



CAPITAL WEEKLY

"From the Heart of the Nation to the Soul of the People."



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HUMMINGBIRD HIGHWAY

House Passes Motion For Rehabilitation

At the first business session of the House of Representatives, a loan motion was tabled and passed for the rehabilitation of the Hummingbird Highway.

The loan motion is for US \$12 Million (Bz\$24 Million) from the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), which is only a portion (39 percent) of funds secured for the rehabilitation of the Hummingbird Highway. These monies will be expended, as spelled out in the loan motion, "towards the general mobilization and site



The scenic Hummingbird Highway to be Rehabilitated

preparation, earth works, construction of embankments and pavement, construction of 8 new concrete bridges, installation of necessary drainage infrastructure along the road and bridges, and installation of utilities structures, street lighting and other protections and safety works".

The 8 new two-lane reinforced-concrete bridges with pedestrian sidewalks to be constructed will replace a series of narrow, outdated, one-lane bridges along the route of the

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At the Center of Robust House Debate

The first business session of the new House of Representatives took place on Friday, December 4, and it featured robust debate on several issues including the use of Petro-Caribe Funds for Flood Relief primarily in Belize City prior to the General Elections, as well as the Government's response to more recent

flooding (since the elections) which impacted the lives of families particularly in the South.

If we had any doubt about the new Opposition's ability and will to fight, we were quickly disabused of it. Member after member from the opposition side took the government to task on issues ranging from Petrocaribe spending to Immigration

matters to the promptness and adequacy of the government's response to infrastructure and humanitarian needs resulting from heavy rains and severe flooding.

Not surprising, members on the government side, led by Prime Minister Dean Barrow, were forthcoming and forthright in their response to the issues and concerns raised. Senior members Wilfred 'Sedi' Elrington and Hon. John Saldivar were characteristically incisive, insightful and illuminating. But it was the maturing and still youthful member from Collet, Hon. Patrick Faber who had perhaps the most memorable moments of the day.

Responding to the most senior member of the Opposition and the House, Fort George Representative Hon. Said Musa, Faber noted that his constituency of Collet was one of the hardest hit by the pre-election flooding disaster. Faber told Musa that as an area representative it was his responsibility to ensure that the needs of his peo-



Hon. Patrick Faber debating in the House of Representatives

ple were adequately addressed, and that is something he and this government did in the normal course of business, not because an election was coming.

When the member from Toledo West, Hon. Oscar Requena attempted to make a case that the Government was neglecting to address infrastructure needs arising from the severe rains and flooding in his constituency,

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Baptism By Water

New NEMO Minister Hits The Ground Running



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EDITORIAL

A DAUNTING BUT EXCITING PROSPECT

The unprecedented three-term victory scored by the UDP in the General Elections a month ago affords the party an excellent opportunity to consolidate the gains made in its first two terms. It is also fraught with the not so apparent dangers that almost invariably ensnare very successful governments.

One of those dangers is the tendency to become arrogant and overconfident, something which seems almost to be dictated by human nature, but which can nevertheless be resisted through dogged self-discipline and a conscious effort to put in place mechanisms to guard against collective departure from the principles upon which government and the management of public affairs are founded.

The other danger is that, having already accomplished so much by way of visible development, the party in government might not have much to aspire to, to inspire its leaders, to keep them motivated and focused on specific goals and a clearly defined national agenda.

For the UDP, there is the unique challenge that the current leader, whose political prowess and proficiency is unequalled, cannot constitutionally seek a fourth term as Prime Minister. Whether or not he can keep himself motivated enough and inspire the party to keep its collectively foot to the pedal, its shoulders to the wheel and its eyes on the well-paved road ahead, is yet to be determined.

This is a task and responsibility that will, admittedly, have to be shared by those aspiring to succeed Mr. Barrow as the new leader of the party. The successful individual, to be anointed some time during this term, will actually have to take over as Prime Minister prior to the next election.

It's a prospect, indeed, an inevitability that is just as daunting as it is exciting. Only time will tell how well the UDP confronts and embraces the challenge and the opportunity.

TRANSFORMATION

THE NEW BELIZE CIVIC CENTER



Front View of the New Belize Civic Center Design

Belize Infrastructure Limited (BIL), a public sector agency of the Government of Belize (GOB), has undertaken the design, construction and management of capital projects in Belize with current emphasis on sporting and other multipurpose facilities.

BIL now embarks on the construction phase of the Belize City Center Arena and Cultural Complex located on Central American Blvd, Belize City, Belize.

Contract has been awarded to the local JVCA of Medina's Construction Limited/International Environments Limited and on October 8th, 2015 contract signature occurred for contract price of BZ\$32,940,261.34. This will include the civil works of the grounds and all FIBA certified equipment. Construction period is twenty-four (24) months.

The new Belize City Center Arena and Cultural Complex design will qualify for world championship women's U-21 and U-19 world championship men and women events.

There will be three (3) interior practice basketball courts, and one (1) professional center court. The design allows for designated seating for up to 4000 for games and 5000 for indoor entertainment events such as conventions, concerts

and other sporting events such as boxing and volleyball. Seats are individual and are numbered by rows.

The design also includes post game rooms, media rooms, administration room and more concessions space. The new Belize City Center will be fully air conditioned and fully handicapped accessible. The facility will be equipped with stage and event performance space and back of house facilities.

The size and careful design of the building footprint and structural placement allows for a broader range of vehicles that will now be able to park under the building. The interior function of the building was completed in accordance with FIBA standards and in conjunction with approved consultancy input.

Exterior design allows for multiple plazas to accommodate recreational sports and parks, including two (2) outdoor basketball courts, one (1) 5 on 5 soccer field, skateboard parks just to name a few. It caters to hosting outdoor entertainments with Security features, Police and Ambulance Zones.

