried to do some refurbishment where it was possible. Training has been done for the new people who have been employed and repeat training for those who are already there so that they are consistent and up to date with new material,” he outlined.

He mentioned that there have been some hiccups in the preparation of shelters, since not all are adequate, according to Habet, and some are not in the direct control of GoB.

“I think that where we might have some glitches is on the side of the housing, because not all the shelters are adequate. Some are under the control of the government, because those are hurricane shelters. Some are under the control of the schools, which might be a state school or a church-state school. So those may not be at a hundred percent. But most of those that were not were taken out and substituted with other new facilities,” he said.

As far as the risk of flooding in the low-lying areas, Habet stated that it is



Hon. Orlando Habet – Minister of Sustainable Development

always a major risk. He said some dredging work being done on the Haulover Bridge will allow the water to flow off easier; this may hopefully reduce the impacts of floods in Belize City, one of the lowest areas in the country.

“It is always a problem, always a big risk. I think earlier in the year there were some work done along, especially here in Belize City by the Haulover Creek. Some of the areas were dredged to try to allow the water to flow faster. There is works being done by the Haulover Bridge now with the new construction. There was some dredging, so the water flows a lot easier. Belize City will always be a problem. It is a low-lying area,” he said.

He warned members of the public to heed the warning signs and avoid taking any actions that could put them, their families, or first responders in jeopardy.

“It is just more vigilance and also to keep the assistance of the BDF and Coast Guards who have been extremely helpful in all the weather events to assist. So, I think in that regard we will be okay. People just have to heed to the warnings and the signs, get out in time, and it is something that we have always asked. Don’t put yourself in trouble or in jeopardy, but neither put the officers who will come to try to rescue you. So, if there is a warning and a timeline, a date, that you have to get out, then try to get out in time so that you don’t put other people at risk also,” Habet said.

Heavy rains over this weekend have inundated certain pockets of the northern districts. Hurricane shelters have since been opened, and NEMO response teams are on the ground assisting the residents. Some infrastructural damages have already been reported.

BTB hosts ambassador training –

Continued from **▶ Page 3**

the initiative is just one of five programs that the BTB will be rolling out under its Elevate Training Program.

“The Elevate Program is a three-year program. So, what we hope to do is that next year the idea is that we will come again for a second round in all the destinations to pick up additional people that would be interested in getting the skillset that we’re training them on,” said Castaneda.

The workshops are being facilitated by Claudine Pohl from the Canadian tourism-based consulting firm Lemoneight. So far, they have been held in Belize City,

San Pedro, and Caye Caulker. The BTB will be taking the program to Corozal on Monday, June 20, and Orange Walk on Tuesday, June 21. Workshops will also be held in the western and southern regions of the country in July.

According to Castaneda, the four other programs that the BTB is planning on implementing are the ‘Taste’ Program, which will focus on the food & beverage industry, the ‘Safe’ Program, which will focus on security, the ‘Best’ Program, which will assist small businesses with skill-building, and the ‘Scale Up’ program, which will be geared towards providing tour guides with additional skills training.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Vacancies exist for the following positions. Successful candidates will be required to obtain a security clearance and undergo a medical examination.

(1) Housekeeper (2 positions):

BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION:

Duties include day-to-day housekeeping, organizing, dusting, vacuuming, laundry services, changing and maintaining bedding, ironing, cleaning floor and counter surfaces, assisting with plans for events and functions, serving at these functions, shopping for household supplies, maintaining shopping records and inventory, pet care (if applicable), tending to house plants, identifying maintenance issues, and escorting staff. All responsibilities shall be completed on time and thoroughly, with utmost integrity and honesty, and in a manner representing the highest U.S. standards of customer service.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

- At least two years prior experience in housekeeping is required
- A good command of reading, writing, and speaking English is required
- Must have initiative, good interpersonal skills and flexibility

(2) Chef:

BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION:

Duties include but are not limited to planning, budgeting, shopping, preparing and presenting a variety of meal services for the residence and for events of 2 to 200 guests. With an understanding of nutritional balance and essential elements, the Chef’s repertoire must include a diverse and wide range of cooking styles and meal types, including appetizers for receptions, baked goods, desserts, and the ability to create vegetarian/vegan meals and cater to gluten sensitivities. The Chef will also be required to maintain expense records for each event or function, create menus, manage inventory, and assure the highest standards of safety, cleanliness, and proper food preparation and storage. The Chef is required to plan menus in advance and carry out the actual purchasing of supplies and ingredients necessary to produce the dishes reflected in the set menus. All responsibilities shall be completed on time, with integrity and honesty, and in a manner representing the highest U.S. standards of customer service.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

- At least three years of culinary experience in a hotel/restaurant setting is required
- Associate Degree or completion of culinary/catering certificate program or in the absence of an Associate Degree, five years of culinary experience in a hotel or restaurant setting
- Must have a fluent command of reading, writing, and speaking English, and the ability to follow recipes and cooking instructions of varying complexity
- Must have initiative, good interpersonal skills and flexibility

WHO MAY APPLY: Applicants must be in possession of a Belize social security card valid for employment and/or a resident/work permit, and be eligible for appointment under Belize’s local laws.

