



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

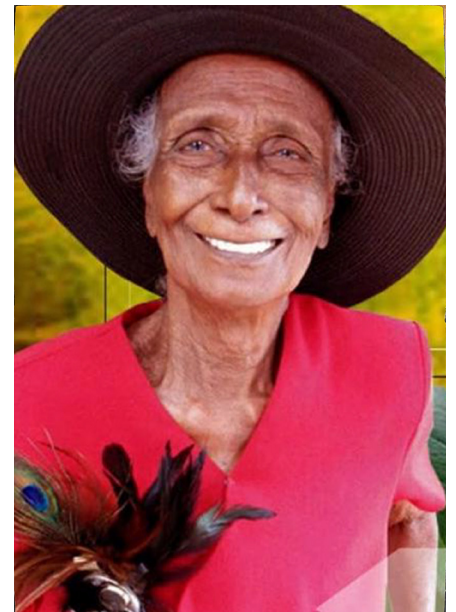
TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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PRICE \$3

CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to the nurses



See Page 13



Happy Birthday

UWI: No let-up in students' attendance

Student attendance and participation in classes at the Five Islands Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) have held steady since the curriculum and administration shifted entirely to remote virtual platforms, according to someone in the best position to know.

Professor Stafford Griffith, UWI Pro Vice Chancellor and Principal of the Five Islands Campus, made the disclosure while making an appearance as a guest yesterday on the Pointe FM program Talking Point hosted by Senator Colin O'Neal Browne.

"The happy news ... is that although there were clearly some teething problems which we had to address on a

continuing basis to make sure that they were properly resolved, despite that the students turned out for their online classes in large numbers, and in some campuses ... their report was that there were more students attending classes online than when they had face-to-face classes," he revealed.

Five Islands in Antigua is the newest and physically smallest of the four landed campuses of the University of the West Indies, having been launched only last September.

For the past month Five Islands has been conducting its academic and other business via the teleconferencing systems of Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

This has been consistent with the universal lockdowns of educational institutions at all levels that have been imposed in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic.

Asked how difficult, Griffith said the Five Islands Campus has been faced with particular and peculiar challenges.

"Having just started only a few months ago – and certainly about six months before we had to put these measures in place – we depended largely on part-time staff. These are staff – teaching staff – who carry full-time jobs elsewhere, and that presented a peculiar challenge for us," he explained.

DAY 5/13

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme
 Wind: E at 17 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 24 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 25%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 0%
 Precipitation: 0.0 mm
 Rain: 0.0 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm

31° Hi



Partly sunny

NIGHT 5/13

Wind: E at 17 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 24 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 1%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 0%
 Precipitation: 0.0 mm
 Rain: 0.0 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm

24° Lo



Mainly clear

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:36AM

Sunset AST
 6:31PM



Duration
 12:55hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonset AST
 11:17AM



Royal Brigade For Nurses

On Tuesday, nurses across all healthcare services gathered along the Queen Elizabeth highway for a one hour 'Drive-By Parade' in recognition of International Nurses Day.

International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world every May 12, which is the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth. The annual event was first celebrated in 1965 by the International Council of Nurses.

According to the World Health Organization, "Historically, as well as today, nurses are at the forefront

of fighting epidemics and pandemics - providing high quality and respectful treatment and care. They are often the first and sometimes the only health professional that people see and the quality of their initial assessment, care, and treatment is vital."

To celebrate these important front-line fighters in Antigua, scores of motorists and passengers drove by the assembled nurses in a motorcade-style-paced, with enthusiastic waves and car honks, showing their admiration and support for the country's health care work-



ers.

The salutations given to the nurses were not just from residents, but also from members of the Royal Police Force and the Antigua and Barbuda Fire brigade who led a continuous parade for the nurses as they escorted reporters from the country's state media--ABS.

As the nurses assembled on both sides of the highway, adorned in their uniforms with placards and banners in hand, many said they felt a sense of pride and were humbled at the level of support they were receiving from the public. Speaking with PointeXpress, Public Health Nurse,

Nurse Tomlinson said, "It is a very momentous occasion for me because despite all of the ravages of COVID-19 it gives us pleasure to know we are still able to serve and that we can come here and receive so much love from the public."

In a statement celebrating International Nurses Day, the WHO commented that "the COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the vital role nurses plays. Without nurses and other health workers, we will not win the battle against outbreaks, we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals or universal health coverage."

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cont'd from pg 3

President of the Nurses Association, Public Health Nurse, Soria Duprie-Winston, was among her association members, celebrating the success of the first-ever drive-by parade. "We are elated with the turnout. We are thankful that the general public has come out in support of us and we are just overwhelmed and happy by the show of love and support we have received today," the association president said.

Winston went on to state her appreciation at the turnout of not only the nurses but also the nursing person-

nel, the Chief Medical Officer, the PNO, and the Health Minister among others.

Usually, International Nurses Day would form a part of a week-long celebration of events put on by and for nurses. However, with the realities of COVID-19 and public safety measures, Duprei-Winston noted that Tuesday's parade is the only planned celebration. "Because of what is happening we can't have any other activities, however, because it is International Day of nurses, we have decided to do this solidarity stance to show who we are as nurses. We are many different fac-



es, but we are human beings as well," Soria said.

In expressing his appreciation for the nurses was Minister of Health, Molwyn Joseph said, "I think this was a brilliant idea and it brings to the nation of Antigua and Barbuda the opportunity to recognize the important role the nurses play in the healthcare system. They are the front line and quite often we do not fully understand the circumstances under which they work. The challenges of COVID-19 open up the opportunity for all Antiguans to see and appre-

ciate the importance of our nurses."

The minister continued by highlighting how important nurses are in the continuous care of patients on a daily basis.

"I am very pleased to see the turnout and the enthusiasm especially coming from the public, it is a demonstration of appreciation," Joseph added.

The health minister indicated it is quite possible for the drive-by parade to celebrate International Nurses Day may happen again in 2021.



COVID opens opportunities

The economic impact of COVID-19 has been well documented, however, as nations take measures to combat the spread of the disease, many opportunities for commerce have presented themselves.

Interestingly, not all the opportunities are available to entities in the private sector. One enterprise within the government system is showing that it too, can adopt and shift its focus to meet a need created by the pandemic.

The National Garment Manufacturing Initiative (NGMI) within the Ministry of Trade has shifted its production of traditional textiles and eco-friendly bags to reusable face masks.

A ministry publication said this was aimed at providing consumers in Antigua and Barbuda with high quality masks in order to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

The publication reported that the factory, which had

closed its doors in early April in light of the State of Emergency and 24-hour curfew, quickly reopened on 6th April when the Ministry of Health made the recommendation that masks should be worn in public places.

Production Manager and Designer at the factory, Lancelot Bromfield, said the idea of NGMI making face masks was the brainchild of the Minister of Trade, E.P Chet Greene, who was confident that the NGMI had the required talent and skillset needed to provide high quality face masks to meet the growing demands for the product.

Bromfield indicated that after researching the styles and materials recommended by health experts, he

decided to use the same design as the surgical masks; double lined in solid colours.

The manager explained that each mask is made using 100% cotton and is “stitched then sterilized, and as it goes through the (sterilizing) machine it is handled by (workers wearing) gloves and then it is packaged.”

