

PAY YOUR TAXES

PM STRESSES IN BUDGET 2020



PAGE 4



HISTORY MADE! FIRST ANTIGUAN AWARDED JAPAN'S SECOND HIGHEST HONOUR

Japan has presented Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador, His Excellency Daven Joseph, with its second highest national honour, the Order of the Rising Sun. The formal presentation took place at a gala event held on the grounds of Government House, Thursday night, with the Governor General Sir Rodney Williams and Lady Williams, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Japanese Ambassador Tatsuo Hirayama, and Foreign Affairs Minister E.P Chet Greene along with several government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, friends and well-wishers in attendance. *Cont'd on page 9*

WEATHER FORECAST

DAY 1/24	°F	NIGHT 1/24	°F
	82° Hi		72° Lo
RealFeel® 92° RealFeel Shade™ 88°		RealFeel® 77°	
Partial sunshine with a couple of showers		Partly cloudy and humid with a shower in spots	
Max UV Index: 6 High Wind: SSE at 1 mph Wind Gusts: 8 mph Precipitation: 60% Thunderstorms: 20% Precipitation: 0.08 in Rain: 0.08 in Snow: 0.0 in Ice: 0.00 in		Wind: ESE at 0 mph Wind Gusts: 0 mph Precipitation: 40% Thunderstorms: 20% Precipitation: 0.02 in Rain: 0.02 in Snow: 0.0 in Ice: 0.00 in Hours of Precipitation: 1	

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST

6:40 AM

Sunset AST

5:59 PM

Duration

11:19 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST

6:27 AM

Moonset AST

5:54 PM

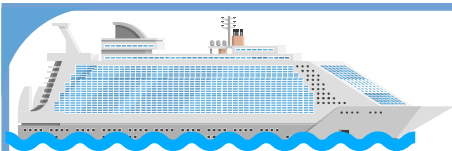
Duration

11:27 hr

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Highlights

5AM - 6AM - TRUTH AND PRAISE GOSPEL**7AM - 9AM - TIME OUT****10AM - 1PM - TALKING POINT****1PM - 4PM - DRIVE POINT****4PM - 6PM - PULL UP SHOW****6:30PM - NIGHTLY NEWS****8PM - 10PM - REAL TALK**

Cruise Ship Port Schedule 2019

Date Cruise Ship Arrive-Depart

25 January, 2020 Saturday	 Braemar		
25 January, 2020 Saturday	 Oceania Marina	10:00	19:00
26 January, 2020 Sunday	 Aurora	07:00	18:00
26 January, 2020 Sunday	 Norwegian Dawn	08:00	16:00
27 January, 2020 Monday	 Celebrity Summit		16:00
28 January, 2020 Tuesday	 Viking Sea		
28 January, 2020 Tuesday	 Britannia	07:00	18:00
28 January, 2020 Tuesday	 Disney Wonder	08:00	16:00
29 January, 2020 Wednesday	 Norwegian Bliss	09:00	17:00

The Living Word

Waiting with the Turtle

Read: Psalm 40:1-5, 14-17

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. Psalm 40:1

Every fall, when the painted turtle senses winter coming, she dives to the bottom of her pond, burying herself in the muck and mud. She pulls into her shell and goes still: her heart rate slows, almost stopping. Her body temperature drops, staying just above freezing. She stops breathing, and she waits. For six months, she stays buried, and her body releases calcium from her bones into her bloodstream, so that she slowly begins even to lose her shape.

But when the pond thaws, she will float up and breathe again. Her bones will reform, and she will feel the warmth of the sun on her shell.

I think of the painted turtle when I read the psalmist's description of waiting for God. The psalmist is in a "slimy pit" of "mud and mire," but God hears him (Psalm 40:2). God lifts him out, and gives him a firm place to stand. God is "my help and my deliverer," he sings (v. 17).

Perhaps it feels like you've been waiting forever for something to change—for a new direction in your career, for a relationship to be restored, for the willpower to break a bad habit, or for deliverance from a difficult situation. The painted turtle and the psalmist are here to remind us to trust in God: He hears, and He will deliver.

What do you need to trust God with? What might that look like today?

God, sometimes it's hard to wait. But we trust in You and in Your deliverance. Please give us patience, and allow Your greatness and glory to be evident in our lives.

Massive development projects for Barbuda in 2020



Barbudans can expect a significant boost in economic activity, new job opportunities and increased incomes – the exact words of a promise made to them by the nation’s Prime Minister and Minister for Finance.

Hon. Gaston Browne – whose pride in being a man of his word is well embodied in one of his favorite catchphrases, ‘Promise Made, Promise Kept’ – was on Thursday 23 January 2020 delivering his annual budget address to the elected House of Representatives in a typically packed Parliament Building.

The 76 page document containing the address is titled simply, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL. Its presentation was punctuated by frequent loud and prolonged applause from the public gallery, something which House Speaker Sir Gerald Watt had announced, at the start of proceedings, would be permitted.

Under the subheading of TRANSFORMING BARBUDA IN 2020, PM Browne was careful to state that his government’s “plans to secure even greater progress in Barbuda” would be achieved by “working in cooperation with the Barbuda Council.”

He went on to itemize the projects that the ABLP administration intends to implement as being the following: rehabilitation of the Barbuda Community Centre; repair and furnishing of the Barbuda Council

Administration Building; construction of a new Disaster Office; construction of a Multi-Purpose Centre which will also serve as a Disaster Shelter; expansion of the Reverse Osmosis Plant and storage tank; and development of agricultural infrastructure.

According to the Finance Minister, “The estimated value of all the projects, which will either be completed or advanced on Barbuda in 2020, is \$155 million – not including the private sector developments.”

He said a master plan for the future development of Barbuda will be created in full consultation with residents of the sister isle, and will be informed by what he termed “crucial environmental studies”.

Also, “a project under the auspices of the Prince’s Foundation and funded by Ambassador Calvin Ayre will construct up to 20 homes on five acres of land in the Louis Hill area. The beneficiaries will be Barbudans whose homes were [destroyed by] Hurricane Irma” in 2017.

The Prime Minister disclosed that another project – funded with a \$15.5 million grant from the European Union – is due to start in a matter of days to rebuild 150 homes that suffered major damage during Irma’s passage.

Preliminary land clearing, geotechnical soil investigations and building layout works have been completed in preparation for pending construction work at the 15-acre lot

earmarked for the new Holy Trinity Primary School – a project jointly funded by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Dominican Republic. It will result in 16 classroom spaces, administration offices, a cafeteria, a security booth, secure parking, and recreation spaces for basketball, tennis, soccer, and cricket.

Barbuda is to also benefit from a \$20 million renewable energy project – funded primarily by a grant from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – and expected to generate one megawatt of electricity, which will be sufficient to power all of Barbuda during daytime hours. According to the Prime Minister, battery power will be added systematically in the future, making Barbuda an island powered completely by solar voltaic energy.

Pointing out that improved access to Barbuda was essential for the island transformation and development – especially in the area of tourism, Prime Minister Browne said it was with this in mind that his government would complete a new airport costing \$55 million on Barbuda in 2020 in order to facilitate such access.

In terms of private investment, PM Browne said the developers of the PLH Ocean Club have made considerable progress with their project – resulting in many residents of Barbuda benefitting from employment opportunities during the year just past.

