

FRIDAY 19TH MARCH 2021

| ISSUE 205

| WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

IN - HOUSE DINING RETURNS

SEE PAGE 3



Photo caption: Members of a visiting family dine at a local restaurant

The politics of vaccines

There has been much discussions recently over the efficacy of the different brands of COVID-19 vaccines that have been developed and marketed from towards the end of 2020 to present.

The pandemic is a truly global crisis, affecting practically every country and bringing such major economic powers as the United States, China and the European Union to their knees. Such was the impact on the health of citizens of all nations that borders were closed with airlines and cruise ships grinding to a halt.

The cost of the pandemic will be in the trillions of dollars by the time it is over.

So it is quite understandable, expected even, that there would be a mad rush by the scientific communities in these countries to quadruple their efforts to find a vaccine to control the spread of the virus, to reduce hospitalisations and deaths.

One recalls vividly in

the early months of the pandemic, the pictures coming out of Italy when that country buckled under the weight of the high rate of hospitalisations and deaths from the pandemic. Italy was one of the first countries in the west to institute a total lockdown. Spain would follow soon after and then most of the EU.

COVID-19 was the common enemy and the world needed an effective weapon in the fight against this airborne, respiratory disease.

Huge sums of money were poured into research to develop effective vaccines on both sides of the Atlantic, Russia, and China. In the U.S, it became part of the presidential election campaign as the Trump team was hoping for an 'October surprise' to energise his campaign for re-election. This did not happen. The announcement of the first vaccine was made right after the elections. To this day, the

Trump team has cried 'foul,' stating that the announcement was delayed in order to 'hurt' the then president's re-election chances. The politics of the vaccine would also go beyond the US presidential elections to become part of the global struggle between East and West and even among countries that are supposed to be friends.

To date, vaccines have been developed in the United States (at least three), China (at least another three), Russia (two) and the United Kingdom, one. Cuba is said to have several under development.

Approval at the World Health Organization has only been for vaccines developed in Western countries. No vaccine from Russia or China, even though the Russian Sputnik vaccine is said to have one of the highest efficacy rates of all the vaccines available. The Chinese vaccines too have been judged to be quite safe and effective. So what is the holdup?

Then there is the issue of countries cornering the market by purchasing more vaccines than they need. There was a report that the US plans to share some of its vaccines with Canada, even though Canada is one nation said to have purchased more than it requires.

The latest fallout in the politics of vaccine is the issue of the EU nations and the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine produced by the United Kingdom. Several weeks ago, many EU nations, notably France and Germany, decided to halt giving sixty-five-year-olds and older the vaccine over what they said was 'safety concerns.' After some deliberation, they announced that they would resume applying the vaccines to their seniors.

Now, more recently there have been concerns on whether or not the vaccine is associated with blood clots. Again, the EU countries announced that they were suspending the use of the vaccine,

allowing for further consultations. This week, the EU regulatory agency made a statement attesting to the safety of the As-

traZeneca vaccine following which these countries decided to resume using the vaccine. One has to wonder what impact Brexit

and the ongoing issues between the UK and the EU has had on all this? As small developing states, it is important for us to recognize

that all is not always what they seem and not to get caught up in geopolitics or vaccine politics. There is nothing to gain by doing so!

In-service dining returns



Chief of Staff, Lionel Max Hurst

The Cabinet has agreed to allow in-service dining to take place in restaurants across the country as a further step in easing the COVID-19 restrictions. According to Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, Lionel Max Hurst, the move goes into immediate effect; however, the current curfew hours

from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. remain in effect. Hurst says the decision follows what he described as “intense discussions” among members of the Cabinet on the issue at Thursday’s meeting of the country highest executive authority. Hurst further stated that the Cabinet intends to review, over

the coming week, the number of people being infected and hospitalized daily. “If the numbers decline further, the Cabinet will determine whether to [shorten] the curfew. The object is to enable those workers in restaurants to return to their jobs and to begin earning an income once more,” he

explained.

The Chief of Staff noted that during this period of delivery and pick-up service, many restaurants furloughed staff and others actually closed their doors. This is a situation which the government’s action seeks to reverse.

Additionally, he announced that gyms, bars and other places of entertainment will be considered in due course.

Meanwhile, Hurst disclosed that the House of Representatives will convene next Thursday 25th March 2021 in order to consider whether to end or to continue the State of Emergency which, after ninety days, is scheduled to end on 31st March 2021.

Also on the Order Paper is the ratification of the vesting order, allowing the Antigua Commercial Bank to purchase the assets and liabilities of the Royal Bank of Canada.

PRIME MINISTER BROWNE AND OECS HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TO MEET WITH WHO DIRECTOR GENERAL TODAY



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General



of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, “The convening of the 6th Meeting of the OECS Authority, to be held under the Chairmanship of Hon. Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica, will be held on Friday 19th March 2021 and will receive the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and his team.”

Prime Minister Browne along with Prime Minister Keith Mitchell will present on ‘Safe and Sustainable Economic Recovery,’ during the Authority meeting.

A media release from the OECS states that the Director General of the OECS, Dr. Didacus Jules, is anticipating a productive outcome with the WHO and hopes that this meeting will help bridge the

vaccine gap for OECS Member States.

“The Special Meeting of the OECS Heads of Government with WHO is critical for two main reasons: it will allow the OECS to join with Director General Tedros in advocating for more equitable access to vaccines and unlocking supplies for developing states. This Special Session will give the OECS Authority an opportunity to explore approaches to filling the gap between vaccines accessible through the COVAX Facility and bilateral sources, and highlighting the health needs of our Member States. Finding a timely solution is critical from a public health standpoint but will also provide the building blocks to resuscitate, repair and rebuild the economies across our region.”

Another key point for

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, along with heads of government from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) will present at the 6th Special Meeting of the OECS Authority. According to the Organization



Prime Minister Gaston Browne



Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerri



*OECS Director General
Dr. Didacus Jules*

the Authority will be to explore the support of the WHO through the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator. The Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) Director, Dr. Carissa Etienne, as well as the Executive Director of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Dr. Joy St. John, will join the discussion to speak to critical public health concerns related to combat the pandemic. Ahead of the meeting, Dr. Tedros said: "Many Caribbean States have led the way in protecting their populations from COVID-19 with careful implementation of public health measures. I am honoured to work side by side with OECS Heads of Government in fighting the pandemic

and am committed to ensuring equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatments to support Caribbean communities. Collaborating with partners through the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and its COVAX Facility, WHO is working to ensure vaccines are distributed as rapidly and equitably as possible, to help bring the pandemic under control in the Caribbean and globally." Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO has been an invaluable partner to the OECS and to CARICOM, facilitating access to African medical supplies platforms and brokering donations of personal protective equipment (PPEs) to the Caribbean region. Shortly after his ap-

pointment to Director General, Dr. Tedros held a meeting with the Ministers of Health of the OECS in Geneva in 2018 to understand the health sector challenges of the region. In that

same year in Grenada, the WHO held the 3rd Global Conference on Climate Change and Health alongside the OECS 5th Council of Health Ministers.

OPERATING HOURS NOTICE

We are pleased to advise that our Bill Payment Centres will revert to normal operating hours effective **Wednesday 17th March, 2021.**

Independence Avenue & High Street Branch	
Bill Payments: Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 3:30 pm	Customer Service: Monday to Thursday 8:00 am – 3:30 pm Friday 8:00 am – 2:00 pm
Village Walk Branch Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 3:30 pm	South Mall Branch Monday to Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

For your additional convenience please feel free to utilize our efficient alternative payment options via the APUA Online Bill Payment portal at www.apua.ag, or online through our banking partners ACB, RBC, ECAB, FCIB, BNS, CUB, CFCCU & SJCCU.

Cheque drop boxes located at our Independence Drive, Village Walk and South Mall locations can also be used for PDV vouchers. We strongly encourage our seniors dropping off their vouchers to submit them at least two business days before the expiration date and to consider submitting them earlier in the month to avoid crowded or long lines.