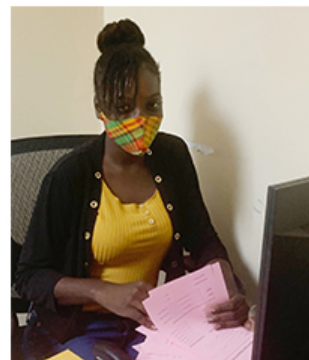
The 11 workers at the factory work an eight-hour shift, and on an average produce 250 masks per day.

The factory has since been supplying face masks to private and public institutions, while members of the public have been visiting the factory to make purchases.

The masks are priced at EC\$10.00 each.



Premament Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Mrs. Lora Piper.



LEFT: Shaqueena Bowman, licence Cashier is busy at work.

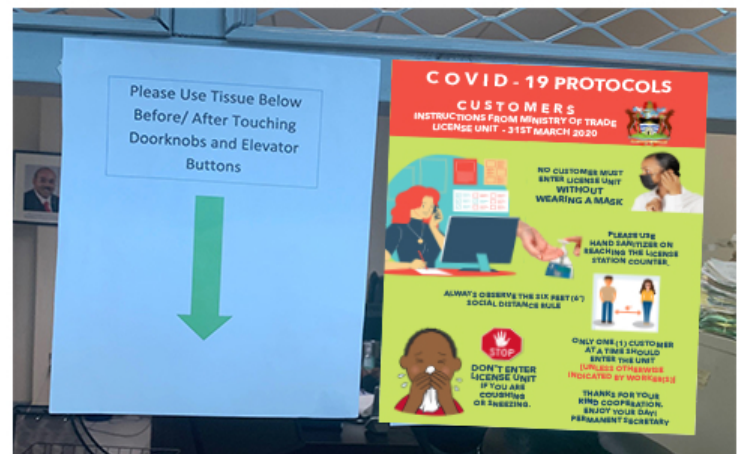
BELOW: Customers are asked to adhere to all our COVID-19 Protocols when they visit our office.



Leslie Martin authorizes the licence and refrigerant forms as long as the forms/licenses are correctly filled out.



Emerald Simon is responsible for processing licences for goods to be cleared from the port.



Greene makes case for closer regional cooperation

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade, Hon. E.P Chet Greene, said regional cooperation on foreign policy is needed more than ever in this the era of COVID-19.

Minister Greene made the point at the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which was held virtually on the 7-8 May 2020.

He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a debilitating effect on regional societies and economies.

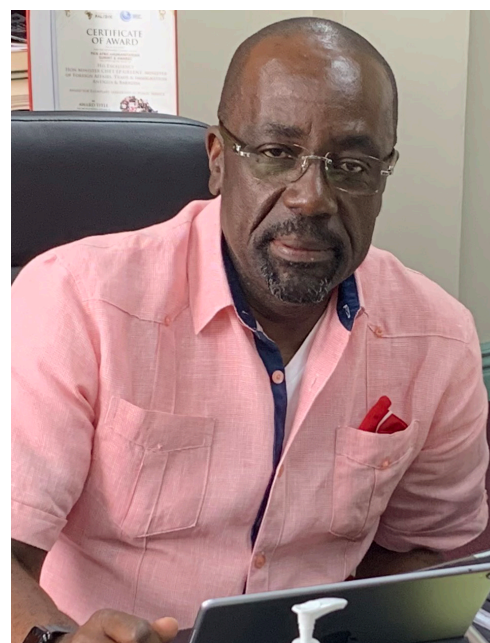
He expressed the view that as a group, CARICOM should speak with one voice particularly as it relates to

the international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In addition, he wants the region to approach these institutions to lobby for more resources to be made available to countries in the area.

The foreign minister also expressed the region's gratitude for the work done by regional institutions such as the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). He credited these organisations for ensuring that the necessary public health guidelines and emergency systems were put in place to safeguard the health and well-being of Caribbean people.

Greene also expressed both Antigua and Barbuda's and the region's 'deep appreciation' to the governments of both Cuba and Venezuela for their 'timely support' in providing human and other resources to help the region fight the disease.

On the issue of the reopening of the region's borders, the Antigua and Barbuda foreign minister has called for the



Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade, Hon. E.P Chet Greene

region to develop the necessary public and health protocols to protect the borders and to return the economies to state of normality. He also wants visiting airline and cruise passengers to follow the safety measures developed by CARICOM.

Permanent Secretary, Antony Liverpool, also participated in the meeting.



Don't politicise COVID-19

Representatives from the ministries of foreign affairs of the Peoples Republic of China and Caribbean states with diplomatic relations with China have condemned any attempt to politicise the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is one of the statements coming out of a just-concluded meeting between China and those Caribbean countries. Anti-

gua and Barbuda was represented at the meeting by permanent secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Anthony Liverpool.

The main topic for discussion held by video-conference on Tuesday was the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the global community. "The two sides acknowledged the enormity of the threat posed by

COVID-19 to lives and livelihoods as well as the resulting deleterious social and economic impacts in China, the Caribbean countries and across the world.

The two sides expressed deep condolences over the lives lost to the virus and heartfelt sympathies to all the patients and their families and paid high tribute to the healthcare workers

fighting at the front line," the post meeting communique said.

The two sides shared the view that although COVID-19 has so far been effectively stemmed in China and several Caribbean countries, it is still rapidly spreading in many parts of the world.

According to the state-
cont'd on pg 7

Hotels ready themselves for re-opening

Several hotels in the country are implementing measures as they ready themselves to begin the process of welcoming guests back to their respective properties as the country re-opens following the lockdown caused by COVID-19.

Tourism Minister, Charles Max Fernandez, accompanied by permanent secretary, Walter Christopher, is spearheading a drive to meet directly with many property owners/managers to discuss the way forward as well as to observe the measures that are being put in place.

One such visit, took the tourism officials to the Hammock Cove Resort and Spa where they met with Resort Manager, Rosario Soler, who was able to give an update about the preventative measures to be implemented to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

According to Soler, the Elite Island Resorts is working on an efficient

prevention plan as health and safety hazards in hotels cannot be ignored.

She said many ideas have come up such as providing guests with face masks and a disinfectant kit in their rooms, social-distanced dining and taking reservations for lunch and dinner to limit how many persons are in the dining room at a time as well as scheduling activities at different times during the week so that all their guests can participate.

Soler said while the coronavirus continues to impact the hotel industry, before they begin to welcome guests back to the property, they will ensure that every room, dining area, bar, the pools, spa and gym will be cleaned and sanitized by the staff that has been kept on to see to the property's daily maintenance and upkeep.

Minister Fernandez said the Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of Tourism will be finalizing



Tourism Minister, Charles Max Fernandez

protocols to guide tourism industry operators going forward.

All properties will be inspected by a certification team to be comprised of officials from the Ministries of Health and Tourism before they can officially open for business.

cont'd from pg 6

ment they also recognised that the virus respects no borders and was a common enemy of humanity. "Guided by multilateralism and science, all countries must strengthen communication, coordination and cooperation in support of the important role of the World Health Organization in coordinating global cooperation against COVID-19. We oppose any politicization, discrimination and labeling of peoples with regard to COVID-19!" it declared.

