



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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PRICE \$3

TEN-HOUR FIRE FIGHT



Story on Page 3

Union boss calls for unemployment insurance

The general secretary for the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU), David Massiah, is calling for the establishment of a national unemployment insurance scheme for the country.

And according to Massiah, this was one of the recommendations he made when the National Recovery Committee (ERC) met last week to plan Antigua and Barbuda-post COVID-19 path to recovery.

The union official said the proposed scheme should run along the lines of similar schemes in both Barbados and St Kitts and Nevis. "This unemployment insurance should be administered by the Social Security scheme with contributions made by both employers and employees. This will help take care of workers who suffer job losses when businesses downside and are forced to closed for reasons such as the current pandemic," he explained.

He suggested that the details of how the scheme will operate must be the



General Secretary for the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU), David Massiah

subject of discussions between all parties; government, employers and employees. "We can set up a tiered system where we determine for how long a worker who loses his/her job receives benefit; whether it's for six months, three months or another configuration," Massiah stated.

The ABWU general secretary said Antigua and Barbuda doesn't have to reinvent the wheel since similar schemes are already in operation within the Caribbean and these should serve as

guides whenever the twin-island state decides to go that route.

He noted that the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has been quite severe and he recalled that following Hurricane Luis in 1995 many workers in the hotel sector were made idle for six months in some cases. In making a case for the unemployment insurance, he said whether it's a health issue, as is the current case, or following a natural disaster, workers quite often have to shoulder 'too heavy a burden' because there is no protection for them under these or other circumstances of economic shock.

In related development, Massiah wants the tripartite arrangements now in place with the establishment of the ERC to be formally institutionalized. "We are happy to be involved with the ERC but our wish is for it to be in place, not just in times of crisis, but to become the way we function as a nation moving forward," he outlined.

DAY 5/18

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme
Wind: E at 17 km/h
Wind Gusts: 24 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 40%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
Precipitation: 0.5 mm
Rain: 0.5 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 1
Hours of Rain: 1

30° Hi



Mostly sunny with a shower in spots

NIGHT 5/18

Wind: E at 15 km/h
Wind Gusts: 24 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 40%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
Precipitation: 0.6 mm
Rain: 0.6 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 1
Hours of Rain: 1

25° Lo



Partly cloudy with a shower in places

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
5:34 AM

Sunset AST
6:33 PM



Duration
12:59 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
3:03 PM

Moonset AST
3:22 AM



Duration
12:19 hr



A fire at a warehouse on the Blue Waters Road engaged firemen from two of the island's fire stations for more than ten hours on Sunday as they attempted to bring it under control.

Reporting from the scene of the fire late last night, Fire Chief, Elvis Weaver, lamented that his men had been battling the fire for more than nine hours without bringing the fire under control.

"We received the call for the fire about 12:45 Sunday afternoon at up to 11:30 pm we are still on the scene without being able to bring the fire under control. It is a two-storey structure and the second floor collapse down unto the first floor," Weaver stated.

Weaver summoned two fire trucks from the St John's station as well as a third fire tender from the Coolidge station. They were buttressed with a water truck from Willy D's as well as one from within the fire service.

But Weaver complained that the construction of the building made it dangerous for his men to get close to the actual fire. "I am not sending my men into the building to have any materials fall down unto them. It is just too dangerous," Weaver stated emphatically.

Firemen battle fire through the night

phatically.

Weaver said the building is owned by Alan Aflak and he was told that while the building was not yet quite completed, it was already rented by a major distributor company that stored wines and other spirits there. "There have been numerous explosions since we have been here which I suspect came from the wines and other spirits exploding," he revealed.

The building was made of steel and corrugated galvanize and located near North coast hardware.

It was the second fire that the fire fought on Sunday. Earlier in the day, the firemen responded to a house fire in York's village. "The call for this morning's fire in York's came at 8.35 am. It was a two bedroom wooden structure - 18x22 - as well as a Store-room - 8x6 - and another house and its contents were all completely destroyed," Weaver reported.

He disclosed that the owner was not at home at the time of



the fire. Electricity, he noted, was attached to the house but it was not insured. A nearby house 24x25 got heat damage.

After almost twelve hours, Weaver instructed his men to

utilize the remaining water they had and to return to their respective stations. "I believe we may return in the morning (today) with special equipment or just let the fire burn itself out," Weaver remarked.

Bars, nightclubs can help speed up their return - Nicholas

Bars and nightclubs are among business categories still awaiting the green light to reopen, as Antigua and Barbuda gradually eases a weeks-old lockdown to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

The deadly respiratory virus is so far known to have infected 25 persons and claimed three lives in the twin-island state, prompting a state of emergency that brought an almost complete shutdown of economic and recreational activities across multiple sectors such as tourism, sports and education.

Barber shops and beauty salons were last week given clearance to reopen – subject to strict regulations governing the interaction of patrons and service providers, such as wearing of masks, maintenance of physical distancing, and adherence to hygiene and sanitization protocols.

But that reprieve has not yet been extended to bars and nightclubs – among the most heavily patronized commercial establishments – many of whom are very small family-owned/operated enterprises on which multiple interconnected livelihoods depend.

Authorities are concerned about whether the risk-minimization protocols will be adhered to in these recreational environments where



Information Minister Melford Nicholas

the consumption of alcohol may result in impaired judgment and flippant compromising of best practices.

That was a question put to Information Minister Melford Nicholas during the last post-Cabinet press briefing: Were any protocols being crafted to take account of the livelihoods impacted by the continued closure of bars and nightclubs, while mitigating the health risks that their reopening could pose?

“Anywhere that livelihoods are affected is of concern for the Cabinet,” he stated. “But I think the overriding issue here is what impact would bars and establishments like those – even gymnasiums – where we know for a fact that those environments and the activities that they would support are the ones that are likely

to lead towards cross contamination by persons who have the virus, if they enter that environment, would lend itself to spreading the virus, and that is what we do not want.”

Nicholas said he was unaware of any protocols that have been developed for the reopening of bars and nightclubs. “I don’t think we have been in contact with anyone who has actually proposed that these are some of the regulations that may be considered.”

The Minister suggested that operators of bars and nightclubs should perhaps do what their hairdressing salon counterparts had done when their reopening was being mulled: “Many of them had actually come up with a set of self-regulations and have offered to say, ‘Listen, we too as opera-

tors are concerned about the health of not only ourselves as operators, but the health of our patrons and the health of our nation; so, if we are permitted to operate, this is what we are proposing to do to ensure that we can maintain those particular health standards’.”

Nicholas then appealed to any “persons out there who are operating bars and that type of establishment, they may want to look within themselves and maybe start determining what could be put in place, and to start an engagement with the government.”

According to the Minister, “Government would not turn its back on a discussion of that type, but we have to approach this thing with ... trepidation, not wanting to lead to any situation where we are going to lose control of the virus again.”

He ended by urging bar and nightclub owners to engage their minds in thinking about reopening, not only for the purpose of having their cash tills ringing again, “but about what you can do yourselves to ensure that the health aspect of engagement with people is given fair consideration.

“I would like to encourage those persons to think about how they can conduct their business that would lead to healthy outcomes for all concerned.”

Bus drivers want government relief

Bus operators want the government to offer them relief in the face of severe economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Bus Association, Keithroy Black, said the association will be writing to the government this week seeking a facility similar to fishermen who pay \$10.00 per gallon for a gallon of gas. The association represents bus drivers at the West Bus Station and some at the East Bus Station.

"The association has already made contact with several members of the Cabinet to plead our case and we will be requesting that the matter be brought to the attention of the entire Cabinet when it meets on Wednesday," Black stated.

He explained that the economic impact of the pandemic on bus operators has been quite severe with most drivers being made idle, especially during the first weeks of the lockdown under the state of emergency.

"Since the loosening of the curfew and bus drivers are allowed to resume operations, we are doing so at a tremendous loss. Under the health protocols, we are not allowed to carry a full trip. What this means is that the 14-seater buses are only allowed to carry 9-passengers and the 15-seaters carry 10. The bigger buses – 29 or 30-seaters – are now only allowed to carry 17 passengers," he detailed.

He revealed that for each trip, bus drivers are losing \$12:00 to \$14:00 per trip for the 14 and 15-seaters while the 29 and 30-seaters lose \$17:00 per trip. Coupled with this, the bus drivers pay an average of \$125 to \$130 per day in fuel costs for the smaller buses. The costs are even higher for the bigger buses, he explained.

According to Black this comes at



President of the Antigua and Barbuda Bus Association, Keithroy Black

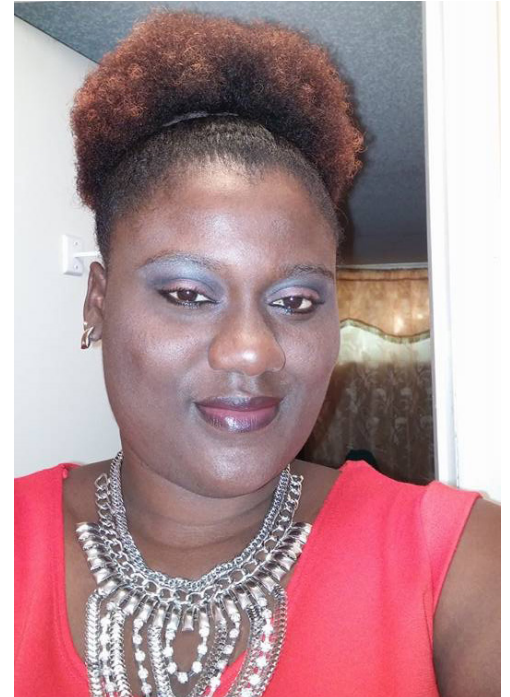
a time when ridership on all routes are down significantly, and not just because of the health protocols. He said the lockdown and the closure of hotels and schools translate to less people using buses to travel to and from the city.

