



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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NEW PLAN FOR LIAT

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**Page 7 -
Dame Edris
Bird passes**

Bold, insightful plan for LIAT

Antigua and Barbuda has circulated a well researched, bold and innovative plan for the troubled Caribbean airline LIAT, dubbed 'Rising like a Phoenix- A plan for the re-organisation of LIAT'.

The twenty-three page document, which has been circulated widely in the local and regional media, was discussed in detail by Prime Minister Gaston Browne on Saturday's Browne and Browne show.

Among the main points raised in the proposal came under the heading, 'Liquidation: The case against it.' The proposal noted that the Antigua and Barbuda parliament has amended the country's Companies Act which now makes it possible for companies in trouble to explore alternatives to liq-

uidation. One such option, and that which is being proposed in LIAT's case, is reorganising the company.

"The amendments to the Act recognize that reorganization is a superior option to piecemeal liquidation which would dispose of the company's assets for a fraction of its value, resulting in greater losses to stakeholders including creditors," the document highlighted.

In opposing the 'piecemeal' liquidation of LIAT, the document noted that this route is fraught with danger, including significant loss of value when the airline's assets are sold off to raise funds to pay creditors. According to the document, some of the airline's assets may be sold at not more than 15 cents on the dollar with the financial

shortfall, and responsibility to cover it, falling upon the shareholder governments.

"The above would leave all other creditors, including the employees of LIAT 1974 Ltd., in an invidious position compared to reorganisation with a superior yield. The proposed reorganization and recapitalization of LIAT would result in an injection of new equity that would cover at least 50 percent of the outstanding staff liabilities," the document noted.

Further, the Antigua and Barbuda proposal indicated there are several additional costs that are associated with liquidation which the Board of Directors have seemingly neglected to consider.

cont'd on pg 3

DAY 7/20

Max UV Index: 12 Extreme
Wind: ESE at 15 km/h
Wind Gusts: 22 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 40%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
Precipitation: 0.5 mm
Rain: 0.5 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 1
Hours of Rain: 1

32° Hi



Mostly sunny with a shower in spots

NIGHT 7/20

Wind: ESE at 13 km/h
Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
Probability of Precipitation: 40%
Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
Precipitation: 0.5 mm
Rain: 0.5 mm
Snow: 0.0 cm
Ice: 0.0 mm
Hours of Precipitation: 1
Hours of Rain: 1

25° Lo



Partly cloudy with a shower in places

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
5:34 AM

Sunset AST
6:44PM



Duration
13:01 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
5:27 PM

Moonset AST
6:57 AM



Duration
13:30hr



cont'd from pg 2

“As an example, there is a requirement of EC\$16.4M to cover pre-liquidation costs to include a deposit of \$5.4M to be paid to KPMG (Barbados) to commence the liquidation. The above costs do not include the millions of dollars that will be required to restore the leased aircraft before returning them to the suppliers. Instead of investing \$16.4M to liquidate LIAT, these funds could be better utilized to assist in the restructuring of the airline and restore its viability,” it advised.

The document also warned that if shareholders pursue the piecemeal liquidation of LIAT and fail to work out a plan with creditors and employees, the liquidation will not only be disorderly, but shareholding governments may be confronted with litigation, totaling hundreds of millions of dollars and tens of millions in legal fees.

In making the case for reorganization, the document noted that the COVID-19 pandemic offers a unique opportunity to address and repair

many of the longstanding issues that have plagued LIAT. Coupled with the provisions of the newly passed amendments to the Companies’s Act, it continued that the shareholders ought to seize the opportunity to ‘do the right thing.’

“The rehabilitation provisions in the Companies Act of Antigua and Barbuda allows for the appointment of an Administrator, who will be the sole representative of the LIAT estate. All decisions involving the affairs of LIAT would be taken exclusively by the administrator and not the directors, or shareholders. The main responsibility of the Administrator would be to reorganize the company, by cutting liabilities and realigning expenses to make the company solvent and restore its viability,” the Antigua and Barbuda government’s plan explained.

The plan also calls for the re-capitalisation and reorganisation of LIAT. It proposes that Antigua and Barbuda is prepared to meet half of this cost.

“The reorganization of LIAT requires

new capitalization up to EC\$108M of which the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is prepared to underwrite up to 50 percent. The new capital invested during reorganization will be protected, in that it will rank in priority above all other creditors in the unlikely event of liquidation. It is expected the remaining \$54M will be shared by other private and public sector entities including existing shareholder governments,” the paper outlined.

It said if the existing shareholder governments are not interested in investing in the reorganized LIAT, they will be requested to surrender their shares for \$1.00, which is an offer far superior to what they may expect to receive should LIAT enter liquidation.

The document also outlines a plan for a profitable LIAT to include staff cuts, the introduction of baggage fees and the discontinuation of unprofitable routes unless the governments of those territories sign a Minimum Revenue Guarantee with the airline as well as revitalizing the QuikPak service.

Barbudans warned!

The situation in Barbuda that led to the arrest of two individuals, one who is the Secretary of the Barbuda Council, Paul Nedd, will not be allowed to continue to disrupt the progress of the Peace Love and Harmony (PLH) project on the island.

This is the stern warning to Barbudans coming from the Central Government.

For several weeks, members of the Barbuda Coun-

cil have removed fences and have blocked the entrance to the project over what they say is the failure of the management of the project so sit with them to discuss their concerns.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, however, is accusing the Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) leadership of deliberately creating 'an atmosphere of hostility' toward any development that comes to

the island on the mistaken notion that 'people are taking away their lands'.

He said the BPM leaders have embarked on this course of action in an effort to hold on to power and 'collect a salary' from the treasury.

"Why every project that comes to Barbuda has to face problems with the BPM.

"Why is the leadership so hell bent on creating havoc

and a sense of lawlessness on the island?" Browne asked.

He added that it is clear that the BPM is determined to keep residents of the sister island in a state of ignorance so that they can maintain the reins of power.

In light of this, the prime minister has issued a stern warning that he will not sit idly by while the BPM's leaders run amok on the island.

"If they are going to become lawless on the island, I want to tell them that if it is one prime minister who would not tolerate this type of behavior it is Gaston Browne," he declared.

PM Browne said he is pleased that the police arrested the trouble makers last week and continued that this was an indication of things to come should the disruptions of law and order continue.

Browne, who is also Finance Minister, described the PLH project as the largest project of its kind anywhere in the Eastern Caribbean.

He continued that rather than embracing the development, which already employs 84 Barbudans, BLP leadership prefers to spend its time engaged in efforts designed to impede or stop the project.

"That will not happen!" he declared.

LIAT shareholders meeting is today

The major shareholders of LIAT (1974) Ltd., the Antigua-based regional carrier, are meeting today to consider a proposal by Antigua and Barbuda to reorganise the airline.

Antigua and Barbuda proposed that the meeting be held a week ago, however it did not materialize because of the unavailability of Barbados' Prime Minister, Mia Mottley, who heads that majority shareholder country's government.

Both Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have agreed to proceed with the liquidation of LIAT, but Antigua and Barbuda has proposed a different course of action; reorganization.

The meeting will take place this afternoon at 5 o'clock via the virtual meeting platform, ZOOM.

Antigua and Barbuda has circulated a detailed reorganization plan for LIAT as it is adamant that LIAT is too valuable an asset to the Caribbean allow it to enter liquidation and relegating it to the dustbin of history.

The Dominica government has given its support to the Antigua and Barbuda position however the Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines combined shares in LIAT total more than fifty percent. If Antigua and Barbuda's proposal to restructure the airline is to work, it must receive the support of these countries, especially that of Barbados.

Chairman of the LIAT Board of Directors, former Barbados Prime Minister, Owen Arthur, who is recovering from a heart attack, is among those who are not in favour of liquidation.

PM Mottley indicated earlier that there are six airlines which have expressed an interest in filling the void that will be created should LIAT go under.

One Caribbean, a St. Vincent-based carrier, is reported to have established a base in Barbados.

The eyes of the Caribbean will be focused on today's meeting and its outcome as the future of LIAT hangs in the balance.

Reality check: Tough times ahead!

