



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

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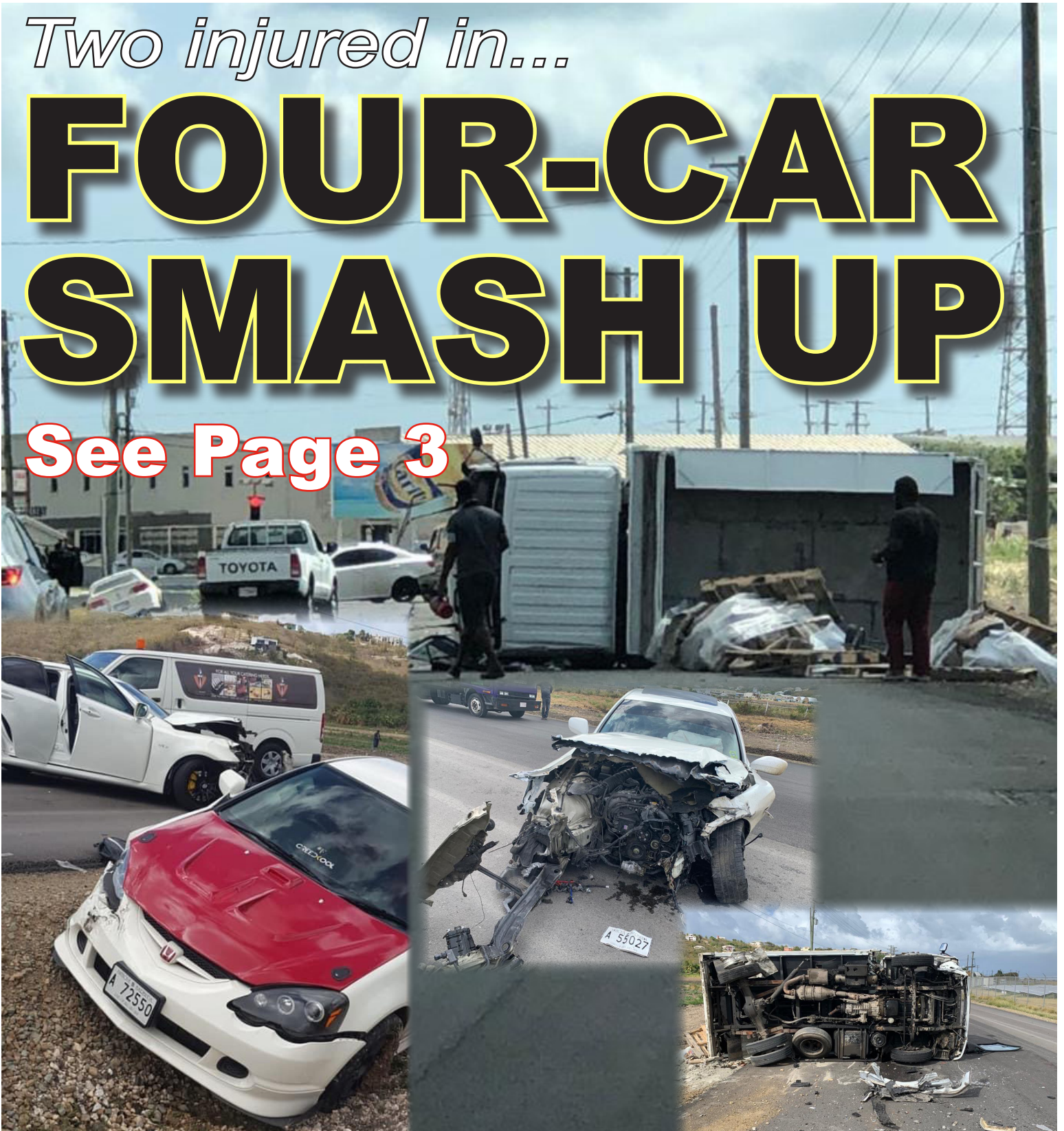
WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 2020 | ISSUE 80 | www.pointville.com

PRICE \$3

Two injured in...

FOUR-CAR SMASH UP

See Page 3



Bar operators discuss opening strategies

Owners of several of the bars that operate in and around St John's are convening a second meeting tonight (Wednesday) to discuss strategies that will hopefully lead to the reopening of their businesses.

The bar operators first met on Monday evening, in response to a suggestion from Information Minister, Melford Nicholas, who urged them to come up with a set of recommendations on how they intend to operate with the health protocols established by the Ministry of Health in place.

Monday's meeting was held at Evie's Bar on Princess Street in Ottos and it was attended by owners/operators of at least twelve bars, both Spanish and English operated bars.

Reports from the meeting said it discussed measures that they can put in place to observe social distancing and

the sanitizing of hands for all patrons who enter their establishments.

Owner of Evie's Bar, Evie Valdez, said she was pleased with the turn-out as everyone present was keen on re-opening their bars as soon as they are given the greenlight to do so.

"Many of these bars represent the only source of income for the owners and they support several members of a family. The closure of the bars over the past two months has had a serious impact on these households so the bars can't open soon enough," she stated.

She noted that the attendance brought bar owners for the immediate surroundings, including Tindale Road, but it also drew attendance from bar operators in Pigotts, Old Parham Road, St. John's Village and Martin's Village.

The meeting that is planned for tonight will finalise the proposals that



Evie Valdez

they plan to present to the government for consideration at next week's Cabinet meeting.

The closure of bars forms part of the measures enforced by the government to stop the spread of the COVID-19 disease in Antigua and Barbuda.

DAY 5/20

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme
Wind: ESE at 17 km/h
Wind Gusts: 24 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 56%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 29%
Precipitation: 2.1 mm
Rain: 2.1 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 1.5
Hours of Rain: 1.5

30°_{Hi}



Mostly sunny with a shower

NIGHT 5/20

Wind: ESE at 9 km/h
Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 63%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 29%
Precipitation: 3.0 mm
Rain: 3.0 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 2
Hours of Rain: 2

26°_{Lo}



Mostly cloudy with a couple of showers

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
5:34AM

Sunset AST
6:34PM



Duration
13:00hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
4:12 PM

Moonset AST
4:57AM



Duration
12:45hr

Two injured in four-car smash up

A major traffic accident on the airport road on Tuesday afternoon, left two men nursing injuries and brought traffic to a halt for over two hours.

Reports say the accident happened close to 2:30 when two vehicles – a Toyota Lexus (A 55027) and a Honda Integra (A72550) were traveling from east to west on the newly paved road at a heightened speed.

When they made the turn near the solar panel farm, the driver of the Lexus, which was in front, apparently lost control of his vehicle and it struck an Isuzu truck (C 17007) causing it to overturn in the middle of the road and to spill the cement cargo it was transporting.

The reports noted that after hitting the truck, the Lexus zigzagged for about another 100 feet before next hitting a second vehicle, a Hyundai SUV (A 4332) driven by George Edwards, the principal of the All Saints Secondary school.

The vehicle then came to a complete



stop in the middle of the road some 40 feet from the Hyundai. It was then that the Honda Integra struck the Lexus and ended up in the nearby ditch.

The drivers of the Lexus and the truck were taken to the hospital by EMS personnel after they complained of pains about their bodies.

There were no open wounds. Their names have been withheld by the po-

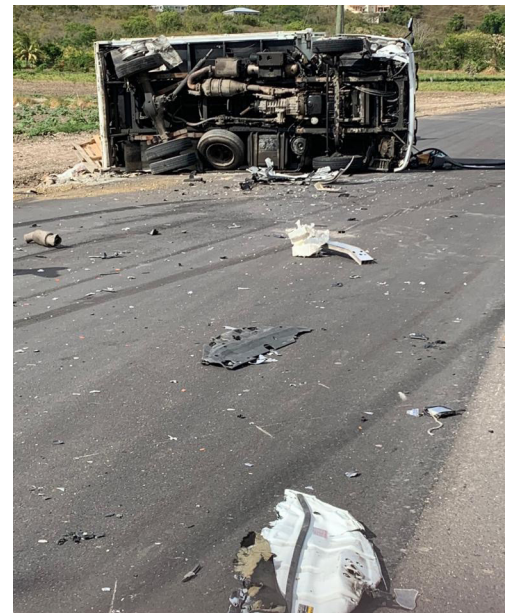
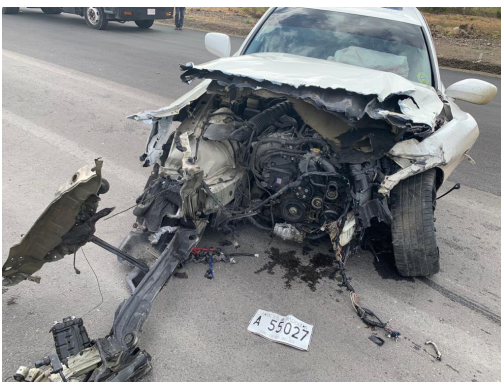


lice.