"With all this in mind, we think that it is only fair that to seek assistance from the government to help struggling bus drivers. We have to work out the logistics of this assistance, but it is badly needed because our bus men and women are operating at a loss.

"Fishermen, for example, get relief in the cost of fuel and they sell their produce at prices that they can increase, but our rates are set by the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board. We cannot change them," he added.

Meanwhile, President of the Northeast Bus Association, Veronica Andrew, whose association broke away from the main bus association about a year ago, said members of her association, which operates out of the East Bus Station, are hurting just as well.

She said under the current health protocols bus drivers with 14-seater buses carry 9 passengers, but they are licensed and insured to carry 14.



President of the Northeast Bus Association, Veronica Andrew

"This new arrangement is killing us; we can't attempt to carry a full load or the passengers themselves will complain, even though it is not in the law," she declared.

In highlighting the decline in ridership, she said her 6:30 am run prior to the pandemic would see her moving off with a full load. However, since the lockdown it now takes much longer. "Sometimes I have to circle through the village (Parham) several times in order to get a just six passengers," she noted.

Despite the fact that drivers from both associations are facing the same hardships, it is unlikely that they will unite around this central issue. Andrew said her attempts to reach out to Black for a joint approach to the government has been rebuffed.

Black said the new association had refused an earlier move by his association and the three main taxi associations to form the Public Transportation Association (PTA). The Northeast Bus Association is the only such organisation that is not a member of the PTA.

30 tons of medical supplies arrive to help fight COVID-19

The V.C Bird International Airport sprung to life on Saturday as it welcomed and cleared its first international flight since the country closed its borders. Though the British Airways flight landed with only crew members and cargo, airport staff and personnel were on full alert as the plane touched down.

This scene came together thanks to Ambassador Calvin Ayre and his foundation, as they chartered a private BA1157 cargo flight, packed with over 30 tons of medical

equipment and supplies.

At the official handing over on Saturday, May 16, 2020, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry, EnaDalso-Henry along with Director of Pharmaceutical Services within the Ministry, Alfred Athill accepted the timely donation which is said to be worth over four (4) million dollars.

Packed in the privately chartered cargo flight, originating out of Hong Kong, China where disposable gloves; N95 masks; full-length shields; surgical



Ministry of Health P.S. EnaDalso-Henry conveys thanks to Jamilla Kirwan and Corina Delowsky of the Calvin Ayre Foundation.

gowns and forehead temperature thermometers. These items form apart of critical gear for medical workers known as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), items needed while working with COVID-19 patients or suspected patients.

In handing over the items to the Ministry of Health, Media Relations Specialist for the Ayre group, Jamil-

la Kirwan said, "We feel that it is important that the people who are risking their lives protecting us, those on the front line, deserved to be protected. We commend them, we applaud them for all the hard work that they have been doing in helping us to manage this COVID-19 pandemic and so we think that it is our duty as good corporate cit-

cont'd on pg 7



Permanent Secretary within the Ministry, Mrs. EnaDalso-Henry along with Director of Pharmaceutical Services within the Ministry, Mr. Alfred Athill

Form RLNC 6

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
THE REGISTERED LAND ACT, CAP 374

Section 34
of the
Act

REGISTRATION SECTION

BLOCK

PARCEL

CASSADA GARDENS
& NEW WINTHORPES

42 1893 B

297

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO REPLACE LOST LAND CERTIFICATE

TAKE NOTICE that an application was filed in the Land Registry on the day of January, 2020 by Peyton J. V. Knight, Attorney-At-Law of Peyton J. V. Knight & Associates of Upper Newgate Street, Saint John Parish, Antigua on behalf of Ramdei Lall the Applicant herein for the replacement of Land Certificate # RL-201301227 dated the day of 20..... issued to Ramdei Lall, being the owner of the above-mentioned property, which has been lost or destroyed.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that anyone who objects to the issue of a new Land Certificate or who has knowledge of the original Land Certificate must within the period of one (1) month from the Second Publication of this notice in the newspaper inform the Registrar of Lands in writing.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that in the absence of any objection or information as to the existence of the original Land Certificate within the time specified the Registrar of Lands may proceed to cancel the original Land Certificate and issue a new Land Certificate in its place without further notice.

Dated the 15th day of Jan, 2020


Registrar of Lands

Antiguan student excels at US university

An Antiguan student, who is a Prime Minister Scholarship recipient, has won a top award for graduating top of her class at the prestigious, Howard University in Washington, D.C, the United States capital.

Danique Nailah Lynzi Jordan is being congratulated for being awarded the Henry Adams Medal of Excellence from Howard University Washington DC. Danique received the medal in the University's online graduation ceremony held Friday May 15, 2020. She graduated with a Bachelor in Architecture from University's College of Engineering and Architecture.

Danique graduated from Baptist Academy as the Top CSEC student in 2015 and is a Prime Minister Scholar-

ship recipient. She is the daughter of Heatherlyn Millett and Daniel Jordan (Barbados).

For more than a century, the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) has provided a medal of excellence to the top graduating students in National Architectural Accreditation Board or Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) accredited degrees, Bachelors of Architecture, Master of Architecture and Doctor of Architecture.

The award is named in honor of Henry Adams (1838 -1918) a historian who donated his book, Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres, and eventually the royalties from his book to the AIA.

In 2018, a new medal and process was



Danique Nailah Lynzi Jordan

announced that aligns with the original 1914 that established the award.



cont'd from pg 6

izens, to play our role and we encourage others to do the same."

In an earlier statement made by Chairman of the CAF, Ambassador Ayre noted his foundation was happy to assist. "We are truly happy to be in a position to assist the government and citizens of Antigua and Barbuda, and especially the brave people on the front line," Ayre added, "these

are the people who risk their lives to protect others and we feel it is our duty to ensure that they are adequately protected."

Accepting the donation on behalf of the health ministry, P. S Henry articulated her ministry's gratitude for the medical supplies. She said, "I think I speak for the entire ministry when I say we can all rest a little more comfortable knowing that we have a safe supply of

equipment and PPE for our frontline workers."

As reported in a previous print of PointeXpress, the CAF also donated some twenty (20) high tech laptops to the health ministry for data collection and reporting. The health ministry's permanent secretary used the opportunity on Saturday, to thank the foundation for the technological boost as well, citing that this will aid them to keep abreast

of technology since everything is being done remotely now. "I want you to convey to Ambassador Calvin Ayre, our heartfelt appreciation," P.S Henry declared during the handing over ceremony.

A team from the Calvin Ayre Foundation including, Corina Delowsky - Executive Director for the Calvin Ayre Foundation were also in attendance at Saturday's inaugural cargo flight landing.

Secondary schools reopen to prepare for CSEC exams

Teaching and administrative staff at secondary schools in Antigua and Barbuda are heading back to work this morning, spending today and tomorrow preparing for a limited resumption of classes beginning on Wednesday, 20th May 2020.

That is when Fifth Form and other students enrolled to write CSEC Examinations this year will return to school in order to prepare, after weeks of closure in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Major and multiple re-scheduling of school terms and examination timetables have been put in place to facilitate a resumption of face-to-face interactions for students to complete their school-based assessments or SBAs on which a significant portion of their final examination grading depends.

Director of Education Clare Browne explained that “the Ministry realized we must find a way to continue the education of our CSEC students and our CAPE stu-

dents, having them to complete their SBAs; as having to complete SBA’s would certainly require some face-to-face situation.”

Browne elaborated that “the current academic year, third term, would come to an end on the 26th of June. The 4K to Fourth Form, we are asking them to continue operating in the remote learning environment. For the CSEC students – Fifth Form and other students – we are seeking to clear the way for schools (the physical facilities) to reopen as of the 18th of May.”

But students are not required to be at the schools today and tomorrow, Browne explained: “We are expecting principals and teachers and other staff members to be at school, organizing for the receipt of students. On Wednesday, we are hoping that the students can begin going back to their respective secondary institutions.”

CSEC Exams this year will run from the 29th June to the 17th of July.

Every student will be provided with a package containing hand sanitizer and a face mask, but parents have been asked to step in and supplement this with an additional supply of hand sanitizer and tissue as part of their children’s provisions from home.

Parents and others have further been warned that

they must not try to visit schools, whether to accompany or see their children, or to have discussions with staff in order to avoid any compromise of social distancing. They are instead encouraged to use the telephone for communication.

“We are encouraging persons, do not visit schools if you do not really have to,” said E. Jonah-Greene, deputy director of education. “It would put additional strain on the school administration to engage visitors. Make an appointment. We are happy to speak to you via phone ... However, when it becomes absolutely necessary that there has to be visitation into schools, you would have to follow the protocols ... We will not allow any visitors into our classrooms.”

