

Belize's leading newspaper

Benque woman, 71, killed by machete-wielding attacker

Miguel Angel Gomez, 68, a man with an alleged history of chopping incidents and other offensive behavior, has been charged with the murder of 71-year-old Ramona Morales Ramirez.

by *Khaila Gentle*

BENQUE VIEJO, Cayo District, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Ramona Morales Ramirez, 71, had been walking from her brother's home on Church Street in the town of Benque Viejo on Saturday morning when she was attacked and repeatedly chopped by Miguel Angel Gomez, who also resides on that street. Police at this time are still trying to find out what prompted the 68-year-old man to commit such a crime; however, Ramirez's son is claiming that Gomez has shown erratic behavior for a number of years but has never been

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Ramona Morales Ramirez, deceased

Farmer stabbed to death in Silver Creek

TOLEDO, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Early this morning the body of 44-year-old Silver Creek resident, Isaiah Chiac, was found motionless at the Silver Creek Junction in the Toledo District. Chiac, a farmer of Maya descent, went to see his children in Belmopan on Saturday, his common-law wife told police.

She did not hear anything more from him until this morning when the news of his death reached her. He was reportedly stabbed and left for dead a short distance from the bus shed in the village. Unconfirmed reports are that he may have been attacked and left for dead at the bus stop when he came off

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Isaiah Chiac, deceased

Retired figure skater, Michelle Kwan, appointed US Ambassador to Belize

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H.E. Michelle Kwan

Same old faces: UDP receives 64 standard bearer applications



(l-r) Patrick Faber, Zenaida Moya and Mark King

BELIZE CITY, Fri. Sept. 30, 2022

Today, the United Democratic Party closed its call for candidates to submit their applications to be the party's standard bearers in the 31 constituencies in the country. The seats in the Mesopotamia, Albert, and Corozal North constituencies — held by elected area representatives Moses "Shyne" Barrow, Tracy Pantan, and Hugo Patt respectively — will all remain uncontested. In the Collet division, Patrick Faber's name appears on the

list, despite the release of a letter by the chairperson of the UDP Nominations Committee outlining the rejection of his application. The Collet constituency is being contested by the former Director of the National Sports Council, Ian Jones. In Queen's Square, Denise "Sista B" Barrow did not resubmit her name for candidacy.

A total of 64 applications were submitted at the end of business today.

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Russian annexation of 4 Ukrainian territories condemned worldwide

"That invasion violates so many norms of international law. It also threatens the international security, and it creates a precedent that Belize, who is claimed by another country, cannot compromise on," Minister Courtenay said.

BELIZE CITY, Fri. Sept. 30, 2022

Belize has joined the world in condemning the Russian annexation of four Ukrainian territories following its unilateral, "sham" referendum in those partially occupied provinces. A tweet posted by Foreign Minister Hon.

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Belizean flags back in the country—Minister Courtenay

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has revealed that the two Belizean flags taken from Sarstoon Island during the Guatemalan Armed Forces' illegal incursion into Belize two weeks ago have since been returned to the country. This most recent illegal incursion of the Guatemala military into Belize has highlighted the need for a Sarstoon Protocol to be drafted and agreed upon between the two countries, Minister Courtenay said. This was highlighted by the Prime Minister, Hon. John Briceño, in his speech at the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and in the

side meetings at that gathering, Hon. Courtenay and Hon. Briceno had conversations with OAS Secretary General, Luis Almagro.

While the flags are now in the country, said Minister Courtenay, he is not sure if they have been returned to Wil Maheia, leader of the Belize Territorial Volunteers (BTV), who, along with a group of BTV members (who traveled in five boats to Sarstoon Island) planted the flags on the island as a part of their yearly Independence Day trip to the Sarstoon. This year, the GAF brought 5 boats and shadowed the group, attempting to block their entrance into the Sarstoon River



Flags being taken by GAF

Oceana recognizes 2 Ocean Heroes



Dr. Rachel Graham and Dr. Leandra Cho-Ricketts, Oceana Ocean Heroes 2022 (Image Credit: OCEANA)

by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Fri. Sept. 30, 2022

On Thursday, Oceana Belize recognized Dr. Rachel Graham, a marine conservationist, and Dr. Leandra Cho-Ricketts, a marine ecologist, as this year's Ocean Hero Award recipients. Both Dr. Graham and Dr. Cho-Ricketts have dedicated almost half their lives to the cause of conservation and the protection of marine life.

Dr. Rachel Graham has traveled across the globe—from Latin America to Micronesia—to carry out marine research. For the past two decades, she has been working with local fishers and conservationists to protect threatened marine wildlife and their habitats. During Oceana's virtual awards ceremony, she remarked that she sees conservation as a marathon rather than a sprint.

"It's taken 25 years of my life to get to some of the successes, and the knowledge, and the scientific discoveries that I've made. It gives me great pleasure to see huge changes, also, in the public in Belize," she said.

Those changes, said Graham, include a shift in the community towards understanding and being concerned for marine creatures like sharks, rather than being afraid of them.

Dr. Rachel Graham is also the founder of international NGO MarAlliance, which works together with communities to protect marine wildlife and their critical habitats.

Like Dr. Graham, Dr. Leandra Cho-Ricketts has spent the last twenty years utilizing her marine science skills in the name of conservation. She is the co-founder of the University of Belize's Environmental Research Institute and has dedicated her life to advancing policies and regulations that ensure the protection of marine life.

During her acceptance speech, Dr. Cho-Ricketts said that the Belize Barrier Reef is what inspired her to enter the field of marine ecology.

"What I always heard growing up was about the reef, and really for me, that's what I wanted to work on to help manage, to help protect. So, I guess over time, I've always been trying to work towards conserving, protecting, and managing the Belize Barrier Reef," she said.

Having received Oceana's Ocean Hero Award, Dr. Graham and Dr. Cho-Ricketts join twenty other exceptional Belizeans who have been awarded over the years, including Wil Maheia, Chef Jeanie Staines, Lisa Carne, and Jamal Galves.

"The Belizeans we've been honored to recognize as Ocean Heroes are testament to the fact that when the odds are against us, that is when our resilience rises. That is when we are our strongest," said Oceana Vice President Janelle Chanona.

Both of this year's awardees received a stained glass plaque designed and made by local artist, Leisa Carr-Caceres of Belizean Craft and Colors.

first, and then making attempts to prevent them from docking on the island.

Notably, the presence of children on the BTV trip did not deter the GAF in their acts of military aggression.

"I had protested to the ambassador here verbally, and then we followed it up with a written protest," Hon. Courtenay has said. "We are insistent that there be a Sarstoon protocol. So far we have not been able to convince Guatemala. Prime Minister Briceño and I had a meeting with the Secretary General of the OAS earlier this week when we were in Washington and stressed the need for a Sarstoon protocol," Hon. Courtenay further indicated.

According to Hon. Courtenay, during the OAS General Assembly next week

in Peru, he will be meeting his counterpart from Guatemala, the Foreign Minister of Guatemala.

"He knows that we will be putting on the agenda a Sarstoon Protocol. We need to avoid these incidents. Whether we succeed, we will see," Hon. Courtenay said. He further explained that the Belize government did not make mention of that specific incident during the Prime Minister's speech at the 77th UNGA since many other issues would have to be addressed.

"We took that into consideration and decided that that was not the place. The Prime Minister made a forceful presentation to the OAS Secretary General, which I won't go into the details, but they have produced some results already," Hon. Courtenay said.

Retired figure skater, Michelle Kwan, appointed US Ambassador to Belize

by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Diplomat and retired Olympian figure skater Michelle Kwan has been appointed by the US Senate as Ambassador to Belize. Kwan was nominated by President Biden for the role in December of 2021, and on Thursday, the US Senate officially confirmed her appointment.

Last year, Kwan said that she was honoured by her nomination and looked forward to serving her country.

"Belize is full of incredible history and culture, and has been a tremendous partner to the United States. I look forward to working with the Belizean government on economic issues, to put an end to this pandemic, and to address the root causes of migration," she stated.

According to the US State Department, Kwan's extensive work in public diplomacy and youth outreach make her a well-qualified candidate for the position, as does her experience

working with non-profit organizations.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration, Hon. Eamon Courtenay, said on Monday that the government is looking forward to Kwan's arrival.

"We have looked at her C.V. and her work. She is an experienced diplomat. Most people regard her as a sportswoman, as a medallist, and as a skier, but in fact she has tremendous experience in diplomacy," he said.

According to Hon. Courtenay, an ambassador in Belize has been long overdue, as the government continues to build relations with the United States.

Michelle Kwan is a five-time World Championship gold medallist. She also won a silver medal at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics and a bronze medal at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. She also holds a Master's Degree from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She has worked on the presidential campaigns of both Hillary Clinton (2016) and President Joe Biden (2020).

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BTL records \$16.1 million in profit

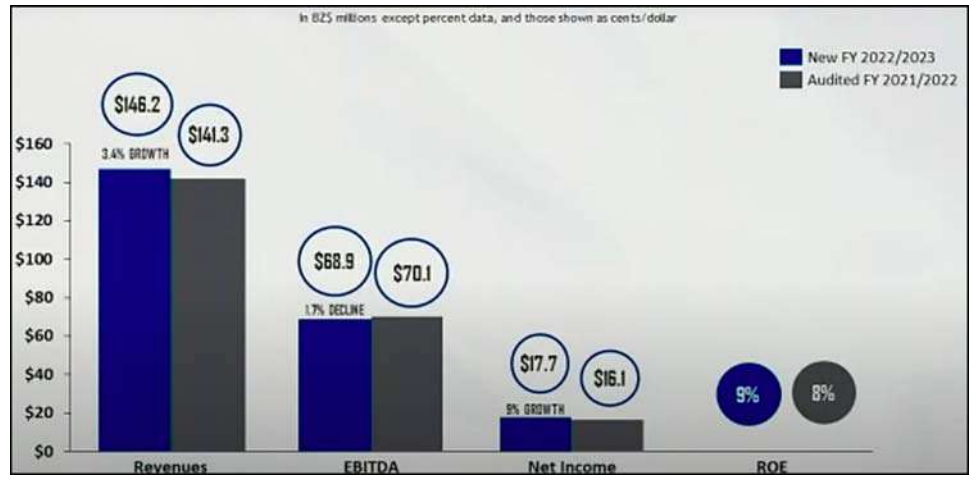
The net income of the company is up 197% from last year, when profits of only \$5.4 million were recorded; shareholder dividends have doubled.

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The state-owned telecommunications company, Belize Telemedia Limited (BTL), now rebranded as DIGI, has reported an 8.6% return on equity for its past fiscal year at its Annual General Meeting held last Friday virtually via Zoom. A net income of \$16.1 million has been recorded—an increase of \$10.7 million dollars from its 2021 performance. The chairman of the company’s board of directors, Markhelm Lizarraga, noted at the meeting that the past year has been the first full fiscal year with the new board

of directors at the helm of the company, and that the measures implemented by this board to ensure the viability of BTL have already begun to bear fruit.

“As a result of the improved financial performance, we are happy to announce that dividends per share will be doubled compared to the previous year,” Lizarraga went on to announce during his presentation. He said that the improved financial performance can be attributed to a mix of improved efficiency in the delivery of service, lowered costs, and renegotiation of prices with suppliers. The managers of



the company have fully cooperated in the effort to increase prudence in spending, Lizarraga further said.

“Everybody understands the need for us to become viable and profitable. And we couldn’t have done it without the contributions and efforts made by all our staff in this regard,” he noted.

The company is aiming to achieve an ROE of 9% during this current fiscal year and has since expanded its

operations and ventured into new service areas—thus becoming the only quad-play provider in the country of Belize. The company is now offering content for viewing/listening this year following the acquisition of Alternative Networks Ltd., which they hope will offset the decrease in revenue derived from its voice and text message services due to increased usage of VOIP apps across Belize.

