



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

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PRICE \$3

POSITIVE RESPONSES

to serve the nation

Page 3

**MSJMC
Innovates
in the
fight
against
COVID-19**

**See
story on
Page 8**



Barbuda Housing Project To Restart

Work is expected to resume next week on the first twenty houses under construction in Barbuda undertaken under the European Union (EU) funded Housing Support to the island.

Under the terms of the state of emergency, construction work on the project has grounded to a halt following the imposition of the terms of the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Barbuda project is underway on the first twenty (20) houses, the work is being carried out by Harrigan Building Construction and they have made significant strides in the completion of the houses. However, due to the

COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the 24-hour curfew, works had stopped for a three week period,” UNDP Office Coordinator Mellissa Johnson said.

Acting in consultation with the National Authorizing Officer and Chairperson of the Beneficiary Selection Committee (BSC), Ambassador Dr Clarence Henry, Johnson wanted the construction workers in Barbuda to be designed as ‘essential workers’ and extended hours to allow them to complete their tasks.

However, since the government announced that the curfew will run from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am, it now means that

the construction work can continue without hindrance.

Head of Harrigan Construction, Colin Harrigan said he is in the process of re-mobilising his team to restart work on Monday. Currently, there are thirty-five men working on the project, twenty-nine of whom are from Barbuda. The remaining 6 are from Antigua.

The UNDP office made a commitment to ensure that the contractor is given firm and strict instructions for all workers to observe social distancing protocols, ensure the presence of sanitation measures on all sites, wear masks always, and meet all other critical safety measures.

DAY 4/24

Max UV Index: 12 Extreme
 Wind: E at 24 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 32 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 25%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
 Precipitation: 0.0 mm
 Rain: 0.0 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm

30°_{Hi}



Partly sunny

NIGHT 4/24

Wind: E at 20 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 28 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

24°_{Lo}



Partly cloudy and warm with a shower in spots

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:45AM

Sunset AST
 6:25PM



Duration
 12:40hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
 6:50PM

Moonset AST
 7:52AM



Duration
 13:02hr

Positive Responses

The announcement that the government intends to set up a broad-based national Economic Recovery Committee to plan the nation's recovery following the COVID-19 crisis, has largely been met with positive responses.

Chief of Staff in the Of-

fice of the Prime Minister, Lionel Max Hurst, said several of the organizations have called the office seeking additional information about the committee and its mandate, but generally, they have signaled a desire to participate.

"There's a willingness

on the part of the identified institutions to participate in a meaningful way in the post-COVID-19 rebuilding of Antigua and Barbuda," Hurst stated.

The post-Cabinet Notes issued this week said the Cabinet made decisions on the makeup of the Econom-

ic Recovery Committee (ERC) which is expected to draw upon expertise outside of the Cabinet.

According to the Notes... the chairman will be the Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, with the leaders of several institutions forming its core: i. The Chamber of Commerce; ii. The Antigua Barbuda Workers Union; iii. The Employers Federation; iv. The Christian Council of Churches; v. The Hotel and Tourism Association; vi. The Leader of the Opposition; and, vii. The Bankers Association.

The Notes added that there will be seven sub-committees, each will be chaired by a minister of government and they will draw upon a variety of institutions. The very first meeting of the ERC will be virtual and will likely be called to order as early as Monday of next week.

Hurst has now identified the seven sub-committees and the ministers who will serve as chairmen. They are the Health Sub-committee, chaired by Health Minister, Molwyn Joseph. Its primary responsibility is the planning of the entire health sector post-COVID-19 with special focus on building institutions that can easily spring into action to respond to another pandemic or any other major challenge to the

cont'd on pg 4



Social Security Remittance Payment Notice

Due to COVID-19, the Antigua and Barbuda Social Security Board [ABSSB] advises that remittance payments for **March 2020** are due on or before 30th April 2020. As such, the usual **late payment charges will be waived**.

However, employers are asked to take due care when submitting the monthly Remittance Form [R5A] to remittance@socialsecurity.gov.ag as any incomplete or incorrect information will attract a penalty fee of **\$100 per page**.

N.B.: For 2020, contribution rates are:

Private Sector – 13 ½ %

- Employees – 5 ¾ %
- Employers – 7 ¾ %

Public Sector – 12 ½ %

- Employees – 4 ¾ %
- Employers – 7 ¾ %

Self-Employed persons remain at 10%.

Remittance payments can be made via:

- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) [For details please visit: www.socialsecurity.gov.ag]
- Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) online
- Drop box at London House on Long Street
- Limited Cashier services at London House, Mondays – Fridays from 8:00 am to 11:00 am

Management

Rotary Colours Fete Cancelled

The Rotary Club of Antigua (RCA) has announced that its annual - Colours Fete - has cancelled.

In a statement RCA said 2020 would have been the 14th edition of this charitable event, which was scheduled to take place on July 4th under the theme "Colours-Fire and Ice -the 4th of July Edition".

The Organizing Committee made the inevitable decision as a result of the global health threat associated with

the COVID-19. This pandemic has severely affected social and economic activity in Antigua and Barbuda and has also resulted in the cancellation of the annual Carnival celebrations.

The proceeds from the annual fundraiser are used to finance a number of our community projects to include its monthly "Meals on Wheels initiative". Through this programme, the Club provides food packages to 100 vulnerable individuals and families across

the island. The Club also executes projects in the areas of health, education and youth development.

The members of the Rotary Club of Antigua thank the public, corporate partners and other stakeholders for their continued support and commitment to the cause of Rotary locally and internationally. The Rotary of Club will continue to play a pivotal role in nation building through its' philanthropic efforts.

cont'd from pg 3

health and wellbeing of the nation.

The other sub-committees are:

Education, headed by Minister, Michael Browne,

Agriculture, head by Minister, Samantha Marshall,

Finance, headed by Minister of State, Lennox Weston,

Energy, headed by Minister, Sir Robin Yearwood,

Technology, headed by Minister, Melford Nicholas,

International Relations, headed by Minister, E.P Chet Greene.

Hurst said each sub-committee will have its work cut out as the nation faces a myriad of challenges ahead.

For example, the agriculture sub-committee has to look at food security and food sovereignty, while the technology committee must explore how the nation can utilize the different social media platforms as it charts the way forward.

"Our relations with the rest of the region and the international community are going to be quite critical. We therefore need a clear vision from our International Relations Sub-committee on how to manoeuvre our way through the complexities of the post-COVID-19 world," Hurst noted.

Prime Minister Browne has already put the nation

on notice that no significant external assistance will be forthcoming since many of the developed countries are facing their own crises from the COVID-19 pandemic, and are focused upon their own citizens' needs.

"The World Bank and the IMF have not responded in a concrete way, though approaches have been made to these Bretton Woods institutions," he reported to

the nation earlier.

Under these circumstances, the Cabinet Notes said, borrowing will become the means by which the government will be able to meet expenses such as salaries, wages and emoluments; however, there is also a limit to borrowing given the need of the Treasury to meet a multiplicity of expenses, now and after the crisis has passed.

Long hours, fatigue & even workplace safety concerns make nurses lives even harder in **COVID-19**

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ANTIGUA BARBUDA
NURSES

ATB
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA TRANSPORT BOARD
A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

MBS to Address Delays

The Medical Benefits Scheme is to institute measures at its pharmacies to deal with the delays some customers have encountered in filling their prescriptions.

Superintendent, Kevin Silston, said the scheme is aware that some customers encounter lengthy delays in having their prescriptions filled. He said he has personally visited the pharmacies and that he too noticed that the problem is particularly acute at the Clare Hall pharmacy.

"I received several complaints today (Thursday) about a large crowd waiting at the Clare Hall pharmacy to

pick up their prescriptions. I went there myself to have a look and from what I can see, we do have a problem there," he told PointeXpress newspaper.

