



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

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PRICE \$3

NO COVER UP!

Story on Page 2

Bush fire overwhelm firemen - Page 3



No Cover Up!

There will be no cover-up in the case where questions are being raised about the circumstances surrounding the death of Bruce Greenaway of Falmouth.

That is the assurance coming from the National Security Minister, Steadroy Benjamin, as he confirmed that a police investigation is now underway into the matter. "I have every confidence that the police will do the right thing and wherever the evidence leads, they will pursue it to its natural conclusion," he told PointeXpress newspaper.

He noted that the police have a history of prosecuting their own and under his watch there will be no cover

up whatsoever.

Greenway's body was discovered at Indian Creek near Mamora Bay on April 13, a few days after he was reported missing by family members. At the time, Greenway was last seen alive in a pick-up allegedly with officers of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force.

Last week and autopsy concluded that he died from asphyxiation, more commonly referred to as strangulation. Family members also reported that at the autopsy, his body had evidence that he was beaten.

As family members and members of the public call for justice, St Paul Member of Parliament, E.P Chet Greene,

is among those calling for justice to be done in the matter. "Without prejudicing the next steps in this case, I as Parliamentary Representative for the deceased, on behalf of his grieving family and indeed on behalf of the entire island community anticipate absolutely no delays in bringing the perpetrator or perpetrators to justice. I caution against any action which could trespass on the patience of the people, while reminding that justice delayed is justice denied," he said in a statement issued on Monday.

Attempts to get comments from the Commissioner of Police Atlee Rodney, on the progress of the investigations continue to be unsuccessful



Bruce Greenaway

as his secretarial staff reported on Tuesday that he was 'engaged in meetings' and thus was unable to respond to our request seeking answers.

Head of the ABDF, Col. Telbert Benjamin was more forthcoming when he confirmed that his officers had completed an internal investigation into the matter and had interviewed all the parties involved. The report of that investigation is now in the hands of the Commissioner of Police.

DAY 5/27

Max UV Index: 12 Extreme
 Wind: ESE at 15 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 55%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 60%
 Precipitation: 2.9 mm
 Rain: 2.9 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm
 Hours of Precipitation: 1.5
 Hours of Rain: 1.5

31°_{Hi}



Partly sunny with a shower or thunderstorm

NIGHT 5/27

Wind: ESE at 7 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 17 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 61%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 60%
 Precipitation: 7.2 mm
 Rain: 7.2 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm
 Hours of Precipitation: 3
 Hours of Rain: 3

25°_{Lo}



Patchy clouds with a couple of showers and a thunderstorm

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:33 AM



Sunset AST
 6:36 PM

Duration
 13:03 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
 9:45 PM



Moonset AST
 11:09 AM

Duration
 13: 24 hr

Bush fire overwhelm firemen

Firemen from the All Saints and St John's fire stations battled a bush fire for several hours into Tuesday night as the bush fire season intensifies with the extreme dry conditions brought on from a lack of significant rainfall for months.

Fire chief, Elvis Weaver, said his men responded to the call about 4:00 pm on Tuesday and up to 9 o'clock last night they were still engaged in putting out the fire that burnt scores of acres between Tyrrell's and Swetes Village.

"Because of the terrain, our fire tenders were not able to get close enough to the fire for us to use water-hose to extinguish it. We therefore had to resort to 'beaters' and manually fight the blaze," he reported. (Beaters are devises made



by the firemen where they use old fire hose cut to small lengths and then nailed to a mop or broom stick that

are then used to beat the flames of the fire).

The firemen on duty had to walk towards the fire and

use their beaters to fight the flames.

Weaver indicated that 'a large area' was burnt by the fire. However, he noted that a decision was made some-time later to leave the fire to burn itself out as his men were confident that it posed no threats to human lives or property.

Meanwhile, earlier in the day the firemen were summoned to the building that housed the Immigration Department in St John's at mid-morning on Tuesday. But when they arrived they did not have to go into action as by then everything was under control.

It seems someone placed items in a paper bag in a toaster over and the paper bag caught fire and the en-



Agriculture Technician calls for Cotton Industry Revamp

As the country continues to seek creative ways of combating the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, one agriculture technician has called for a renewed interest in the cotton industry.

The call comes from Agricultural Assistant one (1), Caswell Joseph, who welcomes the broadening focus that is being placed on increased crop production in light of the COVID-19 pandemic but underscores the importance of bringing new industries into play to help strengthen the local economy.

In a statement from the Agriculture Ministry's social media platform, they have stated that "the time may be opportune for a fresh approach being taken to the revitalization of the cotton industry in Antigua and Barbuda."

The agricultural technician suggested that the restoration of the industry to its former glory could be a timely consideration, given the significant role it has played in the past and the major contribution it has made to the GDP of the country.



According to the Ministry's page, "In the 1950s and '60s, Antigua and Barbuda's king crops were sugar cane and cotton and back then, Antigua exported up one million pounds of the commodity.

"During the '70s and '80s, there was a tremendous peak in the de-

mand for cotton and it had a great impact on the country's agriculture sector and had even contributed to 80% of the country's GDP."

Mr. Joseph added that there can also be a new industry by linking agriculture and tourism through the

cont'd on pg 5



CXC: Don't blame us!

A Caribbean Examinations Council executive says it was Caribbean Ministers of Education that agreed to the June/July sittings of CSEC and CAPE examinations.

There are concerns that candidates may not be adequately prepared of the tests, due to the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In a Webinar on Tuesday hosted by the CXC addressing E-Testing, the organization was asked by a candidate whether it was necessary that the examinations be held starting next month and whether CXC is concerned they may be putting their candidates' health at risk.

But CXC's Manager, Examinations Administration and Security, Dianne Medford, says COHSOD, the Council for Human and Social Development was presented with several dates and it was the education ministers that voted

on that the June/July period for administering the examinations.

"CXC had provided different dates regarding timing of examinations and the initial vote was the July exams. I believe the ministers were thinking of the fact that the candidates wanted to move on; not only to Caribbean universities but to those overseas as well. The feeling was that once we can enforce the national protocols for exams and making sure people are safe, it gives them a good chance of being able to do well and move on with their lives," she explained.

Medford told thousands of participants who participated in the Webinar that CXC is concerned about its stakeholders and has taken steps to ensure their health and safety are not compromised. "The modified approach was taken so that candidates would not have to move around



CXC's Manager, Examinations Administration and Security, Dianne Medford

as much in several territories to do different exams and in terms of how we can reduce the time in terms of

the turnaround," she emphasized.

Despite objections from several countries and organizations registering their dissatisfaction at the proposed examination dates, there is no word from the Barbados based Caribbean Examinations Council, as to whether it is re-thinking its position.

For Antigua and Barbuda, Director of Education, Clare Browne stated recently the country is working towards July as was announced.

cont'd from pg 4

development of a branded product.

In Antigua and Barbuda, the variety of cotton produced locally is the West Indies Sea Island Cotton.

Through the work of the Central Cotton Station, Sea Island Cotton maintains its genetic purity of the variety via the self-pollination process.

The work for the development of cotton on the island falls within the Cotton Division which comprises the Central Cotton Station and Dunbar's Experimen-

tal Station.

The main functions of the Division are to develop and maintain pure lines of the Sea Island Cotton, to develop appropriate technology within the cotton industry with a view towards cost-effectiveness thus allowing the industry to have a greater impact on foreign exchange earnings, to provide cotton farmers with training on cotton production through farmers field school, as well as, to provide technical support to cotton farmers among others.

Paul Ryan appointed as first Indonesian Honorary Consul

Strengthening bilateral and friendly relations between Antigua and Barbuda and Indonesia is key on the agenda for Ambassador Paul Ryan as he takes up his post as the Indonesian Honorary Consul to Antigua and Barbuda.

The Republic of Indonesia appointed the prominent businessman after enactment by a presidential decree signed by President Joko Widodo in November 2019. The decree declared that the appointment of Paul E. Ryan is to take care of the interest of the state and the citizens of the Republic of Indonesia in Antigua and Barbuda.

