



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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ITS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, PLAIN AND SIMPLE!

The fears that have been expressed by government and health officials over the past several months regarding the spread of the coronavirus appear to have been realized with a big jump in the number of positive cases announced overnight.

The government had warned that if the number of positive cases continued to rise at a rate that may indicate community spread, then this would necessitate the government introducing much stiffer measures to help curb the spread of the virus.

Antigua and Barbuda has done relatively well in the management of the COVID-19 virus since it was declared a global pandemic in March of last year, thanks to a proactive government and a population that not only listened to the warnings but heeded the advice of medical personnel regarding the virus and the manner in which it is spread.

As such, the infection rate has been largely kept

in check.

However, as the pandemic dragged on with no obvious end in sight, many have become restless, and some may argue, reckless. There have been complaints of the impact of the pandemic on key sectors such as entertainment. These complaints, largely coming for the younger demographic, have been posted on the various social media platforms where they have garnered comments both for and against the protocols.

Since the pandemic was declared and with the attendant reduction in overseas travel, Prime Minister Gaston Browne has devoted huge chunks of his weekly radio programme to discussions on the virus: where we are as a nation and what needs to be done by all to help limit its spread.

It is instructive that while Antigua and Barbuda has introduced the health protocols since the end of March last year, several Caribbean countries are yet to adopt

these basic measures. St Vincent and the Grenadines announced "a holiday" last weekend to help its people cope with the dual crisis of the volcanic eruptions and the pandemic.

In Barbados, it was announced overnight that the country would close down for a ten-day period as that country battles with a serious case of continuing high infection rates.

The situation is equally bad in St Lucia where the number of cases in January has doubled what was recorded in all of last year.

Across the Caribbean, countries and governments appear to have 'lost' the fight against this virus. Yet many governments are vacillating about whether or not to introduce tougher measures to combat the virus' spread.

Here in Antigua and Barbuda, we too are concerned about what is happening in our neighbouring islands, but our primary concern is what happens here at home.

The police have announced increased surveillance and the enforcement of the curfew, among other measures. Violators have been brought before the courts and have been fined.

Now it is time to be even more vigilant! COVID-19 is not a joke! It kills!

The government and the police may introduce stiffer measures but in the end, the onus is on all of us to adhere to the regulations. Having secret parties and outings that may be 'super-spreader' events certainly is not the way to go.

If we truly want to stop COVID, then all of us must fully participate in the battle. The vaccines are coming; but it may not be soon enough for some people. Protecting everyone starts with protecting oneself. How each of us responds will determine how successful the country's overall battle with this deadly virus is. If ever there was a time when the nation needed us all, the time is now!

Tough measures to contain COVID coming

The Cabinet is meeting today to deliberate on the tightening of COVID-19 measures to halt the spread of the virus in the country.

In a post on his Facebook page overnight, Prime Minister Gaston Browne indicated that there was a "substantial increase" in the latest round of information regarding the number of

positive cases.

"With the dramatically increased amount to COVID cases today (Tuesday), we have to take immediate defensive action to contain its spread.

This is not an issue of sentimentality, provocation, or insensitivity; it's a choice between life and death that requires immediate action," the Prime Minister wrote.

Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph had suggested earlier that the government is paying close attention the increase in the number of positive cases. He said that if the country reaches a stage where there are at least three positive cases daily reported over a seven-day period then the government would have no choice but to introduce

tougher control measures.

Over the past seven days, the country recorded twelve new positive cases. The number of people tested positive for the virus in Antigua and Barbuda has increased to 201 but active cases appear to be on the decline. The latest figures place them at 25, down from a high of 29 two days earlier.

GG and PM welcome proposed health facility

The proposed multi-million-dollar state of the art health facility to be located at Woods Estate has received the enthusiastic 'thumbs up' from both Governor General Sir Rodney Williams, who himself is a longstanding medical doctor of and Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday afternoon, top government officials describe the development as a "very positive" move for the nation. The proposed project – the Doctors Hospital and Medical Complex – is the brainchild of surgeon, Dr Joseph 'Joey' John.

In his remarks, Sir Rodney declared that the construction of this facility is therefore an important opportunity to expand our national capacity and strengthen the quality of healthcare services provided.

"It is always critical to offer the people a choice. As there are certain limitations with the functions of both private and state hospitals across the globe, the presentation of both



types of facilities can only be viewed as beneficial. Dr. John has operated for several years in both private and public practice and therefore exhibits extensive knowledge of the strengths and limitations of both systems. He was also one of the persons responsible for developing the concept of the Mount St. John's Medical Centre. He believes that the healthcare system of any country is optimized by the development of both systems in tandem," he observed.

Additionally, Sir Rodney noted the generation of jobs is a natural spin-off of any new and viable corporate entity. "The nursing school of the UWI Five Islands Campus will un-

doubtedly provide a cadre of trained local talent from which the Doctors Hospital and Medical Complex seek to select," he declared.

For his part, Prime Minister Browne was highly complimentary of Dr. John whom he described as not only an excellent surgeon, but an excellent businessman as well. He explained that when he discussed the project with Dr. John he had asked the medical official to bring forward the development so as to stimulate construction at a time when the country's economy had taken a beating from the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Prime Minister, the proposed facility fits nicely into the gov-

ernment's overall objective to make Antigua and Barbuda a hub for healthcare in the Eastern Caribbean.

"The government wishes to encourage others to follow Dr. John's lead because in order to establish a vibrant healthcare export service industry here we need more private practitioners. That is where the other physicians could team up with other physicians or friends to establish these medical centres that specialize in an area that will allow them to export medical services," Browne remarked.

The country's leader sees healthcare services as an area where the government could diversify the national economy.

PM Browne also noted that LIAT's existence gives Antigua and Barbuda a 'leg-up' in its ability to move people into and out of the country.

The proposed Doctors Hospital and Medical Centre is earmarked for completion in approximately two years.

PLH scores major court victories

The principals of the Peace, Love and Harmony (PLH) resort development in Barbuda have scored major victories in the High Court.

