



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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AMERICAN DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE!

The events that unfolded last Wednesday when an angry mob, some armed, briefly took control of the US Capitol Building, the symbol of democracy not just in the United States but around the world, were extremely troubling.

Perhaps what was most shocking is that the Capitol police chief seems to have been the only person on the planet who did not know of the intentions of the mob once they arrived in Washington D.C.

Many of us have been watching with keen interest the machinations of the current occupant in the White House and his many attempts to have the results of the elections held in November last year overturned. Months before the general elections he was complaining of electoral fraud, stating that this was the only way to defeat him.

Aided by several Republican Senators and members of the House of Representatives, whose only motivate is to inherit the 'million-strong'

Trump base, they spent the months since the election claiming fraud and other irregularities cost them the election.

More than sixty cases where filed. All were dismissed for lack of evidence.

It is interesting to note that all the areas where Trump alleged fraud were those where there were high numbers of black and brown people.

It was a more than subtle reminder that in the minds of some racist Americans only white people's votes were legitimate. All areas where people of other races voted the entire processes were fraudulent.

In the 2016 Presidential campaign the Democratic candidate, Hilary Clinton, referred to Donald Trump's supporters as 'deplorables,' a feeling that his base were largely uneducated whites from the rural areas. Yet, despite losing the popular vote, he won the Electoral College majority under the strange US system put in place to

appease southern states.

In the 2020 elections, Trump's supporters can no longer be described as 'deplorables;' they have expanded to include every segment of American society.

As an example, Ashli Babbitt, who was shot and killed during the assault, is a former US Air Force officer who served four tours in Afghanistan.

Babbitt and many of her ilk believed in many far-right conspiracy theories many of which were being promoted by the President himself.

For many in the Caribbean, and Antigua and Barbuda is no exception, the United States represented the ideal, the land of 'milk and honey', the land of endless possibilities. Thousands of Caribbean nationals migrate to the US each year to work, to study, to live, and others for a two-week vacation that never ends.

It was more than a little unsettling for Caribbean people to see what was happening in the US

last week as this was widely viewed as an assault on democracy everywhere.

It is also incomprehensible that a US president would use his platforms to plan and orchestrate the assault.

In the end the systems held. The attempted takeover or coup did not happen and the President-elect Joe Biden will be inaugurated on 20th January as planned.

This past experience in the US is however not something to gloss over. If nothing else, it highlights the fragility of democracy and how wherever it exists the people have to be eternally vigilant.

It is also clear that there are many deep-rooted problems in the US that are likely to take years to resolve. To his credit, the incoming president has selected a very experienced and diverse team to begin the serious work of resolving these issues.

America's success in this enterprise is also our success. Best of luck, Mr. Biden!

PM Browne: We have no regrets!

That's how the Antigua and Barbuda government views its decision to invest in the establishment of The University of the West Indies Five Islands campus.

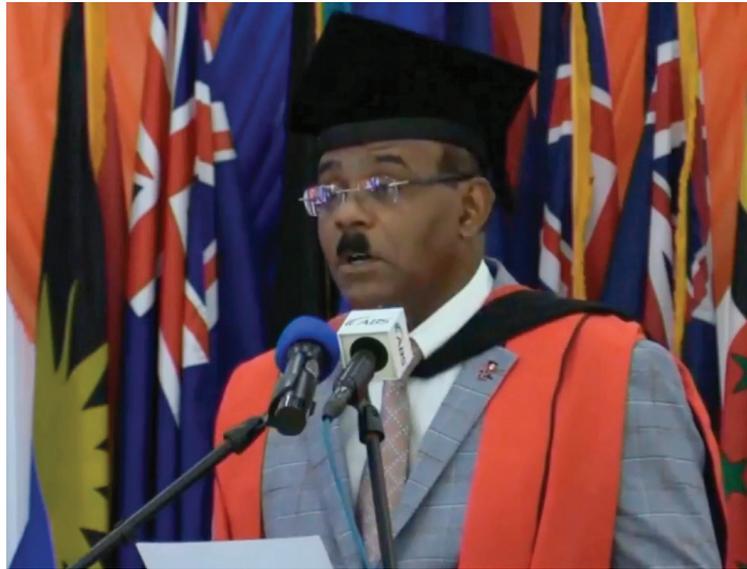
Making the point was Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, who delivered the feature address at Sunday's graduation exercise held at The UWI Five Islands Campus.

"I know that I speak for my Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda when I say that we have no regret over the investment we made in UWI Five Islands. It was an investment in the upliftment of our people, and of our nation. There can be no cause more noble, no pursuit more fulfilling, no accomplishment more joyous. This Inaugural Graduation Ceremony, though small, attests to the worthiness and wisdom of our investment," he declared.

The prime minister noted that at Sunday's graduation six persons graduated with a post-graduate diploma in Education.

"It is a small step in numbers, but a great leap in achievement.

These six graduates are 'the first of the many' who will go on to educate scores of others in the decades to come, adding to the wealth of knowledge and capacity within our country,"



he emphasized.

Earlier in the address, PM Browne remarked that university education "is an expensive ideal that the West Indies could barely afford, especially in an inflationary world." This, he explained has been the one constant since The UWI opened its doors back in 1948.

"The cost of providing a university and a university education, for which many thousands thirst and which is vital to the development of our countries, has increased exponentially over the last seven de-

cadec," he further explained.

He added that finding the money now to continue to provide it, in a world paralyzed and battered by the COVID-19 pandemic, is difficult and challenging.

An indication of the difficulties developing countries face is contained in data presented by the World Bank. "The World Bank estimates that, because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, about thirty per cent of the world's emerging and developing countries have lost at least ten years of in-

come gains per resident.

This has resulted in what the Bank describes as a "lost decade of growth" for these nations," he revealed.

According to the prime minister, unfortunately the economies of Caribbean countries that are served by The UWI are among the hardest hit.

Yet, the Antigua and Barbuda leader is urging resolve, telling the people of the region that despite these brutal circumstances, the provision of university education is not a task from which West Indian governments can recoil, any more than it is an ambition that the West Indian people should abandon.

"My government believes in this great destiny for our people and formulated a vision to transform Antigua and Barbuda into an economic powerhouse in the Caribbean. However, we recognized that access to a university education was quintessential to the sustained advancement of our nation and the achievement of our vision. That is why we prioritized the establishment of The UWI Five Islands Campus, at great costs and sacrifice, to facilitate the development of Antigua and Barbuda and the OECS sub-region as a whole," he remarked.

Freeze on public sector employment impacts police force

The current freeze on employment in the public sector is having an impact on the operations of some departments, most notably the police force.

That is the word from Commissioner of Police Atlee Rodney, who disclosed that the police have not been able to recruit new officers since the government imposed the freeze.

It was among matters address when the Commission and his senior officers met with media representatives

last Friday to provide an update on the operations of the force over the past year.

“It was based (the decision not to recruit new members) on a decision by the government not to hire new staff in the public sector because of the economic impact brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. So as a result we could not recruit new officers. This has affected our operations because with COVID we were called to do much more than

normal and that created a challenge meeting that demand with limited resources,” he explained.

Commissioner Rodney said there are ongoing discussions with policymakers on this and other issues to help make the force more efficient. The commissioner remains hopeful, but admits there will not be a speedy resolution of this matter.

“This may not happen right away because of the economic fallout but hopefully, once the

country starts settling in and there is some glimmer of hope, I expect that this matter will be addressed because it is creating a problem for us already,” he further explained.

Last year, in response to the severe economic fallout from the pandemic, the Cabinet imposed a strict ‘no recruitment’ policy for the entire public sector. This is likely to remain in place until economic activity picks up later this year.



Boost for HAPI programme

The Home Assistance Programme for the Poor and Indigent (HAPPI) has received much needed assistance as it gets ready to begin its 2021 activities.

