



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

# POINTEX PRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

FRIDAY 20TH MARCH 2020 | ISSUE 55 | [www.pointville.ag](http://www.pointville.ag)

PRICE \$3

# COVID-19 TESTS NEGATIVE

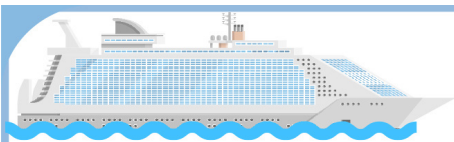
*Story on Page 3*

## Sailing Week cancelled!



Story on Page 4

# Local News



## Cruise Ship Port Schedule 2020

Date	Cruise Ship	Arrive-Depart	
12 March, 2020 Thursday	Norwegian Gem	08:00	17:00
12 March, 2020 Thursday	Norwegian Epic	08:00	17:00
13 March, 2020 Friday	MSC Preziosa	08:00	18:00
14 March, 2020 Saturday	Oceania Sirena	08:00	15:00
15 March, 2020 Sunday	Braemar		
16 March, 2020 Monday	Celebrity Reflection		16:00
16 March, 2020 Monday	Azura	07:00	17:00
16 March, 2020 Monday	Vision Of The Seas	08:00	17:00
17 March, 2020 Tuesday	Costa Magica	07:00	17:00
17 March, 2020 Tuesday	Serenade Of The Seas	08:00	17:00
17 March, 2020 Tuesday	AIDAperla	08:00	18:00

## The Living Word

Water into Hope

Read: John 4:4-14

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. John 7:37

Tom and Mark's ministry refreshes lives. This is clear in the video they share of a group of fully clad children laughing and dancing in the refreshing water of an open shower—their first ever. The men work with indigenous churches to install water filtration systems on wells in Haiti, easing and lengthening lives as diseases connected to contaminated water are prevented. Access to clean, fresh water gives the people hope for their future.

Jesus referred to "living water" in John 4 to capture a similar idea of a continual source of refreshment. Tired and thirsty, Jesus had asked a Samaritan woman for a drink (vv. 4-8). This request led to a conversation in which Jesus offered the woman "living water" (vv. 9-15)—water that would become a source of life and hope within them, like "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (v. 14).

We discover what this living water is later in John, when Jesus said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink," declaring that whoever believed in Him would have "rivers of living water [flowing] from within them." John explains, "By this he meant the Spirit" (7:37-39).

Through the Spirit, believers are united to Christ and have access to the boundless power, hope, and joy found in God. Like living water, the Spirit lives inside believers, refreshing and renewing us.

How has Jesus satisfied your thirst through His Spirit? How will you share what Jesus has done for you?

Dear God, thank You for leaving us Your Spirit. Work in us so that our lives point others to You.

### DAY 3/20

Max UV Index: 11 Extreme  
 Wind: ENE at 26 km/h  
 Wind Gusts: 33 km/h  
 Probability of Precipitation: 40%  
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%  
 Precipitation: 0.5 mm  
 Rain: 0.5 mm  
 Snow: 0.0 cm  
 Ice: 0.0 mm  
 Hours of Precipitation: 1  
 Hours of Rain: 1

# 28° Hi



Partly sunny with a shower in spots

### NIGHT 3/20

Wind: ENE at 22 km/h  
 Wind Gusts: 32 km/h  
 Probability of Precipitation: 41%  
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%  
 Precipitation: 0.6 mm  
 Rain: 0.6 mm  
 Snow: 0.0 cm  
 Ice: 0.0 mm  
 Hours of Precipitation: 1  
 Hours of Rain: 1

# 22° Lo



Partly cloudy with a stray shower

### SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST  
6:11AM

Sunset AST  
6:18PM



Duration  
12:07hr

### MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST  
3:56 PM

Moonset AST  
3:29AM



Duration  
11:33hr



## COVID-19 tests are negative

The number of people confirmed with the coronavirus, COVID-19, remains at one as the Ministry of Health is reporting that tests results from four suspected cases have all returned: Negative.

The announcement was made Thursday afternoon at a press conference convened by the ministry. Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas reported that samples from the four people, all females ranging from ages their 20's to 60's were taken on Tuesday, sent off to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) in Trinidad for testing on Wednesday with the results returning on Thursday.

"We are very pleased that the patients, who have been in quarantine or isolation, have since been notified of their results and they are to be removed from this specialized observation," Dr. Sealy-Thomas stated.

Dr Sealy Thomas said the four include person/or persons, she did not specify, who had been in contact with the lone person who tested positive for COVID-19, a female visitor from the United Kingdom.

Through contact tracing, she reported that several of the people who were on the flight on which the woman arrived in Antigua, have been identified in a collaborative effect that also involved the Chief Medical Officer in Montserrat.

Montserrat.

The Chief Medical Officer refuted claims that a patient at Mount St. John's Medical Centre is felt to be a suspected case and that the individual has been quarantined at the facility.

However, she did confirm that there are two other suspected cases and that samples are to be sent off to Trinidad shortly with the results expected within days.

Meanwhile, Health Minister, Molwyn Joseph, said the ministry is putting additional safeguards in place to screen passengers arriving in the country aboard aircraft. He said passengers arriving from the United Kingdom are to be special-

ly monitored.

"We have introduced a measure, which is another layer of surveillance that we feel is necessary. We have sent forms with questionnaires to British Airways and they are required to have passengers fill out before boarding the aircraft to Antigua," he disclosed.

The minister explained that any passengers who answers 'yes' to the question about whether they have been exposed to the virus or whether they have coughing, sneezing or other symptoms of the virus, they would be denied entry into Antigua.

Joseph said Antigua and Barbuda has entered a new intensified phase relative to

the virus; this phase calls for detecting and testing anyone who display signs of COVID-19.

The health minister is also asking for the assistance of the media to promote the idea of 'social distancing' as this is one way to reduce the spread of the virus among the population. "This means refraining from congregating in large numbers and even at home, we are encouraging people to read a book, watch television and enjoy the solitude of life," he urged.

He explained that if this is done for the next fourteen days, that this would go a long way to limiting the spread of the virus in Antigua and Barbuda.

## No need to hoard: Supplies adequate, taxes removed

Government is not contemplating the imposition of rationing to prevent hoarding by shoppers who purchase unusually and extremely large quantities of items like toilet paper and hand sanitizer in response to the COVID-19 virus threat.

Information Minister Melford Nicholas says this is because wholesalers of these items have indicated that their warehouse inventory is sufficient to keep sales outlets supplied "for the next few months".

The Minister was responding to a question regarding this over-purchasing craze, during Thursday's post-Cabinet press briefing.

Toilet paper, hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol, various chemical cleaners and disinfectants (such as the popular Lysol brand as an example) have been carted off by shoppers at tremendously high quan-

ties and regularity, leaving empty the supermarket shelves where they are normally stacked.

The hoarding frenzy erupted one week ago when the nation's first (and to date only) confirmed case of COVID-19 was officially announced.

"We did discuss that with the wholesalers and they were of the view that one of the things that would help people to resist the need to hoard these items is to indicate that – and they've all indicated – they have sufficient inventory to carry us over the next few months," said the Minister.

He added: "The supply chain is not yet interrupted. The weekly ships are still going to arrive here. We have not yet closed our borders, so the ships are still going to arrive with the necessary supplies and

*cont'd on pg 4*

# Sailing Week cancelled!

One of Antigua and Barbuda's major sporting and cultural event, the annual Antigua Sailing Week, has been cancelled, a victim of the growing measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, now a global pandemic.

President of Antigua Sailing Week, Alison Sly-Adams said, as a result of national and global measures being taken to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and the priority being the health & safety of our citizens, competitors, spectators and volunteers, the decision to cancel Antigua Sailing Week is the only viable option.

"We would like to thank everyone who has supported the event and worked diligently behind the scenes towards creating what was to be a remarkable edition.

"Now more than ever, we are committed to building on this unfortunate turn of events for a phenomenal 2021 event," she said in a statement on Thursday.

She is assuring registered participant with a boat in the region and in need of advice for onward logistics, that her committee is standing by, available to assist.

"Please note that we will be reaching out to registered participants, sponsors and the Sailing Week team over the next week," she noted.