Debris from the accident were strewn along the roadway for about 100 yards as the front of the Lexus was completely ripped apart.

Traffic in both directions were diverted because of the extensive 'crime scene'.

The police arrived on the scene and they are now carrying out their investigation into the matter.



Government Revenues Take Nosedive

Government revenues for the first four months of the year have declined dramatically forcing at least one of the main revenue centers to revise its projections for the year.

Both the Customs Division and the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) are reporting sharp declines in revenue. The Customs Division was projecting to collect approximately \$133.6 million for the first four months of the year. Its total receipts for January to April 2020, were a little more than \$119 million; a difference of almost \$14 million. That figure was over \$9 million less than was collected for the same period last year.

Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu, said the figure for April was particularly bad with \$9 million less collected compared with what was estimated for the month. In April of last year, the department collected \$35.5 million.

The situation at the IRD was no better, according to the Commissioner, Ralph Warner. He reported that revenues for April was down more than fifty percent as the department only opened for about nine days for the month because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We collected about \$15 million for April this year, but this was a sharp decline from last April’s total of \$32 million. Its unfortunate, because our collections up to March this year showed that we were on track to collect the \$500 million dollars that we budgeted for in our 2020 estimates,” he disclosed.

He revealed that from January to March this year, the department collected more than \$100 million dollars in revenue; up from the \$76 million collected for the same period last year.

“The coronavirus is going to have a quite an impact on revenue collection

and we have since revised our estimates for the year. Instead of the \$500 million, we are now projecting to collect approximately \$300 million,” he explained.

In a national address last month, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who is also the minister of finance, told the nation to brace for tough times ahead because of the impact of the pandemic on the country’s finances. He said the government was forced to lockdown the country as it took decisive steps to stop the spread of the coronavirus among the general population. The shutdown brought business activities in the country to a near halt and this has impacted government’s revenues.

Browne said the government plans to make up the shortfall by borrowings. However, he indicated that tougher measures may have to be taken if the situation worsen in the months ahead.

New hours of operation at Customs

The Customs and Excise Division is moving to support the government’s efforts to re-open the economy, by making further adjustments to the hours of work of key departments.

In a press statement... it said the Head Office will open from 8am until 2:30pm but the Cashier will close off at 2pm. This takes immediate effect.

The very same hours of operation apply for the Tariff Section at the Deepwater Harbour, Heritage Quay, Air Cargo Shed and Air Cargo tariff.

All of these will run from 8am until 2:30pm with the cashiers closing off at 2pm.

A four-hour shift system



Customs Officers reported to duty at the V.C. Bird International Airport in PPE for the arrival of a Chartered BA cargo flight last Saturday.

will remain at the baggage section at the VC Bird International airport until the airport reopens.

The shift system remains in place for boarding at the English Harbour and Heritage

Quay facilities, until further advised. Boarding at Jolly Harbour is closed for now.

According to the release even as the COVID-19 crisis stabilizes in Antigua and Barbuda and the sub-region,

Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu, stressed that it remains imperative that all protocols to protect officers and customers will be given strictest adherence.

Supervisors have already been advised to introduce a rotation system in offices where space is limited to ensure social distancing is practiced.

Officers are also being provided with face masks and any other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where necessary.

Those with underlying health issues can now return to work but management will accept a medical certificate if they wish to extend their leave.

Mental health care for teachers

The Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies (PAWI) Antigua Barbuda District has decided to support the Ministry of Health Mental Health response as the country continues to battle the impacts of COVID-19.

Bishop Nigel Henry of (PAWI) says the organization will be providing funding to source a Mental Health professional to offer support to teachers for three months from 18th May 2020 through to the 15th August 2020.

PAWI, according to Henry, decided to embark on this initiative due to the negative health, social and economic impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having globally since it continues to create immense psychosocial disturbances, particularly for teachers.

All teachers/Educators/Guidance Counselors in both public and private schools as well as the Ministry



Bishop Nigel Henry

headquarters – classroom/administration will be able to benefit from the program which will take the format of individual therapy, group therapy and peer group sessions through Tele-MHPSS – Video counseling using a secure, HIPAA compliant online platform; telephone.

Koren Norton of KN Consulting has been selected as the Consultant. Norton is a Social Worker, Counselor and an Employee Assistance Specialist with over 15 years experience (locally, regionally and internationally. She is also a former teacher.

In addition to mid-program



Counsellor Koren Norton

evaluation, the program will be evaluated at the end of the 3 months and a decision will be taken on the feasibility (need and funding) of extending the service.

The Mental Health Focal Point in the Ministry of Health, Dr Teri-Ann Joseph is elated that PAWI – of which she has been a member since childhood - has made this vital contribution because not only will teachers benefit but ultimately students as well. She urges all public and private teachers/educators/administrators



Dr. Teri-Ann Joseph

to capitalize on the service.

Meanwhile, a dedicated counselor for Healthcare Workers has been provided through funding from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Additionally, counseling for 4th and 5th form CXC students who may need the extra support and who may wish to speak with someone other than the school's guidance counselor; will be provided promptly. Information about accessing this support will be provided to principals through the Ministry of Education.



APUA warns about fake meter readers

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) is alerting that some individuals are attempting to enter onto people's properties by pretending to be APUA meter readers.

In a strongly worded statement, the authority is reminding its customers that all its employees can be identified by their APUA-branded uniforms and an APUA identification card that they must always

display.

APUA is asking its customers to be vigilant and not to engage or oblige these imposters. All APUA workers are required to announce their presence upon entering properties and can present their APUA issued ID cards for further proof of employment at the Authority.

APUA encourages all members of the public to be cautious and remain safe.

ABUT takes different path

The Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (ABUT) has embarked on a different course of action over the planned holding of CSEC examinations in July of this year, although it gives tacit support to the Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT) stance on the issue.

In a statement issued on Monday, the CUT said it was ‘deeply concerned’ over the decision by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) to schedule the examinations for July, when it had recommended that these exams should be held in September instead.

“The CUT believes that this unfortunate decision places the lives of thousands of students and teachers at risk, as all issues surrounding the administration of these examinations have not been addressed,” the statement declared.

Chief among the CUT’s

concerns was the issue surrounding health protocols to protect students and teachers during the sitting of the exams.

However, the ABUT said it has adopted an approach where it decided to be proactive and to engage both the ministry of education and the Central Board of Health in a programme to ensure that all the secondary schools in the country meet a minimum standard established by the CBH.

“We were part of the team that visited all the secondary schools on Sunday and Monday and we gave them a grade based on their level of preparedness to welcome back the students,” General Secretary, Annetta Alexander-Hunt indicated.

She revealed that most schools met the criteria, and those that did not, had until Tuesday to correct outstanding issues ahead of today’s reopening.

The new protocols involve the seating arrangements in the classrooms as well as a staggered timetable to limit the number of students and teachers on the school compound at any given time.

“For example, we did not want our students using the regular buses that run between the city and rural areas. Each day the principals will get a list of the students who will be attending classes and arrange for pick up of students by the school bus.

“Each bus will be sanitized during the day and will not seat more than 12 students at any time. The buses will travel with their windows open,” she emphasised.

There are 42 school buses in the fleet, but not all will be utilized as part of this arrangement.

According to Alexander-Hunt the ABUT agrees



with the CUT regarding the sitting of the examinations in September; that was its position. However, since the decision was made at the level of the Caribbean Ministers of Education, the union felt that it would work to make the staging of the exams a success.

She explained that Antigua and Barbuda, with a much smaller population and land size than countries such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the ABUT has been very ‘nimble’ in ensuring that students here are well prepared for the examinations.

UK looking at ways to revitalize local tourism

The United Kingdom government is exploring ways in which it can assist Antigua and Barbuda regenerate its tourism industry and other industries.

The assurance is contained in a letter to the Chevening Scholarship alumni in the country from the Resident High Commissioner Representative, Lindsay Thompson.

She outlined a number of measures the UK government is implementing to assist the Caribbean as countries in the region battle the virus and its

impact on their economies.

