



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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PRICE \$3

DEATH BY STRANGULATION



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Visitor dies
from boating
accident**

Bruce Greenaway



65-year-old Ellen Tischbin and her husband.

Visitor dies from boating accident

A visitor to the island, who was the victim in a boating accident on Saturday...succumbed to her injuries on Sunday.

Reports said the 65-year-old Ellen Tischbin died on Sunday at Medical Surgical Associates, where Dr Joey John is the chief surgeon, from injuries sustained when she came into

contact with the propeller of a dingy around 3:30 in the Falmouth Harbour.

The reports indicate that Tischbin, an American, owned a yacht that was anchored in the harbor when she decided to go for a swim.

It was during this time that the dingy made contact with her and she

sustained serious injuries.

The Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue team was called in to assist and she was rushed to the clinic. An appeal was launch for blood but despite attempts to save her, she died on Sunday.

An investigation is now underway into the incident.

DAY 5/25

Max UV Index: 12 Extreme
 Wind: ESE at 15 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 25%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 1%
 Precipitation: 0.0 mm
 Rain: 0.0 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm

31°_{Hi}



Partly sunny and nice

NIGHT 5/25

Wind: ESE at 11 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 20 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

26°_{Lo}



Partly cloudy with a shower in places

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:33 AM

Sunset AST
 6:35 PM



Duration
 13:02 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
 7:52 PM

Moonset AST
 9:24 AM



Duration
 13:32 hr

Death by strangulation

An autopsy into the cause of death of the English Harbour man whose body was found at Indian Creek on April 13...has revealed that he died of asphyxiation or strangulation.

That's according to information reaching PointeX-press newspaper.

The man – Bruce Greenaway – a known vagrant in the area was reported missing by family members in the early days of the curfew imposed nation-wide under the powers of the state of emergency declared by the government in a bid to halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Antigua and Barbuda.

A few days after he was reported missing, Greenaway's body was found at the water's edge at Indian Creek.

The Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) launched an internal investigation into the matter after reports surfaced on social

media indicating that Greenaway had gone missing. The social media postings said the man was last seen in the company ABDF officers.

Newly appointed head of the ABDF, Col Telbert Benjamin, said the investigation was conducted into the matter by his officers and on completion, the report was handed over to the police.

He disclosed that all the persons who were on duty at the time were questioned as part of the investigation. He further disclosed that the personnel who were questioned were all part of a joint ABDF/police operation that was patrolling the area to ensure compliance with the curfew.

According to the ABDF commander...the police are themselves conducting their own investigations into the circumstances surrounding Greenaway's death.

The autopsy was conducted last week and PointeX-



Bruce Greenaway

press newspaper has been reliably informed that the report indicated that the man died of asphyxiation or strangulation.

Attempts to reach the Commissioner of Police, Atlee Rodney, for comments have been futile.

Public Safety Minister, Steadroy Benjamin, says he is aware that a preliminary investigation has been conducted and he declined further comment.

There's no word when the contents of the police investigation will be made public.

Runway fence removed 'without incident'

An operation carried out by the Development Control Authority (DCA) has successfully removed barbed wire fencing that extended into the sea at Runway Beach from the property belonging to a local businessman.

Early Friday morning, police officers accompanied a DCA team that included the operator of a backhoe, removed the fencing material under the watchful eye of the owner Lobster Pot, Gilbert Gomes.

The exercise was carried out with-

out incident as Gomes made no attempts to interfere.

However, the DCA plans to also remove the many boulders placed in the sea water just off from Gomes' property.

It is alleged that the man claims that he was reclaiming his property that was washed away over a period of time by severe beach erosion in the area.

The DCA warns that it intends to bill Gomes for the cost of the exercise as this has been an ongoing is-

sue between him and the authority stretching over a period of years.

Minister of Housing, Maria Bird-Browne, under whose portfolio the DCA falls, has stated that legal action is well underway and regulations will soon be added to accompany the existing law in order to be able to enforce stricter penalties to include extremely hefty fines.

She noted the beaches shall always remain the property of Antiguan and Barbudans and that no one should deny access to the beach.

No dates for the start of CXC examinations

There are no confirmed dates when the Caribbean Examination Council examinations will begin this year.

That's because wrangling over the exact start of the exams, have prevented the CXC from setting a firm date.

That's the word of Director of Education, Clare Browne, who disclosed that when the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), which is an arm of CARICOM, met on May 8, the majority of the countries that are a part

of the CXC system agreed to begin the examinations at the end of June and conclude by mid-July.

However, according to Browne, very strong objections from Jamaica, which has the highest number of students writing the exams, have forced the council to attempt to arrive at a compromise date that will satisfy everyone.

The local education official said the council is working at arriving at a compromise with an eye on starting the examinations around the

middle of July.

"This time table is very important. If we start the exams at that time, then the council can have the results available by the middle of September, thus giving students who want to matriculate for institutions of higher learning time to complete their registration," he stated.

Noting that the Caribbean Union of teachers (CUT) is siding with Jamaica, Browne said some territories want to start the exams the first week of July but Jamaica is pushing to start

on the 27 of the month; a date that would negatively affect the availability of the results.

"The CXC mantra is not to leave any territory or student behind and in doing so it is engaged in a delicate balancing act in trying to bring all interests to a common ground and understanding," Browne indicated.

With this in mind, one proposal being floated is to begin the exams around the 13 or 17 of July with the 'largest volume subjects' being administered towards the end of the exams period.

"The CXC is also very mindful that starting the exams later would mean that students will be asked to write exams during the height of the hurricane season and this could be very disruptive to the entire process.

"CXC continues to seek regional for administering the exams and the situation is currently 'very fluid'," he further noted.

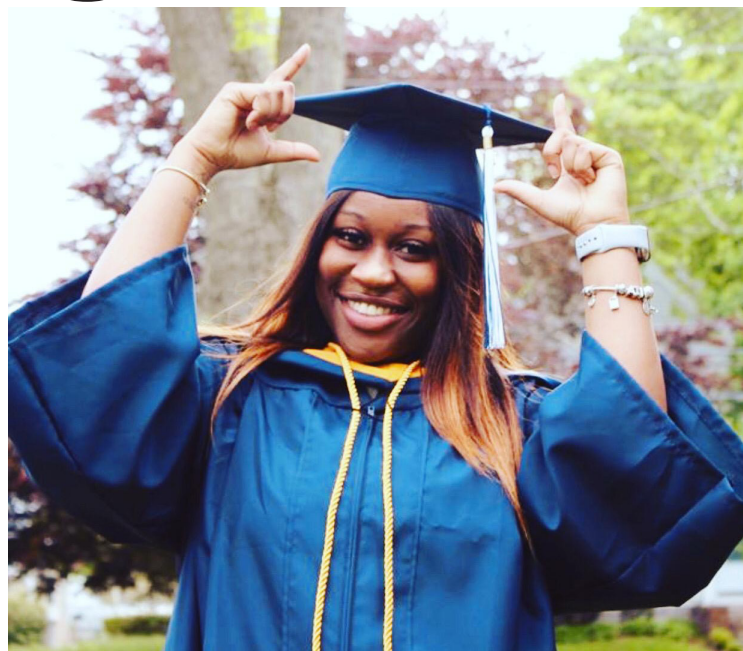
The director said Antigua and Barbuda was in favour of a later start for the exams, however, after the majority of countries voted for an early start, the country wasted no time but to put measures in place to make sure that its students were in a 'state of readiness for the exams'.

Local girl shines

Graduation season is fully on at universities and colleges in North America...and Antigua and Barbuda students are leaving their mark in positive ways.

