

# STAR



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

No. 227

Sunday, May 9, 2010

Price \$1.00

## BAPTIST FACING SEVEN CRIMINAL CHARGES

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo, Friday, May 07, 2010:**

After many months on the down and low, one of those apparent gang related shootings broke the silence of the almost midnight hour on Salazar Street in Santa Elena on Sunday, May 02, 2010.

Investigations revealed that at approximately 11:50 that Sunday night, **Maynor Galindo**, 21 Belizean labourer of a Perez Street address in Santa Elena Town had just exited the enclosed Santa Elena Football field and was driving his black Toyota Corolla car with license plates CY-C28544 on Salazar Street when he saw a male person in dark clothing approaching the vehicle. The person pulled out a gun

and fired a single shot at the vehicle smashing a back glass. Galindo sped off towards the Western Highway with the gunman firing a barrage of bullets at the moving car.

At the time of the incident, Galindo was accompanied by **Justin Gordon**, 21 Belizean, unemployed and **Mowava Myvette**, 18, both residing at #187 Western Highway, in that area known as Hot Point.

It did not take long for Galindo to realize that the two passengers were injured and so he sped off to the San Ignacio Community Hospital where Gordon was treated for three gunshot wounds, one each to the right hand and right foot and another



**The Accused, Henry Baptist, 30,**

## Police And The Army Stand-Off Captain L. Cutkelvin Saves The Day

**BENQUE VIEJO TOWN, Cayo District, Thursday, May 06, 2010:**

An almost three hours stand-off between the Police and the Army on Monday, May 03, 2010 at the police station in Benque Viejo Town could have turned real ugly had it not been for the intervention of a level headed Army Captain.

The incident precipitating into Monday's stand-off began at approximately 4:30 pm on Sunday, May 02, 2010, when a joint team comprising soldiers of the Belize Defense

Force (**BDF**) and a policeman from the Special Patrol Unit (**SPU**) of the Belize Police Department, were patrolling along the banks of the Mopan River near the Mopan River Resort. The patrol came upon two male persons carrying boxes on their shoulders. Upon spotting the patrol, the men reportedly dropped the cargo they were carrying and ran off towards the Guatemalan side of the border. The cargo was retrieved and transported to the

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to the left side of the abdomen. Myvette was treated for a single gunshot to the right side of the hip.

The investigation led to the arrest of Henry Baptist, 30, Belizean Laborer of a Mariana Gonzalez Street address in Santa Elena Town. He has been formally charged for three counts of attempt murder, three counts of aggravated assault and two counts of wounding for injuries caused to Gordon and Myvette.

Police visited the scene where they found twenty nine expended 9 mm castings. Galindo's car was found with 14 bullet holes mainly on the passenger side.

The accused, Henry Baptist is scheduled to appear in court on Friday, May 07, 2000 where all seven charges will be read to him.



Wishing all Mothers a Blessed Mother's Day.

**Turkey Dinner Special - Sunday, May 9th**  
Roasted Turkey and Honey Glazed  
Ham with all the trimmings.

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## Offering An Opposing View

This is that section of the newspaper where editors would normally offer their views and opinions on issues which, in one way or the other, might have some bearing on the way we interact as a society. These views and opinions likewise provide readers with the unique opportunity to get an idea about some of the things that go through our minds as we labor to bring you the news while simultaneously satisfying the needs of those all important persons, agencies, and business establishments who use the medium we provide to promote their causes, products or business.

This week we will venture to offer an opposing view of the end product resulting from that unprecedented dangerous incident between the Police and the Army which dangerously lingered for almost 3 hours on the compound at the Benque Viejo Police Station on Monday, May 03, 2010.

We begin by acknowledging that the Belize Police Department is currently going through a nightmare in terms of the manner in which it is perceived by the public.

The image of the Belize Police Department is at an all time low. We are in that era where allegations of the existence of death squads within the ranks of the Department appear to be real. We are in an era where the police is suspected of being involved in other major crimes, where some in the senior ranks are threatening and pulling guns at each other, where policemen are killing policemen, where trigger happy policemen are shooting and killing innocent people, where policemen are reportedly under senior instructions to shoot to kill, where policemen are said to be engaged in the sale of guns to criminals, where policemen are said to be involved in the distribution of hard drugs.

We have had our run-ins with the police. We know first-hand, how vindictive they can be. One would therefore hardly expect us to come out swinging for the police. This is one of those unique instances where, in expressing our opinion, it would appear as if we are batting for

the police.

So here we go: The Belize Police Department is, by law, the nation's premier law enforcement/criminal investigative agency. Whenever passports go missing from the Immigration Department, the police are called in to conduct the investigation. If a vehicle or goods go missing from the Customs Department, the police are called in to investigate. If a public official is accused of embezzlement, the police are called in to conduct the investigation. If a Commission of Inquiry unearths criminal wrong doings and recommends for the matter to be passed on to the Director of Public Prosecutions for criminal proceedings, it's the police that is called in to do the investigation. When a BDF soldier goes absent without leave, it is the police that are called in to affect the initial arrest and subsequent handing over to the military. When a gun goes missing from the Army, the police are called in to investigate. When grenades go missing from the British Army, additional funding is pumped into the police intelligence unit to get them off the streets and out of the hands of criminals.

In times of peace (*the absence of war*) like the times we are currently living in, the Army is called upon to assist the police, with the police never giving up its lead law enforcement role. The situation changes however, in times of war and subsequent to the declaration of a state of emergency this is that time when the Army is called upon to take the lead role.

That incident in Benque should have never, ever escalated anywhere near the point it reached last Monday. When those two men spotted the Police/BDF patrol and abandoned the cargo they were carrying, someone automatically assumed, rightfully or not, without any investigation whatsoever, that the merchandise was un-custom goods. What about the possibility of those items being the proceeds of a burglary somewhere in Belize and those men were trying to get them across the border into Guatemala? The only agency competent in Belize to make that

determination, after due diligence/investigation is the Belize Police Department. Whenever a burglary or any crime is committed in Belize the victim's first action is to report the matter to the police. No one goes to the Customs to report a crime. No one goes to the BDF to report a crime simply because that is not their role. Therefore, in the event that those items were stolen in Belize, the only competent authority to investigate and make that initial determination is the Belize Police Department. In this case the police initial standard operational procedure would have been to send out an all points bulletin advising of the recovery of the items and request for any reported incident with possible connection to the items found. It is only after that first due diligence has been completed that a more accurate determination, devoid of assumption, could be made.

Apart from automatically assuming and labeling, as un-custom, those items found last Sunday night, someone also took it upon themselves to assume that if they were handed over to the police, the merchandise would have gone missing while in police custody.