“The UK has donated £5million towards the provision of essential medical supplies and to counter domestic violence against women and children in the Caribbean; Antigua and Barbuda will naturally benefit from this.

“In the coming weeks we will be donating PPE to law enforcement officers in the country,” she stated.

She named the UK government as one of the biggest contributors to the global fight against COVID-19. “We

are one of the biggest donors to the international COVID-19 response and we are supporting a global collaboration to accelerate the development, production and equitable access to new COVID-19 tools” she explained.

Thompson also expressed the hope that the Chevening alumni in the country were ‘making a contribution to your respective fields in the global fight against COVID-19’.

The British government represen-

cont’d on pg 7

Road works still on course for year-end completion

Despite supply setbacks occasioned by the COVID-19 lockdown, contractors and administrators of a major road rehabilitation project remain optimistic that their year-end target for completion can still be met.

That was the view expressed by the Project Implementation Management Unit (PIMU) during a virtual press conference.

The almost complete re-doing of two of the country's most heavily trafficked roadways – Sir George Walter Highway, aka Airport Road, and Friar's Hill Road – is being largely funded by a multimillion pounds-sterling grant from the British Government plus counterpart financing from the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

The project has been plagued with delays arising from various causes including disputes between the main contractor, Bahamas Hot Mix (BHM), and local state agencies such as the Ministry of Works and the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA).

These have centered on issues related to the ownership and/or acquisition of adjoining land to facilitate widening of the road in some instances, and the expenses or holdups caused by the need to lay down or relocate underground telecommunications and other utility conduits or trunking.

BHM's Public Relations Officer, Vickindra Simon, said it was not possible to promise a firm completion date "due to the fact that we don't know how long this

pandemic will last. We also don't know – even if Antigua gets back to normal – how long it's going to take for our international suppliers to be able to send ... certain goods and products."

She said it was only when updates ... from the supplier became available that BHM "would be able to better project an end date for this project. But as of now, we still plan to complete before the year is over."

Among the components still outstanding, according to Simon, are guard rails (also known as crash barriers) which have been ordered from overseas but have been delayed due to shipping disruptions caused by the COVID global pandemic.

"As soon as that arrives, we would continue do-

ing the sidewalks from the WIOC gas station on Friar's Hill Road to Epicurean Drive, and when we are completed with that, we would jump to Sir George Walter Highway from the solar farm to south of Dee's [gas station]," she stated

The other significant holdup that the contractors have to contend with pertains to the erection of 29 bus shelters. Nineteen of these are slated for Friars Hill Road, while the remaining 10 form part of the design for Sir George Walter Highway. Six of the 19 sheds on Friar's Hill Road will be for commercial marketing.

Simon added that a lot of new piping has been installed for the crossroad culverts, particularly in the Woods area which is known to be especially susceptible to flooding.

Elaborating further, Simon stated that the "erratic supply of aggregates" was another challenge the contractor has been facing.

"We can say that it has improved marginally. But during the first two weeks of this pandemic we had a problem where none of our suppliers were willing to open up to give us the aggregate that we needed. But as time went on, they were able to open and [deliver] to us ..."

cont'd from pg 6

tative noted that due to the coronavirus pandemic, several initiatives started with alumni have had to be put on pause.

"In terms of projects and planning with Chevening alumni, I'm sure you'll understand we've had to pause initiatives we started with you earlier in the year," she lamented.

However, Thompson stated that once the office, now under construction, is up-and-running, "we will of course wish to engage closely with you to review whether those plans need to change in the "new normal" and how we can best collaborate with the wealth of talent we have in our alumni".

Chevening is the UK government's in-

ternational awards programme aimed at developing global leaders.

Funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and partner organisations, Chevening offers two types of award – Chevening Scholarships and Chevening Fellowships – the recipients of which are personally selected by British embassies and high commissions throughout the world.

Chevening offers a unique opportunity for future leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK.

Regional

Barbados UN ambassador confirmed with COVID-19

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.



Apua Apua Apua
Visit us at www.apua.ag

Barbados' Ambassador to the United Nations, Liz Thompson has tested positive for COVID-19. The Ambassador has no symptoms of the disease and is feeling perfectly well.

According to a release from the Government Information Service, the Ambassador traveled to Barbados Monday afternoon from New York, which is the epicenter of the COVID outbreak in the United States.

Ms. Thompson arrived on a private jet and was tested at Paragon immediately after her arrival. The statement added, "this morning we received information that her test was positive. There was one other passenger on the plane on which the Ambassador traveled. That passenger was also tested; that test is negative."



Liz Thompson

Ms. Thompson came to Barbados to be at the bedside of her 95-year-old mother who became gravely ill with a heart condition (non-COVID related condition) on the weekend. Given the gravity of her mother's condition, she was allowed to go to her mother's bedside. The senior Mrs. Thompson is being kept comfortable at her home.

Since going to her mother's residence, the Ambassador has had no contact with the members of that household other than her mother. Ms. Thompson was wearing a mask from the moment she got off the plane and has been practicing physical distancing. She will, from Tuesday, go into isolation at Harrison's Point.

Despite not having contact with members of the household, the Ministry of Health is taking the usual precaution of testing family members. All precautionary measures and protocols are being observed. The Ministry of Health says it will continue to deal with this situation as it has all other cases in Barbados.

Ambassador Thompson and her family are cooperating fully with the Ministry.

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

Sanitize frequently touched surfaces within your vehicle on a regular basis to avoid potential contamination, especially if the vehicle is shared/used by others.

COVID-19: Driver Safety Tips

DRIVE SAFELY

SANITIZE
DESINFECTAR

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

SIR GERALD WATT Q.C. STATEMENT FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

On 14th May, 2020, at a meeting of the House of Representatives and a packed Order Paper, the Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle, decided to storm out of Parliament, after not being allowed to make a Personal Explanation on a matter that he was not allowed to as he was and would be in violation of the Parliamentary Procedure governing the subject.

My main purpose is not to enter into any argument or debate with the Honourable Member, more so since I am presently considering what action should be taken against him, prior to and during the next Sitting of the House. What I will do is to point out to fair minded people, both here and abroad of the procedure and rules governing the granting or refusal of leave to a Member to make a personal explanation at a sitting, and in doing so I will support my position by referring readers to the Parliamentary Procedure and learning on which I relied.

I am also guided by the watchword of Watt, Dorsette, Hewlett Law, the Law Firm that I head and am proud to be a part of, which reads thus: "Argumentum ab auctoritate fortissimum est in lege" which translates to English reads: "Argument



Sir. Gerald A. Watt KCN, QC

by authority is strongest in Law". The legal learning in respect of Personal Explanations by Members is to be found in a number of Parliamentary texts two of which are:

1) Erskine May Parliamentary Practice 24th Edition 2011. This book deals with the Law, Privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament and is described as "Erskine May's Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament".

2) House of Commons Procedure and Practice Second Edition 2009, which lays out the procedure in the House of Commons in Ottawa, Canada.

To place this in context, Mr. Pringle, M.P., rose speaking to make a person-

al explanation, he stated the matter on which he intended to speak, which was to explain to the House and the World, his reason for refusing to accept an invitation to join the Prime Minister's Economic Recovery Committee, and to rebut the Prime Minister's statement that he was shirking 'his constitutional responsibilities'. I declined to allow him to do so for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the Member is not entitled to be allowed to speak, simply because "the people voted for him" and "his people wants him to speak to these things". The following learning from Erskine May is reproduced for the public's education under the reading "Personal Statement pg. 376".

"The House is usually indulgent with regard to personal statements, and will permit personal explanation to be made without any question being before the House provided that the SPEAKER HAS BEEN INFORMED OF WHAT THE MEMBER PROPOSES TO SAY AND HAS GIVEN LEAVE. Because the practice of the House is not to permit such statements to be subject to intervention or debate, the precise contents of the proposed statement are submitted IN ADVANCE to the Speaker to ensure that they are appropriate. The indulgence of a personal statement is GRANTED WITH CAUTION since it may lead to irregular debates.

In the Ottawa Parliament Personal Explanations is explained as follows: pg. 631

"The Chair may occasionally grant leave to a member to explain a matter of a personal nature although there is no question before the House. Such occasions are not meant to be used for general debate and Members have been cautioned to confine their remarks to the point they wish to make. When granted, they have been used by Members notably

Opinion

TO ANNOUNCE A RESIGNATION, OR TO EXPLAIN CHANGES IN PARTY AFFILIATION.”

