

MONDAY 23RD MARCH 2020 | ISSUE 56 | www.pointville.ag

# **CUBAN DOCTORS** GOMING

Story on Page 4



**Testing for COVID-19** begins this week - Page 6

### **Local News**



### **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.

# **Extended hours at Immigration Department**

New hours are going into effect at the Immigration Department at its St John's headquarters.

Chief Immigration Officer, Katrina Yearwood, said the new hours of operation will serve a twofold objective.

"Firstly, we are very cognizant of the new guidelines regarding social distancing as the country seeks to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

"We are therefore extending the hours of operation to eliminate the need for many clients to congregate at the department at the same time. Secondly, we are reducing the hours of work for our employees," Yearwood explained.

The extended hours start today from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm with teams from the department working a 6-hour shift system. The new hours will enable employees to spend more time at home with family thus enabling the department to institute the social distancing protocols at each station within the department.

The other departments of the department, notably the airport and the seaports, already have in place shift systems.





#### SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST 6:08AM

Sunset AST 6:19PM



Duration 12:11hr

#### MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST 5:52 PM

Moonset AST 5:55AM



Duration 12:03hr

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# Fake news causing havoc

The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is giving rise to another crisis in Antigua and Barbuda; the creation of false information that is being circulated widely via several social media channels leading to unnecessary fears and concern.

The seriousness of the problem has reached a level where the government has announced that it will take decisive actions against anyone found to be creating and propagating the falsehoods or 'Fake News'.

At an extraordinary virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on Sunday, via I.T channels, the matter came up for review with members expressing their displeasure with the frequency of the falsehoods that are being circulated as coming from official sources.

For example, last Friday, one social media message was circulated widely to public servants urging 'non-essential' workers to stay home. The message was purportedly signed by the permanent secretary of the various ministries from which the information was circulated. However, permanent secretaries in the ministries all said that they were unaware of the origin of such information.

That same day, the government spokesman, Lionel Max Hurst had to issue a statement denying that all supermarkets will be close effective today (Monday) because of a shortage of products.

Last week too, there was another message that purportedly claimed that West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) Chief Executive Officer, Gregory Georges had stated that there were insufficient supplies of cooking gas and regular gasoline. This caused a mini-run on service stations before the 'fake news' was debunked. This was being circulated at a time when WIOC had issued a statement to the media assuring the nation that there was no need to worry.

"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," Georges clearly indicated in his statement.

In his press conference last Thursday, Health Minister, Molwyn Joseph, had to refute suggestions ostensibly coming from a 'member' of the nursing fraternity stating that there was inadequate amount of supplies needed for nurses and other health personnel. Joseph

said when he met with senior nurses of the Nurses' Association, they denied knowledge of the origin of the statement. The minister noted that there were adequate supplies available however, there was a mixup in the distribution and that immediate steps have been implemented to ensure a smooth process going forward.

"Those malicious persons who have been making false announcements by way of the Whatsapp Messenger service, and those who assist them by passing the false messages around, are

warned that the Electronic Crimes Act applies to these reckless undertakings,"the post-Cabinet report stated.

It added that the Royal Police Force has been engaged and will do the necessary tracing to get to the origin of the false announcements. It warned that those persons who are so engaged are warned and advised to desist from spreading falsities.

Additionally, the Cabinet noted that there are others who write and speak anecdotally on radio and the Internet; Cabinet reiterated the need to rely on science, and discourages panicking.

# APUA ELECTRICITY MAINTENANCE SCHED

These planned outages are necessary for our continuous upgrade and maintenance programme to provide reliable and consistent service to our customers.

Date: Monday, 23rd March 2020

Time: o8:30AM - 11:00 AM
Affected areas: Section of Cassada Garden south of the Moravi-

Date: Monday, 23rd March 2020 Time: 09:30AM - 11:00 AM Affected areas: Section of Belmont north of the Belmont Clinic.

Time: o8:30ÅM - 01:00 PM Affected areas: Section of Swetes, Folly's and John Hughes

Date: Wednesday, 25th March 2020 Time: 08:30AM - 12:00 PM Affected areas: Denfields and Cook's Ext. areas.

Kindly note that this schedule is subject to slight variation. Changes will be communicated on the APUA Facebook page.

Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated. For further information and updates please call 311.



Apua Apua Apua

## **Local News**



# Cuban doctors to help Antigua and Barbuda fight against COVID-19

This week, some thirty-one (31) health care workers from the Republic of Cuba will be on the island to help strengthen the healthcare capacity of Antigua and Barbuda amidst COVID-19 preparation.

The Cuban healthcare professionals comprise of six doctors and twenty-five nurses. According to a statement from the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, "the deployment of Cuban medical professionals follows a request from the Government of Antigua and Barbuda on March 10th, 2020."

This request was sent two days before the country recorded its first confirmed positive case of COVID-19.

The request of manpower is said to be a signal which speaks to the strong relationship of solidarity existing between Cuba and Antigua and Barbuda. Antigua and Barbuda has enjoyed friendly and diplomatic relations with Cuba for over twenty-five years, when former Prime Minister, Lester Bird and the late former President of Cuba, Fidel Castro forged bilateral relations.

The Health Ministry has confirmed that these health care providers being sent to Antigua and Barbuda are specifically trained in disease infection prevention and control.

Information reaching PointeXpress indicates that several Cuban Doctors and Nurses will be based at the retro-fitted Margetson Ward which has specifically been designated to deal with everything pertaining to COVID-19, while others will be based at the Mount St. John's Medical Center and in Barbuda. The provision of foreign specialists, the Ministry of Health reiterates, comes in the form of support of the government of Cuba, to help the country enhance its response to COVID-19.