In the meantime, Sly-Adams is also urging everyone to stay safe, to follow government health directives, and do everything in his/her power to reduce the risk of infection and those around you.

It is perhaps first time in its more than 50 years that Antigua Sailing Week, billed as the Caribbean's Premier Sailing Regatta has been canceled.

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*cont'd from pg 3*

inventory."

Nicholas was emphatic media assembled for the

that, "There is no need to hoard." He called on the

briefing to help educate the public against what he termed "panic and panic purchasing" as "there is no disruption to the supply."

He explained that, "Rationing is something that is not going to be a closed loop. It's not foolproof, because persons will know that they can use substitution.

"If you went and you didn't get the amount you wanted but you still had the money, you would send a brother in, or your other half, or a cousin, or a nanny ... It's possible that you could still breach the system; so it's not a viable

way."

Nicholas added that, "What has to happen is a change in behavior, so we do not go into this capricious spending ... If you have the money and you are first in the queue and you decide to buy it all and you don't need it, you are just going to be selfishly denying someone else who's probably really in need of it. I can think of so many senior citizens who are in this category ... If they are denied access to this particular set of supplies, then we can say we are doing harm to our neighbor."

In order to support the continued supply and affordability of these "sanitary items", Nicholas said government has decided to "zero rate" them, so that the taxes normally levied on them will no longer be applied as of the next import cycle – and for the duration of the current COVID crisis.



## NOTICE

**Seeking an Office Assistant;  
 Secretarial Experience is an asset.  
 Individual must be willing to work on  
 Saturdays and be proficient in QuickBooks.  
 Interested persons are asked to send their  
 C. V. to [ljobsantigua@gmail.com](mailto:ljobsantigua@gmail.com).**

### Notice From The Villa Primary School

The principal and staff of the Villa Primary School encourages all parents of the learning institution to please collect work packages at the office from the Secretary as of Wednesday 18 March, 2020 from 9:30am to 12 noon. Parents do encourage and assist students in completing work sheets. Remind your child or Children to wash hands thoroughly and remain at home

Thank you.  
 Mrs. Felix Principal



## Centralised check point for all vessels introduced

The Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority has announced a centralized marine vessel checkpoint as steps up surveillance and vigilance of the country's waters.

Typically, all marine vessels including pleasure crafts, boats, yachts, and cruise ships were all checked at either St. John's ports of entry, English Harbour, Jolly Harbour or Parham dock. However, with the growing need to better protect the nation's borders via sea, a drastic step was mandated to have all vessels checked at a centralized location.

This centralized location at the Nevis street pier will allow for all vessels to be checked and cleared by health officials, customs, and immigration in conjunction with the country's coast guard. This, according to the administration of Customs and Excise division is to "respond readily to the rapidly changing dynamics in ensuring that the nation defends itself against the threat of COVID-19".

"All vessels, including pleasure craft, are now being channeled to the St. John's

Harbour for mandatory checks," a statement from the customs division highlighted.

According to the Port Authority Manager, Darwin Telemaque, "all yachts were being cleared in two locations; English Harbour and Jolly Harbour. Because there are so many yachts coming in the island and the protocol for allowing the crew and passengers to enter the island requires a Maritime Health Declaration along with other protocols, there is a major strain on port health officials."

The move, suggested by the port's manager, is an attempt to place less strain on the capacity to guard the nation's territorial waters as well as to reduce the strain on the human capacity in checking and clearing vessels and passengers.

"The minister of tourism gave us the mandate on Tuesday this week to find a solution. In 20 hours, the team was able to ready a retrofitted building and prepare the port for a centralized location to receive marine vessels," the ports manager recounted.



*Port Authority Manager, Darwin Telemaque and members of his team.*

The coast guard, port health, national parks, ministry of tourism along with the port authority and customs and immigration will all make up the dedicated team for this centralized port of entry.

According to customs officials, "In a short space of time, our IT team in collaboration with the management of the port, professionally and skillfully executed the installation of kiosks for electronic clearance at new facilities that will house personnel from the Health Department, the Port, Immigration and of course our officers.

"We must say a special thanks to the UK Border Force, whose donation of the kiosks, is now being used in an urgent national effort.

This is a major step in reducing the possibility of vessels entering our shores without the requisite checks and screenings for COVID-19. Up to Wednesday, there were about 32 vessels on anchor in the St. John's Harbour. Thanks to all involved."

In speaking with PointeXpress writers, the ports manager indicated that this

bold move solved two major issues. Firstly, a centralized location adds another level to managing marine security through coast guards. While having a structured centralized port of entry allows for the yacht industry to continue to flourish. "Having lost the cruise business, and hotels closing, it was crucial to find a solution to keep the yacht business alive, so we can at least capitalize on that economic sector," Darwin Telemaque stated.

The country's port manager also gave some reassurance that the new location is perfect for the magnitude of marine vessels to be properly checked through health officials and cleared. "We are no longer receiving cruise vessels to that port so it is available. The area is already fenced so it separated mariners from the public and the building there was retrofitted to house customs, immigration and port health. The marine environment is also larger than any other location in Antigua. The marine space is larger than Jolly Harbor, English Harbour and Parham combined." Telemaque echoed.



# Local News



We at Island Provision would like to share with you the public a recent communication from our partners Sanpellegrino.

## San Pellegrino Products Safe For Consumption

-World Health Organization (W.H.O), Italian Institute of Health (I.S.S)-

"At Sanpellegrino, we share global concerns over the spread and impact on public health of Covid-19, monitoring the fast-changing scenario and shaping our behaviors consequently.

Since the beginning of this outbreak, Sanpellegrino's priority has been to safeguard the health and safety of our employees, partners, suppliers and consumers. We are following the World Health Organization's strategy of disease containment and are continuing to take all measures to prevent the risk of disease transmission.

We have been ensuring strict compliance with the provisions issued by the competent National (Italian) Authorities.

We would like to remark that all of our products remain completely safe for consumption. Covid-19 is not transmitted through foods and beverages, as both national and international health authorities - including WHO and the Italian National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS) have confirmed. Sanpellegrino always maintains the highest levels of food safety for all of our products.

Furthermore, with special focus to mineral water bottling, Sanpellegrino reiterates that this is already - by its very nature - an intrinsically safe activity, since by law it must take place in conditions that ensure the utmost levels of hygiene, so as to guarantee that original purity that makes it stand out and to prevent any form of contamination.

We continue to monitor the situation very closely. We follow the advice of public health organizations and work with authorities in affected countries to reduce the risk of infection.

**The Management of the Island Provision Group remains at your disposal for any further inquiries.**

## ABDF cancels handing over ceremony

The Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force (ABDF) has cancelled the change of command ceremony that was planned for this afternoon at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. The cancellation is due to the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that is affecting the world. The leadership of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force urges all Antiguan and Barbudans, residents and visitors to observe good hygiene by the washing and sanitizing of hands and practicing of social distancing.

The parade was to see Sir Trevor A. Thomas, hand over the reins of Command of the ABDF to Colonel Telbert Benjamin.

It is expected that the effective hand-over of the ABDF will take place in a private setting. For Sir Trevor, relinquishing command marks the end of an illustrious career of nearly forty years serving in the ABDF. The cancellation of the parade and ceremony is the latest in a series of national events postponed or cancelled out of concerns over the spread of COVID-19.

## SECRETARY



Institution: The University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus  
Location: St. John's, Antigua  
Type: Full-Time

### MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB:

To perform secretarial functions and related duties to enhance confidentiality and efficiency within the department.

- The successful candidate will be required to perform secretarial and clerical duties by:
- Taking dictation, minutes of meetings etc. and reproducing same in a format such as letters, memos, speeches, reports etc.
  - Typing/word processing, duplicating confidential documents, reports, manuscripts etc.
  - Typing/word processing general correspondence etc.
  - Maintaining a filing system of all documents, and other work-related material, ensuring security and easy retrieval.
  - Processing incoming and outgoing mail in a manner to enhance speedy and efficient dispatch from and distribution within the department.
  - Maintaining an up to date departmental diary of appointments, meetings etc.
  - Preparation of bills, collection of fees for telephone fax and photocopying machines and dispatch same to Bank/Bursary.
  - Assisting in the production of final documents, collating and circulating departmental documents.
  - Assisting with organizing seminars, conferences, meetings etc.
  - Receiving, routing and making telephone calls.
  - Receiving, routing and sending fax messages.
  - Managing of departmental imprest
  - The maintenance of an adequate office supply etc.