The MBS superintendent said the matter is currently under review by his team and already it is the intention to extend the operating hours at the pharmacies by an hour, to close at 12 noon, instead of 11:00 am currently. He explained that after the pharmacies are closed to the public, the pharmacists have to remain to fill the many prescriptions and have them ready for delivery within two

days under the current system.

He said the new health protocols have placed additional strains on his team of pharmacists who were already stretched even before the onset of the COVID-19 crisis.

Silston noted that he is aware that most of the clientele of the pharmacies are

themselves senior citizens, many with special needs, and that it is the intention of the MBS to ensure that they served expeditiously and professionally at all times.

The new operating hours go into effect on Monday along with other measures to reduce waiting time for the clientele.



Students Due Back Tonight

A special charter flight arranged by the Board of Education will ferry scores of Antigua and Barbuda students from Jamaica arriving at the VC Bird International airport tonight.

Education Minister, Michael Browne, said the flight should arrive at the airport after 7:00 p.m following a 3-plus hour flight from Kingston. The flight was originally due to arrive Thursday evening, but last minute logistical issues that required the Jamaican government's approval caused the delay in the students' arrival.

The ministry of education, through the BOE arranged the LIAT charter flight as there has been mounting pressure from the students and their parents/guardians to bring them home following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since Jamaica is on lockdown due to the coronavirus, clearances are among the approval needed in order for Antiguan students there to leave their places of residence to journey to the airport.

Additionally, mechanisms must be put in place for the arrival of the flight in Jamaica and its departure and the employ-

ees needed to facilitate the process.

More than 50 students are expected to be onboard the chartered flight at the expense of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

On arrival in Antigua, the students will be placed in quarantine at Hawksbill Hotel.

The last time the Antigua and Barbuda government made available a charter for students was in 2004, to evacuate nationals attending St. George's University, Grenada, before the passage of Hurricane Ivan.

Patrons disregard protocols at public market

The failure by many patrons to adhere to the new health protocols aimed at limiting the spread of the COVID-19 virus, has forced the St John's Development Corporation to put in place new measures to enforce social distancing.

The SJDC said it will allow all farmers who currently sell produce from trucks at the Public Market Complex, the opportunity to operate from PDO Complex (aka bend dung) on Fridays and Saturdays during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, effective this weekend until further notice.

This is as a result of a joint decision



of stakeholders to include SJDC, Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda and the Extension Division. "Over the past several weeks, customers of the market have not been respecting the social distancing protocols set in place and there is continued congestion at the Public Market Complex," SJDC City manager, Carolyn Thomas-Parker stated.



She told PointeXpress newspaper that a protocol was put in place on the inside of the PMC which is currently being enforced. Unfortunately, she noted, the overcrowding of persons continues to exist on the outside of the market. "There is serious concern for the safety of the patrons, farmers and

cont'd on pg 7



Tourism engine prepares for restart

With the closure of ports of entry, the almost nonexistence of cruise arrivals, and empty hotels, the tourism sector is said to have taken the brunt of the COVID-19 financial hit.

However, with the world looking at ways to regain some level of normality with relaxed curfew restrictions and airport re-openings, the Tourism Ministry is gearing up to actively seek ways of competing in the next tourism season.

Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez stated that the first expected aircraft that may arrive in Antigua will arrive from Miami. This particular area, the tourism minister suggested, will see the country's first source market since the lockdown. However, according to the tourism minister, "any source market has to first be approved by the Ministry of Health."

The tourism minister continued by explaining that it is only the Ministry of Health can determine which markets are safe.

Concerning the first expected flight from Miami, Minister Fernandez stated that "we are working with the health ministry, and American Airlines to ensure protocols are in place."

Antigua and Barbuda may be the first island to announce a start date to a re-

opening of the sector with several other countries in the region looking at similar dates as well, the tourism official indicated.

He noted that a virtual meeting was held with all major stakeholders on Thursday and a report will be submitted to the health ministry.

"We had a virtual meeting with the hotels and they are going to put forward information to the Ministry of Health as to what they are going to be doing to increase their vigilance and safety measures which will be put in place for the next season," Minister Fernandez pointed out.

The Tourism Minister also indicated that his ministry will be looking at creative ways to actively market Antigua and Barbuda as a destination post-COVID-19. "By the start of the new season, people will prefer to come to a destination with sunlight rather than cold or cool areas. We are also working with the hotels to offer special rates for both CARICOM members and locals with staycations and regional travel," Fernandez said.

Increased marketing within the Caribbean is also expected from the tourism ministry as well as collaboration with the festivals and sporting industries to



Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez host regional events in Antigua. "The Caribbean is one of our fastest-growing source markets in the tourism sector," the tourism minister stated.

Fernandez used the opportunity to indicate that Caribbean Airlines will also be resuming flights from the middle of June with new adaptive preventative measures.

Though the reopening of the tourism season with the return of flights focuses mainly on the hotel industry, the other arms of the tourism sector remain closed. According to the minister, they are examining the yachting sector however that remains closed for now and any reopening will be based on discussions with the health ministry. The cruise industry, which has taken the hardest financial blow, may open but only with guidelines from the CDC.

While speaking with PointeXpress newspaper, the tourism minister added that the hotel sector is looking at ways to further cushion the financial fallout their staff may have incurred since the lockdown. "The hotels are working on delivering over 4,000 food packages to staff members. The government has also stepped in to offer some support to this mission by offering tax concessions on the food items purchased for the packages," the minister stated.

cont'd from pg 6

vendors hence the need to separate operations going forward," she explained.

According to the city manager there are currently forty farmers who operate from trucks and PDO has the capacity to comfortably accommodate them while observing the social distancing protocols. The Police have advised that they will continue to enforce the protocols established and they will monitor the operations along with the other stakeholders.

The areas around the market where the farmers would have formerly op-

erated will become sterile areas and the Public Market Complex will only allow the operation of vendors selling from tables in the interim process.

The SJDC and the Ministry of Health continue to appeal to the general public to respect the social distancing and to maintain proper hygiene practices during this period. Additionally, all patrons to the Public Market and PDO are reminded to wear a mask on entrance to the facility as mandated the state of emergency.

The PDO has been outfitted with wash basins as well as bathroom facilities for the general public.

MSJMC Innovates in the fight against COVID-19

COVID-19 has impacted the medical community globally as hospitals and health care providers vigorously put up a fight against this novel virus. This fight, however, has been met with challenges such as a lack of Personal Protective Equipment and staffing.