The people of Antigua and Barbuda have been put on notice that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's economy has been severe, however, although tough times lie ahead, they should not lose hope.

That was the sobering, but encouraging position taken by Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Gaston Browne, who in his weekly radio show, Browne and Browne, gave 'a frank assessment' of the state of the country's finances.

PM Browne noted that many nations, much larger and wealthier than Antigua and Barbuda, have been 'brought to their knees' by the pandemic while small Caribbean countries found themselves unable to adequately shield themselves from the economic fallout. In fact, he noted that those countries who had some economic stores are now finding that those reserves will not be enough to take them through this crisis.

"We have to position ourselves to earn more non-tax revenues because this is not a time to impose new taxes when our people are facing economic hardship. We are going through a very challenging period and we



Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Gaston Browne

continue to struggle with revenues that are down significantly leading us to a situation where we are forced to juggle payments," he explained.

The prime minister said the government has been able to negotiate the deferral of some of its loan payments without which it would have defaulted. Additionally, the government has prioritized other payments, such as those that are due to investors on the Eastern Caribbean Stock Exchange.

"We honour those payments because we want the stock market to operate efficiently where those who invest would not have a

sense of discomfort or fear of not being paid," Browne remarked.

PM Browne is also predicting a decline of about twenty percent in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year, down from an estimated \$5 billion to \$4 billion. Unemployment, too, will continue to be high for an extended period of time.

"I suspect that unemployment could take up to 18 months to return to pre-COVID-19 figures. It is going to take that time to recover the losses due to the pandemic," the Finance Minister explained.

During this time, Browne

further advised that the government will be suspending all hiring as it is currently experiencing challenges meeting its present payroll commitments.

As a period of hardship looms, Browne is appealing for patience and maturity. He is also urging the public to refrain from blaming the government for the coming economic challenges as the problems the economy will experience are due to the pandemic and have nothing to do with the actions of his administration.

"Prior to the pandemic, our economy was in a good position and doing quite well!" he stated.

Call for region-wide approach to welcome back cruise lines

Caribbean countries ought to use this down time in the cruise sector to coordinate their responses and guidelines to welcome back cruise ships to the region when the industry resumes, hopefully before the end of this year.

This is the position taken by General Manager of Bryson's Shipping and a Director of the Caribbean Shipping Association, Nathan Dundas.

His comments come on the heels of the announcement by Royal Caribbean International that it will extend the suspension of all cruises until the end of September this year, in compliance with a 'No Cruise'

mandate issued by the United States Centre for Disease Control (CDC).

Dundas said while the industry is eager to see a return of cruise ships to the region, the cruise sector is guided by the advice of the CDC and local health authorities.

"Our main focus is to ensure that safety of our people is the main concern determining the restart of the cruise season.

"I really do believe however that we should be making full use at this time to put protocols in place in all the various sectors of the cruise tourism product that interact with the cruise visitors," he emphasised.



Director of Caribbean Shipping Association, Nathan Dundas.

Dundas wants clear guidelines and procedures

prepared and ready for the resumption of the industry, whether that happens later this year or next year.

"I believe all of the Caribbean islands should be synchronising their protocols and procedures so that we work together with a clear and common message to welcome the cruise visitors to the Caribbean," he stated.

Hundreds of taxi drivers, tour operators and vendors who depend on the cruise industry for their livelihoods were put out of work when the industry was suspended earlier this year for fear of the spread of the coronavirus.

Many have been badly hurt as the season was cut short by a month resulting in no summer cruise calls.

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Dame Edris Bird: A national treasure passes

The people of Antigua and Barbuda are mourning the loss of a national treasure; Dame Edris Mercier Bird Phd. DCN, whose service to the nation in higher education is unparalleled.

Dame Edris was one of the first students to attend the University of the West Indies when it opened at Mona, Jamaica in the late 1940's. Upon returning home from her studies she dedicated her life to service in education helping many persons to complete their secondary education through the University Centre's Extra Mural Department which she headed for close to two decades.

Thousands of Antiguan and Barbudans attended classes at the University Centre writing subjects to help them to matriculate at universities or college or to simply improve themselves and help them qualify for better positions at their places of work.

She was also instrumental in encouraging many single mothers to pursue higher education and improve their circumstance in life.

Dame Edris was a tireless advocate for the expansion of the work of the University Centre which eventually led to first and second year university classes at the institution.

Her work in early childhood education is also exemplary. She was instrumental in founding the Sir Luther Wynter preschool, which was named for one of her mentors. That school served as an example for early childhood education in the country.

Dame Edris Bird also loved the arts and under her patronage, Harambee Open Air Theatre, one of the longest running and most successful theatre groups in the country, found a home at the University Centre.

She also developed a close and long lasting friendship with the late Professor Rex Nettleford, whom she met during her student days at the UWI. Prof. Nettleford became her superior when he assumed responsibility for the UWI Extra Mural Department. They often spoke fondly of each other.

Her daughter, Dr. Jilia Bird, described her as 'a woman of service' who dedicated her whole life to helping people.

"Our mother believed in the power of education and she went to all lengths to ensure that everyone had an opportunity for both secondary and tertiary education," she remarked.

Edris Leatrice Mercier-Bird was appointed Dame Commander, The



Dame Edris Mercier Bird Phd. DCN

Most Distinguished Order of the Nation, DCN, for distinguished contributions in the field of education and community service.

Dr. Edris Leatrice Mercier-Bird was born on 26th April 1929 on Wapping Lane in St. John's. Her lifelong passion has been the relentless pursuit of educational opportunity, not only for self and family, but also the community at large.

Dr. Edris Bird is counted as amongst the very first graduates of the (Then)

University College of the West Indies, forerunner of the University of the West Indies, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Mona Campus in Jamaica in the late 1940's, returning a decade later to pursue and complete a Bachelor of Education degree in 1956.

She subsequently read for her Master's degree in Education from the University of London in 1970 and for a Doctorate in Education from the University of Toronto in 1974.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Hurricane Preparedness Tips

FINANCIAL SERVICES REGULATORY COMMISSION

The early forecast by the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Service indicates that the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season will likely be above normal and unusually destructive. As we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that you minimize the impact of the risks associated with the hurricane season. As a policyholder, you must play your role to ensure that before a natural disaster, the benefits you should receive from your insurance policies will be sufficient to cover the cost of recovery. In this regard, you should consider the following:

1. Review your insurance policy and ensure that you know what your policy covers and what it excludes;
2. Do NOT underinsure as this may affect your ability to return to the state that was in effect prior to the hurricane event. Discuss your exposure with your mortgage providers and lending institutions.
3. Ensure that you know how and when to file a claim with your insurance company. Do NOT wait until it is too late.

When seeking to acquire insurance coverage, you must ensure that the insurance provider has a certificate of registration displayed in a place where the certificate can be read without restriction. The certificate will have the logo and seal of the Financial Services Regulatory Commission and the period during which the issued certificate is valid. Where a certificate has expired, the holder is no longer registered to carry on insurance business.

Persons transacting any type of insurance business with a legal or natural person who does not have a valid registration to carry on insurance business will be doing so at their own risk as any policies issued by or through such unregistered persons may be invalid.

The Superintendent of Insurance maintains a register that is updated periodically of registered insurance companies, underwriters and insurance intermediaries which can be accessed by the public through the Commission's website: www.fsrgc.gov.ag.

See our licensed/registered providers below:

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CUNA CARIBBEAN INSURANCE (OECS) LIMITED ➤ Agent: Bryson's Insurance Agency
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GK INSURANCE (EASTERN CARIBBEAN) LIMITED ➤ Agent: Star Insurance Agency
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ISLAND HERITAGE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD. ➤ Agent: Bank of Nova Scotia
LLOYDS UNDERWRITERS (Association of Underwriter)
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NATIONAL GENERAL INSURANCE CO (NAGICO) (N.V.) ➤ Agent: Bryson's Insurance Agency
NETHERLANDS INSURANCE COMPANY (W.I.) LIMITED ➤ Agent: Kenneth A Gomez & Sons Insurance Agency
PAN AMERICAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY EASTERN CARIBBEAN LIMITED ➤ Agent: Selkridge Insurance Agency Ltd.
PIC INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
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Review of COVID-19 protocols slated for today

The government is to review and update the protocols it has put in place to manage the COVID-19 pandemic especially as they relate to visitors entering the country.