Pay Your Taxes



Prime Minister Gaston Browne has made an impassioned call for individuals and companies within Antigua and Barbuda to take their social responsibilities to the country seriously by paying their fair share of taxes.

Browne bemoaned what he described as a high incidence of tax avoidance that makes it difficult for Government to adequately provide the full gamut of services required by the country.

The Prime Minister made the point during his presentation of the

2020 National Budget to the House of Representatives on Thursday. He said his government's goal is seeking to achieve sustained socio-economic development for its citizens. However, one of the main obstacles in achieving that goal has been the reduction in the amount of taxes that are being paid in relation to the size of the economy.

"Given the impressive rate of economic growth that we have achieved, tax revenues should have also multiplied proportionately. This has not happened. Clearly, there is significant evasion of tax payments, or

plain non-payment by various entities," PM Browne noted.

He drew comparisons between revenue collections over the past two years to illustrate the point. For example, the year 2019, total revenue and grants to the government amounted to \$847.5 million. That figure was a decline from \$859.2 million in 2018. For the most part, this \$11.7 million decline was due to lower tax revenues. In 2018, tax revenue was \$679.6 million, but it declined to \$672 million in 2019.

This, according to Browne, happened while the economy continues to grow steadily and economic activities robust.

Browne explained that although the national economy is the second largest in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) – and it enjoyed a higher rate of growth than most – the tax to GDP ratio is the lowest at 16 percent.

"Other economies that grew at a much slower rate, and are much smaller than ours, had tax to GDP ratios above the Currency Union average of 20%, and some even collected more revenues than we did in nominal terms. The point is, our tax revenues are not at the level where every principle of finance and economics suggest they should be, in an economy that is growing as impressively as ours," the prime minister revealed.

He further explained that Antigua and Barbuda has no personal income tax, no tax on interest earned from savings or dividends, no inheritance tax, nor death duties, or capital gains tax on profits from the sale of property. The main taxes levied are the ABST, property tax and corporate taxes.

"We do not, in this country, burden our people with the plethora of taxes imposed in other countries. It is only fair that the limited taxes that are in place should be paid for the benefit of the nation in which we all live and which we all enjoy. I plead with you to pay your taxes," PM Browne urged.

The budget was delivered to a packed gallery with multiple intervals of applause through the more than three-hour presentation. Among the audience were students from several of the country's secondary schools.

Debate on the budget begins next Thursday.

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Barbuda MP mostly okay with 2020 budget, supports removal of Jonas

Despite a hand of cooperation being extended to him by the country's head of government, Barbuda MP Trevor Walker does not appear eager or enthusiastic about the \$155 million dollars in new investments earmarked for the sister isle in Government's 2020 budgetary estimates.

Speaking with *Pointe Xpress* shortly after Prime Minister and Finance Minister Gaston Browne had delivered his budget address on Thursday, Walker said it sounded to him like "a regurgitation of a lot of things."

He said his biggest concern was about two major projects that were "not mentioned at all in the budget ... the first one was the [Robert] De Niro project, which is the Paradise Found project ... Mr. De Niro and his people have had that land, now, for about six years. And the other one was the Dulcina project, which lease is held by Hon. Maria Bird-Browne and her family; 15 acres of prime property. So I was surprised not to hear, at least, what's the situation with that."

Walker said his concern was that "those lands cannot be held indefinitely without some performance clause."

He however conceded that "in terms of some of the other stuff for Barbuda that he mentioned – the climate resilience project with the solar

panels – is of course something that we welcome." He said he hoped it was "something that can happen this year", as there has already been a lot of work on this project. "But I hope that can come through so, at least, all reliance on fossil fuel can be zero, and we can move forward to have a totally green Barbuda."

Walker said he was surprised to hear that the project would include underground electric utility cables. "If that comes through, it would be even better for us," he declared. "If you get things going in Barbuda, in terms of investments beneficial to the people, I think it can go a long way."

On the fractious relationship between Central Government and the Barbuda Council – of which he, as the elected MP, is automatically a member – Walker hinted that they did not feel sufficiently respected. He referenced some recent squabbling over a shredder and said collaboration as to its shared use should not be a problem. "There has to be a level of decorum that is neutral between the two entities," is how he put it. "I know it appears as if we're fighting all the time, but we just demand some respect and some mutual understanding. Communication has to be better, or else you're always going to have these issues."

With Hon. Samantha Marshall



Barbuda MP Trevor Walker

recently appointed the new Minister for Barbuda Affairs, Walker said he was looking forward to a different and more agreeable approach to relations between the two islands of the unitary state – especially now that a Barbudan in the person of Senator Knacyntar Nedd had also been appointed Parliamentary Secretary in the Barbuda Affairs Ministry, in effect the junior minister and understudy to Hon. Marshall.

"My feeling, generally, about Dean Jonas – no disrespect to him – is that he was an interesting character who did not foster a decent relationship with Barbuda, and he had to change," Walker stated.



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Improving the business environment for the benefit of all

The country's leader, while delivering the budget projections in the 2020 Budget statement, took a focus on how his government is committed to improving the business environment.

Prime Minister Browne, while addressing parliament stated, "Our government recognizes the importance of a vibrant and expanded business community to strengthen our economy, create full employment and enlarge tax revenues needed by the State to provide for the well-being of our society."

In April 2019, a Business Forum was convened as the first in a series of interactions between the Government and the business community.

Over 200 businesspeople attended, representing a diverse range of sectors.

The objectives of the forum were to encourage business creation and expansion; for policymakers to hear directly from business owners about their experiences; and more importantly to elicit recommendations for improving the business environment.

PM Browne revealed that Business Forum Working Group has been reviewing the recommendations and



developing a Work Plan with input from the relevant agencies for implementation of the recommendations.

"The Work Plan and report of the Working Group will be delivered at the next Business Forum to be held in April 2020," Browne announced.

Prime Minister Browne continued his statement by indicating that in anticipation of the report, "our Government has already begun to take action to improve the business environment, making it easier to do business. The interventions include: reviewing and simplifying the

tax code, publishing relevant taxpayer information, and introducing systems for the automation of tax collection at Inland Revenue and Customs. Also, a Maritime Single Window System will soon be operational, to help improve trade facilitation and an Authorized Economic Operators Programme will be implemented shortly," the Prime Minister explained.

PM Browne also stated that these arrangements will allow pre-approved businesses and importers to expedite clearance of their goods.

Development in Barbuda continues stronger with \$135 Million EC in projects

Barbuda continues to play a pivotal role in the entire development of the twin island state of Antigua and Barbuda. In his 2020 Budget statement, Prime Minister The Hon. Gaston Browne addressed the false allegations on the rebuilding efforts in Barbuda and provided factual information on the progress of development in Barbuda.

"During 2019", PM Browne began, "250 homes that suffered level 1 and level 2 damage during Hurricane Irma, were repaired under the China Aid project. The Barbuda Energy Resilience Project was finalized after in-depth collaboration with the Barbuda Council. This is a US\$4.2 million project to be funded through a grant from the UK-Caribbean Infrastructure Fund with counterpart funding provided by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda."

PM Browne continued by giving in-depth details of the ongoing work in Barbuda

"The components of this project are Providing Underground Electricity Lines to specific areas within Codrington

Village; and Providing Hybrid Solar Systems to critical buildings including emergency shelters and government buildings. Additionally, the rebuilding of the Hannah Thomas Hospital will be completed by the end of February, and financing arrangements have been put in place to ensure funding for the renovation of Sir McChesney George Secondary School and to construct the new Holy Trinity Primary School."