In this instance the BDF officer was unimpeded in taking a detailed inventory of the items found. Oh how much different it would have been if they were obstructed from performing that task. Frankly, it is this writer's view that the taking of a detailed inventory and handing those items over to the police should have been the end of the army's involvement in this matter. Assuming that the Police would have stolen those items while in their care is childish and petty. Armed with a concise report of the discovery and a detailed inventory of the items, the senior command of the BDF, if it is serious about dealing with instances of police making off

with found items, could have, a few days or weeks after the discovery, requested to be informed of the final disposition of all the items and if anything was missing, a charge, on the basis of fact, could have been initiated against those responsible for any discrepancy.

Traditionally, all out-of-order discoveries on multi-agency patrols are handled by the police. If a gun is found on one of these patrols, the police, with the only national gun registry are charged with the responsibility of determining if that firearm is registered. Unaccompanied drugs encountered on patrols are handed over to the police for destruction. When a dead body is found on patrol, the BDF would never pick it up and transport it to the morgue where it belongs much less move it to their observation post and keep it there overnight like they with the items found on Sunday night. It is the police that take the lead role in handling these situations. When did this protocol change? We certainly did not get the memo. It is likewise obvious that someone might have failed in delivering a copy of that memo to Inspector Claudio Mai.

The hero in this frightening episode is **BDF Captain Cutkelvin L.** We salute you Captain for stepping in and promptly defusing that volatile situation.

In spite of the fact that, in our opinion, he rightfully stood steadfast in defending the cardinal role of the Department he serves, **Inspector Claudio Orlando Mai** emerged as the fall guy. Notwithstanding, we likewise salute you Inspector Mai, for in times of peace, the police must maintain its constitutional role as the nation's leading law enforcement agency. Allowing the army to usurp that sacred responsibility in times of peace is a first step in fostering a military state.



# Mr. Peters Is Resting In Peace

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo District, Thursday, May 06, 2010:**

**Mr. Gilbert Alexander Peters, 75**, Belizean Retiree, passed away quietly, during the early morning hours on Thursday, May 6, 2010, at home in the Trapiche Area of Santa Elena, Cayo.

Mr. Peters is survived by his wife, **Mrs. Modesta Eusey Peters**; two sons: *Dennis and Densford Peters* residing in California and New York respectively; one daughter: **Evelyn Peters** residing in Texas and one sister: **Olga Watson** residing in Belize City. He is also survived by several

grand children and great grand children as well as a host of other relatives and many friends.

Mr. Peters was born in Belize City on May 21, 1934. He migrated to the United States in 1970 where he resided and worked in California and New York. He retired in 2004 and returned to Belize to live among his wife's relatives in Trapiche where he had built his retirement home prior to relocating permanently to the land of his birth.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, May 08, 2010. The body will be received at 2:00 pm at the Baptist Church, corner George Price Avenue and Felipe Carillo Puerto Avenue, Santa Elena, for funeral services at 3:00 pm. He will be laid to rest



**Gilbert Alexander Peters, 75**

**SUNRISE: May 21, 1934**

**SUNSET: May 06, 2010**

at the Carmen Memorial Cemetery in Santa Elena.

Mr. Peters was best known of his orderly lifestyle and immaculate mode of dressing, may his soul rest in eternal peace.

## Zach Laid To Rest



**Zacharias "Zach" Garcia, 70**

**SUNRISE: Nov. 05, 1939**

**SUNSET: April 30, 2010**

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo District, Sunday, May 02, 2010:**

Funeral service was held on Sunday, May 02, 2010 at St. Ignatius Church in Santa Elena, Cayo for well known Santa Elena resident **Zacharias "Zach" Garcia**.

Zach passed away quietly at his home in Santa Elena after a short illness. He will be most remembered for his delicious hand- made ice-cream which was enjoyed by many of us.

He is predeceased by his parents **Jose and Cristina Garcia** and brother **Lorenzo Garcia**. He is survived by his children **Norma Garcia, Valentine Garcia and Rosario Garcia**. Brothers: **Jesus and Sabino Garcia**. Sister: **Mrs.**

**Orfelina Waight** and host of nieces, nephews and many friends.

Zach was laid to rest inside the Santa Rita Cemetery in San Ignacio Town.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family and we pray that his soul rests in eternal peace.

## BELIZE TOURISM BOARD BTB TOURISM NEWS

### Belize Showcased as a Destination Wedding Hotspot in California



Weddings & Honeymoon was the name of the game this past weekend as Marketing Officers Melecia Banks and Hyacinth Young represented Belize at the Wedding Salon in West Hollywood, California on Monday, May 3rd.

The Wedding Salon is a bridal tradeshow that connects brides, planners and the press with the best vendors in the industry. It features the must-have products and services from the hottest wedding and honeymoon destination and is designed for the sophisticated bride and groom.

As an exhibitor of the show, the Belize Tourism Board was able to promote itself in the Wedding Salon Directory, access the Wedding Salon Database, receive monthly lead lists for one year and become a member of the Wedding Salon Bridal Referral & Social Media Network.

Hundreds of soon-to-be wed couples made their way to the London West Hollywood Bar Room to access over 35 exhibitors showcasing wedding services and destinations with everything they would need for planning their wedding and honeymoon.

While at the Wedding Salon, the BTB also hosted innumerable couples seeking information on the destination and honeymoon opportunities, locales and packages. Additionally, the BTB had the opportunity to meet with a few wedding planners who specialize in destination weddings and sought Belize as an ideal place for their clients.



### BTB Presents the Nominees for the 10th Annual National Tourism Awards



The Belize Tourism Board publicly presented the Nominees for its 10th annual National Tourism Awards at a press conference held at the Radisson Fort George Hotel on Wednesday, May 5th 2010.

The Awards are aimed at recognizing service excellence within the tourism industry and related sectors. There are a total of thirteen Awards recognizing various categories. These are: "Hotel of the Year", "Tour Guide of the Year", "Receptive Service of the Year", "Small Hotel of the Year", "Restaurant of the Year", "Small Vendor of the Year", "Tour Operator of the Year", "Frontline Person of the Year", "Cultural Award of the Year" and "Environmental Organization of the Year". The newest addition this year is the "Destination of the Year". Nominations are closed for both the "Minister's Award" and the "Lifetime Achievement Award".

During the months of March to April the public was invited to go online and nominate individuals, organizations, associations and businesses in the respective categories. From those nominees only four semi-finalists, in all but one category, emerged. The contenders once again will rely on the public's votes to make it down to the last two semi-finalists. These semi-finalists will be invited to attend the 10th Annual National Tourism Awards set for June 10th, 2010 where the winner will be announced and honored at a special Awards Ceremony.

The BTB invites everyone to log on to <http://www.travelbelize.org/awardsvote> for a full listing of the semi-finalists and to cast their votes. Voting ends at midnight on Thursday, May 13th, 2010.



