



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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WEAR A MASK!

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Curfew holding well

Residents of Antigua and Barbuda are heeding the call to stay at home and to obey the laws of the country regarding the state of emergency declared by the government and the 24-hour curfew imposed since last Thursday.

Police spokesman, Inspector Frankie Thomas, said while there's general adherence to the curfew by residents, there are still 'one or two' individuals who seemingly don't understand the seriousness of the situ-

ation and who continue to flout the law.

According to Thomas between Saturday and Sunday morning, an additional four persons were arrested and charged by the police with breaking the curfew regulations. That brings to ten the number of people arrested for violating the curfew since it was imposed last week.

"Our officers are still out there pleading with the public hoping that they understand the health ramifi-

cations of the flouting the law. We all have televisions and we see the human and financial toll it is taking on countries that are far better off than we are," Thomas emphasized.

He said police officers are concerned about the health and safety of all residents and they do not want any more people to become infected with the COVID-19 virus.

The police spokesman explained that the state of emergency and the curfew

are actions that the government took to reduce the likelihood of widespread infection among the general population. "Let's try and work together to protect ourselves, our families and our nation in the fight against an invisible enemy, COVID-19," he stated.

Thomas also appealed for the public's assistance for the frontline security officers who quite often put themselves in harm's way as part of the war against this virus.

Antigua & Barbuda to share in CDB's anti-COVID-19 fund

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has approved up to US\$140 million to be used by the Bank's Borrowing Member Countries (BMC) to tackle the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and other shocks to their economies.

As one of its BMC's, Antigua and Barbuda is expected to share in this fund, although official sources in St. John's say it is still too early to give an exact amount as those details are still being worked out.

"The economic and social shock of the COVID-19 pandemic will likely be severe in most Caribbean countries. There is the additional concern that the situation could be exacerbated in the near future given our Region's vulnerability to natural disasters, and with the hurricane season less than two months away. We, at CDB, stand ready to assist Caribbean countries to alleviate these shocks," said CDB President Dr.



Wm. Warren Smith.

Noting the high degree of uncertainty, the CDB said in a statement, it is expected that at least 1-2% could be shaved off previous estimates of global growth as a result of COVID-19. For the Caribbean Region, the impact could be even more profound.

"The extent of decline of gross domestic product will depend on the duration of the pandemic and the ef-

fectiveness of the policy responses by the countries. Our goal is to ensure our Borrowing Member Countries get access to appropriate financing during the COVID-19 pandemic and to be their partner in the post-crisis recovery," said Dr. Smith.

The statement added that the CDB has responded to its Borrowing Member Countries' need for assistance during this crisis by increasing the limit on its policy-based loans. These loans are designed to respond to exogenous shocks and to support economic growth and poverty reduction through policy reforms. Since the first policy-based loan in 2006, CDB has provided some US\$875 million for such loans.

According to the statement, the CDB is often the main partner that several of the Borrowing Member Countries rely on for financing, technical assistance and policy advice during crises.

The government is putting the nation on notice that it will soon institute a mandatory wearing of face masks by everyone who ventures into a public space.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Ministry of Health said it has been authorized to alert the Antigua and Barbuda public that all persons venturing into public spaces outside of their homes—including to gas stations, supermarkets, pharmacies, banks, doctors' offices, bakeries and all other essential services—will shortly be required to wear masks that cover their nostrils and their mouths.

The ministry statement said this comes after consultation with partners in the fight against the Covid-19 community spread.

The Ministry said it has taken into account developments in other countries and the views of experts suggesting that the wearing of masks appear to reduce the level of infections, in conjunction with social distancing, the washing of hands, practicing proper cough etiquette and the other hygienic practices at home and elsewhere.

The statement noted that eating healthy foods and exercising daily, even within limited spaces, are necessary means to staying well. It said limiting Covid-19 community spread or 'flattening the curve' is the controlling reason for the state of emergency and the curfew.

According to the state-

ment, the ministry recognizes that enough masks are not yet widely available to meet the demand of every household, however, it revealed that supplies of masks for all front-line workers are sufficiently stocked and are being distributed to these workers.

"Every effort to ramp-up production on-island and to import as many additional masks as can be accessed overseas—given the global demand for the product—will be pursued before the mandatory use can be implemented," the statement added.

Some distribution of masks has already begun as on Saturday the item was distributed in parts of the city during the 5-hour window allowed by the government for residents to shop or purchase medicines.

It added that those individuals who currently have masks are encouraged to wear them, including cloth masks, handkerchiefs, bandanas, and home-made masks. "Protect yourself and others!" it declared.

After the announcement was made, citizens shared mixed reactions, some citing it may be impractical given the very limited supply of surgical grade masks on the island. One doctor, speaking with Pointe Express stated that although the announcement was well-intended, a clear message of how-to and



when to wear a mask needs to be amplified. The doctor went on to explain that surgical grade masks should be designated for health-care providers and first responders while the general public should find ways of covering nose and mouth in absence of such while in public, but they should also continue to maintain social distance by staying at home when instructed to.

The Antigua and Barbuda Sickle Cell Association also made a call to action over the weekend, advocating for the general use of facemask in public.

According to the health organization, "If you don't have a mask, tie something around your face. A bandana, a scarf, even a kitchen towel will do. People have gotten creative – you can safety-pin hair ties or elastics to a washcloth if there is nothing else you can use. If

you have a mask, make sure you pull it all the way over the chin.

"Disposable masks can be sprayed with Lysol (if you have) at the end of the day and worn again. Cloth masks can wash - the hotter, the better. Wash your hands after you take the mask off."

The association, via their social media platform, went on to say, "Forget the discussions about what material it should be, how much protection the masks really afford. It is common sense. A mask is a barrier, and any protection is better than none."

An actual date or period for the mandatory enforcement of face mask-wearing was not disclosed up to press time. However, some essential business places have already enforced the use of facemask through distribution on entering their establishment.

Curfew to be extended

The seven days of 24-hour curfew that began immediately after midnight on Thursday April 2nd, will definitely be extended beyond this week.

This was confirmed by Prime Minister Gaston Browne on Saturday, after previous expressions of support for such an extension by respected medical practitioner Dr. Joseph 'Joey' John and Health Minister Molwyn Joseph – both speaking during separate interviews on the state television.

"Clearly that 7-day period will not be enough. We will have to extend it. The degree of the extension and how long it lasts is dependent on several factors," the Prime Minister stated. "First of all, the prevalence of COVID. If there is an increase in the amount of COVID, then clearly, we will have to take more draconian action, and we may even have to move towards a hard lockdown."

Browne said what exists right now is what he considers to be "a soft lockdown", but the more extreme measure could deprive people



of a significant amount of their freedoms, something he said the government was not eager to impose.

"It's [not] good for people's mental health being locked up in a house and cannot move at all, or for that matter the economy in which nothing works, nothing happens," he explained.

Meanwhile, the prime minister disclosed that the government is coming up against a brick wall in ef-

forts to source critical medical supplies.

He said export embargoes in countries that supply medicines and equipment to treat COVID-19 victims were making it very difficult to source and import those items. He referenced the drug hydroxychloroquine from India and ventilators from Singapore as orders from Antigua which had to be subsequently cancelled.

But with the supply of test

kits, the Prime Minister indicated that sufficient quantities had been sourced to permit about 2,000 tests to be done in the near future, with China providing about 1,500 of the kits

He further disclosed that supplies out of the United States were challenged because of the paucity of flights, taking Amerijet as an example, which is now down to only one flight per week to Antigua.

Five Negative COVID-19 Results

The nation is breathing a collective sigh of relief as the latest test results from Antigua and Barbuda sent off for COVID-19 testing have returned 'negative'.

Health officials sent off five samples for testing at the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) in Trini-

dad, which returned over the weekend all of which were negative.

The nation had been keeping an eye on the those results because it was only twenty-four hours earlier that it was reported that the number of confirmed cases of the coronavirus had jumped to fifteen (15) after six positive tests were

returned.

Of the newly confirmed cases four are males and two are females. Two are hospitalized at the Mount St. John's Medical Centre. The remaining four have mild disease and are isolated at home.

cont'd on pg 5

Government Revenues Take Nosedive

The anticipated fallout in government's revenues caused by the coronavirus outbreak is now a reality.

Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu, is reporting that collections for the first three days of last week, that's before the 24-hour lockdown took effect, have plunged over fifty percent when compared with the same period last year.

Boddu said overall collections for the three days amounted to a mere \$1.7 million; less than half of what was collected for the same period in 2019. Over the past year, daily collects at the Customs Division have been at an average of \$1.2 million. For one day last week, collections totaled \$400-thousand.



Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu

The comptroller says the month of March was a 'pretty good' month for his department, collecting just over \$34 million. That figure is more than was collected for the third month of 2019.

Describing the collec-

tions for the month of April, which is already impacted by the shutdown, Boddu said it was a 'horrible' start for the month, but he is still hopeful that the situation will improve as there are several ships on their way to Antigua will containers

packed with supplies for the country.

The customs boss says he wants to wait for at least another week to review the situation before making a determination one way or another.

Under the state of emergency and 24-hour curfew imposed by the government, the customs division is the only government revenue centre that is still functioning. The other major revenue centres such as Inland Revenue Department, and the treasury have remained closed.

The estimated losses in government revenues is already in the tens of millions of dollars and will likely reach hundreds of millions before the crisis is over.

cont'd from pg 4

The Ministry of Health continues with aggressive contact tracing, in an effort to ascertain and mitigate further spread of the virus.

In a statement on Friday, the ministry said this brings the total number of persons tested for COVID-19 to forty (40) with fifteen (15) being positive and twenty (25) cases being negative.

Meanwhile, Health Minister, Molwyn Joseph, announced that there are currently eighty-seven (87) persons in quarantine while their conditions are closely monitored over a 14-day period. This is in addition to the two hundred and twenty-

five (225) persons in self-quarantine.

The minister also announced that work is now

taking place on the National Training Centre on Nugent Avenue to have that facility transformed into a facility

to accommodate COVID-19 patients should the current facilities become overrun by an avalanche of cases.

The evolution of road safety



Remember those long ago days when wearing a helmet was optional and not required to ride? The law regarding helmets when riding motorcycles wasn't instilled until the early 1970's, but the practice was already firmly in place around 1914 during the Isle of Man TT.







A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

Change Eating Habits

A leading agriculturalist says residents of Antigua and Barbuda need to change their eating habits as the nation and the world combat the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus.

Agricultural Extension Officer, Owolabi Elabanjo, made the observation in response to calls for farmers in the country to ramp up their production of vegetables and other crops in the face of the crisis.

Over the weekend, Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, said in light of the current situation, the agricultural sector will be required to make a greater contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). He said an extra five hundred acres of land are being readied to assist farmers to dramatically increase their production of food as part of efforts to secure food security.

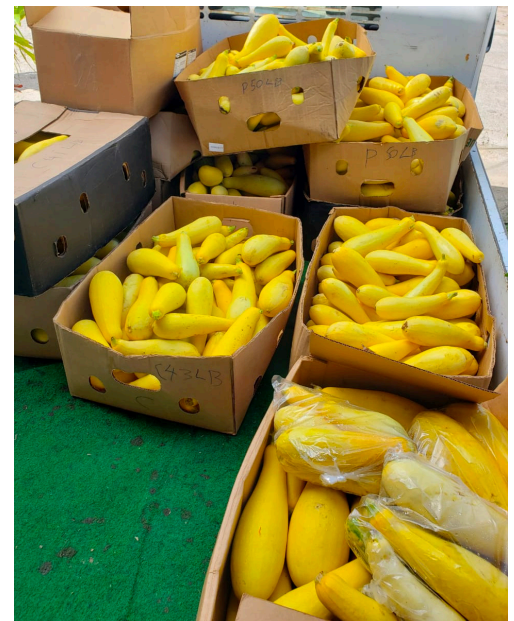
However, Elabanjo said while he agrees with the need to increase production, he believes that the problem goes deeper than that. "Production of additional acreage of vegetables etc. was never the problem for the farming community," he noted. He said the problem is that over the years there has been a shift in the eating habits of



residents of Antigua and Barbuda.

According to Elabanjo that is evidenced when one looks at what residents purchase when they are at the supermarkets. "When you are at the check-out counter what you see is processed foods; cornflakes, tinned vegetables and other food items. Few people are purchasing tomatoes and local vegetables," declared.

The agriculturalist identified a secondary problem stating that many people have become so reliant on fast food or purchasing food at restaurants ect. that they are unable to cook many of the local items.



"You will be surprised to see how many persons head to a popular fast food outlet on the Old Parham Road on a Sunday after church to purchase a 'Sunday meal'," he revealed.

He gave as an example local farmer George Purcell, who sometimes have had difficulty in selling his produce that he is often forced to give away substantial amounts to government institutions and health facilities.

The Extension Officer not only wants to see farmers grow more crops, but he there must be a corresponding increase in the consumption of locally grown vegetables and other crops.





COVID could overrun Antigua if we are careless – PM Browne

If Antiguan and Barbudans do not take seriously and practice the safety and prevention protocols outlined for COVID-19, then the viral pandemic will infect the country's entire population within a matter of weeks.

This grim and dire warning came Saturday evening from Prime Minister Gaston Browne during his weekly radio program, the Browne and Browne Show on Pointe FM 99.1.

The protocols referred to include social distancing, hand hygiene, cough etiquette and, latterly, the wearing of masks in public. In addition, residents have been ordered to stay at home and avoid venturing into public spaces unless absolutely necessary to acquire essential items such as food and medicines. The two-island state is under a week of round-the-clock curfew and the authorities have already indicated that it will be extended beyond Thursday of this week when it was initially slated to end. A 5-hour daily window from 7a.m. to midday has been granted during which persons are allowed to go out to purchase food, medicines and essential accessories such as cooking gas, with no more than two persons – including drivers – permitted aboard ve-

hicles, and pairs of pedestrians required to maintain at least six feet of separation despite accompanying each other.

The Prime Minister and host, Senator Colin O'Neal Browne, did not share the physical studio where they are both normally present during the program, in order to practice and maintain social distancing. Noting the exponential rate of spread which those 15 cases could cause, Prime Minister Browne said "we could have 3,375 cases within the next week or two. Should that continue – if our people become extremely irresponsible and there are no interventions to contain the virus – then maybe in a 2 or 3 week period, the entire population could end up with COVID."

The Prime Minister disclosed that, up to the time he spoke, "we have approximately four cases at Mount St. John's presently. Three are on ventilators ... and they are all over 70 years of age." He said that from all indications, "we could end up with one or maybe a few COVID deaths." Three of the last six confirmed cases were imported, the Prime Minister disclosed, with two of them being individuals who came to the country aboard a Jet Blue flight last week. In fact, he noted,

most of the 15 total confirmed cases so far "consist of returning nationals, including a number who went to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in Montserrat."

One of the domestically acquired cases, the PM revealed, involved "a gentleman who visited a returning national."

He explained, as he has many times, that despite the risks posed by returning nationals, local authorities could not deny Antiguan and Barbudans from entering their own country. He said this was especially sensitive where it involved Antiguan and Barbudans resident in the United States who are unlikely to be given priority by that country's beleaguered health systems should they become infected with the deadly virus.

The Prime Minister referenced the recent passing from COVID-19 in the US of the mother of local physician and former state broadcaster, Dr. Eldean Udell. Said PM Browne, "If she was here, we probably would have gone the extra mile to try and save her life. But when you're in a large society as an immigrant and they have to make a decision as to who will get a ventilator, clearly a black immigrant in those large white-dominated societies,

generally speaking, would not stand a chance."

He cautioned that the current level of 15 confirmed cases of COVID in the country is unlikely to represent the peak, and "clearly there would be more." But he noted that the five most recent tests had all come back negative. But he warned that while this was a welcomed development which he hoped would continue and grow, it was far from enough reason to be complacent.

"We have to assume that there is a significant prevalence. We happen to know that there are several infected individuals who were moving around carelessly and who would have inadvertently or unwittingly infected other people. In fact, there could be several asymptomatic carriers as well, and that is why we are emphasizing the need for social distancing and the need for people to stay at home."