Justice Marissa Robertson who heard legal arguments from both PLH, the claimants and the Barbuda Council, the defendants, as well as listened to oral arguments, ruled in favour of

the developers in four key areas.

The court granted PLH an interim injunction "to restrain the defendant, its servants and/or agents from entering upon the lands demised to the Applicant under a Lease dated the 22nd day of February 2017, which leasehold property is known as Low Bay and Pink Sands, Pal-

metto Point, Barbuda and from carrying out there on commercial sand mining operations pending the determination of the substantive claim in this matter or until further ordered."

The court also lifted its earlier interim order that barred PLH from carrying out any works in the development or construction on the Palmetto Point project,

save remedial works specifically approved by the Development Control Authority.

Justice Robertson also ruled in favour of PLH when she dismissed an application from the Barbuda Council for injunctive relief against the company. The Court ordered that the Council bears the company's cost in the matter.

Dr. Joey John shares his vision for healthcare services

The ceremonial 'turning of the sod' for a new multi-million-dollar healthcare facility took place Tuesday afternoon at Woods Estate.

And for the man initiating the project, Dr. Joseph 'Joey' John, the new facility - to be called The Doctors Hospital and Medical Complex - forms part of his vision for the provision of healthcare in Antigua and Barbuda.

Dr. John, who served as Chief Surgeon at Holberton Hospital from 1994 to 2005, noted that since he returned to private practice he continuously tried to incorporate his efforts into not only surgical development but also in at least some small way, to the economic development of Antigua and Barbuda.

"This medical complex is the culmination of all of this - the desire to deliver healthcare at a top notch level, combined with the desire to continue contrib-

uting to the economic development of this country and our people.

"This new medical complex will be a multi-specialty twenty-four-seven facility, offering not only all services and procedures already available in Antigua but, importantly, many not yet available on island. We've come a long way in the last thirty years but it is my dream that in my lifetime we will have reached a point where there would be no need for one to travel abroad for any medical care. As ambitious as that sounds, I truly believe that it is for all practical purposes attainable—but not without unity of purpose," he revealed.

Dr John added that during his thirty years of experience in both the private and the public health sectors, he realizes that to really move healthcare forward in Antigua, there must be development of both sectors. "And equally

important, close collaboration and support between the two," he declared.

The top-notch surgeon and entrepreneur also sees direct links between providing healthcare and health tourism and the Citizenship by Investment Programme. "In addition to the obvious benefits that this project will bring to bear on local and regional healthcare delivery, it will also be a huge asset to our tourism and CIP sectors. Now more than ever, with the pandemic refocusing priorities, we see that a strong healthcare system is vital to these sectors. And again, it is imperative that government and private sector work in a collaborative and mutually supportive manner," he urged.

He noted that the hospital and medical complex will also undoubtedly increase the country's market share of regional health tourism, an area he has long championed as

a revenue-earner for the country.

"But for me, the most exciting spin-off will be the role this complex will play in providing additional opportunities for practitioners and specialists in Antigua. It will also go a long way, I think, to reduce our brain drain. According to numerous studies and reports, including studies by the IMF, in the Caribbean, more than seventy per cent of tertiary educated citizens emigrate—a statistic that ranks among the highest in the world," Dr. John stated.

The visionary surgeon has been credited with many firsts in Antigua and Barbuda, including the introduction of laparoscopic surgery. He was also the main driver behind the Mount St John's Medical Centre and attracting the American University of Antigua School of Medicine to Antigua and Barbuda.

Twist Mall remains closed by order of DCA

The building that houses the Twist Mall remains closed for almost a week, following several violations of Development Control Authority (DCA) regulations.

DCA sources say the operators of the mall, which houses several businesses,

have reached out to the authority and are expected to submit proposals to rectify the violations.

The sources remain resolute that the mall will not reopen until they are in compliance with the regulations.

A DCA inspection of the

mall revealed inadequate bathroom facilities, open electricity junction boxes, as well as the absence of an emergency escape.

According to DCA, permission was given for the proprietors to operate on two floors, but the owners recently opened a ter-

race restaurant on the third floor, without first getting approval.

Twist Mall is located in the building that formerly housed Benjie's Mall on Redcliffe Street. It currently houses a supermarket, a restaurant and a money transfer outlet.

Fire Department mourns loss of one of its own

Members of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda and Fire Department are mourning the passing of fire officer, Corporal Andre Francois. Francois died in Dominica on Monday following a brief illness.

Corporal Francois served in the fire department for twenty-two years, and was attached to the Fire Prevention

Unit at St. Johns Fire Station. He died at the age of fifty-five years.

Meanwhile, Commissioner of Police Atlee Rodney, along with Fire Chief Assistant Commissioner of Police Elvis Weaver, expressed condolences to his family and members of the Police Force, especially his colleagues within the Fire Department.



Over 500 newborns screened for sickle cell

Over 500 newborns have been screened as a part of Mount St. John's Medical Centre (MSJMC) Newborn Sickle Cell Screening Program which started in September 2020.

In post issued by MSJMC on social media, the country's medical center proudly announced this medical feat.

"The progress thus far is exceptional. I am appreciative to all members of staff for their hard work and dedica-

tion. I continue to look forward to continued success in our maternal and child health program," stated Dr. Shivan Belle-Jarvis, MSJMC Pediatric Department Chair.

The program officially started on September 1, 2020. At the launch of the program, Dr. Edda Hadeed, President of the Antigua and Barbuda Sickle Cell Association, stated that early detection is critical. "It's going to benefit everybody. Remember

the screening finds a sick child, so that child will get better care and earlier care. We won't have to wait now until something happens and the child gets very ill. Now, we can manage this child's health from the very beginning," Dr. Hadeed said.

MSJMC also thanked its partners, Antigua & Barbuda Sickle Cell Association, American University of Antigua (AUA), Caribbean Network of Researchers on Sickle Cell Disease and

Thalassemia when it launched the program last year. According to MSJMC, "The benefits of newborn screening are enormous. A diagnosis soon after birth can ensure access to health services and treatment as soon as possible. Early treatment can improve their health and prevent severe disability or even death. Another proud moment for your community hospital, Mount St. John's Medical Centre."