The latest reports out of the United States say Nia Graham of Parham, St Peter, graduated Saturday from Johnston and Wales University in Rhode Island. She is the daughter of Nadine Smith and Glenroy Graham. She graduated Magna Cum Laude, with BA degree in Counseling Psychology.

Graham attended Shining Light Pre-school, TOR Memorial and Christ the King



Nia Graham

High School and the Bronx Leadership Academy.

Family and friends join

to congratulate the newly-minted graduate on her achievements.



Hot meals for CXC students, teachers

Students and teachers who have returned to the classrooms to prepare for Caribbean Examinations Council examinations in July... will receive hot lunches prepared by the National School Meals Programme (NSMP).

The announcement is from the Director of Education, Clare Browne, who said just under eleven hundred students in the public schools and their teachers, numbering close to four hundred, will receive meals courtesy of the ministry and the NCMP.

“Under our new guidelines, we are prohibiting all vending and cafeteria operations at our school plants to ensure that our students remain safe.

“We want no visitors at our schools. In consideration of this directive, starting today (May 25) we will be providing lunches for students and teachers who are at school preparing for the CXC examinations,” Browne disclosed.

According to the top education official...discussions were held with the NSMP and its manager, Ezra

Knowles, readily agreed to the ministry’s request for lunches.

This is in addition to the hot meals served every day to what he termed ‘the most vulnerable’ students in the society. “This programme will continue unaffected by what we do for the 5th Form students,” he explained.

Meanwhile, the director said the ministry is going even further to ensure that all the health protocols as have been established by the Ministry of Health, are practiced by students during this time.

“We have repurposed the school crossing guards to be on the school compound to monitor that the social distancing, hand washing and other protocols are being observed by the students,” he revealed.

The crossing guards will also be on the alert for any attempts by unauthorized persons from entering the school compound.

These arrangements will only affect students in the public school system. Private schools will have to make their own arrangements.

Sudden deaths unrelated to Covid – PM Browne

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has poured scorn on suggestions that a recent spate of sudden deaths among mostly middle-aged and elderly men was related to COVID-19 but that this was being covered up by the authorities.

The deaths have included two well-known and very popular musicians, but despite the alarms raised about their unexpected demise, deeper investigations have generally revealed that the deceased had known pre-existing health conditions.

However, a prominent local doctor has also pointed out that inactivity during the stay-at-home restrictions of the State of Emergency could have contributed to many people developing or worsening health risks associated with sedentary lifestyles.

Postings on social media by one activist and a former government minister in the previous UPP administration have not escaped the notice of Prime Minister Browne.

During his Browne and Browne Show on Pointe FM last Saturday, the nation's leader devoted some time to disproving the insinuations of a link between the deaths and a failure to test for the Covid virus.

"We have had about a dozen relatively young males, primarily in their early 50s up to about early 60s who have passed suddenly, and there is an assumption by many in the society that it is as a result of Covid," he noted.

"In fact, the last person who passed, I saw Jacqui Quinn-Leandro put up a sign saying that another man died suddenly. What she did not say to the nations is that this man is ... 70-high, in his 80s, and giving the impression



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

as though it is Covid that is the cause of death," the Prime Minister added.

He went on to, as he put it, "examine the inaccuracy of this speculation that Covid is causing males alone to die.

"First of all we know that Covid does not discriminate. Covid does not

care if you are man, woman, black, white, young or old. So the fact that 12 men died suddenly could never be reasonably concluded that it's as a consequence of Covid.

"Because if it was indeed, Covid, then it would have included some

cont'd on pg 7

cont'd from pg 6

women as well.”

The Prime Minister, who receives regular briefings on developments of public health concern, disclosed that a number of those who died unexpectedly were tested for Covid and none were found to be positive. The Prime Minister said in all cases the deceased had serious pre-existing ailments, including one with tuberculosis.

Browne echoed the views of medical practitioners that men tended to be less particular about looking after their health and doing medical checkups, resulting in chronic ailments creeping up on them and worsening for want of in-

terventions.

Doctors have also hinted that the use and side effects of reputed aphrodisiacs to maintain or prolong virility in men who face age-related decline in their sexual prowess, could also be a contributing factor to some of the sudden deaths in those higher age categories.

Higher levels of testosterone in men, whether natural or supplemented, have been linked to a greater risk of heart attacks and strokes because it makes the blood more prone to clotting. Also, many of the sex stimulants have effects on blood pressure, and the consumption of alcohol is known to exacerbate some of these adverse impacts.

Prime Minister Browne cautioned men not to sacrifice good lifestyle practices such proper dietary choices and to avoid over-in-

dulgence in energy drinks which have a high content of caffeine and other stimulants that can cause cardiovascular harm.



100 Barbuda families get assistance

Approximately 100 families on the sister isle, Barbuda, have benefited from an outreach programme being undertaken by the Barbuda Community Relief (BCR), a non-profit organization created to assist islanders in times of need.

Reports from Codrington said the Mill Reef Fund has partnered with the BCR, headed by Bishop Nigel Henry to provide the nutritious food for the 100 families.

Bishop Henry said the BCR is an initiative of the Mill Reef Fund as a 3-month pilot programme to assist in absorbing the effects of unemployment and economic stagnation because of COVID-19.

"It is part of an effort to create a food programme for low-income families in order to bring nutritional

relief during a time when most bread winners are out of a job," he noted.

BCR is intentional on the broadest scope of food distribution in Barbuda which will specifically target the most vulnerable in the Community. In particular, the programme intends to subsidize nutritious foods to families, during the COVID-19 economic shock.

It is realized that most families are from low-income households, so the programme's administration seeks to address the issue of providing food and nutrition safety net for vulnerable persons.

In partnership with the Pastors in Barbuda, food is to be distributed to families every month.

"We welcome anyone in our community who has a need to come and receive



Bishop Nigel Henry

assistance. All Churches are invited to have volunteers transport food from the storeroom, unload the trucks, organize the food, and make sure that everyone gets a generous share," Henry advised.

He emphasized that the BCR is not a political or re-

ligious programme but rather a humanitarian outreach by gracious donors who desire to undergird the people of Barbuda.

"Essentially the benefits are available to all households regardless of race, sex, religious creed, national origin, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital and family status," Bishop Henry explained.

The first distribution was made on Saturday 23rd May 2020 and is expected to continue once each month until July 2020 but could be extended if economic situations on island remain unabated.

The Mill Reef Fund is described as 'a charitable trust founded in 1948 by members of the Mill Reef Club... to improve the lives of the people of Antigua and Barbuda through donations to medical, educational, general welfare, and religious institutions'.



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

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D. Gisele Isaac described as 'greedy and selfish'

Prime Minister, Gaston Browne has put D. Gisele Isaac on notice that he is unfazed by her threats of legal action against him over statements he made about her being the recipient of two monthly cheques from the public Treasury.

The Prime Minister, with supporting documentation, has pointed out that this is at variance with established government policy in place for more than two decades that no one drawing a pension should also be drawing a salary together with the pension.

It was recently exposed that, in addition to her monthly pension as a former two-term Speaker of the House of Representatives, Isaac was also employed as a research officer by the current Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle.

Pringle, a first term Parliamentarian, has only completed two years in Parliament and as Leader of the Opposition. As a matter of convention, the staff in his office – which is considered a unit of the Parliament – is paid from the Treasury.

Isaac, also a former executive secretary of the Board of Education – where she was accused of, and unsuccessfully prosecuted for, drawing a grossly over-inflated salary – serves as chairperson of the UPP for which Pringle was the only successful candidate in the last general elections of March 2018.