The review is the main item on the agenda when Prime Minister Gaston Browne meets today with Minister of Health, Molwyn Joseph and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealy Thomas.

Browne said this has become necessary as the situation has become 'very fluid' since the opening of the country's borders on June 1st. Prime Minister Browne further advised that similar reviews will now likely take place every two weeks.

According to the prime

minister, a number of developments have led to this including an incident in which two visitors who tested positive on arrival sought to place political pressure on the government over the issue.

"Since we last upgraded the protocols only four positive cases have been detected.

"The last two people reported that they tested negative in the US but tested positive on arrival in the country.

"Because of our restrictions they became aggressive and called back to top officials at the embassy in Barbados, the White House and even their congressman seeking their intervention in the matter," he reported.

PM Browne said while the government does wish for a souring of relations with the US government, the laws of Antigua and Barbuda must be obeyed by everyone entering the country.

He also revealed that there is evidence to suggest that some people may be traveling to the country with fake COVID-19 certificates and that this calls for even greater vigilance at the borders by frontline staff.

The prime minister re-

vealed that no one has been hospitalized with COVID-19 for over six weeks and expressed that he is pleased with the job his government has been doing in managing the crisis.

He further expressed the firm belief that the country's health infrastructure is capable of handling any increase in cases, but continued that he has not ruled out the possibility of closing the borders once again should the system become overwhelmed in the future.

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No squabble over planes

There are media reports that there is a squabble between Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados over three LIAT aircraft now in Antigua.

According to the reports emanating from Caribbean News Service, Barbados requested that the three ATR 42 aircraft be moved from

St. John's to Bridgetown, but that the request was turned down.

An informed source tells PointeXpress, however, that there was no request from Barbados for the planes to be relocated.

Our source further informed us that the planes at the center of the dis-

agreement had already been moved.

The source revealed that the three ATR 42s are presently in the hangar and require maintenance work to restore them to airworthy condition.

Additionally, the planes certificates of airworthiness are being renewed therefore

they must remain grounded, with the only exception being if Antigua is threatened by a storm in which case they will be flown to either Barbados or Trinidad and Tobago.

The engineering staff continues to work although they have not been paid since the end of April 2020.

FBI, SY responses expected this week

Formal letters of request have been dispatched to both Washington D.C., the United States of America's capital, and to London, United Kingdom seeking assistance from both countries' top crime fighting agencies to help the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda solve the homicide of customs officer, Nigel Christian.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene, sent the letters of re-

quest through Washington D.C. based Ambassador to the US and the Organisation of American States, His Excellency, Sir Ronald Sanders and High Commissioner in London, Her Excellency, Karen Mae Hill.

Reports are that both diplomats have made initial contact with their counterparts in the US and UK governments regarding the Antigua/Barbuda request. It is expected that formal re-

sponses will be forthcoming this week.

Christian was abducted from his home at Mckinnon's by four armed gunmen on Friday 10th July, 2020 at about 5:30pm. He was discovered shot to death on a roadside near new Winthorpes several hours later.

Since his death, there have been widespread calls for the government to invite outside assistance for the local police in order to expedite the investigation process with a view to bringing the perpetrators of this crime to justice.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has since confirmed that the Cabinet decided to invite the US' FBI and the UK's Scotland Yard to assist local law enforcement with the investigation.

"There have been suggestions in some quarters that there may be attempts to cover up or stymie the investigations into Christian's death. Therefore we took the decision in an effort to have full transparency in the matter," PM Browne stated.

Last October, another customs officer, Cornell Benjamin, was shot at his home in what many believe was an attempt on his life. He, however, survived and is currently receiving treatment at the University Hospital of the West Indies in Jamaica.

It is not known if Christian and Benjamin's shootings share a connection.

Timely donation



Dr. T'Keyah Weston makes a donation of essential items to the Parham Clinic.

The Tyranny of the LIAT Majority



By Makeda Mikeal

The islands of the English speaking Caribbean have gorged themselves on the revenues of LIAT while they have used the taxpayers money to pump up most of the scheduled international carriers flying into the region. Had LIAT been run as the commercial business airline, which the Prime Ministers of the shareholder governments of

Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines are now touting futuristically, LIAT would be an airline in the black. However, in order to peacefully do business in Barbados, LIAT had to pay the tax of passing through Barbados to meet what seemed like a quota of more than US \$30M annually. It got so silly that sometimes to get from Dominica to St. Lucia required a stop-over in Barbados - tax stop, not tech-stop!

Whose money then did the government shareholders arbitrarily spend developing themselves by making LIAT into their own personal cash cows; their airline to provide free carriage to all and sundry and to keep in place aged contracts with themselves at the helm?

Leaders of Government-owned entities are subject to the law and to their absent real owners (the people) just as ordinary companies must face their failures. Placing LIAT into receivership before a full inquiry into LIAT 1974 Ltd. will not only be a travesty, but a failure to report on the real cause of liquidating people's investment.

To quote David Evans, the immediate past CEO of LIAT,

"I can give you many examples of journeys around the region where the tax on the ticket is the same amount as the ticket. We will sell you a ticket for US \$100.00 on LIAT but you will actually pay US \$200.00 for it because the other \$100.00 will be for tax."

The governments of the four shareholders of LIAT (1974) Ltd. need to come to the people and explain why they are deliberately shutting down an Essential Service at a time when it is most needed to rebuild regional economies after COVID-19.

Those who have depleted the revenues of LIAT must be called to explain why a successful airline; a regional powerhouse of aviation expertise carrying passengers throughout the Caribbean, run by a Board of Directors appointed by the shareholder governments and with a Chairman who is a Prime Minister of a country, is effectively being run out of business.

LIAT shareholders hold those shares on behalf of the people of the owner territories and as a consequence the people must be consulted. LIAT is not the Federation which was dashed away

by the flick of a hearing-aid of the then leader Eric Williams.

There is the people's money involved and their jobs. There is also LIAT's internationally known expertise in the air and on the ground and in engineering. The latter alone took LIAT years to build its reputation and represents tens of millions of dollars in training, experience and competence.

There has got to be some legal redress to the tyranny of the share majority who are philandering with the business of the people without notifying them and getting their directives. The people of the Leeward Islands gave birth to LIAT and hold special shares of their aviation creation of 64 years, which they so generously shared and served their sister islands of the Windwards and Barbados, Trinidad and even Guyana.

They need to rise up and ask questions. Why the hurry to bury LIAT? What has gone so wrong that we cannot fix it again? We want an investigation into why the successful airline LIAT is being buried in a hurry!

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Economic Recovery From COVID-19: Making Room for Competition Law and Policy in Antigua and Barbuda



J'Moul Francis BA Law, LLM, (EU Law, Competition Law, and International Law); Commonwealth Scholar, Legal Commentary Blogger at www.francisobiter.org

At the dawn of 2020, no one ever imagined that a coronavirus would lead to such global trauma of epic proportions in the form a COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis. Governments around the world scrambled to implement containment and lockdown measures to thwart the further loss of life, protect individuals, and suppress the spread of the virus. As a corollary, much of the global economy grounded to a halt, giving rise to the loss of income, widespread job losses, production cuts, disruptions to supply chains, heightened uncertainty in both the public and private sectors, and much more. Even though these injuries of severe challenges and

constraints will naturally heal when the pandemic is over, the wounds left require treatment. This treatment must be grounded in a holistic socio-economic recovery plan of solutions led by the Government and key stakeholders.

Commendably in this regard, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda established the Economic Recovery Committee (ERC) to charter Antigua and Barbuda's way out of the economic fallout and back onto the road of growth and development. Also, across various social media platforms, there are conversations about the way to move forward, above and beyond the pre-pandemic status quo. However, left

out of these discussions is the possibility of introducing competition law and policy (also known as antitrust) as a regulatory and development governance tool to fashion a more inclusive and certain market for all going forward. The overlooked reality is that the pandemic is being or will be used as a cover for anticompetitive business conduct and arrangements resulting in harm to consumer protection and welfare. These issues prompted competition regulators in many jurisdictions to play a more critical role in stamping out opportunities—now and on the other side of the pandemic—for unjust enrichment and economic subversion. Antigua and Barbuda is yet to establish such a regulatory regime. As such, there is room for competition law and policy to be one of the pillars in an economic recovery strategy.