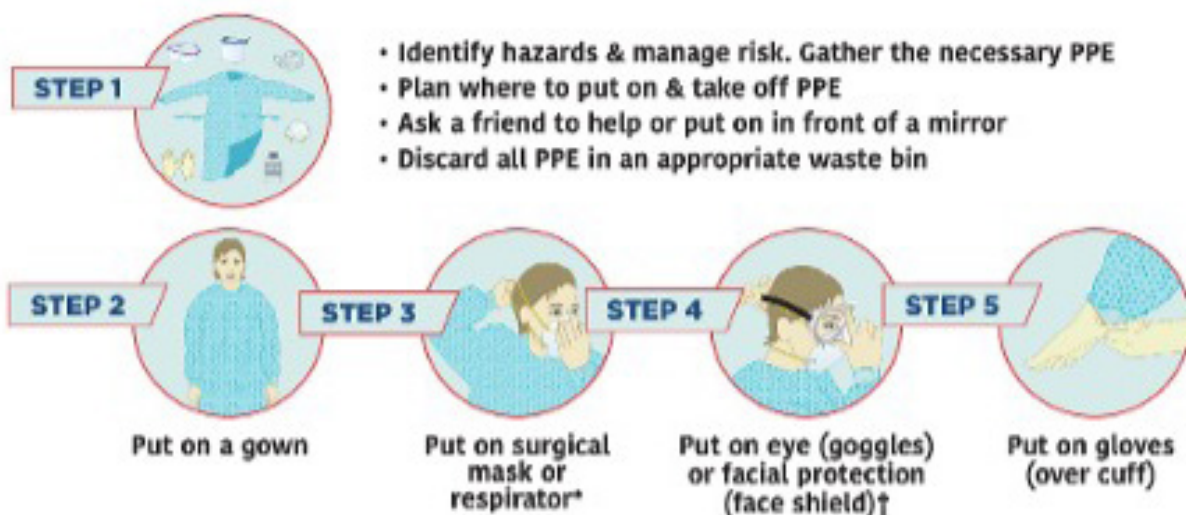
The Prime Minister illustrated that he is among those working from home where he has managed to get a significant amount done. He said that on Friday alone, he had participated in at least four meetings via video conferencing.

COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019



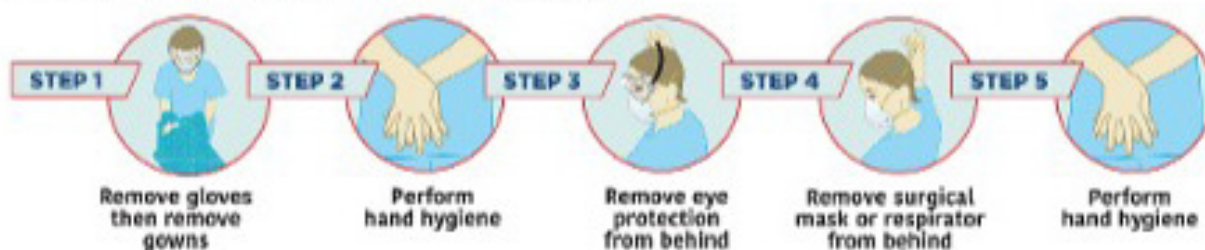
HOW TO PUT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)



*Surgical mask or respirator (N95 or similar), depending on the level of care. For aerosol generating procedures (AGP), wear a respirator (N95 or similar)
†e.g. visor, face shield, goggles (consider anti-fog drops or fog-resistant goggles)

HOW TO TAKE OFF PPE

- Avoid contamination of self, others and environment
- Remove the most heavily contaminated items first



Level of care	Hand hygiene	Gown	Surgical mask	Respirator (N95 or similar)	Goggles (eye protection) OR face shield (facial protection)	Gloves
Triage						
Collection of specimens for laboratory diagnosis						
Suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 requiring healthcare facility admission and NO aerosol-generating procedure						
Suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 requiring healthcare facility admission and WITH aerosol-generating procedure†						

†AGPs include positive pressure ventilation (BIPAP and CPAP), endotracheal intubation, airway suction, high frequency oscillatory ventilation, tracheostomy, chest physiotherapy, nebulizer treatment, sputum induction, and bronchoscopy.

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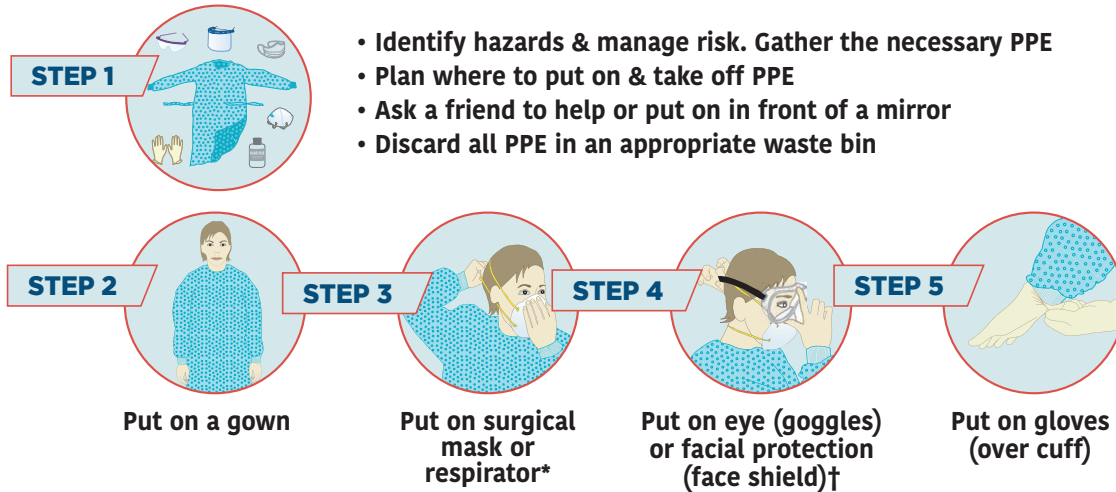
BE AWARE. PREPARE. ACT.

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COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019

HOW TO PUT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

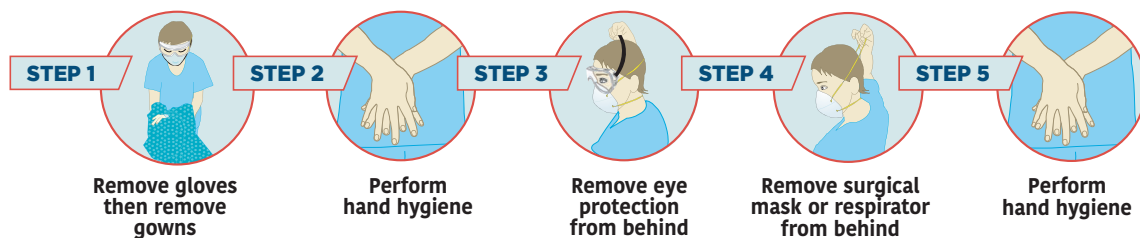


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‡AGPs include positive pressure ventilation (BiPAP and CPAP), endotracheal intubation, airway suction, high frequency oscillatory ventilation, tracheostomy, chest physiotherapy, nebulizer treatment, sputum induction, and bronchoscopy.