Applicants are required to submit a cover letter and curriculum vitae with the names and contact details of three (3) referees. These should be sent by electronic mail to [hr.fiveislands.uwimona.edu](mailto:hr.fiveislands.uwimona.edu) and addressed to:

The Director  
Finance and Administration  
The University of the West Indies  
Five Islands Campus  
St. John's, Antigua

The final date for receipt of applications is Friday, March 20, 2020.

The University thanks all applicants, however, due to the volume of applications, only shortlisted candidates



## Cabinet engages banks on COVID-19 relief

Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Gaston Browne, along with a Cabinet sub-committee has reportedly met with local bankers to discuss how to cushion financial disruptions that the corona virus pandemic is likely to cause individuals and other entities.

This was disclosed on Thursday morning by Information Minister Melford Nicholas during the weekly post-Cabinet press briefing.

He said the meeting was “to negotiate some package of amelioration” for the economic impact that the COVID-19 crisis is expected to have on many persons.

He said such assistance is envisaged for those who “undoubtedly would be affected as the economy continues to receive disruption, particularly in the tourism sector.”

The initial prospect of those talks between the bankers and the Cabinet sub-committee appear to have been positive and promising, according to Nicholas.

“By and large, the results coming out of that meeting is that the bankers are

amenable towards developing some packages to provide some amelioration to persons who would find themselves forcibly unemployed because of layoffs that are likely to occur in the private sector, especially in the hotel sector,” the Minister stated.

He recalled that such consideration of individuals’ circumstances was not unprecedented, citing one example from 25 years ago. “After Hurricane Luis in 1995, which decimated

the entire hospitality sector, persons were allowed a furlough on their mortgage payments.”

Nicholas described this week’s meeting of Cabinet as “unprecedented, because it was devoted entirely to the COVID-19 challenge and our response”.

Still, he pointed out, Antigua and Barbuda “must have balance between dangers to health and the danger of economic collapse”, noting that “we still have only one confirmed case so far.”

## EMPLOYMENT

### SQUARE ONE LTD



#### Job Opportunities

We are looking for:

- Carpenters
- Masons
- Plumbers
- Subcontractors
- General Contractors/Painters
- Supervisors/Foremen
- Project Managers
- Steel Workers
- Tilers

#### **Requirements:**

- Candidates must be legally entitled to work in Antigua and Barbuda.
- Candidates have to be registered with the Statutory bodies (Social Security, Medical Benefits, Board of Education & Inland Revenue)
- Subcontractors must be registered and compliant with Authorities.

Send applications by mail to **P.O. Box W1211, Woods Mall** or by email to [squareone@candw.ag](mailto:squareone@candw.ag). Please include information of previous experiences and projects you have worked on.

Once we receive your documents appointments for interviews will be scheduled.

The Manager  
Square One Ltd  
Antigua & Barbuda W.I



## NOTICE

To our valued customers:

The Bodog Beach Club wishes to advise that we will be temporarily closed until further notice, as we monitor the effects of **COVID-19**.

We want to assure you that the health and well-being of our staff and customers are of utmost importance to us and pride ourselves with adhering to the highest standards of hygiene.

As we navigate these challenging times, we would like to encourage everyone in Antigua and Barbuda to also actively practice social distancing as a means of stopping the spread of the virus, until everyone receives further guidance.

**Thank you so much for your kind understanding as we continue to keep abreast of all health and safety measures and we look forward to serving you very soon.**

# Local News

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
**POINTE X PRESS**  
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## PM Browne's Statement in Parliament on COVID-19

### Part II

*Continued from Wednesday's issue of Pointe Xpress*

Mr. Speaker, we have been making the call for some time for all of us to take responsibility to grow more food and to make the country more secure. In fact, the major area of vulnerability is perhaps food security if this disease continues for the next several months going into the end of the year. We all know that a vaccine could be nine months to a year away. If the global chaos continues, the economic fallout for Antigua and Barbuda and other countries within the Caribbean will be monumental. It would be catastrophic.

Nothing that I say here should create any element of fear. Understanding the fact that I'm sharing real possibilities with the domestic population, our people must always remain optimistic and hopeful. They must also operate with faith and match that faith with works. I have a responsibility to say to the nation exactly what the risks are

and we have taken a decision as a government to manage those risks.

There are some who believe that we could seal our borders from individuals external of Antigua and Barbuda by locking down our ports, our airports and our seaports, by stopping all planes and all ships, all boats from coming into Antigua and Barbuda, but I ask the question to our people, how practical is that proposal?

If we stop all ships. Are we to stop the cargo boats as well that bring food here on a weekly basis? Because if it is that we're saying that we are looking for a full-proof situation in which there is no possibility of the virus coming to our shores, then it stands to reason that we should also stop the cargo boats as well, because those who bring cargo here, could also transfer the disease into the domestic population. But how practical is that suggestion? I would say here, Mr. Speaker, that it is a most impractical suggestion in that if we were to close our seaports and we were un-

able to receive those ships that bring us food on a weekly basis, within a two to three week period we will have a food crisis in this country.

I want the people of Antigua and Barbuda to understand the risk in having an economy in freefall, in having food shortages, the social consequences that will follow. We all know that during the 2017 crisis with Hurricanes Irma and Maria that in at least a couple of countries, people were looting. They knew that that was only a temporary situation.

If it is now that individuals or residents and citizens believe that for several months that there will be no food because you would have closed the country's borders to ships, then what do you think will happen? Do you think that the people in Grays Farm, Point etc. would stay hungry and watch others eat? Or even those in Crosbies?

The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that we have to look at this issue in its totality, not only in terms of the health impact, but the economic im-

pact. Antigua and Barbuda has one of the most vulnerable economies, perhaps anywhere in the world. We all know what happened to this country during the global crisis. We lost 25 percent of our GDP. My government would have made a monumental effort to rebuild the country's economy in the last five and a half years, and we have made significant progress.

We have added about 40 percent to the country's economy in the last five years, literally clawing back the billion dollars that we would have lost and we would have added close to another billion dollars in value. The country's economy remains very vulnerable and government's finances, which were never strong, maybe for the last 40 years, remain in a very precarious position. It means, Mr. Speaker, that we have no surplus that could carry us for several months. We have been living hand-to-mouth. Not by choice, but because of the structural problems that my government inherited five

*cont'd on pg 9*



**LEARNING  
POINT WITH  
MAXINE ALLEN**  
MONDAY - FRIDAY - 1PM - 3PM



*cont'd from pg 8*

and a half years ago. It is to the credit of my government that we have been able to keep this country's economy afloat and not only that, to transform the country's economy from the worst performing over a five year period, perhaps in the world, because I'm not aware that there is any other country in the world that lost 25 percent of its GDP, including Haiti. And we have been able to turn that dismal situation into a positive one in which we became one of the fastest growing economies in this hemisphere and certainly one of the fastest in the world.

Now, we are faced with a situation, Mr. Speaker, in which we could see at least 75 percent of our revenue fall. I said before that we are easily one of the most tourism-dependent countries in the world. 80 percent of our GDP is based on tourism. Between direct employees and indirect employees in the hotel and accommodation, as well as the restaurant sector, we have twenty thousand people employed in that sector.

And if we were to close the country's border, to stop planes coming here and all of a sudden there is no income coming into the country, then how are we going to provide for people? How are we going to raise funds to deal with treating people who may get infected with the COVID virus? Where is this money going to come from? We are not a dependent state. We don't have any godfather. We are not a colony of any country.

I mean, there are some governments, especially the People's Republic of China, that would have been very benevolent to Antigua and Barbuda, but they too have their own problems. We are this added institution in which we have a very high GDP, per capita of about close to 20,000 US per head. That precludes us from concessional funding.