Belize and Cuba to talk migration in October bilateral meeting



Hon. Eamon Courtenay, Foreign Minister

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

During a recent interview, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Eamon Courtenay said that the influx of Cuban migrants in Belize is an ongoing problem, adding that a bilateral meeting between the governments of Cuba and Belize is set to take place next week to discuss the issue. Of recent, the Ministry of Immigration has increased its manpower through the hiring of 15 additional immigration officers, who have since been deployed.

They have also begun to detect and identify persons in Belize who are facilitating the significant increase in illegal and irregular smuggling. As reported recently, the economic conditions in Cuba, which have been exacerbated by additional U.S. sanctions, have triggered one of the largest northern migrations of Cuban citizens to date.

“They are regional flows, and we have detected trends in which these migrants move, and we have to work on a regional basis with the countries which are facilitating them to see whether we can come up with a common plan to try to stem the movement of illegal migrants, particularly the Cubans,” Minister Courtenay said.

The government of Belize does not want the country to become a transit point for illegal and irregular migrants. It must be noted that a majority of the

persons who enter the country illegally are seeking greener pastures further north, in the United States of America. A number of migrants are deciding to remain in Belize, however. Hon. Courtenay noted, however, that after the amnesty program is completed this will not be the case.

And in the case of the Cuban nationals, repatriating them back to their home country

will present some difficulty, since there are no direct commercial flights from Belize to Cuba, and the airlines in neighboring countries have become wary of using their facilities to take the at times, troublesome migrants back home.

“The big challenge for us is how do we get them back. There are no direct flights; there are occasional flights related to the medical program, and if there is space we will put them on, but there is usually no space, because we are rotating the brigade,” Hon. Courtenay said, citing the unrest caused by some migrants who were put on a COPA fight but caused a disturbance on the aircraft, leading the pilot to request their removal.

“Countries through which they have to transit, Guatemala for example on Tag, and COPA to Panama, are now saying we will no longer allow you to use our airline and our airports to transit some of these people. So Cuba presents a particular challenge. We are working with the Cuban government, and as I said, we are having migration talks next month to try to address some of these challenges. The difficulty, is, that it is the obligation of Belize in such instances at our cost to send them back to the country of origin,” Hon. Courtenay explained.

“We have stepped up our effort in

CDB approves US\$6 million for student loans



Development Finance Corporation compound

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The Development Finance Corporation, through the Government of Belize, will receive a US\$6 million-dollar disbursement approved recently by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to provide affordable student loans to persons in Belize who are seeking post-secondary and tertiary-level education. Last Thursday, the CDB reported that through the Belize Student Loan Project, the funds will be made available to the DFC to provide loans for up to 800 students, including disadvantaged persons.

The loan is aimed at bolstering the Belizean workforce through the training of persons in areas of expertise that are critical to improving the country’s economic competitiveness. These areas have been identified in the government’s human resources development strategy.

The CDB Vice President of Operations, Isaac Solomon, in his remarks following the approval of the loan at a recent meeting of the CDB Board of Directors, said, “Investment

in human resource development is vital to the future of a country, and consequently it is critical that Belizean students have access to education and training to meet the future needs of the labor force.”

The release states that with 70% of the population under 35, the demand for tertiary level education is steadily increasing.

“Expanded access to secondary education and evolving human resources requirements for the country’s services-driven economy are also necessitating more tertiary-level training schemes,” the release from the CDB states.

The anticipated benefits from this loan include an increase in enrollment in and graduation from tertiary level programs, as well as an increase in highly skilled professionals and practitioners within the Belizean workforce and improved employability and productivity within the local human resource pool.

The loan, as previously stated, will be administered through the DFC.

Bus upgrades must begin by December

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The Minister of Transport, Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, addressed the current gripes within the transport industry during an interview this weekend. He prefaced his comments by reminding the public and bus operators of the government's intention to implement the upgrade of the buses used within the industry starting this December. This will require present operators to upgrade their fleets through the procurement of modern buses. Hon. Ferguson said that he made the announcement over a year and a half ago and has been in consultation with the IDB for several months to pave the way for the industry upgrade. According to Hon. Ferguson, there is currently a Transport Planner within the Ministry who is determining the needs within the industry.

He also noted that the starting date for the upgrade was extended from June 2022 to December 2022.

"Now December 2022 is not far away, and I di remind all of them that I will maintain my position. Only Cabinet can change my position. But I recognized that the country wants the change, so the change is coming. When that time comes, we are going to have to decide what we are going to do, but I believe some of them will definitely get on board in December to start the transformation," Minister Ferguson said.

The members of the Belize Bus Association (BBA) have highlighted the difficulty they are facing in acquiring the financing to purchase the new buses, and in recent public statements have cited special benefits afforded to the new bus operator, Floralia, by the Ministry of Transport. While the BBA has pointed out that a northern bus run requested by Floralia will give that company an unfair advantage and cause a loss of earnings for long-time operators, Minister Ferguson expressed the belief that competition will vitalize



Minister Rodwell Ferguson

the industry.

"We live inna a free economy," Minister Ferguson said, "As far as I understand it—I don't sit on the board—I think Floralia applied, if I am not mistaken, for a 2:30 or 3:30 from Corozal. That nuh di effect nobody. Maybe it pass through Orange Walk, it might pick up some passenger weh da fi wa particular bus, but we have to figure how we can grow this country," Minister Ferguson said.

Minister Ferguson further stated that the Ministry is not expecting a complete upgrade of the bus fleet immediately, but he said that there must be a start of the process and suggested that a tier system will be put in place to determine how to deal with the varying types of buses expected to be on the road.

"Floralia will always be the gripe. They just come in and already get inna the industry, but we are talking now about a tier 1, a tier 2, and a tier 3, so you, the commuter, will decide based on your pocket which bus do you want to catch," Hon. Ferguson said.

The operators who secure new buses will be granted 10-year permits, according to Hon. Ferguson.

"We are saying, then, that if you could go at the bank now, I'll tell you

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Two shot, one dead in Arlington Drive shooting

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

A 29-year-old man lost his life early Friday morning following a shooting at the corner of Arlington Drive and McKenzie Lane around 8:00 on Thursday night. The victim has been identified as Kevin Gillett, who reportedly had gone to make a purchase at the shop and somehow was standing at the intersection with a group of men when a gunman came out of a yard and opened fire on the group.

Also shot was Glenford "Slim" Soberanis, who was hit in the leg and subsequently discharged himself from the hospital on the morning after the incident. Gillett, however, who was shot in the shoulder, according to members of his family, did not survive despite being in a stable condition following the shooting.

His common-law wife believes that he was at the wrong place at the wrong time, but his family is still puzzled over his death, wondering how someone could die from a wound to the shoulder. Police suspect that individuals from the Antelope Street area may have some link to this murder, since Commissioner Chester Williams claimed in an interview on Saturday that "the past three murders in the city has been committed by



Kevin Gillett, deceased

them."

Stringent measures will be put in place to curb the growing violence in the area and across Belize City, COMPOL Williams said. It must be noted that groups of young men frequently can be seen in the area where Gillett was shot.

The family of Kevin Gillett remains shocked at the loss of his life in this manner, since they always viewed him as a humble young man. A police investigation into this killing is ongoing.

Hopkins man stabbed to death

by Charles Gladden

HOPKINS, Stann Creek District, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Police are searching for four men who they believe were involved in the fatal stabbing of Norman Castillo, 45, laborer of Hopkins Village, Stann Creek District, on Friday night, September 30.

According to police reports, Castillo and his wife were relaxing in their yard together just after 10:00 p.m. on the southside of Hopkins Village when a group of men passed the couple's residence, and for a yet unknown reason, an argument flared up between Castillo and the men.

That argument became a physical altercation, during which Castillo was stabbed twice in the left side of the chest. He was later taken to the Southern Regional Hospital, where he passed away from the injuries he received.

"It seems like the Devil is really busy. You try your best to hold down areas where you believe things may occur and from nowhere ... I don't understand. If you're walking, go about your business. But again, these are things that people expect the police can stop. We just can't. It is extremely difficult ... The fact that we are unable to live in peace-loving harmony with each other is creating [a] problem, and until we recognize that to live with each other, the problem is going to continue," said Commissioner of Police, Chester Williams, during comments he made about the incident.

Today, Monday, October 3, at a police press briefing, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood,



Norman Castillo, deceased

communications director of the Belize Police Department, told local reporters that the police are currently carrying out a death investigation, and at the conclusion of that investigation, they "will know exactly which direction [they] will take, whether or not it is murder or manslaughter."

Dead youth and motorcycle found on John Smith Road

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The body of Ladyville resident, Randy Pollard, 19, was found sometime after 6:00 o'clock on Sunday morning, October 2, on the John Smith Road on the outskirts of Belize City following a road traffic accident, which may have occurred sometime during the previous night.

When police arrived at the scene, they saw Pollard's motionless body on the side of the road, and beside him was his motorcycle, which he had purchased about a month ago. The family of Pollard identified him sometime after 5:00 on Sunday evening.

Police are currently carrying out an investigation to determine whether Pollard was hit by an oncoming vehicle or lost control of his motorcycle.

ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, communications director of the Police Department, told local reporters, however, that a post-mortem



Randy Pollard, deceased

examination will be carried out on Pollard's body to determine whether foul play might have led to his death.



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Bus-isms; "social justice" & "free market"

From Preamble to the Belize Constitution: "...WHEREAS the people of Belize – (b) respect the principles of social justice and therefore believe that the operation of the economic system must result in the material resources of the community being so distributed as to subserve the common good, that there should be adequate means of livelihood for all,..."

Monday, October 3, 2022

As forward thinking political leaders grapple with the task of bringing the living conditions of all Belizean citizens up into the 21st century, the challenge of achieving an efficient, comfortable, affordable and environmentally friendly bus service has brought the spotlight on the contrasting economic philosophies at work, and the balancing act being performed by current government leaders in trying to deliver the goods to the Belizean public.

To some extent, all political leaders, especially those in Cabinet, have to at times confront the dilemma of formulating policies for the betterment of the citizens who voted them into office, while facing pressure from proponents of two opposing economic philosophies, sometimes referred to in the strict scientific sense as capitalism and socialism, but more often described in layman's terms as a governmental approach favoring either social justice or free market competition, which is also sometimes referred to as "laissez faire capitalism". The late great Father of the Nation, Rt. Hon. George C. Price had once remarked that his Belize government was committed to working the "mixed economy", which suggested that he was tempering the basic capitalist structure with judicious interventions from government to assure a measure of social justice to protect the masses of consumers from the innate greed and rapaciousness of the capitalist (business) class. He is reported to have explained his reasoning as, "not that the rich should have less, but that the poor should have more," which sounds like a basic spiritual outlook that is fully embraced and extolled in the Preamble to the Belize Constitution.

According to capitalism.org, "Laissez-faire does not mean the 'laws of the jungle,' i.e., that business owners can enslave workers. Laissez-faire means operating under an objective *rule of law* (freedom) as opposed to an arbitrary, *rule of man* (regulation). Laissez-faire ends where the violation of the rights of others begins. What laissez-faire does mean is that if a business action does not violate individual rights, then the states' policy is 'hands-off' or laissez-faire."

Some Belizean intellectuals who declare their faith-based concern for the people, will swear by the virtues of "free market capitalism", and condemn interventions in the market by government as "rank socialism" and the first dangerous steps toward the dreaded "communism". They are reminded by others, though, that there is really no "capitalist democracy" on earth right now that does not also practice some form of "social justice" intervention. Even the great United States has its well-known Social Security system that gives various forms of protection to workers; and workers unions are also prevalent in the U.S., and those are a visible evidence of a form of "socialism" at work. So, as P.M. Price suggested with his "mixed economy", there has to be some type of balance between

the free market and social justice efforts by government to satisfy the needs of the whole population and not just the whims of a few. Striking that balance is the task faced by governments, usually with much help from a vocal Opposition.