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Health
Organization

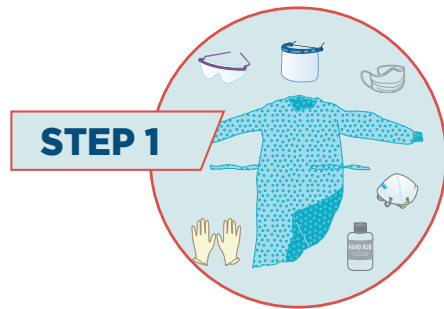
World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE AMERICAS

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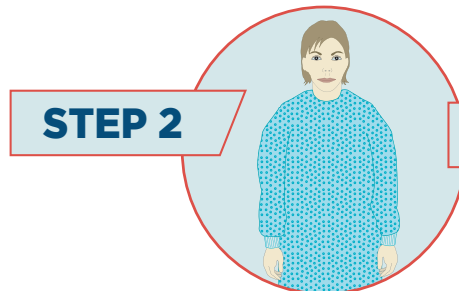
COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019

HOW TO PUT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)



- Identify hazards & manage risk. Gather the necessary PPE
- Plan where to put on & take off PPE
- Ask a friend to help or put on in front of a mirror
- Discard all PPE in an appropriate waste bin



Put on a gown



Put on surgical mask
or respirator*



Put on eye (goggles)
or facial protection
(face shield)**



Put on gloves
(over cuff)

*Surgical mask or respirator (N95 or similar), depending on the level of care. For aerosol generating procedures (AGP), wear a respirator (N95 or similar)

**e.g. visor, face shield, goggles (consider anti-fog drops or fog-resistant goggles)

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The Economics of Covid-19

(Afzal Moolla was born in Delhi, India while his parents were in exile, working as political exiles against Apartheid in South Africa. He is a poet who spent time in Egypt, Finland and Iran. Afzal works and lives in Johannesburg, South Africa.)

The sudden onset of, and now the Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare the fissures that govern our world and the societies we live in. It has, in one fell swoop, put to horrific rest the notion that capitalism is the foundation that the global economic system must be based on.

The wealthiest countries in the world are today facing death in the face. The narrative that “the markets will steady themselves” has been shattered.

Today, in the bastion of capitalism, the United States, we see governors and mayors and other individuals in positions of power and influence calling for the “socialisation” of key medical facilities as well as the medical supply-chain.

What we are witnessing today is the toxicity of capitalism, which is as virulent as the Coronavirus, and in the long term far more dangerous to billions of those with whom we share this pale blue dot, our home. Earth.

The world’s largest economies whose defense budgets are in the trillions of dollars are

faced with having stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, while the very basic needs of hospitals and clinics have health workers pleading for protective masks and gloves, for ventilators and nebulisers, for they are a part of the essential arsenal of tools that are now so desperately needed.

Let us contrast this with the socialist island of Cuba, just 90 miles off the coast of Miami.

A socialist country that has endured an enforced trade embargo for over half a century by the United States.

Today we see Cuba offering supplies at no cost and doctors as volunteers to some of the world’s most prosperous nations. The United States, as it stands has refused to accept any assistance from Cuba, even as their own citizens are dying from a lack of medical equipment and resources.

The private medical sector in Britain, when asked by the National Health Service (NHS) for assistance with hospital beds, agreed to supply beds to the government subsidized NHS at €1.4 million, or thereabouts a day. There is something terribly wrong here. The poorest of the poor, the 99% of the world’s population are facing an apocalyptic future, with scientifically modelled projections of deaths



By Afzal Moolla

due to Covid-19 in the millions.

This is also the “worst case scenario” that US medical experts and epidemiologists are projecting for the United States.

There is something grotesque about this. When a tiny island nation as Cuba is, volunteers and offers medical professionals and material assistance to the large capitalist nations of Europe, it is reason enough for us all, to rethink how capitalism has failed, and continues to fail, and will fail to save the lives of countless human beings.

This is the stark-naked face of the economics of the Covid-19 pandemic. If we are to survive this terrifying pandemic, it will be folly not to rethink how our world’s economic system operates and who it benefits and at what cost to the 99% of our earth’s population.

“Socialism”, the word that has been derided so much and for so long, may offer a more viable solution.

Socialisation of public amenities, of medical and other critical areas which all people need to live healthily as human beings, and with dignity, must be, at the very least, considered as an alternative to the capitalist system where so many starve and die and so few live and prosper.

Our leaders today, and the leaders who are yet to come, will be callously guilty of not, at the very least, acknowledge that “business as usual” does not work, and is not working. The system is rotten at the very core and the Covid-19 pandemic has, again, made this truth apparent to all of us.

It has taken, and is, taking countless lives to make that clear. Our inaction in the coming years will doom future generations to the horrors we are witnessing today. Our decisive action will, at the very least, give the world a fighting chance.

It is up to us.

Opinion

Pelting bricks is not constructive: COVID - 19 needs a national response

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the OAS. He has served three Prime Ministers of Antigua and Barbuda since 1977)

The eruption and spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) have created a global crisis unprecedented in magnitude and scope. Every country is struggling to cope with this invisible and pervasive enemy that invaded its territory, showing no mercy to young or old.

Small and vulnerable countries such as Antigua and Barbuda have been the hardest hit. While the number of affected persons and deaths, as a percentage of population size, has not reached the proportions of the United States, Spain, Italy, Germany and France which are the five nations worse affected, the figures will grow.

This is not because, as the Leader of the United Progressive Party (UPP) Harold Lovell, claims that the Government has no plan and no budget. It is because no Government, not even the richest nation – the United States of America – had a plan or a budget. No government could have anticipated a virus of such unprecedented scale and ferocity. In the US, Canada, European nations and Japan – the most well-off countries – plans had to be hastily put together and are in constant review. Each day brings bigger challenges and greater obstacles to overcome. Until COVID-19 intruded on

our shores, Antigua and Barbuda was a US\$1.5 billion economy. The US economy is in excess of US\$20 trillion. There can be no comparison of the responses by the US and Antigua and Barbuda authorities. Yet, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda responded with greater coherence than the authorities in the US which had obvious differences between the Executive and health administrators. To date, in the US, there has been no meeting between President Trump and the leaders of Congress that had to approve the money to tackle the COVID-19 issue that came out of the clear blue sky. The US has the financial resources to make new plans rapidly and to allocate money to unexpected projects. Antigua and Barbuda has no such capacity. Indeed, in the epoch of COVID-19, the Treasury is emptying fast with considerable diminution of income as planes stop flying-in, cruise ships cease docking, tourist arrivals dwindle and hotels close.

Making plans is one thing; financing them is another. Priorities have to be set, and sacrifices made. That is a reality that Mr Lovell of all persons should know well. He served as a Minister of Finance and knows that, every month, he had to find ways of stretching limited revenues to cover known expenditures. To finance anything not expected, even less demanding than COVID-19, would have been a difficult undertaking.

Recognising that tackling the massive challenge of the virus required a collaborative vision, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda invited leaders of Opposition parties, including Mr Lovell, to a meeting to discuss plans and to brainstorm on how to tackle issues ahead, only some of which were known. So, Mr Lovell was invited to the table, an invitation that has not been withdrawn. Recently, Mr Lovell publicly called not only for a plan and budget, as if Antigua and Barbuda had the resources and capacity of the US and larger countries, he also called for the Government “to adequately compensate the country’s nurses and other frontline personnel”. Before making such a public statement in the height of the current crisis, it would have been constructive had Mr Lovell put that proposal to the Government with sound ideas on how the money would be found to do it. He might also have considered that it is precisely because doctors and nurses, the police force and teachers are regarded as persons in the front line of the nation’s health, security and education that government provides special concessions for them to access land, housing and other amenities. What is more, Mr Lovell would know well that the Government has an obligation to provide the frontline personnel with adequate protection for themselves as well as tools to do their jobs. That costs money – in this case



By Sir Ronald Sanders

unplanned spending at a time of significantly reduced income. Further, the Government has a larger responsibility to all the people of the country which requires spreading little a long way. The effects of COVID-19 will harm more people in the coming weeks. At the same time, it will wreak greater havoc on the economy. The world is reeling from its effects, and Antigua and Barbuda is already caught in the vortex, through no fault of our own, through nothing we have done and through no policy we have implemented. There has never been a time in the country’s history when it needed less political bickering and more political consensus to confront a massive combined assault on the nation’s health and its economic well-being. Perhaps the solution to this problem is meetings every ten days between the leaders of the government and opposition parties where the situation can be assessed, information shared, ideas discussed, and plans formulated. The country needs a coherent approach to a common, merciless and vicious enemy. Pelting bricks is not constructive; using bricks to construct is a far more beneficial approach.

Ventilators destined for Barbados seized by U.S.



Minister of Health and Wellness, Lieutenant Col Jeffrey Bostic

The seizure of 20 ventilators destined for Barbados appears to have thrust the Mia Mottley administration into a growing global battle for critical supplies to fight the outbreak of COVID-19.