The joint statement said the Caribbean side empha-

sized the importance of strengthening the capacity of their local health systems and the need to support developing countries, in particular those in Caribbean. For its part, the Chinese side voiced appreciation to the Caribbean countries for their firm and sincere support and highly commended the Caribbean's active efforts to manage and contain COVID-19 especially given their particular vulnerabilities.

China said it was ready to further help friendly Caribbean countries as its ability permits and it called on the

international community to provide the Caribbean side with necessary support and assistance against COVID-19.

At the conclusion, both sides agreed to further maintain and strengthen mutual support and coordination in international and regional affairs, to firmly support the UN-centered international system, to uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and to safeguard the legitimate rights, interests and space for development of developing countries.

They also agreed on the

need to defend the multilateral trading system with the WTO as the core, build an open world economy, advance the reform of global financial governance and accelerate the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The other Caribbean countries represented at the meeting were the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, Barbados, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Jamaica, the Republic of Suriname and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Support local industries

The decision by the Antigua Distillery Ltd. to diversify its product offerings by switching its production to meet the demand for hand sanitizers has won the company much praise and commendation.

On Tuesday, Trade Minister, E. P. Chet Greene led a tour of the production facilities at ADL adjacent to the Deep Water Harbour in St. John's.

The move by the company takes on added significance as it fits nicely into the government's policy objective to wean the country off its near total dependence on tourism and to develop other sectors of the economy, notably, manufacturing and agriculture.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a worldwide demand for hand and other sanitizers, which has led to global shortages of these products.

In an attempt to meet the local and regional demand, ADL used the alcohol it produces for its spirits to produce three products under its Novirus brand; one a hand sanitizer gel with local aloe, a regular hand sanitizer and a sanitizer to clear surfaces.

"All our products are reasonably priced and are available locally. They



were produced to specification established by the World Health Organisation (WHO) which also mandated that such products should not include fragrances as these may lead to skin irritation for some consumers," said Chief Executive Officer Anthony Bento.

According to company Global Marketing Manager, Calbert Francis, already the company is shipping the products to several neighbouring islands.

These include St Kitts, Nevis, Barbados, and Anguilla with negotiations un-



derway to have the products shipped to St Lucia as well.

He explained that the company utilizes an intra-regional shipping vessel to get the products from island-to-island. However, Francis said shipping to some territories currently poses a problem.

Minister Greene gave a commitment to assist the company work out these issues 'as best as the ministry can'.

However, the minister said he was heartened to see the operations at ADL, especially to see that the company has been able to spring into action in a 'very short period of time' to produce the sanitizers. He commended the company for its creativity in utilizing local aloe in one of the products since this gives a boost to local agricultural production.

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British nationals stuck in Antigua who are desirous of returning home are being given the opportunity to return to the United Kingdom this weekend.

The British High Commission for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean announced on Tuesday via its Facebook page that a British Airways commercial flight from Antigua and Barbuda has been confirmed.

The flight will depart the V.C. Bird International Airport at 6:50 p.m. on Sunday May 17, 2020.

British nationals are being encouraged to make use of the opportunity and book a seat via the British Airways website.

The British High Commission has advised that there are presently no other confirmed flights from Antigua and Barbuda to the UK, but should another charter become available, it would also come at a cost to the passengers.

It was further noted that flight options for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean will be promoted only when the high commission receives confirmation that such flights are likely to go ahead.

Meanwhile, the Chief Executive Officer of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) is optimistic

British nationals secure flight home

that the country's tourism industry will benefit from the changes being made by UK-based airlines.

Virgin Atlantic announced recently that it will cut more than 3,000 jobs and move its London-Gatwick operations to Heathrow Airport due to the negative effect that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on its business.

According to Colin James – who confirmed that all flights from London will now originate from Heathrow and will be shared with other destinations initially – the move can mean good news for Antigua and Barbuda as the country rebounds from a halt in economic activity.

“London-Heathrow will also give us the capacity for seeing the connection from mainland Europe,” he said, adding, “The [aircraft] that will be used to Antigua will be the original A300 series which has a higher upper class capacity, a premium cabin, and that is again in step with the type of destination that we have and the type of accommodations that we have on island,” he stated.

James said the people likely to travel in the wake of the COVID-19 global crisis would be those of considerable financial means and their coming to Antigua and Barbuda would lend considerable vibrancy to the country's tourism business.

Virgin Atlantic is expected to resume service by July or September, while British Airways is also aiming to take to the skies by July, although a specific date has not yet been announced.

James supports a phased re-opening of the country.

“The Caribbean has been very fortunate, in that, consideration our population size, the number of cases we have, and our ability to have mitigated against the spread – community spread in particular. In a few islands there have been no deaths ... Anguilla, is now saying that they are COVID-free, and you see that trend continuing downward in all the islands where the cases are getting smaller and smaller.”

He said it was important to adopt a gradual return to normality and “not reopen the floodgates all at once”.



cont'd from pg 8

“We can now say to our farmers that they now have a ready market for aloes; this is the creation of a niche

market,” he noted. The trade minister also made a call for residents to support local products. “I want to appeal directly to local consumers.

We now have world-class sanitizing products made local, by a local company that has been around for decades.

“As minister of trade, I

want to appeal directly to you, buy local, support local, support local industries as we support Antigua and Barbuda,” he emphasized.

Salute To Ephena Haywood...100 Not Out

By Colin James

The milestone of 100 years is a signal honour of one's longevity in life.

It speaks of that person's dedication to a healthy diet and meticulous care of his/her body.

It also says a lot about those who take care of them; making a personal and conscientious sacrifice that God would spare the life of a loved one to reach that goal.

That Ephena Haywood, the widow of George Haywood and mother of six - five girls and a boy - lived to celebrate that distinction on May 10, Mother's Day, says it all.

Born on 10 May 1920, she was the first of three children born to Hilda Charles.

She was employed as a domestic worker for the late Dr. Charles Locker, one of Antigua and Barbuda's top medical practitioners at the time, since he lived and worked at Swetes and later at St. John's.

Mama Haywood got married at age 37, a union that lasted 58 years until



2015 when George departed.

She is an ardent Christian and attends the Swetes Wesleyan Holiness church.

Her favorite scripture is Psalm 23.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want..."

How apt that her life was centered around being content with whatever little she could afford for her family.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

Her 'green pastures' is her humble home, providing for her family.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Daily she would look to God for his guidance and protection.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Whatever the challenges in life she turned to the Lord for solace.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

Amid those who seek to be negative she was confident God would provide plenty.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord

cont'd on pg 11





cont'd from pg 10

forever.”

Her steadfast commitment to her Christianity kept her going for 100 years.

Her choice song: ‘When We All Get To Heaven’, “what a day of rejoicing that will be” and surely she will be.

Her motto is ‘In The Name Of The Lord’.

“Mom is always a satisfying woman who does not try to exceed her bounds.” remembers Orden Haywood, her only surviving son and live-in caretaker. “This is something she impacted on her children which we hold onto this very day.”

Last Sunday, Orden opened on how his mother’s love led him to devote his life to her longevity.

