

Jamaican BPO plans to employ 500 Belizeans by October 2023



Artist impression of iTel's new location in Belize coming October 2023 (Credit: Jamaica Observer)

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

A Jamaican giant in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) which started out in 2012 and has since expanded to 9 Latin American and Caribbean countries

with 6,000 employees, is working to significantly expand its Belize operations. Itel first partnered with an

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House fires consume 5 homes in the old capital

by Kristen Ku

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Over the course of the weekend, the country witnessed devastating house fires in the city, leaving numerous individuals displaced.

Residents of Vernon Street in Belize City are still recovering from a state of panic as four

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Fire on Vernon Street

Early morning motorcycle RTA claims rider's life

by Kristen Ku

BURRELL BOOM VILLAGE, Belize District, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Thirty-two-year-old Leonel Armando Cabanas lost his life in a road traffic accident that occurred around 2:30 on Monday morning in Ladyville.

Reports are that Cabanas was traveling on his Pulsa motorcycle on the Philip Goldson Highway, on his way



Leonel Armando Cabanas, deceased

home to Burrell Boom Village from Ladyville, when, between Miles 10 and 11, the front tire of the motorcycle got punctured, causing Cabanas to lose control of the bike. As a result, he was flung off the motorcycle and onto the pavement and died at the scene of the accident.

Cabanas was taken to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Hotel reservation now needed for travel to Mexico?



BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

During Easter weekend 2023 when thousands of Belizeans resumed cross-border travel to Mexico, there was a report on social media that Mexican

immigration authorities had started requesting proof of hotel reservations for Belizean travellers. The cited reason

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6-month-old dies unexpectedly at Corozal Community Hospital; parents want justice



Stephanie McFarlane and David McFarlane, parents of deceased

by Marco Lopez

COROZAL TOWN, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

The parents of baby Anita McFarlane have gotten in contact with the media to tell the story of the child's final hours, and to call for justice. They describe

the sequence of events on Wednesday evening at the Corozal Community Hospital that led to her death as a sort of medical malpractice, although not using that term explicitly. Stephanie McFarlane and David McFarlane were

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"Sister Ruth will deliver," says Elena

BNTU's president-elect, Ruth Shoman, in a post on social media following the election, stated, "The true victory lies on the outcomes of very serious issues that lie ahead. Increments, Pension Reform, Tax Reform, Proposal 22, Curriculum, Revision of Education Rules among others."

by Marco Lopez

BELMOPAN, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

In its 53 years of activity, the Belize National Teachers Union (BNTU) has only elected two female presidents – the outgoing president, Senator Elena Smith, and the president-elect, who was voted in last Thursday, Ruth Shoman. On July 3 of this year, Shoman will officially assume the national presidency of the union – following a stellar 7-year tenure of Smith. Shoman, a career educator turned activist, joined the union's executive as National Secretary in April 2017, and has been immersed in the activities of the union since then.



Ruth Shoman, president-elect BNTU

Shoman is a Belizean-born native of the Corozal District who has been in the teaching profession for over 20 years. In her hometown of Corozal, she served as the president of the Scouts Association, guided by a passion for working with youth. At the Corozal Community College, she managed the marching band as a part of a program to engage youths through music. Over 10 years that band won 5 national championships, and recently, the Ruth Shoman Award for Bandfest was

officially inaugurated to recognize band directors who teach students to read sheet music.

In 2018, Shoman facilitated a report writing workshop for police on behalf of the BNTU. This is following the spike in violent crimes against women and children in that year and the subsequent march and rally carried out in Belmopan by the BNTU membership. Following meetings with stakeholders and presentations of measures to curb the crime situation at the time, a four-week session with police was spearheaded by Shoman and ACP Howell Gillett.

As a member of the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB), she represents the umbrella organization on the Social Security Board.

Shoman's work in activism touched various spheres, as she worked alongside Smith unwaveringly over her own 7-year tenure. During that time, significant progress was made on various fronts, including the drafting of the new Collective Bargaining Agreement, whose Proposal 22 is still pending approval.

As the National Secretary of BNTU, she collaborated closely with Senator Smith to organize several large-scale demonstrations throughout the country in recent years and in concert with other

solutions. Her platform today is focused on equipping negotiators with the skills and education needed to sit at the table with stakeholders – and forging a collaborative relationship, as opposed to an adversarial one with those partners. This is to ensure the best outcomes for members when the union is at the negotiation table.

She has said that the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered global changes to which teachers in Belize will also have to adapt. "We are educators and the times have changed. I think the pandemic taught the whole world a lesson and after every pandemic, things change. B.N.T.U. as well, our past leaders have set a very solid foundation for us and it is up to us now to continue building on that," Shoman stated last Thursday evening following the results of the election.

"Recognize, realize, that she is going to be beside me. She is going to be beside me until I move away, and then she leads the union," Senator Elena Smith said after the outcome of the election was known. "And so I know that you all are contented, with your decision today, and so I trust that sister Ruth will deliver on the promises," Smith further said.

As for moving forward, Shoman said that the union has serious work to do, "We have a pension reform that is right around, it's hitting us. We need to sit down and start preparing for these issues. We have to look at tax reform, we have to look at the amendments necessary in the Education Rules, the Education Act. We have to seriously think about the functions of the Teaching Service Commission and how we can step it up to ensure that teachers are further protected through legislation. So for my membership, we have a lot of work to do, and in my platform, I believe in inclusion and so I'll be coming to my teachers who are retired if you have not been involved in BNTU. You've been away, I am going to be calling you out because I believe in having that history that those who have left BNTU and may just be at home, I'll be knocking on your door—all of us, all members, bring something to the table so that together we can properly negotiate for all our members."

She shared that one of the principles of her platform is greater engagement with the union's membership and a tempered approach to media engagement on private union issues.

"I love the media. I've worked with the media, but I think the media is to be used accordingly, and we have, I think BNTU has a very good relationship with the media, but the business of BNTU is the business of BNTU, and for me to reach to my membership, I didn't need the media. I needed the one on one, and to me, that was very important to be able to communicate with my members in my own way through the means that BNTU provides, because that shows that we are connecting with our members. I'll go to the media when it's necessary to go and I will keep the business of the union within the business of the union," Shoman expressed.

Also elected to the new BNTU executive are Jorge Mejia, reelected as 1st Vice president; Bay Rivas as National Secretary, and Keisha Williams as Treasurer.

Coast Guard rescues 7 persons stranded at sea



Dobian Montero, Patrol Commander in Consejo station

by Kristen Ku

COROZAL, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Seven persons from Chunox Village were rescued in waters near Sarteneja Village in northern Belize by the Belize Coast Guard (BCG) following the unfortunate capsizing of their vessel.

The staff of The Crimson Orchid Inn at Orchid Bay was on a boat a few miles off Sarteneja when the vessel began having mechanical difficulties.

Dobian Montero, Petty Officer first class in the Belize Coast Guard, and Patrol Commander in the Consejo Work Station, after speaking to Kimberly Mcguire, owner of Crimson Inn and the vessel, explained to reporters, "While they were making their way to San Pedro, just before reaching Sarteneja, the bow of the vessel dipped and they were taking in water. So, at the time they lost power from the engine, and the engine shut down. And as mentioned previously, the sea state was bad. All the banging from the waves caused the hull of the vessel to crack or split. And that was the main point that led to the vessel to capsize."



Despite no one being injured, the group sent a distress call to the Belize Coast Guard, who quickly responded.

Upon reaching the area at about 8:15 a.m., the Coast Guard found that 5 of the 7 persons were staying afloat by holding on to an icebox that was onboard the vessel and that most of them were using lifejackets. The remaining two, however, were holding on to what remained of the bow of the vessel.

Those holding onto the vessel asked the rescue team to save the group of 5

first before returning for them, as there was one person who didn't know how to swim.

Once the entire group was rescued, they were safely taken back to Orchid Bay.

The Coast Guard recommended the use of lifejackets via their Facebook post, stating, "The rescue was possible because they were able to make a distress call; and very important, they had life jackets onboard."

The public is reminded that the Coast Guard can be reached by calling 999.

House fires consume 5 homes in the old capital

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homes near one another were gutted by flames on Friday afternoon.

These fires occurred just a little before 2:00 p.m. when the Belize Fire Department was alerted of a house fire in the Lake Independence area.

Upon their arrival, two homes were already consumed, while the other two were in an earlier stage of destruction.

Still, the fire was too advanced, so the firefighters had to focus on simply controlling further spread.

Despite their efforts to extinguish the blaze, the fire consumed everything within these homes.

According to official reports, approximately 15 individuals have been left displaced as a result of this incident.

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Women in Renewable Energy

by Kristen Ku

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

On Monday of this week, the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance (MPUELE), with the support of the LAIT UP BELIZE! Project and the European Union, held a ceremony at Biltmore Plaza, Belize City, recognizing Women in Renewable Energy (WIRE).

Originally founded by the Clinton Climate Foundation, WIRE, which focuses on gender equality in the energy sector, is now handled by the Rocky Mountain Institute and they are now partnering to begin a new chapter in Belize.

This new chapter involves an increase from the induction of two women into WIRE to inviting multiple women under a new mentorship program. Through this initiative, women who have been part of the program will be able to guide these new women who are entering.



Ryan Cobb, Energy Director of the MPUELE

According to the Energy Director of the MPUELE, Ryan Cobb, women only make up about 32% of the workforce in terms of renewable energy, which is why events and programs like these aim to increase that number.



“The overarching goal is trying to increase the percentage of women within renewable energy. Whenever you are trying to make decisions, you are trying to make the most informed and balanced position that you can, and the

only way you can do that is if you have a balance within your stakeholders and within the technical people as well. That’s why it’s important to raise what we have of that 32% share to one that’s much more equitable,” said Cobb.

The five women who were highlighted in the ceremony were Kayla Gabourel—Energy Officer at the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-governance; Sheena Kuylen Simpson—Manager, Systems Planning & Engineering at the Belize Electricity Limited; Kay Menzies—President & CEO of Fortis Belize Limited; Brittany Meighan Rancharan—Environmental Engineer & Climate Change Expert; and Khara Roches Francois—Energy Engineer & Consultant.

Finally, the Ministry also used this opportunity “to dialogue and to promote the vision of women supporting other women in light of the sustainable energy transition that Belize is currently undertaking.”