So the question is, how are we going to substitute this fallout in revenue, in which we would have lost 75 percent of our revenue? And for those who are thinking it will come from CIP, CIP will be affected as well. CIP is based on mobility and when people cannot move, then clearly the demand for CIP is likely

to fall.

We're doing whatever we can to make our programme a little more attractive. In fact, it's just a few weeks ago we anticipated problems and made some adjustments to our programme. One of the things that we did as well as to introduce electronic processing of applications, which will help us considerably, because if we didn't have that methodology in place, clearly the situation would've been even worse. But even with the electronic processing, the demand will fall and between CIP and tourism, they constitute 90 percent of all revenue. That is why I made a point that we are likely to see an elimination or a reduction in revenue by about 75 percent.

We have anticipated, Mr. Speaker, in order to take this country to the end of this year, it may take about a half a billion dollars. We already highly leveraged. We have a high debt to GDP. We have an extremely high debt service ratio, which means that the appetite for borrowing is not even quite there. But notwithstanding that, we have to find creative ways to make money and to raise money. We have decided to pursue a balanced approach in the sense that we cannot become totally risk averse, lock down the entire country and plunge an entire population into poverty.

How much of our people can sustain not being paid for two weeks, three weeks, much less six or nine months?

We have many, many, many vulnerable people in the domestic society. We have to protect them.

So it is important for those who are second-guessing us to understand that our position is a most responsible and practical one in which we cannot lock down the country.

We know that, for example, that within the UK that they are seeing an increase in the number of COVID cases. The US as well. I believe the US as of today had over 3000 COVID cases. And globally, it's over 180,000.

If we make a decision to close the country's borders, clearly, we would not be able to feed ourselves because the cargo ships would not be able to come here. And secondly, our tourism reve-

nues, which incidentally would have declined already will literally evaporate causing immense hardships for the people of Antigua and Barbuda. So, that is why we said that we are pursuing a balanced policy in which we are being proactive in managing the health risk associated with COVID, to expand our health facilities, to deal with a spike in COVID cases.

We would have ordered about two dozen ventilators to make sure that those who may develop serious health problems, that we can treat them because the objective here. Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to ensure that there is no fatality. Those vulnerable ones can help us by exercising self-responsibility. You cannot leave it exclusively to the government. This requires collective responsibility and collective action. And I want to say to those who are opposed to us, that I believe that this crisis requires a suspension of all of the partisan rhetoric.

And I especially would like to call upon the member for All Saints East and St. Luke, the Member of Barbuda and the leader of the UPP Mr. Harold Lovell. Those on Crusader and Observer Radio who continue to instill fear. And by the way, let me just amend that to say, I'm not suggesting the member for Barbuda and the Member for All Saints East and St. Luke that they are instilling fear. But I'm going on to say that those who seek to instill fear, using the media and social media, they are compounding the problem. Insofar as the Member for All Saints East and Barbuda, I am asking for your cooperation to help us also to manage those who oppose my government, to understand that this is not the time.

Is it Ecclesiastes 3? There a time and place for everything under the sun. Now is not the time. And if we really care about the people of Antigua and Barbuda, we will all exercise personal responsibility.

I can't overemphasize. I have said to you before at the start of my statement that personal responsibility is what is required to manage the risk of the spread of COVID through the domestic society. And all of us have to take responsibility, including political institutions.

# Electoral registration units to remain open

Registration of new voters will continue indefinitely as the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) has announced that all registration units and its headquarters will remain open for regular business.

This as fears mount national over the potential spread of the dreaded coronavirus, COVID-19. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the outbreak as a pandemic that so far has brought countries such as Italy to a standstill.

To this end, ABEC said it has increased efforts to assist its team members in combating and coping with the

uncertainty associated with the pandemic, COVID-19.

During a meeting held with the senior members of staff on Wednesday, Chairman of ABEC, Nathaniel "Paddy" James, indicated that the electoral management body is aware of the concerns about the disease, which may have an emotional and mental effect on residents and their families.

He added that, ABEC is also playing its part in promoting healthy hygienic practices, and it urges team members who are feeling ill to report through the proper channels, in order to get the time off to recuperate.

Additionally, critical information about COVID-19 has also been circulated to staff members, via social media and through the distribution of paraphernalia provided by the Ministry of Health and other associated partners.

ABEC's Headquarters on Queen Elizabeth Highway and the 17 Registration Units, have all been provided with additional resources as an added precaution designed to maintain a clean and healthy workplace. ABEC's Chairman also encourages the general public to pay attention to news bulletins and to practice good hygiene when interacting with other colleagues and businesses.

# Churches agree to limit congregation sizes

The government has issued new directives to all church bodies bringing them under the initiatives aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus, COVID-19 in Antigua and Barbuda.

This is contained in a circular from the Chairman Ec-

clesiastical Commission of Antigua BarbudaMin. William Dorsett, sent to all religious bodies asking them to manage the risk to their congregations, with the implementation of guidelines and protocols issued by the official agencies, as all cooperatively work towards minimal impact in the nation.


The Ecclesiastical Commission executive along with other churches leaders have met and have agreed to respond to the COVID-19 with a two-pronged approach to coping with the new realities.


Firstly, from Saturday 21  
*cont'd on pg 11*

**As cars have become faster, speed limit signs have naturally kept up. The first speed limit signs were posted at city and town limits. Early signs were not reflective. By the middle to late 20's however, many cities required that speed limit signs be illuminated.**

**Speed limits are posted in miles. Typical Antigua & Barbuda speed limits are: city areas 10-15 mph, rural areas 30 mph, major highways - 40 mph. Always check the signs to be sure you're not exceeding the limit.**

The evolution of road safety





A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



## Cabinet to hold virtual meetings for social distancing

The Cabinet of Ministers will from this weekend be practicing the social distancing that is one the major recommendations for dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Social distancing refers to the avoidance or minimizing of human clusters and physical contact in order to limit transmission of the virus, since it can more easily travel across short distances from one person to another.

The need to prevent congestion of several people in relatively small or enclosed spaces has already led to the closure of schools, the cancellation of sporting events, and the discontinuation of mass entertainment activities – all of which put people

in close mass proximity.

During the post-Cabinet press briefing on Thursday morning, Information and Broadcasting Minister Melford Nicholas announced that Cabinet had experienced what he called “a breakthrough moment” during its weekly deliberations the previous day.

“Through the instrumentality of my Ministry, we have now equipped the Cabinet to be able to have virtual Cabinet meetings for the first time; and so, on Sunday at 10 o’clock in the morning, we will have our first virtual Cabinet meeting, utilizing the information technology platform that’s available to us to ensure that we do not need to have these constant

face to face meetings,” he stated.

Nicholas went on to point out that, “If we are to stick to the letter of the law, the format of our discussions here this morning would have to change.

“I am going to, after this meeting, have a discussion with the Chief of Staff (Ambassador Lionel Hurst) in terms of how we can rearrange the facilities here in the conference room for our next post-Cabinet briefing to ensure that we adhere to the strictures of practicing the social distancing that we

need to be able to do.”

According the Minister, who also holds the portfolios of Telecommunications and Information Technology, “The leadership is going to be demonstrated by the Cabinet that we want to ensure we are doing everything that is possible and is practicable and necessary to arrest – and to change behaviors to ensure that we can arrest – or at least curtail the negative impact that the corona virus would have on our citizenry, on our state, on our economy and on our way of life.

*cont’d from pg 10*

to Sunday 29 March, 2020, all religious bodies/churches are to limit their regular scheduled gatherings inclusive of church services, weddings and funerals to a maximum of twenty-five (25) persons. Churches are also asked to abide by the guidelines and protocols issued by the Ministry of Health and other official agencies.

Secondly, the commission will stage a National Prayer Chain for twenty-four hours from Saturday 21st March to 12th April (Easter Sunday) 2020, encouraging churches to participate in scheduled times of focused prayer to God, as residents repent and seek God’s mercy on Antigua and Barbuda, and the nations of the world.

The commission has also declared Thursday 26th March 2020 a National Day of Prayer and Fasting-Church’s Response to COVID-19, Total Shutdown. It is expected all operations except essential services will come to a halt.

Meanwhile, the Antiguan Christian Council met Thursday and has agreed to implement the new rules and protocols to suspend formal services on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29th March. The ACC said it will review the situation at the end of the month.