Customers visiting our locations are kindly asked to continue adhering to the established safety protocols. #StaySafe

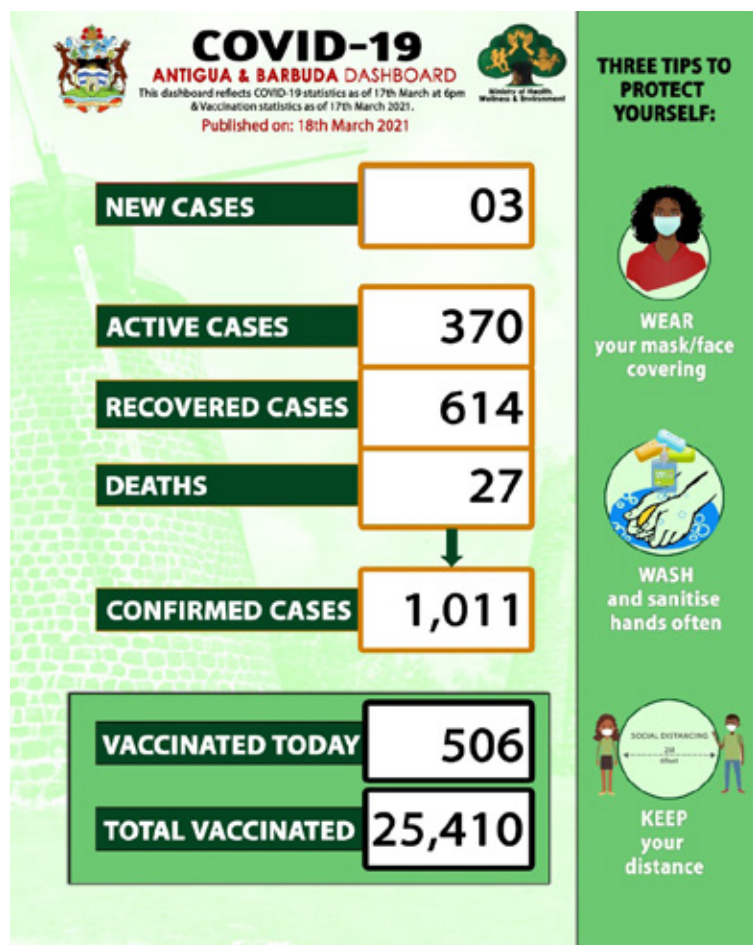
MSJMC announces another COVID-19 Related Death



The Mount St. John's Medical Centre (MSJMC) has announced that the country has recorded another COVID-19 related death. "We can confirm that sadly, a female patient, age fifty-seven, who had underlying medical conditions, has passed away at Mount St. John's Medical Centre on March 18 at 2:48 a.m. She had tested positive

for COVID-19," MSJMC Medical Director, Dr. Albert Duncan, said. He also expressed "thoughts and condolences" for the patient's family and loved ones at this difficult time.

This latest death brings to twenty-eight the number of people who have succumbed to the respiratory ailment since the outbreak exactly one year ago.



THREE NEW COVID-19 CASES

The Ministry of Health has stated that the latest results from the Mount St. John's Medical Centre (MSJMC) have revealed three new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Wednesday 17th March 2021 at 6:00 p.m. These new cases were as a result of sixty-eight samples processed by MSJMC.

Sixteen recovered cases have been recorded, bringing the total to six hundred and fourteen.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is one thousand and eleven, which is inclusive of three hundred and seventy active cases.

Meanwhile, five hundred and six COVID-19 vaccines were administered since the last publication, bringing the total number of individuals vaccinated to twenty five thousand, four hundred and ten.

WORLDWIDE STATS

CONFIRMED CASES	NEW CASES	DEATHS
120,667,101	278,901	2,670,274

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

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

APUA voices concern over dangerous practice involving minors



The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) has raised the alarm over what it describes as “a serious matter”: the removal of electrical material from live powerlines, allegedly done by minors. In a statement issued Thursday, APUA reported that there has been

a sighting of removed cross-arm braces from poles that suspend live powerlines transmitting eleven thousand volts of electricity in the St. Phillips and Newfield areas. It said the discovery was made when a technician visited the areas and noticed planks of wood mounted to the poles and the missing electrical material. It is suspected that the planks of wood were used to climb the pole and remove the apparatus.

“It is alleged that the metal devices are being used to

extend and alter the design of bikes. The Authority would like to appeal to parents, guardians or any other members of the public to dissuade minors or any other unauthorized person from interfering with the infrastructure of the Authority as these activities can result in major injury or possibly electrocution,” according to the statement.

The APUA statement says it continues to encourage all to be safe in every way possible in an effort to protect lives.

COLONEL'S CATCH

- Fish Burger** \$13.50
- Fish Salad*** \$20.99
- Fish Burger Combo** \$19.99
- Fish Twister** \$14.99
- Fish & Chips** \$18.99

5 WAYS to get your KFC

- Walk-In** 10 to 4-DAILY
AVAILABLE AT ALL 3 BRANCHES
- DRIVE-THRU** 10 to 4-DAILY
AVAILABLE AT ALL 3 BRANCHES
- Call-In / Pick Up** 481-1528 Old Parham Rd. 481-1536 Fort Rd. 481-1549 All Saints Rd.
- Grab & Go** 3 to 4-DAILY
5 PIECE & 9 PIECE HAPPY HOUR
- Delivery** 11 to 3 - MON to FRI
CALL 481-1536 TO PLACE ORDER
Minimum order \$25 - FREE WITHIN ST. JOHN'S CITY LIMITS
ORDERS LEAVE ON THE HOUR EVERY HOUR
LAST ORDER FOR THE UPCOMING HOUR TAKEN AT 15MINS TO THE HOUR



#StaySafe

f @kfcanu Instagram @kfcanu
#KFCANU #SOCIALDISTANCING #MADEFRESHEVERYDAY

FOR DELIVERY **QUICK SERVE**
775-4621 / 775-4622
or DOWNLOAD THE APP...
apple Store / Google Play

GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO RAMP UP NOMAD PROGRAMME

The Antigua and Barbuda government is actively exploring ways to 'ramp up' both the profile and interest in its Nomad Digital Residence Visa Programme it launched last year as a new revenue stream from the Treasury.

This week, Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister, E.P. Chet Greene, along with Chief Immigration Officer Katrina Yearwood, were among several individuals who participated in a webinar looking at the programme.

The event was conceptualised by Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner in London, Karen-Mae Hill, who worked closely with the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) to organise the event.

"The programme offers individuals and their dependents the fantastic opportunity to work away from their homeland in a safe, warm and beautiful country for up to two years," Greene said in his opening remarks.

He indicated that from a policy standpoint, the government sees the Nomad programme as "a resilient mechanism" to diversify the tourism sector which has been adversely affect-

ed by the pandemic restrictions placed on travel. "It does so by providing the opportunity to welcome more long-term visitors and benefits of their economic activity while simultaneously diminishing the risks associated with in-and-out short stay visitors in a pandemic. We will continue to develop the programme as a parallel arm to traditional tourism," Greene emphasised. The minister announced that the government will shortly roll out a new website and continue to fine tune its procedures on all aspects of the programme from application, to pro-

cessing to logistical support on arrival to ensure improved efficiency.

Yearwood explained that the new website will serve as a one-stop shop for all applicants to the programme. They will be able to book accommodation, inquire about schools as well as the procedure for bringing their pets into the country.

Additionally, the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) will provide special incentives for those with approval relative to internet use.

She revealed that the strongest interests in the programme come from

the United States and the United Kingdom. She explained that while there are also keen interests from Canadians, that country's borders have been closed making it impossible for them to travel. However, she believes that when these restrictions are lifted Canadians making use of the programme will increase sharply.

Also taking part in the webinar were members of the NRP Unit within the Immigration Department, sports icon, Sir Curtly Ambrose and CWEIC Chief Executive, Samantha Cohen.



TWO OVERSEAS-BASED ANTIGUANS DONATE PPE'S TO CLAREVUE HOSPITAL



Derri Browne



Renard Ramsey

Two young Antigua and Barbuda entrepreneurs based in Miami, Florida, have made a substantial donation of personal protection equipment (PPE) to the Clarevue Hospital for both staff and patients. "Understanding the importance of safety and mental health during this pandemic, the management of The District and Host of The Women's Empowerment Brunch; and in conjunction with Renard Ramsey, son of the late Sir Prince and Ava Ramsey, we are donating the following PPE products in the fight

against COVID-19," Derri Browne wrote in a statement to the hospital. The donation includes facial shields, surgical masks, N95 masks and disinfectant wipes. "These items are being donated to your facility in order to assist in keeping staff members and patients safe in the ongoing fight to combat the deadly coronavirus pandemic," Browne noted.

Browne has hosted the Women's Empowerment Brunch here in St John's which brought together women leaders from the US and the Caribbean to discuss issues related to their advancement. The last staging of the event was at Government House in March 2019. The proceeds from that event, in excess of twenty thousand dollars, were donated to the Clarevue Hospital.

Superintendent of the hospital, Candine Roberts, said the institution is "very happy with this timely donation" from Browne and Ramsey.

"We are thankful that they are thinking of us at this time during the pandemic. These are challenging financial times and we always welcome the support from members of the corporate community who



come forward and assist us. The donation of PPEs will go a long way to protect staff and patients at the institution," she added.

Roberts also acknowledged that Browne and her group have made other donations to the institution in the past.

STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED

Live in a better State of mind

VACANCY
Customer Service Representative

Deadline for Receipt of Application | 26th March, 2021

We are seeking to fill the above named clerical position. The successful applicant will join the team in the General Insurance Department.

REQUIREMENTS

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Detail Oriented
- Critical thinking skills
- Excellent customer service skills
- 6 CXC subjects to include English
- Good interpersonal skills
- Prior experience working in a similar environment an asset
- Familiar with Microsoft Office Suite
- Quick Learner who adapts quickly
- Minimum of two (2) years experience in the Insurance industry
- Associates degree in Business Management or related field would be an asset.

Email your detailed resume with cover letter to hr@sicantigua.com

Address to: **Human Resources Manager**
State Insurance Company Limited
Redcliffe Street
St. John's, Antigua

(268) 481-7800/04 | www.sicantigua.com |

GABRIEL ABED TO DISCUSS BLOCKCHAIN ADOPTION AT THE UWI FIVE ISLANDS PUBLIC ADVOCACY SERIES

The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus in Antigua and Barbuda will explore the adoption of Blockchain for One Caribbean as it hosts the fourth in a series of monthly virtual conversations.

This month's speaker at the Campus' Public Advocacy Series will be Barbadian Blockchain technologist and entrepreneur, Gabriel Abed. Abed has become globally recognised as the man to invent the Caribbean's very first digital dollar to be issued by a central bank. He has also earned a reputation as a regulation technologist, blockchain evangelist, global activist, and World Economic Forum Council Member.

Abed will discuss how Blockchain for One Caribbean could transform ICT, and in so doing, affect substantial disintermediation across a wide variety of industry verticals; changes to supply chains and logistics relationships among retailers, customers, suppliers and manufacturers.

The potential disruptive impact of Blockchain will require Caribbean businesses and governments to develop extensive insights and critical understanding of the full effects of these emerging technologies for

the region. Higher education institutions like The UWI Five Islands Campus are currently engaged in reimagining the future of work in a post-COVID-19 era. This means developing the next generation of visionary tech entrepreneurs who among possessing other skills, would be equipped to help governments and businesses develop innovative Blockchain solutions for the Caribbean.

The virtual event takes place on Monday, March 29, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Caribbean time). Opening remarks will be delivered by Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal, Professor Densil Williams and followed by Abed's feature presentation. Participants will be able to pose questions directly to Abed during the discussion segment. Persons can register online at the Campus' website: <https://fiveislands.uwi.edu/publicadvocacy-series/>.

The Five Islands Campus looks forward to the OECS and wider Caribbean community joining this pivotal conversation with one of the region's leading technology experts.



To: Your Worship
St. Johns Magistrate Court
Gray's Farm
St. Johns
Antigua.

St. Johns
To: The Commissioner of police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR
TAVERN LICENSE FOR
BUSINESS
REGISTERED AS
TEOMO BEACH BAR AND
WANDA'S GRILL

I, **Wanda Desouza**, DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor License Court to be held at Magistrate Court Gray's Farm St. John's Antigua on Thursday 7th January 2021 next ensuing for Tavern license in respect of premises Known as "Teomo Beach Bar and Wanda's Grill" situated Barbuda in the Parish of Holy Trinity Barbuda pursuant to Section 11 (5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act Cap 249 of the Laws Of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised Edition 1992.

Dated the 23rd December, 2020
Wanda Desouza

268-717-0501

To: Your Worship
St. Johns Magistrate Court
Gray's Farm
St. Johns
Antigua.

St. Johns
To: The Commissioner of police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

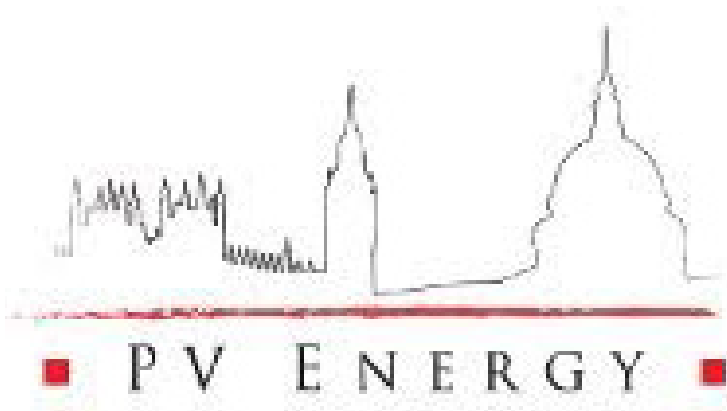
Dear Sir/ Madame,

Re: Notice- Application
for Bottle Licence

I, Rajvir Singh of Friars Hill Road, with registered business situate at Sir George Walter Highway St. Johns Antigua and Barbuda DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm, St. John's, Antigua on Thursday 1st April, 2021 next ensuing for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as "Baali Enterprises" situated at Sir George Walter Highway in the parish of St. Johns, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 15th day of March, 2021

GOVERNMENT UNHAPPY WITH P.V. ENERGY CONTRACT



The government is taking another look at the contract it signed with P.V. Energy to supply electricity to the grid using solar power.

To this end, the Cabinet

invited four of the most experienced lawyers from the Ministry of Legal Affairs/Attorney General's Chambers, including the Solicitor General, to provide it with a history

of on-going events in the life of a contract with P.V. Energy — the company that has built three solar energy plants on Antigua. According to the Cabinet Notes, there is a disagreement over storage batteries which were to be supplied in order to make the plants more useful. The Cabinet agreed to a bargaining position in order to ensure that Antigua and Barbuda achieves the object of the contract. Sources close to the Cab-

inet state that the plants have been made almost useless since they do not have batteries with which to store the power it generates during times of sunlight.

The sources say storing power is critical to the effectiveness of the plants, especially at nights. These plants operate on the premise that they store energy during sunlight for use during periods of no sunlight such as at night.

TOLOMEO BANK LIMITED

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2020

(Expressed in United States Dollars)

	Notes	2020	2019
Assets			
Cash		\$ 11,138	2,848
Due from banks	9	31,986,538	26,919,201
Derivative financial instruments	10	3,925,944	3,546,224
Due from customers		1,199,889	201,701
Investments	11	7,826,217	2,503,492
Other assets	12	564,775	567,664
Property, equipment and right of use assets, net	13	49,000	98,008
Total Assets		\$ 45,563,501	33,839,138
Liabilities and Shareholder's Equity			
Liabilities:			
Due to banks	14	\$ 819,974	8
Lease liabilities		74,318	123,118
Derivative financial instruments	10	3,799,994	3,522,125
Due to customers	14	35,890,502	25,284,778
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	15	397,714	355,621
Tax payable		22,808	28,678
Total Liabilities		\$ 41,005,310	29,314,328
Shareholder's Equity:			
Share capital	16	\$ 3,000,000	3,000,000
General reserves	18	806,526	606,526
Contributed capital	19	40,025	40,025
Retained earnings		711,640	878,259
Total Shareholder's Equity		\$ 4,558,191	4,524,810
Total Liabilities and Shareholder's Equity		\$ 45,563,501	33,839,138

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Director

Director

TOLOMEO BANK LIMITED

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended December 31, 2020

(Expressed in United States Dollars)

	Notes	2020	2019
Income:			
Interest calculated using the effective interest rate method	20	\$ 125,974	183,432
Interest and similar expense	21	(66,894)	(20,568)
Net interest income		59,080	162,864
Fee and commission income	22	4,335,935	3,918,012
Fee and commission expense	23	(1,410,711)	(1,157,317)
Net fee and commission income		2,925,224	2,760,695
Net gain on financial assets designated at fair value through profit or loss	25	16,405	107,210
Net Foreign exchange gain	25	512,549	725,697
Other operating income		67,585	66,085
Total Operating Income		3,580,843	3,822,551
Personnel expenses	27	(738,947)	(659,490)
General office and administrative expenses	26	(1,935,551)	(2,032,423)
Total Operating Expenses		(2,674,498)	(2,691,913)
Net income for the year		906,345	1,130,638
Taxation		(22,964)	(28,678)
Net profit after taxes		\$ 883,381	1,101,960

Haiti needs vigilance by the International Community



By Sir Ronald Sanders

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own)

At a meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) on March 17, I said that “no resolution is per-

fect, and no resolution satisfies every country, but we cannot sacrifice achieving good on the altar of desiring perfection”. The resolution concerned the current constitutional, political and humanitarian situation in Haiti which is very grave and shows every sign of worsening. The delegation of Antigua and Barbuda was the architect of the original resolution which sought to cause the member states of the OAS to express concern about Haiti and to offer to facilitate a meaningful dialogue between President Jo-

venel Moïse and all other stakeholders. It was a matter of regret that, despite the strong statement of CARICOM Heads of Government, concerning Haiti, on February 11, CARICOM delegations at the OAS were again divided. CARICOM Heads were clear that they wanted “all parties in Haiti to engage in meaningful dialogue in the interest of peace and stability”. The Heads also said that they looked forward “to the conduct of free and fair Presidential elections in accordance with the Constitution of Haiti”. Eight CARICOM countries – Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago backed Antigua and Barbuda's draft resolution. In the end, through a process of two weeks of negotiations, countries with important concerns about Haiti – Brazil, Canada, Chile, the

Dominican Republic, and the United States joined the nine Caribbean countries in settling a draft resolution that was then negotiated with the Haitian delegation. By the nature of negotiations, concessions had to be made. Hence, it was not a perfect resolution and not every paragraph of it satisfied everyone. But it was enough to allow the Permanent Council of the OAS to adopt it by consensus. Essentially, it offered “good offices of the OAS, under the authority of the Permanent Council, to facilitate a dialogue that would lead to free and fair elections” and asked the President of Haiti “to consider inviting the Permanent Council to do so”.

