



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

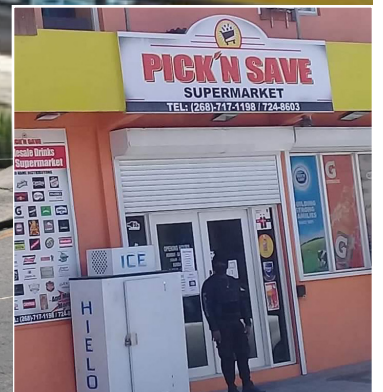
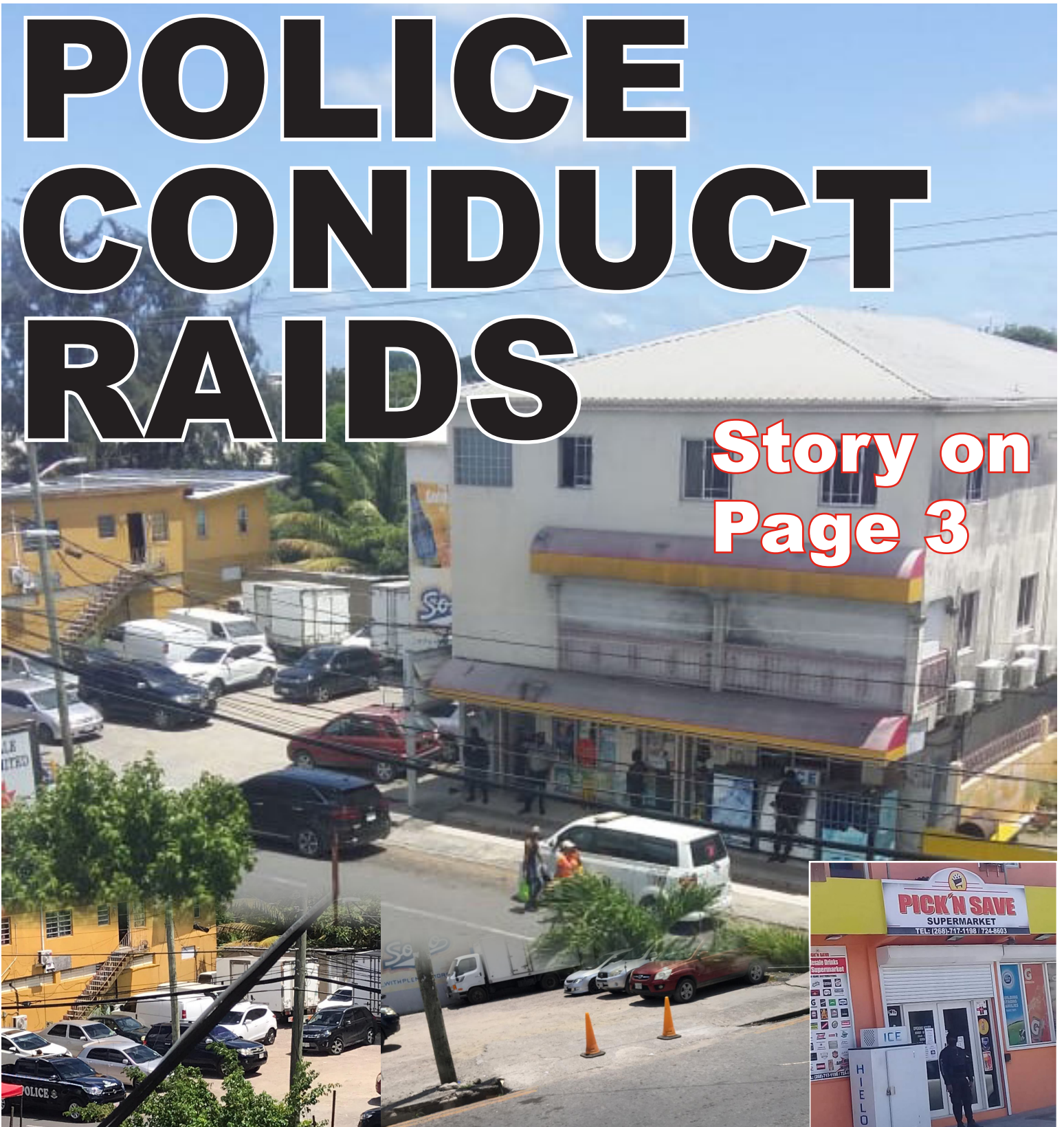
TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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PRICE \$3

POLICE CONDUCT RAIDS

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Definitive steps to regain Category 1 status

The member countries of the OECS union, which also comprise the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA), are making steady progress in their attempts to regain Category 1 status for the authority.

ECCAA was demoted to Category 2 status earlier this year.

Since then, the governments of the sub-region have quickened their pace to ensure the reinstatement of their former status.

OECS heads met virtually on Monday to address the ECCAA issue and two other items which formed the agenda.

A source close to the meeting said

one of the outstanding matters that led to the loss of Category 1 status was the failure of the governments to harmonise specific pieces of legislation governing the authority.

According to the source, the ECCAA legislation has been drafted and circulated to all member states. The legislation will now likely be debated and adopted by parliaments in the sub-region.

The legislation gives more autonomy to the ECCAA board and reduces the influence of ministers of aviation in the affairs of the authority.

It was one of the sticking points that led the United States of America's

Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) and the United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to relegate the ECCAA to Category 2.

Antigua and Barbuda has already approved the legislation.

Meanwhile, the recruitment of a new Director General for ECCAA DG has commenced with advertisements being circulated.

Current head, Donald McPhail, leaves the post sometime in September.

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, is leading the OECS heads of government's attempts to regain Category 1 status.

DAY 8/12

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme
 Wind: ESE at 22 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 28 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 60%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
 Precipitation: 2.0 mm
 Rain: 2.0 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm
 Hours of Precipitation: 1.5
 Hours of Rain: 1.5

31 °Hi



Clouds and sun with a couple of showers

NIGHT 8/12

Wind: E at 18 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 28 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 40%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
 Precipitation: 0.6 mm
 Rain: 0.6 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm
 Hours of Precipitation: 1
 Hours of Rain: 1

27 °Lo



Partly cloudy and very warm with a shower in places

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:50 AM

Sunset AST
 6:34 PM



Duration
 12:44 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET



Duration
 1:04 hr

Police carry out search of St John's businesses

Officers from at least two national security agencies have conducted a search of three businesses in St. John's operated by a popular Chinese-Antiguan businessman.

Reports are that around 8:00am on Tuesday morning, armed policemen served search warrants on the premises of Oriental Choice Supermarket on the All Saints Road, its affiliate supermarket, Pick 'N' Save located east of the School for the Blind and Bar Stox, a drink depot located on Long Street.

The teams conducting the search included officers from the Organisation of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and Police K-9 Unit.

The officers thoroughly searched each of the three premises and took away several boxes containing items which have since been entered into evidence. The items seized included several boxes of cash.

A rifle was also said to be among the evidence seized by law enforcement.



The proprietor of the businesses, along with two of his family members, were reportedly taken into custody and all are being questioned by the police.

Meanwhile, although no arrests have yet been made in the shooting homicide of former Customs Officer, Nigel Christian, Police spokesman, Inspector Frankie Thomas, has said that the raid on Tuesday on the three businesses have unearthed 'useful leads' in the case.

Thomas confirmed that a number of persons of interest have been ques-

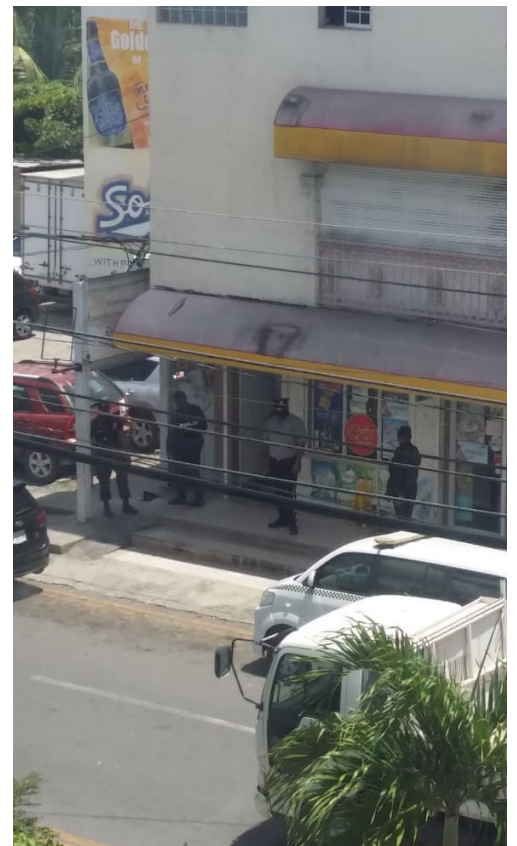
tioned by the police concerning 'several threads of investigations' into Christian's murder.

While Thomas acknowledged that these leads may not all form part of the investigation into Christian's death, he continued 'that is the direction that the evidence is leading'.

Thomas revealed that an autopsy has been conducted on Christian's body and the police are now awaiting the results.

Christian was allegedly kidnapped from his home at McKinnon's at approximately 5:30pm on July 10. Several hours later his bullet ridden body was discovered along a roadside near New Winthorpes.

His death sent shockwaves throughout the country prompting calls for external assistance to solve the brutally executed homicide.



