



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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PRICE \$3

MAN FOUND DEAD



Marco Diedrick

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'Controversial'
bill shelved**



Police urge patience

Police commissioner, Atlee Rodney, is urging patience as the police investigation into the death of Bruce Greenaway of Falmouth continues.

Commissioner Rodney said the department is taking the case 'very seriously' and he does not want to jeopardize the case by making what he deemed may be premature statements to the media.

He added that the case is at 'an advanced stage' and is nearing conclusion. "I am interested in final justice and not temporary satisfaction by 'rushing' to file charges," he stated.

The commissioner added that the case is proceeding 'well' and that he is in constant contact with

members of Greenway's family urging them to be patient.

Although he did not indicate if and when charges may be filed against any officer, the commissioner confirmed that the officers under investigation have already sought legal counsel.

Greenway died from strangulation while in police custody.

His body was discovered at Indian Creek on April 13 a few days after he was reported missing.

The family last saw him alive being taken away in a vehicle controlled by members of the security forces.

His death has led to an outrage by family members and members of the wider community.



Bruce Greenaway

DAY 5/29

Max UV Index: 12 Extreme
Wind: SE at 13 km/h
Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 25%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 2%
Precipitation: 0.0 mm
Rain: 0.0 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm

30°_{Hi}



Nice with variable cloudiness

NIGHT 5/29

Wind: SE at 9 km/h
Wind Gusts: 17 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 55%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
Precipitation: 0.5 mm
Rain: 0.5 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 0.5
Hours of Rain: 0.5

26°_{Lo}



Partly cloudy with a shower in places

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
5:33 AM

Sunset AST
6:36 PM



Duration
13:03 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
10:44 PM

Moonset AST
11:57 AM



Duration
13:13 hr

Man found dead!

The police are tightlipped on the details surrounding the death of a man found hanging in a storage container located at the back of the building that houses the offices of the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) on the airport road.

A police statement Thursday night said they are currently investigating the circumstances surrounding the death of the man, 43year old Marco Diedrick of Cedar Valley.

The statement said the discovery was made around 5:15 pm on Thursday by an on-duty security officer, who saw his body hanging from a rope and

reported it to the police. A medical doctor arrived on the scene and pronounced him dead approximately 6:25 pm.

When asked whether foul play was suspected or if the death was a case of an apparent suicide, police spokesman, Inspector Frankie Thomas' only response was 'further investigations are ongoing'.

PointeXpress understands that Diedrick was at one time charged with murder of his stepfather. He was charged with the murder of Roy Williams Randall of Hodges Bay. Incident took place December 12, 2012. It is not clear how that matter was resolved.



Marco Diedrick

Taxi drivers get training

A series of training sessions specifically geared for taxi operators within the tourism industry is now in progress.

The ministries of tourism

and health have combined to organize the training sessions that focused on passenger safety and minimizing occupational health risks while

transporting passengers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the training, taxi operators have been provided with key information about the corona virus and how it is transmitted, what is expected of the operators to minimize their risk of infection, and protocols they are expected to follow to protect their passengers.

Sustainable Tourism Officer in the Ministry of Tourism, Dr. Adelle Blaire said the initial focus was on cleaning and disinfecting of vehicles and the use of personal protective equipment.

"The taxi operators and their passengers are required to wear masks at all times and we are insisting that the

operators clean and disinfect their vehicles as often as possible especially after dropping off passengers and we want them to pay close attention to surfaces that are touched often by passengers and sanitize after each trip in preparation for the next passenger."

Dr. Blair said at the end of every session there is a short quiz which seeks to ensure the operators fully understood what was taught in the training. Once successful, a certificate will be issued to participants as well as a sticker to be placed on their vehicles to highlight they have received training on the protocols to follow while transporting passengers during the pandemic.



'Controversial' bill shelved

A proposed bill muted by the government to provide protection for both businesses and employees during the COVID-19 state of emergency...will no longer go forward as growing public concerns have caused the Labour Minister to re-consider.

And following immediately on that decision, Labour Minister, Steadroy Benjamin, has announced that he will be meeting members of the Antigua and Barbuda Hotel Association and union representatives this morning (Friday) to discuss the matter further.

It will be the second such meeting that the minister is convening with the parties this week.

A virtual meeting on Tuesday involving government representatives and representatives of employers and employees and requested by the AHTA, suggested the Labour Code be amended to include the establishment of a definition of furlough in Section C3 and the temporary suspension of some provisions of the code.

But Minister Benjamin who is also the country's attorney general disagreed, proposing instead to lay a bill

before the House of Representatives next week as an alternative. That bill would have suspended temporarily, provisions of the Code.

However, growing concerns from laid off workers who took their disapproval of the proposed move to the various social media platforms caused the labour minister not only to rethink the position, but he said that he would shelve the matter 'at this time'.

Benjamin told PointeXpress newspaper that the intention of both he and the government was to find a compromise position between what was proposed by the hoteliers especially and a desire to protect the interest of the workers.

Now the minister said that workers are of the view that their interests will not be protected under the proposed law, he will not proceed further.

"On serious reflection, and looking what the possibilities of what could result, it was thought necessary that perhaps, in the circumstances, we should allow the labour market forces to take effect.

"We understand that the concern was

to preserve businesses and at the same time, ensure that the employees were taken care of, especially during the period of the state of public emergency. At this time, I am of the view to shelve any intended legislation at this point," Benjamin explained.

The minister said he is aware that should market forces 'contend' that this could lead to companies going under and not being able to settle severance and other payments due to workers.

"Several persons have called me to say that they could run out of business because no money is generated coupled with a lack of financing in order to meet their bills and overhead etc.

"At the same time, employees have also indicated that they too are suffering from being out of work for an extended period. When we say 'market forces' we mean the prevailing conditions of the market of supply and demand," he further explained.

The minister suggested that employers and union representatives will have to meet to work out solutions to which both sides may agree.


 ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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Hodges Bay Club gears up for reopening

Hodges Bay Club is preparing for reopening with an extensive guide to help mitigate the spread of the viral strains which may pose a threat to its staff and guest.

This guide was presented to Tourism Ministry officials this week when a team visited the resort for site visit and the property's viral mitigation guide presentation.

According to a statement from the tourism ministry, "The compilation dubbed "Viral Mitigation Policies and Procedures" highlights all standard operating procedures to be adopted by the property in the event of any viral outbreak.

"It covers policies to guide the actions of staff in areas of guest management, cleaning and disinfecting, room management, laundry operations, and food and

beverage."

The ministry stated that some components of the working guide showed that "the adaptations are pioneering to the local hotel sector." These would include policies such as 48 hours hold on rooms recently vacated, rooms sanitized and sealed daily, and 48-hour laundry lock and pre-wash sun disinfecting process.

CEO and Chairman of Hodges Bay Resort & Spa, Jeff Wellemeyer, stated that "the Hotel management is quite cognizant of the extenuating circumstances caused by the onset of COVID-19 worldwide and sought to adopt the best practices of leading global corporations such as Disney who enlisted the experts of the John Hopkins University to compile their list of operating protocols."



The CEO explained that a nurse's station has been secured on the property with two nurses and two doctors on call for 24-hour periods and temperature checks have become a mandatory part of the resorts staff and guest check-in procedure.

Hotel workers will also be asked to complete an online health checklist before coming to work.

The Tourism Ministry delegation visiting the resort consisted of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Investment,

Mr. Walter Christopher, Tourism Minister the Hon. Charles Fernandez and CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin James.

A statement from the ministry indicated that the Tourism Minister was quite impressed with the level of commitment exhibited by the management of the property.

"The good thing about this is that a template has been created to ensure consistency of operations to prevent or to contain not just COVID-19 but any similar viral outbreak that may threaten industry operations in the future, and I foresee that other properties will (and should) adopt similar procedures for guidance in these circumstances," said Minister Fernandez.

According to a press statement from the Tourism Ministry, "Once inspected and certified by the Ministries of Tourism and Health, the resort will officially reopen for operation in early June 2020."



COVID-19: A catalyst for entrepreneurship Series:

Melissa shopping for you during COVID-19

As the world works at containing the COVID-19 outbreak, countries, and citizens are forced to find innovative ways of dealing with what many are referring to as “our new reality.”