Under normal circumstances in Belize, the raging debate over the condition of buses transporting citizens on our roads and highways, and the proposed solutions to the problem would feature major inputs and arguments from members of the Opposition. Unfortunately, internal squabbles and infighting have rendered the Opposition UDP temporarily distracted, and left the bus issue to be ironed out between respective government officials and the bus company owners and representatives.

Those political leaders most under focus in the current bus situation are transport minister Hon. Rodwell Ferguson and Belize City mayor Bernard Wagner. These are two men who have built up a reputation over the years as being concerned about the small people; their sincerity has seldom been questioned, and neither has been their tenacity in trying to get things done. In the normal scheme of things, the battle would be between the poor consumers/commuters who must use the buses, and the bus owners/companies that provide the service. And both Hon. Ferguson and mayor Wagner would be going to bat for the consumers/commuters, the small people. What has complicated the current situation, is that certain new entities and elements have been introduced into the equation, in which case the bus owners/companies are now presenting themselves as "the small fish" being victims of "bigger fish" in the form of well-financed newcomers to the industry, Floralia, and the intrusion into Belize highways of the Chetumal originated Ado bus line, while the mayor is also promoting the introduction of electric buses into Belize City on a trial basis, which means they would be competing with the old current school buses. Now the bus owners/companies are crying foul, presenting themselves as the "small fish" in this new scenario, and seeking assistance and comfort from the minister and the mayor for their predicament in competing against the "big fish" – Floralia, Ado and the new Citco electric buses.

On the one hand, both the minister and the mayor are adamant that our citizens/commuters have been long suffering with appalling conditions of transport in the old buses, and they have been unsuccessful in their persistent efforts to press the bus owners/companies to raise their bus standards. On the other hand, the bus owners/companies are lamenting that they have faithfully carried out the job of providing necessary transportation to the public at low rates and with very limited financing, so they were in no position to make the big upgrade. And if there is outside funding now available, as apparently with some UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) grant funds, they argue that they should be a part of that "action" so they can also upgrade and be a part of this new landmark step in the industry.

The "free market" approach for both minister and mayor would be, to hell with the bus owners/companies; we have long told them to upgrade; let the market forces play out, and who can't keep up will just drop out, and the best will survive, and the citizens/commuters will get the quality service they deserve.

But a "social justice" bug may be singing in the ears of these two sincere gentlemen. Is it fair; is it right; is the "common good" being served? These long-serving bus owners/companies are Belizeans too, have employees, families, have battled through tough times. Will all the problems be solved overnight with the new arrangement – Floralia and electric buses competing in the city; or will new unsuspected problems emerge? Are the constitutional rights of original bus owners/companies being impinged? What if a hurricane hits, and everything electric is out of action for a while; who will come to the rescue with their old diesel buses?

Notwithstanding the relative silence from the Opposition side, it is all our hopes that the demonstrated "social justice" hearts beating in the chest of minister Ferguson and mayor Wagner will not fail, and they will find some amicable solution to this bus dilemma that will see citizens/commuters finally riding in style and comfort, while a productive way forward will also be worked out to see the long standing bus owners/companies and their employees given fair and just consideration.

In law, and to some extent in politics, a precedent often impacts the future course of events; and the outcome of this current bus/public transport dispute may well indicate the future economic and political climate in our once sweet and backward Belize. Will the accelerated drive for progress lead us in the direction of always friendly Taiwan or sometimes friendly Guatemala?

AMANDALA
Belize's leading newspaper! BELIZE

(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**

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Hon. Musa: increase in violent crimes plaguing the region, not just Belize

by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Hon. Kareem Musa has often said that crime is not a policing issue but rather a social one. Nevertheless, the Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries has stated that the recent uptick in killings is somewhat concerning. In the past month alone, there have been six murders, five of which have taken place within the last ten days. According to Minister Musa, however, the increase in violent crimes is not isolated to Belize alone and in fact is an issue plaguing the entire region.

“It is very scary, the world we live in today, Daniel, and it is certainly not just limited to Belize. You look across the region: Jamaica is facing extreme violent crimes happening in their society, Salvador, other parts of Central America. So, there is this sort of uptick worldwide of crime, even in the great United States,” said Hon. Musa to *7News* reporter Daniel Ortiz last week.

Throughout the course of this year, there have been reports of soaring murder rates across the Caribbean—from St. Lucia to Jamaica.

On Monday, the National Security Minister of Bermuda, Michael Weeks, stated that the country is currently facing a gang violence “crisis”.

“We are losing too many young Black men. This is an existential threat, and I want to know the ‘whys’ and the ‘what’s’ – why are we losing these young men and what can be done to stop this crisis,” Weeks said.

Last week, Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Shyne Barrow, once again called for the removal of Hon. Kareem Musa as Home Affairs Minister in the face of the increase in murders. As usual, Minister Musa was dismissive of Hon. Barrow’s criticism.

Like Minister Kareem Musa,



Hon. Kareem Musa, Minister of Home Affairs

Bermuda’s Minister Michael Weeks noted that there is no single person or entity that can be blamed for crime.

“... this problem is a community problem, not a police problem,” he stated.

Jamaica, too, has been plagued by a recent increase in violent crimes. Earlier this month, chairman of the Police Federation, Corporal Rohan James, unlike Ministers Musa and Weeks, blamed the government for the country’s crime problem.

According to *Caribbean National Weekly News*, James spoke at the funeral of slain police constable Jermaine Brown and stated that the crime problem has been “mismanaged,” calling for the public to demand more from leaders to stem the bloodshed. He also said that a lack of adequate resources and years of inefficiency have stunted policing efforts.

Here at home, the most recently published report by the Belize Crime Observatory reveals that the total number of crimes for the first six months of 2022 was up by 40, compared to the same period last year. Murders, specifically, increased from 67 to 85. The Belize Crime Observatory also reported, however, that there was an increase in total arrests—from 102 in 2021 to 141 in 2022.

Minimum wage town halls commence

by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

During his Independence Day speech, Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño announced that, come January 2023, the minimum wage will be increased from the current \$3.50 to \$5 per hour. As a part of the process leading up to the long-awaited date, the government has planned numerous consultations with members of the public. Those consultations, spearheaded by the Minimum Wage Task Force, began last week.

According to the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour, and Local Government, the purpose of the consultations is to discuss the impact of the increase for unskilled workers

and those engaged in elementary occupations, interventions required to ensure compliance, and a potential formula for gradual increase in specific sectors and future wage adjustments.

The Belize City town hall took place on Wednesday. Reports are, however, that the turnout to that consultation left much to be desired, with only a total of nine persons in attendance. Last week, Marcello Blake, the president of the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told *News5* that the low turnout was likely due to inclement weather.

The next town hall meeting is scheduled to take place today, October 3, in Dangriga Town. There will also be meetings held on October 4 in Placencia, October 5 in Independence Village, and October 6 in Punta Gorda Town.

Same old faces: UDP receives 64 standard bearer ...

Continued from Page 1

A large number of the applicants are familiar faces in the UDP, and there has even been some “bad blood” between some of them and the organization. In the Freetown division, in which Orson “OJ” Elrington has been standard bearer, UDP mayor Zenaida Moya has submitted her application for candidacy, and in the Pickstock division former Lake Independence representative Mark King is vying for the leadership of the division against former City Council member Dean Samuels.

Both King and Moya were in the public eye due to controversies that arose since they entered office and have previously sued or threatened to sue the UDP. King was investigated by police for allegedly firing a gun in public following an argument with his girlfriend in July 2020. He is also known to have sued activist Moses Sulph for slander over a Facebook post concerning working conditions at King’s security company. Moya, who was first booted from the UDP in 2010 over words uttered by her against then Prime Minister Dean Barrow, had sued the party, and at one point there was public speculation about her interest in being a PUP candidate. Her expulsion from the UDP was eventually downgraded to a one-year suspension.

Former Corozal mayor, Hilberto Campos, has submitted an application to represent the UDP in Corozal Bay, and Antonio Herrera, a current senator, is seeking to be the standard bearer in the Corozal South East division. Elodio Aragon, Jr., has submitted his name in a bid to be the UDP candidate in Orange Walk East. Also, Edmond Castro, former Cabinet minister and area representative for Belize Rural North, has resubmitted his name to become the standard bearer in the division, and Beverly Williams, current senator, has once again submitted her application to be the UDP standard bearer in

Belize Rural Central.

In Queen’s Square, Godwin Haylock and Shane Williams are contesting the division, currently held by Denise “Sista B” Barrow, who, as mentioned, did not submit an application to represent the division. In Port Loyola, Philip Willoughby and AC Castillo have submitted their names, and Melvin Hewlett has applied to hold over in the Fort George division as UDP standard bearer.

In Cayo Central, Mayor Earl Trapp, Jr., has submitted an application to vie against three others in a bid to represent the division. Omar Figueroa, former Cabinet minister, has submitted his application and will be uncontested in Cayo North. In Belmopan, four familiar names are listed as applicants seeking to represent the division: previous Belmopan area rep and Cabinet minister, John Saldivar; former Belmopan mayor, Khalid Belisle; Emil Torres, and George Lovell.

In Stann Creek West, UDP hopeful Ivan Williams once again submitted his name with two others. And in Dangriga, Richard Webster, Francis Marin, Earth Lopez, and Norman Usher, Jr., have submitted their names to contest the division.

Former mayor of Punta Gorda Ashton McKenzie has submitted his name to run in Toledo East.

Reports are that former UDP leader Patrick Faber’s chance of running in the division he has held for 5 terms consecutively will hinge on whether he complies with the demands made by the UDP’s Central Executive Committee (CEC), which has ordered him to remove posts on his social media page that are critical of UDP leadership. He was removed from the CEC due to his non-compliance with their directive and now a recent letter outlining breaches of the UDP constitution is being used to block his application. The UDP chairman and party leader have both said that if he complies he would be allowed to represent the party in that division.

Bus upgrades must begin by December

Continued from Page 4

to go find your money, guarantee you will get your 10 years road service permit, but we nuh want to give you 10 years and you nuh live up to the commitment,” he said.

Some operators, he admitted, will inevitably have to come off the road, since at the current time the highways are saturated with buses.

“Too many operators deh pan the highway. You cannot run a system with a 10, 15, 20, 40 operators with one or two buses. So you must find a way to form a company, an associate where the Ministry of Transport wa deal with you as an association as a company but nuh wah deal with Tom, Dick, and Harry,” he said. At the time, due to the number of buses, operators continue to hope for their share of passengers in order to make their runs profitable.

“That’s why some ah they will have to step by the wayside and say, ‘you know what, I’m not making any money. You know what, better I come outa this.’ But you wa see the change starting January 2023,” Minister Ferguson remarked.

He did point out that December 2022 is to mark the start of the transport industry upgrade, and that bus operators are expected to at least have begun the process by then. In January 2023, the full rollout of the transformation should begin, Minister Ferguson said.

“Right now we di do wah serious study. We have a Transport Planner, weh di plan for wi and di look at the system and figure, ‘you know what, we need a bus here, we need a bus here,’ but right now there are buses running without anybody in there,” Hon. Ferguson said.

Visiting Justice Program returns to the Kolbe Foundation

The program, in which a Chief Magistrate and two Justices of the Peace appointed by the Governor General visit the prison to hear the concerns and complaints of inmates, has not been active since 2008.

by *Khaila Gentle*

BELIZE CITY, Fri. Sept. 30, 2022

After being inactive for some fourteen years, the Kolbe Foundation's Visiting Justices Program has been reintroduced to the Belize Central Prison. Through the program, a sitting Magistrate and two Justices of the Peace will be conducting regular visits to the prison in an effort to hear the concerns of inmates and assess their living conditions.