ERC plans major Investment forum targeting locals

Arrangements are being made to host an investment forum specifically targeting Antigua and Barbuda nationals as part of the post-COVID-19 recovery plan.

The symposium is one of the suggestions coming from the Economic Recovery Committee (ERC) appointed by the Cabinet and is designed to bring together a cross section of interests who will formulate a plan for the way forward following global pandemic.

Informed sources say while the ERC's final report is not yet complete, one area where there is already broad agreement is hosting the forum which will attract participation by nationals in order to

identify investment opportunities.

A special committee, headed by Investment Commissioner, Ambassador Daven Joseph, has been appointed to coordinate and promote the event.

"Our aim is to encourage local business people to invest in a number of potentially high return projects; projects that can see return on capital in a significant manner," Ambassador Joseph told PointeXpress newspaper.

The committee has identified the Willoughby Bay area, which is located between St. Philip's and Bethesda, for a major development in which local entrepreneurs will take center stage.



Investment Commissioner, Ambassador Daven Joseph

"We are hoping to develop over three thousand acres in the area. The development includes a hotel, a marina, high and middle income homes, agro-business, including a farmers' market and a manufacturing zone to facilitate local manufacturing for local consumption and for export,"

he detailed.

Joseph explained that the focus on agro-processing is designed to reduce the losses suffered by the farming community when they harvest their produce. It will also serve as value added to local produce for both the local and export markets.

"The time has come for more development opportunities to include local capital. The opportunities for investment include real estate, hospitality, manufacturing and other services and agriculture. We have the full spectrum of investment opportunities to attract local investment capital," he remarked.

The Investment Commissioner said the plans being finalised by his committee, under the aegis of the ERC, will develop the economy of Antigua and Barbuda in a sustained manner primarily using local investors and foreign capital through joint venture arrangements.

The forum will take place later this month.

A.B.T.B. Frequently Asked Questions Month

frequently asked
QUESTIONS

**Antigua and Barbuda
Learners Permit is
Valid for Six (6) Months**

**How long is
Antigua and Barbuda
Learners Permit Valid**

**DRIVE
SAFELY**



ABTB
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA TRANSPORT BOARD

A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

Magistrate court system gets UK assistance

Antigua and Barbuda, along with five other countries in the Eastern Caribbean, will share in a \$200,000 donation which will be used to improve the operations of magistrates' courts in the jurisdiction.

The contribution from the United Kingdom's Caribbean Security and Stability Fund (CSSF), will aid in facilitating remote operations of magistrates' courts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A release from the British High Commission in St. John's noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced jurisdictions to implement stringent social distancing rules to lessen the risk of transmitting the virus.

These measures have resulted in the suspension of physical court activity.

US/UK Criminal Justice Adviser to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, Sirah Abraham, said a functioning criminal justice system is essential to delivering law and order and reducing the risk of social unrest.

As a consequence, she approached the UK's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) for assistance to support remote working in regional Magistrates Courts.

The funds have been used to purchase equipment including laptops, printers, scanners, mobile phones and Zoom subscriptions.

The equipment and use of technology will allow the courts to make a smooth transition to the digital delivery of some essential services and limit substantial disruption to the criminal justice process.

Resident British Commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda, Lindsay



Thompson, handed over this equipment to Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh on Monday.

The Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC), Dame Janice Pereira, had already urged courts to use remote hearings to facilitate the continuation of proceedings and prepared guidance on how these matters were to be conducted in a Practice Direction issued in relation to COVID-19 emergency measures.

The jurisdictions to benefit from the funding are Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Abraham explained the importance of ensuring a responsive and adaptable criminal justice system during

the pandemic.

"This support will reduce the risk of spreading the virus, prevent courts from being shut down as a result of spread and limit any delays in the criminal justice process by ensuring that these essential services are still provided to the public."

Dame Janice expressed her gratitude for the funding and the continued support of the Criminal Justice Reform Project.

"I thank you so much for your continued assistance in coming to our aid and more particularly, in these times when we must retool to ensure that the justice system continues to deliver justice fairly and effectively, even if the physical doors and spaces are closed," said Chief Justice Pereira.

PM Browne congratulates PM Rowley on victory

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has congratulated Dr. Keith Rowley on his reelection to the position of Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago

Dr. Rowley's People's National Movement (PNM) claimed victory in Trinidad and Tobago elections on Monday night.

In an official congratulatory letter to his Trinidad and Tobagonian counterpart, PM Browne highlighted Dr. Rowley's achievement in securing reelection and wished him continued success in his good governance of the state of Trinidad and Tobago.

Prime Minister Browne said Dr. Rowley's commitment to regionalism and his leadership will be crucial to the success of both countries.

The Antigua and Barbuda leader added that issues such as the COVID-19 crisis, climate change and air and sea transportation within the region require the collaboration of both leaders, noting that he looks forward to continued partnership with the PNM administration in Trinidad and Tobago.

PM Browne stated, "Our two nations, and the nations of CARICOM, are confronted with new and different challenges in this epoch of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Additionally, persistent issues remain, such as making our countries more resilient to Climate Change and collaborating to address equitably matters like regional air and sea transformation.

"Your well known commitment to regionalism and your leadership will be crucial to our joint success."

Browne further wished Dr. Rowley, his government and the people of Trini-

dad and Tobago good fortune as they continue the task of strengthening their country.

With twenty-two parliamentary seats, Dr. Rowley's PNM defeated Kamla Persad-Bissessar's United National Congress which secured nineteen seats.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne, left, and Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Dr. Keith Rowley.



Office of the Prime Minister Antigua & Barbuda

Queen Elizabeth Highway
St. John's, Antigua
Email: pmsecretariat@ab.gov.ag

Tel. (268) 460-5100
Fax. (268) 462-3225

11th August 2020

The Honourable Dr Keith Rowley
Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago,
Office of the Prime Minister,
Port-of-Spain
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

Dear *Keith,*

On behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and on my own behalf, I congratulate you warmly on your re-election as the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, and on the return to office of the People's National Movement consequent to the general elections held yesterday.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with you in the interests of our countries and in the wider interests of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Our two nations and the nations of CARICOM are confronted with new and different challenges in this epoch of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, persistent issues remain, such as making our countries more resilient to Climate Change and collaborating to address equitably matters like regional air and sea transportation. Your well-known commitment to regionalism and your leadership will be crucial to our joint success. I wish you, your government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago every good fortune as you continue the task of strengthening your great country.

Sincerely

Gaston Browne
Gaston Browne M.P.
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda.

Training for school vendors

Preparations for the re-opening of schools across Antigua and Barbuda extend beyond the classroom as plans for vendors intending to conduct business in, or near schools, are being considered.

The Central Board of Health (CBH) has announced that it will conduct a series of food safety

workshops for persons who vend in the vicinity of schools or in their cafeterias.

Registration for the workshops is now taking place at the CBH headquarters located in the newly refurbished former Ministry of Education building on Upper Church Street.

Senior Public Health Supervisor, Julianne Mannix, has said vendors will not be allowed to ply their trade in or near schools unless they complete the department's training programme.

Mannix said fifty persons are expected to attend each of the workshops which take place from August

17-20 at the Multipurpose Cultural Centre.

"All school vendors must be retrained and approved by CBH before returning to vend at their respective schools," Mannix stated.

She said food safety training for other persons working in the food industry will run concurrently in the afternoon.

Since the easing of restrictions and resumption of business in the country, CBH has conducted health and safety compliance inspections across the hotel, hospitality and beauty sectors.



**FOOD SAFETY
COVID-19
PROTOCOLS
TRAINING!**

Venue:
Multipurpose Cultural Centre

Day 1: 17th Aug 2020
Day 2: 18th Aug 2020
Day 3: 19th Aug 2020
Day 4: 20th Aug 2020

50 persons are allowed each session.

5:00pm Daily

"THE PUBLIC DESERVES SAFE MEALS"



PLEASE REGISTER!

Please register at the Central Board Of Health, Upper Church St. Before August 13th, 2020.

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

REQUIRMENTS

- ✓ 2 passport size photos
- ✓ Pen & Notepad





Elite Island Resorts CARIBBEAN

Elite Island Resorts seek to recruit an experienced and highly motivated professional to join our team as

HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR

POSITION SUMMARY:

Reporting directly to the CEO and his designates, the HR Director promotes and implements human resource values by planning and managing the human resources programs and our teams. The suitable candidate will support the resorts General Managers by providing human resources advice and counsel.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Develops organization strategies by identifying and researching human resources issues and establishing human resources objectives in line with organizational objectives.
- Implements human resources strategies by establishing department accountabilities, including talent acquisition, staffing, employment processing, compensation, health and welfare benefits, training and development, safety and health, succession planning, employee relations and retention and labor relations.
- Manages human resources operations by recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, coaching, counseling, and disciplining staff. Establishes a system for planning, monitoring, appraising, and reviewing staff work contributions; maintaining compensation; quality and customer-service strategies; resolving problems and implementing change.
- Develops human resources operations financial strategies by estimating, forecasting and anticipating requirements, following trends and budgeting resources to ensure team development and fund welfare initiatives.
- Recommends, evaluates and participates in staff development for the organization. Guides management and employee actions by researching, developing, writing, and updating policies, procedures, methods, and guidelines; communicating and enforcing organization values.