This new reality includes finding ways of maintaining social distancing during the peak of this pandemic. Finding a solution to this is the true benchmark of entrepreneurship and capturing the opportunities which may lie ahead.

Melissa Baird encapsulates exactly what being a

catalyst for entrepreneurship during a crisis is. Shop4U, a brand, an experience, and service, is the creation of Melissa who started her concierge shopping service during the height of the country’s first hit of the pandemic.

With only two months of operations under her belt, Shop4U has already left an impressionable mark on the personalized shopping industry.

Being in the world of business is not entirely new to Melissa, according to the

young business owner, as she is always looking for ways to capitalize on business opportunities. “Being quarantined at home forced me to think outside the box. What I noticed were the long lines at the supermarket and there were no provisions made for the elderly or pregnant women or disabled persons. That’s when I thought ‘what if these people had someone to shop on their behalf’. Melissa recounted.

It was this thought process that brought about her



Melissa Baird

shopping service idea. Melissa said, “I thought of the idea for the business, and the name SHOP FOR YOU ‘Shop4U ‘ came to me. I started to expand on the idea. Now we offer a number of services including grocery delivery, restaurants, pharmacy, and urgent care delivery and also business and personal errand run.”

Though concierge shopping services are becoming the ideal go-to for personalized shopping, Melissa explains that Shop4U easily stands out.

“In our company, we take an in-depth approach to shopping, involving all aspects of technology to include video chat to ensure a personal experience during shopping. We also offer a very wide range of services different from any other company of this na-

cont’d on pg 7

Enjoy the convenience of island wide delivery

SHOP4U

STORE TO YOUR DOOR

PROVIDING FAST AND FRIENDLY SERVICE SHOPPING NEEDS!
SUPERMARKET | RESTAURANT | STORE

Send shopping list via 1 (268) 717-7569

Special Feature

PAGE 7

cont'd from pg 6

ture I have seen so far in this country.” Ms. Baird explained.

In any business, making a profit is at the forefront of the mind of the entrepreneur. However, Melissa displayed that despite the young and novel nature of her business, corporate responsibility plays a pivotal role in its development.

To this end, Melissa stated, “Our company has placed medical practitioners and first responders at the very top of our list offering free delivery as a way of saying thank you for their hard work. Very soon our company will provide a free fabric face mask to our customers provided by Cut Couture my sewing businesses.”

The young businesswoman also explained that her business was explicitly birth as a result of the pandemic, and she used her own savings to start her business immediately, underscoring the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities that were presented to her.

According to Baird, “unlike other companies, financially this one was very easy to start up. It didn’t require me to have a big savings to start nor make an investment. In fact, I started immediately with the savings I had already.”

Customer service, reliability, and safety are some of the adjectives previous clients of Shop4U have used to describe Melissa’s business. Explaining how Shop4U differs from other

personal shopping services, Baird explains that exemplifying hygienic safety measures is a key feature of her service.

“Safety is at the forefront. We have employed a number of safety habits to keep ourselves and our customers safe. Our shoppers wear a face covering or mask while in the store. Carry our own wipes, to wipe down the handles of the shopping cart or basket.

“Practice social distancing while shopping; Use checks to pay bills instead of cash; Sanitize phones before and after use; keeping at least 6 feet between other shoppers and washing hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds after shopping.

“We also offer no contact delivery as an option in which our drivers drop items on the doorstep.” This is all done through virtual contact

with the business through their Facebook and Instagram pages, Shop4uanu, or by simply WhatsApp at 268 717-7569 by sending a simple text with your name, location, and your order.

Melissa also contends that her business has the capacity for further growth and expansion. “Shop4u has a lot of potential and I believe there is only upward movement from here. The goal is to have this business become the most widely used business in Antigua and Barbuda and I think that will be achieved through consistency and reliability,” the young businesswoman said.

Noting the inclination of many other upcoming entrepreneurs, Melissa stated that she would advise them to be convicted in their plans. “My advice to entrepreneurs is to do what you believe in. It sounds very simple but



it makes all the difference when you put your dreams into action. Don’t allow this crisis to shift your dreams use the downtime to reflect on the things you can do to make your goals achievable.”

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is forcing small business owners, governments, and intuitions to change their way of business. However, this may perhaps be the opportunity for many others to do what they do best: Adapt and innovate.

Is your Vehicle License
Expired or due to be renewed
by 31 May?

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**DRIVE
SAFELY**

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

JCI Antigua celebrates 60 years of service

Though the COVID-19 pandemic has placed a damper on many scheduled events and activities globally, JCI Antigua remains committed to marking its 60 years of community development and service with its annual week-long activities.

Each year, JCI Antigua stages a week of activities which cumulates with a community service project.

This year, in light of the effects of the pandemic, the organization will embark on a community service project that sees them making donations to those who are suffering due to the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19.

With national social distancing protocols still in place, JCI Antigua plans to stage its week-long activities completely virtual.

According to Ms. Janelle

Saunders, Co-Chair of the week of activities committee, "Despite our current circumstances the committee was resolute in not cancelling; rather we were determined to find alternative ways to celebrate this year's week of activities using virtual platforms.

"This is the organization's 60th year and we wanted to allow our members to celebrate and foster camaraderie at a time when we truly need it most."

The JCI Antigua Week of Activities 2020 begins on Sunday 31st May with virtual corporate worship where members will worship together virtually at the St Johnson's village church of the Nazarene via the online meeting platform- Zoom.

On Monday 1st June the organization will feature a virtual read-along for the youth called "Storytime with President Andrea and friends."

Understanding the importance of engaging children during quarantine and curfew period, JCI Antigua President Andrea Smithen, Past President Dr. Nneka Hull-James, and JC Neilson Duberry will read two stories to children ages 4-7 and 7-10 respectfully via the JCI Antigua Facebook

page beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The organization is encouraging parents and caregivers to help their children participate in this virtual event.

The committee also noted the importance of staying physically fit and healthy while at home.

On Tuesday, 2nd June the organization will see members participating in a virtual Zumba session via zoom facilitated by Danielle Walwyn of "Zumba with Dani".

President of JCI Antigua, Andrea Smithen remarked on how the organisation had to find innovative ways of celebrating its anniversary during these unprecedented times.

President Smithen said, "One of my 2020 Strategic Objectives is for JCI Antigua to work smarter in our project implementation by, amongst other things, engaging in digital transformation.

Little was it known that this would be quite relevant, given the pandemic. JCI Antigua has therefore transitioned, almost seamlessly, to virtual platforms and has been using the technology available to us to still make an impact and create positive change."



Week of Activities 2020

JCI Antigua

60th ANNIVERSARY
PEOPLE. PASSION. COMMUNITY.

SUNDAY MAY 31	Online Church Service
Story Time with President Andrea & Company <i>Facebook Live</i>	MONDAY JUNE 1
TUESDAY JUNE 2	Virtual Zumba Session
Media Day	WEDNESDAY JUNE 3
THURSDAY JUNE 4	Chilled: An Evening of Reflection with NVP Kevin Cornette
Virtual Impromptu Speaking Competition	FRIDAY JUNE 5
SATURDAY JUNE 6	Virtual Social and Games Night

"PEOPLE. PASSION. COMMUNITY."

Official Visit via Zoom by
JCI West Indies NVP Kevin Cornette

GG solicits assistance for ministry

Over 7-thousand dollars-worth of hand sanitizers have been presented to the Ministry of Social Transformation to help with its outreach programme.

The hand sanitizers were solicited from the Mill Reef Club by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, who in turn made the presentation to Minister of Social Transformation, Dean Jonas.

“This initiative was undertaken in response to a request from former Minister, Samantha Marshall.

“The items were donated by the Mill Reef Fund and they are intended for use by the 160 caregivers in the Ministry of Social Transformation, who regularly attend to the elderly in need across the nation” Sir Rodney stated.

The GG underscored the need for strict adherence to the COVID-19 protocols, which include the frequent use of hand sanitizer — especially in cases where caregivers are required to interact with older citizens who are at



Governor General HE Sir Rodney Williams (right) with Hon. Dean Jonas (left)

high risk for contracting the disease. and the Mill Reef Fund and noted that

Minister Dean Jonas expressed his appreciation to the Governor General the receipt of these items was very timely.

UWI modifies entry requirements

The University of the West Indies is reporting it has modified the matriculation requirements for the academic year 2020/2021.