HOW TO APPLY:

Interested candidates must submit a letter of application, current résumé, two references and all other applicable supporting documentation by email to BelmopanJobs@state.gov. All applications must include in the subject line which position they are applying for (eg: **Employment Application for Chef position**). Incomplete applications will not be considered. For a complete copy of the position description listing all duties and responsibilities, please send an email to BelmopanJobs@state.gov or call at 822-4011, Ext. 4242. The deadline for submitting applications is **Friday, July 1, 2022**.

New El Salvador Ambassador presents credentials



El Salvador Ambassador H.E Graciela Marina Pérez Zeledón and H.E Dame Froyla Tzalam

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Fri. June 17, 2022

El Salvador’s new ambassador to Belize is H.E Graciela Marina Pérez Zeledón, who on Friday, June 17, presented her letters of credence to the Governor-General, Dame Froyla Tzalam.

According to a Government of Belize press release, the Governor-General “graciously accepted the letters of credence and welcomed the

Ambassador,” sharing well wishes for her time of service in Belize.

Ambassador Pérez Zeledón stated in her remarks that Belize and El Salvador share great respect for each other and have maintained strong diplomatic ties over the years. She also shared her hopes of building on areas of cooperation during her service.

Earlier in the month, the Governor-General also received the credentials of Brazil’s Ambassador, H.E Agemar de Mendonça Sanctos.

Spiny Lobster Amendments deferred until next year

by Khaila Gentle

BELIZE CITY, Fri. June 17, 2022

The Belize Fisheries Department and the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation have announced that the implementation of new Spiny Lobster Amendments to the Belize Fisheries Regulations, one of which establishes a minimum lobster tail weight of 4.5 ounces as opposed to the previous 4 ounces, has been deferred until next year. A press release from the Ministry indicates that the decision was made after numerous engagements with several fishing communities from across the country led them to conclude that deferral was necessary.

Back in early May, several groups of fisherfolk opposed to the proposed amendments took to the media to voice their frustrations—many of them claiming that their livelihoods would have been severely affected. One community of fishers had stated that the increase in the minimum lobster tail weight would reduce their catch numbers by 25% compared to last year, and had pointed out that lobsters larger than the newly required size are rarely found.

In addition to establishing a minimum tail weight of 4.5 ounces, the amendments, which are a part of Statutory Instrument No. 128 of 2021 and should have taken effect in March of this year, establish a new minimum carapace length of 3.25 inches, and a lobster trap escape gap of 2 1/8 inches. The new size requirements are being set in hopes of giving lobsters a better chance at reproducing before being harvested in an effort to increase the number of lobsters in the wild.