Liberta Primary turns 61

The Liberta Primary school is this week celebrating its sixty-first anniversary of offering education to young people of that village.

Parliament Representative for St Paul, E.P Chet Greene, who credits the educational institution for giving him a good foundation for his successes later in life, on Monday paid a visit to the school where he extolled the virtues of hard work and discipline to the students.

Greene visited each classroom and addressed the students, urging them to adhere to the health protocols and to encourage even their parents to do the same.

During the visit, Greene presented a refrigerator and a



microwave to the school. He presented a commemorative plaque to the principal, Arian Fleming-Thomas, on the occasion of the sixty-first anniversary.

While making the rounds, the representative said he observed that several of the students were wearing oversized masks. He immediately sprang into action and ordered new masks

for the entire student body and faculty.

"It is instructive to note that from the visit this morning we realize that whilst there is general compliance with the use of masks, a number of children are wearing masks that were oversized or where the elastic bands are worn. So after discussions with the principal, I placed an order for

a second set of masks for the school. You will recall that last year, during the last school term I made a donation of masks to the school. These were uniquely done in school's colours. However, with a mask now a daily wear, certainly they can't last forever," he remarked.

Greene said he would not wait for a visit to Cobbs Cross, New Bethel or any other school in the constituency to note that they too are likely to need new masks so the order included masks for them all.

He has also expressed his appreciation to the Falmouth Harbour Marina for sponsoring the new masks for the educational institutions.

Boost for school's literacy programme

The Clare Hall Secondary School's efforts to promote literacy has received a boost from a recent donation.

The school had approached CIBC FirstCaribbean back in September 2020 to support its reading programme, but because of problems created by the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a delay.

The school's literacy specialist, Marcia Chatham, explained that the school held its first annual Christmas Book Drive in 2019 in an effort to promote literacy among students. The initiative was launched under the theme, "One

book can make a world of difference" and focused on giving forms one, two and three struggling readers high interest, low readability books as their personal gift from the school.

The first goal of the programme was successful and in order to take the reading initiative to another level an appeal was made to FirstCaribbean International Bank for support.

The bank's branch manager, Dawn Soley, said that over the years the bank has sponsored many educational institutions and initiatives that benefit students.



"We are always eager and willing to support programmes that benefit and enhance the learning experience and opportunities for our young people. When we received this request we

were very impressed with the effectiveness and success of this literacy programme and agreed immediately to give our support."

The bank donated EC\$3,025.00 to purchase the books.

Navigating Uncharted Waters

With tourism accounting for upwards of seventy percent (70%) of GDP, very few businesses are not impacted by the fallout from the COVID-19 Pandemic. At the time of penning this article, the United Kingdom is mandating more lockdowns as scientists and researchers have confirmed the presence of a new mutant strain of the virus. It has closed its borders until mid-February 2021. Airlift from the UK will be severely affected with the planned discontinuation of British Airways flights until further notice. In our other large source market, the United States, even as the first vaccine is being rolled out, unprecedented new numbers of exposure to and death from the virus are being recorded daily. Every single industry in Antigua and Barbuda will therefore be operating with a level of uncertainty.

Strategic human resource management involves among other things, ensuring the organization can retain top talent by providing employees the compensation, benefits, training and development, opportunities and reward in a sustainable manner which is aligned with the organization's strategic direction. In this economic downturn, most employers are not recruiting team members, and many have also reduced their training budget as revenues decline. Worse, most employers are not able to offer increases in compensation and benefits in 2021 also because of declining revenues. How does an organization keep its employees motivated?

Employers, particularly within the critical tourism sector are not able to determine with any degree of accuracy, what their manpower needs will be in 2021. Forward bookings in the hotel sector have significantly declined with the larger properties experiencing less than thirty percent (30%) occupancy levels, while others are being forced to close their doors once again. This decline



affects the industries that support tourism for example distribution, tours, transportation, restaurants, bars, cafes, and ancillary services. With this unprecedented uncertainty, how do human resource personnel determine adequate staffing levels for 2021, or even for the first quarter of 2021? Can engaging employees temporarily or even seasonally be feasible when an organization wants to retain the best and brightest? And when top talent may want job security?

HRPAB can provide no easy answers but can provide some guidance to HR professionals who may find themselves in this quandary. Firstly, every organization should determine its list of key or core personnel. These are employees who the company absolutely cannot operate efficiently without and do not want to lose or who have highly specialized skillsets relative to the business. HR must ensure the company has a robust succession planning policy in place to ensure business continuity in the absence of any of the key personnel whether temporarily or permanently. The organization must make every effort to retain these employees year-round, through the changing seasons and occupancy levels. Next, the company needs to determine which ancillary workers with the requisite skills, experience, and years of service in the company they will be able to retain even at varying levels. Once the company identifies this second tier of employees, it needs to strategize on how to keep these employees engaged and available for recall when they are needed.

Effective communication of a transparent policy will ensure employees understand how and when they will be recalled, and how much notice they will receive in advance of a recall. Companies need to ensure available work hours are fairly and equitably distributed among employees to be recalled. Continuation of employee benefits for permanent part-time employees is one way of retaining the link with them and ensuring they give the organization preference when they are needed. Some businesses may find it appropriate to consider outsourcing some services and or categories of work. One positive from the pandemic is that it has shown that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Antigua & Barbuda.

Team leaders and department heads must constantly assess workforce requirements based on information received in real-time and act on it quickly. One can expect that with the levels of uncertainty, mistakes will be made. As the COVID-19 Pandemic is likely to continue to affect Antigua & Barbuda throughout 2021, managers will during the year become more adept at making good decisions rapidly, based on quantifiable data.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hrpro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HRPro268

IMPORTANT NOTICE

FROM ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TRANSPORT BOARD

Driver's Licence Renewal **REQUIREMENT**

Effective February 8th 2021, the Antigua and Barbuda Driver's Licence will now feature **NATIONALITY**, as well as, **COUNTRY OF BIRTH**. This is to facilitate the regional integration movement.