He recalls how she secured funding from Dr Locker to allow him to sit his final year school exams.

“And I said to him, not

being disrespectful, that my mom will not work for anyone else because I’ll take care of her for the rest of the life,” he said as the tears flowed.

Her favorite food is fungi with any relish.

How that Antiguan staple

would have nourished and fortified her.

The family and friends led by Pastor Olson Daniel prayed and thanked God for sustaining her life, graced the modest but highly-significant short ceremony at her home to mark her cen-

tenary.

A light drizzle brought showers of blessings on the proceedings.

A Mother’s Day that will be long remembered for its historic milestone.

I was honoured to have attended.

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

Wear gloves when fueling your vehicle as fuel pumps and associated handles/keypads are frequently touched surfaces that are not sanitized.

COVID-19: Driver Safety Tips

Wear gloves

DRIVE SAFELY

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



Lion's Club gets big help

A local egg producer donated several cases of eggs to the Lion's Club to assist the service organization with its outreach programme.

Past president, Valerie Gonsalves-Barreiro said the donation of 80 dozen eggs was made by Adrian Hall of Hall Valley Farms. She said Susan Hall approached her about making the donation and the arrangements were then put in place.

Eggs were donated to the Salvation Army, the Care Project, Clare Vue Hospital, the Fiennes Institute and the Pensioners Association. "All of the groups were very appreciative and thanked the Hall Valley Farms and the Lions Club for remembering them," Gonsalves-Barreiro said.

On hand were the President Lion Franklin Maynard MJF, Lion Desiree Edwards MJF (1st VP), Lion Gail-Henry Lewis, and Lion Valerie Gonsalves-Barreiro MM MJF (Past President).



Double celebrations

One of the rarest events in Antigua and Barbuda happens today with another addition is being made to the 100 Years Club...while another member of the club celebrates a 106th birthday.

The Ministry of Social Transformation has announced that Zena Doobay of Desouza Road, who is originally from Guyana but has been residing in Antigua and Barbuda for the past ten (10) years, is celebrating her 100th birthday today, May 13.

According to family members, Doobay grew up in Berbice, Guyana and was the 2nd of 21 children by her father. Her grandmother arrived in Guyana years earlier on an indentured labour's ship from India.

Doobay enjoys singing and two of her favourite songs are; 'Onward Christian Soldiers and Jim Reeve's, I'll Fly Away.

At age 100, Doobay doesn't wear glasses and she regularly watch television especially when Family Feud is being aired. She also enjoys watching Judge Judy. Presently she spends her day doing Word Search finishing one book in just about a week. Today is also

the birthday of Hyacinth Mottley of Briggins Road who turns 106. She is currently the oldest resident in Antigua and Barbuda.

Mottley was born in Barbados on May 13, 1914, in her twenties; she left job as a Barbados School teacher and embarked on a journey that took her to several Caribbean islands- from Trinidad to St. Croix and many places in between. From these travels, she gained many interesting life experiences and lessons. She has been living in Antigua for the past seventy-five years.

A statement from Government House congratulated both centenarians for their remarkable achievements. However, the statement noted that the limitations placed on gatherings under the state of emergency have ruled out the usual visits that both Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams and Lady Williams would make on these occasions. However, their Excellencies extended best wishes to both Doobay and Mottley on behalf of the Government House, as well as from the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda.



Ms. Hyacinth Mottley



Ms. Zena Lucinda Doobay

OECS Authority Keen to Work with FAA to Restore Category 1 Status

The Authority of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) met on Sunday, May 10 to review the recent announcement by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that it has assigned a Category 2 rating to OECS Member States under its International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) programme.

The Authority noted with appreciation that the FAA clearly stated in its announcement that “OECS carriers can continue existing service to the United States”. Therefore, as a practical matter, aircrafts that now fly to US airports, including the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, are not affected.

The Heads of Government expressed their keen intention to work closely with the FAA in resolving the issues that would restore the OECS’ Category 1 status that has been in place since 2007. They recalled that, following a comprehensive review last year of the regional Eastern



Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA), the FAA had made 14 key recommendations to ensure the maintenance of Category 1 standing. Eleven of the recommendations were fully addressed, leaving only three which required legislative changes.

The three remaining recommendations made by the US FAA are being addressed.

They also observed that the change in status to Category 2 does not affect the day-to-day running of regional airports and airlines, and that other outstanding matters, affecting ECCAA, are regulatory issues and do not

call into question the safety and security of the region’s airports and airlines. Nonetheless, the Heads expressed their determination to regain Category 1 status for the OECS in order to gain new, direct and profitable routes into the United States for OECS air carriers. In this regard, they instructed that the Board of Directors of ECCAA and other relevant government agencies should immediately engage the FAA to satisfy the requirements it has identified. The meeting, Chaired by Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister the Honourable Gaston Browne, was attended by Dr. the Honourable

Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica; Honourable Allen Chastanet, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia; Dr. the Hon. Timothy Harris, Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis; Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; and Honourable Clarice Modeste-Curwen, Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Grenada. Also in attendance were Honourable Mark Brantley, Premier and Minister of Tourism, Nevis; Honourable Denise Charles, Minister of Tourism, International Transport and Maritime Initiatives, Commonwealth of Dominica; OECS Director-General, Dr. Didacus Jules; Director General of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority Mr. Donald McPhail; Mr. Bardouille, Interim Chair of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority; and other officials.

GOT NEWS

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Jamaican Mom Proud Of History - Making Black Valedictorian At Princeton

JAMAICAN DR Anita Brown-Johnson said yesterday that she was not shocked that her son Nicholas Johnson's record of academic excellence paved the way for his history-making exploits as the first black valedictorian of Princeton University.

Princeton confirmed late April that the 22-year-old scholar was the first black valedictorian in the Ivy League school's 274-year history.

Johnson, who is from Montreal, Canada, was also named valedictorian years earlier at Selwyn House High.

"I feel overjoyed for him because I admire his discipline and his commitment towards his study, which he has always exhibited. There is that joy and happiness for him, but at the same time gratitude for all who have contributed in a mentorship role," Brown-Johnson told *The Gleaner* yesterday evening.

Brown-Johnson said that she was proud that Nicholas topped a graduating class of 1,300 at a university ranked number one in the world for undergraduate studies. "I am surprised he ended up at the very top, but at the same time, I know his capabilities and work ethic which is incredible, so in that sense it's not so much of a surprise," Brown-Johnson said.



Historymaking Princeton University valedictorian Nicholas Johnson (left) is seen here with mom Dr Anita Brown-Johnson (second left), sister Anastasia Johnson, and dad Dr Dexter Johnson.

Johnson majored in operations research and financial engineering and wrote his senior thesis on developing algorithms to design a community-based preventive health intervention to decrease obesity in Canada.

In an interview with CNN, the scholar said that it felt empowering being the first black valedictorian given Princeton's historical ties to the institution of slavery and said he hopes his achievement motivates other black students.

ACADEMIC HONOURS

Among his academic honours, Johnson is a recipient of the Class of 1883 English Prize for Freshmen in the School of Engineering, a two-time recipient of the Shapiro Prize for Academic Excellence, and co-recipient with Sommers of the Class of 1939 Princeton Scholar Award. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in fall 2019

and to Tau Beta Pi in 2018, where he served as president of the Princeton Chapter in 2019.