According to the Human Rights Commission of Belize, the Visiting Justices Program guarantees inmates institutionalized recognition, acknowledgment, and respect while strengthening the systems that maintain their human dignity. The program is made possible through the Prison Act, which empowers visiting justices with the ability to investigate cases in the prison, make reports, and assess the welfare and living conditions of the prisoners.

Kevin Arthurs, the CEO of the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries—the Ministry responsible for prisons—said that the Government has a responsibility to the most vulnerable and forgotten to ensure that they are treated humanely.

Arthurs called Friday a “very proud day” for the Ministry, adding that the fact that the program has been inactive since 2008 is saddening.

According to the CEO, Belize has been fortunate for the past fourteen years, since having the benefit of a prison run by a private-public partnership between the Kolbe Foundation and the Rotary Club of Belize allowed some of the prevailing issues that should have been tackled by the Visiting Justice Program to have been instead solved by the prison's administration.



Visiting Justice Program returns

“It's a very involved system that makes the prisoners feel good, because, you know ... part of what makes you human is the ability and the right to be heard and respected. And for this process, I think it will allow prisoners to feel as though they are people and not their mistakes. We want them to get back into society. We need a healthy Belize. We need a happy Belize. And I think this is a part of the process of getting Belize whole and healthy again,” Arthurs said.

In the eyes of Kolbe Foundation CEO Virgilio Murillo, the relaunch of the Visiting Justices Program is a value added to the already existing oversight systems in place at the Central Prison. At the end of the day, said Murillo, all organizations should be held accountable, and as such, there is no such thing as too much oversight or accountability. When one reporter asked why the program ever came to a stop, CEO Murillo said, “only heaven knows.”

“Remember this program is primarily funded by the Government. Kolbe

Foundation does not control it. It's just like the parole system. Some people are of the belief that the Kolbe Foundation is in charge of parole—Kolbe Foundation is not in charge of parole. It is the government that is in charge of parole,” he added.

Also present at the launch of the program were the president of the Association of Justices of the Peace, Adrian Madrid; Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries, Hon. Kareem Musa; Project Coordinator for the Human Rights Commission of Belize, Lizet Aldana, and Chief Magistrate Sharon Fraser.

The Chief Magistrate noted to local reporters that, since magistrates are the ones responsible for sending persons to prison, it is only right that they visit to see the conditions under which those persons are incarcerated.

“I have long believed that we should be coming here on a regular basis. Unfortunately, because of the level of work we have, it's a little difficult. Now,

with the Visiting Justice Program being put in place, at the very least there is a magistrate that will be on every visit, every session, that the visiting justices will be here,” she said.

According to Chief Magistrate Fraser, the prisoners should not have to wait until they go to court to make a complaint or raise a concern. Out of fear of victimization, however, many are reluctant to talk to persons within the prison.

“At least knowing that the visiting justices are here, they would know they have an additional outlet that they can refer any concerns, issues, or problems they would have encountered in the prison,” she said.

The Human Rights Commission has said that the reinstatement of the Visiting Justice Program will provide a “needed reminder” that prisoners are not forgotten or disposably condemned but “men and women that are fixing themselves and the wrongs they committed so they can get back home.”

La Fiesta Del Pueblo returns

by *Charles Gladden*

ORANGE WALK, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

The annual La Fiesta del Pueblo returns to San Jose Nuevo Palmar in the Orange Walk District on Sunday, October 9, after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event was first held in 2001, with the objective of promoting and educating others about the indigenous people of the Yucatec community in northern Belize, as well as celebrating the founding of San Jose Nuevo Palmar, which was the last Yucatec community remaining in the Yalbac area.

This year's festival will mark the 86th anniversary of the village's relocation to the area where it currently sits, which was done under the instructions of King George VI due to a dispute with the Belize Estate Company in colonial times. The area was also considered the first Indigenous reserve in the country of Belize.

“This year we're celebrating 86 years since the village was founded, and there's a lot of history to share about it, because it tells about the constant struggle the



Arturo Cantun, vice president of the Northern Maya Association of Belize

indigenous people had to go to colonial powers and authority at the time. And it goes to show the little respect they had for indigenous people, and that is why the fiesta began,” said Arturo Cantun, vice president of the Northern Maya Association of Belize.

“But we also decided to incorporate

the part about highlighting the elements of our heritage through the music, dances, food, through the history that we offer, [and] medical knowledge. The fiesta is a whole-day exhibition with dances, with music on the stage. We have food booths where people can actually see how these foods are prepared and they can buy them as well. Also, we're having small exhibits from different communities to show a little history of their village, and these are Yucatec villages in the north,” Cantun added.

Additionally, Cantun mentioned that the traditional Mayan ball game, Pok Ta Pok, will be played by adults and kids to showcase the historical heritage of the Mayan community.

Cantun told us that in addition to next weekend's huge festival, other small activities were also coordinated to spread awareness of the culture.

“Throughout the course of the year, we do other outreach communities. We have our membership comprised of retired educators who go into the schools; we use International Literacy Day, where we go into the schools and we teach, introduce the Mayan language,

because you can't really teach it on one session. So we introduce them to the Mayan language so that they learn common words, and how the translation is in Yucatec Maya. We also have major activities that also take place, for this one here, this weekend is one to highlight the culture. Just recently, [on] September 1, we celebrated Mayan Heroes Day, and what that does we honor the work of cultural promoters. So we lay a wreath at the Battle of Orange Walk Monument for those past Maya heroes that we never recognized, and recognize those who are still living for the promotion of the culture,” highlighted Cantun.

Due to the two-year hiatus, Cantun noted that they have lost momentum in the festival so having it this year is to spread more awareness and highlight the Mayan heritage and attempt to make the event into a national exhibition.

The event is being organized through a collaboration with the Palmar Culture Group, with sponsorship from the Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous People's Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture.



Bus-ismos; “justicia social” y “libre mercado”

Del Preámbulo de la Constitución de Belize: “...*CONSIDERANDO que el pueblo de Belize: (b) respeta los principios de la justicia social y, por lo tanto, cree que el funcionamiento del sistema económico debe tener como resultado que los recursos materiales de la comunidad se distribuyan de manera que sirvan al bien común, que haya medios adecuados de sustento para todos...*”

Lunes, 3 de octubre de 2022

Mientras los líderes políticos iluminados se enfrentan a la tarea de mejorar las condiciones de vida de todos los ciudadanos beliceños a nivel del siglo XXI, el desafío de lograr un servicio de autobús eficiente, cómodo, asequible y respetuoso con el medio ambiente ha puesto de relieve las filosofías económicas contrastantes que están en juego, y el acto de equilibrio que están realizando los líderes gubernamentales actuales al tratar de entregar los bienes al público de Belize.

Hasta cierto punto, todos los líderes políticos, especialmente los del Gabinete, a veces tienen que enfrentar el dilema de formular políticas para el mejoramiento de los ciudadanos que los eligieron para el cargo, mientras enfrentan la presión de los defensores de dos filosofías económicas opuestas, a las que a veces se les refiere en el sentido científico estricto como capitalismo y socialismo, pero más a menudo descrito en términos sencillos como un enfoque gubernamental que favorece la justicia social o la competencia de libre mercado, que a veces también se denomina “capitalismo de laissez faire”. El difunto gran Padre de la Nación, el Muy Honorable George C. Price, una vez comentó que su gobierno de Belize estaba comprometido a trabajar la “economía mixta”, lo que sugería que estaba templando la estructura capitalista básica con intervenciones juiciosas del gobierno para asegurar una medida de justicia social para proteger a las masas de consumidores de la codicia y rapacidad innatas de la clase capitalista (empresarial). Se informa que explicó su razonamiento como, “no que los ricos deberían tener menos, sino que los pobres deberían tener más”, lo que suena como una perspectiva espiritual básica que se acepta por completo y se ensalza en el Preámbulo de la Constitución de Belize.

Según capitalism.org, “Laissez-faire no significa las ‘leyes de la jungla’, es decir, que los empresarios pueden esclavizar a los trabajadores. Laissez-faire significa operar bajo un objetivo *estado de derecho* (libertad) en oposición a un arbitrario *gobierno del hombre* (regulación). El laissez-faire termina donde comienza la violación de los derechos de los demás. Lo que sí significa laissez-faire es que si una acción comercial no viola los derechos individuales, entonces la política de los estados es de ‘no intervención’ o laissez-”.

Algunos intelectuales beliceños que declaran su preocupación por la gente basada en la fe, jurarán por las virtudes del “capitalismo de libre mercado” y condenarán las intervenciones en el mercado por parte del gobierno como “socialismo repugnante” y los primeros pasos peligrosos hacia el temido “comunismo”. Sin embargo, otros les recuerdan que realmente no existe una “democracia capitalista” en la tierra en este momento que no practique también alguna forma de intervención de “justicia social”. Incluso el gran Estados Unidos tiene su conocido sistema de Seguridad Social que brinda diversas formas de protección a los trabajadores; y los sindicatos de trabajadores también prevalecen en los EE. UU., y esos son una evidencia visible de una forma de “socialismo” en el trabajo. Entonces, como P.M. Price sugirió con su “economía mixta”, tiene que haber algún tipo de equilibrio entre el libre mercado y los esfuerzos de justicia social por parte del gobierno para satisfacer las necesidades de toda la población y no solo los caprichos de unos pocos. Lograr ese equilibrio es la tarea que enfrentan los gobiernos, generalmente con mucha ayuda de una Oposición vocal.

En circunstancias normales en Belize, el acalorado debate sobre la condición de los autobuses que transportan a los ciudadanos en nuestras carreteras y autopistas, y las soluciones propuestas al problema, contarían con aportes y argumentos importantes de los miembros de la Oposición. Desafortunadamente, disputas y las luchas internas han distraído temporalmente a la Oposición UDP y han dejado que el problema de autobuses se resuelva entre los respectivos funcionarios gubernamentales y los propietarios y representantes de la compañía de autobuses.

Los líderes políticos que reciben más atención en la situación actual de

los autobuses son el ministro de Transporte, el Honorable Rodwell Ferguson y el alcalde de la Ciudad de Belize, Bernard Wagner. Estos son dos hombres que se han ganado la reputación a lo largo de los años de estar preocupados por la gente pequeña; rara vez se ha cuestionado su sinceridad, y tampoco su tenacidad para tratar de hacer las cosas. En el esquema normal de las cosas, la batalla sería entre los consumidores/viajeros pobres que deben usar los autobuses y los propietarios/empresas de autobuses que brindan el servicio. Y tanto el Honorable Ferguson y el alcalde Wagner lucharían por los consumidores/viajeros, la gente pequeña. Lo que ha complicado la situación actual es que se han introducido en la ecuación ciertas entidades y elementos nuevos, en cuyo caso los propietarios/empresas de autobuses ahora se presentan como “el pez pequeño” siendo víctimas del “pez más grande” en forma de recién llegados a la industria bien financiados, Floralia, y la intrusión en las carreteras de Belize de la línea de autobús Ado originada en Chetumal, mientras que el alcalde también está promoviendo la introducción de autobuses eléctricos en la Ciudad de Belize a modo de prueba, lo que significa que estarían compitiendo con los antiguos autobuses escolares actuales. Ahora los dueños/empresas de autobuses están llorando, presentándose como el “pez pequeño” en este nuevo escenario, y buscando la ayuda y el consuelo del ministro y el alcalde por su situación de competir contra el “pez gordo”: Floralia, Ado y los nuevos autobuses eléctricos del consejo municipal.