Libertad teen, 13, missing

by Charles Gladden

COROZAL, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Police are seeking the assistance of the general public in the search for a 13-year-old girl from Libertad Village, Corozal District. The missing teen has been identified as Kareema Encalada.

The teen was last seen on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at the home of a relative on Sea Sponge Drive, in Vista Del Mar, Ladyville, Belize District, and was reported missing the following day.

ACP Hilberto Romero, OC Eastern Division, told local reporters that recently there have been a large number of cases of children that are being

reported missing.

“Some of these reports are runaways, and so the persons return safely, and so we treat each one as a separate report and they’re followed up, but most of them are runaways and they come back home. Efforts are made in these reports, and investigations are conducted,” he said.

Kareema is described as being of Hispanic descent, with a brown complexion. She is about 5 feet 4 inches in height, is of slim built, weighs 110 lbs., and has hazel eyes and red hair.

She was last seen wearing a black dress.

If she is seen, please call 911 or 922.



Kareema Encalada

BDF soldier run over by car on highway



Hector Cho, deceased

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

A hit-and-run accident between Miles 10 and 11 on the Philip Goldson Highway, in the Ladyville area, claimed the life of a Belize Defence Force (BDF) soldier on Thursday, April 13. The soldier was identified as 38-year-old Hector Cho of Orange Walk, a father

of four.

Preliminary reports have indicated that sometime before 10:00 p.m. Thursday, a motorist pulled over on the side of the road and exited his vehicle to render aid to Cho, who was seen lying motionless on the highway and had apparently already been hit by a vehicle that had left the scene. At the same time, another car heading in the direction of Belize City drove by and proceeded to drag Cho’s body approximately 50 feet away from its initial location, then sped away.

Cho was then transported to the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

In an interview with *Amandala*, Lieutenant Colonel Jermaine Burns, Acting Chief of Staff of the Belize Defence Force, said that Cho was off-duty at the time of his passing.

Cho had been serving in the BDF since October 2003 and at the time of his demise he had been serving as a cook in the BDF Air Wing for almost 4 years. His previous positions were Signal Operator and Armorer.

Drug plane discovered in southern Belize

by Kristen Ku

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Last week it was reported that a suspected narco plane had been spotted on Tuesday, April 11. The plane was later confirmed to be in an area between Corazon Creek Village and Otoxha Village, Toledo District. There had also been shocking unofficial claims that two bodies had been allegedly found.

On Sunday morning, April 16, police visited the remote area where the burnt remains of the drug plane were located on a cleared air-landing strip.

Preliminary reports had suggested that, while there was a cleared landing strip, the plane had apparently missed it and landed in nearby bushes.

However, ACP Hilberto Romero, OC Eastern Division, cleared that up stating, “A review of the area shows that there was an airstrip made in the jungle and that is where the plane landed.”

Romero also made it known that as investigations into this case are ongoing, up to this point, there has been no



discovery of any drugs that could have been transported by the plane.

In regard to the rumors circulating that bodies were allegedly found near the site, Romero said, “That is incorrect; no remains of (any) body was found in that area.” He went on to state that he was uncertain as to where such reports could have originated.

In regard to the time that lapsed between the initial sighting of the plane on Tuesday and the arrival of officers at the landing site on Sunday, Romero explained, “From the time the information was received based on the radar, teams were deployed, and from there they were searching; so, it is a remote area, and so it took some time to reach that particular area.”

Evan X Hyde!

Sat. Apr. 15, 2023

I write a column for this newspaper, I use my first name only, for the anonymity, because I don't think I'm that good! I also believe that if you put words on paper, they have to be subjects that you believe every single word of, or your readers will lose interest. No propagandizing, just your truths. I'm almost positive that the Publisher will be embarrassed by what I have to say, but I believe you should let people know, when they have left their footprints on the soul of a nation, know how much they have influenced others, while they're still alive, not after they are no longer with us.

The first time I was aware of Evan X Hyde was when Ralph Feinstein and I were invited to his coming home party from university at his uncle, Jim Hyde's house. I think that it was Jim's wife, Geri Reid, later Michael Peyrefitte's mother, who invited us. This was in 1968, I believe. Was a great party, lots of beautiful people and great food. Evan was very quiet, and my first impression of him was that he was arrogant, a loner, and highly intelligent. Looking at him then, I would never have imagined that he would become the agitator he blossomed into; after all, he was one of the elites. I don't think we spoke to each other, but it didn't take long before I started to hear his name, about his politics, his romantic liaisons, his politics, the company he kept, his politics!

It wasn't long after this that UBAD was formed, and *Amandala* started to compete with the *Reporter*, *The Beacon* and the *Belize Times*! This was a period when time was almost at a standstill, and yet, that band of ragamuffins quickly became the talk of the town, to the surprise and alarm of the powers that were, and a pleasant and much needed shot in the arm to the roots generation. Black pride and aspirations were at the forefront of their messaging, and the upheave began! My attentions was centered elsewhere, chasing women, growing up, and trying to move on up. The cast of characters in the movement couldn't have been better scripted for a movie! Justice, Galento, Richardson, Shabbazz, Fairweather, Rufus, and many others who were voiceless before, and who matured into being the conscience of the unwashed

masses!

I'm not going into the history of UBAD, I'm not qualified to do so, but many of us, some surprising names, dug their message! But the sacrifice would've been too great. So we sided with the establishment that called them communists, Black Panthers, revolutionaries, and those were the nice names. Why join a movement that was going nowhere and lose out on a great future? So the hell with them, from my point of view!

They made a difference, and *Amandala* quickly became the leading paper in the colony, because they spoke truth to power! They opened our eyes, took off the blindfolds, from our jaded, myopic minds! Their roots culture changed fashion, the way youths dressed, huge Afros and dashikis, and natural hair for women. Such a transformation in the Jewel.

I give the X man full credit for changing the landscape of a bland society into one filled with colors and anger and revolt and change, mostly change for the better. We learned more about our history from him than all the years we spent in primary and secondary school! Creole, Mayan and Garifuna history weren't a part of the curriculum, at least not in depth. British and European history was what was mostly taught.

I left Belize in the early 70s, amid all the sturm and drang, so I missed out on some of the most interesting and exciting periods of this transition. But reading this man's editorials and publisher columns changed my perspective on what he had been trying to accomplish. His love of country is undeniable. He struggled and clawed his way up to reach the pinnacle of journalism, in all its forms. Teaching and preaching and agitating!

Most of all, and what has impressed me most, are his writings, his truths, his elegy to the past, and a Belize that is no more! For this, and for his recent friendship, I'm eternally grateful! And yes, I still believe he's a loner; no matter how many might be around him, he always seems lost in his thoughts. Keep on preaching, and leave that light on, on Spanish Caye, on fishing, sailing, on sports, on history, on life! Respect and Peace.

Glen.

House fires consume 5 homes in the old capital

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It is alleged that the house fire began at a home on Hibiscus Street where sparks quickly spread onto two other structures on Vernon Street, taking only minutes to leave damages.

However, it is still unclear what initiated these fires, as the Station Supervisor of the Fire Department, Kenneth Mortis, says the families have not been cooperating.

"Reports reaching our investigating team was that some of the kids were left in the house unattended while the adults were out front, and hence the reason I mentioned earlier that the parents of these children are adamant

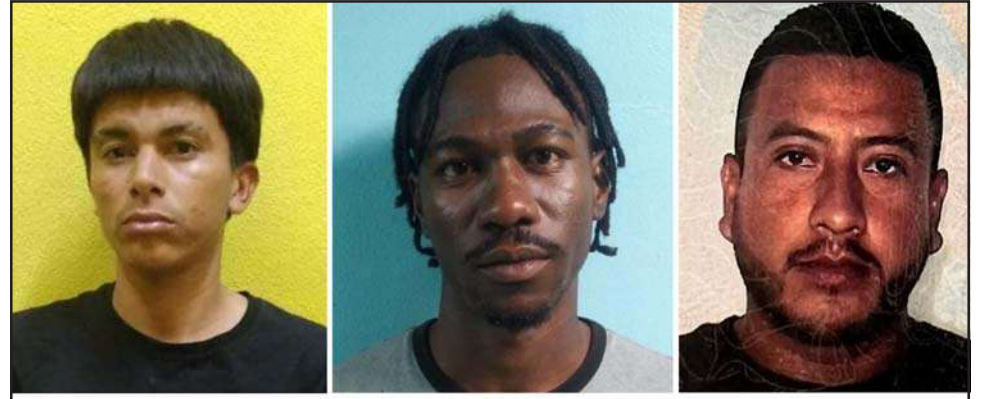
in denying such claims. And due to lack of any cooperation from these families, unfortunately, we have to rule this fire as undetermined," said Mortis.

It is understood that some of these homes were salvaged by families during Hurricane Lisa, and efforts to repair and upgrade them were underway.

Unfortunately, these plans have now been completely taken out of the family's hands, as they have now been left with nothing, since nothing they owned was insured.

Another home over on Oleander Street, Belize City, called the attention of residents, police officers, and the fire station at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Two men arrested for murder of vendor



(l-r) Milton Nuñez and Emerson Elijo, charged; Jose Antonio Lopez, deceased

by Charles Gladden

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Two men have been arrested for the murder of a vegetable vendor of Valley of Peace, Cayo District, 35-year-old Jose Antonio Lopez, which took place on Wednesday night, April 12.

According to Friday's issue of the *Amandala*, around 11:00 p.m. on April 12, Lopez, a father of four, had been socializing in front of a pub on Barbara Harris Street in the Gungulung area of Belize City when three unknown men approached him and a scuffle ensued among the men.

During the altercation, one of the men reportedly fired gunshots that fatally injured Lopez, thereafter stealing his wallet which contained cash and a licensed firearm, and the trio then fled down Barbara Harris Street.

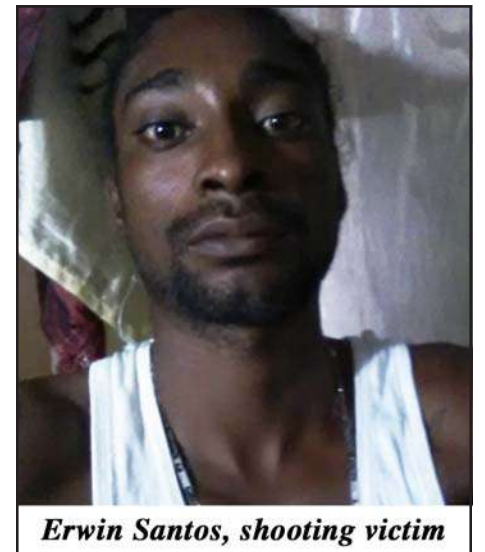
Lopez succumbed to his fatal injuries at around 1:07 a.m. the following morning, at the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital.