As a senior, Johnson was employed as a software engineer in machine learning at Google's California headquarters.

"When it comes to bookworms, they would often not have much of a personality in terms of having difficulty socialising, but that was never the case with Nicholas. He has always been a very balanced student and always very much liked by his peers," his mother said yesterday.

"He is his own boss and always self-driven. He has always been a leader, so he would always lead the way and carry his peers along in terms of showing them the way or supporting them," Brown-Johnson, a past student of Excelsior High School, said. The younger

of two children for his parents, Johnson hails from a family of greatness.

His father, Dr Dexter Johnson, a native of The Bahamas, is a dual-degree Harvard-trained physician and oral and maxillofacial surgeon. His mother is an assistant professor of family medicine, an interim chief of the department of family medicine, and director of a secondary-care division. Nicholas' sister, Anastacia Johnson, is currently completing her Master of Fine Arts and was nominated for four Grammy Awards.

With Princeton's in-person graduation ceremony cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will hold a virtual one on May 31.

In the fall, Johnson will begin his doctoral studies in operations research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

CARICOM foreign ministers condemn EU over blacklisting of regional states

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) foreign ministers have “rejected the arbitrary and unilateral imposition of blacklisting by the European Union” on several CARICOM countries.

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

The 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 countries that have been de-listed.

In a statement issued Monday following last week’s 23rd meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR), the foreign ministers said they “rejected the arbitrary and unilateral imposition of blacklisting by the EU on several member states of the Community.

“They expressed concern over the constant shifting of goal posts, the continued lack of prior consultation or



Caricom

notification and the unwillingness to take into account the efforts at compliance made by CARICOM member states,” the statement noted.

It said that the “measure was viewed as detrimental to the economies of the affected states which are already in recession.

“The Community called on the EU to take into consideration the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic wellbeing of the small states of CARICOM in their policy-making,” the statement added.

The statement said that the foreign ministers also reviewed the region’s relations with both its traditional and more recent partners and discussed ways and means by which these relations could further be strengthened.

“The COFCOR also reflected on the need to engage new partners with a view to promoting an appre-

ciation of the Community’s interests and catalysing new development platforms.”

The statement said particular attention was paid to developments, such as BREXIT and the negotiation of the successor to the Cotonou Agreement, “which are having a profound impact on the nature of existing relationships, hence the focus on relations with the UK in its new dispensation and the European Union (EU)”.

The statement said that with the seventh CARICOM-Cuba Summit scheduled to be held in Cuba in December, the foreign ministers received an update on the status of relations.

“The COFCOR paid tribute to the government and people of Cuba for the provision of public health personnel to boost the region’s limited capacity in the face of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic despite the country’s own challenges aggravated by enhanced US

sanctions. “Foreign Ministers called for an immediate and unconditional lifting of the US economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba,” the statement said, noting that the ministers also made reference to the deepening of relations with Latin America.

“CARICOM Foreign Ministers highlighted the recent developments in the relations between CARICOM and Africa underpinned by reciprocal official visits of CARICOM Prime Ministers and African Presidents which have brought the two regions closer.

“They expressed regret over the postponement of the proposed CARICOM-African Union Summit in June 2020 owing to the spread of the COVID-19 virus.”

The foreign ministers have also expressed their regret at “the understandable postponement of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which was due to be held in Rwanda in June 2020”.

It said that CARICOM “was looking forward to addressing issues of interest and concern with their Commonwealth counterparts.

“This forum has always been viewed as a valuable opportunity for exchanging views with members of the G7 and G20 which play an

influential role in shaping global economic and financial affairs. This would have been opportune, given the present need for the support required by CARICOM states whose economies have been decimated by the pandemic. This forum is also of significance because of the importance it has ascribed traditionally to the situation of small states," the statement added.

On the matter of border issues involving Belize and Guatemala as well as Guy-

ana and Venezuela, the ministers said that they had received "an update" on these matters. In the case of Belize and Guatemala, the foreign ministers said they welcomed the submission of the case arising from Guatemala's claim to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for final and definitive resolution, in accordance with the Special Agreement to Submit Guatemala's Claim to the ICJ. "They further noted that the ICJ had extended the time-limits for the filing

of the initial pleadings," and "further called on both countries and the OAS to redouble their efforts to engage in the design and development of a mechanism of cooperation for the Sarstoon River, which remains outstanding."

In the case of Guyana and Venezuela, the foreign ministers "noted that Guyana was to have presented its case in oral pleadings scheduled for the week of 23 March 2020 as to why the ICJ was properly vested with jurisdiction by the United Nations Sec-

retary-General under the Geneva Agreement 1966 for a final resolution to the controversy. "Ministers reiterated the Community's full support for the judicial process that is intended to bring a peaceful and definitive end to the long-standing controversy between the two countries. They further reiterated their firm and unswerving support for the maintenance and preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana," the statement added.

Guyana Goldfields to terminate hundreds -as challenges mount up

Guyana Goldfields Inc is to sever between 200 to 300 employees as it faces a range of challenges including financing, regulatory approval of a mining plan and the impact of COVID-19, sources say.

President and Chief Executive Officer Alan Pangbourne made the announcement without giving the total number of employees to be laid off. He assured that the provisions of the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act will apply,

The announcement comes days after Canadian silver miner, Silvercorp took over the company.

A portion of Pangbourne's statement to workers follows: Today, with great regret I am writing to all employees to inform you that

we will be reducing the size of AGM's workforce. This reduction in the workforce will take place at all levels including both national and expatriate employees as the company will transition its mining operation into a state of Care and Maintenance for an undetermined period. The reason our timeline is undetermined is because it depends on multiple variable factors. These factors include financial conditions, COVID-19 issues, travel restrictions, and pending approval from Guyana's EPA of our Revised Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) permit for underground mining. Let me share with you the details of how we arrived at this difficult decision.

The upcoming changes are primarily due to the follow-

ing reasons: – Our inability to mine safely both RK5 & RK4 concurrently – An anticipated ore shortage from our open pits resulting in a loss of our income stream,
– Lack of funding to re-

commence RK5 and re-establish continuous ore supply, and – The continued negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which forced us to stop underground development.



Babies among 16 killed as gunmen attack maternity ward in Kabul



So far 72 civilians, including women & children, have been rescued from the #hospital under attack.

Gunmen stormed a maternity hospital in the western part of the Afghan capital Kabul, setting off an hours-long shoot-out with the police and killing 16 people, including two newborn babies, their mothers and an unspecified number of nurses.

Photos from the Ministry of Interior Affairs showed two young children lying dead inside the hospital.

An image showed a woman who had been killed lying on the ground still holding tightly to her baby, who a nurse in the unit confirmed to Reuters news agency had survived

and had been moved to an intensive care unit at another hospital.

Security forces earlier cordoned off the area as they evacuated more than 80 women and infants from the hospital, where medical charity Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF) runs a maternity clinic.

Interior ministry spokesman Tareq Arian said three foreign nationals were among those safely evacuated, without elaborating.