The Government of Belize, through BIL, has committed to provide the residents of Belize City and the entire Country of Belize with an innovative, well equipped state-of-the-art Arena and Cultural Complex.



Side View of the New Belize Civic Center Design

Friend or Foe?

New Guatemalan President Visits PM Dean Barrow



Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales and Belize Prime Minister Dean Barrow meet and exchange gifts at the PM's Belize City Office

The newly elected President of Guatemala might have made some initial enemies among Belizeans as a result of his pre-election remarks about 'reclaiming Belize'. But that did not affect the mutual cordiality that attended his

first official visit to Belize introducing himself to Prime Minister Hon. Dean Barrow. Mr. Barrow received President-elect of the Republic of Guatemala His Excellency Jimmy Morales at the Prime Minister's Office in Belize City. President-elect Jimmy Morales

had indicated from as early as 6th November, 2015 to Belize's Ambassador, H.E. Alexis Rosado to Guatemala that he intended to pay a courtesy call on the Prime Minister as part of a visit he is making to all Heads of State and Government of SICA member countries and Mexico.

In a cordial atmosphere they both congratulated each other for their respective recent victories at the polls. Prime Minister Barrow and President-elect Morales discussed the bilateral relations between Belize

and Guatemala, including a way forward in respect of resolving our historical differences. They agreed to continue along the path set out in the Framework Agreement and Confidence Building Measures of 2005 for expanding functional cooperation between the two countries, and each committed to strengthen the processes that already exist for good neighbourly relations so that the two countries may continue to live in peace and as friends pending a legal resolution of the territorial dispute. Both sides agreed to make a greater effort to enhance cooperation and understanding at various levels, especially in areas of security, business, trade and investment.

President-elect Morales extended a special and personal invitation to Prime Minister Barrow to the presidential inauguration in January 2016 and Prime Minister expressed that he has every intention of attending.

President-elect Jimmy Morales was accompanied by



President Jimmy Morales and Prime Minister Dean Barrow Exchanging Gifts at the PM's Belize City Office

Guatemalan Foreign Minister, H.E. Carlos Raul Morales; the President-elect's Diplomatic Liaison Officer, Rodrigo Colmenares; Guatemalan Ambassador in Belize, H.E. Estuardo Roldan; and Ms. Sandra Hovel, Director of Integration. The Prime Minister was accompanied in the meeting by CEO in the Prime Minister's Office, Audrey Wallace; CEO in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Lawrence Sylvester; and Ambassador of Belize in Guatemala, Alexis Rosado.

Guatemalan Foreign Minister, H.E. Carlos Raul Morales; the President-elect's Diplomatic Liaison Officer, Rodrigo Colmenares; Guatemalan Ambassador in Belize, H.E. Estuardo Roldan; and Ms. Sandra Hovel, Director of Integration. The Prime Minister was accompanied in the meeting by CEO in the Prime Minister's Office, Audrey Wallace; CEO in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Lawrence Sylvester; and Ambassador of Belize in Guatemala, Alexis Rosado.



President Jimmy Morales and Prime Minister Dean Barrow Sharing a Cordial Handshake at the PM's Belize City Office

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HUMMINGBIRD HIGHWAY

House Passes Motion For Rehabilitation

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Hummingbird Highway. The loan is being obtained on concessionary terms at 2.75 percent per annum to be paid back over a period of 15 years starting in 2020, after a grace period of 5 years.

These funds are in addition to monies already committed by the Kuwait Fund which is sponsoring \$16 Million worth of rehabilitation on the Hummingbird Highway. They are starting with the beginning and ending sections.

The first portion is from the Belmopan Roundabout Junction to the Sibun Bridge, and the second is from Dangriga to Alta Vista. The Government of Belize has already signed a contract with a Cayo based company, A&N Construction, for these two sections.

To engineer the upgrade, the Ministry of Works hired the Kuwaiti Consulting Firm led by Owner and Managing Director Dr. Nabeel Abdul-Raheem. He and his team did extensive surveys and studies on what is the



Short-term patching on portions of the Hummingbird Highway which will become unnecessary after complete resurfacing

best way to refurbish the highway.

The Government of Belize (GOB) received a Technical Assistance (TA) Grant from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) to assist in financing the services of consultants to prepare a technical and economical feasibility study and detailed designs for rehabilitating the Hummingbird Highway, between Belmopan Roundabout Junction and Dan-

griga in the Stann Creek District.

The feasibility study and detailed design were completed by the end of 2014 and an application for funding was made by the GOB. Members of the Funding Agency visited Belize and performed their due diligence and assessment of the design and scope of works.

The project for the Rehabilitation of the Hummingbird Highway was favorably appraised

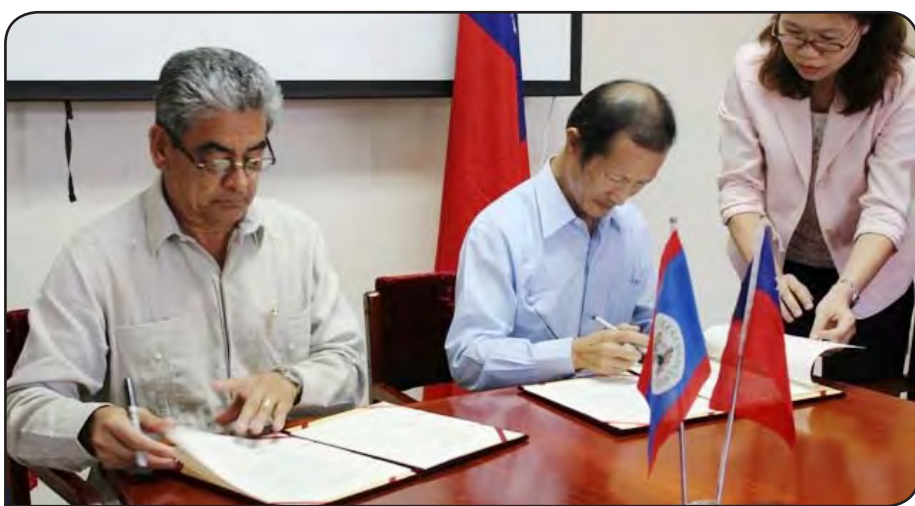
in December 2014. In February, 2015, the Board of Directors of KFAED approved the loan for the rehabilitation works. With no objection from the Funding Agency, the award for the supervision of the works was made to the consulting engineers who performed the design.

