



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

# POINTEXPRESS

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# 60 MORE DAYS

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# PM remains hopeful

Despite his unhappiness over the foot-dragging by some member states that led to a US downgrading of the Eastern Caribbean Aviation system, Prime Minister Browne, current chairman of the OECS, has said the development was unfortunate and unnecessary as enough advanced notice had been served for the grouping to put its house in order before the downgrade was imposed.

The United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said late last week that it had downgraded the safety rating of the OECS' Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA), thereby preventing airlines from any of sub-regional territories from starting new flight services into the US or any of its territories – including some in the Caribbean, such as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

He indicated that Antigua and Bar-

buda had already done all that was necessary to meet the regulatory requirements but had been unable to persuade one or two other countries to the same.

Despite this country's clean bill of health in this regard, delinquency by others affects the entire grouping which falls under a single regulatory body – ECCAA.

The downgrade from Category 1 to Category 2 points to legal, regulatory and technical deficiencies pertaining to the oversight of airlines when measured against international standards and best practices.

While new services to US territories cannot be opened under the Category 2 downgrade, existing services such as LIAT's, are allowed to continue.

"But in any case, I remain hopeful that we should be able to resolve this issue. I don't think that the issues are

insurmountable, and I don't think any effort will be needed now for people to act ... They may have underestimated the situation ... I certainly would have urged them on numerous occasions. It's not to say that they ever resisted. I think it's just a matter of inertia, they were slow in moving ... I don't know if they felt that it was a warning that would not have resulted in any action."

The Prime Minister also considered it unfortunate that the FAA had taken this action at a time when the ECCAA territories were all struggling with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, and without giving them any additional time to get their houses in order.

Browne was due to tele-convene with his fellow OECS heads of government yesterday and was hopeful that it would result in the necessary actions being taken to restore the sub-region's Category 1 status.

## DAY 5/11

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme  
 Wind: ESE at 22 km/h  
 Wind Gusts: 28 km/h  
 Probability of Precipitation: 48%  
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%  
 Precipitation: 1.6 mm  
 Rain: 1.6 mm  
 Snow: 0.0 cm  
 Ice: 0.0 mm  
 Hours of Precipitation: 1  
 Hours of Rain: 1

# 30°<sub>Hi</sub>



Mostly sunny with a shower in places

## NIGHT 5/11

Wind: ESE at 17 km/h  
 Wind Gusts: 24 km/h  
 Probability of Precipitation: 4%  
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 0%  
 Precipitation: 0.0 mm  
 Rain: 0.0 mm  
 Snow: 0.0 cm  
 Ice: 0.0 mm

# 24°<sub>Lo</sub>



Mainly clear

## SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST  
 5:37AM

Sunset AST  
 6:30PM



Duration  
 12:53hr

## MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST  
 10:59 PM

Moonset AST  
 10:21AM



Duration  
 11:22hr

## Green light for over 100 barbers and hair salons

Hairstylist, barbers, and beauticians were among some of the personal care entrepreneurs who were impacted negatively by the advent of COVID-19 pandemic.

These businesses were once as frequently visited as a trip to the supermarket. However, due to the literal hands-on nature of these services, the COVID-19 state of emergency meant immediate closure of these small businesses.

Now that the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda has since lifted and relaxed most of the curfew protocols, with the intent of bringing back some level of normality, these personal care businesses are looking forward to regaining their financial footing.

With their reopening from today, the Ministry of Health, through the Central Board of Health, has embarked on an island-wide

inspection of all registered barbershops, nail stations, and beauty salons.

According to Julianne Mannix; Senior Public Health Inspector. Central Board of Health, "a total of 102 businesses were inspected so far." The senior Public Health Inspector broke down the work she and her team has embarked on thus far. She explained that so far 98 beauty salons registered with 71 inspected, 30 Barbershops registered with 21 inspected and 16 registered Nail Salons with 10 inspected thus far. "The others were scheduled for inspection on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday", she stated.

In ensuring that these personal care businesses were anti-COVID-19 ready, Mannix said that her department mostly checked for and hygiene station, the social distancing of seating, general sanitation to ensure



*Julianne Mannix; Senior Public Health Inspector. Central Board of Health*

the business is clean, storage of linens and adequate supply of disinfectants for cleaning of their tools and surfaces.

The Senior health official indicated that her department also checked that the employees have an ample supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), specifically face masks, gloves, and face shield.

"Additional measures were put in place to prevent COVID-19 such as hand hygiene stations being placed at the entrance of the establishment, seating established for 6ft apart, wearing of additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as face shields," Mannix added.

According to Mannix, the inspections are primarily for any infectious dis-

ease but more specific for COVID-19. "We want to reduce the spread of the virus as much as possible," she stated.

Though the health inspections are intended to be island-wide to aid in the fight against COVID-19, some personal care businesses are home-based which poses a greater risk. However, the Senior Health Inspector indicated that "we advise a separate structure from their dwelling house. To avoid the public from entering their personal home where their family resides."

According to the Ministry, inspections are set to continue. "The intention is to inspect all. They must be inspected by the department before opening. They must call 727 7077 to register," Mannix stated.



# Sixty More Days

The Cabinet will be considering a proposal to extend the current state of emergency for another sixty days when it meets on Wednesday. The state of emergency expires on Thursday.

According to a highly placed government source the extension of the state of emergency has become necessary because the gov-

ernment believes that while the disease may have been contained, it has not been fully eradicated from the society.

Antigua and Barbuda has only recorded one new case of infection over the past three weeks, and so far most of the people who contracted the disease have recovered. Two people, however, remain hospitalized.

However, the source said the state of emergency will remain in place until mid-July although there will be further loosening up of the regulations.

For example, with hair salons, barber and nail technician shops authorized to open from today, the Cabinet will now look at the situation with bars and nightclubs at its meet-

ing on Wednesday. There's no indication what the decision about these establishment is likely to be.

But there has been mounting pressure for the government to 'ease up' on these establishment especially with a general feeling that the spread of the virus has been largely contained.

"These establishments employ a significant amount of people and they provide opportunities for socialization, even casually," one operator told PointeXpress newspaper.

However, these businesses will not be allowed to return to how they operated before as according to the source, the protocols of social distancing, wearing of masks and frequent handwashing will remain in force for the extended period and perhaps beyond.

The source noted that with no vaccine available to stop the spread of the virus, the government has no choice to keep some of the measures in place in order to protect the society.

There is also likely to be further shortening of the curfew period as the source indicated that there are several suggestions that include 8:00 pm to 6:00 am or 7:00 pm to 5:00 am.

These are among the matters which will come up for discussion at Wednesday's virtual meeting of the Cabinet.

## 'Big Up' for local business

Businesses that have found ways to not just survive, but to thrive under the weight of the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic are getting due recognition and encouragement from the government.

This week, Trade Minister, E.P Chet Greene will initiate a programme of recognition for such businesses when he undertakes a tour of the Antigua Distillery Ltd. tomorrow, Tuesday. "The focus will be on their production of alcohol-based products as part of their strategy to meet domestic demand for such products while, at the same time, ending the scarcity of such products locally. This is due to the disruption of trade and the sourcing of such items from the traditional source markets caused by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic," Trade Coordinator in the Ministry, Dr Clarence Henry revealed.