It was unclear why the maternity hospital in Dashti Bar-

chi, a 100-bed facility, was targeted - an attack Arian said was an "act against humanity and a war crime".

At least three attackers wearing police uniforms entered the hospital, throwing grenades and shooting, officials said.

A paediatrician who fled the hospital told AFP news agency he heard a loud explosion at the entrance of the building in Dashti Barchi, a mostly Shia neighbourhood that has seen past attacks by the ISIL (ISIS) armed group.

"The hospital was full of patients and doctors, there

was total panic inside," the doctor said, asking not to be named.

In the evening hours, husbands, fathers and family members of the hospital's patients gathered around the hospital, desperate for news of their loved ones.

A man read out the names of those who had been evacuated to other hospitals.

The neighbourhood is home to many members of Afghanistan's Hazara community, a mostly Shia Muslim minority that has been attacked by ISIL in the past, including at a Kabul ceremo-

ny commemorating the death of one of its leaders in March. Rights group Amnesty International condemned both the attacks.

“The unconscionable war crimes in Afghanistan today, targeting a maternity hospital and a funeral, must awaken the world to the horrors civilians continue to face,” the group tweeted.

“There must be accountability for these grave crimes.”

Countries including the United Kingdom, Germany, Turkey and Pakistan released statements condemning the violence.

Also on Tuesday, in a suicide bombing in eastern Nangarhar province, an attacker

targeted the Khewa-district funeral of a local pro-government militia commander and former warlord who had died of a heart attack on Monday night, said Attahullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor. The interior ministry said the final casualty toll included 24 killed and 68 wounded. The wounded were brought to the Nangarhar provincial hospital, said hospital spokesman Gulzada Sangar.

Khogyani added the dead included Abdullah Lala Jan, a provincial council member, while his father Noor Agha, a politician, was wounded in the attack.

According to Zabihullah Zemarai, another provincial

council member, dozens of people, including, politicians, provincial council members and locals had gathered for the funeral of Shaikh Akram, the militia commander.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid tweeted that the Taliban was not involved in the attack. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack in Khost, which killed a child and wounded 10 people. The bomb was placed in a cart at a local market and remotely detonated, said Adil Haidari, spokesman for the provincial police chief.

ISIL also said it was behind a spate of attacks on Monday in Kabul when four bombs, one placed under a garbage bin and the other three by

the roadside, went off in the northern part of the city, wounding four civilians, including a child. The Afghan intelligence service said in a statement late Monday that the agency arrested an ISIL leader in the region, Zia-ul Haq, also known as Shaikh Abu Omer al-Khorasani.

Afghanistan is also facing violence around the country from the Taliban, even as the United States tries to usher in peace talks after signing a troop withdrawal agreement in February with the armed group. Taliban spokespeople say they are holding back from attacking urban centres and their operations are aimed at government security forces.

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Russia now has second highest virus case total

Russia has confirmed 232,000 cases of coronavirus - the second highest toll in the world after the US. In the last 24 hours the country has reported 10,899 infections, the tenth consecutive day that number has been above 10,000. Among the infected is President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov, local media report. He is the latest high profile official to test positive, after Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin caught the illness.

The news comes the day after President Putin eased the country's lockdown. Factory and construction workers returned to work on Tuesday, though Mr Putin gave regions freedom to set restrictions depending on local circumstances. Despite the high number of confirmed cases, Russia's death toll is only 2,116. Government officials say the country's mass testing programme is responsible for that low mortality rate, but many believe the number is in fact far higher. Meanwhile, authorities in St Petersburg have put out a fire in an intensive care unit, which killed five coronavirus pa-



Dmitry Peskov, spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin, has now tested positive for the

tients and forced the evacuation of about 150 people. What's the latest in Russia? Local media reported on Tuesday that Mr Peskov - the presidential spokesman since 2012 - had tested positive for the virus and was now in hospital. "Yes, I am sick. I am receiving treatment," new agencies quoted him as saying.

Prime Minister Mishustin tested positive for coronavirus two weeks ago. Since then, culture minister Olga Lyubimova has also been diagnosed with the virus, as has construction minister Vladimir Yakushev and one of his deputies. Mr Peskov told TASS news agency that he last met President Putin in per-

son more than a month ago. Mr Putin is working remotely from his residence outside the capital, and the Kremlin says his health is well protected. The president announced the end of six weeks of "non-working days" in a televised address on Monday. Russians began returning to work on Tuesday morning. The outbreak is far from over, the president warned, saying that "danger remains". But all sectors of the economy should begin to restart, he said - though local authorities could bring in tougher restrictions if needed to contain the spread of the virus. Moscow is the epicentre of Russia's outbreak, accounting for more than

half the country's cases and more than half its total death toll. Last week Mayor Sergei Sobyenin extended the capital's lockdown until 31 May. Though construction and industrial workers must now return to work in the city, everyone must wear face masks and gloves in shops and on public transport. Residents still cannot leave home unless to shop, work or walk the dog, and must have a digital permit to travel.

Mr Sobyenin has previously estimated that the capital may have more than 300,000 infections - about three times its current confirmed tally.

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The US's top infectious diseases doctor has warned senators the virus will spread if the country opens up too soon.

Dr Anthony Fauci said if federal guidelines to reopen are not followed, "little spikes" will become outbreaks.

He also said the real US death toll is probably higher than the official figure of 80,000.

His message is at odds with the upbeat tone of President Trump who is keen to get the economy going again. Dr Fauci was speaking via video to a Republican-led committee of the US Senate. He was referring to the White House's Opening Up America Again plan, which includes three 14-day phases that states should consider implementing as they allow schools and businesses to reopen. Several US states already restarting their economies have infection rates that are rising, not falling. He warned of the risk of triggering an outbreak that officials would not be able to control, adding such an outbreak would set back economic recovery and could lead to "suffering and death". Although the White House has laid out guidelines for reopening, it is ultimately up to state governors to make the decisions on how to ease the lockdown. 'Cautiously optimistic'

Questioned about the possibility of a rebound in autumn of the "highly transmissible virus", Dr Fauci said one is "entirely conceivable and possible".

"I hope that if we do have the threat of a second wave we will be able to deal with it very effectively to prevent it becoming an outbreak." Dr Fauci also said there are multiple vaccines in development but "no guarantee" any will be effective, though

based on his knowledge of other viruses, he is "cautiously optimistic". "We have many candidates and hope to have multiple winners," he said. "In other words it's multiple shots on goal." Witnesses testify remotely. Witnesses appeared remotely, as did some senators on the Senate Committee on Health, Education Labor and Pensions. The three members of the White House coronavirus task force who testified are self-isolating after possible exposure to the illness, including Dr Fauci. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director Dr Robert Redfield and Food and Drug Administration commissioner Stephen Hahn are also self-isolating.

Dr Fauci has tested negative but will continue to work from home for the time being, and will be regularly tested.

Meanwhile, Vice President Mike Pence is also keeping his distance from the president after his press secretary Katie Miller tested positive last week.