KEY COMPETENCIES:

- Sound Business Acumen and problem solving skills
- Good Communication Skills
- Global and Cultural Awareness
- Proven HR & Leadership Expertise
- Confidentiality & Service Excellence

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

- Master's Degree or Bachelor's Degree in Human Resource Management
- Training experience a plus
- Minimum of five (5) years' work experience in a similar position overseeing a large and diverse team.

Suitably qualified persons who are interesting in joining our team should submit their application By 19 August 2020. Please send your curriculum vitae via email to:

Elite Island Resorts Human Resources
Email: gm@pbcantigua.com
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

No new COVID-19 cases in over a week

As the country seeks to return to some level of normalcy having reopened its borders and tourism sector, and with schools soon to follow suit, the Ministry of Health is reporting that there are no new cases of COVID-19.

On Tuesday, the health ministry reported that as of Monday 10th August 2020 at 6 pm, the Mount St. John's Medical Center had revealed no new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda.

According to ministry officials, there have been no new confirmed cases since August 3rd, 2020, bringing it to just over a week since the last report of non-imported or local transmission of the virus.

The Ministry of Health explained, "Subsequent to the publication of the dashboard on Monday 10th August 2020 with the cut off time of 6 pm, fifty-one samples were processed at the Mount St. John's Medical Center's (MSJMC) Laboratory. All fifty-one samples tested yielded negative results."

The total number of COVID-19 cases that the island has reported since the first case was confirmed remains at 92. Of the ninety-two (92) confirmed cases, seventy-six (76) have

recovered. There have been three COVID-19 related deaths.

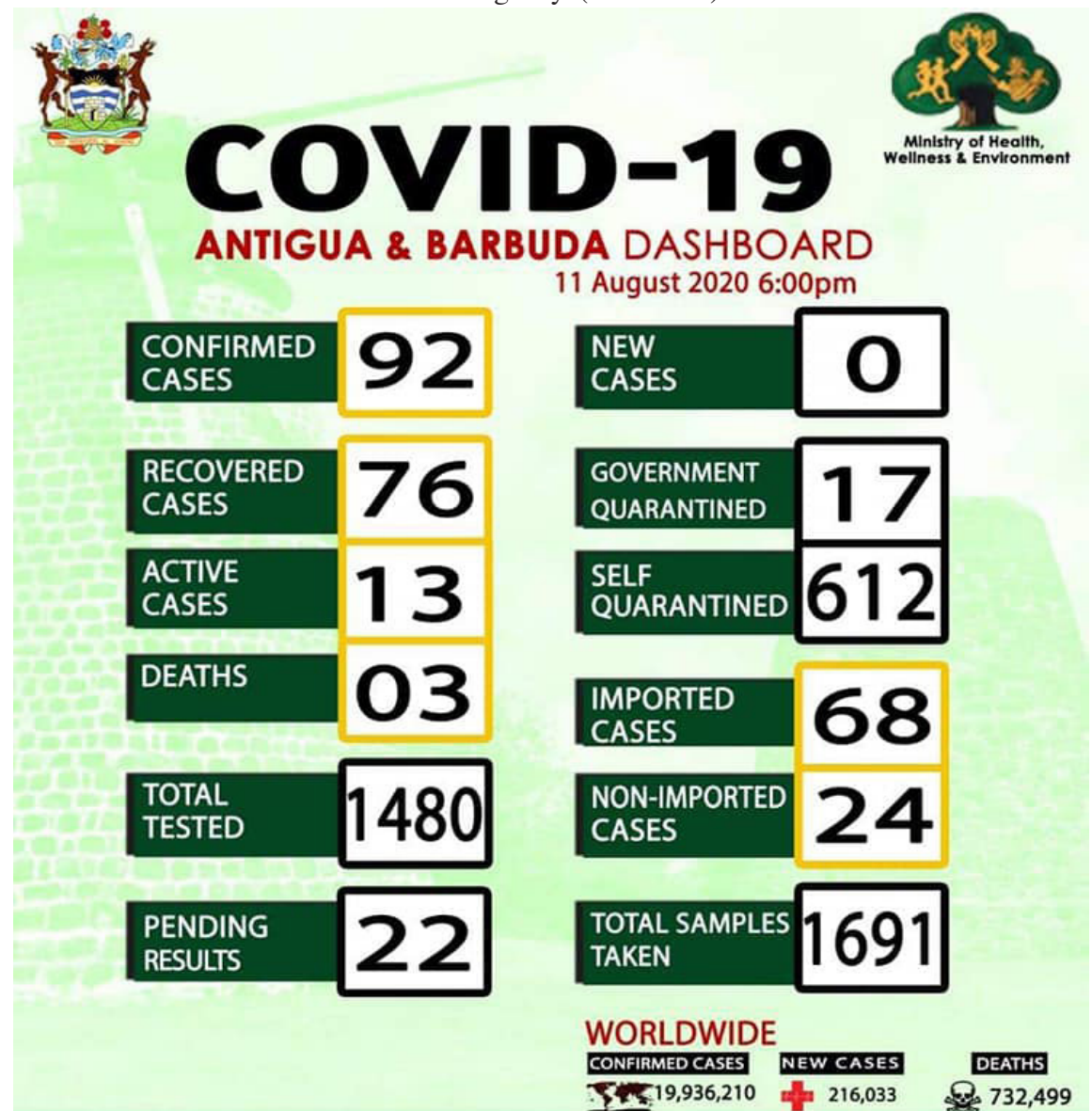
The nation's COVID-19 dashboard also revealed that there are thirteen (13) active cases while the results

of twenty-two (22) samples are pending.

The twenty-two pending samples, according to the Ministry of Health, were sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)

on Monday, August 10th.

Currently, there are seventeen persons (17) in government quarantine while six hundred and twelve (612) persons remain in self-quarantine.



Government of Antigua & Barbuda
Ministry of Health, Wellness & Environment
 High & Long Streets
 St. John's, Antigua.

Contact us if you are exhibiting symptoms
 COVID-19 HOTLINE 462-6843 | COVID@MSJMC.ORG

TENDER NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Construction and Assembling of 150 Vending Booths

CARIFESTA XV – August 2021

Ministry of Sports, Culture, National Festivals and the Arts

The Tenders Board of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the Ministry of Sports, Culture, National Festivals and the Arts, invites interested vendors to submit bid/proposal, for the supply of works and or services related to the construction and assembling of 150 vending booths, to host CARIFESTA XV, Grand Market, in August of 2021, at the Multipurpose Cultural Center and Exhibition Hall – Perry Bay.

The Scope of Works related to this tender, can be accessed through our e-Procurement Platform, accessible via the following link:

<https://ra.easibuy.com/advertisements/1199?token=7923781c08da5a9188bc62b1>

The e-Procurement Platform for this tender is hosted by EASiBUY. Should you require any assistance in accessing the platform, please feel free to contact Mr. Daniel Knight, email: Daniel.Knight@ab.gov.ag or Mr. Jamal Barnes, email: Jamal.Barnes@ab.gov.ag

Please be advised that it is imperative that you submit the following documents when uploading your Proposal to the site:-

1. Business Registration
2. Company Profile and
3. References

*Bids/Proposals for this tender must be uploaded to the e-Procurement Platform no later than **Friday 12:00 noon on 21 August 2020**. Queries regarding the specified requirements of this tender must be directed and delivered to **Chairman, Tenders Board (tenders.board@ab.gov.ag)** via the platform. Please note that the *final day for considering queries* related to this tender is **2:00 PM on Friday 14 August 2020**.*

OECS to discuss standardised COVID-19 proposal

The governments of the OECS and Barbados are moving to standardise entry into their jurisdictions in efforts to limit the domestic spread of the coronavirus.

A meeting of health technicians from the OECS and Barbados is taking place today where a proposal from the Germany based company, Ecolog, will be discussed.

‘COVID-19 Pandemic: Restoring Economic Continuity and Managing the Tourist Flow in OECS countries and Barbados’ is the title of the proposal that first went to OECS heads for consideration during a virtual meeting on Monday. The heads have recommended their senior technicians consider the proposal and make recommendations.

The Antigua and Barbuda team is composed of Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas,

Pathologist, Dr. Lester Simon and Medical Officer, Dr. Anju Smith.

Ecolog is offering the sub-region what it describes as ‘a systematic, highly flexible and rapidly deployable Screening + Testing + Diagnostics Solution’ which it says are key in the first steps towards resuming tourism.

“Travel destinations can play a critical role as an entry control point in the flow of visitors. Early detection of infected individuals can effectively contain and reduce the further spread of the virus. Our dedicated Eco-Care Solution, developed in collaboration with strategic world-class partners in the medical and virological world, in full compliance with WHO and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines including certification and accreditation to national standards,” Ecolog said.

The company noted that its system is designed to fully address all aspects that would ensure the safe resumption of tourism in the OECS countries and Barbados including:

1. Testing at origin across the U.S., Europe, and Canada, at accredited partner laboratories with results available in less than 72 hours

2. Eco-Care staffed and equipped testing stations at U.S., European, and Canadian gateway airports, with results available in less than 2 hours

3. State-of-the-art laboratory solutions set up in each OECS country and Barbados, with test result turnaround times of 2 hours at airports, and 3-6 hours at other ports of entry, such as ferry terminals

4. Sampling, analytics, tracking, and reporting (Clearance Passport) through daslab®, a secure mobile and web-based platform

5. Promote the OECS countries and Barbados as Safe and Trusted Travel and Business Destinations and restore the public’s confidence in travel.


 ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTE X PRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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AND VIEWS WITH US
CALL 268-562-4989**



Caribbean Electric Utility Services Corporation



Desir Avenue, Sans Souci
P.O. Box CP5907, Castries, Saint Lucia, W. I.
Tel: 758-452-0140/1; Fax: 758-452-0142
Website: <http://www.carilec.com>

MULTI-LEVEL REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP IN A MULTI-HAZARD ENVIRONMENT

Castries, St. Lucia, July 29, 2020: On July 28, 2020, CARILEC partnered with the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Organisations (CANTO), the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) in the successful hosting of a virtual Multi-Hazard 2020 Simulation Exercise. The exercise was characterised by the presentation of three (3) unique scenarios, detailing situations in which multiple tropical cyclones have impacted the Caribbean Region. Not to mention, the impact of such natural disasters were compounded by the presence of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

CARILEC is pleased to report that simulation participants provided real-time, practical and feasible solutions to the challenges presented by the simulated disasters. Fifteen (15) Electric Utilities were represented at the simulation exercise and as such, CARILEC commends its Utilities and Member Organisations for their support of this initiative and valued participation. The participants comprised of health and safety officers, disaster coordinators, electrical engineers, Utility Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and telecommunications operators. These distinguished personnel are extremely knowledgeable and experienced in disaster restoration operations; therefore, the solutions and best practices generated from this simulation exercise are both realistic and credible.

Such regional collaboration among key agencies such as CDEMA, CANTO, CARPHA and CARILEC is critical, at a time where the region is susceptible to the adverse impacts of several disasters. It would be quite remiss to believe that tropical cyclones are the only impending disasters which regional governments, organisations, communities, families and individuals need to prepare for. Climate change, global pandemics, diminishing international funding sources and vulnerable supply chains for essential resources such as oil, are just a few challenges which the region is currently faced with.

Moreover, the management of multi-hazards is further challenged by the necessary adherence to COVID-19 health protocols, in order to maintain the region's effective minimisation of the spread of this disease. Against this backdrop, a fundamental area of strategic partnership between CARILEC and CARPHA is the updating of current protocols for the CARILEC Disaster Assistance Programme (CDAP) deployment crews, in order to ensure full compliance with approved COVID-19 health practices.

CARILEC remains resolute in its commitment towards achieving increased regional collaboration amongst its strategic partners, with the ultimate objective of developing and effectively implementing Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) plans and relevant solutions to challenges and opportunities in the regional energy sector.

So You Have To Sever An Employee...

The Labour Code of Antigua & Barbuda, together with Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) where they exist, seek to protect and preserve employment. In the absence of a CBA, employers must have a written severance policy in place. A written policy will ensure that employees know what to expect to receive if they are severed, and can ensure consistent treatment across similar categories of employees. A well-established severance policy can also reduce the instances of employee litigation for unfair labour practice.

Why are you considering severance? Employers should not consider severance in instances where they have not considered other cost-saving initiatives. In situations where business is bad but is expected to rebound, employers should consider laying off employees first. Severance is a permanent action and employers should reserve it for genuine cases of redundancy. Genuine cases include a reduction of the number of employees due to permanent loss of business, machinery or computers replacing workers, or in instances where due to ill health or incapacity an employee can no longer perform their duties. Employers should act prudently to ensure their actions do not constitute unfair dismissal, in accordance with Division C part 5 of the Labour Code. Part 4 of Division C of the Code outlines the computation of severance pay but collective agreements and recent rulings of



the Industrial Court provide even more generous severance provisions. C41 of the Labour Code computes severance payment as one day per month served for employees.

Most employers are not over-staffed, and have the requisite staff complement for their size of operations. They will have difficulty continuing normal operations with a reduced staff complement, and need to consider the immediate impact on cash flow of a severance payout, particularly a sizeable one. A severance package is due and payable on the date of termination. Particularly in this period of economic downturn, an employer may not be able to pay the severance in full at this time. C 42 (2) of the Labour Code directs that the employer is liable to pay interest at the rate of ten percent per annum on the unpaid balance. In these instances, the employer should communicate this inability to pay to the affected employee, and negotiate a mutually agreeable payment schedule. An employee may not be opposed to continu-

ing to receive a salary monthly while they seek new employment.

Some general reminders when one is involved in a severance process are: Employers must be fair, empathetic and diligent when processing severances.

Employers must ensure that they pay over to the exiting employee in a timely manner, all outstanding emoluments, some of which for example commissions, bonuses and incentives become due and payable after the employee would have left.

Employers must wind up all employee benefits such as pension and thrift funds speedily to ensure the employees receive the proceeds in a timely manner.

Depending on company policy, employee tenure and other factors, employers may consider continuing select employee benefits for instance employee discounts, to severed employees.

Employers should offer a business reference where appropriate without the employees having to ask. Employers should assist the exiting employee, where ap-

propriate and when requested, to manage or reschedule their debt, as companies normally must settle outstanding employee debt to lenders from their final pay packages.

Employers should facilitate where appropriate, informal gatherings where employees can appreciate and bid farewell to their exiting colleagues.

In summary, after the employer determines that severance is necessary, they should execute the steps legally required with empathy and care. They must then take steps to mitigate against the fallout from the severance on the engagement and productivity of remaining employees. Employers must communicate clearly with the remaining employees the reason the severance action was necessary, to provide a measure of reassurance.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began assembling informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary.

Why We Can't Wait: Danny Glover's Statement in Support of HR-40

The public lynching of George Floyd pierced deep into the “souls of Black folks” compelling a thorough-going examination of the flawed foundation, values, systems and symbols of white supremacy and structural/institutional racism in these United States.

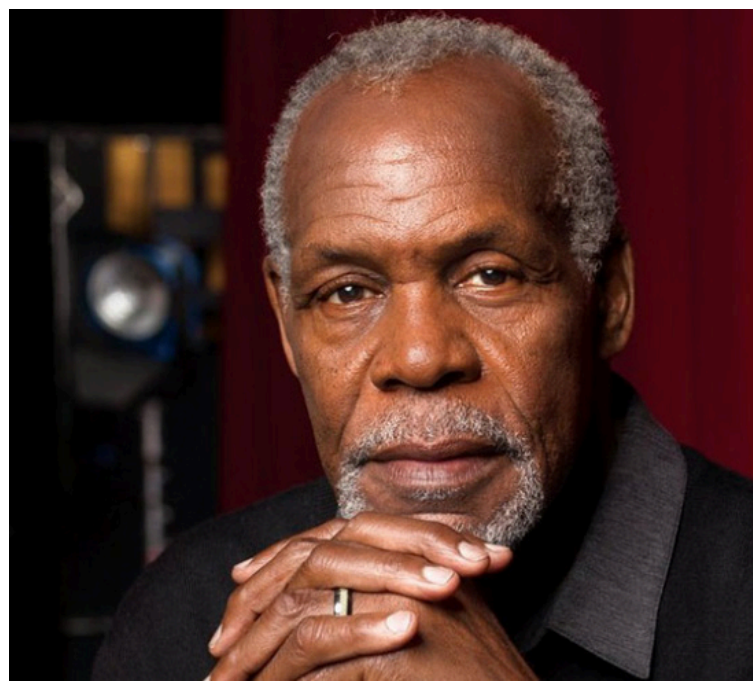
A massive Black Lives Matter-led, multiracial, cross-generational movement has erupted in cities large and small and surprisingly in rural towns and villages where few if any Black people reside. According to a recent article in the New York Times, we are witnessing the unfolding of the largest social movement in the history of the country; a movement which marks an inflection point, where there is not only a demand for fundamental restructuring of policing and the criminal justice system, but a reckoning with an original sin that gave birth to a racialized capitalist political-economy in this nation.

Speaking at a Congressional Black Caucus Press Conference on July 10th of this year, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee said: “systemic racism has been a cancer on the skin and the fabric of this nation that has not been remedied. It has only deepened. Reparations are the answer to the original sin.” Encouraged by the mass movement in the

streets, Congresswoman Lee has adopted Dr. Martin Luther King's “Why We Can't Wait” as the call to action as she prepares to push for passage of HR-40 in the House of Representatives.

An American history of progressive African American life sacrifices and transformative struggles for consistent democracy, justice, and material well-being has brought the nation to this moment of reckoning and great promise. When the walls of segregation remained firmly intact throughout the South and de facto segregation was the order of the day in the north, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, ever the optimist was convinced that the “Negro Revolution” would succeed. “Why We Can't Wait” was a declaration of his determination to intensify the movement to finally ensure “liberty and justice for all” in this nation.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voter Rights Act of 1965 marked major successes of the “Negro Revolution” along the path towards a more perfect union. By 1967 Dr. King was openly expressing his opposition to the Viet Nam War, calling for a “revolution of values” and fundamental structural/institutional change in America. He proclaimed: “True Compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an



By Danny Glover

United Nations Ambassador for the International Decade for People of African Descent, Board Member Institute for Policy Studies

edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.”

Despite the “strides toward freedom” of the “Negro Revolution” and the era of ‘Black Power,’ the COVID-19 Pandemic and the epidemic of police violence and murders of Black people has revealed anew in stunning detail the raw racial and socio-economic disparities that still afflict people of African descent in this country.