This was done against a background that since January 2020, there has been no legislature and no government in Haiti, and President Moïse has been ruling by decree. Further, maraud-

ing gangs have been raping women, including young girls, kidnapping people (rich and poor) and demanding huge ransoms. Violence has exploded in the country, particularly as hundreds of thousands of people have been protesting against President Moïse and deadly force has been used against them by a police force that is allegedly highly politicised.

The UN High Commission for Human Rights has stated its “concerns about judicial independence” which it says “has further eroded the separation of powers” in Haiti.

Time is fast running out to avoid further worsening of the situation in Haiti. The OAS resolution, offering to facilitate dialogue, has come only after deep polarization and distrust in the country. The OAS should have acted much earlier. If President Moïse does not respond positively and swiftly to the offer by the OAS, no dialogue between the stakeholders might be possible. A stand-off between them will occur with

further confrontations. Many Haitians have already stated publicly that “no dialogue is possible with Moïse”, and he has not sought a meaningful dialogue either.

Instead, he is persisting with plans to hold a referendum in June on altering the Constitution. But there has been no consultation with major Haitian players who say he has no authority to hold such a referendum. What is clear is that, in 2015, Haiti had more than 6.5 million people registered to vote. Moïse has now issued new identity cards which his OAS Ambassador says has been distributed to 4 million people. Human rights groups in Haiti dispute that figure, putting it closer to 2 million. Either way more than 2.5 million persons are currently disenfranchised. No referendum or election held in these conditions would be credible or acceptable.

Still worse, the current Provisional Electoral Council, to manage a referendum and elections, comprises persons appointed solely by Moïse. They are

known to have close links to him. Similarly, the draft Constitution has been written by persons he has hand-picked. None of this is “in accordance with the Constitution of Haiti”, and, for the opposition parties, are red rags to a bull.

On March 29, Haiti will mark the anniversary of its 1987 Constitution the very thing that the President is seeking to alter. Stakeholders are pledging to put more than 2 million people on the streets in its defence on March 28 and 29. The Charter of the OAS strictly forbids interference in the internal affairs of States. And, while there have been various artifices by some OAS member states to circumvent that prohibition, the majority of countries adhere to that principle generally. Consequently, the OAS cannot insist that President Moïse accepts its offer to play a good offices role. It must await an invitation from him to do so.

In this context, member states of the Organization should work behind the scenes with Moïse and other stake-

holders to urge them to talk and, in so doing, to take the idea of a referendum on the Constitution off anyone's agenda; to ensure that independent election machinery is established by agreement of all parties and that Presidential, legislative and local elections are held at the earliest possible date, and until then Presidential decrees should be suspended on anything except that on which major players decide.

While this diplomatic work takes place – and CARICOM should be a part of it – the OAS should continue to be vigilant about developments in Haiti and ready to speak out against any further deterioration in the constitutional, political and humanitarian situation.

The people of Haiti need and deserve objective and constructive support in their collective interest, and not for the benefit of any political elite.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

Catholic order pledges one hundred million dollars in reparations to descendants of enslaved people



By Miranda Bryant

An order of Catholic priests has pledged one hundred million dollars in reparations to descendants of Black people it enslaved and sold, in the largest initiative of its kind by the church. Leaders of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States have promised to raise the sum, which will be paid to a foundation set up with a group of descendants, and to

“begin a very serious process of truth and reconciliation.”

“Our shameful history of Jesuit slaveholding in the United States has been taken off the dusty shelf and it can never be put back,” said the Rev Timothy P Kesicki, president of the Jesuit Conference.

“Racism will endure in America if we continue to turn our heads away from the truth of the past and how it affects us all today. The lasting ef-

fects of slavery call each of us to do the work of truth and reconciliation. Without this joining of hearts and hands in true unity, the cycle of hatred and inequality in America will never end.” Jesuits used enslaved labour and sold enslaved people for more than a century, to support clergy, churches and schools, including what is now known as Georgetown University in Washington DC.

The announcement on Monday is thought to be one of the largest attempts to atone for slavery by an institution and the most substantial by the Catholic church. It comes amid growing calls for reparations across US institutions including churches, colleges and Congress.

Descendants of enslaved people called on the order to raise one billion dollars, after discovering that their ancestors were

among two hundred and seventy-two enslaved men, women and children sold in 1838 to plantation owners in Louisiana, by the Jesuit owners of Georgetown.

While the order has committed to one hundred million dollars over three to five years, with fifteen million dollars deposited in a trust so far, Father Kensicki and Joseph M. Stewart, acting president of the Descendants Truth and Reconciliation Foundation, said one billion dollars was the long-term goal. We now have a pathway forward that has not been travelled before," Stewart told the New York Times. "They [the order] did not come running to us, but because we went to them with open arms and open hearts, they responded. They have embraced our vision."

Each year about half the foundation's funds will take the form of grants to organisations work-

ing on racial reconciliation, around a quarter will fund scholarships and educational grants to descendants, and some will be allocated for the emergency needs of descendants who are old or sick.

About five thousand living descendants of people enslaved by the Jesuits have reportedly been identified by a non-profit, the Georgetown Memory Project.

Shannen Dee Williams, assistant professor of history at Villanova University, said the move was an "important step forward" and "continued efforts to seek atonement for these egregious sin histories should be applauded."

But she added: "Hopefully, this most recent announcement will not be the end for a religious community that for well over four hundred years actively participated in and financially benefitted from the slave trade, colonisation, slavery

and segregation."

As the first and largest corporate slaveholder in the Americas and the largest Christian supporter of segregation in the US, the Catholic church will "never be able to repay fully what is owed for the millions of Black lives stolen and destroyed by its own practices of slavery and segregation," Williams said.

The historian said she hoped other religious orders, US bishops and the Vatican would follow the Jesuits' lead and called on them to formally acknowledge and apologise for the church's history of slavery, segregation and racial exclusion; to institutionalise teaching of Black and Black Catholic history; and to "work in complete conjunction with the descendants of its victims to realise true racial justice and reconciliation."

Rashawn Ray, a fellow at the Brookings Institution and a sociology professor at the

University of Maryland, said the move "sends a message" to other religious institutions but added that it "doesn't come close" to bridging the racial wealth gap.

"While the one hundred million dollars is laudable and important," he said, "that one billion dollars that they discussed raising should still be on the table because we know that when it comes to the racial wealth gap, when it comes to the legacy of slavery in the United States and what selling slaves has meant for building wealth, particularly white wealth and institutional wealth in higher education, even with the one hundred million dollars it still doesn't even remotely come close to making that racial gap."