On Friday, through the efforts of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, E.P. Chet Greene, and the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), a set of new tools was donated to the programme.

In accepting, Social Transformation Minister, Dean Jonas, said the tools will assist greatly in enabling the programme to carry out its mandate more efficiently. He said there is a long waiting list of individuals wanting to access the programme but the shortage of equipment limits the amount of work they can do at any given



Presentation of new tools to HAPI programme

time.

Minister Greene said he will utilize his foreign contacts as well as the country's foreign service representatives to seek out additional assistance for the programme.

Coordinator of HAPPI, Sgt. Veldon Raguette, said the programme, which started in 2017 utilising prisoners to help repair and rebuild houses for the

less fortunate in the communities, selects the beneficiaries based on prioritizing needs.

So far, fifty-six homes have been repaired and there are two houses where work is currently being done. However, he acknowledged that the need for assistance is significant.

There are two teams of prisoners working on the programme, with a unit

from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force to join soon.

Sgt. Raguette said each team needs two electric saws and Friday's donation will allow for increased output.

"With this much-needed donation, the HAPPI programme will be in a better position to assist more persons who are in need of urgent home repairs and build better, more resilient homes. Thanks to Philmore Mullin from NODS and Minister Greene for the timely donation. Gratitude is also extended to members of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force who are dedicating their time and skills to join the inmates in constructing homes under the HAPPI programme,"

Additional charges for escapee

After being on the run for almost twenty-four hours, a man who was being held on a number of charges is now back behind bars and is facing additional charges.

Police Public Relations Officer, Inspector Frankie Thomas reported that the suspect, Carlson Matthew Jr. of Upper Fort Road, escaped police custody on Friday 8th January.

"It is alleged the accused escaped from a holding cell at St. John's Police, while a police officer was attending to another detainee around 5:00 p.m. He was last seen wearing a

pair of red three-quarter pants and a multi-colored shirt," Thomas stated.

But in a subsequent update, Thomas said Matthew was recaptured Saturday afternoon around 2:45 p.m. at Bennett Street, Villa.

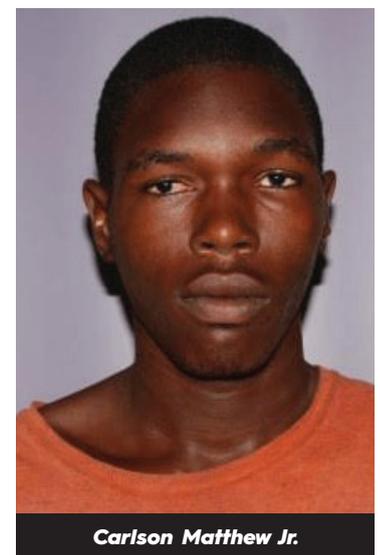
Matthew was previously apprehended by police around 5:00 a.m. on Thursday in the Point Area, after a wanted bulletin was issued for his arrest. He is accused of breaking into a dwelling house on upper St. George's Street on 30th December 2020 and stole several valuable items to include

a mobile phone, jewellery and an undisclosed sum of money. He was charged with house break-in and larceny for that offence.

Meanwhile, Darius Williams of Potters surrendered to police at St. John's Police Station late Thursday night. Further investigations are now ongoing into the matter.

Last week, week police issued a wanted bulletin for the arrest of both men in connection with allegations of aggravated robbery, break-in and larceny.

Both men are expected to appear in court this week to face separate



Carlson Matthew Jr.

charges. In the case of Matthew, he is expected to have the charge of escaping lawful custody added to the offences with which he was previously charged.

Fire Chief committed to a 'standalone' Fire Department

If Fire Chief Elvis Weaver had his way, the Fire Department, now a department within the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, would sever ties with the 'parent body' and operate as a separate entity within the government service of Antigua and Barbuda.

And according to Asst. Commissioner Weaver, the move to separate the fire department from the police has at least one powerful supporter, Attorney General Steadroy Benjamin, who is also the minister with portfolio responsibilities for the police and Legal Affairs.

The issue was among matters raised last Friday when the top brass of the police force, which includes Weaver in the capacity as Assistant Commission of Police and head of the Fire Depart-

ment, held a press conference at the Sir Wright George Police Academy.

"We are still pursuing the matter. There was a committee put in place to look into the process of separation of the fire from the formal police force. The Attorney General is still on board, so too is the Permanent Secretary. We continue to do the work but the final decision must be made by the government," he told reporters.

Weaver said the fire service is 'ready to go' as it awaits final word from the government of its intentions. He explained that the fire service already operates to a large degree as an independent unit with its own budget, establishment and other arrangements in place.

The Fire Chief said he believes that the separa-

tion from police will make the department more effective as the firefighters will concentrate on the growing demands they face. "The separation will make us more efficient and while we understand that there are some who may have reservations about such a move, I believe the department will be better off for it," he declared.

Currently, members of the fire department train alongside regular police recruits at the Sir Wright George Police Academy and are introduced to police methodologies.

If a criminal act is suspected at a scene of a fire, then the CID is called in to conduct the investigation, but Weaver wants to see his personnel undergo specialist training for fire investigation.

Weaver revealed that his firefighters are now

being called to emergency situations, especially those involved in vehicular accidents as part of the expanding role.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Benjamin has confirmed that he is still fully committed to separating the fire service from the police. "It's a matter that the government has not addressed for a while, but we are going to get it done; it's a matter of time. Everything is in place for this to happen. The Act has been drafted which shows that much work has been done on the matter," he revealed.

According to Benjamin, this is one area where Antigua and Barbuda lags behind most Caribbean countries, even among those in the OECS where the fire services have been separated from the police.

Carib beer is still committed... but a local group now wants to do beer production

The Trinidad and Tobago-based beer company - Carib Beer - is still committed to establishing a brewery here in Antigua and Barbuda. But so too is a local company.

"Carib Beer say they are still committed to the plans announced over a year ago where they plan to do Carib Beer and

other beverages here," Prime Minister Gaston Browne disclosed.

However, he noted that local company Antigua Distillery Ltd. has also indicated that it too is interested in establishing its own brewery on island.

There are some matters which first have to be clarified, based

on certain assurances already given to Carib Beer.

If all had gone to plan, Carib Beer would have been nearly completed with upgrades to the Antigua Brewery Building at Crabbs where it intends to base its operations.

These plans have been disrupted by the COVID-219 pandemic.

Sharp rise in active COVID-19 cases

There has been a sharp rise in the number of active cases of COVID-19 in Antigua and Barbuda, according to the latest information coming from the Ministry of Health.

In the latest update provided Sunday afternoon, the Ministry disclosed that there have been seven new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country as of Saturday 9th January 2021 at 6 p.m.

The update said subsequent to the publication of the dashboard for Friday 8th January 2021 with the cut off time of 6 p.m., two hundred samples were processed at the Mount St. John's Medical Center, which increased the pending results from seventeen to two hundred and seventeen.