Por un lado, tanto el ministro como el alcalde insisten en que nuestros ciudadanos/viajeros han sufrido durante mucho tiempo las pésimas condiciones de transporte en los autobuses viejos, y no han tenido éxito en sus persistentes esfuerzos por presionar a los propietarios/empresas de autobuses para que mejoren sus estándares de autobuses. Por otro lado, los propietarios/empresas de autobuses lamentan haber llevado a cabo fielmente el trabajo de proporcionar el transporte necesario al público a tarifas bajas y con un financiamiento muy limitado, por lo que no estaban en condiciones de hacer la gran mejora. Y si ahora hay fondos externos disponibles, como aparentemente es el caso con algunos fondos de subvención del PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo), argumentan que deberían ser parte de esa “acción” para que también puedan actualizarse y ser parte de este nuevo paso histórico en la industria.

El enfoque de “libre mercado” tanto para el ministro como para el alcalde sería, al diablo con los propietarios/empresas de autobuses; les hemos dicho durante mucho tiempo que se actualicen; que las fuerzas del mercado actúen, y quien no pueda seguir el ritmo simplemente quedará fuera, y los mejores sobrevivirán, y los ciudadanos/viajeros obtendrán el servicio de calidad que se merecen.

Pero un bicho de “justicia social” puede estar cantando en los oídos de estos dos caballeros sinceros. Es justo; Es correcto; ¿Se está sirviendo al “bien común”? Estos propietarios/empresas de autobuses que llevan mucho tiempo en servicio también son beliceños, tienen empleados, familias, han luchado en tiempos difíciles. ¿Se resolverán todos los problemas de la noche a la mañana con el nuevo arreglo: Floralia, y autobuses eléctricos compitiendo en la ciudad; ¿O surgirán nuevos problemas insospechados? ¿Se están afectando los derechos constitucionales de los propietarios/empresas originales de autobuses? ¿Qué pasa si golpea un huracán y todo lo eléctrico está fuera de servicio por un tiempo? ¿Quién vendrá al rescate con sus viejos buses diesel?

A pesar del relativo silencio del lado de la oposición, todas nuestras esperanzas son que los corazones demostrados de “justicia social” que laten en el pecho del ministro Ferguson y el alcalde Wagner no fracasen, y encuentren alguna solución amistosa a este dilema de autobuses que verá los ciudadanos/viajeros finalmente viajar en estilo y comodidad, mientras que también se elaborará un camino productivo para ver a los propietarios/empresas de autobuses de larga data y a sus empleados recibir una consideración imparcial y justa.

En derecho, y hasta cierto punto en la política, un precedente a menudo impacta el curso futuro de los acontecimientos; y el resultado de esta disputa actual entre autobuses y transporte público bien puede indicar el futuro clima económico y político en nuestro alguna vez dulce y atrasado Belize. ¿Nos conducirá el impulso acelerado por el progreso en la dirección de la siempre amigable Taiwán o, la a veces amigable Guatemala?

Bad choice for an oldster

by Colin Hyde

It isn't funny, the way L Ashcroft and his group are so feverish about this Waterloo project. It is believed that he put his money behind the PUP in the last general elections, and because of that "investment," he expects his "vote" to get more respect than ours. Government of the people, by the people, should be for the people, but on the ground too often it doesn't work out that way. Some, by affiliation, and some by money pumped in, get more oomph from their votes.

You see why the people clamored for campaign financing laws. There's no perfect thing made by man; the closest we can get to that in a political system is the democracy with transparent, practical laws so there is some control of the funding. Bah, so much fizzled away when the GOB was led off to do a full review of the Constitution.

This massive port proposal, it's some kind of obsession. I got the sense listening to Ashcroft speak to Marleni that he recognizes he's aging, and like he has this ambition to build something big before Father Time saps his juice. Hurray for ambition, but why did he have to choose a cruise port when we've got one already? That project that calls for massive dredging, dumping, and construction work should sink or swim on its own demerits/

merits. Ai, an oldster desperately trying to show he still has it makes a donation to a political party, and now it seems he wants that to give him an edge in the decision.

Those PUP politicians made a deal with a devil so they could beat the UDP devils, and now the devil is pulling out everything he's got to see that dredge sink its suction hose into the mud and those cranes start driving massive piles into bedrock. If not for the help of the good people and the educated NGOs, those PUPs would have rolled over a long time ago. But it's not over yet for this party donor. That man's digging in to satisfy his ambition to see mammoth ships land and look down on our country's biggest city.

Babies and animals have same quantity of the selfish gene

It's true that the dastardly selfish gene can be found here and there in people of all ages. But it's 100% dominant in babies and animals. There are studies that have concluded that it is not true that babies are selfish, but that is just embarrassing researching, flat-out not objective. While it might be true that babies, like animals, aren't deliberate in their selfishness, no question they are all about "me." Have you ever heard of a baby who gave up their bottle of milk before they're done with it? No, you

have not. Those little bohgaz, they are the inventors of me first, me second, me third.

Selfishness is a behavior we should all strive to grow out of, put behind us and never allow back in. Rip it out, for the good of the whole. But whoa, it's stubborn, sometimes. Fortunately, we are not alone, fortunately there's help out there.

Moms, a breed especially gifted by the Almighty, are the first ones to try and help us to excise that vice. They are usually quite enough. Hurray, we guys don't have to deal with the little breed for more than a couple hours each week. We couldn't be blamed if we lost our cool.

God gave women many qualities He didn't give men, and that's because He knows it's some task to tame little ones, to teach them to stop being selfish. Moms, they deserve maximum praise and for all their efforts they should have the license to do anything they want, except pull it out in public places. Please don't ask me why I call for a halt there. I'll go no further than saying God blessed women with fine upper bodies, to feed children, and He gave them plenty patience to raise them.

Bah, sometimes the avarice is so deeply embedded that moms fail, but all isn't lost; here comes the support staff, in waves and waves to dump the ugly devil 'me, me, me' into the ravine, into the same place the Master chased

the horde of swine.

Second up to the plate are the teachers, and if that brigade fails and one reaches adulthood a selfish brute, then it will be up to the people, and NGOs, if you're a fiend to the environment, to give you the sense.

Sedi and Arturo big Waterloo supporters, but what about the thousands

It isn't lost on anyone that besides the fascination an old man has to see megaships and 15,000 screaming tourists touching the shore, there are these megabucks dreams. My ears perked up and my eyes grew big when the head table at the Waterloo consultation mentioned they were after money from banks that I know lend cheap. Braa, Ralph Fonseca, in the name of our country, had to borrow expensive money from private Italian banks, and from Bear Stearns, a private investment firm that we helped crash. Well, this private group is after sourcing funds from public lenders who charge much less interest than the Belize Bank.

Keeping things innocent, staying in waters where we don't need an oxygen tank or to be a pearl diver to reach the conchs, wait, hurray, what great news that konks season is on again! I love that frittaz, and a konks soup made by

Please turn to **Page 11**

A Collection of Ideas and Opinions 2007-2012
by C B Hyde

Available at: #3304 Amandala Drive (formerly Partridge Street), Belize City, Belize
Phone: 202-4477

Notice to Mariners

NAVAREA IV 004/2022
Belize City and Approaches
Admiralty Chart #522

The Belize Port Authority hereby issue this Notice to Mariners that starting 10 October, 2022 through 10 January 2023 dredging operations at the mouth of the Haulover Creek near the Barron Bliss Lighthouse in Belize City will commence.

Mariners be warned that during this time floating pipes and dredge equipment will be located in the area immediately in front of Birds Isle Island and the Baron Bliss Lighthouse

All vessels transiting the area during this time must do so with extreme caution, stay clear of the area as much as possible and proceed at slow speed. **NO WAKE ZONE** is enforced.

Emergency contact
VHF- Channel 16
Phone-222-5666 or toll free 966

**By: Order of Port Commissioner
Belize Port Authority**

Who is threatening to launch nuclear war?



by Clinton Canul Luna

Permit me, our dear readers of this column, to present to you the below analysis which I find to be of utmost interest. The following, entitled “Who is threatening to launch nuclear war?”, was posted on the LaRouche Organization’s YouTube page on September 30, 2022. It is as follows:

Good morning. I’m Harley Schlanger from the LaRouche Organization with your daily video update for the last day of September 30, 2022. As it’s Friday, I’m taking your questions. I received a lot of them today, the last couple of days, and so let’s just jump right into it. The first question was, did Vladimir Putin threaten to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine? Now, in the wake of the explosions, disabling the Nord Stream pipelines and the discussion of the likely annexation of four regions of eastern Ukraine by Russia, there’s been a lot more discussion of the likelihood or the supposed likelihood that this could trigger the use of nuclear weapons by Russia, and many, many people in the West are discussing this question: would Putin use a tactical nuclear weapon? Would he engage in limited nuclear war in Ukraine? And of course, most of them say, since he’s a mad man, of course, he would. Now, the fact is, there’s a lot of talk of use of nuclear weapon, but most of it is coming from Western analysts, Western strategists, associates and officials of NATO, and among the things they’re saying—for example, the Atlantic Council, one of the leading think tanks of the West, said that the West must be prepared to respond in some way, including the likelihood of the possibility of a nuclear strike against Russia.

Now, this narrative was debunked in an article published in the *National Interest* on September 28 by the Russian ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, and I’m going to report on it to you, because it’s important that you hear what the Russians are actually saying, as opposed to what the Western media is saying about the Russians, what the Russians are saying. Now, Antonov started by saying that the talk of limited nuclear war being possible is a dangerous fallacy. The point being, that once you start the use of nuclear weapons, an escalation is virtually inevitable, and this risks the annihilation of the human race. Now, he then went into a review of U.S. action to withdraw from the arms agreements that had been negotiated since the 1980s beginning with Ronald Reagan, including the intermediate nuclear force agreement, the ABM agreement, the Open Skies and others, and he points out that there were unilateral decisions by the United States to withdraw from these treaties, and the U.S. has been hesitant or unwilling to engage in renewing them or writing new treaties. So, he said, this has certainly contributed to the worsening of relations, but then he ended by saying that Putin did not threaten to use nuclear weapons and he quoted Putin as saying the following, quote, “Russia is ready to defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and our people, with all weapon systems we have...” unquote. That’s from Putin. Then Antonov writes, “What is so aggressive about this statement? Would the U.S. not do the same if faced with an existential threat? That is, be prepared to use all existing weapons to defend the integrity, territorial integrity and the lives

of Americans?”

Well, of course it would. All you have to do is look at the annual nuclear posture review which is part of the U.S. national defense strategy. Read it. It discusses the modernization of all weapons systems, especially the nuclear system, the so-called Triad that the U.S. must modernize and upgrade its capacity to defend the United States and its allies. Does this mean the United States is preparing to use nuclear weapons? Now, keep in mind since 2001 U.S. forces have been engaged in wars all over the globe, that we have bases in more than 80 nations, that we’ve been deploying troops worldwide engaging in regime change and other kinds of aggressive activities against sovereign nations. Meanwhile, the continued flow of weapons into Ukraine from NATO, including the U.S., is heightening the danger of a World War III, especially when the West intervenes as it has, including in March and April, to tell the Ukrainians not to negotiate a diplomatic resolution. That’s where the threat of escalation is coming from, and it’s necessary to step back from that to engage in diplomatic talks, including back-channel discussions, before we have an accident that leads to a global nuclear conflagration.