Ryan officially assumed his duty as an honorary consul after he received his signed exequatur in December 2019. However, his official inaugu-

ration into office was scheduled to take place in March 2020. Due to safety measures and restrictions brought on by the global pandemic of COVID-19, his inauguration was postponed.

According to a statement from the Office of the Honorary Consul, Republic of Indonesia, "As honorary consul, Paul Ryan is also to support the work of Indonesian non-resident Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Priyo Iswanto to promote the bilateral relations between Indonesia and Antigua and Barbuda especially in the field of economy and socio-culture as well as the protection of Indonesian nationals in Antigua and Barbuda."

Ambassador Iswanto, through a communique, ex-



Paul Ryan would be the first Antiguan to take up the post.



pressed his confidence in Ryan's ability to execute his duties based on his outstanding reputation and expansive networking in the country.

Speaking with PointeXpress, the newly appointed honorary consul stated that "forging ties with Indonesia means a lot for Antigua and Barbuda as a small tourism country."

Ryan indicated that there are several sectors Antigua and Barbuda can benefit from closer ties with the Republic of Indonesia. "I think now is the right time for Indonesia and Antigua to work together on various issues in

terms of Industry and trade, culture, education, training in environmental protection and training and assistance," Ryan said.

Opportunities for the Citizenship by Investment Program and exploring Visa-free travel between the two nations were other areas the honorary consul mentioned he sees as benefits from stronger bilateral relations.

"Indonesia has actually opened up the country for Antiguan to visit visa-free and we are looking at doing the same on our end in the very near future," Ryan added.

Diversified meal plan for fifth formers

The National School Meals Programme says it is offering a diversified meal plan to secondary school students who have returned to the classrooms for the next five weeks.

That assurance comes from head of the National School Meals Programme, Ezra Knowles.

School vendors and canteen operators are not allowed to ply their trade currently, due to the risks associated with the spread of COVID-19.

With that in mind and also considering that some parents may be experiencing hardships due to layoffs and/or job loss; officials decided the NSMP will bridge the gap.

“It’s the first time in its 14-year history that the NSMP is catering for secondary school students and we are aware that this is not ‘business as usual’.

We are fighting this corona virus but at the same time we are tasked with providing meals for these students who have had to return to the classroom because they can’t purchase from vendors.

We therefore try to do an interesting and exciting meal plan for them,” Knowles revealed.

The first meals were delivered to schools on Monday and Knowles has described it as a success.

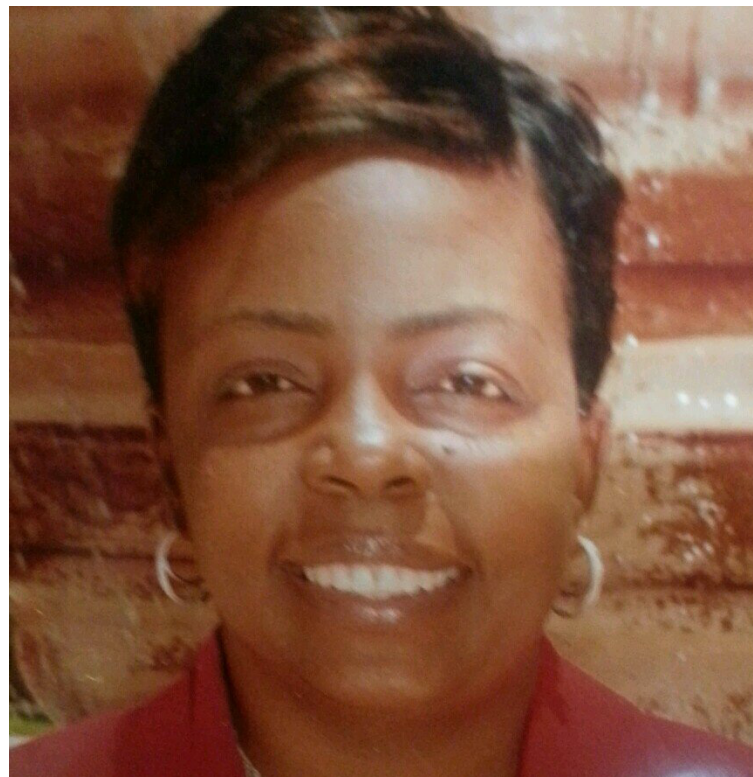
“We are tweaking the plan ‘here and there’ as at the beginning we were not catering for the vegetarians as that information on the numbers was not readily available.

“However, we have been able to sort these matters out thus allowing us to meet the needs of a wide variety of tastes and likes,” she added.

The NSMP head also thanked the Board of Education for providing the resources to allow her department to provide the meals to the students.

The programme to provide hot meals to the CXC students was announced this week by Director of Education, Clare Browne.

He said this programme



Head of the National School Meals Programme, Ezra Knowles.

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 fifth form students,” he explained



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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

No early prison release

Discussions among Caribbean prison authorities on the possible early release of some prisoners because of the COVID-19 pandemic...will not happen in Antigua and Barbuda nor any of the other territories of the OECS.

That's because there have been no confirmed cases of the coronavirus within the prison walls here in St John's, nor in any of the neighbouring territories.

Superintendent of Prison, Lt. Col. Eugene Phillip, said the matter was raised at the early stages of the pandemic in the Caribbean. It was seen as one way to reduce the risk of the virus spreading among the individual country's prison population.

"There's been no official policy directive on the matter and while there have been discussions among the prison chiefs there's been no decision on the matter. In fact, most prison superintendents are against the suggestion for a number of very good reasons," he disclosed.

Phillip said the prison bosses had difficulty in deciding whether prisoners on short sentences or those with a few months remaining on their sentences would be the ones that benefit from such a programme if it was implemented. Additionally, it was noted that some prisoners were without homes and under the circumstances it would have been better for them to remain in jail.

According to the superintendent, only two CARICOM states – Haiti, which has at least 19 confirmed cases of the virus among its more than 3-thousand prison population and Guyana, whose numbers were not readily available – have said they planned to implement the policy.

He said Antigua and Barbuda's prison population now stands at 285 inmates. Not too long ago, that number was down to just over 250.

Phillip revealed plans to build additional accommodation for inmates not-

ing that the onset of the pandemic has pushed back these plans for 'sometime in the not too distant future'. HM Prison popularly referred to as '1735' was originally built to accommodate 150 inmates. It has had a problem with overcrowding for many years.

Meanwhile, almost a week after he was granted bail in the High Court, murder accused Mikhail Gomes remains incarcerated at Her Majesty's Prison.

Gomes is charged with murdering Vincia James three years ago.

Last week, against the wishes of prosecutors, Justice Ian Morley granted bail

to Gomes of Pigotts in the amount of \$200-thousand with a cash component of \$40-thousand. The fact that the accused has had his trial date postponed several times and the uncertainty as to when he will be put on trial due to adjustments made in the courts as a result of COVID-19 were what the judge considered before granting bail.

However, it appears Gomes have not been able to come up with the \$40-thousand that would have secured his release.

Prison Superintendent Phillip confirmed Mikhail Gomes has not been released.



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NB: Selected applicants will be required to complete psychometric assessments.

INFORMATION TECH. MANAGER

JOB SUMMARY

To provide leadership and supervision to plan, install and maintain information technology infrastructure.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree or professional certification or equivalent education and experience
- Project management
- Professional certification in Network Technologies
- Proficient in network technologies, security, firewalls, LAN, WAN, Wireless, and Internet services.
- Extensive Technical Writing and Presentations skills

VACANCIES Senior Managers

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

JOB SUMMARY

Responsible for the day-to-day administrative and operational functions of the Human Resources Department and will work closely with the Divisional Director to provide the necessary technical support in HR strategic management and policies and procedures.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Relevant Bachelor's degree, professional certification, or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Extensive human resource generalist experience to include strength in change management, leadership development, talent selection, employee relations, and management coaching
- Extensive knowledge of Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code
- Demonstrable experience with human resources metrics

SECURITY MANAGER

JOB SUMMARY

Administer the security operation to ensure compliance of all stipulated regulations and standards, update policies and procedures relating to security standards, and provide training for security details and departments

QUALIFICATIONS

- Five (5) years relevant work experience
- Relevant Bachelor's degree, professional certification, or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Logistics Management
- Knowledge of International Travel and Safety Standards, an asset
- Knowledge of human behavior and performance
- Team building

Big Bucks for COVID-19 Food Programme

CIBC First Caribbean Bank has donated fifteen thousand dollars to Ministry of Social Transformation to aid its COVID-19 food programme.

