

# STAR

"The Newspaper That Cares And Dares To Bring Out The Truth"



No. 156

SUNDAY, JUNE 22, 2008

Price \$1.00

## RAPE, ROBBERY AND MAIM - CAYO TAXIMAN REMANDED TO RAMADA

**SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Monday, June 16, 2008:**

It's now official, **Ludin Najera, 21**, Belizean taxi driver of a Santiago Juan Layout Area in San Ignacio was today brought before the court on charges of rape, robbery and maim.

Reports reaching us indicate that acting upon information received at around 1:45 on the morning of Thursday, June 12, police visited a residence in the Santiago Juan Layout area of San Ignacio where they encountered **Lori Knepp, 22**, American volunteer on assignment with ProBelize, suffering from at least 2 large cut wounds to the palm of her left hand severely affecting all three fingers except the thumb and little finger.

She was transported by the

police to the San Ignacio Town Hospital where only a few days prior she began working as a volunteer.

Investigations revealed that the victim who is originally from Illinois, USA had only arrived in Belize five days before the incident.

It was around 10:30 pm on the night of Wednesday, June 11, when the victim and another female volunteer exited the Faya Wata Night Club on Burns Avenue in San Ignacio. They then walked over to the nearby taxi stand in front of Courts Store.

Recognizing the taxi driver as one who had taken them safely home from the same location a few nights earlier they agreed that it was safe to ride the car to their separate homes.

The driver reportedly proceeded to

drop off the first volunteer and whilst heading to the Santiago Juan Layout Area for the second dropoff, he diverted to an area near the unmanned police check point on the Bullet Tree Road. After he pulled into the feeder road, the sequence of events began to appear somewhat weird.

The first offence he allegedly committed was maim as he is reported to have first pulled out a machete and when the victim raised her left hand to defend herself the chop



**The Accused - Ludin Najera, 21**

wounds were inflicted. The accused then reportedly proceeded to rape the injured and bleeding victim

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## Five JP's On Honors List 2008

**BELIZE HOUSE, Belmopan, Saturday, June 14, 2008:**

The Office of the Governor General, on the occasion of the Queen's Birthday Honors 2008, today announced the names of five Belizean Justices of the Peace (JP) to be appointed as Ordinary Members of Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE).

The awardees are: **Mrs. Phillipa Audrey Griffith-Bailey JP**, **Mr. Diego Bol JP**, **Mr. Ruben Ricardo Campos Sr. JP**, **Mrs. Addy Castillo JP** and **Ms. Myrna Manzanares JP**.

In putting together this article, we requested and received brief



**Mrs. Phillipa Audrey Griffith-Bailey, JP**

biographies from Phillipa Bailey, Ruben Campos and Myrna Manzanares. We were unable to get in touch with Mrs. Addy Castillo as we were told that she is presently out

of the country and, with high schools on summer vacation, we were likewise unable to contact former senator Diego Bol.

**PHILLIPAAUDREY GRIFFITH-BAILEY, JP:**

Mrs. Phillipa Audrey Griffith-Bailey has been involved with the sport of softball since the late 1950's when she started playing with the famous Dunrite Softball Team. She played second base and captured the prestigious Batting Average Crown in 1963. She retired from playing the sport in 1967 but continued to serve the sport in various capacities.

She was Secretary of the then British Honduras Softball Association for six consecutive years. She



**Ms. Myrna Manzanares, JP.**

chaperoned the then British Honduras Team that participated in the Caribbean Games for the Herman Spoerri Trophy in Jamaica in 1969.

Her steadfast commitment to the

**Please Turn To Page 11**

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## Editorial



### SETTING A DANGEROUS PRECEDENCE

While land owners continue to publicly oppose government's efforts to amend the Constitution of Belize to explicitly vest petroleum and mineral rights in the government; three of the nation's most powerful organizations are of the opinion that petroleum and mineral rights must be vested in the Government of Belize (GOB).

Land owners disagree and are of the opinion that they should be the exclusive owners of these rights.

1) The new United Democratic Party (UDP) government is leading the charge in amending the Constitution to exclusively vest the rights to petroleum, mineral and accompanying substance, in whatever physical state, located on or under the territory of Belize or the exclusive economic zone of Belize, in the Government of Belize.

2) The Bar Association of Belize is quoted as saying that it ***"does not offer any objection to the vesting of petroleum and mineral rights in the government but it does not support the denial of access to the courts to determine the existence of rights and interests in relation thereto, and the right, if any, to compensate for acquisition of property rights and interests relating to petroleum and other minerals."***

3) The opposition People's United Party (PUP) is on record indicating that: ***"The PUP supports in principle the vesting of petroleum and mineral rights to the Government of Belize, for and on behalf of the people of Belize. However,"*** like the Bar Association ***"the PUP believes that private land owners should have access to the courts at all times and should be reasonably compensated for compulsory acquisition of their rights and property."***

By all indications therefore, the group representing land owners are faced with an uphill battle. It is obvious that they will be faced with extreme difficulties to change the proposed course of the vesting of petroleum and mineral rights in the GOB and that it will be next to impossible for them to have these rights vested in land owners.

In light of the fact that the Bar Association and the opposition People's United Party are opposed to the portions of the proposed amendment as it pertains to access to the courts and reasonable compensation, the group representing land owners should therefore be focusing attention at opposing these two portions of the proposed amendments.