"The vice president has made the choice to keep his distance for a few days," said White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany. Anthony Fauci's testimony before a congressional committee started as a genteel affair, with senators treating him as a long-serving public health official whose advice carries considerable authority and expertise. Then Senator Rand Paul spoke. When it comes to the coronavirus, the Republican from Kentucky said, public health experts had made "wrong prediction after wrong prediction after



Fauci warns Senate of 'serious consequences

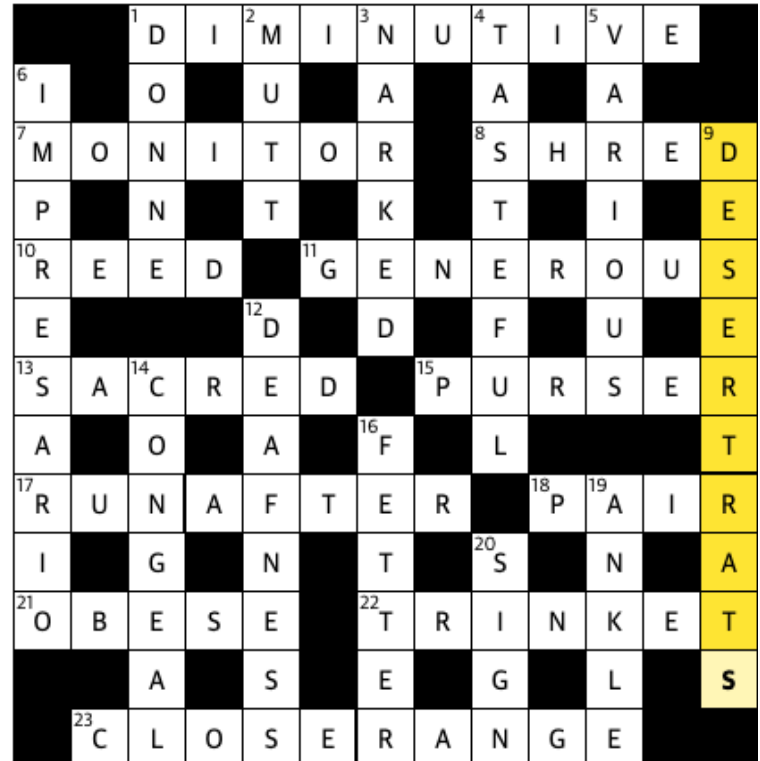
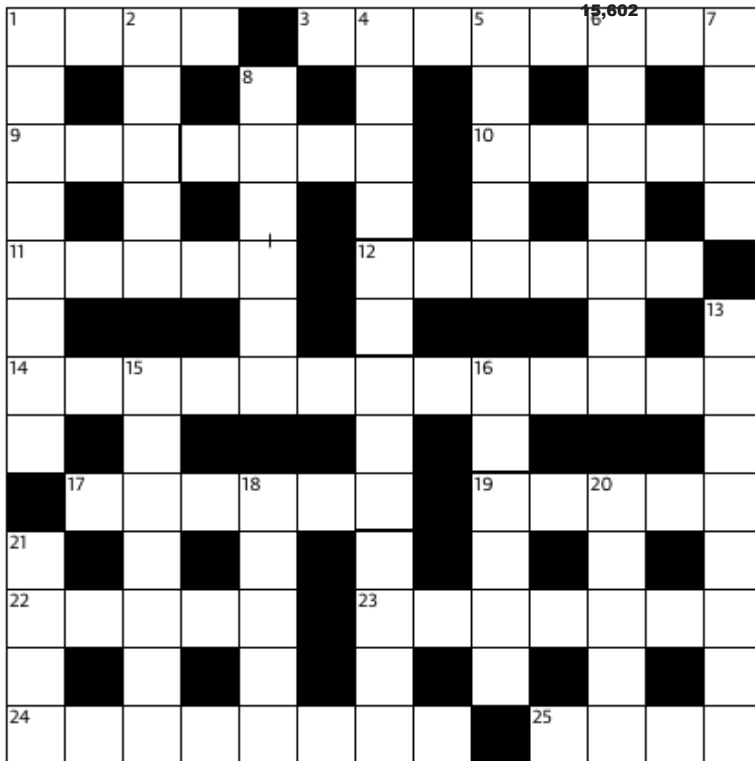
wrong prediction". "As much as I respect you, Dr. Fauci," he continued, "I don't think you're the end-all, I don't think you're the one person that gets to make a decision." Paul went on to assert that "outside of New England," the virus has followed a "relatively benign course". He told Fauci that schools, which have been closed across the US since mid-March, should be reopened as soon as possible. Paul was giving voice to a growing sentiment among the conservative base that Fauci does not have the nation's - or the president's - best interests in mind. Crowds of anti-lockdown activists in several states have chanted "fire Fauci", and the director has required special protection after receiving death threats. They, like Paul, have dismissed the spread of the virus beyond the current coastal hotspots, even though data indicates cases are spiking in some areas in the interior of the US. It's evidence of a growing political divide within the nation over how to respond to the virus and how, and when, to begin easing from existing state-ordered mitigation efforts.

Fauci, for his part, responded coolly. "I have never made myself out to be the end-all and

only voice of this," he told Paul. "I'm a scientist, a physician, and a public health official." He added that there is still much that is not known about the virus, and warned not to be "cavalier" about the threat to children, given new evidence that they may not be "completely immune to the deleterious effects" of the virus. Paul, a practicing physician, was himself diagnosed with the coronavirus last month and received significant criticism for continuing to work in the Senate after being exposed but before he received his positive diagnosis. Presentational grey line Some US states are beginning to lift lockdown orders. Georgia, Oklahoma, Alaska and South Carolina have already allowed some businesses to reopen and have issued plans that call for more rules to be relaxed. Tuesday's hearing is Dr Fauci's first appearance before lawmakers since President Donald Trump declared a state of national emergency in March. The senior health adviser - who has become the public face of the fight against the virus in the US - was blocked from testifying to a congressional committee examining the Trump administration's response to the pandemic on May 6.

QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword No



Across

- 1 Arrived (4)
 3 Puerile (8)
 9 President Franklin D Roosevelt's economic policy from 1933 (3,4)
 10 Longest bone in the human body (5)
 11 Stagger (5)
 12 Anne is (anag) — crazy (6)
 14 Sweets (13)
 17 One-piece full-body garment (6)
 19 Scoring moves in rugby (5)
 22 Diametrically opposed — very cold (5)
 23 Mildly funny (7)
 24 Coordinated set of clothes (8)
 25 Let out (4)

Down

- 1 Fighting (8)
 2 Tool for cutting grass (5)
 4 Cash dispenser (informal) (4,2,3,4)
 5 Elevates (5)
 6 Colossal (7)
 7 Damage (4)
 8 Titter (3-3)
 13 Faculty of vision (8)
 15 Confound (7)
 16 Travelling about (2,4)
 18 Melee (5)
 20 Vocabulary characteristic of a specific group (5)
 21 Duelling weapon (4)