For more information on events taking place in Belize's tourism industry, please contact the Belize Tourism Board at 227-2420, via email: [btbb@btl.net](mailto:btbb@btl.net) or visit our website [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).

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# Neal Caught Red Handed Inside The School Cafe

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo District, Thursday, May 06, 2010:**

A Santa Elena male teenager was today formally arrested and charged for burglary after he was caught inside the Cafeteria at the Santa Elena Roman Catholic Primary School.

Acting upon information received at around 3:30 am on Tuesday, May 02, San Ignacio Police rushed to the school compound and directly to the cafeteria building where they detected movement inside. Further investigation led to the discovery of a damaged front door with its locking device, a padlock attached to a hasp and staple, yanked from the wooden door. Upon entering the 20X30 feet building, police came upon a male person in front of an interior window



**Christian Neal, 19**

which was opened by the removal of the screws attached to two upper hinges. The intruder was taken into

## Police And The Army Stand-Off

**Continued From Front Page**

Xunantunich Observation Post (XOP) where BDF Patrol Commander, **Sgt. G. Palacio** reported the incident by radio to the Second Infantry Battalion Headquarters at Camp Belizario in Central Farm. The message was received by the Battalion's Operations Officer, **Lt. Eric R. Neal**.

Approximately 20 minutes after receiving the report, Lt. Neal personally briefed the Battalion Commander, **Lt. Col. Steven Ortega** of the incident. Ortega reportedly instructed Neal to travel to the XOP, take an inventory of the items and hand them over the Customs Officials at the Western Border Station.

The list of fifty vehicle parts, valued at three thousand dollars include: 4 strut mounds, 4 water pumps, 1 carburetor, 1 mirror, 3 cans of wax, 7 pairs carburetor nuts and bolts, 3 air filters, 4 fuel filters, 13 master cylinder kits, 3 antennae, 4 halogen bulbs and 3 Epoxy Glue

At approximately 7:45 the following morning Neal accompanied by a BDF Sergeant and a Private departed the Battalion Headquarters, in a BDF Isuzu DMax pickup truck enroute to the XOP. Neal and his team arrived at around 8:30 am where they met Sgt. Palacio who directed them to the room where



**The Abandoned Items**

the items were stored. The BDF team's first challenge came when the SPU Constable attached to the patrol informed that the items are not to be moved from the XOP. Ignoring the Constable's remarks, Lt. Neal, with assistance from the Sergeant who accompanied him on the trip from the Battalion Headquarters, proceeded to take an inventory of the items. While this activity was taking place, the SPU Constable reportedly entered the room and told them that the items were not going anywhere until he was ready to take them. It was at this point that Neal informed the SPU Constable that the military had full jurisdiction over anything found on patrol and that for security purposes it was not advisable for the items to remain for any extended period at the XOP as there is a real

custody and police suspect that he might have been taking a rest before tackling the burglar bars that were behind the dismantled window. This interior section of the building is said to house the cafeteria's cooling appliances where food supplies including meats and drinks are stored.

The cafeteria has been burglarized on numerous occasions hence the installation of burglar bars which, in this instance, prevented the intruder from gaining access to the food supplies before the arrival of the police.

The intruder was transported to the police station in San Ignacio where he was identified as **Christian Neal, 19**, Belizean laborer of a Trapiche Area address in Santa Elena. Neal was formally arrested and charged with one count of burglary. He will be appearing in San Ignacio's Magistrate court on Friday, May 07, 2010.

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orders to his head station in Benque Viejo Town.

With the SPU relaxing his position, the items were loaded into the BDF DMax and the team departed the XOP at around 9:10 am.

Upon arriving at the ferry, prior to crossing, Neal reportedly briefed the BDF Ferry Post Patrol Corporal of the situation as two policemen were reportedly observed advancing

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STAR

Newspaper

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42A Western Highway,  
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starnewspaper@gmail.com

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# Robbers Lurking In The Shadow Of The Church

**SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Cayo District, Thursday, May 06, 2010:**

The hunt continues for three masked men reported to have robbed and wounded a Chinese businessman as he was closing his restaurant on Joseph Andrews Boulevard in San Ignacio Town.

At around 3:00 am on Saturday, May 01, 2010, **Ting Zhao, 45**, proprietor of Pin Mei Restaurant visited the police station in San Ignacio Town and reported that at around 1:30 that Saturday morning, he was in the process of closing his restaurant for the day.

Ting Zhao reportedly switched off the lights and was closing the main entrance door before walking upstairs to retire for the day. He was reportedly fumbling to get the right key in the lock when suddenly he felt a blow from behind and when he turned around he was confronted by three masked men one of whom had what appeared to be a 9 mm pistol with which he was pistol



whipped in the head. He was reportedly relieved of one thousand three hundred dollars in cash being the proceeds of the day's sale.

With the cash in hand, all three masked men ran off and disappeared into the darkness.

The businessman suspects that the robbers might have been monitoring his movements from the shadows of the Iglesia Evangelica Ministerios Vida church located across the boulevard from his restaurant as he waited the opportune time

to attack.

As is customary, police is asking anyone with information that could assist in this investigation to kindly contact officers from the San Ignacio Police Crimes Investigation Branch.

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HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY  
FROM THE MANAGEMENT & STAFF OF BELIZE BANK LIMITED





# Scouting Weekend In Cayo

**BY: Abel Simpson**  
**District Scout Commissioner**

The Cayo Scout Association under the leadership of Abel Simpson Sr. (District Scout Commissioner) and the District Executive is hosting an Exciting Weekend event for some 300 Scout and 30 Leaders at the Macal River Park on the weekend of May 8 & 9th under the theme - 'Cayo Mayan Extravaganza'.

The weekend will see scouts and leaders from across the country involved in activities such as: Canoeing down the Macal River, Visitation to the various Mayan archeological sites and Cave Exploration .

The opening ceremony will be held on Saturday May 8th commencing at 9:00 am. **Mayor John August** will give the welcome address and **Hon. Elvin Penner** - Minister of

Youth and Sports and Area Representative for Cayo north will give the Main Address.

Following the official opening all scouts will be participation in some field activity as previously listed.

The Sunday program will start with a church parade

officiated by **Rev. S.O. Pott** from the Nazarene Church and will be followed by a Street parade through the main streets of San Ignacio and Santa Elena. Scouts will be joined by two local marching bands of Sacred Heart College and St. Ignatius High School.