The fourth factor in the equation is the people of Belize. The masses of the people of Belize certainly do not fall in that small land owner category. They will therefore be more inclined to support their government taking control of Belizean oil.

In terms of doing that which appears to be politically correct with the removal of all ambiguity as to who is the rightful owner of petroleum and mineral rights in Belize, the government therefore appears to be on the right track.

When we chose not to comment in the newspaper on this specific aspect of the public consultation held two weeks ago by members of the Constitutional House Committee we were asked if we were ***"making the STAR into a political rag of the same ilk as Guardian and Times?"*** The writer ***"could NOT believe that you had nothing to report, especially when you were so vocal at the meeting itself."***

We might be mistaken, but as the meeting drew to a close, the self interest was clear as crystal.

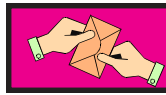
Those representing the Land Owners Association were busy several days before the meeting handing out expensive color flyers and hanging banners in an effort to increase the turnout.

By the time the meeting got started there were about a hundred persons in attendance. Those most vocal in the Land Owners Association were sitting in the front row.

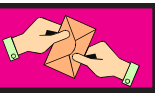
The first topic on the agenda was the petroleum and mineral rights issue. When the Chairman called for the discussion on this topic to be closed, the gathering almost instantly contracted to less than half its original size.

Land owners were obviously not interested in the other 21 proposed amendments.

They could care less if the Constitution is being amended to



## Letters to the Editor



### Are You Making The STAR Into A Political Rag?

Alberto,

Why would you ignore reporting on the contentious amendment hearing?

There are few things with implications as far reaching and serious as these proposed amendments and the meeting

### The Community Is Better Off With An Aggressive Media

Dear Editor;

A taxi driver is charged last week for rape. San Ignacio Police, Mr. Fuentes in particular, is withholding his picture from the media for fear; he says that ***"its release will jeopardize a fair trial for the accused"***.

A few months ago Police Corporal Joel Grinage was charged for carnal knowledge and his photograph was promptly released to the media.

Lady Justice is blind; all of us are equal under the law. Why the difference in handling a somewhat similar situation?

The problem is that those in the senior command, who are sworn to uphold the law without fear, favor ill will or affection, instead of doing that which is right and following the police standard operating procedure, are more often than not allowing personal conditions to interfere with their law enforcement responsibilities.

Writing from the inside, these personal conditions that interfere with the better judgment of the police comes in many forms such as: ***a)*** I don't like Corporal Grinage and so I will give all the information about him to the media. ***b)*** This taxi man had given me free ride a few weeks ago and so I must shield him at any cost. ***c)*** The **STAR Newspaper** was critical of PC John Doe in the past and PC John Doe is my runner, so now that I am in command, I will let the **STAR** get the sense.

A person is arrested and charged

certainly showed the public was concerned. Are you making the **STAR** into a political rag of the same ilk as Guardian and Times?

I could NOT believe that you had nothing to report, especially when you were so vocal at the meeting itself.

Jim Cavanaugh

for failure to display an insurance sticker. Standard Operating Procedure is that he is charged and given police bail to appear in court on the next available court day. Instead, the police are indicating that he will be locked away for the night. Obviously having some knowledge of his rights, the accused attempts to find out why he is being locked up instead of getting police bail. How dare this man questions the police by seeking his right? He should not even know his rights. He is accused of being disrespectful to the police and will be locked away. It is only in dictatorship societies that this kind of abuse is perpetuated by a Gestapo police. How do we stem this abuse?

A more level headed policeman steps into the station and he questions the reason for the detention of the accused. He instructs us to grant him police bail and fortunately the rights of the accused is restored. How often does a level headed policeman appear to save the day? – Not very often and so abusive policemen continue to employ their illegal ways and a community becomes frustrated with abusers hiding under the clothing of agents of law enforcement. An aggressive media is a threat to these abusers disguised as officers of the law. The community is better off with an aggressive media as it serves to minimize the actions of these abusers.

I rest my case, your honor.  
**Please do not disclose my name.**



limit the number of terms a Prime Minister can serve. They could care less if the Prime Minister serves a hundred terms in office or just one.

They could care less if our Constitution is being amended to make it mandatory for the Auditor General to present an annual report to the House of Representatives on the spending of our tax dollars.

They could care less if the Auditor General could be fired if the report is not tabled or that the Auditor General could be given extended time to present the report which could take us right back to days of old when the report could be delayed for years.

All they apparently cared about was getting ***"their oil"*** and when

it looked like they were not getting ***"their oil"***, they left the meeting and in so doing sent a clear message that anything else was irrelevant to them. They came for ***"their oil"***. They wanted ***"their oil"*** and nothing less.

The one or two land owners who remained for the rest of the meeting removed themselves from the front row and pulled all the way to the back of the building while the other proposed amendments were discussed. This is the reality of the situation.

In the final analysis, a very dangerous precedence is being set when citizens are constitutionally denied access to the courts and reasonable compensation for losses.



## Stealing Our Basic Human Rights

SAN IGNAIO TOWN, Thursday,  
June 19, 2008:

BY:  
**Jim Cavanaugh**  
comments:  
junglejim@btl.net



Our politicians have made a terrible mess out of running our government. They were not only incompetent, but recently they became so greedy and corrupt they raped and plundered the assets of our country.

We can blame the politicians we elected for being ignorant, and there is a lot of evidence to support that conclusion... it appears though that they were so busy stealing the wealth of our struggling country they didn't have time to tend to the business of government.