"Of the two hundred processed by MSJMC, one

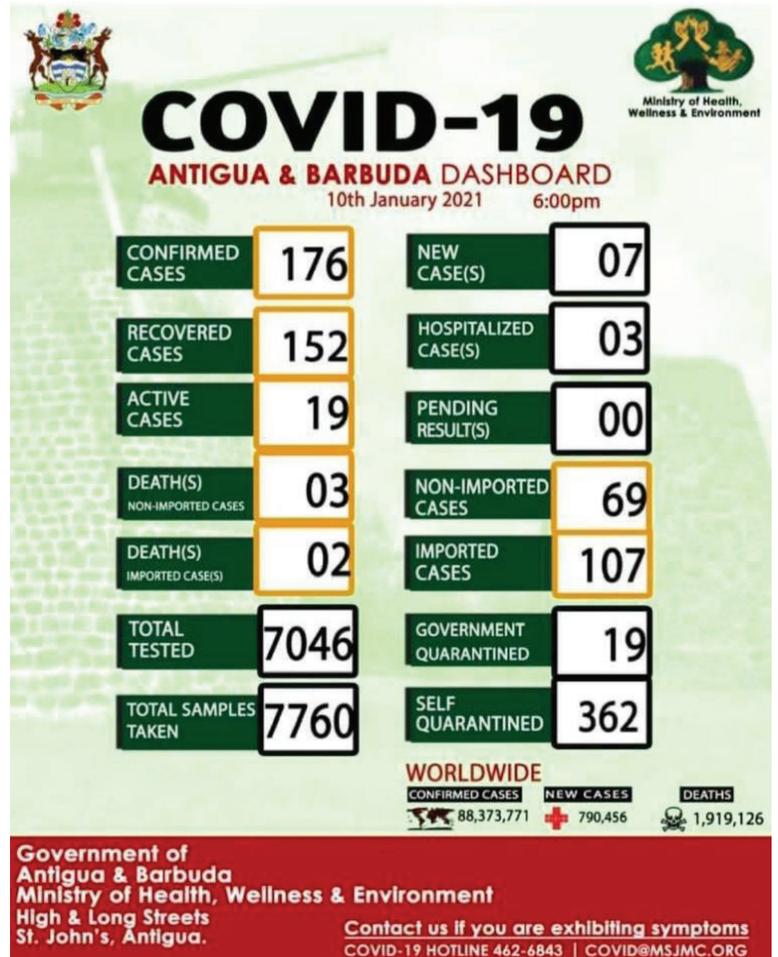
hundred and ninety-eight were negative and two positive while of the seventeen processed by CARPHA, eleven were negative and six positive. One of the positive samples from CARPHA was a repeat test," the update explained.

The samples are reflected in the total persons tested and total samples taken columns of the dashboard.

Of note, the ministry is drawing attention to the jump in the number of active cases. "Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is one hundred and seventy-six (176), which is inclusive of nineteen (19) active cases," the statement noted.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.

The ministry is however



emphasizing that the information in this dashboard

is inclusive of data for 9th January 2020.

PM concerned about male under-achievement

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is raising concerns over a growing problem not only here in Antigua and Barbuda but also across the Caribbean—the issue of male under-achievement.

Speaking on the Browne and Browne radio programme on PointeFM on Saturday, PM Browne discussed Sunday's graduation exercise where six women were involved in the ceremony with high certification.

"It is most instructive that there are no males in this graduating class. We have a fundamental problem. In the earlier days, men dominated these

exercises but now we have gone to the other extreme where women now dominate," he stated.

According to the Antigua and Barbuda leader, it is clear that males are being left behind and he takes the firm view that males 'have to step up'.

"When you look at most tertiary institutions across the region, you don't see males properly represented among the student body. Our males seem to be happy to be on the back of a truck going to a construction site," he lamented. He said the country cannot advance with aspirations 'set so low'. Aspirations have to be

higher, he remarked.

Browne indicated that the problem is a major issue for young men in the area he represents in parliament, the Point and Villa communities. He revealed that many young men in the area drop out of secondary school in third form to get a job at the port authority because of high-paying stevedore jobs.

The representative is advising these young men to complete their secondary education and aim at attaining higher education as many jobs as stevedores will disappear with the growing mechanization of the port.

BA Holidays reverses decision to continue sales

(Simon Browning - BBC Business Reporter)

BA Holidays reverses decision to continue sales get stuff from the supermarket despite the list she sends me on WhatsApp, I figure that the idea for an appropriate resolution for me to try this year is to make a Velcro wall but she doubts that I will stick to it.

Despite my poking fun at the New Year and choosing the worst possible predictions, I am truly a romantic and visionary. I am convinced that we live in the best

possible world and time. Even if we don't, we have the capacity and power to make it so. All we need to do is believe in ourselves, try our best and never give up. I am not alone in this. Poet and pacifist, Edith Lovejoy Pierce, wrote, "We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day." T.S. Eliot believed, "Every moment is a fresh beginning." I am convinced that what the new year brings to us will depend large-

ly on what we bring to the new year. While Frank Sinatra made it clear that "The best is yet to come" we should always take everything with more than a pinch of salty humour. Oscar Wilde set the tone when he noted, "Good resolutions are simply cheques that men draw on a bank where they have no account." In my case, I tell people that many years ago I made a New Year's resolution to never make new year's resolutions. Since then, it is the only resolution I've ever kept.

OECD: Lockdowns here to stay, even with vaccine plan

(Karishma Vaswani - BBC Asia business correspondent)

That's the sobering forecast for 2021 from Laurence Boone, the chief economist of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development.

"We probably have another six to nine or twelve months of this ahead of us," she told the BBC's Talking Business Asia programme.

"I'm not saying it's easy, I'm saying we've seen that it worked in 2020."

"We must keep going both with the non-pharmaceutical measures, the government support and deploy the vaccine, as long and efficiently as fast as efficiently and securely as possible."

A new strain of the virus has led to fresh lockdowns in many parts of the world - including countries in Asia, such as South Korea, that have up until now managed to constrain new infections.

Nevertheless, the OECD says the

global economic outlook for 2021 will improve - albeit from a low base.

It is expecting global GDP to rise to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year, but warned that recovery won't be equal across all countries.

China, for instance, is expected to grow by 8 per cent in 2021, while other OECD member economies are expected to grow by just over 3 per cent on average.

The international economic body added that how well countries will recover will depend on how smooth the rollout of vaccines is.

Speaking from Paris, Ms Boone also explained that governments have to keep spending to help shore up their economies in the face of this unprecedented crisis - even if that means adopting a more relaxed attitude to managing national budgets.

"These measures that we have strongly advocated do make sense

because this crisis is temporary. So we're talking about temporary measures and a temporary increase in debt to GDP ratio," she said.

"Once we're out of the crisis, the economic fabric would have been preserved thanks to these measures, then we will have to take a step back, look at the evolution of public finances across country not only since COVID-19, but also since the financial crisis and see... whether governments are spending their money on the right priorities."

This is a different approach from the advice the OECD gave countries in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008, when it advocated austerity.

The stark forecast highlights how challenging the health crisis has been for both rich and poor countries - and the difficult road they now face.

The OECD also warns of widening inequality, with lower paid workers in informal jobs at most risk.

Deferred loan payments used to repurchase Grenlec shares

Prime Minister Dr Keith Mitchell has indicated that Government's US\$60 million payment to repurchase the majority shares in Grenlec from WRB Enterprises included allocations from ministerial projects that failed to be implemented in 2020 because of COVID-19 and from allocations that were initially scheduled for debt payment.

When asked to provide specific areas where Government reallocated funding to pay to the company for its approximately 63% of the shares, he said, "There is one category in

the budget, I don't understand how that seems to be an unknown fact to some people; there is one thing in the budget, debt payment is one vote."

Dr Mitchell, who served as Finance Minister up to September 2020 explained that a debt payment which is part of the Government's overall commitment, is covered in the annual estimates of revenue and expenditure under the section for debt payment.

In March 2020 following the announcement from the World Health Organisation that Covid-19 has become a global pan-

demic, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund called on bilateral creditors to provide debt relief for IDA countries like Grenada, suspending payments on loans and allowing them to use available resources to fight the pandemic.

In May, the Paris Club Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) announced through a press release that it would suspend Grenada's repayment for the May and December 2020. Though the formal announcement was not made about the terms and conditions for all debt repayments to the Paris Club, a recent news release from the US Embassy in Grenada confirmed an agreement with one member of the Club.