With the donation, the government's emergency food program is said to now be in a position to assist more persons.

Newly appointment Minister of Social Transformation, Dean Jonas accepted the cheque on behalf of the ministry from CIBC Director of Retail Sales OECS, Ladesa James Williams.

In accepting the donation, Minister Jonas conveyed thanks and appreciation on behalf of the Ministry and expressed the importance of the cooperate community contributing during these unprecedented times.

"This will go a long way towards enhancing our food programme within the ministry," Minister Jonas said.

During the handing over ceremony, the CIBC Director pledged her bank's assistance in the fight against COVID-19.

"We know that the Minister will ensure that the proceeds go to at least 1000 impacted persons in Antigua," James Williams said.

The Director also reaffirmed her organization's commitment to assist in other ways as the country tackles this pandemic.

Minister Jonas added that the government will ensure that the most vulnerable persons will continue to benefit from the programme.

Speaking with PointeXpress, Jonas explained that his ministry is encouraging the cooperate world to play an active role in the program.



From left: CIBC Director of Retail Sales OECS, Mrs. Ladesa James Williams and Minister of Social Transformation and the Blue Economy, the Hon. Dean Jonas

"We are again reaching out to the corporate community in Antigua to make donations to our programs of assistance to the disadvantaged," Minister Jonas commented.

The Social Transformation Minister indicated that so far, "Some have responded positively."

Minister Jonas also pointed out that the COVID-19 Emergency Food program will be tweaked somewhat, to offer more efficiency.

The minister stated: "We're also revamping the delivery process to

make it more efficient. The board of guardians will play a key role in the assessments and manage the process using our district coordinators. These are structures that were already in place with the ministry."

According to the Social Transformation Ministry, "The COVID-19 Emergency Food Assistance programme, provides assistance in the form of food packages and

So far, over 4000 food packages and 1000 vouchers have been distributed.



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Trumpism and Jamale Pringle

The name Donald J Trump, the 45th president of the United States, evokes very strong emotions and sentiments among the people of Antigua and Barbuda. It may surprise many, but here in Antigua and Barbuda, Donald Trump has his admirers and like some in the U.S, they can be very vocal in their admiration/support.

On the other end of the spectrum, are those who view Trump as the most racist and divisive president in U.S modern history; a man who lacks empathy and is narcissistic. Others have even described him as a fool.

We take the view that Trump is no fool. He may not be able to quote Shakespeare or any of the great scholars throughout history, but Trump has a gift; a gift of marketing and self-promotion that no one can deny.

And he defied all political conventions and the political pundits by winning the elections in 2016, albeit, he lost the popular vote.

The American system of Electoral College came through for another Republican candidate, George W. Bush, who won similarly 16 years earlier.

Since assuming office, President Trump has become a master of distraction and defection. If there is a matter in the body politic that Trump feels may hurt him politically, he has an uncanny ability to create another issue, a diversion, that is totally unrelated and insignificant that sends the nation and the pundits discussing for days and perhaps weeks, while the focus is removed from the issue that previously focused on him or his actions.

We can't help but be reminded of Donald Trump, when this matter of the 'staged' walkout of parliament by the Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle two weeks ago. But to do so would ascribe to Pringle a kind of political calculus, that he has not convinced

anyone, not even his UPP handlers, he possesses.

Since the episode took place in the House of Representatives on May 14, the incident has become fodder for countless hours of radio discussion, pages of newspaper editorial content, numerous postings on the various social media platforms and informal discussions among the body politic.

While it is widely believed that the 'walk-out' was a well-orchestrated charade designed to embarrass the Speaker in an attempt to score what is believed to be cheap political points, the inadvertent consequence, is that it has diverted attention from a number of positives for the government.

The late American pop culture icon, Andy Warhol, once stated that everybody will be famous for '15 minutes'. It is clear that Pringle has earned his '15 minutes of fame' and that his act was 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'.

In his attempt to explain away his failure to accept an invitation to sit on the Economic Recovery Committee (ERC) to plan the way forward post-COVID-19, Pringle 'kick up dust', however, when it was all settled, there was absolutely nothing.

In the aftermath, the successes scored by the government with the massive efforts to control and limit the spread of the virus among the population have not received similar attention.

Nor is the fact that in record time, the government completed a 17-bed Infectious Disease Control Centre (IDCC) and it is well underway to developing a 75-bed facility at the former National Technical Training Centre (NTTC) on Nugent Avenue.

When all this is done, Antigua and Barbuda will have one of the highest ratios of hospital beds per 1000th of the population. In fact, the government in-

tends to promote the twin-island state as a destination for medical tourism given the facilities on hand, including the kidney transplant availability and the Cancer Centre.

Despite huge losses in revenues, the government has so far been able to 'paddle its own canoe' and has made all payments in salaries and allowances on time. It has also assisted the Social Security Scheme in meeting its own obligations due up to the end of last month.

How long the crisis lasts and how soon the country's main money earner, tourism recovers, is still unknown. Yet the government has remained positive throughout.

The work of the ERC is ongoing. So too, is the work of its seven sub-committees. Together, they are devising a plan that will help the country cope with the many challenges that lie ahead.

That Pringle declined participation; is one of the biggest political miscalculations ever. Reports indicate that the ERC has had full participation from its constituent members. Neither Pringle nor the UPP will be able to share in any of its successes.

As for Pringle, his actions warrant censure. House Speaker, Sir Gerald Watt says he is leaving it to the members to decide on how the matter is treated.

The argument has been that the house or the speaker should 'go easy on him' simply because he is the lone member of the opposition in the House. Conversely, because he is the lone member, the onus is on him to at all times, act in a responsible manner.

The House would be remiss in carrying out its duties if it allowed Pringle's 'act' to go unpunished on the premise that he is the sole opposition member of the House. The House would be settling an example its members may someday live to regret.

Open Letter to Justin Simon

Dear Sir,

I write in response to a letter carried in your online publication and dated May 19, 2020 under the heading “Personal Explanation Mr. Speaker... and why not”, and written by Mr. Justin Simon Q.C. In his letter, Mr. Simon states that “his opinion has been sought by many members of the public on last Thursday’s confrontation in Parliament”. He went on to state his intention was “to expound” on the matter.

I would pause here to explain that the dictionary meaning of “expound” is, “to set forth or explain in detail”. The writer then proceeds to deal with Standing Order 20 of the House of Representa-

tives of Antigua and Barbuda, in a cursory and simplistic manner.

Mr. Simon’s stated position is that in applying the Standing Orders, Speakers must be guided by the Standing Orders ONLY (which are the bare rules of Parliament) and contained in a small booklet of 45 pages and 78 Standing Orders.

He explained that the Speaker cannot refer Erskine May’s, “A Treatise on the law, privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament”, he states, “Erskine May is a guide, (not law) and is helpful and instructive where our Standing Orders are either unclear or silent on an issue.” I find this argument, coming from Queen’s Counsel to be



Sir. Gerald A. Watt KCN, QC

astonishing; bearing in mind that this reference work is referred to by ALL Commonwealth Parliaments, and others which practice the Westminster System of Government, so much so, that Erskine May is referred to as the Parliamentary Bible.