NOW HIRING

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- Controlling budgets and minimizing wastage
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- Recruiting, training and developing staff

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# COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS UPDATE

## To Our Valued Customers and Business Partners,

We are facing an unprecedented situation with the Coronavirus; developments are rapidly occurring, and decisions are being made in real-time that affect our colleagues, our families and our communities.

One thing that remains consistent and is critical in these challenging moments is the ability for you to communicate with one another, connect with your loved ones, and conduct your business as best as possible. We understand that the products and services we deliver to you are essential. We know you are relying on us to stay connected.

Flow's leadership team is meeting continuously to assess and appropriately respond to the crisis as it evolves, to adjust our operations to maintain continuity, and to support the safety and health of those impacted. We are operating in accordance with guidance from the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment and the World Health Organisation.

We have put in place many virus-mitigating actions to ensure the health and safety of our customers and employees as well as steps being taken to keep you connected:

### Health and Safety:

- We have increased the frequency of cleaning high touch areas in our offices and stores.
- We have trained our employees and external teams on best practices, and given them tools to help keep them and you safe in the event we need to visit your homes for installations and service checks.

### Customer Service & Retail Stores:

- Our Retail Stores will remain open, but please check opening hours as they may change for safety reasons. Store hours are available at: <https://discoverflow.co/antigua/find-a-store>
- We encourage you to use our kiosks to pay your bills to avoid long wait lines in store.
- Please call our 24-hour Customer Call Service Team 1-800-804-2994 for assistance.
- We ask that you download our MyFlow App in Google Play and Apple Store to; top up your prepaid plans, check your account status, pay your bills and access other relevant information.

### Keeping Our Network Up:

We anticipate unprecedented connectivity demand ahead, consequently our network may be stretched to unpredictable levels. We are doing all that is possible to keep you connected, but you may experience some slow down periodically.

- We have activated our emergency plan and our technical team will be working around the clock to fix any service interruption issues.
- Hospitals, first respondent services, pharmacies, government institutions, banks, supermarkets, gas stations, our loyal customers and businesses will be prioritized.

We are dedicated to doing what is best for our customers and will continue to communicate the information shared by our government as the events unfold.

For more information visit [www.discoverflow.co](http://www.discoverflow.co) We are by your side, keeping you connected.



Joe Mathieson  
Country Manager  
Cable & Wireless Antigua & Barbuda





## **A Message from the Chief Executive Officer WIOC'S Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic**



**Safety** is our most important core value at West Indies Oil Company, Ltd. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic caused by the new coronavirus presents unique challenges in preserving the health and safety of our customers, employees and other stakeholders. We at WIOC are relying on trusted medical guidance from the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment, Pan American Health Organization and Caribbean Public Health Agency in formulating the company's response to the pandemic.

The virus is spread primarily through person to person contact, and contact with surfaces contaminated with droplets from an infected person. Therefore, the most effective way to prevent the spread of the virus is through social distancing, regular hand-washing and the cleaning and disinfecting of workspace surfaces. We are taking the following steps to prevent the spread of the virus at our Friars Hill facility and service stations:

- Enhancing employee and customer awareness through the continuous exchange of published information pertaining to workplace hygiene and the prevention of exposure to the virus.
- Additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures in our public areas and workspaces.
- The provision of hand sanitizers, face masks and disinfectants to employees.
- Encouraging social distancing (a meter or more) when conducting company business among employees and interfacing with customers.

Our aim is to safeguard the well-being of our employees and all stakeholders. We are committed to preventing the spread of COVID-19 by taking decisive action informed by our core values of Safety, Integrity, Reliability, Innovation and Excellence.

Finally, I want to assure you that we have adequate supplies of our various products on hand. In addition, we have updated our business continuity and contingency plans. We are well-positioned to fulfil our mandate of supplying the nation's energy needs by ensuring there are procedures and reserve assets in place to mitigate any unforeseen disruption to our supply chain and operations.

**Gregory F. Georges**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
The West Indies Oil Company, Ltd.



## COVID-19 CRUISE PORT UPDATE - LETTER TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Together, we are facing unimaginable circumstances. The global coronavirus pandemic is threatening our entire way of life in an unprecedented fashion, affecting the way that we live, do business, and even socialize. In the midst of this incredibly challenging period, I'd like to give you an update on how we're managing this situation at Antigua Cruise Port.

We wish to share our support for all of those who have been directly impacted by the virus and hope for the speedy recovery of those who have fallen ill as a result. We also wish to express our gratitude for the health care workers in our community and around the world who are selflessly and tirelessly caring for those in need, putting themselves on the front line of this global public health crisis. We owe their families a debt of gratitude.

We want you to know that the health and safety of our entire port community, our citizens and residents, and our global community are our first priorities. As a result, we have already undertaken these steps:

- Enhanced our already vigorous cleaning and sanitizing protocols
- Ensured that our cleaning staff has undertaken extensive training programs regarding disinfecting public spaces and proper use of personal protective equipment.
- Installed extra hand washing sinks in the shopping area to encourage more frequent hand washing among passengers, tenants, staff and all visitors to the port area.
- Installed signage to remind and encourage everyone who enters the port to practice proper hygiene to help protect us all

We will continue to review our health and safety protocols to improve the safety of the port environment.

During this time, we've been in constant contact with various government officials, our cruise line partners, and cruise port community stakeholders. We've shared our response plan with public officials, held numerous training and briefing events to keep our team members updated, and hosted meetings with our tenants, tour operators, and taxi drivers to ensure that they are aware of how we are responding to this situation. Where possible, we will encourage some team members to work remotely while we continue to deliver the highest levels of performance and security, in light of the situation at hand.

While this pandemic has certainly placed us all in uncharted territory, it is perhaps during times like these that the best in each of us shines through. At Antigua Cruise Port, our commitment to our team and our community remains stronger than ever. We are focused on developing a cruise port complex that will rival the best in the world, bringing significant benefits to the people of Antigua & Barbuda. We look forward to maintaining an open dialogue with you and encourage you to share your ideas, thoughts and feedback with us as the global and local outlooks regarding the virus change. We encourage you to maintain your personal well-being and heed the advice of our government officials and other credible sources.

Let us move forward with patience, compassion, and sensitivity in the days and weeks ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Dona Lisel Regis-Prosper  
General Manager  
Antigua Cruise Port



## Guyana: future leader or outcast?

(The writer is 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)

Guyana is in grave danger of being ostracised in the regional, hemispheric and global communities. As I write, the General Elections, which were held on March 2, still have no final count, and certainly not one that international observers have declared as credible, transparent and lawful.

I have seen many comments, statements and assertions from some who should know better, and those who seem to have adopted a herd mentality, that international approval is unnecessary and international disapproval, however demonstrated, is both unimportant and incapable of harming the country. Nothing could be further from reality.

Should the Guyana general elections be declared, and a government established, without the blessing of the international organisations that the Government invited to observe those elections, Guyana could face suspension from the Commonwealth and from the Organisation of American States (OAS) – two of the most important organisations to which it belongs, for breaches of the Commonwealth 1991 Harare Declaration on the protection and promotion of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth, and the Inter-American Democratic Charter that guides the OAS.

Once the machinery of the Commonwealth and the OAS are invoked – as it certainly will be – suspension of Guyana

from the councils of both organizations will assuredly follow. The European Union will also take separate action that will be directed at suspending normal terms of trade, aid and investment relations. The latter will have an immediate effect that will be immediately apparent in Guyana.

Of great significance is that both the Commonwealth and the OAS Observer missions were led by two former Caribbean Prime Ministers, Owen Arthur of Barbados and Bruce Golding of Jamaica. Therefore, those who look to racism to blame for positions of these organisations that don't suit them, are hardly able to do so in this case.

And, those who might say that suspension of Guyana from the Councils of the OAS and the Commonwealth is of no account, it is worth reminding that these two Organizations have been extremely important to Guyana in defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity in face of claims by Venezuela. When Guyana does not have a voice in these organisations, it is in no position to argue its case and to secure the support it has received in the past.