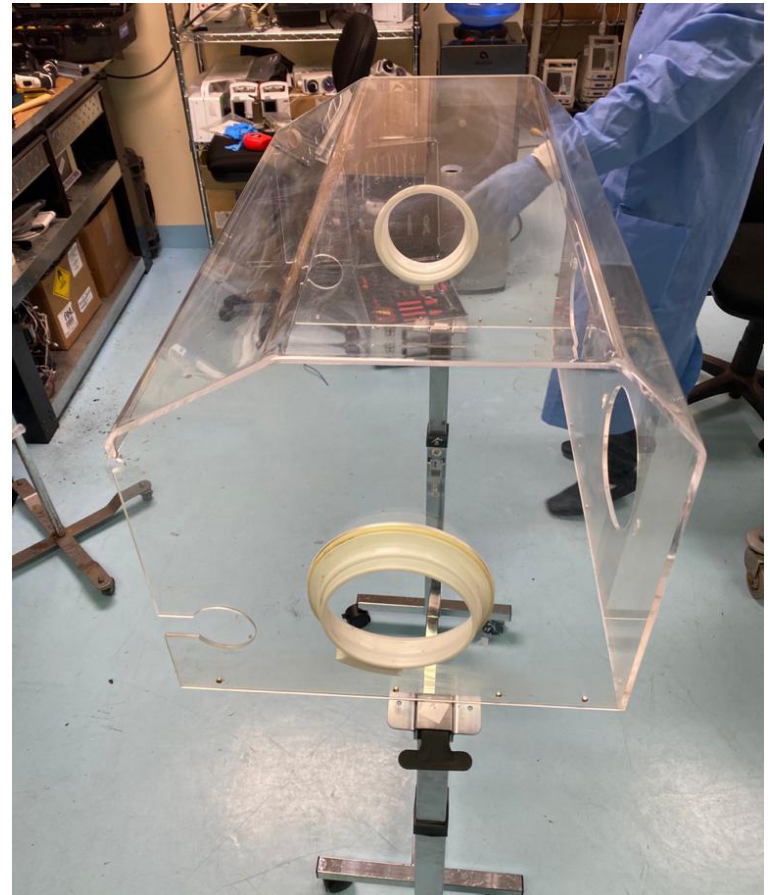
“Nonetheless, the biomedical department at Mount St. John’s Medical Center has taken the opportunity to find creative solutions and mitigation ways in how the hospital manages COVID-19 medical care,” said Dr. Vonetta George-Nanton, a physician based at MSJMC., who came up with a brilliant idea of adding an additional layer of protection for healthcare workers when intubating patients with any contagious disease.

According to MSJMC, “the biomedical department team of MSJMC innovated a device for the protection of our doctors and nurses. This



device safeguards against droplet transmission when intubating COVID-19 patients. For the design and manufacturing, this team used recoverable material from obsolete equipment.”

Speaking with PointeXpress newspaper, Communication Specialist at MSJMC Salma Crump said, “the idea was initially brought to our Biomedical Director, Oscar Vargas, by Dr. George-Nanton in her efforts to provide further protection for herself and her colleagues. After



seeing online what some other hospitals were doing she thought we could make our own.”

According to Crump, the mainframe for the device was

made out of an old intubator along with two over-the-tables. The final product sees the device being portable with wheels, adjustable, and
cont'd on pg 9



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even has negative pressure which is said to offer additional protection for the person doing the incubation.

"As a direct result of COVID-19 pandemic, our hospital now has this new protective barrier which offers protection from contagions and other contaminants during patient intubation procedures," Crump added.

According to medical professions, "Intubation is the process of inserting a tube, called an endotracheal tube (ET), through the mouth and then into the airway. This is done so that a patient can be placed on a ventilator to assist with breathing during anesthesia, sedation, or severe illness. The tube is then connected to a ventilator, which pushes air into the lungs to deliver breath to the patient. This process is done because the patient cannot maintain their airway, cannot breathe on their own without assistance,

or both."

The hospital's communication specialist indicated that the "tube provides an uninterrupted air supply for patients that struggle to breathe, including those suffering from more severe symptoms of COVID-19."

With this new device, Salma added, "the doctor doing this intubation now has an additional layer of safety."

Working on this project was Dr. V. George, Biomed- J. Prince, Biomed-Yovani Zarazola, and Biomed-Oscar Vargas. This team continues supporting the MSJMC frontline staff.

The hospital also announced that beginning (on a limited basis) on Monday April 27, MSJMC will resume services which were previously halted due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

"We know many of our patients and families who have waited weeks for procedures and diagnostic imaging ap-



pointments are anxious," said Dr. Albert Duncan, MSJMC Medical Director.

"We want the public to know though, that the transition will be starting out on a limited basis and it will be slow and incremental - because your safety and that of our team is our number one priority," the Medical Director said.

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Multilateralism - necessary now more than ever



By Maria Fernanda Espinosa

(The writer is a former President of the United Nations General Assembly and a former Foreign & Defence Minister of Ecuador)

On April 24, 2019, representatives from across the world celebrated the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace for the first time. The occasion took place in the emblematic hall of the United Nations General Assembly in New York and came as a direct result of a Resolution approved by the 193 UN member states.

At that time, we could not possibly have imagined the scenario that is now being played out across the world and how all our lives have been impacted. In common

with hundreds of thousands of people across the globe, I have also personally experienced the terrible effects of the virus.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forever changed humanity. It has changed the way we communicate, interact, make decisions, and think about the future. Nothing will be the same again. An alarm has awakened in us all. It already has raised huge questions and should be providing global leaders with many lessons, the first being that acting alone, or unilaterally, is ultimately self defeating. One of the key lessons is that our own life depends on the behavior of others and that human beings are integrally inter-

dependent on one another. Each of us is fragile and vulnerable. This is a lesson to our arrogance as a species.

We need to understand that inequalities and poverty are determining factors of vulnerability and access to medical care and public services. Here, the role of the State is irreplaceable to guarantee the most basic rights, such as the right to life. Further the State has to recognize that strong and effective public health systems are the best social investment any society can have, and act to establish them. No one should forget, or ignore, that women represent more than 70% of the global health workforce and are essential in the COVID-19 response. There is another stark truth; women and girls across the world are experiencing higher levels of domestic violence as a result of the pandemic.

Central to our global and individual response is the understanding that despite the efforts of each country and the decisions it makes, the only effective way to combat the COVID-19 pandemic is through coordinated global action, based on solidarity and cooperation.

And that, despite the resurgence of nationalism and xenophobia, this virus does not recognize borders or na-

tionalities. That is why we require a strong, effective multilateral system that is fit to deal with the multiple and devastating effects of the pandemic. Ultimately, global leadership, collective action and co-responsibility that define multilateralism, are the most effective antidote for COVID-19.

Humanity needs a multilateral system that responds to this public health emergency simultaneously and at two levels. First, an immediate humanitarian response, especially for the most vulnerable, such as older adults, people with disabilities or refugees. And, second, a strategy, a coordinated action that targets the devastating economic and social consequences of the crisis.

It is time to establish a new social pact, a new common sense, that offers solutions to the massive loss of jobs, the destruction of the livelihoods of informal workers, the multiplication of hunger and the deepening of inequalities. There are dozens of initiatives, ideas and plans, ranging from debt cancellation to the creation of emergency funds – now is surely the time to bring them together and act on them.

Governments everywhere must take seriously the call of the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, for

Cont'd on pg 11

a global ceasefire, so that nations can direct their resources and efforts to confront the crisis that is the one genuine battle that humanity should now be waging.

The global community must take seriously the recent call of the UN General Assembly for; “a global response based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation”, and the Resolution approved this week, on the initiative of Mexico, advocating the need for all countries, especially the poorest to have access to tests, equipment and medicines, and hopefully soon to treatments and vaccines.

The creation by the United Nations of the Global Hu-

manitarian Response Plan and the establishment of the Recovery Fund for poor and middle-income countries must be recognized and supported. The latter include almost all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. However, for these initiatives to work, hundreds of billions of dollars are required, alongside the committed participation and contribution of the richest nations. As can clearly be seen now, wealthy nations are not immune from the spread of disease, and in treating with it within their own borders, they must recognize that they remain vulnerable to its effects from the global neighbourhood.

Trying to put out the fire in their own yard will not stop the blowing embers from the conflagration around them to reignite the fire again and again. It is the totality of the fire that has to be extinguished, not only its sparks.

Amid this crisis, governments and civil society have the opportunity to re-found, rethink and transform the nature and scope of global integration. It is time for a new social pact that must be built on the foundation of multilateralism and from its main pillar, which is the United Nations. In this pandemic and in other global challenges such as climate change, poverty and hunger, inequalities or war, there is

no room for the law of the fittest. For everyone is losing, and everyone is counting their grave losses in precious human lives and severe erosion of decades of economic gains. The word ‘multilateralism’ is perhaps difficult for some governments to celebrate as the greatest contributor to human progress. But it is essential as it is irreplaceable. Synonyms can be used to disguise multilateralism. It can be described, for political convenience, as solidarity, cooperation, coordination, or global governance. None of that diminishes the reality that multilateralism is certainly more necessary now than ever.