He said the Antigua Distillery has been singled out because it demonstrated the capacity of local manufacturers to respond to needs of the market.

"They are a shining example of the possibilities that are available, and they fall within the policy of supporting manufacturers as the administration attempts to give priority to the creation of new business in the post COVID-19 era," the offi-



Trade Minister, E.P Chet Greene

cial stated.

Dr. Henry suggested that enhanced creativity and productivity will guarantee future sustainability and he wants more entrepreneurs to answer the challenge of investing in manufacturing plants and to take advantage of the numerous provisions of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and the different Trade Agreements with third States.

"It's an open frontier, challenging as it is, but, yet pregnant with possibilities. It is the possibilities the Ministry of Trade encourages all to seize," he declared.

## Antigua positioned to export healthcare services

Despite the economic damage and upheaval inflicted on Antigua and Barbuda by the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's response to it will ensure that it emerges from the crisis with a significant advantage in at least one critically important sector, according to the nation's leader.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne believes the heavy investments that his government has made in the rapid procurement of top-notch facilities, equipment, personnel, certification and operating standards will result in Antigua and Barbuda having a healthcare infrastructure that is second to none in the Eastern Caribbean.

"Maybe barring a couple of countries, we will have, easily, one of the best healthcare infrastructure within the Caribbean, and that it certainly one of the positives coming out of Covid," Browne said during his weekly Pointe FM radio program, the Browne and Browne Show.

The new facilities include a 17-bed state-of-the-art Infectious Diseases Control Center (IDC), an additional 75-bed hospital and the establishment of two community polyclinics which will double as mini hospitals – each with a roughly 6-bed

capacity.

"Which means now that we are increasing the amount of beds per thousand of population by about from 2-3, which is about the average that you will find in any country ... We want to make sure that we deal proactively with the whole issue of wellness, rather than have too many people ill and to rely on a significant amount of hospital beds."

He noted that although the ultra-modern Mount St. John's Medical Center "is a 200-bed hospital which has been able to take care of our needs, we had to expand on the basis that if there was any significant prevalence of Covid, then clearly we would have needed more beds."

Instead, Browne declared, "What will happen now is that we will have such a strong health infrastructure, that we can now look toward providing export services within the sub-region. In fact, presently we are in the process of building out the kidney transplant facility to have specialized unit to do kidney transplants; as you know, we've been doing kidney transplants for a few years now – as to establish a cardiac unit as well."

The Prime Minister reminded that the country is home to the cutting-edge

Cancer Center of the Eastern Caribbean, and it also has the Friar's Hill Road Stem Cell Facility that was established not too long ago.

Meanwhile the Prime Minister is optimistic that the only two active cases of Covid disease still under treatment could be declared negative when they are tested again this week. "Which means this week we should be able to declare Antigua and Barbuda Covid free – barring no new cases."

He said despite this, the health authorities would now be in a position to step up testing of a greater number of people now that the facilities and equipment are in place.

"In fact, I'm pleased to confirm that our testing facilities are now operational ... Testing would have started last week and went very well ... From [today] we will now be testing new cases of Covid ... New indi-

*cont'd on pg 6*

### APUA ELECTRICITY MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

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

Date: Monday, 11th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of Five Island, Galley Bay Hotel and Hawks Bill Hotel areas.

Date: Monday, 11th May 2020

Time: 01:00PM - 3:30 PM

Affected areas: Eastern section of Piggotts, Paynters and Fitches Creek areas.

Date: Tuesday, 12th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of John Hughes (Sawcolt).

Date: Wednesday, 13th May 2020

Time: 09:00AM - 11:00 AM

Affected areas: Joseph Lane and Kentish Rd. areas.

Date: Thursday, 14th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of Marble Hill and section of Anchorage Rd. near Halcyon.

Date: Saturday, 16th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of Friars Hill Rd., Dunbars & Cedar Valley areas.

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

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



# Be vigilant!

The police are asking the public to report all suspicious activities where individuals may be hiding behind the fact that wearing masks is now a must...to commit brazen daily robberies.

Police Commissioner, Atlee Rodney, said his men will be stepping up patrols particularly around business establishments to prevent such incidents from taking place.

This happened as a lone gunman entered a popular village shop in Parham last week and demanded money from the cashier...after taking the money at gunpoint, he made good his escape. The entire robbery was caught on tape, but the robber was wearing a mask as everyone is now required to do under the regulations of the state of emergency.

"The police have always been concerned about this possibility and we have been proactive and vigilant in our patrols and presence at some of the business places. Now, we will continue to be even more vigilant and we will call on the business persons

to be alert and also members of the public that they should report any suspicious activity at any business place or in any residential area," Commissioner Rodney appealed.

Members of the public have been voicing concerns about opportunistic individuals who may wish to engage in criminal acts while wearing masks since covering the face is now the 'new normal' under the current state of emergency.

But National Security Minister, Steadroy Benjamin echoed Rodney's sentiments regarding the determination by the police to combat this type of criminal activity. Benjamin said neither the government nor the police will tolerate such acts against law abiding citizens or businesses especially in these tough economic times.



National Security Minister, Steadroy Benjamin

*cont'd from pg 5*

viduals will be swabbed this week.

"The swabs, part of the culture that is taken from the individuals, will be utilized here for domestic testing, and other part of it will be sent to CARPHA.

"Because the local lab has to go through a process of validation with CARPHA ... For the next week they have to ensure that there

is a verification between our results and that of CARPHA ... Our positive tests should correlate with the positive tests of CARPHA.

"Then by the following week, we hope that our lab will be able to test independently of CARPHA, having gone through all the necessary validations," he noted.

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## UWI Five Islands Campus donates care packages

Many businesses and entities in Antigua and Barbuda have responded generously to the economic hardship that many residents now face due to the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

The latest to join the list of donors is the University of the West Indies new campus, located at Five Islands, Antigua.

“With the crippling impact of COVID-19 on the Antigua and Barbuda economy, many persons have lost their jobs and vulnerable groups are facing financial hardships.

The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, through the regional institution’s UWI CARE initiative is seeking to assist vulnerable persons in the Five Islands, Antigua community,” the education institution said in a press statement.

Chairperson of the local UWI CARE Committee and Head of the Department of Health and Behavioural Sci-



ences at the campus, Karen Josiah said, “In the first instance, we donated 48 care packages with basic food and personal items to single mothers and senior citizens in the Five Islands community in time for Mother’s Day.”

The UWI CARE initiative, which promotes volunteer efforts by staff



and students across the region, is one aspect of The UWI’s response being pursued by The UWI COVID-19 Task Force that was established “to leverage the University’s knowledge and experts to assist the Caribbean in its readiness and response to the virus outbreak.”