The Belize Fisheries Department has



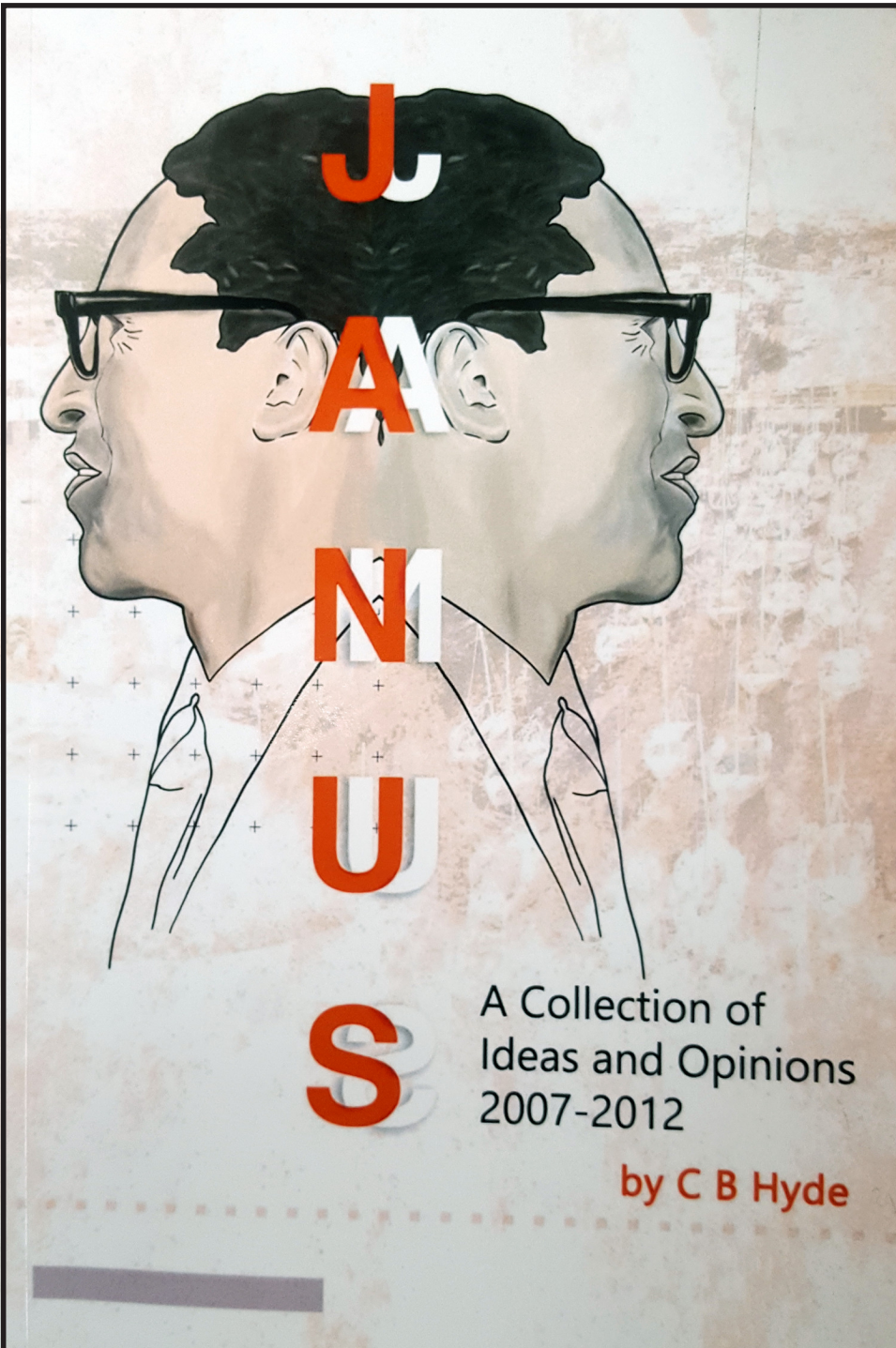
Photo by Meritt Thomas

stated that it is committed to “the execution of community engagements during this year and in early 2023” to gather more input from fishers and fishers’ organizations. The Department says that this will in turn help to further the strengthening of lobster regulations for Belize.

The Spiny Lobster Amendments come as part of a binding agreement that Belize signed with the Organization of Fisheries and Agriculture in Central America (OPESCA) in 2009. Despite signing the agreement, Belize did not comply for over a decade, and in 2019 OPESCA wrote to the Government of Belize inquiring about that lack of compliance.

The new regulations are expected to be implemented through a phased approach. In its press release, the Ministry also reminds the public that the opening/closing of the lobster fishing season will remain from July 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023.

Fishers and fishers’ organizations are strongly encouraged to contact the Belize Fisheries Department at telephone number 224-4552 or by sending an e-mail to fisheries_department@fisheries.gov.bz for any clarifications they may require or to arrange a meeting to discuss the new regulations and to provide further input and recommendations.



Police vehicle explodes

It was a near-death experience for two officers who escaped a burning mobile moments before it exploded!

BENQUE VIEJO, Cayo District, Mon. June 20, 2022

In the wee hours of this morning, two police officers from Benque Viejo were almost blown up along with the Wingle patrol pickup assigned to them. Around 1:20 a.m. today, police officers PC Sicario Cruz and PC Luis Carado left their station in the red Wingle pickup and were traveling on the road when a loud bang was heard by the driver. He reportedly exited to check the vehicle but saw no sign of fire when he lifted the hood. Shortly after going back inside the vehicle and resuming their journey, however, the officers saw the glove compartment on fire, and quickly dismantled the vehicle.

“The vehicle then exploded, where it landed on a wooden structure that was

not too far from the street. By the time that the Fire Department showed up and extinguished the fire, two of our police-issued Smith and Wesson firearms were destroyed by fire.” Communications Director of the Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood said.

Luckily, the two officers made it out of the vehicle in time. Yearwood said that they believe the explosion was caused by an electrical issue.

“We have a motor vehicle inspector that will check the vehicle today, and of course, the fire department is doing their investigation also, simultaneously, because we know that these Wingles are old vehicles. We’ve had them for quite some time; at this moment it would want to seem that it is something electrical,” Yearwood said.

Our email address for business & advertising is amandalapress@gmail.com



Benque hosts games in basketball tournament out west

by Karim Juan

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo District, Sun. June 19, 2022

Week 2 of regular season in the Benque and San Ignacio/Santa Elena Basketball Tournament 2022 continued this past weekend at Mopan Technical High School in Benque Viejo Del Carmen. Below are the scores and the upcoming schedule.

Friday, June 17 results

Game 1 (Open Male) – Tigers, 59-50, over West Kings. For Tigers – Alfonso Audinette 21 pts, Kareem “Pulu” Cardinez 14 pts, and Kaver Smith 10 pts. For West Kings – Miguel Cruz 13 pts, Kieran Dart 13 pts, and Huber Contreras 9 pts.

Game 2 (Open Male) – Outdoors, 69-54, over Vikings. Outdoors – Alejandro Baptist 24 pts, Neil Nicholson 12 pts, Terrick Mariano 10 pts, and Steven Wade 9 pts. Vikings – Rasheed Avila 20 pts, and Alvan Gentle 12 pts.

Game 3 (Open Male) – Venom, 80-54, over Benque No-Hops. Venom – Elvert “PG” Ariola 24 pts, Ryan “Ratta” Duran 12 pts, Ivan Flowers 12 pts, and Johan “Cutto” Bermudez 10 pts. Benque No-Hops – Cadeem Ford 15 pts, and Elvis Usher 13 pts.

