

U.D.P Poised To Win A Third Term

COROZAL TOWN, Sunday, February 17, 2012:

Four months of rigorous campaigning climaxed today at the Andres Campos Civic Center in Corozal on the occasion of the United Democratic Party's National Convention 2013.

First Deputy Leader of the Party while the Hon. **Patrick Faber** received 233 votes (41.16%). There were two spoilt ballots in this contest.

For the post of Party Chairman, **Alberto August**, with 379 votes (66.96%), was elected to serve as the new Chairman of the United



New Chairman Of The United Democratic Party, Alberto "STAR" August

While thousands of UDP supporters, from every corner of the country, converged on the convention site, the focus was on the Party's 566 delegates from all 31 constituencies along with elected municipal officials, senators and members of the Party's Central Executive each with one vote to cast for the candidate of their choice to fill the three contested positions of First Deputy Party Leader, Party Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Party.

On this occasion the incumbent First Deputy Leader of the Party/Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. **Gaspar Vega** faced a challenge from the incumbent Party Chairman/Minister of Education, Hon. **Patrick Faber**.

The Gaspar Vega slate, dubbed the "**Unity Team**" included **Alberto August** contesting the post of Chairman and **Fern Guterrez** seeking election as Deputy Chairman while the **Patrick Faber** slate included former Deputy Chairman, **Roosevelt Blades** and Belize City Councilor, **Roger Espejo**.

After the votes were counted the Hon. **Gaspar Vega**, with 331 votes (58.48%), was re-elected to serve as

Democratic Party as he defeated the incumbent Deputy Chairman of the Party, **Roosevelt Blades**, who garnered 183 votes (32.3%). There were four spoilt ballots.

In the third contested position, Punta Gorda Town Councilor, **Fern Gutierrez**, with 378 votes (66.78%) defeated Belize City Councilor, **Roger Espejo**, who received 180 votes (31.8%). There were 8 spoilt ballots.

Rounding off the five top positions in the Party, Prime Minister **Dean Barrow** and the Hon. **Erwin Contreras** were overwhelmingly endorsed as Party Leader and Second Deputy Leader of the Party respectively.

Other highlights of the day's event included the Party's position on Crime, Youth and Women as well as a declaration on the October 6, 2013 referendum on the issue of the taking of the Guatemalan claim to Belize, to the International Court of Justice.

Despite the over 8,000 UDP supporters in attendance the convention was peaceful as Party supporters seized the opportunity of interact with each other in the spirit of unity within the Party.



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Jerome Tillet Remanded For Attempt Murder

From Front Page

estranged common law wife was visiting her brother the accused and that she sent the two children she shares with the victim over to the neighboring house to visit their father while she spent time with her brother and his family. It is reported that when it was nearing the time for her to catch the last bus heading out of town, she requested for the children to return. The request reportedly sparked a confrontation between the estranged couple.

It is reported that the verbal exchange escalated when the victim allegedly returned in the company of a male friend with whom he told them that he would return. The two men reportedly walked over into the yard of the accused and reportedly punched the accused in the face. The accused reportedly rushed over to his car which was parked nearby, opened

the trunk, pulled out a machete and allegedly inflicted the first chop wound which caught the victim on the left hand. Notwithstanding the injury, the victim reportedly continued threatening to kill the accused and his family. The death threats reportedly infuriated the accused who rushed to the victim and inflicted the next two chop wounds.

The investigation subsequently led to the arrest and the formal charging of the accused **Jerome Tillet** on single attempt murder charge.

The accused was arraigned on Monday, February 19, in the San Ignacio courtroom of magistrate **Narda Morgan** where the indictable charge was read to him. Due to the indictable nature of the crime the accused was remanded to the central prison in Hattieville. The case was adjourned until Thursday, April 4, 2013.

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Bradley Accused Of Trafficking In Drugs

SAN IGNACIO TOWN, Monday, February 18, 2013:

A well known Santa Elena man, accused of drug trafficking, is today out on a five thousand dollar bail.

Police reports that on Friday, February 15, 2013, members of the Mobile Interdiction Team (MIT), on an anti-drug operation in Santa Elena, Cayo found over one and a half pounds of weed inside a house on George Price Avenue.

The team, accompanied by a senior Justice of the Peace, conducted a search at the George Price Avenue residence of **Derick Bradley**. The search reportedly led to the discovery of 781.1 grams of marijuana, inside seven separated black plastic bags, found inside the cavity of a cement block in an interior wall.

The police drove away with only the drugs as Bradley was not at home at



The Accused
Derick Bradley

the time of the search and the discovery.

Two days later however, on Sunday, February 17, **Derick Bradley** was detained and

transported to the police station in San Ignacio where he was arrested and issued a drug trafficking charge.

The accused drug trafficker appeared, on Monday, February 18,

in the San Ignacio Town courtroom of magistrate **Narda Morgan** where he pled not guilty to the charge. He was offered and met bail in the sum of five thousand dollars. He was ordered to return to court on Monday May 6, 2013.

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INVITATION FOR THE SUPPLY OF INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR BELIZE WATER SERVICES

Belize Water Services invites interested firms to submit bids for the supply of insurance coverage for the period April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014, with the option to extend to March 31, 2015.

The document detailing the schedule of services can be picked up at the office of Belize Water Services at #7 Central American Boulevard, Belize City between the hours of 8:00am - 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Details are also available electronically upon request.

For more information please contact
Jennifer Schnarr
 at 222-4757 Ext 233
 or email corporateservices@bws1.com.bz .

Deadline for receipt of bids is Wednesday, February 27, 2012 at 5:00 PM.

The envelope must be addressed to:

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Belize City, Belize

Belize Water Services reserves the right to accept any or to reject all applicants.

International Raid Targets Illegal Timber Trade

Interpol has announced that it arrested nearly 200 people in a wide-ranging international operation against illegal logging and the trafficking of timber.

The three-month effort spanned 12 Central and South American countries, and \$8m (£5.2m) worth of timber was seized.

Interpol says the illegal logging trade could be worth up to \$100bn world-wide.

It has also been linked to a rise in murders and corruption, as criminal groups move into remote forest areas.

Interpol said officials had checked lorries, ships and containers, as well as retailers and individuals, seizing a total of 50,000 cubic metres, or about 2,000 lorry-loads, of illicit timber.

More than 100 people remain under investigation.

Murderous trade

The head of Interpol's environmental crime programme, **David Higgins**, said the raid, dubbed "*Operation Lead*", was just the first step in the organisation's fight against the illegal timber trade.

He said the international nature of the trade made prosecutions difficult, but that in the long term Interpol would try to help countries apply the law in a more uniform manner.