But let's face it folks, the ones to blame for this mess is ourselves. We not only elected those politicians, but we stood by and watched as they plundered everything they could grab, and then rubbed our noses in the mess as they lounged in luxury in their overseas villas and hotels... which of course were purchased with the funds they stole from us Belizeans.

We stood by and watched while they were caught illegally hauling suitcases full of their looted money out of our country, and nobody was ever prosecuted.

We stood by and watched our politicians give away thousands of valuable acres of our precious land to their cronies.

We stood by and watched as oil companies paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to get oil contracts.

And now we are asked to stand by and watch as the new government makes the biggest theft in our history... the theft of our minerals and petroleum... the theft of our basic human rights.

The last government stole everything that was not nailed down, then proceeded to borrow enormous sums of money... and embezzled or misappropriated most of it. After 10 years we were left with two and a half billion dollars of debt, but the only thing we had to show for it was the debt!

When our newly elected politicians took over in February they quickly understood there was nothing left to steal... our tax sources were limited... and we were unable to support the government in the style in which they wanted to become accustomed. The options were straight forward. They could

1) Reduce the size and cost of government 2) Recover the stolen money and assets from the thieves 3) Control corruption or 4) Operate government more efficiently

So what did **Dean Barrow** and associates decide to do? Well... none of the above. Instead Barrow

decided that oil money could solve all his government problems... if the government could take all of the oil money the politicians could still live and loot in luxury.

A big problem though was the government owns the mineral and oil rights only to crown and national lands, but not to private lands. They attempted in 1991 and again in 2000 to expropriate mineral and oil rights from private Belizean landowners... but both attempts were clearly unconstitutional because the government tried to take valuable property rights from Belizeans without paying for them.

Lately government has tried to bluff everyone by claiming they owned all mineral and oil rights in Belize because they had passed laws to that effect, but they knew the Court would not support their unconstitutional acts. So... if the Constitution stands in your way than the simple solution is to change the Constitution! And of course Barrow knew he had enough votes to change both the laws and the Constitution as he wished. BUT... just change the Constitution? Well "the devil is in the details", as the saying goes.

Our constitution says no one can take any personal property rights from Belizeans without paying for them and giving the people the right to go to Court. This is a Fundamental Right of all Belizeans... in fact it is a Basic Human Right covered in all kinds for international human rights protocols to which Belize subscribes. Barrow decided that the best way was to be devious... the Constitutional provision to protect private property rights would remain, but that protection will no longer include minerals and oil. A clincher is added which states Belizeans cannot go to Court to challenge the confiscation of their private property rights. And get this: minerals can include anything the government wants. A final slap in the face is the same property rights they take away from us can then be sold or licensed to foreign companies and Belizeans won't get a penny of that money, and if the government then tries to take these property rights from the foreign companies, they will be compensated. The Constitutional rights which government plans to take away from Belizeans will still exist for foreigners or anyone the government wants it to!

What this all means is that private property will no longer exist in Belize. We will only own that part of our property that the government has no use for.

This Amendment will steal the benefits of private land from thousands and thousands of Belizeans, benefits that are worth billions of dollars, and the only ones who will profit are politicians and foreigner business.

Taking our Fundamental Rights is wrong wrong wrong!

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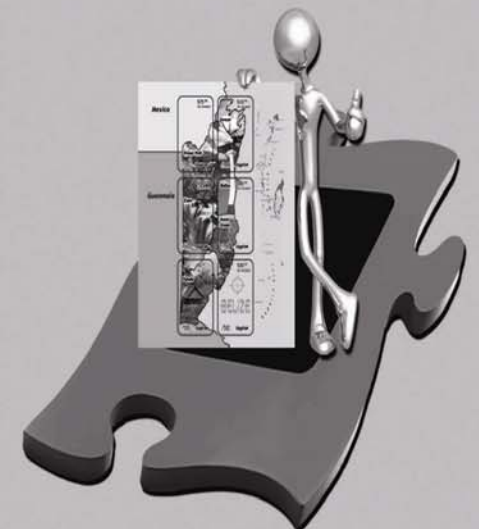
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## Juan Aguilar Facing Carnal Knowledge Charges

**SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo, Wednesday, June 18, 2008:**

The details are too disgusting to recount and so we summarize by saying that **Juan Daniel Runi Aguilar**, 23, construction worker from the village of Unitedville in the Cayo District was today formally charged with two counts of carnal knowledge and one count of aggravated assault reportedly

committed against a 10 year old female child.

Reports reaching us indicate that at around 9:30 p.m. on Monday, June 16, a mother was returning home when she looked through the front window of her house she saw the accused in a sexually compromising position with her 10 year old daughter on her bed inside her room.

After threatening to break down the



**Juan Daniel Runi Aguilar, 23,**

door, it was opened about five minutes later by the accused.

Within half an hour the mother was at the San Ignacio police station with her child filing a report.

A medical examination revealed that the child was carnally known. Upon objection by prosecutor **George Gomez** the accused was denied bail and remanded to the Hattieville Prison until Thursday, July 24, 2008.

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The PACT Foundation, a legally recognized private, non-profit organization, was established in November 2004 and has funds available through the Debt for Nature

Swamp Funds to be administered to community based and non-governmental organizations through a grants process. The Foundation's main objective is to promote the protection and maintenance of Belize's protected areas.