Private investments in Barbuda was another key area PM Browne spoke on during his budget presentation.

"The developers of the PLH Ocean Club made considerable progress with their project. The result has been that, in 2019, many residents in Barbuda have benefitted from employment opportunities, even at this initial stage of the hotel development process," Browne highlighted.

PM Browne will address the investments projected for Barbuda throughout his budget statement today.

Earlier this week, the Prime Minister announced that he has advised the



Governor General that he wishes Barbudan Senator Knacyntar Nedd to serve as the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs. Senator Nedd has since taken up her role with an undeviating focus on Barbuda.

Antigua and Barbuda prepares for coronavirus epidemic – Health Minister



Ministry of Health headquarters in St. John's

Antigua and Barbuda is on the defensive as it gears up for the potential hit of the coronavirus here.

The virus, which originated in China is spreading rapidly throughout the world and has already breached the United States, Antigua's largest tourism source market.

On Thursday, Minister of Health Molwyn Joseph said his ministry was not only monitoring the progress of the coronavirus, but it is actively putting measures in place to manage any potential outbreak.

"Let me state that there is no known or confirmed case of that virus in Antigua and Barbuda," the Minister said.

The Ministry on the other hand said to be establishing a multi-stakeholder coronavirus task force to include representatives from the Ministry of Health, Mount St. John's Medical Center, Immigration and Customs, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Works and others.

"We are monitoring the situation very closely and have developed a plan to mitigate any effects in Antigua and Barbuda," the Minister said.

It is also looking to identify and establish areas for quarantine and isolation for those found to have been exposed and those who have contracted the coronavirus.

So far, there are no known cases of infection in the twin-island state.



Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas told *Pointe Xpress* late on Thursday that efforts are actively underway to maintain connection with Antiguan and Barbudan students studying in China.

"We did reach out to the students studying in China. There is an association which has been contacted... we have written to them with our concerns and have given advice on how to handle the situation," Dr. Sealy-Thomas said.

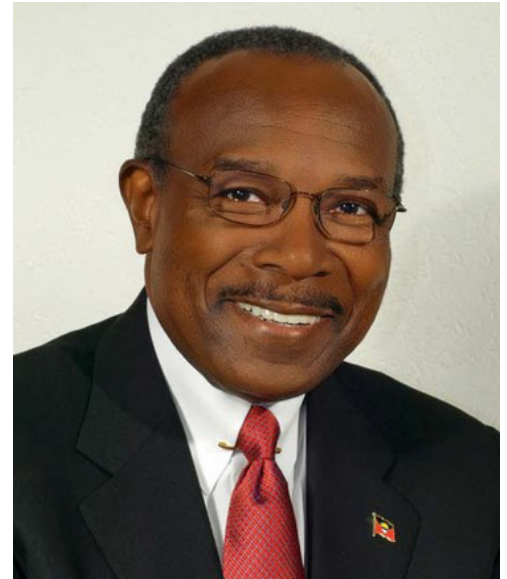
The CMO has also confirmed that there have been no reports of Antiguan students who have been affected with the coronavirus.

On the matter of testing in Antigua and Barbuda, Dr. Sealy-Thomas said that since the coronavirus is new there is no direct testing available in the island. This means that Antigua and Barbuda will be relying on the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

"This is a new virus. There is limited testing available. So CARPHA is our reference lab at this time. "Any sample will be sent to CARPHA for testing and then further [if necessary]. Currently there is no testing available specifically in the Caribbean region but they are working to have that capability," Dr. Sealy Thomas said, adding that the body is actively working to develop a test unique to the coronavirus.

The Ministry of Health is further working educate and equip health care providers on the appropriate methods of response.

"The main objective of the plan



Minister of Health Molwyn Joseph

is to ensure the health and well-being of our citizens and residents here and abroad," said Health Minister Molwyn Joseph, who added that responses will be adapted as needed.

There is said to be an active line of communication between local health officials and their regional counterparts, including the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the regional office for WHO, on the basis of shared advice and support.

The Minister said, "I wish to take this opportunity to reinforce to the general public at this time that two of the most effective measures to prevent coronavirus infection and general infection control are frequent handwashing with soap and water and covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

He said government is "deeply concerned" and will use all its resources to protect the health of citizens and residents of Antigua and Barbuda as well as visitors to the country.

"I wish also to applaud the efforts being made by the Chinese government and we have established a communication link with the Embassy here in and we intend to use those links in protecting the citizens, residents and visitors of the country," the Health Minister said.

Budget 2020: Prime Minister Gaston Browne focuses on investment in education

"We will not accept an economy where only a few do spectacularly well." Prime Minister The Hon. Gaston Browne, in his 2020 Budget Presentation spent a considerable amount of time focusing on the importance of an investment in education.

"My Government is determined to give every person who wants it, the opportunity to climb the ladder to self-improvement, to betterment and to progress. That is why we have placed such great emphasis on improving education and expanding access to all.

We recognize that a better educated, better skilled, more knowledgeable people, will not only benefit from the opportunities in a growing economy; they will also contribute to its widening and strengthening. That is why we will invest tens of millions in the renovation of schools in Antigua and Barbuda." Prime Minister Browne announced.

PM Browne went on to navigate his presentation on the importance of tertiary education through progressive educational policies.

The Hon. Prime Minister declared that his government is determined to give every citizen of Antigua and Barbuda, regardless of social status, colour or creed a chance for higher education., a chance to certify themselves, and, by so doing, to compete with the best in the world.



Prime Minister Browne with UWI Vice Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles

PM Browne said, "That is why we are spending millions every year to provide scholarships to 1,600 young people, to pursue various degree programmes. And it is also why we have established the UWI Five Islands campus in Antigua. It was no easy feat. It required many months of hard work and the investment of nearly \$20 million, to facilitate a few hundred students to pursue a University education right here in Antigua and Barbuda."

Prime Minister Browne reiterated that the move in ensuring

The UWI Five Island Campus becoming a reality is a monumental and historic accomplishment.

"The opportunity the Five Islands Campus offers, is open to all Antiguan and Barbudans – by birth, descent, naturalization, residency, or by choice. I call on all within our shores, to seize the chance in their own personal interest and in the interest of our nation, that will profit from the greater knowledge and skills they will gain," PM Browne echoed.

Antigua and Barbuda's foreign relations guided by principled cooperation with bilateral and int'l partners

Antigua and Barbuda continues to enjoy strong diplomatic and friendly relations with a number of Developed and developing nations around the globe. Prime Minister Gaston Browne took a pause during his presentation of the 2020 budget to speak on Antigua and Barbuda's foreign policy in the International fora.

"I express on behalf of our government and our people, our

gratitude to those countries that have contributed through loans, grants and technical assistance to our economic and social advancement. Among these countries are: the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Japan, the Russian Federation, Venezuela, Canada, the United Kingdom, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, the Republic of Korea, India, New Zealand, the United States," PM Browne said.

PM Browne continued by sincerely stating, "I am honour-bound, to thank especially, the People's Republic of China, because of its responsiveness to our needs, and the extent of its contribution to almost, all sectors of our economy and social development."