Brazil Has An Environmental Police Force Tasked With Cracking Down On Illegal Logging

Mr Higgins said co-operation between forestry officials, customs and border agents and the police would be crucial to fight the timber

trafficking.

Over the past years, dozens of anti-logging activists have been killed in Brazil in attacks believed to be

linked to their activism.

In Colombia, police say illegal and rebel groups are increasingly turning to illegal logging as a source of revenue.

And in Venezuela, there have been clashes between indigenous groups and loggers who have invaded their land.

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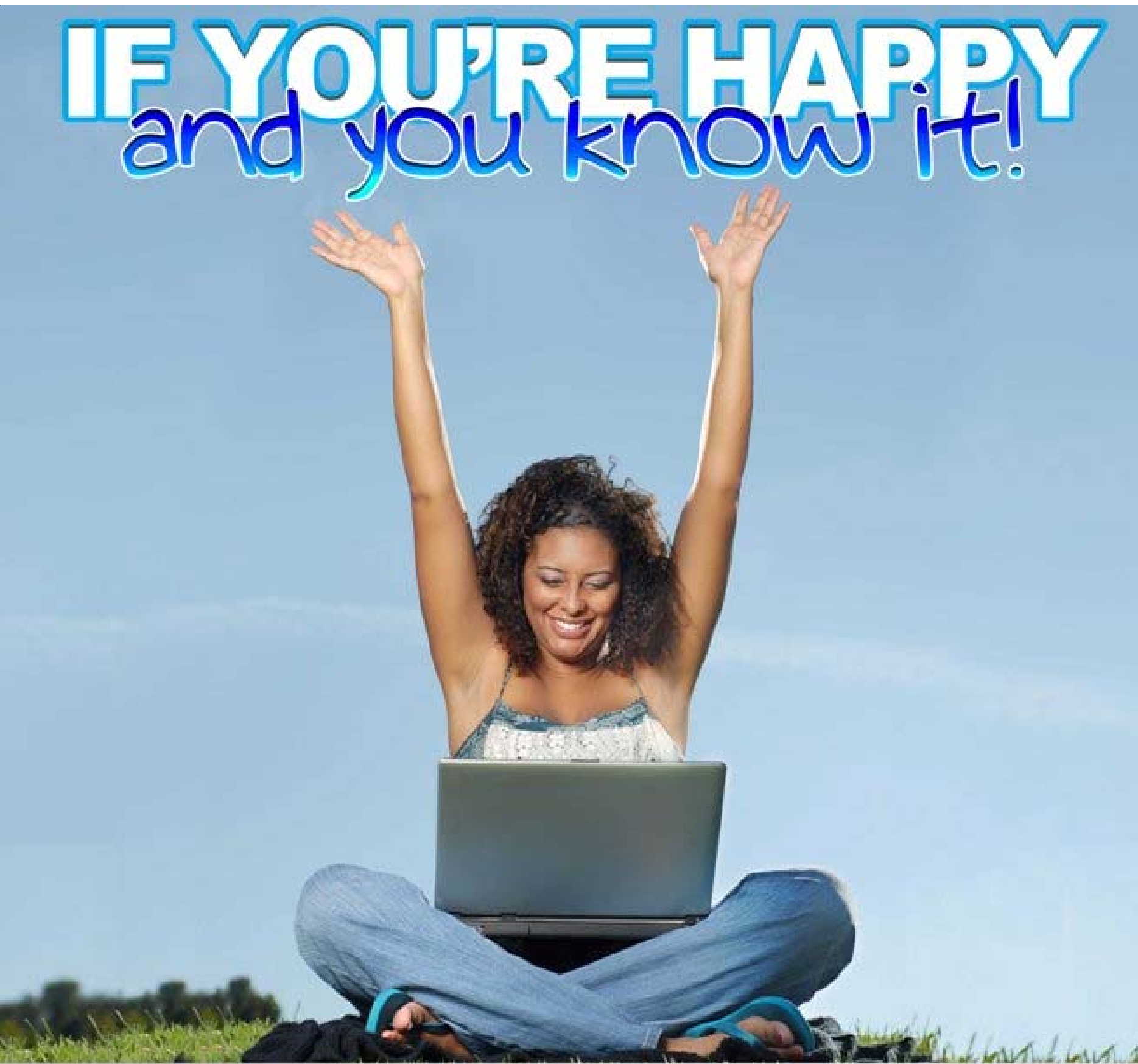
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Mexico Security Forces Colluded In Disappearances

The pressure group Human Rights Watch says Mexico has failed to properly investigate human rights abuses committed by the security forces.

The group has documented almost 250 disappearances during the term of former President Felipe Calderon.

It says evidence suggests that in more than half of the cases the security forces participated either directly or indirectly in the disappearances.

HRW has called on the new government to find the missing.

'Arbitrary detention'

In a report published on Wednesday, HRW says *"state agents participated directly in the crime [of disappearances], or indirectly through support and acquiescence"* in more than 140 of the cases they investigated.

In the remaining cases, their researchers were not able to determine whether state actors may have participated.

HRW says the majority of the cases of enforced disappearances it investigated followed a pattern, in which members of the security forces *"arbitrarily detain individuals without arrest orders or probable cause"*.

"In many cases, these detentions occur in victims' homes, in front of family members; in others, they take place at security checkpoints, at workplaces, or in public venues, such as bars," the report alleges.

The report says that the administration of former President Calderon ignored the mounting problem and failed to take steps to address it, thereby contributing to it becoming *"the most severe crisis of*



Relatives of the disappeared have been marching across the country to demand the authorities do more to find the missing

enforced disappearances in Latin America in decades".

Nationwide efforts

An estimated 70,000 people are believed to have been killed in Mexico

since December 2006, when Mr Calderon came to power and declared war on the country's powerful drug cartels.

Mr Calderon deployed the army in

an attempt to curb the violence, but human rights groups say the levels of human rights abuses against civilians has risen as a result.

Mexico's interior ministry has not yet commented on the report.

Human Rights Watch says it hopes the administration of President **Enrique Pena Nieto** will develop a national strategy to tackle the growing number of disappearances.

According to HRW, the creation of a national database documenting disappearances and unidentified remains would be an invaluable tool for investigators and relatives trying to trace the missing.

Shortly after coming to office on 1 December 2012, Mr **Pena Nieto** announced the creation of a new national police force which he said would be better trained and better equipped to fight crime.

Grenada Opposition Wins Clean Sweep In General Election

Preliminary results of the general election on the Caribbean island of Grenada suggest a landslide win for the opposition New National Party (NNP).

Election supervisors said the preliminary figures showed the NNP had won all 15 seats.