## Wadadli Pen Announces 2020 Winners

The Wadadli Youth Pen Prize is proud to announce that for the first time the overall winner's spot will be shared by two talented writers. The Wadadli Pen competition has been held annually since 2004, giving writers an avenue to flex their talents. The Wadadli Pen competition has two stipulations; use your creative freedom and pieces must have a Caribbean flavor.

This year Wadadli Pen received 57 entries. Overall, the judges were impressed with the level of creativity and they enjoyed the judging process which in some cases separated finalists by a mere few points. The Wadadli Pen 2020 winners are:

7 to 12 Category  
Winner

Cheyanne Darroux (Tom, the Ninja Crab)  
Golden Grove Primary School

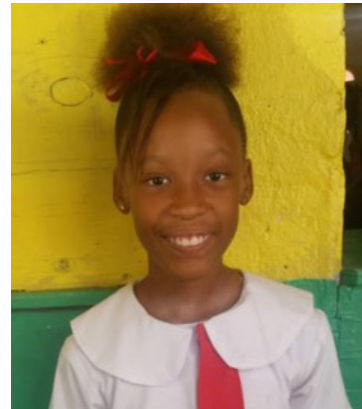
2nd place  
Ciara Thomas (My Favourite Dish)  
Sunnydale Primary School

3rd Place  
Zaniah Pigott (A Mermaid)  
Island Academy

Honorable Mention  
Sienna Harney-Barnes (A New World)  
St. Nicholas Primary

13 to 17 Category  
Winner  
D'chaiya Emmanuel (Two Worlds Collide)  
Antigua Girls High School

2nd place  
William Henderson (The Beast of Barbados)



*Cheyanne Darroux*  
St. Anthony's Secondary School

3rd Place  
Aria-Rose Browne (The Fabled Truth)  
St. Anthony's Secondary School

Honorable Mention  
Judah Christian (The John Bull Effect)  
Antigua Grammar School

18 to 35 Category  
Winner



*Andre Warner*  
Andre Warner (A Bright Future for Tomorrow)

2nd Place  
Lehana Simon (Lead Me Lord)

3rd Place  
Sethson Burton (Oh, Beach That I Once Loved)

Overall Winner 2020  
Cheyanne Darroux & Andre Warner

Special Prizes  
'Imagine a Future' Climate Change Themed Submission  
Andre Warner

School with the Most Entries  
Sunnydale Primary

Writers in the winner's circle will receive a mix of prizes – cash, gift certificates, books, and presents. Full prize breakdown and winning stories have been posted to <http://wadadlipen.wordpress.com>

The Wadadli Pen would like to thank all the writers who submitted entries. Gratitude is also extended to all the patrons who donated this year's prizes.

For the **safety** of employee drivers,  
their families and the communities in which they **live** and **work**.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue,  
throw the tissue in the trash when you are  
safely stopped, and wash your hands.

**COVID-19: Driver Safety Tips**

**DRIVE SAFELY**

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

# Another centenarian joins the Club!

Antigua and Barbuda's exclusive club – the 100 years Club – has added another member within the space of a week.

There are now 25 centenarians living in the country today, the most at any single time with one who now resides in Canada.

On Sunday, Udalia Rumalia Haywood of Swetes, celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends. But unlike on previous occasions when an individual achieved this milestone, absent was the visit from the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Social Transformation.

That's because the country is under a state of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government took drastic measures to reduce the spread of the deadly virus, including social distance protocols and a limit on the number of people who may attend a single event.

In a statement, Sir Rodney apologised for his absence because of the regulations to which the country must adhere.

"On this your very special day, we however celebrate with your close family,



friends and fellow Swetes residents by extending heartiest congratulations on your 100th Birthday on behalf of the nation. You are now the latest member of the Centenarian Club of Antigua and Barbuda!" he remarked.

He added that the centenarian's life has inspired so many and her inner strength and faith resonate in everything that she does. "Happy 100th birthday!" he concluded.

Head of the Community Development Division of the ministry, Dale O'Brien, said despite the limitations placed on the department by the regulations, it continues to support in whatever way possible the elders in the community and especially when they attain that special 100th birthday.

The oldest Centenarian is Hilda Drucilla Watkins Spencer of Freeman's Village, who now resides in Canada. She is 106; her date of birth is March 24, 1914. The oldest centenarian resident on the island is Hyacinth Mottley of All Saints Road in the Briggins community. She turns 106 years on Wednesday. Of the 26 centenarians, there are nineteen (19) females and seven (7) males.

# Mother's Day Cheer!

The pandemic caused by the COVID-19 disease has disrupted many aspects of life in Antigua and Barbuda as the regulations of the state of emergency are still in place. However, at least two parliamentarians and a business entity took measures to ensure that Mother's Day, did not go unnoticed, even in these times.

Parliamentary representative for St. Paul, E.P Chet Greene, and the parliamentary representative for St Peter, Asot Michael, individually sent out Mother's Day

greetings to all the mothers in their respective constituency. In addition, Antigua's Premier Mega Yacht Marina, Falmouth Harbour Marina, also used the opportunity to give back to mothers in its host community this Mother's Day by donating several food packages to mothers and seniors.

"Today we add value to a rich tradition of celebrating Mothers. We honor the mothers of our families, motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers on society and na-



MP Asot Michael and volunteers on Sunday with Pares Resident Mrs. Shirley Butler.

tion building.

"To all the mothers of the St. Paul's constituency, on behalf of ALL the children of our community, I shower you with love and adulation,

praise and commendations on your foundation work in shaping, fashioning and molding us into God fearing, conscientious, produc-

*cont'd on pg 11*



MP Asot Michael, background, engages with a Pares resident while one of the many volunteers assemble one of the 500 packages distributed on Sunday.



Marina Staff with some of the relief bags



*cont'd from pg 10*

tive citizens,” Greene said in a note to mothers in St Paul’s.

In his message, the St Peter representative thanked mothers for the vital roles they play in their children’s and by extension, the nation’s development.

“I salute the mothers of Antigua and Barbuda, especially the mothers of the St Peters constituency, for the love and devotion with which they champion our growth and development - constantly lifting us up; inclining our hearts to the word of God; picking us up when we stumble and fall; and always inspiring us to be the best and to keep climbing the ladders of success,” he declared.

Meanwhile, chairman of the Falmouth Marina, Sir Gerald Watt, explained that with so many persons now unemployed as a result of COVID-19, the company felt this contribution of food packages would be of some as-



sistance to senior citizens and single mothers in the surrounding community.

“We continue to play our role as a good corporate citizen. After Hurricane Irma devastated our sister island Barbuda in 2017, we made a substantial contribution and we also support the schools and community activities



in our area, St. Paul. With the stress of COVID-19 on our people, we felt this was a good time to bring some cheer,” said Sir Gerald.

The food packages contain many of the basic items including rice, flour, sugar, pasta and cleaning supplies.

Falmouth Harbour Marina is locally owned and was established in 1994.



Left to right Janice Adamson, John Henry and Iline Bailey.



Marina Staff delivering care packages in the community to the elderly and families

# Caribbean Has Achieved COVID-19 Containment – Researcher



*Dr. Clive Landis, pro-vice-chancellor*

The coronavirus (COVID-19) has been contained in the English-speaking Caribbean and Haiti, according to a leading researcher and academic.