The magnitude of the PRC support of Antigua and Barbuda was highlighted by PM Browne.

"The hundreds of millions of

cont'd on page 9

Japan Honours Daven Joseph

from page 1

In the Citation read by Ambassador Colin Murdoch, who described Joseph as 'a friend and a brother', Daven Joseph – who persuaded the then Lester Bird Administration that it ought to play a greater role internationally on ocean affairs, and that whaling was emerging as a key issue.

As Antigua and Barbuda's representative to the International Whaling Commission, he became an advocate and leader of the 'sustainable use' group at the international level where he displayed strong leadership skills. In his remarks, Sir Rodney Williams said it was not very often that countries confer National Awards on people of other nations "so what makes this occasion so special Ambassador Daven Joseph is being honoured for the work he has done in developing beneficial relations between Japan and Antigua and Barbuda."



Ambassador Daven Joseph (left) and the Japanese Ambassador, Tatsuo Hirayama (right)

Other congratulatory remarks came from Foreign Minister Chet Greene who noted that the nation can be duly proud of a hard-working professional citizen who over the years have exceeded the expectations of his peers in achieving regional and

international recognition for his passionate work in sustainable development projects.

This is the first time that an OECS national is receiving this recognition by the Japanese Government.

from page 8

dollars provided by China in grants, technical assistance, and concessional loans, have supported; infrastructure, education, agriculture, healthcare, energy, national security, housing, sports and community development projects.

Prime Minister Browne reiterated how grateful his government, and the people of Antigua and Barbuda are to the significant support given by the PRC. Emphasizing how important the mutual respect is between both nations and the reliability of Antigua and Barbuda's support in the international fora.

PM Browne used the opportunity to expand on the nation's basic foreign policy. Highlighting that Antigua and Barbuda, continue to extend the hand of friendship to all.

"I want to make it clear that Antigua and Barbuda adheres to the principles and precepts laid down by our nation's founding father, Sir Vere Cornwall Bird Snr. On the day that we became a sovereign nation; he said this, to a Joint Session of Both Houses of Parliament:

"We extend the hand of friendship to all. But the hand of friendship should not be misinterpreted as an invitation to dictate our policies. We are determined to marry principle with practicality; we will try to fashion an approach that will, at the very least, advance our own development while contributing to global peace and well-being". Browne ended.

These words, Prime Minister Browne said, are the policies, principles and precepts his government

maintains. However, PM Browne indicated "we will allow no one to dictate who our friends should be. We make no demands on others, nor do we disrespect them in any way.

By the same token, we do not accept that we should be disrespected or that unreasonable demands should be made of us.

We remain ready to work with all in a spirit of genuine cooperation, mutual trust, understanding and tolerance within the framework of international law, international norms and the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter, to which all nations are bound. That is the basis on which, as a small state, we preserve, protect and promote our sovereignty and our rights,"

Prime Minister Browne proclaimed.



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EDITORIAL by Sir Ronald Sanders

Only CARICOM countries can divide CARICOM

The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and the Foreign Ministers of seven Caribbean countries, gave rise to many questions, but the U.S. seeking to "divide CARICOM" should not be one of them.

External forces can try as they wish to divide the members of the 15-nation Caribbean Community (CARICOM), but only those Caribbean nations can cause the division.

So, there should be no blame attributed to the U.S. government for "dividing CARICOM" by the invitation to foreign ministers of only six of its 14 independent member-states to attend a January 22 meeting, hosted by the Jamaica government. The U.S., like every other government in the world, has the perfect right to invite to a meeting any governments with which it wants to confer.

The issue – if, indeed, there is an issue – is with those CARICOM governments, particularly the host government, that agreed to the meeting without insisting that no CARICOM government should have been excluded from a rare opportunity to consult a U.S. representative as high-level as the Secretary of State.

After all, the meeting was held in the Caribbean, under the auspices of a CARICOM government. It was not held in the U.S. under the control of the U.S. government as occurred when President Trump invited five Caribbean leaders to Mar-a-Largo, his estate in Florida.

At the very least, it was within the Jamaica Prime Minister's capacity to advise the U.S. government that it would be both prudent and beneficial for representatives of all 14 independent CARICOM governments to be invited to what Mr. Pompeo's own State Department described as "a roundtable discussion" with the named foreign ministers of the seven Caribbean countries. It should be noted that, in addition to the six invited foreign ministers from CARICOM countries, the Dominican Republic was also an invitee as it was



(The writer, Sir Ronald Sanders, Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and at Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own)

to the Mar-a-largo gathering with President Trump. The CARICOM six were: Bahamas, Belize, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts-Nevis and St Lucia.

In the past, whenever any CARICOM government has hosted a leader of a major nation, it has been the general practice to invite all CARICOM governments to be present for discussions. The wider CARICOM meeting with such leaders did not preclude a bilateral meeting by the host government with the invited leader. Indeed, it was the norm that a bilateral meeting would be held between the host and guest leaders, followed by the wider consultation with all CARICOM governments.

In this context, the off-the-cuff remark, made by Jamaica Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, at a press conference with Mr. Pompeo, that, "if anyone wanted to attend, they just had to signal", was unfortunate. Mr. Holness is a decent man; undoubtedly, had he prepared his response, it would have been more considered and less dismissive than it sounded.

No CARICOM country should have to ask for an invitation between

a representative of the world's superpower and representatives of CARICOM countries. From the inception of the treaty organisation, CARICOM member countries have operated in recognition that there is strength in their taking common positions on the crucial issues that affect them jointly.

A separate collective CARICOM meeting with Mr. Pompeo would not have deprived the Jamaica government of bilateral discussions of matters of peculiar interest to Jamaica. However, apart from specific national interests, Jamaican concerns, that are shared with all other CARICOM countries, would have been bolstered by Mr. Pompeo hearing the collective voice of the 14 independent member states. That opportunity was lost at the January 22 meeting.

It is for the other five CARICOM countries that readily attended the meeting to consider whether they should have accepted an invitation that excluded eight of the countries on whose support and solidarity they depend in global affairs.

Would the arguments that they advanced, not have had greater effect if Mr. Pompeo had heard them from 14 countries rather than 6, especially as among the remaining eight countries would have been Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname – three countries that possess resources that are of considerable interest to the U.S.?

Of course, at the heart of this matter is that CARICOM countries have never agreed to harmonise their external relations, as have the (still) 28 countries of the European Union (EU), which conduct their collective policies through a single European Commission under the direction of a Council of Ministers of the member states. CARICOM governments have clung to the notion that CARICOM is "a community of sovereign states". In affirming this position in their external relations, they have placed the rights of "sovereignty" over the obligations of "community", allowing each of

Cont'd on page 13

Regional

Anti-Discrimination Steering Committee meets with Evangelical association to discuss Equal Opportunities Bill

BELIZE

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES LEGISLATION



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - DA FI AAL A WI

BELIZE: The Anti-Discrimination Steering Committee met on Wednesday with Pastor Scott Stirm, Pastor Lance Lewis, and Pastor Louis Wade of the National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB).

During the meeting, the NEAB Representatives were provided with an overview of the Equal Opportunities Bill, including on how the legislation operates in relation to people of faith.

"The Pastors expressed specific

concerns about the Bill and engaged in constructive dialogue, which will continue. Clarifications were provided around how the legislation accommodates exceptions for religious organisations so as to ensure that freedom of expression and freedom of religion are respected," a statement from the steering committee noted.