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## Your Horoscope & Lucky Numbers



### **ARIES:**

**March 22- April 20**

The coming week will take you on a materialistic spin. Money related matters keep you busy. While drafting terms of a new contract, do not ignore finer details or rely incredulously on goodwill. Some intelligent investment made in the past will yield gains. Meetings with old friends are likely. **Lucky Numbers: 03, 44, 87.**



### **TAURUS:**

**April 21 to May 21**

This is one week where you can take it easy — decimate all worrisome thoughts, banish stress and focus more on rejuvenating yourself. Most events are poised favourably at work while inflow of money looks good. Use this phase to further your good relations with people who matter. **Lucky Numbers: 05, 32, 76.**



### **GEMINI:**

**May 22 to June 21**

Learn how to delegate tasks to others and trust them, even though they may take much longer to execute the them. Also, you will be looking at alternative sources of income. Remember, the key to success in most endeavours is to maintain an even temper. **Lucky Numbers: 16, 27, 64.**



### **CANCER:**

**June 22 to July 23**

You seek company of those people who fuel your growth and stimulate you intellectually. There is a great desire in you to convert promising ideas into successes and look for motivation for growth and development from someone you idolise. **Lucky Numbers: 09, 22, 85.**



### **LEO:**

**July 24 to August 21**

Individuals born under this sign of the zodiac are likely to be in a positive frame of mind. It is a good phase to harness your creativity and apply it to your work or hobby. You have put in a lot of hard work in a few projects and from the way it seems, it might garner glory and success for you. **Lucky Numbers: 10, 61, 78.**



### **VIRGO:**

**August 22 to September 21**

A very hectic phase. Work and social activity will keep you fairly occupied. However, there could be old issues that come back to haunt you. In case you decide to take action, think twice. Do not take decisions simply because you are hurt or feel victimised. Defer your decision till you're calmer and rationally-oriented. **Lucky Numbers: 07, 36, 62.**



### **LIBRA:**

**September 22 to October 23**

Varied activities are lined up for you this week. On one hand, you seek to fulfill your worldly desires —increased assets, monetary gains, adulation from people, while on the other hand, you seek to satisfy your spiritual hunger. There is a greater harmony in your relationships; owe it to your peace of mind. **Lucky Numbers: 11, 77, 90.**



### **SCORPIO:**

**October 24 to November 21**

Sort out issues if you want to balance your life. To solve financial matters immediately, all you require is tact, firmness

and a bit of humour. Your public image as a result will climb up several notches. It will also work wonders for your personal as well as professional relations. **Lucky Numbers: 06, 48, 72.**



### **SAGITTARIUS:**

**November 22 to December 21**

You have the much required motivation as well as energy to make any professional activity a success. However, a word of caution — arrogance and being judgmental about other people could pull you down. Use available resources instead of chasing after new ones. **Lucky Numbers: 45, 68, 94.**



### **CAPRICORN:**

**December 22 to January 20**

You have to realistically define your own expectations and once this is done, you will be pleased to see the fruit of your labour. Professional success coupled with contentment in relations is in store. Halt the aimless chase for that elusive 'something' to

improve your efficiency at work. **Lucky Numbers: 12, 33, 49.**



### **AQUARIUS:**

**January 21 to February 19**

Those who are in the public eye, there is applause and adulation. People look up to you for advice and support. You may have to shoulder additional responsibility and the amount of work may grow manifold. It does spell more hours and physical exertion but will be worthwhile. **Lucky Numbers: 24, 56, 89.**



### **PISCES:**

**February 20 to March 21**

There could be a lot of public interaction this week with ceremonies at home or conferences at work. There is a lot of excitement as an engagement or a new relationship is born. Maintain cordial relations with family even if you perceive that their behaviour towards you is unreasonable. **Lucky Numbers: 42, 80, 95.**

## Mexican Participation In This Year's National Agriculture & Trade Show

**BELMOPAN, Monday, May 3, 2010:**

For the second year in a row, a large delegation from Mexico participated in the National Agriculture and Trade Show 2010.

The Mexican delegation actively participated in the show from the "Mexican Pavillion" a structured specifically constructed to facilitate open interaction with the general public.



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## Belize Es Campeon Centramericana De Bandas 2010



**Por: Alex Rios:**

**BENQUE VIEJO TOWN, Cayo, Martes, 04 Mayo, 2010:**

El Campeonato Centroamericano de bandas, se desarrolla cada año en la ciudad de Esquipulas Guatemala, este año el evento reunió a lo más granado de la música internacional, con un total de 25 bandas provenientes de la República de El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras y nuestro país de Belice.

Este año Mount Carmel Marching Band, se prometió realizar el mejor papel de la historia y lo cumplieron, dejando en claro que la practica hace al maestro, ya que en el 2009 la banda se había adjudicado el tercer lugar, pero esta temporada la banda practico como nunca, con desfallecientes practicas bajo los rayos del sol con la compañía de los padres de familia, que siempre los apoyaron.

La aventura inicio el día jueves 29 de abril cuando la banda partió de Benque Viejo del Carmen, con un solo propósito: ser campeones del Campeonato Centroamericano de bandas, los más de 60 músicos, llevaban las ansias del orgullo y de la inspiración que los caracteriza, cuando eran las 7pm el convoy beliceño compuesto de 1 autobús de 60 personas, 2 microbuses y vehículos particulares, viajaron a la cita con el destino, la ciudad de Esquipulas, Guatemala.

Viernes 30 de abril la

delegación es recibida por el comité organizador, aprovechan para visitar la catedral de Esquipulas y hacer compras, paseos y el convivio con las demás bandas, en el colegio INBECC.

Para el día sábado 1 de mayo iniciaron con el tradicional desfile con las 25 bandas participantes, para que después del recorrido iniciara la gran competencia. Pasaron 23 bandas antes que la nuestra, pero cuando Mount Carmel Marching Band, toco escena se sabía que era una banda ganadora, interpretaron en su repertorio de 6 minutos que le acreditan a cada banda, Designer Music, Cumbia Poder, Jamás Podre Olvidarte, Muévete una punta que les encanto y Man Eater, después de interpretar magistralmente su presentación, hubo que esperar minutos de adrenalina pura, minutos de nerviosismo entre todas las bandas presentes, las banderas de El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras y Belice hondeaban en silencio, nerviosismo puro, hasta que al fin se dio a los ganadores, y MOUNT CARMEL MARCHING BAND se corono Campeón Centroamericano 2010.

Esto nos llena de orgullo no solo a los Benqueños, sino también a todos y cada uno de los beliceños, que sabemos del esfuerzo y de la dedicación que han depositado estos jóvenes, en el enaltecimiento de nuestro país.

Este título enorgullece a la música de nuestro país, pero más que nada enaltece la disciplina y la dedicación de cada joven de Mount Carmel Marching Band, de los maestros, del comité de

la banda, de los padres de familia, que nunca desfallecieron ante la constante practica, ante retos y obstáculos, si, después de todas las practicas y ensayos, se adjudicaron el mejor merito a la dedicación, el mejor premio a sus sacrificios personales, a la física que tenían que poseer, a la mentalidad ganadora con la que han sobresalido, al fin pueden respirar hondo y decir con orgullo, *“Somos Campeones de Centro América”* y decirlo es fácil, pero ganarlo y demostrarlo fue difícil, ayer fue el tercer lugar, hoy 2010 Campeones!