Note well, the narrow nature of a personal statement. In this instance, the Member simply attempted to make a statement and a controversial one at that without informing the Speaker and providing me with the contents of the statement and getting my permission, and even if I was minded to overlook that and grant permission there and then, the matter in which he wished to speak was well outside the parameters of what was permissible and would certainly have led to “unnecessary debate”. The Member seemed to have accepted the ruling of the Speaker and took his seat.

Under Public Business, and after the Hon. Prime Minister had moved the Motion for debate on the extension of the State of Emergency, the Hon. Member rose, I thought to debate the Motion instead however, he immediately commenced to raise the issue which I had ruled on before and that he was not entitled to do under the Standing Orders or Parliamentary Procedure. In this regard, I refer to Standing Order 37(1):

“Debate upon any Motion, Bill or Amendments, SHALL BE RELEVANT TO SUCH MOTION, BILL OR AMENDMENT except in the case of a Motion for the adjournment of the House.”

Clearly in attempting to make a political statement

during his debate on the Motion, the Member was clearly in violation of the above cited Standing Order and the Speaker was therefore perfectly correct to prevent him from so doing.

During my attempt to explain and guide the Member to his breach of the Standing Order, I was subject to a torrent of abuse and insults. The Member proceeded to yell at the Chair and to persistently accuse me of being biased and would not cease his rant until I stood. At this time I warned the Member that he should control himself and I demanded that he apologize failing which I would take certain action. He chose to leave and stormed out of the Chambers without acknowledging the Speaker contrary to Standing Orders 40(a).

It cannot be denied that the Hon. Member’s actions and behavior amounted to grossly disorderly conduct, during which time he inter alia:

a) Accused the Chair of being biased and continually “shutting him down” to prevent criticism of the Government side and;

b) Did so by using disorderly and unparliamentary expressions and;

c) Imputing improper Motives to a Member of Parliament to the Speaker contrary to Standing Order 36 (3) and 36 (5).

While preparing this statement for distribution, my attention was drawn to an article in AntiguaNewsroom.com under the heading “UPP STANDS BEHIND

MP JAMALE PRINGLE’S POSITION AND DECISION”. The article consists of and appears to be written in support of Jamale Pringle and commence thus:

“The Political Leader, Executive Committee and the Woman’s Forum placed on record their support for the positions expressed and the decision taken in the Parliament on May 14th, 2020, by the Hon. Jamale Pringle, Member for All Saints East and Saint Luke.... We agree that MP Pringle acted within his rights as a Member of the House in his attempt to register by way of Hansard, his explanation for declining a position on the Cabinet’s Economic Recovery Committee.”

It then proceeds to refer to Standing Orders 6(5) and 13(1) which are totally irrelevant to the issue at hand. It goes on to state certain positions which have no basis in Parliamentary practice and which have been stated to mislead the UPP and Opposition supporters there are however certain statements which I must address. It is important at this point to address Standing Order 20 which specifically deals with Personal Explanations. This Standing Order states and I quote:

“WITH THE LEAVE OF THE SPEAKER A MEMBER MAY make a personal explanation at the time appointed under Standing Order 13(Ordinary Business) although there is no question before the House. BUT NO

CONTROVERSIAL MATTER MAY BE BROUGHT FORWARD NOR ANY DEBATE ARRIVE UPON THE EXPLANATION.” (Emphasis supplied)

Can any reasonably, sane, and intelligent person, doubt that the Member’s explanation was in respect of a current, hot political issue and highly controversial at that.

Further, if this Member was permitted to give his explanation which concerned the Prime Minister, would the Prime Minister not seek to reply and there you would have the very debate which the Standing Order seeks to prevent. This is just one of the several reasons which clearly mitigated against granting leave to MP Pringle and was only one of the several Standing Orders that he wished to ride rough shod over.

The Standing Orders of the House of Representatives were passed in 1967, 53 years ago, it is old, outdated, and is contained in a small booklet of 45 pages and 78 Standing Orders, the idea that all of the laws, privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament is to be found in this outdated booklet is ludicrous. Indeed, it is to Erskine May’s Parliamentary Practice to which Speakers and Parliamentarians must refer. The Standing Orders set out the bare rules, Erskine May fleshes them out and indicates how they have been and are to be interpreted by Speakers and Parliamentarians. It is

Erskine May that is known worldwide as the Parliamentary Bible, NOT the Standing Order. Incidentally, the very idea that a Speaker or Member cannot refer to Erskine May, the supreme reference for guidance and precedent, and put forward to explain away Mr. Pringle's behaviour can only be described as a Parliamentary heresy.

Before departing this subject, I feel obliged to comment on two final matters as contained in the subject at hand. The writer maintains that the "Platform of Personal Explanations has been used many times, usually by Members of the Opposition to address matters relevant to their tenure" and that the Hon. Asot Michael, "utilized this platform to report on his health following his return from major surgery." I do accept MP Michael spoke to a non-political issue, i.e. his health with this Speaker's permission, I am sure that all reasonable persons can decipher the difference between both statements. If and when Members of the Opposition have frequently used Personal Explanations in the past, it has NEVER been during my Speakership and if during the term of the former Speaker, was allowed willy nilly by her, would explain her failure to utilize Erskine May as a reference and not play it by ear, as was her practice during her tenure. Speaker Isaac has continually criticized this Speaker for not referring to Members by the

names of the Constituencies for which they have been elected, and she "points to Standing Order 36(4), once again the former Speaker is stuck in the past, and persistently fails and/or refuses to refer to Erskine May to glean the modern interpretation of this ancient custom. In this regard, I refer to Erskine May 24th Ed., 2001, page 444 which states:

"In order to guard against all appearance of personality in debate, no Member should refer to another by name. Each Member must be distinguished by the OFFICE HE HOLDS, by the place he represents, OR BY OTHER DESIGNATIONS as ... or when speaking of a Member of the same Party, "my right Honourable friend the Member for..."

I also refer to House of Commons, "Procedure and Practice" 2nd Ed., 2009 which states:

"During debate, Members do not refer to one another by their names but rather by title, position or Constituency name... A Minister is referred to by the Portfolio he or she holds. The two main Party Leaders are generally referred to as the Right Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and other Party Leaders are identified as the Leader of their respective Parties."

It is abundantly clear that my manner of referring to Members is more modern, while the former Speaker continues to wallow in the past blissfully unaware that modern Parliamentary Prac-

tice and usage is not stuck in 1967 with our outdated Standing Orders.

Finally, I take note of the support that MP Pringle is getting from his Political Leader, Mr. Harold Lovell and former Prime Minister, Baldwin Spencer. Harold Lovell says, "it took tremendous courage to state his case (I ask what case?), also PM Spencer commends Mr. Pringle "for his stance and encourages him to continue fighting in the interest of those he represents". I can state without fear of contradiction that in all their long terms in Parliament, no one has ever heard either of these two politicians behave in the obnoxious and grossly disrespectful manner as this Member.

I take due note of Mr. Harold Lovell and former Prime Minister's fulsome praise in respect of MP Pringle's childish, and grossly disorderly behaviour in the House of Representatives, or to his gross disrespect to the Chair. It should be noted that during their long period of Membership in the House, neither of these two gentlemen have been known to behave in the manner that they now feel obliged to condone. I am particularly saddened at Mr. Spencer's intervention. In conclusion, I wish to make it clear that my intention by way of this Statement is to conclusively show by citing the relevant Standing Order and Parliamentary Authority which grounded my decision, and in addition to inform and ed-

ucate the Body Politic as to the relevant Standing Order and Parliamentary Practice which would have guided any Speaker in these Circumstances. I am not so naive as to think that I will be able to convince the intellectually dishonest leadership of the United Progressive Party, their political sycophants or those radio hosts who are too mentally lazy to research matters of this sort and would rather repeat and regurgitate whatever emanates from the political players of the party that they so fervently support.

The Honourable Jamaile Pringle intemperate and childish outburst was far more egregious than that of those who have been sanctioned by former presiding officers Ms. Giselle Isaac and Ms. Hazlyn Francis and was far worse than that of former MP and Deputy Prime Minister Wilmoth Daniel and once encouraged is likely to repeat his disgraceful performance. It must be noted that MP Pringle was in breach of at least three Standing Orders, and it is difficult to understand how any speaker would be

expected to exercise one's discretion in the face of serial breaches of the Standing Orders and proper Parliamentary Practices and usage. Clearly, the present Parliament must of necessity take note and ponder whether this matter is simply to be allowed to die a natural death. The ball is in the House of Representatives' court.