Parents have also been asked to keep their children at home once they are observed or suspected to be displaying any sign of illness. All students, upon arrival at school will have their temperatures checked at the point of entry, before proceeding to hand-washing and sanitizing stations that have reportedly been set up at schools in preparation.

Students are further asked to bring snacks and drinking water with them, as school cafeterias will remain closed and vendors will not be permitted to operate anywhere nearby.

Form RLNC 6

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
THE REGISTERED LAND ACT, CAP 374

Section 34
of the
Act

REGISTRATION SECTION BLOCK PARCEL

CASSADA GARDENS & NEW WINTHORPES 42 1893 B 35

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO REPLACE LOST LAND CERTIFICATE

TAKE NOTICE that an application was filed in the Land Registry on the 2nd day of January, 2020 by Peyton J. V. Knight, Attorney-At-Law of Peyton J. V. Knight & Associates of Upper Newgate Street, Saint John Parish, Antigua on behalf of Drupattie Motilall the Applicant herein for the replacement of Land Certificate # RL-201803719 dated the 25th day of September, 2019 issued to Drupattie Motilall, being the owner of the above-mentioned property, which has been lost or destroyed.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that anyone who objects to the issue of a new Land Certificate or who has knowledge of the original Land Certificate must within the period of one (1) month from the Second Publication of this notice in the newspaper inform the Registrar of Lands in writing.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that in the absence of any objection or information as to the existence of the original Land Certificate within the time specified the Registrar of Lands may proceed to cancel the original Land Certificate and issue a new Land Certificate in its place without further notice.

Dated the 9th day of January, 2020


Registrar of Lands

Teachers celebrate amid COVID-19

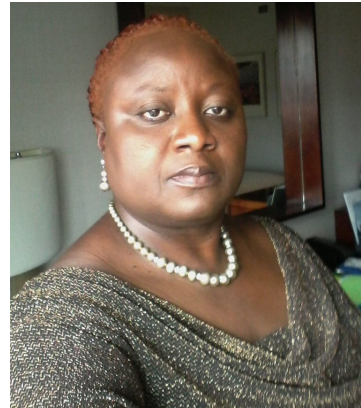
Teachers across Antigua and Barbuda are taking time out to celebrate and to acknowledge their contributions to nation building in the annual Teachers Week activities.

But Teachers Week 2020 is like no other; as teaching like practically all professions has been severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

General Secretary, Annetta Alexander-Hunt, said the theme of the week is

‘Transforming education through empowerment and capacity-building’. Some of the highlights of the week include media appearances, a virtual workshop, ‘a state of the union’ address by acting president, Tashena Fredrick, and an appreciation dinner where seventeen awardees will be honoured for long-service to the profession.

There will not be election during the week to se-



General Secretary, Annetta Alexander-Hunt

lect a permanent president following the sudden departure of Ashworth Azille

from the post last month.

Teachers have had to continue classes using social platforms since the entire education system grounded to a halt as the government imposed a state of emergency to stop the spread of the coronavirus in the country.

It is also during this week that some teachers are returning to the classroom to help prepare fifth form students to prepare the annual CSEC examinations.

Jamaica appoints honorary consul in Antigua and Barbuda

Former journalist, turned businesswoman, Onika Campbell, has been appointed by the Jamaican government as its honorary consul to Antigua and Barbuda.

The announcement comes from High Commissioner for Jamaica to Antigua and Barbuda, His Excellency Arthur Williams, who says the appointment of Campbell takes immediate effect.

Campbell, a multi award-winning journalist and former journalism lecturer, has been appointed to the post which became vacant in 2012 following the resignation of Attorney at Law, Septimus Rhudd.

The new honorary consul, who hails from the parish of Hanover in Jamaica, received her Writ of Commission from the Government of Jamaica in December 2019, and is charged with the Government’s mandate to protect the interests of Jamaica and Jamaican nationals, within the limits prescribed by international law, which includes;

- Processing documents, such as visa applications, passport applications and supporting documents and authenticating and transmitting official and legal documents
- Issuing of emergency travel documents to Jamaican nationals
- Issuing visas to foreign nationals wishing to visit to Jamaica
- Visiting and providing assistance, as appropriate to nationals who have been arrested or incarcerated
- Fostering friendly and mutually beneficially relations between Jamaica and Antigua and Barbuda through the promotion of tourism, trade and investment

Campbell has been resident in Antigua and Barbuda since 2003. She was once employed by the Observer Media Group and she also served as Public Relations Officer to the Ministry of Agriculture during the United Progressive Party Administration.

The Jamaican Consulate is located in the Obeez Complex Sir Sidney Walling Highway (Factory Rd). Per-



Former journalist, Onika Campbell

sons wishing to reach the Honorary Consul can call 734-5244 or visit them on facebook at Jamaican Consular Services in Antigua.

‘Time from Cabinet boosted me in constituency’ – Dean Jonas

The elected parliamentarian who was on Friday reinstated to the Cabinet of Ministers says he used the time away to reconnect with his constituents, and to engage in the reflection that the person who sacked him had requested.

Prime Minister Browne had stated that Jonas’s suspension from Cabinet was initially for a period of six months, but decided to re-admit the former deputy speaker back into the fold two months earlier.

“The last four months afforded me the opportunity to reconnect with members of my constituency. I’ve always been on the ground in the community, but at a much deeper level this time, and I took great advantage of that, so it was a big plus for me” Jonas said in an exclusive interview with PointeXpress following the brief swearing-in ceremony.

Jonas was accompanied by his wife, Ann, a former Permanent Secretary who is now the Governor General’s personal secretary.

“I wasn’t just sitting and twiddling my thumbs,” he quipped from behind his COVID mask, “I went out there and was continuing to work on the ground in my community.”

Asked whether he had learned any lessons from his times out of Cabinet, Jonas chuckled before replying, “Well, patience is one, and you have to learn to give and take. That was one of the takeaways. As I said, it was a time for me to reflect, but I wasn’t just sitting down waiting for things to happen.

“I went out there in my community and listened to the people and interacted with them. I provided for them wherever I had the ability or the opportunity to so do.”



Social Transformation Minister Dean Jonas

Jonas believes his support base in St. George has increased over the last four months as a consequence of how he spent and used his period of Cabinet exile. “I fully aim to continue to increase on it; strengthen myself in the community.”

The agriculture ministry contains tremendous potential to spur national growth and development, Jonas opined. “I think agriculture can be a key contributor to the overall economy, and that was my aim. Many of the persons within the Ministry of Agriculture are technocrats, they’re scientists.

“Many of them are trained agronomists and this sort of thing. But the key shortcoming within the Ministry is the business side of agriculture. Running a farm is a business, and that is one of the key messages that I tried to drive home. I don’t know if it got through, but I am hoping that

it will.”

Concerning the allegations about his interpersonal skills and personal integrity, Jonas said there was never any wrong doing on his part.

“I will always have a toxic relationship with people who are lazy, people who don’t work, people who do not perform. I don’t make any apology for that at all. Once you do your work, once you perform to the best of your ability and according to your level and qualifications, you will have no problems working with me.

“As a matter of fact you will have a very good working relationship with me. I am a team player and it shows throughout my community, and I will bring it bear again within this new Ministry. The accusations were false and the matter is dead now.”

The term Blue Economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, employment generation and improvement of livelihoods while maintaining the health of marine ecosystems.

As an economic development policy, it has been collectively embraced by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) with a Strategy and Action Plan developed by the OECS Commission in collaboration with the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

Upon taking office following her party’s clean sweep of all 30 seats in the general elections of May 2018, Barbados’ Prime Minister Mia Mottley appointed one of her more youthful Cabinet members, Kirk Humphrey, to be the Minister for Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy – a first time appointment, now seemingly emulated in Antigua and Barbuda.

Did House Speaker Sir Gerald fall to Pringle's orchestrated plot?

By Political Watcher

It's clear, if not pellucid, that the Opposition Leader came to Parliament last Thursday with a sinister plot to be disruptive, disrespectful and downright rude.

Jamale Pringle's dubious rant about being unfairly treated by the House Speaker Sir Gerald Watt, QC, was a red herring intended for it to be: as distraction to cause attention.

His sole mean spirited objective was to deflect attention from the mountain of criticism he has been receiving for childishness not accepting to sit on the national Economic Recovery Committee (ERC).

So, along with so-called advisors, they hatched a plan to use the House of Representatives as the playground for their nonsensical act of deception. Sadly, it now appears as if Sir Gerald got caught in their ploy and Pringle's behaviour reduced the highest court in the country to a verbal brawl befitting of a rum shop.

He was primed by his puppet masters to disregard the Standing Orders in an attempt to agitate the Speaker to allow him to whimsically address his refusal to serve on the ERC under agenda item: Personal Explanation.

When Sir Gerald rightfully indicated he could not do so he reluctantly took his seat as the proceedings continued uninterrupted.

After Prime Minister Gaston Browne tabled the resolution to extend by sixty days the current state of emergency to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, the Speaker asked for debate.

But by then, we suspect those who were pulling his string were working overtime on whatsapp and texting furiously that he should use his next opportunity to attack the Speaker.