Saturday, June 18 results

Game 1 (Open Male) – Outdoors, 52-51, over Benque No-Hops.

Outdoors – Alejandro Baptist 20 pts, and Sheffan Hemmans 9 pts. Benque No-Hops – Elvis Usher 17 pts, Cadeem Ford 16 pts, and Erwin Soza 10 pts.

Game 2 (Open Male) – Venom, 93-54, over West Kings. Venom – Joel Montejo 26 pts, Allizair Rhaburn 17 pts, Elvert “PG” Ariola 16 pts, and Ryan “Ratta” Duran 11 pts. West Kings – Matthew Morales 16 pts, Kieran Dart 16 pts, and Miguel Cruz 8 pts. Game 3 (Open Male) – Assassins, 86-45, over Tigers. Assassins – Shemar White 21 pts, Santiago “Dados” Clark 13 pts, Denzel Nunez 12 pts, and Robert Jeffries 10 pts. Tigers – Michael Lyons 14 pts, and Shane Lopez 12 pts. Below is the schedule for this coming weekend.

All games will be played at the Resilience Center at Victor Galvez Stadium in San Ignacio Town. Upcoming schedule:

Friday, June 24

6:30 p.m. – (U15) Assassins Jr. vs Benque Basketball Academy

8:00 p.m. – (Open) Assassins vs Vikings

9:30 p.m. – (Open) Tigers vs Venom

Saturday, June 25

6:30 p.m. – (U18) Snipers vs Love Soul Mambas

8:00 p.m. – (Open) West Kings vs Outdoors

9:30 p.m. – (Open) Venom vs Assassins

Marin, Sr. says the youth will...

Continued from Page 2

new, and possibly long-term commercial agreement between BSI/ASR and BSCFA.

“After about a few weeks, about three weeks, I was able to capture the issues at the roots. Then, I moved to meet with the people at BSI/ASR. And I must report that I found the hierarchy in the company very friendly, and very cooperative with me. I had told them about the issues, and what the Prime Minister had asked me to do. So today, I am happy to say BSI/ASR is cooperating fully with me, and so are the cane farmers associations. I have invited all four cane farmers’ associations to visit with me at the SIRDI’s office, where I have an office. We have gone down over all the issues affecting us, and I have been communicating actively with Belize Sugar Industries.” He also stated that the PM, to whom he reports directly, has been informed of all his activities.

And according to Marin, Sr., progress has been made in the efforts to reach a sound and mutually beneficial agreement between the parties.

“There has been progress; they have

been meeting. I have told the cane farmers plain, my job is not to dictate the conditions of the agreement, but I feel very strongly that it’s about time they sit down, discuss, compromise where there are room for compromise. The important thing is that they have an agreement they could rely on for the consistent and reliable supply of sugar cane to the mill. There has been a stumbling issue in the way in the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA), up to today has not been receiving the benefits of the Fairtrade sales of sugar in Europe. I gather the reasons why they are not benefitting from that is because they do not have an agreement, which is not so. The fact the government of Prime Minister Briceño intervened, there has been, I will say, up to this day a successful sugar cane season. The factor has been milling. Cane supply has been consistent and available at all times by cane farmers, so Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association has been a reliable partner in the business,” Marin, Sr. commented.

He said that he is hoping that Fairtrade sees it fit to give the members of that cane farmers association their fair share of the benefits.

He also said that despite the reports

BDFA 1st Division reg. season ends; knockout semifinals pause for Inter-District

BELIZE CITY, Mon. June 20, 2022

Rainy weather did not stop football action at the MCC Grounds yesterday, Sunday, where 4 games were played to complete the single round-robin regular season of the Belize District Football Association (BDFA) 1st Division 2021-2022 Closing Season.

In game 1 scheduled for a 10:00 a.m. kickoff, Lake-I FC got the 3-2 win over Port Loyola. Lake-I led 2-nil with goals from Kenrick Cumberbatch (20’) and Robert Hernandez (57’), until Port Loyola drew even with a goal each from Zinedine Hines (64’) and Kenroy Linarez (69’); but Lake-I then got the game winner from Lawnie Leslie (81’).

Game 2 saw Pickstock Ebony crushing Stars Academy, 6-1, with goals coming from Keydenshay Bowen (4’ & 79’), Traveyon Martinez (22’ & 80’), Luis Acosta (50’) and Myron Requena (63’); while Jaymion Cacho (59’) scored the only goal for Stars Academy.

In game 3, after trailing 1-nil at the half, undefeated Kelly Street Bombers exploded for 5 second half goals to come away with the 5-2 victory over Eagles SC. Shaking the net for the Bombers were Francis Andrews (52’ & 58’), Jaylen Clothier (66’), Steven Baizar (78’) and Ceron Usher (82’); while Eagles got a goal apiece from Fede Esteverne (33’) and Keron Sutherland (88’).

Game 4 was Hattievile United’s last chance to gain a victory in regular season, but their hopes were dashed by Ladyville Rising Stars who cruised to a 5-1 win over Hattievile with goals from Denroy McCord (7’ & 35’), Steven Rivera (9’) and Deltroy Gamboa (30’ & 61’). Hattievile’s lone goal was by Jaheed Baptist (12’).