On Saturday, Jamaica welcomed 140 Cuban medical professionals to support their island's national response ef-



Her Excellency Maria Esther Fiffe Cabreja, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Antigua and Barbuda, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P Chet Greene.earlier this year at CARICOM CUBA day celebration.

forts for COVID-19. To date, Jamaica has confirmed 19 cases with 1 death.



The Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party joins the fight against COVID-19 through awareness and education. Awareness information and Public Service Announcements throughout every village in Antigua and Barbuda continues this week.

Adhering to the principle of social distancing, catch us in your village in the day, providing information on this

# Community Notice:

novel virus utilizing loudspeakers.

Keeping abreast of the latest news and information on Coronavirus will aid in protecting you, your family and the community. Let us all stay aware, prepare and act.

If you think you have contracted the virus, have been exposed to it or any other matters about the virus please contact the COVID-19 Hotline (462-6843).

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# Silver lining in COVID's dark cloud

Antiguans and Barbudans have been told in no uncertain terms that "there will be significant economic problems" arising out of the COVID-19 crisis because of the shutdowns and disruptions it is causing.

As a matter of fact, according to the nation's Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, these economic problems and threats have already begun to manifest and take shape.

He explained that this is "because, in essence, there is constructive closure of the country. Practically all the international carriers will be discontinuing flights by about Tuesday and Wednesday of [this] week. So that in itself would have resulted in the constructive closure of the country's airport …"

He however noted that a reduction in the amount of people entering the country would also reduce the risk of the disease being brought in by inbound travellers.

Browne said word reaching him was the opposition United Progressive Party, which had previously supported the government in keeping the country's ports of entry open, has since vacillated in its position and was now calling for shutdown.

The Prime Minister said

he was at a loss as to the reason for this turnaround, as the risk now is less because the country is constructively in as state of closure already. With airport traffic down to a barely discernible activity, he pointed out that hotel occupancy had within one week dropped from 80 percent occupancy to under 10 percent.

"By Wednesday of [this] week," the Prime Minister stated, "many of those properties will be closed. In fact, practically all but maybe one or two of the hotels would have given notice already that they are closing [this] week. The guests are obviously leaving and trying to get back home."

The damage to the country's tourism industry and economy, notwithstanding, Prime Minister Browne held up the silver lining in this otherwise very dark cloud: "So the risk now, in terms of having an imported case, would be significantly reduce, which will make it even more manageable ... especially it hasn't spread significantly within the domestic population."

The Prime Minister stressed that "there is no reason to be fearful" as the country has been doing well so far in terms of managing the COVID-19 risk.





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 inquires.

### **Local News**

# Testing for COVID-19 begins this week

A special temporary facility has reported been set up at the Central Board of Health (CBH) headquarters on All Saints Road to examine and test persons who feel unwell and believe they may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

Although only a single case has been confirmed in the country thus far, persons exhibiting flu-like symptoms are being encouraged to practice self-isolation and seek medical attention to ascertain whether they have

been infected with the virus.

The COVID-19 pandemic is responsible for thousands of deaths worldwide in the four months since it broke out in China.

According to Prime Minister Gaston Browne, "Individuals can go there to be examined. Those who have respiratory tract infections, instead of going to the clinics, instead of going to the hospital, we are inviting them to go to All Saints Road at the CBH headquarters where they can be exam-

ined and a prognosis could be made of their condition, and they could be tested accordingly for COVID."

He disclosed further that the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has already shipped COVID-19 test kits to Antigua and these are expected to arrive today. "I believe by about Wednesday we should be able to commence our own series of testing," Browne stated.

He said it was his understanding that the equipment is already set up here and 'needs someone to authenticate the procedures' and make sure that everything is in order. He noted that the government has not been able to schedule that person. However, he continued, the government is hoping it can get that person in by Tuesday, and on the basis it gets that person arrives by tomorrow, then there's every likelihood that testing can commence from Wednesday.

He added that Antigua and Barbuda has also purchased a significant number of test kits other than what PAHO is donating, and the government expects to get those later in the week if all goes well.



# 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.



### TREASURY DEPARTMENT MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

#### To Our Valued Customers,

At the Treasury Department, the safety and well-being of our employees and customers is always our priority. We recognize the important role we play in providing efficient service to our external customers together with the Public Service. We are activelymonitoring the COVID-19 situation and are taking steps to help keep our customers safe. Here are a few steps taken by the department to mitigate any spreading of the virus. THE TREASURY WILL OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FROM 8:30AM TO 12 NOON, MONDAY TO FRIDAY EFFECTIVE 23RDMARCH 2020 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

#### Aligning with public health authorities

We are closely monitoring updates from the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the World Health Organization and PAHO regarding COVID-19. We will continue to seek guidance from public health officials and government agencies on an ongoing basis.

#### Protecting our employees and customers

As our employees interact with customers and the general public, we have taken steps to limit exposure to the virus. We have limited the number of persons entering the building to three per service window. Wehaveorganized remote-work solutions in the event the risks should increase. We continue to encourage and enforce safe behavior in every environment. We havesourced and providedfor use, sanitizers and protective supplies for the staff as well as customers. Additionally, we have protocols in place that will activate closures, disinfecting and appropriate quarantine procedures based on recommendations by Government and health agencies.

#### What we ask of you

We are taking every precaution to ensure the safety and health of our employees and customers, but we need your help. If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms such as fever, coughing, sneezing, please reconsider entering our offices. Please contact the Ministry or Department with which you do business orcall usat 468-9100 or email us at treasury@ab.gov.ag. Let us work together to secure our health against COVID-19.

