



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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POLICE REPORT PROGRESS



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**Workers in the public sector
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Relief for bus drivers

The appeal from the country's bus operators for some form of assistance to cope with their losses occasioned by the coronavirus pandemic has engendered a positive

response from the government.

Cabinet spokesman, Lionel "Max" Hurst, has reported that the matter was discussed at last Friday's

Cabinet meeting where it was agreed that a gasoline subsidy would be provided for the bus operators.

"The object of the new policy would be to ensure that buses, which are compelled to reduce the number of passengers which can lawfully be carried on each trip, receive an amount that reflects a gasoline subsidy to compensate in part for the reduction," Hurst explained.

He said the details are to be worked out with the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board after the August holidays.

In making their case to the government, the bus associations asked the government to establish a system of reduced fuel prices for them similar to that which

currently obtains for fishermen.

The bus operators say they have been severely impacted by the pandemic as the shutdown instituted at the end of March into April brought business to a trickle. Even after being allowed to resume operation of their buses, business continued to be impacted as social distancing protocols instituted by the Ministry of Health limited the number of passengers allowed on public transportation.

Many residents rely on buses as their primary means of transportation. Since the start of the pandemic, however, bus operators have not been allowed to carry more than two-thirds of their regular passenger load.



DAY 8/5

Max UV Index: 13 Extreme
 Wind: E at 15 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

31° Hi



Partly sunny with a shower in the area

NIGHT 8/5

Wind: E at 13 km/h
 Wind Gusts: 20 km/h
 Probability of Precipitation: 55%
 Probability of Thunderstorms: 20%
 Precipitation: 1.1 mm
 Rain: 1.1 mm
 Snow: 0.0 cm
 Ice: 0.0 mm
 Hours of Precipitation: 1
 Hours of Rain: 1

25° Lo



Mostly clear with a passing shower

SUNRISE/SUNSET

Sunrise AST
 5:48 AM

Sunset AST
 6:38 PM



Duration
 12:50 hr

MOONRISE/MOONSET

Moonrise AST
 8:21 PM

Moonset AST
 8:14 AM



Duration
 11:53 hr

Police report progress in the Nigel Christian Murder Investigation

The Police are reporting what they term ‘significant progress’ into the murder investigation of Customs Officer, Nigel Christian.

Christian was abducted from his home at McKinnons on Friday 10th July, 2020 at approximately 5:30pm.

Several hours later his bullet ridden body was found on a roadside near New Winthorpes.

Since then, there has been great disquiet over the circumstances surrounding his death. This has been coupled with calls for those responsible for his slaying to be brought to justice swiftly.

In a statement aimed at assuaging the public’s concerns, the police say their investigators are pursuing several useful leads and multiple persons of interest.

“This requires more time and resources, especially if all lines of inquiry are to be fully exhausted to bring the investigation to a point where a prima facie case is made out.

“This includes, but not limited to, ballistics, trace evidence, DNA analyses and an Autopsy Examination,” the statement noted.

To date, a number of exhibits and forensic materials have been recovered for evidential purposes while several persons of interest, including witnesses, have been interviewed.

“We also continue to work



Nigel Christian

with our regional and international counterparts who are providing invaluable technical support and assistance in this complex investigation,” said the police statement making reference to the request from the government for assistance for the local police investigation from the UK’s Scotland Yard and the USA’s Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

In an appeal for the public to exercise patience, the police explained while it may appear to some that the wheels of justice are turning slowly, the administration remains optimistic that this matter will be solved in due course.

“The public, along with the family of Nigel Christian, can be assured that investigations into his brutal killing will continue to be treated as priority and is given the level of attention that is required.

“The entire organization is committed to seeing this to the end, and no efforts will be spared in bringing those responsible to justice.

“We ask the public to con-

tinue to exercise patience and understanding, as one cannot sacrifice accuracy for speed in an investigation of this magnitude,” the press statement explained.

The police also indicated that they wish to encourage those who may have seen or heard anything prior to, or after the incident, to come forward and share that information. The assurance was given that information shared will be pursued and treated confidentially.

The police also expressed gratitude to those who have come forward and shared information with authori-

ties.

A reward of \$50, 000.00 is being offered to anyone who can provide additional information that will lead to the arrest of those responsible.

“We ask that you continue to pray for Nigel’s family and all the investigators involved in the investigation,” the release concluded.

Meanwhile, a pathologist is being flown into Antigua to conduct the postmortem investigation.

The investigation includes a forensic examination of the recovered bullets and shells.

Tender Notice

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority Water Business Unit is inviting tenders for the transportation of its Shift Workers. Additional information regarding the number of workers to be transported, transportation route, shift schedule, station locations and pick-up points can be provided.

Interested parties must submit closed written bids for the supply of this service and address it to:

Attn: Water Business Unit Manager
 Re: Shift Workers Transportation Tender
 Antigua Public Utilities Authority
 4th Floor ABC Building
 Cnr. Independence Ave. & High Street
 St. John’s, Antigua

Deadline for submission is August 15th, 2020

For further information please call 480-7170.



Workers in the public sector to be redeployed

The government has announced plans to redeploy some of its workers in order to assist the efforts of the Ministry of Health in containing the local spread of COVID-19.

This was one of the outcomes of last Friday's Cabinet meeting in which the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Health Inspector, the government's Chief Chemist and Pathologist were all invited to provide reports on the management of the

coronavirus in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Post-Cabinet Notes suggested that the decision to reopen the country's borders on June 1 would increase the likelihood of the country importing coronavirus cases and that this has, in fact, been the case.

CMO, Dr Rhonda Sealy-Thomas, reported that returning nationals are the largest source of the imported cases. As of last Friday, four of the last five confirmed positive cases of the virus were returning nation-

als.

The CMO appealed for additional manpower to assist the health ministry with the task of containing the virus.

"The various ministries are compelled to coordinate closely in order to achieve a very high level of efficiency in fighting this dreadful infectious disease, the officials and the Cabinet agreed. Staff from departments or statutory corporations who have very little work doing because of the absence of cruise tourists, for example, are to be redeployed to assist with contact-tracing and other kinds of responsibilities for which they can be re-trained quickly," the Cabinet Notes revealed.

It continued that reopening the borders was necessary in order to revive the economy and generate employment.

Since June 1, 2020 more than 1,100 hotel workers have returned to their jobs and more than 8,000 passengers have arrived in Antigua. It is anticipated that the numbers will continue to grow and that more job opportunities will be generated as the winter season dawns.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet repeated that the 25 person threshold on gatherings is derived from science and is intended to enable successful contact tracing. According to the Cabinet, a number larger than this makes tracking

people's movement and interactions exceedingly difficult, if not impossible.

Additionally, the legal requirement to wear masks in public contributes significantly to the protection of others and the mask wearer.

Since the imposition of a State of Emergency and curfew on March 25, 2020, intended to contain the spread of the virus in Antigua and Barbuda, the Ministry of Health led the way in safeguarding the population.

The Cabinet Notes also made reference to a protest which took place on Tuesday July 28, 2020, in which more than 100 people assembled in front of the Parliament building. The gathering, which included members of the opposition, called on the government to end the State of Emergency. This was in apparent response to the government's recent announcement that it intended to extend the State of Emergency until October 29, 2020.

The protesters also called for an end to the curfew and the wearing of face masks.

When the Parliament convened on Thursday, July 30, 2020, the members on the government benches condemned those demanding that an end be brought to the precautionary systems put in place to protect the country against the spread of the deadly virus.



PDV CAB announces changes to the distribution schedule for the voucher booklets for the period September 2020 to February 2021 for its Senior Citizen Utility Subsidy Programme. This distribution will take place at the Multipurpose Cultural Centre, Perry Bay for Antiguan beneficiaries from **Monday August 10th until Friday August 28th** from 9am to 3pm daily. Special arrangements have been made to have the booklets delivered to our beneficiaries in Barbuda.