A contract was subsequently signed with Dr. Nabeel Abdul-Raheem Consultants (NARCO) in Joint Venture with Intercontinental Consultants & Technocrats (ICT) to perform the procurement of civil works contractors and the supervision of the scope of works. The Consultancy Services agreement was signed for the amount of BZ\$7.6 million.

The overall objective of the Government is to reconstruct and upgrade the Hummingbird Highway which will involve costs in civil works, land acquisition, and consultancy services and supervision; and the project will significantly contribute towards the improvement of the regional road network and the socio-economic integration between Belmopan and Dangriga.

Another Belize-Taiwan Cooperation Agreement

Genetic Improvement in Sheep and Goat Project



Signing by Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Gaspar Vega and Taiwan's Ambassador in Belize H.E. Mr. Benjamin Ho

The "Genetic Improvement for Sheep and Goat Breeding Belize-Taiwan Project" was signed on December 2, 2015 by Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Gaspar Vega in his capacity as Minister for Agriculture, and the Ambassador of the Republic of China (Taiwan) H.E. Mr. Benjamin Ho.

This is a three year project with an approved total budget of

approximately \$1.62 Million US, of which the Government of Belize will contribute \$0.35 Million US and the Taiwanese Government will finance \$1.27 M US.

The project seeks to improve and develop the genetic blood lines of both the sheep and goat livestock through natural breeding and an artificial insemination program. The main objectives to be accomplished through the project are, the

improvement and development of the National Small Ruminant Center at Central Farm; the introduction of quality breeding stocks and renewal of breeding stock so as to improve the productivity of the stock; and capacity building and technical training of the Ministry's livestock technicians and officers, and the small ruminant producers in the country including the establishment of a

traceability registry for the herd. Sheep and goat production have tremendous growth opportunity on the national market but also on the regional export market.

This project will complement other ongoing initiatives and place the industry on a firm footing for development. In particular, the traceability/registry component will provide the base on which an export market could develop.



Deputy Prime Minister of Belize and Minister of Agriculture Hon. Gaspar Vega and Taiwan Ambassador H.E. Mr. Benjamin Ho

Annual Review for Road Safety Project Opens

Main Speaker Is Minister of State for Transport



*Hon. Edmond Castro
Minster State for Transport*



*Glen McCarvell
Caribbean Development Bank*



*Erroll Gentle
CEO - Ministry of Works*



*Ruth Meighan
CEO - Ministry of Transport*

Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport, Hon. Edmond Castro was the main speaker on Monday, November 30, 2015 at the official opening for the Annual Review 2015 of the Belize Road Safety Project. The opening ceremony took place at the Biltmore Best Western Plaza Hotel.

Other speakers at the event included Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Transport and NEMO, Ms. Ruth Meighan, Chief Executive Officer from the Ministry of Works, Mr. Gentle, and Mr. Glen McCarvell from the Caribbean Development Bank.

The vision for the project is that through an integrated and comprehensive approach along the pilot safety corridor, together with demonstrated respect among all road users, there will have been a 20% reduction in the frequency and severity of traffic collisions.

In 2013, the Government of Belize received US\$7,248,000 in loan financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) towards the cost of the Belize Road Safety Project. Over the past years, many activities have taken place along



*Honourable Edmond Castro and Glen McCarvell of
Caribbean Development Bank along with other representatives*



Honourable Edmond Castro and Participants in the Annual Review



Honourable Edmond Castro and Participants in the Annual Review

the demonstration corridor (George Price Highway) that have contributed to a reduction in the frequency and severity of road traffic deaths and injuries.

The Ministry of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Commerce is the executing agency for the project, supported by a Project Management/ Road Safety Unit, and Task Leaders in the Ministries of Education, Youth and Sports; Health; Works; Transport; and The Government of Belize Press Office in implementing the project.

On November 30, 2015, Government representatives, together with their partners and stakeholders and the Caribbean Development Bank will meet to discuss the progress that has been made to date, and make plans for the continuation of the focused road safety initiatives. Small booths will showcase some of the results to date.

A news release from the Road Safety Project states, "We need to continue the ongoing battle to prevent needless death through drinking and driving, speeding, texting and driving, overtaking on curves, overtaking on double solid lines or unsafe places, or not wearing seat-belts or helmets or adequate protective gears to shield the brain."



Honourable Edmond Castro at Head Table, flanked by Ministry CEOs, CDB Representatives and other officials at the opening



Participants at the Opening of the Annual Review 2015 for the Road Safety Project at Biltmore Best Western Plaza Hotel

Leader Of Free World Addresses Terrorism

US PRESIDENT DELIVERS SPEECH FROM OVAL OFFICE

Good evening. On Wednesday, 14 Americans were killed as they came together to celebrate the holidays. They were taken from family and friends who loved them deeply. They were white and black; Latino and Asian; immigrants and American-born; moms and dads; daughters and sons. Each of them served their fellow citizens and all of them were part of our American family.

Tonight, I want to talk with you about this tragedy, the broader threat of terrorism, and how we can keep our country safe.

The FBI is still gathering the facts about what happened in San Bernardino, but here is what we know. The victims were brutally murdered and injured by one of their coworkers and his wife. So far, we have no evidence that the killers were directed by a terrorist organization overseas, or that they were part of a broader conspiracy here at home. But it is clear that the two of them had gone down the dark path of radicalization, embracing a perverted interpretation of Islam that calls for war against America and the West. They had stockpiled assault weapons, ammunition, and pipe bombs. So this was an act of terrorism, designed to kill innocent people.