Each driver's licence holder is therefore required to bring along your valid passport upon your next driver's licence renewal date.

Please be guided accordingly.



Venezuela threatens further action if more Guyanese found in Essequibo waters



Venezuela's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jorge Arreaza

(kaieteurnewsonline): Venezuela's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jorge Arreaza, Tuesday threatened further action against Guyanese found in Essequibo waters after Guyana gave a firm rebuke to its detention of two Guyanese fishing vessels off the Essequibo Coast on Thursday last.

"Venezuela," he said, "rejects the Communique of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana [of January 24] on the operation of the Bolivarian National Navy and reiterates that it will

not allow illegal incursions of any kind into its territory, exercising the defense of its sovereignty."

The first two vessels, Lady Nayera and Sea Wolf had been operating just off the coast at Waini Point on Thursday, where they were intercepted by the Venezuela Navy Vessel, Comandante Hugo Chavez GC 24, and ordered to navigate their way to Port Guiria to be held.

In response, Guyana had announced that it is seeking to ensure the status and

security of the vessels' crew members, and ordered the Venezuelan government to release them immediately.

The Bolivarian Republic's foreign minister tweeted that Venezuela rejects Guyana's statement, and that Venezuela would not allow "illegal incursions in its territory."

Arreaza claimed the vessels were fishing illegally in "undisputed" Venezuelan territory without having required documentation.

Arreaza also claimed that Guyana's authorities

are engaged in a "media matrix" which "lays bare the unilateral claims of that government, in alliance with transnational oil companies, particularly with the American ExxonMobil, on uncontested Venezuelan territory, as well as on marine and underwater areas pending delimitation."

Though the vessels were found in Guyanese waters, Venezuela arrested the vessels in-keeping with a presidential decree made by its President, Nicolas Maduro, on January 7.

"I signed the decree, he had posted on Twitter shortly after, "by which the Territory for the Development of the Atlantic Façade of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is established, which becomes part of the legal, diplomatic and political actions for the defense of our rights for more than 200 years."

The decree effectively means that the Venezuela Government would treat the Essequibo region, which Venezuela has coveted for decades, as its own. President Maduro vowed to "reconquer" the region.

REAL TALK

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Homeless horror - Streets filled with trembling as four chopped to death in Kingston

(Jamaica-gleaner):

The cold, haunting streets of Kingston were frozen with fear on Monday night as the capital's nomads snuggled in corners or retreated to shelters in the aftermath of the grisly murders of four homeless men and the wounding of two others.

The macabre scenes spanned an arc of 9.5km (6.0 miles), stretching from the shopping strip of Half-Way Tree to downtown and further west near Bumper Hall.

Kingston Mayor Delroy Williams called the incidents a "stain" on the nation - a contrast to what he viewed as improving relations between the public and the homeless population.

While attacks, even deadly ones, on homeless persons occur occasionally, Jamaicans awoke to a scale of carnage to the city's vulnerable as infamous as it was horrific.

The police said their probe into what appeared to be coordinated attacks was ongoing as they pursued several leads. Some of downtown's homeless who spoke to journalists believe



Lionel Johnson, 47, lights a cigarette while sitting outside the Kingston and St Andrew Municipal Corporation temporary night shelter on Church Street.

that one of their own might have been responsible for the bloodbath.

The investigations might also delve into questions of whether the savagery was the work of a serial killer. It is uncertain whether the acts were committed by a single person.

Barrington Hall be-moaned the murder of his soulmate and friend 'Soljie', one of the four men killed in the streets between Sunday night and Monday morning. Soljie met his demise on the outskirts of the civil and tax division of the Kingston and St Andrew Parish Court - chilling irony

of the injustice that befell him.

Hall, who has been homeless for years and regularly hangs out with Soljie, mused that he might have suffered a similarly bloody fate if he had slept near his pal on Sutton Street as usual.

"Dem say me miss it. I sleep out here. Me and she, too," Hall told The Gleaner, referencing a nearby homeless woman.

"We talk about woman and thing and we smoke, enuh Sometimes I beg him a draw or I buy my own and ting, yuh know. Otherwise he was just a

friend."

Two deceased were found on Hanover Street in the Kingston Central Police Division and a fourth in Kingston West in the vicinity of the Mother White Bridge.

The injured men were found at a Constant Spring Road plaza and on Derrymore Road in the St Andrew Central Police Division.

A resident of central Kingston who lives in the area where the downtown murders occurred told The Gleaner on Monday that the attacks were an indictment on the State and the people of Jamaica. He was seen busily covering bloodstains with sawdust.

"Homeless people are being murdered on the streets and not being protected by the citizens and the State, especially in COVID time.

"If they were allowing people on the street over time, maybe somebody would see the act and try and stop it," the man, who requested anonymity, said, hinting at the nightly island wide curfews that run from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.



TALKING POINT

TUESDAY - FRIDAY
10:30AM TO 1:30PM

DR. MASERATI
SENATOR COLIN BROWNE

BVI's historic Commission of Inquiry now officially underway

(BVI News): The territory's historic Commission of Inquiry (COI) officially started last Friday when Judge Gary Hickinbottom was sworn in as the sole Commissioner of Inquiry.

The swearing-in ceremony took place in the presence of the Governor and a senior Magistrate.

"I was sworn in as Commissioner this morning and my work begins today. I'll be supported by a team, including secretary to the Inquiry, Steven Chandler, who's already been appointed and who is here. But I'll also be supported by a solicitor and counsel to

the Commission – both shortly to be appointed," Judge Hickinbottom said at a press conference on Friday, January 22.

The public is being invited to log on to the COI's official website to provide information that may assist the Inquiry.

"[It] will not only have information about the Inquiry but will have a portal by which anyone can raise queries and submit information which falls within the terms of reference and which they consider may be helpful," Judge Hickinbottom explained before adding that the website is now

live.

He said other means of submitting information will be shared on the website and will include, email, Whatsapp and a postal address in the UK.