So, what exactly is competition law and policy? Well, competition law and policy concerns reining in, through regulation, practices that are harmful to the fair, competitive processes between undertakings (i.e. entities) operating in traditional and digital markets. The idea is that undertakings, whether public or private, can inflict harm on their competitors, costumers (i.e. business-to-business), and average consumers. The injuries inflicted can come in the form of unjust price increases, resale price maintenance,

price-fixing, cartels carving up the market, predatory pricing, refusal to supply or deal, and other discriminatory practices. There are situations where entities abuse their market power through exclusionary and exploitative conduct or seek to distort competitive markets through questionable mergers and acquisitions with detrimental effects on prices and market equilibrium. Also, there are cases in which subsidies place certain entities in an advantageous position to the detriment of others. Undoubtedly, many of the highlighted anticompetitive practices are recognisable and may very well be contributors to the high cost of living and inefficacy of doing business. In combating these harms, competition law and policy would weed out of the markets in an economy anticompetitive agreement, abuses of substantial market power, mergers and acquisitions with adverse effects, and unlawful state aid. In doing so, major companies like Microsoft, Google, Apple, Amazon, Facebook, GlaxoSmith-Kline, United Brands, British Airways, Visa, Mastercard et al. were forced to ensure that competitors, costumers, and average consumers benefit from better market equity, lower prices, higher quality goods and services, increased innovation, better choices, and greater allocative and production efficiencies.

Cont'd on pg 14

Commentary

Globally, the tentacles of competition law and policy continue to expand institutionally and substantively across more than 130 systems. Competition law has been around for some time now as it roamed the antique common law through the restraint of trade doctrine. In the United States, antitrust became formalised under the Sherman Act 1890 and in the European Union (EU) (then European Community), competition law and policy at the supranational level came into being through the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Here, I should note that the US and the EU are the two major and most influential competition systems in operation today, reflecting their global economic influence. At the domestic level, the establishment of many national authorities in Europe and the developed world took off between the 1940s-1950s. Later on, between the 1980s-1990s, systems in the developing world came on stream in India, Singapore, Brazil, South Africa et al. in proportion to their economic growth and development.

Interestingly, there is another layer of competition law and policy which forms part of regional integration systems and creates a legal regime above member states at the transnational level as hinted with the EU and its supranational approach. Where there is not a supranational approach, there is an intergovernmental approach as per the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and others which operate on the basis of functional cooperation. Furthermore, authorities in their respective

jurisdictions worldwide work together, tackling cross-border issues, through the International Competition Network (ICN). The wide recognition and layers of competition law and policy are attributed to the fact that the core functions and objectives are vital to socio-economic governance in developed and developing economies.

The core functions and objectives ground themselves in certain developmental principles and values. For example, consumer protection seeks to maximise consumer interests and welfare by taking action against offending undertakings and requiring them to reduce their prices, void harmful agreements, and terminate detrimental business conduct. The redistribution objective aims to democratise markets by sharing the wealth out of concentrated hands and promoting economic equity, which is particularly vital for establishing an entrepreneurial class in a small island developing state. Also, protecting competitors encourages more firms to enter and operate in a market to give everyone a fair chance by breaking down barriers to entry and levelling the playing field for existing undertakings. Furthermore, at the supranational or intergovernmental level, there is the single market imperative which aims to guarantee fairness between members states and their industries. This is particularly critical for the free movement of goods, people (albeit limited under Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC)), capital, data, and the freedom of establishment. The functions and objectives are about tearing down national divisions, lifting knees from the

necks of disadvantaged small to medium-sized undertakings and allowing them to fulfil their potential across larger and more inclusive markets and economies.

In the Caribbean, the tenants of competition law and policy are regulated and enforced by national competition authorities or government divisions in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. At the level of CARICOM, the CARICOM Competition Commission (CCC) enforces the rules under Chapter 8 RTC to harness the benefits of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) through combating anticompetitive and abusive business conduct. This is also fundamentally supported by two other regional treaty institutions: Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) and the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). COTED establishes appropriate rules and policies for competition, including special carveouts due to the unique market situation in the Caribbean and the CCJ interprets and applies CARICOM competition law in light of the spirit of the RTC. On this point, the CCJ will have to balance the potential conflicts between the domestic and regional regimes as a final appellate court and as the chief judicial institution of CARICOM. Nonetheless, thus far, the CCJ's competition jurisprudence continues to slowly develop even after its first judgment in *Trinidad Cement Ltd v CCC*.

With all that said and to bring the discussion home, Antigua and Barbuda does not have a formalised competition regime.

A possible reason for this is that competition and law policy was not seen as a necessary governance and development tool, but this means that there are possibly large swathes of the economy where anticompetitive practices run wild with impunity. The closest regime that exists is that governed by the Consumer Affairs Department albeit with underwhelmingly limited statutory competences and powers. Also, there is a proposal for a system at the level of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), but that is still on the table for discussion. I would argue for the preference of establishing national authorities as an OECS system might be an unnecessary layer which duplicates the efforts and takes resources away from of the already established CCC. Moreover, an OECS regime might not be effective on the ground in the jurisdictions due to practical issues concerning regulation and effective enforcement.

A potential regime sits within the Telecommunications Bill under Sections 81-83 which seeks to promote, develop, and enforce fair competition and equality of treatment of licensees in the telecommunications market. This regime will be governed, as proposed, by the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC). This is revolutionary and has the potential for telecommunications policies to yield significant benefits for Antiguans and Barbudans, natural and legal, to better live and operate in the digital age. Yet, there is a potential conflict with the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) and its welfare

Commentary

PAGE 15

and national security function as a monopoly in addition to the interest(s) of another operator. Both own much of the current infrastructure at a high cost to market entrants and existing operators. Notwithstanding, competition law can allow fairer access under the 'essential facilities doctrine'. Nonetheless, regarding APUA, balancing competition concerns with those of legitimate national security interests requires consultation between decision-makers and with stakeholders and the general public. Moreover, there are broader issues concerning setting up a more comprehensive national authority and network, chief among them, the lack of resources—human and otherwise—given the current situation. Also, given

the uniqueness of a small island market, policies concerning natural monopolies and other business conduct must be adequately examined in light of national economic interests. Added to this, intervening political considerations (as is the case everywhere) will result in some reluctance to introduce a robust regime. However, there are tangible socio-economic benefits such as additional revenue through fines, lower cost of living, increased economic efficiency and innovation, increased attractiveness for foreign direct investment, and greater economic diversity.

In conclusion, competition law and policy developed around the world as a regulatory governance and development tool utilised to protect

competitors and consumers. There are also holistic functions and objectives in which competition law and policy can meaningfully play in rebalancing and democratising markets, the economy, and economic interests. This is vital in ensuring that economic and legal strategies can support the establishment of a less vulnerable and more certain economy coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic in conjunction with efforts at the regional level. Certainty is needed to ensure that those who hold economic power do not use it together with the effects of the economic fallout to the detriment of others. Many small to medium-sized undertakings need to have the surety that not only can they recover from the current situation, but

they can also sustainably operate and grow in the period after. With that said, establishing such a system is not without philosophical and practical challenges. Nevertheless, the overarching goal is for each to endeavour and all to achieve. With COVID-19 unveiling critical faults within markets and the developmental model upon which they languish, room should be made for competition law and policy to be part of the economic recovery from the COVID-19 fallout leading to an economy that works for many and not just for the few.

All views expressed herein are the author's personal views and do not reflect the views of any organisation(s) or other entities with which he may be affiliated.

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Jamaica- 'Political Week From Hell' - Holness Admin 'Overwhelmed' Navigating Choppy Waters As Polls Loom

With another Cabinet minister in the Andrew Holness administration stripped of portfolio responsibilities over a controversial land arrangement and another thrust under the microscope over contracts awarded to a public-relations firm, one political analyst has described last week as one from hell.