CARICOM rejects European Commission blacklist of Caribbean countries



CARICOM

CARICOM describes the decision by the European Commission to blacklist Barbados, Jamaica and the Bahamas as “callous and premature”.

Below is the full text of the statement:

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) deplores the latest attack by the European Commission on the economic well-being of some of our Member States who were named on 7th May, 2020, in a list of third countries with strategic Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) deficiencies, and which would therefore be subject to enhanced due diligence measures by European Union (EU) States.

This list, which includes four (4) CARICOM Mem-

ber States was published despite the European Council, in objecting to a list submitted for approval last year, concluding that the Commission’s submission was “not established in a transparent and resilient process that actively incentivises affected countries to take decisive action while also respecting their right to be heard.”

Impacted countries were neither informed nor consulted prior to this month’s publication.

The Commission’s unilateral actions are therefore contrary to the principles of transparency and consultation reflected in the Council’s conclusion, as well as its own assertions about its Revised Methodology which advocates prior engagement with third coun-

tries, as outlined in its press release announcing the new list. It should be noted that of the four CARICOM States included in the Commission’s list, one has been delisted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global AML/CFT standard-setting body, since February 2020, and the other three Member States had already entered into agreed Action Plans with the FATF/CFATF.

Moreover, the Commission has published the list of high risk jurisdictions, even as its Action Plan for a Comprehensive Union policy on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing is still being subject to stakeholder consultation that will conclude by July 2020. CARICOM Member States continue to

demonstrate their commitment to strengthening their AML/CFT frameworks and have actively participated in the CFATF’s mutual evaluation process. The Caribbean Community maintains its call for a uniform, fair and transparent assessment process that is based on an inclusive, multilateral framework.

As a longstanding partner of the Caribbean Community, the action of the European Commission is not in keeping with the collaborative and supportive relationship between CARICOM and European States. The Caribbean Community therefore calls upon the European Union Member States to once again reject the Commission’s proposals as callous and premature, at this moment in time.

CDB to Provide Almost US\$67M to Seven Caribbean Countries to Counter COVID-19

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) is making available emergency loans to seven Caribbean countries, in the first instance, to finance the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, the Bank's Board of Directors has approved a total of US\$66.7 million for Antigua and Barbuda (US\$13 million), Belize (US\$15 million), Dominica (US\$2.5 million), Grenada (US\$5.9 million), Saint Lucia (US\$10.8 million), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (US\$11.3 million), and Suriname (US\$8.2 million).

"The provision of support to the seven countries to respond to COVID-19 and keep critical government services and operations running is urgent to halt the economic decline and minimise social hardship, while giving focused attention to the most vulnerable people," says CDB President Dr. Wm Warren Smith.

The emergency loans, made under CDB's most concessional terms, will provide vital liquidity and increase governments' fiscal space to allow these countries to promptly meet their urgent financing needs without diverting resources away from critical social expenditures or health emergency needs.

Caribbean countries are especially vulnerable to the global outbreak due to their



CDB President, Warren Smith

heavy dependence on tourism for income and employment. According to CDB estimates, many of these countries, including those, which will be supported with emergency loans, will fall into recession this year. Real gross domestic product will decline in Antigua and Barbuda (1.5%), Belize (5.4%), Dominica (2.9%),

Grenada (10%), Saint Lucia (9.1%), and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (4.8%). Suriname, heavily dependent on gold production and export, was also severely hit and the economy almost brought to a complete standstill. Its economy is forecast to contract by 3% in 2020.

It is expected that the social impacts of the COVID-19

pandemic will be significant, stemming from an increase in unemployment, and loss of income and livelihoods, as well as substantial disruptions of social services, with women, female heads of households and children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and migrants as the most vulnerable groups.

Jamaica: \$25 Million In Support For 1,500 Community Bars



\$25 million are to be provided in support to 1,500 community bars under the “For our bars: For Jamaica” initiative - Contributed photo

Some 1,500 community bars across the island are to receive more than \$25 million in support as they rebuild from the financial fallout due to restrictions imposed by the government to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

Community bars reopened today after being closed for two months.

Beverage company Pepsi-Cola Jamaica in partnership with Red Stripe, Cel-

ebration Brands, and the Desnoes & Geddes Foundation today launched their initiative “For our bars: For Jamaica”, which will see hard-hit community bars receiving drink products to replenish their stocks.

Additionally, bars will be provided with masks, face shields, and sanitisers.

Workers will undergo training in health and sanitation protocols, responsible customer service to include

speed and efficiency in pouring, and serving beverage products.

Bar owners will also be trained in increasing revenue, profitable cocktail programmes, the foundations of profitability, and boosting staff morale.

“Many of these small and medium-size businesses have been greatly inconvenienced and many may otherwise remain closed without such an initiative as

this. Enduring weeks without commercial activity, confronting fixed expenses, and more so, seeing to the well-being of families who count on them have posed a tremendous challenge. We seek to honour our relationship with these operators who have supported us over the years by giving back in this way,” said Alejandro Sacasa, Pepsi General Manager.

Royal Caribbean cruise line docks with 1,044 Jamaican stranded crew members



Royal Caribbean cruise line's Adventure of the Seas has docked at Falmouth Pier in Trelawny. (Photo: Kimone Francis)

KINGSTON, Jamaica — Royal Caribbean cruise line's Adventure of the Seas, the vessel with 1,044 Jamaican crew members aboard, has docked at Falmouth Pier in Trelawny.

The ship arrived at the port a short while ago.

The Adventure of the Seas vessel was given approval yesterday to enter Jamaican waters.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness, who made the announcement during a digital

press conference at Jamaica House, said the approval was given with specific protocols regarding the re-entry of the ship.

"They will follow through the necessary maritime regulations to ensure the safe docking of the ship in Falmouth," he noted.

The Government, through the Ministry of Health and Wellness, will create a sterile area around the port to conduct testing for the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Holness said that the cruise ship workers will be disembarked in groups of 200 every 48 to 72 hours and after testing, they will be taken to the Bahia Principe Grand Jamaica hotel in St Ann where the Government has secured 400 additional rooms.

The 48 to 72-hour period is to allow time for the test results to be made available.

Those who test positive for the virus will be taken to a State quarantine facility,

and some crew members with negative results, will be allowed to self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the day they disembark the vessel.

For home quarantine, individuals will be required to consent to have their location geofenced via the Jam-COVID19 website and to do video check-in multiple times daily.

Holness said the ship will repatriate the largest batch of Jamaicans to date.

Trump is refusing to unveil Obama's portrait at the White House, breaking a 40-year tradition

President Donald Trump won't be unveiling former President Barack Obama's portrait at the White House, breaking a 40-year tradition, NBC News reported on Tuesday.

Obama would also not be interested in attending such an event, according to the report, which cited people familiar with the matter.

The White House and a representative for Obama did not immediately respond to requests for comment from Insider.

For decades, first-term presidents have held ceremonies in the East Room to unveil the portraits of their immediate predecessors. Obama did so for former President George W. Bush in 2012, for example.

"George, you went out of your way to make sure that the transition to a new administration was as seamless as possible," Obama said at the time.

Trump and Obama have perhaps the most contentious relationship of any current and former presidents in modern US history. In recent days, Trump has made baseless allegations that Obama committed an unspecified crime. Before his transition from reality TV to politics, Trump spent years perpetuating a racist conspiracy theory regarding Obama's place of birth.



President Donald Trump and former President Barack Obama at Trump's inauguration in January 2017.

Despite their rocky past, Obama wrote Trump an Inauguration Day letter in 2017 and left it in the desk drawer in the Oval Office; Trump said it was "beautiful."

But that detente did not last long. Trump has frequently blamed Obama for various issues he's faced as president, including for issues with COVID-19 testing.

Obama has generally avoided the limelight since leaving the White House. In the rare instances he's criticized Trump, the former president has often done so without saying his successor's name. Over the weekend, Obama appeared to excoriate Trump's response to the coronavirus pandemic but did not explicitly mention him.

navirus pandemic but did not explicitly mention him.

"More than anything, this pandemic has fully, finally torn back the curtain on the idea that so many of the folks in charge know what they're doing," Obama said during a virtual commencement address for 2020 graduates of historically black colleges and universities. "A lot of them aren't even pretending to be in charge."

Though Obama did not mention Trump, the former president's comments were widely interpreted as a direct jab at his successor.