Mr. Simon emphatically

claims “that there are only three restrictions to a personal explanation sought to be given by a Member of the House:

1. The permission of the Speaker must first be sought and obtained;
2. The explanation must not raise any controversial mat-

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ter; and

3. The explanation must not give rise to any debate.

This, he contends, is the meaning of Standing Order 20. In response, I pose the following questions; one, when precisely must the Speaker's permission be sought and obtained prior to or during the Sitting?

Two, how and on what information will the Speaker decide if the personal explanation is controversial and likely to give rise to a debate?

Further, if Mr. Simon is right, what is to prevent several Members without prior notice and permission seek to raise ANY question which they the Members subjectively consider to be acceptable under the Standing Orders.

No right minded individual can deny that the question which MP Pringle sought to raise was a current hotly debated political issue, between the Member and the Prime Minister, and has been carried almost daily by the radio and print media and on social media, with persons taking

strong vocal positions depending on the colour of their parties. Further, MP Pringle's explanation would be aimed at the Prime Minister who would seek to reply, and this would inevitably lead to debate.

Notably neither Mr. Simon Q.C. or Charlesworth Tabor Esq. have dealt with the obvious issue as to whether the explanation was a controversial one, however, I leave your readers to answer this question themselves.

Let us next examine the writer's bold assertion that "The Treatise" by Erskine May is "merely" a guide "only to be used where Standing Orders are unclear or silent".

Clearly, Standing Order 20 does not give the Speaker any guidance as to when should a Member seek leave, and how is the Speaker to know what the contents of the question are going to be?

Clearly, Standing Order 20 is absent in these matters. In the present circumstances, the Speaker can either act

blindly and make arbitrary decisions or seek assistance (guidance if you wish) in Erskine May which "inter alia" provides "that the Speaker must be informed of what the Member proposes to say and has given leave," and "the precise contents of the proposed statement are submitted IN ADVANCE TO THE SPEAKER to ensure that they are appropriate".

So to Mr. Simon I say, "your letter is contradictory and devoid of logic, the facts clearly indicate that Standing Order 20 is deficient, in this regard I sought "Guidance" from Erskine May, which Mr. Simon has admitted I am entitled to do. His reasoning on this matter can only be described as seriously flawed.

I cannot but take note that the former Speaker of the House and former President of the Senate during their tenure and that of the writer has expressed similar opinions with regard to the use of Erskine May as a Parliamentary reference. Both former Presiding Officers go even

further.

Their position is and has been that, Erskine May cannot be used as a reference and can be of no assistance to Parliament period.

This misguided view explains the arbitrary and erroneous rulings made by the Speaker, and the chaotic manner in which the President managed Sitzings of the Senate.

Finally, I wish to chide the House for the inordinately delay in tabling and debating new Standing Orders, which were prepared by a Select Committee under my Chairmanship, and which the Committee presented to the Attorney General's office some 2 years ago, reported to the House several Sitzings ago, and is yet to be debated.

Hopefully, this unsavory incident will result in the new Standing Orders being debated and passed without further delay.

Sir. Gerald A. Watt KCN, QC
Speaker of the House of Representatives

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Barbados: 'No job cuts at the top'



General Secretary of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Senator Dr Jerome Walcott

The job security of 26 Government ministers and a supporting cast of advisors appears to be secure despite tremendous uncertainty throughout the public service, according to at least two Government spokespersons.

General Secretary of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) Senator Dr Jerome Walcott, the Foreign Minister, on Sunday defended "hardworking" colleagues, while Finance Minister Ryan Straughn declared that trimming the cabinet would be a "disservice" to the country.

The two were responding to numerous questions raised amid heightened scrutiny of myriad of high-level positions as the Government prepares to cut its payroll which could severely affect the disposable income of public sector workers, especially those at the bottom.

The current cabinet includes three finance ministers, two ministers of transport and works, two ministers of foreign affairs and individual ministers of Housing, Education, Peo-

ple's Empowerment, Environment, Agriculture, Health, Tourism, Home Affairs, Maritime Affairs and Labour.

In Government's defence, Straughn argued that ministers have continued to shoulder heavy workloads throughout the national shutdown and will continue to do so in the interest of the country. Straughn said "Obviously in a COVID-19 environment, people are looking for things to cut, but the workload is still there and we still have to deploy people to look after the people's needs. "As a Government, even during this lockdown, we have all been working even harder than before. The very social needs in our constituencies and in the country means we have to work doubly hard so that we can deliver for the people.

"Reducing the number of consultants or cabinet ministers at this time will do a disservice in the context of being able to effectively carry the workload that the country currently faces.

"One may agree or disagree

with this approach, but when one examines the results, I think one will understand it is an approach that we have adopted, it has been working, and on that basis, we have to allow the work to continue."

Straughn added that a team of economic advisors led by Ambassador Dr Clyde Mascoll is responsible for the massive improvement in the confidence of international investors, businesses and consumers in Barbados. He stressed the team will continue to engage international agencies and investors needed to assist the country's economic turnaround.

Straughn, appearing on a panel of four on CBC's *The People's Business*, said: "The number of consultants that we have brought on board is to ensure that we have the best possible expertise available to us, because the world has evolved and we need to ensure that we have specialists that know the issues and the players that we can engage."

Dr Walcott, the BLP's General Secretary, stressed that Government consultants are not new to the country's political landscape. In fact, he suggested their role is even more critical amid the ongoing crisis.

He said: "The previous government had a transport board consultant, one for the ministry of public workers, tourism, finance and education. This happens and most of ours are in the ministry of finance and have played a remarkable role in the country's achievements.

"In the COVID-pandemic

the economy is being affected locally as it is globally. These consultants that people want us to dispose of are responsible for getting us out of the rut we were in earlier.

"If we are now in a similar state because of COVID, this is the time that we need some of these same consultants to put their hand to the plow and get us out of the situation we are in now." Turning his attention to the unprecedented cabinet size, the Foreign Minister added that it was borne from the myriad of "mission-critical" items on Government's agenda in May 2018 when the party came to office and continues to face two years later.

Dr Walcott said: "Persons can have their opinions on the size of the cabinet... but we have all been working very hard and I believe the cabinet has been engaged. You would be surprised at the hours we are working sometimes in cabinet meetings and in various meetings throughout the day. Some of us have been working some very long hours during the day."

Political scientist Dr George Belle also chimed in on the "constant picking on politicians" stressing that the political leaders work "very hard" and sacrifice "a whole lot" to enter public life.

"We may not like a lot of their politics but I don't think the politicians should be the first targets. I think the targets are very visible and people are misdirecting their attention," he added.

Guyana's Role as Caribbean's 'Breadbasket' Under Spotlight

GUYANA's potential of becoming the "breadbasket" of the Caribbean has once again come under the spotlight as regional experts seek out solutions to ensure the demand and supply shocks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic do not adversely affect food security in the region.

The novel coronavirus—COVID-19— and its resulting pandemic has led to an "unusual occurrence" of a global, dual demand and supply shock, according to Economist at the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Ronald James, at a recent youth forum.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has highlighted that the measures used to mitigate the spread and effects of COVID-19, including border closures, quarantines and market, trade and supply chain disruptions, have limited access to "sufficient, diverse and nutritious" sources of food.

During the medium to long term, as economies contend with the loss of productivity, increase in unemployment and other economic impacts of COVID-19, the FAO said that countries, particularly those which depend on food imports, will face difficulties in buying food.

