



Public Relations Unit

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BAHAMAS IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE

#5/23

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INFLUX OF ILLEGAL MIGRANTS

The Immigration Department remains active in its efforts to apprehend and process numerous illegal migrants that entered the country over the past few days.

On today's date, 25th January 2023 at approximately 9:57 a.m., the latest group of migrants consisting of eighteen (18) Cuban nationals; seventeen (17) males and one (1) female, were found in waters near Cay Sal Bank United States Coast Guard (USCG). The migrants were turned over to the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF), and are expected to arrive in the capital on Thursday, 26th January 2023 where they will be received by Immigration officials.

Additionally, on Tuesday, 24th January 2023 at approximately 6:00 a.m., three hundred and seventy-five (375) Haitians and two (2) Cuban nationals were turned over to Immigration officials in Matthew Town, Inagua after being intercepted by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) in waters near Cay Sal Bank. The group will remain in facilities on the island where they are being processed.

On the same day, at approximately 10:25 a.m., Immigration officers on Cat Cay, Bimini apprehended seven (7) Cuban National; five (5) males, one (1) female, and one (1) minor; the group was subsequently transported to the capital today for processing.

Lastly, at approximately 9:30pm the Immigration Department was notified by locals in the community of The Bluff, South Andros of an abandoned wooden sloop suspected of carrying Haitian migrants.

A task force comprising twenty-three (23) officers from the Immigration Department and Royal Bahamas Defence Force was immediately dispatched to the island to investigate. Once on the ground, the team commenced operation; and as of 2:35 p.m. on 25th January 2023, apprehended forty-one (41) Haitian nationals; thirty-one (31) males and ten (10) females thus far.

This is an active and ongoing apprehension exercise as more Haitian migrants are suspected to be on the island. The Department is presently working with local agencies on the island to ensure all health and safety protocols are followed.

Subsequently, all migrants will be transported to the capital for further processing and arrangements are presently being coordinated for the deportation of all irregular migrants.

For more information, call the Public Relations Unit at **1-242-322-7530**, visit our website at **www.immigration.gov.bs**, or call our Investigation hotline anonymously at **1-242-604-0249**.

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Mission Statement: *To regulate the movement of people across the borders of The Bahamas so as to ensure the security, facilitate economic advancement and promote the harmonious social development of The Bahamas through the collaborative efforts of responsible government and non-government agencies both nationally and internationally*