Family members, staff members, and friends of former presidents tend to attend

these events. Even if both Trump and Obama were willing to participate in a portrait-unveiling ceremony, it's possible the coronavirus pandemic could place limitations on it.

The first formal portrait unveiling took place in 1978, when President Jimmy Carter invited his predecessor, President Gerald Ford, back to the White House for a ceremony in the East Room, per NBC.

Similar ceremonies had occurred in the years before, such as when former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy returned to the White House in 1971 for the unveiling of the portraits of her and her husband, President John F. Kennedy.

France's Macron loses majority as defectors form new party

The party of French President Emmanuel Macron has lost its outright majority in parliament, after a group of MPs broke away to form a new party.

Ecology, Democracy, Solidarity will be largely formed of seven MPs from La République en Marche (On the Move) and other ex-supporters of the president.

The defecting MPs want to focus on green issues and social inequality. But their decision leaves Mr Macron's party with 288 seats, one short of a majority in the 577-seat lower house. French commentators said La République en Marche (LREM) still had the backing of two other political allies, the centrist MoDem as well as Agir from the centre-right, which together make up another 56 seats in the National Assembly.

There is even a chance that the party could regain its absolute majority if another defector who leaves the assembly is replaced by a pro-Macron MP.

The Macron camp has been plagued by a series of defections in recent months, and French media said the seven latest departing MPs had come under intense pressure to stay.

Two MPs who had originally planned to join EDS backed down at the last minute, Le Figaro reported.

The new party is not a major blow to Mr Macron electorally, and allies dismissed the moves as part of the "tribulations of parliamentary life". But it is further evidence of dissatisfaction among the president's MPs, who were



President Macron's party will still be able to rely on other parties for support

swept into the National Assembly in June 2017, weeks after his whirlwind presidential victory.

There has been a steady trickle over recent months of MPs out of the ranks of the LREM.

Until now they've sat as independents. From Tuesday, with a handful of new defections, they are sitting as an official group in the National Assembly, entitling them to parliamentary privileges and status. The main beef of these MPs is that President Macron's party has failed in its promise to be inclusive and to transcend the old political divisions. In spirit, they were all on the left or ecological wings of the LREM. And they feel that since 2017 Macron has made a lot of overtures to the

right, but not many to the left.

The analysis may well be correct. Polls show that more voters on the right than on the left generally approve of the Macron presidency. He has shifted rightwards.

But the timing of the bloc's initiative raises questions. Everyone knows that after the Covid-19 crisis things will be different. There is no way on Earth that Mr Macron will be carrying on as before. Indeed most likely the new priorities will be themes such as ecology, industrial protection and higher wages for health workers - all of which the breakaway MPs would presumably regard as their own. President Macron's ratings have dipped during France's coronavirus outbreak, however

those of Prime Minister Édouard Philippe have increased. Members of the new Ecology, Democracy, Solidarity (EDS) group said they had failed to change LREM from the inside and would now take an independent stance, neither allied to the government nor the opposition. One of the new party's best-known figures, Paris mayoral candidate Cédric Villani, told French radio that what was important was that the new party went forward.

"There's been talk of treason and rebels, but this ninth political group is made of free men and women who want to devote their souls and conscience to defending ecology, democracy and solidarity," he told France Inter radio.

Qatar Airways cabin crew to wear hazmat suits

Flight attendant uniforms have evolved considerably over the years, with styles adapting to reflect fashion trends, along with the changing world.

However, it's unlikely any designer could have predicted its latest incarnation.

Qatar Airways is one of several airlines to introduce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suits for its cabin crew in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

From now onwards, all flight attendants for Qatar's flag carrier will wear a hazmat suit over their uniforms, along with safety goggles, gloves and a mask during flights.

In addition, passengers will be required to wear face coverings or masks on all its flights from May 25.

The airline recommends that travelers bring their own "for fit and comfort purposes."

According to an official statement, Qatar Airways' cabin crew have already been wearing PPE, such as masks and gloves, during flights for a number of weeks.

However, the added "temporary" measures were introduced as an extra precaution.

"At Qatar Airways, we have introduced these additional safety measures onboard our flights to ensure the continued health and wellbeing of our passengers and cabin crew, and to limit the spread of coronavirus," says Qatar Air-



ways Group Chief Executive Akbar Al Baker.

"As an airline, we maintain the highest possible hygiene standards to ensure that we can fly people home safely during this time and provide even greater reassurance that safety is our number one priority."

In addition, the airline will be equipped with large bottles of hand sanitizers, which can be used by both cabin crew and passengers.

The move comes weeks after Philippines Airlines and AirAsia reportedly launched new uniforms that incorporate PPE.

Philippines Airlines' offering is said to have been devised by designer Edwin Tan, who used hospital gowns for inspiration, while AirAsia's uniform was reportedly dreamed up by Puey Quiñones, who described the protective gear as "the new normal."

Qatar is one of many airlines to insist passengers wear face coverings or masks while flying, following guidance from the CDC.

However, there seems to be some confusion on US airlines with regards to customers and masks. While Southwest Airlines has ad-

vised flight crews to refrain from stopping passengers from boarding if they refuse to wear a mask, according to an internal memo obtained by CNN, American Airlines' policy insists customers "may be denied boarding" for not wearing a mask.

However, JetBlue Airways policy states, "Customers who refuse to comply with our policy will be denied boarding."

At present, the FAA and TSA have not introduced any government-enforced rules making masks mandatory for passengers.

WHO head says he will keep leading virus fight after Trump threat

The World Health Organization's head has said he would keep leading the global fight against the coronavirus pandemic after US President Donald Trump threatened to cut off funding and quit the body.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Tuesday defended the agency's role after the United States again withheld full support for a resolution passed by member states on the pandemic.

"We want accountability more than anyone," Tedros told a virtual meeting of the WHO's 194 member states. "We will continue providing strategic leadership to coordinate the global response."

Washington allowed the resolution calling for a review of the global response to the pandemic to pass by consensus, but said it objected to language about reproductive health rights and permission for poor countries to waive patent rules.

WHO officials running the meeting clapped and cheered after the resolution was passed without a vote hours after Trump tweeted his threat to pull the US out of the body.

It calls for a review of the WHO-led global response, something the US has demanded.

But the US mission in Geneva said in a statement that paragraphs on the right of poor countries to waive patents to obtain medicine during a health emergency would "send the wrong message to innovators" trying to produce new drugs and vaccines.

The reproductive healthcare language could be interpreted as requiring countries to permit abortion. "The United States believes in legal protections for the unborn," it said.

China-US spat

China and the US also sparred in



Tedros says the WHO wants accountability 'more than anyone' as states agree to probe on virus response

the closing moments of the assembly over the issue of Taiwan. Taiwan lobbied hard to be included as an observer at the two-day meeting and received support from the US, Japan and others, but says it was not invited due to opposition from China.

Even as Trump has proposed quitting the WHO, the body has received backing and a two-year pledge of \$2bn in funds from China's President Xi Jinping.

Beijing has furiously denied the US allegations that it played down the virus threat, and accused Washington on Tuesday of trying to "smear China".

"The US tries to use China as an issue to shirk responsibility and bargain over its international obligations to the WHO," foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said.

Russia also denounced Trump's threat. "We are against breaking everything there is for the sake of one state's political or geopolitical preferences," Deputy Foreign Minister Ser-

gei Ryabkov was quoted as saying by news agency Interfax.

Many other leaders expressed support for Tedros.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called for international cooperation in response to the pandemic. "At times like these, the greatest act of courage is to play as a team," she continued, without an overt reference to the US.

During his three years in office, Trump has criticised many international organisations and quit some. Still, European diplomats said they were taken aback by Washington's decision to stand aside at the WHO while China is boosting its role.

"It was so striking to see Xi Jinping seizing the opportunity to open up, with broad [cooperation], and make a proposal for \$2bn, and say if ever there is a vaccine they will share it with everyone," a European diplomat told AFP news agency.

"It's exactly what we feared: the space liberated by Washington will

be taken up by China."