Over the weekend, police were able to apprehend two men in connection with Lopez's murder: 23-year-old AC technician, Milton Nuñez, and 21-year-old welder, Emerson Elijo of Belize City.

Teakettle man charged for shooting fellow villager



Marty Mendez, charged



Erwin Santos, shooting victim

by Charles Gladden

TEAKETTLE VILLAGE, Cayo District. Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

Following an investigation into a shooting incident that occurred on Thursday night, March 30, which left 30-year-old Erwin Santos of Teakettle Village, Cayo District injured, one male person has been arrested and charged for multiple offenses relating to the incident.

On Thursday, April 13, police arrested and charged 34-year-old Marty Mendez, a self-employed Teakettle resident, for the crimes of attempted murder, use of deadly means of harm,

and grievous harm.

On the day of the incident, Santos was reportedly at his mother's home helping her to make panades, and then went outside to sit on a plastic chair under a tree. After a short while, the sound of two gunshots was heard, and when relatives went outside to see what had happened, they saw Santos with two gunshot wounds. He had also been chopped and beaten in the head with a hammer, and was suffering from a broken leg and arm.

After the incident there was public speculation that Santos' attackers were two men who had disputes with him and wanted him dead.

on Saturday to the residence of Glenford Webster.

Webster is believed to be a mentally challenged individual who lives alone, and when approached by firefighters, was uncooperative.

It is believed that Webster started the fire himself before fleeing the scene, and it completely consumed his structure.

Mortis commended Webster's neighbors for assisting and attempting to extinguish the fire before the fire department stepped in.

Webster is now the second mentally challenged individual to set his home on fire, following Barkley Allen, who lit up his grandmother's home in Orange Walk town in February this year.



A people's pain

Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

When we hear the news about the crime and violence raging in the streets of Haiti, and the poverty and starvation being battled by the poor masses, it is tempting for those of us in better circumstances to shrug off the thought of their plight, and wonder what bad decisions they have made as a people, what corruption might exist in their governments, what bad luck came upon them, what evil could be in their midst that God must be punishing them for. Whatever we are tempted to think, few of us will make any connection between the perennial poverty and struggle of the Haitian nation and people, with the willful, orchestrated, militarily enforced exploitation of the Haitian people's "blood, sweat and tears" for the past couple centuries after they had become the first people of the Caribbean to abolish slavery and declare the former slave colony as an independent nation of free people in 1804. Slavery was still in existence in Belize six years after the famous Battle of St. George's Caye, when our Caribbean sister nation declared their independence from France, their former colonial masters.

Slavery was still a going concern in the United States to the north and the rest of the Caribbean and Central America to the south.

But Haiti, which had previously been the "crown jewel" of France, their most profitable colony upon which the wealth of France was built, was about to suffer immense pain for daring to be free.

Shaking off the yoke of slavery from their predominantly African population was not an easy task. But even more challenging was the survival of the new nation of free people, because other slave-holding nations feared the influence of Haiti would also infect their slaves and inspire them into

similar rebellions. So, none of the other European powers would do business with Haiti. They all "ganged up" on Haiti – France, Spain, Great Britain and, yes, the United States of America. Without the benefit of trade as a young nation of politically free people, the pain of economic enslavement was about to begin.

Having won freedom for some 500,000 former slaves, each with a "head value" in the eyes of their former French slave-masters, the proud Haitian people were soon to witness a fleet of French warships arriving in their port, with a declared readiness to bomb, destroy and burn Haiti to the ground, unless their then president signed an agreement to make annual payments to France to compensate for the value of the slaves that France had lost with Haiti's declared independence. Haiti has been paying back that debt ever since, resulting in massive underdevelopment and intense poverty among the Haitian masses for the next two centuries. And when the Haitian people dared to elect a leader, a former priest, Jean Bertrand Aristide, who declared his intent to go to the United Nations demanding reparations in the billions of dollars from France for their unjust enrichment on the backs of the poor Haitian people, agents of big nations arranged his removal by a coup, just as they had done with Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala back in 1954, when Arbenz was

pushing agrarian reform and giving lands for agriculture to the landless Mayan population. That coup in Guatemala sparked over thirty years of civil war, and much suffering and death among the poor in Guatemala. Haiti's tragedy continues to this day, and the big nations who know what they have done to cause this, are mostly concerned with military intervention to stomp out the violence and put the Haitian troublemakers in their place, which means continued poverty and exploitation.

In Belize, if we are not careful, times could get rough, much "more rough" for the masses of poor people, as prices get higher, and crime increases among the desperate fringes of the unemployed and/or uneducated. Regardless of the ethnicity or culture, poverty and ignorance of the masses, the presence of obscene affluence among a small wealthy class tends to breed crime and violence in every society.

Belizeans need to become conscious of, and understand the pieces of the puzzle that have led to the huge crisis being experienced presently by our Haitian brothers and sisters. It is important for our leaders to know how best to assist Haiti to overcome their plight, rather than becoming an obstacle to their true liberation from the tentacles of manipulation and exploitation by big and powerful nations. Small as we are, our voice carries some value on the international stage; that is why our friendship is so valued by our Taiwanese ally.

What France has done to Haiti, a British "investor" has been doing to our little Belize. Yes, he has won just about every case he has brought against our Government, sometimes with the collusion and connivance of some of our own leaders, but more often with the "fire power" of his top international lawyers. While our national fervor has driven us to condemn his manipulation of the capitalist system always to his advantage, nevertheless, the one Lord Michael Ashcroft has always "played by the rules," the rules being the court of law, where his deep pockets either allow him to outwit local opponents or simply wear out his adversaries with repeated litigation. His legal victories, and there have been quite a few over the years, beginning with his takeover of BTL in the 1990s, have had little moral worth in the eyes of the Belizean people, whose taxes end up carrying the burden for every case lost to Ashcroft by our Belize government.

When government lacks the resources to provide healthcare for its poor people, the slide into desperation and destitution can be quick and painful. Whenever Ashcroft wins millions on the front end from our government, individual citizens feel the pain on the back end; and it is becoming more and more real in these inflationary times.

A middle-aged woman and her retired husband can be happy and relaxed today, and in a couple months' time, her world is upside down. He gets sick, some five hundred dollars from their savings for a CAT scan. Boom! It's prostate cancer; advanced. The medical bills pile up fast. And in a few months, he's gone. She draws the last of their savings to deal with the funeral. A loan of a couple thousand dollars was also necessary, because they have not made the necessary contributions to qualify for any assistance from "Social." Jewelry, whatever she had, has already been sold or pawned. A proud, God-fearing Belize woman is now looking at desperation; a hundred-dollar loan payment is due. She is broke, and hungry, and things are falling apart. Tears quickly flow.

As a people, we have to find ways to come together to "help our falling brothers/sisters." As the economic situation gets worse, more and more individuals could fall into the pit of desperation and crisis. We must at least be able to provide food to sustain us through the tough times.

In these hard times, it is not nice when we hear that Ashcroft is suing our government, again. The millions he extracts from government, is money that could help feed and provide healthcare for our struggling masses.

If there is any hope for little Belize, it is in our old time saying, that "every fat fowl got ih Sunday." Let's pray that for once this cruel corporate creature has bitten a poisoned berry in daring to challenge the whole global environmental movement because our government listened to the expert advice of our National Environmental Appraisal Committee (NEAC) and decided that his Waterloo cruise tourism project involved too much risk for a World Heritage Site, our precious Belize Barrier Reef.

For once, let's hope that Ashcroft loses this time. The road is already rough ahead, and our people shouldn't be forced to endure any unnecessary pain because of one man's greed and ego.

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All out “free up” attack

by Colin Hyde

A month ago it was reported that women in Germany have won the right to bathe topless in public swimming pools. Hmm, we had heard that in Europe they are a lot less prudish than we are; in fact, for years we’ve been hearing the story that in France breasts are exposed on television as routinely as ads for old-men performance boosters are run over here.

We’ve also heard that there are actually a few studies out there that claim that our prudishness is harmful. But I don’t know how sound that research is. Sorry, I am not surprised when I read, in a medium called EURACTIV, that “in 2020, 86% of all known child sexual abuse material discovered online by the IWF (Internet Watch Foundation) was hosted in Europe.” It’s known human behavior that one step leads to another.

We know of women on our side of

the ocean who have called for “freeing up.” Some complain of chafing and other discomforts with brassieres. That might be a good point for their cause. Some say if men can walk around without shirts they should have the right too. That’s absolute nonsense. It’s like impossible to believe that bare chests are as sexual for women as bare breasts are for men. And even if so, they don’t have to battle tumescence.

The Breast is Best League has been on a relentless push for women with babies to pull out whenever dehn baby skwaak. They want the nanny to bring the baby to work so they can be breastfed. I don’t think anyone questions the baby’s right to their milk; the debate is all about the publicness. Hmm, if not for good old “prudishness” there wouldn’t be the need for them to be about their promotion.

Some women have tired of talking; they’ve moved to action. No more need

to sneak around, there’s a deluge of bare breasts on Facebook. I’ve seen more breasts in the past three months than I’ve seen in all my life. In the first phase the boobs were all under the cover of flimsy blouses and wet t-shirts. The subjects all came from the Hollywood and music world, a crowd that has no hesitation about exposing themselves. This past month the game got taken up a notch. Now the bare breast stars are women feeding babies, and ooh, the “other” nipple is as bare as it was when Eve seduced Adam. Now why would the other nipple be out, when the baby only has one mouth?

In Arabia they have women covered from head to toe. And on our side we are heading to the next extreme. I think it shouldn’t happen in Belize without us having a real discussion.

Ah, way at the bottom of all this is a push by an aggressive women’s group to have every right that men have. But sauce for the goose clearly is not always sauce for the gander. We have different “rights”. We really need a discussion. But how to have an honest *charlar* when so many in the world are only about agenda? Ever since the lawyers became leaders in society, no one cares about the truth; it’s all about the argument.