La banda regreso de tierras chapinas el día domingo 2 de mayo por la mañana, con el trofeo que los adjudica como los únicos soberanos 2010 de las bandas de música en el istmo Centroamericano. La banda Mount Carmel regresara a una demostración completa en el mes de Julio, a la ciudad de Esquipulas, Guatemala.

Una felicitación en nombre del pueblo beliceño por ser un orgullo para nuestro país de Belice.

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# The Wife Of Murder

From: WinBelize

WINDows

Monday, May 03, 2010

Bang! Bang! Bang! I was having tea, it was late on a Tuesday evening, I was waiting for the evening news to start. I yelled for the children to come upstairs, they were out playing in the yard. After the third blast, there was silence; I could see people running to the area where the shots were coming from. I stayed put, went to the verandah as the police mobile rushed through the neighborhood with their sirens blasting. ***"Another man's life gone; and nothing will come out of it,"*** was what I said to myself. Moments later he walked through the door, this was the first time it happened. He was sweating profusely, vomiting, and shaking out of control, his eyes were dark and sunken, and he did not even look like the man I had been in love with for the past five years. He did not have to tell me anything, I already knew, his clothes had large splatters of blood on it. He started by telling me that he did not want to go to jail again, I was scared and I too started trembling, this could change our lives forever. He had been in jail many times before on other misdemeanors but he had never been charged for murder. How would I survive with our kids? I did not have a job and no other way to bring an income into the house to sustain myself and my two children. A high school drop out with no work experience, no family around, he was my world. Should I turn him in? This besieged me all night; I did not know what to do. But tomorrow would be a better day for sure, he was my breadwinner, his going to jail would be suffering for me and my children. I calmed myself down after which I noticed that he had been stabbed, so I called him to the bathroom and cleaned his wounds, I told him that he had to be strong and to hold himself together; he needed to go to bed and relax. It was a night of terror that seemed to last for days, he was up cursing at nothing, telling invisible people to leave him alone. He was running in the corner of the room hiding, he told me to tell them to go away. He was seeing the person he had just shot in the

flesh. I was scared for him, the spirits never bothered me, but he was constantly fighting with them.

A week passed and no police came to look for him, I even sent a friend of mine to the station to find out if he was wanted for anything. He was not even a suspect! I decided that I loved him and that I would keep his secret, so I was there for him whenever he needed to be held and be loved. That became the first of many other murders. I could be in the supermarket and get a call from him telling me that he needs me. I now know when he has committed a murder, I can tell from the look on his face or I can hear it in his voice. So many mothers are crying because they have lost their sons, the streets are swelling with the blood of young Black men; violence has become a way of life for many. Killing and dying is a part of life; I too pray that my sons do not fall in these streets; however, from where I live we cannot reach for the stars. I do not expect lawyers and CEOs. I just want them to live and grow-up!

Behind every good man, is a good woman; behind every notorious crime figure, well, there is a woman like me. Every day is a struggle, if I leave him, I will never be at peace; I hold this man's darkest secrets, I too am scared for my life. My soul is as dark as his, bright and beautiful sunny days do not exist anymore. All I see is darkness, sadness and regrets about a life that could have been before I met him. My smile used to bright up the room, my missing teeth has now become a constant reminder of years of abuse and neglect. I cannot speak, who is going to speak for me? I do not have two and a half children, a white picket fence and the Belizean dream. I live day-to-day, hand-to-mouth, catch and kill. My children will not receive a "quality education"; they will receive what I can afford. My children go to school hungry at times, when it rains, we get wet inside our house! I hear on the news, from our leaders that poverty and crime are related. So then why do I see the politicians and their friends filling their pockets? Can you blame us on the outside

looking in for wanting a piece of the pie? Even the crumbs will be appreciated. Until our country looks after us, its poor and the wealthy stop blaming us and not accepting responsibility for their role, the crime situation will not improve. I know that violence is not the answer, but the reality is that we too need to survive, just like you do.

## Another Highway Robbery

**SANTA ELENA TOWN, Cayo District, Monday, May 03, 2010:**

In last weekend's edition of the newspaper we warned of the apparent resurgence of robberies against pedestrians making their way along that stretch of the Western Highway between the Hawksworth Bridge and the Felipe Carillo Puerto double street in Santa Elena.

This week another such incident reportedly occurred, this time, in front of the Carillo Puerto Gas Station on the Western Highway,

Some weeks ago in the news there was a story about someone being shot in the middle of the day, people were everywhere, why is it that no witness came up to say anything. We are all poor people; our concerns include how we will get our rent paid and how we will eat. People die among us every day; it is a way of life. Give us a reason to break our silence.

Santa Elena.

**Calixto Guerra**, 25, Belizean bartender residing in the Santa Cruz area of Santa Elena Town reported that at around 3:30 am on Friday, April 30, he was walking home and upon reaching in front of the CP Gas Station he was attacked and robbed of his iPod valued at \$225; a red Samsung cellular telephone valued at \$450; and \$150 in cash. He was also relieved of the \$75 pair of black and white tennis shoe he wore, all for a total value of \$900. An arrest is yet to be made in this latest incident.



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# MINISTRY OF HEALTH

## REPORTS

### ON ITS ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2010



## MINISTRY OF HEALTH RECEIVE WORLD BANK GRANT



Signing on behalf the World Bank—Ms. Carmen Carpio and Signing on behalf of GOB - Financial Secretary, Mr. Joseph Waight

The Ministry of Health received a grant from the World Bank valued at US\$501,744.00 for an Avian and Human Influenza Detection and Response Project. The Ministry of Health will use the funds to strengthen Belize's ability to detect and respond to potential H1N1 influenza epidemic and build the overall surveillance capacity of the health system.

Funds from this short-term grant will be used to strengthen the country's ability to detect A/H1N1 by expanding and improving existing influenza surveillance activities by providing training to health professionals to work at ports of entry, establish diagnostic laboratories at air and sea ports, and acquire medical supplies for the collection of samples from probable cases.

The Ministry of Health will also use the funds to strengthen its ability to

respond to A/H1N1 by expanding its public information campaign and upgrading the national public health and medical laboratory.

According to the Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Health Dr. Peter Allen, the Ministry of Health - Government of Belize is being given the grant based on its response to the H1N1 pandemic. Prior to the H1N1 pandemic, the Ministry of Health had been collaborating closely with PAHO and other stakeholders to produce its influenza pandemic preparedness plan. Furthermore, consideration was given to the support provided through the Ministry of Health by granting emergency funds to effect mitigating measures against H1N1.