The organizations championing the Equal Opportunities Bill, namely the National AIDS Commission (NAC),

the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation, Poverty Alleviation and the Office of the Special Envoy for Women and Children, thanks the NEAB representatives for accepting their request to meet and for engaging with the panel, composed of Enrique Romero (Executive Director of the NAC), Dwight Arnold (Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of the NAC), and Attorney Rashad Brathwaite (independent consultant and legal drafter).

The committee says that the goal of this legislation is to improve the life of all Belizeans.

The steering committee believes that the bill will create a fairer society with improved public services, where businesses and everyday citizens can thrive.

The committee encourage all Belizeans to make their voices heard.

Submissions and requests for information or for a meeting with the technical team can be made to the National AIDS Commission. (Breaking Belize News)

Brantley-Pompeo Meet: De Risking, Blacklisting Discussed

By Loshaun Dixon, The St Kitts Nevis Observer.

Federation Minister of Foreign Affairs Mark Brantley pitched regional issues as they relate to 'de-risking' and blacklisting to USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a meeting in Caribbean summit Kingston, Jamaica this week.

Brantley in a social media post said, "Truly an honour to hold bilateral discussions with US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo today and to discuss matters of mutual interest between St. Kitts Nevis and the United States."

However in round table discussions with Secretary Pompeo and fellow Foreign Ministers from across the

region Brantley highlighted the major Caribbean concern of 'de-risking' in the US banking industry.

"One of the concerns we had is de-risking. That is a phenomenon where many of our correspondent banking relationships- most with United States based banks- are withdrawing from the region seeing the region as high risk leading to de-risking."

Brantley said the practice presents a "grave and present danger" to Caribbean economies. "For example the cruise industry that is largely dominated by US players is at risk if the Caribbean region is unable to do banking."

He noted if the phenomenon is not arrested the people and the region



St. Kitts Foreign Minister Mark Bradley

will be cut off from the international banking sector which will result in the inability to trade and pay for goods and services.

The foreign minister also said he would like to see greater interest by the United States over blacklisting in the region. "The blacklisting phenomenon

Cont'd on page 14

Grenada's human rights record to be reviewed by Universal Periodic Review



GENEVA – Grenada's human rights record will be examined by the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group for the third time on Monday, 27 January 2020 in a meeting that will be webcast live.

Grenada is one of the 14 States to be reviewed by the UPR Working Group during its upcoming session taking place from 20 to 31 January.

Grenada's first and second UPR reviews took place in May 2010 and January 2015, respectively.

The documents on which the reviews are based are: 1) national report - information provided by the State under review; 2) information contained in the reports of independent human rights experts and group, known as the Special Procedures,

human rights treaty bodies, and other UN entities; 3) information provided by other stakeholders including national human rights institutions, regional organizations and civil society groups.

The three reports serving as the basis for the review of Grenada will be available on January 27.

The UPR is said to be a unique process which involves a periodic review of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States.

Since its first meeting was held in April 2008, all 193 UN member States have been reviewed twice within the first and second UPR cycles.

During the third UPR cycle, States are again expected to spell out steps they have taken to implement recommendations posed during

their previous reviews which they committed to follow-up on, as well as to highlight recent human rights developments in the country.

The delegation of Grenada will be headed by Mr. Charles Peter David, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The three country representatives serving as rapporteurs ("troika") for the review of Grenada are: Brazil, India and the Netherlands.

The UPR Working Group is scheduled to adopt the recommendations made to Grenada around 5:00pm on January 30.

Grenada will be given the opportunity to express its positions on recommendations posed to the tri-island state during their review.

From page 11

them to pursue short term "benefits" from external sources at the expense of the longer term gains they would get from being seen, indeed and in fact, as a solid and unshakeable group.

But, there should be no mistake. External forces will always try to break any solidarity of CARICOM countries if it is in their interest to do so. No CARICOM government should behave as if such attempts are an affront – it has always been a fact of international relations. Instead, CARICOM countries should consider what they lose individually and collectively by fragmenting themselves,

instead of acting in solidarity.

As for the Jamaica meeting, Mr. Pompeo had one overriding objective and that was to secure the support of the seven attending countries to vote for Mr. Luis Almagro to be re-elected as the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States.

The U.S. has calculated Mr. Almagro's support and reached the unavoidable conclusion that he does not now have the 18 votes required to be re-elected. There is nothing wrong with the U.S. government promoting and advancing a candidate it favours; many countries in

the Lima Group and in the Caribbean are also promoting the candidates they back.

The more fundamental issue is not whether external forces are trying to divide CARICOM, but whether CARICOM will allow itself to be divided. Maybe, at the CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in February in Barbados, the 14 Heads of independent member states should lock themselves in a room, without anyone else, and thrash out this issue.

Responses and previous commentaries:
www.sirronaldsanders.com

Mayor of Roseau urges all to be responsible for Carnival

Carnival patrons are told to be responsible during the upcoming celebrations.

Mayor of Roseau, Her Worship Sandra Irmine Royer said during festive times, revelers-young people especially-tend to get involved in practices that could have a negative impact on their lives.

"Too many young people fall victim of ill effects of drugs and alcohol abuse as well as unsafe practice of sex," Royer said during the official opening of Mas Domnik 2020 on Saturday.

She said while everyone is encouraged to have fun, "they must do so in a responsible manner".

"For us in Roseau we want all carnival lovers to have a wonderful time this season, however I must stress that we want people to enjoy themselves responsible. Carnival is only for a time and mistakes that you make during this time can affect the rest of your life," she cautioned.

She is also advising residents to be on the lookout for people with bad intentions.

"We know that during this time there will be some among us with malicious intent, please be on the lookout and guard yourself and your children," she said.

The Mayor also encouraged those participating in the celebrations to patronize the vendors and join a band.

"I am urging all carnival lovers to play an imperial part in Dominica's culture. We are resilient, we are strong and we have potential to build Dominica together in many ways," she



said.

The cleanliness of the City should be given priority, according to Royer, calling on everyone to dispose their waste in a responsible manner.

"In doing so, we will demonstrate a

level of care for the environment," she stated.

The theme for this year's Real Mas is "Play the Rhythm, Play Mas". (Dominica News Online)

from page 12

leads to reputational damage which in turn leads to the threat of de-risking. It runs a risk for derailing the economic gains we have made.

"We would want to draw this to your

attention and engage the state department in a meaningful way."

He also addressed issues of countries be unable to qualify for additional development funds after being told

they have hit a Debt to GDP threshold. Brantley said no provision have been put in place for territories that may have been struck by natural disasters.

Timeout! DAILY SPORTS PROGRAM on Pointe FM 99.1. Hosted by Veron "Epilus" Edwards with guests and panellists 7-9am Mondays to Fridays.

International

Airlines scour the world for scarce 737 MAX simulators

MONTREAL / SYDNEY / WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Airlines are scrambling to book time in 737 MAX training facilities as far afield as Fiji, Iceland and Panama, operators said, after Boeing Co recommended pilots be trained in one of the few simulators replicating the latest model.

That means thousands of pilots from more than 54 airlines need to squeeze into about three dozen 737 MAX simulators around the world before they can fly the plane.

"Boeing is recommending that all 737 MAX pilots undergo training in a 737 MAX simulator prior to flying the aircraft in commercial service," the company told Reuters on Tuesday evening, the first confirmation of its new policy.