"But there is no need for the world to panic," the FAO said, however, "Globally,

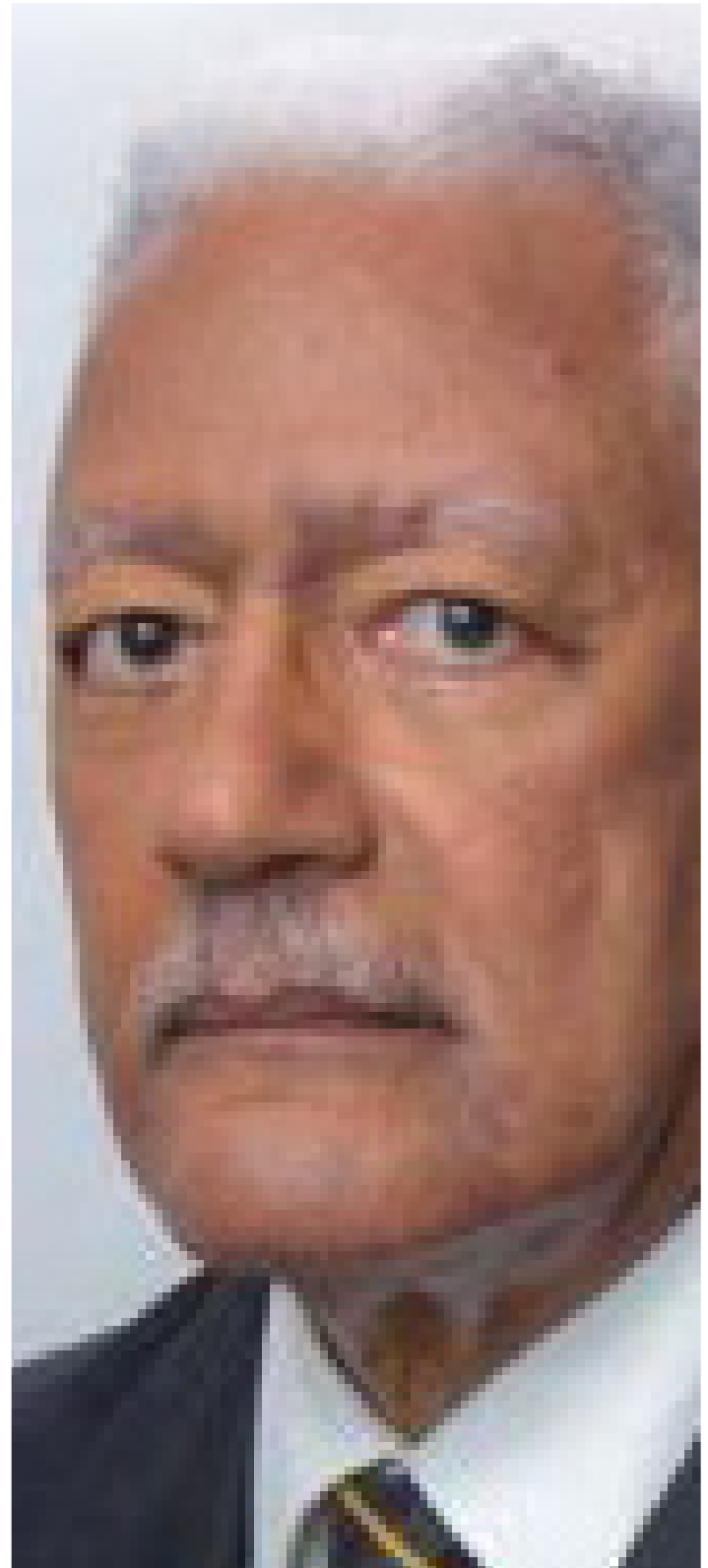
there is enough food for everyone." The challenge remains, however, in logistics and the outcome of the continuing pandemic.

Meanwhile, in the Caribbean, James explained that the outbreak has led to a sharp, but temporary decline in domestic consumption, and a weak demand in other economies due to its effects on trade and trade production linkages.

In the short term, the loss of tourism (a major income earner for numerous Caribbean countries) has led to a decrease in the demand for food imports, which has helped to offset the reduced supply of those imports. Food security in the Caribbean has not been destabilized; at least, not yet.

Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)'s Executive Director, Barton Clarke, cautioned that the indefinite continuation of the pandemic, exacerbated by the droughts in April and predicted active 2020 hurricane season will "put the region's agri food supply chains on a precarious footing."

This threat of a "precarious footing" has led regional experts to seek out solutions to safeguard against the potential ill-effects of the loss of productivity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Amidst those solutions was Guyana.



Minister of Agriculture, Noel Holder

Bahamas gov't denies 'running out of money'



The Bahamas government Tuesday described as “false”, reports that it is “running out of money” and that the local currency is under threat of being devalued. “Our economy has not survived and thrived for so long because of good fortune. As a country, we have historically taken a very prudent approach to fiscal and monetary policy to protect ourselves in situations like the emergency we face today,” Finance Minister K Peter Turnquest said in a statement.

He said the country’s foreign reserves are managed by the capable Bahamian professionals at the Central Bank of the Bahamas, which has “an exemplary record that should instill confidence in every Bahamian”.

The finance minister said that since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Central Bank has taken several “pre-emptive steps to shore up our reserves, and they will continue to take necessary action as needed. “I echo the Central Bank’s statement today, indicat-

ing that monetary policies have already taken into consideration vital local needs, and any reports of devaluation threats are entirely misleading and without merit.

“The Government will continue to take the necessary steps to stabilise the economy and support the Central Bank in its mandate to preserve the integrity of the Bahamian dollar,” Turnquest added.

Central Bank Governor, John Rolle, said “contrary to the misleading report, 50 per cent of our demand liabilities determine the

legal floor on external reserves.

“These move in close sync with reserves because they fund the balances. The Bahamian dollar is not facing devaluation threats. Policies already anticipate vital local needs,” he added.

The Central Bank had earlier this month announced several measures to shore up foreign reserves, including the suspension of resident access to exchange for international capital market investments through Bahamas depository receipts and the Investment Currency Market.

St. Lucia: Government took on more debt to pay full cash April salaries

The Government of Saint Lucia has put itself further into debt after paying public servants their full salaries in cash for the month of April.

According to Senior Communications Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister, Nicole Mc Donald:

“The Government confirms that public servants were paid their salary in full cash payments today, April 23, 2020.”

“In order for the Government to make the payment of salaries in all cash in April, the Government increased its overdraft and incurred further debt. The Ministry of Finance is currently dealing with compounding issues: extremely low revenue intake, significantly high debt repayments and additional financial resources which needed to be allocated to managing COVID-19, hence the proposal of a blended payment to public servants of part cash and part treasury bills.

The Government is still hopeful for support from the unions and the public service on the sacrifices that have to be made by all of us for Saint Lucia to survive this crisis.”

Mc Donald says that what was proposed in discussions with the Ministry of Finance and the



Senior Communications Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister, Nicole Mc Donald

unions was paying the civil servants partly in cash and partly in bonds or treasury bills for a three-month period. This was determined to be necessary due to the fact that the government must conserve cash at this time in order for Saint Lucia to meet its debt commitments. To not do so would likely lead St Lucia to default, which would have even more dire consequences for our country going forward.

“It must be noted that the Government of Saint Lucia continues to dialogue with trade unions on the current econom-

ic crisis facing Saint Lucia and the world and the need to make drastic adjustments in the current COVID-19 Climate.

As the prime minister has said, at no time did the administration propose any form of pay cuts and the government is honouring the collective agreement with public servants,” said Mc Donald.

Discussions are expected to continue with the unions and the special ministerial sub-committee set up by Cabinet which includes Minister of Labour Hon Stephenson King as chairperson

along with Minister for Equity Hon Lenard Montoute and the Minister for Commerce Hon Bradley Felix.

As the prime minister has explained, the shutting down of borders and the partial scale down of our economic activity, as well as the additional costs to the health sector associated with the pandemic, has severely affected government revenues.

The prime minister will address the nation on this issue and will also speak t

'I can't breathe': Black US man dies after officer pins him down

A Black man who yelled "I cannot breathe" as a white Minneapolis police officer pinned him down with his knee in the US state of Minnesota died late on Monday, police confirmed, drawing outrage from community members and leaders, and leading to the officers' termination.

Video of the incident shows the police officer pinning down George Floyd, believed to be in his 40s, to the pavement with his knee on the man's neck for several minutes. Floyd was identified by prominent civil rights lawyer Ben Crump, who said he had been retained by the Floyd family.

Floyd can be heard saying in the video: "Please, please, I cannot breathe."

The officer tells Floyd to "relax".