The stage is now set for the knockout semifinals, where the #1 ranked team meets #4, and the #2 team faces #3. (See final standings below.) Note that Ladyville Rising Stars edged out Port Loyola by goal difference only, as both ended with 10 points.

BDFA 1st Division Regular Season Final Standings:

TEAM	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	+/-	Pts
Kelly Street Bombers	7	7	0	0	25	7	18	21
Lake-I FC	7	3	3	1	17	10	7	12
Pickstock Ebony	7	3	2	2	20	18	2	11
Ladyville Rising Stars	7	3	1	3	18	17	1	10
Port Layola	7	3	1	3	15	16	-1	10
Eagles SC	7	2	1	4	15	22	-7	7
Stars Academy	7	1	1	5	9	19	-10	4
Hattievile United	7	0	3	4	6	16	-10	3

The knockout semifinals will pause this weekend for the opening of the National Amateur Inter-District Championship, which features BDFA 2021-2022 Opening Season champs Kelly Street Bombers hosting Conquerors FC from the Stann Creek District.

Below is the BDFA 1st Division knockout semifinal schedule on a date to be announced.

Sunday, TBA, MCC Grounds

1:00 p.m. – Kelly Street Bombers vs Ladyville Rising Stars

3:00 p.m. – Lake-I FC vs Pickstock Ebony

BDFA 1st Division Top Goal Scorers 2021-22 Closing Season:

TEAM	PLAYER	Goals
Kelly Street Bombers	Steven Baizar	10
Ladyville Rising Stars	Deltroy Gamboa	10
Pickstock Ebony	Traveyon Martinez	7
Port Loyola	Kenroy Linarez	6
Kelly Street Bombers	Francis Andrews	6
Port Loyola	Zinedine Hines	4
Pickstock Ebony	Keydenshay Bowen	4
Ladyville Rising Stars	Denroy McCord	4

focusing on his age, he is full of energy and ready to assist the industry in whatever way he can, and he remarked that the younger generation will have their time, but need to first take the time to learn and gain the relevant experience.

“I question that term, ‘younger-blood.’ Let me tell you, I am enjoying what I am doing right now. I did that for a long time, and I think I had a good rest for the 15 years that you say I was not active, so I am back again, full of energy. I will give my very best in the service of my country,” he said.

Today’s meeting which Marin, Sr., attended was focused on increasing the younger generation’s interest in the sugar cane production industry. Many have

little or no desire to be involved in the sugar cane cultivation and harvesting process.

“Nobody is stopping young people from getting on board. As a matter of fact, you see us training young people in this conference here. Young people will have their time but, let me put it this way, do you think I can pick up any of those young boys, ask him to summon a meeting of the hierarchy of BSI/ASR and the cane farmers association and put them together and give them a lead? You think they can do it? They are not ready yet, but that is why we are training them. Give them a few years; they will be as good as Florencio ever was and even better,” Marin, Sr. said.

Work on Philip Goldson Highway continues

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Fri. June 17, 2022

Motorists traveling from Belize City to Ladyville on the Philip Goldson Highway have had to exercise extra caution along that route after the collapse of a retaining wall at Mile 7, which was caused by erosion due to the undercurrents of the Belize River. The wall was built in 2009 under the then UDP administration when that portion of the highway was being reconstructed. In December of 2020, however, the retaining wall collapsed, which caused the highway's width to be reduced to one and a half lanes of access.

Last week, Minister of Infrastructure Development, Hon. Julius Espat, met with members of the local media and gave an update on the rehabilitative work that is to be done on that portion of the highway.

"We're about ten more days for the piles to start driving. We had to build everything from scratch. So the contractor built the piles to specifications. Ten more days are left for the piling to be cured. Not only the piling, but the protection that we need to put in the shear wall. So, in about ten more days, they will start doing the physical work ... the life spans of most of these things are between twenty to thirty years. You can't plan for longer than that, because you're dealing with corrosive material when you talk about salt and all of that," said Minister Espat.

Minister Espat also highlighted the several difficulties motorists face on their way from Belize City to the Philip Goldson International Airport in Ladyville while the construction work on the highway is ongoing. "We have a problem coming out of Belize City, all



Hon. Julius Espat, Minister of Infrastructure Development

the way to the airport, you know. If you notice, the roundabout by Benny's, the second roundabout, the road that was done before our time has already sunk. What our engineers are telling us is that there is like an underground water stream and that the sub material that's there is not adequate. So, to be able to remedy it permanently, you might have to drive piles and create a causeway-type scenario. That is something we will have to propose to Cabinet, because that's not an inexpensive approach. Something like that will cost somewhere between forty to fifty million. And so we have to always be balancing the needs of the country. We got about two thousand five hundred miles of roads approximately, and hundreds of bridges. And so we have to be balancing and analyzing the budget that's given to us to see what is the priority," noted Minister Espat.

Starling Perez found guilty of murder

Jane Usher Boulevard resident, Starling Perez, was found guilty of murdering Carlos Reyes in his home in Dangriga in March 2019.