Now, there are many, many questions that came in on the Nord Stream pipelines, the explosions which have disabled them. Of course, the media is saying that the Russians did it—that was the initial take, but many of you wrote and said, ‘why would Russia sabotage its own pipelines?’ Someone wrote, actually, several wrote: if Russia wanted to shut off the flow of gas it could do it by turning off the spigot, so why would it destroy the pipelines? Now, this raises a number of questions, including who has the capacity to do this and who benefits from shutting down the pipelines, and let me just take up a couple of aspects of it. One point is that by getting rid of the pipelines, it relieves the pressure on Germany, which otherwise is there, given the growing demonstrations that are taking place as a cold winter is coming that the Schultz government might make a decision to negotiate with Putin to agree to diplomatic resolution for the war in return for reopening the pipelines. That’s not an option right now, and as Ray McGovern and former CIA analysts said in the discussion with me the other night, this does take the pressure off Schultz, because now it’s not possible to do that.

Well, this is a threat for all of Europe, because all of Europe is facing shortages of energy. Most of it is self-inflicted: it’s the Green New Deal; it’s the sanctions against Russia, and it’s the unwillingness to engage in negotiation. So, this takes away one of the leverages that Putin had to convince the West to engage in negotiations so that you can keep oil and gas flowing into Europe. So, who has the most to gain from the sabotage of the Nord Stream 1 and 2? Well, the simple answer is that the United States, going back to President Trump, but also Biden, they’ve said that the U.S. is prepared to

provide liquefied natural gas to Germany. The problem is, it will take a number of years before Germany has the facilities, the port capability and the storage to bring in such natural gas. It’s also questionable whether there’s adequate shipping capability, especially with the supply chain issues and everything else. So, if this is the intent to destroy the pipeline so that Germany has to rely on the United States, it’s foolish. Similarly, Schultz went to the Middle East to try to negotiate an upgrading of delivery of energy supplies and came back virtually empty-handed, and the idea of liquefied natural gas coming from Qatar, all the German analysts acknowledge that it will be four or five years before there’s the capability to do that.

So, what this means is something more profound that people should think about, that this is an attack on the potential for Germany and Russia to have rap or small—to repair their relationship. Now, why is that important? Well, who benefits from a Russian-German conflict? It’s the British. This goes back to Mackinder and the geopolitical doctrine from the early 1900s which identified a Russian-German alliance as an existential threat to the British Empire, and this is at the heart of geopolitics—that the integration economically through transport, through energy and development capability, the integration of Eurasia with Western Europe, through Russia is a threat to British control of the seas. Now, that was the beginning of the 20th Century, but today it’s not just the shipping capabilities where the British still are a very important force, but more importantly the financial power of the city of London, which is the new imperial power—of Wall Street, city of London and Brussels, unified to defend an existing bankrupt financial system and fearful of the potential that’s emerging with the global South, the developing sector that there will be a new financial system based on physical production and not paper money such as the dollar. This is behind most of the posturing going back to 1990, the attempt to destroy Russia through shock therapy, the attempt to isolate Russia and to undermine China’s belt and road initiative, that these are efforts underway from the West to ensure that there’s no alternative, to the sole superpower and control of a unipolar world order based on the dollar and the Petro dollar.

But that’s breaking up. That’s not going to exist in the near future. Both because of the idiocy of the policies of the Great Reset and the Green New Deal. The Green New Deal, as Putin has said, is a self-inflicted suicide for the West but also because many nations that wish to have development such as Indonesia, such as Brazil, Argentina, many African nations, South Africa, are turning to institutions

IDB to elect new president

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Sept. 29, 2022

The process of nominating candidates to serve as the next president of the International Development Bank (IDB) has begun, a release from the bank said this morning. The IDB governors will have 45 days to nominate candidates, who, if elected to be president, will occupy the post for the next 5 years.

“To be elected, the candidate must obtain a majority of the voting power of member countries. The voting power varies in accordance with the quantity of shares each member country holds in the IDB’s ordinary capital. The winning candidate must also be supported by at least 15 of the 28 regional members of the region,” states the release.

The release further notes that



IDB headquarters

Borrowing Member countries, all from Latin America and the Caribbean (including Belize) hold a little over 50% of the voting power on the IDB board.

Candidates from all member countries can be nominated to hold the post. The current IDB president, Reina Irene Mejia, has said, “The IDB’s work is built on solid institutional foundations, ethical values, and operational excellence. Our institution is stronger and more committed to continuing making a positive difference in our people’s lives.”

GoB seeking funds to rebuild St. Mary's primary school building

BELIZE CITY, Thurs. Sept. 29, 2022

When interviewed by local reporters yesterday, Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, Hon. Francis Fonseca, informed the public that funds are being sought to assist in the rebuilding of St.



St. Mary's Anglican Primary School

Mary's Primary School. The main building had to be evacuated after engineers, following an assessment of the structure, deemed it unsafe for students and teachers, and it has been marked for demolition.

Students of the institution, who have been out of the classroom for close to 2 years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, were at risk of being among the only students in the country to go back to remote learning, but with last-minute efforts, the Samuel Haynes building was

designated as the structure to house the students until the new St. Mary's school building is constructed.

Minister Fonseca, who had pledged that his ministry would assist the school's Anglican management in transporting students to that new location, had said that it is the ultimate solution and that they have engaged the Ministry of Finance and the Social Investment Fund in hopes of accessing funds for the construction of the new building.

Russian annexation of 4 Ukrainian...



Ukraine regions illegally annexed by Russia

Continued from ▶ Page 1

Eamon Courtenay on Friday stated, "Belize absolutely rejects the purported annexation of Ukrainian territory by Russia. This illegality will not stand! Belize deplores the most recent attack by Russia on Ukrainian civilians."

The territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia were declared a part of Russia on Friday during a conference which was followed by a concert organized by the Kremlin in the historic Russian Red Square. This has been considered a major escalation in the war between the two Eastern European countries that began on February 24.

Moscow has claimed that the voters of the region have indicated a desire to join Russia through a 5-day referendum. This vote has been called a sham by Kyiv and its Western allies. The United Nations Secretary-General, before the announcement on Friday, stated, "It is time to step back from the brink," warning that a formal annexation would put at risk any possibility for peace. The UN pointed out in its comments that the annexation would have "no legal value."

Ukraine has fast-tracked its application to join NATO, its president Volodymyr Zelensky said on Friday, after signing an application formally. During his remarks on the supposed annexation by Russia, he said, "The entire territory of our country will be liberated from this enemy—the enemy not only of Ukraine but also of life itself, humanity, law, and truth."

NATO has reaffirmed its "unwavering support" for Ukraine, its secretary general Jens Stoltenberg said recently.

And while Ukraine is not a formal member of NATO as yet, the United States president, Joe Biden, in comments on the Russian annexation has said, "America is fully prepared with our NATO allies to defend every single inch of NATO territory, every single inch, so Mr. Putin, don't misunderstand what I'm saying, every inch."

In a recent interview, Belize's Foreign Minister, Hon. Eamon Courtenay said, "We have deplored and we continue to deplore the illegal, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. We have issued a very strong statement on it. We will join when a new resolution

Man charged for stabbing ex-common-law wife 14 times

by Charles Gladden

SAN NARCISO, Corozal District, Thurs. Sept. 29, 2022

Myron Palencia, 35, a truck driver of Buena Vista Village who was being sought by police for stabbing his ex-common-law wife on Independence Day and who is believed to have been attempting to flee the country, has been captured by police and has been criminally charged.

On Independence Day last Wednesday (September 21), Palencia went to the home of his ex-girlfriend, Kenya Villamil, 35, in San Narciso, Corozal District while she wasn't there and stole a bicycle that belonged to her. At around 11:00 o'clock that night, Villamil, who was trying to regain possession of the bicycle, was told by Palencia to meet him behind the San Narciso Polyclinic.

When Villamil went to that location to retrieve the bicycle, however, Palencia, who was reportedly in the company of a younger relative, proceeded to stab her 14 times – six times in her neck, and once near her heart, as well as on various parts of her body.

Palencia and Villamil had been in a



Myron Palencia, charged with attempted murder

relationship for 4 years and lived together. During that time, the couple's relationship became an abusive one, and the relationship ended 8 months ago.

Luckily, Villamil survived the attempt on her life, and is slowly recovering. On Wednesday, September 28, Palencia was caught by police and was formally arrested and charged with attempted murder.

Bad choice for an oldster

Continued from ▶ Page 9

a cook who has all the ingredients and knows how to make a roux, but you can keep all the ceviche, especially if it has too much habanero.

Sedi is on board. Somebody has to tell him that the ship sailed when his party chose Stake Bank. Arturo Lizarraga is on board too. When Arturo said we have to consider environmental impacts and such, I saw a big future for him in the political game. No less than a former PM told of virtue in fibbing, sometimes.

Sedi got his 13 years, and it might be time for Arturo to get his. Of course I know it isn't fair to judge a book by its cover, but I can't help thinking Arturo was saying what he knew people wanted to hear when he claimed to care much about the environmental impact of Waterloo, and Stake Bank, and Miracle Port, and any other port that could spring up along our shore.

For me, he was just too lukewarm to make a sale there. However, you could see the excitement in him, you could feel he was from the heart when he said the more the merrier, let the market

decide who swims and who sinks. That brother is pro-capital, and that's no shame, because in a democracy everybody defends their interests. My, certain elite will get a bite if Waterloo gets the green light, and they couldn't avoid dropping some crumbs.

Fantastically, no one has bothered to try and explain what Belize would do with 15,000 cruise tourists who land in Belize City for five hours. If half of them smoked weed, they could go to the cafés and shoot the breeze, but 7,500 is still a whole lot.

For sure, early on there would be a burst of action, a feeding frenzy, but then as night follows day around the clock, the balloon would burst. Have the authorities considered people who come here for the pace, for a break from their hectic world?

Can you see 2,000 tourists tramping up the steps at Altun Ha? And when they came down, has anyone considered how many bathrooms would be needed for men folk to ease their bladders and women folk to freshen up? Wasn't it just a year or two ago that a poor tourist needed to find a lamp post and there wasn't any to hide him as he sprinkled the lawn?

comes to the United Nations General Assembly. It failed yesterday in the Security Council because Russia vetoed it, but come to the General Assembly and we will vote strongly in favor of it. That invasion violates so many norms of international law; it also threatens the international security, and it creates a precedent that Belize, who is claimed by another country, cannot compromise on," Hon. Courtenay said.

"If Russia is allowed to get away with this, believe me, there are other countries that are looking on and are getting ready to do the same thing. If the international community is ineffective in ensuring that the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine are not returned and restored, we have a fundamental problem in the international community," Hon. Courtenay further pointed out.

REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

Stampede at football stadium kills 125 in Indonesia

Indonesian football fans, angered by the loss of their team, stormed the stadium pitch and began rioting. In response, law enforcement fired tear gas into the stadium stands, causing mass panic and one of the deadliest sporting disasters in history.

by *Khaila Gentle*

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

At least 125 persons have been reported dead following a stampede at a stadium in Malang, a city in the province of East Java, Indonesia. Officials have called it one of the world's deadliest sports disasters, and it was caused after riots broke out at the end of a Saturday evening football match. The host team, Malang's Arema FC, lost to Surabaya's Persebaya team 3-2, which led to thousands of Arema fans flooding the stadium pitch in protest.

According to one report by *Al Jazeera*, the upset fans threw bottles and other objects at players and officials, demanding that the management explain why Arema FC had lost after 23 years of undefeated home games. Eventually, some of the angered fans reportedly began tipping over police vehicles as well.

In response, riot police fired tear gas into the crowd, including towards the stadium bleachers, inciting panic. The ensuing stampede led to fans being trampled and suffocated as persons ran for the exits. Those among the casualties include two police officers and, according to Indonesia's Ministry for Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 33



Deadly stampede at Kanjuruhan Stadium in Indonesia. (Image Credit: Yudha Prabowo/AP Photo)

children aged 4 to 17.

During a press conference held after the tragedy, East Java police chief Nico Afinta said that the police had exhausted all their preventative action tactics before deciding to fire tear gas at the crowd.