Floyd responds: "I can't breathe. Please, the knee in my neck."

The officer continues to hold down Floyd with his knee for several minutes, with Floyd pleading and asking for water.

"My stomach hurts. My neck hurts. Please, please. I can't breathe," Floyd cries out, while moaning and trying to cough.

Floyd eventually appears motionless under the officer's knee.

Those who were watching the incident unfold can be heard begging police to move off Floyd.

"He's not f***** moving," an onlooker can be heard saying. "Get off of his f*****

neck." It is unclear what happened before and after the video was taken.

Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo said during a news conference on Tuesday that the four officers involved in the incident were now "former employees".

The city's mayor, Jacob Frey, confirmed that the officers had been terminated, saying "this is the right decision for our city".

In a statement earlier on Tuesday, the Minneapolis Police Department said its officers were responding to a "report of a forgery in progress".

"After [the suspect] got out [of his car], he physically resisted officers," the statement said. "Officers were able to get the suspect into handcuffs and note he appeared to be suffering medical distress."

He was then transported to a nearby medical centre where he died a short time later, the department said.

The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehensive (BCA) said it was "investigating the circumstances surrounding an incident".

It added that it was sharing information with the FBI, which "is conducting a separate federal civil rights investigation at the request of the Minneapolis Police Department."

Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo has said he requested the FBI involvement after receiving additional information "from a community source". He did not elaborate.



A protest against police is scheduled in Minneapolis on Tuesday [Screenshot of video shared by a bystander]

The police officers involved in the incident were wearing body cameras, the Minneapolis police department said. The footage has not been made publicly available.

Community members and leaders have expressed outrage over the incident, with many drawing comparisons to Eric Garner, an unarmed Black man who died in 2014 after being placed in a chokehold by New York City police and pleading: "I can't breathe." That incident sparked nationwide protests.

"We all watched the horrific death of George Floyd on video as witnesses begged the police officer to take him to the police car and get off his neck," Crump, the Floyd's lawyer, said in a statement on Tuesday.

"This abusive, excessive and inhumane use of force cost the life of a man who was being detained by the police for questioning about a non-violent charge," he added. "How many 'while Black' deaths will it take until the racial profiling

and undervaluing of black lives by police finally ends?"

Nekima Levy Armstrong, a local lawyer and prominent activist, wrote on Facebook that this "is trauma on trauma on trauma".

"We can't escape police violence even in a global pandemic," she added.

Minneapolis Mayor Frey called the incident "wrong on every level".

"Being black in America should not be a death sentence," he said in a Facebook post.

"This officer failed in the most basic, human sense," he added. All I keep coming back to is this: this man should not have died ... To our Black community, to the family: I'm so sorry."

A protest is scheduled in Minneapolis on Tuesday, with organisers urging participants to wear masks and adhere to social distancing guidelines due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Crops destroyed as India faces 'worst locust attack in 27 years'

Huge swarms of desert locusts are destroying crops across western and central India, prompting authorities to step up their response to the country's worst plague in nearly three decades.

Drones, tractors and cars have been sent out to track the voracious pests and spray them with pesticides. The locusts have already destroyed nearly 50,000 hectares (125,000 acres) of cropland.

"Eight to 10 swarms, each measuring around a square kilometre (0.39sq miles) are active in parts of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh [states]," the government's Locust Warning Organisation's deputy director KL Gurjar told the AFP news agency.

India has not seen locust swarms on this scale since 1993, the warning centre said.

The insects have caused enormous damage to the seasonal crops in both the states, devastating many farmers already struggling with the impact of a strict coronavirus lockdown.

They destroyed harvests in the agricultural heartlands of neighbouring Pakistan in April, before entering Rajasthan.

Smaller swarms are also active in a handful of states across India, Gurjar said.

A swarm of 40 million locusts can eat as much food as 35,000 people, or six elephants, according to the



Insects damage seasonal crops, devastating farmers already struggling with the impact of coronavirus lockdown.

United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Residential areas in Rajasthan state's capital Jaipur were overwhelmed by the insects as bewildered locals banged on pots and pans to try and ward off the insects.

Locusts destroy crops in some parts of Rajasthan close to the border with Pakistan most years, but it is rare for the insects to move

further into the state.

Experts warn the situation could worsen with more expected to reach India via Pakistan from the Horn of Africa in June.

Heavy rains and cyclones enabled unprecedented breeding and the rapid growth of locust populations on the Arabian Peninsula early last year, according to the UN.

Locusts destroy crops in some parts of Rajasthan close to the border with Pakistan most years, but it is rare for the insects to move further into the state.

Wind patterns have been pushing the swarms southwest, the locust warning centre said.

Brazil faces dark week as Covid-19 toll rises

Brazil appears to be entering another dark week, as coronavirus cases grow by the thousands and controversy swells around President Jair Bolsonaro.

On Monday, the Ministry of Health announced 11,687 new cases of coronavirus had been confirmed over the last 24 hours, bringing its total number of cases to over 374,800. More than 23,400 Brazilians have died so far.

The increase follows a grim milestone over the weekend: On Saturday, Brazil overtook Russia to become the country with the most confirmed cases of Covid-19 after the United States, according to Johns Hopkins University figures.

That was the night that Bolsonaro and his security team left Brasilia's presidential palace and made an impromptu stop at a hot dog stand. While local media captured the president eating his snack, people could be heard yelling "killer" and "trash" and banging pots and pans from their windows. The President at one point turned and wagged his finger at the crowd.

While the country's number of confirmed cases and death rate soar, Bolsonaro has referred to the virus as a "little flu" and frequently downplayed its risks. Two health ministers have left his cabinet in the past few weeks -- one was fired and the other resigned -- after disagreements over how to handle the pandemic.



Bolsonaro has repeatedly expressed concern about the financial impact of the virus, warning it will be worse than the virus itself. He has been outspoken against preventive measures, like lockdowns and quarantines, imposed by governors and mayors of some of the most impacted places in Brazil.

His supporters seem to agree. On Sunday, crowds gathered outside Planalto Presidential Palace in Brasilia waving banners and flags in support of Bolsonaro and protesting the lockdown measures. The rallies have been happening nearly every weekend and are usually broadcast live on Bolsonaro's personal Facebook account.

In video footage of the latest rally, Bolsonaro could be seen with and without a mask as he greeted excited supporters cheering behind a barrier. At one point, a young girl slipped past the barrier and hugged him, while he wasn't wearing a mask.

National Security Adviser Gen. Augusto Heleno, who was with Bolsonaro at the

event, could be heard saying, "We will win this war."

"This is a calculated risk and everything will work out," he added.

However, Bolsonaro's critics have slammed the government for how things are working out. During an interview with CNN Sunday, Manaus Mayor Arthur Virgilio Neto said the president was "co-responsible" for the country's coronavirus deaths and called for the president's resignation.

"Shut up, stay home and resign," Virgilio Neto said.

Manaus, a city of 2 million known as the gateway to the Amazon, has been devastated by the virus. More than 13,000 cases and 1,182 deaths have been registered in Manaus. On Saturday alone, there were 51 burials.

Virgilio Neto's attack was not unprovoked -- in a video of an April cabinet meeting released last week by the country's Supreme Court as part of an unrelated probe, Bolsonaro was revealed calling the Manaus mayor a "piece of shit," referencing the city's mass graves.

The explosion of cases in Brazil is part of a new rise across Latin America that worries health experts. Peru, Chile and Mexico have also seen steep rises in new cases over the past week.

"We don't have the situation under control and particularly in many of the poorer areas of the world, it's really spiraling upward," Dr. Keiji Fukuda, former World Health Organization assistant director-general for health security told CNN's Alisyn Camerota on Friday.

And while Brazil's so-called "Trump of the Tropics" has been accused of failing to take Covid-19 seriously enough, his counterpart in the United States is starting to signal concern.

On Sunday, US President Donald Trump -- a vocal ally of Bolsonaro who has also faced criticism for his handling of the pandemic -- suspended entry for foreign nationals who have been in Brazil within 14 days immediately preceding their attempt to enter the United States.