Without actually naming Isaac at that point, Browne told her that even though she had won her Board of Education case, she stood convicted in the court of public opinion as everyone knows how greedy she is.

"D. Gisele Isaac, I'm told, has



D. Gisele Isaac

threatened that she is going to sue me because I posted on my Facebook page – and just to paraphrase, I said, 'Greedy Gisele Isaac strikes again – that she has been collecting cheques from the Treasury similar to what she did under the UPP [when] she collected about four different cheques concurrently ... So you had one person just grabbing, grabbing, grabbing.'

He said government had until recently not known that Isaac was employed in the Leader of the Opposition's office and being paid more than \$50,000 annually for that job which has been active for the past two years.

PM Browne said the letter outlining Isaac's appointment by Pringle was brought to his attention by a disgruntled person within the UPP who felt that Isaac could have allowed another person to benefit from this employment opportunity instead of seizing it for herself.

He said all such appointments should come to the Cabinet as a matter of policy, but that somehow this appointment by Opposition Leader Pringle had somehow flown below

the radar at practically all levels that should have preceded its submission to the Treasury.

The Prime Minister stressed that neither he nor the rest of Cabinet or Minister of State in the Finance Ministry, Lennox Weston, nor the Financial Secretary had any prior knowledge that Isaac had been recruited for this second source of income.

He was careful to point out that Isaac was not being accused of having done anything illegal, but the appointment was in violation of Government policy as opposed to any law being broken.

"If she is in opposition and behaving like that, what do you think would happen in the unlikely event that they were to get power?" he asked.

"She would take more ... I have no doubt and make no apologies that D. Gisele Isaac is greedy woman and very selfish."

Browne said if Isaac had any sense of decency about her, she should not even allow the Finance Ministry officials to write her, but should instead take the necessary steps to do the right thing – especially given the fiscal challenges that the COVID-19 crisis has placed on the State's coffers.

He said Isaac and the UPP should demonstrate their concern for people of lesser means by giving up one the payments she received every month.

The Prime Minister illustrated this with reference to two currently serving Government Senators who were made to give up their prior public sector employment in order to become legislators in order to avoid receiving more than one monthly payment from the Treasury.



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Another celebration: 101 and going strong!

Yet another celebration has occurred in the exclusive 100 Year Club, when Club member Ethel Charles of Liberta, who celebrated her 101 birthday on Sunday.

Charles' life has been described as 'a rich and rewarding one' with her focus and energies on her Lord and Saviour, family, Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party and the Antigua Trades and Labour Union.

She worked for several years at the now St. James' Club which was then Holiday Inn. Charles is the proud recipient of the Sir V.C. Bird Award which recognizes labour and community services. Residents of Liberta and the wider St. Paul's community joined in offering congratulations to a woman they know for being vivacious, super smart and

collective for her 101 years.

Parliamentary Representative of the St. Paul's constituency, E.P Chet Greene, who she affectionately refers to as her 'little baby Chet' (and her daughter's godson) was among those on Sunday who joined with the rest of the community to extend 'Happy Birthday' greetings to the lady of the day and wishes for continued health, life and happiness.



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Jamaica: \$300m Tivoli Bill - Figure Set To Increase With Suits Pending; Public Defender Laments Continued Abuse Of Young Men By Cops, Soldiers

Ten years after the 2010 Tivoli Gardens incursion, there has been no systemic changes within the Jamaican security forces to ensure there is no repeat of the catastrophic events, one state agency has asserted.

Compensation payouts for the death and destruction that occurred during the internal security operation to arrest drug lord Christopher 'Dudus' Coke have already cost taxpayers a little over \$300 million, a figure that will increase when over two dozen lawsuits filed on behalf of detainees are wrapped up.

Days of anxiety and tension over a request by the United States (US) Government for Coke's extradition came to a head on May 24, 2010. The then Bruce Golding-led Government gave local authorities the go-ahead to process the request after a nine-month stalemate with Washington over the process used to obtain some of the evidence against Coke.

Delroy Chuck, Jamaica's justice minister since 2016, disclosed that the Government is examining the Extradition Act, but said it has not yet come up for a total review.

Despite this, Chuck said his position on the issue is very simple. "No extradition [request] has lasted more than 24 hours on my desk."

Hundreds of police and soldiers were met with fierce resistance from armed thugs recruited by Coke when they tried to enter his Tivoli Gardens enclave to arrest him on an extradition warrant.

A diary retrieved from slain gangster Cedric 'Doggie' Murray after he was killed in a police operation in Clarendon on August 10, 2010 provided a window into the intensity of the hours-long firefight.

'RAGING GUN BATTLE' "Gunshots rang out from every corner of west Kingston and other places ... to protect the Don of all Dons, Christopher Coke, AKA-Dudus," one diary entry read.

"It was a raging gun battle, a day I won't forget and such tragedy for Jamaica. I escape, one of the last from where I was under crazy gun fire, but God, grace, mercy brought me out untouched," he wrote.

When the dust cleared, 69 civilians and one soldier were confirmed dead and several houses destroyed in what Public Defender Arlene Harrison Henry has described as the modern-day equivalent of the 1865 "massacre" during the Morant Bay rebellion.

"Sixty-nine dead, compensation having been offered and paid by taxpayers, there has been no accountability within the JCF (Ja-



Children who have been hemmed in – first by gunmen loyal to Christopher Coke, and then by the security forces – look out from behind a grille to their home in Tivoli

maica Constabulary Force) or the JDF (Jamaica Defence Force) for deaths or property damage," Harrison Henry told The Sunday Gleaner during an interview last Friday.

"It has been business as usual. There has been no change of culture," she insisted.

Nearly a month after the operation, Coke was apprehended along the Mandela Highway in St Catherine, in a vehicle driven by the Reverend Al Miller. The founding pastor of Fellowship

Tabernacle church declined an interview for this story.

Miller was convicted in 2016 for attempting to pervert the course of justice – a charge related to Coke's capture – and later detailed, during an interview with The Gleaner, how he was contacted by associates of the drug lord who requested his assistance to take Coke to the US Embassy in St Andrew.

A commission of enquiry, which investigated a number of issues around the operation, concluded that there

was compelling evidence to suggest that members of the security forces engaged in extrajudicial killings, and used strong language to criticise the actions of police and military commanders.

“The most significant and worrying feature of our enquiry was the fact that the JCF did not acknowledge responsibility for any civilian deaths whatsoever,” the panel of three commissioners wrote in their 2016 report.

“The time has surely come to usher in a radical new culture in the operations of the security forces, a culture that provides for greater transparency and accountability,” suggested the commission, which was chaired by former Barbados Chief Justice Sir David Simmons.

While not discounting the importance of the commission of enquiry, commissioner of the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM), Terrence Williams, believes it “has proven to be an ineffective route if you want to punish or put before the court those who are individually responsible”.

“The commission of enquiry process is better for institutional problems, to uncover institutional problems, but not for individual problems,” he reasoned.

The report by the Simmons commission included a raft of proposals aimed at improving the process of accountability within the JCF and the JDF. Among them was that both forces con-

duct separate administrative reviews of the conduct of five senior cops who were singled out for criticisms.

It was also recommended that the JCF gradually change out its weapon system to develop an armoury of weapons that are more traceable; phase out from general use weapons that are not traceable; adopt a same-person, same-weapon policy; and develop a system to ensure that all firearm-related violations and the related disciplinary actions or inaction be noted on the personal files of the offenders.