**The PACT Foundation Announces its**

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## TROPICAL STORM ARTHUR RELIEF EFFORT

In an effort to provide assistance to families affected by the flash floods resulting from Tropical Storm Arthur, the Belize Bank Limited donated a cheque for BZ\$10,000 to the Belize Red Cross on Wednesday June 11th, 2008.



Belize Bank Limited's Marketing Manager, Misty Michael presenting cheque to Belize Red Cross General Manager, Lily Bowman

On Saturday June 14th, Belize Bank staff and Management volunteered their time to assist the Red Cross in distributing food and supplies to affected families in the North and South. Staff traveled to the villages of Douglas, San Estevan and Carmelita in the North, and to the village of Hope Creek in the Stann Creek District, and distributed food and supplies to more than 125 families.



In addition to the donation made to the Red Cross on behalf of Bank, staff from Belize Bank branches countrywide made donations of canned goods, baby items, hygiene products and clothing to their local Red Cross offices.



The Belize Bank Limited hopes that these contributions will aid those affected in restoring their lives and communities.



## ★ STAR HUMOR ★

### IS IT ANY COINCIDENCE?

BEL is asking for an increase in electricity rates, the services of an Independent expert is engaged and is name is **Dr. LESSER**? In the end Dr. Lesser recommends that BEL should get **MORE**.

The nation must address the crime situation, an overseas expert is brought in his name is **Mr. CROOKS**.

So then what's next? The nation is forced to import rice to address the shortage. Will we soon see the arrival of a relative of **US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice** to advise us on the way forward with this Belizean staple or maybe a **Dr. Fuels** to advise us on the best practices in dealing with the oil company?

### MONEY TALKS AND THE REST WALKS

Mr. Cano walks into the bank and says to the teller, "*I want to open a @#%&\* account*"

"*I beg your pardon Sir,*" said the lady behind the counter, "*what did you just say?*"

"*Listen up lady, I said I want to open a @#%&\* account right now.*"

"*Sir, I'm sorry but we do not tolerate that kind of language in this bank!*"

The teller left the customer standing at the counter and went over to the bank manager and told him about the situation. They both returned and the manager asked,

"*What seems to be the problem here?*"

"*There's no darn problem,*" said Mr. Cano, "*I just won 50 million in the state lottery and I want to deposit it and so I am here to open a @#%&\*account in this damn bank!*"

"*I see sir,*" the manager said, "*and am I right to assume that this @#%&\* teller is giving you a hard time to open a @#%&\* account at this darn bank. Come this way Sir, I am going to @#%&\*personally open the @#%&\*account for you.*"

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**Lucille Anselma Humes**

Sunrise: April 21<sup>st</sup> 1910 Sunset: June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2005

Grandma, you were a precious gift from God above,  
so much beauty, grace and love.

You touched our hearts in so many ways,  
Your smile so bright even on the sad days.

You heard God's whisper calling you home,  
You didn't want to go and leave us alone.

You loved us so much, you held on tight,  
till all the strength was gone and you could no longer fight.

He had called your name twice before,

You knew you couldn't make him wait anymore.

So you gave your hand to God and slowly drifted away.

Now Daddy too is there with you, we dearly miss you both, but  
we

know that with our love we will all be together again some day.

Deeply missed by The Aldana's Family, Santa Elena, Cayo.

## Mexican TV Reporter's Disrespectful Remarks

**Jorge Aldana**  
**PO Box 132**  
**Tel: 226-4054 Fax: 226-4100**  
**San Pedro Town**  
**Belize**

June 16, 2008

**H.E. Luis Manuel Lopez Moreno**  
**Mexican Ambassador to Belize**  
**Belmopan City**  
**Belize, Central America**

Dear Mr. Moreno;

I would like to register my discontent in regards to a comment made on the television program called **Futishow** conducted by comedian Mr. Jorge Ortiz de Pineda, televised on Televisa on Sunday June 15<sup>th</sup> in afternoon.

In his comment, Mr. Pineda insinuated that Belize's name is not suitable for our country. Pineda also made comments to the effect that the name Belize sound too ugly and made fun of our name disrespecting the integrity of our country.

Belizean can accept criticism as to Belize's level of football compared to Mexico, but those offensive comments made on an international station in Mexico were uncalled for and totally out of order. Mr. Pineda also illustrated a picture of a Belizean girl in swim wear and stating that it was the only good thing Belize has to offer.

Mr. Pineda's comments about Belize are highly offensive and disrespectful to the integrity of Belize and must be reprimanded for making such

comments about our country. The names of Belize as well as Mexico must not be a subject of comedy especially on international television.

Belize and Mexico have both enjoy a mutual relationship and I believe that our people must continue to foster that good relationship. The Belizean people have never brought Mexico to public embarrassment on national television.

Belizeans are very patriotic, full of pride and dignity for all the good things we have and can offer. I am hopeful that Pineda's comment does not reflect the views of the Mexican people. Belizeans are disappointed at the level the Mexican television stations would go to entertain their public, disrespecting integrity the diplomatic relationship Belize has with Mexico. The Belizean people would like to know if your government tolerates those types of comments. Belize deserves an apology.

Belize and Mexico has been respectful to each other, let us keep it that way.