Our nation has been at war with terrorists since al Qaeda killed nearly 3,000 Americans on 9/11. In the process, we've hardened our defenses — from airports to financial centers, to other critical infrastructure. Intelligence and law enforcement agencies have disrupted countless plots here and overseas, and worked around the clock to keep us safe. Our military and counterterrorism professionals have relentlessly pursued terrorist networks overseas — disrupting safe havens in several different countries, killing Osama bin Laden, and decimating al Qaeda's leadership.

Over the last few years, however, the terrorist threat has evolved into a new phase. As we've become better at preventing complex, multifaceted attacks like 9/11, terrorists turned



United States President Barack Obama in the Oval Office

to less complicated acts of violence like the mass shootings that are all too common in our society. It is this type of attack that we saw at Fort Hood in 2009; in Chattanooga earlier this year; and now in San Bernardino. And as groups like ISIL grew stronger amidst the chaos of war in Iraq and then Syria, and as the Internet erases the distance between countries, we see growing efforts by terrorists to

day party like the one in San Bernardino. I know we see our kids in the faces of the young people killed in Paris. And I know that after so much war, many Americans are asking whether we are confronted by a cancer that has no immediate cure.

Well, here's what I want you to know: The threat from terrorism is real, but we will overcome it. We will destroy ISIL and any other organiza-

“The threat from Terrorism is real; but we will overcome it...We will prevail by being strong and smart; resilient and relentless.”

poison the minds of people like the Boston Marathon bombers and the San Bernardino killers.

For seven years, I've confronted this evolving threat each morning in my intelligence briefing. And since the day I took this office, I've authorized U.S. forces to take out terrorists abroad precisely because I know how real the danger is. As Commander-in-Chief, I have no greater responsibility than the security of the American people. As a father to two young daughters who are the most precious part of my life, I know that we see ourselves with friends and coworkers at a holi-

tion that tries to harm us. Our success won't depend on tough talk, or abandoning our values, or giving into fear. That's what groups like ISIL are hoping for. Instead, we will prevail by being strong and smart, resilient and relentless, and by drawing upon every aspect of American power.

Here's how. First, our military will continue to hunt down terrorist plotters in any country where it is necessary. In Iraq and Syria, airstrikes are taking out ISIL leaders, heavy weapons, oil tankers, infrastructure. And since the attacks in Paris, our closest allies — including France, Ger-

many, and the United Kingdom — have ramped up their contributions to our military campaign, which will help us accelerate our effort to destroy ISIL.

Second, we will continue to provide training and equipment to tens of thousands of Iraqi and Syrian forces fighting ISIL on the ground so that we take away their safe havens. In both countries, we're deploying Special Operations Forces who can accelerate that offensive. We've stepped up this effort since the attacks in Paris, and we'll continue to invest more in approaches that are working on the ground.

Third, we're working with friends and allies to stop ISIL's operations — to disrupt plots, cut off their financing, and prevent them from recruiting more fighters. Since the attacks in Paris, we've surged intelligence-sharing with our European allies. We're working with Turkey to seal its border with Syria. And we are cooperating with Muslim-majority countries — and with our Muslim communities here at home — to counter the vicious ideology that ISIL promotes online.

Fourth, with American leadership, the international community has begun to establish a process — and time-line — to pursue cease-fires and a political resolution to the Syrian war. Doing so will allow the Syrian people and every country, including our allies, but also countries like Russia, to focus on the common goal of destroying ISIL — a group that threatens us all.

This is our strategy to destroy ISIL. It is designed and supported by our military commanders and counterterrorism experts, together with 65 countries that have joined an American-led coalition. And we constantly examine our strategy to determine when additional steps are needed to get the job done. That's why I've ordered the Departments of State and Homeland Security to review the visa *Waiver program under which the female terrorist in San Bernardino originally came to this country. And that's why

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Leader Of Free World Addresses Terrorism

US PRESIDENT DELIVERS SPEECH FROM OVAL OFFICE

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I will urge high-tech and law enforcement leaders to make it harder for terrorists to use technology to escape from justice.

Now, here at home, we have to work together to address the challenge. There are several steps that Congress should take right away.

To begin with, Congress should act to make sure no one on a no-fly list is able to buy a gun. What could possibly be the argument for allowing a terrorist suspect to buy a semi-automatic weapon? This is a matter of national security.

We also need to make it harder for people to buy powerful assault weapons like the ones that were used in San Bernardino. I know there are some who reject any gun safety measures. But the fact is that our intelligence and law enforcement agencies — no matter



US President Barack Obama delivering address from the Oval Office

these are the steps that we can take together to defeat the terrorist threat. Let me now say a word

“I am confident we will succeed in this mission, because we are on the right side of History.”

how effective they are — cannot identify every would-be mass shooter, whether that individual is motivated by ISIL or some other hateful ideology. What we can do — and must do — is make it harder for them to kill.

Next, we should put in place stronger screening for those who come to America without a visa so that we can take a hard look at whether they’ve traveled to war-zones. And we’re working with members of both parties in Congress to do exactly that.

Finally, if Congress believes, as I do, that we are at war with ISIL, it should go ahead and vote to authorize the continued use of military force against these terrorists. For over a year, I have ordered our military to take thousands of air-strikes against ISIL targets. I think it’s time for Congress to vote to demonstrate that the American people are united, and committed, to this fight.

My fellow Americans,

about what we should not do.

We should not be drawn once more into a long and costly ground war in Iraq or Syria. That’s what groups like ISIL want. They know they can’t defeat us on the battlefield. ISIL fighters were part of the insurgency that we faced in Iraq. But they also know that if we occupy foreign lands, they can maintain insurgencies for years, killing thousands of our troops, draining our resources, and using our presence to draw new recruits.