The release said that a Bilateral Debt Agreement was signed with the USA that provides for the island to consolidate and reschedule debt payments that were due between May and December 2020. A review of the 2020 Estimates and Expenditure has shown that the Paris Club loans are labelled as rescheduled.

Speaking with journalists as part of his annual new year's interview schedule, Dr Mitchell explained that the repurchasing was something that Government could not have refused.

"It was known that any change the Government signed onto, any change

in that purchase agreement the force majeure clause will be initiated by the buyer and it means that we will be forced to buy back," he said while pointing out that failure to reach an agreement could have had negative implementation for the current government and the country.

"The buyback decision was not a government decision, in a time of pandemic where we have serious issues to deal with, we will not want to spend that kind of money to buy back any kind of national asset, so we were forced to do it and had we not done it," he said, pointing out possible penalties.

"Of course the name of the country will be brought into disrepute; no one wants to know that an international tribunal indicates the Government must pay and that if we refuse to pay, that has serious implications to the image of the country. They will not be able to come and take us and sell us individually, but they can certainly do a lot to embarrass the Government and the country, and I will not want to be part of this, so clearly, that was one of the serious considerations," said the Prime Minister.

Under the final settlement agreement Government paid WRB Enterprises US\$60 million of the agreed US\$63 million in full within a short period and the remaining US\$3 million over a 2-year period.



This beautiful kitten is available for adoption at the Humane Society's animal shelter in Bethesda. The adoption fee of \$80 covers worming, treating for fleas, litter box training and neutering. If you would like to adopt this kitten or any of our cats or kittens, please call us at 461-4957 for more information. We are open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Antigua & Barbuda Humane Society
 Tel: (268) 461-4957
 Email: antiguaanimals@gmail.com
 Website: www.antiguaanimals.com
 Facebook: Antigua & Barbuda Humane Society

Minister aiming to expand reach of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee

(Jamaica Observer) - Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Floyd Green is aiming to expand the reach of the Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee brand internationally and increase production of coffee locally.

Green said on Friday that he intends to facilitate a close working relationship among several stakeholders in the industry. They include the Jamaica Coffee Exporters Association (JCEA) and State agencies such as the Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority (JACRA) and the Jamaica Promotions Corporation (Jampro).

“We also want to work with our partners such as the Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee and right here the local Embassy of Japan and our friends in Japan,” Minister Green said.

He was delivering remarks at a virtual joint ceremony of the eve of the third anniversary of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Day, held at the offices of the Consulate General of Jamaica in New York, yesterday.

The minister indicated that while coffee recorded an increase of 12 per cent last year, the aim is to get to 31 per cent by 2025.

A number of steps, he said, will be taken to ensure this happens. They include the expansion of nurseries so that farmers have clean and cli-



Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Floyd Green enjoys a cup of coffee at a virtual joint ceremony on the eve of the third anniversary of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Day. Jamaica, Japan and other countries will observe today, January 9, as Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Day. /PHOTO JIS

mate-resilient planting material, providing greater technical support to farmers and processors, the exploration of new markets, and ensuring that coffee farmers get a fair price for their product.

The minister expressed gratitude to the people of Japan for the interest shown in Jamaica’s coffee and for being the largest importer, with that market accounting for roughly 70 per cent of Jamaica’s coffee exports.

Meanwhile, president of the JCEA, Norman Grant, said his organisation wants to intensify the marketing strategy to preserve and grow existing markets such as the United States, which accounts for only 20 per cent of the exports of Jamaica Blue

Mountain coffee.

Grant also indicated that a local campaign has been launched to improve the consumption of coffee locally.

The JCEA president is also aiming to increase the production of coffee from 30 boxes per acre to an average of 90 boxes per acre to increase the overall production of Jamaican coffee from 250,000 to 350,000 boxes by the year 2025.

And president of Jampro Diane Edwards said that her agency remains committed to increasing exports of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee to the United States and Europe.

“As the Government’s trade and investment promotions agency, we are eager to see more coffee

growers, greater coffee production and ultimately, more exports of our treasured coffee. Therefore, we have partnered with the JCEA and JACRA in bringing greater visibility to this prized product and brand with the celebrations of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Day,” she said.

Celebrated on 9th January each year, Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Day highlights Jamaica’s strong bilateral partnership with Japan and the increasing prominence of the coffee on the international market, including the United States.

The day also commemorates the first large shipment of coffee beans from Jamaica to Japan on 9th January 1967.

Bitcoin Association unveils online learning platform Bitcoin SV Academy

Bitcoin Association, the global industry organization that works to advance business with the Bitcoin SV data network, has recently unveiled Bitcoin SV Academy, an online learning platform built to educate businesses and individuals about the true capabilities of Bitcoin and its blockchain. Bitcoin SV Academy is the latest educational initiative to emerge from the Switzerland-based Bitcoin Association, which counts Calvin Ayre, Special Economic Envoy with responsibility for Bitcoin to Antigua & Barbuda, among its founding executive committee members.

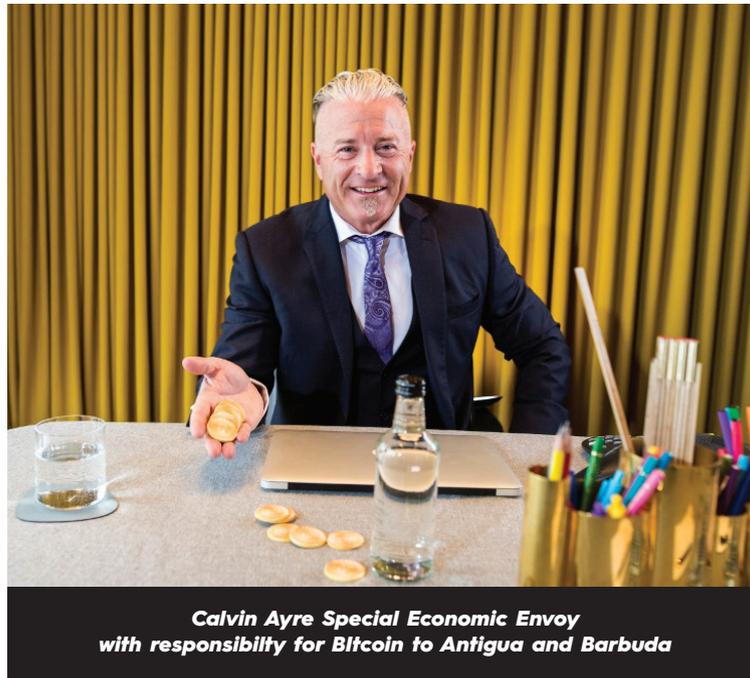
Bitcoin SV Academy offers university-style, academia-quality online courses in three distinct streams: Bitcoin Theory, Bitcoin Development and Bitcoin Infrastructure.

Bitcoin Theory - covers the design of Bitcoin as a system as prescribed by its creator, Satoshi Nakamoto.

Bitcoin Development - provides vanguard information for application developers building with Bitcoin, including tools and techniques for leveraging the unique features of the network.

Bitcoin Infrastructure - looks at the underlying architecture of both the Bitcoin network and ledger, including how the network is constructed and scales.

Within each stream, courses are offered at introductory, intermediate and advanced levels, following a progressive struc-



**Calvin Ayre Special Economic Envoy
with responsibility for Bitcoin to Antigua and Barbuda**

ture designed to build on the concepts and knowledge introduced in the preceding course. The first course to launch, the introductory module of the Bitcoin Theory stream, is now available for enrolment at www.bitcoinsv.academy.