#### **Accountant General**

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# Claims of multiple COVID cases debunked

The lone individual who tested positive for COVID-19 virus – after she arrived in Antigua aboard a British Airways flight from the UK – remains Antigua and Barbuda's only known case of the disease.

This has been emphasized by Prime Minister Gaston Browne, whose government continues urging people to refrain from making unfounded allegations via social media, which are likely to spread panic and confusion.

Speaking Saturday on Pointe FM's Browne and Browne Show, the Prime Minister said the 21-yearold female is "recovering nicely" and is expected to "make a full recovery within the next week or so".

He said her parents, with whom she lives, have been tested and found to be free of the virus, but continue to be monitored for any signs that may develop while they remain in isolation at home.

The location of the family members, like their identities, is being withheld for personal privacy and security reasons.

Browne said there is at present not a single person hospitalized for COVID-19,

although several have been tested when they present with respiratory and other symptoms associated with the deadly global pandemic.

The Prime Minister, with a hint of amusement, mentioned well-known environmentalist Eli Fuller, who he said was among those claiming that there were more cases of COVID-19 within the domestic space than the authorities were either aware of or admitting to.

"I'm not in a position to doubt him," Browne said of Fuller. "Maybe he has knowledge that most do not have

"All I can say is that, to date, only one person has tested positive. And I also should add here that we do not have a single person in the hospital with COVID to our knowledge; and no one has died of COVID or any flu-like symptoms. So, from all indications, the risk in Antigua and Barbuda remains relatively low and the country remains very safe."

Browne said it was based on this assessment that local authorities have concluded that "there is no need to take any premature action to close the country's borders at this time.

"This is a situation we are monitoring all the time ... to determine our next course of action."

# Local Business Donates To Fiennes

Local businessman, Leslie Salmon, of Food Brokerages Services Ltd. has donated several food items and other supplies to the elderly housed at the Fiennes Institute.

The donation include 10 cases of oats, 10 bales of toilet paper and 10 cases of crackers to the residents of the Fiennes Institute. "This donation is part of our efforts to assist the needy during this difficult period. We are aware that the Government cannot do it alone therefore stepping up our efforts as Good Corporate Citizens to help our fellowman," Salmon stated.

He noted that is a time for national coming together in the interest of Antigua and Barbuda and to ensure that no one is left behind.





POINTE PRESS

### XPRESS NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING RATES

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350.00 250.00	500.00 500.00 350.00
120.00 30.00 60.00	300.00 125.00
	2,200.00 900.00 800.00 600.00 350.00 250.00 120.00 30.00



### **POINTE FM RADIO ADVERTISING RATES**

STYLE BUSIN THREE PROPERTIES			
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			1//
<b>3 MENTIONS DAILY</b>	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 SPONSPORSHIP**

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

# POINTE APRESS & POINTE AN RADIO CETAR DIRECTEVADA OCUMO

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

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# LIAT Reduces Flights



The ongoing global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted intra-regional travel forcing the Antigua-based carrier, LIAT, to reduce its flight schedule.

A statement from its headquarters in St John's said LIAT is committed to fly across the region, however, under the circumstances; it has been forced to reduce its schedule drastically with immediate effect. "The new reduced schedule is in response to the decline in travel as well as travel restrictions and border closures imposed by governments of destinations into which LIAT operates," the statement revealed.

It said the schedule runs from March 22 to April 30 and it represents a forty percent (40%) reduction in the number of flights operated by the airline. LIAT is reporting a 'significant decline' in travel due to COVID-19 forcing the airline to suspend service to several destinations.

Already, it has suspended flights into Guyana due to border closures as well as to Trinidad, Martinique, Guadeloupe and St. Maarten. Effective today, Mon-



LIAT CEO Julie Reifer Jones

day, the airline will also suspend flights into Grenada as that island announces the closure of its borders bringing the reduction in flights closer to fifty percent.

LIAT spokesman, Shavar Maloney, said there's likely to be further reductions in the schedule as other destinations have indicated that they too will soon be closing their borders to reduce their exposure to the virus. Chief Executive Officer, Julie Reifer-Jones expressed her concern about the dynamic situation with the imposition of travel bans and border closures. As a result,

LIAT quickly amended its schedule to ensure that it could remain flying and connecting the region. She reassures the traveling public that LIAT was doing its part by ensuring several measures were in place to protect employees and passengers. These include ensuring aircraft are cleaned to global cleaning standards, following the directives of CARPHA & WHO and collaborating with local public health authorities. The airline was assisting customers by waiving penalties for cancellations and changes on bookings. "These are extremely challenging time for the airline, its employees and other stakeholders. We are currently in ongoing discussions with stakeholders, including its union partners, to ensure that measures were in place to keep LIAT flying throughout this crisis," Reifer-Jones explained. In addition, the airline's Board of Directors is in direct communication with regional governments to secure concessions and waivers. LIAT will closely monitor this rapidly changing situation and issue regular advisories to the public.



## **Local News**



### Sandals Announces Closure



The two Sandals resort properties in Antigua and Barbuda will close at the end of the month as part of a system-wide closure of Sandals and Beaches Resorts across the Caribbean.

The announcement comes from the Sandals Group Chairman, Gordon "Butch" Stewart, who advised that all Sandals and Beaches Resorts are being closed for the period March 30 to May 15, 2020 in a move to safeguard the safety and health of the chain's valued guests and team members.

The decision, which he described as difficult, comes amid the global spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

"Never could we have imagined the impact the current global health crisis would have on the world. In these unprecedented times, and now more than ever, the safety and health of our valued guests and team members is of paramount importance. Recent global travel warnings, coupled with airline carrier cancellations, have compelled us to make the difficult decision to close all Sandals and Beaches Resorts," Stewart is quoted in the Jamaica Observer as saying. He indicated that the various resorts will stop accepting guests effective today, March 23. Stewart's all-inclusive luxury resort chain operates 19 properties across seven Caribbean islands.