Distribution will still be done alphabetically by surname but as follows:

Mon August 10th	A.	Mon August 17th	G.	Mon August 24th	O, P & Q.
Tues August 11th	B.	Tues August 18th	H&I.	Tues August 25th	R.
Wed August 12th	C.	Wed August 19th	J.	Wed August 26th	S.
Thurs August 13th	D.	Thurs August 20th	K&L.	Thurs August 27th	T, U & V.
Fri August 14th	E&F.	Fri August 21st	M&N.	Fri August 28th	W, X, Y & Z.

Distribution will be conducted with strict adherence to the protocols established to limit the spread of COVID-19. That is, the mandatory wearing of face masks to cover nose and mouth, hand sanitization and adequate physical distancing.

Please present the beneficiaries' expired booklet or Social Security pension card along with your valid Antiguan/Barbudan picture ID in order to collect the new voucher booklet and make every effort to collect at the place and time as specified, to **avoid any loss of benefits.**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE PDV CAB OFFICE AT 562-6185 OR 562-6189.

Man narrowly escapes serious injury in traffic accident

On Tuesday afternoon, 61-year-old Bertrand Ashe narrowly escaped major injury in what witnesses have described as a freak accident on the Sir Sydney Walling Highway (Factory Road).

According to eyewitnesses, Ashe was driving along the highway at a moderate speed when a green Toyota Vitz sped up and overtook him causing him to lose control of his vehicle as he tried to clear the way. Eyewitnesses claimed that the Vitz that overtook Ashe did not stop.

Ashe, who was driving an

orange Honda automobile, was the sole occupant of his vehicle which crashed into a junction box and light post causing several wires and other debris to block the highway.

The police, Emergency Medical Services and fire department responded swiftly to the accident.

Ashe received attention on the scene from the EMS personnel for minor bruises and injury to his left hand after which he was rushed to the Mount St. John's Medical Center (MSJMC) for further examination and treatment.



LIAT planes are due back today

The three LIAT planes that were flown to Grenada for safekeeping last week when Tropical Storm Isaias threatened Antigua and Barbuda will return to the airline's hangar at the V. C. Bird International Airport today.

An informed source confirmed to PointeXpress newspaper that the planes were taken to Grenada under an arrangement that is a requirement of the insurance against loss. The planes were to remain in Grenada only until the storm passed.

Upon their return, the planes will remain in Antigua until they are sold as part of LIAT's reorganization plan. The proceeds from the sale will help amortise outstanding loans owed to the Caribbean Development Bank by the three main shareholders of LIAT; Barbados, Antigua and Barbu-



da and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Antigua and Barbuda government last week agreed to put up close to \$3 million to pay outstanding salaries for LIAT staff who remained on the job after the planes were grounded. Part of the disbursement will also go toward the first install-

ment to be made to the court appointed administrator, Cleveland Seaforth of BDO.

Seaforth is reportedly meeting with various stakeholders of LIAT, including creditors and staff, in an effort to arrive at a workable reorganization plan which will then be presented to the court.

Government has said that LIAT will continue to receive much of its attention as it seeks to attract investment into the airline in order to enable it to resume operation as soon as possible.

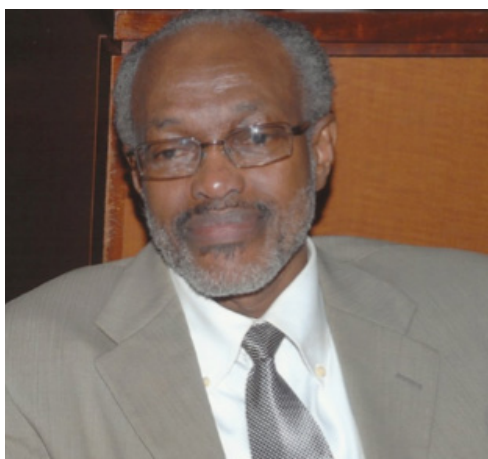
LIAT was grounded after the airports within its network closed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Antigua and Barbuda says thanks!

The man who managed the affairs of the University of the West Indies Five Islands campus during its formative first year, is leaving the post after completing his assignment in St John's, but not before receiving the sincere thanks and appreciation of the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda.

Outgoing Principal of the UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Stafford Griffith, has received the thanks of the Cabinet of Ministers for the sterling service he provided to the new Five Islands Campus during the recently concluded academic year.

Professor Griffith underscored the fact that UWI's fourth landed Campus at Five Islands is unique in that no



Professor Stafford Griffith

other UWI Campus has begun with as many students or with a built-up campus.

He reported that the number of applicants for the 2020/2021 academic year

exceeded 400 from 10 CARICOM countries, which in his view was quite remarkable.

As he proceeds to retirement, Professor Griffith said he felt the warmth of the people of Antigua and Barbuda and enjoyed the security which the country afforded.

He added that he would forever remain attached to the campus here as its first principal.

The Cabinet thanked him for his outstanding work and applauded his leadership of the university campus.

The Gaston Browne Administration regards the establishment of the UWI's fourth landed campus at Five Islands as its most significant achievement.

No new COVID-19 Cases, 14 active cases remain on the island

As of Monday 3rd August, the Ministry of Health has indicated that the Mount St. John's Medical Center (MSJMC) has revealed no new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda.

The health ministry explained that all of the twenty-three samples recently tested yielded negative results for COVID-19. These twenty-three samples were processed and tested at the MSJMC Laboratory.

According to the ministry, another twenty-eight samples, which were sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) on Monday 3rd August, are still pending.

Meanwhile, information collected through the National COVID-19 dashboard, indicates that the country currently has fourteen (14) active COVID-19 cases.

Since the first case of COVID-19 arrived in Antigua and Barbuda, the country has recorded a total of 92 cases, with 3 deaths and 75 recovered to date.

The COVID-19 dashboard further indicates that the majority of COVID-19 cases have been imported.

According to the Cabinet, "Returning nationals, the evidence reveals, turned out to be the largest source of imported cases

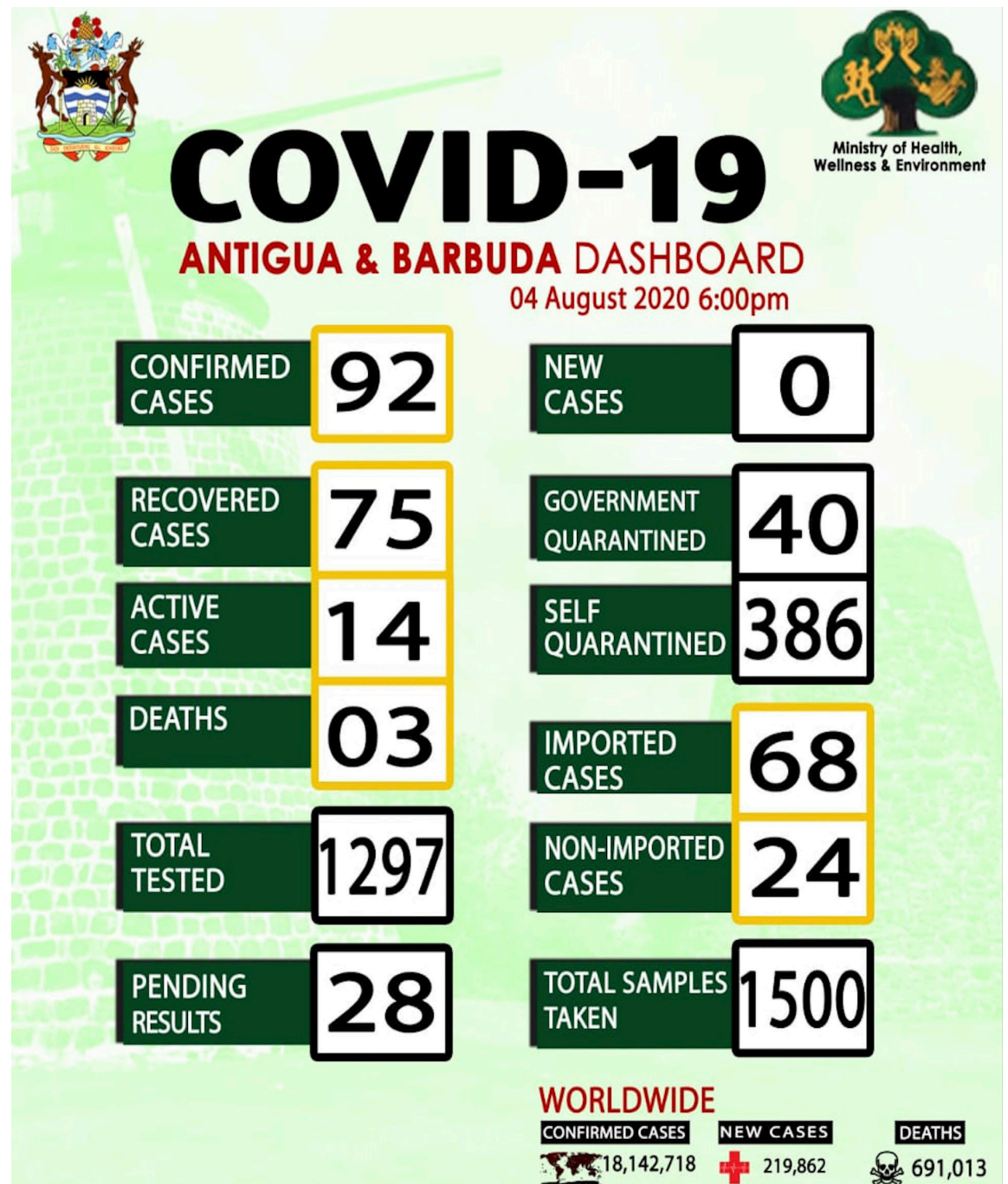
of the virus.