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100 percent recovery of COVID-19 cases in St Lucia



Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Sharon Belmar-George

As of April 21, 2020 the WHO reported a total of 2,397,217 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally with 162,956 deaths. There are now 893,119 confirmed cases in the region of the Americas.

The affected region includes Dominican Republic (4,964), Haiti (47), Barbados (75), Jamaica (196), Cuba (1087), Dominica (16), Grenada (13), Trinidad and Tobago (114), Guyana (63), Antigua and Barbuda (24), Bahamas (60), Saint Vincent and Grenadines (12), Guadeloupe (148), Martinique (163), Puerto Rico (1,252), US Virgin Islands (53), and

Cayman Islands (61).

As of April 22, 2020, Saint Lucia has a total of 15 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

To date, all of the positive cases of COVID-19 in Saint Lucia have recovered, with the remaining two cases who were in isolation receiving negative COVID-19 test results and since discharged from hospital. This now places Saint Lucia at a 100 percent recovery of all COVID-19 cases.

Among the 15 cases Saint Lucia recorded were individuals who fell within the category of high risk by virtue of some being elderly as well as living with chronic

illness. They too recovered well with

no complications or needed critical care.

Laboratory testing for COVID-19 continues to be conducted both locally and with the support of the Caribbean Public Health Agency Laboratory. Saint Lucia has modified its testing strategy by testing an increased number of samples from community respiratory clinics; this would assist us in the assessment of COVID-19 locally.

Saint Lucia continues on the partial shutdown and on a 10 hour curfew from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. We remain at a very critical position in the implementation of the national response to the COVID-19 threat. Large scale public health and social measures have been implemented in an effort to break transmission of COVID-19 when in country transmission was noted. The public must note that many of these measures need to be sustained in an effort to achieve low COVID-19 levels in country.

Some of the measures that have been instituted include school closure, national zoning to manage population movement, the closure of non-essential businesses,

travel restrictions, the partial national shutdown and instituting a 24-hour curfew.

The measures recommended to guide individual risks include the use of masks, the testing, isolation, treatment and care of sick persons and the adoption of hygiene and other infection prevention measures. As seen in many of the more developed countries, even with an apparent decrease in the number of cases and the flattening of the curve, there have been periods of resurgence in their cases.

When measures are relaxed and persons become more socially engaged this provides an opportunity for smaller epidemic waves which are characterized by low level transmission. It is with the benefit of this information we note the necessity of conducting a risk assessment to arrive at evidence based approach in relaxing measures while ensuring the capacity to detect and manage a possible resurgence in cases moving forward.

Everyone is asked to note that as essential services are made available to the public the guidelines for social distancing need to be adhered to at all times in the interest of the health and safety of the public. In the context of this

we all need to be reminded that the threat of COVID-19 still exists and will continue to be with us for a while. Some of the national protocols include: stay at home as much as possible, unless it is for food or medical purposes, avoid mass crowd events and social gatherings, practice social distancing and good personal hygiene.

The public is also advised against going to public places with flu-like symptoms including fever, coughing and sneezing. When visiting the supermarket or public places refrain from touching items unless you intend

to purchase them. We need to adopt behavior patterns moving forward in this new COVID-19 environment.

Although, hardware stores are opened in an effort to facilitate household emergencies and increase water storage capacity, the public is reminded that we are still on national scale down. Only leave your house for essential goods. Another recommendation which the public is asked to adhere to is the use of face mask or scarf when going to public places such as the supermarkets. The face mask or scarf may be used for source control by

reducing potential exposure risk from infected persons during the “pre-symptomatic” period. This measure will support current efforts to protect the health and safety of our citizens.

However for the face masks to be effective in reducing infection, they must always be used as recommended. We continue to advise the public to focus on the maintenance of standard recommendations to prevent the spread of infection.

These include:

- regular hand washing with soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer

where soap and water is not available.

- cover mouth and nose with disposable tissues or clothing when coughing and sneezing.

- avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.

- seek medical attention and share your travel history with your health care provider if you have symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel. The Department of Health and Wellness will continue providing regular updates on COVID-19.

US Deport 129 Haitians, Some Possibly with COVID-19

A plane carrying 129 migrants who were deported from the U.S. landed Thursday in Haiti amid concerns that the second such flight this month could strain the impoverished country's limited resources as it fights the COVID-19 disease.

Authorities whisked the group away in buses and took them to a hotel in the capital of Port-au-Prince, where they joined more than 60 other recent deportees already serving a two-week quarantine.

Three of the migrants who arrived in early April have tested positive for COVID-19, although so far none in the group that departed San Antonio, Texas on Thursday has a tem-

perature, said Jean Negot Bonheur Delva, director of Haiti's migration office. The newest group includes 50 children from ages ranging 5 to 15, he told The Associated Press. The World Health Organization is providing Haiti with free testing kits, although the local government is paying for three meals a day and the deportees' two-week stay at hotels including one in the north coastal town of Cap-Haïtien, where nearly 400 migrants are under quarantine after being expelled from the nearby Turks & Caicos Islands.

Bonheur declined to say how much the situation is costing the government as a Miami-based Haitian rights advocacy group called on

President Jovenel Moïse to stop accepting deportees and ask that U.S. President Donald Trump place a moratorium on deportations.

“These flights do not only put the deported individuals at risk, but they also threaten to spread the coronavirus in Haiti, a country as you know all too well is ill-equipped to deal with a pandemic,” wrote Marleine Bastien, executive director of the Family Action Network Movement.

Government officials in Haiti did not immediately respond to a request for comment. However, Prime Minister Joseph Joute said earlier this week that the country is caring for the deportees. “They are Haitians.

They are coming home. We have to receive them,” he said in an interview Monday with Radio Vision 2000.

Haiti has reported at least four deaths and more than 60 confirmed new coronavirus cases. Among the infected is a young man who was among the deportees who arrived in early April and escaped earlier this week from the hotel where he was placed under quarantine.

On Thursday, Keller Polynice, mayor of Ganthier, told Radio Ginen that the man's parents went to his office and said they would not hand over their son to authorities. Polynice said the father told him that their son remains under solitary confinement at home.

US releases \$100m to Guyana COVID-19 fight



The US Embassy today said that US\$475,000 (\$100m) is being released by the US to Guyana's COVID-19 fight.

A statement from the US embassy follows: "Through the generosity of the American people and the leadership of the U.S. government, the United States continues to lead the public health and humanitarian assistance to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of our ongoing commitment to Guyana through the U.S. Caribbean Resiliency Partnership, the Regional Caribbean Office of the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC) is releasing US\$475,000 to help address Guyana's priority areas of laboratory diagnostics and systems strengthening and supplies, surveillance, infection prevention & control, and emergency operation centers.

"The funds are part of a regional funding package of US\$3,000,000 provided to support the current COVID-19 Response. The CDC will coordinate with Guyana Ministry of Public Health and its regional partners to disburse these funds rapidly and implement the activities".

Armed with 9,000 kits, authorities to conduct mobile COVID-19 testing in coming days

The Ministry of Public Health is set to dispatch a number of mobile COVID-19 testing units around the country from this weekend.

Made of metal and wood, the units will be seeing health care workers inside with persons wanting to be tested to be on the outside.

The units will be sent to the various regions, explained Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Public Health, Collette Adams.

After weeks of struggling with a limited number of test kits, the Ministry received 7,000 from the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) over the weekend.