Signing on behalf of the World Bank was Ms. Carmen Carpio, Knowledge Management Officer, World Bank-Latin America and Caribbean Region and signing on behalf of the Government of Belize was Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Joseph Waight.

Financial Secretary Waight expressed gratitude on behalf of the Government and People of Belize for the opportunity the grant provides and will work according to the contractual arrangements of the grant.

The grant was signed on Monday April 26, 2010. It is expected that Belize will complete the execution of the Avian and Human Influenza Detection and Response Project by June 2011.

## OPERATION MIRACLE TAKES OFF



The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in collaboration with the Ministry of Health - Government of Belize and City and Town Councils throughout Belize has launched Operation Milagro - a humanitarian social programme geared toward providing free surgery on pterygium and cataracts for Belizeans. 71 Belizeans travelled to Venezuela April 7 - 17, 2010 receive their free eye surgery. The flight to Venezuela was free of charge. Similarly, the Government of the Republic of Venezuela provided patients with accommodations and food during their stay. Their medical care and medications was also free. On their return to Belize, several patients found that they could not afford their post surgery medication and the humanitarian mission provided medication free of charge. The medication was handed over to the coordinators for their respective districts.



## World Tuberculosis Day

The National Tuberculosis Programme, Ministry of Health commemorated World Tuberculosis Day on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March under the theme "ON THE MOVE AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS - INNOVATE TO ACCELERATE ACTION".

This year's activities included an official ceremony which was held at the Cleopatra White Polyclinic II

Compound in Belize City. Activities were held in the four health regions including talk show appearances and an open day at major public health care providers on World TB Day. The Ministry of Health places emphasis on the importance of Tuberculosis as a public health priority. Within the general population, Tuberculosis continues to be a threat since it is easily transmitted from the infected person to others through sneezing, coughing or just talking. Tuberculosis is an opportunistic infection in HIV/AIDS patients. However, Tuberculosis is easy to cure if patients adhere to the treatment.

The Ministry of Health's main objective is to alleviate, and in the long term eliminate suffering due to this disease. The Ministry of Health utilizes Information, Education and Communication, Diagnosis and Treatment, Contact Tracing and Surveillance as strategies to prevent and control the disease.

World TB Day raises awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease.

The annual event on 24 March marks the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch detected the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus. This was a first step towards diagnosing and curing tuberculosis.

## WORLD HEALTH DAY 2010



"Urbanization and Health" is the theme for World Health Day 2010. Its commemoration provided an opportunity to focus on the many health challenges related to water, environment, sanitation, violence and injury, non-communicable diseases and their risk factors including tobacco use, unhealthy diets, physical activity, harmful use of alcohol as well as the risks associated with disease outbreaks in cities and towns.

In commemoration of World Health Day 2010, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization and Belize City Council held a multi-sectoral Health Fair on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Opening ceremonies were held at Fred Westby Park, Albert Street West, Belize City.

The Ministry of Health and PAHO joined the Belize City council in cleaning and renovating the park. The official ceremony at the park was followed by the health fair where HIV Testing, Blood Pressure Monitoring, Glucose Testing and Body Mass Index were offered free of cost.

World Health Day should be seen as a symbolic day of commitment to incorporate health from multiple sectors of the population while engaging a wide scope of partners.

As part of World Health Day festivities, the global campaign entitled "1000 Cities, 1000 Lives" had been launched to encourage cities, towns, neighborhoods and local authorities to conduct health-promoting activities on or around World Health Day (the week of 7-11 April, 2010).

The goal of the 1000 Cities campaign was to open public spaces to health, for example by closing off portions of streets to motorized vehicles and opening them up to people, holding town hall meetings, and community forums, promoting more active civil society participation in local planning and governance, initiating clean-up campaigns and conducting work-place and school based health initiatives.

In 1948, the First World Health Assembly called for the creation of a "World Health Day" to mark the founding of the World Health Organization. Since 1950, World Health Day has been celebrated on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April annually. Each year a theme is selected for World Health Day that highlights a priority area of concern for the World Health Organization.

World Health Day is a worldwide opportunity to focus on key public health issues that affect the international community.



## MENTAL HEALTH TEAM VISITS MOH



A Mental Health Team from St. Vincent and the Grenadines visited Belize 19-23 April 2010 on a familiarization visit to look at the success of the Mental Health Programme of the Ministry of Health.

The team was introduced to the community mental health programme and met with consumers and the Mental Health Association. The Ministry of Health facilitated the team throughout the course of the week with activities geared toward providing an understanding the success of the programme and how it could be applied to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Resulting from the visit, technical co-operation between the two countries geared at guiding the St. Vincent and the Grenadines team in the development of a community mental health programme was developed with the Belize programme being the model.

## DENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP



The workshop "Caries Prevention for Communities in Belize" was held in Belmopan at The George Price Centre for Peace and Development from April 20-22, 2010. The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Health of Belize in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). Dentists and dental auxiliary staff from public health facilities across Belize attended the workshop.

The objective was to increase their understanding of best practices to prevent dental caries, with a focus on oral health screening, fluoride varnish for infants and young children, and the promotion of fluoride toothpaste use beginning with the eruption of the first primary tooth. Participants also worked together to develop community-based oral health plans.

## FOOD HANDLERS NOTICE

The Central Health Region, Ministry of Health informs all those persons who applied for their FOOD HANDLERS CERTIFICATION in the Belize District that their identification cards are now available at the Environmental Health Office, Central Health Region, Corner St. Joseph and St. Thomas Streets, Belize City.

Food Handlers identification cards are available for all those persons who applied up to February, 2010.

The Ministry of Health takes this opportunity to remind the general public that all persons interested in becoming certified food handlers contact their local Public Health Office, Ministry of Health and follow the guidelines to get certified:

- Have 2 passport size photos,
- Fill out an application to register for training
- Pay a \$20 fee
- Obtain a date to sit training
- Undergo training after which the person must take an exam

After passing the examination, certification is processed and an identification card is made available. Identification cards are valid for a period of one year.