Afghanistan to free 900 more Taliban prisoners: Government

Afghan authorities plan to release 900 more Taliban prisoners, as a rare ceasefire announced by the armed group entered its third and last day.

“There is a decision to release 900 today,” National Security Council spokesman Javid Faisal told AFP news agency on Tuesday. But the exact number could vary subject to legal procedures, he added.

The Afghan government also urged the Taliban to extend the three-day ceasefire which is due to expire at midnight on Tuesday (19:30 GMT).

“It is important to extend the ceasefire and, to avoid bloodshed, the Afghan government is ready to extend it,” Javid Faisal, the spokesman for the Afghan national security adviser, told a news conference.

The pause in fighting, which came into effect on Sunday to mark the Muslim festival of Eid al-Fitr, and the prisoner release offer hope of peace for the South Asian country ravaged by nearly 20 years of war.

A US-Taliban agreement signed in February in Qatar’s capital, Doha, stipulated that the Afghan government would release up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners while the Taliban would free about 1,000 Afghan security forces personnel.

But the prisoner swap



The Afghan government has so far released about 1,000 Taliban prisoners [Photo courtesy: National Security Council of Afghanistan/Anadolu]

has been delayed as Afghan President Ashraf Ghani refused to release all 5,000 Taliban prisoners at once. So far, Kabul has freed about 1,000 Taliban inmates, while the armed group had released about 300 Afghan security forces it held captive. On Sunday, President Ghani’s spokesman responded to the Taliban’s ceasefire offer by announcing plans to release up to 2,000 Taliban prisoners.

On Monday, 100 Taliban prisoners were released as a “goodwill” gesture that will likely create a positive atmosphere before the so-called intra-Afghan talks envisaged in the Doha agreement.

The ceasefire, only the

second of its kind in the 19-year conflict, has raised hopes of an extended truce that could pave the way for long-awaited peace talks between the Taliban and Afghan government.

President Ghani has said his administration is ready to begin the negotiations, seen as key to ending the war in the impoverished country. Government negotiators would be headed by Ghani’s former rival Abdullah Abdullah after the two signed a power-sharing deal last week that ended a months-long political crisis.

On Tuesday, officials said the ceasefire, the country’s first initiated by the Taliban, had largely been observed.

The Taliban’s offer of a

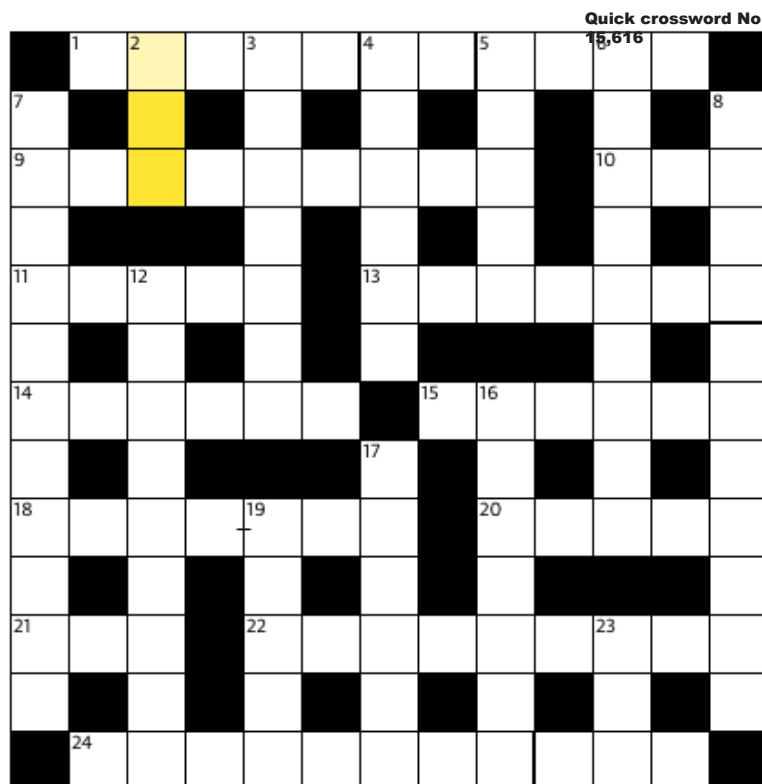
ceasefire came just days after its leader Haibatullah Akhunnzada urged Washington “not to waste” the opportunity offered by the Doha agreement that set the stage for the withdrawal of US troops from the country after more than 18 years.

The only other comparable pause in violence came over Eid in 2018, an olive branch that had been offered by Ghani.

Violence in Afghanistan escalated after the Taliban signed the agreement with Washington.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has welcomed the ceasefire and said the freed Taliban fighters should not return to the battlefield.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Easy task (5,2,4)
- 9 Valour (9)
- 10 First name of Coronation Street's Widow Sharples, d. 1980 (3)
- 11 Goodwood events (5)
- 13 Advice (7)
- 14 Laud (6)
- 15 Pail (6)
- 18 Out-of-doors (4-3)
- 20 More sagacious (5)
- 21 Rocks on which drink is served? (3)
- 22 Retinue (9)
- 24 Needless (8,3)

Down

- 2 Sick (3)
- 3 Vehicle frame (7)
- 4 Science of light (6)
- 5 Nutria (5)
- 6 Mementos (9)
- 7 Morbid fear of open places (11)
- 8 Improbable tales (4,7)
- 12 Colour-changing lizard (9)
- 16 Relaxed (7)
- 17 Senselessly cruel (6)
- 19 Contest venue (5)
- 23 Bother (3)

CARTOON CORNER

Dilbert





ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Don't sell yourself short. You may be far more capable than you give yourself credit for, so it might be time to cast doubts aside and rise to meet all challenges. Intense feelings could interfere with friendship.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Just roll with it. The tact and poise you display during a difficult episode should earn you respect from those in charge. This may not be a good time to tinker with your appearance, as there could be unintended results.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Stay fluid and consider all aspects. You may need to compromise during negotiations to make better progress. Realize that your personal rules and standards may not mesh with someone else's.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't count on a seemingly sure thing. Be sure to have a backup plan in case things don't go your way, as too much confidence with finances could be detrimental. Make sure you're seeing the entire picture.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Helping is great, but think first. It's noble to be generous to a friend in need, but make sure you're not just giving someone an undeserved handout. Stick to window shopping when it comes to romantic prospects and hookups.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Make things easy on yourself. You can stick to your ideas and fight an uphill battle, or you can go along with the majority and make quick progress. A romance could escalate rapidly but may still fail to launch.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): Go your own way. You might make large strides toward your goals by going solo. A group think tank might have a completely different outlook or agenda. Your accomplishments can be unlimited if you stay focused.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Stop and smell the roses. Don't get so hung up on having your own way that you ignore what's happening around you. Personal projects may function better in a controlled environment where there are no surprises.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Little things add up over time. Small expenses may not seem like much, but if they occur every day, the overall cost could be great. Cutting out a few little luxuries could create great long-term savings.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): There's a method to your madness. Long hours of thankless toil and grim determination should finally pay some dividends. Romantic encounters may be within reach, but the timing could be inconvenient.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The odds are in your favor. Don't go all in, but you should feel confident that luck will be on your side when taking a slight risk, especially if your partner is on board. Making a good first impression may be key to a positive result.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Stay level-headed at all times. While any praise you receive may be well-deserved, others may have varying reasons for laying it on so thick. Your head should overrule your heart when serious decision-making is necessary.

Jonas: The course is dry

By **Veron Edwards Jr**

The course is dry, so players are just getting out there to have some fun and stay in form as much as possible," says president of the Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association Avery Jonas.

Jonas – once an outstanding football player at the national youth and senior levels, but who now leads golf – says most of their plans for 2020 have been scrapped because of COVID-19.

"We have been able to complete three tournaments this year: the Canada Challenge, the Antigua Open, and

the Saturday and Sunday Challenge.