Reparations for the enslavement of African Americans and racially exclusionary policies after generations of heroic, multigenerational struggle, dating from the 1863 Emancipation Proc-

lamation, has now gained remarkable momentum. The concept of HR-40 the Congressional Bill first introduced in 1989 by the late Congressman John Conyers, Jr. to study the institution of slavery and assess restitution has taken on new life.

Under the leadership of the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) a Working Group which includes the National Coalition for Reparations for Blacks in America (N'COBRA) and the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) collaborated with Congressman Conyers's staff to reformulate HR-40 from a “study” bill to a

Commentary

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“remedy” bill. The revised HR-40 is entitled: “Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.”

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee has become the Lead Sponsor of HR-40. Under her leadership and the advocacy of the N’COBRA Legislative Committee along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the Center for American Progress (CAP) HR-40 has amassed more Co-Sponsors than ever before. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House and the Democratic Leadership fully support the bill

and Senator Corey Booker has introduced a Senate version, S.1083 which enjoys the open support of Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

I was delighted on June 19th/Juneteenth, 2019 to provide testimony at the historic Congressional Hearing on HR-40 convened by the Constitution Sub-Committee of the House Judiciary Committee. Hundreds of people packed the Hearing and overflow rooms, spilling over to hundreds more rallying outside the Rayburn House Office Building.

Millions more watched this amazing moment on

C-SPAN and network television, signaling that the issue of reparations had reached a new milestone in terms of public awareness and interest. A year later, the crescendo of demands reverberating from the current uprising in the streets in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic and epidemic of police murders of Black people has dramatically increased the urgency for Reparations Now!

As a U.N. Ambassador for the International Decade for People of African Descent, I am honored to join with Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and the allied forces working with

her in declaring that we cannot wait in pursuing HR-40 as the harbinger of a new future for people of African descent and the marginalized and oppressed in this nation and the world. Please join with me in expressing your support and petitioning your Congressional Representatives to support passage of HR-40. The passage of HR-40 will be one of the milestone achievements of the International Decade for People of African Descent. I pledge to work side by side with all people of good will who are committed to achieve this righteous objective. Reparations Now!

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Trinbagonians give Prime Minister Rowley another term



Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley

Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley led his People National Movement (PNM) to victory in Trinidad and Tobago's general elections on Monday.

Preliminary results show the PNM won with a reduced majority, capturing 22 seats, down from the 23 they got in the last elections in 2015. The victorious candidates include first-timer Brian Manning, son of the late former Prime Minister Mr Patrick Manning.

The main opposition United National Congress (UNC) of Opposition Leader Ms Kamla Persad-Bissessar captured the Moruga/Tableland seat from the PNM to increase its tally to 19.

Nineteen political parties and four independent candidates contested Monday's poll.

In his victory speech on Monday night, Prime Minister Rowley signalled that the upcoming term will be a period of transition for



Leader of the United National Congress Ms Kamla Persad-Bissessar

him and the party, as this may be his last elections. "This is my period to ensure that the young people I have been mentoring that they move into greater responsibility during that period. So Trinidad and Tobago this is a period of transition but I will not shirk my responsibility to the people of Trinidad and Tobago who have elected me for this five year period," Prime Minister Rowley said.

In the meantime the UNC Lead-

er has requested a recount of the marginal seats, and said her party will not concede until then.

"We fought a good fight. However, tonight I am not giving a concessionary speech. I am not conceding. Our candidates in several marginals are filing for recounts and only then we can concede. Go brave, we fought a good fight and we will continue to go and fight," Ms Persad-Bissessar told party supporters Monday night.

Barbados: Drug trafficker claims drug deal was to save his children



Harbone Mackinon Griffith claims he was forced to join an enterprise to import 525.36 pounds of marijuana into Barbados because the lives of his two daughters were being threatened.

"I would like to apologise to the court for my misbehaviour in society. My two little girls' lives were being threatened through an incident me and a guy had years ago. So, he decided to hit back at me by getting back at my two little children so I could do a deed for him. "I made various complaints to the police and nothing came out of it. He even had people running about behind my children, spying bout and sending pictures of my children

telling me he know where to get them, he know where them is. So I did it out of trying to protect my children. "I begging for the court's leniency in this matter," Griffith, 49, of Checker Hall, St Lucy said as he addressed the No. 2 Supreme Court judge, Justice Randall Worrell this morning via Zoom.

Griffith had previously pleaded guilty to importation, trafficking and possession of 238.3 kilogrammes or 525.36 pounds of cannabis. He will return before Justice Worrell on August 13. The time he has spent on remand will be submitted by prison officials before he is sentenced.

Mitigating on Griffith's behalf

attorney-at-law Angela Mitchell-Gittens urged the court to be as lenient as possible while Crown Counsel Oliver Thomas submitted that a starting sentence of seven years would be an appropriate punishment under the circumstances. Both submitted that the most aggravating feature of the case was the quantity of drugs involved. They also agreed that there was "no great level" of sophistication. However Thomas said Griffith "played a substantial and important role" in the enterprise.

He told the court that Coast Guard officials were conducting surveillance about ten nautical miles off Batt's Rock, St Mi-

chael on August 30, 2018 when they received information and began heading in the direction of Heron Bay, St James. On the way they spotted a white vessel off Hometown registration number J6-1464 bearing the name Power Struggle. Three men were spotted on board the boat, which began making evasive manoeuvres on seeing the Coast Guard vessel. The boat was intercepted about 15 nautical miles off Heron Bay with three people on board including Griffith.

The bags containing the cannabis along with the detainees were taken to the Coast Guard base and subsequently to the Oistins Police Station.

LIAT's SVG workers yet to secure appointment with Gonsalves



The trade union representing LIAT workers in St. Vincent and the Grenadines say they are still awaiting an appointment with former chair of the bankrupt airline's former shareholder government, Prime Minister of SVG, Ralph Gonsalves.

In a press statement on Tuesday, Jeremiah Howard, president of the LIAT Workers Union, said that the airline's SVG staff learnt by social media two months ago that LIAT (1974) Ltd, was going into liquidation.

Howard said that in a June 8 letter to Gonsalves, the SVG workers requested a meeting to

discuss the matter.

"... and, to date, nine weeks have passed and we have still not received an appointment," Howard said.

"The anxiety and frustration that is being experienced by the staff losing their jobs, through no fault of their own, is now exasperated by the poor communication with management and the failure to secure a meeting with the Prime Minister to resolve the matter of the outstanding salaries, severance pay and other benefits," Howard said.

He continued:

"We fully understand the

complex nature of this situation, the legal ramifications and the current crises engendered by COVID-19, have resulted in an unprecedented economic fall-out. However, our patience and understanding for the past nine weeks, is waning thin.

"The Prime Ministers of Barbados, Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda have met with the LIAT staff of their respective countries regarding the same issues.

"This crisis is not just about our fiduciary interest but speaks to a moral obligation to show care and compassion to us as staff members of LIAT and by

extension citizens of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in this unprecedented time. We should be valued like the other shareholders' citizens."

Howard said that six active-duty staff have not received a salary since April.

"Their commitment and dedication despite the handling of this situation is exemplary. This arrangement is, however, under review and simply cannot continue given the lack of reciprocal care and concern for our staff members," the press statement said.

German police seize 1.5 tons of cocaine hidden in Guyana rice

Authorities in the German port city of Hamburg have found over €300 million worth of cocaine in a cargo ship container from Guyana containing rice.

According to Deutsche Welle, Hamburg authorities discovered 1.5 tons of cocaine in a freight container, one of the largest quantities ever seized in the northern German port city, a spokesperson for the Customs Investigations Office said yesterday. Rice from this country has been used on several occasions to conceal cocaine. Some rice exporters from this country have previously been implicated in such shipments. The massive haul, which has an estimated street value of around €300 million (US\$353 million), was hidden between sacks of rice in the container which came from Guyana, local newspaper *Hamburger Abendblatt* said.

“The 1.5 tons of cocaine seized may be a highly pure drug, which would be tripled in price for street sales,” the *Hamburger Abendblatt* quoted an official as saying.

The container had arrived in Hamburg’s port at the end of June on the 300-meter-long container ship, “CMA CGM Jean Gabriel.” The container was to be loaded

onto a feeder ship together with 11 other transport containers and then ultimately carry the cargo to Poland. As a result, the container was temporarily stored at the Hamburg terminal. Investigators at the Joint Customs and Police Investigation Group (JIT) had reportedly received a tip-off about drug smuggling, Deutsche Welle said.

The container in question was then taken to the city’s Waltersdorf customs office and examined in a testing facility. Officers found 47 large packages hidden between the rice sacks and within those packages, a total of 1,277 small parcels with cocaine, the report said.

The parcels all had various symbols on them, including a cat’s face, the Gallic rooster, and the Ampelmännchen (red and green traffic light symbols shown on pedestrian signals in Germany). Several hundred of the packages were marked with the same logo.

Authorities presumed the cocaine was to be distributed from Poland to bulk buyers all over Europe who would then sell the drugs to street dealers. A variety of commodities from this country have been used to conceal cocaine including timber and pepper sauce.

Bahamas PM enters voluntary quarantine after COVID-19 exposure



Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis

Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis and Deputy Prime Minister K Peter Turnquest have entered voluntary self-quarantine after their offices were exposed to COVID-19.