However, Dr. Clive Landis, pro-vice-chancellor for undergraduate studies and research, and professor of cardiovascular research at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill campus in Barbados, and the chairman of the UWI COVID-19 task force, says this does not mean that the Caribbean is out of danger.

Landis, the guest on this week's Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) podcast, COVID-19:

The Unwelcome Visitor, led the research into the progress of the virus in the 15-member Caribbean Community, as well as the British overseas territories.

"The bottom line for the whole Caribbean is that the Caribbean has avoided the kind of outbreak, the kind of epidemic that we've seen in many European countries...and north America. We've avoided that," he says in the podcast which is available at [www.anchor.fm/onecaribbean](http://www.anchor.fm/onecaribbean), Spotify and the CTO's Facebook page, among other platforms.

"When you look at the growth trajectories, they are basically flat [in virtually all the countries],"

he reveals. However, the UWI researcher insists containment does not mean the virus has been wiped out in the region, adding that the Caribbean will have to learn to live with its threat for another year.

"I want to stress that when you have achieved containment... you are looking to find cases in clusters and having a cluster, there's nothing wrong with that. That actually shows you are doing your surveillance. We map how each Caribbean country has done from the first case and we can say quite confidently that these countries have achieved containment," says Landis.

He also advises that before opening their borders to international travel, every Caribbean destination should have public health nurses who are trained in detecting acute respiratory illnesses in every hotel and all areas of potential risk.

In this podcast, Landis addresses a range of subjects including what countries must look for in order to determine whether or not they've reached their peak, the projections for the region and the future of travel, which he says will likely include immunity passports and health certificates.

## Congressman Accuses US Of Meddling In Guyana's Elections

(CMC): A high-ranking United States Democratic Congressman has accused the US State Department officials of interfering in the elections to benefit Guyana's main opposition People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C).

Ballots in the disputed elections held on March 2, are currently being recounted by the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) in presence of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) observers.

Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, chairman of the US House of Representatives' Democratic Caucus, made the accusations while being interviewed on a television show by Rickford Burke, president of the Brooklyn, New York-based Caribbean Guyana Institute for Democracy (CGID). He strongly urged US Ambassador to Guyana, Sarah Ann Lynch, and Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the US Department of State, Michael Kozak, not to interfere. "Traditionally, we can monitor how democracy is playing itself out in different parts of the world, but to interfere in such an extraordinary way and in a manner which favours one party, the opposition party, potentially to the detriment of the ruling party, is deeply troubling to a lot of us in Washington, DC," said Jeffries, who represents the eighth

US Congressional District in New York. Burke claimed that the US government officials have also made several threatening statements against officials of President David Granger's ruling AP-NU+AFC coalition government, as well as against GECOM officials.

US not in a position to tell others how to conduct affairs "I do find it somewhat ironic that, at the same time, when the US government may be trying to direct Guyana as to how it should conduct itself in the form of an election, that we've been so irresponsible in many parts of the country, like in Wisconsin, where there is a refusal to permit universal access to mail-in voting and you compel people to vote in densely packed polling sites, as was done in a Wisconsin election in early April, in a manner that may have contributed to community spread in terms of COVID-19," said Jeffries.

"So, it seems to me that we are not in a position to tell anybody, until we get our own act together, as it relates to how faithfully we conduct a free, fair election that protects the well-being of the American people, that we are not necessarily in a position to tell anybody else about how to go about doing their job," he added.

A member of the House Judiciary Committee, Jeffries invoked Robert Muller investigation into the Rus-



*US Congressman Hakeem Jeffries*

sian interference into the US 2016 presidential election.

He noted that "Russia interfered in the US election in sweeping and systematic fashion to help Donald Trump win the US presidency," contending that the Mueller Report also concluded that the Trump campaign acceptance of the Russians "was wildly inconsistent with American democracy."

Jeffries, who was also a House Manager of the Trump impeachment trial in the US Senate, underscored Trump's invitation for Ukraine to interfere in the US 2020 elections to dig up dirt against presumptive Democratic presidential candidate, former US Vice President Joseph Biden.

"It was a stunning corrupt abuse of power," Jeffries asserted. "The Ukrainians should not be involved in a US election, the Chinese should not be involved in a US election, the Russians should not be involved in a

US election, that's a settled principle," he said.

Jeffries continued: "At the same time, if we are alarmed at foreign interference in our electoral process, why in the world is the United States Government engaging in foreign interference in the affairs of an independent nation in Guyana?"

He called for US government officials to allow the Guyanese people to freely elect its government without interference from the US government. "It is appropriate to broadly ensure that there is a free and fair election in Guyana and in other parts of the world that is carried out independently and in a manner that does not result in the United States trying to sway or alter the results, one way or the other," Jeffries said.

"The people of Guyana should be able to decide, as they have done in the past, who they see fit to lead them into the future," he added.

# CXC Regional Examinations to be held in July 2020

CSEC, CAPE and CCSLC students will be sitting their examinations in July this year. That was the decision coming out of the First Emergency Virtual Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) – Education on Friday. The meeting, chaired by Antigua and Barbuda Minister of Education, Hon. Michael Browne, was attended by Ministers of Education, senior Ministry of Education officials from across CARICOM and key stakeholders including CXC, University of the West Indies, CUT and (other stakeholders).

The Registrar of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Dr. Wayne Wesley, made a presentation where he explained the administration of the modified examination process for the award of valid grades. He indicated that preserving the integrity of the examinations involved; the administration of Paper 1 (Multiple Choice Assessment), School Based Assessment, and where applicable additional assessment components along with appropriate modelling accounting for historical data and teacher predicted information as important calibration/quality check.

He said while the proposed revised administration schedule for examina-



*Dr. Wayne Wesley, Registrar, CXC*

tions is July 2020 (results released in the 1st week of September 2020), there was need for a regional consensus considering the impact of COVID-19 and the respective national protocols.

The COHSOD also agreed to have Examinations administered via an e-Testing modality in countries that are equipped with the requisite infrastructure. However, where there were infrastructure challenges, candidates would be allowed to sit paper-based examinations.

The CXC in collaboration with the UWI presented another proposal at the meeting in relation to requirements for CAPE applicants for 2020 admission. Their proposal to accept CAPE Unit 1 plus previous results to serve as matriculation to UWI for the next academic

year was accepted by the Council.

The Council adopted Public Health Guidelines for the reopening of schools, as proposed in the report from Executive Director of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Dr. Joy St. John.

The report from CARPHA included initial guidance on the development of protocols for re-opening of schools in the response, recovery, and resilience phases of the crisis by the Education sector. She also spoke to the need for mental health considerations during a Public Health crisis. Dr. St. John reminded the COHSOD of the complexities of the education system in Member States and the challenges for social distancing. The Chair underscored the significance of

competing and varying conditions impacting education systems in Member States, with some states seeing increased cases of confirmed COVID-19 while in other states the number of confirmed cases are decreasing. There was a deep appreciation of the complexities of responding to the provision of education during a public health crisis and Member States detailed the peculiar challenges they were experiencing. In particular, attention was given to the current trend of COVID 19 infections in Jamaica and it was agreed that the CXC would pursue further bilateral discussions with Jamaica in relation to special considerations that could be explored.