"The Caribbean is resilient. We have always come back better, stronger and more passionate than ever," he said. "We promise this time will be no exception. We will take this time to make further enhancements to our resorts, so that we will continue to surpass your expectations and provide you with the luxury-included vacation you so well deserve. You chose Sandals and Beaches Resorts because it's the brand vou can trust. When the time is right, you can trust us to be here, ready to welcome you back with open arms and a warm smile. Soon come back." There's no immediate indication on how this move will affected the hundreds of workers at the resort.

# Caribbean Cinemas Closes Indefinitely

The country's lone cinema – Caribbean Cinemas – has announced that it too will close for an indefinite period because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a statement...CC said it was adhering to the directives as set out by the government regarding to the congregating of people in closed places. Effective today, CC said it will therefore close until further notice.



**Coronavirus Disease 2019** 

#### BE AWARE.

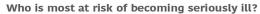
COVID-19 is a new respiratory illness that was first discovered in Wuhan, China. It is transmitted from person to person.



\*Symptoms may appear 1 to 12 days following exposure to the virus







- People over age 60
- People with pre-existing conditions such as diabetes and heart disease





#### How is it transmitted?

- Through close contact with an infected person
- By an infected person coughing or sneezing
- By touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes



Currently there is no vaccine or specific treatment. We can only treat the symptoms. Serious cases may require oxygen and ventilatory support.

#### PREPARE.



Make sure you get your information from a reliable source.



Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based gel.



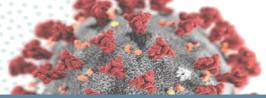






Cover your mouth with the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze or use a tissue and dispose of used tissue immediately and wash your hands.





#### ACT.

COMMON **SYMPTOMS** 

**SEVERE** CASES



Avoid close contact with people who have flu-like symptoms.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid sharing cups, plates or other personal items and disinfect all surfaces that are touched frequently.



If you have traveled to areas where COVID-19 is circulating or have been in contact with someone who has it and you experience fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention immediately. Do not self-medicate.

Note: Information may change when more is known about the disease. February 2020.







POINTE PRESS

# Six Month Moratorium on Bank Loans



Customers of commercial banks operating in Antigua and Barbuda and the other countries in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) will get a six-month moratorium on their loans.

A statement issued by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) said this was among a package of assistance hammered out between the central bank and the ECCU Bankers Association over the past few days. It said the institutions understand the anxiety that some customers and residents across

the ECCU are experiencing over the loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

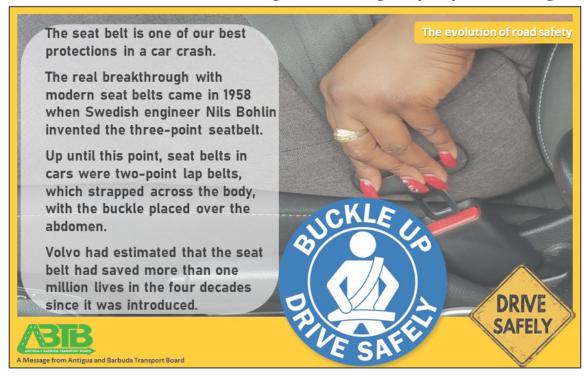
Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne, said meetings are planned shortly with the management of the credit unions to encourage them to offer similar services to their customers.

"The current situation is unprecedented and we recognize the magnitude of the likely impact on our daily lives. Rest assured, we are here to offer guidance and support as we navigate this situation together," according to the ECCB statement.

The statement said there have been discussions between the ECCB and the bankers' association to formulate a support programme for customers and residents during this time of difficulty and uncertainty. Noting the likely impact on individuals and businesses across our region, the statement said they have agreed to adopt a collective and coordinated approach to help address the economic and social consequences from the pandemic. "Consequently, we have agreed that a support programme will be implemented by all member banks in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union," the statement explained. The programme will facilitate a loan repayment moratorium for an initial period of up to six (6) months with a possible extension upon review. In addition to the deferral of loan repayments, a waiver of late fees and charges will be applicable to eligible customers during this period.

According to the ECCB, each member bank will advise its customers of the details and process for the support programme as direct information of the details of the scheme will come from the commercial bank themselves.

The ECCB is also urging customers of financial institutions and residents of the Currency Union to use digital and online channels as far as possible. This comes as many financial institutions implement measures that follow the government's guidelines relating to social distancing. These services are offered, without charge, by most financial institutions.





# 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.

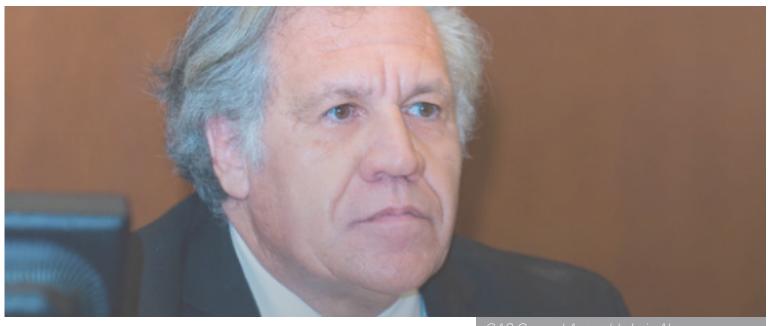
Finally, I want to assure you that we have adequate supplies of our various products on hand. In addition, we have updated our business continuity and contingency plans. We are well-positioned to fulfil our mandate of supplying the nation's energy needs by ensuring there are procedures and reserve assets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

# Regional News

## OAS General Assembly Re-elects Luis Almagro as Secretary General,

Nestor Mendez as Assistant Secretary General



OAS General Assembly Luis Almagro

### TAKE ME HOME



This sturdy, energetic, spayed female named Hope is avail- able for adoption at the Humane Society's Animal Shelter near Bethesda. She would make a good companion/ watchdog but should be the only dog in your yard.