So Pringle rose to ostensibly present his response but with nothing to contribute to the motion he went after the Speaker in a way unimaginable.

Even when Sir Gerald stood on his feet to caution the unruly member did Pringle respect the chair. He continued his tirade at Speaker spouting accusations that he could not substantiate or corroborate.

Maybe if Sir Gerald had allowed him to spew his verbal garbage then there would not have been any fallout. But that would have been tantamount to allowing a member to disrespect the chair with impunity with no redress.

And although the Speaker requested an apology, mindful of him being the only opposition voice in the House and that his contribution to the motion was needed, Pringle couldn't care less.

He demonstrated like an errant messenger who did

not know or remember his lines when asked to carry a task beyond his capacity.

Pringle conveniently used Sir Gerald's ultimatum that he should apologise or leave the sitting for the rest of the day to storm out of the Chambers with his tail firmly between his legs. His uncouth behaviour was unbecoming and completely out-of-order.

His inexperience of parliamentary procedure and his political naivety were laid bare as was his well-orchestrated puppetry.

It's one thing to brag before your media of choice

that you are outspoken and unduly influenced but it's another thing to display statesmanlike discipline when you are under pressure.

And the pressure took its toll. His heated temper tantrum would sit squarely with a toddler who was refused a lollipop.

Blindly his political sycophants have been gloating that he was right "to stand his ground".

If Pringle, and that's a big 'if', is going to recover from this political fallout he would be well-advised to tread cautiously where fools rush in.

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, 18th May 2020

Time: 09:30AM - 11:30 AM

Affected areas: Leewind Paints Factory and Water Reservoir at Powells

Date: Tuesday, 19th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of Airport Rd. north of Ace Enterprise & south of Dee Service station.

Date: Wednesday, 20th May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Freetown, Halfmoon Bay, Mill Reef & Browne Bay areas.

Date: Thursday, 21st May 2020

Time: 08:30AM - 1:00 PM

Affected areas: Section of Johnson Point near the clinic.

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.



Lost Files capture hidden Antiguan soca tunes

By Colin James

There is now a new opportunity for the promotion of Antigua and Barbuda's soca music.

US-born DJ, Reckless Music, who's based in New York City, has just released *Lost Files*, a compilation of some top soca hits from Antigua's Carnival 2019, produced by Limerz Inc, a US-based company.

They have been hidden under the radar but they have now been brought to the forefront.

There are thirty-two tunes that will keep us dancing and jamming and help to reminisce on Carnival when this year's festival has been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These include artists like former soca monarch King Hard Knaxs, Kimmy, K- Lee, AC Tafari, Young Lyrics, and Leon Norville.

"I believe in giving them the opportunity to shine on our biggest platforms for the world to see," said DJ Reckless, real name, Brandon Williams.

It is so refreshing to find a DJ with a passion for Antiguan soca music. He wears this pride on his sleeves and he believes that Antiguan soca music matches the levels of music of any Caribbean island. He believes the music just needs an outlet to the world to experience and listen to the sound.

Having grown-up in NYC with Antiguan parents, Reckless' appetite was wetted for music from his ancestry. He would come to Antigua for Carnival yearly and he undoubtedly loved the music. Antigua Carnival represented for him the best summer festival.

As a DJ he felt proud to represent Antigua everywhere he went.

"I fly my flag high every chance I

get. I want people around me and the world to know, "Hey!!! Ah Antigua mi come From!"

His goal is to see Antigua music atop of the industry,

"I feel in the social media world that we live in, Antiguan music is only given 15 to 45 seconds to prove its worth," he bemoaned.

"And that's a total injustice to the art form and the hard work these artists

"As a DJ representing Antiguan music, we have to be able to give our artist an opportunity to shine way past the summer carnival festival."

put into the music. I can remember numerous summers going to Antigua for carnival and everyone singing, jamming, and loving the music.

"Then by the end of August, the same songs are no longer being played on radio or being talked about on social media.

"As a DJ representing Antiguan music, we have to be able to give our artist an opportunity to shine way past the summer carnival festival.

"For this reason, I created this mix to give people a taste of some of the talents representing the island of Antigua. We need to give the artist and their music a chance to reach others on a more global level. I created the *Lost Files*, with the intention to highlight artists who give their all to the music form but may sometimes go overlooked.

"Antigua has some good artists with really good music that needs to be highlighted and featured.

"As a DJ, if we don't tell our stories, who will? That's what *The Lost Files* is all about! Telling our story through music. I took over 30 songs from carnival 2019 and created a music playlist I know everyone will enjoy and gave these artists and their music a second chance.

"The hope is that some of these artists will gain new fans, new followers and more opportunities to put Antigua on the forefront of the SOCA Music Industry."

The *lost Files*, music from Antigua's carnival 2019 were released only last week and it is already a buzz on social media.

With a unique approach, Reckless Music has taken the lead by exposing some of the missing gems that you might have missed or never heard during the carnival season.

"I must admit that I missed some of these songs during carnival 2019 and was not aware of some of these artists he featured on this mix," he confessed.

"It is truly a good blend of groovy and power tracks that will keep you bouncing and before you know it the mix is over. I can only imagine if more of us had this type of passion for our music, where the future will lead us!!

Reckless Music took a risk and he has delivered what he considers to be "a gem."

His goal is to take Antigua soca music to a higher level. His mission on this mix was to give the unknown voices a voice. It looks like his mission has now been accomplished.

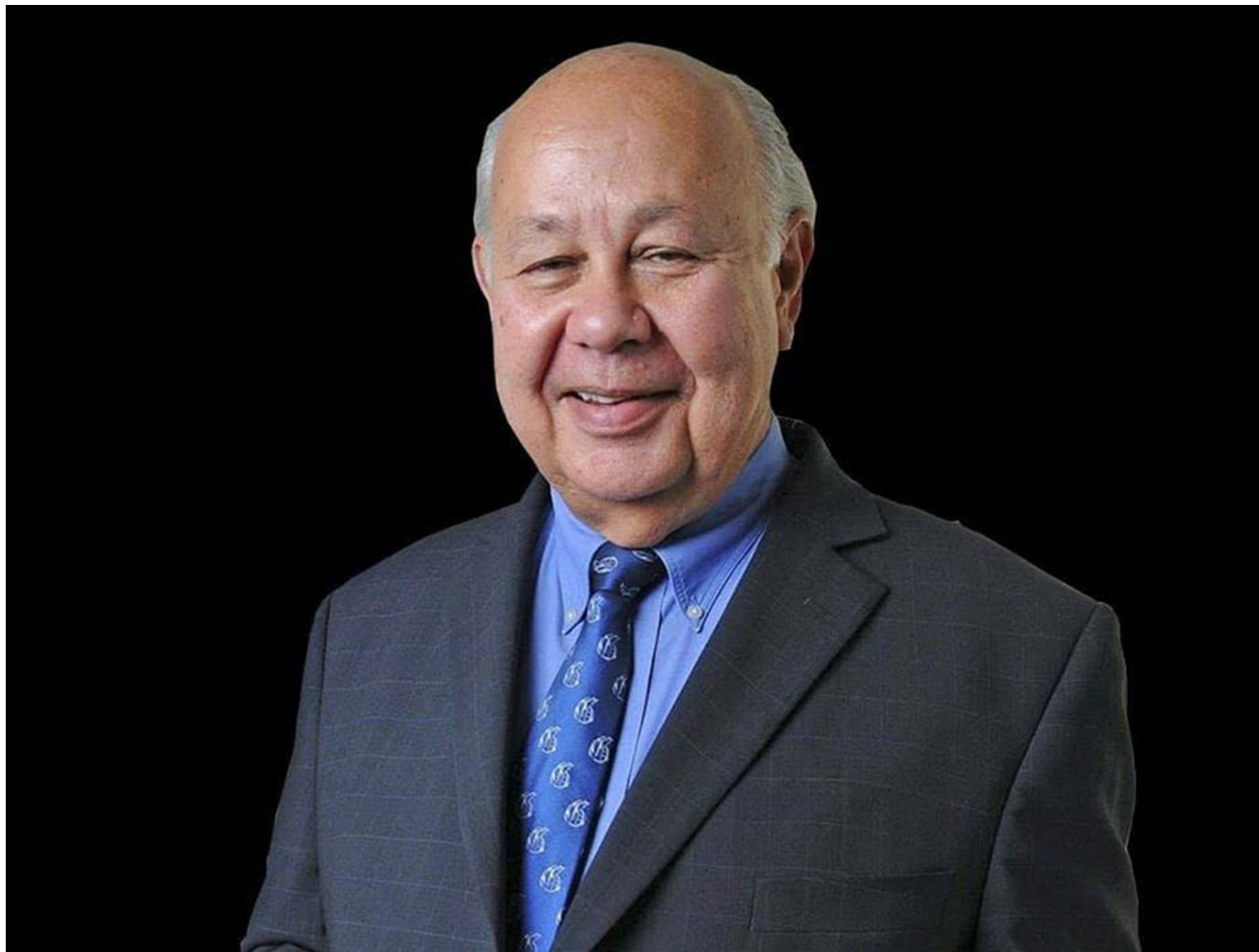
Listen out for future releases by Reckless Music.