The test kits would allow for authorities, on the frontlines to fight the pandemic, to increase the number of tests. Authorities just had few hundred of the kits, before PAHO had stepped into to help.

It has long been suspected that there are more COVID-19 cases in Guyana, with the limited number of tests, until now, not reflecting the true picture.

So far the country has recorded 67 positive cases of COVID-19 with seven deaths.

However, while the number of deaths has been stabilized, the number of those infected has been rising.



The testing units, made of metal, glass and wood, which will be deployed in the various regions from this weekend.

Regional Distilleries join in the fight against COVID-19



**WIRSPA Chairman,
Mr. Komal Samaroo**

As the world continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, CARICOM rum producers have modified their production lines to play their part by producing alcohol and hand sanitiser and making donations of sanitation products. Across the Caribbean, contributions have been made to governments, institutions, and frontline healthcare workers and to support local communities impacted by the virus.

Some of the initial actions taken by WIRSPA member-producers to assist their various countries include:

- Angostura in Trinidad & Tobago re-directed one of its product lines towards the creation of 70,000 bottles bulk and retail size sanitising liquid, which were donated to front line workers in the Ministry of Health and Ministry of National Security in Trinidad. A donation was also made to community-based organizations working with senior citi-

zens and children's homes and a shipment was sent to the prisons. The venture was part of the company's aim to combat the spread of the virus and to assist with meeting the demand for sanitisers, which are in short supply.

- Antigua Distillery in Antigua & Barbuda has made 4,300 litres of 70% alcohol readily available to produce hand sanitiser and disinfectant. The company has further made donations to Emergency and Essential Workers in Antigua and Barbuda to include Health & Medical Personnel, EMS, the Police & National Guard, Her Majesty's Prison, and other persons on the front line. In addition, the company has supported the Government's social initiative to provide care packages to the most affected in the society by providing the aforementioned sanitising products and bottled water to those in need.

- Casa Brugal in the Dominican Republic provided hospitals and public centers with 150,000 litres of 70% denatured alcohol donated through the National Health Service (SNS), for the purpose of using it as a disinfectant to protect patients and health personnel on the front line of the crisis. Another WIRSPA member, Vinícola Del Norte, partnered with Casa Brugal and packaging

companies Plastidel and Neplas to package the alcohol and provide containers and boxes so that the donation could be delivered swiftly and safely.

- Demerara Distillers in Guyana donated approximately 12,000 litres of Environ, an alcohol-based sanitising cleaner, to institutions around Guyana, such as senior citizen's homes, orphanages, night shelters and prisons. In addition, 254 five-gallon bottles of Environ were given to the Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC), for distribution to public agencies such as health centers, public hospitals, post offices and police stations.

- Grenada Distillers produced some 1,200 cases of sanitising solution that was made available to all supermarkets and pharmacies island wide, with free distribution to various senior citizens' and children's homes. In addition, in collaboration with the Government of Grenada, sanitiser was donated to the public transport /bus association, traffic department, prison and other law enforcement entities. Hand sanitisers were also provided for all GDL employees.

- J. Wray and Nephew in Jamaica donated 50,000 litres of high strength alcohol and 20,000 litres of hand sanitizers to the national health service, through

the National Health Fund (NHF) to ensure that public health facilities maintain international standards in responding to Jamaicans needs during this time. JWN also provided hand sanitizers to all staff, to first responders including police, fire brigade and vulnerable members of their communities including children's home and infirmaries. JWN has committed US\$37,000 to the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica's COVID-19 Jamaica Fund, which will provide support for the Jamaican Government and persons affected by COVID-19.

- Mount Gay Distilleries in Barbados donated 2,000 bottles of hand sanitiser (WHO formula) to health officials, with a further estimated total of 28,000 bottles to be handed over for community outreach. Hand sanitisers were distributed to all staff with anti-COVID-19 procedures.

- National Rums of Jamaica has ramped up production to ensure all excess capacity can be utilized to produce alcohol for denaturing, to supply to local manufacturers and the Government to make sanitization products. Just over 10,000 liters of 95% denatured alcohol was donated to the National Health Fund, for use in the national fight against COVID-19.

- Ron Barceló in the Dominican Republic has allo-

Regional News

cated a significant part of their alcohol production to donations of ethyl alcohol and sanitising hand gel to support the efforts towards reducing the risk of contagion among the Dominican population from COVID-19. It also started a public campaign under the hashtag #juntosporrd (together for DR).

A first donation of 32,000+ litres of 75% ethyl alcohol, in 145 tanks of 220 litres were distributed to 12 hospitals across the Dominican Republic, as identified and classified by the public health authorities. The first donation was followed by another 100,000 units of sanitising hand gel, distributed among the general population as part of a program lead by a worldwide recognized non-profit organization.

Ultimately, a third donation of 100,000 bottles of sanitising hand gel is to be distributed among delivery service employees and mom and pop's stores, some other medium and small retailers that are currently working within the rank of "strictly indispensable", during the declared state of emergency.

- St. Lucia Distillers has produced a 70% ABV rub-

bing alcohol sanitiser which helped alleviate an island wide shortage of sanitiser for citizens. Some 20,000 bottles of bulk and retail sizes were donated to schools, the police and fire departments and to homes for the elderly, to help keep the most vulnerable on island safe.

- St. Vincent Distillers Ltd. produced Mt. Bentick's Hand Sanitiser, a disinfectant solution developed using the WHO's guidelines to meet the demand for desperately needed hand sanitiser in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. A first donation, of some 13 cases, was donated to the country's first responders, health care workers, police station, clinics and hospitals.

- Suriname Alcoholic Beverages N.V. made initial donations of up to 10,000 hand sanitisers to the Public Health Agency and other government institutions, with more donations projected in the coming days. Ready-to use disinfectant alcohol is also being sold at cost, to other local businesses active in the sale and distribution of hand sanitisers and detergents. Joint projects with local beer companies and other businesses are also underway to

produce hand gels and hand sanitisers with a variety of fragrances.

- Travellers Liquors in Belize reconfigured its distillery and packaging facility into a production centre to manufacture the alcohol-based hand sanitiser according to the WHO's formula. Several batches were made totaling about 4800 litres in half gallon, litre and personal sizes, and donated to the public hospital, senior citizens homes, the Customs and Police Departments. Local organisations also benefited from the donations – Hope Haven Food Bank, San Pedro Polyclinic and the San Pedro Isolation/Flu Unit.

- West Indies Rum Distillery in Barbados has donated 55-gallon containers of hand sanitiser to the Barbados Government for use at fire stations, COVID isolation centers and the Customs department. It ramped up production to meet increased local demand from pharmacies, supermarkets and companies that produce retail products with surgical alcohol. West Indies Rum has been providing staff and contractors each with disinfectant weekly for their

personal and family use, for the duration of this pandemic. West Indies Rum has also been exporting alcohol to neighbouring Caribbean countries since the start of the pandemic, to satisfy much needed supplies.

- Westerhall Estate Ltd. in Grenada shifted from rum to production of hand sanitiser. Approximately 14,000 bottles of the solution, in 250ml and 1.75L quantities, were produced and donated to prisons, medical facilities, police stations and assisted living homes. The 69% proof alcohol-based sanitiser will become a permanent fixture on the product line.

WIRSPA Chairman, Komal Samaroo, "These contributions are just an early snapshot of our engagement to date, with many producers committed to further steps in the days ahead.

We are encouraging everyone to monitor their physical and mental health during this pandemic. We are also encouraging consumers that if they choose to drink, to do so responsibly and be careful not to use alcohol as a coping mechanism for stress and anxiety, especially while in isolation."