On Jan. 7, the company had recommended using a simulator but did not specify what type.

The 737 MAX has been grounded since March 2019 after two fatal crashes and cannot return to service until regulators approve software changes and training plans.

The estimated 34 737 MAX simulators in service, produced



An inside view of the Icelandair Boeing 737 MAX training simulator in the TRU Flight Training Iceland in Reykjavik, Iceland January 17, 2020. Picture taken January 17, 2020. REUTERS/Geirix

separately by CAE Inc and Textron Inc's simulator and training division TRU, are less than a quarter of the number of older 737 NG simulators certified by U.S. and European regulators.

"I think that what a shortage of simulators will mean is the fleet of MAXes will start flying more slowly than what the airlines would like,"

said Gudmundur Orn Gunnarsson, managing director of TRU Flight Training Iceland, a joint venture between Icelandair and Textron's simulator and training division.

"In the beginning it was said that simulator training would not be needed," he said. "This changes it totally."

Intel sees 2020 revenue above estimates as chip demand recovers

(Reuters) - Intel Corp on Thursday cemented the market view that a prolonged slowdown in the chip industry was bottoming out by forecasting full-year revenue and profit above analysts' estimates.

The company's sales in its closely watched data center business jumped 19%, helping it beat fourth-quarter profit and revenue estimates and sending its shares up 7% in extended trading.

Intel said its transition to a newer generation of chipmaking technology was progressing better than it expected and that it would boost its capacity to make chips for personal computers, in a sign that the manufacturing woes that plagued the chipmakers over the past year were starting to ease.

Intel's positive outlook follows an equally upbeat forecast from chipmaker Texas Instruments on Wednesday. Analysts view 2020 as a recovery year for semiconductors, driven by 5G spending for both smartphones and network upgrades.

After years of acquisitions outside its core area of processing chips under previous leaders, Intel Chief Executive Bob Swan has set a goal of becoming more disciplined about spending, slowing investments in areas like memory chips and shedding struggling businesses.

Intel has doubled down on its core markets such as personal computers and data centers, both of which beat analysts' fourth-quarter expectations.

The Santa Clara, California-

based chipmaker expects fiscal year 2020 revenue of about \$73.5 billion, compared with analysts' average estimate of \$72.25 billion, according to IBES data from Refinitiv.

Revenue from Intel's client computing business, which caters to PC makers and is still the biggest contributor to sales, rose 2% to \$10 billion in the fourth quarter, beating FactSet estimates of \$9.74 billion.

Net revenue rose 8.3% to \$20.21 billion, beating estimate of \$19.23 billion, according to IBES data from Refinitiv.

Excluding items, the company earned \$1.52 per share, above estimates of \$1.25.

WHO says 'bit too early' to declare coronavirus a global emergency



Chinese paramilitary officers wearing masks stand guard at an entrance of the closed Hankou Railway Station after the city was locked down following the outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan, Hubei province, China January 23, 2020. China Daily via REUTERS

GENEVA/BEIJING (Reuters) - The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Thursday it was "a bit too early" to declare a new coronavirus a global health emergency as China put millions of people on lockdown amid an outbreak that has killed 18 people in the country and infected around 650 globally.

Health officials fear the transmission rate could accelerate as hundreds of millions of Chinese travel at home and abroad during week-long holidays for the Lunar New Year, which begins on Saturday.

"It is a bit too early to consider that this is a public health emergency of international concern," WHO Emergency Committee panel chair Didier Houssin said after the body met in Geneva.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the committee of 16 independent experts had been divided in its conclusion.

"Make no mistake, though, this is an emergency in China. But it has not yet become a global health emergency. It may yet become one," said Tedros. Declaring the disease a global health emergency would have required countries to step up the international response.

Scrambling to contain the outbreak, the local government in

Wuhan, a city of 11 million people at the center of the outbreak, suspended most transport on Thursday and people were told not to leave. Hours later, neighboring Huanggang, a city of about 7 million people, announced similar measures.

"The lockdown of 11 million people is unprecedented in public health history," said Gauden Galea, the WHO's representative in Beijing.

The organization said, however, that it was not yet recommending any broader restrictions on travel or trade.

"China has taken measures it believes is appropriate to contain the spread of coronavirus in Wuhan and other cities. We hope they will be both effective and short in their duration," said Tedros.

Peter Piot, a professor of global health and director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said the outbreak was at a critical phase.

"Regardless of the decision not to declare this a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, intensified international collaboration and more resources will be crucial to stopping this outbreak in its tracks," he said. "There cannot be any complacency as to the need for global action."

The previously unknown virus strain is believed to have emerged late

last year from illegally traded wildlife at an animal market in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province in central China.

Chinese state television said 634 cases had been confirmed. By the end of Wednesday, China's National Health Commission confirmed 17 dead in Hubei. The first confirmed death outside Hubei - an 80-year-old man in Hebei, just south of Beijing - was also announced by health authorities.

Non-fatal cases have also been detected in Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the United States.

Five people were being tested in Scotland for coronavirus as a precaution, the BBC reported on Thursday. All had respiratory symptoms and had recently been in Wuhan, it said.

The newly identified coronavirus has created alarm because there are a number of unknowns surrounding it. It is too early to know just how dangerous it is and how easily it spreads between people.

There is no vaccine for the virus, which can spread through respiratory transmission. Symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing and coughing, similar to many other respiratory illnesses.

Michael Ryan, head of the WHO Health Emergencies Program, said data from China suggested almost three-quarters of the cases were in people aged over 40, with some 40% having underlying health conditions.

Three research teams are to start work on developing a vaccine, a global coalition set up to fight diseases said.

Preliminary research suggested the virus was passed on to humans from snakes, but Chinese government medical adviser Zhong Nanshan has also identified badgers and rats as possible sources.

The biggest tumble in Chinese stocks in more than eight months led global equity markets lower on Thursday as concern mounted about the outbreak.

U.N. says officials barred from using WhatsApp since June 2019 over security



UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - United Nations officials do not use WhatsApp to communicate because "it's not supported as a secure mechanism," a U.N. spokesman said on Thursday, after U.N. experts accused Saudi Arabia of using the online communications platform to hack the phone of Amazon chief executive and Washington Post owner Jeff Bezos.

The independent U.N. experts said on Wednesday they had information pointing to the "possible involvement" of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the alleged 2018 cyberattack on the

billionaire Amazon.com Inc chief.

They called for an immediate investigation by U.S. and other authorities, based on a forensic report by Washington-based FTI Consulting. The report alleges that Bezos' iPhone was hijacked by a malicious video file sent from a WhatsApp account used by the crown prince.

When asked if U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had communicated with the Saudi crown prince or any other world leaders using WhatsApp, U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said on Thursday: "The senior officials at the U.N. have been instructed not to use WhatsApp, it's not supported as a secure mechanism."

"So no, I do not believe the secretary-general uses it," Haq said. He later added that the directive not to use WhatsApp was given to U.N. officials in June last year.

When asked about the move by the United Nations, WhatsApp said it provides industry leading security for more than 1.5 billion users.

"Every private message is

protected by end-to-end encryption to help prevent WhatsApp or others from viewing chats. The encryption technology that we developed with Signal is highly regarded by security experts and remains the best available for people around the world," said WhatsApp Director of Communications Carl Woog.