The governing National Democratic Congress admitted defeat.

If the results are confirmed, **Keith Mitchell**, who served three terms as prime minister between 1995 and 2008, will return to power.

The main theme during the election was the economic crisis.

Grenada has a 30% unemployment rate and the Caribbean Development



Grenada's failure to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Ivan was one of the election issues

Bank recently warned Grenada that it had unsustainable debt levels.

During his campaign, Mr Mitchell promised to make job creation his priority.

After the preliminary results came in, catapulting his party from four seats to 15, he said he would also strive to unite the country.

"The victor is the one who has to reach out, the one who lost can't be expected to reach out; national unity will be a serious platform," he said.

He asked Grenadians *"to have patience"* with the new government, and to give it a chance to implement policies he said would revive the stalled economy.

The country has been struggling to recover from major destruction caused by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

Dozens of people were killed and 90% of the island's buildings were destroyed. Grenada's main export crop, nutmeg, was also devastated.

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Your Weekly Horoscope and Lucky Numbers

ARIES:

March 22 to April 20

Work that could advance you professionally could take you away from loved ones and cause some emotional tension. You might feel down because you would rather be with your loved ones but feel it's important to move ahead now. Try to make up for it with some quality time. It's crucial to make the most of the current planetary positions. Everyone will be glad when you see results. **Lucky numbers: 50, 66, 95.**

TAURUS:

April 21 to May 21

A task, perhaps job related or perhaps one of your own, might prove weightier than you expected. You are working too hard and you could be feeling tired and dejected. Exactly how crucial is it to get this done right now? If it isn't vital, get as much done as you can without compromising your well-being. Do the rest tomorrow. The world won't end if you take another day. **Lucky numbers: 12, 27, 43.**

GEMINI:

May 22 to June 21

Someone, perhaps a person involved with a group you are in, may ask you to help in some way this week. You probably don't want to do it, possibly because you have plans. Don't be afraid to say no. Your creative energy should be high and your imagination working overtime, but other responsibilities interfere with your doing anything about it now. Note your ideas and come back to them later. **Lucky numbers: 05, 46, 83.**

CANCER:

June 22 to July 23

Career developments could look promising now and you might be in a

hurry to finish whatever needs to be done. But responsibilities to home and family might interfere. For some reason, you might have to stay home. Perhaps you experienced some intense dreams that you feel are significant but you can't remember them. If you stop trying to remember, they may come back to you. **Lucky numbers: 16, 34, 77.**

LEO:

July 24 to August 21

Some rather depressing information could come to you this week from far away. This is less likely to be about your immediate situation or circle of friends than it is about something social or political in nature. It's probably the subject of a lot of talk around you. You might need to run some errands in your community, but for some reason you can't. Relax. Tomorrow should be fine. **Lucky numbers: 09, 31, 85.**

VIRGO:

August 22 to September 21

You have been working hard to improve your financial situation. You might be on the verge of attaining what you want, but temporary obstacles could get in your way. You could be in a bit of a panic, wondering if this means you will never get where you want to be. Don't worry. That isn't the case. You just need to assess the situation and figure out what to do to get over this hurdle. **Lucky numbers: 23, 49, 91.**

LIBRA:

September 22 to October 23

A partner might be feeling rather down and need you to cheer him or her up. Too many social invitations could come your way this week. You

may have to turn one of them down. You may not be in the mood for socializing and need to be alone to organize your thoughts. One of the events could be business related and you may feel obligated to go. Put in an appearance. Don't feel compelled to stay long. **Lucky numbers: 01, 52, 98.**

SCORPIO:

October 24 to November 21

This week you might enjoy planning to have some visitors stay with you for a while. Worry about developments on the job or unfinished chores of your own might have you feeling a bit stressed and under the weather. You need to look at your situation objectively. It isn't all that bad, just something that needs to be done. Get it handled and then reward yourself somehow. **Lucky numbers: 18, 36, 72.**

SAGITTARIUS:

November 22 to December 21

A friend could be depressed and need your advice. Some long-held, cherished goals that you have been working toward could be temporarily blocked, causing you to wonder if they will ever come to fruition. Don't waste any time lapsing into negative thoughts. Assess what needs doing and do it. This is only a temporary situation. You

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will get through it, but it's up to you how quickly. **Lucky numbers: 20, 55, 73.**

CAPRICORN:

December 22 to January 20

Some professional colleagues might visit and you may not be looking forward to it. You could be worried. Will you make a good impression? Don't drive yourself crazy. It will be fine. Family members should be doing well regarding their responsibilities, although you might be a bit worried about them today. Relax. All is going to go very well. **Lucky numbers: 07, 25, 57.**

AQUARIUS:

January 21 to February 19

This week you might need to run some errands but they might prove difficult for a number of reasons. The errands could be personal or business related. Communication may be temporarily blocked. Messages may not be delivered or you could be playing phone tag. On days like this, you need to make a special effort to keep cool. Nothing is so important that you have to drive yourself crazy. **Lucky numbers: 13, 32, 65.**

PISCES:

February 20 to March 21

You might reflect on recent successes in business and money and suddenly feel a strong sense of gloom, wondering if it's going to continue. Don't panic. It isn't a vision of the future. It's only a temporary feeling. Work it off through exercise or throw yourself into a task. Meditation could also help. Get the endorphins going and your optimism and enthusiasm should return. **Lucky numbers: 21, 54, 79.**

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Deepest Undersea Vents Discovered By UK Team

By David Shukman
Science editor, BBC News

UK scientists exploring the ocean floor in the Caribbean have discovered an *"astounding"* set of hydrothermal vents, the deepest anywhere in the world.

Deploying a remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) in the Cayman Trough, they stumbled across a previously-unknown site nearly 5000m below the surface.

Video pictures relayed live back to the research ship mounting the operation show spindly chimneys up to 10m high.

They are belching out dark water - *"a stunning sight"*, one scientist said.