Repeated calls to police spokesperson, Senior Superintendent Stephanie Lindsay, for the JCF’s position on the recommendations went unanswered.

In 2017, the JCF conducted an internal review of the 2010 operation, which cleared the five cops singled out by the commission of any wrongdoing.

“The [Simmons] commission did not identify any specific act of dereliction of duty or misconduct on the part of any of the named officers,” the review committee said in a report on its findings.

“Therefore, it is the view of the [police internal] committee that no basis existed for the adverse findings and comments [in the Tivoli report] and [we] see no reason why the named officers should not be allowed to continue to serve.”

Card skimming on rise in T&T; \$1.5M already stolen from accounts

Trinidad and Tobago police are reporting an increase in card skimming activity in the Twin Island Republic.

Acting Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) at the Fraud Squad in Trinidad, Curtis Julien noted that the number of reports has increased in 2020.

Speaking at a media briefing today (May 22) Julien noted that for the year so far, \$1.5 million has already been stolen from the bank accounts of over 700 people.

“Within the first quarter January to April 2019, there were 253 reports in the Port of Spain area and 206 reports in the Southern area, totalling a value of \$2.2 million which was skimmed from persons’ accounts. For that said period 2020, we had 494 reports in the Port of Spain area, 264 reports in the Southern area, totalling \$1.5 million.”

“These statistics represent both a rise and a drop in the two categories. Firstly, the reports to date have risen mainly because of the type of activity that has been taking place during this lockdown period of the COVID-19. There would not have been skimming at the ATM machines, but mainly taking place at the point of sale machines. These point of sale machines are very hard to detect.”

He noted that the scammers are now using point of sale machines to capture data of

customers, after which a data encoder is used to print cards.

The Acting ASP revealed that Fraud Squad recently recovered point of sale machines, as well as card printing equipment.

“These point of sale machines were not sold anywhere in the Caribbean or Latin American region. They were sold - one from California, one from Finland and the other from Hungary, which goes to say that the person who was in possession of these machines has some international links. Now, these point of sale skimmers are for the most part reading your data, capturing your data and they only give receipts that would say “communication error” or “transaction” failed.”

He is advising customers to be vigilant.

“We need to safeguard ourselves from this type of activity. Most of the persons using their cards, swiping their cards with point of sale machines usually do not pay attention to the activity that is taking place with their card because they may be looking at the item they purchase or may be looking at some other item. It is important that we keep our eyes on our card. If there is any suspicion of the activity taking place you must immediately raise a red flag and discontinue that transaction. Contact your financial institution and of course, do your self-checks.”

St. Kitts Nationals Overseas Will Not Be Able to Vote

Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris Friday said that borders of the twin-island Federation will remain closed effectively dashing the hopes of overseas nationals who would have wanted to travel to cast their ballots as had been the case in past general elections. In a radio and television broadcast, Harris said that the general election on June 5 will be held as the country continues with its efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) even as he announced that new regulations will come into force on Saturday, replacing those that expire later on that day. He said that the new regulations would remain in force until June 13 and that the nightly curfew remains in place and must be adhered to.

“It will start at 8:00pm and end at 5:00am (local time) the next day Monday to Friday, and it will begin at 7:00pm and end at 5:00am on Saturday and Sunday,” he said. Harris told the nation that his Team Unity administration, which will face challenge from the main opposition St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) for control of the 11 seats in the National Assembly, “is committed to keeping our people safe. “Indeed, that has been our first priority. But we have also been a government that has been committed to the rule of law. Our Constitution requires us to hold an election to choose representatives to sit in Parliament and form your government once Parliament is dissolved. “COVID-19 forced us to adjust the way we are accus-

tomed to campaign and bring our ideas and vision to influence people to select the candidate of their choice. Our medical experts have strongly advised against mass gatherings, which are fertile ground for the transmission of the disease by asymptomatic persons,” he said.

He said that as a result those vying for seats in the Parliament are resorting to innovative ways to bring their programmes to the voters. “Virtual campaigns, social media, and other innovative and creative ways are the new normal. When we visit residents in constituencies, we ask that candidates, campaigners and supporters follow the social distancing protocols. That is good for all of us. “I urge all of us to pay attention. Our people must continue to behave responsibly. We have to be mature and keep the Peace at all times. I expect that the Supervisor of Elections and the Electoral Commission will be advised by the medical experts and thus ensure that registered voters will be safe when they go to vote. “But Harris insisted that the strict guidelines that his government initiated some weeks ago have so far proven to be effective, and they have allowed the country to flatten the curve with respect to the virus that has killed more than 350,000 people and infected more than five million others worldwide. “Our borders will continue to remain closed to international commercial flights and visitors so as to prevent and/or delay the possibility of importing any new cases. We are



St. Kitts Prime Minister, Dr. Timothy Harris

concerned that our ally the United States of America has become a hotspot for COVID-19. Many of us are concerned about the rate of infection in New York, in New Jersey and Florida. “

He said that there is a procedure that has been established and is in practice, which must be followed if requests for entry are made. “Anyone entering our country must go through a mandatory or a compulsory quarantine period up to a minimum – I stress, up to a minimum – of 14 days, after which they must be tested and, if found to be negative, they will be reintegrated in the community. If they are found to be positive, they will have to be isolated until they are fully recovered as per World Health Organization’s guidelines.”

Harris said that while his heart “grieves for those of our citizens there and everywhere who have contracted the virus and who have died after contracting COVID-19,” we must do all we can to keep safe, avoid spreading the virus by adhering to well-established protocols.

“Lives are at stake. Let’s not

take COVID-19 lightly. My government has a solemn duty to protect our population from all harm. All that we are doing is about you and for you – your health, your wellbeing, your lives and livelihood,” he said, urging the population to cooperate with the medical experts and the security forces “forces for our collective good.

“We must continue to protect our people. Danger still lurks and we must all remain vigilant. My fellow citizens and residents, we are living through a most trying experience, one which none of us has ever had to go through before.

“My government is committed to keeping all of our citizens and residents safe. The health of our nation and its people is our number one priority. We know that we are all in this together, and in Unity, we as a people will overcome this challenge,” he added. The SKNLP has called for a repeal of the state of emergency saying that it seriously hampers the ability to campaign in the days leading up the general election.

Regional News

EXPOSÉ... US firm revising Guyana's oil laws registered as ExxonMobil's lobbyist

By Kiana Wilburg

The company that was chosen by the Energy Department to revise Guyana's outdated oil laws is no ordinary creature.

In the USA, Hunton, Andrews, Kurth LLP is a goliath which represents petroleum powerhouses like ExxonMobil.

Last month, Kaieteur News published several articles indicating that the firm, formerly known as Hunton and Williams, enjoys a 40-year-old relationship with ExxonMobil. But more extensive research exposed just how intimate that relationship is.

Kaieteur's investigation found that on July 19, 2016, the law firm had filed a lobbying registration form to represent Exxon Mobil Corporation, effective June 6, 2016. The specific issues they would lobby for in ExxonMobil's interest include Clean Air Act Regulatory Issues, Clean Water Act Regulatory Issues, Early Action Compact Legislation, Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard Deadline Harmonization Act, Clean Air Implementation Act of 2015, and the Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2016.

The lawyer who is listed on the document that is expected to represent the client is Charles H. Knauss. He is a partner at the firm. (See Link for registration form: <https://disclosurespreview.house.gov/ld/ldxmlrelease/2016/RR/300814978.xml>)

During that time, the company would have received approximately US\$100M for working in ExxonMobil's interest. In fact, Hunton, Andrews, Kurth

LLP was working to protect the interest of the oil extraction company up to last year.