After tedious negotiations and consultations, and on evaluating Education and Health officials' ability to create a safe environment for students to prepare for and sit the regional exams, the meeting arrived at a consensus for exams to be held in July 2020. Informed by CARPHA's recommendations and strategies for the safe, phased opening of schools, Ministries of Education, guided by national Health officials, will adapt respective national conditions to ensure students, teachers and staff can safely prepare for the July sitting.

## OACPS condemns new EU black list

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, Thursday condemned the decision by the European Commission to include several African and Caribbean countries on a new list of high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies in their regime regarding anti-money laundering and countering terrorist financing.

“The OACPS regrets the unilateral publication of this list, without any appropriate prior consultation with the ACP countries therein mentioned. To this day, neither the Secretariat of the OACPS nor the concerned Member States have been notified of this list, produced by the European Commission (EC),” Chikoti said in a strongly worded letter addressed to Gordan Grlic Radman, the Co-President of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

The Secretary General reiterated the commitment of the OACPS member states to the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism, telling Radman, who is also the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia that he was also questioning the timing of the EU’s action.

Chikoti pointed out that the inclusion of the OACPS member countries on the list was not in keeping with the



*OACPS Secretary-General, Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti*

spirit of partnership which exists between the two institutions and further requested the postponement of the adoption of the report while calling for “consultations at the earliest possible opportunity in keeping with articles 8 and 12 of the Cotonou Agreement in order to find a solution”.

The EU said under the Anti-Money Laundering Directive (AMLD), it has revised its list, taking into account developments at international level since 2018 and that the “new list is now better aligned with the lists published by the FATF (Financial Action Task Force).

It said countries which have been listed are The Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, along with Botswana, Cambodia, Ghana, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Panama and Zimbabwe. But Guyana is among six other third world coun-

tries that have been delisted.

In his letter, the OACPS Secretary General said that “at the moment where the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the economies of these states and that while both member states of the EC and the OACPS are trying to find solutions to the crisis, the publication and the adoption of such a list would aggravate the health and economic crises which are already affecting the concerned countries”.

The Commission said that the new list will now be submitted to the European Parliament and Council for approval within one month, adding “given the coronavirus crisis, the date of application of today’s Regulation listing third countries – and therefore applying new protective measures – only applies as of 1 October 2020.

“This is to ensure that all stakeholders have time to

prepare appropriately. The delisting of countries, however, is not affected by this and will enter into force 20 days after publication in the Official Journal,” it added.

The Commission’s Executive Vice-President, Valdis Dombrovskis, said “we need to put an end to dirty money infiltrating our financial system. Today we are further bolstering our defences to fight money laundering and terrorist financing, with a comprehensive and far-reaching Action Plan.

“There should be no weak links in our rules and their implementation. We are committed to delivering on all these actions – swiftly and consistently – over the next 12 months. We are also strengthening the EU’s global role in terms of shaping international standards on fighting money laundering and terrorism financing,” he added.

## Obama slams Trump response to coronavirus as 'chaotic disaster'

Former United States President Barack Obama has reportedly described President Donald Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic as "an absolute chaotic disaster".

Obama has largely kept out of the fray even as Trump has blamed him and his Democratic administration for a variety of problems related to having sufficient supplies to battle the pandemic.

But in his call on Friday with 3,000 members of the Obama Alumni Association, people who served in his administration, Obama reportedly urged his supporters to get behind Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, who is trying to unseat Trump in the November election.

"This election that's coming up on every level is so important because what we're going to be battling is not just a particular individual or a political party. What we're fighting against is these long-term trends in which being selfish, being tribal, being divided and seeing others as an enemy - that has become a stronger impulse in American life. And by the way, we're seeing that internationally as well," Obama was cited as saying in the private call according to Yahoo News, which said it obtained a tape of the call on Friday.

"It's part of the reason why the response to this global crisis has been so anaemic and spotty. It would have been

bad even with the best of governments. It has been an absolute chaotic disaster when that mindset - of 'what's in it for me' and 'to heck with everybody else' - when that mindset is operationalised in our government.

"That's why, I, by the way, am going to be spending as much time as necessary and campaigning as hard as I can for Joe Biden," he said.

The United States by far leads the world in the number of coronavirus infections, at nearly 1.3 million, and deaths, with more than 78,000.

Trump has been criticised as essentially abdicating any leadership role in guiding the country through one of its worst crises in a century, leaving states on their own to grapple with the pandemic and even bid against each other to obtain critical medical equipment on the open market or abroad.

Critics say Trump, after first downplaying the threat posed by the virus, squandered precious time in February as the pathogen spread in America and his administration did little to stock up on testing kits and other medical gear or to develop a cohesive national strategy.

With an eye to re-election, the president has also been blasted as putting his own political interests before human life by aggressively pushing states to reopen their devastated economies without a



*Obama reportedly made the comments after the justice department said it would drop the case against Michael Flynn*

clear blueprint for how to do it safely.

White House spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany said Trump's response to the coronavirus "has been unprecedented" and has saved American lives. Warning on rule of law Obama also warned during the call that the "rule of law is at risk" in the US after the justice department said it would drop the legal case against Michael Flynn, a former White House national security adviser. Flynn, a key target in the investigation into alleged Russian meddling the 2016 US election, pleaded guilty in 2017 to making false statements to the FBI in relation to conversations with the Russian ambassador.

Attorney General William Barr's declaration that there were never grounds to pursue Flynn and the FBI abused its powers drew fierce criticism from legal experts and civil society groups.

While President Donald

Trump fired Flynn for lying to Vice President Mike Pence, Trump frequently tweeted about the former general's case, which became a rallying cry for his supporters in attacking the FBI investigation. Trump recently declared Flynn "exonerated".

"The news over the last 24 hours I think has been somewhat downplayed - about the Justice Department dropping charges against Michael Flynn," Obama reportedly said.

"And the fact that there is no precedent that anybody can find for someone who has been charged with perjury just getting off scot-free. That's the kind of stuff where you begin to get worried that basic - not just institutional norms - but our basic understanding of rule of law is at risk. And when you start moving in those directions, it can accelerate pretty quickly as we've seen in other places," he said, misstating the charges against Flynn.

## Coronavirus: Germany infection rate rises as lockdown eases

Coronavirus infections are rising in Germany, official data shows, just days after the country eased its lockdown restrictions.

According to the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), the reproduction rate - the estimated number of people a confirmed patient infects - is now above 1.

This means the number of infections is now rising in the country. The report came as thousands of Germans gathered on Saturday calling for a total end to the lockdown. Chancellor Angela Merkel announced a broad relaxation of national restrictions on Wednesday after talks with the leaders of Germany's 16 states.

All shops are allowed to re-open, pupils will gradually return to class and the Bundesliga - Ger-

many's top football league - will restart as soon as next weekend.