# Celebrating Education Week 2010

## Sunday, May 9 to Friday, May 14



**SUNDAY, MAY 9, 2010**

*Address opening Education Week 2010-Hon. Patrick Faber, Minister of Education*  
(Radio & Television Broadcast)

**MONDAY, MAY 10, 2010**

*Quality Schools Initiative-Ministry of Education Officials*  
(Open Your Eyes Morning Show, Channel 5)

*Panelists: Mr. Alan Genitty, Mr. Nelson Longsworth, Jahmor Lopez, Mr. Margarita Gomez*

*Education Week Radio Address-Mr. Jaime Panti, BNTU National President*

*Literacy/Book Fair Day 1-Ministry of Education Literacy Unit*  
(Holy Redeemer Parish Hall)

*Ecumenical Service and Rally-BNTU Branch Level (1:30pm)*

*Focus: Literacy -Ministry of Education Literacy Unit*  
(Belize Watch, LOVE TV – to be confirmed)

*Panelists: Hon. Minister of Education, Mrs. Rose Bradley, Mrs. Carol Babb, Mr. Christopher Aird (other members of Literacy Unit as appropriate)*

**TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2010**

*Update from Task Force on Alternative Student Discipline Approaches*  
(LOVE FM 7:30 am)

*Panelists: Mrs. Dativa Martinez, Ms. Maria Zabaneh, Mrs. Darnelle Roaches, Dr. Olda Hoare*

*Appointment of Task Force on the Reform of Secondary School Financing and Curriculum-Hon. Patrick Faber, Minister of Education (2:00pm, Belize City ITVET)*

*Clean-up Campaign, Beautification-BNTU Branch Level (after school)*

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION**  
(Adele Ramos Show, KREM TV – to be confirmed) – 7:30 PM

*Panelists: George Frazer (BNTU), Dr. Ellajean Gillett, Ms. Brenda Armstrong, Mr. Christopher Aird, Mr. David Leacock, Hon. Patrick Faber*

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2010**

*Update on Subsidy to Needy High School Students and Efforts to increase access to secondary school in the Southern Districts-Ministry of Education Officials*  
(KREM/WUB – to be confirmed) 7:30 am

*Panelists: Mr. David Leacock, Mr. Alan Genitty*

*Literacy/Book Fair Day 2-Ministry of Education Literacy Unit*  
(Holy Redeemer Parish Hall)

*Launch of Distributed/e-Learning pilot project at Salvation Army School-Hon. Patrick Faber, Rotary Clubs of Belize & Alberta Canada, Belize Natural Energy and Belize Telemedia Limited (2:00pm)*

*Visit to Retired Teachers/Citizens, Hospital, Children Home, KOLBE Foundation-BNTU Branch Level (after school)*

**THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2010**

***Focus: Teacher Education, WAVE Radio Morning Show***

*Panelists: Mrs. Cecilia Ramirez Smith, Ms. Pat Bennet (BBTE Chair), Mr. Jaime Panti (BNTU)*

*Outstanding Teachers Award Ceremony-Belize City (Belize City ITVET)*  
(7:00 pm)

**FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2010**

***Teachers' Day***

*Sporting, Cultural and Other Activities at District/Branch Level*



# Police And The Army Stand-Off

Continued From Page 4

towards the BDF vehicle with a Police DMax pickup truck reportedly blocking the ferry's exit on the other side of the river along with three policemen on motorcycles standing near the parked police vehicle.

One of the Police Constables reportedly approached and eventually convinced Neal to make a first stop at the Benque Viejo police station to at least brief the Police Officer Commanding the Sub Formation, **Inspector Claudio Orlando Mai**, of the situation.

On the journey to the Benque Viejo police station, the BDF DMax carrying the cargo, made a detour for a brief stop at the Succotz police station where 2 soldiers were dropped off. At around 9:30 am the BDF vehicle arrived at the police station in Benque Viejo Town where Neal proceeded to Mai's upstairs office where he reportedly encountered Mai in conference with the Station Sergeant and a Special Branch Officer.

Neal proceeded to brief Mai of the situation after which Mai reportedly advised him that the BDF had no jurisdiction over the found items and in the process Mai reportedly told Neal that the BDF was interfering with a police investigation and that they failed to inform the police of the discovery thereby resulting in a missed opportunity for the police to secure the scene where the items were discovered for the possible gathering of evidence to commence the initial investigation.

Neal reportedly told Mai that the items were found outside of the Benque Viejo Town limits, in an area where the Army has full jurisdiction. Mai reportedly advised Neal that Benque Viejo Police's jurisdiction in not merely confined to Benque Viejo proper but that it encompasses the surrounding villages of Arenal, Succotz and Calla Creek right up to the feeder road leading into Clarissa Falls Resort on the Western Highway.

Mai reportedly informed Neal that in these operations the Army operates in a supporting role with the police as the leading law enforcement agency and that it is advisable for Army personnel to acquaint themselves with their



The Police Station In Benque Viejo Town  
Where The Action Took Place

role in order to minimize the possibility of them venturing into doing the job of the police.

Realizing that the discussion was going nowhere and that he might have made an error in judgment by making that stop over at the Benque Viejo police station, Neal, whilst still inside

Mai's office contacted Ortega by telephone and briefed him on this new development. At Ortega's request, Neal handed the telephone to Mai who reiterated his position to Ortega and advised him that the police will proceed to relieve Neal of the items. It was at this point of

the exchange that the Police Officer Commanding the SPU, **ASP Ralph Moody**, accompanied by the SPU Constable who was with the patrol when the items were found, stepped into Mai's office. Simultaneously with Moody's arrival there was an apparent break in telephone communication between Mai and Ortega.

Telephone communication was reestablished when Ortega called Neal requesting to resume the conversation with Mai. Before handing the telephone to Mai, Neal informed Ortega about Moody's presence. Ortega reportedly shifted his request and asked to speak with Moody instead but Moody reportedly refused to speak with Ortega.

At Ortega's request, Neal handed the telephone to Mai and the conversation between Ortega and Mai resumed whereby Mai reportedly advised

Please Turn To Page 13



The Rotary Club Of  
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*The Belize Choral Society*  
*Spring Concert*

At  
St. Andrews Anglican Church  
Burns Avenue, San Ignacio

May 15, 2010  
7:30 PM

Tickets:  
Adults \$10.00  
Children 5.00



All Funds raised go to  
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## STAR HUMOR

### A True Southern Gal...

A woman goes into the local newspaper office to see that the obituary for her recently deceased husband is written.

The obit editor informs her that the fee for the obituary is a dollar per word. She pauses, reflects and then says, "Well, then, just let it read, 'Billy Bob

died'."

Amused at the woman's thrift, the editor says, "*Sorry ma'am there is a seven word minimum on all obituaries.*"

A little flustered, she thinks things over and replies, "*In that case, let it read, 'Billy Bob died - Red truck for sale'.*"

### Whales

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "*When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah.*"

The teacher asked, "*What if Jonah went to hell?*"

The little girl replied, "*Then you ask him.*"

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## Mexico's Army Handling Of Civilian Death Inquiries Questioned



**Two students the Attorney General's office says were caught in crossfire formed part of a spontaneous memorial at Monterrey Tech**

A military-led inquiry and another by the attorney general find the army not responsible in recent cases of civilians being killed amid the war on drug cartels. But their credibility is questioned.

The Almanzas slowed down as they drove their black pickup past what they believed to be an army checkpoint in violent northeastern Mexico. They rolled down their windows, they say, so the soldiers could see they were a family. But the masked men in uniform instead opened fire, and two Almanza children, aged 9 and 5, were killed.