FACEBOOK: Brandon Williams

IG: reckless_music

SoundCloud/Reckless268

Tribute to Oliver Clarke



*By Professor Sir Hilary Beckles,
Vice-Chancellor of The University of the West Indies (The UWI).*

Any tribute to Oliver Clarke should depart from his renowned trademark; the sharp, critical mind, spiced with a mischievous “wicked wit” and gentle charm of character. So deeply embedded were these effervescent elements it’s now challenging imagining the end of Oliver’s innings at the wicket.

In recent years he batted brilliantly for The University of the West Indies. There were several invitations to his famed Gleaner breakfast meetings to share and discuss

The UWI’s strategies and resource needs with stakeholders. We appreciated the many meals over which we mulled over the details of our strategic plan. OFC came on board to support our industry-academic partnership and our preparations to take The UWI to market in search of private sector investment.

A high point in proof of our partnering came in 2018. His commitment was tested. He rose beyond the parameters of our request, and offered us the opportunity

for the University to showcase its enormous legacy during its 70th anniversary. The University was offered full editorial freedom over a Gleaner supplement that enabled it to tell its story and to project its thinking about the future.

Oliver didn’t suffer foolishness in his rush to support and promote good works. In this regard, he was an effective advisor, and a reliable ally. Private business was his life and hallmark. The University, he urged, should build a two-way

bridge to business. We were bonded in our commitment to this project.

And what a gentleman. No dinner or lunch to which he was invited went by for long without the host receiving a card of appreciation. I shall miss this hugely misunderstood man.

And so, far too soon, the “wicked wit” man left the wicket. What an outstanding innings played for his family, country and region!

COVID-19: A catalyst for entrepreneurship Series:

The creative mecca of COVID-19 through fashion

By Angelica O'Donoghue

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had an immense impact on almost every revenue-generating business in the world.

Internationally, major fashion houses, retail stores, and textile companies have faced devastating economic turmoil as the COVID-19 pandemic unleashes a catastrophic financial downturn. According to the 'Fashion Revolution' organization, "Retailers are shutting their doors around the world." While Bloomberg reports that about "1,089 garment factories in Bangladesh have had orders cancelled worth roughly \$1.5 billion due to the coronavirus outbreak."

However, in the face of adversity, creativity and adaptation evolve.

This week's entrepreneur feature embodies this mantra. Fashion school graduate, Launesha Barnes speaks on how she has managed to use her discipline to traverse the challenges COVID-19 has brought to Antigua and Barbuda.

Launesha creates fashionable, trendy, and textile masks as a personal protective gear for persons seeking to be out and about in the public.

Since the start of the country's instituted a state of emergency, wearing masks while in public became a mandatory safety measure



Launesha Barnes

issued by the government. It is here, Launesha saw an avenue for her particular skill-set.

The young fashion designer said she has always had an interest in finding ways to

mitigate problems through designing and creating. "I've always been a creative person; I knew from very young that I NEEDED to work in a creative field. I channel cre-

Cont'd on pg 15





ativity in different ways and I always felt strongly, that I was born to share that with the rest of the world. In a nutshell, I go by the mantra: using the within to create the without. It drives me; coming up with different ways of problem-solving and different avenues to reinvent or to invent!" Launesha commented.

Barnes, who studied fashion in Trinidad and Tobago reflected on how she had to reintegrate herself in Antigua after returning from school to maneuver around other businesses which were into fashion as well.

Starting with no capital injection, Launesha who operates a fashion house called TAOTM said, "I pretty much started with what I had which wasn't much. One thing we were taught in design school is to be resourceful, you can start with nothing and an idea, it comes down to how you plan on executing that idea."

Conversely, Launesha indicated that as a small business, she too is affected by

COVID-19 in both good, and bad ways. "2020, was a great start for me, things were starting to pick up, and there were a few projects I had taken on. With the onset of COVID, things have slowed to a near halt and I've had to put a few of those earlier projects on the backburner. However, I've resorted to making and selling masks as they are now in

demand."

Though the young fashion designer is capitalizing on the demand for her products, she explains that it does come with some psychological impacts. "The psychological repercussions of the demand can sometimes take a toll on me, as it not only presents itself as another opportunity to make some money but what we're making it for. Sometimes the thought of the "why" is what gets to me, making masks becomes a task because the situation sometimes feels so dire and we don't know when it will end. They go beyond the fashion statement and become function and necessity, and I think about that every time I make a new mask. I think about the person wearing it, I think about how easily it spreads and I think about what else can we do to protect ourselves." Launesha said.

The emphatic business

owner says she also "thinks about other small business owners and how they are coping." Launesha is advising other budding entrepreneurs to stay positive through these unprecedented times. In her message to aspiring business owners, she articulated "go for a walk. Breathe, meditate, think deeply about where you are now, and where you want to be. Drink water, stay hydrated. Practice safety measures. These are the things we can control now, the pandemic is beyond our control, but we can control how we view ourselves within this pandemic. The upcoming weeks are going to be hard, and that's the reality, but if we keep our eye on our future goals, maintain a positive mindset and healthy habits, we can get through it. And if any of those things are difficult to do, reach out to someone. Speak your truth. Work through it."



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

On the road
Keep the windows open, if possible. You could also consider wearing gloves as a precaution as well as washing your hands before and after driving.

COVID-19: Driver Safety Tips

WASH
LAVAR

DRIVE SAFELY

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

IMF Predicts Economic Growth of 6.25% for Grenada in 2021



Dr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is predicting economic growth of 6.25% for Grenada in 2021.

The projection is contained in the latest IMF Country Report on Grenada, issued after the IMF Executive Board recently approved the disbursement of US \$22.4 million for Grenada under the Rapid Credit Facility, to help the country deal with the economic impact of COVID-19.

In its report, the IMF noted that Grenada's economy "enjoyed

a favorable multi-year macro-economic performance prior to the COVID-19 outbreak", with growth averaging "almost 5 percent in 2014-19, well above the 20-year historical average of 2¾ percent".

The report identified tourism, construction and agriculture as the sectors that supported this growth and it acknowledged that prior to the pandemic, "Grenada's key macro-economic indicators were expected to remain broadly at 2019 levels."

While revised projections suggest a sharp decline in growth given the considerable impact on tourism, the IMF said, "the projections assume a modest recovery beginning in Q4 2020 leading to a perceptible rebound in 2021, when the economy is projected to grow by about 6¼ percent". The IMF report also noted that "given the strong prior fiscal position, the Government financing situation looks manageable if the fiscal liquidity is well-protected and extreme shock scenarios do not

materialize". Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Dr. the Right Honorable Keith Mitchell has welcomed the IMF projections saying, "it is reflective of the level of confidence in Grenada's economy and the country's future, based both on Government's management of the economy and the level of economic activity that is expected, primarily in the construction sector with several major public and private sector investments underway, as we re-open that sector for activities."

Jamaica: Bring Them Home... PNP Wants Shipworkers Repatriated



Opposition spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Lisa Hanna

The People's National Party (PNP) is putting pressure on the Government to address plans for some 1,044 Jamaican ship workers to land in Falmouth tomorrow.

The crew members are aboard the Royal Caribbean cruise liner — Adventure of the Seas, which is now en route to Jamaica.

PNP Chairman Fitz Jackson told a media briefing on Sunday, that some stranded ship workers and their families reached out to the party for help.

“All other countries in the region have put the necessary plans in place and accepted their nationals back to their respective homeland. Jamaica is the

only country that has so far failed to do similarly,” Jackson said.

Jackson called on the Government to immediately put arrangements in place to ensure that the Jamaicans are allowed to disembark upon fulfilling health protocols.

“Even at this late stage, there are safe and secure arrangements that can be implemented,” said Jackson, who is also the Opposition spokesman on national security.

“We demand that our fellow Jamaicans now in distress and uncertainty be allowed to join their families and loved ones here in Jamaica,” he added.

Meanwhile, Opposition

spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Lisa Hanna, questioned whether proper logistics are in place to receive the nationals. She underscored that it was the Government's responsibility to ensure the safe repatriation of those aboard.

“In this time, we're not seeing certain people as a part of this. If you'll remember when the earthquake happened in Haiti, the Jamaican army was sent to Haiti to help the Haitian Government deal with logistics in that crisis. Why hasn't the army been called out now? Who is managing the protocols here? These are questions the Jamaican

people really need to ask. Where's the Red Cross? Where's the Social Development Commission?” Hanna questioned.

Hanna demanded answers on whether the incoming ship has been granted permission to sail into Jamaican waters because “we are hearing that they have not been given permission just yet”.

“It almost appears as if the Government, or this particular Government, with our nationals, that's a pattern is emerging because somehow when our nationals are overseas, they seem to be forgotten about; we have to start caring for our people better than this,” Hanna insisted.

Trinidad's Public Utilities Minister resigns – PM Rowley accepts

Trinidad and Tobago's Public Utilities Minister Robert Le Hunte has resigned. Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley has accepted the resignation of Senator Le Hunte, who is also vice-chairman of the Road to Recovery Committee tasked with resetting the country economy post-COVID-19.

The resignation letter is dated Friday (May 15).

The resignation follows a conflict that arose during last Thursday's Cabinet meeting. The Communications Ministry issued a statement this afternoon, confirming the resignation.