But Minister of Health and Wellness, Lieutenant Col Jeffrey Bostic on Sunday morning assured there is no shortage of the critical supplies, dismissing such suggestions as “absurd”.

During a press conference at Ilaro Court, Bostic revealed that the ventilators donated to the Barbados Government as an act of philanthropy were barred

from exportation.

“They were seized in the United States. Paid for, but seized, so we are trying to see exactly what is going to transpire there,” Minister Bostic disclosed.

“But I remind you that ventilators are one of the most in-demand items in the world today and Barbados is merely wrestling with the other 203 countries and territories around the world seeking to secure as many of these pieces of equipment as possible,” he added.

While initially indicating they were part of the \$1.4 million in assistance

pledged by Barbados-born international pop star Rihanna, he later corrected this and added that five of the ventilators sent by Rihanna would soon reach the country.

The Health Minister did not disclose the U.S. city or state where the seizure took place. But reports of such seizures made news as recently as Friday in New York, where Governor Andrew Cuomo vowed to seize unused ventilators from private entities through an executive order in the hard-hit city. It is still unclear how Barbadian authorities will

respond, but at least for now, the 48 ventilators on island that are currently at government’s disposal appear to be more than enough with only three of the country’s 56 COVID-19 patients in need of ventilators. “So it is absurd for anyone to say, suggest, imply or insinuate that there is a shortage or could in the foreseeable future be an acute shortage of ventilators on the island,” the Lieutenant Colonel declared.

“We have an adequate amount of ventilators at this point and ventilators have been arriving almost daily over the past two weeks or so. But up to this point, we have only had to use three ventilators,” Bostic added.

On Saturday, Democratic Labour Party President, Verla DePeiza questioned whether enough ventilators are on the island and demanded to know when more would arrive.

The Health Minister, however, disclosed that over 150 ventilators had been ordered and paid for from more than five different sources through five different sources and stressed that Prime Minister Mottley had made an “open cheque” available for the purchase of such critical supplies.

'Our Lives Are In Danger' - Caribbean Workers In Florida Living In Fear Of COVID - 19 With No Protection On The Job



These are turbulent times for Caribbean nationals who work in healthcare and other essential areas in South Florida.

With the ravaging effects of the deadly coronavirus nipping at their heels, many are forced to face the storm and hope for the best as they strive to keep afloat in the United States to earn their bread to feed their families.

There are many Jamaican doctors and nurses who work in hospitals where the brunt of the effects of the respiratory disease is most obvious, but the spectrum of persons who face danger on a daily basis is much wider. They include certified nursing assistants, workers at

grocery stores, Uber drivers, truck drivers, emergency response teams, and law enforcement officers.

Among those expressing concerns are several Jamaicans, other Caribbean nationals, and even white Americans who work at big chain stores in South Florida.

While most other businesses have drawn down their shutters, stores like Walmart, Aldi, Publix, Target and Winn Dixie are still operating, as they are listed as an essential service by the state of Florida.

Alvito Carnegie has been living in the United States for upwards of three decades and has been a produce

stocker at a Walmart store in South Florida for 10 of those years.

The Jamaican is comfortable in his job. But lately, he has had reason to think twice. NO PROTECTIVE GEAR

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the rising death toll, he said his employers have not seen it fit to provide personal protective equipment in the form of gloves and masks to ensure that he and his fellow co-workers are protected from contracting the virus when customers flock the store for necessary supplies.

"I was stocking some vegetables on a shelf one day when an elderly man came into the store. He let go a wet sneeze and I had to sprint out of range. I was very upset and chipped two bad words as I ran away from the area. I returned and cursed out the man at the expense of losing my job, because customers always come first at Walmart," he told The Sunday Gleaner.

"I do not know if that man is asymptomatic or if he has the virus, but he sneezed and that is very scary. We are all worried because up to yesterday (Friday), our manager told us that we must not wear gloves and masks. We are providing an essential service and I personally

know that these customers are the reason I have a job; however, we must be allowed to protect ourselves."

His sentiment was echoed by Fabrishia, a 27-year-old Jamaican woman who migrated to the United States three years ago and has been employed to the store for the last eight months.

"We handle cardboard boxes every day. Where are they coming from? Who handled them before us? They say the virus can live on these surfaces for some time, yet I must touch them with my bare hands? Our lives are in danger. On top of that, everything is made in China," she lamented.

COVID-19 originated in the Wuhan province of China in December last year and has now spread across the world. To date, there are approximately 1,159,515 confirmed cases globally, with an estimated 62,375 deaths. So far, approximately 225,066 persons have recovered. The United States has now recorded approximately 278,458 COVID-19 cases, with some 7,159 deaths. An estimated 9,897 persons have recovered.

The virus is spreading rapidly in Florida, where millions of Jamaicans and other Caribbean nationals live. The state is battling approximately 10,268 cases and already an estimated

Cont'd on pg 15

Man charged for threatening to kill PM Allen Chastanet

A fisherman from Canaries has been formally charged for threatening to kill Prime Minister Allen Chastanet in a video that went viral on social media.

Charged for making use of threatening words is Steve Alexander who is originally from Canaries but is now a resident of Soufriere. Police said he was charged on Friday afternoon and remanded in police custody until April 8.

Alexander was arrested earlier in the week after the video surfaced, in which he threatened the prime minister over the sudden imple-



mentation of the 24-hour seven-day curfew to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus disease COVID-19.

The video was filled with creole-laced expletives. Alexander wore a mask in the video but that did not stop

the authorities from succeeding to hunt and track him down.

Cont'd from pg 14

170 persons have died. Jane was born and raised in Minnesota but now lives in the warmer climes of South Florida. The Caucasian woman is feisty and has disregarded the edict laid down by her manager at her big chain retail outlet.

"They will have to fire me, as I am wearing my gloves. This is ridiculous. I have a family and I will do everything to protect myself," Jane told The Sunday Gleaner. At some major retail outlets and places that remain open for business during the outbreak of the new coronavirus in Florida, glass structures are erected at cashier stations to protect staff and customers against infection. There was none at the two Walmart stores visited by The Sunday Gleaner on Friday, and some customers were within six feet of cashiers, who appeared quite apprehensive.

"I try to hold my breath when they come to pay for their goods and I use the hand sanitiser after every transac-

tion," a Trinidadian woman who works as a cashier in Broward County said. "One woman came and was coughing terribly, so I turned my back, covered my face and took a few steps away. This is what we face on a daily basis but we are still lucky to have a job, as many people are out of work now."

CORONA MUSIC

Yvonne has been a certified nursing assistant for over 20 years. The Jamaican currently takes care of a 95-year-old Jewish woman. Her job is now fraught with danger.

The woman's children have been very stern in their warnings about Yvonne not going out and bringing the virus back into the home of their mother, who is in the category of persons most vulnerable to COVID-19.

"Last week, she sneezed twice. Blood came the second time and I was very scared because I had just returned from an errand she had asked me to

run," Yvonne recalled, noting that she had not been home in three weeks.

"I called in the doctor and after several tests it was determined that she had a cold. It was a big relief for me and her children. I am on tenterhooks, as she is my bread and butter and we are like mother and daughter. I don't want anything to happen to her and then I get blamed for it."

Karl, a Jamaican, drives trucks across the United States and delivers freight to grocery stores owned by the Publix chain.

He, too, is worried.

"It nuh easy, boss, travelling from state to state and handling these boxes and we don't know if the virus is on them. Every day I pray and when I get home, I strip at the door down to my briefs and leave my clothes outside. I head straight for the shower. I am afraid to even hug my wife and child. We facing the corona music," he declared.

Coronavirus: PM admitted to hospital over virus symptoms

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been admitted to hospital for tests, 10 days after testing positive for coronavirus, Downing Street has said.

He was taken to a London hospital on Sunday evening with "persistent symptoms" - including a temperature.

It is said to be a "precautionary step" taken on the advice of his doctor.

The prime minister remains in charge of the government, but the foreign secretary is expected to chair a coronavirus meeting on Monday morning.

Mr Johnson is expected to stay overnight and is having what have been described as "routine tests", according to BBC Political Editor Laura Kuenssberg.