"The executive is now planning towards November with the hope we can host our Independence tournament in collaboration with Sir Vivian Richards at the Cedar Valley Golf Course.

"We are now looking to 2021 with the hope of having a vibrant and successful season," said Jonas. "We have been putting some emphasis on youth development since that was one of my mandates when I took office as president."

Golf is one of the sports that have been given the green light to play by the Government under the necessary COVID-19 protocols, but Avery says it has been difficult because of the dryness of the course.

Jonas says one of his executive's immediate goals is to work closer with the Cedar Valley Golf Course – as they are two separate entities – in organizing more tournaments and collaborating to achieve the overall goal of improving the sport in Antigua and Barbuda.

Underrated but appreciated

By **Veron Edwards Jr**

Joey "The Pitbull" Christopher started his career at the Ottos Rangers football club as a promising young striker before moving to Tryum.

Christopher was a prolific goal scorer in school football, playing for Ottos school, leading to him been selected to one of the most talented under-17 youth teams in An-

tigua and Barbuda's history, travelling to St. Lucia in one instance.

Joey eventually travelled to New York. While representing the Antigua team in the Caribbean Football Tournament in the Big Apple, he was scouted by a college coach, leading to him spending four years in university where he was very prolific as a striker.

But the Pitbull impact on the local football landscape came on his return to the island from college when he converted to midfield, representing Lion Spliff and winning three championships.

Playing a roaming midfield role between central midfield and sometimes on the wings, Joey was known for making most of his opponents uncomfortable with his fiery style of play.

Make no mistake with his hard knocks style of play, Joey was a box-to-box skillful player who had an eye for goal coming from deep.

"My most memorable moment was scoring the winning goal against St. Kitts, playing as a fill-in striker for Derrick 'Pretty Boy' Edwards who was injured," Christopher said.

Joey is presently the coach of Tryum football team in the ABFA First Division, and under his direction, Tryum now has a strong chance of



Joey "The Pitbull" Christopher promotion to the Premier League. Joey is also technical director of the Soccer Academy, which has players aged four to 16.

He is one of those who never received the compliments he deserved as a player because of his quiet nature and his preference for remaining in the background.

Joey Christopher was an outstanding team player, much appreciated by all who played with him, because he always had your back.

PRESS STATEMENT

Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment
Central Board of Health



May 26th, 2020

The Ministry of Health through the Central Board of Health has issued the following statement as a consequence of the Cabinet decision granting permission for Bars and Gyms to resume their business operations as of June 1st 2020.

All businesses (i.e Bars and Gyms) are asked to call 727-7077 between the hours of 9am -3pm to make an appointment for an inspection.

Guidelines will be posted on Central Board of Health Facebook page.

Shannon Gabriel pushing for involvement in England series

West Indies fast bowler Shannon Gabriel is hopeful of returning from injury in time to be selected for a planned Test tour of England.

West Indies and England are trying to organize a three-match series to be held in July behind closed doors, with games on July 8, July 16 and July 24, according to Cricket West Indies CEO Johnny

Grave.

He also confirmed that a 25-man squad, including 10 reserves, will travel to the United Kingdom in the week commencing June 8.

Gabriel has not featured in the longest format since September 2019, having struggled with an ankle injury that subsequently required surgery in November

last year.

Gabriel is focusing on stepping up his rehabilitation with the aim of returning to the fold for the series.

"The plan right now is to try to make it to the tour to England. Hopefully that comes off," the Trinidadian said. "I am just trying my best to stay positive and I hope everything goes well," he added.

cont'd from pg 26

because of the pressure from my work environment after my workplace brought in a manager from Canada who had a problem with me leaving work eight times a year to play cricket and football," Veron Sr. expressed.

"The former managers, who were Antiguan and black, were more understanding. But after the change I had to make a decision, and I did, choosing to leave cricket and go into football coaching.

"There is a lot of talent here on island, and I just want to encourage young athletes to work hard and remain focused," Edwards Sr. said.

Also talking to PointeXpress was Point Villa legend Gene Gould who made clear that his appearance in this newspaper depended on his teammate and friend-for-life Veron also appearing.

"I was born in Point," Gene said, "and played my football and cricket with Villa.

"I attended the Point School and then Pilgrim High School. I got introduced to cricket playing wind ball,"

Gene explained. Gould was a nice left wing football player for Villa, but made most of his impact in cricket with his intelligence for the game and attacking spirit.

Gene was full of compliments for Sir Vivian Richards who he said, at a young age, would say 'Gene me go play for West Indies'.

"He knew where he wanted to go, was very confident, and had a great eye-ball-hand coordination," Gould said.

Guy Yearwood, former national player, is high in praise for Gould, saying, "He played one of the best innings I ever seen, 146. He was talented and special."

Gene says he watches very little cricket these days. "When I drive by and see players batting with their bat over their shoulders, with very little time to play if a bowler is fast, I just say choops and move on."

Did rural countryside players get a difficult time back in the day? Gould was blunt: "Yes they did, because first class cricket was played centrally, and until Parish League

came in and cricket moved from being played on Thursdays only to Saturdays and Sundays, they were not seen by selectors. That changed with the cricket revolution which happened when Hector, Sir Lester Bird and Hudson took over the sport."

Gould says he spends very little time watching local sports since he is not impressed with what he is seeing and is not involved as a coach; "because no matter what your contribution, you

are cussed out by the media and supporters.

"Most of the [cricketers] playing for the West Indies team could make an Antiguan Eleven in my days," Gene ended by saying.

PointeXpress and Pointe FM salute two sporting icons who, while present as guests on the Pointe FM Timeout sports program also attracted many calls from past players who were excited to hear their experiences and that all was well with them.



The Legends speak

By Veron Edwards Jr

PointeXpress caught up with two of the most talented sportsmen Antigua and Barbuda has produced in its rich history of churning out greats, Veron Edwards Sr. and Gene Gould, both outstanding in cricket and football.

“Living close to the King George V grounds as a little boy, you had to get involved in sports; which I did, mostly while on vacation during the summer and Christmas from school,” sporting icon Veron Edwards Sr explained.

“As youngsters we played everything, but I leaned towards cricket more in my early days, since the who-of-who was involved in the administration of cricket, and if you wanted to be somebody, just excel in cricket,” noted Edwards.

Veron Sr. said during his days attending the Princess Margret School, sports in school was not organized. “They would just select players who were excelling for their local clubs for trials and took it from there.

“I was very fortunate playing for Empire [which] was involved in first class cricket,



Antiguan sporting legends Gene Gould, left, and Veron Edwards Sr., right, flank Veron Edwards Jr of PointeXpress.

and was eventually drafted into the national set up at the age of 17.”

‘Square Deal’, as he is referred to by some of his friends, broke the Leewards Islands record, scoring a blistering 227 against Montserrat – a performance he described as one of the highlights of his career, since most of his teammates representing the Leewards were part of that Emerald Isle team.

“When I returned home in Gray’s Farm, I was surprised by the welcome I got from my villagers. We partied and

had a wonderful time,” Edwards said.

He credits Hilson Phillip, a former national player from Gray’s Farm, for encouraging him, recalling that Phillip “was the star in the village at the time and I looked up to him. I had no problems with equipment, because Hilson took care of me.”

‘Bill Chapman’, as some of his friends call him, was very high in praise for people like Guy Yearwood, Taddy Arindale and Danny Livingston for their contribution to development of cricket. He was also high in praise for Sir Lester Bird, Tim Hector and Hudson Isaac for changing

the game of cricket in Antigua and Barbuda and presenting more pathways to players from the rural and poor communities.

“I am convinced sports need to stay more community-based,” Edwards added. “I don’t like seeing eight players from overseas in our local football teams, retarding the growth of our youngsters. There should be a cap.”

Veron Sr. is also a former national football player, captain and coach who said he moved away from cricket after travelling on a coaching course to Mexico after he broke the Leewards Islands’ batting record.

“I walked away from competitive sports at the age of 26

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DEWS