



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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PM BROWNE BATS FOR SIR HILARY BECKLES

SEE PAGE 2



Photo caption: Four home owners to receive keys for temporary houses on Bay Street in Villa

Essential workers in the pandemic

By Orville Taylor

If you have never watched your child, mother or any other relative gasp for air, with the atomiser not seeming to work, then you will never truly appreciate what a lower respiratory infection is. Outside of COVID-19, hundreds of Jamaicans die from pneumonia, bronchitis, and there is still the occasional sufferer from diseases which look like tuberculosis. Asthmatics know that their lungs are no organs to play with, because even a common cold, caused by one of the older coronaviruses, could mean lights out.

Vaccines are here and there is a major debate about them. Indeed, there is one which, in the strictest sense of the word, is not actually a vaccine but some form of new technology. What seems to be the consensus among our medical experts is that they work better than if one takes nothing at all, and the risks are outweighed by the benefits.

With more than 34,000 cases and more than 600 deaths and less space in hospitals than in naysayers' arguments, the need for a national con-

sensus is greater than at any other time in our modern history. Never mind the dramatics last week in Parliament, I totally agree with Leader of the Opposition Mark Golding, in his call for the resumption of Vale Royal Talks. They do not have to be as they used to be, but the processes of deep consultation and agreement on the fundamentals is paramount.

There is agreement regarding the need to prioritise the distribution of the vaccine, and in a country where a significant portion of the population is more than 60 years of age and with high levels of comorbidities, this must be settled. Yet, there seems to be creeping in the debate some degree of dissensus. Given that 30 per cent of the population indicated an unwillingness to take the needle, the Government has to find means to convince the citizens, beyond the \$10,000 given to the elderly who have no other income.

SETTLE PRIORITY LIST
Of course, there is no dispute regarding former prime ministers P.J. Patterson and Bruce Golding being inoculated,

because they are senior citizens. However, we need to settle the priority list once and for all. At the beginning of the pandemic, we threw around the expressions 'essential services' and 'essential workers'. The latter is actually easier because it is a management decision. What it means is that those are the categories of workers, without whose presence at the workplace work would come to a halt. It does not have to be an enterprise that is critical to the economy. For example, the bartender is critical to the running of a bar; but the bar does not provide a service that we cannot do without. Well, some may disagree.

Coming out of the collective wisdom of the International Labour Organization (ILO), comprising around 200 countries and at least twice that number of trade unions and employers' associations, there is a binding standard as to what constitutes 'essential services'. The list will surprise you. Under our Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Act (LRIDA) 1975, First Schedule (sections 2 and 28), the following fall into

the classification: "water services, electricity services, health services, hospital services, sanitary services, firefighting services, correctional services, [and] overseas telecommunication services".

Add to those docks and their associated activities, transport, petroleum, civil aviation and air transport. Key industries such as banking, bauxite, banana, sugar, tourism and, of course, the good old rum. The list is long.

DEFINING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

However, the ILO is clear. Essential services are those "the interruption of which would endanger the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population". The rule of thumb is "the existence of a clear and imminent threat to the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population". Dismissing, to my personal chagrin, radio and television, petroleum, ports, banking, tax administration, tourism and a slew of others; its narrow list is health, electricity, water, telephone, police and the armed forces, firefighting, cor-

rectional services, and “the provision of food to pupils of school age and the cleaning of schools and air traffic control”.

So, here is the simple question: if we have limited numbers of vaccines, what is the likely consequence if essential workers get very ill and

die? We have had nurses and doctors dying. But what happens to the rest of society if in the middle of a COVID-19 and murder pandemic, the houses of Babylon and Soljje lose large numbers of their already small contingents? True, there are vulnerable populations,

but if you have one dose and it is to either give to a sick baby or a sick nurse, what is your choice? On an aircraft, the instruction is that you put on your own life jacket and oxygen, so that you can save the weak and infants later.

Indeed, it is a difficult

choice, and we need to talk and agree.

- Dr Orville Taylor is head of the Department of Sociology at The University of the West Indies, a radio talk-show host, and author of ‘Broken Promises, Hearts and Pockets.’