The strategy that we are using now — airstrikes, Special Forces, and working with local forces who are fighting to regain control of their own country — that is how we’ll achieve a more sustainable victory. And it won’t require us sending a new generation of Americans overseas to fight and die for another decade on foreign soil.

Here’s what else we cannot do. We cannot turn against one another by letting this fight

be defined as a war between America and Islam. That, too, is what groups like ISIL want. ISIL does not speak for Islam. They are thugs and killers, part of a cult of death, and they account for a tiny fraction of more than a billion Muslims around the world — including millions of patriotic Muslim Americans who reject their hateful ideology. Moreover, the vast majority of terrorist victims around the world are Muslim. If we’re to succeed in defeating terrorism we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies, rather than push them away through suspicion and hate.

That does not mean denying the fact that an extremist ideology has spread within some Muslim communities. This is a real problem that Muslims must confront, without excuse. Muslim leaders here and around

“Let us not forget that Freedom is more Powerful than Fear”

the globe have to continue working with us to decisively and unequivocally reject the hateful ideology that groups like ISIL and al Qaeda promote; to speak out against not just acts of violence, but also those interpretations of Islam that are

incompatible with the values of religious tolerance, mutual respect, and human dignity.

But just as it is the responsibility of Muslims around the world to root out misguided ideas that lead to radicalization, it is the responsibility of all Americans — of every faith — to reject discrimination. It is our responsibility to reject religious tests on who we admit into this country. It’s our responsibility to reject proposals that Muslim Americans should somehow be treated differently. Because when we travel down that road, we lose. That kind of divisiveness, that betrayal of our values plays into the hands of groups like ISIL. Muslim Americans are our friends and our neighbors, our co-workers, our sports heroes — and, yes, they are our men and women in uniform who are willing to die in defense of our country. We have to remember that.

My fellow Americans, I am confident we will succeed in this mission because we are on the right side of history. We were founded upon a belief in human dignity — that no matter who you are, or where you come from, or what you look like, or what religion you practice, you are equal in the eyes of God and equal in the eyes of the law.

Even in this political season, even as we properly debate what steps I and future Presidents must take to keep our country safe, let’s make sure we never forget what makes us exceptional. Let’s not forget that freedom is more powerful than fear; that we have always met challenges — whether war or depression, natural disasters or terrorist attacks — by com-

ing together around our common ideals as one nation, as one people. So long as we stay true to that tradition, I have no doubt America will prevail.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

Venezuela's Socialist Party Loses

Worst Election Defeat for Party Founded By Hugo Chavez

Five hours after polling ended, the National Electoral Council announced the opposition had won 99 seats. President Maduro has admitted defeat, recognising "these adverse results".

It is the worst-ever defeat for the leftist movement founded by former leader Hugo Chavez in 1999. The Socialists have gained 46 seats, with an-



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro-Moros

other 22 yet to be declared. Results arrived much later than expected, five hours after polls closed. Fireworks erupted over the capital, Caracas, soon after.

Venezuela has been hit hard by the continuing low price of oil, its main export. It also has the continent's highest inflation rate.

Mr. Maduro has blamed the situation on an "economic war" waged by the opposition.

\$30 MILLION FOR TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

GOVERNMENT PASSES SUSTAINABLE TOURISM II LOAN MOTION



Ongoing Development and Construction on one of Belize's most popular Island Tourism Destinations

One of two loan motions tabled and passed at the first business session of the House of Representatives was one for a loan of US \$15 Million (\$30 Million Belize) from the Inter-American Development Bank, called the Sustainable Tourism Program II Loan Motion, 2015.

The Government has approached the Bank for financial assistance in execution of the project, which is intended to increase the tourism sector's contribution to national, sustainable and resilient socio-economic development.

The goals consist of undertaking investments geared towards diversifying the tour-

ism product in Corozal, Cayo, Caye Caulker, and Toledo, enhancing tourism services and experiences and increasing tourism expenditure, employment and income; promoting disaster and climate resilient tourist destinations and environmental sustainability; and strengthening of national and local capacity

for sector policy, destination planning and management.

The monies will be disbursed over a period of Five (5) Years from the effective date of the loan.

It is a long-term concessional loan, which extends over a repayment period of twenty Five (25) years, with a grace period of 5 ½ years.

MORE BOOTS - MORE WHEELS

NEW VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Minister of National Security Honorable John Saldivar handing over keys for new vehicles to Commissioner Allen Whyllie



Designated Drivers pose with the New Vehicles at the Police Headquarters Compound in the City of Belmopan

The Police Department which has been consciously and steadily increasing the number of boots on the ground through regular new recruitment, is also consistently expanding its vehicular fleet, adding new wheels for better

mobility and quicker response to crime. The Government of Belize, through the Ministries of Finance and National Security, has purchased 10 new patrol vehicles for the Belize Police Department at a cost of BZ\$280,000. The vehicles were

officially handed over to the Police Department on November 11, at the Belmopan Police Station. The vehicles are being distributed to the formations in Belize City, Ladyville, Belmopan, Dangriga, San Ignacio, the Intermediate Southern Formation (Independence

Village) and the Special Patrol Unit (headquartered in Belmopan). Minister of National Security Hon. John Saldivar presented the keys to Commissioner of Police Allen Whyllie, who received them on behalf of the Belize Police Department.

CLIMATE WORLD SUMMIT IN PARIS

Addressing the twin threats of global warming and extremist violence, the largest group of world leaders ever to stand together kicked off two weeks of high-stakes climate talks outside Paris on Monday, saying that by striking an ambitious deal to cut emissions they can show terrorists what countries can achieve when they are united.

The meeting, which includes more than 150 heads

of state and representatives of 195 governments, comes just two weeks after militants linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) killed 130 people around Paris.