All dogs at the Humane Society are spayed or neutered, treated for external and internal parasites and vaccinated. The adoption fee is just \$100.

If you are interested in adopting a dog or cat from the Humane Society, please call us at 461-4957 or visit us Monday to Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. OAS General Assembly Re-elects Luis Almagro as Secretary General and Nestor Mendez as Assistant Secretary General.

The 54th Special General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) today re-elected Luis Almagro as Secretary General and Nestor Mendez as Assistant Secretary General of the Organization. Secretary General Almagro, from Uruguay, was re-elected with 23 of the 33 votes cast by member states. Candidate María Fernanda Espinosa, from Ecuador, obtained 10 votes and one country was absent. Following his re-election, Secretary General Almagro expressed his thanks to those that supported his candidacy and vowed "I will continue to dedicate all efforts to ensure more rights for more people in all the 34 member states."

Assistant Secretary General Nestor Mendez, from Belize, was re-elected by acclamation. He said, "I pledge my commitment to ensuring that this Organization is optimally positioned to assist each of its member states in addressing the global pandemic and other crises plaguing our world at this time."

Both Secretary General Almagro and Assistant Secretary General Mendez will fulfill their second mandate for five years starting May 26, 2020. Neither of them will be eligible for re-election once they complete their second term. The Assembly was held at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C.

# Regional News

PAGE 15

# Dominica records first positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dominica has reported its first positive case of the dreaded COVID-19 coronavirus. Minister for Health. Wellness and New Health Investment, Irving McIntyre, made the announcements in a media statement on Sunday. McIntyre said that the patient is a 54-year-old Dominican citizen who recently returned to Dominica from the United Kingdom. He said the individual was placed under home quarantine from the time of arrival and has been under surveillance by a medical team. The minis-



ter added that the person is being treated in a special isolation unit and will remain there until recovery.

"In accordance with public health practices, the ministry of health has initiated

aggressive contact tracing to identify every individual who may have come into close contact with this patient," McIntyre stated. "All individuals identified during contact tracing will be tested and placed under quarantine." He said the primary focus of the ministry of health is to ensure containment and prevent in-country transmission and assured the public that all necessary actions are being taken.

"The ministry advises the public to continue to follow proper hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and social distancing," the health minister stated," and to "inform health officials in their districts about anyone not adhering to quarantine measures."

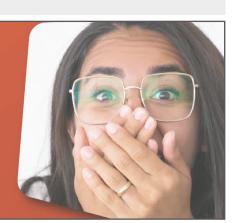
# Grenada Records First COVID-19 Case

Grenada has recorded its first case of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The announcement was made on Sunday during a press conference called by the Ministry of Health. The individual has been iden-

tified as a female, who has been displaying mild symptoms. She has been isolated. According to health officials, she arrived in Grenada on March 16 from the United States.

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# Regional News



# Help From Cuba - 140 Healthcare Professionals Join Ja's Fight Against Virus



Minister of Health and Wellness Dr Christopher Tufton welcomes 140 Cuban medical professionals who arrived at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston yesterday. The group will be quarantined for 14 days then dispatched across the island in the fight against COVID-19.

Some 140 healthcare workers from Cuba arrived in the island yesterday as Jamaica seeks to boost its capacity to contain and treat the dreaded COVID-19 that has triggered the lockdown of the country's air and seaports.

Cargo, however, will still be allowed in and out of the country. And persons can also leave the island.

Health and Wellness Minister Dr Christopher Tufton told The Sunday Gleaner yesterday that the Cubans will be quarantined for 14 days and then deployed in the public health sector across the island.

The practitioners arrived at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston and were greeted by Tufton and Cuban Ambassador to Jamaica, Inés Fors Fernández. The health ministry

said the Cuban professionals comprise 90 nurses specialising in critical care, emergency, medical-surgical and primary care; a team of 46 doctors who are internists and haematologists; and four therapists.

"We're trying to get about 100 additional specialist nurses in the system, focusing primarily on high intensity units or ICU (intensive care unit)," Tufton had said at a press briefing on Friday.

Rodrigo Malmierca, the Cuban minister of foreign affairs, trade and foreign investment, wrote on Twitter that "Brigades of health collaborators travel to fulfil solidarity missions", posting a picture of scores of men and women clad in white just before their deployment.

Cubans health professionals are also expected to arrive in Venezuela, Nic-

aragua, Suriname and Grenada, as the Caribbean region braces for the full impact of the infectious respiratory illness that has now spread to 182 countries across the world, infecting approximately 266,073 persons and killing some 11,184 individuals.

Yesterday, Cuba had 21 confirmed cases of the disease, compared to 19 in Jamaica. Both countries have so far recorded one death.

Tufton is appealing to medical students, doctors, and retired nurses and medical professionals, who are still able, to assist in hospitals and health facilities. They can also volunteer at the National Emergency Operations Centre with the publication of information and education, telecommunications, administration, finance and operations.

# International

PAGE 17

# New York warns of major medical shortages in 10 days

The coronavirus outbreak in New York will get worse, with damage accelerated by shortages of key medical supplies, the city's mayor has said.

"We're about 10 days away from seeing widespread shortages," Bill de Blasio said on Sunday. "If we don't get more ventilators people will die."