"We're currently working on whether we can have a sufficiently safe and secure dropbox here," Judge Hickinbottom said.

In the meantime, Hickinbottom suggested that hearings will officially begin in weeks and "hopefully some or perhaps all of the proceedings will be in public and will be live streamed".

He, however, said he "can't make a commit-

ment yet because we don't know what the hearings will cover".

"Over the next couple of weeks I will be inviting a number of people whom I believe might be able to assist the Inquiry to come and talk to me and we propose holding sessions and various locations on Tortola and on the sister islands," said Hickinbottom.

"I hope that the vast amount of information I have referred will be sent to us over the course of the next month or so, so that we can move on to the next stage of the inquiry," he added.

Persons do not want to follow the protocols – St. Lucia Deputy Commissioner of Police

(Loopslu): St Lucia's Deputy Commissioner of Police, Milton Desir, is imploring all citizens to keep themselves and others around them safe from the coronavirus by following and adhering to the recent protocols stipulated by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

Desir warns that individuals found in breach of the COVID-19 protocols will be dealt with in the strictest manner within the parameters of the law.

Currently, Saint Lucia is experiencing a third wave of the pandemic, recording over 500 cases alone in January, almost double what was recorded

the previous year.

"It appears that persons, they do not follow protocols, they do not want to follow protocols," Desir said.

Health officials have attributed the spike in cases to a complete lack of adherence to protocols, forcing the Government to institute new protocols while enforcing what already exists.

"We are asking in these new measures that you follow the protocols because where protocols are not followed, we see where they lead us to; that stricter measures would be put in place."

On Friday, January 22, the Government

announced new protocols which included:

- Prohibition of all social gatherings, including religious activities
- Restrictions on in-dining restaurant services
- Prohibition of all sporting activities including gyms
- Work from home and reduce contact meetings
- Closure of schools
- Restrictions on alcohol sales

Desir observed that social activities were the main area for concern for law enforcement and health officials where individuals were violating COVID-19 protocols,

especially at the bars.

"We have had the COVID wardens, we have had officers going out there to persons to warn them but I think the time has come that we have to take definitive action against persons who do not comply with the protocols," Desir said.

According to him, with compliance, the island could see a reduction in positive COVID-19 cases and therefore return to some degree of normalcy.

The protocols will last for a ten-day period, except for the suspension of liquor licenses which will last for a 21 day period.

Republican senators want to halt Trump impeachment trial

(Associated Press):

Senators took oaths Tuesday to ensure “impartial justice” as jurors in Donald Trump’s historic impeachment trial, proceedings that will test Republican loyalty to the former president and the power he still wields after the deadly siege at the U.S. Capitol.

But some Republican senators are challenging the legitimacy of the trial and questioning whether Trump’s repeated demands to overturn Joe Biden’s election really constitute “incitement of insurrection” in the Jan. 6 riot.

Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky said he plans to force a vote on whether the impeachment trial of a former president is allowed under the Constitution.

“A sham, this is, a travesty, a dark blot on the history of our country,” Paul said in a fiery speech on the Senate



Clerk of the House Cheryl Johnson along with acting House Sergeant-at-Arms Tim Blodgett, lead the Democratic House impeachment managers as they walk through Statuary Hall in the Capitol

floor.

He called on Senate colleagues to stop this “kangaroo court” and compared the way Trump egged on the crowd outside the White House before the mob stormed the Capitol to past speeches by Democratic lawmakers, including now-Vice President Kamala Harris.

What seemed for some Democrats like an open-and-shut case that played out for the

world on live television — as Trump encouraged a rally mob to “fight like hell” for his presidency — is running into a Republican Party that feels very differently. Not only are there legal concerns, but senators are wary of crossing the former president and his legions of followers. Security remains tight at the Capitol.

On Monday, the nine House Democrats prosecuting the case against

Trump carried the sole impeachment charge of “incitement of insurrection” across the Capitol in a solemn and ceremonial march along the same halls the rioters ransacked three weeks ago.

In a scene reminiscent of just last year — Trump is the first president twice impeached — the lead House prosecutor, Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, stood before the Senate to read the House resolution charging “high crimes and misdemeanors.”

But Republican denunciations of Trump have cooled since the riot.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, asked if Congress starts holding impeachment trials of former officials, what’s next: “Could we go back and try President Obama?”

Besides, he suggested, Trump has already been held to account. “One way in our system you get punished is losing an election.”



STARTING POINTE

with

Shelton Daniel

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

8:30am-10:30am



99.1 FM

ON AIR

 **POINTE FM**

Indian farm protesters battle police to plant flags at historic Red Fort



(Reuters): Thousands of Indian farmers protesting against agricultural reforms on Tuesday overwhelmed police and stormed into the historic Red Fort complex in New Delhi after tearing down barricades and driving tractors through roadblocks.

Police fired tear gas in an unsuccessful bid to force the protesters back. One protester was killed, a witness said, and Delhi police said 86 officers

had been injured across the city.

Some of those who scaled the walls of Red Fort carried ceremonial swords, scattering police who tried to prevent them from entering. Footage from Reuters partner ANI showed police jumping from the ramparts to escape. Once inside, the protesters hoisted flags.

Angered by laws they say help large, private buyers at the expense of producers, farmers have

camped outside the capital for almost two months, posing one of the biggest challenges to Prime Minister Narendra Modi since he came to power in 2014.

"Modi will hear us now, he will have to hear us now," said Sukhdev Singh, 55, a farmer from the northern state of Punjab.

The body of one protester draped in an Indian tricolour lay in the street after the tractor he rode overturned in one clash, said a witness, Vishu Aro-

ra.