GOT NEWS

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Nearly all Covid-19 patients put on ventilators in New York's largest health system died, study finds

Nearly all coronavirus patients who needed ventilators in New York's largest health system to help them breathe died, a study found.

Overall, about 20% of Covid-19 patients treated at Northwell Health died, and 88% of those placed on ventilators died, according to the study. A ventilator is a device that forces air into the lungs of patients who cannot breathe on their own because of severe pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Other, smaller reports have indicated that patients who need ventilation are unlikely to survive.

Just 12% of the patients in the study needed ventilators, Dr. Safiya Richardson at the Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research, Northwell Health, and colleagues found.

But this study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, shows how dire the outlook is for patients with severe Covid-19 disease.

The team looked at the electronic health records of 5,700 patients with coronavirus disease hospitalized at Northwell Health. Final outcomes were known for 2,634 of them.

The records support what doctors have been saying about the coronavirus: most people who become severely



The Covid-19 ranking system that could decide who gets a ventilator.

ill have some sort of so-called underlying condition. More than half, or 57%, had high blood pressure, 41% were obese and 34% had diabetes.

"Of the patients who died, those with diabetes were more likely to have received invasive mechanical ventilation or care in the ICU compared with those who did not have diabetes," the researchers wrote.

They also confirmed that men were more likely to die

than women, and no one under the age of 18 died.

The symptoms of infection were far from clear-cut. About a third of all patients showed up with fevers, 17% were breathing too fast and just under 30% needed extra oxygen. On average, patients were sent home after four days.

But 14% were treated in intensive care, 3% needed intensive dialysis and 21% died.

Since final data was only

available on about half of the patients, it's possible that more of those on ventilators survived, the researchers said -- something that would drive down the 88% fatality rate for that group. "This study reported mortality rates only for patients with definite outcomes (discharge or death), and a longer-term study may find different mortality rates as different segments of the population are infected," the Northwell Health team wrote.

UN, EU warn Israel against West Bank annexation

The United Nations and the European Union have warned Israel not to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

The UN's special Middle East envoy Nickolay Mladenov on Thursday said such a move would be a "devastating blow" to the internationally-backed two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as the EU said annexing Palestinian territory "would constitute a serious violation of international law".

Earlier this week, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main rival Benny Gantz signed a coalition agreement that includes a clause to advance plans to annex parts of the West Bank, including Israeli settlements, starting on July 1.

Reporting from the UN, Al Jazeera's James Bays said the formation of a government in Israel has brought the question of annexation into focus.

"The new coalition government in Israel makes the prospect of the annexation of parts of the West Bank much

more likely. That means that areas currently seen as occupied under international law, would be brought under Israel's sovereignty. At least that's how Israel would see it," he said. In a video briefing with the UN Security Council, Mladenov warned that "the dangerous prospect of annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied West Bank is a growing threat", and said such a move would violate international law. The envoy said annexation would also "deal a devastating blow to the two-state solution, close the door to a renewal of negotiations, and threaten efforts to advance regional peace."

Separately on Thursday, the EU's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said the bloc of 27 member countries does not recognise Israeli sovereignty over the Palestinian territory and that it will "continue to closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and will act accordingly".

US plan
Netanyahu's pro-settler



Israel's coalition government agreement includes a clause to advance plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, including Israeli settlements.

base is eager to move forward with annexation while the friendly administration of United States President Donald Trump is in office.

The White House's long-awaited Mideast plan, unveiled earlier this year, envisions leaving parts of the West Bank under permanent Israeli control. The Palestinians have rejected the plan as biased. Israel captured the West Bank during the 1967 Mideast war. Since then, more than 700,000 Israelis have moved into settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Most of the international community considers Israel's

West Bank settlements illegal according to international law and an obstacle to a two-state solution to the conflict.

The Palestinians seek all of the West Bank and East Jerusalem as part of an independent state. Annexation of West Bank settlements would infuriate the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbours, and eliminate any lingering hopes of establishing a viable Palestinian state. The Netanyahu-Gantz deal stipulates that any Israeli action would need US backing, and must take into account Israel's peace treaties with neighbouring Jordan and Egypt.

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US job losses soar past 26 mn as states move to reopen



Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi wore a face covering as she arrived on Capitol Hill to vote on the latest US stimulus bill.

Job losses from the coronavirus pandemic in the United States climbed to 26.4 million, as Congress on Thursday was poised to approve a new stimulus measure and governors in some states move to slowly reopen businesses.

Sobering data released by the Labor Department showed 4.4 million US workers filed new claims for jobless benefits in the week that ended April 18, underscoring the damage done to the world's largest economy by the crisis. The figure represents a drop from recent weeks, but the weekly totals are many times higher than any recorded during the global financial crisis starting in 2008, as virus lockdown measures force businesses to close nationwide.

The House of Representatives was set to give its seal of approval to the latest stimulus bill, which would add nearly \$500 billion in fresh relief

funds for devastated small businesses and overwhelmed hospitals.

That builds upon the massive \$2.2 trillion CARES Act stimulus measure passed in late March. The new bill under consideration would provide another \$320 in funding for a depleted program to aid small businesses, along with \$75 billion for hospitals, \$25 billion to expand virus testing and \$60 billion in disaster recovery loans and grants.

More than 200 lawmakers were to attend the session to ensure a quorum, and only small groups were allowed to enter the chamber at a time. Many wore face masks.

After that, President Donald Trump has said he will sign it into law.

- To open or not to open? -

In states where the outbreak has been less severe, governors are moving to begin the slow process of returning to normal,

some in response to a spate of anti-lockdown protests.

But their measures are being called into question -- and Trump specifically criticized a decision to open hair salons, tattoo parlors and gyms in Georgia from Friday.

"I told the governor of Georgia, Brian Kemp, that I disagree strongly with his decision to open certain facilities," Trump told reporters on Wednesday.

"At the same time, he must do what he thinks is right."

In Florida, another Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, is considering similar measures.

A CBS News poll released Thursday said 63 percent of Americans were more concerned about lifting the restrictions too soon and intensifying the outbreak than about the consequences to the economy of maintaining them for two long. Meanwhile, only 13 percent said they would return to public places if the restrictions were lifted right now.

Business owners and economists have said that without confident consumers willing to go out and spend, reopening shops and restaurants will have little effect. The United States has recorded more coronavirus-related deaths than any other nation, with the toll at nearly 47,000 as of early Thursday, according to Johns Hopkins University.

- Double-digit unemployment - Calling the jobless figure "extraordinarily elevated," Nancy Vanden Houten of Ox-