New York state has become the epicentre of the outbreak in the US and accounts for almost half of the country's cases.

There are now 31,057 confirmed cases nationwide, with 390 deaths.

On Sunday, the state's Governor Andrew Cuomo said 15,168 people had tested positive for the virus., an increase of more than 4,000 from the previous day.

"All Americans deserve the blunt truth," Mr de Blasio told NBC News. "It's only getting worse, and in fact April and May are going to be a lot worse."

New York now accounts for roughly 5% of Covid-19 cases worldwide.

On Friday, President Donald Trump approved a major disaster declaration for the state which gave it access to billions of dollars of federal aid.

But Mr de Blasio has continued to criticise the administration for what he views as an inadequate response. "I cannot be blunt



The city's mayor, Bill de Blasio, warned that "people will die who lus bill intended to blunt the could have lived otherwise" punishing economic impact

enough: if the president doesn't act, people will die who could have lived otherwise," he said. "This is going to be the greatest crisis, domestically, since the Great Depression," he added, referring to the economic crisis of the 1930s. Doctors across New York have reported depleted medical supplies and a lack of protective gear for healthcare workers on the frontlines of the outbreak.

Warnings of such shortages have reverberated across the country as other state governors have pleaded with the federal government to make more supplies available. In California, officials instructed hospitals to restrict coronavirus testing. Meanwhile, a hospital in Washington state - once the centre of the US outbreak - said it could run out of ventilators by April.

And on Sunday, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker said "competing states were against each other" for virus supplies. "We need millions of masks and hundreds of thousands of gowns and gloves," he said. "We're getting just a fraction of that. So, we're out on the open market competing for these items that we so badly need." The US Senate is expected to convene on Sunday to vote on an almost \$2 trillion (£1.7 trillion) emergency stimupunishing economic impact of the pandemic.

A final vote to pass the legislation is scheduled for later in the day.

# International



# As virus spreads, Africa gets supplies from China's Jack Ma

With the coronavirus increasing its spread across Africa, the continent received a much-needed care package from Chinese billionaire Jack Ma.

A cargo flight containing more than 6 million medical items arrived Sunday in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. The supplies from Ma, the founder of China's e-commerce giant Alibaba, will be distributed to African countries in need of supplies to battle the spreading COVID-19 pandemic.

An Ethiopian Airlines cargo flight from Guang-

zhou, China arrived with 5.4 million face masks, 1.08 million testing kits, 40,000 sets of protective clothing and 60,000 protective face shields, according to Ethiopian officials and the Jack Ma Foundation.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed last week pledged to distribute the supplies to other countries in Africa. Ma has sent similar shipments of medical supplies to countries in Asia, Europe, North America and Latin America.

The virus has been relatively slow to reach Africa but

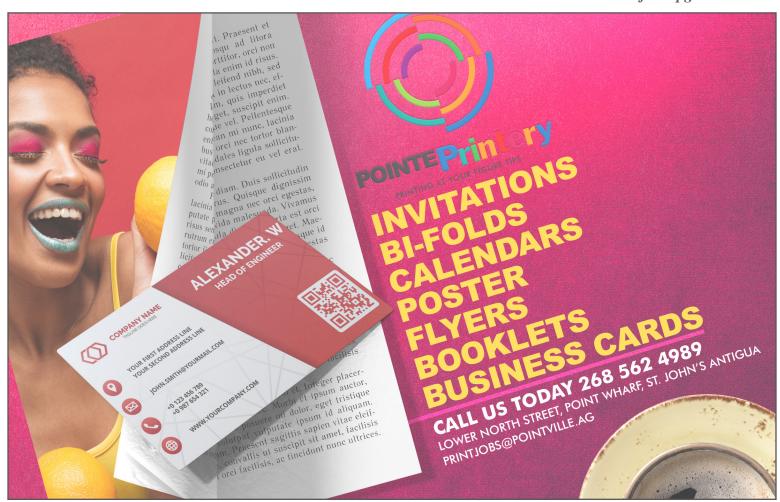
has now spread to at least 43 of the continent's 54 countries, with more than 1,100 cases confirmed. In response many African countries are imposing restrictions.

Mozambique confirmed its first case Sunday and cancelled all visas to the country, closed schools and banned gatherings of more than 50 people.

Kenya announced new restrictions Sunday, after it confirmed eight new cases, bringing its total to 15. It closed all bars and restaurants as of midnight Sunday and halted all services at churches and mosques, saying that houses of worship had not implemented safe social distancing. Kenya also suspended all international passenger flights effective Wednesday and closed the border posts to neighboring Uganda, except for the transport of cargo.

In Burkina Faso, the U.S. ambassador, Andrew Young, announced on his personal Twitter account Sunday that he has tested positive for the virus, He is in quarantine and local sources say he has not gone to a hospital.

cont'd from pg 19



# International

PAGE 19



A cargo flight containing over 6 million medical items including face masks, test kits, face shields and protective suits arrives in the capital Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Sunday, March 22, 2020. The supplies arriving from Guangzhou, China for fighting the spread in Africa of the COVID-19 coronavirus were

Burkina Faso has 75 cases and four deaths as of Sunday, one of the highest number of deaths in sub-Saharan Africa.

Young is the first U.S. ambassador to say that he has tested positive for COVID-19 and the second ambassador in Burkina Faso to contract the virus, according to diplomats. Earlier this week Italian ambassador, Andrea Romussi, told AP he was positive, but was feeling fine. Burkina Faso's government has also been badly impacted by the virus with at least four Cabinet ministers confirmed as positive.

Burkina Faso's president on Saturday announced a curfew and shut the borders for two weeks, but health officials are concerned the number of cases will grow exponentially in the coming weeks and could worsen the West African country's already dire humanitarian crisis.