In a statement, the Cabinet Office said it has not been confirmed whether the pair were directly exposed.

The statement announced that the Cecil Wallace-Whitefield Centre, which houses the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Finance and their agencies, has been closed for cleaning and sanitization following exposure to the virus.

“The Ministry of Health’s Surveillance Unit has initiated contact tracing to determine the

level of exposure to employees and visitors to the Cecil Wallace-Whitefield Centre,” the statement read.

“At this point there has been no confirmation that the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister have been exposed.

“Out of an abundance of caution, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister will voluntarily enter into self-quarantine until further instructions from the Ministry of Health.”

It added: “Other employees of the Cecil Wallace-Whitefield Centre are encouraged to self-quarantine until further instructions are issued by the Ministry of Health.”

Joe Biden picks Sen. Kamala Harris to be his vice presidential running mate, making her the first Black woman on a major ticket

Former Vice President Joe Biden has chosen Sen. Kamala Harris of California to join him on the Democratic ticket, fulfilling his pledge to select a female running mate and making Harris the first Black woman ever to appear on a major party ticket. His campaign announced the pick Tuesday afternoon through its website.

Biden's selection of Harris, 55, lends racial diversity, gender parity and generational breadth to his campaign. It also represents a strategic decision by the 77-year-old former vice president to keep his ticket firmly within the more moderate wing of the Democratic Party. "Back when Kamala was Attorney General, she worked closely with Beau," tweeted Biden, referring to his late son, Beau Biden. "I watched as they took on the big banks, lifted up working people, and protected women and kids from abuse. I was proud then, and I'm proud now to have her as my partner in this campaign."

The selection came despite a monthslong pressure campaign from leftist factions that wanted Biden to pick a progressive star such as Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, and in the final few weeks of the search, concerted lobbying by prominent Democrats on behalf of Rep. Karen Bass of California and former Obama National Security Advisor Susan Rice.

Harris said in her own tweet shortly after Biden's decision, "Joe Biden can unify the

American people because he's spent his life fighting for us. And as president, he'll build an America that lives up to our ideals. I'm honored to join him as our party's nominee for Vice President, and do what it takes to make him our Commander-in-Chief."

Former President Barack Obama complimented his vice president's choice. "Joe Biden nailed this decision," Obama said in a statement. "By choosing Senator Kamala Harris as America's next vice president, he's underscored his own judgment and character. Reality shows us that these attributes are not optional in a president. They're requirements of the job. And now Joe has an ideal partner to help him tackle the very real challenges America faces right now and in the years ahead."

Following the announcement, Rice complimented Harris in a statement, calling her "a tenacious and trailblazing leader who will make a great partner on the campaign trail." Bass did the same, saying in a tweet that Harris' "tenacious pursuit of justice and relentless advocacy for the people is what is needed right now."

Harris has a uniquely American biography: Her mother was a widely respected breast cancer researcher who immigrated to the United States from India in the 1960s. Her father, Donald Harris, is an eminent economist who spent much of his career at Stanford



Sen. Kamala Harris

University. Also an immigrant, Harris moved to the United States from Jamaica around the time his future wife came from India. A first-term senator who served as California's attorney general from 2010-16, Harris has drawn on her personal and professional experience to emerge as a leader in the Senate on racial justice issues.

"We've all watched her hold the Trump administration accountable for its corruption,

stand up to a Justice Department that's run amok, and be a powerful voice against their extreme nominations," said Biden in his announcement Tuesday, touting her experience in the Senate.

"She's been a leader on criminal justice and marriage equality. And she has focused like a laser on the racial disparities as a result of the coronavirus," Biden said.

Belarus opposition leader flees the country

The main opposition candidate in Sunday's disputed presidential election in Belarus has left the country after security forces mounted a sweeping crackdown on protests over the result.

Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who stood in for her husband as an opposition candidate after he was jailed in the run-up to the vote, was forced out of the country and is now in neighboring Lithuania with her children, her campaign said Tuesday.

Tikhanovskaya fled after publicly rejecting preliminary election results that handed the longtime Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko a landslide victory. But many details around her departure are still unclear.

Protests erupted after official exit polls were released late Sunday, granting a sixth term to Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus for 26 years and earned the nickname "Europe's last dictator." Thousands were arrested and the demonstrations resumed on Monday night.

Tikhanovskaya's campaign and independent observers say the vote was marred with widespread ballot stuffing and falsifications. The independent monitoring group "Honest people" said that according to its data, she had won in at least 80 polling stations across Belarus.

On Monday, Tikhanovskaya "left to an unknown location" after filing a complaint with Belarus' central elections committee demanding a recount of the votes. After spending several hours at the committee alone,

she came out and told her lawyer that "she made up her mind" and left the building, according to her campaign. The campaign could not reach her for several hours before she got in touch to confirm she was safe. Lithuania's foreign affairs minister announced early on Tuesday that Tikhanovskaya was in the country.

Tikhanovskaya defended her flight from Belarus in a video posted on the YouTube channel of her husband, Sergey Tikhanovskiy, a popular blogger and former candidate who has been jailed since May.

"I thought this campaign strengthened my spirit and gave me so much energy that I could bear it all. But I guess I'm still just that weak woman I was in the beginning," a visibly distressed Tikhanovskaya said in the clip.

"I made a very hard decision, I've made this decision on my own ... and I know that many people will understand me, many will judge me and many will hate me but god forbid you will ever have to face the choice that I had to face."

A few hours later, a pro-government channel on the messaging app Telegram shared a video of Tikhanovskaya quietly reading from a piece of paper and calling on Belarusians to cease protests. In the video, she insisted that "the nation has made its choice" — a complete reversal from her claim that the election was rigged.

It was unclear where and when the second video had been recorded, but it spurred intense



Svetlana Tikhanovskaya

speculation on social media about possible threats that could have been levied against the candidate, forcing her out of the country.

The candidate's representative Olga Kovalkova told Belarusian outlet TUT.BY on Tuesday that Tikhanovskaya "had no choice," and said that part of Tikhanovskaya's team was still being "held hostage."

Her campaign told CNN on Sunday that nine people associated with the campaign had been arrested. Tikhanovskaya's husband has been in a detention center since May and the family sent their children abroad before the election following threats

they would be placed in an orphanage.

"Svetlana had no choice, the Belarusian authorities took her out of the country," Kovalkova told TUT.BY. "It is important that she is free and alive. Svetlana's departure made the release of [campaign manager] Maria Moroz, who was a hostage in this situation, possible and they left together."

The nine campaigners were arrested for various reasons, including allegedly preparing unauthorized demonstrations, according to police. The Belarusian authorities did not officially acknowledge that Moroz has been released.

Scientists uneasy as Russia approves 1st coronavirus vaccine

Russia on Tuesday became the first country to approve a coronavirus vaccine, a move that was met with international skepticism and unease because the shots have only been studied in dozens of people. President Vladimir Putin announced the Health Ministry's approval and said one of his two adult daughters already was inoculated. He said the vaccine underwent the necessary tests and was shown to provide lasting immunity to the coronavirus, although Russian authorities have offered no proof to back up claims of safety or effectiveness. "I know it has proven efficient and forms a stable immunity," Putin said. "We must be grateful to those who made that first step very important for our country and the entire world." However, scientists in Russia and other countries sounded an alarm, saying that rushing to offer the vaccine before final-stage testing could backfire. What's called a Phase 3 trial — which involves tens of thousands of people and can take months — is the only way to prove if an experimental vaccine is safe and really works.

By comparison, vaccines entering final-stage testing in the U.S. require studies of 30,000 people each. Two vaccine candidates already have begun those huge studies, with three more set to get underway by fall. "Fast-tracked approval will not make Russia the leader in the race, it will just expose consumers of the vaccine to unnecessary danger," said Russia's Association of Clinical Trials Organizations, in urging government officials to postpone approving the vaccine without completed advanced trials.

While Russian officials have said large-scale production of the vaccine wasn't scheduled until September, Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said vaccination of doctors could start as early as this month. Officials say they will be closely monitored after the injections. Mass vaccination may begin as early as October. "We expect tens of thousands of volunteers to be vaccinated within the next months," Kirill Dmitriev, chief executive of the Russian Direct Investment Fund that bankrolled the vaccine, told reporters. The vaccine developed by the Gamaleya Institute in Moscow with assistance from Russia's Defense Ministry uses a different virus — the common cold-causing adenovirus — that's been modified to carry genes for the "spike" protein that coats the coronavirus, as a way to prime the body to recognize if a real COVID-19 infection comes along. That's a similar technology as vaccines being developed by China's CanSino Biologics and Britain's Oxford University and AstraZeneca — but unlike those companies, Russian scientists haven't published any scientific information about how the vaccine has performed in animal tests or in early-stage human studies. Dmitriev said even as Russian doctors and teachers start getting vaccinated, advanced trials are set to start Wednesday that will involve "several thousand people" and span several countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines and possibly Brazil.

The Associated Press couldn't find documentation in the Russian



Health Ministry's records indicating that permission to start the advanced trials was granted. The ministry has not responded to a request for comment. Putin said one of his daughters has received two doses, and had minor side effects such as slight fever, and is now "feeling well and has a high number of antibodies." It wasn't clear if she was one of the study volunteers. The Health Ministry said in a statement Tuesday that the vaccine is expected to provide immunity from the coronavirus for up to two years, citing its experience with vaccines made with similar technology.