UWI's Board for Undergraduate Studies (BUS) made the decision at its quarterly this month.

In a statement, the UWI outlined students who have passed at least two CAPE subjects either at Unit 1 or 2 at Grades 1-4, who also have the requisite CSEC subjects and are currently registered for either Unit 1 or 2 will qualify as normal matriculants to The UWI.

The University says its decision is grounded in scientific analysis as research

on students' predictive performance conducted by The UWI over the years, showed that passes at CAPE Unit 1 (Grades 1-4) were 97% predictive of success at CAPE Unit 2.

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Board for Undergraduate Studies, Professor Clive Landis explained, “Around the world, universities have had to pivot and adapt to more flexible admissions processes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a world-ranked university, committed to serving our Caribbean region, The UWI, too, has to consider how it can better support students in this time.” Professor Landis,

who is also the Chairman of The UWI COVID-19 Task Force asserted that, “this is absolutely not about lowering of standards. It is a fair and reasonable proposal given the prevailing circumstances.”

The UWI stated comparatively, some of the finest universities in the USA have long since adopted the practice of accepting CSEC and CAPE Unit 1 results to determine its offering of scholarships and full admission to Caribbean students; thus attracting some of the best and brightest students from the region while The UWI waits on CAPE Unit 2 results.

The proposal on the ad-

justed matriculation requirements was jointly presented by The UWI and the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) to the Ministries of Education at CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) meeting earlier this month, where it received endorsement.

The decision on students who merit admission remains with the Faculties, which are allowed to establish faculty-specific admission regulations that go beyond the matriculation standards (e.g. Law, Medicine), and include competitive screening of applicants, where necessary.



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Regional travel needs urgent tax relief!

Five years ago, as Antigua and Barbuda's Minister for Tourism, I urged the removal or reduction of impediments to intra-regional travel, especially the high cost of airline tickets between the islands. I was at the time addressing an OECS workshop on Factors Inhibiting Intra-Regional Travel.

I noted then that there had been an almost 50% decline in arrivals to Antigua and Barbuda from other OECS territories in the period 2008 to 2014. This happened at a time when we did not have to contend with anything like COVID-19.

What I pointed out then, in April 2015, remains true today. The sharp decline in intra-regional travel for more than a decade is directly related to ticket prices that many travelers find too expensive. A large proportion (more than 50% in many cases) of LIAT's ticket prices are made up of taxes, fees and charges (TFCs). This 50% dip in intra-regional air travel is roughly the same percentage by which ticket prices have increased as these TFCs are added to the base fares.

Tourism needs more regional travel

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) recently cited remarks by Peter Cerda, regional vice-president for the Americas at the International Air Transport Association (IATA). He echoed much of what I argued during my time as Tourism Minister and Chairman of the CTO: We need to remove or reduce travel taxes for intra-regional movement.

Even before COVID-19 grounded everything to a halt, international tourism to most of our regional destinations was steadily growing, while intra-regional air travel fell steeply. My concern is that our post-COVID recovery plans are heavily focused on restoring international arrivals and not enough on increasing intra-regional travel.

During his May 13th 2020 appearance on the CTO's weekly podcast, COVID-19: The Unwelcome Visitor, IATA's Cerda said the Caribbean travel market will not be the same as before, when our borders reopen. We should pay close attention to what this implies for



by **Hon. Asot Michael, MP, MBA**

our economies. Is it more important to tax a traveller coming here from another island, or reap the rewards of them coming at a cheaper cost and spending more money during their time in Antigua and Barbuda?

Affordable airfares a must

We must help LIAT to help itself by reducing the ticket prices within its destinations. The base fare on LIAT from Antigua to Saint Lucia is US\$65 – a figure I am certain most people would happily pay once or twice a month if they need to. But that amount is before we added the Antigua Airport Administration Charge of US\$37.50 – already more than half the cost of the base fare. We also see a Security Booking Surcharge of US\$24 and an Antigua Ticket Tax of US\$6.50. These and a few other charges raise the ticket price from US\$65.00 to US\$147 – a 126% increase of the base fare! These are the price decisions that intra-regional travelers make every time they consider going from one island to the next whether for business or leisure.

Cerda predicts that our economies could lose over US\$470 million and put 23,000 people out of work if our borders are not reopened to international travel by the end of June. Thankfully, Antigua and Barbuda and other islands are looking to reopen as early as next week. But not even one percent of that US\$470 million will be lost to regional travel, which never had such numbers to begin with. It is import-

ant to reverse this trend because regional visitors provide at least two significant economic benefits: They are more likely to travel outside the peak season, thereby stimulating the tourism sector during its slow period. The regional market is also particularly important for the small hotel sector which consists primarily of locally-owned properties, including AirBnB and guest houses. On the whole, regional travellers are important contributors to national and regional tourism due to their expenditures on food and drinks, accommodation, local transportation, entertainment, and other goods and services.

We should not be making it more expensive for people to travel among the islands. We instead need to make such movement more affordable. The logical starting point is the basic cost of doing so – the airfare.

Cost recovery in a broader context

Many airports in the region – including ours here in Antigua – have undergone very expensive upgrades that must be paid for. A large portion of the charges added to airline tickets are to fund airport debts, maintenance and expenses. Despite these challenges, we must devise ways to restore growth in travel within the OECS and the wider Caribbean.

Our cultural and business environments – shopping trips, attending workshops, cricket and other sports, carnival and other festivals – require safe, efficient and affordable means of travel. LIAT must be facilitated to continue flying as a vital component of our economic union and recovery.

Practical measures that governments and other stakeholders can take to revitalize intra-regional travel include partnerships with hotels, shopping outlets and other potential beneficiaries of enhanced intra-regional tourism.

Similar arrangements to facilitate and stimulate intra-regional travel were adopted when the West Indies hosted the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup. So these recommendations are not new or revolutionary; merely a call for us to build creatively and sustainably on that precedent.

Salute the “CARICOM Three” for their sacrifice

(The writer is Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the Organisation of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and at Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own).

Here are three heroes of democracy in the 15-nation Caribbean Community (CARICOM): Cynthia Barrow-Giles (St Lucia/Barbados), John Jarvis (Antigua

and Barbuda) and Sylvester King (St. Vincent and the Grenadines). Their names must not be forgotten.

These three persons have devoted 22 days of their lives so far to scrutineering a recount of the votes cast in the Guyana general elections of March 2. In a period of COVID-19 with exposure to the perilous coronavirus and amid a curfew, they have done little else, from day-break to nightfall, except to scrutineer an exhausting recount of the votes with all the challenges and demands that are being made by some

political party agents.

At the end of all this – whenever that comes – these three persons deserve a special award as Champions of CARICOM Democracy. And the Caribbean Community should bestow it upon them. They are not doing their jobs; this exercise is not their jobs; it is an act of self-sacrifice and dedication to democracy. Sadly, it appears far from over.

Barrow-Giles is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Government at the University of the West Indies, John Jarvis is a Commissioner of the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission and Mr. Sylvester King is the Deputy Supervisor of Elections of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Each of them left their homes and their families during the eruption and spread of COVID-19 to carry out this arduous task.

What was expected to be a 25-day recount process, ending on May 30, has been stretched out by obfuscation and by dilatory tactics, not by any inefficiency of the persons doing the recount but by constraints imposed on the process. A big part of the constraints is the protocols demanded by the Guyana COVID-19 task force which is, essentially, a political body headed by the caretaker Prime Minister left-over from the former government.



By Sir Ronald Sanders

The protocols, imposed by the COVID-19 task force, limit the number of counting stations and persons who can be present for a count. Whether such an obvious political body should have been charged with this responsibility is another matter that will feature in later analysis of the entire general elections.

In any event, the task force's protocols have contributed to the delays, by not allowing more counting stations with appropriate protocols. At the end of Day 21 of the recount (May 27), only 55% of the 2,339 ballot boxes were recounted, leaving a balance of 1,049 boxes. While local observers of the recounting process from the private sector have given it high marks for transparency and accuracy, including revelations of huge discrepancies between the Statements of Poll at polling stations and poll tabulation results offered by the Returning Officer, Clairmont Mingo, the recounting period has to be extended to accomplish the full recount.