In a statement, a Downing Street spokeswoman said: "On the advice of his doctor, the prime minister has tonight been admitted to hospital for tests.

"This is a precautionary step, as the prime minister continues to have persistent symptoms of coronavirus 10 days after testing positive for the virus."

She added: "The prime minister thanks NHS staff for all of their incredible hard work and urges the public to continue to follow

the government's advice to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives."

Mr Johnson has worked from home since it was announced that he had tested positive for coronavirus on 27 March.

He was last seen in public applauding the NHS and other key workers from his flat in Downing Street on Thursday evening, and chaired a coronavirus meeting remotely on Friday morning.

Also on Friday, the prime minister posted a Twitter video in which said he was still displaying minor symptoms.

"I still have a temperature. So in accordance with government advice I must continue my self isolation until that symptom itself goes," he said.

"But we're working clearly the whole time on our programme to beat the virus."

On Saturday, his pregnant partner Carrie Symonds tweeted that she has spent a week in bed with the main symptoms.

She said she had not been tested for the virus.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock had also tested positive for the virus and returned from self-isolation on Thursday to host the daily

Downing Street news conference.

The government's chief medical adviser, Prof Chris Whitty, has also had to self-isolate after showing symptoms.

Last month, the prime minister's spokesman said if the prime minister was unwell and unable to work, Foreign

Secretary Dominic Raab, as the first secretary of state, would stand in.

The news of Mr Johnson's admission to hospital came shortly after the Queen delivered a rallying message to the nation, saying the UK "will succeed" in its fight against the coronavirus pandemic.



The PM took part in the clap for carers on Thursday outside No 11 Downing Street

Taliban warn deal with US in Afghanistan near breaking point

The Taliban has said the deal with the United States aimed at bringing peace to Afghanistan was nearing a breaking point, accusing Washington of violations that included drone attacks on civilians, while also chastising the Afghan government for delaying the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners promised in the agreement.

The Taliban said it had restricted attacks against Afghan security forces to rural outposts and had not attacked international forces or Afghan forces in cities or military installations. The group warned of more violence if the US and the Afghan government continue alleged violations of the deal, adding that continued violations would “create an atmosphere of mistrust that will not only damage the agreements, but also force mujaheddin to a similar response and will increase the level of fighting”.

“We are seriously asking

the Americans to abide by the contents of the agreement and to alert their allies to fully abide by the agreement,” the Taliban statement read. The Taliban has accused the Afghan government of using “indefensible arguments” to explain the repeated delays in releasing a promised 5,000 Taliban prisoners in exchange for 1,000 government personnel. The US military in Afghanistan rejected the Taliban’s claim, saying it had upheld the military terms of the agreement and that Taliban’s assertions were “baseless”. “USFOR-A has been clear - we will defend our ANDSF (Afghan National Defense and Security Forces) partners if attacked, in compliance with the agreement,” US Forces Afghanistan spokesman Colonel Sonny Leggett tweeted.

Political feud

In February, US officials and Taliban representatives signed an agreement after



Taliban also accused the Afghan government of using ‘indefensible arguments’ to explain the repeated delays in releasing a promised 5,000 Taliban prisoners in exchange for 1,000 government personnel. [Hussein Sayed/AP]

months of negotiations in Qatar aimed at ending the United States’ longest war, fought in Afghanistan since 2001. The deal paves the way for the gradual withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan.

Last month, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced a one-billion-dollar cut in American aid to Afghanistan after he failed to convince Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his polit-

ical foe, Abdullah Abdullah, to end a feud that has helped jeopardise a US-led peace effort. Ghani and Abdullah both claimed the presidency following a disputed September election marred by allegations of fraud.

The country’s Independent Election Commission has declared Ghani a winner, but Abdullah and the Elections Complaint Commission have charged widespread irregularities.

NIGHTLY NEWS

WITH **PHIL GEORGE**

MONDAY - FRIDAY
6:30PM | 6:30AM



99.1 FM RADIO



'Complete collapse of economies' ahead as Africa faces virus



KAMPALA, Uganda -- Some of Uganda's poorest people used to work here, on the streets of Kampala, as fruit sellers sitting on the pavement or as peddlers of everything from handkerchiefs to roasted peanuts.

Now they're gone and no one knows when they will return, victims of a global

economic crisis linked to the coronavirus that could wipe out jobs for millions across the African continent, many who live hand-to-mouth with zero savings.

"We've been through a lot on the continent. Ebola, yes, African governments took a hit, but we have not seen anything like this be-

fore," Ahunna Eziakonwa, the United Nations Development Program regional director for Africa, told The Associated Press. "The African labor market is driven by imports and exports and with the lockdown everywhere in the world, it means basically that the economy is frozen in place.

"And with that, of course, all the jobs are gone."

More than half of Africa's 54 countries have imposed lockdowns, curfews, travel bans or other measures in a bid to prevent local transmission of the virus. They range from South Africa, where inequality and crime plague Africa's most developed country, to places like Uganda, where the informal sector accounts for more than 50% of the country's gross domestic product.

The deserted streets in downtown Kampala, Uganda's capital, underscore the challenge facing authorities across the world's poorest continent, home to 1.3 billion people: how to look after millions of people stuck at home for weeks or even months of lockdown.

With some governments saying they're unable to offer direct support, the fate of Africa's large informal sector could be a powerful ex-

ample of what experts predict will be unprecedented damage to economies in the developing world. Among the millions made jobless are casual laborers, petty traders, street vendors, mechanics, taxi operators and conductors, housekeepers and waitresses, and dealers in everything from used clothes to construction hardware.

Unless the virus' spread can be controlled, up to 50% of all projected job growth in Africa will be lost as aviation, services, exports, mining, agriculture and the informal sector all take a hit, Eziakonwa said.

"We will see a complete collapse of economies and livelihoods. Livelihoods will be wiped out in a way we have never seen before," she warned.

The U.N. Economic Commission for Africa has said the pandemic could seriously dent already stagnant growth in many countries, with oil-exporting nations like Nigeria and Angola losing up to \$65 billion in revenue as prices fall.

Economies in sub-Saharan Africa are seen as especially vulnerable because many are heavily indebted and some struggle just to implement their budgets under

Cont'd on pg 19

less stressful circumstances.

Now the continent might need up to \$10.6 billion in unanticipated increases in health spending, and revenue losses could lead to debt becoming unsustainable, UNECA chief Vera Songwe said in March. Urgent calls for an economic stimulus package have followed.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has spoken of an “existential threat” to Africa’s economies while seeking up to \$150 billion from G20 nations. A meeting of African finance ministers agreed that the continent needs a stimulus package of up to \$100 billion, including a waiver of up to \$44 billion in interest payments.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa backed the calls for a stimulus package, saying in a recent speech that the pandemic “will reverse the gains that many countries have made in recent years.” Several African nations have been among the fastest-growing in the world.

The International Monetary Fund on March 25 said it had received requests for

emergency financing from close to 20 African countries, with requests from another 10 or more likely to follow. The IMF has since approved credit facilities for at least two West African nations — Guinea and Senegal — facing virus-related economic disruption.

Further challenges exist. Rampant corruption in many African countries feeds inequality, and poor or non-existent public services stoke public anger that sometimes escalates into street protests and deadly violence.

Measures to control the spread of COVID-19 could make that worse as people trapped at home go hungry.

UNECA has called for emergency actions to protect 30 million jobs immediately at risk across Africa, particularly in the tourism and airline sectors, saying the continent will be hit harder than others with an economic toll that will exacerbate “current fragilities.”

After Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni announced that food markets could remain open under

orders to decongest crowded areas, some fruit vendors were assaulted by armed men and had goods confiscated, drawing an apology from the army commander. Museveni later announced an effective lockdown, closing public transport and all but essential businesses.

“What am I going to eat if he stops us from working? Museveni cannot do that,” said Marius Kamusiime, who operates a passenger motorcycle. “We may have to go back to the village if this corona becomes serious.”

On a continent where extended families are common, some say, one job loss can spell doom for up to a dozen or more people.

“Sitting down is not an option because they don’t have money locked away,” said Eziakonwa, the UNDP official in charge of Africa.