The Chief Medical Offi-

cer reported that of the last

five cases, four were Anti-

gua and Barbuda nationals returning home."



**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**.*

CIBC/FCIB launches initiative to help frontline workers

CIBC First Caribbean International Bank has launched a Caribbean-wide initiative that will award the frontline workers in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

In a press release, the bank said communities across the region have a unique opportunity to hail those special heroes, who in the darkest moments of the COVID-19 crisis, shone brightest.

According to the release the FirstCaribbean Unsung Frontline Heroes initiative is aimed at giving persons the opportunity to nominate essential workers and persons from their communities who put service above self and reached out to others in a variety of ways during the COVID-19 crisis.

"We have been awed and humbled by the many stories of heroism and selflessness displayed across so many villages and towns, as medical professionals and little children with piggy banks, all rallied to help and to give to those impacted by the pandemic," said Chief Executive Officer of CIBC FirstCaribbean and Chair of the FirstCaribbean ComTrust Foundation Colette Delaney.

She noted that the First-

Caribbean Unsung Frontline Heroes Awards is an initiative of the FirstCaribbean ComTrust Foundation aimed at recognizing the outstanding work of individuals across the region who have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic fight.

To be nominated persons must be resident in any of the 16 territories where the CIBC FirstCaribbean operates and must have worked, volunteered or been involved in any of the following award categories:

Medical personnel
The Protective Services

Community Heroes (individuals who by their courageous acts, strength and self-sacrifice in the service of a community, have made a difference to those persons impacted).

To nominate a candidate for an award, persons must log on to the website <https://www.cibcfcib.com/about-us/community-relations/unsung-frontline-heroes> or visit the bank's social media channels to complete the nomination form.

Information about the nominee and their photo must be provided.

While persons can make

multiple nominations, they can only nominate candidates who reside in their country of residence.

The nomination period runs from 1st to 15th August 2020 and winners will be announced in September 2020. Winners will receive an E-Check for US\$2,000 toward a staycation at a local hotel of their choice.

Through its flagship Unsung Heroes programme which ended in 2013, FirstCaribbean has previously highlighted many hidden treasures who have made a difference in the lives of persons they have helped or touched in some way.

Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Motorcyclists Safety



IMPORTANT NOTICE

Your Motor Vehicle Registration expires on the last day of the month shown on your sticker. For example, if your sticker shows a date of JUL/2020, your registration is valid through the last day of July 2020.




A cold wind is blowing from the north

David Jessop asks who will lean into the wind, speak out and define in Caribbean and small state terms what free, socially oriented democratic societies require of both the US and China?

Amid the feverish work to whether it chooses to take sides or not, the Caribbean is about to find itself swept up into the now almost inevitable superpower confrontation between the United States and China.

Speaking at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library on 23 July, the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, brought together in ideological terms the threads of the Administration's long-trailed strategic policy and belief in its continuing exceptionalism. "Securing our freedoms from the Chinese Communist Party is the mission of our time, and America is perfectly positioned to lead it because our founding principles give us that opportunity", Mr Pompeo told his audience in a speech, 'Communist China and the Free World's Future'.

The absence of nuance made clear that the Trump Administration expects every country to now join in its endeavor.

The outcome is, however, uncertain. Unlike the previous sometimes close to hot war with an economically and intellectually impoverished former Soviet Union, in this confrontation the US does not necessarily have the long term economic and military supremacy to outrun Chi-

na, let alone global sentiment on its side. Mr Pompeo's remarks have their origins in the Administration's National Security Strategy and a sophisticated official analysis that builds on a view first developed during the Obama Administration. This suggests that China's economic advance and growing global influence will cause a relative decline in US economic and political influence, so requires a western response. The US Secretary's remarks undoubtedly also play into the forthcoming US elections, but it is more than likely that if former Vice President Joe Biden becomes President in November, both he and Congress would pursue a similar policy, albeit in a less myopic way.

Particularly striking from a global, let alone Caribbean perspective, is the conflation by the US of its interests with those of its allies when it comes to China. According to Mr Pompeo: "The free world must triumph over this new tyranny". Nations must "induce China to change in more creative and assertive ways". Its actions "threaten our people and our prosperity" and China, he believes, "cannot be treated as a normal country".

In his remarks he suggested in almost evangelical terms that the choice Washington is now asking every nation to make is "between freedom and tyranny". Although accepting that this may be difficult for some small countries, he suggested that the starting

point should be an insistence on reciprocity, transparency, and accountability from the Chinese Communist Party to reset the terms of engagement.

As some Caribbean states already know, the outcome that Mr Pompeo is pursuing is participation in a new global alliance of willing "like-minded nations, a new alliance of democracies" in Europe, Africa, the Americas, and the Indo-Pacific region, prepared to take the same approach; one intended to reset supply chains, alter existing trade relationships, and revisit old alliances and existing regional relationships.

What is unclear is how the US intends to encourage or cajole countries large and small to decouple from China, ignore its continuing economic and technological rise, and set aside the beneficial economic relationships it continues to develop in regions such as the Caribbean.

Read carefully the remarks made following Mr Pompeo's recent meetings with Australia, the UK, Japan and others in Europe and the Far East that are expected to make up the core of Washington's post-NATO global alliance. They illustrate that while most nations are willing to share Washington's security concerns, they have reservations when it comes to forfeiting their economic relationship with China.

What is missing in the current US approach is an understanding that communism



By David Jessop

where it still exists has been redefined by circumstance, and to succeed Washington will have to do more that matches China in relation to investment and trade, and find ways to modify its 'America First' approach.

In the Caribbean, China's engagement has brought new opportunities for development even for nations ideologically close to the US. It is therefore unlikely to be a coincidence that just a few days after Mr Pompeo spoke, China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, reminded the region of Beijing's determination to advance China-Latin America relations "from a strategic and longterm perspective", enhance support for its Belt and Road Initiative, and help build new public health and other infrastructure.