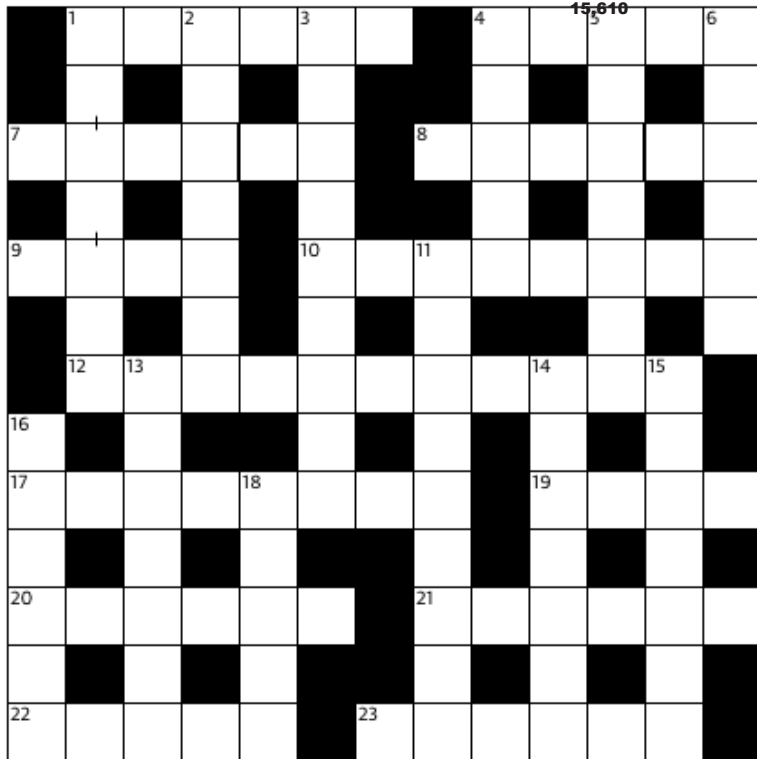
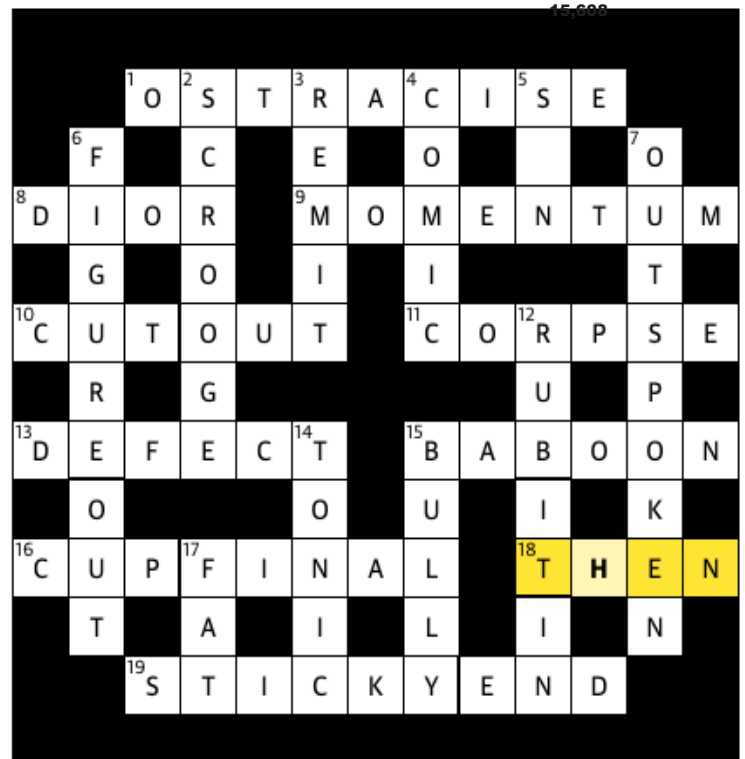
The WHO declined to comment on Trump's threat to quit, saying only that it had received his letter and was considering its contents. Agreement on probe Tuesday's resolution calls for a review into how the novel coronavirus spread after making the jump from animals to humans, believed to have happened in the Chinese city of Wuhan last year.

Some countries, including hard-hit Spain and Italy, suggested the body could emerge stronger from the pandemic through reform.

"This should be a time for renewing our organisation and we renew our strong commitment to the organisation," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said.

More than 297,000 people have died of COVID-19 out of over 4.6 million infections worldwide since its emergence, and governments are scrambling to contain the virus while seeking ways to revive their economies.

QUICK CROSSWORD

 Quick crossword No
 15,610

 Quick crossword No
 15,609


Across

- 1 Take away — the cad (anag) (6)
 4 Old European coin (5)
 7 Stop there! (4,2)
 8 Appear (4,2)
 9 Work-shy (4)
 10 Substantial — textile (8)
 12 Variety artist (11)
 17 Children's game — fish (8)
 19 Sludge (4)
 20 Wastrel — shoe (6)
 21 Exclamations of opposition (6)
 22 Get wind of (5)
 23 The rest (6)

Down

- 1 Desperately determined (2-2-3)
 2 Most orderly (7)
 3 Twin-hulled boat (9)
 4 Hymn of mourning (5)
 5 Dense growth of small trees and bushes (7)
 6 Overbalance and fall (6)
 11 Convey — delight (9)
 13 Tell the story (7)
 14 Bed clothing (7)
 15 Best performances (7)
 16 Old Testament book (6)
 18 Motionless (5)

CARTOON CORNER

Dilbert





ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Keep calm and carry on. Don't overstate your abilities or spend more than the budget allows just to try to improve your standing. You may be at a critical juncture where you may make poor choices and unnecessary changes.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Play your cards close to the vest, but not too close. Hiding your feelings or activities could make someone uncomfortable. Remain sensitive to the feelings and concerns of others and include them in your plans.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Be forthright. Let someone know they aren't allowed to infringe on your important boundaries. You may be more sensitive than usual and might not appreciate anyone who steps on your toes to get further up the ladder of success.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): There are bargains to be found if you follow up on every lead and tip. Don't be too proud to accept advice. Remain industrious and you might conquer any obstacles you encounter through sheer persistence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be sufficiently prepared for an impending project by studying all the documents and data available. Advocating order and neatness may not win prizes but there's a sense of accomplishment when chaos is tamed.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Decisions and plans may remain unresolved due to a misunderstanding or mix-up. This could work out in your favor, so don't be too anxious to settle an issue before the time is right.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Treat people the way you would like to be treated. Don't overreact if someone isn't open and refuses to share their time or innermost feelings. This isn't the time to further complicate an issue by using complex solutions.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't be both judge and jury. Show sympathy to those who ask for your understanding even if you feel they may not deserve it. Hold off on making a big move until you've gathered much more information.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The way the story is being told might obscure some of the facts. Don't be fooled into making financial decisions based on hearsay. Don't let someone guilt-trip you into doing something that you wouldn't normally do.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Having friends doesn't cost a thing. Keep in mind that you may be better off spending your spare time engaged in conversations with members of your circle of close pals than doing just about anything else.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make sure that what you set your heart on having is worthwhile and not just a temporary distraction. Wait for better timing to make major purchases. Your lesson might be that patience and persistence can pay off.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Try to avoid misunderstandings before they start. Perhaps you insist on peace and quiet, or shrink away from open displays of affection, but someone in your intimate circle may believe these are signs you're avoiding them.

Vanroy Burnes: 'I am from the best village in Antigua'

Vanroy Burnes, who claims his village of All Saints is the best location in Antigua, started his career in sports playing football, cricket, tennis, marble – you name it – before settling on the nation's two most popular sporting disciplines.

Burns took a liking to football, but after suffering a severe injury playing in the All Saints Community League as a goalkeeper, then-striker, he turned his attention to officiating.

Vanroy's journey as a football referee started 44 years ago after honing his skills in the All Saints Community League before joining the ABFA Referees Association.

"Back in those days you had to start in lower divisions, prove yourself and

wait your turn to be elevated," Burns noted. "These days an individual join the referee association and within a short period he or she is officiating in the Premier League," Vanroy said.

The man from All Saints believes the quality of officiating has dropped over the years and the young referees these days believe they know it all and don't seek advice from senior officials who have the experience.

Burns is of the view that former CONCACAF president Jack Warner has played a role in stifling the progress of officials from the smaller islands while elevating referees with less quality and performance from the bigger islands.

"I was at an event in Mexico where Jack War-



Vanroy Burnes

ner made a comment that the first referee from the Caribbean to officiate in a World Cup will come from Trinidad and Tobago. I lived to see that happen, even though the individual's performance left a lot to be desired," Burns stated.

He went to two World Cups, followed by a referee from Jamaica who traveled to the other two.

"I have officiated in every Central American Country where football is loved and have come out in flying colours," Vanroy added.