For that reason, any ban that specifically singles out WhatsApp, which is owned by Facebook Inc, might leave digital security experts scratching their heads.

WhatsApp "is taking security very seriously compared to others," said researcher Oded Vanunu, whose company, Tel Aviv-based Checkpoint, regularly finds flaws in messaging apps.

"Every application has vulnerabilities you can exploit in some way," he said, before noting that WhatsApp was particularly good at fixing them. "Other instant messaging companies can dream of their kind of security procedures," he said.

Venezuelan opposition party seeks U.S. blessing to 'repeat' 2018 election: document

CARACAS (Reuters) - Venezuelan opposition politician Henri Falcon's party is seeking the United States' blessing for a deal with President Nicolas Maduro to overturn and repeat a 2018 vote in which Maduro trounced Falcon, the party's lobbying firm said in a filing.

Canadian lobbying firm Dickens & Madson in its bi-yearly report to the U.S. Department of Justice said it was in "regular, ongoing communications with U.S. intelligence and the executive branch" to ensure Washington would not oppose the plan as long as Maduro relinquishes his claim to the presidency.

The United States, dozens of other countries and the mainstream Venezuelan opposition argue Maduro stole the 2018 vote and is no longer the legitimate president. They recognize Juan Guaido, the leader of the

opposition-held National Assembly, as the rightful head-of-state.

Any such deal would face many obstacles, namely Guaido allies' aversion to negotiations with Maduro, who they argue uses such talks as tactics to buy time and cement his grip on power.

Opposition politicians often criticize Falcon's willingness to engage with Maduro and his decision to take part in the 2018 vote, which the mainstream opposition boycotted over concerns it would not be free and fair.

But it nonetheless comes after a series of behind-the-scenes contacts between allies of Maduro and U.S. President Donald Trump.

Last year, prominent Trump supporter and private security executive Erik Prince met with Vice President Delcy Rodriguez

in Caracas, while a wealthy Venezuelan businessmen who forged a profitable relationship with the socialist government has engaged Trump's unpaid personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani.[nL1N29Q20Y][nL1N28N196]

The U.S. State Department and a spokesman for Falcon did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Dickens & Madson could not be reached for comment.

Under the plan, Maduro and Falcon "would agree to the invalidation of the results of the most recent presidential election by the Supreme Court of Venezuela to enable a repeat of the election," according to the Jan. 21-dated document.

Falcon retained the firm in July to promote its efforts.

In one filing at the time, the lobbyist said it "intends to pursue Henri Falcon's election as President of Venezuela." Falcon at the time called that filing false and said it had been filed due to an administrative error.

Zion Williamson backed to continue shining after dazzling NBA debut



Alvin Gentry and Jrue Holiday believe there is even more to come from Zion Williamson after his impressive NBA debut for the New Orleans Pelicans.

The number one overall draft pick belatedly made his regular-season bow following knee surgery, scoring 22 points - including 17 in a stunning fourth-quarter stretch - in the 121-117 defeat to the San Antonio Spurs.

Williamson made each of his four three-pointers following a slow start, and head coach Gentry quickly saw progress in his game.

"I think you'll see that in him," Gentry said. "It's his first NBA game, but I think the third time he went out there he was much more comfortable, much more aggressive."

"He found out that everybody makes mistakes and he just continued to play through them. I think, for him, it was just a relief to have one game under his belt."

"And now all of this goes away: first game, first game, first game. Now he can just play and get himself in a situation where he can continue to

learn and continue to grow."

Gentry saw evidence of Williamson's "really, really high ceiling" but had to take the 19-year-old out of the game with more than five minutes left on doctors' orders.

"It was going to be a learning experience either way - if he played well, if he didn't play well," the coach said.

"I think the big thing is that he was much more aggressive during that situation. We talked at half-time, as I thought he was deferring way too much and I wanted him to be aggressive."

"I knew that he would make some mistakes, but I think what you saw there is a taste of what [is to come]. Once we get settled in and he gets settled in, there are a lot of things that we can do with him."

"There's a lot of potential there. It was good to see him do that. But I think there's a really, really high ceiling that he can reach. We'll just continue on, continue to practice."

"And no, he couldn't go back in the game. So don't go there. The medical people said that was it."

"We've got to be smart about it. I'm pretty sure Sean [Payton, New Orleans Saints coach] wouldn't take Drew Brees out in that situation. But we've got to be smart about it."

"We have to look long term and not one game, short term, and put him out there extended minutes. We were not going to do that in any situation."

"I think he made his point and he will continue to get better. But we can't sacrifice his whole future for one short-term thing."

Team-mate Holiday is certainly excited about what is to come, appearing alongside Williamson at a post-game news conference and interrupting one question to explain there is no return to "normal" when it comes to the teenager.

"This is going to be normal for him," Holiday said. "The way he plays, this is something he could do every day."

"We're here to help him and obviously for him to contribute to us and help us out, too. But with him being back, he's waited a long time for this and he's really excited to play - speaking for Zion." (sportsmax.tv)

Jamaica lose big to New Zealand in Vitality Nations Cup

New Zealand drubbed Jamaica's Sunshine Girls 71-45 in their round two match-up in the Vitality Nations Cup Netball Tournament in Birmingham, England on Wednesday.

The Silver Ferns with quick, crisp passing and better movement the ball ploughed through the centre court, proving too much for the Connie-Francis-coached Jamaicans who were once again plagued by a raft of turnovers.

Jamaica committed 50 contact penalties and turned over possession, many of them unforced, on 34 occasions. By comparison, New Zealand had 19 contact penalties and 19 turnovers for the match.

Jhaniel Fowler scored 38 goals from 40 attempts at a rate of 94 per cent but was unable to put a dent in the lead as Maria Wilson scored 42 of 45 attempts for the Silver Ferns who also got 11 goals from 13 attempts from Te Paea Selby-Pickit and 18 goals from 22 attempts from Amelie Ekenasio.

Shanice Beckford went seven of



eight from the field for the Jamaicans.

New Zealand led 18-11 at the end of the first quarter and 32-22 at half-time.

They blew the game wide open in the third, outscoring the Jamaicans 19-9 to lead 51-31 at the end of the third.

The Sunshine Girls made a better

match of it in the fourth quarter but once again turnovers proved to be their undoing. New Zealand eventually pulled away for the convincing win.

Jamaica plays next on Sunday when they take on England. (sportsmax.tv)

Windies U-19 success due to youth investment claims CWI boss Skerri



Cricket West Indies president Ricky Skerri has insisted the strong showing of the U-19 team at the ongoing ICC U-19 World Cup is due to a policy of deliberate investment in youth cricket.

The U-19 Windies, who won the

title in 2016, are off to a strong start at the current edition of the tournament after notching wins over Australia, England, and Nigeria. The team's latest win, a dominant 246 runs win over their African opponents, ensured

that the Windies were top of group B.

According to the CWI president, the team's strong showing, which has taken many by surprise, is no accident.

"This administration promised that we would invest more seriously and in a more focussed and strategic way on our youth cricket and this Under-19 team is an example of what we set about to do immediately – to give them the best possible preparation going into this World Cup," Skerri said recently.