The week began with a messy Holland Estate affair that came to light after a Sunday Gleaner report raised questions over the selection of Holland Producers Limited to manage 2,400 acres of state-owned lands located in Holland, St Elizabeth. The report also revealed that Lola Marshall-Williams, a director and shareholder, is the partner of J.C. Hutchinson, a minister in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries. The couple share a child.

Last Friday, Hutchinson was forced to apologise for "errors of judgement in relation to land transactions involving the Holland Estate" as Holness reassigned him to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

Health and Wellness Minister Dr Christopher Tufton was also dragged into the spotlight with what he termed as "filthy and scandalous" claims in social media posts over which he has threatened legal action. Questions were also raised as to whether there were conflicts of interest in Market Me Consulting Limited, a public-relations agency, benefitting from coro-

navirus-related contracts through an unsolicited proposal.

A senior source close to the Holness administration said it was a rough week for the prime minister, who was reassigning a minister to his office for the fifth time since 2016.

'WHAT NEXT?'

"The prime minister is overwhelmed by the heaviness of this week, and it looks like it will carry over into next week with the Ministry of Health," the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) official told The Sunday Gleaner late last week. "At the rate things are going, everyone has been asking, 'What next?' Jesus, man! It is too much, man!"

Despite the messy affairs, environmentalist and Gleaner columnist Peter Espeut said Holness would not be upsetting the apple cart with a general election on the horizon.

"If it wasn't general election preparation time, he might have risked firing them, but nobody is getting fired," Espeut told The Sunday Gleaner. "They are all members of parliament who have to run in their constituencies to secure wins for the JLP so nothing will happen."

He continued: "And the PNP (opposition People's National Party) has no moral high ground, low ground, no ground at all to say anything. So Ruel Reid and others will come back. They going to get off. Nobody is held accountable for anything. Things are going to remain just



Prime Minister Andrew Holness

the same."

Reid, a former education minister, was booted from the Cabinet last year March as a corruption probe engulfed a number of agencies under the ministry. He has since been slapped with a number of charges.

With thick sarcasm, Espeut added: "Everything has been efficient and running well, including the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It's so efficient that you can't get a policeman or a soldier charged for anything. There is no such thing as nepotism or cronyism in law and nobody is going to pass legislation to criminalise it. So we are all doing fine.

"All it was was a busy news week and much ado about nothing. Holness has shown nothing more than that he is a post-Independence-born leader, but who is cut from the same cloth as those in the pre-Independence era, many of whom are still in the forefront of politics today."

The usual hard-hitting political commentator Dr Paul Ashley was cryptic and brief in comments. "A political week from hell," was how he summed it up.

'POLITICAL VIRUS'

"All I would say is that a political virus, much like the coronavirus, has hit the ruling party and it can only get worse," he warned ominously, but declined to go further.

JLP sources told The Sunday Gleaner that "some people are expecting another resignation because of a long-standing issue", adding that the best thing Holness can do is "call the election because this can only get worse".

"His popularity will fall quicker than it rose. These rapidly giddy heights of popularity cannot be maintained. If the popularity numbers are unprecedented, then this week has also been unprecedented," said a JLP operative.

I said 'Blank Man', not 'Black Man' – Persad Bissessar



Opposition Leader Kamla Persad Bissessar

Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley on Friday said he was not surprised at the statement made by Opposition Leader Kamla Persad Bissessar at a political meeting on Thursday night, even as she insisted that she had not referred to him as “black man on the other side”.

Addressing supporters of the main opposition United National Congress (UNC) as it campaigned for the August 10 general election, Persad Bissessar was reportedly heard telling supporters, “I know some people are a bit concerned, and in fact the black man on the other side

talked about kindergarten. What a great disservice and disrespect to young people of this country.”

In a message posted on his Facebook page, Prime Minister Rowley wrote, “Finally!!! Caught in her frequent disgusting race baiting she is reduced to repeating inane rubbish to try and lie her way out.

“Anyone surprised? She didn’t call me an Oreo. What she said was ‘Ohio!’ or ‘Oh hello,’” he added, making reference to a public statement made by Persad Bissessar in September 2018 when she described him as an “Oreo” owned by the “one per

cent” of the population, a term used to describe the Syrian/Lebanese community here.

In a statement Friday, Persad Bissessar insisted that she used the word ‘blank’ to describe Rowley and not ‘black’.

“Keith Rowley is again trying to divide the population by purposefully using the word ‘black’ instead of ‘blank’ with the hopes of stirring a racial argument to distract the population from his failed tenure,” she said, adding that the term ‘blank’ was in reference to Rowley’s “complete lack of ideas, vision or plan”.

She said she was urging peo-

ple to “look at and read the entire contents” of her speech where the word “blank” is used as a theme to describe the ruling People’s National Movement (PNM) government over the last five years.

In his post on Facebook, Prime Minister Rowley included one video with the ‘black man’/‘blank man’ comment and a second with her using the phrases that included ‘blank’.

Friday is nomination day for the general election. Only the PNM is expected to contest all 41 seats, while the UNC will contest 39.

Hefty sanctions for non-compliant tourists

Grenada's borders, through a phased process, are opening. A legitimate concern for many would-be non-compliant tourists. Non-compliance in this instance could range from breaking quarantine to not wearing masks. Although our visitors must be welcomed as they escape to relax and explore our beautiful island, they must comply with our laws. According to Dr George Mitchell, head of the National Covid-19 Response Team, via actions through parliament, the current monetary sanctions for non-compliance will increase.

This revelation occurred on Friday, 17 July 2020, when Central Health-Grenada interviewed the coordinator of the National Covid-19 Response Team as part of its online series entitled, "Covid-19 & Those Most at Risk."

"The sanctions that have been on the books for many, many years were deemed inadequate. Just not enough to deter persons and so this is going to be brought to Parliament," said Dr Mitchell. He went on to say, "I suspect that very early next week the fines surrounding breaking quarantine etc, will be revised and will be implemented upwards."

Grenada has to take steps to move on. The way our world economics is designed, we have to smartly create a new normal. Covid-19 will be around for a while and so the process of welcoming tourists to our island is part and parcel of the overall process. Having



Dr George Mitchell, head of the National Covid-19 Response Team

said that, as far as Dr Mitchell and his team are concerned, if you are coming from what they have deemed as Yellow or Red Zones, meaning that there are active transmissions there, expect to be quarantined for a certain period of time. "Unlike the St Vincent experience, where people were allowed to go home, and they have their peculiarities about them — that they were allowed to go home, Grenada is not about to take that kind of chance. I'm

sorry — no. We are not about to take that kind of chance. If you are coming from an area where there is active transmission, and you want to come and have fun, then your fun, of course, would be enjoying our beautiful island — but from your secured location."

Earlier this month, the Ministry of Health outlined its phased approach for opening the Borders — Low Risk (OECS Countries), Medium

(Caricom, UK, Canada) and High (US or visited the USA 14 days prior to arrival) arrivals would be permitted during different time periods. Our visitors or those returning home, would have to bear additional costs, outside of their airfare, and adhere to strict procedures. In fact, travelling via aircraft requires serious planning. Everyone entering Grenada must have certain things and accept our laws and procedures.

Jamaica: Woman charged with murder of younger sister

A Trelawny woman, along with her two daughters, has been charged for the murder of her younger sister, 36-year-old Tamara Geddes. The latter was allegedly shot dead by a contract killer on Friday, June 19, in the presence of her 10-year-old daughter at their family home in Reserve district in the parish. The woman charged with the murder is, 39-year-old farmer, Nadeen Geddes and her two daughters, a juvenile and 21-year-old Shanice Ruddock, all from the Reserve district, Trelawny have also been charged. The three women are accused of conspiring to hire a gunman who carried out the hit on Tamara Geddes.

On Tuesday, they were picked up by the Police from their Trelawny home, which they used to share with the deceased. The Police said that after they were picked up, they gave caution statements and admitted that they planned and hired the gunman to kill their relative, Tamara Geddes.