Note should be taken that, in the OAS, the ostensible representative of Venezuela is Juan Guaidó's nominee, and the opposition in Venezuela has been especially virulent in its claim to two-thirds of Guyana. Therefore, in the OAS, Guyana will have left the OAS field clear for the Venezuela opposition to sow its seeds.

Similarly, if the Guyana elections are condemned by the international community, Guyana's high moral standing in its case against Venezuela at the International Court of Justice, on the border contention, will be weakened.



By Sir Ronald Sanders

Based on the recommendations of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group and the OAS Permanent Council, members of the 55 nation Commonwealth and the 34 nation OAS will be strengthened in taking any individual actions against Guyana that they consider appropriate. Mike Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State, has already said that "individuals who seek to benefit from electoral fraud and form illegitimate governments/regimes will be subject to a variety of serious consequences from the United States". That is usually a first step before the U.S. unleashes sanctions against the operations of state-owned companies and their operations. Guyana would be hurt by actions taken against individual states from the EU, the Commonwealth and the OAS.

Sadly, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries – 12 in the Commonwealth and 14 in the OAS – that would normally defend and fight for the interests of Guyana, as they have consistently done in the past, will be estopped from doing so by the shabby treatment accorded to CARICOM in its attempt to help to resolve the general elections process at the request of both President Granger and Opposition Leader, Bharat Jagdeo.

Current CARICOM Chair, Mia Motley, the Prime Minister of Barbados, led

*cont'd on pg 16*

# Opinions

*cont'd from pg 15*

a high-level team to Guyana of four other Prime Ministers that included three of the longest-serving leaders, Dr Ralph Gonsalves of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr Keith Mitchell of Grenada, Roosevelt Skerrit of Dominica and Dr Keith Rowley of Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana's immediate CARICOM neighbour. In good faith, the leaders thought they had brokered an agreement with President David Granger and Opposition leader, Bharat Jagdeo.

Essentially, it was agreed that the tabulation process had been widely viewed as not being transparent or credible, and CARICOM was invited to supervise a recount as an independent body and one that wanted Guyana to come out of the situation, boasting legitimacy of the electoral process. A CARICOM team,

dispatched to supervise tabulation of the votes on March 15, was forced to leave the country after three days of patiently waiting in vain. Mottley was compelled to conclude that, despite CARICOM's valiant efforts, "It is clear that there are forces that do not want to see the votes recounted for whatever reason". She did not end there, she pointedly added: "Any Government which is sworn in without a credible and fully transparent vote count process would lack legitimacy". So, there is now the matter of what CARICOM will do. Given all these circumstances, it is unlikely to be business as usual with a government, established on the back of elections that are not deemed credible and transparent by any of the international Observers, including CARICOM. Even the continuation of the CARICOM Secretariat in Guyana

could come into question.

No one in CARICOM wishes this fate for Guyana. At a moment in history when Guyana's fortunes are set to be transformed by the exploration of oil and gas, all in CARICOM were looking forward to a vibrant Guyana, taking-up the leadership role it played in the Community's original formation.

By the time this commentary is published in some places (it was written on 19 March), measures may have been taken to take the action necessary to tabulate the votes in Guyana through a transparent and credible process – with CARICOM re-invited to supervise it.

If that happens, Guyana will enjoy international respect amid its new-found wealth; if it doesn't, the path ahead will be strewn with difficulties and hardships.

## God Forbid: But in Times of Crisis We Discover Our True Selves



**By Lawrence A. Jardine**

Founder of the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Enlightenment Academy (AB-YEA) There is a philosophical doctrine called Determinism that states all events

are determined by previous events. Also, there is the concept of triggers. For example, it was believed in some quarters that the full moon triggered lunacy, and the transformation of humans into werewolves and vampires.

However, I am triggered - to feel a sense of national embarrassment and shame - by the general and religious ignorance that is being propagated via the local radio stations in relation to the causes and source of the current global pandemic, resulting from the Coronavirus and its disease, COVID-19.

For some members of the clergy and citizens alike, COVID-19 is retribution from a loving God to punish humanity for our evil ways. In a rush to judge God, some members of the clergy and public had initially forgotten of the scapegoat called the Devil. Daily in the unclosed media polls, the cause for COVID-19 is being proportioned to God or the Devil

– both in part or to each as a whole.

I was trained as a sports coach to look for and evaluate triggers, and that - using the left and right brain theory - at various magnitudes of pressure, anxiety or stress, the less dominant side of the brain closes down. Respectfully, is COVID-19 closing one side of our collective national brain, or was that side already partially closed? To confess in true religious form, I concluded the latter after the CCJ/JCPC national referendum in 2018.

We need to slow down and desist with this fundamentalist religious rhetoric, and let level heads prevail. We are fooling around with a potentially volatile situation.

In Antigua and Barbuda, the church - generally speaking - is not accountable to or engaged in enlightening discourse with any scientific guild. It is a religious powerhouse unto itself. The religious

*cont'd on pg 17*



*cont'd from pg 16*

community asserts 'Biblical Truths' and alternative facts at Mass without fear of opposition, as there is

no Q&A segment at the end of Mass. In this Age of Information, Algorithm and Acceleration, and in the wealth of massive scientific data and incontrovertible facts, the church can remorselessly hold and propagate any unschooled belief. For example, from Monday to Friday, our students are taught the science of evolution, and that diamonds and fossil fuels are billions of years old. But on Saturday and Sunday, they - the very same students - are taught by the church that the Earth is still only six-thousand (6,000) years old.

Consequently, in every seven-day cy-

cle (no pun intended), our students are conflicted by that diametrically opposed academic and church curricula. And our scientific community remains sinfully silent, thereby doing our vulnerable youth a disservice. I want to suggest here, the first responsibility of a society is to take care of and protect its offspring, especially from the purveyors of ignorance, falsehoods, and mental and physical harm, among other things.

I would like to advise the Minister of Education to prepare an online curriculum - now our 'school children' are captive and at home - to teach them about the history of viruses (that predates the computer ones). We must make our children wise and intelligent too. Pure aca-

demics coupled with this bombardment of religious fundamentalism is a recipe for perpetual national ignorance and intellectual stagnation.

This is early days yet in Antigua and Barbuda, but if ignorance is allowed to ferment during this pandemic, Heaven knows what a national panic might become as more persons are infected - and food and medical supplies become scarce.

For example, it is reported that due to COVID-19, gun purchases have alarmingly increased across the US, as citizens line the streets shopping to stockpile weapons and ammunition in anticipation of food shortage, theft and civil unrest.

A word to the wise is good enough...

## Statement by Sir Shridath Ramphal on the impasse in the *Guyana General Elections*



By Sir Shridath Ramphal

In the darkness of disagreement, CARICOM's helpful intervention in trying to resolve the general elections process at the

request of both President Granger and Opposition Leader, Bharat Jagdeo, was a ray of light. All Guyana should have welcomed it, as most Guyanese did. It is a wholly legitimate role of community that must not be smothered under any pretext whatever.

It is utterly regrettable that, despite the highest-level agreement between the political leaders of Guyana and five CARICOM Heads of Government acting for the Community, the invited CARICOM team to oversee the recount of the votes has had to withdraw. Guyana is being deprived of regional and international approval and the opportunity for global respect at a time when it matters most. CARICOM has not closed the door to proving the preciousness of its familial ties with Guyana; it can still play the

role Guyana's two political leaders agreed it should. What is required now is for all to place the interest of the nation above other narrow considerations that could mar the country's prospects and retard the strides that the people of Guyana have made collectively. I urge that peace and progress be pursued lawfully and transparently.

*Sir Shridath was one of CARICOM's "Three Wise Men" that brokered the 1998 Herdmanston Agreement after the impasse of the December 1997 General Elections in Guyana. He is also a former Foreign Minister and Minister of Justice of Guyana, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana, Chairman of the West Indian Commission*

## Coronavirus: Italy's death toll overtakes China's



*A lockdown imposed on 12 March in Italy has been extended*

Coronavirus has killed more people in Italy than in any other country, after deaths there rose by 427 in a day.

The number of deaths now stands at 3,405, which is more than in China where the virus originated last year.