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DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Run with the pack. Being part of an online group might give you a chance to widen your contacts as well as your opportunities. You may become focused on how your status and position affect your earning power.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Don't worry about the critics who nitpick about every single word and find differences that don't meet their standards. There will be no room for criticism if you do something no one else is doing.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Mercury has just slipped into your sign, where it feels right at home. This planet loves to challenge critical thinking skills and dig up pertinent knowledge. You might find ways to apply research skills and talents.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Follow the leader or use the buddy system. Your loved ones or a partner may put a great deal of energy into making something a success. If you offer to help, you may share in the rewards as well as the process.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Moving mountains could be your specialty. Once you have begun a project, whether at work or at home, you'll give it your best effort no matter how impossible it might seem to achieve. You've got this!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Rework and reimagine old ideas and use them in a broader context. Although you're required to paint inside the lines and obey the rules, you might be able to use more imaginative colors so that your work receives notice.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): Move on. Once a romantic spell is broken, it's like Humpty Dumpty and you may not be able to put it back together again. If you are doing what everyone else is doing, you can stand out by doing it much better than everyone else.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put your thoughts into dynamic action and make a plan for success. You can finalize a project without having to always make changes. Don't underestimate the impact your words can have on others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may be ready for a bigger bank account. There may be an upswing in your material ambitions and a desire to achieve financial security. Use enthusiasm and energy to make money rather than spending it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): When ambition takes control of your senses, you are ready, willing and able to work intensely to achieve your aims. A hobby may begin to pay off but require you to shell out cash to build a more viable product.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It might be necessary to make sacrifices to achieve your material ambitions. Like a mouse, it's probably a good idea to avoid the advice of even the wisest old owl, who may have his own self-interest in mind.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Tiptoe around temptations. You can recognize the difference between a viable business idea and an odd concept that may go nowhere. You can be discriminating about your choices without hurting anyone's feelings.

Pooran sticks with Warriors, quashes Knight Riders rumour

Talk had been making the rounds that West Indies sensation Nicolas Pooran was being wooed by the Trinidad Knight Riders (TKR) for this year's Hero Caribbean Premier League (CPL) Twenty20 tournament.

But those utterances through the grapevine proved unfounded as the wicketkeeper-batsman, who hails from Trinidad and Tobago, remains with the Amazon Warriors of Guyana, honouring the second year of his three-year contract.

With Denesh Ramdin



moving from the TKR to the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots, it was rumored that Pooran might have been in the Trin-

bago management's sights, but he has stayed with the Warriors.

The local regional players

retained and signed by the franchise for this year's CPL are Pooran, Shimron Hetmyer, Brandon King, Keemo Paul, Sherfane Rutherford, Romario Sheppard, Chanderpaul Hemraj, Kevin Sinclair, Odean Smith and Anthony Bramble.

International retentions and signings will be announced at a later date. This season, teams retain as many players from their 2019 squads as they wish. They could also transfer players to other teams and sign emerging players.

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Tight restriction for Premier League training

Tackling will be banned, pitches disinfected, and players restricted to groups of five when the Premier League starts a first phase of team training.

Official protocols issued to players and managers on Tuesday reveal that social distancing must be strictly observed.

Corner flags, balls, cones, goalposts, and even playing surfaces, will be disinfected after each session.

League bosses hope training can begin on Monday, restricted to 75 minutes.

Ongoing surveillance measures included in further guidance include twice-weekly testing, along

with daily pre-training questionnaire and temperature check.

Under a section titled 'Health Screening', players are also told that a Central Register of COVID-19 test results (subject to their consent and the agreement of the Professional Footballers Association) will need to be maintained.

Recommended "control measures" include "meticulous personal hygiene and use of PPE (personal protective equipment), no congregation in communal areas, including – but not limited to – medical rooms and gym areas.

Under further stringent rules, players are told they cannot share transport with anyone to and from the training ground. Vehicle interiors should be cleaned regularly. Team vehicles and public transport should

not be used.

Players are being consulted on proposed medical protocols for a return to training by the PFA. They have been given a condensed version of a 40-page document for them to digest.

A number of players with health issues like asthma, plus black and minority players, have some serious misgivings about returning to playing.

Black men and women are nearly twice as likely to die from coronavirus as white people in England and Wales, according to the Office for National Statistics.

On Wednesday, there will be a meeting between players, the Premier League, medical staff, and the PFA.

Government approval will be needed before teams can continue to the next stage of training, when contact will be permitted.



Rose criticises plans for Premier League restart

England and Tottenham defender Danny Rose has criticized the Premier League's plans to restart the season amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Club officials met on Monday to continue talks on "Project Restart", with the English top flight aiming to resume fixtures on 12 June.

As of May 11th, 32,065 people had died from COVID-19 disease in the UK.

"Football shouldn't even be spoken about until the numbers have dropped massively," said Rose, 29. "People's lives are at risk," he added.



Bobby Joseph: The basketball trigger man

He is loved, respected and appreciated by the people of the Grays Green Community for his contribution to sports and caring behavior towards everyone he came into contact with.

Meet Bobby Joseph, former national basketball shooting guard and legend.

Bobby grew up in Grays Green in an era when the community was looked down upon and opportunities to enhance oneself were hard to come by.

But the quiet 6'1" guard, who started his playing career in Villa school yard after being encouraged to play by a friend called 'Today' – the older brother of Brian Joseph, a former standout point guard from the area – slowly but surely built a reputation in the sport that has left a lasting effect on his community and the country at large.

"My grandmother is from Villa and the first time I entered Villa school to play I realized I was blessed with outstanding shooting skills," Bobby explained.

"I grew up honing my skills with friends like Shemlight, Sadu and Today. We played basketball all day before the sun went down because in those days there was no light and we had to make use of the sun," Joseph noted.

The former Express captain and coach remembers his first game with the national team in Freetown against Southern Moon College before the Legendary Bulldogs came on stream in 1984 – a name given to the team by former national teammates Nya Roberts and Doc Harris after they returned from university in the US.

Speaking with PointExpress, Bobby remembers the days of doing battle in St. Kitts in the former Leeward Islands tournament; an event that he says contributed to their development as players and as individuals. He is hoping that the association and governments can find a way to rejuvenate the tournament for the benefit of present players in the region.

"My favorite country to

battle was St. Kitts. They were always ready for the dance, and our game was built on defense, even though we were not the biggest team in height," said Joseph.

"Whenever you played in the Sugar City they would give us a hard time, pelting green mangoes at us, but after the game it was all good. They knew the game and loved a good fight," Bobby expressed.

"My top moment is playing against the British Virgin Islands in the Leeward Islands tournament in St. Kitts in the finals. They were bigger, had College players, and cocky, and that made us angry. We beat them, but the authorities found a way to have the game replayed, and even though we were upset, we went back and spank them again."

Bobby praised people like the Chalkie brothers, Baldwin Spencer, Popeye Simon and Micah Samuel for their dedicated work in the community.

His closest friend in sports is former Skillville and national point guard Boli Knight who he says dominated the 1980's. "But I finish their dominance," he said



with a smile.

Bobby added, "Boli is from Greenbay but act like he is the biggest Villa man. But I love him and he is responsible for my life in Christ which I am enjoying. I remember one day he came to me and said 'I feel like a brand new engine. I have just given my life to God.' I laugh, but eventually he convinced me to make the move to the lord and I will always respect him and his wife Olena for convincing me."

Joseph is a Seventh Day Adventist, committed to the holistic development of young people and actively coaching the Potters basketball team.

Meet a sporting icon who has flown under the radar: Bobby "The Trigger Man" Joseph, known for his potent outside shooting.

DEWS