The three accused are scheduled to appear before the Trelawny Parish Court on July 22, Wednesday.

Two other people who were nabbed by the Police in Westmoreland on Thursday, but who reside in St James are also expected to be charged in relation to the killing of Tamara Geddes. The two persons nabbed from Westmoreland are suspected of having established the connection to hiring the contract killer.



Jamaica: Woman charged with murder of younger sister

Superintendent Kirk Ricketts, commander of the Trelawny Police Division, said that they currently have five persons in custody regarding the murder of 36-year-old Tamara Geddes, of Reserve District, Trelawny. Out of the

five, three persons have been charged so far. The Police are expecting that the other two would be charged soon.

A senior investigator said the investigation of the murder is not yet finished as other people are being sought regarding the

matter.

It is not yet clear that what brought enmity between the feuding sisters but one community member said that the two siblings, who occupied the one-storey house, were at odds constantly.

Cubans celebrate no local transmission of COVID-19 for first time in four months



People get hand sanitizer before entering a shop amid the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), in Havana, Cuba, July 8, 2020.

Cuba for the first time in 130 days on Sunday said there were no new domestic cases of COVID-19 as most of the country moved into the final phase of resuming normal activities with masks and social distancing.

Francisco Duran, head of epidemiology at the Ministry of Public Health, and who has updated the country daily on the pandemic, took off his mask during the national broadcast for only the second time deliver the good news.

Duran, on Saturday did the

same, reporting just a single domestic case in Havana.

Only a handful of COVID-19 cases were reported in Cuba over the last week, all in Havana. Most of the Caribbean island, home to 11.2 million inhabitants, has been free of the disease for more than a month.

"I always tell you to stay safe at home, but I know many will go to the beach today," Duran said, smiling, before reminding his television audience about social distancing.

The capital's 2.2 million residents remain at the first

phase of three stages of re-opening where they can once more move around on public and private transport, go to the beach and other recreation centers, and enjoy a seaside drive just in time for the summer break. They can also dine and have a drink. Each phase allows capacity at venues to increase from an initial 60%. Interprovincial transportation begins during phase two, while phase three includes schools re-opening. Social distancing and wearing masks remain mandatory in most circumstances.

The country has opened a group of isolated resort keys to international tourism. Phase three broadens international travel depending on risk.

The Communist-run country has been given high marks for its textbook handling of the pandemic.

Cuba's robust and free community-based health system, door-to-door search for carriers, isolation of the sick, suspected cases and contacts has allowed it to keep the number of infections under 2,500 with 87 deaths.

Trump refuses to commit to accepting November election results

United States President Donald Trump refused to publicly commit to accepting the results of the upcoming presidential election in November, while also declining to say if the Confederate flag was an offensive symbol. In an interview with Fox News host Chris Wallace broadcast on Sunday, Trump said it was too early to make such an ironclad guarantee, echoing a similar threat he made weeks before the 2016 vote and scoffing at recent polls that show him lagging behind presumptive Democratic candidate Joe Biden.

"I have to see. Look ... I have to see," Trump said. "No, I'm not going to just say yes. I'm not going to say no, and I didn't last time either." The Biden campaign responded: "The American people will decide this election. And the United States government is perfectly capable of escorting trespassers out of the White House."

While considered remarkable that a sitting president would express less than complete confidence in the American democracy's electoral process, the statement comes from Trump's insurgent play-book of four years ago, when in the closing stages of his race against Hillary Clinton he said he would not commit to honouring the election results if the Democrat won. Pressed during an October 2016 debate about whether he would abide by the voters' will, Trump responded he would "keep you in suspense".

During the interview, Trump also declined to say whether the Confederate battle emblem - that has come to represent racial oppression and slavery for many Americans - was an offensive symbol.

"It depends on who you're talking about, when you're talking about," Trump responded. "When people proudly had their Confederate flags they're not talking about racism. They love their flag, it represents the South. They like the South... I say it's freedom of many things, but it's freedom of speech."

Trump has also promised to veto the annual National Defense Authorization Act over an amendment to remove the names of Confederate generals from military bases within a year. The position breaks with several of his fellow Republicans in Congress.

"We won world wars out of these, out of these military bases, no I'm not gonna go changing. I'm not gonna go changing," Trump said in the interview, which was taped on Friday. Trump also defended his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, despite the US leading the world in both numbers of cases and deaths, and a renewed surge in states that tried to reopen their economies early.

Trump said the US is "the envy of the world" on testing, while repeating his opposition to any national mandate for mask wearing.



Donald Trump says he will not commit to accepting the November presidential election results

"I want people to have a certain freedom," he said.

Referring to what he called an early prediction that the virus would someday disappear, he said, "I'll be right eventually. It's going to disappear and I'll be right."

Trump assailed likely opponent Joe Biden as "not competent" to lead the United States, speaking as polls over the weekend showed deepening voter disenchantment with his own handling of the coronavirus pandemic. "He's shot, he's mentally shot," Trump said about Biden, adding if the former vice president is elected on November 3, he will "destroy this country".

Facing the multiple challenges of a spreading pandemic, racial unrest and a struggling economy, Trump made several unfounded or highly speculative accusations saying Biden would "triple your taxes" and "defund the police".

He added broadly "religion will be gone" - referring to

Democratic officials banning large church services to stem the virus spread.

Wallace told the president a new Fox opinion poll showed Biden with a substantial lead over Trump, not only on his ability to manage the pandemic (with a 17-point edge) and to deal with racial unrest (by 21 points), but even - by a single point - on handling the economy, long a Trump strong point.

And a new Washington Post-ABC News poll has Biden leading Trump among registered voters nationwide by a resounding 15-point margin, 55-to-40 percent.

Trump dismissed such polling as "fake" saying White House surveys show him winning both nationally and in key swing states.

"Let Biden sit through an interview like this, he'll be on the ground crying for Mommy. He'll say, 'Mommy, Mommy, please take me home,'" the president added.

UAE launches historic first mission to Mars

The United Arab Emirates' historic first mission to Mars is under way, after a successful lift-off in Japan.

The Hope probe launched on an H2-A rocket from Tanegashima spaceport, and is now on a 500-million-km journey to study the planet's weather and climate.

Two previous attempts to launch the probe in the past week had to be called off because of adverse weather.

Hope's arrival in February 2021 is set to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the UAE's formation. The UAE craft is one of three missions to Mars launching this month.

The UAE has limited experience of designing and manufacturing spacecraft - and yet here it is attempting something only the US, Russia, Europe and India have succeeded in doing. But it speaks to the Emiratis' ambition that they should dare to take on this challenge.

Their engineers, mentored by American experts, have produced a sophisticated probe in just six years - and when this satellite gets to Mars, it's expected to deliver novel science, revealing fresh insights on the workings of the planet's atmosphere.

In particular, scientists think it can add to our understanding of how Mars lost much of its air and with it a great deal of its water.

The Hope probe is regarded very much as a vehicle for inspiration - something that



The Hope probe successfully launched from a spaceport in Japan

will attract more young people in the Emirates and across the Arab region to take up the sciences in school and in higher education. The satellite is one of a number of projects the UAE government says signals its intention to move the country away from a dependence on oil and gas and towards a future based on a knowledge economy.

But as ever when it comes to Mars, the risks are high. A half of all missions sent to the Red Planet have ended in failure. Hope project director, Omran Sharaf, recognises the dangers but insists his country is right to try.

"This is a research and development mission and, yes, failure is an option," he told BBC News.

"However, failure to prog-

ress as a nation is not an option. And what matters the most here is the capacity and the capability that the UAE gained out of this mission, and the knowledge it brought into the country."

The UAE government told the project team it couldn't purchase the spacecraft from a big, foreign corporation; it had to build the satellite itself.

This meant going into partnership with American universities that had the necessary experience. Emirati and US engineers and scientists worked alongside each other to design and build the spacecraft systems and the three onboard instruments that will study the planet.

While much of the satellite's fabrication occurred at the Laboratory for Atmospheric

and Space Physics (LASP) at the University of Colorado, Boulder, considerable work was also undertaken at the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) in Dubai.