Almost 800,000 people are internally displaced due to attacks linked to Islamic militants and more than 2 million

people are in need of aid.

"The number of high level officials and VIPs who have tested positive is a concern, but I hope that this does not distract from the fact that this virus is indiscriminate in who it will infect," said Jackie MacLeod, head of mission for the International Rescue Committee in Burkina Faso. "We need to make sure that while this will bring more attention to Burkina Faso, this attention should not have an adverse affect on the humanitarian community's ability to safely and responsibly deliver aid to people who do not have access to same level of care as Ambassador Young."

Rwanda and Tunisia have announced lockdowns, ordering people to stay at home except for essential reasons.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country with 190 million people, just three weeks ago announced the first coronavirus case in sub-Saharan Africa. Now with 22 cases, it stopped all incoming international flights on Saturday.

Ethiopian Airlines and South African

Airways, two of Africa's largest airlines, announced sweeping cancellations of international flights. South Africa has stopped allowing foreigners to disembark from incoming international flights.

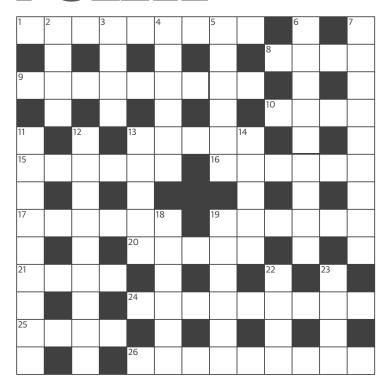
South Africa announced 34 new cases, bringing its total to 274. Normally bustling shopping malls in Johannesburg, Cape Town and other urban centers have few shoppers, many wearing face masks.

Although most people only experience minor flu-like symptoms from the coronavirus and recover within a few weeks, the virus is highly contagious and can be spread by those who do not show symptoms. It can cause severe illness, including pneumonia, in some patients, particularly those with underlying health problems. This poses a threat to many African health systems, which experts warn do not have sufficient resources to cope with a large influx of patients needing isolation and intensive care.

# Leisure



# CROSSWORD



#### Across

- Owned up (9)
- 8 Husks of cereal seeds sifted from flour (4)
- 9 Continued (7,2)
- 10 On this spot (4)
- 13 Hold forth at length (5)
- 15 Eerie (6)
- Wedge-shaped bone forming the back part of the pelvis (6) 16
- 17 Rebellion (6)
- 19 Fame (6)
- Cabs (5) 20
- 21 Scruff of the neck (4)
- 24 Pleasant (9)
- 25 Coarsely ground grain (4)
- 26 Artificial international language devised in 1887 (9)

#### Down

- 2 Sultanate on the south-east coast of the Arabian Peninsula (4)
- 3 Divide into two or more branches (4)
- 4 Somnolent (6)
- 5 Mass departure (6)
- 6 Place for actors to relax with their friends (5,4)
- Burial (9)
- Study of heavenly bodies (9) 11
- Shop early (anag) tomfoolery (9) 12
- 13 Strapped for cash (5)
- 14 Stories (5)
- River flowing into the Bay of Bengal (6) 18
- 19 Choice cut of beefsteak (6)
- 22 Buddhist monk (4)
- 23 Silly billy (4)

#### FRIDAY 20TH MARCH 2020 - NO 15,558

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Daily Comics presented by azcentra









BY SCOTT ADAMS









## Leisure

PAGE 21



# **Your Stars Foretold**



**Aries** 

#### **Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)**

Work on your own projects may be very much on your mind today, Aries. They could involve studies of some kind or the arts. It's possible that you may be considering innovative ways of earning extra money. All signs indicate that any enterprise begun or continued today is likely to succeed, so go to it. However, it's important to give whatever you're working on a lot of thought before presenting it to others.



#### Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)

You may have plans to get together with friends, and you're probably looking forward to it. However, Libra, delays could get in the way, although you aren't likely to let them stop you. Your concentration and perseverance are both higher than usual, so it isn't likely that you'll give up on anything you start today. Therefore, this is a good day to either begin or continue projects that mean a lot to you.



#### **Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)**

Long-term investments, especially those involving real estate, could pay off now, Taurus. If you've been thinking of buying or selling a home, this is the time to do it. All signs indicate that your patience is likely to bear fruit, so at least one of your longtime goals should bring success right now. Also, if you've been considering investing some money in your house, such as remodeling or building an addition, start planning today.



#### Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Your hard work on the job may appear to be finally paying off, Scorpio, as all signs indicate that a raise, promotion, or other form of advancement is coming your way. Your ambition and concentration have led and will continue to lead to significant accomplishment, which isn't likely to escape the notice of those above you in the hierarchy. Draw satisfaction from your achievements and continue as you are.



#### Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)

Kicking ideas around with colleagues Kicking ideas around with colleagues today could lead to planning social events and bringing important people together in order to ensure cooperation on ambitious projects. You might find yourself in a number of meetings, Gemini, or spending considerable time on the phone. Your mind is especially business oriented today, so you'll be operating very efficiently. However, remember the niceties. Express polite interest in those around you even if you don't feel it.



#### Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Studying in solitude may appeal to you today, Sagittarius. A new interest has captured your imagination, so you may decide to sequester yourself at home or in the library to learn about it. Your concentration is high, as is your perseverance, so anything you begin today is likely to succeed. The downside is that you might strain your eyes or give yourself headaches trying to accomplish too much at once. Pace yourself.



#### Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

A lot of paperwork, perhaps involving contracts, could lead to financial gain on the job, Cancer. You could make or save some money for your employer, which could prove important. Expect some sort of acknowledgement or recognition for your efforts from superiors, which could lead to advancement or a possible raise. However, there may be some delay with regard to the latter. Don't expect it right away.



#### Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Memories welling up today could trig-ger a desire to get in touch with old friends, Capricorn, or relatives you haven't seen in a long time. Some of these recollections could be bittersweet, bringing pain experienced in the past to the surface once more. Don't hang on to these ancient grievances. Work them out in your mind and then let them go. You might experience a deep-seated relief. You could even feel a little light-headed.



#### Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)

Today you might want to put your innate Today you might want to put your innate business sense into making a success of a pet project of your own. This is a good idea, Leo, because all signs indicate that whatever you begin today, whether it's for your employer or yourself, could well lead to success. You could, however, find yourself spending a little more money than you would normally care to. Don't hold yourself back, but be careful!



Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

Business-oriented social events could Business-oriented social events could take up a lot of your time today, Aquarius. You could either be planning or attending them. If the latter, however, it could well be more than one. You're feeling especially outgoing at this time, so you should make a good impression and possibly even make a few new friends. However, it's also important to remember to take some time for yourself. vourself.



#### Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

New discoveries that capture your imagination could find you spending most of your day sequestered in your home and learning as much as you can. All indications are that you aren't going to want to do much else, Virgo, but ifs important to remember to take breaks and get a little exercise throughout the day. Moving the body and shaking out the kinks in your muscles can get your mind going as well.



#### Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

Your innate charm and good manners have brought you good relationships with both co-workers and superiors, and today you might find that this has served you well, Pisces. Authority figures may seem a little intimidating, but hang on to your self-confidence. Hard work and dedication have also brought you some corporate kudos. Therefore, it's quite possible that you might hear of forthcoming career advancement. Onward and upward!

# Sports News POINTE PRESS



# **Brian Lara: Windies future** lies with select handful

Former West Indies captain Brian Lara believes the future of the Caribbean team lies in the hands of Alzari Joseph, Nicholas Pooran, and Shai Hope.

According to Lara, Pooran understands his role in the team, while West Indies can find Hope stability useful, even in T/20 forum, of the game. He added that Alzari is a game changer with his ability to take wickets.

The legendary left-handed batsman says he likes Pooran a lot and the youngster is settling well, he notes Hope technique and ability to hold an innings together is needed and Joseph is someone he wants to see do well.

The Trinidadian record holder advice to the young West Indies players is to use Virat Kholi as a model with his work ethic and attitude towards fit-



ness.

He pointed to Shimron Hetmyer who he believes can achieve great re-

sults if he can iron out his problems which included improving his fitness and passion towards the game.

### James: Hurricanes team, management seem not to be on the same page

Known Antiguan Jour- in the 50 overs format but nalist and Politician Colin James is of the view there seems to be a disconnection between, management, coach and the players for the Leeward Islands Hurricanes.

Speaking on the Mason and Friends program James pointed to the positive results there achieved under previous coach Winston Benjamin over a two year period.

Benjamin was eventually axed for former West Indies opener Stuart Williams, since then the team got off to a positive start has since dwindled in the recent four day regional competition losing five of their eight appearances.

The president of the Young Warriors Football Club says, predominantly fifty overs games are played in the Leeward Islands which lead to poor performances in the longer version of the game.

He noted that he is not totally blaming Stuart for the team output but believe if Benjamin could be axed for his positive results then the present situation need to be reviewed.



Colin James, right.

# **Sports News**

# **Footbal Player Profile:**

# **Troy Jules**





Troy Danyals Jules from Brownes Avenue is one of the rising stars in local football and has caught the attention of many including the management and coaching staff of the Pigotts Bullets Football Club.

Maximin, as he is called within the football circles started playing at the tender age of ten with Colin James at Young Warriors. He has

since moved on and represented Ottos Rangers, Villa Lions, John Hughes and presently Bullets.

The 18 year old striker says he plays anywhere in attack and his goal is to play professionally overseas. His favorite player locally is Parham F.C captain Peter Redz Harriott, but patterns his play after Neymar Jr., who he regards as the best player on the planet.

The former national youth player noted that Neymar technique, and dribbling skills inspires him to improve and become a better player.

His favorite music is dancehall and love watching Turbo the Snail.

Troy added that his biggest accomplishment to date is his positive attitude on and off the field.

Watch out for this young man who has lightening pace, quick fee, and a powerful shot on goal.



# S O O T L S MONDAY 23RD MARCH 2020







# Women's Cricket Spotlight: Shawnisha Britney Hector

Meet 6' 1", 183 pounds 20 year old Shawnisha Britney Hector from New Winthropes Village.

Hector was introduced to the sport at 10 years old by Keith Fredo Federick and developed a love for the game because of the passion, team-work and energy it generates.

The Bowling All-Rounder is the captain of the Antigua and Barbuda Female Cricket team and also the leader of the Leeward Islands outfit.

The 20 year old is a contracted player with Cricket



West Indies and made her debut last November 1st, 2018 at the Sir. Vivian Richards Stadium.

Hector says if female cricket is to grow in Antigua

and by extension the Leeward Islands, there needs to be more committed coaches, and the marketing of the sport among young females needed to be expanded.

Britney favorite players are former West Indies pacer Winston Benjamin and Haley Matthews.

She loves soca and reggae music and when relaxing enjoys watching comedy movies.

Shawnisha goal is to become one of the best cricketers in the world while been an inspiration to other young female players across the Caribbean.

The athletic young-lady has also represented her country in Football and is presently sponsored by Citizens Investment Unit (CIU). Hector is a graduate of the Clare Hall Secondary School.

Keep your eyes on Shawnisha Britney Hector a rising star in regional sports.



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