There have been 3,245 reported deaths in China, but there have been questions over the reliability of its data. A lockdown imposed on 12 March in Italy has been extended beyond the original 25 March end date. Nearly all Italians have been told to stay at home.

Despite these measures, the number of new cases and deaths has continued to spiral. There have been 220,000 cases of

the virus worldwide with more than 9,000 deaths. China confirmed it had no new domestic cases on Wednesday for the first time since the outbreak began, a major milestone. But it reported 34 new cases among people who had recently returned to the country. The number of cases in China - more than 81,000 - is still far higher than in Italy, which has 41,035. What's the latest in Italy?

Italy shut down most businesses and banned public gatherings nationwide on 12 March as it tried to halt the spread of the virus. Bars, restaurants and most shops have closed, as have schools and universities. The lockdown has been extended,

and Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said it had helped prevent "the collapse of the system". But he told the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper that "we will not be able to return immediately to life as it was before" even when the measures were ended. A report by the Istituto Superiore di Sanita into the deaths in Italy of 2,003 people confirmed to be positive for coronavirus found that three regions, all in the north, were by far the worst hit. Some studies point to the large number of elderly in the affected regions, and that a large proportion of 18-34s live at home with them. Different demographics in other nations may have helped to keep the death toll lower.

# GOT NEWS

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## US jails begin releasing prisoners to stem Covid-19

US jails are to let out inmates as cases of coronavirus infections are being reported in prisons.

New York City is releasing “vulnerable” prisoners, the mayor said on Wednesday, days after Los Angeles and Cleveland freed hundreds of inmates.

Prison reform advocates say those in jail are at higher risk of catching and passing on Covid-19.

There have been more than 9,400 cases of Covid-19 and 152 deaths in the US so far, according to estimates.

Globally there are some 220,000 confirmed cases and over 8,800 deaths.

What happened in New York City?

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said on Wednesday that city officials will this week identify individuals for release, including people who were arrested for minor crimes and those most vulnerable to infection due to underlying health problems.

His announcement came hours after a guard and a prisoner tested positive for coronavirus at Rikers Island prison, where disgraced former Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, 68, is a high-profile inmate.

Weinstein will be moved to a different state prison, an official said on Wednesday.

Other New York prisons, such as Sing Sing, have had



*New York is to release prisoners who are most vulnerable to coronavirus infection*

inmates test positive for coronavirus and one employee for the state’s corrections department has died from it.

What have other US jurisdictions done?

The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department reduced its inmate population by 600 in the last two weeks, officials said on Tuesday.

“Our population within our jails is a vulnerable population just by who they are, where they are located, so we’re protecting that population from potential exposure,” Los Angeles Sheriff Alex Villanueva told reporters earlier this week.

The LA County jail system is the largest prison system in the world with an average population of around 22,000 prisoners.

Mr Villanueva disclosed that arrests in the county are also down, from an average of 300 per weekend to only 60 in mid-March.

Cuyahoga County, Ohio, where the city of Cleveland is located, has also released hundreds of prisoners due to coronavirus concerns.

Judges held emergency hearings through the weekend to work out plea deals and other agreements to allow prisoners to be released

early or without serving time.

Several states from New York to California are now banning in-person visitors. A ban on visits led to a deadly prison riot in Italy last week.

Federal agencies will postpone most arrests and deportations during the coronavirus crisis.

What is the danger to prisoners?

Reform campaigners say prisoners face unique risks, due to a lack of hygiene in overcrowded cells and hallways.

Handcuffed people cannot cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze, sinks often lack soap and hand sanitiser is considered contraband due to its alcohol content.

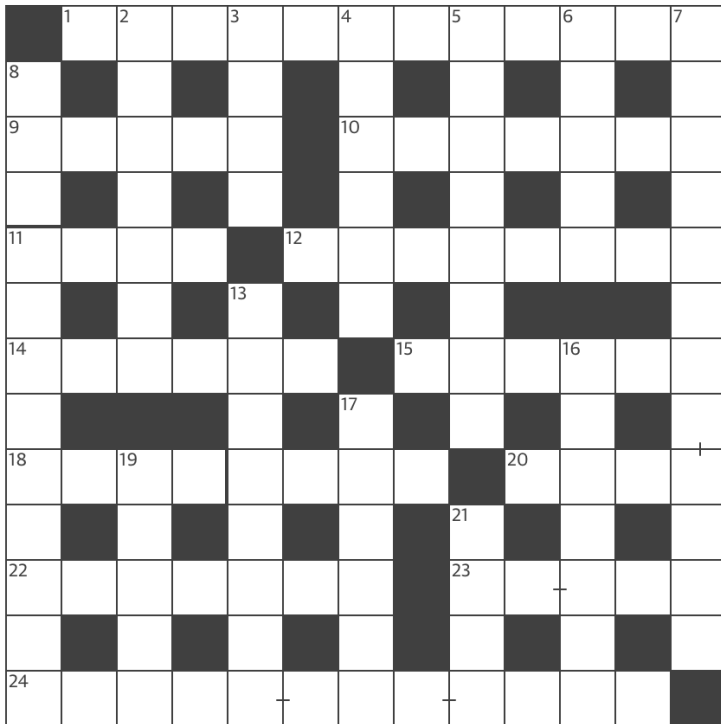
Iran has already released 85,000 people, including political prisoners, in an effort to combat the pandemic.

The US locks up more of its citizens per capita than any other country, with an estimated 2.3 million people behind bars in federal, state and local prisons.

Some high profile convicts have argued for early release over coronavirus fears.

They include President Trump’s former lawyer Michael Cohen, 53, financial fraudster Bernie Madoff, 81, and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, a notorious Colombian drug lord.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## Across

- 1 Large island part of Canada's most easterly province (12)  
 9 Large semi-aquatic pachyderm (abbr) (5)  
 10 Breed of cat (7)  
 11 Injure seriously, leaving permanent damage (4)  
 12 Gigantic statue that once stood at the Rhodes harbour entrance (8)  
 14 Not amenable to discipline (6)  
 15 French female chorus line dance (6)  
 18 Tea flavoured with bergamot (4,4)  
 20 Provide with money (4)  
 22 Warren residents (7)  
 23 Relative by marriage (2-3)  
 24 Chips to stand (anag) — game played with coins (5-3-4)

## Down

- 2 Containing less (7)  
 3 Flat mass of floating ice (4)  
 4 Outcome (6)  
 5 Straight line on a slant (8)  
 6 Spaces covered by two-dimensional surfaces (5)  
 7 Severe scolding (8-4)  
 8 Agatha Christie play (3,9)  
 13 Slow-moving (8)  
 16 People with their partners (7)  
 17 Bible passage read during a church service (6)  
 19 Mechanical worker (5)  
 21 Decree — Italian car (4)

# SUDOKU

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9		2				3		7
3	7		9		8	5	1	

**Daily Comics** presented by **azcentral.**

Dilbert

March 19, 2020



Garfield

March 19, 2020



Luann

March 19, 2020





**POINTE TV**

## COMING SOON

## Your Stars Foretold



### Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

Visitors could come to your home tonight, Aries, possibly for an informal get-together of some kind. Dear friends might be involved in some way. You're likely to be very busy during the day, perhaps tying up loose ends. Your mind is probably going a thousand miles an hour, so you'll need to wind down before going to bed tonight. You don't want to lose any sleep.

*Aries*


### Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

Today you could be faced with a bunch of people from out of town that you've never met before. You're likely to find this exciting and stimulating, but you could also feel a bit flustered. You might also not be at your most outgoing right now. This could be a better day to listen than to try to talk. Sometimes that impresses people more than anything you might say, Libra.

*Libra*


### Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

You may appear to have your head in the clouds today, Taurus. The truth is, you've got a lot of important things on your mind. Others might be offended or even amused at your distance. Try not to worry about this too much. You need to take care of resolving those problems you've been ruminating on before worrying about everyone else's reaction.

*Taurus*


### Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

Travel and adventure are on your mind. You could be daydreaming about flying to exotic places and doing unusual things, such as touring the ancient sights of India or going on safari in Kenya. Such dreams are possible, Scorpio, so you might want to look into it. You also might want to learn about exciting fields of interest, so this is a good day to sign up for a class or workshop.