I think our Mayan elders who lived in the period when women went to the river without tops have a lot to tell. Yap, we’ll have to lean on our Mayan brothers here. Are we heading toward the end of breasts’ glory? Can a man really get so used to seeing breasts that they lose their titillation? Will the time come when bare uppers will be as interesting as toes? Will a woman’s knees become more exciting?

Talking about sights at the rivers, and the sea too, in every picture I’ve seen of our black and brown *ancianos* the women cover their below the waist well, and men wear very respectable loin cloths. So, what’s this with these women in bathing suits that leave nothing to the imagination, and these men who wear this thing they call speedo. What kind of man wears this speedo when they are around men?

This bathing suit business, there’s a lot of exposure from tourists. But we can’t allow them to set the standards here. Okay, I apologize for the ramble.

Uy, if yu want to leave Belize yu haffu pay

I hear the complaints about the high price of new passports, but I can’t feel it. I can’t wear anyone’s shoes here, because I don’t want to go anywhere farther than Melchor and Chetumal.

Gallo and *Corona* are good enough for me!

I haven’t been to those destinations for some time, so I can’t put my head on the block that what someone told me, that a dollar fifty permit now costs \$150, isn’t a daam lie. But if I had to bet I’d wager that the devil is behind such talk. No way a “day visit visa” can cost that much.

The Immigration Department, found through Google, didn’t address the one-day pass. There’s a Belize Border Crossing Card “for travelling to border towns and villages of Guatemala / Belize / Mexico.” There’s one issued ONLY to Belizeans and Mexicans, “a card that facilitates the movement of Belizeans and Mexicans crossing the Belize borders”, and that’s for \$40 for the year; and there’s one, it seems for traffic at the Guatemalan border, and that’s for \$20 per year. Wait, a one-day pass doesn’t exist anymore?

Returning to this new, expensive passport made in Canada; not only I can’t empathize with those who are disgruntled because of the new fees, I don’t sympathize either. I’m not happy that so many of my family live abroad; I’m not happy that so many Belizeans live abroad. I’ve seen my cousin, Landy Belisle, just once since 1980. Landy was like a big brother to me. I see my cousin, Dave “di Dude” Hyde, maybe once every five years, just for brief hellos. He was like a younger brother to me.

There’s a question about who pays for Belizeans to get passports. I might be wrong, but my thinking is that there are two groups, one, Bel-American families who are in competition with us for our people, and the other is Belizeans who want out and are well wealthy enough to pay their way. Hmm, some people might want for me to get on a plane. But I don’t harbor such feelings about anyone, so I want everyone to stay.

Whee, Melchor and Chet are plenty gud enough for me. I don’t appreciate any Belizean loving another country more than ours. But I don’t say gud riddance. I say get back di love and return home!

I hear the GoB has a fair explanation for the massive price increase. I hear it’s the cost of the new safety features. If it is so that no Elvin and his kind of friends/cronies can make pappyscho of a Godwin again, it’s worth it. My, my, you remember how silly our hero Godwin looked when those elected bohgaz made a sap of him all the way to South Korea? How many times have we been embarrassed by the US because crooks falsify our passport?

Apocalypse on the horizon

POINT OF VIEW

Contemporary Commentary for the 21st Century by Wallace Ford

WALLACE FORD

BEDLAM, BELLEVUE, DONALD J. TRUMP, MAGANATION, VIA DOLOROSA

April 3, 2023

By now the whole world knows what the people of New York City have known for decades – Donald Trump is the embodiment of a dystopian nightmare. In New York City he is known to be a liar, a cheat and perhaps the most blatantly insincere human being walking the face of Earth.

And New Yorkers are wondering how in the name of Bedlam and Bellevue could this living incarnation of megalomania manage to get 74,222,958 American adults to vote for him to be President of the United States ... again? And yet we are faced with the man who brought you Trump University and Trump Steaks being the leading candidate for the Republican nomination for president in 2024.

And by virtue of some satanic legerdemain Trump has gotten himself embroiled in a briar patch of litigation all of which have the possibility of him receiving a prison sentence(s) and fines that would take some of the sheen off of his fake persona of being a wildly successful businessman (who has managed to turn debt and bankruptcy into an art form). Meanwhile, simultaneously, he has managed to turn his travails into the Via Dolorosa of MAGA Nation, and his followers are more ardent than ever in following their Fake Messiah.

Just the mention of his various legal troubles has his followers loading up their AR-15’s and SUV’s to go somewhere to do something against the Deep State that is, according to Trump, the source of all of their troubles. And,

as we saw on 1.6.21, it is clear that a few words from Trump, uttered at the right time, become an incantation that brings about literal death and destruction.

And now, on April 4, 2023, the hold that Trump has on MAGA Nation will be on full display for the United States and the world to see. The sight of the now indicted and accused leader of MAGA Nation as a defendant in New York State Supreme Court will be too much for many to bear. They may not make it to 100 Centre Street in Manhattan, but they will let their fear and anger be known – hopefully through peaceful protest, although it would appear that a significant cohort of MAGA Nation could not spell peaceful if you spotted them a “p” and an “f”.

Donald Trump reminds us of what happens when a child learns how to light matches but is absolutely ignorant as to the damage that can occur with the resultant fire. Similarly, Trump throws around words like “Death and Destruction” not realizing that way too many of his 74 million certified followers take those words seriously. And too many members of MAGA Nation own most of the over 400 million guns in this country, including millions of AR-15 weapons.

So, when Trump talks about “Death and Destruction” and “Soon You’re Not Going to Have a Country”, there are millions of well-armed believers who will follow him straight to Hell, as he seems to be asking them to do.

It remains to be seen whether two years from now 4.4.23 will be remembered as the 55th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King or will it be remembered for something even worse – the continuation of a dystopian outcome for these United States.

And if it is the latter, the blood of America will be on the tiny hands of one Donald J. Trump.

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From the Publisher



Evan X Hyde

(NOTE: The following is an excerpt from an important article by Elizabeth Kolbert in the March 6, 2023 issue of THE NEW YORKER, pg. 25.)

“The longest conveyor belt on earth begins in the town of Bou Craa and runs for sixty miles across Western Sahara to the port city of El Marsa. The region is so flat and so desolate that the conveyor stands out, even from space. According to NASA, the belt ‘has often attracted astronaut attention in this otherwise almost featureless landscape.’

“The conveyor carries phosphorus-rich rock, which is mined in Bou Craa and then shipped from the coast to places like India and New Zealand to be processed into fertilizer. The mine, and indeed the vast majority of the rest of Western Sahara, is controlled — illegally, by most accounts — by Morocco, which possesses something like seventy percent of the planet’s known phosphorus reserves.

“The status of Western Sahara is one of the worries that Dan Egan takes on in his worrying new book, *The Devil’s Element: Phosphorus and a World Out of Balance* (Norton). Egan is a journalist who for many years reported on the Great Lakes, for the Milwaukee

JOURNAL SENTINEL; it is the condition of Lake Erie that, in a roundabout, everything-in-the-modern-world-way, seems to have led him to learn about Bou Craa. Egan quotes Jeremy Grantham, the British investor, who has said that Morocco’s hold over the planet’s phosphorus ‘makes OPEC and Saudi Arabia look like absolute pikers.’ He also quotes Isaac Asimov, who once wrote, ‘Life can multiply until all the phosphorus is gone and then there is an inexorable halt which nothing can prevent.’

“As Egan notes, phosphorus is critical not just to crop yields but also to basic biology. DNA is held together by what’s often called a ‘phosphate backbone’; without this backbone, the double helix would be a hash. The compound ATP provides cells with energy for everything from ion transport to protein synthesis; the ‘P’ in the abbreviation stands for ‘phosphate.’ In vertebrates, bones are mostly made up of calcium phosphate, as is tooth enamel.

“What distinguishes phosphorus from other elements that are essential to life — carbon, say, or nitrogen — is its relative scarcity. (Asimov described phosphorus as ‘life’s bottleneck.’) The atmosphere contains almost no

phosphorus. Phosphate-rich rocks, meanwhile, exist only in limited quantities, in certain geological formations. China holds the world’s second-largest reserves — these are less than one-tenth the size of Morocco’s — and Algeria the third-largest.

“Since the early nineteen-sixties and the start of the Green Revolution, global consumption of phosphorus fertilizers has more than quadrupled. How long the world’s reserves will last, given this trend, is a matter of debate. As the planet’s population continues to climb — it recently reached eight billion and is expected to hit nine billion in fifteen years — more and more people will need to be fed. At the same time, as the best-grade ores get mined out, more and more rock will presumably have to be processed just to hold fertilizer production steady. Some researchers say that ‘peak phosphorus,’ the point at which the amount of phosphorus being pulled from the ground starts to decline, could be reached within the next decade. Others maintain that the time frame is more like centuries.

“Egan doesn’t think that the world will run out of phosphorus anytime soon, but he does argue that the U.S. is ‘particularly vulnerable.’ America is rapidly churning through its domestic reserves, which aren’t all that large

to begin with. (Much of the country’s phosphorus is found in central Florida, a region where mining has to compete with condo development.) When these reserves are gone, potentially within the next thirty years, the U.S. will become dependent on other countries — notably, Morocco — to feed itself.

“This, it seems, would suit Morocco just fine. The country seized large swaths of Western Sahara in 1975, after Spain, which had ruled the region for almost a century, relinquished control. The invasion, Egan writes, was primarily ‘a business move.’ Morocco has its own huge phosphorus operations, and it didn’t want the Bou Craa mine competing with them. Tens of thousands of the territory’s residents fled; most of them settled in Algeria, where their children and their children’s children still live in refugee camps. In November, 2020, the Polisario Front, a group fighting for independence for Western Sahara, declared that it was ending a ceasefire that had been brokered by the United Nations. A month later, Donald Trump, in one of his last acts as President, announced that the U.S. would recognize Morocco’s sovereignty over the region. The decision was criticized as a violation of international law, and many U.S. officials urged Joe Biden to reverse it. So far, though, he hasn’t.”

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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

Position Name: Electro-Mechanical Technician
Vacancy number: Belmopan-2022-06-R
Extended closing date: April 23, 2023

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

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

- Note 1:** This position is being re-advertised with a new closing date.
- Note 2:** Resumes **will not** be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.
- Note 3:** Candidates **must** submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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

Position Name: Criminal Fraud Investigator
Vacancy number: Belmopan-2023-07-R
Extended closing date: April 23, 2023

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

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

- Note 1:** This position is being re-advertised with a new closing date.
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FROM THE PUBLISHER en Español

(NOTA: El siguiente es un extracto de un artículo importante de Elizabeth Kolbert en la edición de marzo 6 de 2023 de THE NEW YORKER, página 25).