Carlos Reyes, deceased

by Charles Gladden

DANGRIGA, Stann Creek District, Wed. June 15, 2022

The family of Carlos Reyes, 48, a fisherman, is one step closer to getting closure after the brutal murder of Reyes in his own home on March 28, 2019, in



Starling Perez, guilty of murder

Dangriga, Stann Creek District, as a result of the Supreme Court conviction of the man who reportedly caused Reyes death—Starling Perez, 28, a laborer of Jane Usher Boulevard of Belize City—on Tuesday, June 14.

Before the murder took place, Perez had traveled from Belize City to

Mother and son knocked...

Tessa Myvett and her son were hit from behind by a car while walking in Lords Bank Village. The Belize City teacher is suffering from several fractures to the hip and will need to be airlifted to the United States within the next ten days.

Continued from Page 1

at the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital and in need of surgery. Since there is currently no specialist in the country who can perform such surgery, she will soon need to be airlifted to the United States.

According to reports, Myvett and her son had gotten off a bus in Lords Bank Village and were walking along the road when a car slammed into them from behind. While Myvett's son was not injured, she suffered numerous pelvic fractures.

Myvett's family, along with the administration of the Bernice Yorke Institute of Learning, are now asking for the public to assist with the mounting medical expenses, including the cost of her being airlifted, which

amounts to USD 7,000.

"Tessa is unable to work during this time and will be out of commission for a long time because of the extensive nature of her injuries and necessary healing time," wrote the Bernice Yorke Institute of Learning on their official Facebook page.

In addition to the hospital and airlift costs, Myvett will also need to secure funding for her surgery, rehabilitation, and childcare.

Donations to assist Miss Tessa Myvett can be sent to her Atlantic Bank account, account number 211433849, or to the account of Thalia Myvett under account number 211018673. Persons wishing to assist can also contribute through the family's GoFundMe account, labeled "Tessa Myvett's Airlift and Medical Expenses".

Belize City man killed...

Continued from Page 1

crime scene on 6th Street in the Kings Park area. Bermudez, who was shot in the hand, is currently in stable condition.

When police arrived on the scene, Buller and Bermudez had already been transported to the KMH. While Buller is no stranger to the law, police say that his killing may have been an isolated incident.

"What we know so far, we have two persons detained, they are saying that it was an isolated incident, not gang-related, something that transpired between Buller and these two parties earlier than night, and it would appear that these persons may have followed them and made good on their target," ASP Fitzroy Yearwood told local



media.

He said that the investigators have a "pretty good lead," but remain tight-lipped on the case. As mentioned, two persons are currently detained, but Yearwood was unable to reveal their identities.

BDF soldiers complain...

Continued from Page 2

complaints received were coming from soldiers out in the fields. Minister Mira noted that when soldiers are out on patrol, every individual is responsible for their own food.

"When you're on patrol, then every individual is responsible for their own food. When we go out on patrol, we don't have someone cooking for us. When we go out and patrol, we cook our own food, so it's up to the soldiers themselves, and we teach them what to do, and as a soldier, you go out there and cook for yourself," said Mira.

Dangriga, where he stayed overnight.

On the following day, at around 6:15 p.m., Perez entered Reyes' home, and pulled out a firearm from the waist of his trousers, with which he shot Reyes' friend and worker, Ishmael Pimentel, once in the abdomen. He then proceeded to unleash a number of bullets at Reyes, who was reportedly hit 8 times, in the head, back, chest,

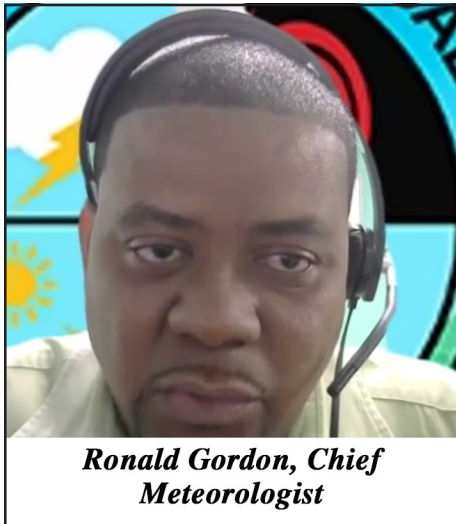
and abdomen, and died instantly. Perez then fled the scene in a getaway car and traveled back to Belize City via boat.

The case was prosecuted by Crown Counsel Riis Cattouse, and Perez was defended by attorney Arthur Saldivar. Perez was found guilty in a trial without a jury by Justice Antoinette Moore, and his sentencing date was set for Thursday, July 21.

Major flooding up North!

Consistent and heavy showers from a low-pressure system and a tropical wave caused “unprecedented floods” in the northern districts. Flood warnings have been issued, while a flood watch across the entire country continues.

Continued from ▶ Page 1



Ronald Gordon, Chief Meteorologist

Corozal. The system, which made its way into the Gulf of Honduras, crossed over Belize late last week and into the weekend caused intense rain which peaked late Saturday evening into Sunday.