Because of its work with ExxonMobil and other groups which seek more relaxed environmental laws, several transparency watchdogs such as The Washington Post, describe the law firm as one of the "nation's premier challengers of federal air and water pollution standards."

DELIVERING FOR EX-CLIENTS

A case that occurred in the not-so-distant past gives a clearer picture on why the Hunton group is considered one of the best and most effective defenders of oil companies, and why concerns on not using the law firm to protect Guyana's interest may be justified.

In November 2017, Bill Wehrum, was appointed Assistant Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the USA. He was one of Hunton's finest sharks. But this move did not sit well with many American environmental activists. Their concerns were premised on the fact that Wehrum had spent much of his career life working in the interest of oil companies. In fact, The New York Times said that "Wehrum worked for the better part of a decade to weaken air pollution rules by fighting the Environmental Protection Agency in court on behalf of chemical manufacturers, refineries, oil drillers and coal-burning power plants."

The decision to give him the job in spite of those concerns, turned out to be an embarrassment for the US government.

In fact, the New York Times had shockingly reported that Wehrum interacted with former clients, despite an ethics rule that prohibits, for the first two years, former industry lawyers and lobbyists from meeting with former clients in private settings to discuss government-related matters. Democrats who were convinced that his meetings represented an ethics violation, succeeded in getting a probe launched. Details of that investigation showed that it was less than one month after joining the EPA (December), that Wehrum met with two former clients.

The meeting occurred at his old firm, Hunton, Andrews, Kurth. That same month, US media reported that Wehrum, following his unethical meetings, weighed in on a decision that appeared to benefit a former client, DTE Energy.

Wehrum subsequently resigned from his post last year since according to the Washington Post, the matter that was being investigated, affected his old law firm.

The Washington Post reported that Wehrum served as one of the chief architects of the Trump administration's efforts to shrink the ambition and reach of the EPA. He also oversaw efforts to ease regulation of the coal industry, slow requirements that cars and trucks become more fuel efficient and overhaul how the agency calculates costs and benefits so as to favour the industry.

EXPOSED

The 40 year relationship between ExxonMobil and the American law firm was first



Energy Department Head, Dr. Mark Bynoe

raised by British news agency, The Guardian and subsequently picked up by a German Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called Urgewald.

The NGO questioned how Guyana's authorities, with a straight face, could allow an ExxonMobil affiliate to write the nation's laws when those very laws would be used to regulate Exxon and many of its subcontractors.

Urgewald also questioned the World Bank's role in the matter. The World Bank has given Guyana a US\$20M loan of which US\$1.2M is being used to pay Hunton, Andrews, Kurth to rewrite the nation's laws.

Urgewald said that an investigation is needed forthwith as the use of an ExxonMobil subcontractor to write laws for the country is an affront to genuine efforts to bring rigid governance frameworks into being.

Despite being shown told of the foregoing, Guyana's authorities have failed to drop all ties with the Virginia-based law firm and return to the drawing board.

Trump claims Jeff Sessions not 'mentally qualified' to be AG as feud escalates

President Donald Trump on Sunday ramped up his ongoing feud with former Attorney General Jeff Sessions Sunday, claiming Sessions wasn't "mentally qualified" for the job.

During an interview on "Full Measure with Sharyl Attkisson," Trump called Sessions, who he handpicked for the 2017 appointment, a "disaster" who was never qualified for the role of attorney general.

"He's not mentally qualified to be Attorney General," Trump said. "He was the biggest problem. I mean, look Jeff Sessions put people in place that were a disaster."

The president's comments come a day after he formally endorsed Sessions' opponent in the Alabama Senate race, college football coach Tommy Tuberville. Trump has long assailed the former attorney general for recusing himself from the FBI's investigation into Russian influence in the 2016 election.

Sessions responded to Trump's comments Saturday on Twitter, defending his re-

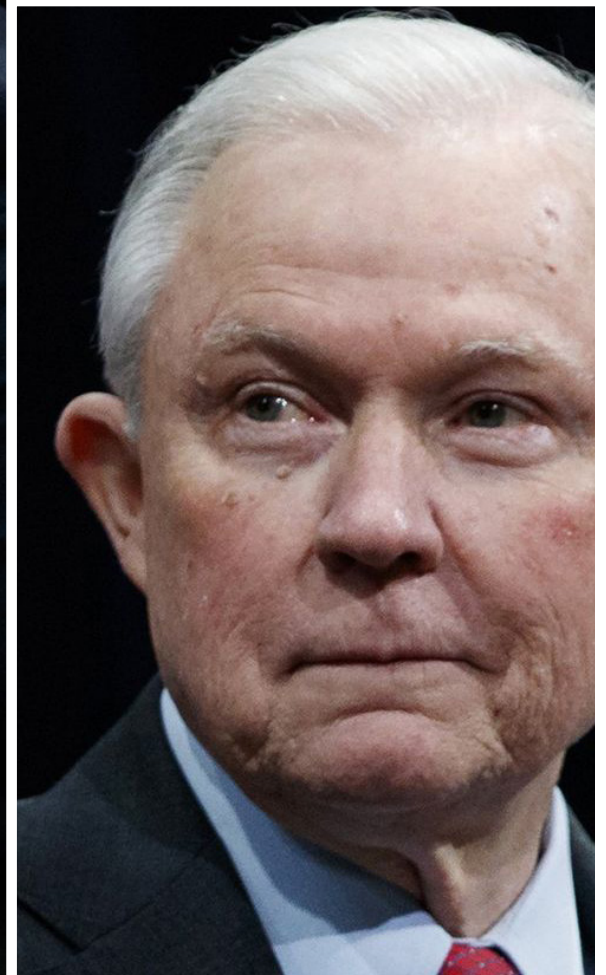
cus and telling the president he was "damn fortunate" for it.

"It protected the rule of law & resulted in your exoneration," Sessions tweeted. "Your personal feelings don't dictate who Alabama picks as their senator, the people of Alabama do."

Sessions and Tuberville finished neck-and-neck in March in a Republican primary, setting up for a July 14 runoff. The runoff winner will face off in November against Democratic Sen. Doug Jones, who won Sessions' former seat in a 2017 special election.

Trump's criticism of his former appointee is just the latest in a yearslong battle with Sessions. In November 2018, Trump ousted Sessions as attorney general and replaced him temporarily with Matt Whitaker.

Trump said in an interview on NBC's "Meet the Press" last year that Sessions would be his only "do-over" as president, claiming that the former Alabama senator should have never been in the role.



President Donald Trump and former Attorney General Jeff Sessions

Netanyahu trial: Israeli prime minister faces Jerusalem court

Mr Netanyahu, 70, is the first standing leader to face trial in the country's history. He denies accusations of bribery, fraud and breach of trust. Arrived at the courthouse for a brief hearing, he said the cases were aimed at "toppling him in any way possible". He was sworn back into office as head of a rare unity government a week ago. His political rival, Benny Gantz, agreed to share power following three inconclusive elections in under a year. He has rejected calls by opponents to step down while he fights the cases. The leader of the right-wing Likud party is Israel's longest-serving prime minister, having been in power continuously since 2009. He also served a term in office from 1996-1999.

What happened at the court? As he arrived at the Jerusalem District Court on Sunday, he told reporters: "I'm here with a straight back and my head held high." "When you need to take me down, a strong prime minister from the right, everything is possible," he added. At the start of the hearing, which lasted about an hour, Mr Netanyahu told the judges: "I read and I understand the indictment." He stood in a face mask and refused to sit down on the defendants' bench until the reporters left the room, local media say.