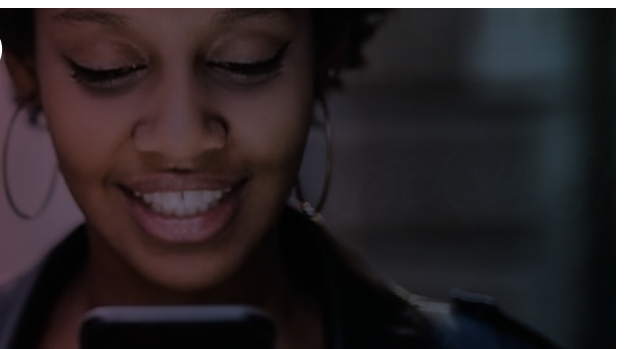
"He died right there," Arora said.

A Reuters witness saw several police and protesters with head injuries following clashes at the Red Fort, from whose ramparts Modi delivers an annual speech.

The government ordered internet services in some parts of the capital to be blocked, according to mobile carrier Vodafone Idea, in an attempt to prevent further unrest.

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Janet Yellen is confirmed as the first female Treasury secretary in US history

(CNN): Lawmakers confirmed Janet Yellen as Treasury secretary on Monday, making her the first woman in American history to hold the position.

As head of the Treasury, she'll be tasked with shepherding President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan through Congress and overseeing its execution. The plan includes \$1,400 stimulus checks, expanded unemployment benefits, and increased funding for Covid-19 vaccinations and testing.

During her confir-

mation hearing last week, Yellen defended the size and scope of the plan, saying the first priority of the incoming administration must be to get the nation and its people through the pandemic before addressing other concerns, including America's ballooning deficit or raising taxes.

"Right now, with interest rates at historic lows, the smartest thing we can do is act big," she told the Senate Finance Committee.

She made clear her No. 1 priority would



Janet Yellen first female Treasury secretary in US history

be to provide relief for those in the greatest need — especially minority workers and women, who have been hit hardest by the downturn.

"The pandemic has caused widespread devastation," Yellen said in her testimony. "The damage has been sweeping, and ... our response must be, too."

With broad bipartisan support from Wall Street to Washington, Yellen was widely expected to be confirmed. The Senate Finance Committee on Friday approved her nomination unanimously, 26-0.

"It is hard to imagine a better prepared nominee to meet this great moment of need than Dr. Yellen," her Treasury predecessors wrote

in a letter backing her nomination.

She's no stranger to breaking barriers in positions of power. In 2014, she became the first woman to run the Federal Reserve, and she will be the first person ever to have led the three most powerful economic bodies in government: Treasury, the central bank, and the White House Council of Economic Advisers.

"Janet Yellen is brilliant and has a track record for being unflappable," Greg Valiere, chief US policy strategist at AGF Investments, said when her nomination made headlines in November. "She seems to be popular in all factions, from the financial markets to Main Street."

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Italian PM Conte resigns in split over Covid response



Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte

(£186bn; \$254bn) of last year.

EU recovery funds - part of a €750bn EU rescue for the Covid crisis.

Mr Renzi says EU funds should be invested in promising sectors like digital and green technologies, and wants MPs, rather than technocrats, to decide on the allocations. But he also wants more investment in the embattled health service.

Italy, now mired in recession, was at the epicentre of the pandemic in Europe

Mr Renzi governed Italy in 2014-2016, but currently his Italia Viva party is polling below 3%.

And so Italy's 66th government since World War Two comes to a close. A country of seemingly perennial political crises has chosen the worst possible time to face another - in the grip of a pandemic that has killed more than 85,000 Italians and unleashed the worst economic collapse in decades.

(BBC): Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has resigned - and it is not clear if he will be able to form and lead a new coalition government.

Parties are divided over spending in the coronavirus crisis, in which more than 85,000 Italians have died.

Mr Conte met President Sergio Mattarella, who may ask him to form a stronger government. Last week he lost his Senate majority.

But someone else could become Italy's PM, or a snap election could be called.

The law professor, who has headed coalition governments since 2018, tendered his resignation to the president. And now Mr Conte is discussing the political crisis with Senate president Elisabetta Casellati.

President Mat-

tarella is expected to spend two days in talks with party leaders, as it is up to the president to decide the next move.

The centrist coalition government was plunged into crisis two weeks ago when former PM Matteo Renzi pulled his small, liberal Italia Viva party out of it. He said he would only return if Mr Conte accepted a list of demands.

Mr Conte survived a vote of confidence in the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, last week. He then won a Senate vote, but without an absolute majority.

The lack of a majority would restrict government business - hence the political shake-up.

Mr Renzi's main objection was to Mr Conte's plans for spending €209bn

APUA ELECTRICITY MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

These planned outages are necessary for our continuous upgrade and maintenance programme to provide reliable and consistent service to our customers.