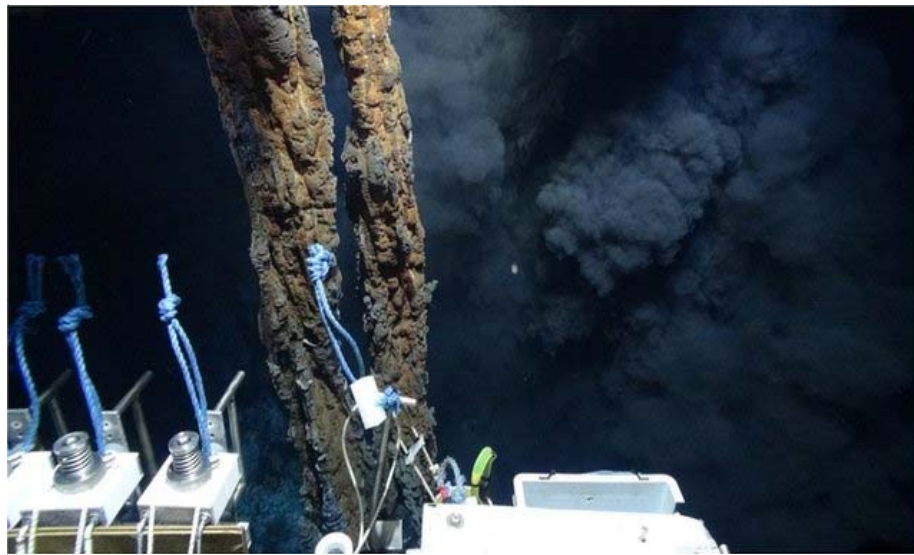
In the immense pressure of the sea three miles down, the ROV, known as ISIS, was gently steered around the vents, taking pictures and gathering samples.

One of the people *"piloting"* the ROV said seabed smokestacks remind him of *"the industrial Midlands"*.

Hydrothermal vents are among the strangest features of the deep ocean and their existence was not known until the 1970s. Since then they have been discovered at about 200 sites around the world including the Southern Ocean and the Atlantic.

But it was only three years ago that vents were first detected in the Cayman Trough, a deep trench formed by the boundary between two tectonic plates. One set of vents, known as Beebe, was established as the deepest on record - until the discovery last night of another slightly deeper set nearby, at 4,968m. or about three miles.

The water being blasted from the newly-found vents was measured at 401C, making this set among the hottest on the planet.



David Shukman joins researchers examining the sea bed

The expedition, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council, is being run from a British research ship, the **James Cook**, named after the 18th century explorer who blazed a trail of discovery around the Pacific.

Now the ship bearing his name is using the latest technology to open up and understand an underwater world of eerie landscapes and unusual life forms.

A live stream of video is relayed back to a control room on board - where a cheer went up when the ROV's lights and high definition cameras picked out the new vents amid total darkness.

The team had been looking for a set first identified a year ago but their search took them unexpectedly into an entirely new field.

The tallest of vents reaches about 10m.

The chief scientist, **Dr Jon Copley** of the National Oceanography Centre, said the discovery of *"astounding mineral spires"* was a *"complete surprise"*.

"We initially thought it was a site we'd been to before but it looked so different we thought it had changed. But eventually we

realised it looked different because it was different," Dr Copley told BBC News.

"The beauty of working in the deep oceans is that you're always stumbling over things that are completely new."

"It's teaching us how little we know and for a few minutes it's not about the science, it's about the wonder of the planet, something that's been hidden for so long."

The ROV remained on station for nearly 24 hours - a typical length for a dive - before being returned to the James Cook bearing samples of water and wildlife.

For the biologists on board, the

vents act as a highly unusual habitat with a massive contrast between the water from the vents measuring just over 400C, compared to the surrounding sea temperature of around 4C.

The narrow interface between the two extremes of water - sometimes as narrow as a few centimetres - provides a unique environment for an array of creatures.

Ghostly-white shrimp - clustered on the rocks in teeming crowds - appear to have lost the ability to see because their eyes are fused together.

Verity Nye is one of the researchers studying the blind shrimp, brought up in the ROV's containers, filled at the seabed.

"We don't think they have functioning eyes but they have a really unusual organ on their backs which is like a warning system for them to tell them when they're getting too hot so they don't get too close to the hot water from the vents."

"But we really don't know how life operates down there so we're still trying to understand it."

According to Dr Copley, the expedition has already yielded finds that are likely, after lab analysis back home, to prove to be new species including a white anemone and starfish.



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Investing In The Caribbean



By Joseph Doway

Someone asked me this week, where are investors all flocking to certain islands or regions within the Caribbean, and neglecting others. My answer was simple. Kudos to the government and the people of those countries that accept change and development. As advisors to investors and developers of hotels and resorts in the 2006 to 2009 period, we were always asked to do studies on the destinations where these developments were to take place.

Consistent and transparent policies hold the key to economic development of any country or island, which then help to boost its efforts to attract foreign investment.

Local participation is another factor, since there are fewer banks lending to the sector and those that remain have tightened their lending requirements. Many of those without a physical presence in the region have retreated from the market completely. The market is now seeing an increase in hotel and mixed-use project receiverships and restructurings as banks exercise their exit options. We have had to make presentation on many distressed properties in the region. These properties slowly go out of business due to (a) high energy cost; (b) stressful union interference; (c) lack of airlift and (d) lack of support from government officials.

But some countries in the Caribbean and beyond are able to attract investors and financiers to their shores. St Kitts and Nevis has two major million dollar projects on stream, while The Bahamas already started the \$3.5 billion Baha Mar resort. Grenada has secured financing for a major resort and investors are looking to go into Dominica and St Lucia to develop projects there. The majority of the success is due to the participation of the people to partner, their willingness to recognize job creation and the fact that the investors are comfortable with the arrangements.

Investors are now looking for transparent business policies and a proper legal structure. There are signs that this is under way, with international legal and accountancy companies

helping drive greater transparency. Investors play hardball with their money and it make take years of negotiating before the final Letter of Intent is signed. After all, it is their money.

things.

The Caribbean is in considered a gem to the investor who wants to develop a business, but with that consideration comes the fear of being taken to task, or being



There is a need for public-private partnerships (PPPs) that could play a key role in bringing the private sector centre stage in any country's economic expansion, particularly with the country's plans to drive forward a number of major infrastructural projects.

Concerns about investment environments and perceptions of political risk often inhibit foreign direct investment, with the majority of flows going to just a handful of countries and leaving the world's poorest economies largely ignored. The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) addresses these concerns by providing three key services: political risk insurance for foreign investments in developing countries, technical assistance to improve investment climates and promote investment opportunities in developing countries, and dispute mediation services, to remove possible obstacles to future investment.

Investors want protection as well as very little friction from legal agencies, some of which may be considered harassment to foreign investors and how they are derived. Countries where foreign investors have been put to task or mistreated by government officials receive very little preference or consideration in the scheme of

considered smarter than the natives. The populace is slightly bending towards the acceptance of foreign money, because it brings job creation from construction to day to day management, procurement of goods and services and the like.

But don't expect miracles, said executives participating on the *"Caribbean Gone Global -- International Investors"* general session panel during last week's Caribbean Hotel Investment Conference and Operations Summit at the Atlantis Resort, Bahamas. While investors welcome the opportunity to do business, there are a number of other challenges in the Caribbean beyond finding the actual financing piece of the puzzle.