However, scientists around the world have been cautioning that even if vaccine candidates are proven to work, it will take even more time to tell how long the protection will last.

"The collateral damage from release of any vaccine that was less than safe and effective would exacerbate our current problems insurmountably," Imperial College London immunology professor Danny Altmann said in a statement Tuesday. The World Health Orga-

nization has urged that all vaccine candidates go through full stages of testing before being rolled out, and said Tuesday it is in touch with the Russian scientists and "looks forward to reviewing" Russia's study data. Experts have warned that vaccines that are not properly tested can cause harm in many ways — from harming health to creating a false sense of security or undermining trust in vaccinations.

Becoming the first country in the world to approve a vaccine was a matter of national prestige for the Kremlin as it tries to assert the image of Russia as a global power. Putin repeatedly praised Russia's effective response to the outbreak in televised addresses to the nation, while some of Moscow's top officials — including the country's prime minister and Putin's own spokesperson — became infected. And the U.S., Britain and Canada last month accused Russia of using hackers to steal vaccine research from Western labs. Russia has denied involvement. Russia has so far registered 897,599 coronavirus cases, including 15,131 deaths.

China increases military drills as tensions with US heat up

China is stepping up military drills around East Asia as a war of words with the United States heats up over Washington's military activities and the visit of a US cabinet secretary to Taiwan.

One Chinese think tank even says the People's Liberation Army (PLA) may consider live-fire exercises near the US island of Guam. Beijing has stepped up the pace of its war games in recent weeks, after the US sent two aircraft carrier strike groups on rare dual-carrier exercises in the South China Sea twice in the month of July. But the visit of US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar to the self-governed island of Taiwan this week has added fuel to the smoldering tensions. Azar is the highest-ranking US official to visit the island – which Beijing regards as Chinese territory – in decades. Azar's presence in Taipei is "a serious breach" of US commitments on Taiwan, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Monday afternoon.

"We urge the US side to abide by the one-China principle and the provisions of three China-U.S. joint communiques, stop official interactions and contact of all kinds as well as the upgrading of substantive relations with the island, and handle Taiwan-related issues in a prudent and proper manner, so as not to seriously damage China-US cooperation in major areas as well as peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," Zhao said, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency. On Monday morning,

China sent fighter jets across the median line in the Taiwan Strait, which Taiwan said its warplanes warned off. The Chinese jets were also tracked by Taiwan's land-based anti-aircraft missiles, Taiwan's Defense Ministry said.

Though still in international airspace, the Taiwan Strait median line has been an informal but largely respected dividing line for Beijing and Taipei. According to Taiwanese and US government reports, Beijing's warplanes have only crossed it intentionally three times since 1999 – once in March 2019, in February of this year, and again on Monday.

A story from state-supported Global Times, appearing on the official English language website of the PLA, showed Beijing's displeasure with Washington over Azar's visit to Taiwan.

"The PLA operation is considered a strong response to the US move, which broke a diplomatic bottom line of China-US relations," the story said.

It goes on to say if Washington doesn't back down, more moves by the PLA may be necessary.

"If the US goes further, the PLA could take more counter-measures, including live-fire missile drills east of Taiwan island and near Guam," the story says, citing Xu Guangyu, a senior adviser to the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association.

Maj. Randy Ready, spokesman for the US Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii, said the US military "won't speculate on hypothetical exercises that may or may not take place in the future."



The mention of possible exercises off Guam, home to the important US military installations of Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Station Guam, comes after a busy few weeks for the PLA.

"Ground and naval forces of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) have been on concentrated schedules in amphibious landing and maritime exercises in the past weeks and will continue to do so in the weeks to come," a Global Times report said.

Recent drills include a mock beach assault in Hainan province on the South China Sea; a sea-crossing and landing with amphibious assault vehicles in Guangdong province; sea-crossing assault drills in Fujian province; and flights of missile-armed bombers and fighters over the South China Sea.

The PLA has live-fire exercises planned for this week and next, according to another Global Times report.

Those drills will be off Zhoushan, an island on China's east coast south of Shanghai.

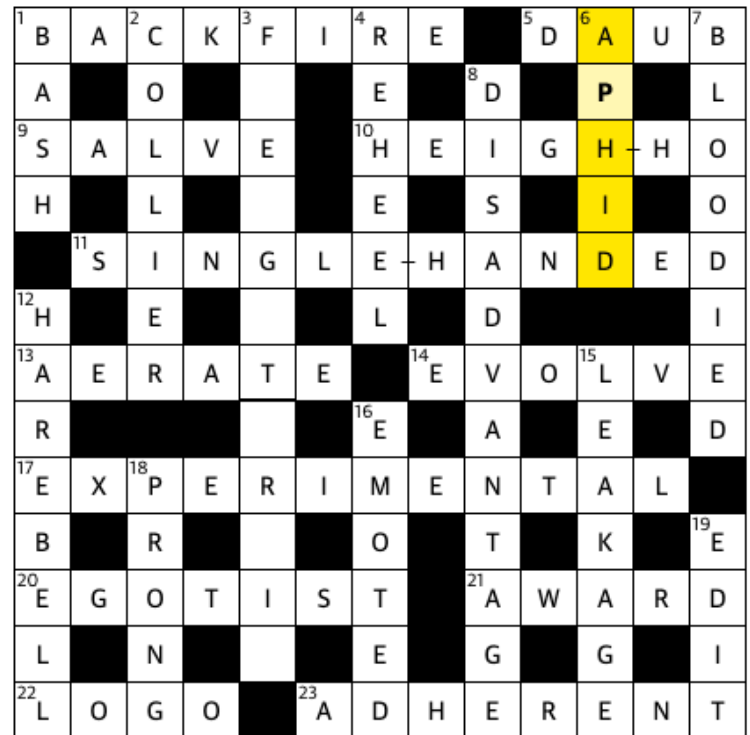
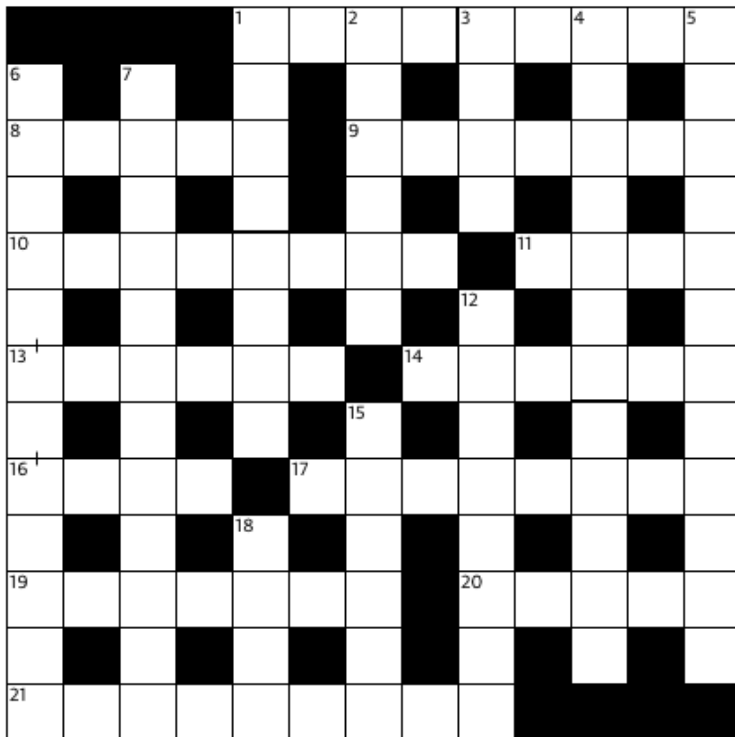
"The PLA drills come amid the increasingly frequent provocative military activities made by the US near the island of Taiwan and in waters in the South China Sea," the Global Times report says.

In a Xinhua interview, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week accused Washington of sending 2,000 military flights over the South China Sea in the first half of this year. That would be a rate of almost 11 a day.

Ready, the Indo-Pacific command spokesman, would not confirm Wang's assertion on the number of US flights.

LEISURE

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Late 1950s' genre combining R & B and gospel (4,5)
 8 Thin cord (5)
 9 Speak dramatically (7)
 10 Space — role (8)
 11 Reverse (4)
 13 Contaminated (6)
 14 Opening (of opportunity?) (6)
 16 Carry (4)
 17 Traditional Spanish lace scarf (8)
 19 Acrid gas, NH3 (7)
 20 Training during term time for teachers in state schools (5)
 21 Key (9)

Down

- 1 Initial investment (4,4)
 2 Renew (6)
 3 Treat with contempt — imitation (4)
 4 Feature in decorative windows (7,5)
 5 Period following the English Civil Wars (12)
 6 Oscar knitted (anag) — what's necessary for carrying on a business (5-2-5)
 7 Thick-skinned herbivorous animal of tropical Africa (12)
 12 Invalid court procedure (8)
 15 Wildlife-watching expedition (6)
 18 In a little while (informal) (4)

CARTOON CORNER

Non Sequitur



"Carl, no! Just say 'Mine!'
 You don't have to mark it."