Forty-four years and counting in the football fraternity as a referee, administrator, a qualified cricket umpire and match referee, Burns is definitely a legend on the landscape of sports in Antigua and Barbuda.

"I am still training and keeping in shape, and will not give up on sports or be deterred by detractors because I have a passion for what I do and my contribution cannot be overlooked," Burns said.

"I am available to young officials who need guidance in both football and cricket," stated Vanroy.



Chris Gayle the greatest in T20

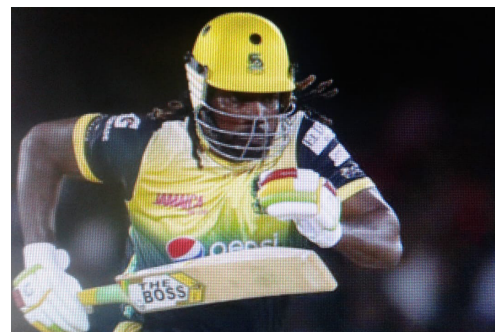
Chris Gayle, the original T20 globe-trotter and the leading run scorer in the format, has been named the greatest T20 player in a vote conducted among ESPNcricinfo staffers.

Gayle, who played his first T20 match in 2005, has turned out for over 20 teams in the format, and has featured in games in Australia, Bangla-

desh, England, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the UAE, USA, West Indies and Zimbabwe.

He was the first to 10,000 runs, and his 22 hundreds are 14 more than those in second place.

His 175 remains the highest T20 score, during which he hit the fastest 100.



Bolt and partner welcome baby girl

Jamaica sprint legend Usain Bolt has become a father for the first time after welcoming the birth of a baby girl with partner Kasi Bennett.

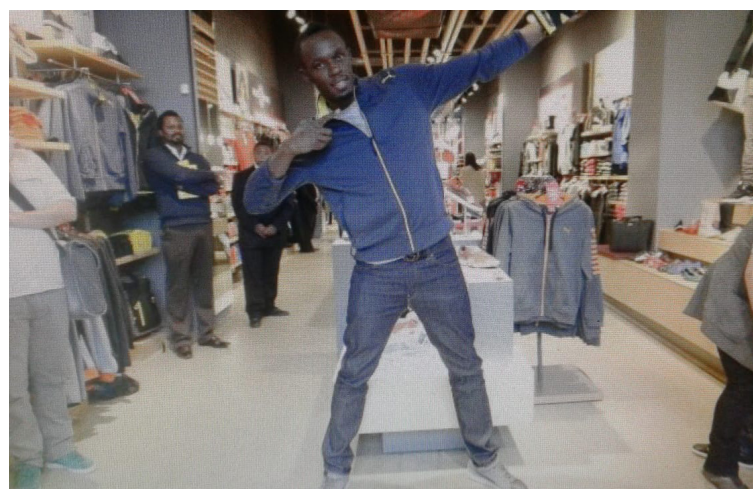
Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness appeared to confirm the birth of Bolt's daughter in a social media post.

“Congratulations to our sprint legend Usain Bolt and

Kasi Bennett on the arrival of their baby girl,” Holness wrote on Twitter.

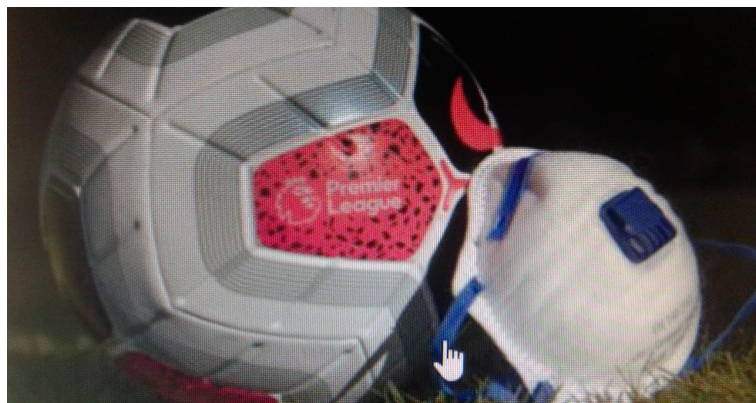
Local media reports said the couple's daughter was born on Sunday.

Bolt, 33, had revealed on social media in March that he was expecting a daughter with Bennett, jokingly warning any future suitors to steer clear of his daughter.



Bolt, the world record holder at the 100m and 200m, retired from athletics in 2017 after a decade of dominance in men's sprinting.

At the 2016 Olympics, Bolt became the only man to win the 100m and 200m titles at three consecutive Olympics.



Six positive tests across Premier League

There were six positive tests across three Premier League clubs on Sunday and Monday, as the English top flight prepares to resume in June.

A total of 748 players and staff from 19 clubs were tested. Norwich City did their tests on Tuesday, so they will be included in Saturday's results.

Squads started non-contact training from Tuesday.

The Premier League has been suspended since 13 March because of the coronavirus pandemic, with 92 fixtures remaining.

COMMUNITY NOTICE

Members of the public are advised that normal hours of operation have returned at the headquarters of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology as of Monday 18th May, 2020.

**THE HOURS ARE
8-4:30 PM, MONDAY THROUGH
THURSDAY AND 8-3 PM ON FRIDAYS.**

Health and safety protocols will remain in place and visitors will be guided by our security guards and receptionist.

Gregg Skepple: Quietly made his impact, then walked away

I grew up playing sports with my two brothers, one older and the other younger,” the words of former national footballer and cricketer Gregg Skepple.

“I am from Pigotts, but my parents moved to New Winthropes while we were still young, and I grew up being torn between playing for New Winthropes or Pigotts,” Skepple noted.

“Earlier in my sporting life I leaned towards football because the season was longer, meaning I played more football than cricket, which had a shorter season,” Greg explained.

“My career in youth sports was rough because at the age of nine my voice box changed and I sounded older than the other children [in] my age group, coupled with the fact [that] I was bigger; so I had to walk around to tournaments with my birth certificate to prove I was the

correct age to participate,” said the former midfielder.

Gregg represented Antigua and Barbuda in football at the Under-19 level in Trinidad in 1989 where he had saw former Manchester United great Dwight Yorke play for the first time.

“I learned a lot on that tour, but when I return home and was selected to train with the national senior [football] team, coach Clancy Mack said ‘Boy me no want you here. Go train with the national cricket team and don’t waste that talent’.”

Gregg said that led to him turning his attention away from football to cricket in which he represented the island from 1991 to 2008 when he left the national setup.

Skepple talked about his respect for Parish League cricket and credits it for his development.

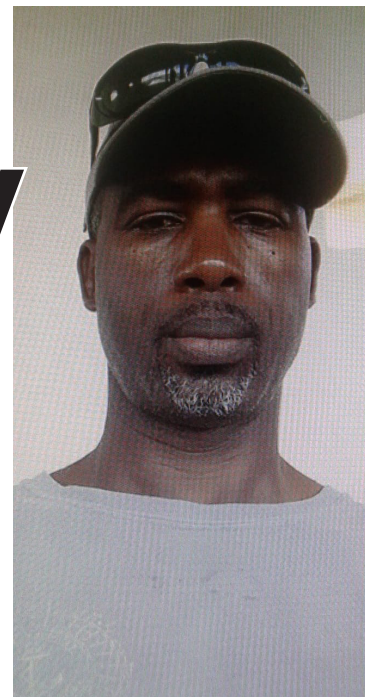
“I have never missed a Parish League tournament in 34 years,” stated Gregg. “But COVID-19, which has put a stop to this year’s League, look like it want to break my run,” he added.

The former Antigua and Barbuda batsman turned to farming 24 years ago when he got married and started a family, realizing that cricket was not going to pay his bills and he needed to find something constructive to move into in order to earn a living.

Gregg, who has visited China on a farming trip, is very passionate about farming and believes one of the issues holding local farmers back is not being able to have a regular flow of the water they need.

He also articulated that farmers need more support with their crops, as major supermarkets and businesses are leaning towards cheaper and more substandard produce from overseas.

“I have spent recent years



Former national footballer and cricketer Gregg Skepple

studying the soil and how it operates and because of that, even in this dry season, I am able to produce good crops,” Skepple expressed.

Gregg Skepple has made a quiet but productive contribution to the landscape of sports in Antigua and Barbuda during the ‘80s and ‘90s. His talents are now immersed in the development of farming on the island.

“I love to share my knowledge with people, as it allows me to expand my horizon by learning; more so if they return again, I am armed with the necessary details,” the man from Pigotts said.

DEWS