Bitcoin SV Academy has been built to showcase the wide-ranging capabilities of the original Bitcoin protocol, which now operates as Bitcoin SV [Ticker: BSV]. In contrast with better-known platforms that continue to inaccurately use the Bitcoin name for their own non-Bitcoin protocols, including Bitcoin Core [Ticker: BTC] and Bitcoin Cash [Ticker: BCH], Bitcoin SV unlocks the true power of the Bitcoin protocol in its original form, uninhibited and unrestricted.

Both BTC and BCH have significantly deviated from Bitcoin's original design, with neither chain following the original network

protocol or economic incentive model prescribed by its creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. Only Bitcoin SV maintains the regulation-friendly, lawful system that constitutes Bitcoin, in stark contrast with competing chains which have eschewed compliance in favour of anonymity and illegality.

The developers of BTC effectively crippled its blockchain by fundamentally rejecting scaling, driving transaction fees sky-high and in-turn marketing Bitcoin as a reserve asset, rather than as the system of peer-to-peer electronic cash for daily use envisioned by its creator. The BTC network further strayed with the introduction of Segregated Witness (SegWit), a change which fundamentally altered the network such that it, by definition, can no longer be called Bitcoin.

Likewise, BCH - the

blockchain platform promoted globally by Roger Ver, including now on the island of Antigua - can also not claim to represent Bitcoin's original design. BCH developers made significant technical changes to the original Bitcoin protocol, including introducing a new signature technique that can be used to deliberately obfuscate transactions under a misguided notion of 'privacy', despite Bitcoin being designed to be a public, auditable ledger for honest transactions. BCH has also failed to scale anywhere close to the levels Satoshi Nakamoto envisioned, rendering its blockchain unable to deliver on Bitcoin's true purpose to serve as the world's most powerful enterprise-class ledger for monetised data.

As the only Bitcoin blockchain which scales unbounded, the Bitcoin SV network offers superior data capacity and functionality at a fraction of the cost of competing networks, enabling it to serve as the world's distributed data ledger and premier data management platform. That utility is already being put to use by a variety of enterprises, with industries as varied as supply-chain management, pharmaceutical research, online gaming and the Internet of Things using the Bitcoin SV network as the basis for their business.

Issued by
The Ayre Group Antigua

Cocaine Valued Millions Of US Dollars Seized By US In Caribbean Sea

(Jamaica Gleaner): The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency says security personnel recovered some 1.9 tonnes of cocaine valued about US\$65 million in Caribbean waters last month.

CBP said on December 18, an Airborne Early Warning crew detected a 45-foot go fast vessel and coordinated with law enforcement officials to interdict it.

The crew later recov-

ered 66 bales of cocaine, totalling 3,781 pounds.

"The President and Secretary of Defense announced the Enhanced Counter Narcotics mission on April 1, 2020; and, since then, the Department of State, Department of Defense and other federal agencies have strengthened our methods and improved operations in order to obstruct the drug shipments from transnational criminal organisations,"

said CBP in a statement "Air and Marine Operations (AMO) safeguard our nation by anticipating and confronting security threats through our aviation and maritime law enforcement expertise, innovative capabilities, and partnerships at the border and beyond, with about 1,800 US federal agents and mission support personnel, 240 aircraft and 300 marine vessels operating throughout the United

States, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands."

In 2020, CBP said AMO enforcement actions resulted in the seizure or disruption of 194,220 pounds of cocaine; 278,492 pounds of marijuana; 15,985 pounds of methamphetamine; 952 weapons and US\$51.5 million. Some 1,066 arrests and 47,872 apprehensions of illegal immigrants from the Caribbean and other places were also made.

St Lucia's sea moss industry now struggling after success

(Loopslu): A drop in the price of local sea moss in certain foreign markets is hurting the local sea moss industry, which had shown much potential.

Loop News understands that a few exporters of the commodity have temporarily stopped exporting the product with the hope that the price will return to normal.

According to Marvin Charles, a resident of Praslin, Micoud, who exports sea moss to a buyer in the USA, the decrease in the price of the commodity is seriously affecting his business.

He said the price of their sea moss was reduced because of the competition they get from sea moss exporters in other countries, who sell their sea moss to the foreign market at a cheaper price than theirs.

"Things are very slow



Sea moss farmers at their farms

these days because of the reduction in the price of our sea moss in certain markets," Charles said.

He added: "Before business was booming. Every day we were making money and we were getting paid on time."

Charles said the purple sea moss, which he usually sold at US \$40 per pound to an individ-

ual buyer in the USA, is now sold at US \$18 per pound, and the bleached sea moss, which was sold at US \$25 per pound is now sold at US \$15 per pound.

Another sea moss exporter said his buyer in the foreign market told him that the situation exists as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He feels the only way

their situation can be ameliorated is if the local sea moss farmers reduce their price at which they sell their produce to them.

Some farmers are already doing so, while others are reluctant to do so because of the amount of work involved in sea moss cultivation.

The normal price of the sea moss on the local market is \$25 for the bleached and \$30 for the purple.

Tricia Peters, a sea moss farmer, said in the past she used to sell sea moss every week, but it's been two months since she sold any.

"Right now, we are at a loss. Sea moss is not selling like before," Peters lamented.

She described sea moss cultivation as a very difficult job and said it deserves a payment which is satisfactory.

Guyana President Ali summons Venezuela's rep. over Maduro decree

(Kaieteurnews online): President Irfaan Ali has thoroughly rejected the latest decree by Venezuela's leader, Nicolas Maduro following a recent statement in which he vowed to reconquer the Essequibo as a territory of the Bolivarian Republic.

The decree comes weeks after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) handed down a decision that it has jurisdiction to hear the Guyana-Venezuela border dispute over the validity of the Arbitration Award of 1899 which gave Guyana rights to the territories of Essequibo. The case is

ongoing and is expected to be ventilated through the ICJ within the next 24 months.

Given the recent developments from the neighbouring territory, President Ali announced in a live broadcast address to the nation yesterday that Foreign Affairs Minister, Hugh Todd has been instructed to summon the Officer-in-Charge of the Venezuelan Embassy in Georgetown to express Guyana's deep concern about the decree.

He said that the Officer-in-Charge has been told to convey to the Venezuelan authorities in Ca-

racas, that, in accordance with international law, and its assertion of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, Guyana rejects entirely the decree issued by President Maduro.

The President noted that Guyana is committed to continue on the path of peaceful resolution of this matter in keeping with international law and the jurisdiction of the ICJ.

"It is, therefore, deeply disturbing that," he said that "on January 7th, the President of Venezuela, Mr. Nicolas Maduro, issued a decree claiming Venezuela sovereignty and exclusive

sovereign rights in the waters and seabed adjacent to Guyana's coast, west of the Essequibo River."

In this regard, President Ali reminded that sovereignty over this coast, and the land territory to which it is attached, were awarded to Guyana (then British Guiana) in the 1899 Arbitral Award, which is valid and legally binding."

"Regrettably," he emphasized that by decreeing that the seas adjacent to this territory belongs to Venezuela, at least two fundamental principles of international law have been violated.

BVI places travel ban on DR as country's COVID cases pass 40K

(BVI News): The BVI government has moved to ban all tourist-related travels from the Dominican Republic to the territory effective Monday, January 11. Health Minister Carvin Malone said in a statement on Friday that Cabinet decided to implement the ban due to the alarming COVID-19 statistics coming out of the Spanish-speaking country.

The Dominican Republic has more than 40,000 cases and reports of new cases are continuously increasing.

Malone stated: "Cabinet has also decided that in light of concerning information and of the prevalence of increasing cases of COVID-19 in the Domin-

ican Republic – to implement a travel ban effective Monday, 11th January, 2021 of persons travelling from the Dominican Republic to the British Virgin Islands, except for Nationals, Belongers, Residents, work permit holders, persons permitted to reside in the territory, diplomats and persons employed by government and statutory agencies.