“Preliminary information from our network of automatic weather stations indicates that the heaviest rainfall occurred over the Corozal and Orange Walk Districts, where some stations recorded as high as 10 to around 13 inches of rainfall within the three-day period from Friday into Sunday. Those rainfalls, as you would know by now, have created some flooding over parts of the Orange Walk and Corozal Districts. The forecast going forward is that the conditions will remain very moist or very wet, to put it in that term, and very unstable for the next few days. We have a tropical wave which is near us and moving very slowly, so that system will continue to dump heavy rainfall across the country,” Chief Meteorologist Ronald Gordon said during a Zoom press conference this morning.

He shared that the models are projecting 2 to 3 inches of rain, or possibly more, daily, and warns residents to take caution, since these models tend to lean toward more conservative estimates.

“Indications are that the districts that have been affected already will continue to be affected. As a matter of fact, the models are indicating about 2 to 3 inches with locally higher amounts daily, for today and Tuesday, with amounts decreasing around Wednesday and a likely return to better weather on the latter part of the week, that is Thursday into Friday. Important point, the ground is already saturated, there has been intense rainfall, upwards of 10 inches in some locations, and there is likely to be more rainfall, with the models indicating about 2 to 3 inches daily and locally higher amount, because the models sometimes are conservative in their forecast, so we need to take into consideration that what we see on the models may not be what occurs. There could be higher amounts, and those rainfalls are likely to more flooding in that area,” Gordon continued.

A flood warning has been issued for those northern districts, and the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) sprang into action last night. Shelton Defour, the Deputy Coordinator of NEMO, shared that district coordinators have been on the ground since Friday when the forecast for increased rains was issued. By Sunday, shelters had to be opened in some northern communities due to the rapid flooding in those areas.

During an interview this morning, Defour said, “The main concern was the pooling of water in people’s yard, so that was the first level of inconveniences when the water started to pour in people’s yard. It was not

until about 3:30 thereabout that heavy downpour from the remnants or passing of the area of low pressure near the Orange Walk Town and surrounding villages were under the rain for about at least 2 hours nonstop. From our assessment on the ground, the water could not run off from people’s yards into the street because of the drainage problem, so the water just inundated the entire Trial Farm, Black Water area, other parts of the Orange Walk Town itself, and then it partially washed out a culvert near Tower Hill area which caused additional flooding in that area.”

Shelters were opened to the residents of the flooded areas: 10 families from Carmelita were directly affected, and 2 from the San Jose area. NEMO is activated across the country, Defour says, and the Ministry of Education has been advised that classes should not be held in affected areas today.

In order to emphasize the scope of the massive amounts of rain which caused never before seen flooding in some areas up north, Chief Meteorologist Gordon explained that about ¾ of monthly estimated rainfall fell in those areas in just 6 hours, from midday on Sunday to 6:00 p.m..

“The data from our automatic weather stations that were there showed 141.8 millimeters of rainfall, which is about 5 and a half inches. I told you the total for the month is about 200 millimeters, so it’s almost three-quarter of what we get in a month that we got in 6 hours.” Gordon outlined.

While up north received the brunt of the rains and flooding over the weekend, the NEMO deputy coordinator reminded the public that due to the topography of southern Belize, those areas will always see, and should always prepare, for flash floods.

Defour explained, “The hill features, once the rainfall on the hilly terrains, rivers like the Moho River, will always see the flash flood, so they see that on a regular basis. From I was stationed in Toledo ages ago, there’s always been Blue Creek, and those places flooding, Jacintoville, places like that where the water piles up after it runs off the high ground, Big Falls, and those communities. So, they are experiencing a flash flood. That is a similar threat in Cayo, where they have rains in the hills in Guatemala which we are monitoring right now in terms of rainfalls amounts,

Ras Ben killed on Father’s Day

Continued from ▶ Page 1

shots at him, ending his life.

When police arrived at the scene moments later, they found a bleeding and motionless Hyde slumped over the handlebar of his bicycle.

According to the Communications Director of the Belize Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, police are considering the high likelihood that Hyde, Sr., was killed due to his son’s gang activity, and they are preparing for expected retaliation.

“We’re not saying that’s the only angle we’re looking at. We are looking at several angles, but definitely, that is the first angle we are examining—knowing that his son is a rival with the other gang that belongs in that area where he was shot. We have to pay that special attention, because this, of course, could become very volatile, and we have prepared ourselves for any type of retaliation they might try to come with, and we’re going hard after both gangs involved in this dispute,” stated ASP Yearwood.

One local reporter at a police press briefing today asked ASP Yearwood whether police presence in the neighborhood where the shooting took place will increase due to the murder of Benjamin Hyde, Sr. just a couple of

yards away from the nearest police presence in that area.

“I don’t know how much more we can heighten our security, but we have things in place to try to bring these persons to justice. And if you know the dynamics of that area, it has a lot of little alleyways that you can travel through, so what we would do now is provide our patrols and also in these alleyways. We have several ways we can cover that: by foot, by motorbike, by bicycle, but if you see an increased presence in that area, don’t be alarmed. We’re just trying to keep the law-abiding citizens of Belize safe,” said Yearwood.