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): There may be an important project that requires your undivided attention. A passing fancy might tempt you to play hooky when you should be hard at work. Ignore the pull of transient desires and whims.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): It is not just about you, or just about them. Cooperation can't occur without a good deal of give and take from both sides. Rather than debating differences of opinion, find places where you share common ground.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Apply mind over matter. You may have to enforce your boundaries if faced with high-pressure sales tactics. Use logic and fact-gathering if you feel overwhelmed or pressured.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You could be so intent on reaching out to obtain the better things in life that you forget to take care of what you already have. Be especially kind and considerate towards loved ones and thoughtful about their needs.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The importance of a project or assignment may be blown out of proportion. Nevertheless, you might still feel that your reputation is at stake. You may be willing to go to extreme lengths to accomplish something.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Be decisive, cut any losses and move on. Keep your goals firmly in mind and it will be easier to make an expedient decision. A romantic partner or close friend may provide some sensible and canny input.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22.): Libra is the sign of the scales, so you are probably well equipped to weigh your options and balance family with career. This isn't a fortuitous time to plunge headfirst into an enticing investment or an exciting new relationship.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may dwell on the challenges that lie ahead and think about ways to accomplish your goals. The things that make you happy may not be the things that you must embrace to obtain security now.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Keep your expectations within with the realm of possibility. If your dreams are impossibly grand, you could set yourself up for a grand disappointment with love, money or possessions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Persistence should pay off. It's easy to lose track of your purpose if many people and things clamor for your attention. Keep plugging away despite time-consuming interruptions and you will make headway.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Still waters run deep. Someone close may appear to have veiled secrets or hidden depths, but this is probably not the most auspicious time to dive in and investigate them. Put your financial ambitions on hold temporarily.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): You may be challenged to spend your money wisely. Family needs and home repairs could eat up some of your cash, leaving you unable to pursue your fondest dreams. Focus on saving and wait for better timing.

Sarwan heads home

Former West Indies batsman, Ramnaresh Sarwan, will not serve as an assistant coach for the Jamaica Tallawahs in this year's edition of the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) after being given leave to return home.

The entirety of this season's tournament will take place on the island of Trinidad and Tobago as organisers have decided to operate with an abundance of caution as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The six CPL franchises and match officials reported to the twin island republic a week ago where they have been quarantined at the Hilton Hotel in St. Ann's.

The tournament will get under way on August 18.

Tallawahs CEO, Jeff Miller, confirmed that Sarwan, who was appointed to the post two years ago, was not present.

"Mr Sarwan requested leave for personal reasons and that was granted," Miller said in an interview with the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday.

"It's a big loss. Sars (Sarwan) brings a lot to the game; his knowledge, his experience and the way he has dealt with the players over the years, so it is a great loss," he added.

Sarwan will be replaced by former West Indies spinner, Ryan Austin.

In April, Sarwan was in the news after a public spat with former teammate and then Tallawahs batsman, Chris Gayle. In a Youtube rant, Gayle



Ramnaresh Sarwan

blamed Sarwan after he was released by the team.

Sarwan denied Gayle's accusations.

British player complained about 'lightheadedness' during match

Johanna Konta has said she felt "lightheaded" after suffering from heart palpitations during her straight-set defeat at the Lexington Open.

Konta, seeded third on her WTA Tour return, was beaten 6-4 6-4 by world number 48 Marie Bouzkova in Kentucky.

The Briton needed medical attention early on but, after consultation with a doctor, was able to return to court.

Konta said, "My heart rate shoots up for no reason and I wasn't gassing in any way in my lungs."

She continued: "It actually goes up and stays there so it makes me a bit lightheaded. I just needed to see the doctor and the physio.



Johanna Konta

"It was very high when they came out. I was having all the checks. I am as fit as a fiddle, but it can happen. It took a while to settle down but then it did and I was able to concentrate on the tennis."

Konta had also lost to the

Czech Republic's Bouzkova in Mexico in March in her final match before the tour was suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic.

After play was delayed by four hours because of a rain storm, and after surviving

a break-point scare in the opening game of the match which was played in extreme humidity, Konta appeared to be struggling with the conditions.

She has suffered similar issues in the past, notably at the 2016 US Open and at the Fed Cup last year where she recovered to win both matches.

"We don't know why it happens. It's been under stressful situations, in no-stress situations. We just don't know. It's been sporadic," Konta said.

"It's not ideal. I am going to have another ECG and see what protocols we can take. It's probably not going to happen again for another year or something. I'm not too worried, no."

Focusing on youth development

National Women's Football Coach, Lisa Cole, says she is focusing on youth development with the aim of creating pathways to university for local players and producing a competitive Women's national team to compete in the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Cole, speaking to PointeXpress, said she was contacted a few years ago by Antigua Barbuda Football Association (ABFA) Vice President, Gwen Salmon, about the women's coaching vacancy in Antigua and Barbuda. She said she immediately accepted the challenge of helping to improve the sport on the island.

Cole, who has vast experience coaching on the college circuit in the United States and professionally, said when she arrived on island all she was looking for is bodies to participate in women's football, however, with the introduction of the 2019/20 Female Senior Football League at the ABFA technical center she has seen the emergence of young talent. According to Cole, the future of the national team



National Women's Football Coach, Lisa Cole

is bright.

"I was lucky to travel with the Under-17 and Under-20 national teams not long after taking up the position as Head Coach and was able to make an early assessment of what was needed moving forward," she noted.

Cole, who has worked with the Papua New Guinea Women's National Under-20 team, says emphasis needs to be directed to the primary and secondary schools programme in order to enhance the development of female football on the island.

"We have to find a way to energize

young ladies between the ages of 9 to 12 to get involved in the sport and develop their motor skills and appetite for the game at an early age," Cole explained.

"Our aim is to start our development process early by preparing our girls at 13 years old for Under-15, at 16 for under-17 and at 17 for under-20 moving forward, Cole stated.

The national coach, who has worked professionally with the Boston Breakers, Houston Dash and Washington Spirit, says the immediate goal for the female national programme is to be competitive and more organized in 2022.

"We have to start competing with countries like Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Haiti by closing the gap," she said.

The national team has been transitioning slowly from its older athletes to the younger players presently in the system.

Cole has coached at University of Mississippi, UConn, University of Rhode Island, and Florida State.

Broad fined for inappropriate language

England bowler, Stuart Broad, has been fined 15% of his match fee for using "inappropriate language" during the first Test against Pakistan. The incident took place during Pakistan's second innings on Saturday when Broad dismissed leg-spinner, Yasir Shah.

Broad has also been given one demerit point which takes his total to three in a 24 month period. If a player receives four or more demerit points within a 24 month period they will receive a suspension.

Broad admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by his dad, Chris Broad, of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of match referees. England won the first Test

at Emirates Old Trafford by three wickets to take a 1-0 lead in the three Test series.

Lebron talks Lakers' struggles

LeBron James spoke to reporters about the Lakers struggling a bit in the bubble, explaining that it's been a different dynamic since the restart of the NBA.

Lebron said, "I'm getting more and more used to being out there. It's a very weird dynamic. I haven't played in an empty gym in a very, very long time. Just having that backdrop there is a lot different from playing in a high school gym or a college arena where you're playing in the summertime, whatever the case may be.



"It's really dark, extremely dark. You can literally hear a feather hit the ground. I'm just getting more and more comfortable playing with my game here in the bubble."

Sports

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Umpiring is their passion



James Chapman

James Chapman of Mount Joy, St. Peters has been around cricket from an early age.

"I have been around the sport since the 1980's and attended a lot of cricket matches as a youngster," Chapman expressed.

"I was encouraged to get involved in umpiring by Javid Goodwin leading to me joining the local umpiring association and was thrown in the battle field early when I was invited to umpire a game at Rising Sun which created nervous moments, Chapman recalled.

"I held discussions with more senior umpires about my first experience and was encouraged to stay the course which I have done and I was enjoying every moment before COVID-19 brought a halt to proceedings," shared Chapman.

He explained that his previous knowledge of cricket assisted in accelerating his improvement as an umpire.

"To be a good umpire you have to mentally and physically tough," he told PointeXpress.

He also told us that he takes great pride in arriving at his



Donald Scheckles

venues ahead of the teams playing in order to mentally prepare himself for the game.

According to the experienced umpire, his future goal is to officiate regional games in the hope of being identified for opportunities further afield.

Meanwhile, Donald Scheckles is another umpire making waves in cricket.

The former Under-17 and Under-19 national team all-rounder attended the Antigua Grammar School.

Fondly recalling his early days in cricket, Scheckles said his experience at the Sir Garfield Sobers Youth Tournament in Barbados is among the highlights of his career.

A past student of the Uni-

versity of the West Indies, Scheckles was outstanding in the Leeward Islands Cricket Tournament and came in for high praise from the teams.

The former national youth player is presently pursuing Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) professional certification which will qualify him as an accountant, however he has no plans of abandoning his ambitions of rising to the level of an international umpire.

Scheckles says to be a good umpire it's important to know the laws and stay abreast of changes in regulations and stay changes in the game.

"Players pick up when you are weak and not consistent," the Cedar Valley resident added. Keep a sharp eye on these two bright prospects in umpiring on the island.

 **DEWS**

Editor : Everton Barnes, Published by Pointville Communications, Lower North Street, St. John's, Antigua Tel:-1-268-562 4989, Editor: editor@pointville.ag
Advertisement: sales@pointville.ag, Reporting: news@pointville.ag