"It had gotten anarchic. They started attacking officers; they damaged cars," said Afinta.

He added, "Not all of them were anarchic. Only about 3,000 who entered the pitch."

Videos of the stampede have flooded social media, with footage showing persons clamoring for the exits and some

fans even resorting to climbing over fences to escape. Others show lifeless bodies on the floor. In addition to leaving 125 dead, the tragic incident has left hundreds of persons injured, many of whom remain in critical condition and are receiving intensive care.

FIFA president, Gianni Infantino, said this weekend that the football world is in "a state of shock" after "a dark day for all involved in football and a tragedy beyond comprehension."

Both the police and the organizers of the football match have come under much scrutiny after the incident. Tear gas is

officially banned at football stadiums by FIFA, whose Stadium Safety and Security Regulations state that no firearms or "crowd control gas" shall be carried or used by stewards or police officers at matches.

According to some reports, the football stadium had been filled far beyond its capacity, with Indonesia's chief security minister revealing that a total of 42,000 tickets had been sold for the football match when the stadium's maximum capacity is 38,000.

Arema FC's coach, Javier Roca, spoke with local reporters and said "the most terrible thing was when victims came to be treated by the team doctor... About

20 people arrived and four died. Fans died in the arms of players."

Indonesia's football association has banned Arema from hosting matches for the rest of the season. Human rights organization Amnesty International has called for authorities to ensure that those found to have "committed violations" that led to the stampede are tried in open court. Indonesia's government has since announced that it will be setting up a commission to investigate the cause of the incident and hopefully identify the police officers who had a role in the tragic event.

Venezuela releases 7 jailed Americans; US frees 2 prisoners

Prisoner swap is a rare gesture of goodwill by President Nicholas Maduro as he looks to rebuild relations with the US after vanquishing domestic opponents.

Venezuela freed seven Americans in exchange for the release of two nephews of President Nicholas Maduro's wife jailed for years by the United States on drug smuggling convictions.

The swap of the Americans on Saturday, including five oil executives held for nearly five years, is the largest trade of detained citizens ever carried out by the Biden administration.

"These individuals will soon be reunited with their families and back in the arms of their loved ones where they belong," President Joe Biden said in a statement.

"Today, after years of being wrongfully detained in Venezuela, we

are bringing home" the seven men, whom the president cited by name. "We celebrate that seven families will be whole once more."

The prisoner swap amounts to a rare gesture of goodwill by Maduro as the socialist leader looks to rebuild relations with the US after vanquishing most of his domestic opponents.

The deal follows months of back-channel diplomacy by Washington's top hostage negotiator and other US officials – secretive talks with a major oil producer that took on greater urgency after sanctions on Russia put pressure on global energy prices.

Those freed include five employees of Houston-based Citgo – Tomeu Vadell, Jose Luis Zambrano, Alirio

Zambrano, Jorge Toledo and Jose Pereira – who were lured to Venezuela in 2017 to attend a meeting at the headquarters of the company's parent, state-run-oil giant PDVSA. Once there, they were hauled away by masked security agents who burst into a Caracas conference room.

Also released was Matthew Heath, a former US Marine corporal who was arrested in 2020 at a roadblock in Venezuela on what the Department of State has called "specious" weapons charges, and Osman Khan who was arrested in January.

The US freed Franqui Flores and his cousin, Efrain Campo, nephews of "First Combatant" Cilia Flores, as Maduro has called his wife.

The men were arrested in Haiti in a Drug Enforcement Administration sting in 2015 and immediately taken to New York to face trial. They were convicted the following year in a highly charged

case that cast a hard look at US accusations of drug trafficking at the highest levels of Maduro's administration.

The Biden administration has been under pressure to do more to bring home the roughly 60 Americans it believes are held hostage abroad or wrongfully detained by hostile foreign governments.

While much of the focus is on Russia, where the US has so far tried unsuccessfully to secure the release of WNBA star Brittney Griner and another American Paul Whelan, Venezuela has been holding the largest contingent of Americans suspected of being used as bargaining chips.

Full article can be found at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/1/venezuela-releases-7-jailed-americans-us-frees-2-prisoners>

First published by *Aljazeera*



Benque 2-0 victory breaks Verdes' undefeated string

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Oct. 3, 2022

Week 10 of the Premier League of Belize (PLB) 2022-2023 Opening Season, and defending champions Verdes FC are no longer undefeated, falling 2-0 to Benque FC at the Marshalleck Stadium, and at the same time relinquishing the standings lead to Altitude FC who won their game against Bandits SC, and also have a back match in hand against San Pedro Pirates FC. According to a report by Ruben Morales Iglesias (Breaking Belize News), Verdes' last defeat on Belizean soil was way back in October of 2019, some 44 games back.

From their season-opening 0-0 draw with newcomers Port Layola FC, defending champions Verdes FC have not appeared as dominant as in seasons past. Goals have been scarce for Verdes despite their line-up being stacked with foreign players. Of their 10 games played so far this season, they were scoreless in 3 games, and only managed 1 goal each in another 3 games. There is great parity in this PLB Opening Season, and with Verdes' shortage of goals from their striking department, it was only a matter of time before a defensive error would lead to their first loss. And it happened on Saturday night at the Marshalleck Stadium where veteran star goalkeeper Woodrow West returned to the line-up after a two-game absence, and made two costly errors resulting in 2 goals by Benque. West appeared tentative on a free kick from the left wing by Benque's Nahjib Guerra that landed just inside the six-yard box. West moved to intercept, then changed his mind and returned under the sticks, whereupon a charging Juan Ocampo of Benque was all alone on the right side, his defensive marker apparently leaving the play to West. Ocampo's (26') uncontested header low to the right corner was unstoppable. And in the second minute of injury time, Benque's Colombian import Ayrton Sisa, fresh off a hat trick the previous week against Port Layola, and who maintained a menacing presence all game long in the Verdes goal area, pounced on an opportunity as West casually dribbled the ball too far ahead in front of his goal, and a sliding Sisa (90+2') connected all ball to make it a 2-0 ball game.

Meanwhile, it was still scoreless near the end of regulation time at the M.A. Stadium in Independence between home standing Altitude FC and visiting Bandits SC from Belmopan; but midfielder Delone Torres (90') got the last minute goal to give Altitude the 1-0 victory and the top spot in the standings.

Also on Saturday night, at the Ambergris Stadium, San Pedro Pirates FC held on to their third spot in the standings when they secured a 3-2 win over visiting Port Layola FC from Belize City. San Pedro led 2-1 at the half on a goal each from Andir Chi (23') and Horace Avila (45') along with an own goal by Jose Tinoco (24' OG). In second half, Luis Valdez (66') increased the lead to 3-1 for the Pirates, but Calvin Young (85') scored for Port Layola to make it 3-2, and that's the way it ended.

The only Sunday game was at the Carl Ramos Stadium, where Wagiya SC kept their playoff hopes alive with a 1-0 victory over visiting Progresso FC who missed a penalty that could have given them the 1-0 lead. Wagiya's Cion Augustine (64') scored the only goal of the match to give his team their first taste of victory since their 3-0 win on August 21st over Port Layola. They had also won 1-0 over Progresso the previous week, August 14. This latest victory pushed Wagiya into fourth place, ahead of Progresso in the standings.

Premier League of Belize 2022-2023 Opening Season Standings at Week 10, Sunday, October 2, 2022								
TEAMS	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff	Pts
Altitude FC	9	7	0	2	16	7	9	21
Verdes FC	10	5	4	1	15	6	9	19
San Pedro Pirates FC	9	5	2	2	12	7	5	17
Wagiya SC	10	4	2	4	13	14	-1	14
Progresso FC	10	3	3	4	9	10	-1	12
Benque Viejo FC	10	3	2	5	9	13	-4	11
Port Layola FC	10	3	1	6	10	17	-7	10
Bandits SC	10	1	2	7	7	17	-10	5



Photo: William Ysaguirre

Delone Torres of Altitude FC netted the winning goal versus Bandits SC



Photo: William Ysaguirre

Juan Ocampo of Benque FC scored a header for 1-nil lead over Verdes FC

Upcoming PLB Week 11 schedule:

Saturday, October 8

7:30 p.m. – Benque Viejo FC vs Progresso FC – Marshalleck Stadium

7:30 p.m. – Bandits SC vs San Pedro Pirates FC – Isidoro Beaton Stadium



Photo: William Ysaguirre

Cion Augustine of Wagiya SC scored their game winner over Progresso FC



Photo: William Ysaguirre

Andir Chi of San Pedro Pirates SC opened the scoring against Port Layola FC

FC – Isidoro Beaton Stadium

Sunday, October 9

4:00 p.m. – Wagiya SC vs Port Layola FC – Carl Ramos Stadium

4:00 p.m. – Verdes FC vs Altitude FC – Norman Broaster Stadium

Who is threatening to launch nuclear war?

Continued from Page 10

such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union, the BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—because these are development institutions that are committed to investment in the future, in technology, in new platforms of infrastructure which, despite the rhetoric of build back better, has no intention to provide the credit that's needed and the capital goods that are needed for the so-called Third World to develop. So, the fact that the potential exists for a German Russian and German China economic alliance is a threat to this bankrupt and collapsing system, and so exacerbating the tensions between Germany and Russia has been a part of British strategy, and now Anglo-American strategy going back to the beginning of the 20th Century.

Now, finally there's a question. What can the U.S. do to regain credibility and be trusted again by non-aligned nations? Well, first, use the influence of the United States to end the war, to have a negotiated settlement that provides security guarantees for both Russia and Ukraine, as well as for every other nation in the world. That's why Helga Zepp-LaRouche has called for a new security architecture and a new financial architecture outside of the control of a sole superpower centered in the city of London in Wall Street. Secondly, end the U.S.-backed wars and deployment of forces, recognize the absolute right to sovereignty of all nations. This includes ending the sanctions and finally supporting the moves toward a new Bretton Woods, as I was just discussing. What nations want is the sovereign right to develop, to improve the conditions and lives of their nations. This has not been allowed under

the control of the International Monetary Fund and the bankers regimes that have dominated the world, especially since the 1960s and 70s. That's why institutions such as the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are so important, because their efforts to create development investment capabilities outside of the control of the Western banks, now support for a new Bretton Woods from the United States or better yet, the United States renouncing policies such as the Great Reset and the fake Green New Deal and instead committing themselves to work together with programs such as the belt and road initiative, such as the development of nuclear energy for African nations, such as the transportation corridors which would link nations in cooperation. That is the way the United States could not only regain credibility but restore its commitment to the traditions of the American founding fathers who were opposed to the idea of the United States serving as a global policeman. Now, toward this end, the Schiller Institute is sponsoring an international youth conference which will take place on October 15 and I'll put a link to that to register for that conference at the bottom of the description section of today's update. So, thanks for joining me. Thanks for your questions. Get active. You want to regain credibility for the West; it's going to depend on citizens rejecting the control of the so-called deep state of the military-industrial complex over governments which not only are a threat to other nations but a threat to the people of our nations.

fincasolan@gmail.com
October 2, 2022
Finca Solana
Corozal Town

Belize and Cuba to talk migration in October bilateral...

Continued from Page 3

trying to catch these people, not only Cubans but other nationalities as well," Hon. Courtenay said. He said that a significant increase of migrants from West Africa has also become a concern for the ministry.

"We have, for example, a significant increase of people from Africa, from West Africa, and that's a concern for us, and the ambassador for Ghana and the ambassador for Nigeria were here for the diplomatic week and we had a discussion about that. They both promised to return to have an in-depth discussion to how we can manage these flows," Hon. Courtenay said.

Through the current Amnesty program by the Government of Belize that is still ongoing, the Ministry of Immigration is in the process of regularizing tens of thousands of irregular migrants, but, according to Courtenay, when this process is over, the immigration laws will be strictly enforced.