Reprinted from the Jamaica Gleaner

PM Browne bats for Sir Hilary Beckles



Professor Sir Hilary Beckles

The Antigua and Barbuda government has stated its position quite clear: it will not be party to attempts to diminish the role of the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Sir Hilary Beckles. PM Browne was making his first public comments on the issue after alarm was raised in the media over the past week with the publication of an article by David Commissiong of St Vincent and the Grenadines. The Antigua and Barbuda leader used the medium of his weekly radio programme, the Browne and Browne show on

PointeFM to address the issue, indicating that Antigua and Barbuda stands firmly in support of Sir Hilary, who he described as one of the Caribbean’s ‘finest sons.’ He noted that the UWI Chancellor, which is largely a ceremonial position, had commissioned a study of the governance structure of the university “ostensibly to strengthen the governance of the UWI” under the present circumstances, where the university too, has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The prime minister said while he has no difficulty with the premise of the study, what seems to have happened is that the Chancellor seemed determined to appropriate “unto himself” much authority at the expense of the Vice Chancellor, Sir Hilary. “I just want to say here that Antigua and Barbuda will resist any at-

tempts to emasculate the position of Sir Hilary, one of our finest sons, to facilitate the uncontrolled ego and unbridled ambition of others who may want to lead the university,” PM Browne declared.

Further, he credits Sir Hilary for the “fine job” he has been doing on behalf of the UWI. “Sir Hilary has done an excellent job to the point where the UWI is one of the top universities in this hemisphere and among the top four per cent worldwide. We have to continue to support Sir Hilary and the leadership at the UWI,” he remarked.

PM Browne is urging the Chancellor to “moderate his conduct” and to work along with Sir Hilary and the UWI leadership to pursue whatever reform or realignment that may be required at the UWI. He frowned upon the Chancellor’s attempts

to “utilise whatever influence” he has to diminish the role of the Vice Chancellor. “Such moves will be resisted!” he declared.

The Antigua and Barbuda leader also wants to see CARICOM heads be more vocal on the matter, noting that while they do not run the university, the ministers of education are members of the university’s council and thus “we have locus standi.” Caribbean governments are also part of the university’s charter. “I expect heads (of government) will provide necessary leadership to ensure that individuals do not plunge the UWI into crisis at this time of a pandemic. What is needed is stable leadership which Sir Hilary has provided over the past six years. Personal ambitions cannot supersede the stability of the UWI,” he declared.

Four Booby Alley Families

to receive keys to temporary homes on Tuesday



Photo caption: Prime Minister Gaston Browne speaks with Civil Engineer in the Ministry of Works, Collis King, during a walk-through of the temporary homes on Bay Street in January 2021

Four (4) families will receive keys to their temporary homes as a part of the relocation process at the temporary housing project at Bay Street, Villa, on Tuesday, 23rd March 2021. This is according to Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Works, Clarence Pilgrim. The relocation of families represents a major part of the Booby Alley redevelopment project which will see the structural and environmental revitalization of the Booby Alley

area in the Point.

The homes at Bay Street are said to be three-bedroom houses, approximately twelve hundred square feet in size, with a combination of reinforced concrete, cement base foam panels, metal trusses with angle iron, foam galvanize, metal doors, and windows. The project will also see a single concrete road, drains, and walkways, which will also be constructed in the upcoming days. All homes are said to have electricity,

water, and internet infrastructures in place. The official key-handing over ceremony on Tuesday will see Prime Minister Gaston Browne and officials from the Ministry of Works present, as well as the families benefiting from this project. In January, Prime Minister Browne visited Booby Alley residents to provide them with an update on the major housing renewal project being undertaken. During the walk-through of the area,

PM Browne, who is also the parliamentary representative for St. John's City West, used the opportunity to advise constituents on the relocation plans and progress. After the walkthrough, the Prime Minister, along with ministry officials from the Ministry of Works, took a tour of the temporary houses currently being built on Lower Bay Street that will be used to house residents during the relocation process.