Charalambides said there are two other primary obstacles for foreign investors looking at the region. *"Everything takes a long time to get done -- it takes two to three times longer than in mature markets,"* he said. *"It's very nice for holidays but the region is tough to do business in."*

"The other challenge is keeping your costs down" when developing a hotel, he added. "We're spending a lot more time in value engineering and making sure we get the supplies from the right place."

It was said that Caribe builds identical rooms in every market it enters, but the Caribbean's geography makes it a difficult proposition. He said building a hotel in Jamaica, for example, costs 40% more than it does to build the same hotel in Mexico.

It was also mentioned that the lack of airlift also is an issue.

"To get to a destination you have to change two or three planes," Charalambides said. *"It's very difficult to create residential resorts that way."*

During my working period in The Bahamas, people in the Caribbean would always say to me they adore The Bahamas, but they do not have a visa to travel via Miami. It takes just about six hours to travel from Nassau to Antigua. That is due to the layover in Miami. I always wonder why not a flight four times a week to Santo Domingo or Haiti. One can then fly from either location to The Bahamas.

Investors are looking for markets with good cash-on-cash return and a long-term hold.

"The secret formula in the Caribbean is finding local partners," said John Keith, managing partner for San Jose, Costa Rica-based Caribe Hospitality, which has a goal of developing 20 to 25 hotels throughout Mexico, Central America and parts of the Caribbean. The properties will be operated by Marriott International when they are open; the company has developed five Courtyards by Marriott properties thus far.

The Chinese are emerging travellers that will target the Caribbean -- especially if the country continues to provide investment into the region. Hence the reason for the Baha Mar project in Nassau. One can fly directly from China into Miami and then to Nassau. With a new airport structure, a possibility of direct flights is not far away.

While the majority of Caribbean people have been consuming Chinese food for years, there is always the concern of the influx of Chinese in recent years. There's a tremendous amount of wealth creation in Asia that is bound to stimulate travel. Let's not forget that the Asians come in with their money and they purchase whatever the locals will sell them. Nobody seems to have a problem with Asian money, so the Caribbean needs to capture a small share of that money and continue to expand.

On a particular Caribbean island, there has not been one single resort development since 2009. Resorts were started and were forced to stop due to the downturn of the world economy. Hotel plants are now white and yellow and blue elephants. Instead of the government adding these properties in a stimulus package, they introduced all sorts of legal

Please Turn To Page 15

STAR HUMOR

Retirement Party

The boss is finally old enough to retire from the company. On his last day of work, he ordered a farewell party for himself. The boss wanted everyone to express their good feeling about him by writing on the farewell card, so later he could remember how his staff "miss" him. Most people are writing standard phrases like, "Without you, the company will never be the same,"

"We will always remember you," etc.

Obviously the boss was not satisfied. *"I need something from the bottom of your heart, something really touching, you know. Okay, John, you have been working with me for the last 20 years. You are my best staff. I am retiring now. What do you have to say?"*

Slowly but firmly, John wrote, "The best news in 20 years."

Beautiful

One day, during a lesson on proper grammar, the teacher asked for a show of hands from those who could use the word "beautiful" in the same sentence twice. First, she called on little Suzie, who responded with, "My father bought my mother a beautiful dress and she looked beautiful in it." "Very good, Suzie," replied the teacher.

Always Been There

A woman's husband had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, yet she had stayed by his bedside every single day. One day, when he came out of the coma and he motioned for her to come nearer.

As she sat by him, he whispered, eyes full of tears, "You know what? You have been with me all through the bad times...When I got fired, you were there to support me.

Female Friendship VS. Male Friendship

Friendship among Women:

A woman didn't come home one night. The next morning she told her husband that she had slept over at a friend's house. The man called his wife's 10 best friends. None of them

knew anything about it.

Friendship among Men:

A man didn't come home one night. The next morning he told his wife that he had slept over at a friend's house. The woman called her husband's 10 best friends. Eight confirmed that he had slept over, and two said he was still there.

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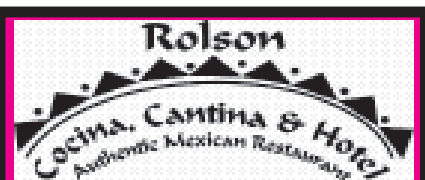
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On Second Thought...

A blind man walks into a bar, taps the man next him, and says, "Hey, wanna hear a blonde joke?"

The man says back to the blind man, "Look buddy, I'm blonde. The man behind me is a 400-pound professional wrestler and he is

blonde. The bouncer is blonde. The man sitting over to your left is also blonde. Still wanna tell that blonde joke?"

The blind man is silent for a moment and then says, "Nah, I wouldn't want to have to explain it five times."

True Grief

A man placed some flowers on the grave of his dearly departed mother and started back toward his car when his attention was diverted to another man kneeling at a grave. The man seemed to be praying with profound intensity and kept repeating, "Why did you have to die? Why did you have to die?"

The first man approached him and said, "Sir, I don't wish to interfere with your private grief, but this demonstration of pain is more than I've ever seen before. For whom do you mourn so deeply? A child? A parent?"

The mourner took a moment to collect himself, then replied, "My wife's first husband."

Policeman & Speeding Driver

A policeman pulled over a car, walked up to the driver's window, and asked the man if he knew why he was pulled over. "No," the man replied.

"You failed to stop at the stop sign," the cop explained.

"But I did slow down!" the guy argued.

The cop shook his head. "You are

required to stop. That's why they're called stop signs."

The man started to get belligerent. "Stop, slow down -- what's the difference?"

The cop pulled out his baton. "I can show you. I'm going to start hitting you with my baton. You tell me if you want me to stop or slow down."

You Will Have Your Day In Court

A man went to the Police Station wishing to speak with the burglar who had broken into his house the night before.

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said the Desk Sergeant.

"No, no no!" said the man. "I want to know how he got into the house without waking my wife. I've been trying to do that for years!"

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Haiti's 'Baby Doc' Duvalier Bids To Avoid Court

Haiti's former ruler has filed a last-minute appeal with the Supreme Court to avoid appearing in court on allegations of crimes against humanity.

Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier was due to attend a hearing in the capital, Port-au Prince, on Thursday afternoon or face arrest.

The ex-leader, who returned to Haiti in 2011 after 25 years in French exile, has already missed two hearings.

He denies all charges, with his lawyers saying the case should be thrown out.

Mr Duvalier's chief counsel, **Reynold Georges**, earlier told journalists that the ex-president would not attend Thursday's hearing.