But there were protests across the country on Saturday, as some called for measures to be lifted even faster. Germany has the seventh-highest number of confirmed cases in the world, with latest RKI data on Sunday showing the reported infected tally at 169,218 and a reported death toll of 7,395. What did the report say?

The reproduction number is a way of rating a disease's ability to spread. It is not a fixed number because it changes as our behaviour changes or as immunity develops. It is one of three important measurements for monitoring the outbreak, the others being the severity of symptoms and the number of cases.

The report from the public health agency released on Saturday said the reproduction rate was estimated at 1.1, while Sunday's update put it at 1.13. The number has been below 1 for most of the last three weeks.

The agency said this estimate involved "a degree of uncertainty", and the rate would have to be observed closely over the coming days. It was not yet possible to assess "whether the decreasing trend in the number of incident cases observed over the past few weeks will continue or whether case numbers will again increase", it added.

Germany has won praise for its response to the outbreak. Mass testing and effective lockdown restrictions have helped keep the

death toll far lower than in other European countries.

But some have criticised Mrs Merkel's decision to relax those measures after speaking with the heads of the 16 states on Wednesday. The chancellor imposed an "emergency brake", requiring local authorities to reimpose restrictions if cases rise above a threshold of 50 per 100,000 people.

Outbreaks at meat processing plants in the states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein have already reportedly breached that line, and forced district officials to act.

And one district in the state of Thuringia reportedly recorded more than 80 infections per 100,000 people, thought to be due to outbreaks at care facilities.

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## Cuba, Vietnam to Exchange Anti-Coronavirus Technology

Technology to make a Covid-19 test kit developed by the Vietnam Military Medical University will be transferred to Cuba, according to the defense ministry.

Deputy Minister of Defense Tran Don said on Thursday Cuba would in turn provide technology to produce antiviral drug interferon alfa-2b to Vietnam's Army Medical Department in cooperation with the military university.

Speaking at a meeting with his ministry's Steering Committee for the Prevention and Control of Covid-19, he said a group of Cuban experts would come to assist Vietnam in fighting the pandemic.

"The General Logistics Department needs to instruct the university to complete procedures to export the test kits to Cuba." The military's medical units would continue to cooperate with Russia and the EU to study the disease and its treatment regime, vaccines and drugs, and help neighboring countries like Laos and Cambo-



*Boxes of Vietnam's Covid-19 test kits, developed by the Vietnam Military Medical University and the Viet A Technologies Joint Stock Company. Photo by VnExpress*

dia combat the disease, he added.

Last month the test kits developed by the military medical university collaboration with Viet A Technologies Joint Stock Company were recognized by the Emergency Use Listing (EUL) procedure of the World Health Organization. The EUL procedure was established to expedite

availability of diagnostics needed during public health emergencies, and it helps procurement agencies and countries navigate the large presence of different devices on the market and access quality products.

The test kits, which utilize molecular biological technologies, have been mass-produced

in Vietnam since March. They have been approved for sale in Europe. Vietnam has had 288 Covid-19 cases, with the latest patients, diagnosed on Thursday evening, being 17 Vietnamese arriving from the UAE. There has been no community transmission in the last 22 days. The number of active cases is 55.

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## US to deport Haitians who've tested positive for coronavirus: NGO



*Haitian migrants ride on a bus after arriving on a deportation flight from the United States, amidst the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Port-au-Prince, Haiti*

US immigration authorities are set to continue deportations to Haiti on Monday, with a flight that is scheduled to have at least 100 people on board, including five individuals who have recently tested positive for the novel coronavirus, according to a US-based rights group.

Among those facing deportation is Stephane Etienne, who first tested positive for COVID-19 on April 17 at the Pine Prairie Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Processing Center in Louisiana.

He told Al Jazeera in a video call from the detention centre that he tested positive again on April 28 and has not been re-tested since.

Monday's deportation flight also includes at least four others who have tested positive since April 16 at the Pine Prairie detention centre, according to the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH),

a Boston-based human rights organisation that has obtained information about this list.

"I don't know how they can do this," said Etienne, who maintains that he has never even set foot in Haiti and was born in the US.

Deporting individuals who are known to be infected with the virus violates US and international public health guidelines designed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Dr Jacques Boncy, the director of the Haitian Ministry of Public Health's national laboratory, said that deporting those who have COVID-19 would also put other passengers on the flight, as well as the crew, and the Haitian population, at risk.

"Everybody knows the risks," said Dr Laure Adrien, the executive director of the Haitian public health ministry.

"We are facing a pandemic," he told Al Jazeera, adding that "every positive case is one too many; any positive

case is a risk."

Although Haiti has reported a relatively low number of cases - fewer than 200 - experts fear the actual number is much higher as Haitians who work in the neighbouring Dominican Republic, which has more than 10,000 cases, return home amid lockdown measures.

Haiti's health system is not equipped to handle an influx of cases, experts warn.

Despite the high risks of COVID-19 infection, ICE generally does not test all detainees for the virus prior to deportation. Etienne is doubtful that he would have been tested at all if he had not insisted that he be given a coronavirus test. Since he first tested positive for the coronavirus, he has been confined at Pine Prairie in close quarters with at least 11 other people who have recently tested positive for the virus, he said.

ICE did not respond to Al Jazeera's request for comment. The agency said in late April that it would begin testing some migrants prior to deportation, but it did not elaborate on timing, US media reported.

At least 788 detainees - including 26 at the Pine Prairie detention centre - have tested positive for COVID-19, according to the ICE, with 1,593 tests performed. There are currently more than 29,000 people detained in ICE facilities across the US.

'Reckless on whole new level' IJDH Immigration Poli-

cy Coordinator Steve Forester said that while it is reckless for the US to deport people in the middle of a pandemic without at least testing them to make certain they are not carrying the virus, Monday's planned deportation flight "takes reckless to a whole new level".

"For the United States to knowingly send COVID-positive people to Haiti is a tremendous lack of respect for Haiti and Haitians," he told Al Jazeera, adding, however, that "this is in line with [US President Donald] Trump's prior statements and actions."

How many other people are they deporting who they have tested positive?