To write this is not to ignore issues such as freedom of expression in Hong Kong, the reported treatment of various ethnic groups within China, or restrictions on the freedom of information and expression

Commentary

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there. Such questioning is as valid as being critical of the militarisation of US policing, supportive of the black lives matter movement, or objecting to the US President's implicit racism in his approach to immigration, or attacks on the liberal media. Rather, it is to observe that the parameters of difference and disagreement between states are no longer ideological and now require the case being made for future alliances to be built on alternative universally adopted parameters such as demonstrably fair systems of governance, economic reciprocity, social equity, and humane values. In his balanced and thought-provoking recent book 'The Chinese Challenge to American Primacy – Has China Won?', the Singaporean academic and former diplomat, Kishore Mahubani, demonstrates the paradoxes. He suggests that 'the assumption of virtue' has made the US inflexible and challenged, while China, despite its sometimes 'objectionable activities', is adaptable and pragmatic for deep philosophical reasons. Why would China waste its time seeking to change US or anyone else's

ideological thinking when it knows the opportunity offered by the success and competitiveness of its economy, and the relative cohesiveness of its society, he asks?

Whoever wins November's US elections, the Caribbean will find itself in an increasingly difficult place when it comes to US-China relations. This is because it has so far failed to develop a solid, alternative, intellectually justifiable, and new, non-aligned approach based on its own needs and values.

In the region there are still a few politicians and academics like the late Owen Arthur, looking outwards, willing to lean into the cold wind that is now blowing. They should speak out, define in Caribbean and small state terms what free socially oriented democratic societies require of both the US and China.

David Jessop is a consultant to the Caribbean Council and can be contacted at david.jessop@caribbean-council.org and forced them out of business, in many cases permanently. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, crop yield declines of 10-25% may be prevalent by 2050 because of climate change.

The effects on tourism would also be devastating. Suffice to say, that the challenges and dangers posed by global warming and sea-level rise are enlarging, requiring strenuous and sustained responses at the national, regional, and international levels.

Even now, there should be a joined-up effort by national government agencies to factor the effects of climate change into their economic planning. That planning should be advised by scientific research and data. National blueprints should also dovetail into a regional action plan. Integral to the plan should be coordinated international advocacy about the Caribbean plight.

In Washington, DC, CARICOM Ambassadors have started an international outreach by soliciting the convening power of the Organization of American States (OAS) and its Secretary-General, Luis Almagro. The idea to which the Mr. Almagro has given full support is to gather the leading financial and development institutions to consider actions to save the Caribbean from the catastrophic consequences of

unrestrained climate change. There is good reason to give the Caribbean special attention; it accounts for less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions and suffers hugely disproportional impacts.

Actions, like that taken by the OAS secretary-general, should be secured from other heads of multilateral institution such as the Commonwealth of which Caribbean countries are members.

Since 2010, more than 30 studies, aimed at quantifying the economic impacts of climate change on various vulnerable sectors of the Caribbean, have been conducted. Therefore, the nature and scope of the problem are well-known; it is time to stop the studies and to start the action.

In the words of the poet Dylan Thomas: "Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight; rage, rage against the dying of the light". And do so from the rooftops of the world.

David Jessop is a consultant to the Caribbean Council and can be contacted at david.jessop@caribbean-council.org

GOT NEWS

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Congratulations



**Government of Antigua and Barbuda
Office of the Prime Minister**

*Queen Elizabeth Highway
St John's
Antigua and Barbuda*

3 August 2020

His Excellency Mr Irfaan Ali
President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana
Office of the President
Georgetown
GUYANA

Dear President Ali

On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda and on my own behalf, I congratulate you warmly on your election to the Presidency of Guyana.

Guyana and Antigua and Barbuda share a long history of cooperation, including as founder members of the Caribbean Free Trade Agreement at Dickenson Bay in Antigua in 1965 which led to the creation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Antigua and Barbuda has also been a home to many Guyanese and persons of Guyanese heritage for decades. Our two countries, therefore, share strong familial ties. In our passionate commitment to regional integration, we have cooperated at many levels in the international community, including territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is my fervent expectation that we will continue to work closely in our mutual interest and in the wider interest of CARICOM.

My Government is very pleased that the long delay in declaration of the Guyana general elections of March 2nd was brought to peaceful conclusion and we congratulate the people of Guyana and the political parties for the patience and restraint that they demonstrated.

As Guyana stands on the threshold of economic transformation, I wish you every success in your Presidency and in the stewardship of Guyana's affairs, and I offer you my own and my Government's support in the great cause of delivering prosperity to all the people of Guyana.

I look forward greatly to working with you.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Browne'.

Gaston Browne
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda

Statement by Sir Shridath Ramphal on the Guyana Elections Result

Guyanese everywhere and Guyana's many friends are relieved and grateful that the worst of times are over. Now must begin the best of times.

To President Irfan Ali and his new Government, I send fulsome congratulations on their election success.

I welcome their expressed commitment to make those best of times come true for all Guyana and all Guyanese. The new Government starts with the goodwill of all who stood by Guyana's side in the struggle that democracy and the rule of law has won. The environment of peace and progress is

achieved; Guyanese must now seize the opportunity to build a prosperous Guyana for all, without exception.

Note to Editors: Sir Shridath Ramphal is a former Attorney-General and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana; second Secretary-General of the Commonwealth (1975-1990); former Chancellor of the Universities of the West Indies, Warwick (UK) and Guyana; former Chairman of the West Indian Commission and a member of Guyana's legal team at the ICJ in the Guyana-Venezuela border case.



By: Sir Shridath Ramphal

 ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTE X PRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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



With COVID-19 surging & ICU beds scarce, Bahamas goes into total lockdown

Bahamas Prime Minister Hubert Minnis announced Monday a complete lockdown of the country for the next two weeks, saying the bed capacity and human resources were being “increasingly stretched” amid a sharp rise in COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations.

“Our ICU beds are at capacity and non-critical care beds are approaching capacity,” Minnis said during a national address about the economic shutdown of the archipelago, just days after being spared by Hurricane Isaias. “We can and we will rebuild our economy and our society. But what we cannot do is bring people’s life back. We can rebuild, but we cannot recreate new life.”

On Monday, the Bahamas, whose population is about 385,000, confirmed 31 new infections — 9 in the island of New Providence and 22 in Grand Bahama, which was put on a lockdown two weeks ago after it began leading the country in newly confirmed cases.

The new infections, Minnis said, gave a tally of 679 confirmed cases, the country’s highest since it confirmed its first case in March and forced the closure of all of airports and seaports to outside visitors. Since the Bahamas fully reopened its borders on July 1 to international visitors, cases have increased exponentially as health officials traced the rise to gatherings and Bahami-

ans traveling abroad to hotspots like Florida, which has been seeing a record number of cases and deaths in recent weeks.

While the country’s travel policy, which has been repeatedly revised since June, will remain unchanged as of the last order, Minnis urged Bahamians not to travel to hotspots.

While the country’s travel policy, which has been repeatedly revised since June, will remain unchanged as of the last order, Minnis urged Bahamians not to travel to hotspots.

Under the travel policy, anyone arriving in the Bahamas must quarantine for 14 days at their own expense at a government facility and have a negative COVID-19 test before they can leave. The new lockdown takes effect at 10 p.m. Tuesday. Among the new measures, funerals will be limited to graveside services with only five attendees, excluding the official and funeral home personnel, and most businesses will have to close. Food stores, water depots, pharmacies with curbside and take-away window service and gas stations will be allowed to operate on Mondays, Wednesday and Friday with restricted hours. Commercial and international banks will also be open on those days but only until 1 p.m. “There will be no curbside and takeaway dining or retail,” Minnis said.



The tighter restrictions are not new for Bahamians, who were forced to endure several lockdown periods between March and June. But the announcement comes amid a deadly spike in cases that Minnis fears could cause the collapse of the country’s healthcare system.

It is a reality that the Pan American Health Organization has warned countries in the region to be on the lookout for, and just recently the U.S. embassy in the Dominican Republic, where there are more than 70,000 cases, issued a similar appeal. The embassy in Santo Domingo urged Americans to delay their travel to the country, saying that an increase in cases was making ICU beds unavailable.