Human rights groups say hundreds of political prisoners died from torture or were murdered under Mr Duvalier's rule from 1971 to 1986.

His unexpected homecoming two years ago prompted the Haitian authorities to open an investigation.

In January 2012, a court decided Mr Duvalier should stand trial for embezzling public funds but ruled that the statute of limitations had run out on charges of murder, arbitrary arrest, torture and disappearances.

However, Amnesty International and the Open Society Justice Initiative said the former leader "*must not evade justice*" for crimes against humanity.

'Dictator' gibe

The court in Port-au-Prince is hearing an appeal by victims challenging the January 2012 ruling regarding the charges of human rights abuses.

If Mr Duvalier attends, he will face his alleged victims for the first time in



Jean-Claude Duvalier ruled Haiti from 1971 to 1986

a court, the BBC's Mark Doyle reports.

Any future trial would be a symbolically crucial moment and a potential turning point for Haiti, our correspondent says.

There is a widespread feeling in the

country that the judiciary is biased in favour of the rich, he adds.

The appeal court already ordered Mr Duvalier twice to appear to answer the charges - once on 31 January and again on 7 February.

A judge ruled the ex-leader would

be arrested if he did not turn up on Thursday.

Responding to Mr Duvalier's last-minute appeal, a lawyer representing some of the alleged victims said: "*Duvalier is trying to control the justice system like he did when he was a dictator.*"

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are observing the case in the capital.

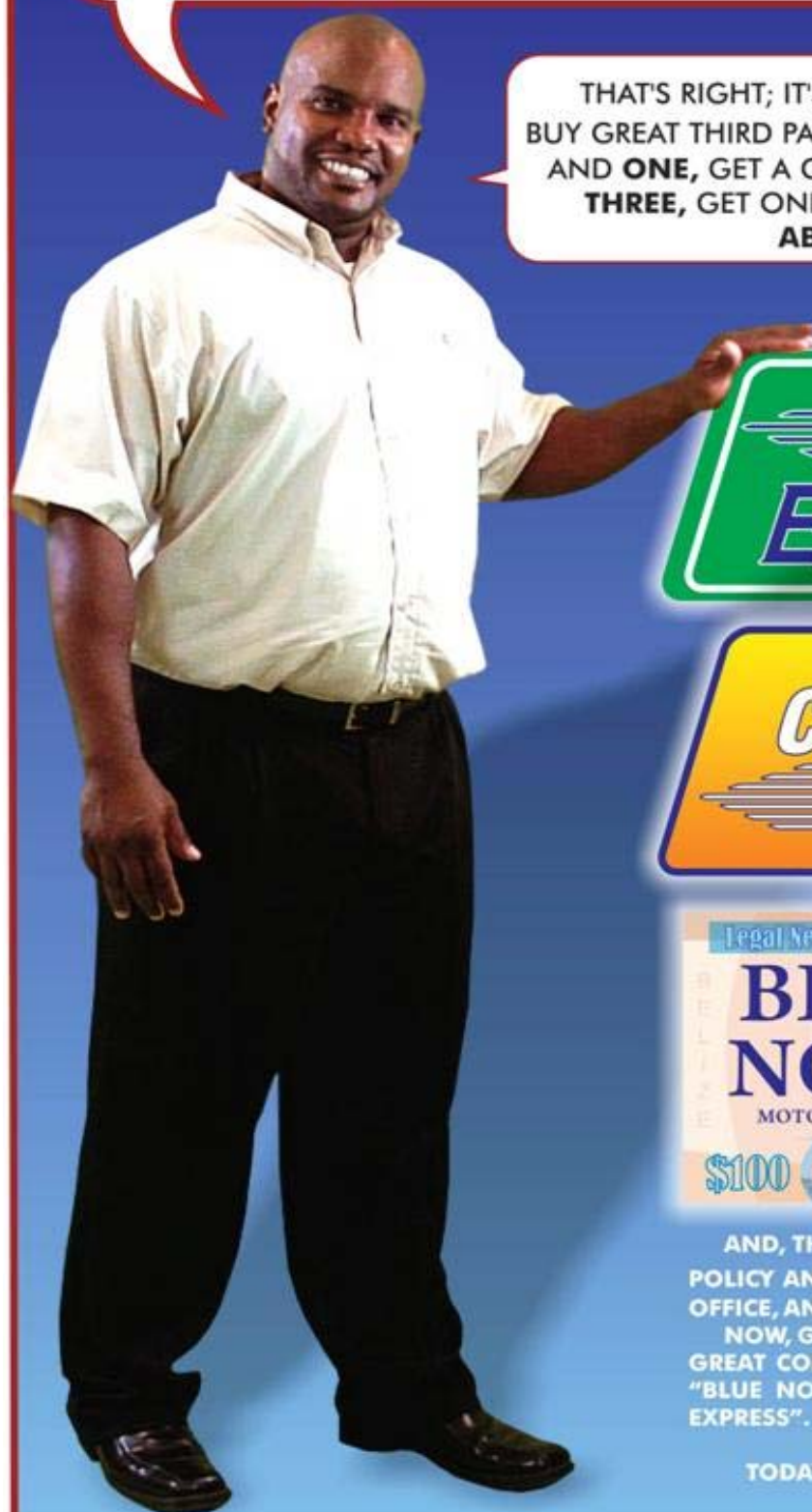
Jean-Claude Duvalier was just 19 when he inherited the title of president-for-life from his father, **Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier**, who had ruled Haiti since 1957.

Like his father, he relied on a brutal militia known as the Tontons Macoutes to control the country.

In 1986 he was forced from power by a popular uprising and US diplomatic pressure, and went into exile in France.

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Hugo Chavez Returns To Venezuela After Cuba Cancer Care

Venezuelan President **Hugo Chavez** has returned to the country after receiving treatment for cancer in Cuba.

In three messages posted on Twitter, Mr Chavez, 58, thanked Cuban President and ex-leader **Raul** and **Fidel Castro**.

He also thanked Venezuelans for their support and said he would continue treatment in his home country.

He has been president for 14 years and was re-elected for another six-year term in October 2012, but his swearing-in was delayed because of his illness.

Mr Chavez went to Havana for surgery on 11 December, his fourth operation in an 18-month period for cancer first diagnosed in mid-2011.

Last week the first images of him since the operation were broadcast by Venezuela's government.

He was pictured smiling as he lay in bed reading a newspaper, with his two daughters by his side.

Thanks and praise

Mr Chavez announced his return to Venezuela to his 3.9 million Twitter followers in a series of tweets that were bombastic in tone but short on detail.