"They have achieved already way beyond the expectations of most people. They beat Australia, they beat England. We are going to hope and pray that they continue on the path of improvement and performing at their best and whatever the end result of this World Cup is for them they would have made the Caribbean people extremely proud." (sportsmax.tv)

Sudoku

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Answer to last Sudoku

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Your Stars Foretold



Aries

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

This new moon should boost your confidence in yourself as well as your many creative talents and skills. Plus, you're likely to discover you have a ton of tangible support for your endeavors.



Libra

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

Ah, the new moon in Aquarius again raises questions of love and relationships with close ones. A friend is going to say something surprising to you. Instead of writing it off, take it as truth and try to understand what it is saying.



Taurus

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

The new moon encourages you to examine your quality of life and lay the groundwork to enrich it. Plus, if there are routines you want to vary or systems you want to change, why wait?



Scorpio

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

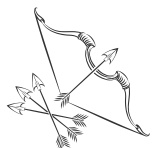
You're feeling drained today. Tell the people in your life that you need some time to gain that energy back. Introverts and extroverts alike need some time to themselves.



Gemini

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)

Magazine wisdom has it that if you haven't worn a certain garment in six months, you never will. Use the new moon to examine all aspects of your life and determine whether anything should be donated to Goodwill.



Sagittarius

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

With today's new moon, tell your friends you love them today. And mean it. They need the boost to remember that love doesn't always come from romance, it comes from understanding.



Cancer

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

Invest time in your relationship with yourself especially when it is so relevant for you. It will only make your relationships stronger. If you treat yourself well, you can show up for others in ways that will change their lives.



Capricorn

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Reflect on your relationship with your family. Are they healthy for you and supporting you how you need? If not, make the effort to communicate with them this week about it.



Leo

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)

Today, the new moon in Aquarius suggest you that you need to remember that you don't know how much time you have with someone. You need to embrace the time you have now while you can.



Aquarius

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

With today new moon in your Zodiac sign, change in your relationships is in the air. Whether it's an intimate, platonic, or familial shift you experience today, ground yourself so that you aren't shaken, too.



Virgo

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

Don't force love; don't manipulate love; don't beg for love. Today's new moon in Aquarius emphasized all matters of this kind. You deserve the most pure, real love that needs nothing but two people committed to each other.



Pisces

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

Real love isn't like a romance movie. Real love takes time. It takes understanding someone underneath all of their layers. It is vulnerable, difficult, and involved. It's worth it all.

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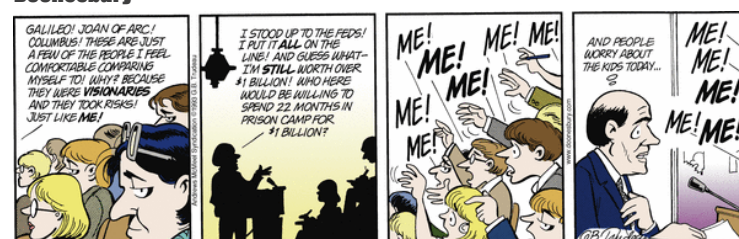


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Fraser-Pryce, van Niekerk, Chris Taylor lining up for 2020 Racers Grand Prix June 13



Sports agent Cubie Seegobin (left), Glen Mills, Jamaican Sports Minister Olivia Grange and Kingston Mayor Delroy Williams at Thursday's launch of the 2020 Racers Grand Prix which is set for Kingston on June 13.

Olympic champions Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Elaine Thompson-Herah and Wayde van Niekerk, are among a host of global track and field stars who have already expressed interest in competing at the 2020 Racers Grand Prix on June 13 as the now five-year-old meet takes on its new designation as a Continental World Tour Gold Series meeting.

Glen Mills, Chairman of the meet's organising committee, made the announcement at the Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston on Thursday. During the four previous years since the meet began in 2016, the Racers Grand Prix has seen the participation of several Olympic and World champions as well as world-record holders in editions that we of the highest quality, Mills said.

The meet has earned high praises from World Athletics and its president Lord Sebastian Coe, who was at the 2017 renewal in Kingston, the year when Usain Bolt retired from the sport. It has also been commended by a number of world-class athletes and coaches as well as managers and agents.

So it was no surprise that it was selected among the 10 Continental Tour Gold Series meets as World Athletics began to overhaul the sport to make

it more appealing to old and new fans alike.

"I am proud to announce that the administrators of World Athletics have selected the Racers Grand Prix to be part of the Continental Tour Gold Series for the next 10 years," Mills announced on Thursday.

The Gold level is the highest in the competition series, which is only one level below the Diamond League and Kingston, Jamaica is the only city in the western hemisphere chosen to host a gold series.

With 2020 being an Olympic year, Mills said that a number of the world's leading athletes have already expressed their intention to compete at the meet.

"Presently, I have received the names of over 200 athletes from agents, managers and coaches who have expressed their interest. Most notable are multiple Olympic and World champion Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Olympic champion Elaine Herah, World and Olympic champion and world record holder Wayde van Niekerk, World Champion Tajay Gayle, Commonwealth champion Akini Simbine, World Champions Yohan Blake and Noah Lyles, world-record holder Kendra Harrison, and

world medalists Danielle Williams and Rushell Clayton," Mills said.

"Promising athlete Christopher Taylor, Akeem Bloomfield and Demish Gaye are also some of the leading persons who have expressed interest."

Mills said that because the championship points that will be awarded for the core events of the meet, he is expecting a lot more interest as the meet draws closer.

The Continental Series will replace the World Challenge events as the second tier of competition under the Diamond League, and the four events that have been controversially cut, either partially or completely, from the latter competition for next season will have senior status within the new format.

The four events - triple jump, discus, 200 metres and 3,000m steeplechase - will be part of the core events in the top, or Gold level of the Tour, which will also have Silver and Bronze levels.

All four events dropped from the Diamond League final, or in some cases, the Diamond League itself will retain a wild card to the Eugene World Athletics Championships for the winners. (sportsmax.tv)



Captain Kimani Melius scored 65 as the West Indies racked up 303 for 8.

Melius scores 65, Patrick 68, as West Indies U19 steamroll Nigeria to win Group B

West Indies U19 advanced to the quarterfinals of the ICC U19 World Cup on Thursday after they steamrolled debutants Nigeria by 246 runs at Kimberley in South Africa.

The win, their third of the tournament, saw the Caribbean lads top Group B with the maximum six points. The young West Indians had previously won their matches against Australia and England.

On Thursday, after winning the toss and choosing to bat, the Caribbean side racked up a mammoth 303 for 8 from their 50 overs, their best

score in the tournament so far.

The score was built largely on half-centuries from captain Kimani Melius, who scored 65 and allrounder Matthew Patrick, who top-scored with 68. The latter and Joshua James, who scored a 30-ball 43, put together a 90-run seventh-wicket partnership that propelled the West Indies to their mammoth total.

There were two wickets each for Peter Aho (2-53), Abdulrahman Jimoh (2-56) and Sylvester Okpe (2-66).

In the face of the huge total, Nigeria crumbled to 57 all out.

Jayden Seales (4-19) tore the top order taking their first four wickets to fall as the Nigerians stumbled to 23 for four, four balls into the ninth over.

They never recovered as Ashmead Nedd (3 for 15) and Patrick (2 for 16) ripped out any resistance that might have remained within the Nigerian batting that only managed to survive for 21.4 overs.

Jimoh (17) and Okpe (10) were the only batsmen in double figures. (sportsmax.tv)



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