“Much of the world is battling a resurgence of this highly contagious virus,” Minnis said. “Countries like us that had success during the first wave are

seeing new, aggressive spread. They too are having to re-institute restrictions, curfews and in some instances lockdowns.”

COVID-19, he emphasized, is extremely contagious and a small hotspot could quickly turn into a large number of cases.

“I know that a lockdown like this is the last thing we wanted as a country. I know the nation is hurting; that our economy is in a terrible state; that many business people are struggling; that many workers are now unemployed; that families are scared; that many of us are afraid of catching the virus,” he said. On a more positive note, Minnis told Bahamians that Hurricane Isaias, which chugged through the chain over the weekend, turned out to be less destructive than the country had prepared for. From a flyover over Andros, Bimini and the Berry Islands, he said, “there did not appear to be much

Jamaica: Dreadlocked Girl Gets Green Light to head back to school

The seven-year-old child whose dreadlocked hairstyle stoked a constitutional kerfuffle is expected to resume classes in September despite a court ruling that her rights were not breached when the school sought to block her enrolment. Chairman of the Kensington Primary School board, Bishop Alvin Bailey, said the child, who was five at the time of the initial stand-off, still “has a place in school”.

“The child has been there all along from first grade on through the entire second grade and the child is expected to report to school in September when school reopens,” Bailey told *The Gleaner* on Monday night.

“From the very onset of this case, the child was never barred from school,” the bishop said.

But that narrative contrasts with the storyline of the parents, Dale and Sherine Virgo. The Supreme Court had granted an injunction for the child to attend school after Jamaicans for Justice filed a motion on behalf of the child and her parents in August 2018.

The Virgos’ daughter was initially allowed to attend summer classes at the institution for a few weeks prior to the August 29, 2018 official opening of school when her parents were given an ultimatum to remove her dreadlocks. Mrs Virgo confirmed that the family was informed from the first week of July 2018,



Bishop Dr Alvin Bailey, chairman of the board of Kensington Primary School.

during orientation, that their daughter’s locks would need to be removed once school officially started. The child had no issue while attending summer school.

“I asked them what my option was and they said she could attend summer school, because summer school was pretty much the next day,” she told *The Gleaner* on Monday.

“Summer school was fine, but she said, it would have to come out before August 29,” Mrs Virgo said. But the mother said she

refused to remove her daughter’s locks when the slated date arrived, because that was part of the family’s identity. When asked to clarify whether her family were Rastafarians, she said, “It doesn’t matter.”

“I don’t walk around and ask people if they are Muslim, if they worship the devil, so it really doesn’t matter,” Mrs Virgo insisted. “It’s our freedom of expression. It is how we identify ourselves. It is how everyone in my family wears their hair, so it

doesn’t really matter why I do it.” Administrators at Kensington, one of the top-performing schools in Portmore, St Catherine, had insisted that the wearing of dreadlocks was against its policy. But the court ruled last Friday that the child’s constitutional rights were not breached when the school refused her acceptance and that her father, who was the first claimant in the case against Kensington Primary, had no standing.

“Early in the Morning” and “Time to Face the Facts’ Host Jerry S George Has Died



Regional Talk Host and Social Activist Jerry George

WINN- Regional Talk Host and Social Activist Jerry George died Tuesday morning at his home in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mr. George was a social activist and host of “Early in the Morning”, a show broadcast live on Facebook that attracted thousands of viewers seeking a perspective on local, regional and international news.

Mr. George, Tuesday morning introduced his program

in the usual fashion before inviting his media colleague Beverly Sinclair, in Grenada, to air her views on how “everyday” people appeared blind to the challenges of the visually impaired, including access to public transportation and dealing with COVID-19 realities, in a segment of the show “Thoughtful Tuesday”.

The news of Mr. George’s death was greeted with incredulity by some and people

rushed to his Facebook page to see if he had appeared on “Early in the Morning”. But, while he introduced the program, he never reappeared after the segment “Thoughtful Tuesday” despite prompts from his co-host. As his death was confirmed, tributes poured in on Facebook with relatives, friends, colleagues and fans expressing shock and deepest condolences. His wife, Valerie Tucker-George posted on

Facebook that she was still in shock after discovering her husband dead on the floor of their home.

Mr. George, the managing director of Island Media Marketing also hosted the made-for-television series “Time to Face the Facts” aired on Caribvision.

Apart from his work in the media, Mr. George was also an Internet and Mobile Marketing Expert with a background

CARICOM Secretary-General congratulates Guyana's new President



CARICOM Secretary-General Ambassador Irwin LaRocque congratulates new Guyana President Mr Irfaan Ali following his swearing-in ceremony, Sunday.

CARICOM Secretary-General Ambassador Irwin LaRocque has congratulated Dr Irfaan Ali on his assumption to office as Guyana's ninth Executive President, and said he looks forward to welcoming the new President as a member of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government at its next Meeting.

Dr Ali Took the oath of office on Sunday 2 August 2020 after his Peoples Progressive Party/

Civic was declared winner of the country's 3 March 2020 Elections following an extended period of challenges.

"The people of Guyana have entrusted you with their leadership, at a most critical juncture in the country's development," the Secretary-General said in his congratulatory message.

"This demonstrates their acceptance of the policies and programmes that you and your

Party have put forward for the future. The confidence they have placed in you should serve as an inspiration, as you undertake the task of uniting the country going forward," Ambassador LaRocque added. "The patience and composure you have displayed during the prolonged process prior to your swearing-in are qualities that bode well as you embark on your term of office," he said.

"On behalf of the Caribbean

Community (CARICOM) and its Secretariat, I offer full support to you, Excellency, your Government and the people of Guyana, in the efforts to ensure a prosperous and secure future for the country, and convey best wishes for a successful tenure."

"I look forward, Excellency, to welcoming you as a member of the Conference of Heads of Government at its next Meeting," the Secretary-General said.

Spain puzzles over ex-King Juan Carlos's whereabouts

There is intense speculation in the Spanish media about the whereabouts of embattled ex-King Juan Carlos, after his shock announcement on Monday that he was leaving the country. The 82-year-old, who is targeted by a corruption probe, announced the move in a letter posted on the royal

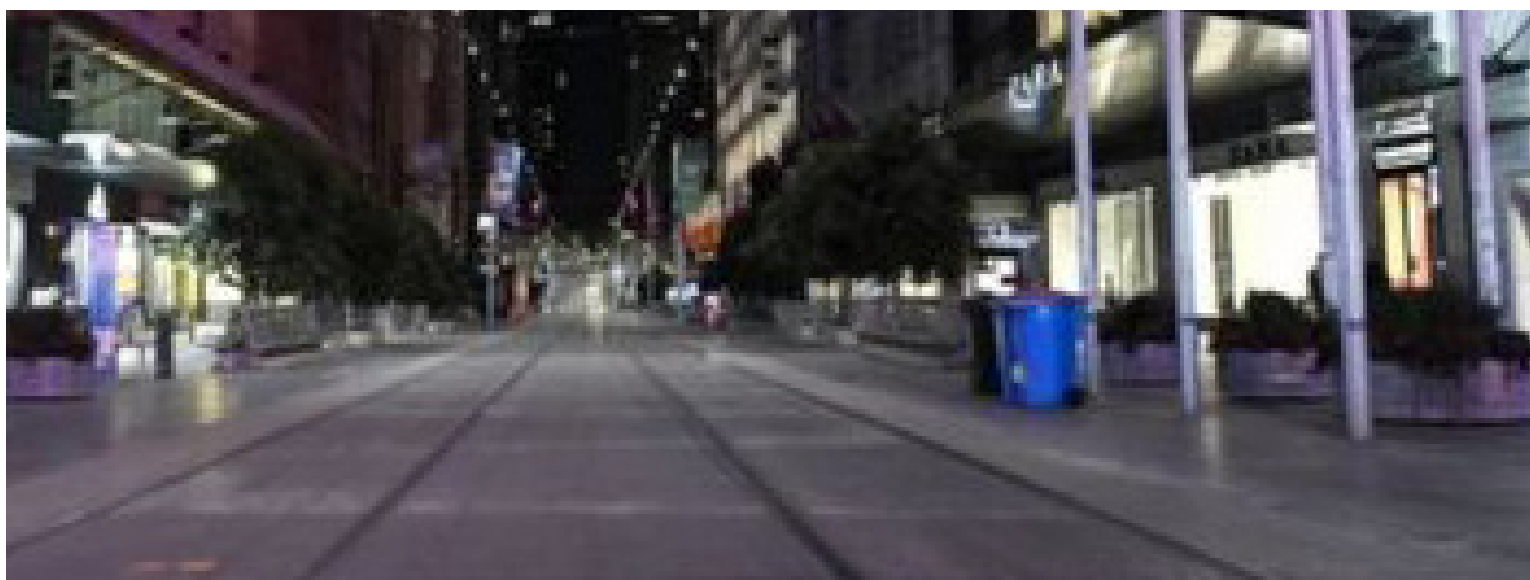
iating exit for a king who had once seemed set to go down in history as the leader who skillfully guided Spain to democracy after the death of General Franco in 1975.