His lawyers say they need several months to prepare



Mr Netanyahu is the first serving Israeli prime minister to go on trial

their defence. The date for the next hearing has been set for 19 July.

What is Benjamin Netanyahu accused of?

Mr Netanyahu has been indicted in three cases, known as 1,000, 2,000 and 4,000:

Case 1,000 - Fraud and breach of trust: he is accused of receiving gifts - mainly cigars and bottles of champagne - from powerful businessmen in exchange for favours

Case 2,000 - Fraud and breach of trust: Mr Netanyahu is accused of offering to help improve the circulation of Israeli newspaper Yediot Ahronot in exchange for positive coverage

Case 4,000 - Bribery, fraud and breach of trust: as PM and minister of communications at the time of the alleged offence, Mr Netanyahu is accused of promoting regulatory decisions favourable to the controlling shareholder in the Bezeq telecom giant, Shaul Elovitch, in exchange

for positive coverage by Mr Elovitch's Walla news site

Mr Netanyahu has strongly denied all the charges against him, branding them a "witch-hunt" by political opponents, and has vowed to clear his name.

How can the prime minister serve and stand trial at the same time?

According to Israeli law, a leader charged with a crime is not required to resign. But there is no precedent.

A former prime minister, Ehud Olmert, stepped down as party leader when he was under investigation for corruption in 2008 but technically remained prime minister until elections the following year - polls which brought Benjamin Netanyahu to power.

Under the power-sharing deal with Benny Gantz, a new role of "alternate prime minister" was created, which means when the two men switch positions in 18 months' time, Mr Netanyahu will still occupy a prime

ministerial office and stay on as Mr Gantz's deputy.

What does the trial mean for the country?

In short, a serving prime minister occupying the most powerful office in the land simultaneously trying to clear his name and avoid jail-time.

Opposition leader Yair Lapid called it "an embarrassment" and "horrible for the spirit of the nation" though it is not expected to affect government policy. Mr Netanyahu is still likely to press ahead with plans to annex Jewish settlements and the Jordan Valley - territory in the occupied West Bank - in the coming months, a move certain to infuriate the Palestinians.

Opinion in Israel as to whether he should carry on as prime minister is split: critics say the spectacle of a trial makes Mr Netanyahu's job untenable, but his supporters - including his party - say he has been democratically elected and should not be forced out.

Even if he is convicted, Mr Netanyahu will not be required to resign unless and until any appeals are exhausted - which could, in theory, be many months or years into the future.

In Ehud Olmert's case, the former prime minister went on trial in 2009 and after he was convicted only began serving his sentence in 2016 due to the long legal process.

First Iranian oil tanker reaches Venezuelan waters

The first of five Iranian oil tankers heading to Venezuela to help ease fuel shortages entered the country's waters, encountering no immediate signs of US interference amid a diplomatic standoff.

Amid heightened tensions over what Venezuelan authorities described as threats from the United States, the oil vessel *Fortune* officially entered Venezuela's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) at about 7:30pm local time (11:30 GMT) on Saturday, according to the shipping tracker TankerTracker.

"The first Iranian tanker reached the Venezuelan coasts," the Iranian embassy in Venezuela said in a Twitter post. "Grateful to the Bolivarian Armed Forces for escorting them."

Venezuelan state television showed images of a navy ship and aircraft preparing to meet it. The government of President Nicolas Maduro had pledged the military would escort the tankers once they reached the EEZ.

Fortune was heading to the El Palito refinery in Puerto Cabello in northern Carabobo state, according to state television.

The rest of the Iranian ships - the *Forest*, *Petunia*, *Faxon* and *Clavel* - are expected to arrive in the coming days.

The shipments have caused a diplomatic standoff between the US, Iran and Venezuela, which are both under harsh US economic sanctions.



Washington was reportedly considering measures in response.

"This [the shipment] would be an example of how the Iranian regime taking the wealth of the Iranian people and wasting in Venezuela on Maduro," said Brian Hook, the US special representative for Iran. The US recently beefed up its naval presence in the Caribbean for what it said was an expanded anti-drug operation. Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said on Thursday he was not aware of any operations related to the Iranian vessels.

'Defiance to US hegemony' Mohammad Marandi, a professor at the University of Tehran, said the United States has no right to dictate how two nations conduct their business.

"What is important is that these are trade ties between two sovereign countries, and the regime in Washington is in no position to dictate terms to the international community," Marandi told Al Jazeera.

"Iran is not a weak country like countries within the EU

that bow down to the United States when it makes it mad. Sending five ships is a big message - it wasn't just one or two - so the Iranians did that both to give support to the Venezuelan people to prevent them from suffering, and also in an act of defiance to US hegemony." Venezuela has been locked in a political crisis for more than a year, with the US and more than 50 other countries recognising opposition leader Juan Guaido as the country's rightful leader and accusing Maduro of rigging elections in 2018. Maduro has accused the opposition of stirring up violence and of attempting a coup with the help of the US.

Chronic shortages

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani had on Saturday warned the US against disrupting the shipments as the oil tankers passed through the Caribbean Sea on their way to Venezuela.

"If the Americans cause problems for our oil tankers in the Caribbean Sea, we will also cause problems for them," Rouhani said in a tele-

phone call with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Rouhani stressed that Iran did not want a new conflict with the US, but his country would reserve the right to defend its interests.

"We therefore hope that the Americans will not make a mistake in this regard," said the president, according to comments published on his office's web portal.

The tanker flotilla is reportedly carrying about 1.53 million barrels of gasoline and alkylate to Venezuela.

The fuel from Iran comes at a time when the shortage of gasoline in Venezuela, chronic for years in some parts of the country, has worsened during the coronavirus pandemic.

Venezuela has the largest oil reserves in the world, but its production is in freefall, a collapse that experts attribute to failed policies, lack of investment and corruption.

The two nations held a close relationship since late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez took power in 1999.

Hong Kong Police Fire Tear Gas As Thousands Protest Planned Security Law

Hong Kong police fired tear gas, pepper spray and water cannons as thousands of protesters rallied against proposed security measures aimed at tightening Beijing's grip on the semi-autonomous territory.

Protesters amassed in some of Hong Kong's busiest retail districts Sunday afternoon, just days after China's parliament began working on a new anti-sedition and security laws, which have drawn criticism from pro-democracy activists. The protest was unauthorized and in defiance of social distancing rules.

Not long after demonstrators rallied in the city's Causeway Bay and Wan Chai, riot police began turning tear gas and water cannons on the crowd. Media reports citing video of demonstrators say at one point, some protesters began throwing objects at police. Police accounts say demonstrators started fires and destroyed traffic lights.

"A large number of community facilities were damaged, multiple traffic lights were destroyed, road rail fences removed, and a large number of drainage covers and bricks on the road were crowded," Hong Kong police said in a statement.

At least 180 people were arrested, according to police, for unlawful and illegal assembly and misconduct in public places.



Protesters march on a road during a pro-democracy rally against a proposed new security law in Hong Kong on Sunday.

Though smaller demonstrations have broken out in recent weeks, Sunday's was the largest since protests over a now-suspended extradition law roiled the city last year. Those protests culminated in a standoff at a major university and sit-in that led to flight cancellations at the Hong Kong International Airport.

Sunday's rally came just days after Beijing proposed security measures that "could make any secessionist activity seen as critical and subversive illegal, effectively ending Hong Kong's limited autonomy," NPR's Emily Feng reports.

Reuters reports that the rally was initially planned over a bill criminalizing disrespect of China's national anthem.