Respectfully yours

**Jorge Aldana**

CC. **Hon. Dean Barrow**  
**Prime Minister of Belize**

**Hon. John Briceño**  
**Leader of the Opposition**

**Hon. Wilfred Elrington**  
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# Mexico 2 - Belize 0 In Houston

By:  
Wellington  
C. Ramos,  
HOUSTON  
TEXAS,  
USA,  
Monday  
June 16,  
2008:



Former  
Belizean National Player and  
Current Coach In New York City

On Sunday, June 15, 2008 about fifty thousand fans packed the Reliant Stadium in Houston Texas to witness the football match between the Mexican National Team and the Belizean National Team.

This game should have been played in Belize but due to the fact that the country of Belize does not have a stadium that meets F.I.F.A. standards an alternate choice had to be chosen.

I have been informed through reliable sources that the new UDP Government is working diligently to address this problem by upgrading the Carl Ramos Stadium in Dangriga Town and the Marion Jones Stadium in Belize City.

When I was standing outside of the stadium I observed hundreds of Mexican fans waving their Mexican flags cheering up their Mexican comrades to look out for another victory after defeating Peru last week 4 to 0. As I walked further towards the gate I ran into my Belizean people with their flags and other Belizean displays cheering up their Belizean brothers and sisters to support our national team.

Upon entering the stadium I observed that almost 98% of the people who were inside the stadium were Mexican Americans. With Texas being a state where Mexicans live in large numbers and borders the country of Mexico that was expected. The Mexicans and Belizeans were very friendly to each other and were laughing, joking and taking pictures together.

At the start of the game some of the Belizean players appeared to me to be nervous and frightened. However,

after about ten minutes the Belizean players settled down and started to play.

The first half was controlled by the Mexicans with good ball control and team work skills and a few attempts at the Belizean goal but the Belizean goalkeeper Shane Moody displayed his superb skills by saving the few shots they fired at him.

The Belizean team allowed too many turnovers and the midfield was a disaster because there was no construction coming from the midfielders to support the offense in order to score goals. The offense was not visible because the offensive players had to go back and assist the midfielders many times during the game. A few offensive and defensive Belizean players dribbled the ball too much and at times dribbled the ball off the field all by themselves.

At the start of the second half I was expecting the Belize coaching staff to repair the midfield and work

on an offensive strategy to get the offensive players to start shooting shots at the Mexican Goalkeeper to get goals.

The second half continued and the problem was not corrected so eventually the Mexican team scored after a beautiful save by the Belizean goal keeper Shane Moody which caused the ball to hit the post and went to the Mexican striker who was all by himself and tapped it in the goal. A few minutes before the game ended, the Mexican team was awarded a penalty kick after a Belizean foul and the game ended with Mexico 2 and Belize 0.

The Belizean team has potential but they need to improve on their team work, ball control, shooting, passing and less dribbling of the ball.

I have never seen this team playing before but from my experience they need to get more familiar with each other and learn to communicate better to develop that cohesiveness

among themselves to win.

The Belizean players appeared to be strong and physically fit but the Mexicans with their ball control, team work and shooting had them running around in confusion.

I hope they take my criticisms constructively and that the team learn their mistakes from this game as they head into Monterrey Mexico this Saturday.

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## European Union Agrees To Lift 5-Year-Old Sanctions On Cuba

By JAN SLIVA The Associated Press,  
**BRUSSELS, Belgium Friday, June 20, 2008(AP):**

The European Union (EU) on Thursday agreed to lift its diplomatic sanctions against Cuba, but imposed tough conditions on the communist island to maintain sanction-free relations, officials said.

The U.S., which has maintained a decades-long trade embargo against Cuba, criticized the move, saying there were no significant signs the

communist island was easing a dictatorship. An independent analyst predicted it would have no affect on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean island.

EU External Relations Commissioner **Benita Ferrero-Waldner** said the bloc felt it had to encourage changes in Cuba after Raul Castro took over as the head of the country's government from his ailing brother Fidel.

*"There will be very clear language also on what the Cubans*

*still have to do ... releasing prisoners, really working on human rights questions,"* she told reporters at an EU summit. *"There will be a sort of review to see whether indeed something will have happened."*

The largely symbolic decision takes effect Monday. The diplomatic sanctions, which banned high-level visits to EU nations by Cuban officials, have not been in force since 2005. They were imposed in 2003 following the arrests of dozens of dissidents but suspended two years later.

In Havana, state television mentioned the EU's decision briefly but did not give any government reaction.

Leading Cuban dissident **Oswaldo Paya** said he hopes the move does not signify the EU's approval of Raul Castro's government.

*"This regime has not announced any change that is significant for rights or liberty, and we know we have to conquer that ourselves,"* Paya said.

As part of its action, the EU approved a set of conditions on Cuba in return for sanction-free relations. They include the release of all political prisoners; access for Cubans to the Internet; and a double-track approach for all EU delegations arriving in Cuba, allowing them to meet both opposition figures and members of the Cuban government.

Officials said the bloc will evaluate Cuba's progress in a year's time and could take new measures if human rights do not improve.

**The U.S. expressed its opposition.**

*"We're disappointed,"* White House deputy press secretary Gordon Johndroe said. *"We think the Castros need to take a number of steps to improve the human rights conditions for ordinary Cubans before any sanctions are lifted."*

State Department Deputy spokesman **Tom Casey** said the

United States has recently seen *"some very minor cosmetic changes"* in Cuba. *"We certainly don't see any kind of fundamental break with the Castro dictatorship that would give us reason to believe that now would be the time to lift sanctions or otherwise fundamentally alter our policies,"* he said.