In 2014, Juan Carlos abdicated and handed over to his son Felipe. Newspapers give various accounts about the former

in the Caribbean country.

In the letter, the former monarch wrote that he was leaving “in the face of the public repercussions that certain past events in my private life are generating” and in the hope of allowing his son to carry out his functions as king with “tranquillity”. The statement from

In Spain it was necessary to judge people, not institutions, he said. The country always needed “stability and robust institutions” which came with “transparency and regeneration”. But the move has caused tension with the prime minister’s left-wing coalition partner, Podemos.



Juan Carlos is under investigation in Spain, as well as in Switzerland

website.

It gave no details about his destination, but some reports suggest he has gone to the Dominican Republic.

Juan Carlos said he would be available if prosecutors needed to speak to him. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez says he does not know where the former king is. In June, Spain’s Supreme Court opened an investigation into Juan Carlos’ alleged involvement in a high-speed rail contract in Saudi Arabia.

BBC Europe correspondent Nick Beake says it is a humil-

king’s travels. La Vanguardia says he went to Portugal early on Monday, and was planning to fly to the Dominican Republic to stay with friends.

ABC, another daily, said he was already in the Dominican Republic. But El Confidencial said he could be in Portugal, France or Italy. El País meanwhile has so far refrained from speculating about Juan Carlos’s whereabouts. In Portugal, media said he was in the resort towns of Estoril or Cascais.

There are no reports from the Dominican Republic that he is

the Zarzuela palace said that King Felipe VI had conveyed “his heartfelt respect and gratitude” to his father for this decision. In March, King Felipe VI renounced the inheritance of his father. The royal palace also said at the time that Juan Carlos would stop receiving an annual grant of €194,000 (\$228,000; £174,520).

Prime Minister Sanchez addressed the media after a cabinet meeting and stressed the government’s “absolute respect” for Juan Carlos’s decision to relocate abroad.

Irene Montero, Spain’s equality minister, said Podemos had not been aware of any negotiations between the royal household and the government.

She said the departure of Juan Carlos left the Spanish royal family in a “very compromised and delicate position” and that the people of Spain “would not accept more corruption or more impunity”.

Spain’s Supreme Court has said it aims to establish Juan Carlos’s connection with the Saudi Arabia contract after his

Dozens killed as huge explosion rips through Lebanon's Beirut

At least 50 people have been killed and nearly 3,000 wounded in a powerful explosion that ripped through Lebanon's capital, Beirut, leaving much of it a wrangled mess.

The massive explosion on Tuesday at Beirut's port sent shockwaves across the city, causing widespread damage to buildings and shattering windows even on the outskirts of the capital.

The exact cause of the explosion was not immediately clear. Mohammed Fahmi, Lebanon's interior minister, said it was apparently caused by ammonium nitrate that was stored in a warehouse at the port.

Prime Minister Hassan Diab promised that "what happened will not go without accountability".

Health Minister Hamad Hasan called for international aid to Lebanon, and a number of nations in the West and the Gulf have said they were willing to provide assistance.

The explosion left the port a wasteland; cars hanging from the mangled beams of warehouses, bent containers spread across roadways and a large ship listing onto the quayside. A health worker on the scene told Al Jazeera that he had seen at least 10 people dead near the last site, many left disfigured.

Helicopters circling the port area were trying to extinguish a large fire preventing to get to the epicentre of the blast sight, even hours after it occurred. Sirens filled the air.

Hospitals in the city were overwhelmed with wounded and turning those with non-serious injuries away.

At Hotel-Dieu hospital, itself left damaged by the explosion, dozens of people trying to enter were told to go elsewhere. "It's a catastrophe, a catastrophe," a man said in disbelief.

Inside the crowded lobby, a family got the news that their relative was dead. A young woman bent over in anguish, spread her arms open to an infant child and said "Youssef, dad is in heaven." An old man fell to his knees and smacked the ground, over and over.

Pharmacies in the city were asked to welcome the wounded in order to take pressure off hospitals.

On TV screens, doctors asked for people to come donate blood. Newscasters read out the names of missing people - some were port employees, others were firefighters who had first responded to the fire at the port, before the massive explosion ripped the capital apart.

"Joseph Ruukoz," the newscaster read. "Marwan Charbouni. Charbel Hitti. Mohammad Mustafa Dakdouki. An Ethiopian woman."

Earlier at the port, a man in the all-white uniform of a boat crew, stained with blood, wandered near an Italian ship docked near the explosion site, the Orient Queen. Its interior was blown out, it was sloped sideways onto the quayside.



A picture shows the scene of an explosion near the port in the Lebanese capital Beirut

"The ship is totally destroyed - the cabins, the lounge, everything," Vincenzo Orlandini, the 69-year-old Italian crew member, told Al Jazeera.

"I heard the blast and I flew to the opposite of the lobby, then I landed on the carpet and I'm lucky, I think that saved me."

Video of the explosion taken by Al Jazeera shows a large column of smoke billowing from an area of the port that houses large warehouses before a large orange explosion is seen and huge dome-shaped blast wave shoots into the air.

Glass storefronts and windowpanes across the city were shattered in the explosion, while videos and pictures shared on social media showed doors ripped from their hinges and ceilings filled with gaping

holes.

A civil defence worker who has worked in the sector for 20 years was in disbelief at the scale of the damage.

"I've seen the assassinations and the explosions but this is something else. There is something wrong here," the worker said.

The explosion in Beirut port comes as the country faces an unprecedented financial crisis and a surging coronavirus outbreak.

Located in the heart of capital, the port is a vital piece of infrastructure used to get scarce goods in the country. There explosion damaged grains silos in the port which are a strategic reserve of wheat for the crisis-hit nation.

Venezuela market at centre of Caracas COVID-19 outbreak

Venezuela capital Caracas's largest produce market is at the centre of a worsening COVID-19 outbreak, but cash-strapped merchants refuse to stop hawking food there for the city's five million residents, many of whom are starving.

Three days a week - down from six before the pandemic - some 10,000 people, including retailers and consumers, pack into the state-run Coche Wholesale Market. The produce is trucked out to the city's supermarkets, providing a lifeline amid Venezuela's six-year economic crisis.

"Caracas depends on this market," its administrator Walter Rivera said in an interview, adding that about 17,000 tonnes of goods are sold there each month.

But the open-air bazaar, where people pay little heed to social distancing though most wear masks, upsets President Nicolas Maduro's government's efforts to stop an accelerating number of coronavirus cases from overloading Venezuela's dilapidated health system. So far authorities have confirmed 20,206 cases and 174 deaths, though the opposition and medical NGOs warn that testing is insufficient.

On July 29, authorities limited the opening hours of wholesale markets across the capital to between dawn and 2pm.



Walter Rivera, director of the Coche wholesale market announcing rules to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Caracas, Venezuela

Coche is a "potential site of high contagion" due to its lack of social distancing, Jose Manuel Olivares, a health adviser to opposition leader Juan Guaido, said in an interview.