Miranda Bryant is a freelance journalist based in New York

Reprinted from The Guardian



REAL TALK
With
BEEF | RASTAMAN
KENTAE & BERNARD
MONDAY & THURSDAY 7pm-Until **TUESDAY 9pm-Until**
f i y t s
POINTE FM
POINTE FM 99.1
BROADCASTING FROM THE POINT COMMUNITY
COMMUNITY BASED... GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
99.1 FM

AC TAFARI

INFUSES TALENT, INSPIRATION FROM OTHERS



Inspired by some of the best in today's soca world, one of Antigua and Barbuda's budding artists is hoping to use their inspiration to join this esteemed clan. AC Tafari (real name Theodore Daisy) is considered by music observers to be a rising talent and is about to become a fan favourite. He says his music is rooted in traditional Antiguan Benna which is a cross between folk and calypso. "You know the up-tempo with hard drums and a driving bass," is how he describes it. He is versatile enough to command a Buyon Riddim from Dominica, control any Dancehall beat from Jamaica and still hold his own on any Dennerly segment tune from St. Lucia. "My goal is to make good music for people to dance. I want the ladies to express themselves and forget their troubles. My music style is limitless, I don't want to be placed into a box. People have a tendency of box-

ing in artists, my interests lie more in reaching the international markets and beyond. So, for me, versatility is the key." My manager tells me all the time "Don't think outside the box, think like there is no BOX!!" After making videos on YouTube, the twenty-two-year-old singer, songwriter, and producer has captured the attention of prominent Soca artists and creators. His mega hit song 'Boom Pon It' was released in 2019 and is still blazing up the airwaves. "I'm twenty-two years young, born in Gray Hill, Antigua. I started learning music around eleven or twelve years old and just ran with it. Music was never forced upon me, but it was something that flowed naturally. Right now, I'm still on the grind, trying to show myself to the world." "When I first started out, I wasn't doing it seriously until around the age of fourteen music became my only passion. I used to sing at school

and one day during recess some girls were going crazy about my singing. That is when I began to think I had some talent. I later performed at a talent show at school and I got the same reaction from my peers, and that persuaded me to begin pursuing music." The influence from his home also spurred him. "My mother (Cynthia Daisy) and sister (Erica Daisy) are always encouraging me. They really believed in me and didn't want to force me to do something that really wasn't my passion. They both encouraged me to follow my love for music. Their encouragement gave me more hope and the push to follow my dreams," AC recalls. Born in an era when Burning Flames' jam-band up-tempo rhythm was still holding sway and the rise of Claudette "CP" Peters and Tian Winter, AC's imagination would have been moulded. "Antigua is home to a lot of talented musicians

and artists like Tian Winter, Burning Flames, Ricardo Drue, K-Lee, Island Prince, Laurena Davis, Claudette Peters, Menace, just to name a few. There is a lot of musical competition in Antigua." "Everyone here does music or something in the entertainment field, so there are pros and cons of trying to thrive and make a name for yourself here. The pros are that it is easy to meet and connect to a lot of people who share the same musical interests. The cons are that the music landscape is more competitive, so you have to find your own niche to stand out from the other artists. Once you find that niche, people will gravitate toward you." "My versatility helps to separate me from other artists! I see myself as a vehicle moving Antiguan music forward. I'm not asking for acceptance, I'm taking my seat at the table and I'm hungry! Very hungry! Antigua's music has been



taking a backseat in this industry for far too long and as my manager Clint likes to say, 'Ah Time Fu disturb di Ants Nest.'"His advice to upcoming artists is to follow their dreams. "My life motto is to achieve any dream that you have, put in your best effort. My dreams are becoming a reality everyday as we speak. No one can tell me I can't. I'm having the chance to watch my journey right now. I have a story to tell other young people - just put forth your best effort and grind," he says. His initial hit 'Boom Pon It' has caught the attention of fans and others in the industry in sound and video. "I had a fun time filming it. There was a lot of energy on the day of filming. It was different from anything I've done before. I wanted to make the visuals mesh with the song. I wanted it to be something that girls and guys can dance to. I wrote 'Boom Pon It' in my room. To see that song go from my bedroom to the radio to videos on TV is a great feeling and it tells me that what I'm doing is on the right track."He dreams one day of collaborating with one of the best arrangers and bands in the business. "I'd say Oungku from Burning Flames. He has had a lot of influence on me because he also started off so young. His success and vibe tell me that what I'm doing is possible."AC is in the studio as he, like other artists, await the end of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic effect on the music

scene. "I definitely want to come out with an album. Right now, I'm in the studio recording more music, networking, meeting DJs and promoters, and getting my face out there as much as possible. I'm just grinding and trying to get people to put a face to my name. I definitely want to tour and meet fans in person soon."Although performing in a competitive environment, AC does not fancy winning prizes. "I don't like competition! Especially when it creates a divide! I'm more for collaborations, working together than against each other. His social media followers on Facebook and Instagram have taken him to heart. "A girl got my name tattooed on her shoulder, which is crazy. I would not say I'm a celebrity or a superstar. I'm not on that level yet but knowing that I have die-hard fans is a blessing and pushes me," he says. Outside of music he likes going to the movies and kicking it with friends. "I'm humbled for this opportunity to bring joy into the life of others! I'm ready for whatever comes my way!! I'm giving this my all! And trust and believe you will hear the name AC Tafari in 2021 and beyond."AC is relishing his management with a US-based Antiguan-oriented group. "Since signing with Limerz Inc it has allowed me to focus more on my music and connect with my fans! I have pending bookings in Atlanta, NYC, and few other Caribbean islands," he mused.



GUYANA A SLEEPING GIANT IN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Guyana Chronicle - GUYANA is poised to become the most exciting investment destination in the Western Hemisphere, President, Dr Irfaan Ali, said on Wednesday.

The Head of State made this pronouncement during his address at the opening of the Guyana Basin Summit 2021 (GBS) which was held virtually. The event, which is aimed at creating investment and development opportunities in the Guyana-Suriname Basin, brings oil and gas leaders and the global energy community together during the virtual edition (17-19 March), before a physical conference is held in October in Georgetown.

"We welcome investment in the Guyana Basin as well as the multiple oppor-

tunities it will spawn within our economy... I want to take just a few moments to say to all potential investors that you need to come, you need to explore, and you need to look holistically at the varied opportunities in Guyana.

Whether it is large-scale agriculture production, whether it is mining, whether it is forestry, whether it is in the health-care system, the education system; you need to understand the varied opportunities Guyana offers for different types of investors. It is not only about oil and gas, oil and gas has really brought attention to Guyana, a sleeping giant in investment opportunities."

President Ali noted that while the summit is not necessarily confined to oil

and gas, the sector will become a focal point during deliberations.

"In this context, the Guyana Basin is an important national resource. In terms of endowment, we have estimated that total Basin potential is around twice our proven reserves. Economically, this is important and further solidifies our position as a lucrative emerging petroleum state."

He added that his Government intends to maximise on the many business opportunities that exist along the value chain of the country's fledgling petroleum sector, while expanding drilling, exploration and production activities.

RESOURCE-DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The President emphasised that while his Government is clear on the fundamental principles which will guide the development of Guyana's natural resources sector, it is important for prospective and potential investors to have similar clarity.

"Our natural resources are part of our people's patrimony. As such, these resources must be used for, and rebound to, the benefit of the people of Guyana.

This is the fundamental starting point for the development of our natural resources. And it underpins our policy resource development model."

He acknowledged that the country's resources, however, are useless if they remain unexploited, and therefore, foreign and local capital is necessary to convert its natural resources into wealth and to generate jobs.

"As such, Guyana welcomes private investment.... Investment remains pivotal to shared prosperity. We simply lack the scale of financial, technological and human resources needed for our ambitious economic development plans. We need investment to drive our development."

President Ali pointed out that it is necessary for the local private sector to become more involved in the planned economic transformation, and to grow and develop through synergies and partnerships with foreign businesses. To enable this, he pointed to the importance of the draft local content policy and law, which is aimed at spurring a stronger and more robust local business environment.

MINISTER: MOST COVID CASES NOW RESTRICTED TO CERTAIN COMMUNITIES



Barbados Advocate - Minister of Health and Wellness, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Bostic says COVID-19 cases in recent days have been restricted to certain communities in Barbados.

"We still have community spread but it not widespread community spread as we were having before, but there is still elements of community spread out there. Fortunately, the cases that we have had in the past seven to 10 days have been restricted to a

number of communities and we are not seeing that spread of cases in several communities like we were seeing before, and that is a good sign. But for me, I would like for us to be able to return to the pre-December days and then I will be satisfied that we are really on the right track and that we are on top of things." Bostic was speaking to the media yesterday at the Harrison Point Isolation Facility, one of the locations visited during

the tour conducted by officials. The occasion marked the first anniversary of Barbados' first positive COVID-19 case.

He stated members of various neighbourhoods have been randomly tested for COVID-19 and this exercise is going to be expanded even more. He was responding to a question asked about the reason for the noticeable reduction in the number of COVID-19 tests that have been conducted daily.

In explaining, Bostic said previously when cases were "in the dozens" and even greater, "those cases would have required a lot of contact tracing and those persons would have had a lot of primary contacts". He said what is taking place presently is a more focused approach to testing. "So that we are getting persons that we want to be tested because they have been exposed to contacts, and what we have also started to do is to do some random testing within various communities and we have done about three or four communities so far – communities of interest to us. And fortunately, for the most part, those results have come back negative except for one in a particular community."

He continued, "That exercise is going to be expanded and we will actually go into some of the country communities so that we can be sure that we don't have residual impacts of COVID cases still in the community. So we expect to see a ramp up in the numbers and we have also issued a press release asking persons to come forward for testing." (MG)

NO BYPASS DELAY

Chang dismisses Chamber of Commerce claims



Jamaica Deputy Prime Minister Dr Horace Chang

Jamaica Observer - Deputy Prime Minister Dr Horace Chang has flatly denied claims that the long-awaited Montego Bay bypass road project will be delayed.