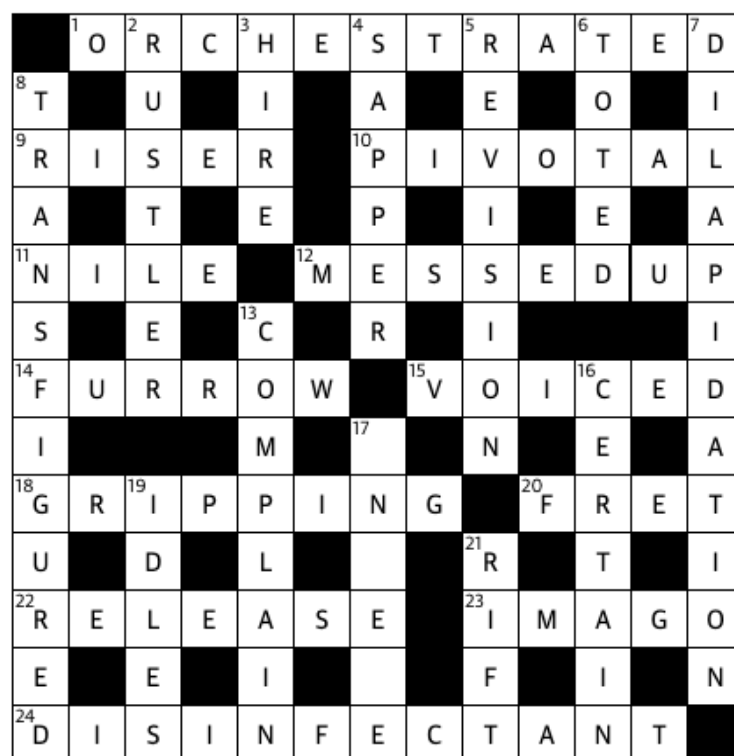
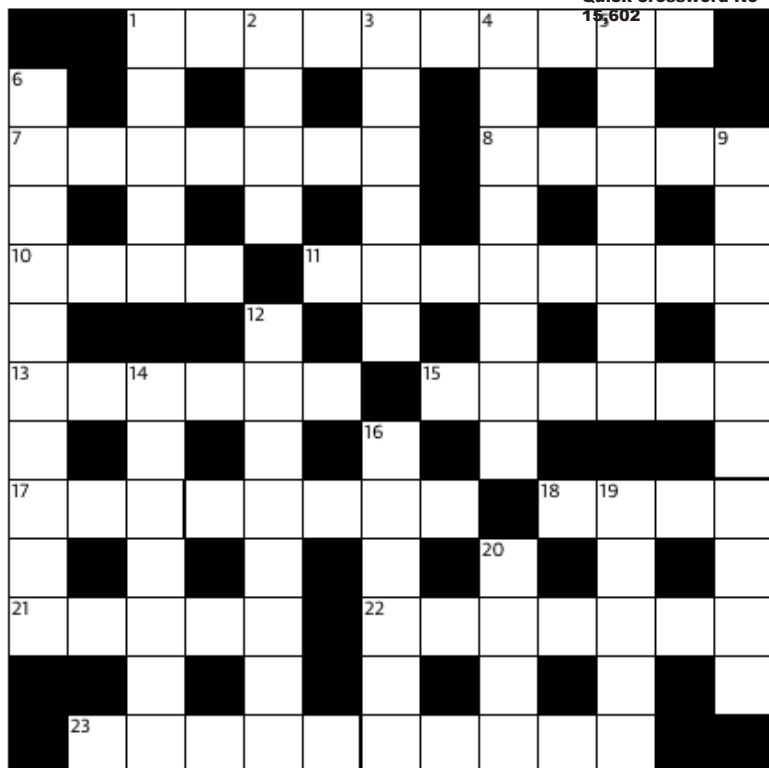
STEVE FORESTER, IJDH

The US has been accused of deporting the virus, with more than 100 deported Guatemalans testing positive, according to Guatemalan officials. At least three people deported by the US on April 7 tested positive for the coronavirus upon returning to Haiti, according to the Haitian Ministry of Public Health. The US has deported individuals to at least nine other countries across Latin America and the Caribbean since February, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, despite US and international guidelines that emphasise the risks that international travel presents for the spread of the coronavirus.

"How many other people are they deporting who they have tested positive?" Forester asked.

# QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword No



## Across

- 1 Tiny (10)  
 7 Check — lizard (7)  
 8 Tiny amount (5)  
 10 Tall grass plant that grows in water (4)  
 11 Munificent (8)  
 13 Religious (6)  
 15 Ship's officer looking after the passengers (6)  
 17 Pursue (3,5)  
 18 Couple (4)  
 21 Corpulent (5)  
 22 Inexpensive ornament (7)  
 23 With a short distance to the target (5,5)

## Down

- 1 English preacher and metaphysical poet, d. 1631 (5)  
 2 Dog of mixed breed (4)  
 3 Annoyed (6)  
 4 Refined (8)  
 5 Saviour (anag) — assorted (7)  
 6 Sponsor and manager of public entertainments (10)  
 9 Jerboas — British 7th Armoured Division, 1940-58 (6,4)  
 12 Loss of hearing (8)  
 14 Clot (7)  
 16 Shackle (6)  
 19 Foot-leg connector (5)  
 20 Indication (4)

# CARTOON CORNER

## Garfield





## DAILY HOROSCOPE

**ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19):** Your phone might ring more than usual this weekend. Find creative ways of having good times with friends. Enjoy your increased popularity but avoid taking undue risks with money.

**TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20):** Practical ideas and sensible solutions might flood your mind. This is an excellent time to discuss your objectives and create a game plan. You can receive sound and useful advice from relatives and professional people.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Clear thinking is in play, making this a good day for frank discussions and brainstorming sessions. You and a partner can easily come to an amiable agreement about the handling of joint resources or family investments.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Demonstrate your flexibility by reconsidering old goals. Some things you have abandoned, such as a desire to put a certain idea into action, might now be possible. You and loved ones can make powerful plans.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Your pragmatic handling of life's little problems sets you free to enjoy life's little pleasures. Be logical about facts and figures but kind and generous with people. Numbers don't care how you treat them, but people want affection.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Put your passion for excellence to good use by getting involved with constructive activities. Your ability to make wise decisions is enhanced this weekend, making it a good time to evaluate your long-

term life objectives.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Your acceptance into new circles may put you in a position to make valuable connections. Think up several excellent strategies to complete homework or job assignments.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Return to the pursuit of treasured past activities with a fresh perspective. Kid stuff can be fun even as an adult. The stars are ripe for romance, but you can make headway with career aspirations, too.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** It may be time to analyze your banking activity. You are clear-thinking and observant about your allotment of resources, making it simple to juggle bills and expenditures. Develop a budget that offers big benefits.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You have the wisdom and vision to develop purposeful plans. Write down your inspiring ideas and plot a course that will make your life more fulfilling. Buy useful items that bring beauty into your surroundings.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Blow the dust off the chess set or find the basketball and shoot some hoops. You may be attracted to activities that require strategy and a high level of accuracy. A family member may offer some insightful and valuable ideas.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20):** Think about catching up on sleep. You may rest easy once you and a partner or co-worker have come to an agreement about an important issue. Together you have better judgment than usual and will be able to make wise choices.

# JFF concerned over possibly “disadvantageous changes to World Cup qualifying”

Jamaica Football federation (JFF) general secretary, Dalton Wint, believes the potential of changes to the hexagonal stage of CONCACAF world cup qualifying could hurt the Reggae Boyz chances of making it to Qatar in 2022.

Wint was responding to CONCACAF President Victor Montagliani's comments about the possibility of the six-team final round going through changes because of the delays in sports on account of the worldwide spread of coronavirus.

Montagliani said the hexagonal may involve more teams but that would depend on a new calendar coming from FIFA.

The JFF secretary ex-

plained that playing more games would mean a greater financial burden than the federation had not bargained for.