**Peter De Shazo**, Americas Program director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the *"decision will not affect the U.S. position toward Cuba"* because the policy is largely fixed by legislation with key changes conditioned on a transition to democracy.

Czech Foreign Minister **Karel Schwarzenberg** said it was well known that certain circles in the United States wanted the EU sanctions to be maintained, but he said *"we felt the need to find our own solution."*

Swedish Foreign Minister **Carl Bildt** said the lifting of sanctions in no way means the EU was getting weak on Cuba.

*"We haven't softened our approach,"* Bildt said. *"It's a repressive regime. ...Now we are very explicit on what we want. We want democratic changes."*

He said the EU would push strongly for Cuban authorities to open up their economy, liberate Internet access, and release political prisoners.

The EU sanctions were introduced after Cuba's government rounded up 75 dissidents in 2003. Sixteen of those arrested have been released on medical parole and another four were freed last month into forced exile in Spain. But more than 200 dissidents are still serving jail terms.

Cuba has insisted the EU sanctions be eliminated completely, and said the unilateral action violated its sovereignty.

Asked if lifting EU sanctions would weaken U.S. sanctions, Casey said simply, *"We'll see,"* but offered no assessment.

Associated Press writer Constant Brand contributed to this report.

## Study: Treating Herpes Doesn't Prevent HIV

By MARIA CHENG - The Associated Press  
**LONDON, England (AP), Friday, 20 June 2008:**

Doctors have long suspected that people with herpes are more likely to catch HIV.

So they thought that by treating herpes, they could also cut a person's HIV risk. But a new study that tested this strategy found the assumption may have been wrong.

*"It's a significant, disappointing finding,"* **Francis Ndowa**, coordinator of the sexually transmitted infections control team at the World Health Organization, said in an interview.

Ndowa was not connected to the research, published Friday in the medical journal The Lancet.

The finding may spark a rethinking of HIV prevention strategies in Africa, where controlling sexually transmitted diseases such as herpes is usually part of general AIDS prevention plans.

Researchers tracked more than 3,000 men and women infected with herpes in Africa, Peru and the United States. Roughly half were treated with aciclovir, an antiviral that stops herpes ulcers.

After a year and a half, the scientists found that 75 people out of the 1,581 who had been receiving aciclovir were later infected with HIV. Of the 1,591 people who received placebo pills, 64 contracted HIV.

In the trial, researchers chose participants who had herpes and who faced similar risks of getting AIDS. The study also questioned the participants during monthly visits about risky sexual behavior with their recent partners.

The study was paid for by the United States' National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, other U.S. government institutes, and by GlaxoSmithKline PLC, which sells aciclovir as Zovirax.

A small study in Tanzania last year also suggested that treating herpes didn't help reducing HIV susceptibility.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that the theory of treating herpes to avoid HIV is incorrect, experts said. *"It's probably likely that we need considerably more potent interventions than we have,"*

**Connie Celum**, a professor of global health and medicine at the University of Washington who led the Lancet study, told The Associated Press.

Experts said there was a complex relationship between the two viruses that is still not entirely understood.

When herpes ulcers erupt, that draws white blood cells to the skin to fight the virus. Unfortunately, those white blood cells also have receptors for HIV.

Ndowa said it was possible that even without the telltale ulcers, herpes might have lingered while patients were taking the aciclovir, allowing HIV to gain a foothold.

In an accompanying commentary in the Lancet, **Ronald H. Gray** and **Maria J. Wawer** of Johns Hopkins University said it was questionable whether controlling sexually transmitted infectious could work to prevent HIV.

*"It is time to reassess the hypothesis and to adjust prevention policy accordingly,"* they wrote.

But Ndowa and Celum said the strategy of fighting herpes to prevent AIDS might work, if a different dosage or more powerful drug was tried.

*"We don't exactly know why this didn't work, but this approach still has potential,"* Ndowa said. *"Maybe it was just too much to expect from a tablet taken twice a day that it could be effective against HIV."*

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# Today We Lost The Prize, But We Won The Battle



**By: George Gomez**  
**SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo,**  
**Monday, June 16, 2008:**

As I listened to the commentators on the Mexican Televisa TV Station in the wake of Sunday football game between Belize and Mexico, my heart sunk.

We were about to make history, but a proper foundation would not be laid to brighten our boys spirits because of the commentators that we ourselves did not have to support our Belizean footballers – our team.

As the commentators appraised their team boasting of the confidence and experience which Mexico possessed, they lashed at us with the same nasty tongue and crucified our boys with tasteless mercy.

One commentator could not have

put it worst than saying *“the Belizean boys playing in this small third world country was just getting something like a hundred dollars to play, they were not being properly nourished and did not get the top class training that the Mexicans were getting”*.

He went on to say that Belize did not even have a proper football Stadium. After mentioning that we were Negroes, he went on to create the impression that our boys would not last the first 15 minutes of the game.

After the coin toss the Mexican expected a scared and frighten bunch of Belizean boys who could not handle the crowd or who they thought could not organize, strategize, and play a good game of football.

As the game started I began to notice that our boys had structure, our boys had discipline, they showed team work, they were organize and they were focused.

We went on to hold the fort in the first half of the game playing a defensive strategy that Mexicans would never seem to break or dismantle.

Our boys created a first hand impenetrable fortress, which experience could not defeat.