*Scorpio*


### Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)

You might feel that money is flowing out of your bank account all too quickly lately, and this might be a cause of worry for you. You could feel you've spent too much on decorations for your home or on entertaining family and friends. Don't worry! You'll make up for it, and besides, you can't take it with you, you know. Watch your spending, Gemini, but don't turn into a miser.

*Gemini*


### Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Be careful of getting into fights today, Sagittarius. However, if a squabble or altercation of some sort seems inevitable, don't shrink away and hide. It's important that you face the source of the attack and stand up to whomever or whatever is getting in your path. Conjure up the warrior inside you and you might surprise yourself with the incredible power you have within.

*Sagittarius*


### Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

This will be a good day for you, Cancer. You should be feeling happy, excited, enthusiastic, and optimistic about the future. Relations with family, friends, and neighbors are likely to be warm and congenial. Today could involve a lot of time on the phone or out running errands. Expect a surprise encounter with someone you haven't seen in a long time. You'll spend some time reminiscing and catching up.

*Cancer*


### Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

A trip by air could be very much on your mind today. Perhaps you're planning a vacation with your family or a romantic partner. You could well be caught up in the excitement that seems to be the driving emotion today. Friends could offer advice, Capricorn, but you aren't in the space to accept it, as your self-confidence is high. Expect to spend the evening in the congenial company of friends.

*Capricorn*


### Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)

A rush of humanitarian spirit and a desire to do some real good might find you looking into various charities in order to find those you might want to help. However, money could be flowing out for other purposes a bit too quickly for your tastes, Leo. It perhaps would be best to find one group that suits you and give only to that one. Save other worthy causes for another time.

*Leo*


### Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

You've got a lot on your mind right now, Aquarius, and others might be interpreting your quiet behavior as your being aloof. Go right ahead and let them think whatever they want. You've got some real issues to think through, and decisions with important consequences to come up with. You'll be able to smooth their ruffled feathers later. Right now, just focus on taking care of yourself.

*Aquarius*


### Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

You, along with a significant other in your life, could be very busy trying to make time to see each other today, Virgo. Later, when you're finally alone, your phone could be ringing nonstop, further intruding upon your time together. Don't be afraid to turn it off! If a call is particularly important, they'll call again later.

*Virgo*


### Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

A number of invitations to social events could come your way today, some from people you really don't know well. Don't pass them up, however. You could make some fortunate contacts or even some new friends at these parties. You enjoy being around people, Pisces, but today you might find it a bit tedious. Your heart is with your family. You're probably looking forward to being at home and cuddling with a romantic partner.

*Pisces*





## NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING RATES

	B & W	COLOR
CENTER SPREAD	2,200.00	3,500.00
FULL PAGE	900.00	1,600.00
MINI PAGE	800.00	1,200.00
HALF PAGE - VERTICAL	600.00	850.00
QUARTER PAGE	350.00	500.00
EIGHT OF A PAGE	250.00	350.00
16TH OF A PAGE	120.00	300.00
CLASSIFIED - PERSONAL	30.00	
CLASSIFIED - PROFESSIONAL	60.00	125.00



## POINTE FM RADIO ADVERTISING RATES

RADIO RATES	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
3 SPOTS DAILY	165.00	990.00	3,366.00
4 SPOTS DAILY	200.00	1,200.00	4,080.00
6 SPOTS DAILY	270.00	1,620.00	5,508.00
30 TO 45 SECS ADS			

MENTIONS	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
3 MENTIONS DAILY	120.00	600.00	2,040.00
4 MENTIONS DAILY	160.00	800.00	2,720.00
6 MENTIONS DAILY	240.00	1,200.00	4,080.00

### PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP

PRIME TIME	30 MINS   500.00
NON-PRIME TIME	30 MINS   250.00

## POINTE XPRESS & POINTE FM RADIO COMBO ADVERTISING RATES

	B & W	COLOR
MINI PAGE 4 MENTIONS	750.00	1,199.00
HALF PAGE 4 MENTIONS	600.00	850.00
CLASSIFIED ADS & 4 MENTIONS	150.00	-
QUARTER PAGE & 3 MENTIONS	350.00	500.00
CENTER SPREAD & 3 RADIO ADS OR 6 MENTIONS	1,900.00	3,200.00

## Shooting club executives share insight

The Antigua and Barbuda Shooting Club hosted the Royal Air Force Target Rifle Club last weekend at the Crabbs Shooting Range.

On Wednesday two of the executive members appeared on the Point FM program TIMEOUT Program.

President of the Club Thomas Greenaway said he was introduced to the sport 25 years ago after a conversation with Ivor Gomes. Greenaway started with hand-guns before graduating to Small bore and eventually Full bore.

Small bore target rifle is usually 22 calibre and Full bore over 30.

The legal age to shoot in our twin island state is 21 and Thomas says his Club will be embarking on a major recruitment drive for new members. To become a member one does not need to own a gun or rifle but has to produce a police record, present a reputable reference and go through an intense interview process.

The 25 year veteran says safety is of uttermost importance to the Club and every step is taken to make sure that individuals with the wrong motives and



criminals don't use their institution for the wrong reasons.

Also appearing on the program was Secretary, Rev. Olson Daniel who is also a 25 year veteran of the Club. Daniel says he enjoys the intensity of the sport. He noted age is not a number and once you can see the sport is open to everyone. He articulated that Shooting has a lot to offer Sports Tourism since every

tournament they host involved 50 or more people and their families. These people rent cars, purchase food, hotels and entertainment.

The Clubs provides Guns and ammunition to its members at a cost which along with the membership fee drives the survival of the institution.

The Club will be hosting another team in March.



President Trevor Cranstran

## Draught activities postponed

As a result of the COVID-19 virus, the Antigua and Barbuda Draught Association have postponed majority of their activities.

All tournaments and training sessions for the usage of Clocks and the recording system of the draughts moves have been put on

hold.

But executive meeting will continue.

However, the Association has acquired a space as their headquarters at the Lower Ottos Sports and Youth Development Center on All Saints Road.

President Trevor Cranstran says their youth development program held at the Greenbay Primary School every Thursday has also been halted. He added that once the dust has settled the youth development program will be re started immediately.

## Sir Andy not happy with WI performance

Sir Andy Roberts has given Cricket West Indies 6 out of 10 on the first year of President Ricky Skerritt tenure in office.

Roberts speaking on the Mason and Friends program says he is not happy with the performance of the senior West Indies team.

He added that the administration is focusing on mending fences with the older players instead of zooming in on the development of the present players.

The former pacer added that the present

Franchise system is failing the system. He said they are performing in regional cricket but fail at the higher level.

Roberts say the present players have been allowed to fly under the radar and they should be held responsible for sixty percent of their development instead of coaches and administrators having to bear all the responsibility.

When asked what would be his advice to the Skerritt going forward he said "they don't listen to me I am too old fashioned."



## Football Player Profile: Ronaldo Flowers

Keep your eyes on Ronaldo.

One of the brightest talents in local football ply his trade with Villa F.C in the ABFA First Division.

Ronaldo Flowers who was introduced to the game by his mother at the age of three would engage him in kick around after work. At the age of ten on his birthday he ventured with his friend Jahquane Richards to join the Villa Lions

Football Academy a day he says he will never forget.

A graduate of the Antigua Grammar School Flowers made his debut for the Antigua and Barbuda national team at the tender age of 16.

To date he has played Luton Town F.C Brentford, Oxford United F.C and Villa F.C who he now represent.

Renaldo says his dream is to become a professional player and he believed through God his dreams will be a reality.

He wants to give his Mom who has been very supportive throughout his career a better life.

His favorite Club is Chelsea F.C and favorite player anyone who brings joy and excitement to the fans like Renaldo, Messi, Neymar, Joa Felix, and Dybala.

Keep your ear and eyes open on 17 year old Antigua national player Renaldo Flowers.



@Football Profile268

### Football Notice

All football coaches assigned to the Ministry of Sports have been advised to precede 30 days vacation immediately.

This was sent via a group chat by the Coordinator of Schools Football Rohan Porridge Benjamin who indicated that vacation forms should be completed by today (Friday) on the directive of the Minister and Permanent Secretary.

# DEWS