LASP's Brett Landin believes the Emiratis are now in a great place to do another mission on their own.

"I could give you the process for fuelling a spacecraft, but until you've put on an escape suit and transferred 800kg of highly volatile rocket fuel from storage tanks into the spacecraft, you don't really know what it's like," the senior systems engineer said.

"Their propulsion engineers have now done it and they know how to do it the next time they build a spacecraft."

Third day of wrangling over huge EU recovery plan



This is the first time EU leaders have met face-to-face in months

EU leaders trying to hammer out a huge post-coronavirus economic recovery plan are now in an unscheduled third day of a testy summit in Brussels.

Some member states believe the proposed €750bn (\$857bn; £680bn) package is too large and should come as loans, rather than grants.

Austria said there was still a “way to go”, while Hungary’s PM lashed out at his Dutch counterpart.

Germany’s Angela Merkel said a deal might not be reached on Sunday.

With the impasse still unbroken on Sunday evening, Pres-

ident of the European Council Charles Michel reminded the leaders that 600,000 people had died of the virus worldwide and he hoped that the “headline tomorrow is that the EU has accomplished mission impossible”.

The third day of talks followed a record one-day rise in new infections worldwide.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Saturday that new cases rose by almost 260,000 in 24 hours.

Officials said this was the largest single-day increase since the pandemic began, and the first time the number of new daily in-

fections has surpassed a quarter of a million. The previous record rise in new confirmed cases was recorded by the WHO just one day earlier.

The total number of confirmed cases of coronavirus passed 14 million on Saturday, according to the tally kept by US-based Johns Hopkins University.

EU leaders first met on Friday in Brussels to discuss the bloc’s €1 trillion seven-year budget and the planned stimulus package to help countries recover the pandemic.

It is the first face-to-face meeting between leaders since governments began imposing lock-

downs in a bid to stop the spread of the virus in March.

Member states are split between those hit hardest by the outbreak, and those concerned about the costs of the recovery plan.

Some northern nations like the Netherlands and Sweden have balked at the package, arguing it should take the forms of loans not grants.

But nations including Italy and Spain are desperate to revive their shattered economies, and have accused the EU of not doing enough to help countries hit by the pandemic. Italy in particular was one of the earliest European countries to suffer an outbreak and has recorded 35,000 deaths - one of the highest tolls in the world.

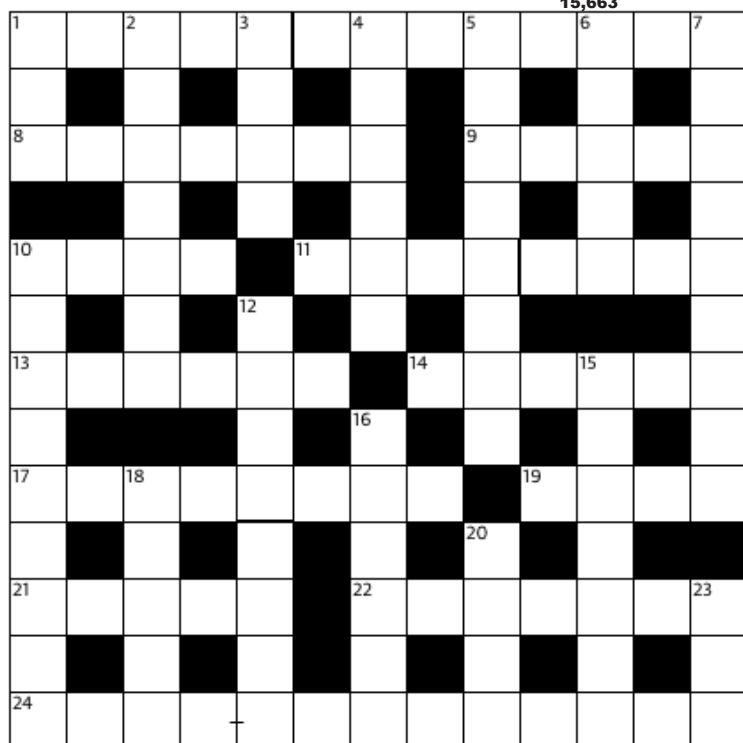
Italian PM Giuseppe Conte said Europe was “under the blackmail of the ‘frugals’” and described negotiations as “heated”.

Hungarian PM Viktor Orban accused Dutch PM Mark Rutte of a personal vendetta and of trying to link financial help to political issues. Mr Orban, and his ally Poland, have threatened to veto the package if it adopts a policy of withholding funds from nations who do not meet certain democratic principles.

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said there was “a way to go” but that it was possible a deal could be achieved.

Mrs Merkel said: “I still cannot say whether we will find a solution. There is a lot of goodwill but also many different positions.”

QUICK CROSSWORD

Quick crossword No
15,663Quick crossword No
15,660

Across

- 1 Grit sweeper on? (anag) — it makes driving easier (5,8)
 8 Sincere — humourless (7)
 9 Tree with orange-red berry-like fruits (5)
 10 Peak (4)
 11 Savaged (4,4)
 13 Hergé's adventurous young Belgian reporter (6)
 14 Put the ball in the net (6)
 17 Branch of mathematics (8)
 19 Substance taker (4)
 21 Excuse (5)
 22 Treating badly (7)
 24 In a lackadaisical fashion (4-9)

Down

- 1 Fruit or meat dish (3)
 2 Labourer (7)
 3 Regrets (4)
 4 Italian painter of the Venetian school, patronised by Philip II of Spain (6)
 5 Wife of Orpheus (8)
 6 From Des Moines? (5)
 7 Explosive invented in 9th-century China (9)
 10 Signature (9)
 12 Accompaniment at mealtime (4,4)
 15 Quash (7)
 16 Misprints in a book (6)
 18 Type of bay window (5)
 20 Sculpture — ruined (4)
 23 Writer of The Beggar's Opera (3)

CARTOON CORNER

Non Sequitur





DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): You might rush to get something done on time and only end up slowing yourself down. This is one of those weeks when you should be extra polite and avoid letting anyone get under your skin. Hold off on making major changes.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Let sleeping dogs lie. You might feel that it's best to be forthright when discussing a financial matter. Unfortunately, all you may do is stir up resentment and controversy. Remain discreet in the week ahead.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Dialogues about the past can needlessly complicate the present. Put personal meetings and serious discussions on the back burner during the first half of the week. There may be obstacles to handling your budget.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): The New Moon arrives in your sign early tomorrow. The next few days could be difficult to navigate because there may be a pileup of duties and realities to face. Wait until the second half of the week to make weighty decisions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The shift in focus during tomorrow's New Moon might be all it takes to reveal hidden problems and mistakes. Be glad to have a chance to fix them as the week unfolds and learn from them for the future.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can solve crossword puzzles easily but may not easily handle cross words. There could be a competition or struggle over money, policies or ethics, so it's best to let a sense of fair play prevail in the week ahead.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): You may feel your achievements are unsatisfactory if you compare yourself to others. This is not a good week to negotiate better terms because other people may be focused on their own agenda and could be less empathetic than usual.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may briefly feel you're out of your depth in the upcoming week. You could be dismayed by family dramas or feel uncertain when faced with a dilemma. Make a deliberate effort to fill in the gaps in your knowledge.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In the week ahead, you may be discouraged when people don't react to your ideas with the level of enthusiasm you expect. Remain budget-conscious and be sure to pay your bills on time.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't let a spat turn into a grudge. When people are stressed out, a few harsh words can quickly turn into hard feelings. In the week ahead, be aware that unmindful criticism of others might build an unscalable wall.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Performing the duller duties may show others that you are diligent but may not earn you any credit. Do not expect to receive glowing praise for just being there. Avoid disputes and dissension during the upcoming week.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Put creative energies to work on your own behalf as this week unfolds rather than being distracted by lingering problems. Wait until a project is perfected and polished before presenting it to the world.

Cricket helped Windrush migrants to integrate

When Alford Gardner stepped off the Empire Windrush, a ship which took about 500 migrants to the United Kingdom from the Caribbean, he, like his fellow passengers, was about to embark on a storied journey that would see him build a life for himself in a land more than 4,000 miles from home.