“La cinta transportadora más larga del mundo comienza en la ciudad de Bou Craa y recorre sesenta millas a través del Sáhara Occidental hasta la ciudad portuaria de El Marsa. La región es tan plana y desolada que la cinta transportadora sobresale, incluso desde el espacio. Según la NASA, la cinta “a menudo ha atraído la atención de los astronautas en este paisaje casi sin rasgos distintivos”.

“El transportador transporta roca rica en fósforo, que se extrae en Bou Craa y luego se envía desde la costa a lugares como India y Nueva Zelanda para ser procesada en fertilizante. La mina, y de hecho la gran mayoría del resto del Sáhara Occidental, está controlada -- ilegalmente, según la mayoría de los reporteros -- por Marruecos, que posee algo así como el setenta por ciento de las reservas conocidas de fósforo del planeta.

“El estatus del Sáhara Occidental es una de las preocupaciones que aborda Dan Egan en su inquietante nuevo libro, *The Devil’s Element: Phosphorus and a World Out of Balance* (Norton). Egan

es un periodista que durante muchos años informó sobre los Grandes Lagos, para el Milwaukee JOURNAL SENTINEL; es la condición del lago Erie que, en manera de rodeos, de todo en el mundo moderno, parece haberlo llevado a aprender sobre Bou Craa. Egan cita a Jeremy Grantham, el inversionista británico, quien ha dicho que el control de Marruecos sobre el fósforo del planeta ‘hace que la OPEP y Arabia Saudita parezcan piqueros absolutos’. También cita a Isaac Asimov, quien una vez escribió: ‘La vida puede multiplicarse hasta que se agote todo el fósforo y luego hay una parada inexorable que nada puede evitar’.

“Como señala Egan, el fósforo es fundamental no solo para el rendimiento de los cultivos, sino también para la biología básica. El ADN se mantiene unido por lo que a menudo se denomina una ‘columna vertebral de fosfato’; sin esta columna vertebral, la doble hélice sería un revoltijo. El compuesto TFA proporciona a las células con energía para todo, desde el transporte de iones hasta la síntesis de proteínas; la ‘F’ en la abreviatura significa ‘fosfato’. En los vertebrados,



El dolor de un pueblo

Lun. 17 de abril de 2023

Cuando escuchamos las noticias sobre el crimen y la violencia que asolan las calles de Haití, y la pobreza y el hambre contra la que luchan las masas pobres, es tentador para aquellos de nosotros en mejores circunstancias ignorar la idea de su difícil situación y que nos preguntemos qué malas decisiones han tomado como pueblo, qué corrupción puede haber en sus gobiernos, qué mala suerte les ha tocado, qué mal puede haber en medio de ellos para que Dios los esté castigando. Independientemente de lo que estemos tentados a pensar, pocos de nosotros estableceremos una conexión entre la pobreza perenne y la lucha de la nación y el pueblo haitiano, con la explotación deliberada, orquestada y militarmente forzada de la “sangre, el sudor y las lágrimas” del pueblo haitiano durante los pasado dos siglos después de que se convirtieran en las primeras personas del Caribe en abolir la esclavitud y declararan la antigua colonia de esclavos como una nación independiente de personas libres en 1804. La esclavitud todavía existía en Belize seis años después de la famosa Batalla de Cayo San Jorge, cuando nuestra hermana nación caribeña declaró su independencia de Francia, sus antiguos amos coloniales.

La esclavitud seguía siendo un problema en marcha en los Estados Unidos hacia el norte y el resto del Caribe y América Central hacia el sur.

Pero Haití, que anteriormente había sido la “joya de la corona” de Francia, su colonia más rentable sobre la que se construyó la riqueza de Francia, estaba a punto de sufrir un dolor inmenso por atreverse a ser libre.

Sacudirse el yugo de la esclavitud de su población predominantemente africana no fue una tarea fácil. Pero aún más desafiante fue la supervivencia de la nueva nación de personas libres, porque otras naciones esclavistas temían que la influencia de Haití también infectara a sus esclavos y los inspirara a rebeliones similares.

Entonces, ninguna de las otras potencias europeas haría negocios con Haití. Todos se “agruparon” contra Haití: Francia, España, Gran Bretaña y, sí, los Estados Unidos de América. Sin el beneficio del comercio como nación joven de gente políticamente libre, el dolor de la esclavitud económica estaba a punto de comenzar.

Habiendo obtenido la libertad de unos 500.000 ex esclavos, cada uno con un “valor nominal” a los ojos de sus antiguos amos franceses, el orgulloso pueblo haitiano pronto fue testigo de la llegada a su puerto de una flota de buques de guerra franceses, con una disposición declarada para bombardear, destruir y quemar Haití hasta los cimientos, a menos que su entonces presidente firmara un acuerdo para hacer pagos anuales a Francia para compensar el valor de los esclavos que Francia había perdido con la independencia declarada de Haití. Haití ha estado pagando esa deuda desde entonces, lo que resultó en un subdesarrollo masivo y una pobreza intensa entre las masas haitianas durante los siguientes dos siglos. Y cuando el pueblo haitiano se atrevió a elegir un líder, un ex sacerdote, Jean Bertrand Aristide, quien declaró su intención de ir a las Naciones Unidas a exigir una reparación en los miles de millones de dólares de Francia por su injusto enriquecimiento a costa del pobre pueblo haitiano, agentes de las grandes naciones arreglaron su destitución mediante un golpe de estado, tal como lo habían hecho con Jacobo Arbenz en Guatemala allá por 1954, cuando Arbenz impulsaba la reforma agraria y entregaba tierras para la agricultura a la población maya sin tierra. Ese golpe en Guatemala provocó más de treinta años de guerra civil y mucho sufrimiento y muerte entre los pobres de Guatemala. La tragedia de Haití continúa hasta el día de hoy, y las grandes naciones que saben lo que han hecho para causar esto, están principalmente preocupadas por la intervención militar para acabar con la violencia y poner a los alborotadores haitianos en su lugar, lo que significa la continua pobreza y explotación.

En Belize, si no tenemos cuidado, los tiempos podrían volverse difíciles, mucho más difíciles para las masas de personas pobres, a medida que los precios suben y el crimen aumenta entre las franjas desesperadas de los desempleados y/o sin educación.

Independientemente de la etnia o la cultura, la pobreza y la ignorancia

de las masas, la presencia de opulencia obscena entre una pequeña clase rica tiende a engendrar delincuencia y violencia en cada sociedad.

Los beliceños deben tomar conciencia y comprender las piezas del rompecabezas que han llevado a la gran crisis que experimentan actualmente nuestros hermanos y hermanas haitianos. Es importante que nuestros líderes sepan cuál es la mejor manera de ayudar a Haití a superar su difícil situación, en lugar de convertirse en un obstáculo para su verdadera liberación de los tentáculos de manipulación y explotación de las naciones grandes y poderosas. Por pequeños que seamos, nuestra voz tiene cierto valor en el escenario internacional; por eso nuestra amistad es tan valorada por nuestro aliado taiwanés.

Lo que Francia le ha hecho a Haití, un “inversionista” británico se lo ha estado haciendo a nuestro pequeño Belize. Sí, ha ganado casi todos los casos que ha presentado contra nuestro Gobierno, a veces con la colusión y la connivencia de algunos de nuestros propios líderes, pero más a menudo con el “poder de fuego” de sus principales abogados internacionales. Si bien nuestro fervor nacional nos ha llevado a condenar su manipulación del sistema capitalista siempre para su beneficio, sin embargo, Lord Michael Ashcroft siempre ha “jugado según las reglas”, siendo las reglas el tribunal de justicia, donde sus profundos bolsillos le permiten aventajar a los oponentes locales o simplemente desgastar a sus adversarios con litigios repetidos. Sus victorias legales, y ha habido bastantes a lo largo de los años, comenzando con su adquisición de BTL en la década de 1990, han tenido poco valor moral a los ojos del pueblo beliceño, cuyos impuestos terminan soportando la carga de cada caso que pierde nuestro Gobierno de Belize ante Ashcroft.

Cuando el gobierno carece de los recursos para brindar atención médica a la gente pobre, la caída en la desesperación y la indigencia puede ser rápida y dolorosa. Cada vez que Ashcroft gana millones en la parte delantera de nuestro gobierno, los ciudadanos individuales sienten el dolor en la parte trasera; y se está volviendo cada vez más real en estos tiempos inflacionarios.

Una mujer de mediana edad y su esposo jubilado pueden estar felices y relajados hoy, y en un par de meses, su mundo está patas arriba. Él se enferma, unos quinientos dólares de sus ahorros para una tomografía computarizada. ¡Bum! Es cáncer de próstata; avanzado. Las facturas médicas se acumulan rápidamente. Y en unos meses, se ha ido. Ella saca lo último de sus ahorros para pagar por el funeral. También fue necesario un préstamo de un par de miles de dólares, porque no han hecho los aportes necesarios para calificar para alguna ayuda del “Seguro”. Las joyas, las que tenía, ya fueron vendidas o empeñadas. Una mujer de Belize, orgullosa y temerosa de Dios, ahora se enfrenta a la desesperación; se avecina un pago de cien dólares del préstamo. Ella está en bancarrota y hambrienta, y las cosas se están desmoronando. Las lágrimas fluyen rápidamente.

Como pueblo, tenemos que encontrar maneras de unirnos para “ayudar a nuestros hermanos/hermanas en apuros”. A medida que la situación económica empeora, más y más personas podrían caer en el pozo de la desesperación y la crisis. Al menos debemos ser capaces de proporcionar alimentos para sostenernos durante los tiempos difíciles.

En estos tiempos difíciles, no es bueno escuchar que Ashcroft está demandando a nuestro gobierno nuevamente. Los millones que extrae del gobierno es dinero que podría ayudar a alimentar y brindar atención médica a nuestras masas en apuros.

Si hay alguna esperanza para el pequeño Belize, es en nuestro viejo dicho que “todas las gallinas gordas tienen su domingo”. Oremos para que por una vez esta cruel criatura corporativa haya mordido una baya envenenada al atreverse a desafiar a todo el movimiento ambiental mundial porque nuestro gobierno escuchó el consejo experto de nuestro Comité Nacional de Evaluación Ambiental (NEAC por sus siglas en inglés) y decidió que su proyecto de turismo de cruceros de Waterloo involucraba mucho riesgo para un sitio del Patrimonio Mundial, nuestra preciosa Barrera de Coral de Belize.