As the second half commenced and the first goal was scored, a surge of

emotions ran through me. I felt anger, frustration, and desperation.

As the game moved my emotions tempered and it became clear then as it is clear now. We are there; we did what no one else thought that we could do. We played like no one else thought we could play and we showed the world that Belize was alive, preparing and ready.

We could have stopped playing after the first half and it would have been great. We had won that game just after the start of the first 15 minutes of play time.

Many Belizeans must take this game as a message of hope. For all of those who believe that the dream lies in other countries, in different

times, in different places, - that dream is here and now. We are no more less than others, and we are far greater than most. We are Belizeans!

Don’t condemn the goal keeper; his game was the game of the day not the goal. He reached in and save that game. He did all he could have done with expert skill to stop that penalty shot, and then in what the real world would have called a cheap shot, the Mexican scored.

So let us welcome our National Football Team back home. Let us welcome

them with open arms, with our Belizean flags, with the drums of our culture, with the dance of our Mayan ancestors, with the beat of the Chinese drums, with exotic spices of the Hindu roots within Belize. Welcome our boys as if they returned from war with salutes, with blazes of glory. Let us parade them through the cities and towns. Let us parade them on the highway and byways and lets us join hands and be proud Belizeans.

We are a nation of people who can achieve anything and everything our hearts desire.

We must stand up together and give ourselves a round of applause. God has Blessed Belize.

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## RAPE, ROBBERY AND MAIM - CAYO TAXIMAN REMANDED TO RAMADA

### From Front Page

after which he drove her to the residence of her host family located in his neighborhood Santiago Juan Layout.

Before dropping off the victim, the accused reportedly demanded all the money she had, the victim handed over the fifteen Belize dollars in her possession, this is the act constituting the robbery charge.

The accused then reportedly told her that his name is "Bling" and that he was sorry for what he had done.

The accused was picked up by the police a few hours later from his residence in the Santiago Juan Layout. He was escorted to the police station where he was detained.

On Friday, June 13, he was transported to Belize City to attend an identification parade where he was reportedly positively identified by the victim and the other female volunteer.

The accused was returned to San Ignacio where he was remanded for the weekend by a Justice of the Peace.

He was taken to court on Monday morning, June 16, where all three charges were read to him. He was consequently advised that all three matters will be heard on indictment in the Supreme Court.

On the basis of strong objections by *Prosecutor George Gomez*, the accused was remanded to the

Hattieville prison and is scheduled to return to court on Thursday, July 31, 2008.

The victim's father arrived in Belize on Friday, June 13, and he departed for the return trip home along with his daughter on Sunday, June 15 where she will be undergoing further medical treatment.

ProBelize is a non-profit organization operating in San Ignacio Town only. The program attracts volunteers from the United States, Canada and Britain on two to four weeks rotational stints in Belize. Volunteers are required to pay a tuition to join the program.

Upon arrival, they are posted in the private or public sector commensurate with their educational qualifications.

ProBelize is funded solely by tuition it receives from volunteers.

The program has been operating in the community since 2004. And according to Jonathan Roman, Country Direct for ProBelize, this is the very first time that a volunteer has been attacked in this manner.

Roman informed that prior to this incident, the only other situation experienced was the mugging of a volunteer several years ago, but it was nothing near as vicious and life threatening as this incident.

He thanks all those many Belizeans who have called in to express their displeasure at this unfortunate and irregular incident.

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# Five JP's On Honors List 2008

## From Front Page

sport earned her an Honorary Life Member of the Softball Federation in 1972. Mrs. Bailey served for 11 consecutive years (1995-2006) as the General Secretary of the Belize Softball Federation and is currently serving as the Federation’s Treasurer and Chairperson of the National Selection Committee responsible for the formulation of the program for the development of the National Softball Team.

In 1996 she represented the Softball Federation as the nation’s Chief Delegate to the Central American Qualifying Games in Colombia and in 2003 she headed the Belizean Contingent attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Central American Champion of Champions Female Tournament in El Salvador. She was honored in 2005 by the Belize Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association for outstanding contribution to the development and growth of softball in Belize.

In 2007 Mrs. Phillipa Griffith-Bailey represented the Belize Softball Federation at the XXIII World Softball Congress in Manila, Philippines. Also in 2007 she was named to the Women in Sports Commission of the Education Commission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Softball Federation (ISF) by the President of the ISF.

Despite her dedication to softball, Mrs. Bailey is considered an activist

in matters of the environment and community development. She was instrumental in lobbying government for the inclusion of the village of Gales Point in the rural electrification program and the installation of an upgraded water system for that community. She also played a key role in coordinating, along with the Gales Point Village Council, the activities which eventually resulted in the creation of a 9,950 acre Wildlife Sanctuary for manatees and crocodiles in the community of Gales Point.

In the political arena, Mrs. Phillipa Griffith-Bailey has been serving for almost 10 years as Secretary General of the United Democratic Party and was instrumental in organizing the Party’s activities and functions countrywide before, during and after the Party’s landslide victory at the general election polls on February 7, 2008. She continues to be the woman at the helm of the United Democratic Party’s Secretariat. Mrs. Bailey is also a Commissioner on the new Elections and Boundaries Commission. She is now being recognized with an MBE for services to sport, the community and the environment.

## MR. DIEGO BOL, JP:

Mr. Diego Bol is a Mayan leader, veteran educator/ teacher at the Toledo Community College in Punta Gorda and a former UDP senator (03-08). He is being recognized for



Mr. Ruben Ricardo Campos, Senior Justice of the Peace

services to education and the preservation of indigenous cultures.