The statement read:

Prime Minister accepts resignation of Robert Le Hunte The Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley accepted the resignation of Minister of Public Utilities Robert Le Hunte.

The resignation became effective yesterday, 16 May 2020.

The Prime Minister is in the process of making the necessary adjustments consequent to Mr. Le Hunte's resignation.

Who is Robert Le Hunte?

Senator Robert Le Hunte assumed the portfolio as Minister of Public Utilities in September 2017.

Prior to his appointment as Minister, Senator Le Hunte has been a career banker for



Senator Robert Le Hunte

more than 30 years, the majority of which was spent at the Managerial and Executive levels. His career at Republic Bank culminated in his appointment to the Executive Director level in 2016, where he was charged with the responsibility of executing the bank's African Continent expansion strategy, a role he held just prior to opting for early retirement.

Other notable highlights during his career with Republic Bank include his appointments as Managing

Director of the then Barbados National Bank, now Republic Bank (Barbados) Limited, and Managing Director of HFC Bank (Ghana) Limited.

Le Hunte holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Manchester, and a Master of Science Degree in Accounting from the University of the West Indies, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. He has also partici-

pated in the Advanced Management Program at Harvard University.

Le Hunte has also made time for national interests, by serving on a number of Boards, including the National Flour Mills, National Feed Mills, the Environmental Management Authority and National Initiative for Service Excellence, Barbados. He also served as President of both the Caribbean Association of Indigenous Banks, and the Barbados Bankers Association.

UWI Caribbean Students Feel Trapped, Abandoned In Ja

Caribbean students still stuck at The University of the West Indies, Mona, are anxious to get home as the coronavirus pandemic continues to wreak havoc across the globe. They also fear that their extended stay on campus could result in them having to fork out more payment for dorm rooms, putting further pressure on their dwindling financial resources. Two students from St Vincent and the Grenadines, whose identities The Sunday Gleaner is protecting out of a general fear among Vincentians that they could lose scholarships for speaking out, have said that they feel let down by their government in how it is communicating with them and how plans for their return home are being handled. David Bentley* numbers among roughly 200 students believed to have remained on campus since the suspension of physical classes in March as Jamaica recorded its first coronavirus case. "COVID-19 has created a spirit of anxiety in me," he told The Sunday Gleaner last week. "Being locked in now because you have to has produced the psychological feeling that you are trapped." Now one of the last occupants of his dorm as Jamaican students were given notice to vacate several halls within hours of news that classes would be suspended, Bentley said the uncertainty surrounding transportation arrangements have added to his anxiety. Jamaica and several other Caribbean countries have closed their borders to incoming passenger traffic as part of efforts to contain the deadly pandemic. However, special arrangements have been made by some governments to bring home stranded citizens to mixed reaction.

"Initially, contact was not made to us by the government," the Vincentian said. "It was after a while when people realised things were getting serious ... that we reached out to the honorary consul as to what could be done, but it wasn't until late that the government got truly involved." In a letter earlier this month, St Vincent and the Grenadines Honorary Consul to Jamaica, June Barbour, told the stranded students wanting to return home amid the coronavirus that they would each have to pay more than US\$1,330 for a return charter flight, warning that the airfare could increase if there are fewer than 56 students making the journey. Bentley and other students found the price quoted by the Antigua-based regional airline, LIAT, of which St Vincent and the Grenadines is a shareholder, to be exorbitant, given the limited resources they had. This has left some parents to be desperately trying to organise their own transportation home. However, there is no official word on departure dates due to ongoing dialogue in regard to the reopening of different countries' borders. "I think that the government did not do enough ... in terms of early communication," Bentley said. "If we were communicated with, ... then we would have understood. [Initially,] we listened to the prime minister's delivery of the country's stimulus package; nothing was mentioned about us. We had awaited further correspondence from the National Student Loan Company, and nothing was said. Only one email came that told us to continue washing our hands."

STUCK IN LIMBO

Deborah Wisdom*, another



A student walks towards the Main Library at The University of the West Indies, Mona, in this August 2018 Gleaner photo.

Vincentian student, echoed this frustration. "Personally, I am not in agreement with the plans that have been made to fly us home. The time period in which they would like to send the flight is not the best for me, neither was the cost. There has also been a lot of tug of war regarding what airline we would be taking," she said. "Flights should be scheduled for next Tuesday and Thursday, but the flights would only leave if enough persons are able to go." The students said they have been adopting different strategies to ease their anxiety.

For Bentley, writing journal entries, listening to music, exercising and watching plays have helped him through the often-lonely experience. On the other hand, Wisdom has found that being involved in her studies takes her mind off the pandemic. Other Caribbean nationals have also expressed worry even as they rally together to keep their spirits up during the pandemic.

Lisa, a St Lucian student, has expressed that she has grown closer with her fellow colleagues on campus. "We have tried to band together during this time by engaging in different activities such as exercising, cooking and studying together.

I also keep frequent contact with my family and friends who are back home Their support definitely keeps me going," she told The Sunday Gleaner.

She is hoping that she will be able to return home sooner rather than later as news of the pandemic can be unnerving.

"I think what unsettles me most is the media. There are so many stories surrounding this virus that it is very easy to fall prey to those that incite fear and panic, which I, too, have felt from time to time

"My biggest fear about this crisis is the fact that it does not discriminate," Lisa added, although she is happy that the St Lucian government has made contact with her.

Conversely, Jennifer, a Barbadian student, has not found solace with these sentiments.

"My fear is that the date for the borders to reopen keeps being pushed back, which prevents me from returning home," she lamented. "My challenge with remaining on campus is the uncertainty of whether or not the university will charge me for my extended stay. There has been talk about us being charged, but no one can either confirm or deny."

Iran warns US against disrupting fuel shipments to Venezuela

Iran's foreign minister on Sunday warned the United States against deploying its navy in the Caribbean to disrupt Iranian fuel shipments to Venezuela. According to an oil shipment analyst, five Iranian-flagged tankers loaded with tens of millions of dollars worth of fuel are heading towards Venezuela.

In a letter to United Nations chief Antonio Guterres, Mohammad Javad Zarif warned against "America's movements in deploying its navy to the Caribbean in order to intervene and create disruption in [the] transfer of Iran's fuel to Venezuela".

He said any such action would be "illegal and a form of piracy" adding the US would be responsible for "the consequences", according to a foreign ministry statement.

A senior official in US President Donald Trump's administration told Reuters news agency on Thursday that the US was considering measures it could take in response to Iran's shipment of fuel to crisis-stricken Venezuela.

Iran's Fars News reported on Saturday it received information that four US Navy warships are in the Caribbean for a "possible confrontation with Iran's tankers".

Zarif's deputy summoned the Swiss ambassador, who represents Washington's interests in Tehran, to communicate Iran's "serious



In retaliation, the British-flagged oil tanker Stena Impero was seized in the Strait of Hormuz in July 2019 by the Revolutionary Guard [Morteza Akhoondi/Tasnim News Agency via AP]

warning" on Sunday. Abbas Araghchi said any potential threat to Iran's tankers would be met with a "quick and decisive response".

The US has imposed unilateral sanctions aimed at ending oil exports by both Iran and Venezuela, both major crude producers.

Five Iranian tankers likely carrying at least \$45.5m

worth of petrol and similar products are now sailing to Venezuela, part of a wider deal between the two US-sanctioned nations amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington. The tankers' voyage come after Venezuela's socialist leader Nicolas Maduro already turned to Iran for help in flying in chemicals needed at an

aging refinery amid a petrol shortage, a symptom of the wider economic and political chaos gripping Latin America's one-time largest oil producer.

For Iran, the tankers represent a way to bring money into its cash-starved country and put its own pressure on the US, which, under President Trump, has pur-

sued maximalist campaigns against both nations. But the strategy invites the chance of a renewed confrontation between the Islamic Republic and the US both in the Gulf, which saw a series of escalating incidents often involving the oil industry last year, and wider afield.

“This is like a new one for everyone,” said Captain Ranjith Raja, an analyst who tracks oil shipments by sea at the data firm Refinitiv, of the petrol shipments. “We haven’t seen anything like this before.”

All the vessels involved belong to Iranian state-owned or state-linked companies, flying under the Iranian flag. Since a pressure campaign on Iranian vessels began, notably with the temporary seizure of an Iranian tanker last year by Gibraltar, the country’s ships have been unable to fly flags of convenience of other nations, a common practice in international shipping.

The ships all appear to have been loaded from the Persian Gulf Star Refinery near Bandar Abbas, Iran, which makes petrol, Raja said. The ships then travelled around the Arabian Peninsula and through the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean Sea, according to data collected from the ship’s Automatic Identification System, or AIS, which acts as a tracking beacon.

Given the crushing US sanctions imposed on Iran, also-sanctioned Venezuela appears to be a country that would have nothing to lose from accepting the shipments.

Raja said Refinitiv had no

data on any Iranian petrol shipment ever going to South America before.

TankerTrackers.com, a website focused on the oil trade at sea, first reported the ships likely were heading to Venezuela.

The capacity of the five ships is some 175,000 metric tonnes. On the open market, the petrol and product carried within them would be worth at least \$45.5m, though Iran likely reached a discounted, non-cash deal with Caracas given the circumstances the two nations face, Raja said.