On Sunday, Trump's National Security Adviser, Robert O'Brien said the proposed security measures could jeopardize Hong Kong's future as a financial hub — due in part to its special trade status with the U.S. — and lead to sanctions.

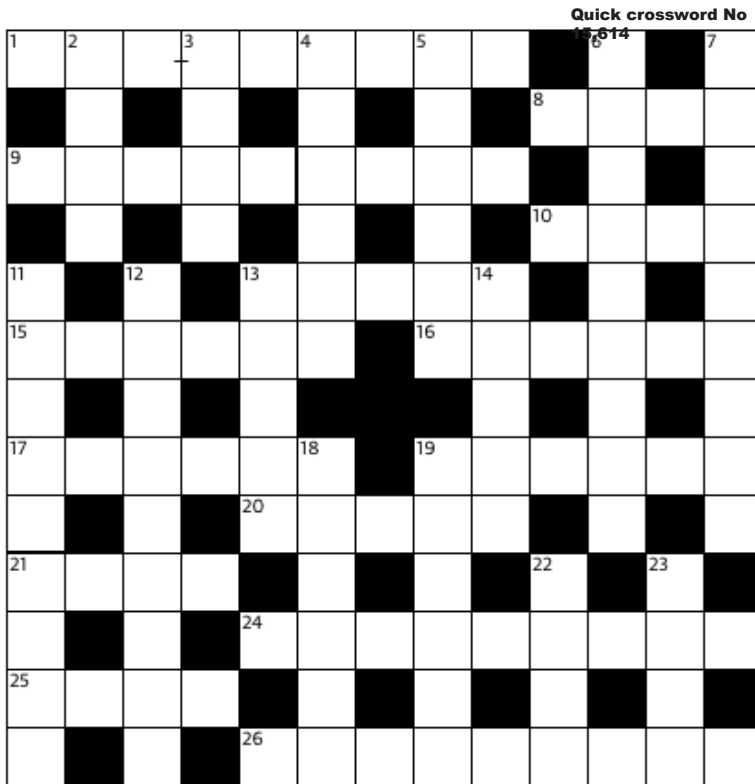
"It looks like, with this national security law, they're going to basically take over Hong Kong," O'Brien told NBC's Meet the Press. "And if they do, Secretary [of State Mike] Pompeo will

likely be unable to certify that Hong Kong maintains a high degree of autonomy and if that happens there will be sanctions that will be imposed on Hong Kong and China."

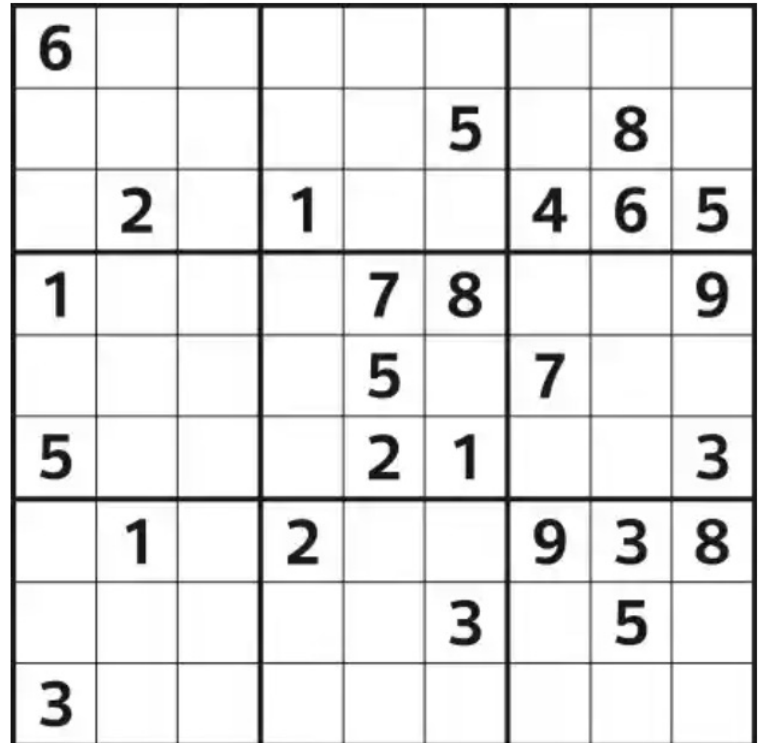
Legislation passed last year requires the state department to annually certify that Hong Kong is "upholding the rule of law and protecting rights" and "sufficiently autonomous" for the city to maintain its special status under U.S. law.

Hong Kong's semi-autonomy from China was established in 1997 as part of the city's handover from the United Kingdom.

QUICK CROSSWORD



sudoku



Across

- 1 Clumsy (3-6)
- 8 Blood vessel (4)
- 9 Painting genre (5,4)
- 10 Broad (4)
- 13 Equals (5)
- 15 Get (6)
- 16 Bondage (6)
- 17 Aromatic spice (6)
- 19 Came to an end (6)
- 20 Largest city and once capital of Nigeria (5)
- 21 Try to find (4)
- 24 Small round thick beef fillet (9)
- 25 Fortitude and determination (4)
- 26 Staff (9)

Down

- 2 Stake (that may be upped?) (4)
- 3 People (4)
- 4 Bad-tempered and sulky (6)
- 5 Exertion (6)
- 6 Small coffee cup (9)
- 7 Entr'acte (9)
- 11 £ (5,4)
- 12 Figurine (9)
- 13 Digital image unit (5)
- 14 Footwear (5)
- 18 Aplenty (6)
- 19 Venomous tropical snakes (6)
- 22 Inert gas (4)
- 23 Hemispherical structure (4)



CARTOON CORNER

Dilbert





ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Avoid any temptation to reveal other's secrets. Honor someone's trust by not giving away information they have confided in you. The long weekend could be an excellent time for rekindling old flames and interests.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Save your money. Just having enough to get by may not be adequate if an unexpected expense challenges your finances when you least expect it. Don't be shy about expressing your true feelings to loved ones.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Budget your time wisely. Make progress toward long-term goals this week by planning a schedule that emphasizes productivity. For your happiness, seek a fun friend to share free time and holiday festivities.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Cupid's arrow may be slightly off the mark. A physical attraction could briefly knock you off balance, but there may not be much more to it. It might be wise to not take any chances with money or love this week.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't mess with a winning streak. If you're already riding a wave of success with something, keep at it, as you might not be as successful with other endeavors. Don't follow advice that could be more harmful than helpful this week.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Nip it in the bud. Misunderstandings can be prevented by speaking clearly and concisely during the week ahead. You have exquisite taste, but this does not mean it's a good idea stretch your budget to buy costly items.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): It may be easy to fall out of practice. An extra day off from work could make it that much more difficult to get back in the groove. Relax by communicating with your favorite people in the week ahead.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Let the good times roll. You may be involved in a networking event, or you may reveal your inner feelings to the object of your affection. Make the most of the long weekend while you can, as a busy workweek lies ahead.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't be too hasty. Any drastic changes made as a preventative measure could end up making matters worse. Problems you worry over now could correct themselves by midweek if you're patient.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Beware of bad influences. Being around people who are glum and spread negativity could adversely affect your mood. Stay positive and upbeat and seek out others who are ready to enjoy the holiday weekend.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It may all be new to someone if they've never seen it before. You could open up a whole new world to someone by exposing them to concepts they didn't know existed. Spend quality time with loved ones as this week unfolds.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Different strokes for different folks. Your personal quirks may be considered charming, but try to keep them to yourself when in mixed company during the upcoming week. Not all ideas are necessarily good ones.