“... When a murder occurs, it’s a breakdown of society. And people who commit murder look for the opportune time to commit murder. We could have a thousand drones out there and a thousand officers, but when you want to commit that crime, you have done your studies. And we do not know, because murder is with intent when you intend to strike. That’s why we always encourage our officers to do a lot of stops and searches, because you don’t know who could be carrying a gun,” ASP Yearwood went on to say.

Several persons have been detained for his latest homicide; however, no charges have been levied against any persons due to insufficient evidence.

BDF soldier caught transporting undocumented migrants

Continued from ▶ Page 1

placed on disciplinary leave.

In an interview on Monday, Hon. Mira told reporters that in addition to the current ongoing police investigation, an internal investigation is pending as well.

“Unfortunately, it’s not something we like to report on, but it is the reality. For some reason, I think that the security forces in the past have been coerced to cooperate with these individuals,” he stated.

Regardless, said Minister Mira, the BDF holds a zero-tolerance stance when it comes to human smuggling. He noted that the soldier has since been placed on leave and is awaiting disciplinary action.

“We will not tolerate the Belize Defence Force or any of our security forces to be part of this ring that is bringing in illegal immigrants into Belize. It’s unfortunate. This is not what the Belize Defence Force is, and we will not let one individual tarnish the good

name of the Belize Defence Force,” he added.

On the night of Friday, June 10, a Toyota 4Runner, being driven by the soldier, was intercepted in Bullet Tree Village by the Mobile Interdiction Team (MIT). Also in the vehicle were thirteen persons who could not produce any proper documentation. As a result, both the driver and his passengers were detained by the MIT. The thirteen undocumented migrants, all Ecuadoran nationals and six of whom are children, were then handed over to the Immigration Department.

According to Minister Mira, as part of the ongoing investigation, the police are working on ascertaining the identity of the person responsible for the attempted smuggling, since the soldier was only the driver.

“This person was just a driver. He wasn’t responsible. So we want to make sure we get to the bottom of who is responsible for these undocumented migrants to be crossing the border,” he said.

and the Mopan River in Guatemala, to anticipate the downstream flow into Belize, and then that means the knock-on effect is flooding in Belize River Valley.”

Most vulnerable families are to be identified by village chairpersons and directed or transported to shelters if necessary. A flood warning across the northern districts remains in effect, and a warning is also in place for the rest of the country.

“The National Meteorological Service of Belize and the National Emergency Management Organization

(NEMO) hereby informs the general public that a slow-moving tropical wave is affecting the country today,” stated the second advisory issued today. “This comes after an area of low pressure caused flooding in the northern districts on Sunday, June 19, 2022. As a result, some areas in Orange Walk and Corozal have already seen upwards of ten inches of rainfall during the past seventy-two hours. The tropical wave will continue to support very wet conditions persisting at least through to mid-week,” the advisory further said.



Sales Agents

BELIZE CITY

- * Puma Roundabout
- * Puma, 2 Mls.
- * Shell Service Station, C.A. Boulevard
- * Community Drug Store
- * William Supermarket, C.A. Boulevard
- * Fuel Logistics/Bel-China
- * Puma Freetown
- * Cambranes
- * J & K Supermarket
- * Twin Supermarket, 5526 St. Thomas Street
- * Tow Tow Grocery Store, Mahogany Street
- * Julie Wong Store, Belama (by police station)
 - * JB's Store, Mahogany Street
 - * 88 Shopping Center, C.A. Boulevard
 - * Freetown Drug Store
 - * Publics, Philip Goldson Highway
 - * Buca Shell, Philip Goldson Highway
 - * James Brodie & Co., Albert St., and Philip Goldson Highway
 - * 1st Choice Pharmacy
 - * Save-U Supermarket

PLACENCIA

- * Placencia Office Supplies

LADYVILLE

- * Puma Service Station
- * Shell Service Station
- * Low's Supermarket

ORANGEWALK

- * One Stop Service Station
- * People's Store

BENQUE

- * Eduard Cambranes
- 6 Diaz St., Benque

CAYO

- * Amini Habet
- C/o Shell Service Station
- San Ignacio
- * Venus Store

BELMOPAN

- Dakers Stationery & Books
- * Hydes Mini Market
- * First Choice Variety Gift Shop
- * Shell Service Station
- * Medicare Plus Pharmacy

STANN CREEK

- * Xaibel Service Station
- * S & S One Stop
- C/o Uno Belize
- * St. Vincent Convenience Store

COROZAL

- * Aguilar Car Care Products # 60 4th Avenue, Corozal Town
- * Xiomara Alcala c/o Corozal Farmer's Supplies # 99 - 5th Avenue, Corozal Town
- * Elena Castaneda WE Store Gabriel Hoare Market #A8 6th Avenue, Corozal Town

SAN PEDRO

- Rocks Shopping Center

INDEPENDENCE

- * G N J Mart

PUNTA GORDA

- * King's Texaco
- * NJV Pharmacy

Amandala business and editorial offices:
3304 Partridge Street, Belize City, Belize, Central America
is printed twice weekly by the
Amandala Press.

Telephones: 501-280-4703/202-4477

Our email address for business & advertising are
amandalapress@gmail.com and amandalapress@yahoo.com
For news, letters and articles: editor_amandala@yahoo.com