It remains unclear how the US will respond to the tankers. On Thursday, the US Treasury, State Department and Coast Guard issued an advisory warning the maritime industry of illegal shipping and sanctions-dodging tactics by countries including Iran. The advisory repeated an earlier promise of up to \$15m for information disrupting the Revolutionary Guard’s finances. It also warned anyone “knowingly engaged in a significant transaction for the purchase, acquisition, sale, transport or marketing of petroleum” faced US sanctions.

The US State Department and the Pentagon did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Analysts already have been warning about the growing chance for a renewed confrontation between the US and Iran.

In April, the US accused Iran of conducting “dangerous and harassing” manoeuvres near American warships in the northern Gulf.

Chinese ambassador to Israel is found dead in his home, Foreign Ministry says



Du Wei was married with one son.

China’s Ambassador to Israel, Du Wei, was found dead inside his official residence Sunday morning, a spokeswoman for Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs told CNN.

At this stage, the 57-year-old’s death is not being treated as suspicious.

Police are outside the ambassador’s residence in Herzliya -- to the north of Tel Aviv -- as part of standard procedure, the spokeswoman said. His death comes less than a week after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Jerusalem, openly criticizing China’s actions during the coronavirus pandemic, as well as calling on Israeli leaders to stop sign-

ing major infrastructure and communications deals with Chinese companies. There has been no comment on the ambassador’s death from the Chinese embassy in Israel or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing.

Ambassador Du assumed his current role in Israel in February 2020, according to the embassy’s webpage, as the coronavirus pandemic was sweeping across the globe. He wrote in an article in the Jerusalem Post in mid-March that he immediately had to enter two weeks of mandatory self-quarantine on his arrival.

Ambassador Du was married with one son.

US Federal Reserve chairman Powell warns downturn 'may last until late 2020'

Jerome Powell added in a CBS interview that a full rebound may not be possible until a vaccine for the virus is discovered.

Earlier this week, Mr Powell had called on US lawmakers to pass more economic stimulus and relief aid.

Over 36m Americans have filed for unemployment benefits since mid-March.

What did Powell say?

In an interview with CBS' 60 minutes, Mr Power said: "This is a time of great suffering and difficulty... you can't really put into words the pain people are feeling.

"This economy will recover. It may take a while," he said. "It could stretch through the end of next year. We really don't know."

He added that he expected the economy to "recover steadily through the second half of this year" - provided there was "not a second wave of the coronavirus".

But, he said, "for the economy to fully recover, people will have to be fully confident. And that may have to await the arrival of a vaccine."

He argued that "in the long run, and even in the medium run, you wouldn't want to bet against the American economy."

The US has already approved nearly \$3tn (£2.5tn) in new stimulus spending - packages worth an estimated 14% of the country's economy. The Fed has also taken radical steps to shore up the economy, pumping trillions of dollars into the financial system.

On Friday, Democrats in the House of Representatives passed an additional \$3tn coronavirus



The chairman of the US Federal Reserve has warned that the American economy may not recover from the coronavirus pandemic until late 2021.

relief package. However, it is not expected to pass the Republican-majority Senate, where leader Mitch McConnell has argued there is "no urgency" to act.

'States are safe to reopen'

Meanwhile, US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar has defended the decision by most states to begin lifting the lockdown measures.

He told CNN on Sunday that the decisions should be made by local leaders, because "in almost half of our reporting counties, we have had not a single death", and over 50% of cases came from just 2% of those counties.

He also said he disagreed with White House trade advisor Peter Navarro, who said earlier on Sun-

day that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "really let the country down with the testing".

"I don't believe the CDC let this country down," Mr Azar responded. "I believe the CDC serves an important public health role and what was always critical was to get the private sector to the table."

Test kits sent out to states by the CDC in February were found to be faulty, leading to criticism of the CDC's role in the crisis.

Mr Azar added that he was not concerned by images of people in bars not practicing social distancing.

"I think in any individual instance you are going to see peo-

ple doing things that are irresponsible," he said. "We've got to get this economy open and our people out and about, working and going to school again."

What is the current death toll?

There are more than 1.4m cases of Covid-19 in the US, and 89,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

On Saturday, Texas reported its largest one-day spike in new cases since the pandemic began, with 1,801 new infections.

It comes after the governor allowed all retail businesses to reopen on 1 May, but with restrictions on capacity.

Thirty-three more people died on Saturday, bringing the state-wide death toll to 1,305.

Obama tells graduating HBCU students to step up because leaders 'not even pretending to be in charge'

Former President Barack Obama urged graduating students from historically black colleges and universities to take charge as they step into the real world because, he said, if they want to see change, it won't come from current leaders.

Obama said the novel coronavirus pandemic has "more than anything ... fully, finally torn back the curtain on the idea that so many of the folks in charge know what they're doing."

"A lot of them aren't even pretending to be in charge," he added in his virtual commencement speech Saturday to HBCU students. The U.S. currently has by far the most confirmed cases and deaths due to the virus in the world. Polls have shown that a numeric high of 57% of Americans disapproved of how President Donald Trump has handled the pandemic.

Obama said that the virus also "just spotlights the underlying inequalities and extra burdens that black communities have historically had to deal with in this country."

Specifically, Obama mentioned

the disproportionate rate at which black people are dying from COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, and the recent killing of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old black man who was on a jog and encountered by Gregory and Travis McMichael, both white and armed with guns.

Obama did not mention Arbery by name, but said the injustices of the world were seen "when a black man goes for a jog, and some folks feel like they can stop and question and shoot him if he doesn't submit to their questioning."

He called on the graduates to be bold in their vision of the world.

"If the world's going to get better, it's going to be up to you," Obama said, later adding, "No generation has been better positioned to be warriors of justice and remake the world." His speech was part of a larger virtual event, titled "Show Me Your Walk, HBCU Edition." It was a two-hour virtual HBCU commencement program presented by Chase in partnership with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund,



His remarks were made during a virtual commencement speech.

the United Negro College Fund, the National Association for Equal Opportunity, the NBA, Paul Quinn College, Howard University and JPMorgan Chase's Advancing Black Pathways Initiative, according to the former president's office.

Obama applauded the students for choosing to attend an HBCU. He said that while they could have chosen any school in the country, they chose an HBCU to help them "sow seeds of change" and follow in the footsteps of those who "shook the system to its core," such

as Thurgood Marshall, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Toni Morrison and Spike Lee. He offered the class of 2020 three pieces of advice: use your voice in real communities at a grassroots level and not only online, work with allies and be active in leadership.

"So many of us believe in you," Obama said. "I'm so proud of you." Obama will also address the high school seniors of 2020 in a virtual speech at 8 p.m. ET on Saturday broadcast on ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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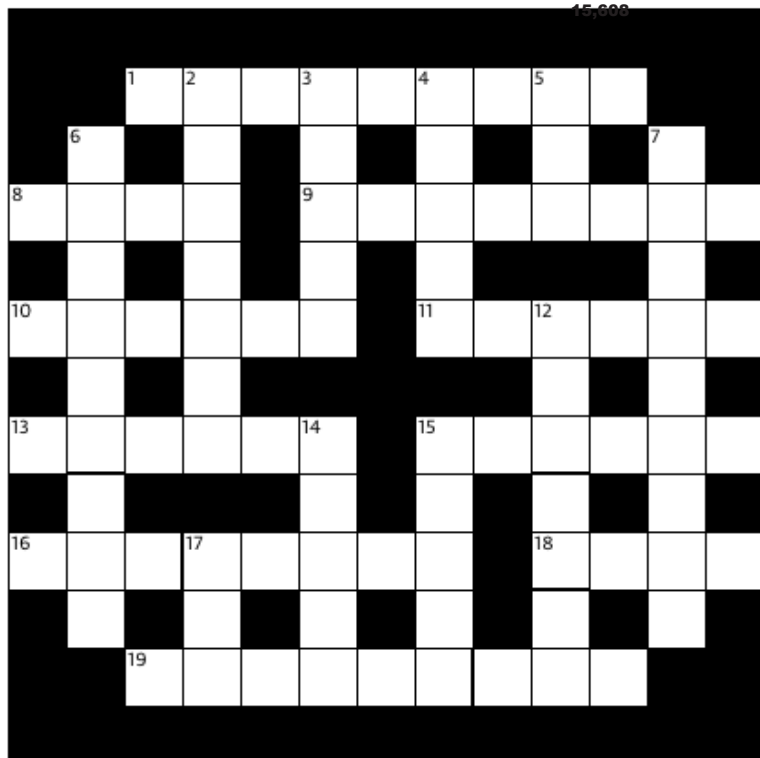
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QUICK CROSSWORD

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Across

- 1 Send to Coventry (9)
 8 French couturier, creator of the New Look in 1947 (4)
 9 Impetus gained by a moving object (8)
 10 Cease operating (3,3)
 11 Dead body (6)
 13 Change sides (6)
 15 Monkey (6)
 16 Last match in a knockout football competition (3,5)
 18 Consequently (4)
 19 Unpleasant conclusion (6,3)

Down

- 2 Dickens's miser (7)
 3 Terms of reference (5)
 4 Funny (5)
 5 Star round which we orbit (3)
 6 Calculate — fathom (6,3)
 7 Bold in speech (9)
 12 Remind someone of an embarrassment (3,2,2)
 14 Restorative (5)
 15 Intimidate (5)
 17 Excess body weight (3)