"We have arrived back in the land of Venezuela. Thank you



Information Minister Ernesto Villegas: "He's back! Bravo! Commander Chavez has returned"

Lord!! Thanks to my beloved people!! We will continue our treatment here."

There was no information about when or why he returned, and no details about whether he would actively take up the duties of office.

He is yet to be sworn in for his new term, and doubts remain about whether his health will allow him to return to active politics.

Instead he thanked Cuba's leaders and people and said he had confidence in his doctors.

"Onwards to victory!! We will live and we will overcome!!!" he wrote in his final tweet.

Local media quoted Vice-President Nicolas Maduro as saying that Mr

Chavez landed at 02:30 local time (06:30 GMT) before being transferred to the Military Hospital in Caracas.

State TV later confirmed his return, proclaiming the president's repatriation in joyous terms: "**He's back! Bravo!**" said one presenter. "**Commander Chavez has returned!**"

Those sentiments were echoed on the streets of Caracas, where supporters headed towards the hospital and the central Bolivar

Square.

Waving banners and carrying portraits of their idol, the crowds of red-clad "**Chavistas**" spoke of their hero in similar terms: "**We're all Chavez**", one man told the Associated Press.

The extent of Mr Chavez's illness is shrouded in mystery, but it is understood to be serious. Mr Maduro described it as a "**continuous battle**".

During his treatment the Venezuelan leader is reported to have had tumours removed from his pelvic region.

He has also undergone prior rounds of chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

Mr Maduro has effectively been running Venezuela since Mr Chavez went to Cuba, and the opposition has demanded clarity about who is in charge.

Delaying the inauguration scheduled for 10 January, the Venezuelan Supreme Court ruled that Mr Chavez could be sworn in at a later date.

But the opposition argued that National Assembly Speaker Diosdado Cabello should take over and new elections should be held.



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India's Hyderabad Hit By Two Explosions

Two explosions have killed 12 people in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad, in what Prime Minister **Manmohan Singh** labelled as a *"dastardly attack"*.

The blasts that hit the city in Andhra Pradesh were 10 minutes apart, police said. Television images showed casualties being rushed to hospital.

India's home minister said bombs had been planted on bicycles 150m (500ft) apart near a crowded fruit market.

Major cities have been put on alert as police probe the cause for the blasts.

"The number of dead has increased to 12 and the injured are 57," home secretary RK Singh said after a high-level security meeting following the attacks.

Unconfirmed reports suggest the number of casualties may rise.

The explosions hit just after 19:00 (13:30 GMT) within a radius of 150m, home minister Sushil Shinde said. There was a possible third blast reported shortly afterwards, Hyderabad police told the BBC.

Appeal for calm

No group has so far said it carried out the attack.

Authorities had received intelligence about possible attacks in the country but no specific information as to where or when they might occur, Mr Shinde said.

The information had been passed on to the states, he added.

Prime Minister Singh has urged the public to remain calm.

"The guilty will not go unpunished," he tweeted.

He has directed federal agencies to extend all possible help to the state authorities in the relief effort, and offered 200,000 rupees (£2,500) to the next of kin of each person killed.

Meanwhile, Australia's cricket team says it has held talks about its players' safety with Indian authorities in the wake of the deadly twin



Indian authorities had been informed about possible attacks, but did not know when or where they might occur

bombings. The second Test of the India-Australia series is due to start in Hyderabad on 2 March.

"The safety of the squad is of paramount importance and Australian team management and Cricket Australia staff are liaising with the Board of Control for Cricket in India, local authorities and the

Australian High Commission to ensure we have all the appropriate information," the team said in a statement on Thursday.

Mumbai and the rest of Maharashtra state have been put on high alert following the blasts, with measures such as increased police presence on the streets and random vehicle searches.

It is the first major bomb attack in India since a September 2011 blast outside Delhi's High Court killed 13 people.

The Muslim extremist group Harkat-ul Jihad al-Islami (Huji) said it carried out the Delhi attack.

Hyderabad is one of southern India's main commercial hubs, and the UK opened a new deputy high commission in the city late last year.

The explosions hit the busy Dilsukh Nagar neighbourhood, which is crowded with cinemas, shops, restaurants and one of India's largest fruit and vegetable markets.

There have been at least nine attacks on the city since 1992, including twin explosions in 2007 that killed more than 40 people.

The city has a sizeable Muslim minority, is a stronghold of the Muslim political party, MIM, and has a long history of religious tension, says the BBC's Soutik Biswas in Delhi.

He says religious tensions grew from the 1980s and 1990s with Hindus and Muslims moving out of mixed areas into community ghettos.

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China Cultural Revolution Murder Trial Sparks Debate

The trial in China of an elderly man accused of murder during the Cultural Revolution has sparked online debate.

The man, reportedly in his 80s and surnamed Qiu, is accused of killing a doctor he believed was a spy.

The Cultural Revolution, launched by **Mao Zedong** in 1966, was an era of violence against intellectuals and other alleged bourgeois elements.

Some have questioned why one man is on trial so belatedly when so few officials have been brought to account.

Prosecutors say that in 1967 Mr Qiu, from Zhejiang province, strangled the doctor with a rope.

Charges were filed against him in the 1980s and he was arrested last year, Global Times reported.

Mao's 10-year Cultural Revolution was intended to produce massive social, economic and political upheaval to overthrow the old order.

Ordinary citizens - particularly the young - were encouraged to challenge the privileged, resulting in the persecution of hundreds of thousands of people who were considered intellectuals or otherwise enemies of the state.



The Cultural Revolution radicalised young Chinese into acts of violence against "elites"

The BBC's **John Sudworth** in Shanghai says the topic of what went on during the Cultural Revolution remains highly sensitive in China and public discussion of it is limited, but that the trial has caused fierce debate online.

One user said on the Weibo micro-blogging site described the case as a farce, saying: **"Do they really think this reflects the rule of law?"**

The South China Morning Post quoted one internet user as asking: "What about those big names who started the Cultural Revolution? **"How come they never took any**

responsibility?"

However some internet users was a step in the right direction.

"This is good, at least it sends out the message that those who did evil will pay back one day," wrote one user.

The state-run China Youth Daily published an outspoken editorial comparing the excesses of the period to the Nazi atrocities in Europe.

"The most shocking thing about the Cultural Revolution was the assault on human dignity. Insults, abuse, maltreatment and homicide were common.

The social order was in chaos," it said.

It suggested that unless the period was finally allowed to be openly reviewed there was a danger of the chaos and violence returning, warning that many people harbour nostalgic views of it.