CWI CEO increasingly confident England tour will happen

West Indies are on the verge of embracing on unprecedented trip-full of challenges and unknowns, most of them outside the field of play.

“Yet it is a risk worth taking,” feels Johnny Grave, the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who has been busy sorting the risk assessment with his counterparts at the ECB over the past six weeks, and who is optimistic West Indies will fly around June 8 for the three-Test-series, which is likely to begin on July 8.

Grave says CWI are in the final stage of discussions with the ECB and they are in the final stages of finalizing their plans in order to get the UK government and ECB board support.

“We are expecting to get the formal offer to tour England probably by the end of the month so that we can get our board’s approval and the players can potentially leave the region in early June,” the CEO says noting that the coaching staff and players want four weeks to prepare before the first Test.

The current plan being worked on is to have three Tests series starting on



July 8, July 16, and 24 and a 25 player squad is expected to fly to the UK – 15 players and 10 reserves.

“Effectively, we want to bring all the players to Antigua mainly because LIAT has all their aircraft based here, so it’s easier for them to send planes to the islands to come back to the central hub.

“We are looking to convene players here in Antigua by late afternoon, and they would get on a chartered flight to the UK immediately after that.

“We don’t want our players over-

nighting anywhere in the Caribbean,” he added.

Grave said the plan is to have the players tested about three to four days before departure date and, subject to getting a negative test result, they would be chartered into Antigua and then chartered on one aircraft to the UK.

Once they land in the UK, the WI players would be transported to their quarantine and training venue where they would spend about three weeks or so during which they can train.

La Liga can resume behind closed doors from 8 June

La Liga can resume behind closed doors from 8 June, says Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.

The league’s president Javier Tebas said he had hoped Spain’s top flight would restart on 12 June, although La Liga is yet to confirm a restart date.

La Liga’s players this week started training in groups of no more than 10.

“Spain has done what it should, and now new horizons are opening for everyone. The time has come to bring back many day-to-day activities,” said Sanchez.

He noted that from 8 June, La Liga will be back. Spanish football has a huge following, but it will not be the only recreational activity that will return.

The Spanish second di-

vision is also set to resume at the same time as the top flight, with reports in Spain suggesting the derby between Sevilla and Real Betis will be the first La Liga game to take place.

“We are pleased with the decision,” said Tebas. “It is a result of the great work of clubs, players, coaches, CSD (National Sports Council) and agents.”

The players in the top two divisions were only able to return to individual training in early May after being tested for the virus.

La Liga teams have 11 games to play this season, with leaders Barcelona two points ahead of Real Madrid at the top of the division.

Meanwhile Portugal’s Primeira Liga will resume on 3 June.

A glimmer of hope

Sports all around the world have been on lockdown until recently when the German Bundesliga returned a week ago, leading to Italy, Spain and England looking to restart their leagues.

Despite Jamaica recently cancelling its league, President of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association, Everton 'Batow' Gonsalves, speaking to Pointe Xpress, said that his executive has decided on a wait-and-see policy as they monitor how other leagues around the world handle their restart, take advice from CONCACAF and FIFA, while following the island's protocols locally.

Gonsalves said despite the Minister of Sports, Daryl Matthew, recently expressing the belief that team sports will not be played for the rest of 2020, his association is balancing and weighing its options with the health of their members key to any final decision being made.

The former national player turned football executive hinted that there is a good possibility that once everything remains normal there might be football. "At least at the Premier League level where," he said, "it only takes five days to complete the top division." He told PointeXpress that with the two top teams separated by only two points it would be difficult to cancel the Premier League.

Gonsalves also hinted that there is a possibility that a different approach could be looked at for the first and second divisions where some teams have upwards of six outings remaining. He stated, "we could look at expanding some of the divisions if necessary."

Former national player, Joey Christopher, who is the coach of Tryum – which sits third in the first division with a good chance of promotion – believes the division can be completed by playing the remainder of the season be-



President of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association, Everton 'Batow' Gonsalves

hind closed doors with only players and coaches allowed in the ARG, while practicing social distancing on the benches, washing hands regularly, and following all the other necessary protocols.

Gary Gonsalves, whose team Aston Villa is also in the thick of things in the first division, has a similar view. But he believes 50 fans from each team can be allowed in the grounds, practicing social distancing and all the necessary protocols.

President and coach of the Cool and Smooth Empire team, which led the first division when everything

came to a halt on March 13, Veron Epilus Edwards Jr, says he agrees with the wait and see approach being taken by the ABFA and believes there is no need to rush to any decision.

"I think there is time to play with and I expect no decision until August when the July 30 deadline set by the government for the present curfew to expire," he expressed.

Former national captain and president Everton Gonsalves says his executive will continue to monitor all the Government press briefings, keep in contact with the local health officials and CONCACAF with an eye on moving towards a decision between July and November 2020.

"When we know if we can proceed with the 2021 season, then we will have a decision on 2020," Gonsalves noted. Grenades lead the Premier League with 33 points, followed by Hoppers on 31, with two rounds of matches remaining.



Sports

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
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Quiet but deadly

Gary 'Iron Donkey' Gonsalves was introduced to the sport of football by following his two older brothers – current president of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association, Everton 'Battow' Gonsalves and Johnny Gonsalves – to training in the afternoons.

"It was the only 'legitimate' way of getting out of the house at that time, piggybacking on the excuse that I was following my brothers to training which led to me kicking around on the sidelines and developing a love for the sport," Gary said.

He recalled that back in the late 1970s and early 80s they would form their own teams and arranged matches with guys from the other side of the village. "There were no referees present and there was no fighting. This played a role in developing our competitive side and organizational skills," Gonsalves explained.

'Iron Donkey' as he is referred to in football circles, credits his early development to playing in the Shipwreck League, which his

side, Manchester, won the first year; and making his first overseas trip to St. Kitts with the Shipwreck League All Star team in 1984.

Gonsalves attended the Pilgrim High School where he formed a dominant partnership with former national captain Veron Epilus Edwards Jr, going undefeated during the 1985 school football season before being defeated 2-1 in the finals by Bolans School led by Derrick "Prettyboy Edwards.

"I went to Canada to visit a family friend and while overseas I received a call from Luther Lee telling me to go to the Canadian border where I would be picked up because a college in Oklahoma wanted me to represent them," Gary recounted.

Gonsalves said he ended up at Bartersville College in Oklahoma.

"When I arrived there, I was asked if I had a visa and monies, both I did not have. I was told I would have to go back home and reorganize myself.

"Fortunately, before I left, there was a friendly game being played between pres-



ent and past players and I was invited to participate. I scored 13 goals and my return to Antigua was cancelled leading to four constructive years in college," Gonsalves reported.

He represented Antigua and Barbuda at both the youth and senior levels, playing in a number of different positions before retiring from international football.

"My favorite position depends on the different eras of my career. Early on I loved playing as a striker, a little later on midfield, and, during the latter part of my career, defense," he explained.

Gonsalves is still an active player with Aston Villa, playing as their goalkeeper.

"My most memorable moment is playing against St. Kitts where I assisted



Gary 'Iron Donkey' Gonsalves Pretty-Boy Edwards scoring the winning goal, taking my country to the Shell Cup finals," he stated.

Gary is also involved in coaching. "I am hoping that the 2019/20 football season can be completed playing at the ARG in front of a limited crowd with social distancing being practiced," Gonsalves ended by saying.

His team, Aston Villa, is presently fourth in the first division. But with five games in hand, it has the best chance, along with Empire, of being promoted to the Premier Division.

DEWS

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