ACB Caribbean is Here - Simply Smarter Banking

The New Look ACB contributes \$100,000 XCD to the Government of Antigua & Barbuda Vaccination Programme



ster Gaston Browne received the donation and expressed thanks and congratulations to Ms. Charles and the Management and Staff of ACB. "It is with thanks I accept this generous donation from ACB Caribbean. It is a significant contribution towards our efforts in keeping the people of Antigua and Barbuda safe during the pandemic. ACB Caribbean is an example for all corporate citizens in Antigua and

Today, customers can step into the new look Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) now trading as ACB Caribbean. The sixty-five-year-old financial institution has unveiled its Brand Evolution to the people of Antigua and Barbuda. In spite of the modern and fresh new image, the organization has not lost sight of its long-standing legacy of deeply rooted Corporate Responsibility. The financial institution has generously contributed \$100,000 XCD to the ongoing Vaccination Programme of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

In a handover ceremony at the Office of the Prime Minister on Friday 19th March, ACB Caribbean's General Manager, Ms. Joanna Charles, remarked: "ACB Caribbean is an indigenous financial powerhouse with years of generating wealth for the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda. We are known for our versatile and customized products and services, and our ongoing commitment to those we serve. In keeping with that legacy, I am proud to present the Government of Antigua & Barbuda with a cheque for \$100,000.00 XCD today." Prime Min-

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: Monday, 22nd March 2021

Time: 8:45AM - 11:00AM

Affected areas: Section of All Saints Road east of Kennedy's Enterprise

Date: Monday, 22nd March 2021

Time: 8:30AM - 1:30PM

Affected areas: Section of Falmouth Main Road

Date: Tuesday, 23rd March 2021

Time: 8:15AM - 12:00PM

Affected areas: Side Hill

Date: Wednesday, 24th March 2021

Time: 8:15AM - 12:00PM

Affected areas: Section of Potters west of the Adventist Church

Date: Wednesday, 24th March 2021

Time: 8:30AM - 9:30AM

Affected areas: Section of Horsford Hill

Date: Thursday, 25th March 2021

Time: 8:45AM - 12:00PM

Affected areas: Section of Potters west of Champs

Date: Friday, 26th March 2021

Time: 8:45AM - 12:00PM

Affected areas: Section of Bolans

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.



Barbuda, showing that their focus is not solely on corporate profitability, but also giving back to the communities in which they operate. Congratulations to you on your timely Brand Evolution as you expand into the OECS with the acquisition of the assets of RBC in Antigua and Barbuda and shareholding interest in RBTT Grenada."The bank's goal is to take ACB Caribbean into the next century by using cutting-edge technology to drive its digital Banking mandate with a responsive and innovative suite of services, including online banking and a cutting-edge

website. These changes allow the organization to adapt to the changing times and continuously provide Smarter Banking solutions. This brand refresh will expand to ACB Mortgage and Trust Company Limited and the soon to be acquired Royal Bank of Canada/ RBTT operations in Antigua and Grenada. ABOUT ACB Caribbean Antigua Commercial Bank Ltd., now trading as ACB Caribbean as at 22nd March, 2021, is the largest indigenous commercial bank in Antigua and Barbuda, with an asset base of over one billion Eastern Caribbean Dollars.

Incorporated on 20th October 1955, Antigua Commercial Bank Ltd. became the country's first indigenous financial institution and public company and has since cemented its leading position within the banking industry of Antigua and Barbuda. The bank's operations started on 3rd January 1956, at its first location on Newgate Street in St. John's and has expanded to its Head Office location on Thames & St. Mary's Streets, St. John's, modern facilities, that stand as a symbol of strength within the community. Established in 1987, its wholly owned subsidi-

ary, ACB Mortgage and Trust Company Limited, continues to be the leading mortgage company operating within the State, known for its commitment to excellent customer service. Other service facilities include the ACB Loans Centre, Village Walk Branch and Barbuda Agency. ACB Caribbean, with its sixty-five years of distinguished service, is a proud corporate citizen, and is actively involved in the development of culture, sports, community development and education in the communities in which we operate.