Eighty-seven days after it

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P. O. Box 2118, St. John

Antigua and Barbuda

Email: jobs@profiles-consulting.com

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

cont'd from pg 12

was held on March 2, Guyana's elections result remains shrouded in uncertainty and incredulity. The Guyanese people deserve every commendation for their patience and tolerance and for not being lured into strife that would further harm them and the country.

The Chair of the Guyana Electoral Commission (GECOM) had proposed an extension of the recount period to June 16. A meeting of the Commission was held on May 28 to decide on a date, but at the time of writing no announcement had been made.

If the recount is extended to June 16, the three overburdened CARICOM scrutineers, who are already in

highly pressured circumstances away from their homes and families, will be in Guyana for 37 days altogether.

All of this has damaged Guyana's standing in the global community. The public remarks of the diplomatic community accredited in Guyana, the statements made by the Commonwealth of Nations, the Organisation of American States, the European Union and high representatives of the United States and Canada, have all urged GECOM in particular to conduct a transparent recount that leads to a credible result that is acceptable to the Guyana society and the international community. In that way, Guyana, as a nation, can claim a legiti-

mate place in the world and in international institutions that will have to make determinations that could hurt or harm the country.

Therefore, it should be clear that the "CARICOM Three", scrutineering the elections with only the support of the resident representative of the OAS, are striving not only to uphold CARICOM's commitment to democracy, but Guyana's as well.

Repeatedly, the governments of CARICOM countries, with Guyana included, have expressed, through various public instruments, "their commitment to democracy and popular participation", and they have "pledged to work together to maintain and strengthen the

institutions and processes essential to democratic government", including "respect for the will of the people, as expressed through free and fair elections on a regular basis".

The "CARICOM Three" are striving to ensure that those commitments mean what they say to the people of CARICOM and to the world. Neither they, nor CARICOM governments, could ignore their obligations to the reputation and values of CARICOM, Guyana included.

The contribution of the "CARICOM Three" must be acknowledged and appropriately honoured.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

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Rapid testing not the best way to find virus – CARPHA



*Director of Vector Control Surveillance with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA),
Dr Laura Lee Boodram*

One of the region's public health authorities has warned that rapid testing kits are not the best way to diagnose COVID-19 cases and should only be used under certain circumstances.

Speaking during the second in a series of webinars put on by the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) in light of the pending hurricane season and the ongoing pandemic, Director of Vector Control Surveillance with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Dr Laura Lee Boodram, said: "Officially CARPHA does not recommend any rapid

testing method in general for COVID-19 as it will not give you the results that you really need in the acute phase of infection."

She said CARPHA officially recognised the PCR test as the "gold standard" for diagnosis of COVID-19. But since a number of rapid testing kits have been developed in recent times, CARPHA had published a series of guidelines on how and when to use these kits.

Dr Boodram said: "Hundreds of manufacturers across the globe have developed and promoted rapid tests, and since we recognise the need, and re-

alise that several of our member states are using rapid tests as a screening mechanism, we have recently put out information to help the health authorities in our region to choose the best types to be used in a given scenario, but rapid tests are not a replacement for proper diagnosis of COVID-19."

One of the main concerns was that rapid tests did not always give accurate readings, which could create further risks as countries try to keep the disease from spreading further, she said

The public health official added: "Their test specifica-

tions are low in terms of sensitivity and specificity as you will pick up false positives and false negatives, and of course there is a greater risk with negatives as someone may get misdiagnosed as negative and then move around the population. "The best thing we can recommend is if you use a rapid test it should be for screening purposes only, and there is guidance from CARPHA on how to choose them, but public health protocols for testing, tracing and isolation of patients are still there and PCR is still the method used for final diagnosis of the condition."

Haiti emerges as “outbreak hotspot” in region

Haiti has emerged as the “outbreak hotspot” among CARICOM members with the vast majority of new COVID-19 cases among member states stemming from The Bahamas’ south-eastern neighbor.

As of yesterday, there were over 1,000 cases.

Four more COVID-19-related deaths were confirmed in Haiti yesterday, bringing the total to at least 30.

Haiti has become the first CARICOM country to record more than 1,000 cases of the virus.

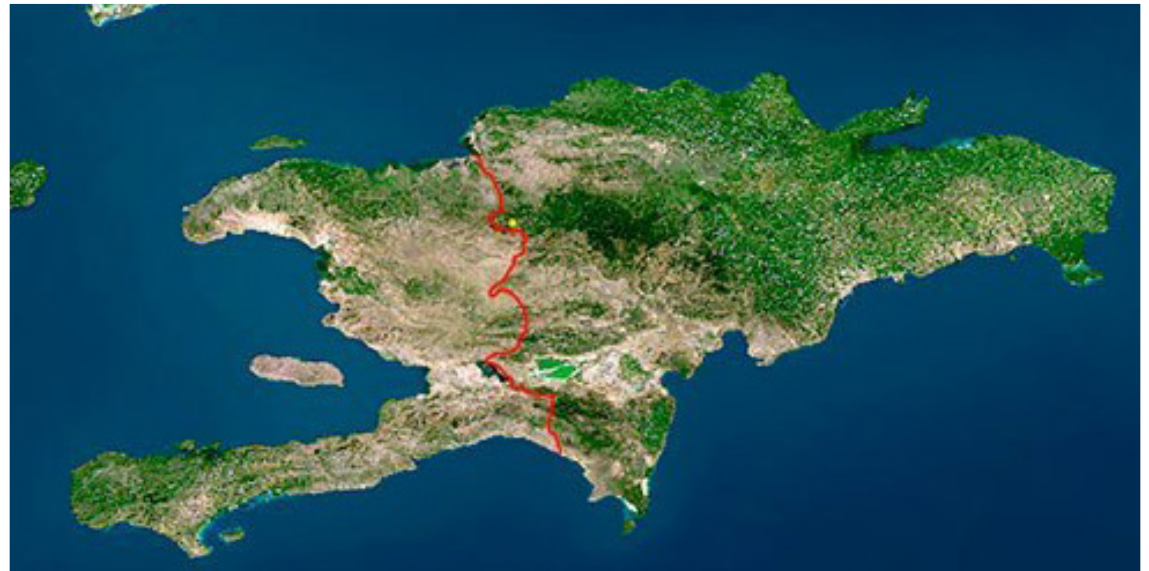
Secretary of State Communication Eddy Jackson Alexis said: “We must change our behavior today. If you have symptoms related to COVID-19, fever, dry cough, fatigue, contact a healthcare professional urgently.”

The ministry said there were more than 3,300 suspected cases while nearly 300 people were hospitalized.

In the last week, there were 426 new confirmed cases of the virus among members states and associate members of CARICOM.

Three-hundred and sixty-two of those cases were confirmed in Haiti.

The remaining 74 cases were reported in the Cayman Islands (26), Jamaica (20), Guyana (12), Barbados (five), Bermuda (four), Bahamas (three), the British



Virgin Islands (one), Grenada (one), St Vincent and the Grenadine (one) and Suriname (one).

In its May 21 situation report, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) said: “With 596 confirmed cases, 362 of these in the past week, Haiti remains the outbreak hotspot among the CARICOM members.”

It said the “major outbreak” in neighboring Dominican Republic — 13,477 cases with nearly 2,300 confirmed in the last week — has compounded the situation in Haiti.

In its daily bulletin, Haiti’s Ministry of Public Health said the pandemic is “accelerating throughout the national territory” and the number of people infected in 24 hours for the first time exceeded 100 cases, reaching 105 cases.

As at 19 May, 2020, there

were 1,222 in quarantine at home and in institutions.

The borders and airports remain closed in Haiti.

Cargo and commercial transport is ongoing.

The government was in the process of renewing the state of emergency measures.

A curfew is in effect from 8pm to 5am.

Access to public places is being limited to reinforce social distancing.

New measures were expected to be put in place to prevent direct contact and the spreading of the virus.

Natural disasters and widespread civil unrest in Haiti has seen increased illegal migration attempts from the country to The Bahamas.

The Royal Bahamas Defence Force has said it continues to implement measures to address the “threats and challenges of the influx

of migrants from Haiti”.

The Bahamas Embassy in Haiti closed operations in early April, Minister of Foreign Affairs Darren Henfield confirmed yesterday.

Earlier this month, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Director Dr Carissa Etienne sounded the alarm on an “impending humanitarian crisis” in Haiti, as The Bahamas’ southern neighbor faces a bleak health outlook with COVID-19.