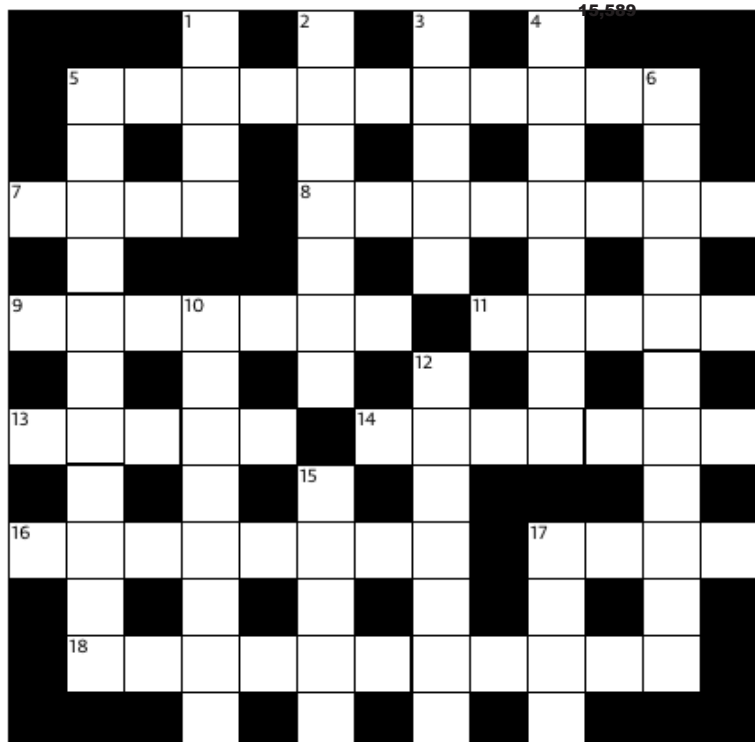
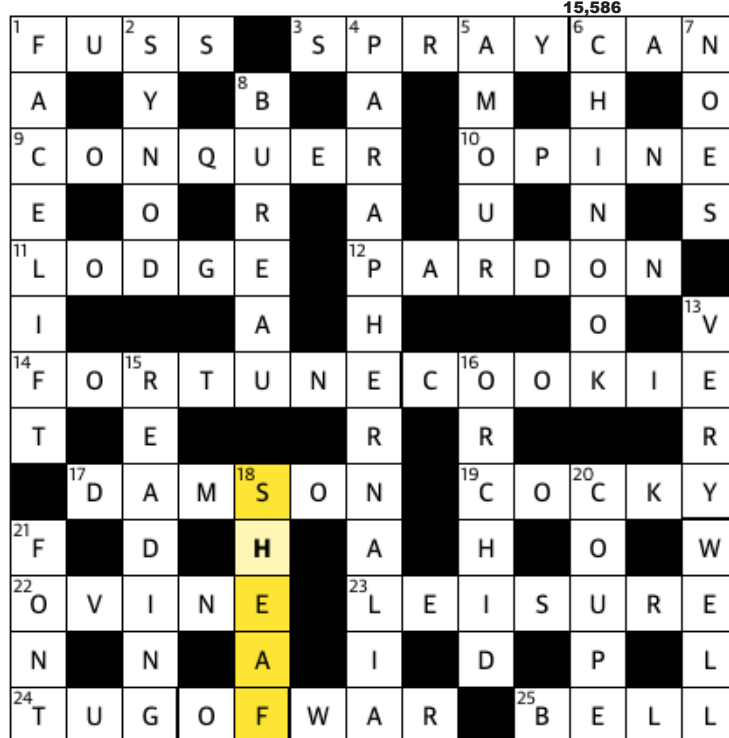
ford Economics predicted the US was on track for a spike in the unemployment rate to 24 percent. That is a reversal of fortune that was unthinkable at the beginning of the year, when the rate was in the low single digits. "While there is great uncertainty surrounding the magnitude of the job losses in April, we expect a total decline of around 24 million that will touch a wide range of jobs, but be concentrated in the accommodation and food services, recreation, retail and transportation sectors," she wrote in an analysis. Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics predicted a further decline in unemployment claims next week, but said "less terrible ... is not the same as good."

He noted that "the rate of fall of Google searches for 'file for unemployment' has slowed, suggesting it will take several more weeks before claims drop below one million."

In another sign of the pandemic's damage, government data released Thursday showed home sales collapsing in March, declining 15.4 percent compared to February -- exceeding analyst expectations.

The decrease was seen in all areas of the country, with the sharpest contractions in the Northeast and West -- both regions that have experienced significant virus outbreaks.

QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword No
15,586Quick crossword No
15,586

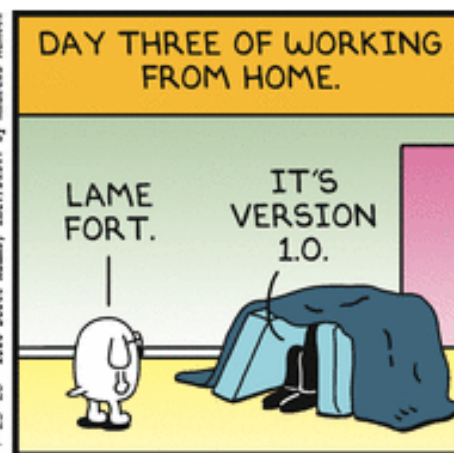
Across

- 5 Forty winks for those wanting to look good (6,5)
 7 Men-only (4)
 8 System based on pleasure as the highest good (8)
 9 Melodies (7)
 11 Asian capital (5)
 13 In and of itself (3,2)
 14 Blackthorn-fruit flavoured liqueur — Leo sign (anag) (4,3)
 16 Benevolence — compassion (8)
 17 Abominable (4)
 18 Inflammation of an arm tendon (6,5)

Down

- 1 Sound of a gun (4)
 2 Carving into a surface (7)
 3 In reserve — confidential remark (5)
 4 Tall, thin person (8)
 5 Come to an end (4,3,4)
 6 Catkin tree (5,6)
 10 Declines to vote (8)
 12 Enclosure for kids (7)
 15 Elf (5)
 17 Aura experienced instinctively (4)

CARTOON CORNER





DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): If you are energized by the latest ideas, you may be ready to put them into action immediately. You might be too excited to do a little advance planning, so that might disrupt your regularly scheduled activities.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): The New Moon in your sign could activate a desire to try something new and exciting. You might want to be the center of attention and could go out of your way to be independent. Impress people with your originality.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your imagination can offer endless hours of fascination. Your sensitivity is enhanced, so your intuition might be right on the mark when you are dealing with people and circumstances outside the norm.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Review and revise, or take a chance and improvise. Your goals might undergo a subtle change when you follow someone's lead. You may become aware of new ideas that empower you to explore other possibilities.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may be restless for a change and in search of excitement. Your family unit might be the source of refreshing ideas and novel undertakings that will break up any monotony. Try not to be careless about spending money.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Perfect communication could spell perfect bliss between you and a romantic partner. Take time to jot down your ideas or to engage in deep meditations, because your insights could be right on the mark.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Your timing may be off, but people probably won't mind if you are open, honest and caring. Your special someone will likely enjoy your presence more when you are completely straightforward about your feelings.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your desire for excitement can be contagious. You might be full of surprises and abruptly change the subject, but loved ones appreciate your sincere desire to be entertaining. Don't let logic interfere with emotions.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Remain skeptical of requests for money that don't make sense. Someone might spin a tale designed to take advantage of your generosity. Acting on your creative ideas can be worthwhile with the help of a partner.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Money-saving ideas could require more self-discipline than you care to muster. Family gatherings or events might throw your schedule out of kilter. Remain focused on primary goals and ignore petty distractions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It might be up to you to make the first move when it comes to a romantic encounter. A loved one might be a bit unpredictable, but with good communication you can clear the air and dispel uncertainty.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Listen to your intuitions, as they might offer added value to a project or plan. Loved ones might surprise you with a gift or an invitation. You may be able to think of ways to make your surroundings more inviting.

Richie speaks of his love for football

My first love growing up playing sports in my home village of Five Islands was football, the words of Sir Richie Richardson. Sir Richie said he was of the view, early on in his career, that he was better at football.

"I played both football and cricket but enjoyed football more. However, because there was not much opportunities in football and I was making much progress in cricket so after a serious football injury, I decided to focus on cricket after which, I was selected for the national team," Sir Richie added.

The former West Indies skipper said his first cricket team was Empire after he had been encouraged by former national and Leeward Islands batsman, Veron Edwards Sr. to join the set-up.

"I then switched to Combine Schools and then one season for St. Johns Club following which I was away most of the times representing Leeward Islands and the West Indies," Sir Richie noted.

He identified his role models growing up in cricket as Sir Garfield Sobers, Wes Hall, about whom I heard from listening on radio to their performances against Australia and England, and

later on Sir Vivian Richards and Sir Andy Roberts who, he said, gave him the inspiration to play for West Indies, realizing that they had made it.