Date: Wednesday 27th January 2021

Time: 8:45AM-11:30AM

Affected areas: Section of Matthews Main Road

Date: Wednesday 27th January 2021

Time: 8:45AM-12:00PM

Affected areas: Section of Buckleys and Buckley Line

Date: Thursday, 28th January 2021

Time: 8:45AM-12:00PM

Affected areas: A small section of Sawcolts

Date: Friday 29th January 2021

Time: 8:30AM-12:00PM

Affected areas: Dr. Prince Ramsey Drive

Date: Friday 29th January 2021

Time: 8:45AM - 11:30AM

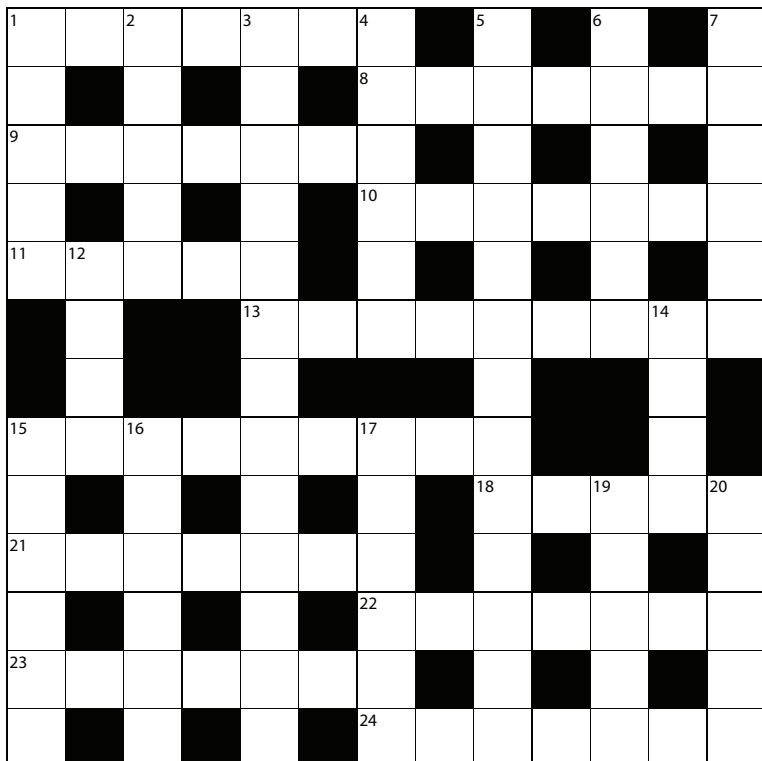
Affected areas: Section of Mount Joy west of the gas station

Kindly note that this schedule is subject to slight variation. Changes will be communicated on the APUA Facebook page.

Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated. For further information and updates please call 311.



QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

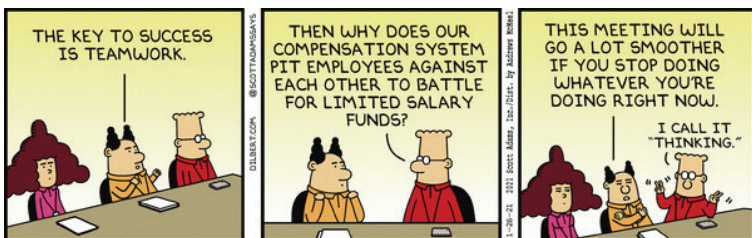
- 1 This baby will grow up to be a fierce canine (4,3)
- 8 Stupendous (7)
- 9 Far beyond the norm (7)
- 10 Cable way for coming down fast under gravity (3,4)
- 11 Display of bad temper (5)
- 13 Storyteller (9)
- 15 Starters (9)
- 18 Games played with a pack (5)
- 21 Official conducting inquests (7)
- 22 Unsurpassed (3-4)
- 23 Composition of flat objects stuck on a board (5-2)
- 24 Moorhen (anag) — internal secretion (7)

Down

- 1 Industrial sites (5)
- 2 Shelf (5)
- 3 Small silky-coated dog (6,7)
- 4 French novelist, Honoré d. 1850 (6)
- 5 At right angles (13)
- 6 The fuzz? (6)
- 7 Surface (6)
- 12 Kinship group (4)
- 14 Employed (4)
- 15 Say 'yes' (6)
- 16 Beat conclusively (6)
- 17 Angel of the first order (6)
- 19 Horned pachyderm (abbr) (5)
- 20 Large yellow edible root (5)

DAILY COMICS

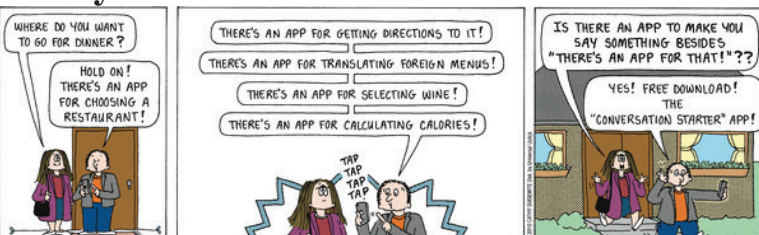
Dilbert



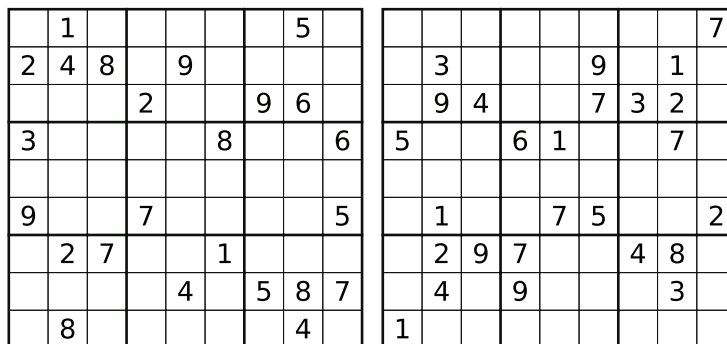
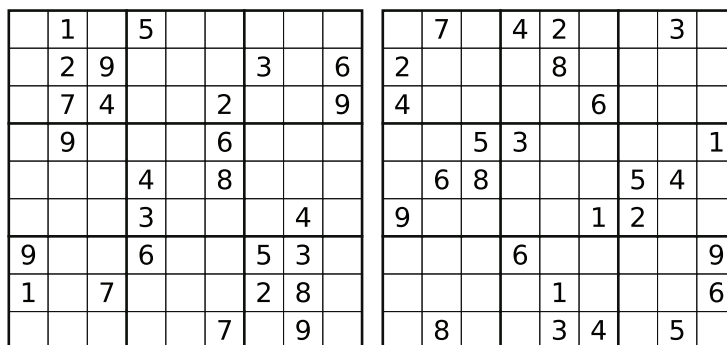
Garfield



Cathy



SUDOKU



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

WED
01/27



81 °Hi DAY
Sunshine and some clouds

74 °Lo NIGHT
Patchy clouds with a couple of showers

Sunrise 6:40 AM Sunset 6:00 PM Moonrise 5:05 PM Moonset 6:34 AM

THU
01/28



81 °Hi DAY
Partly sunny

73 °Lo NIGHT
Partly cloudy with a shower in the area

Sunrise 6:40 AM Sunset 6:01 PM Moonrise 6:03 PM Moonset 7:24 AM

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You've come to a long-anticipated crossroads in one of your relationships, and things could change significantly, depending on how you treat today's drama. If you can be patient with this person's outrageous behavior, you will grow closer.

♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Today, pay attention to the people on the fringes of your social circle, the folks everyone else gossips about. These people might not be suitable role models for you, but what they represent is important.

♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

There's no such thing as a dumb question! If you're feeling uncomfortable or unsure about something today, you owe it to yourself and those who depend on you to ask some questions of the people in charge.

♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

Try not to be too suspicious of someone who has been paying a lot of attention to you lately. Why do you doubt their interest in you? No strings are attached, so stop worrying. Drop your guard and let them in.

♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

Your status within your group is on a huge upswing, which will create a lot of positive energy around you. Everyone wants to be near you, get some time with you, and just soak in all the good vibes you're giving off.

♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Put a little more energy into staying current. You need to learn more about what's going on. This could apply to news events, pop culture, politics, sports, or even just your social circle. Check out what's going on online.

♏ LIBRA Sept. 23-Oct. 22

Your famous sense of fairness and equality is stronger than ever today, and it could cause you to speak up despite your discomfort. Who cares if you draw attention to yourself? Everyone else needs to hear what you're saying.

♏ SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Some real heat has been growing between you and another person, but it might not be exactly the kind you were hoping for. Be open to all possibilities, because you still have a lot to gain from building this relationship.

♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your ambitions have steadily been evolving, and the process has intensified. You're coming into the fullness of your potential, and you have a glimpse of the themes you'll be dealing with in a professional situation in the months to come.

♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

The energy is a bit uneven now, but you can get excellent results if you push your agenda forward using tact instead of force. You get jealous easily if you're feeling insecure, but acting on negative emotions does more harm than good.

♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

It doesn't matter how well you are or aren't getting along with your family right now — you need to get in touch with one or two older relatives you haven't seen in a while. One simple phone call or short message will have a gigantic effect on their lives.

♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

The beauty you see in someone else's romance is completely an illusion. What you're experiencing right now is a classic "grass is greener" situation, and you're wasting your energy being jealous.

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.

INVITATION TO CONSTITUENCY TOWNHALL MEETING

Member of Parliament for St. Mary's North, the honourable Sir Molwyn Joseph cordially extends an invitation to his constituents for a Town hall meeting in his constituency on Thursday 28th January 2021. The meeting will be held at the Bendals Primary School starting at 7:30pm. The Parliamentary representative will be updating the constituency on matters of national importance as well as issues specific to the community. The Member of Parliament also holds the Health portfolio and will use this opportunity to discuss issues related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Government's response including vaccinations. Matters related to the infrastructural developments will also be discussed with particular focus on the Bendals community. The constituents are encouraged to attend and raise any other issue they would bring to bring to my attention.

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W.I off-spinner Rakeem Cornwall grateful for long lead up to test series

West Indies All-rounder Rakeem Cornwall believe the long preparation leading up to the start of the Bangladesh test series has assisted the players get use to the anticipated difficult conditions.

As the team prepare for the start of the series on February 1, they have had to quarantine for seven days based on the country's Covid-19 protocols since arriving on



10 January. Since clearing all the required protocols, the team have been free to train.

The Asian team who

dispatched the West Indies 2-0 on the last visit in 2015 is known for being difficult to beat on their home turf. Cornwall said the

conditions are difficult to play in, but the more time they get to understand the conditions the better it is for the team.

The off-spinner noted that it spins more in Bangladesh and the pitches are drier than in the Caribbean. The West Indies will be hoping to improve on the poor performance of the ODI team who were thrashed 3-0 by the Asian side in the just concluded series.

CWI Super50 bowls-off 7 February

The Leeward Hurricanes will get the ball rolling in the opening game of the CG Insurance Super50 Cup on Sunday 7 February when they take on the Windward Volcanoes at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds.

Only 19 matches will be contested due to the Covid-19 pandemic with the tournament scheduled to conclude on February 27. The health risk related to the Covid-19 pandemic caused a major disruption to all domestic cricket since late March 2020.

The region's six major cricketing rivals will clash in 19 action packed 50-overs games starting from 7



February when the Hurricanes host the Volcanoes.

The tournament will climax when the new champions are crowned on Saturday, February 27. Each team

will play each other on a round robin basis with the top four teams qualifying for the semi-finals and the opportunity to reach the finals.

Matches will be played at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds and the Sir. Vivian Richards Stadium. The Coolidge Cricket Grounds will feature 13 matches while six games will be hosted at the Sir Viv Richards Stadium.

All players and supporting staff will have to return negative Covid-19 test before arriving in Antigua. Players and officials participating in the tournament will be in a bio-secure bubble.

Premier League registers further drop in number of Covid positive tests

The English Premier League has confirmed eight positive coronavirus cases were recorded in the latest batch of testing- half the number recorded last week.

The results were taken across two rounds of test-

ing of 2,518 players and club staff- and represent another decrease in positives since the season high 40 between December 28 and January 3.

Players or club staff who have tested positive will self-isolate for a period of

10 days. In total, the Premier League has recorded 231 positive results out of 36,615 tests this season but having said that, six top flight matches have been called off due to coronavirus cases.

The Premier League,

along with the Football Association and the English Football league, recently released a joint statement reiterating the importance of following newly enhanced Covid-19 measures and have already begun rescheduling fixtures.

Unfinished business

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation, Dave George, says he has unfinished business and he will be seeking re-election as leader of the Federation.

Elections will be held on Saturday 30 January at the ABI center. All-Covid-19 protocols will be observed while an independent individual will conduct the proceedings.

George said he feels like he was robbed of 2020 by the coronavirus pandemic that hampered all sporting activities from March last year. The well-known sports

broadcaster said if re-elected by the membership he will focus his attention on the junior program for continuity of the sport.

Expanding the membership and engaging more sponsors are high on George's priority list. Hazel Went will challenge George for the leadership of the Federation with the winner installed for the next three years.

Anyone who was a member of the organization in 2020 is eligible to vote while preparations have been put in place for members who are unable to attend to vote.



President of the ABBWF Dave George

DEWS



with
VERON 'EPLIUS' EDWARDS JR.
VERNON A. SPRINGER



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