She described the situation as a “perfect storm”.

“In addition, there is a real risk food insecurity will result in famine.

“Civil unrest... and precarious security may further complicate the situation.

“The health system in Haiti has limited capacity.”

She added: “There is real danger of a large scale outbreak followed by a humanitarian crisis in Haiti.”

UWI modifies entry requirements amid COVID-19



The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has announced its decision to modify the matriculation requirements specific to academic year 2020/2021, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

It follows the quarterly meeting of its Board for Undergraduate Studies (BUS) on May 19.

As approved by the Board, students who have passed at least two CAPE subjects either at Unit 1 or 2 at Grades 1-4, who also have the requisite CSEC subjects and are currently registered for either Unit 1 or 2, will qualify as normal matriculants

to The UWI.

In a statement on Thursday, it said the University's decision is grounded in scientific analysis as research on students' predictive performance conducted by The UWI over the years showed that passes at CAPE Unit 1 (Grades 1-4) were 97% predictive of success at CAPE Unit 2.

In commenting on this decision, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Board for Undergraduate Studies, Professor Clive Landis explained: "Around the world, universities have had to pivot and adapt to more flexible admissions processes in response

to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a world-ranked university, committed to serving our Caribbean region, The UWI too has to consider how it can better support students in this time."

Professor Landis, who is also the Chairman of The UWI COVID-19 Task Force, asserted that: "This is absolutely not about lowering of standards. It is a fair and reasonable proposal given the prevailing circumstances."

Matriculation is defined as a minimum admission standard and does not guarantee a right of entry for a matriculant into ev-

ery degree programme.

According to Professor Landis: "The change in policy is more about building flexibility into The UWI application process. Prospective students who have completed their first year of CAPE can make an application to The UWI, right now today, and the Faculty, in turn, can make a firm offer to applicants who meet this new matriculation standard."

The UWI said the decision on students who merit admission remains with the Faculties, which are allowed to establish faculty-specific admission regulations that go beyond the matriculation standards (e.g. Law, Medicine), and include competitive screening of applicants, where necessary.

The proposal on the adjusted matriculation requirements was jointly presented by The UWI and the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) to the Ministries of Education at CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) meeting earlier this month, where it received endorsement.

It added that comparatively, some of the finest universities in the USA have long since adopted the practice of accepting CSEC and CAPE Unit 1 results to determine its offering of scholarships and full admission to Caribbean students; thus attracting some of the best and brightest students from the region while The UWI waits on CAPE Unit 2 results.

Jamaica: No rent holiday

‘Day of reckoning’ coming for bad tenants

TENANTS who may be taking advantage of stalled eviction proceedings because of scaled-down operations at the island’s courts will soon have their “day of reckoning”, warns chairman of the Rent Assessment Board Rose Bennett-Cooper.

For the past three months she’s been working with tenants and landlords to find amicable solutions to the problems spawned by COVID-19, the global pandemic which she said has “significantly impacted the landscape of landlord and tenant” [relations]. “You have circumstances where the tenant doesn’t have the money and the landlord needs the money and cannot afford to not be paid. Those are the hard situations where the landlord is the one that ends up just having to ‘hug up’ the problem,” she told the Jamaica Observer, yesterday. “Because here is the rub: You can’t get an eviction during this period because the process that you have to undergo to get that eviction is pretty much on hold.” To evict a tenant a landlord first has to serve him with a notice of eviction, wait for that notice to expire, and then — if the tenant refuses to leave — go to court to get a court order.

But operations have been scaled down in court across the country, a ripple effect of the Government’s measures to curtail the spread of the virus that has so far infected more than 500 Jamaicans and left nine people dead. Bennett-Cooper

pointed out, however, that this hold on evictions will eventually come to an end and bad tenants should not see it as a free pass. “I don’t want my saying that the system is now somewhat stalled as it relates to evictions to be an encouragement to bad tenants who say, ‘Oh, we got an eviction holiday,’ because that is not so,” she stressed. She anticipates that once the courts are back to some level of normal operations eviction cases will be fast-tracked. Bennett-Cooper also cautioned tenants that COVID-19 should not be viewed as an opportunity to stop paying rent, thus allowing that debt to simply pile up.

“A day of reckoning is coming, and it doesn’t make sense to put yourself in that position. You don’t want to say, ‘Hip hip hooray, COVID has allowed me the opportunity to not pay rent for a while, and it’s going to take the landlord a very long time to be able to get back the money and evict me because the court process is going to be bogged up when they reopen,’” she cautioned. There are also implications, she explained, for the credit rating of individuals who develop a history of not honouring their debts. “If you end up with this kind of bad credit, the day may come when you want to buy your house or get a mortgage and this kind of history may have an impact on that. So it’s not an encouragement to persons to think of this as a rent-free holiday,” she added. As the local



A woman reads a notice outside the Kingston and St Andrew Parish Court on Sutton Street, downtown, yesterday. (Photo: Karl McLarty)

economy reels from the effects of COVID-19, layoffs and job cuts have left many unable to cope. Incomes have shrunk or dried up completely while expenses such as rent remain the same. Bennett-Cooper cited anecdotal cases in which both tenant and landlord have lost their jobs and the homeowner needs the rent to cover mortgage payments; or retirees who were relying on rent to survive are now faced with unemployed tenants who are unable to pay. She has been offering a range of suggestions, encouraging them to find solutions that work for both sides. These include, for tenants who are able, paying the rent in advance to help out their landlord who may be faced with a challenge. She has also suggested to landlords, who have had no issues with tenants in the past to allow late payments or defer payments for up to three months and then resume based on a mutually agreed payment plan. Some have taken that suggestion on board, she said, but as of June the three-month grace period will be up and rent will again be due. But with the economy not yet fully

reopened and many people still laid off, or surviving on less income, it is unclear how landlords and their tenants will go forward from there. It appears, though, that finding an amicable solution is better than trying to fight it out in court. “Some landlords are in a really bad situation because they are not getting the rent and they can’t get an order for eviction,” said Bennett-Cooper. “And you also have those instances where a landlord would have a bad tenant from long before COVID-19, they already started the process for eviction, and they are stuck with that tenant during the entire period of COVID-19 because the courts are not operating at full strength, so they could not get an order from the courts for eviction. Under our rent laws you cannot evict a tenant without a court order, and you can’t get a court order if the courts are not open.”

She was unable to say how many eviction cases are stalled in the country’s courts at this time, but said it was information that, as chair of the rent board, it “would be good to get a handle on”.

Coronavirus deaths in US top 100,000

The US has passed 100,000 deaths in the coronavirus outbreak in less than four months.

It has seen more fatalities than any other country, while its 1.69 million confirmed infections account for about 30% of the worldwide total.

On Thursday, a day after the figure was reached, President Donald Trump tweeted calling it a “sad milestone”.

His initial silence had been noted by critics who pointed out that Mr Trump has often sought to downplay the toll.

The president also expressed his “sympathy and love” for the families and friends of those who have died from Covid-19.

The first US infection was reported in Washington state on 21 January.

Globally there have been 5.6 million people recorded as infected and 354,983 deaths since the virus emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year.

The US death toll stands at 100,276, according to Johns Hopkins University in Maryland, which has been tracking the pandemic.

It means that around as many Americans have died from Covid-19 as from the Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined.

But on a per capita basis the US ranks ninth in its mortality rate behind the likes of Belgium, the UK, France and Italy, according to the university.

Twenty states reported a rise in new cases for the week end-



Health officials say the actual death toll is likely far higher than the recorded count

ing on Sunday, according to a Reuters study.

North Carolina, Wisconsin and Arkansas are among those seeing a steady rise in cases.

The caseload remains stubbornly high in a number of metropolitan areas, including Chicago, Los Angeles and suburban Washington DC.

Some hard-hit states are seeing a drop in death rates, including New York, where 21,000 residents have died.

During the peak of the crisis in the city, the daily death toll was in the hundreds. Hospitals were overwhelmed and makeshift morgues were built outside health facilities.

President Trump has insist-

ed that without his administration's actions the death toll would be 25 times higher, though critics have accused him of a slow response.

State governors have also been blamed for failing to grasp early enough the lethal threat that the virus posed to nursing homes.

Initially, the Republican president downplayed the pandemic, comparing it to the seasonal flu. Back in February he said the US had the virus “under control” and that by April it could “miraculously go away”.