CARTOON CORNER

Dilbert





DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Your week ahead could include a profusion of confusion. Be alert to potential hackers or phishing scams, and don't click on email links or give out personal information. Reassure any loved ones who have doubts.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Apologize if you make a mistake or commit some slip-up. If you and loved ones can agree to disagree, your week to come will run more smoothly. Don't go on a spending spree thinking it will solve a problem.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Someone may tell you only what you want to hear. Check the facts twice before embarking on new enterprises in the upcoming week. Someone who is demanding or is dealing with an emotional issue could drain your energy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You or a family member could be subject to online tricks, misleading offers or false advertising. Change your passwords and update your security applications so that you can rest easy in the week ahead.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You might not recognize which people have your best interests at heart. Any skepticism may prevent you from making an advantageous choice. As this week unfolds, focus on being responsible as well as reasonable.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get it while you can. If you ask for forgiveness or assistance, your wish might be fulfilled. Don't be surprised if you find hidden strings attached to a purchase or investment in the week ahead that changes your mind.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): Your social life could be at a low point. If you become bored or restless, your imagination might go into overdrive. Wishful thinking could cause you to be misled by someone in the week ahead, so be alert for tricks.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Rein in any roving desire for romance. Keep your money in your pocket and your mind sharp. In the week to come, make decisions based on facts and don't rely on others to guide your hand.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll run fewer risks if your cash and credit card remain safely tucked away in your wallet. Avoid making an issue of someone's hedging during the week ahead to preserve the tranquility of a valued relationship.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You are probably feeling good about yourself and welcome some new activities as this week begins to unfold, but remain aware of your fiscal and social responsibilities. Take advantage of a chance for fun that costs little.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You may see evidence of your need to work harder as this week unfolds. It might be pointed out that you have not always made the most of your time. Put a hold on major expenditures until you are more comfortable.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Out of sight, out of mind. This is a good week to maintain a low profile and steer clear of misunderstandings. Your intuition could be less accurate than usual in the upcoming week, and you may want to be out of the loop in social situations.

Some regret, zero bitterness – the Austin Richards Jr story

Austin Richards Jr grew up in a cricketing family where his father and uncles were involved in the sport.

“I started playing cricket on the road and at the beach before playing formally at a very young age,” the former national cricketer explained.

“I watched people like Jensen Joseph Jr and Howard Warner play and they inspired me to participate. At the age of 13, I was approached to play and the rest is history,” Richards noted.

“I made my first tour to Montserrat at the age of

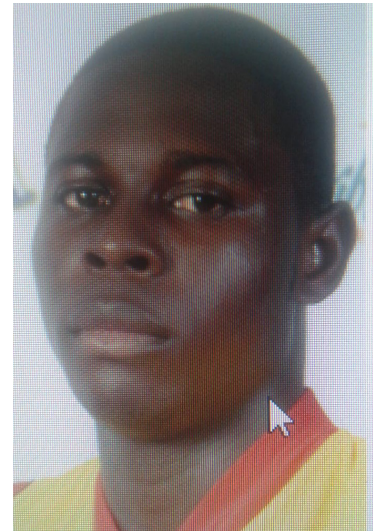
13 to play in an under-15 tournament and I did very well. That was followed by an outing in St. Kitts in the Leeward Islands Under-15 tournament where I performed, setting a platform for my progression,” the man from the east stated.

“I was first an all-rounder before focusing more on my batting,” Austin Jr said. His transition from junior cricket to the senior level was not hard because of the foundation laid by Taddy Arindale who assisted in developing his game at factory grounds.

“At an early age Taddy exposed me to real fire from some of the island’s fastest bowlers like Cleave Joseph and Vaughn ‘Hungry’ Walsh,” Richards said.

“I remember my first game for Antigua and Barbuda senior team at the age of 15 and being given words of encouragement by players like Dave Joseph who made it clear this is war when we battle teams like St. Kitts and Nevis in the Leeward Islands tournament.

“My first senior century at regional level came against



Austin Richards Jr

Montserrat, 115, an innings I will never forget,” said the

cont'd on pg 27

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Gayle avoids punishment for Sarwan comments

Chris Gayle avoided punishment for his criticism of Ramnarresh Sarwan, despite standing by his comments in which he called the former West Indies teammate “evil” and a “snake”.

Gayle made the remarks on YouTube

in late April following his release from Caribbean Premier League (CPL) side Jamaica Tallawahs where Sarwan is assistant coach.

The CPL Tournament Committee is satisfied with Gayle’s statement ex-

plaining his initial comments, even though he has not retracted them.

“In so far as my resentment at the treatment, I stand by my comments in those videos. My words were spoken from the heart,” said Gayle who won the CPL with Jamaica in 2013 and 2016.

“Having said that, I must be honest and say I now realize how portions of my comments may be viewed as being damaging to CWI and to the CPL Tournament and its brand – a tournament which I have sincerely enjoyed not just being a part of, but also helping to build and promote.

“I made these videos with one single intention: to explain to the fans in Jamaica the reasons behind what has now become my second departure from the Tallawahs franchise.

Gayle will represent the St. Lucia Zouks franchise in the 2020 CPL, due to begin in August against Barbados Tridents, the defending champions.

Bayern Munich returns to Bundesliga with win

Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich comfortably beat Union Berlin in a strange game at the league’s return during the coronavirus pandemic.

It has been allowed to restart without fans, most people off the pitch wearing masks, and muted goal celebrations.

Robert Lewandowski gave the champions the lead with a penalty, his 40th goal in 34 Bayern games this season. Benjamin Pavard headed in a late second from Joshua Kimmich’s corner.

The Bundesliga became the first

elite league to return to action, with substitutes and coaches socially distancing on the bench – including using the front rows of the otherwise empty stands.

In other games played in Germany over the weekend, Eintracht Frankfurt’s rolled over Borussia Monchengladbach 3-1. Borussia Dortmund hammered Schalke 4-0, while FC Koln and Mainz 05 played to a 2-2 draw.

Players noted that playing without fans made the minutes seem very long until the final whistle.

cont’d from pg 26

left hander.

Austin talked about his love for Parish League: “Whenever you were out of form there were so [many] experienced players participating in the league, that you were exposed to a lot of educated advice as to what to and how.”

Richards described former West Indies wicketkeeper-batsman Ridley Jacobs as one of his idols because of his toughness and temperament. “Whenever Ridley got the crease and the team was in trouble you know something positive was going to happen,” Richards added.

Austin Jr played a sin-

gle One Day International (ODI) for the West Indies and one T20 game, but he is of the view that had he been afforded another opportunity, he would have pushed on and cemented his place.

“The game I played, I batted at number six when I am an opening batsman. I did not have the best game, but that was it. Another opportunity never came,” Austin said.

“I am not bitter and thank God for the opportunities I had to meet lots of good people and make many friends in the sport,” the former West Indies player said.

“I am now a Fire Police enjoying my job and, in my

spare time, I assist my dad with his business.”

Richards Jr said he wants to help young cricketers on

the island and has started his coaching license, but he is not sure he wants to coach full time.



Female trailblazer conquers male fortress



Mrs. Renee Edwards Ambrose – a dynamic, confident beautiful lady who has been making her mark in the field of Drag Racing, a sport dominated mostly by males – always wanted to be involved in the field of engineering when she grew up attending the Liberta Primary School.

“I started in modeling but my passion and drive was always leaning towards engineering, fast cars and things of that sort,” Ambrose expressed.

“After leaving the Liberta School, I went on to Antigua Girl High School, then the Antigua State College where I studied automotive engineering. After school I did

my job training with LIAT before leaving for Canada to study pilot aviation,” Ambrose noted.

“On returning to Antigua, it was difficult finding employment and LIAT was offering scholarships in aircraft engineering. I applied, was successful, and left for Guyana to study,” Ambrose explained.

Renee has overcome many obstacles in a male-dominated sport. In 10 events that her team participated in, they mounted the podium seven times.

Buttaz, as she is affectionately called, holds the record for being the fastest Antiguan on four wheels (drag racing). Ambrose is also the fastest fe-

male to race at the St. James raceway in Nevis and the Pearis Speedway in Grenada.

Renee was also awarded best female racer at the Trinidad and Tobago Auto Sports Association event (dubbed Carnival Drags) in 2017, and nominated as ABDRA’s 2016 Female Drag Racer of the Year.

In 2020 Ambrose added the Women of Wadadli award in sports.

The founder and accomplished racer of the Caribbean’s first all-female drag racing Team Lady Horsepower Farm (now LHF Motorsports) has also launched the LadyMEX Mechanic Workshop, of which Renee seeks to educate and empower women motorists about their vehicles.



Buttaz is also a model who has successfully participated in a number of events across the region.

Renee is presently employed as an aircraft maintenance engineer at LIAT 1974 Ltd and is the owner of LHF Motorsports Racing.

Drag racer, model, entrepreneur, aircraft maintenance engineer, a mentor to young aspiring females in Antigua and Barbuda and across the region who encourages her peers to reach for the sky and believe in themselves: Meet Renee Edwards “Buttaz” Ambrose.

DEWS