New COVID-19 measures effective immediately for DR and UK

Minister Malone also announced new COVID-19 measures that must be adhered from all persons travelling into the territory from the Dominican Republic and the United

Kingdom, which is in effect from today January 8.

"I wish to say here as well that Cabinet met and it was decided that effective immediately, all persons approved to travel to the BVI originating or transiting through the Dominican Republic or the United Kingdom are required to provide a five-day rt-PCR negative test prior to entry and must undergo a mandatory 14-days quarantine and a testing regimen on the day of entry; on day 7 and finally on day 14 when in the territory," Malone explained.

UK Banned due to new COVID-19 strain

Just last week, the BVI government announced a

travel ban on persons travelling from the United Kingdom into the territory, after reports of a new COVID strain within that country.

Since then, the new strain of the virus has been reported in the Caribbean region, affecting Jamaica with four registered cases of the virus announced on Sunday, January 3.

In the meantime, countries such as Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados and the BVI are awaiting COVID results from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to determine if any of the most recent cases are the new strain of the virus.

This new strain is said to be more contagious.

Indonesia locates black boxes of crashed jet as body parts recovered



(Reuters): Indonesian authorities on Sunday located the black boxes of the Sriwijaya Air jet that crashed into the sea soon after taking off from the capital Jakarta, as human body parts and pieces of the plane were retrieved.

The Boeing 737-500 with 62 passengers and crew was headed on a domestic flight to Pontianak in West Kalimantan on Saturday before it disappeared from radar screens four minutes after take-off.

Indonesia National Transport Safety Committee (KNKT) chief SoerjantoTjahjono said the locations of Flight SJ 182's two black boxes

had been identified. "Hopefully, we can retrieve them soon," said military chief HadiTjahjanto, without giving an estimated timeframe.

Search will continue into the night, a search and rescue official said, but efforts will be limited to sonar scans by boats.

There were no clues yet as to what caused the crash, the first major air crash in Indonesia since 189 passengers and crew were killed in 2018 when a Lion Air Boeing 737 Max in 2018 also plunged into the Java Sea soon after take-off from Soekarno-Hatta International Airport.

Even before the latest crash, more people had died in air crashes in Indonesia than in any other country over the past decade, according to Aviation Safety Network's database.

Pieces of wreckage were brought to Jakarta port by rescuers, including the plane's altimeter radar, emergency chute and a piece that was suspected to have come off of the bottom part of the plane's tail, KNKT official NurcahyoUtomo said.

One twisted piece of metal was painted in Sriwijaya Air's blue and red colours. Authorities said they came from a depth

of 23 metres (75 feet) near a group of islands off the Jakarta coast.

Indonesian authorities said they had also retrieved body parts and clothing.

Police asked families to provide information such as dental records and DNA samples to help identify bodies.

The plane had 12 crew and 50 passengers on board, all Indonesians and including 10 children.

President Joko Widodo, speaking at the palace in Bogor, expressed "deep condolences" over the disaster and urged the public to pray the missing people could be found.

US intelligence agencies have 180 days to share what they know about UFOs

(CNN): When President Donald Trump signed the \$2.3 trillion coronavirus relief and government funding bill into law in December, so began the 180-day countdown for US intelligence agencies to tell Congress what they know about UFOs.

No, really.

The director of National Intelligence and the secretary of defense have a little less than six months now to provide the congressional intelligence and armed services committees with an unclassified report about “unidentified aerial phenomena.”

It’s a stipulation that was tucked into the “committee comment” section of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, which was contained in the massive spending bill.

That report must contain detailed analyses of



UFO data and intelligence collected by the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force and the FBI, according to the Senate intelligence committee’s directive.

It should also describe in detail “an interagency process for ensuring timely data collection and centralized analysis of all unidentified aerial phe-

nomena reporting for the Federal Government” and designate an official responsible for that process.

Finally, the report should identify any potential national security threats posed by UFOs and assess whether any of the nation’s adversaries could be behind such activity, the committee said.

The submitted report should be unclassified, the

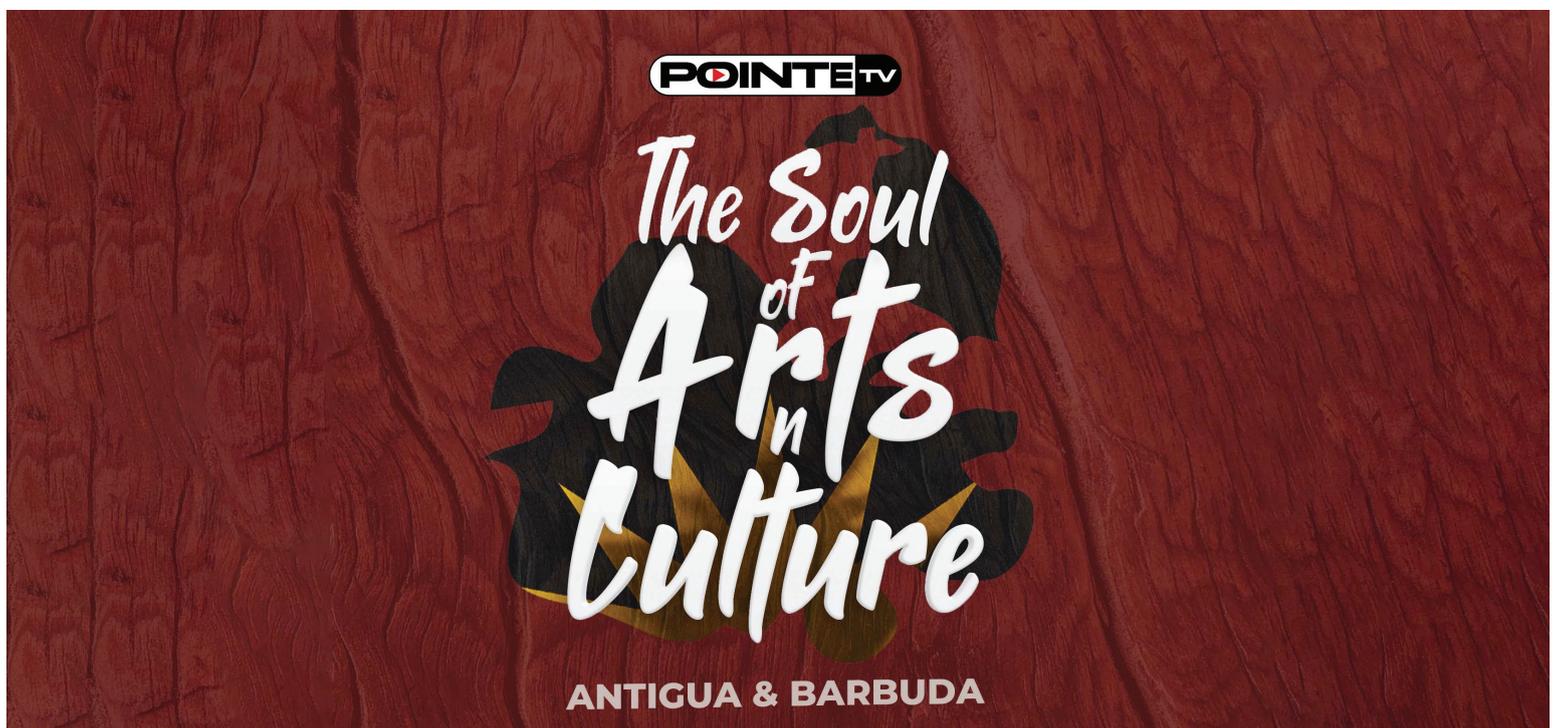
committee said, though it can contain a classified annex.

A spokesperson for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence confirmed the news to the fact-checking website Snopes.

Congress has long been interested in UFOs.