"There is no delay," Dr Chang, who is also Member of Parliament for St James North Western and minister of national security, told the Jamaica Observer.

Earlier this week members of the Montego Bay business community berated the Government for

what they described as a plan to push the project back to 2022 while providing funding for what they saw as less important projects. There was also a suggestion that they would invite Chang to a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce to address the issue.

However, according to Dr Chang, the first phase of the project is well underway.

"The work on a highway is not just putting tractors on the ground. The

design is being done, the acquisition of property is being done — the people around Montego Bay are aware [of all this]. We have acquired several properties in the Porto Bello area... that continues," he told Observer West. "We started the process in the last three years... and much of the work is being done."

He added that funding is in place to complete the acquisition of lands, design and environmental studies during this fiscal

year.

The Montego Bay business community became agitated after a recent disclosure by the National Road Operating and Constructing Company (NROCC) that construction of the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project is now expected to begin by late 2022.

The bypass project involves the construction of 25 kilometres of roadway, consisting of two segments — the 15-kilometre Montego Bay bypass project from Ironshore to Bogue Road, and the Long Hill bypass involving construction of 10 kilometres of highway from Montego Bay to Montpelier.

Among those who vented their disappointment over what they saw as a delay of the project were Janet Silvera, president of the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and St James businessman, philanthropist and major landowner Mark Kerr-Jarrett. In their view, the Government's decision to allocate \$12.9 billion to the Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project while pushing back the start of the Montego Bay bypass was a slap in the face.

TAX INCREASE NOT 'CALLOUS', 'WICKED', 'UNCONSCIONABLE', 'MURDERATION' — CAMILLO



SVG Finance Minister Camillo Gonsalves

iWitness News – St Vincent and the Grenadines Minister of Finance Camillo Gonsalves has defended his government increase of the Customs Service Charge from 5% to 6%.

“This was introduced in the Budget [in February],” he said as he wrapped up the debate before the law was passed in a vote without the support of the opposition on Tuesday.

“This measure we’re not springing it on anybody today. An entire opposition responded to the Budget. And the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had four hours when he responded to the Budget and

his contribution on this was: government, you say it’s 1%. It’s not 1% it’s one percentage point but it’s actually 20%. And he moved on.”

The Opposition Leader, Godwin Friday, commenting from across the floor, said, “The point is, I said that this should not be done.”

The finance minister, however, said that during Tuesday’s debate, the Parliament heard opposition lawmakers describe the amendment as “‘callous’, ‘wicked’, ‘unconscionable’, ‘murderation’.

“These were the words used... They described this as a ‘hellish’ amendment that was placed be-

fore the people. But there was no need, in four hours of conversation, of debate to discuss it that way,” Gonsalves said.

Gonsalves noted that East Kingstown MP, opposition lawmaker Dwight Fitzgerald Bramble said that he had run out of time during the Budget Debate before he could address the tax increase.

“I will exclude the Honourable Senator Bruce because he tried, albeit with some new-fangled mathematics, but he tried to address it,” Gonsalves said.

“I understand that it is a tax measure and it’s very easy for the opposition, any opposition to rail

against a tax measure, I understand that. So, I expect a certain amount of gallery behaviour,” Gonsalves said.

Using a case of chicken leg and thigh as an example, Gonsalves said that the increase will result in a five cents increase in what a consumer pay per pound.

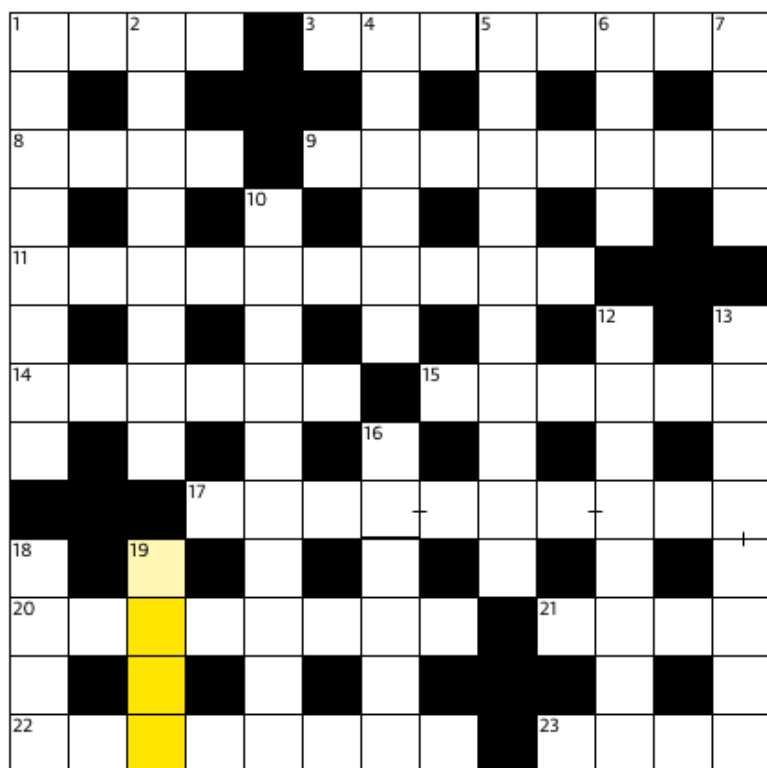
“It comes in at \$49.68. You put on your 5%, that would add \$2.49; or you put on your 6%, it would add \$2.98 on the entire case. You’re going up by 50 cents.”

Gonsalves said that when the 16% VAT is added to the 5% customs service charge, it adds \$8.35. If the rate is 6%, the increase is \$8.43.

“So you add another 10 cents instead. You put on your Customs Duty, you’re gone \$27.24 on one side, \$27.49 on the other side,” the finance minister said.

“When it’s all said and done, fee, by fee, by fee, by fee, you come out with \$101.81 for your case, if it’s at 5% and \$102.76, if it’s 6% — 95 cents on the whole case. So you would spend less than five cents a pound additional on your leg and thigh.”

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Hope (4)
- 3 Brought to an abrupt conclusion (3,5)
- 8 One-sided win (4)
- 9 Against the current (8)
- 11 Painful condition of the joints and muscles (10)
- 14 Show anger (6)
- 15 Lacking foresight (6)
- 17 On the streets (4-3-3)
- 20 Mimic (8)
- 21 Platform sticking out into the water (4)
- 22 Threadbare (8)
- 23 Give over (4)

Down

- 1 Clothing collection (8)
- 2 Holiday reminder (8)
- 4 Self-important (6)
- 5 Meeting a need (10)
- 6 Toe the line (4)
- 7 Casual worker (4)
- 10 Improve (10)
- 12 Contrary (8)
- 13 Without penalty (4-4)
- 16 Enamoured (2,4)
- 18 One of two British prime ministers (4)
- 19 General idea (4)

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You may be surprised. Discussions that go beyond polite banter may yield startling revelations, but don't believe everything you hear. No matter what you choose to do today, you'll probably fare better if you bring a friend.

♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Stay on point. Alluring distractions may try to divert your attention from the important tasks that should be done today. Don't be surprised if a new admirer makes his or her presence known.

♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

Air out your grievances. You'll feel a whole lot better about it if you discuss what's bothering you rather than keeping it bottled up. You'll probably say the right thing if you speak from the heart.

♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

Look at both sides of the situation. Your optimism over a project may cause you to see only the positives and ignore the negatives. You may need an objective third party on your side to find the right path.

♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

Fantasy may be better than reality. Your illusions could be dashed to pieces when you finally meet someone you've admired from afar. Doing what's best for the common good can be difficult but is certainly achievable.

♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

When you talk, people will usually listen. You'll not be at a loss for words when it comes to getting your way, and others may be pleased to accommodate you. Your wisdom and charm earn respect.

♎ LIBRA Sept. | 23-Oct. 22

Have it your way. Be a star of the business world or the spark that kindles a blazing romance, as you probably can exert your will on anything today. Your performance may suffer if you do too many things at once.

♏ SCORPIO Oct. | 23-Nov. 21

All's fair in love and war. You may be able to take advantage of a romantic situation by being in the right place at the right time. Make sure your financial picture isn't in need of tweaking.

♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Strut your stuff. Don't blend into the background; you're far more appealing than you think. Exude confidence and charm, and you should be able to conquer any situation that comes your way.

♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

There's more to it than meets the eye. Don't take a cold reception personally, as there is likely something else going on behind the scenes. Take what is offered but don't pry into private matters.

♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Honey works better than vinegar. You may get to the bottom of someone's problem if you show tact and compassion. Try to encourage someone to improve rather than being overly critical.

♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Read between the lines. You'll need to be perceptive to tell the difference between what someone says and what they actually mean. Your trust should be earned rather than given lightly.

LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST

<p>Fri 19 Day</p> <p>81° ☀️</p> <p>11% ENE 15 mph</p> <p>Mostly sunny skies. High 81F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.</p> <p>Humidity 64% UV Index Extreme</p> <p>Sunrise 6:11 am Sunset 6:17 pm</p>	<p>Fri 19 Night</p> <p>73° 🌙</p> <p>24% ENE 13 mph</p> <p>Mainly clear skies. Low 73F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.</p> <p>Humidity 78% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 10:12 am Moonset 11:33 pm</p> <p>☾ Waxing Crescent</p>
<p>Sat 20 Day</p> <p>81° ☁️</p> <p>24% E 14 mph</p> <p>Intervals of clouds and sunshine. High 81F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.</p> <p>Humidity 71% UV Index Extreme</p> <p>Sunrise 6:11 am Sunset 6:18 pm</p>	<p>Sat 20 Night</p> <p>74° 🌙</p> <p>20% E 12 mph</p> <p>Clear skies. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.</p> <p>Humidity 76% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 10:56 am Moonset ---</p> <p>☾ Waxing Crescent</p>

COMICS

Dilbert

March 18, 2021



Garfield

March 18, 2021



Luann

March 18, 2021



unicef
for every child



AFTER YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE

Have you had symptoms you are concerned about following your vaccination?

If yes,

Call the COVID-19 hotline at

462-6843

to report your symptoms and to seek guidance on how to handle it.

EACH VACCINATED, ALL PROTECTED.

#GETTHEFACTS #GETTHEVAX

VACCINEANTIGUABARBUDA.COM

**TELL US WHAT'S
HAPPENING
IN YOUR
COMMUNITY.**

Submit community notices to

news@pointville.ag

Atlanta shootings: Suspect charged with murder as victims identified

(BBC News) - A man has been charged with murder over the killing of eight people at massage parlours in Atlanta, Georgia.

Officials cannot yet confirm if the attack, in which six Asian women were killed, was racially motivated. Four victims were named on Wednesday. The suspect, named as Robert Aaron Long, faces multiple counts of murder as well as aggravated assault. Cherokee County Sheriff Frank Reynolds said the suspect may have been a patron and claimed to have a "sex addiction." The attack comes amid a sharp uptick in crimes against Asian-Americans. Four of the victims have been identified by Cherokee County officials as Ashley Yaun, thirty-three; Paul Andre Michels, fifty-four; Xiaojie Tan, forty-nine; and Daoyou Feng, forty-four. Elcias R Hernandez-Ortiz was identified as having been injured.

In a news conference on Wednesday,



investigators said Long, twenty-one, of Woodstock, Georgia, admitted to the shooting spree, and said that he denied that the attack was motivated by race.

He has been charged with four counts of murder and one count of aggravated assault, according to the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department.

"He apparently has an issue, what he considers a sex addiction, and sees these locations as a temptation for him that he wanted to eliminate," said Captain Jay Baker, adding that Long was

caught with a nine millimetre handgun and did not resist arrest. But Baker's remarks - that "yesterday was a really bad day for him and this is what he did" - came in for widespread criticism for appearing to sympathise with the alleged perpetrator. Massage parlours are known to sometimes provide prostitution services, but authorities say there is no indication yet that this is the case at the targeted locations.

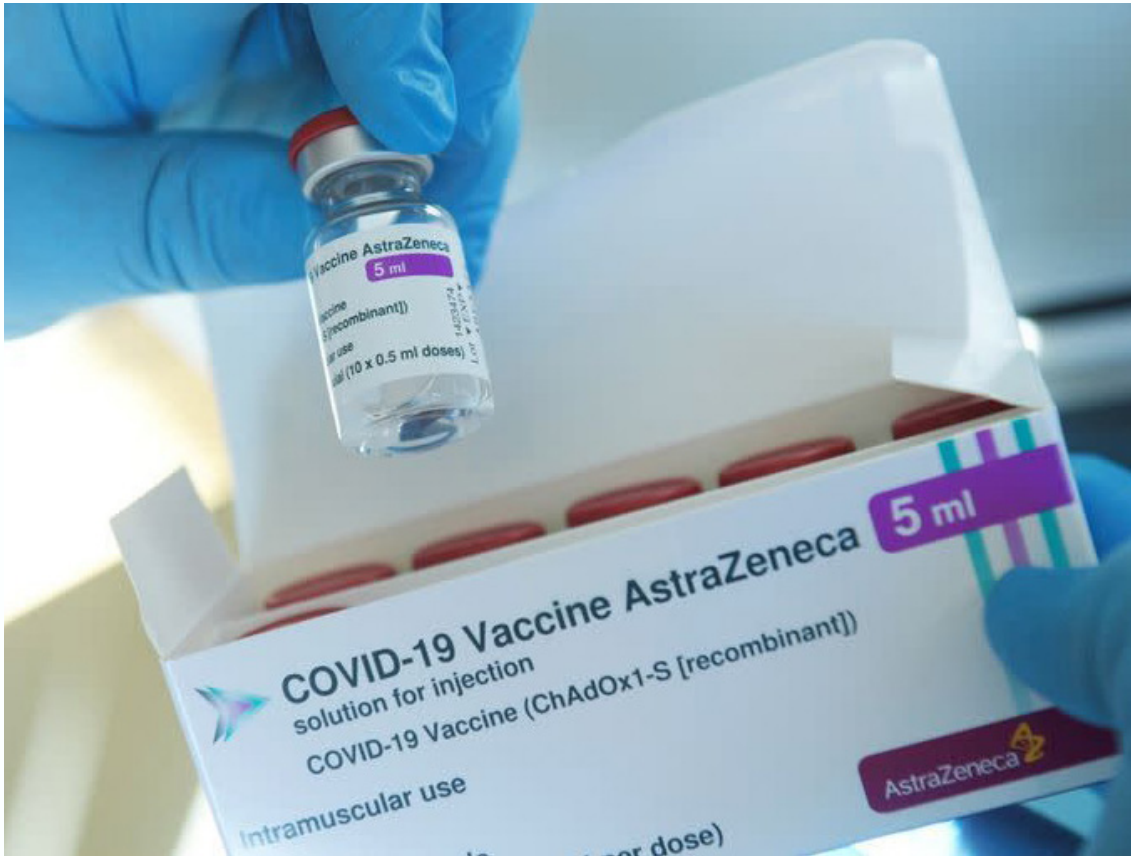
"These are legally operating businesses that have not been on our radar," said

Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, who added that the city would not engage in "victim shaming, victim blaming."

Police also noted it is still too early in the investigation to definitively state a motive and that the suspect appeared to have been acting alone. Bottoms said that he was on his way to Florida, possibly to commit more shootings, when he was arrested.

The suspect's parents helped to identify him, officials told reporters.

EU, UK drug regulators rally behind AstraZeneca vaccine after safety concerns



AMSTERDAM/LONDON (Reuters) - Drug watchdogs in the EU and Britain moved to shore up confidence in AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday after reports of blood clots prompted more than a dozen nations to suspend inoculations.

The safety scare is the latest challenge for AstraZeneca and its ambition to produce a "vaccine for the world," as the global death toll from the coronavirus passes 2.8 million.

The European Med-

icines Agency's (EMA) "clear" conclusion following an investigation into thirty cases of unusual blood disorders was that the vaccine's benefits in protecting people from coronavirus-related death or hospitalisation outweighs the possible risks, though a link between blood clots in the brain and the shot could not be definitively ruled out.

The agency's review covered twenty million people given the AstraZeneca shot in the UK and the European

Economic Area (EEA), which links thirty European countries.

Safety concerns led at least thirteen European countries, including France, Germany and Italy, to stop administering the shot, slowing an already faltering inoculation campaign in the EU, which lags Britain and the United States.

Britain's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said earlier that it was investigating five cases of the rare brain blood clot that

had been reported out of eleven million shots administered in the UK.

It said it would investigate reports of clots in the cerebral veins (sinus vein thrombosis, or CSVT) occurring together with lowered platelets soon after vaccination. But the agency said use of the vaccine should continue and one official said Britain's rollout would likely continue even if a link was proved.

The AstraZeneca shot was among the first and cheapest of the COVID-19 vaccines to be developed and launched at volume and is set to be the mainstay of vaccination programmes in much of the developing world.

The drug maker's own review covering more than seventeen million people who have received its shot in the EU and Britain found no evidence of an increased risk of blood clots.

The World Health Organization has also this week reaffirmed its support for the shot.

Putin cites ills in US society after Biden's killer remark



MOSCOW (AP) — President Vladimir Putin responded Thursday to U.S. President Joe Biden's description of the Russian leader as a killer by citing America's past and present troubles, from slavery and the slaughter of Native Americans to racial injustice.