He predicted 50,000-60,000 deaths, then 60,000-70,000 and then “substantially under 100,000”.

Mr Trump also argued this month it was “a badge of honour” that the US had the world's highest number of confirmed infections “because it means our testing is much better”.

A study from Columbia University in New York suggested about 36,000 fewer people would have died if the US had acted sooner. Joe Biden, Mr Trump's likely Democratic challenger in November's White House election, issued a message directly to grieving families on Wednesday.

“To those hurting, I'm so sorry for your loss,” the former vice-president said in a tweet. “The nation grieves with you.”

Trump escalates war on Twitter, social media with executive order

United States President Donald Trump has escalated his war on social media companies, signing an executive order on Thursday challenging the liability protections in US law that serve as a bedrock for unfettered speech on the internet.

The move appears to be more about politics than substance, as the president aims to rally supporters after he lashed out at Twitter for applying fact checks to two of his tweets.

Trump said the fact checks were “editorial decisions” by Twitter and amounted to political activism. He said it should cost those companies their protection from lawsuits for what is posted on their platforms.

Trump and his allies, who rely heavily on Twitter to verbally flog their foes, have long accused the tech giants in liberal-leaning Silicon Valley, California of targeting conservatives on social media by fact-checking them or removing their posts.

“We’re fed up with it,” Trump said, claiming the order would uphold freedom of speech.

The order directs executive branch agencies to ask independent rule-making agencies including the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission to study whether they can place new regulations on the companies.



United States President Donald Trump holding up a copy of the New York Post newspaper while speaking to reporters and discussing an executive order on social media companies in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, the US

Experts express doubts that much can be done without an act of Congress. Trump said he would push for legislative action as well.

Companies like Twitter and Facebook are granted liability protection under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act because they are treated as “platforms”, rather than “publishers”, which can face lawsuits over content.

A similar executive order was previously considered by the administration, but shelved over concerns that it could not pass legal muster and that it violated conservative principles on deregulation and free speech.

On Wednesday, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey tweeted, “We’ll continue to point out incorrect or disputed information about elections globally.”

Dorsey added: “This does

not make us an ‘arbiter of truth.’ Our intention is to connect the dots of conflicting statements and show the information in dispute so people can judge for themselves.”

On the other hand, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg told Fox News his platform has “a different policy, I think, than Twitter on this.”

“I just believe strongly that Facebook shouldn’t be the arbiter of truth of everything that people say online,” he said.

The president’s critics, meanwhile, scolded the platforms for allowing him to put forth false or misleading information that could confuse voters.

“Donald Trump’s order is plainly illegal,” said Senator Ron Wyden, a Democrat and advocate for internet freedoms. He is “desperate-

ly trying to steal for himself the power of the courts and Congress ... all for the ability to spread unfiltered lies.”

Trump’s proposal has multiple, serious legal problems and is unlikely to survive a challenge, according to Matt Schruers, president of the Computer and Communications Industry Association, a Washington, DC-based organisation that represents computer and internet companies.

It would also seem to be an assault on the same online freedom that enabled social media platforms to flourish in the first place - and made them such an effective microphone for Trump and other politicians.

“The irony that is lost here is that if these protections were to go away, social media services would be far more aggressive in moderating content and terminating

UN chief warns leaders pandemic may cause historic famine

The U.N. chief on Thursday warned the largest gathering of world leaders since the coronavirus pandemic began that it will cause “unimaginable devastation and suffering around the world,” with historic levels of hunger and famine and up to 1.6 billion people unable to earn a living unless action is taken now.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also told the high-level meeting on measures to help low- and middle-income countries that fallout from the crisis could lead to “a loss of \$8.5 trillion in global output — the sharpest contraction since the Great Depression of the 1930s.”

He called for immediate collective action in six critical areas: enhancing global financial liquidity; providing debt relief; engaging private creditors; promoting external finance; plugging leaks in tax evasion, money laundering and corruption; and adopting a recovery that tackles inequalities, injustices and climate change.

Nearly 50 world leaders spoke by video at the event along with economic experts, including the heads of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. But there were noticeable absences, among them the leaders of the world’s two largest economies — the United States and China, which are engaged in escalating tensions over the pandemic and a host of other issues.



China’s U.N. Mission said it didn’t participate “due to a scheduling conflict” and submitted a written statement. The U.S. Mission did not respond to requests for a reason why it did not speak. Guterres told reporters later that neither country could participate at a high level, but “there is a commitment from both the United States and China to be involved in this process which we very much welcome.”

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, a co-host of the event, said the U.N. wanted to bring dozens of global leaders and finance experts together because “we need to think outside the box” in dealing with pandemic.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called for “a global recovery initiative” that links investment and debt relief to U.N. development goals for 2030, which include eliminating extreme poverty.

“Europe is ready to put on the table expertise and resources, with both traditional and innovative financing instruments,” she said. “But ...

it should be a green recovery, a digital recovery, a just and resilient recovery.”

Guterres said the “unprecedented human tragedy” behind the 5.5 million cases of COVID-19 and more than 350,000 deaths has been coupled with a devastating economic impact that has spurred his call since March for a relief package equivalent to more than 10% of the global economy.

“Developed countries have announced their own relief packages, because they can,” he said. “But we have not yet seen enough solidarity with developing countries to provide them with the massive and urgent support they need.”

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, speaking on behalf of the African Union, called on developed countries to meet commitments and “be innovative.” He said developing country debts “are the foremost concern, especially to my continent, Africa,” which is calling for a debt standstill for two years and more IMF special

drawing rights.

African leaders also support Guterres’ call for economic relief worth at least 10% of global GDP, which would mean over \$200 billion in additional support for Africa.

Fiji’s prime minister, Voreqe Bainimarama, warned that the pandemic’s economic impact is “widening the gap between the developing and developed worlds, between north and south.”

“As economies of small island states are left reeling, our tourism revenue is gutted, and our lending capacity is limited. We cannot go at it alone,” said Bainimarama, whose country relies on tourism for 40% of its economy.

Saying wealthy nations have already put \$8 trillion into their own economies for pandemic relief, he added: “Even the equivalent of one-half of one percent of this was dedicated to all the world’s small island developing states, it would provide us with the vital support we need.”

Chinese grad students may be next hit by US-China tensions

The Trump administration may soon expel thousands of Chinese graduate students enrolled at U.S. universities and impose other sanctions against Chinese officials in the latest signs of tensions between Washington and Beijing that are raging over trade, the coronavirus pandemic, human rights and the status of Hong Kong.

President Donald Trump said he would make an announcement about China on Friday, and administration officials said he is considering a months-old proposal to revoke the visas of students affiliated with educational institutions in China linked to the People's Liberation Army or Chinese intelligence.

Trump is also weighing targeted travel and financial sanctions against Chinese officials for actions in Hong Kong, according to the officials, who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

"We'll be announcing what we're doing tomorrow with respect to China and we are not happy with China," Trump told reporters at an unrelated event Thursday, referring mainly to COVID-19. "We are not happy with what's happened. All over the world people are suffering, 186 countries. All over the world they're suffering. We're not happy."

Although the student expulsions aren't directly related to Hong Kong and China's move to assert full control over the former British territory, potential sanctions against officials involved in that effort would

be a result of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's determination that Hong Kong can no longer be considered autonomous from mainland China. Pompeo notified Congress on Wednesday that Hong Kong is no longer deserving of the preferential trade and commercial status it has enjoyed from the U.S. since it reverted to Chinese rule in 1997. Under a joint Sino-British agreement on the handover, Hong Kong was to be governed differently than the mainland for 50 years under a "one country, two systems" policy. Pompeo's determination opened the door to possible sanctions and the loss of special perks Hong Kong has received from the United States. But neither Pompeo nor other officials were able Wednesday to describe what action the administration might take, an uncertainty related to the impact that such sanctions would have on U.S. companies that operate in Hong Kong and the city's position as Asia's major financial hub. Trump's comments sparked a drop in U.S. financial markets.

Serious consideration of the visa revocation proposal, first reported by The New York Times, has faced opposition from U.S. universities and scientific organizations who depend on tuition fees paid by Chinese students to offset other costs. In addition, those institutions fear possible reciprocal action from Beijing that could limit their students' and educators' access to China.