COLONEL'S CATCH

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AVAILABLE AT ALL 3 BRANCHES
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PM: Pilot ‘rotten elements’ seeking to derail LIAT



Prime Minister Gaston Browne has called out what he termed “rotten elements” among the pilots of LIAT for wanting to derail attempts his government’s attempts to revive the fortunes of the regional carrier, LIAT.

Speaking on the Browne and Browne show on PointeFM on Saturday, Browne also blamed the pilot group, which has brought legal action against the government over severance and other payments, for contributing to the grounding of the airline last year which caused at least two of the major shareholder governments to agree to the liquidation of the airline. “One reason the airline collapsed last year was not only because of COVID. It is because of the behaviour

of these ‘rotten elements,’ mainly from Barbados, who refused to cooperate with the governments to ensure the streamlining of the airline and to make it more efficient. Now that their action has contributed to the bankrupting of the company, they are at it again,” he stated emphatically.

PM Browne takes the view that the pilots behind the legal action are doing themselves a disservice as he feels that outside of LIAT many would have difficulty gaining employment elsewhere. “Which airline would want to employ them; where are they going to get references? It is obvious that they are not thinking about the long-term implications of their actions,” he remarked. The prime minister noted

that the action his government took to protect LIAT is nothing new and that this is something that is practised in the United States and elsewhere. “The legislation is designed to give the company ‘a little breathing space’ from its creditors. However, in this situation, the pilots are not allowing this breathing space to take place. Instead, they seem intent on precipitating the liquidation of LIAT,” he noted. He issued a warning that the action by these pilots may force his government to re-consider its offer to pay a compassionate

allowance to LIAT staff left idle since last June.

PM Browne reiterated that the Antigua and Barbuda government does not have any obligation to pay the severance but it had agreed to do so recognizing that many staff of the airline have had mounting bills and other financial stress. Borrowing from a popular local saying ‘want all get none,’ Browne said the “rotten elements cannot expect benevolence from his government while at the same time they are being destructive,” he declared.



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- Good interpersonal skills
- Prior experience working in a similar environment an asset
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- 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.

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CULTURE DEPARTMENT TO HONOUR WOMEN

Against the backdrop of the month of March being celebrated internationally as Women's History Month, the Department of Culture has announced a project to honour women who have made outstanding contributions to national building.

The department convened a press conference last Friday to announce the launch of the 'Remarkable Women of Antigua and Barbuda Initiative,' a programme it said it started working on exactly two years ago. According to Research Officer in the department, Anderson O'Marde, the criterion for selection of the women for special recognition is based "solely on achievements in whatever field of endeavour that may have made their contributions." "Women have played significant roles in the development of our society. Therefore, it is imperative that we highlight the extraordinary efforts and positive developments that they have made to our nation, and in some instances, the world at large," he remarked.

He revealed that over the past two years the department has conducted much research into a

number of women and their biographies have been compiled and are now ready to be presented to the public.

The cultural department said it is committed to showcasing a diverse collection of 'Remarkable Women' and to ensuring that their contributions do not go unnoticed or unannounced. It also said the research information contained in the biographies will be recorded for posterity and to assist in educating the nation now and in the future.

Director of Culture, Khan

Cordice, in highlighting the significance of the project, noted that knowledge of the contributions of many women in the society, both past and present, is quite limited in the general society and the initiative is seen as a critical tool in 'righting' this 'knowledge deficit.'

"We want our society to know of our people and their contributions that they have made; we want to focus on educating our people about our people. We want our younger generation to know of the contributions these people have made so that they too

may follow their footsteps. We want more role models," he declared.

The department plans to announce the names of five outstanding women each month though to December.

The first five names to be announced under the programme are: Cultural icon, Dame Yvonne Maginley; educators Hilda Richards and Ekua Richards; from the creative arts: Keva Margetson and Mary Georginea Quinn. Only Ekua Richards of the first five is still alive.