Maduro ordered harsh lockdown measures in March which slowed the virus's spread, but basic goods shortages forced many merchants to return to wholesale markets to make a living.

"If you don't go out every

day you don't eat," said Moises Rojas, 23, who sells carrots, potatoes and onions in Coche.

Rojas, one of the market's 3,500 workers, said on pre-pandemic days he could sell three 45kg (110 pounds) sacks of carrots. Now, he sells only 5kg (11 pounds).

Some traders lugging sacks and pushing carts around the market said they feared getting infected, but they were

more afraid the government would stop them from working. "It would get ugly for us," said Angel Serrano, who has spent 32 of his 44 years selling there. "This supports all of us here."

Coche administrator Rivera said in the last few weeks they carried out 4,500 rapid antibody tests there, with only one positive result. "We're working so that they don't shut the market," he said.

Millions return to lockdown in Philippines



Residents of Manila can only step out for essentials

Tens of millions of people in the Philippines are back in lockdown, after doctors warned a surge in new coronavirus cases could push the healthcare system to collapse.

Stay-at-home orders are now in place in Manila and four surrounding provinces on the island of Luzon for two weeks.

The country only just emerged from one of the strictest lockdowns in June.

But hospitals have been struggling to cope with a five-fold rise in confirmed infections, now surging past 100,000. The lockdown

means a return to stay-at-home orders except for going out to buy essential goods or exercising outdoors. Public transport has also been suspended and domestic flights are grounded, while restaurants are restricted to take-aways.

The new lockdown came after 80 medical associations on Saturday called on President Rodrigo Duterte to toughen restrictions in a bid to slow the spread of the virus.

On Sunday the Philippines announced a record 5,032 new infections. In some areas hospitals are reported to have

been forced to turn away soaring numbers of patients.

Doctors hope the reinstated restrictions will now give medical workers more time to deal with the spike in cases.

With only 24 hours notice of the shutdown, which took effect on Tuesday, many people have found themselves stranded in the capital without any transport to return to their hometowns.

"We've run out of money. We can't leave the airport because we don't have any relatives here," Ruel Damaso, a 36-year-old construction

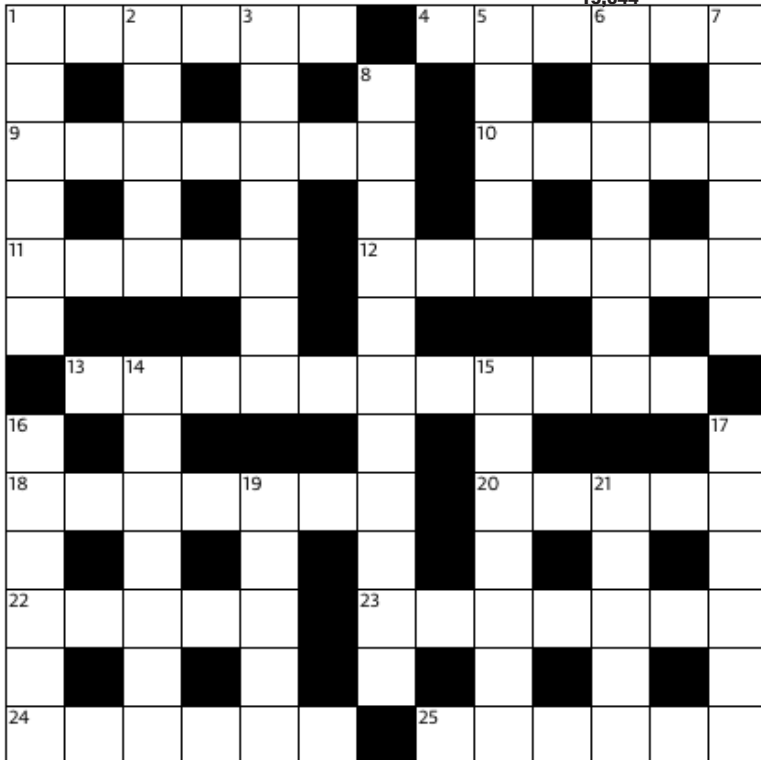
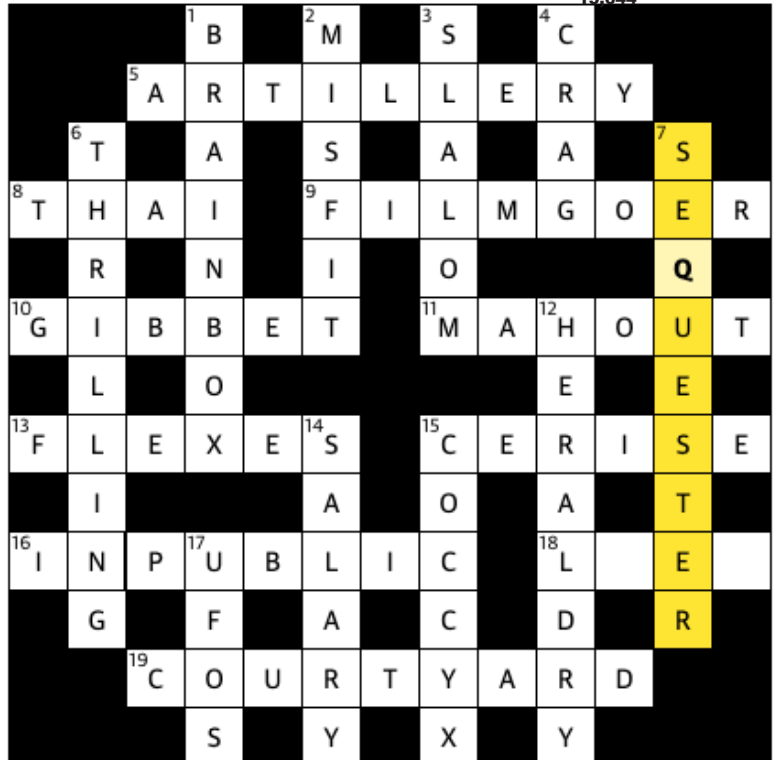
worker, told AFP. He was trying to return to the southern city of Zamboanga.

In other parts of Manila people were seen stockpiling food the day before restrictions began as they prepared to stay indoors for a second time.

The earlier shutdown from mid-March to May was one of the world's longest stay-at-home orders.

There have been 2,104 deaths in the Philippines from Covid-19, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

QUICK CROSSWORD

 Quick crossword No
 15,644

 Quick crossword No
 15,644


Across

- 1 Easter ___, 1948 film
with Judy Garland and Fred Astaire (6)
- 4 Led (6)
- 9 Level out (7)
- 10 Roofing slabs (5)
- 11 Flexible (5)
- 12 Coach (7)
- 13 Strikingly different (11)
- 18 Long-suffering (7)
- 20 Solo (5)
- 22 Between (5)
- 23 Places of business (7)
- 24 Company (6)
- 25 Condition caused by lack of

Down

- 1 Learners (6)
- 2 Retaliate (5)
- 3 Most profound (7)
- 5 Spare (5)
- 6 Small toothed whale, larger than a porpoise (7)
- 7 Win over (6)
- 8 Calculation — or tacit snub (anag) (11)
- 14 End result (7)
- 15 Deal illegally (7)
- 16 Jumped suddenly (6)
- 17 Largest of the Channel Islands (6)
- 19 Rowing crew (5)
- 21 Crop up (5)

CARTOON CORNER

In the Bleachers



"I'm glad the golf course is reopened —
I just wish they hadn't furloughed
the groundskeeper."



DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr. 19): It could be fantasy and not fate that makes things seem more complicated than they really are. Avoid misunderstandings by being willing to go along with someone's harmless flights of fancy.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20): Make imagery count. You may be able to spin your ideas and your appearance into a more favorable look. Be a leader and set an example when morals, principles and high ideals need to be demonstrated.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Sometimes you have to fake before you make it. More can be gained by speaking your mind than by brooding in silence, but be considerate of others. Search out the win-win solutions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A stalemate might stall your progress. You may yearn for more romance in your life than is possible at this time. When your expectations are unrealistic, you are likely to be disappointed when people do not meet them.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Gemstones form when ordinary elements are placed under fire and your status within a group might seem important now. A careless word or change of plan might create a situation that challenges your loyalties. Reach out to a trustworthy friend or family member.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Do you really need that? Watch a tendency to spend money on wild and crazy fads. The little things you buy on impulse may bring a smile to your face, but things that are useful and lasting bring more true pleasure.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): When they think you're good, don't disappoint them. You may receive more positive attention from others than usual, but you must work hard to live up to that favorable opinion.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may believe in the eventual triumph of good over evil, or that all fairy tales have a moral message. Since you are inspired by positive and uplifting ideas, it is easier for you to be generous and

show brotherly love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your passion for achieving financial success can keep you going long after the sun goes down. Your belief that there is always a happy ending may sustain you and help you overcome minor misunderstandings.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): When you are open-minded and grateful, you are able to see opportunities rather than obstacles. Pure logic alone may not work when it comes to human feelings and behavior. Cultivate empathy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Some people believe that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. You want to believe that, but you are more of a pragmatist when it comes to handling your money. Encourage your friends to be more realistic.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Find your best path forward. Your social skills can give you a competitive edge, especially when it comes to making smart business moves. Fight off the urge to spend money frivolously to satisfy emotional needs.

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- (2) Have your dog spayed or neutered to prevent unwanted puppies. The Humane Society operates a low-cost spay/neuter clinic - call 461-4957 for more information.
- (3) Keep your dog on your own property or under your direct control at all times, as is required by law.

Why NBA seeding games matter for Luka Doncic and the Dallas Mavericks

The Dallas Mavericks truly enjoyed the early stages in the NBA's bubble community, starting with a bass-thumping dance party on their Walt Disney World Resort hotel balconies while quarantined and continuing with playfully intense pickleball and Spikeball competitions.

Once the basketball games that counted began, the fun skidded to a halt for the Mavs in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

Actually, they had a pretty good time for the first 47 minutes, 15 seconds, as the Mavs lit up the Houston Rockets for most of the restart opener and had a seven-point lead with 45 seconds remaining in regulation. But that lead disintegrated, and soon, so did Dallas' realistic hopes



Luka Dončić

of moving up from seventh place in the Western Conference standings.

The Mavs followed up that gut-wrenching overtime loss by blowing a 13-point halftime lead to the Phoenix Suns, who, despite an undefeated run so far in the bubble, remain a long shot to stick around for the playoffs. It marked

the 13th time this season (and second in the restart) that the Mavs lost despite building a double-digit lead, matching the most in the league.

The Mavs managed to avoid that issue in Tuesday's matinee against the Sacramento Kings by trailing the vast majority of the game. Dallas was in serious

danger of establishing itself as the biggest bubble disappointment when the Mavs trailed the Kings by six points with five minutes remaining.

Ugly as it might have been, the Mavs consider the 114-110 comeback win they pulled out in overtime worth celebrating.

"We got this win, and we needed that," said Mavericks point guard Luka Dončić, who had 34 points, 20 rebounds and 12 assists, recording the fourth 30-20-10 triple-double since the NBA-ABA merger, according to Elias Sports Bureau research.

"I think we played one of the worst games ever and we won. We didn't play good, and we still hung in there and helped each other and never gave up. I'm proud of the win."

Rafael Nadal will not defend title

Defending champion Rafael Nadal has decided not to play the US Open later this month because the coronavirus pandemic is "not under control".

Spanish world number two Nadal, 34, has not entered the tournament, which takes place in New York from 31 August.

"The health situation is very complicated around the world with cases increasing and flare-ups," said Nadal.

Serbia's Novak Djokovic leads the men's entry list, while American great Serena Williams has indicated she will play.

Nadal added: "This is a decision I

never wanted to take but I have decided to follow my heart this time and for the time being I rather not travel."

The United States Tennis Association (USTA) is hosting a double tournament at Flushing Meadows, having moved the Cincinnati Masters to New York.

The event will be staged at the Billie Jean King Tennis Centre from 22 August, with the US Open taking place immediately afterwards.

Both tournaments will be held without fans and players will have to follow strict measures.

The USTA measures within the safe-



Rafael Nadal

ty bubble include regular testing, mitigation measures and increased sanitisation. The organisation said on Friday it was confident the health and safety of everyone involved in the tournaments remained "on track".

cont'd on pg 25

England v Pakistan: Ben Stokes fitness causes home side to wait

England will wait on the fitness of all-rounder Ben Stokes before deciding on the make-up of their side for the first Test against Pakistan.

Stokes, 29, was unable to bowl in last week's third-Test win against West Indies because of a quad injury.

He bowled in the nets on Monday, but wet weather at Emirates Old Trafford meant he was only able to bowl indoors on Tuesday.

England's team will be announced at the toss on Wednesday.

"We're still a bit unsure on where he's at," England captain Joe Root told BBC Sport. "We have options, and that is very exciting."

"Regardless of what the conditions and the surface throw at us, we feel like we have all bases covered."

With Stokes unable to bowl against West Indies, England omitted batsman Zak Crawley and fielded four frontline seamers alongside spinner



Ben Stokes

Dom Bess.

Bess did not bowl a ball in the 269-run win but, with warm weather forecast at least for the start of the Test in Manchester, the decision will probably be between Crawley and a pace bowler if Stokes cannot bowl.

Regardless of Stokes' fitness - he may be able to bowl more as the game progresses - England may again be

faced with the difficult decision of which of their seamers to leave out.

Root said Stuart Broad is set to play and added that he would like the extra pace of either Jofra Archer or Mark Wood.

Therefore, the decision could be between James Anderson, England's all-time leading wicket-taker, and Chris Woakes, whose aver-

age of 22.53 in home conditions is the best of the current crop of seamers.

"In terms of selection, I couldn't be happier to have so many headaches," said Root.

"It's a very tough call, but it's exciting as well. You look at the amount of bowlers that are performing very well at the moment - we feel like we have a really good chance of taking 20 wickets and winning a Test match."

"If we are going to be the number one side in the world, we are going to have to have a battery of fast bowlers - guys who can come in and perform at any given stage."

Pakistan arrive with their own exciting pace attack, including 17-year-old Naseem Shah, who in February became the youngest bowler to take a Test hat-trick.

cont'd from pg 24

While the WTA Tour resumed in Palermo this week, the Cincinnati-US Open double header will be the first ATP events since March.

"We know that the reduced tennis calendar is barbaric this year after four months stopped with no play," added Nadal, who will miss a Grand Slam for the first time since Wimbledon in 2016.

No Nadal or Federer - who is playing?

Nadal's great rival Roger Federer will also be absent from the US Open, with the

38-year-old Swiss recovering from knee surgery.

Australian Ashleigh Barty, the women's world number one, said last week she did not want to play, meaning Romania's world number two Simona Halep leads the entry list.

Defending women's champion Bianca Andreescu has also entered.

The entry list is not a guarantee that those on it will play the Grand Slam tournament, with many players likely to make a final decision over the next few weeks.

Sports

WEDNESDAY 5TH AUGUST 2020

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Carnival Weekend Golf Classic



Victory for Aubrey Matthew in the Patricia Matthew Carnival Weekend Family Golf Classic held at Cedar Valley on Monday.

In a close contest, Matthew edged his two younger brothers, Paullus and Glen-tist Martin by two shots to win the championship

which was dubbed JUDGE-MENT DAY.

Thanks to his eighteen-hole score of 89, Matthew away walked away with the biggest trophy while Paullus took home the runner up hardware and Glentist the third place prize.

Apart from the trio, the other contenders were Walcott Haywood, Winston Moore Jr, Josh Croke, Co-



rey Robertson and Garfield Pigotts.

Sponsorship for the exercise came from Sugars Delight and Zamine Shipping.

DEWS

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