In a nod to those concerns, the officials said any restrictions would be narrowly tai-

lored to affect only students who present a significant risk of engaging in espionage or intellectual property theft. The officials could not say how many people could ultimately be expelled, although they said it would be only a fraction of the Chinese students in the country.

Still, the possibility that the proposal may be implemented has drawn concerns from educators. "We're very worried about how broadly this will be applied, and we're concerned it could send a message that we no longer welcome talented students and scholars from around the globe," said Sarah Spreitzer, director of government relations at the American Council on Education. "We don't have a lot of details about how they are going to define ties to Chinese universities, what type of universities are they going to target, what would constitute a university having ties to the Chinese military," she said. If the situation were reversed and another nation imposed limits on students from U.S. universities that receive Defense Department funding, she noted it would affect a wide range of schools.

The U.S. hosted 133,396 graduate students from China in the 2018-19 academic year, and they made up 36.1% of all international graduate students, according to the Institute of International Education. Overall, there were 369,548 students from China, accounting for 33.7% of international students who contributed nearly \$15 billion to the U.S. economy in 2018.

The proposal to revoke the visas is not directly related to the dispute over Hong Kong, nor is it tied to U.S. criticism of China for its handling of the coronavirus outbreak. Rather, it is connected to various elements of trade and human rights issues that have seen U.S. officials complain about Chinese industrial espionage and spying and harassment of dissidents and religious and ethnic minorities.

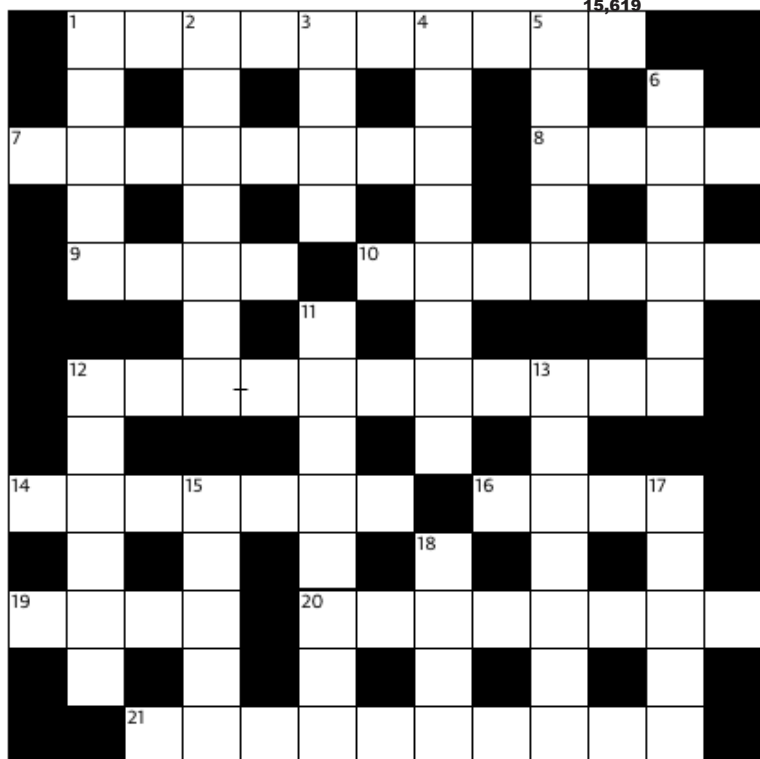
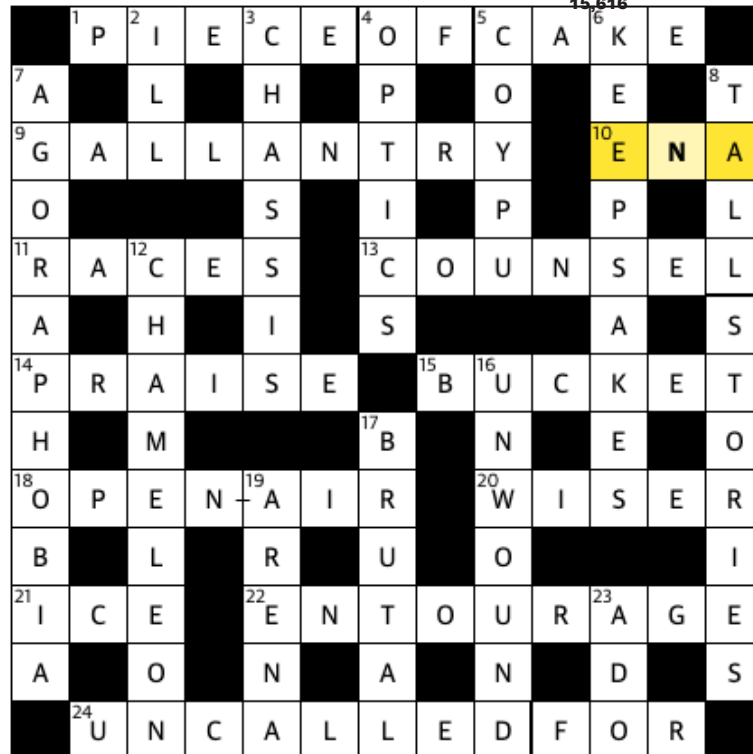
But the timing of a potential announcement could come at a time of increasingly heated rhetoric about the imposition of national security laws on Hong Kong in violation of the Sino-British accord.

The proposal first began to be discussed last year when the administration moved to require Chinese diplomats based in the United States to report their domestic U.S. travel and meetings with American scientists and academics. At the time, U.S. officials said it was a reciprocal measure to match restrictions that American diplomats face in China.

Those limits were followed by a requirement that Chinese state-run media in the U.S. register as "foreign diplomatic missions" and report their property holdings and employee rosters to the government. That was, in turn, followed by the limiting of the number of visas for Chinese journalists allowed to work in the United States.

China retaliated for the visa limitations by expelling several reporters from U.S. media outlets, including The Washington Post and The New York Times.

QUICK CROSSWORD

 Quick crossword No
 15,619

 Quick crossword No
 15,616


Across

- 1 Recklessly extravagant (10)
 7 Boxing (8)
 8 Containing a lot of fat, eggs and sugar (4)
 9 Tub (4)
 10 Hard yellow Swiss cheese (7)
 12 Easily angered (3-8)
 14 Acrobat — glass (7)
 16 Swindle (4)
 19 Hospital unit (4)
 20 Completely free of dirt (8)
 21 Everyday language (10)

Down

- 1 Fathom (5)
 2 Left out (7)
 3 Produced an egg (4)
 4 Gelatinous sweeties (8)
 5 Linger (5)
 6 Frightened (6)
 11 Barrie character (5,3)
 12 Himalayan kingdom (6)
 13 Concert performance (7)
 15 Move (5)
 17 Child (5)
 18 Metal alloyed with copper to make brass (4)

CARTOON CORNER

Dilbert





ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): Don't sweat the small stuff. Try to make do the best you can if someone irritates you or makes a sudden change, as worrying will not help matters. A little exercise can be a good way to ease stress and tension..

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): All that glitters is not gold. An attractive face may have your heart all aflutter, but some minor probing could reveal that the attraction is not deep. Ask questions before committing to a plan or person.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): What you see may not be what you get. Some digging may be required to find the truth, as the actual facts may be buried under a glittering surface. Having too much information will never be a problem.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Be more involved with your surroundings. Sometimes it's best to fly solo, but now could be the time for you to spread your social wings and participate as part of the group. Your latest idea may need support when challenged.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Walk away and count to 10. Overcome frustration when trying to juggle your books by getting away for a while to clear your head. Get a fresh perspective from reading material. Win the day by keeping emotions in check.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Some people can be hard to please. Don't take it personally if one person scoffs at your latest idea or project since someone else may think it's brilliant. Only those in authority merit an explanation of your actions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Say your piece. People may be drawn by your magnetic charm. You should be able to tap into a captive audience if you are promoting a cause or making a presentation. Don't take constructive criticism personally.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You can't see the whole puzzle picture with just one piece. You may need to do your homework in order to get a view of the grand scheme. Stay on the sidelines until you are properly prepared.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The answer could be right in front of you. You shouldn't have to rack your brain if the solution to a pressing problem can be found in a mentor's words of wisdom. There's no shame in getting help or advice.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): No one is going to give you a free ride. The only way that you can be sure of achieving financial security is if you roll up your sleeves and work for it. There are no shortcuts to success or ways to bypass effort.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Try it, you might like it. Don't be so quick to discard a new idea or method until you've tested it out for yourself. Give someone a chance to explain themselves before you make up your mind.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): It may have nothing to do with you. Try to talk things over first since taking a loved one's comment out of context might not be the best thing. You may be in the mood to seek out bargains on the internet.