Director of Culture, Khan Cordice

Cedar Valley Golf Club donates to Women's group



Photo caption: Head pro at Cedar Valley Golf Club, Martin George, presents cheque to two members of the women's group

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is taking a toll on families and their finances. Against this backdrop, the Ce-

dar Valley Golf Club has donated close to one thousand EC dollars to the Empowered Women, Empower Women

Group. The handing over ceremony took place at the Cedar Valley Golf Course on Sunday.

The donation was made possible by a few members of the Cedar Valley Club.

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

DR. MASERATI SENATOR COLIN BROWNE

CREATING PATHWAYS FOR PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY



Rock Your Socks

Antigua and Barbuda joined in the international observance on Down Syndrome Day on Sunday as health officials here focused attention on this developmental disorder that affects a small portion of the society. Communication Manager of the Mount St John's Hospital (MSJMC), Salma Crump, said 21st March has been observed by the United Nations since 2012 to bring awareness to the condition. There are no statistics on the number of people in the country living with this disorder. "Its purpose is to educate the world on what Down Syndrome is and how individuals with Down Syndrome need to be valued in their communities. The date for WDSY symbolizes the 21st day of the 3rd month, which was selected to signify the triplication (trisomy) of the

21st chromosome which is Down Syndrome," Crump explained. The MSJMC official explained that people with Down Syndrome can fully participate in society if given the opportunity. "We need to include them; we need to put things in place to ensure their full integration.

Some people with Down Syndrome grow up and get married while others have attended colleges/universities," she further explained. Last Friday, people were encouraged to wear socks that served to draw attention to those in the country living with Down Syndrome. Crump said

there is no clear evidence to determine why two healthy adults would produce a child with Down Syndrome. She however noted that it is felt that women who have babies later in life are more susceptible to having children with the disorder.

CAUTION WEEKEND ACCIDENT SCENE

Driver Safety Tip
Seatbelts saves lives,
Please Buckle up.

DRIVE SAFELY

ATB A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is a dynamic, international institution serving the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Its faculties and institutes offer a wide range of undergraduate, master's and doctoral programmes in Humanities and Education, Science and Technology, Engineering, Law, Medical Sciences, Sport and the Social Sciences. The institution represents the oldest of its kind within the region and has been responsible for producing outstanding leaders who have made remarkable contributions to regional development. In 2019, the UWI placed 32nd among the 150 best-ranked universities across Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the Times Higher Education (THE) Latin America University Rankings. After 71 years The UWI remains the number 1 ranked university, out of more than 200 registered universities in the Caribbean. The UWI is currently within the top 2% of universities in Latin America and the Caribbean from a complement of over 2,000 registered universities.

The Five Islands Campus is inviting applications from suitably qualified individuals for the post of **Systems Administrator**. The position of Systems Administrator exists to assist for the management and tuning of computer software systems to ensure high levels of availability and security of supported business applications. The Jobholder will be responsible for areas relating to the strategy, acquisition and development of Information Technology and the overall operation's management. The incumbent will participate in the planning and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure system provisioning and maintenance that is consistent with The UWI's goals, industry best practices, and regulatory requirements.

The successful candidate will be required to:

- Coordinate business application and database administration.
- Coordinate the deployment, monitoring, maintenance, development, upgrade, and support of cloud servers and networks and assist with the management of all server operating systems and application software.
- Manage hardware and software problems on servers and support application development throughout project lifecycles.
- Function as web master maintaining all The UWI Five Islands websites including implementing new designs
- Conduct research on emerging products, services, protocols, and standards in support of systems software procurement and development efforts

QUALIFICATION, TRAINING & EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's degree in Computer Science or Information Systems from an accredited institution
- Certification in Project Management (CAPM, CSM, etc.)
- Certification in Linux+, Server+ and ITIL is preferred
- Minimum of three (3) years' related work experience in a similar position

REQUIRED SKILLS:

- Working technical knowledge of networks, PCs, and platform operating systems, including Linux and Windows, and application support experience with Linux, VMware, Drupal, IT helpdesk application, backup and recovery applications, Active Directory and SurveyMonkey would be an asset.
- Extensive knowledge of programming languages, including HTML, PHP, CSS and JavaScript.
- Knowledge of databases, including MySQL and Microsoft SQL.
- Strong knowledge of Microsoft Office 365, server management, local area network administration, and data privacy practices and law.
- Good understanding of the University's goals and objectives.