"Once that amnesty is finished, we will be strictly enforcing the immigration laws of Belize, and so any migrant who is irregular regardless and where he or she is from, we will be prosecuting you,

and deporting you according to our law," Minister Courtenay said.

Hon. Courtenay also pointed out that a large number of irregular migrants are entering the country with the help of locals. He said they are looking at the data.

"Let me give you an example. There is a particular country where we have many requests, a West African country where we have many requests for let's say a meeting, and they say, let's say a meeting, and they say three nationals from Country X want to come to Belize and they are seeking permission from Immigration for these people to board and to be landed in Belize. That very letter that approves three people, the airline would call us and say they have 20, 30 at the counter says they are coming on this letter, should I board them?" Hon. Courtenay outlined.

He further said that there are examples of fraudulent letters from Belizean officials being used to board people on airplanes to Belize from African countries.

"These are fraudulent schemes where people are just using Belize as an entry point to move north; 99.9% are not moving from Africa to make Belize their home. They are coming because they



SSBA Tournament bounces on out west!

by Demi Awe

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Sun. Oct. 2, 2022

The San Ignacio & Santa Elena Basketball Association (SSBA) hosted 10 games over the weekend at the Resilience Center at Victor Galvez Stadium in San Ignacio Town.

Below are the scores from the games played this past weekend.

Friday, September 30

(Under 10 – Coed) Habet Service Station, 14-3, over CK Restaurant. Habet Service Station – Amid Juan 10 pts, Andrea Chilroy and Arden Boiton 2 pts each. CK Restaurant – Aiden Pinelo 2 pts, and Jaden Logan 1 pt.

(Under 12 – Male) KG Equine & Oye FM, 11-10, over Q&M Construction. KG Equine & Oye FM – Elihugh Pitts 7 pts, Leroy Flowers and Randy Zetina 2 pts each. Q&M Construction – Oscar Blanford 3 pts, Xzavien Pascual and Wayne Lemus 1 pt each.

(Under 15 – Female) Royal International, 16-9, over San Ignacio Hotel. Royal International – Ashley Gillett 14 pts, and Jahxanne Waight 2 pts. San Ignacio Hotel – Jenayah August 6 pts, and Aaliyah Oliva 3 pts.

(Under 15 – Male) Tyre Center, 18-5, over Yute Expedition. Tyre Center – Sheheen Urbina and Mikhail Saquil 6 pts each, Japan Laurence 4 pts, and Robert Jones 2 pts. Yute Expedition – Elroy Willis Jr. 3 pts, and Clifford Martinez 2 pts.

(Seniors – Male) Assassins, 109-20, over Alphas. Assassins – Kyron “Tut” Molina 28 pts, Jamie Carbajal 21 pts, Santiago Clark 12 pts, Denzel Nunez 11 pts, and Robert Jeffries 10 pts. Alphas – Mohammed Garcia 7 pts, and Kenrick Valentine 6 pts.

Saturday, October 1

(Under 15 – Female) Royal International, 16-7, over San Ignacio Hotel. Royal International – Annillette Flores 8 pts, Zephania Santiago 6 pts, and Jahxanne Waight 2 pts. San Ignacio Hotel – Aaliyah Oliva 4 pts, and Emily

Arriola 3 pts.

(Under 12 – Male) Q&M Construction, 12-6, over KG Equine & Oye FM. Q&M Construction – Hebron Martinez 6 pts; Xzavien Pascual, Oscar Blanford and Devan Allison 2 pts each. KG Equine & Oye FM – Maverick Requena 4 pts, Aaron Rivero and Leroy Flowers 1 pt each.

(Seniors – Female) Ixchel, 41-29, over Western Queens. Ixchel – Amanda Sarceno 9 pts, Dania Calderon 7 pts; Perlita Bran, Jesika Prom and Mabel Rodriguez 6 pts each. Western Queens – Taryn Arnold 11 pts, Jeneve Reynolds 8 pts, and Enid Dakers 7 pts.

(Under 18 – Male) Joehann Construction, 37-29, over Atlantic Bank. Joehann Construction – John Aranda 11 pts, Kenroy Nunez 8 pts, and Rowan Romero 4 pts. Atlantic Bank – Sean Maskall 8 pts, Jamie Mangar 7 pts, and Roy Valentine 5 pts.

(Seniors – Male) Nexgen Ballers, 56-54, over NBB Pay Elites. Nexgen Ballers – Brandon Flowers 22 pts, Owen Kuylen and Karl Williams 6 pts each. NBB Pay Elites – Jayden Lopez 12 pts, Akeem Waters and Kevin Brown 10 pts each.

Below is the upcoming weekend schedule. All games will be played at the Victor Galvez Stadium.

Friday, October 7

6:30 p.m. - (Under 7 - Female) Shabla Events vs Obs OJ

7:00 p.m. - (Under 7 - Male) Mambas vs Joseph Freights/RGM Trading

7:30 p.m. - (Under 15 - Male) Tyre Center vs Yute Expedition

8:00 p.m. - (Under 18 - Male) Recinos vs JDB

Saturday, October 8

6:30 p.m. - (Under 10 - Coed) Eskimo Ics vs Habet Service Station

7:00 p.m. - (Seniors - Female) Vegan Roots Sisterhood vs Ixchel

7:30 p.m. - (Under 16 - Male) Atlantic Bank vs JDB

8:00 p.m. - (Seniors - Male) West Side vs Vegan Roots Brotherhood

want to move north, and so the fight against that smuggling – we welcome tourists, but this is smuggling – the fight is multifaceted and has to start with the country of origin," Hon. Courtenay said.

Belize has become a regularly used transit point for migrants from Central America and across the world who are trying to find more favorable conditions in countries in the north. The country is urging the US to include it in the Regional Migration Plan to address the growing global crisis.

In Belize, an estimated 60,000 irregular migrants are expected to be regularized under the Amnesty program currently being carried out throughout the country. For now, Minister

Courtenay said that the estimated number of persons currently accessing that amnesty seems to be less than what was expected.

"Our projections of the number of people who will take advantage of the amnesty is much less than we anticipated so far, but now, having said that, one of the things that we notice is that when our officials do outreach in a particular village, the numbers go up," Hon. Courtenay said.

The administration is therefore emphasizing outreach now as a key part of the program.

"The purpose of this amnesty exercise is to accurately get these people into the formal sector," Hon. Courtenay said.



Burkina Faso coup: Ousted military leader Damiba 'resigns'

BURKINA FASO, Sun. Oct. 2, 2022 (Aljazeera)

Burkina Faso's overthrown military chief agreed to step down two days after army officers announced his deposition in the country's second coup in a year.

Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba "offered his resignation in order to avoid confrontations with serious human and material consequences", according to a statement on Sunday by mediators.

Influential religious and community leaders held mediation talks between Damiba and the new self-proclaimed leader,

Captain Ibrahim Traore, to resolve the crisis.

"President Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba proposed his own resignation in order to avoid clashes," said Hamidou Yameogo, a spokesman for the mediation efforts.

Damiba set "seven conditions" for stepping down. They included a guarantee of security for his allies in the military, "a guarantee of his security and rights", and assurance that those taking power will respect the pledge he gave to West Africa's

Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba offered his resignation in order to avoid confrontations with 'serious human and material consequences'.



Supporters of coup maker Captain Ibrahim Traore rally in the streets of the capital Ouagadougou on Sunday, October 2, 2022 [Kilaye Bationo/AP]

Benque woman, 71, killed by machete-wielding attacker

Continued from Page 1

held accountable under the law.

"For someone to be walking on the street that they lived ... and just being attacked by a neighbor, we would want to answer all the questions," said Police Communications Director, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood in an interview on Monday.

"Yes, we have charged him for the crime committed, but that doesn't mean we aren't canvassing the area to see what we can get that will help us to find a motive for that murder," he later added.

Esduid Ariel Morales, the son of Ramona Morales Ramirez, told PLUS TV reporters that, many years ago, Miguel Angel Gomez allegedly smashed one of the glass windows at his family's home. The 68-year-old labourer also often made lewd comments towards both Morales' mother and grandmother. He had a habit of urinating in public, and most notably, he allegedly chopped at least two other persons in the past. Even more shocking, however, is the fact that, according to Morales, Gomez had previously attempted to chop his mother back in 2019. He stated that the family filed a report, but claims that, due to political intervention by a UDP minister, Gomez faced little to no repercussions.

When Ramona Morales Ramirez left home, she told her son that she would be going to feed the family's ducks and chickens. After a while, however, he noticed that his mother was taking a while to return. At first, he assumed that she had simply stopped along the way to talk with a friend. He was sitting inside their home when he heard several screams. He looked out the window and noticed a woman leaning forward, not realizing at first that it was his mother.

"I thought dogs were attacking her," said Morales, who immediately ran outside to render aid. "When I was just in the middle of the street ... I saw it

was my mother," he said.

She was bleeding profusely from a cut wound to her upper shoulder. Another of his relatives who was nearby at the time told him that the assailant, Gomez, had inflicted two chop wounds on her. The seventy-one-year-old woman was rushed to the San Ignacio Hospital, but succumbed to her injuries.

"My mother, on her left hand, she was bringing a bed sheet with dirty clothes that she was going to wash and a couple bags of groceries that she had bought at the shop—brown sugar, Nutrioli oil, and Blue Bonnet margarine; that's what she used to do coconut crust. And she did not drop those things when she got hit," said Morales.

It wasn't until she crossed the drain in front of her home that she dropped her bags and leaned against the wall. Ms. Morales later collapsed. Her son made attempts to stop her bleeding with a towel while waiting for transportation to the hospital.

A number of neighbors saw Gomez fleeing the scene.

"He just waited to see that my mom was already going to die, then he ran across the creek, across the highway, and then up that mountain," recounted Morales.

Ariel Morales says that he believes Gomez's animosity toward his mother stemmed from a property dispute. He also said that he does not believe Gomez suffers from any kind of mental illness and blames the failure of the justice system, as a result of political interference, for his mother's death.

"He's just evil, and they did not punish him accordingly," he said.

On Monday, residents from the surrounding area, along with friends and family, held a candlelight memorial in honor of Ms. Morales Ramirez. According to her son, she will be remembered fondly as a hardworking woman who was always willing to sacrifice for the sake of her family.

Farmer stabbed to death ...

Continued from Page 1

the last bus late Sunday night.

At this time, police are still carrying out what is classified as a death investigation before determining whether Chiac was a victim of manslaughter/murder.

During a police press briefing today, the communications director of the Police Department, ASP Fitzroy Yearwood, said, "I know that our investigators are on the scene canvassing that area, but there is not much that we are going on as yet, but definitely it is early in the investigation."

regional bloc for a return to civilian rule within two years.

Traore officially was named head of state after he accepted the conditions given by Damiba, calling on "the population to exercise calm, restraint and prayer".

A statement issued on Sunday by the pro-Traore military said he would remain in charge "until the swearing-in of the president of Burkina Faso designated by the nation's active forces" at an unspecified date.

The second change of leadership in a year started on Friday when military officers announced the deposition of Damiba, the dissolution of the transitional government and the suspension of the constitution.

Full article can be found at : <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/2/ousted-leader-damiba-agrees-to-resign-after-burkina-faso-coup>

First published by Aljazeera

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Amandala business and editorial office: #3304 Amandala Drive (formerly Partridge Street), Belize City, Belize
 Central America is published twice weekly. Tuesday issue can be access online: <https://amandala.com.bz/news/>
 and join our membership portal, and the Friday issue is printed by the Amandala Press.
 Telephones: 501-280-4703/202-4477. Our email address for business and advertisement are
amandalapress@gmail.com and amandalapress@yahoo.com
 For news, letters and articles: editor_amandala@yahoo.com