Por una vez, esperemos que Ashcroft pierda esta vez. El camino ya es difícil por delante, y nuestra gente no debería verse obligada a soportar ningún dolor innecesario debido a la codicia y el ego de un hombre.

Democracy



by Clinton Canul Luna

It is sad to see how low many of us have come by accepting that our master continues to be the one who judges our behavior that is not related to their ideology and accuses us of having violated the rights of human beings according to what they dictate. I wonder, who gave Washington the power to accuse other countries, in that sense, of having violated the rights of human beings, when there is no other country that can seek or criticize Washington for all the crimes it has caused since its birth. When we go to the history of how the United States was created, we can see that from the beginning they have violated the rights of the indigenous people. They robbed them, killed them, raped the women, did everything they wanted to do, took advantage of everything. They killed buffaloes to obtain the skin they sold in Europe; gold, oil, land, they seized everything. According to them, they believed they had found the promised land and believed they were the chosen children of God to dominate this land.

We have heard various opinions from different leaders. I remember reading when Franklin D. Roosevelt had said, "We are soldiers of Christ . . ." things of that sort. But we go back in time, not only in the past, but in the present, after the Second World War. As it has been

believed that they are the bosses of this world, obviously there are a few who can or have the courage to be able to write or speak about this subject, since anyone who goes against what they have done and continues to do is sanctioned, and obviously Belize could not withstand a sanction from the United States government. But we see how many people are living in small houses made of plastic on the avenues in several large cities there. It is something known internationally. It is also something that was reported to the United Nations Secretariat that there is an average of 50 million people living in abject poverty in the United States. It is even known that people have no right to health services. So many things, but it is known that there are countries where there is freedom of expression and it is reported, it is said, that they do not analyze themselves, they analyze others, but absolutely nothing about them.

It can also be seen that there is very little that can be written or done to demonstrate the inequality, the discrimination that exists in the United States and also in England, as the same police kill people of color, that is, blacks or the African descendants who live there. That is well known through the independent mediums of communication. It is also known that in the United States

anyone can have a gun, including students who go to school with guns. So, then, they have the right to kill whomever they want, their own teachers if they desire, and we have been able to have an experience of many of those who come here in Belize, they don't even know their own history. I personally had that experience in the past. They don't know their own history, they don't know how that country came to exist, they don't know that in 1847 they stole 60% of Mexico. That is a debt that is still pending.

Obviously, it is expected that after the year 2050 the moment will come when Mexico will be able to take the United States to the International Court of Justice to resolve the matter, or for them to hand over again what had been stolen. Well, that's something else. The point I'm leaving is that who has the guts to report on how Washington has violated human rights, both in their country and abroad. We know that they invest billions and billions of dollars so that others kill themselves like fools, while they, a few corporations, mainly those that build weapons, make good money and do not look back at their own people who are hungry, cold, and homeless. Who is going to say it? Nobody. Why? Because they are afraid. Some, because they are afraid they would not get a visa to visit that country, and others' green cards can be cancelled. So, they are afraid to talk, not only about the situation in the United States, but also about the world.

And I dare say that this is one of the reasons why the world is the way it is right now, why a new system has been born with BRICS, Russia, China, Iran and other countries in America as well as other countries in the Middle East. Those who were once enemies are now friends; they have joined, they have made the peace to become a bloc that seeks equal rights without another meddling in the internal affairs of their country. Each country has its own culture, religion, beliefs and they have lived like this for thousands of years. However, Washington has wanted the world to be like them. Their democracy is not democracy, because in the United States people don't vote for a president, they vote for an area representative that becomes a college, and among them they are the ones that are going to vote or elect who will be the president, and probably there can be a lot of corruption. In short, it is not like in other countries, for instance, Mexico, where each citizen is a vote and each citizen chooses, in the elections, the president of the Mexican Republic. So, if we talk about democracy, the United States is very backward, and it is known, because there are those who speak about it and the situations that are happening inside their country where the Americans themselves are against the system of government they have.

Anyway, my point is: who gave them the right to be able to judge others when they don't even have morals? And when I mean them, I don't mean the people of the United States. No. I mean their government, their system, that's what I mean, their foreign policy system, and

now they have turned against their own people who are in need of many things that human beings require. However, they are spending on weapons for wars. The other country is also England, which is in the same conditions. Those are the two countries that have dominated this nation we call Belize. It was colonized by force with arms by England and later by agreements, since they are one of the same. In the Middle East they are joining the BRICS group to form a New World Order where each one of them has the same rights, regardless of their size, their economic or military power, that has nothing to do with the other. And each country respects its way of being, its system is respected and it is up to the people, the people, to fight for what is theirs. Not that another power enters to impose its system because that system does not fit anywhere, except, of course, with little places like Belize, because Belize is a little dot that you can hardly see on the map, but it is in the Caribbean.

As for the other countries, we can see the change in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and it goes further south, joining these countries that invest in large projects where the people have work and can improve their lives. We see in Africa, where all the countries are coming together in this new system because they were previously plundered by Western countries, that is, including Europe, obviously. Many years ago, hundreds of years ago, they have been looted, and what is left is great poverty. However, these new countries are making large investments there in Africa, where Africans are going to be able to work, many of the days they are working, and in a short time it is expected that those 50 or more million people who are still displaced will arrive to have the right to live a dignified life. In short, the point is that who can analyze and criticize Washington's violations against its own people, the human rights violations against its own people. Although we would also have to ask, who do they consider to be their own people? Why does so much discrimination exist? They talk about equal opportunities that are simply words. They do not practice democracy. They practice THEIR democracy, but not what democracy is. As for health, food, a roof for low-income people, there is no such thing. There is no money for that, but there is money to send billions of dollars that are from the taxes of the people, they send it to other places. It seems that their IQ is so high that they have it under their feet. We are aware that it is a struggle for power, in this case, to be the god of the world. Anyway, I doubt that this article sees light.

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 March 26, 2023
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A Collection of Ideas and Opinions 2007-2012
 by C B Hyde

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Hotel reservation now needed for travel to Mexico?

Continued from Page 1

for the big change was that it was a precautionary measure to tackle the increase in individuals transiting through Mexico to get to the United States, many of them illegally.

There was no formal notice of a change by the Mexican government, though the report attributed information to Belize's Honorary Consul in Quintana Roo, Dr. Luis Gilberto Maldonado. Since then, Belize's Ambassador to Mexico, H.E. Oscar Arnold, has been trying to confirm the facts but has, so far, not obtained anything concrete from Mexican officials. He said Dr. Maldonado told him that a Mexican immigration official had verbally indicated that the change had been implemented but only for Belizeans travelling further than Quintana Roo. The Ambassador polled a few travellers on his own and says some said they were not asked for proof of hotel reservations, whereas others indicated they were asked but simply replied they would sort out accommodations while in Mexico, and they were allowed to continue on their way.

Ambassador Arnold has reached out

to his counterpart in Belize, who has told him that they are trying to get more information on the matter. An official at the Embassy of Mexico in Belize told *Amandala* that no change has been implemented, and any Belizean who experiences an issue should make a report via e-mail at embbelize@sre.gob.mx. H.E. Arnold did say that had it been an issue, they certainly would have known, given that anywhere between 10,000 and 14,000 Belizeans would have travelled to Mexico over the Easter weekend. He said, "We haven't been appraised of any major incidents. So, I am hoping that all is – if not normal – at least civil at the border crossing."

Arnold commented, "I know that the hoteliers in Chetumal will not be super happy about this, and I have already heard that they've requested a meeting to discuss this issue, if in fact, the immigration authorities will stick to this hard and fast rule of having a hotel reservation prior to travel, because we know that at that border area, the practice is to go across, then you find your accommodations." The concern is that implementing more regulations serves as a deterrent for Belizeans to visit Mexico.

Jamaican BPO plans to employ 500 Belizeans by October 2023

Continued from Page 1

existing BPO in Belize last year to begin a pilot with 100 employees in June. According to the *Jamaica Observer*, iTel is making a US\$2.5 million capital investment to retrofit its own facility in Belize City and signed an agreement with its new landlord a couple weeks ago. It is projected to be a 40,000-square-foot complex in a prime location (yet undisclosed) in the Old Capital. Once the infrastructure works are completed in October 2023, the company plans to hire 500 employees. The expectation is to have 800 employees by the end of 2024.

The *Jamaica Observer* quotes the founding chairman and CEO of iTel, Yoni Epstein, as saying that they want to tap into benefits from Belize's special Export Processing Zone, including "among other benefits, a 20-year tax holiday from income tax, withholding tax, capital gains tax or any new corporate tax." Epstein revealed to the paper that an existing client of iTel in Guyana and Honduras made a request for the company to come into Belize and

manage their options here. Epstein also remarked on the success of the Belize pilot, saying it has "consistently exceeded client expectations and shown the kind of sustainable success that supports the company's expansion strategies".

In confirming the news today, Prime Minister John Briceño told *Amandala* that more and more BPOs are setting up in Belize. He commented, "I think in 2019 we had probably about 1,500 employees in the BPO sector, and because of the changes that we've done and the work that we've been doing – we've been encouraging it – we expect to have maybe as much as 12,000 Belizeans working in the BPO sector. You may not believe me, but we are having a tight labour market right now – that people are having difficulty in getting people to work."

Notably, iTel has further interest in setting up another site in Belize to "take advantage of Spanish language capabilities resident in the populations living near to borders Belize shares with Mexico and Guatemala."

6-month-old dies unexpectedly at Corozal Community Hospital...

Continued from Page 1

the parents of 6-month-old baby Anita. They took her to the hospital after she developed a cough on Tuesday. According to the father, the hospital was not able to attend to the child in the morning when they arrived. They were told to return later that day, and did so at about 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

According to the child's mother, Stephanie McFarlane, when they checked her baby's vital signs, all was deemed normal, and she had even gained two pounds since the last doctor's visit. Some disturbance was noticed in the baby's airways, and two rounds of nebulizer treatment were prescribed for the child. According to the parents, the manner in which the treatment was administered to the child may have led to her untimely passing.