Wint noted that the JFF has a plan in their heads about approaching corporate Jamaica geared toward playing ten games. But if there are more games in a shorter period, it presents difficulty acquiring the services of their best players, reorganizing their strategy to potential sponsors, and the facilities they might need may not be available if you have more games.

Teams vying for a place at the World Cup in Qatar were to be given the opportunity to play in the CONCACAF six-team final and Jamaica,

who now stand at fourth in the region, were preparing for that eventuality.

The cut-off point for the rankings to count would have been June 2020.

However, with teams not getting the opportunity to play for a spot in that six because of COVID-19 issues, CONCACAF may be forced to make changes.

As it stands Mexico, the United States, Costa Rica and Honduras are also among the top six sides.

“It might be disadvantageous to us” said Wint although he was keen to express that whatever solution that was reasonable by CONCACAF, it would not be met with opposition from the JFF.

## Afghanistan wicket-keeper batsman handed six-year ban

Afghanistan wicketkeeper batsman Shafiqullah Shafaq has been banned for six years from all forms of cricket after breaching anti-corruption rules.

Shafaq admitted to four charges while playing for Afghan clubs Nangahar Leopards in 2018 and Sylhet Thunder in last year's Bangladesh Premier league.

The 30-year old has played 24 one day internationals and 46 Twenty 20s.

Afghanistan Cricket Board's senior anti-corruption manager said the ban was a warning for all players.

“This is a very serious offence where a senior national player is involved in corruption of a high-profile domestic game in 2018 Afghanistan Premier League T/20,” said Sayed Anwar Shah Quraishi.

The player also attempted but failed to get one of his teammates to engage in corruption in another high-profile game during the Bangladesh Premier League 2019.

It was an alert for all the players who think their illegal activities concerning the game of cricket will not be disclosed to the ACB.

He said their coverage is wider than what is perceived.



## Patrice Davis: I am not intimidated

Patrice Davis, who hails from the village of Willikies, first started in athletics at the age of nine when she was encouraged to run by her physical education teacher at the time.

"I was taken to YASCO where Evans Jawaki Jones started the process of honing my skills as a sprinter," Davis said, "I was the MVP in Under-17 at inter-schools in 2003 and my favorite race was the 200 metres because of my ability to run the curve well."

Davis represented the nation in the triple and long jumps at CARIFTA Games' two events she took on later in her athletic career.

While training at YASCO, Davis had the opportunity to view a number of national football teams training and she was eventually drawn to the sport where she represented, Villa, Parham, Police and the national team.

A serious injury playing for Antigua and Barbuda ended the lady from the east football career and she ventured into refereeing after been invited to referee a warm game at the invitation of former national coach, Rowan Porridge Benjamin.

"I decided to take officiating seriously being trained by Ivor Davis and Vanroy Burns. Officiating is very



challenging and requires extreme physical fitness in order to keep up with the speed of game and being in the right angles to make the correct calls," Davis articulated.

She said female referees are given a difficult time when conducting their duties because the men believe that they are not capable of making the correct calls especially off-side which lead to consistent screaming,



but she remains undeterred.

She revealed that before every game she prays and asks God for guidance and she is usually nervous until she makes her first call then she settles down.

Patrice is presently a qualified FIFA referee who has refereed a number of games overseas most notable St. Kitts, Cayman Islands, and British Virgin Islands.

## Five players test positive across Spain's top two divisions

Five players have tested positive for coronavirus across Spain's top two divisions, La Liga has said.

The unnamed players are all asymptomatic and are now in isolation.

They will continue to be tested and can only rejoin training when they return

two consecutive negative results.

La Liga started testing players last week as part of the protocols in place for training to resume and elite football in Spain to get going again behind closed doors in June.

Several clubs, including

Barcelona, started individual training last week.

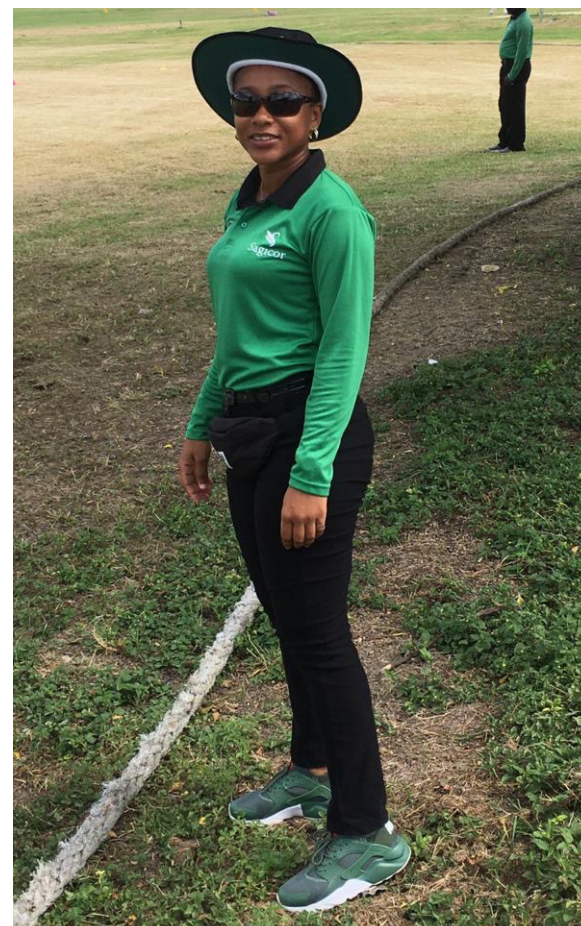
Spain has been one of the worst hit countries in Europe with 26,621 deaths and 224,390 infections as of 10 May.

Elsewhere in Europe this weekend: A third player for premier league side Brighton tested positive for coronavi-

rus. Bundesliga 2 side Dynamo Dresden put their entire squad and coaching staff into two-week isolation after two players tested positive for coronavirus.

And three players from Portuguese top flight side Vitoria Guimaraes tested positive.

## Melissa Lawry: Aspiring to become an international umpire



Melissa Lawry is a qualified teacher, scorer and umpire; a versatile young lady climbing the ladder behind the scenes in the landscape of sports and education in Antigua and Barbuda.

Lawry was encouraged by her brother, who is also an umpire, to take up the challenge which she has

done.

Melissa is employed by the government as a Math teacher at the Sir Novelle Richard's Academy where she is engaged in three to four sessions of classes daily, however, she still finds the time to work on her dream of becoming an international umpire.

"Females are treated differently by the males who believe that we lack knowledge of the game especially when it comes to LBW decision, they shout and scream more often than when it's our male counterpart umpiring trying to intimidate us thinking we are soft," Melissa explained.

She admits that some of the men have been very encouraging on the other hand keeping her motivated. She

identified them as individuals such as umpire James Stevens, Sylvester Bouncing Joseph and her brother.

Presently, Melissa is staying in shape, while conducting video classes with her students from Monday to Friday's during the COVID-19 break. Umpiring requires a lot of concentration and physical preparation especially during the longer version of the game.

Lawry ended by reminding the public that her ultimate goal is to take umpiring as far as possible.

# DEWS