## RUBEN RICARDO CAMPOS, Sr.JP

Mr. Ruben Ricardo Campos, Sr. JP, veteran politician, former minister of government and current owner of Orange Walk’s Suga City Radio Station, was born in Orange Walk Town in 1952. Along with his wife Sandra they are the parents of three sons Ruben Ricardo Jr., Carlton Joseph, and Jason Lee.

Ruben attended Orange Walk’s La Inmaculada Primary School and St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale Florida, USA. After high school he moved on to Broward Community College also in Fort Lauderdale.

Ruben first got a dose of politics at the age of 24, in 1976, as a youth leader for the United Democratic Party (UDP) in Orange Walk Town. Since then he has moved on to hold posts in the UDP as National Youth Director, National Chairman and Assistant National Campaign Director.

Although his party got only three of the seven seats on the Town Board, Ruben Campos was first elected to serve as a member of the Orange Walk Town Board in 1981. He successfully contested the 1984 general elections for the UDP in the Orange Walk East Division and was appointed as Deputy Minister of Health, Labour and Sports under the first Manuel Esquivel UDP government. Although he was successful at the polls in 1989 his party lost the general elections that year and so he served as an opposition member in the House of Representatives. Ruben was reelected for a third term in 1993 under the second Manuel Esquivel administration and was appointed as Minister of Health and later, in a cabinet shuffle, he was appointed Minister of the newly created Ministry of Mobilization and

Coordination.

Although no longer seeking election, Ruben remains actively involved in politics for the UDP. Most recently he has been serving as the party’s coordinator for the four constituencies in the Orange Walk District. With almost 32 years of service to the UDP, Ruben Campos continues to be a driving force for the Party in the Orange Walk District.

Mr. Ruben Ricardo Campos, Senior Justice of the Peace, is recognized for services to health and public life.

## MRS.ADDY CASTILLO,JP:

Mrs. Addy Castillo, from the Santiago Castillo Group of Companies, is being recognized for her many years of service to business and the community. She is the wife of the late Santiago Castillo Sr.

## MS. MYRNA MANZANARES, JP:

Ms. Myrna Manzanares is a woman of many talents. She is an educator, a counselor, a social activist, a writer, a poet and a storyteller among others. She was born in Gales Point Manatee and grew up in Belize City.

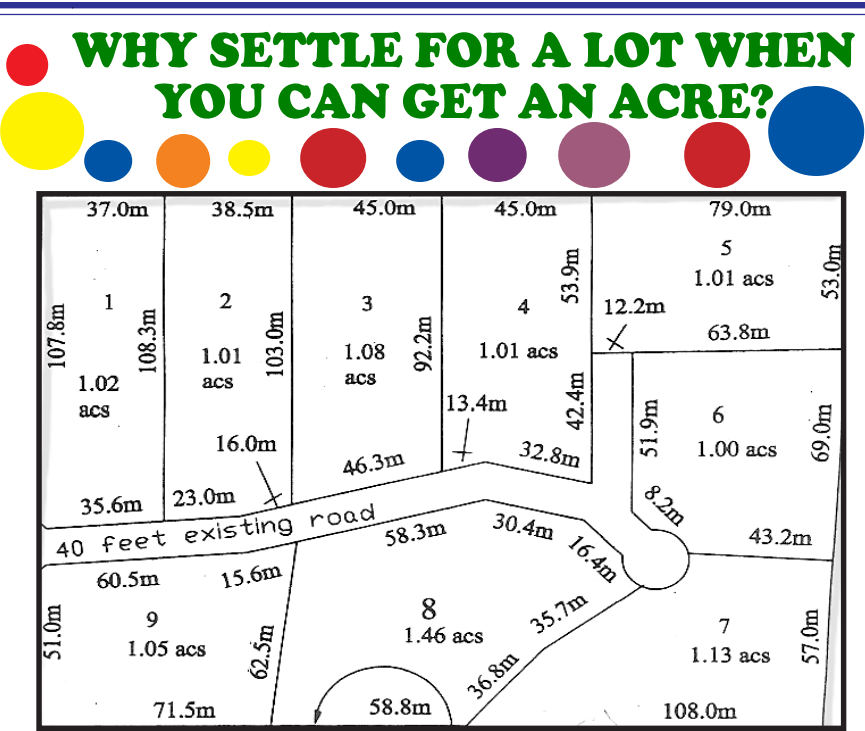
Over the years Myrna has worked in the areas of drug prevention, drug rehabilitation, drug education, cultural development and HIV & AIDS. She has developed different training programs in these fields. She has worked at the Belize Teachers College, University of Belize, Pride Belize and Peace Corps.

Myrna has also served as the Chairperson of the National AIDS Task Force; President of Addiction Alert Rehabilitation Center; President of the Belize Family Life Association; Member of the Board of Directors of the Youth Enhancement Services; Member of the Board of Directors of the Belize Social Security Board and Member of the Board of Directors of the Broadcasting Cooperation of Belize.

She is presently engaged as the Counselor for the Belize Family Life Association as well as the current President of the National Kriol Council. Myrna has a daughter Shalini, a son Robert and a grandson Shamaan.

Ms. Myrna Manzanares JP is being recognized for her many years of service in the areas of education, culture and social development.

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