They claim that the two doses of the nebulizer treatment were not given with the appropriate 15- to 20-minute intervals. But more egregious is what the mother, Stephanie, claims took place during the administering of the second treatment, when, according to her, instead of a mixture of saline and the commonly used nebulizer medicine Ipratropium, a direct dose of the latter was administered to the child instead.

Dr. Angela Gilharry from the Corozal Community Hospital said in an interview, however, that this is not the case, and that they may have misunderstood the explanation she gave to them. She asserted that the standard mixture of two drops of Ipratropium and the remaining portion of a saline solution was used in both nebulizer treatments.

Shortly after the second treatment, however, the baby became unresponsive, and the parents thought that the child was sleeping. They claim that this is when the doctor came out to check the baby's heart. Dr. Gilharry in her interview said that the medical personnel noticed that the baby was unresponsive and went over to check the child before taking her back inside. They began resuscitation shortly after, but the family claimed one doctor referred to only as "Dr. Samos" said that the baby was "dead long time."



Dr. Angela Gilharry

According to Dr. Gilharry, the child was born with various congenital problems and had underlying conditions that ultimately led to her death. She noted that hospital personnel were familiar with the baby, since she has been a sickly child since birth. The child suffered from a condition that prevented her from getting rid of phlegm in the lungs, according to Dr. Gilharry. The parent shared that the baby, at 1 month 5 days, was diagnosed with gall bladder stones, and needed surgery for their removal.

Dr. Gilharry, in her interview with CTV3, said, "We have explained to them the details of what were the underlying conditions of the baby, what was the ultimate cause of death for that baby, and what would have been the possible outcomes, regardless of whether that nebulization was given or not."

While the parents believe that the negligence of the nurses to give the child two doses of nebulizer treatment consecutively instead of with the requested 15-minute break led to the baby's death, after an autopsy, it is determined that the cause of death was acute respiratory failure caused by bilateral pneumonia.

"All I want is justice for my daughter, and for parents to know and be alert, that when they have babies like that and they are very young, I just want them to know, be careful, and try to keep focused and see what the doctors are doing to the babies," Stephanie McFarlane, mother of the late baby Anita, expressed.

FROM THE PUBLISHER en Español

Continúa de página 7

los huesos se componen principalmente de fosfato de calcio, al igual que el esmalte dental.

"Lo que distingue al fósforo de otros elementos que son esenciales para la vida (por ejemplo, carbono o nitrógeno) es su relativa escasez. (Asímov describió al fósforo como el 'cuello de botella de la vida'). La atmósfera casi no contiene fósforo. Mientras tanto, las rocas ricas en fosfato, existen solo en cantidades limitadas, en ciertas formaciones geológicas. China tiene las segundas reservas más grandes del mundo (menos de una décima parte del tamaño de las de Marruecos) y Argelia la tercera más grande.

"Desde principios de los años sesenta y el comienzo de la Revolución Verde, el consumo global de fertilizantes de fósforo se ha más que cuadruplicado. Cuánto tiempo durarán las reservas mundiales, dada esta tendencia, es un tema de debate. A medida que la población del planeta continúa aumentando —recientemente alcanzó los ocho mil millones y se espera que alcance los nueve mil millones en quince años — más y más personas necesitarán ser alimentadas. Al mismo tiempo, a medida que se extraen los minerales de mejor ley, es de suponer que se tendrá que procesar cada vez más roca solo para mantener constante la producción de fertilizantes. Algunos investigadores dicen que el "pico de fósforo", el punto en el que la cantidad de fósforo que se extrae del suelo comienza a disminuir, podría alcanzarse en la próxima década. Otros sostienen que el marco de tiempo es más como siglos.

"Egan no cree que el mundo se quede sin fósforo en el corto plazo,

pero sí argumenta que Estados Unidos es 'particularmente vulnerable'. Estados Unidos está agotando rápidamente sus reservas internas, que para empezar no son tan grandes (gran parte del fósforo del país se encuentra en Florida central, una región donde la minería tiene que competir con el desarrollo de condominios). Cuando estas reservas desaparezcan, posiblemente dentro de los próximos treinta años, EE. UU. se volverá dependiente de otros países, en particular, Marruecos, para alimentarse.

"Esto, al parecer, le vendría bien a Marruecos. El país se apoderó de grandes extensiones del Sáhara Occidental en 1975, después de que España, que había gobernado la región durante casi un siglo, renunciara al control. La invasión, escribe Egan, fue principalmente "una movida de negocios." Marruecos tiene sus propias grandes operaciones de fósforo, y no quería que la mina de Bou Craa compitiera con ellos. Decenas de miles de residentes del territorio huyeron, la mayoría se instaló en Argelia, donde sus hijos y los hijos de sus hijos aún viven en campos de refugiados. En noviembre de 2020, el Frente Polisario, un grupo que lucha por la independencia del Sáhara Occidental, declaró que ponía fin a un cese al fuego que había sido negociado por las Naciones Unidas. Un mes después, Donald Trump, en uno de sus últimos actos como presidente, anunció que Estados Unidos reconocería la soberanía de Marruecos sobre la región. La decisión fue criticada como una violación del derecho internacional, y muchos funcionarios estadounidenses instaron a Joe Biden a revertirla. Sin embargo, hasta ahora no lo ha hecho".



BEBL Week 10 review

Belize Elite Basketball League 2023 Tournament Standings

Position	TEAM	GP	W	L	Pts	Str
1	Griga Dream Ballers	10	7	3	17	+1
2	Benny's Belize Hurricanes	09	7	2	16	+3
3	Orange Walk Running Rebels	10	6	4	16	-1
4	Belize City Defenders	10	6	4	16	+2
5	Western Ballaz	10	4	6	14	-1
6	San Pedro Tiger Sharks	08	4	4	12	+3
7	Belmopan Red Tigaz	09	3	6	12	-3
8	Punta Gorda Panthers	10	1	9	10	-7



Belize City Civic Centre

(Cancelled and possibly postponed): Fri. Jan 27, 2023: San Pedro Tiger Sharks vs Belmopan Red Taigaz; Sat. Mar 25: San Pedro Tiger Sharks vs Benny's Hurricanes (San Pedro High School)

Results and Schedule

Week 10: Fri. Apr 14: Belize Hurricanes 109, Orange Walk Running Rebels 80 (Belize City Civic Centre); Western Ballaz 77, Belize City Defenders 81 (SHC Auditorium).

Sat. Apr 15: San Pedro Tiger Sharks 83, Punta Gorda Panthers 51 (San Pedro High School); Griga Dream Ballers 92, Belmopan Red Taigaz 49 (Russell Chiste Garcia Auditorium).

Week 11: Fri. Apr 21: San Pedro Tiger Sharks vs Griga Dream Ballers (San Pedro High School) Belmopan Red Taigaz vs Orange Walk Running Rebels (UB Gym).

Sat. Apr 22: Western Ballaz vs Belize Hurricanes (SHC Auditorium); Belize City Defenders vs Punta Gorda Panthers (Belize City Civic Center).

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

The BEBL resumed tournament play last weekend after a two-week break and 3 teams got bludgeoned on the court. Friday night at the Belize Civic Centre was a very competitive game for a half between two of the tournament's co-leaders, but turned into a 29-point blowout as host Benny's Belize Hurricanes turned a one-point deficit into a 29-point victory at the final buzzer.

The only truly competitive game of the weekend played out in San Ignacio at the Sacred Heart auditorium where hosts Western Ballaz fought desperately to keep their chances of making the tournament's 4-team playoff alive, but the visiting Belize City Defenders held on for an 81-77 much needed road victory.

Saturday night's schedule were two blowouts, with the San Pedro Tiger Sharks mauling hapless Punta Gorda Panthers on the island, whilst the Griga Dream Ballers steamrolled the Belmopan Red Taigaz in the capital city.

Friday night's loss snapped the Orange Walk Running Rebels' 6-game winning streak. They had gotten going early with James Stanback, one of the BEBL's leading scorers quickly racking up 13 of their first 15 points, but a combination of the Hurricanes' aggressive double teaming and his teammates not looking out for him soon had him missing and turning the ball over. He would only score 2 more points off free throws for the rest of the game.

The Rebels led by as many as 8 points in the first quarter, when veteran Alex Carcamo came off the bench to direct the Hurricanes to several ties and a 1-point halftime deficit.

The host team came out the locker room blazing. Stanback would hit a free throw to tie the score, but the hosts ran off 13 points before their guest would score again. The Rebels could only muster 12 points in the quarter and the rout was on.

In San Ignacio, neither guest nor host could score for the first three and a half

minutes of a tightly contested match. The first period ended 16-13 in favour of the visiting Defenders, a lead they had lost by halftime when they trailed by a point, 40-41.

They narrowed a hole of as much as 9-points as the Ballaz' and BEBL's new leading scorer Mark Gordon heated up to only 2 points, 56-58, at the end of the third, and then seized the lead and held on to win by 4 points, 81-77. Gordon would finish with a game high 28 points.

On Ambergris Caye Saturday night, the hapless Punta Gorda Panthers were without the former League leading scorer Tavian Davis, who had been called by the NBA G-League for a try-out and left Belize suddenly in the last week of the break.

The Panthers played gamely and led after one quarter, but trailed by 11 at halftime as the Tiger Sharks slowly shook off the effects of the 2 weeks layoff. The 55-39 score soon turned into a rout when the Panthers could only score 12 points in the fourth, 7 of which were from baskets made in the last 7 minutes when victory was out of reach.

Kyle Steward led San Pedro with the game high 33 points, while only 2 Panthers managed to record double figures, 10 and 12 points.

The Belmopan Red Taigaz was similarly without their leading scorer, Benjamin Page, and it showed early when they could only score 2 points in their game's first 4 minutes against the visiting Griga Dream Ballers Saturday night at the UB auditorium. They trailed by 25, 31-6 at the end of one.

That deficit ballooned to 37 points (52-15) at half time, and 46 points (79-33) at the end of the third, before losing 92-49.

The young Belmopan squad hope to regroup before hosting the Running Rebels who lost the top spot in the standings, whilst Griga visits San Pedro where they are hoping to hold on to their just acquired spot as the tournament number one against a team desperate for victory and the opportunity to make the playoffs.



PLB playoff scramble in final week of regular season

BELIZE CITY, Mon. Apr. 17, 2023

At the end of Week 13 this past weekend, with one more week of regular season remaining in the Premier League of Belize (PLB) 2022-2023 Closing Season, the Top-4 playoff picture looks like one mad scramble, and it all will be decided this coming weekend.