Applicants are required to submit a completed employment application form, a curriculum vitae (CV) giving particulars of qualifications, experience, the names and addresses of at least three (3) references (one of whom should be from your current organization) and copies of academic qualifications. These are to be sent by electronic mail to hr.fiveislands@uwi.edu addressed to the **Director of Administration, The University of the West Indies, Five Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, West Indies**. A full CV and an application form must be submitted. Application forms can be obtained by sending a request to hr.fiveislands@uwi.edu. The final date for receipt of applications is **April 19, 2021**. To expedite the appointment procedures, applicants are advised to ask their referees to send reports under confidential cover to the above address without waiting to be contacted.

HALF MOON BAY AMONG CARIBBEAN'S FINEST BEACHES



Antigua and Barbuda's Half Moon Bay has been recognised as one of the Caribbean's Best Beaches. Half Moon Bay has been named #9 beach in the Caribbean in the 2021 Travellers' Choice Best of the Best Awards

for Beaches. The Travellers' Choice Best of the Best is Tripadvisor's highest honor. The Best of the Best Awards for Beaches identifies and ranks the very best beaches, not by a panel of judges, but by those who

matter most: the travellers. Travellers' Choice Best of the Best award winners are among the top one per cent of listings on Tripadvisor. A recent Tripadvisor study of consumers worldwide revealed that fif-

ty-five per cent of travellers are extremely or very likely to take a beach trip in 2021, and "visiting the beach" ranked second highest on the list of activities they were extremely or very likely to do in 2021.

REAL TALK

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

SENIOR LECTURER / LECTURER

SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE, COMPUTING AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is a dynamic, international institution serving the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Its faculties and institutes offer a wide range of undergraduate, master's and doctoral programmes in Humanities and Education, Science and Technology, Engineering, Law, Medical Sciences, Sport and the Social Sciences. The institution represents the oldest of its kind within the region and has been responsible for producing outstanding leaders who have made remarkable contributions to regional development. In 2019, the UWI placed 32nd among the 150 best ranked universities across Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the Times Higher Education (THE) Latin America University Rankings. After 71 years The UWI remains the number 1 ranked university, out of more than 200 registered universities in the Caribbean. The UWI is currently within the top 2% of universities in Latin America and the Caribbean from a complement of over 2,000 registered universities.

The Five Islands Campus is seeking to fill positions of **Senior Lecturer/ Lecturer** on the Five Islands Campus in Antigua and Barbuda. Each Senior Lecturer/ Lecturer will provide academic leadership for the **School for Science, Computing and Artificial Intelligence**.

QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING & EXPERIENCE:

- Ph.D. in Computer Science, Data Science, Mathematics or a related field from an accredited institution by the time of employment.
- Minimum of five years' experience teaching related courses at the University level.
- Demonstrated evidence of ability to produce scholarly work in the field of Computer Science, Data Science or Mathematics.

The successful candidate will be required to:

- Collaborate with colleagues in research and co-curricular activities, while engaging in community outreach initiatives which are aligned with The One UWI strategic plan and the strategic priorities of the Five Islands Campus aimed at expanding the economic development of Antigua and Barbuda, and the OECS Region.
- Exhibit a record on innovative pedagogy in a face to face environment, as well as online.
- Develop students' appreciation and passion for the study of Computer Science, Data Science or Mathematics.
- Demonstrate strong interpersonal, communication and presentation skills
- Display a record of peer-reviewed publications, research in Computer Science, Data Science or Mathematics and related fields, and demonstrate success with securing grants and/ or contracts.