The Pentagon released three short videos in April of last year showing “unidentified aerial phenomena” -- clips that the US Navy had previously confirmed were real.

The videos, one from 2004 and the other two from 2015, show what appear to be unidentified flying objects rapidly moving while recorded by infrared cameras. Two of the videos contain service members reacting in awe at how quickly the objects are moving. One voice speculates that it could be a drone.



Trump must 'go away as soon as possible', says Republican senator

(Aljazeera): A second Republican senator in the United States has called on Donald Trump to step down after some of the president's supporters overran the Capitol building in Washington, DC this week in a deadly riot.

In an interview with NBC's Meet the Press news programme on Sunday, Pennsylvania Senator Pat Toomey said Trump should resign for the good of the country.

"I think the best way for our country is for the president to resign and go away as soon as possible," he said.

Toomey said the president's resignation is the "best path forward, the best way to get this person in the rear-view mirror for us", but added that he did not believe Trump would step down before his term ends on January 20.

He also said the president's role encouraging the riot was an "impeachable offence".

Momentum has been building among Democratic lawmakers to impeach Trump for inciting the Capitol rioters on January 6. Five people, including one Washington, DC police officer, died during the inci-



US Senator Pat Toomey said Donald Trump's role encouraging the riot on Capitol Hill is an 'impeachable offence'

dent, and dozens of alleged participants have been charged.

Democrats said they plan to introduce an article of impeachment in the US House of Representatives on Monday about the riot.

The impeachment article accuses Trump of engaging "in high Crimes and Misdemeanors by willfully inciting violence against the Government of the United States", according to a copy US Representative Ted Lieu posted on Twitter on Friday.

Lieu said Sunday that 195 legislators backed the impeachment article.

A day earlier, the California Democrat said he had requested that the New York State Bar Association investigate Trump

lawyer Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York City, "for his involvement in the violent insurrection on Capitol Hill".

"Giulianli [sic] must be disbarred and held accountable," Lieu tweeted.

Also on Sunday, House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn said the congressional chamber could vote this week to impeach Trump, but delay sending the legislation to the US Senate until after many of President-elect Joe Biden's nominated cabinet secretaries are confirmed for their posts.

Clyburn said he is concerned that a Senate trial could distract from the process of confirming Biden's nominees.

Al Jazeera's Pat-

ty Culhane, reporting from Capitol Hill, said House Democrats appear likely to impeach Trump while he is still in office and then wait until the first 100 days of the incoming Biden administration have gone by before taking the documents to the Senate.

"Then, 100 days later, the Senate can hold a trial," said Culhane, who pointed out that after wins in election runoffs in Georgia last week, Democrats took control of the Senate.

"So, unlike the last impeachment trial, where Republicans for the first time in the history of this country chose not to call witnesses ... the Democrats can make it a full spectacle. They can put him (Trump) on trial."

Twitter deletes China embassy's Xinjiang 'emancipation' tweet



Woman holding a baby in Xinjiang province

(BBC): Twitter has deleted a post from China's US embassy which claimed Uighur women had had their minds "emancipated" by their policies in Xinjiang.

The post linked to an article by state-run media which claimed women were no longer "baby making machines" due to action on alleged religious extremism.

Beijing is alleged to have forced many Uighur women to be sterilised or fitted with contraceptive devices, apparently to control population growth.

China has denied the allegations.

The Uighurs are a

mostly Muslim minority group which lives mainly in Xinjiang province in northwestern China.

The tweet, published on Thursday, also claimed that Uighur women were "more confident and independent" as a result of "reproductive health" being "promoted" to them.

Over the weekend, the tweet was replaced with a message from the social media site which claimed the tweet "violated" Twitter's rules, without providing further details.

The original tweet had linked to an article by China Daily, a state-

run newspaper, which alleged the eradication of extremism in Xinjiang "had given Uighur women more autonomy when deciding whether to have children".

The article referenced a report by the Xinjiang Development Research Centre which said: "The changes were not caused by 'forced sterilisation' of the Uyghur population, as repeatedly claimed by some western scholars and politicians."

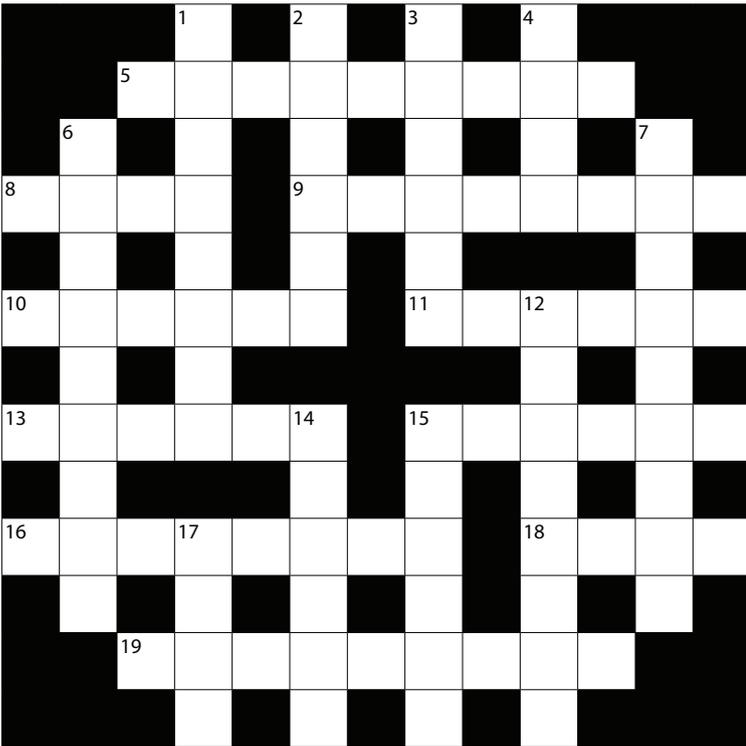
Last year, a report by China scholar Adrian Zenz alleged Uighur and other ethnic minority women were being threatened with intern-

ment in camps for refusing to abort pregnancies that exceeded birth quotas.

The findings were based on a combination of official regional data, policy documents and interviews with ethnic minority women in Xinjiang.

The report also said that Uighur women with more than the legally permitted number of children - but also many women who had not exceeded birth quotas - were involuntarily fitted with intra-uterine devices (IUDs), while others were coerced into receiving sterilisation surgery.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 5 Cranky (9)
- 8 Device for moving liquid or gas (4)
- 9 Scottish broadsword (8)
- 10 Sports results — a large number (6)
- 11 Bewail (6)
- 13 Deep gorge (6)
- 15 Fit in (6)
- 16 London airport (8)
- 18 In that case ... (2,2)
- 19 Menial cop (anag) (9)

Down

- 1 Possessions, collectively (8)
- 2 Sign of the zodiac (6)
- 3 Humphrey Bogart's last wife, d. 2014 (6)
- 4 Strike violently (4)
- 6 Buyer (9)
- 7 Candour (9)
- 12 Unit of atmospheric pressure (8)
- 14 CS Lewis's imaginary land (6)
- 15 Archers (6)
- 17 Implement (4)

DAILY COMICS

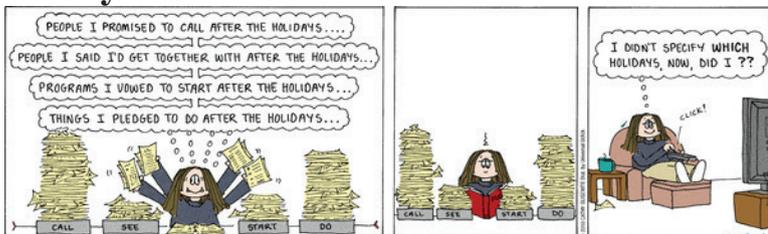
Dilbert



Garfield



Cathy



SUDOKU

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		8				1		
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How to play

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST

MON
01/11



82° Hi DAY
Partly sunny and pleasant

74° Lo NIGHT
Partly cloudy

Sunrise 6:40 AM Sunset 5:51 PM Moonrise 5:03 AM Moonset 4:25 PM

TUE
01/12



81° Hi DAY
Variable cloudiness with a shower in places

74° Lo NIGHT
Partly cloudy with a shower in places late

Sunrise 6:40 AM Sunset 5:51 PM Moonrise 6:06 AM Moonset 5:27 PM

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Just like peanut butter and jelly or Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, you and your best friend make an excellent combination right now. The two of you generate wonderful energy when you get together.

TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Good news early in the day could send you off on a nice wave of joy all day long, so ride it and spread the word. People love a happy e-mail, so shoot a bunch out today and give the people who love you yet another reason to smile.

GEMINI | May 21-June 20

Complicated plans can be simplified under your intellectual gaze today. You have an uncanny ability to cut right through all the noise and get to the real heart of any matter. All the recent drama in your social circle is coming from the same root cause.

CANCER | June 21-July 22

You've been feeling calm and contented with the way things are going, but today you might see some problems pop up. Watch out for others who aren't doing what they should be doing. You might have to play referee today.

LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

Someone's brilliant one-liner could do more than tickle your funny bone. It could ignite a tiny spark in your heart. Few people realize how having fun can lead to romance, although you have always understood the connection.

VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Of course you deserve a splurge now and then, but right now you should limit your shopping to only the essentials. Groceries, gas, and rent deserve your hard-earned cash, but fancy food, designer duds, and the latest electronics might not, for now.

LIBRA Sept. | 23-Oct. 22

If you spend too much time thinking about how to make everything equal and fair between you and your friends, you'll end up wasting a lot of time and creating way too much work for yourself.

SCORPIO Oct. | 23-Nov. 21

Someone as charming and fun to be around as you can't let one little no get you down! Rejections happen. The only way you can avoid them is to never take any risks. And how boring would life be if you never stuck your neck out the littlest bit?

SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Let your curiosity drive all your decisions today, and you could end up in some very interesting places. There's no certain path or direction to follow, so toss out your usual routine and go adventuring as much as you can.

CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

This day is loaded with intensity for you. Every time you make eye contact with someone, you'll feel a strong, meaningful subtext at work. Are they trying to tell you something? It's important not to let your imagination run away with you.

AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

There is no denying that having fun is fun! So try to put some silliness at the top of your to-do list today. You can kiss goodbye the deep issues of life for at least the next 24 hours and focus on just skimming the surface of things.

PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

You're way overdue for a heart-to-heart talk with one of your closest friends. Make a serious effort today to talk with them or schedule a time for the near future. The two of you have some catching up to do.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP NOMINATIONS

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom is inviting nominations from Antigua and Barbuda for Commonwealth Master's Scholarships tenable from 2021. Closing date for nominations is 1st March, 2021. Deadline for submission of applications to the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries is 19th February, 2021. Full details of the scholarships are included in the 2021 terms and conditions, available at: cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/about-us/scholarships

CHSS DARE TO D.E.A.R. BOOK DRIVE 2020

Clare Hall Secondary School is inviting past Clarehalites, entertainers, radio personalities and the general public to participate in its DARE to D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read) Book Drive 2020. Send us a video recording about your favourite book and donate a copy or multiple copies of that book to our school library. Give us a call at 462-3487 or mail us at admin@chss.edu.ag. The book drive culminates in December 2020. We DARE you to D.E.A.R with us and help us promote literacy amongst our students.

QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT

The Quality Assurance Unit, Ministry of Tourism will be suspending operations from December 15, 2020 to January 15, 2021. All property owners are asked to take note as no inspections and covid-19 certifications will be executed during this period. For more information contact the department t 468-4061/4003.

EARLY CLOSURE

The general public is advised that the headquarters of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, Government Office Complex, will close at 11am on Wednesday, 23rd December, 2020. This is to facilitate a staff function. Normal office hours will resume on Thursday 24th December, 2020. Any inconvenience caused is regretted.



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West Indies test captain Braithwaite confident heading to Bangladesh

Despite facing a difficult challenge, West Indies captain for the Bangladesh Test series, Kraigg Braithwaite, is confident the team will perform well notwithstanding the absence of many of the usual members of the team.

The Caribbean side, who is embarking on their third overseas tour since the sport returned after being impacted by COVID-19, will be missing twelve first team players.

Ten players, including test captain Jason Holder, vice-captain

Roston Chase, and white ball captain Kieron Pollard, declined the invitation to tour. Two players withdrew because of personal reasons.

Most of the players opted out of the tour for health and safety concerns. Stand-in captain Braithwaite said the players selected are all up for the challenge and are aware it will be a tough series in Bangladesh.

The Barbadian said there are some players who will be experiencing the playing conditions

in Bangladesh for the first time so it will be something new for them.

The tour will comprise of two test matches, as part of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) World Test Championship, and One-Day Internationals (ODI) as part of the ICC's Cricket World Cup Super League.

The ODIs present the first opportunity for the West Indies to earn Super league points which count towards pre-qualification for the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2023.

US indoor track championship cancelled

This year's US indoor track and field championships, planned for next month in New Mexico, have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USA Track and Field announced.

The meet was to have

been contested on from 20th to 21st February in Albuquerque. Also called off were combined events to be conducted as a part of the meet. US Track's working group of medical and scientific experts had been working on safety

protocols.

But according to a statement from the governing body "it has become apparent that statewide restrictions in New Mexico and other logistical challenges for the event are too severe

to overcome."

This will be the first year the event is not staged since the inception in 1958. The 2020 World indoors that had been rescheduled for March 2021 in China were postponed again last month to 2023.

Support for Olympics hits new low in Japan

Support for holding the postponed Tokyo Olympics this summer has hit a new low in Japan, a poll found Sunday as the country battles a third wave of infections due to COVID-19.

Just over eighty per cent of those asked by Kyodo news agency said the huge global event should be cancelled or postponed again—a jump from around sixty per cent in a 6th

December survey by the same outlet. Kyodo said the survey asked 1,041 participants nationwide who were selected by random dialling.

Tokyo 2020 organizers have said another delay is out of the question and are insisting the Games will go ahead despite a state of emergency declared in the greater Tokyo area this week over a surge in COVID-19 cases.

In Sunday's

nationwide telephone poll, around thirty-five per cent of the people told Kyodo they favoured outright cancellation, while some forty-five per cent said the event should be postponed a second time.

The month-long emergency in the capital and the surrounding regions is less strict than harsh lockdowns seen elsewhere in the world and primarily targets

restaurants and bars, which have been asked to close early.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said this week that Japan is committed to holding a "safe and secure" Olympics. But senior International Olympic Committee official Dick Pound told the BBC he could not "be certain" the games will go ahead, because the ongoing elephant in the room would be the surges in the virus.

Sir Richie Richardson Trophy



Demar James



Sir Richie Richardson

A student and a knight were in the winners' circle over the weekend as Demar James and Sir Richie Richardson swung their way to the top prizes during the

weekly Sunday Cup Golf Championship at Cedar Valley.

James, who is a student at Island Academy, was the hottest man on show as he snatched the Gross division in the ABI Insurance and the Antigua

and Barbuda Golf Association sponsored event.

The sixteen-year-old shot two over par, 72.

As for Sir Richie, the former West Indies Captain defeated another cricketer, Leon "Kuma" Rodney via the

count-back format to claim the competition's Net trophy.

Both players ended their eighteen-hole battle with a score of 65 but it was Sir Richie who had the lowest score over the closing hole.

DEWS

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