Some governments such as Rwanda are distributing food to those who need it, but there are questions about sustainability.

“We do know what to do to bring the economy back to life. What we don’t know

is how to bring back people to life,” said Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo. He has created a virus alleviation fund to look after the neediest and has donated the equivalent of his salary for three months.

But many want to see more support, including tax relief that benefits a wider section of the urban poor.

In Kenya, President Uhuru Kenyatta has announced temporary tax relief to people described as low-income earners — those earning up to \$240 in monthly wages — as well a reduction in the maximum income tax rate from 30% to 25%. He also gave \$94 million to “vulnerable members of our society” to protect them from economic damage.

But other leaders say they cannot afford such benefits.

Noting that “the rich countries are unlocking staggering sums” to stimulate their economies, Benin’s President Patrice Talon said that his West African country, “like most African countries, does not have these means.”



99.1 FM RADIO

TRUTH AND PRAISE GOSPEL

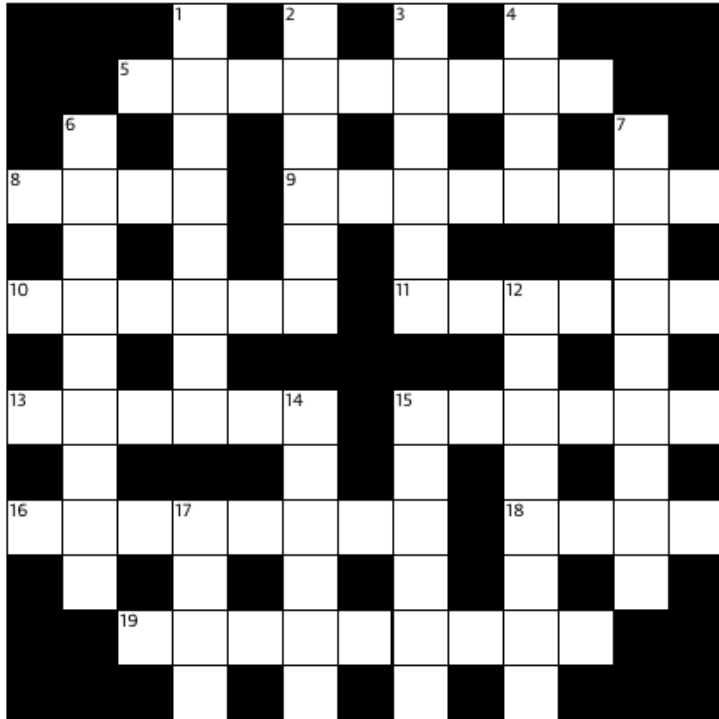
 WITH **SEAN O'NEIL**

MONDAY - FRIDAY

FROM 5AM - 6AM



CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 5 Displeasing to the eye (9)
 8 Norse god of thunder (4)
 9 Vilified (8)
 10 Blacksmith's workplace (6)
 11 Invent (4,2)
 13 International cultural organisation (6)
 15 Places for bowling (6)
 16 Seaside resort in south-west France (8)
 18 Very small (4)
 19 Off-road motorcycle (5,4)

Down

- 1 Falsehoods (8)
 2 Feeling of despair in the face of obstacles (6)
 3 Jewish salutation (6)
 4 Bullet — shot of liquor (4)
 6 Small image (9)
 7 On the way back (9)
 12 Greek dish of lamb, baked on the bone (8)
 14 Source (6)
 15 Summerhouse (6)
 17 Lightly cooked (4)

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22	D	I	R	E			23	F	R	A	G	M	E	N	T				

Sudoku Puzzles

5				2				
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6			5		1	9	8	
	5		4		6	8	3	2
		4		5	3			
		6				7		5
4		5		6		3		
7			1				2	9
9	2	8		7	4		6	

DAILY CARTOON



DAILY HOROSCOPE



Aries

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

When it comes to friendships, quality is more important than quantity. It's possible you will decide to whittle down your social network to a small number of people who truly understand you. This doesn't mean unfriending everyone today; it simply means unfollowing those who drive you to distraction. In fact, receiving a sincere compliment from someone you respect may reassure you that it pays to be discerning. You're moving into exalted circles now, and soon you will see what kind of difference this can make in your life.



Gemini

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)

Devoting more time to spiritually enriching pursuits is encouraged under the current cosmic energies. Someone with your keen intelligence tends to overanalyze situations, and having a practice that allows you to release tension, relax, and live in the moment could completely change your life. Not only will your problem-solving skills improve, but you will look and feel better, too. As a result, you'll have a heightened charisma that those around you won't be able to help but take notice of. That's because contentment is the best cosmetic.



Leo

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)

Making a personal sacrifice for a loved one will be easy for you today. You've always been warm, generous, and demonstrative. Whenever you get a chance to make someone's life better, you take it – and you will do just that now. As the day goes on, you could find yourself bursting with boundless energy that allows you to handle a heavy workload effortlessly. Someone in charge could recognize this, and you might be given a wonderful assignment that is the envy of your colleagues. Don't apologize; you've earned this prize.



Libra

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

Today presents a golden opportunity to polish your artistic skills to a diamond-like brilliance. Connecting with a respected master could be a surprisingly joyful experience, and it might be a relief to feel a kinship with someone who places such great importance on beauty, harmony, and originality. You may also feel bolstered by any praise and encouragement you receive from this instructor. After putting in several hours of hard work and practice, you'll welcome the chance to rest and relax at home. Your personal space will feel like a reward for a job well done.



Sagittarius

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Use your powers of observation to draw your own conclusions today. An authority figure's version of the truth may make you skeptical. Instead of following this person's lead, forge your own path by learning as much as you can about a subject with global importance. The information you acquire through this pursuit could be used to empower others who are determined to make a positive difference. In fact, your upbeat attitude has the potential to land you a lucrative job offer. You'll love getting paid to make the world a better place.



Aquarius

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)

Your keen sense of responsibility commands respect. You're not content to rest on your laurels while others struggle. Running errands for a housebound relative, checking in on an elderly neighbor, or dropping off a care package of art supplies to needy children are all good impulses to follow. Your considerate behavior will not only garner appreciation, you may also find yourself on the receiving end of a few admirers. Let your light shine out into the world and see who wants to come along for the ride.



Taurus

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

You have an excellent opportunity to reach the top of your career game today. The secret to your success is having two equally good options from which to choose. When your employer realizes you've generated such great ideas, you could be given a leadership role or be placed in charge of an important department. Are you unemployed? Having twin sources of income may be more profitable and stimulating than one. Consider your options, especially if one involves working with people from another culture. Experiencing a different way of life could make you happier and healthier overall.



Cancer

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

Putting aside money for a rainy day could bring long-term gains. With sensible Saturn touring your 8th House of Unearned Income, you might be wise to open a retirement, savings, or educational fund. Even making a small contribution now could grow into a sizable nest egg one day. As the energies shift this evening, a marriage, business, or creative partnership could have a momentous effect on your career. Someone could give you the money to launch a dream project, or you'll receive the resources needed to go back to school. Turn this seed money into something that can blossom.



Virgo

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)

Your conscientious behavior at work may finally be rewarded. Being given an exciting assignment or impressive title is a distinct possibility today. If you're unemployed, think about contributing in some way to an organization you've always admired. The powers-that-be may quickly realize you should become a permanent member of paid staff. There's a big market for someone with your excellent communication skills. You could also feel an upswing in your personal life this evening as the cosmos turns passion up a notch. Let down your defenses and see where it takes you.



Scorpio

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

Establishing a secure home base will help you feel a sense of relief. After all, it is so much easier to do a good job when you're able to return to a tranquil abode. If you're tired of professional politics and endless conference calls, you could launch a successful home-based business now. The idea of melding your personal and professional lives into a seamless whole might greatly appeal to you. Don't be daunted by the prospect of learning new systems to get this up and running. You soak up information like a sponge.



Capricorn

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

Making your money work for you is the name of the game right now. If you've been entrusted with heavy responsibilities, ask about receiving a bonus for reaching your goals and deadlines. It's time to be rewarded for your exceptional dedication and diligence. Are you looking for a job? Think about acquiring specialized skills in a rapidly growing field. This will allow you to pick and choose your assignments, rather than being forced to take whatever you can get. Your decision to turn lemons into lemonade today may pave the way to an exceptional opportunity down the road.