Fears of more attacks have prompted extra-high security and a crackdown on environmental protests - and threaten to eclipse longer-term concerns about rising seas and increasingly extreme weather linked to man-made global warming.

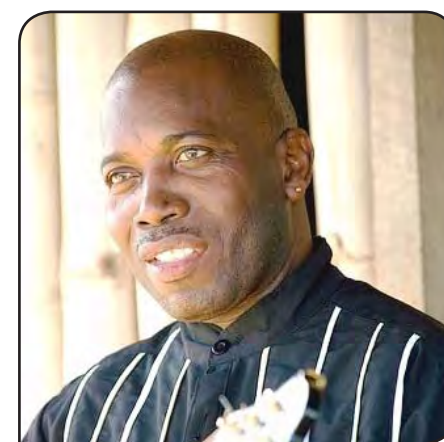
"The challenge of an in-

ternational meeting has never been so great because it's the future of the planet, the future of life," French President Francois Hollande said after a moment of silence for attack victims in France, Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia and Mali.

"There are two big global challenges that we must face," he added, urging leaders to create a world free from both environmental destruction and extremist violence.

(Reprinted from CBS News)

Remembering A Belizean Legend



Andy Vivian Palacio (Dec 2, 1960 - Jan 19, 2008)

Last week, we observed the birthday of Belizean music legend Andy Vivian Palacio.

Palacio was born December 2, 1960 in the coastal village of Barranco, where he was also raised. He worked briefly as a teacher before turning to music. Andy received the award for "Best New Artist" at the Caribbean Music Awards in 1991, and was posthumously bestowed the BBC Award for World Music in the Americas Category.

Andy Palacio died almost eight years ago, on January 19, 2008, but his spirit lives on through his impressive body of works, and through the Belizean musical ambassadors called 'Garifuna Collectives', which he was instrumental in forming.



French President Francois Hollande among other world leaders at the world summit in Paris

Flood Relief for Belize River Valley

Honorable Edmond Castro and NEMO to the Rescue



Hon. Edmond Castro on the flooded Flowers Bank Access Road

As noted in an article elsewhere in this edition, Minister of State and wellbeing of Belizeans affected countrywide were being looked after, communities in his own con-

responsibility to respond to their needs and ensure their well-being. Again, on flooding, were unable to make it out of their village to purchase groceries.



Edmond Castro flanked by NEMO Belize Rural Chairman Calbert Budd, Flowers Bank Chairman Clinton Rhaburn and other residents

both counts, Castro did not fail to deliver. After an initial tour up river with the BDF, Castro led a convoy

The convoy included the NEMO National Coordinator himself, Colonel Shelton DeFour, and



Food stuff unloaded at the Community Center in Flowers Bank

with new responsibilities for National Emergency Management, Hon. Edmond Castro, had his baptism the literal way, not by fire, but constituency of Belize Rural North were also suffering the effects of the flooding. As Minister of National Emergency Man-



Hon. Edmond and Miss Roselle, a senior resident of Flowers Bank

into the riverside village of Flowers Bank delivering foodstuff to villagers who, as a result of the chronic

Belize District Rural Coordinator Calbert Budd. The packages of food stuff

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Hon. Edmond Castro interviewed by Media on banks of flooded river

by water. Well, even as he was on the ground personally ensuring that the needs management and Area Representative for Belize Rural North, he had the double



Edmond Castro, Flowers Bank Chairman Clinton Rhaburn & others

Flood Relief for Belize River Valley

Honorable Edmund Castro and NEMO to the Rescue

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Speaking to national television reporters from delivered included staples like Flour, Rice, Beans, Love TV and Channel 7



Edmond Castro flanked by Flowers Bank Chairman Clinton Rhaburn, NEMO Belize Rural Coordinator Calbert Budd and others

Sugar, Oil and Milk. Because there is no grocery store in Flowers Bank, and because the access road News, Castro emphasized his responsibility to his own people in Belize Rural North as their Area Representa-



Edmond Castro and a resident of Scotland Halfmoon

was largely impassable, residents were unable to leave the village to stock on these basic food items. tive, while acknowledging his duty to the entire Nation as Minister of National Emergency Management.



Two residents thankful for the food stuff distributed



A van full with Food Stuff headed to Flowers Bank

After leaving Flowers Belize River Valley area, Bank, Castro and the NEMO Team took some food stuff but when it does, the condition normally persists



NEMO Belize Rural Coordinator Calvert Budd in Scotland Halfmoon

into Texas Road in Scotland Half Moon, where residents were also experiencing the effects of flooding. for a relatively long period because in these areas the Belize River is at what is referred to in Geography as the 'old stage'.

When there is excess rainfall in the West, never give us more than



Flowers Bank Chairman Clinton Rhaburn interviewed by the Media

it normally takes around 5 to 7 days before flood waters make it down to the we can bear", "Castro told his people. "Together we will weather this storm!"

IMPROVING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hon. Castro Visits NEMO Headquarters Nationwide

NEMO BELIZE DISTRICT

Accompanied by his Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of National Emergency Management and Transport, Miss Ruth Meighan, measures to upgrade their physical facilities and human capacity to improve service to the people of Belize District guaranteeing their safety and wellbeing. He



National Emergency Minister Honorable Edmond Castro and NEMO Belize District Regional Coordinator Kevin Pollard

and NEMO National Coordinator Shelton DeFour, Minister of State for NEMO, Honorable Edmond Castro on Wednesday, November 25, 2015 visited the Belize District NEMO Headquarters located at the Transport Building in Belize City. Having done a quick assessment, he says they will be implementing

expressed thanks to the Belize District Regional Coordinator Kevin Pollard for holding the fort, and to all the personnel from the



CEO Ruth Meighan, Hon. Edmond Castro, NEMO National Coordinator Shelton DeFour, Belize Dist. Regional Coordinator Kevin Pollard

various departments and agencies, as well as community volunteers, who continue to perform such vital functions towards the overall safety and wellbeing of the people.