English Premier League set to resume June 17

The Premier league is set to restart on 17 June with Aston Villa vs Sheffield United and Manchester City against Arsenal, subject to government approval.

A full round of fixtures would be then played on the weekend of 19-21 June.

There are 92 matches still to play, and the first to take place will be those the four teams have in hand.

All matches will take place behind closed doors and will be broadcast live on Skysports, BT sports, BBC Sport or Amazon Prime.

Meanwhile, Sky Sports will show 64 matches LIVE and make 25 available free on air.



Safety guidelines are yet to be issued by government and decisions will remain subject to the continuing fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Clubs have agreed to a provisional end date of Saturday, 25 July.

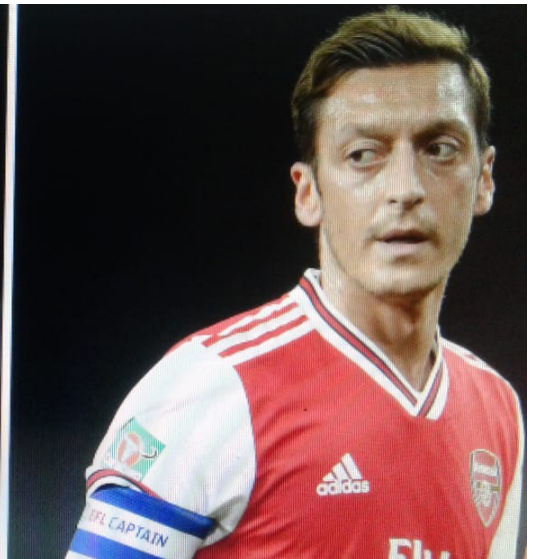
for serie A to resume on 20 June, Italy, sports minister confirmed.

Liverpool is 25 points clear at the top of the table while Bournemouth, Aston Villa and Norwich City are in relegation places.

Over in Italy the government has given the go ahead

for serie A to resume on 20 June, Italy, sports minister confirmed.

Serie A was suspended on 9 March, with Juventus leading the table by a point with 12 rounds of matches remaining.



Kemar Roach working on return

West Indies fast bowler, Kemar Roach is happy to be back in the swing of things as he prepares for the proposed tour of England starting next month.

The most experienced and successful bowler in the last decade has his eyes on the magical figure of 200 test wickets once the green light is given for the tour to happen.

The teams will play three Tests matches as they compete for the Wisden Trophy.

The Barbadian presently sits on 193 wickets in 56 matches since his debut against Bangladesh back in 2009 in St. Vincent. His figures include nine five wickets haul and he is ninth in the West Indies all time list.



West Indies fast bowler, Kemar Roach

Roach says his goal is to reach 200 wickets when the team travels to En-

gland—"that's my personal goal. The team goal is to win the series."

CFU President Randy Harris: A yah me born

PointeXpress had a sit-down with president of the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) Randy Harris who spoke about the new direction the organization has been taking in the last 18 months since he has assumed the presidency.

Harris who is also the president of the Barbados Football Association alerted the paper that he was born in Antigua in the village of Greenbay and christened at the Greenbay Moravian church.

Randy who left Antigua for Barbados at an early age says that CFU have been concentrating on youth development and female football.

“We are an affiliate of CONCACAF who organized most of the com-

petitions but we have been focusing on hosting Under-14 tournaments for boys and girls,” he revealed.

CFU has also made coaching development a priority as Harris explained.

He noted that a lot of people love the sport and do a good job in organizing teams but there is a need for more coaching education and he believes that is one of the main issues slowing the growth of the sport in the region.

The BFA president says that the organization credibility has swiftly grown in the past year and FIFA has budgeted one million US yearly to assist the region with its development plans.

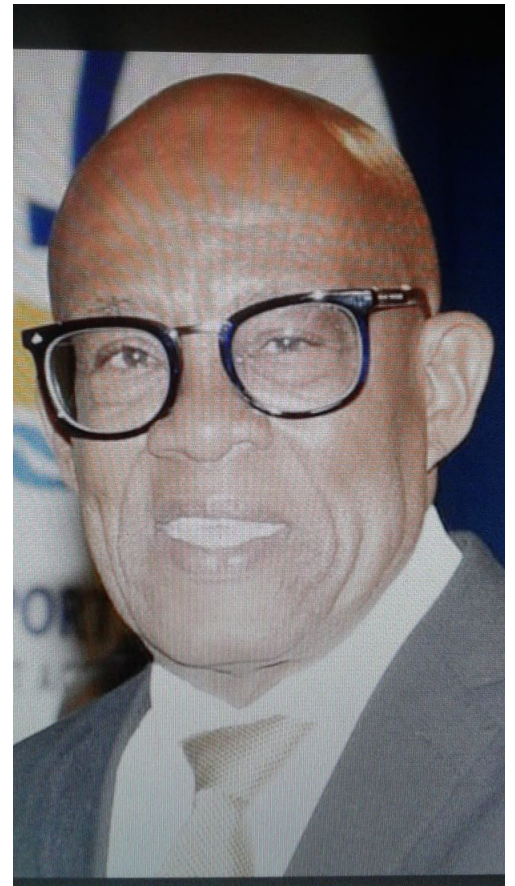
“There is too much politics in football and we need to concentrate on development and work together for the betterment of the game in the region,” Harris said.

Talks have been ongoing about the start of a Caribbean professional league and the president is appealing for the support of the regional associations and everyone involved in football.

There is too much negatives surrounding the idea of a regional professional league with people saying we have tried that before and it did not work so it’s a wasteful idea.

Harris is more positive in his approach to the league believing it’s possible and can go a long way in creating a living and partway for Caribbean players.

“My short term vision for regional football is to find a way of working with our members to make sure we have at least three teams at the 2026



President of the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) Randy Harris

World Cup and long term to make our teams in the region more professional in the way they carry out their duties,” he noted.

Harris wants his members to be more respectful of CFU and not just run to the organization when they have a problem in particular with FIFA, the world governing body.

When quizzed about the Normalisation Committee being put to run football in Trinidad and Tobago by FIFA after removing the recent executive which was voted into power some five months ago, his response was, “FIFA is the ruling body and we have all signed up to work with them.”



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Terry Andrew: Love what I do

Terry Andrew grew up in the village of Sea View Farm where he attended the community primary school before moving on to All Saints Secondary.

"I never started playing for my school until third form because there were a lot of good players," he recalled. However, despite the setback Terry was slowly honing his craft under the watchful eyes of former national coach Micah Samuels and 'Cajawawa' Warner.

Terry eventually attached himself to 5'P's F.C Wadadli coached by Noel Egan and Veron Epilus Edwards jr. where his development continued by leading the team's defense as they went from the second division straight to the premier league over a three year period.

The 'man for farm' also travelled to the Norway Cup with 5'P's in 2001, an experience, he says, he will never forget witnessing great facilities and a high standard of play for the first time. "It was also my first time to Eu-



rope and it was fantastic," Andrew noted.

Andrew never got the experience to represent his team in the Antigua premier league because University came calling through the contacts of coach Veron Epilus Edwards Jr. who arranged for him a scholarship at his old school John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

"It was the greatest four years of my life," Terry explained. He said he was exposed to top class facilities, a great coach Bob Gustavson and people who cared about your personal development.

Terry who is one of the



face of the state own television ABS graduated with a degree in Broadcasting after starting his studies in journalism, but decided to make the change since broadcasting was broader and covered more grounds in the field.

Appearing on the TIME-OUT program on Point FM Andrew said he is enjoying his job and has started a program showing old clips of sporting activities from the 1980,s 90's and beyond. Terry has started a facebook page called Throw Back Antigua Sports and is ap-



pealing to the general public that anyone who has old footage of any sporting activities should contact him at ABS TV.

Andrew has represented the Empire Football Club who awarded him his scholarship, and Indiana Invaders in the USA professional Development league in the USL.

DEWS

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