Fifteen days earlier and just 100 miles away, two promising university students were killed at the gates of their school during

an army battle with drug traffickers. The army initially identified the pair as shooters but later retracted the claim after the victims' families came forward.

As the Mexican government's war against drug cartels increasingly claims the lives of innocents, the handling of the two cases is being closely watched.

In the last week, the army has sought to exonerate itself in both. Three of the four victims were found to have been killed by drug traffickers and not soldiers, the army and the attorney general's office said as they released the results of investigations conducted by these same authorities. *(The killer of the fourth victim — one of the university students — was not*

*identified.)*

Families of the victims decried the results as whitewashes. The situation casts a spotlight on what human rights activists say is one of the most troubling aspects of the military's conduct of the drug war: that the army is allowed to investigate itself in cases involving questionable tactics. In both these cases, the national government, under international and domestic pressure, has sought to inject civilian authorities into the investigative process. But issues of credibility remain.

In the deaths of the Almanza children, the gunmen at the checkpoint were not soldiers at all but drug traffickers fighting each other to control the disputed road from Nuevo Laredo to Reynosa, according to Gen. Jose Luis Chavez Garcia, head of the military justice office. The traffickers first opened fire on the Almanzas, then engaged a military patrol that approached, Chavez said.

"*Pure lies,*" Cynthia Salazar, mother of the two children killed at the checkpoint, said in an interview after the report of the army-led investigation was released.

She recalled holding her 5-year-old, Bryan, in her lap on that April 3 afternoon as the family traveled to the beach from their home in Nuevo Laredo, near the border with Texas. It was Easter weekend. The truck was packed

with seven children, aged 3 months to 11 years, and two men and three women.

"*We've gotten used to army checkpoints,*" Salazar, 28, said. "*We know how they are and the precautions to take.*"

After their vehicle moved slowly, windows down, past what Salazar described as four truckloads of masked soldiers, shots rang out. According to Salazar, the soldiers opened fire on her family, shooting out the tires of their truck and continuing to shoot and then toss grenades at them even as they begged for mercy and tried to escape toward the roadside hills.

A bullet pierced Salazar's stomach, she said, and the same bullet killed Bryan. Nine-year-old Martin was also killed, and Salazar's husband, Martin Almanza, was wounded.

Although the army led the investigation of the incident, it said civilian prosecutors were also involved, and, in conclusions released late last week, disputed Salazar's version of what happened.

Grenades used by the traffickers hit the back of the Almanza truck and killed the two children, Chavez said. He acknowledged that gunfire from the army had strafed the front of the vehicle. But he added that the military-grade grenades were of a caliber the army does not possess.

A major problem, say human rights organizations, is that the army's credibility suffers when it is involved in investigating itself.



# Police And The Army Stand-Off

Continued From Page 13

Ortega that if Neal removes any of the items from the police station that charges will be filed against both Neal and Ortega for interfering in a police investigation. Mai then returned the telephone to Neal with Ortega still on the line. Ortega reportedly instructed Neal not to allow the Police to take possession of the goods and that he should wait until Customs Officials arrived at the Benque Police Station after which he should proceed to hand over them over to the Customs Officers.

Neal was still on the telephone speaking with Ortega when Mai and Moody exited the office and walked to the BDF DMax and were in the process of removing the goods when Neal arrived on the scene. Neal reportedly approached Mai requesting that he adhere to Ortega's instructions. He reportedly positioned himself in front of Mai thereby preventing him from passing a first portion of the items to an awaiting police constable. Neal extended his right hand to prevent the exchange resulting in Mai reportedly slapping his hand away while threatening to arrest



**Inspector  
Claudio Orlando Mai**

him for obstructing the police. Neal regained composure and took hold of the item that was passed to the police constable. Moody reportedly intervened by reiterating the threat to arrest Neal for assaulting a Police Officer. While Neal was still hanging on to the item, Moody reportedly pushed him in the chest resulting in Neal losing grip of the merchandise.

It was at this point that tensions reached the highest when two of the BDF soldiers released the safety catches from the rifles they carried and positioned themselves in combat readiness.

Having lost grip of the goods, Neal stepped away from Moody and likewise removed the safety catch from the rifle he carried and got into combat readiness position. The police reportedly responded in like fashion as they surrounded the soldiers with their guns reportedly drawn.

Realizing that they were outnumbered, Neal reported relaxed his rifle and requested reinforcement from the nearby Barrio El Juda BDF patrol stationed less than 2 miles away. He also requested additional human assets from Battalion Headquarters at Camp Belizario some 14 miles away.

By 10:00 am the police had already removed the found items from the BDF DMax and stored them inside the police station.

The BDF position was strengthened at about 10:10 am with the arrival of two Field Intelligence Officers both of whom walked into the police station to gather information on the chain of events. Five minutes later the Army's position was further reinforced with the arrival of the El Juda patrol under the command of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. E. Moh. He was immediately briefed of the situation and deployed his troops to stand

guard outside the police station.

About five minutes after the arrival of the El Juda patrol, additional reinforcement arrived from the Battalion Headquarters under the command of **Captain L. Cutkelvin**. After getting a brief from Neal, the Captain assured the soldiers that he would take care of the situation. He instructed Moh to withdraw his troops and to return to his post at El Juda, Moh complied with the instruction and withdrew his troops while Neal and the troops that accompanied Cutkelvin stood guard outside the police station.

Captain Cutkelvin proceeded to Mai's office followed shortly thereafter by Customs Officer Augustine Smith. They remained in Mai's office for over 30 minutes after which they all exited without the goods. A few minutes later **Mr. Henry Marsden**, Senior Customs Examiner arrived. He received a full brief and proceeded to Mai office and he likewise exited without the goods.

Neal and his team were at the police station for 2 hours and 40 minutes, until Captain Cutkelvin gave the orders for them to stand

down and return to their routine duties. They departed at 12:10 pm.

It was not until the following day, Tuesday, May 4, when all the items were handed over to Customs at the Western Border Station.

After the incident hit the airwaves on Monday evening's news, **Police Inspector Claudio Mai** and **BDF Lt. Col. Steven Ortega** were summoned to Belmopan where they were each offered the opportunity to present their version of the sequence of events.

A follow up meeting was held on Thursday, May 6 between members of the high command of the Police and the BDF. A police press release coming out of the second meeting *"concluded that the actions of Insp. Mai precipitated the dissatisfaction in the process"* and that *"Insp. Mai is being re-posted to San Ignacio"*.

We understand that the *"re-posting"* is to take place with immediate effect and that Insp. Mai will be switching places with Dinsdale Thompson who moves from 2<sup>nd</sup> in command of the San Ignacio police station to take on the post as Officer Commanding Benque Viejo (**Police**) Sub-Formation.

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