Many Chinese today want the party to face up to the wrongs of the Cultural Revolution era. It is not as taboo a subject as the Tiananmen Square protests. The party's wrongdoings during the Cultural Revolution are discussed openly in the state media, but without discrediting or undermining the party's legitimacy.

Chinese children are not taught in detail about events from that period, which makes it difficult for the younger generation to understand the country's traumatic past.

Mr Qiu's trial has sparked vigorous public debate. Some say it's more important to hold those at the top responsible, rather than make one individual a scapegoat for the party's wrongs.

Nearly 40 years since the Cultural Revolution ended, China is still haunted by events from that period. As recently as last year, Premier Wen Jiabao said the country risked another **"historical tragedy"** like the Cultural Revolution unless it pushed political reforms.

D-quality men. So if you are a leftover woman, you are A-quality."

But it's the **"A-quality"** of intelligent and educated women that the government most wants to procreate, according to **Leta Hong-Fincher**. She cites a statement on population put out by the State Council - China's cabinet - in 2007.

"It said China faced unprecedented population pressures, and that the overall quality of the population is too low, so the country has to upgrade the quality of the population."

Some local governments in China have taken to organising matchmaking events, where educated young women can meet eligible bachelors.

The goal is not only to improve the gene pool, believes Fincher, but to get as many men paired off and tied down in marriage as possible - to reduce, as far as possible, the army of restless, single men who could cause social havoc.

But the tendency to look down on women of a certain age who aren't married isn't exclusively an attitude promoted by the government.

China's 'Leftover Women', Unmarried At 27

Over 27? Unmarried? Female? In China, you could be labelled a **"left-over woman"** by the state - but some professional Chinese women these days are happy being single.

Huang Yuanyuan is working late at her job in a Beijing radio newsroom. She's also stressing out about the fact that the next day, she'll turn 29.

"Scary. I'm one year older," she says. **"I'm nervous."**

Why?

"Because I'm still single. I have no boyfriend. I'm under big pressure to get married."

Huang is a confident, personable young woman with a good salary, her own apartment, an MA from one of China's top universities, and a wealth of friends.

Still, she knows that these days, single, urban, educated women like her in China are called **"sheng nu"** or **"leftover women"** - and it stings. She feels pressure from her friends and her family, and the message gets hammered in by China's state-run media too.

Even the website of the government's supposedly feminist All-China Women's Federation featured articles about **"leftover women"** - until enough women complained.

State-run media started using the term **"sheng nu"** in 2007. That same year the government warned that China's gender imbalance - caused by

selective abortions because of the one-child policy - was a serious problem.

National Bureau of Statistics data shows there are now about 20 million more men under 30 than women under 30.

"Ever since 2007, the state media have aggressively disseminated this term in surveys, and news reports, and columns, and cartoons and pictures, basically stigmatising educated women over the age of 27 or 30 who are still single," says Leta Hong-Fincher, an American doing a sociology PhD at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

Census figures for China show that around one in five women aged 25-29 is unmarried.

The proportion of unmarried men

that age is higher - over a third. But that doesn't mean they will easily match up, since Chinese men tend to **"marry down"**, both in terms of age and educational attainment.

"There is an opinion that A-quality guys will find B-quality women, B-quality guys will find C-quality women, and C-quality men will find D-quality women," says Huang Yuanyuan. **"The people left are A-quality women and**



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Facts Related To Death Of 17 Year Old Of Toledo District

PRESS Release From The Belize Press Office Belmopan. February 21st, 2013.

The Ministry of Health would like to state the medical findings in relation to the death of a seventeen year old female of Golden Stream Village, Toledo District.

The patient first visited the Big Falls Health Center on March 19th, 2012 where she was treated for a chronic abdominal condition and released. She later returned to the clinic on March 22nd, 2012 where she was diagnosed with a chronic disorder. She received a blood transfusion at that time and was hospitalized for a week at the Punta Gorda Hospital for observation before release by her



Milka Sho, 17

doctor.

On February 17th, 2013, the patient was brought into the hospital

by her father but was declared dead on arrival. The father reported that two days before she had ingested a very large amount of soap powder detergent. Upon review of the Belize Health Information System (BHIS) it was confirmed that she suffered from a chronic disease that eventually led to her death.

Additionally, two medical officers examined the body and found no sign of external injuries.

Along with the clinical data retrieved from the BHIS and the history provided by the father, the medical officers felt confident to issue a death certificate; thus no autopsy was needed.

The Ministry of Health expresses sincere condolences to the family and we are prepared to offer any additional assistance for the family in their time of bereavement. Ends.



Allegations Of Theft From Pro World

From Front Page

Anderson to investigate the report of missing funds. Anderson was absent from the office and later sent Mundy a text message allegedly informing that she was resigning from the Foundation.

At the office however, Mundy met the manager, **Yesenia Vargas** who reported that at Anderson's request, between December 19 and 21, 2012, she left two signed blank cheques in a metal safe in the office.

Vargas further reported that on Friday, January 4, 2013 whilst reviewing the Foundation's online bank account she noticed that on December 24, 2012, one of the cheques in the sum of thirteen thousand dollars was drawn from the account.

As is the Foundation's policy, Vargas informed that she requested a voucher and a receipt from Anderson for accounting purposes. She said that to date she has failed to provide either voucher or receipt.

An investigation by the Foundation revealed that on December 24, 2012, the thirteen thousand dollar cheque was used to pay a San Ignacio businessman for the purchase of a green Mitsubishi Montero. According to the businessman, the

vehicle was purchased by the Foundation's Project Coordinator, **Clayton Chavez**.

This purchase, according to Mundy, was never approved or authorized by his office and as such constitutes fraud on the part of Chavez. In a statement to the police Mundy reportedly is seeking court action in this matter. While **Clayton Chavez** continues to evade the long arm of the law, Anderson was encountered in the Santiago Juan Layout Area in San Ignacio on Friday, February 15 where she was detained and transported to the police station and subsequently charged jointly with **Clayton Chavez** for theft.

With attorney **Rachel Montejo** at her side, Akiesha Anderson, appeared in the San Ignacio Town courtroom of magistrate Narda Morgan on Monday, February 18, 2013, where she pled not guilty to the theft charge.

Prosecutor George Gomez objected to the granting of bail on the grounds that, being a foreigner, Anderson presents a flight risk. Magistrate Morgan concurred with the prosecutor's request resulting in Anderson being remanded to prison. She will reappear in court on Thursday, April 4, 2013.

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Investing In The Caribbean

Continued From Page 9

action against owners or they simply show no interest in assisting the owners. If the politicians would stay away, development would continue. Investors would not have the fear of experiencing the stress that other investors and developers have gone through. Jobs would be created, the economy would be stimulated and the population would increase, thereby

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