There were few surprises in Week #13 games on Saturday night. At the Marshalleck Stadium, it was 1-1 at the half, but in second half Police/Benque United cruised to a 5-1 victory over visiting Wagiya SC. Police/Benque goals came from Danny Jimenez (4'), J. Cano 47', Ayrton Sissa 51', J. Ocampo 64' and Nahjib Guerra 79'; while the lone goal for Wagiya was by Aidan Nunez (34'). Meanwhile, at the Isidoro Beaton Stadium in Belmopan, it was the visitors, defending champions Altitude FC coming away with a 6-nil thrashing of (Bandits) International FC, courtesy of 3 goals from Andres Orozco (7', 43' & 47') and 1 apiece from Santiago Maquin 29', Aloisio Texeira 64' and Oscar Rodas 80').

On Sunday, at the Norman Broaster Stadium in San Ignacio, visiting Progreso FC held the foreign stacked Verdes FC to a nil-nil stalemate until late second half, when the Green Machine pulled out the 2-0 home victory with goals from Trimayne "Peppa" Harris (81') and Nicolas

Gomez (84'). Meanwhile, it ended 2-2 between playoff hopefuls Port Layola FC and visiting San Pedro Pirates FC at the very dusty Marion Jones Sports Complex. Port Layola led in first half on a goal by Gilroy "Bredda" Thurton (26'); but the Pirates came roaring back with two goals from Facundo Garnier (56' & 70'). With every point now precious in their hopes of making the playoffs, Shawn Young (73') responded with the equalizer for Port Layola.

The table is now set for the final weekend, and the numbers are just too wild to try and figure out all the possible scenarios here. Just check the standings on page 12.

Cellar dwellers Wagiya SC and International FC (formerly Bandits SC) are definitely not in the playoffs, and will square off in Week 14 only to decide who ends up at the bottom of the barrel.

France demanded crippling payments. Now Haiti has a legitimate claim for slavery reparations | Opinion

by **MARIO JOSEPH, BRIAN CONCANNON and IRWIN STOTZKY**

www.miamiherald.com, March 27, 2023

The movement for reparations for slavery has enjoyed some success lately, but there is still a long way to go before slavery's harms to Africans and their descendants are acknowledged, repaired and compensated. Better integrating Haiti into the movement for reparations can accelerate the larger movement's journey toward justice, while also helping Haiti secure sovereignty and democracy.

Haitians suffered many of the same harms that enslaved people and their descendants faced in the United States, the Caribbean and elsewhere—forced labor, murder, mutilation, sexual assault, family separation and all the other horrors of the slave ships and the plantations. Haitians, likewise, suffered after slavery's abolition from systematic discrimination that kept Black people from learning, earning and voting their way out of poverty.

But the slave-owning powers that ran the world in 1804 when Haiti won its



President Biden, in Canada, hoped to persuade Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to lead a military intervention in Haiti, which Trudeau rejected. ANDREW HARNIK AP

independence from France reserved some harms exclusively for the world's first Black Republic—and the first country to abolish slavery.

The white-supremacist ideology that justified slavery could not survive the example of a stable, prosperous Haiti founded by self-emancipated slaves, so the powers-that-were, especially the

United States and France, ensured that Haiti remained poor and unstable. The United States refused to even recognize the second independent country in the Americas until 1862. France recognized Haiti in 1825, but only after its fleet of warships in Port-au-Prince harbor forced Haiti to agree to compensate French slave-owners for their losses by threatening to destroy Haiti's capital and reinstitute slavery.

Haiti's coerced compensation to France—often called the Independence Debt—exceeded 10 years of government revenue. It included payments for the value of the emancipated Haitians themselves. Haiti was forced to finance the debt through French banks on predatory terms. It did not complete payments until the 1940s, after over a century of sacrificing investing in education, healthcare and industrial development. Haiti's current poverty and instability is to a large extent the result—the intended result—of the Independence Debt.

The unique harm that the Independence Debt imposed on Haiti provides unique opportunities to claim reparations. The violence and threats that forced Haiti's agreement to the debt fall squarely into the well-established legal theory of unjust enrichment. Haiti's government unquestionably has standing to assert the claim. Calculating the damages for restitution is straightforward (Haiti's government calculated the claim at \$21 billion in 2003).

The example of a successful restitution claim by Haiti might be as dangerous for the former slave-owning countries as the example of Haiti's 1804 independence was. The claim's legal advantages might allow it to make a crack in the wall that has so far protected those countries from responsibility to return any of their unjust enrichment from slavery, which could generate a deluge of justice for all those harmed by slavery.

In fact, the United States and France fear the example of a restitution claim enough to once again ensure that Haiti remains poor and unstable. When Haiti's elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide prepared a restitution claim in 2003, France and the United States stopped the potential legal proceedings by overthrowing the President. The Haitian governments that followed the

ouster have dismantled Haiti's democracy, allowed gangs to control half of Haiti's territory and stolen enough money to leave half of all Haitians facing hunger. But in almost 20 years none of these governments have pressed the restitution claim, so all have earned reliable international support.

Last Friday, the University of Miami Law School symposium convened scholars from around the world to discuss Haiti's restitution claim. The participants were optimistic about the strength of the legal claim, but pessimistic that Haiti would be allowed the freely-elected, sovereign government that pursuing a restitution claim requires. In fact, the same day, President Biden was in Canada trying to convince Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to lead a military intervention that Haitians reject as designed to prop up their brutal, repressive government.

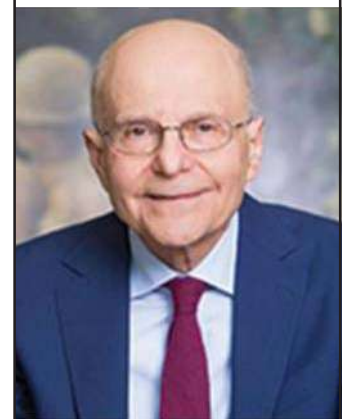
Canada refused to lead the intervention, as the Caribbean Community did last month. The refusal likely derails the intervention, and gives Haiti an opportunity to reclaim its democracy. Supporters of reparations, especially in the United States, can help Haiti seize that opportunity—and advance their own chances for reparations—by insisting that their governments allow Haitians to vote for a government that would stand up for its citizens' right to restitution of the Independence Debt.



Mario Joseph



Brian Concannon



Irwin Stotzky

(Mario Joseph is Managing Attorney of the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux in Port-au-Prince. Brian Concannon is Executive Director of the Boston-based Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti. Irwin Stotzky is Professor of Law at the University of Miami School of Law. All three are human rights lawyers.)

PLB playoff scramble in final...

Continued from Page 11

Verdes FC is out front at the top of the standings and definitely in the playoffs, aided by two awarded victories, in Week #3 against Port Layola FC due to a technicality in the paperwork involving Port's only foreign import, and for a match that they had won on the field in dramatic fashion, 2-1; the other game awarded to Verdes was their Week #12 outing in San Pedro, where the hosts were found liable for not providing the required accommodations to the officials delegated for the match.

Only 1 goal difference separates 2nd place San Pedro Pirates FC from 3rd place Progresso FC; but, weird as it may seem, one of these teams could be out of the playoffs if they both lose this coming weekend. Police/Benque is scheduled to meet San Pedro Pirates, and a win by Police/Benque puts them at 24 points. Likewise, should Port Layola clip Progresso in Orange Walk this coming Sunday, Port would have 25 points. Such a scenario would have Police/Benque and Port Layola through to the Top-4, with the fourth spot to be decided on goal difference between Progresso and San Pedro Pirates. But that is only one scenario. A draw or a win by either Progresso or San Pedro definitely seals each a spot in the playoffs.

Defending champion Altitude FC only has a long-range chance at seeing playoff action. But it's never over 'til it's over. First, they would have to beat Verdes on Saturday night in Independence to gain 22 points. Next, they would need Port Layola to lose, so they could eclipse Port in the goal difference column. And also, they would need Police/Benque to lose or draw. A draw by Police/Benque against San Pedro Pirates would put them at 22 points, but they have a very low goal difference, which Altitude would easily surpass.

So, that's why we say this weekend is crazy. Nobody is completely out of the woods. Only Verdes is certain of their playoff berth.

Week 14 will be real PLB football fireworks.

Saturday, April 22

7:30 p.m. – Police/Benque United FC vs San Pedro Pirates FC – Marshalleck Stadium

7:30 p.m. – Altitude FC vs Verdes FC – M.A. Stadium in Independence

Sunday, April 23

3:30 p.m. – Progresso FC vs Port Layola FC – People's Stadium

4:00 p.m. – Wagiya SC vs (Bandits)/International FC – Carl Ramos Stadium

Premier League of Belize 2022-2023 Closing Season								
Standings at Week 13, Sunday, April 16, 2023								
TEAMS	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff	Pts
Verdes FC	13	9	3	1	30	7	23	30
San Pedro Pirates FC	13	6	5	2	30	15	15	23
Progresso FC	13	6	5	2	21	7	14	23
Port Layola FC	13	6	4	3	23	13	10	22
Police/Benque United FC	13	6	3	4	17	15	2	21
Altitude FC	13	5	4	4	25	15	10	19
Wagiya SC	13	1	0	12	10	52	-42	3
International FC	13	0	2	11	5	37	-32	2



SPORTS, SIN AND SUBVERSION



Ludwig Lightburn after he defeated New Orleans' Ralph Dupas, the no. 2 lightweight contender in the world, at New York City's Madison Square Garden in 1955. This was Lightburn's first nationally televised fight in the U.S. It was also seen in Mexico and Canada, and broadcast worldwide on shortwave radio. (The ring announcer is Johnny Addie.)

Evan X Hyde

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Available at:

BELIZE CITY

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

LADYVILLE

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

ORANGE WALK

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

COROZAL

- * Aguilar Car Care Products, # 60 4th Avenue, Corozal Town
- * Xiomara Alcalá c/o Corozal Farmer's Supplies, #99 - 5th Avenue, Corozal Town

BELMOPAN

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

CAYO

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

BENQUE

- * Eduard Cambranes, 6 Diaz St., Benque

STANN CREEK

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

PLACENCIA

- * Placencia Office Supplies

INDEPENDENCE

- * G N J Mart

PUNTA GORDA

- * King's Texaco
- * NJV Pharmacy

SAN PEDRO

- * Rocks Shopping Center

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