Jamaica, where Alford was from, and Leeds, where Alford was to settle, couldn't have been more different in 1948.

Yet there was one thing which was central to the life of people in both places - cricket.

Within months of arriving in the UK, the country's first Caribbean Cricket Club had been formed.

"It was 1948, there were just eight West Indians in Leeds and they needed something to do, something to help integrate them into the community, so they set up a cricket club," says Howard Gardner, Alford's son.

Now, 72 years later, the Caribbean Cricket Club in Leeds is home to three adult teams and four junior teams, welcoming men and women, boys and girls, from all backgrounds.

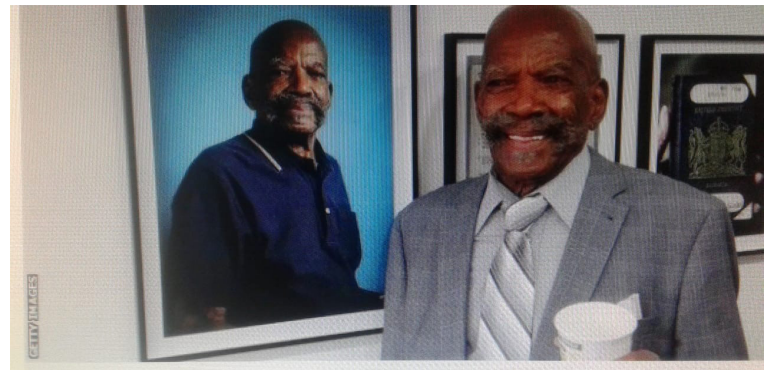
This all may have had a different outcome if, back then, a racist shop worker had his way.

"There was a big cricket shop in Leeds which my father and his friends arranged to get equipment from so they could play," said Howard.

"Everything was agreed - they would take bats, balls, stumps etc. on a hire purchase agreement - but when they went to collect the equipment, they were told they couldn't have it.

"They had to resort to borrowing equipment from elsewhere. Uncomfortably, discrimination like that was common back then," he remarked.

When they did manage to source equipment, every waking hour was spent playing cricket on long summer



days.

"When I grew up in Jamaica, everyone played for a cricket team," says Alford now 94.

"We'd spend all weekend down at the cricket club and the boys and girls would be scattered around the boundary playing a mini test match of their own.

"It was the highlight of the week. We carried that on in Leeds and other Yorkshire towns and cities," Alford recalled.

He also remembered very vividly the style of play.

"Bowlers were fast! There was no such thing as medium, and batters hit the ball hard!" proclaimed Alford, "but most of all, everyone was welcome. We had a lad from St. Kitts called Crossley who was brilliant. We didn't bother with first names in those days, just the name they went by for the scorecard."

"I vividly remember dashing to Nottingham on a train and watching West Indies beat England by 10 wickets," says Alford, who

married a local girl, Norma McKenna, with whom he raised eight children.

"The radio commentary of that time will always stay with me," he went on. "Hearing names like Everton Weekes, Clyde Walcott and Frank Worrell come to life."

While the world is now a very different place to that which Alford and his fellow Windrush travel companions encountered in 1948, one simple fact remains - that cricket can still be an important vehicle for integration.

The very club which Alford helped to set up continues to expand and at its core is a focus on equality and inclusion. His efforts also helped to bring a bit of the Caribbean - its cuisine, culture and fast bowling - to a little corner of west Yorkshire.

To think all of this might not have happened if the club's founders had given up when faced with discrimination in a cricket shop 72 years ago.



Stuart Broad's magical 14 deliveries

An outstanding spell from Stuart Broad on the fourth evening of play kept England's hope alive of winning the second Test against the West Indies at the Emirates Old Trafford.

Broad, who was angry and frustrated to be left out of the first test, took three wickets in 14 deliveries with the second new ball to inspire the home side after West Indies looked to be batting towards a position of safety.

Kraigg Braithwaite made 75, Shamarch Brookes 68, Chase 51

and Alzarri Joseph 32 as night watchman.

The Caribbean side posted 287, 182 behind. England batting a second time are 37 for 2, a lead of 219, and will continue their journey today (Monday) for quick runs setting up a declaration before looking to secure 10 wickets to try and level the three match series.

Scores in the game: England 469 for 9 declared, Stokes 176, Sibley 120 and 32 for 2. West Indies 287, Braithwaite 75, Brookes 68. West Indies. England lead by 219.



Stuart Broad

Michael Holding critical of ECB, Archer

"I have no sympathy at all for Jofra Archer."

Those were the stern words coming from West Indies cricket legend, Michael Holding.

Speaking to Sky Sports on Thursday, Holding slammed Jofra Archer for breaching the COVID-19 protocols and questioned ECB's bio-secure bubble.

Jofra Archer has been dropped, fined and issued a warning from the England and Wales Cricket Board for traveling home after West Indies defeated England by four wickets in the first test at Southampton.

On his way to Manchester from Southampton, Archer reportedly visited his home and had contact with an unidentified person.

The England Cricket Board had allowed players to travel by their own cars, separately, from Southampton to Manchester, as reported by the Guardian.

However, the Barbados born player decided to visit his home on the way and broke the protocols.

He has since been asked to self-isolate for five days and must undergo two COVID-19 tests which must return negative if he is to be eligible for selection in the third Test.

West Indies great, Michael Holding, was critical of Archer's behavior in breaching the team's bio-secure protocols stating that he had no

sympathy for Archer over his actions.

"I just don't understand why people can't just do what is required," Holding said on Sky Sports.

"Talking about sacrifices, Nelson Mandela spent 27-years in a little cell and he did nothing wrong. That is a sacrifice," the Jamaican added.

Holding also questioned what he considers the England Cricket Board's illogical bio-secure protocols.

The West Indies former pacer queried why England players were allowed to use their own cars to travel between cricket grounds if the ECB's intention was to keep them insulated to avoid the possibility of contracting the coronavirus.

"Why are all the players not travelling in the same bus? They have all tested negative for COVID-19 and should be travelling together making sure everyone is together," Holder said.

Archer given warning, fined

England fast bowler, Jofra Archer, has been given a written warning and fined by the England and Wales Cricket Board for breaching bio-secure protocols.

The Barbados born cricketer visited his home on Monday during his journey from Southampton, where the first Test against West Indies was played, to Manchester, the venue for the second.

The 25-year-old was dropped from the squad for the second Test being played at the Emirates Old Trafford, but can rejoin the Squad on Tuesday and is available for

the third Test which starts on Friday.

Archer's return to the England team is dependent on him returning two negative tests for coronavirus during a five day period of isolation which began on Thursday.

The disciplinary hearing on Friday evening was chaired by England's Director of Cricket, Ashley Giles, and attended by Archer's agent and a representative from the Professional Cricketers' Association.

Giles said Thursday that Archer's trip home included meeting a person who has since tested negative for coronavirus.

Sports

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Dead eye shooter and lock down defender

Jevon Andrew, the dead-eye shooter and lockdown defender from Fitches Creek, is on his way to Florida International University on a full scholarship.

The 6'3ft, 180 pound youngster, a member of the Wadadli Elite Basketball Academy, recently successfully completed Victory Rock Prep School. While there, he carved out a reputation for himself as a knock down shooter.

"My workout includes 800 long range shots per session as I work to master the art of shooting" Jevon told PointeXpress in a recent interview.

"At prep school I had to be up early to hit the gym for 5:15 until 6:30, go back home for breakfast, then head to classes from 8:00am until 12:45, then head back home for lunch only to return to training from 1:30 until 4:00pm," Andrew explained.

In the interview, the former St. Joseph's Academy



student said he had to make a major adjustment when he arrived at prep school getting stronger, faster and more disciplined in a short period of time.

He went on to share his short and long term academic and athletic goals.

"I am looking to average about 13 points in my freshman year at University and I will be majoring in Sports Management," Andrew noted.



"My favorite player is Paul George, and if things work out after school, bas-

ketball-wise, I will seek an agent and look some try-outs, otherwise I will be preparing myself for life after basketball focusing on my studies," Jevon said.

DEWS

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