Belize Regional Coordinator Kevin Pollard, Hon. Edmond Castro, National Coordinator Shelton DeFour, CEO Ruth Meighan

NEMO AMBERGRIS CAYE

On Wednesday, November 25, 2015, Minister with new responsibilities for National Emergency

Hon. Castro expressed gratitude and congratulations to the NEMO Coordinator in that area, Timrose Augustine,



Honorable Edmond Castro and CEO Ruth Meighan welcomed by Ambergris Caye NEMO Coordinator Timrose Augustine

Management, Honorable Edmond Castro visited the NEMO Headquarters in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, accompanied

for holding the fort. He also thanked all the public servants and volunteers in the area for continuing to execute such an



Honourable Edmond Castro and CEO Ruth Meighan with Ambergris Caye NEMO Coordinator Timrose Augustine

by his Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of National Emergency Management and Transport, Miss Ruth Meighan.

important mission, looking after the safety and wellbeing of the people and communities in times of emergency and disaster.



CEO for NEMO and Transport in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye conversing with local NEMO Coordinator Timrose Augustine

IMPROVING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hon. Castro Visits NEMO Headquarters Nationwide

NEMO COROZAL DISTRICT

After leaving Flowers Bank where he and officials from the National Emergency Management Organization delivered food stuff to residents new responsibilities for National Emergency Management, took the opportunity to thank Mr. Levy and all the other public officers and volunteers for their dedica-



Hon. Edmond Castro with Corozal NEMO Coordinator Willard Levy

affected by chronic flooding, Hon. Edmond Castro travelled north to Corozal, where he visited the NEMO Corozal Headquarters coordinated by Willard 'Taxi' Levy.

tion and selfless service in continuing to look after the wellbeing of the people in this most northern district.

He said he and his Ministry will be working



Willard 'Taxi' Levy
Corozal NEMO Coordinator



Hon. Edmond Castro
NEMO Minister of State

There he was joined by NEMO National Coordinator, Colonel Shelton DeFour. Honorable Edmond Castro, as Minister of State with

closely with them and the entire team countrywide to further improve the quality of service delivered in times of emergency and disaster.



Corozal NEMO Coordinator Willard Levy, Hon. Edmond Castro and NEMO National Coordinator Colonel Shelton DeFour

NEMO ORANGE WALK

While in the North on Friday November 25, 2015, Minister of State with responsibility for National Emergency Management, Hon. Edmond Castro,

the Belize Government's partnership with the United States.

Hon. Castro expressed congratulations and gratitude to Mr. Aragon and all the public officers and volun-



NEMO National Coordinator Sjelton De Four, Orange Walk Coordinator Elodio Aragon Sr; Hon. Edmond Castro

visited the NEMO Headquarters in Orange Walk and met with the regional coordinator there, Elodio Aragon Sr. The Honorable Edmond Castro was again joined

teers who represent the various departments and agencies making up NEMO Orange Walk and the Northern Region.

He said that together



Elodio Aragon Senior
O. Walk NEMO Coordinator



Hon. Edmond Castro
NEMO Minister of State

by NEMO National Coordinator, Colonel Shelton DeFour.

They discussed, among other things, the physical infrastructure, including a new building which is currently under construction, funded through

with the rest of the national team, they will work hard to continue improving the execution of this most important function in looking after the safety and wellbeing of our Belizean people and communities.



NEMO National Coordinator Shelton DeFour and Orange Walk NEMO Coordinator Elodio Aragon Sr

BAPTISM BY WATER

New National Emergency Minister Hits The Ground Running



Hon. Edmond Castro at Bladen Bridge - River Flooded

In the wake of the United Democratic Party's third consecutive general election victory, Prime Minister Dean Barrow named the new Cabinet on Monday, November 16, 2015. The only three-time area representative on the government side who did not receive a full ministry this time around, Edmond Castro had, as acknowledged by the Prime Minister himself, expressed some initial dissatisfaction.

National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). Heavy rainfall, which commenced around the middle of the week, had by Saturday resulted in serious flooding in various parts of the country, especially in the South where hundreds of persons were displaced from their homes and had to be moved into shelters. NEMO kicked into action immediately, mobilizing personnel from the relevant government

He proceeded to Dangriga for a meeting with, and briefing by NEMO Dangriga, constituted by representatives

being of the families displaced. Thanks to his personal intervention, the one family that remained in the shelter re-



Hon. Edmond Castro inside shelter at Bella Vista

from various departments and agencies, as well as Area Representative Hon. Frank Mena and Mayor Francis Humphreys. Apprised of the situation

ceived additional relief material within an hour from the NEMO Independence Warehouse. Hon. Castro travelled further south where he attend-



Hon. Edmond Castro meeting with NEMO Dangriga

He was, nevertheless, assigned additional responsibilities as a Minister of State, and he immediately embarked upon discharging those duties with his usual vigour. One of his new assignments was the responsibility for National Emergency Management. And before the ink could dry on the paper he had signed at the swear-in ceremony presided over by the Governor General, Castro would be pressed into active duty as Minister of State with responsibility for the

departments and agencies it encompasses, along with local volunteers in the communities affected. A characteristically hands-on politician, Hon. Edmond Castro was himself immediately on the ground. After making his rounds through his own constituency of Belize Rural North and the Cayo District on Saturday, Castro arrived in the South on Sunday. In Stann Creek, he visited the village of Sarawee, which had been affected by flash flooding. Thankfully, the deluge had already subsided in that community.