Pisces

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)

Working in seclusion can keep you emotionally centered today. Instead of showing an unfinished project to a confidante or colleague, keep it under wraps for now. Only reveal it when you've applied the finishing touches as this will prevent you from second-guessing your excellent instincts. Although you're a bit reclusive at the moment, you're still in great demand. People are seeking you out because you always emphasize the positive and eliminate the negative. That's a quality which is especially precious now. Call up a dejected friend and give them a pep talk. Your encouragement may have a transformative effect.

Cornwall dominant in five games

Antigua and Barbuda Rakeem Jimbo Cornwall was dominant in the just concluded Cricket West Indies Regional Four-Day tournament won by the Barbados Pride with two rounds of matches remaining because of COVID-19.

Jimbo bagged 30 scalps from five



matches at an average of 21.01.

But the leading bowler for the tournament was Guyana's Veerasammy Permaul with 50 victims at 12.98 followed by Chemar Holder and Akeal Hosein who had 36 wickets each.

Holder the 22 year old Barbadian pace bowler took his 36 wickets at an healthy average of 18.91 while Hosein, 26 took his wickets at an excellent 20.61.

Preston McSween, the 24 year old left-arm, fast medium bowler from Grenada was ranked fourth in the



bowling standings with 31 wickets at an average of 22.77.

Veteran Barbados fast bowler Kemar Roach was also impressive with 30 wickets from just five outings.

Premier League warns PFA of \$762 million penalty if season is voided

Players have been informed that the Premier League faces \$762million financial penalty, if the season does not resume. If Broadcasters demand refunds on games they could not show, such penalty would apply, the Premier League explained to the Professional Footballers Association (PFA) during a Conference call on Saturday.

The Premier League also explained why it wants players to drop wages by 30%.

Clubs and players are ex-

pected to discuss the plan with talks set to continue.

The players and the coaches will have to agree to the drop in wages because the Premier League is not mandated to make such a decision.

PFA is the players Union, but representatives from the League managers Association, the managers union, were also involved in Saturday's call which concluded in an hour with no agreement reached.

The Premier League also

warned that, in addition to the penalties payable to broadcasters, hundreds of millions of pounds could be lost in sponsorship and match-day revenue because the season has been suspended.

The league announced last Friday that it would ask players to take a 30% pay cut in order to protect jobs.

The PFA and leading agents think wage deferrals rather than cuts are preferable at this stage. But former England international Wayne Rooney

has branded the handling of the Premier league pay row as a disgrace.

Rooney, who now plays for Championship side Derby criticized the Government and league for placing footballers in a no win situation over proposed pay cuts after a warning from players representatives that National Health Service coffers could suffer.

The former Manchester United legend penned an impassionate column in the Sunday Times saying his fellow professionals were easy targets in the wider response to the coronavirus.

Rooney made it clear he had both the means and the will to make financial contributions, either in the form of salary reductions or direct donations to the NHS, but felt the public pressure being exerted on players was unhelpful

Mayweather's daughter arrested

Floyd Mayweather's 19 year old daughter, Iyanna, was arrested on Friday night after an altercation at the home of rapper NBA YoungBoy, according to multiple reports.

A representative of Harris County Precinct 4 Constable's Office said that Iyanna, also known as "Yaya", was arrested at a Houston residence for felony aggravated assault with a deadly weapon around 1am local time on Saturday morning, and taken to Houston Harris County jail. She was later released on bond.

The victim a 35 year old black female, suffered multiple lacerations to her arm and was transported via ambulance to a hospital for a non-life threatening injuries.

The victim underwent surgery and is stable.

TMZ reports that Mayweather confronted YoungBoy and the victim at his Houston home, and said that she was YoungBoy's fiancée. When the confrontation moved to the kitchen, Mayweather reportedly attacked the victim with two knives.

What will the ABFA do?

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association has some serious decisions to make on the local football programs.

With COVID-19 halting all sporting activities in the country football administrators, coaches and players are left wondering what approach the Everton Batow Gonsalves Administration will take.

Will the Competition Committee which the president sits on make a tough decision or will the general membership be asked to decide their own fate.

Teams in the respective divisions have been asked to make recommendations.

Defending Champions Liberta Blackhawks have recommended no demotion from the Premier Division, four teams be promoted for the first division, with two demoted, while four teams two from each group be promoted from the second tier.

Also speaking to TIMEOUT on Point



FM President of the Liberta Sports Club Kenneth Benjamin suggested the prize monies be divided between the top four teams in each division. No winners declared.

A team who occupy a top four position in the First Division that did not want to be named recommended that the authorities wait out the pandemic and look at completing the remaining games in July before kicking off the new season in late September early October.

Whatever the call, ABFA is faced with a situation that no one forecast or planned for the coronavirus.

Check the ABFA website for the standings with Grenades and Hoppers



the only teams in position to win the premier league and in the First Division Empire followed by Sap, Villa, and Tryum are the only four with a chance of winning or automatic promotion.

In the second division Garden Stars and Bendals lead one group with 51 points, in the other group JSC Progressors FC lead with 43 followed by Young Lions FC on 40 points.

WI U-19 tour to England postponed

Due to scheduling clashes, Cricket West Indies (CWI) and the England and Wales Cricket Board have agreed to postpone the planned West Indies tour of England, scheduled for August and September.

With the West Indies Under-19 Team being unavailable to tour England during the proposed window, CWI and the ECB have worked together to investigate all alternatives scheduling options, but unfortunately, it has not been possible to find a time for the tour that would work for both boards

in relation to the respective domestic tournaments and player availability.

Mo Bobat, ECB performance director said, cancelling the summer programme for their U19 side was not

an easy decision to take. He added, that it was not possible to identify a window for the tour that works for both boards, and in the current climate, it is certainly the most appropriate step.



FIFA could move age limit for men's football tournament

The age limit for the Olympic Games in Tokyo could be rearranged to 24 from 23 by FIFA.

The sport's governing body has recommended moving the limit to accommodate players eligible for this year's games, which were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic...

Players born on or after 1 January 1997 will be allowed to play but, it is yet to be approved by the Fifa Bureau.

The Bureau is a reduced version of Fifa's decision making Council. The tournament is due to start before the opening on 23 July, 2021. The women's competition in next year's games has no age limit.

Player profile: Jessica Hall

Jessica Hall started playing football at age 4 with her father who introduced her to the sport. Jessica said she tried numerous sports but settled on football because it was her passion.

With very supportive parents Andy and Cathy Hall who were always at her training sessions and games young Hull embarked on a journey in the sport she love which saw her representing Antigua and Barbuda senior national team as a teenager and hone her skills in University in England.

The left footed attacking midfielder, who is also deadly done the left and

right flank says, been on the field allows her to forget everything that is going on around her for a while. Hall added it's an easy get away spot to say the least.

The 25 year old started her career at 5'P's FC Wadadli where she credits Noel Egan and the late Lowell Jarvis for her development.

Noel Egan when contacted by PointeXpress praised Hall for her passion and drive for the game. Egan said Jessica had good ball skills, kept the ball close to her feet and head up at all times. Noel the former referee and coach added she had quick feet and good vi-

sion. She has also worn the colors of Woodley United FC, The Priority School and Oxford Brookes University.

Jess as she is called in football circles noted that her favorite team is Fulham Football Club, all-time favorite player is David Beckham, but she has grown to love Lionel Messi game. Her favorite female player internationally is Julie Ertz and locally Kai Jacobs.

Jessica believes she has had her best years of football and experience what most players may not get. Jess is willing to share what she have learned and experienced over the many years with the young players coming up to make female football in Antigua and Barbuda better.

At the moment the St. Anthony's graduate is focusing on her career in physiotherapy more than playing. Jess is presently working with Pigotts Bullets in the local Premier League and moving her way up the ladder with the goal of working with national and sports teams as their physiotherapist. There is also the vision of working with professional teams around the world.

Jess favorite music is Soca,



DEWS