Biden was asked in an interview this week whether he thought Putin was a killer, and he replied, "I do," a remark that prompted Russia to recall its ambassador in Washington for consultations and warn about further retaliation. Biden has taken a tough stance on Russia, saying that the days of the U.S. "rolling

over" to Putin are done, contrasting his style with the approach of former President Donald Trump, who avoided direct confrontation and frequently spoke about Putin with approval. Putin was asked about Biden's comment during a video call marking the anniversary of Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, and he responded with an "it-takes-one-to-know-one"-style remark, saying his counterpart's words reflected the United States' own problems. At the same time, he offered to have a phone call with Biden to discuss issues of mutual interest.

White House press

secretary Jen Psaki said Thursday that Biden will continue to look to work with Putin on areas of mutual concern such as efforts to stem Iran's nuclear programme and, more broadly, nuclear non-proliferation. But she said that Biden is "not going to hold back" when he has concerns about Putin's actions.

Psaki added that Biden did not regret referring to Putin as a killer and pushed back against suggestions that the rhetoric was unhelpful.

"President Biden has known President Putin for a long time," Psaki said. "They've both been on the global

stage for a long time, worked through many iterations of a relationship between the United States and Russia. And he believes we can continue to do that."

Psaki also dismissed Putin's "it-takes-one-to-know-one"-style response, suggesting Biden's words reflected the United States' own problems.

"The president believes that one of the greatest attributes of the United States is our honest self-reflection, and our constant striving for progress and there's always more work to do," she said.

Putin in his remarks pointed at the U.S. atomic bombing of Japan during World War II, as well as its history of slavery and slaughtering Native Americans, noting the painful legacies weighing on the United States.

"Otherwise, where would the Black Lives Matter movement come from?" he said, citing racial injustice and the killing of African Americans.

U.S., China set to broach icy relations in Alaska talks



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. officials are looking for China to change its behaviour if it wants to reset sour relations as the two sides prepare to meet in Alaska on Thursday, but Beijing has said Washington is full of illusions if it thinks it will compromise. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and national security adviser Jake Sullivan will meet China's top diplomat Yang Jiechi and State Councillor Wang Yi in Anchorage, fresh off of Blinken's visits to allies Japan and South Korea.

Washington says the Asia tour, as well as outreach to Europe, India and other partners, shows how the United States has strengthened its hand to confront China since President Joe Biden took office in January. But the two sides appear primed to agree on very little during what will be the first high-level in-person talks with China of the Biden presidency, which are expected to run into Friday.

Even the status of the meeting has become a sticking point, with China insisting it is a

"strategic dialogue," harkening back to bilateral mechanisms of years past. The U.S. side has explicitly rejected that, calling it a one-off session. On the eve of the talks, the United States issued a flurry of actions directed at China, including a move to begin revoking Chinese telecoms licences, subpoenas to multiple Chinese information technology companies over national security concerns, and updated sanctions on China over a rollback of democracy in Hong Kong. China's ambassador

to Washington, Cui Tiankai, on Wednesday told Chinese media that the United States should discard its illusions if it thinks senior Chinese officials would travel all the way to "frigid and icy" Alaska just to "make compromises and concessions."

White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the talks would be "an opportunity to address a wide variety of issues including ones where we have deep disagreements."

"Our focus is on having a frank discussion, raising issues where we have concerns, and of course looking for ways in places where we can work together," she told a regular briefing.

Washington has said it is willing to work with China when it is in the interests of the United States and has cited the fight against climate change and the coronavirus pandemic as examples. On Thursday, Blinken said Washington hoped to see China use its influence with North Korea to persuade it to give up its nuclear weapons.

Messi told he 'cannot leave Barca'



featured prominently in his opening speech to members at a time when his future at Barcelona is less than clear. Laporta and Messi, who were both part of Barca's golden age in the first decade of the twenty-first century, were pictured embracing prior to the new president's speech. And a significant part of the address was aimed directly at the six-time Ballon d'Or winner, who last summer demanded predecessor Josep Bartomeu let him leave. Laporta in his speech indicated when the pandemic is over an increase in revenue will

return, that will be fixed. "There will be strong leadership, because I am well-accompanied. We will make decisions to defend the club," Laporta noted. The question is will Messi stay or go with Manchester City or Paris Saint-Germain considered to be the front-runners for his signature. But recent speculation suggests that there is still a chance he could stay put, with the prospect of City star and Messi's close friend Sergio Aguero thought by some, including ex-Argentina defender Pablo Zabaleta, to be key in his final decision.

The new president of Barcelona Joan Laporta has issued a Messi stay plea. The new chief takes over at a critical time for the Catalans, with their captain's future a burning question at the club.

Laporta made a direct plea to Lionel Messi to stay

at Camp Nou as he celebrated his inauguration at the Blaugrana helm. Laporta was sworn into office on Wednesday after winning club elections in a landslide, eleven years after leaving the post for the first time in 2010. And predictably, the Argentine

Tokyo Olympics: Up to ten Russians can compete in track and field events as neutrals

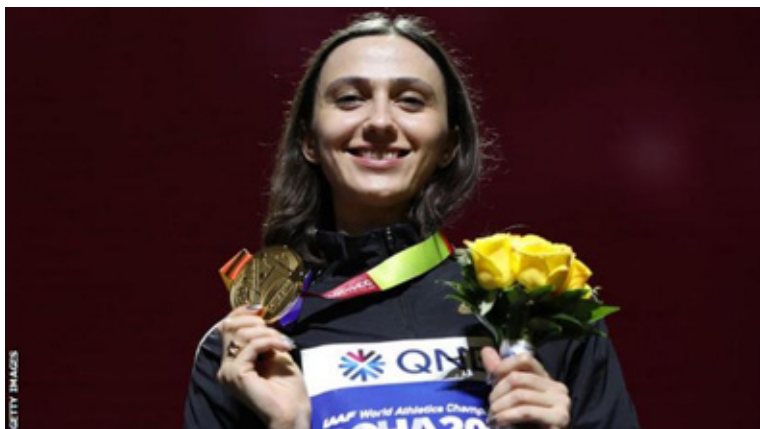


Photo caption: Russia's Mariya Lasitskaya won high jump gold at the 2019 World Athletics Championships in Doha, competing under the Authorised Neutral Athletes (ANA) flag.

ing criteria to compete under a neutral flag. The Authorised Neutral Athlete scheme was announced in March 2020, but was then suspended over further violations. Russia has been banned from competing as a nation in athletics since 2015. In 2019, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned the nation from all major sporting events for four years but that sanction was reduced to two years in December 2020. Earlier this month, World Athletics approved

Russia's thirty-one-page plan for reform. The Authorised Neutral Athlete scheme, which covers further international athletics events as well as the Olympics, depends on Russia meeting deadlines and targets set out in the plan.

Twenty-nine Authorised Neutral Athletes from Russia competed at the 2019 World Athletics Championships in Doha. They won two gold medals, three silvers and one bronze medal.

Up to ten Russian track and field athletes will be able to compete as neutrals at the Tokyo Olympics this summer, World Athletics has con-

firmed. Athletics' world governing body has reinstated a scheme allowing Russian athletes who meet anti-dop-

West Ham striker picks Reggae Boyz over England

Michail Antonio has given up playing for England where he was born, and has chosen his parents birth place in hope of launching his international career.

According to UK media reports, the thirty-year-old Antonio, whose parents are from Jamaica, was approached by the Reggae Boyz last month, but had not made up his mind and was still considering whether to continue with England.

Antonio has been included in England squads by previous managers but has never been capped at senior debut. UK media reports say the powerfully built West Ham striker has chosen to pledge his allegiance to Jamaica because it provides the prospect of more regular international football.

Michail Antonio was not one of the six England-born players called up by Jamaica for the first time, as a nineteen-man squad to face the USA was named.



WEST INDIES STILL BENEFITTING FROM BANGLADESH PERFORMANCE



Former West Indies captain Sir Clive Lloyd believes the team spirit, professional attitude, and great leadership that led to the West Indies 2-0 series win in Bangladesh earlier this year have spread to other players within the Caribbean side set-up.

Sir Clive is of the opinion that the recent performance of the regional team against Sri Lanka, winning the Twenty20 series 2-1 and sweeping the Asians 3-0 in the One-Day International series, stems from the performance of the Kraigg Braithwaite unit, which was

underestimated heading into last month's battle against Bangladesh.

The Guyanese said because of the way the players performed in Bangladesh, putting their heads down and batting intelligently, has trickled down to others. Lloyd said it has galvanized those other guys to do the same.

West Indies will look to continue their recent success when they bowl-off their two-Test series against Sri Lanka, starting on Sunday at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

DEWS



TOUCH LINE

with

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



**MONDAY-FRIDAY
7:00am - 8:30am**