"I was a very defensive batsman early in my career in school and in the local league realizing that the longer I batted the better it was for me at the time until I ran into Guy Yearwood, former national captain and Taddy Arindale, commonly called 'the Enforcer'," he recalled.

The cricket great told the story of how he overcame a weakness for the short ball.

"Yearwood recognized that I had a weakness to the short ball and one afternoon he ask all the spinners to take the day off and lined up all the quickies and instructed them to bowl all short pitch deliveries all afternoon and if anyone pitched up he would take the ball from them," Sir Richie said.

According to Sir Richie it was fire out there and he had to defend himself and eventually he started hooking them all over the place recognizing he had no choice but to defend himself.

"People passing in their cars stopped and watched me in action and after that Guy turned to me and said 'ok



Sir Richie Richardson

you are ready to play for Antigua," he recounted.

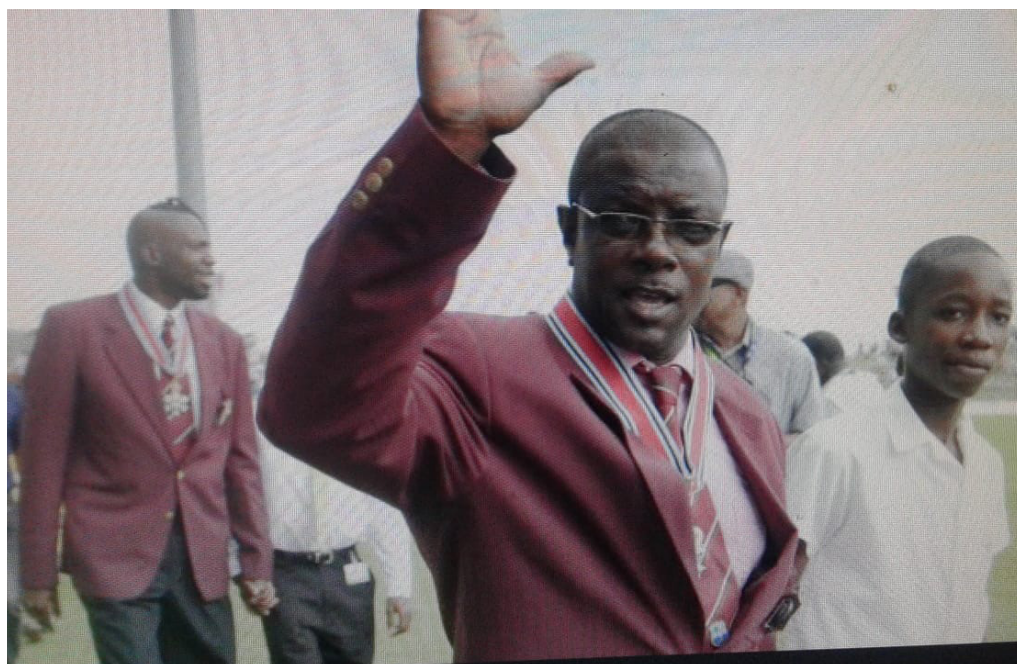
That led to the Antiguan cricketer becoming very good playing pace and he neglected spin, a situation he had to correct later in his career.

Richardson spoke about his first game in Barbados as captain against a South African team that was just returning to world cricket after its lengthy ban, and having to deal with the boycott of the Barbados public who had boycotted the game because their player Cummings was left out, coupled with the fact that they were not happy he was selected as captain ahead of their son of the soil Desmond Haynes.

"I was very disappointed in Tony Cozier, who I respected a lot. for instigating the boycott but with God's blessings, we were victorious thanks to outstanding performances from Sir Curtley Ambrose and Courtney Walsh," the man from Fives Islands noted.

He said his most enjoyable innings was his 156 against India in Jamaica because they said he was awful against spin and he wanted to prove otherwise. The Indians played three

cont'd on pg 23



Bundesliga to return

Bundesliga ready to return on May 9 says the German Football League. Despite football being halted across the globe by the coronavirus pandemic with all major

leagues and competitions suspended, the Bundesliga plans to play spectator free games in May.

The German Football League (DFL), responsible

for the operating the Bundesliga and the second division, is determined to finish the current season.

Its 36 professional clubs met Thursday to discuss a

restart of the season next month.

"If we start on 9 May we are ready.

"If it is later we will be ready again," DFL chief executive, Christian Selfert said Thursday.

German politicians have recently decided that large events with crowds will be banned at least until 24 October.

That rules out the Bundesliga being played in front of spectators until the scheduled start of next season.

cont'd from pg 22

spinners in that game and all three had different styles.

He noted that Australia was another team he was always motivated to play against even before making the West Indies because he listened to the battles against West Indies when he was young.

For most of his career he neglected to wear a helmet because it was very uncom-

fortable and it affected his concentration but later on he decided to put it on to avoid injury as he was heading into retirement.

Sir Richie is currently engaged as a match referee a job he is enjoying, and working with the three Knights Sir Vivian Richards, Sir Andy Roberts and Sir Curtley Ambrose to get the academy off the ground as soon as possible in Antigua and Barbuda.

Chris Gayle Joins St. Lucia Zouks for Hero Premier League

The St. Lucia Zouks have signed Chris Gayle as their marquee player for the 2020 Hero Premier league.

Gayle has played for the Jamaica Tallawahs and St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots in the past. He has won the CPL title twice with the Tallawahs and played the final with the Patriots in 2017.

Gayle is the leading T20 run scorer of all time as well as the man with the most centuries in the format.

He is also the leading CPL run scor-

er of all time, having made 2,344 runs at the tournament.

Commenting on Gayle arriving at the Zouks, captain Darren Sammy said, "this is great news for the Zouks. Chris is one of the most successful T20 batsmen in the world and with his experience with our young open-

ers a lot can be learnt from Chris."

The CPL is scheduled to take place between 19 August and 26 September but the tournament organizers are currently watching the current situation with COVID-19 closely and are liaising with medical advisors and governments.



Spotlight on Colin James, sports broadcaster

Sports journalists, turned politician, Colin James, has been speaking of his journey to become a highly respected sports journalist, broadcaster and administrator.

He revealed that his father, a postman, and his wife, prescribed to a number of sports magazines which he read and he listened to BBC Sports Round Up, which was fifty minutes long, while we would get Outlet from Tim Hector, and the Workers Voice newspaper.

James said he and his brothers had to stay engaged with the latest happening in sports, as one could not be involved in a conversation at home and not have the facts.

He said growing up in All Saints he and his brothers played sports on their gallery and in their yard, but he never really committed to the on-field part of participation, but got involved more at the man-



Sports journalists, turned politician, Colin James.

agement level, following the foot-steps of his father. The elder James was into the administration part of

it with the local village club, Attackers.

Colin said after he left high school 1984 he was recruited by the state owned ABS after embarking on a venture of providing local sport scores to the ZDK and the state owned media,

realizing that no one was doing it.

His highlights in the field of sports broadcasting are Sir Vivian Richards fastest century at the ARG, Brian Lara 365 breaking Sir Garfield Sobers record, and the relaying of the ARG in 1998.

When quizzed about the absence of young broadcasters emerging at this time, James said the media houses need to provide the environment to get the current generation interested by producing development programs in the schools.

The Sports administrator took time to thank Barry Stevens who provide his first trip overseas in Barbados to cover CARIFTA Games as a teenager.

The coaches and coordinators in schools sports need to realize that their calling is to provide avenues for the young athletes to excel and follow the path laid by Pat Whyte, Fitzroy Bran, Micah Samuels, and Danny Livingston.

James was high in praise for his wife who has been involved in his personal development since they were teenagers involved in sports.

DEWS