Hon. Edmond Castro in Bella Vista Village

in Cowpen Village, where a main culvert had collapsed and a few families had to be sheltered, he stopped in at that village to see for himself the physical damage wrought, and to ensure the well-

ed a mid-morning session with NEMO Punta Gorda, chaired by local coordinator Kenton Parham, and also attended by current Mayor Fern Gutierrez and former

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Hon. Edmond Castro in Bladen Village

BAPTISM BY WATER

New National Emergency Minister Hits The Ground Running

Continued from Page 14

Mayor Floyd Lino. He then visited the village of Golden Stream,

had to be sheltered at the local Roman Catholic Church and the Baptist Church. There the relief efforts featured an effective part-



Hon. Edmond Castro at the Shelter in Bella Vista

where 20 homes occupied by 113 persons were affected by flooding. There, he met the local shelter coordinator and a medical team that was dispatched to the various

nership among NEMO representatives from the various government departments and agencies, missionaries and educators. Minister of State, Hon. Ed-



Hon. Edmond Castro at Shelter in Bladen Village

communities to address health issues related to the flooding.

Castro and his team moved on to Bladen, where flooding had impacted almost 150 persons making up 29 families who

mond Castro completed his Monday working tour in Bella Vista Village where NEMO personnel from the various departments and agencies were providing essential relief services for close



Hon. Edmond Castro inside Shelter in Bladen Village



Hon. Edmond Castro at affected home in Golden Stream Village

to 100 persons from 15 families also displaced by the floods. In that community, Belize Defence Force personnel were particularly helpful in various ways, including the provision of hot meals for residents occupying the shelter.

Other communities affected in Toledo included Trio, where 26 families amounting to 115 persons had to be evacuated from their inundated homes, as well as Big Falls and San Miguel.

In addition to the timely advisories from the National

Even before visiting them, Castro was advising the farmers, including those in his own constituency, to take proactive measures to move their livestock to higher grounds in anticipation of the flooding which was bound to eventually arrive in the area.

When disaster strikes, there's no telling what will be the full extent of its impact, but with an effective National Emergency Management Organization and a hands-on political leader like Hon. Edmond Cas-



Hon. Edmond Castro meeting with NEMO Toledo

Emergency Organization, Hon. Edmond Castro kept the nation informed and focused through his regular real-time interventions via National Radio and Television, as well as Social Media.

Returning to his own constituency by Tuesday Morning, Castro joined the BDF and NEMO national and local personnel on an up-river tour of communities in the Belize River Valley Area, where livestock was being impacted by flood waters which had worked their way down through the Old Belize River.

tro in charge, those affected will certainly be assisted and enabled to cope in a way that really makes a substantial difference.

For the new Minister of State with responsibility for NEMO, it was truly a baptism by water; and by all accounts, he passed the test with flying colors.

CAPITAL WEEKLY
*From The Heart Of The Nation
 To The Soul Of The People*

PAYING RESPECT – PROVIDING RESOURCES

PM Barrow Addresses Garinagu in Dangriga

Prime Minister Dean Barrow was in Dangriga for Garifuna Settlement Day November 19, 2015, and he brought good tidings for the Garinagu. He paid respect to the Garifuna People, extolling their legendary leaders such as Chatuye and Thomas Vincent Ramos, and he congratulated the Garinagu for their continuing invaluable contribution to the Nation of Belize.

The PM also put the money where his mouth is, committing public funds to pay for a bust of

ment of Belize will be pleased to make a significant contribution towards the balance of Okeke's fees; and I only don't say that we will pay all of it because I must reserve some funds in particular for the Gullisi Primary School. There is nothing more important with respect to Belize's cultural front than the retention of the Garifuna language. We cannot afford to lose that language, and I fear that with the onslaught of modernity, too many Garinagu children are not being brought up



Prime Minister Dean Barrow greeted by President of the National Garifuna Council (NGC) Senior Superintendent Robert Mariano

Thomas Vincent Ramos produced by sculpture Stephen Okeke, and to assist the Gullisi Primary School.

In his address, the Prime Minister remarked, "I know that there is a bust of Thomas Vincent Ramos that has been done by Mr. Okeke, and it seems that there is some difficulty with finding the funds to pay Okeke. The Govern-

ment to speak the language. Retrieval and preservation must continue to be watchwords, and in that context, it pleases me greatly to commit a significant contribution to the Gullisi Primary School."

We join the PM in paying our respect to the Garifuna people, and we believe the funds committed are a good and worthy investment!

Six New Ambulances Acquired



Hon. Pablo Marin handing over the new Ambulances

The Ministry of Health has added six new ambulances to its national fleet. The ambulances are being posted in Punta Gorda, San Antonito, Independence, Orange Walk, Dangriga and San Ignacio/Benque Viejo. They were officially handed over to the regional managers and administrators of the respective hospitals

and polyclinics by Minister of Health Pablo Marin. In a press release, the Ministry of Health said the procurement of the new ambulances is in line with its efforts to ensure an effective health system throughout the country, pro-actively scaling up and maintaining regional health clinics and hospitals to meet the nationwide demands of a growing population.



The six new ambulances acquired by the Ministry of Health

At The Center of Robust House Debate

Continued from Page 1

specifically the Jalacte area, Faber spontaneously countered by reminding him that even as he spoke, the paving of the highway from 'The Dump' to Jalacte was being splendidly executed. Faber noted that Requena's best act has been to list out names of villages in Toledo West in an effort to impress and confound those who might not be knowledgeable of those communities. "I know what I am speaking about because, as Minister of Education, I have visited all those villages," Faber contended.

A four-time area representative, Patrick Faber is still one of the youngest members of the House of Representative, and he is clearly coming into his own. The impressive lineup on the



Hon. Wilfred 'Sedi' Elrington and John Saldivar, two of the most seasoned debaters in the House, alongside the master communicator himself, Hon. Dean Barrow, and the young lion from Collet, Hon. Patrick Faber

Government side featuring the young 'Lion from Collet' alongside other seasoned members, such as the master communica-

tor himself, Prime Minister Dean Barrow, and a re-configured and reinvigorated Opposition on the other side, will make for some of

the most robust and balanced debating that will hopefully strengthen our Democracy over the next five years. Stay tuned!