The **School for Science, Computing and Artificial Intelligence** seeks to fill **three (3) posts**. Applicants must be able to deliver content across multiple areas at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The available posts are as follows:

- **1 Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Data Science.** The ideal candidate must have experience using statistical computer languages (R, Python, SLQ, etc.) to manipulate data and draw insights from large data sets, and exhibit skills in creating data architecture. The incumbent must have strong capabilities in Predictive Analytics, Market Analytics, Risk Analytics, Text Analytics, Decision Analytics, Operations Management, Financial Market Models and Time Series Forecasting, Mathematical Programming, Simulation Methods and Analytics for Total Quality Management.
- **1 Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Mathematics.** The ideal candidate would teach courses in the discipline area of mathematics and statistics, develop and design curriculum in collaboration with Data Science, Computer Science and colleagues from other fields regarding research interest and co-curricular activities. Additionally, the successful candidate should be equipped to provide leadership and should have made significant contributions to the field.
- **1 Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Computer Science.** The ideal candidate will take a leadership role in modernizing pedagogy and research in Computer Science and teach courses in Computer Science for students engaged in data science, machine learning, Big Data Analytics, deep learning, intelligent automation/robotics, and Artificial Intelligence studies.

Applicants are required to submit a completed employment application form, curriculum vitae giving particulars of qualifications, experience, the names and addresses of at least three (3) references (one of whom should be from your current organization), a statement on teaching and research interests and copies of academic qualifications. These are to be sent by electronic mail to hr.fiveislands@uwi.edu addressed to the **Director of Administration, The University of the West Indies, Five Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, West Indies**. A full CV and application forms must be submitted. Application forms can be obtained by sending a request to hr.fiveislands@uwi.edu. The final date for receipt of applications is **April 19, 2021**. In order to expedite the appointment procedures, applicants are advised to ask their referees to send reports under confidential cover to the above address without waiting to be contacted.

Bitcoin ATMs go live in Antigua and Barbuda



By *Christal Clashing*

“I want to see at least three thousand Antiguan become millionaires within the next fifty years,” proclaims CEO of SSID Financial Ltd, Dr Hugh Jarvis. This is the vision Dr Jarvis has for Antigua and Barbuda when it comes to the potential of cryptocurrency and the technology behind it. It is an audacious claim - a goal that can be shrugged off as unrealistic and unattainable. Yet, on Monday 15th March 2021 and Friday 19th March 2021, Antigua’s first Bitcoin ATMs went live at each of the two SSID Financial Ltd

locations last week. The first one to go live was on the Sir Sydney Walling Highway at the Khouly Business Complex. The second went live on Friday at the SSID location in Jolly Harbour.

This installation of Bitcoin ATMs adds to the growing interest among several Antiguan and Barbudans in digital currencies and crypto-assets. On 8th August 2020, Hemmingways Restaurant in St. John’s became the first restaurant in Antigua to accept Bitcoin Cash. Since then approximately fifty places of businesses across the island display the sticker that says “Bitcoin Cash

(BCH) accepted here.”

The new Bitcoin ATMs allow you to purchase and redeem both Bitcoin and Bitcoin Cash. What’s the difference? Bitcoin, the first and original cryptocurrency, is best used as a long-term investment. Bitcoin Cash, on the other hand, while it can be also used as an investment, is more geared for day-to-day transactions at restaurants and small businesses. Compared to the regular EC dollar or the US dollar, which is called fiat currency, cryptocurrencies act as assets where they can increase (or decrease) in value over time.

At the time of writing this article, one Bitcoin is valued at USD\$56,197.86. Hypothetically speaking, if you had bought a Bitcoin at when it was valued at USD\$100, you would have a strong investment on your hands. Bitcoin Cash currently stands at USD\$516.95 so it’s more attainable than Bitcoin. However, it is key to note that you can purchase fractions of Bitcoin or Bitcoin Cash. That is what the new Bitcoin ATMs or BATMs allow you to do. You can purchase as little or as much Bitcoin or Bitcoin Cash up to a USD\$900 limit in one day. This allows you to invest as little or as



much as you feel comfortable doing. Antigua light years ahead of the rest of the OECS The BATMs going live signals a stepping up of the cryptocurrency game in Antigua and Barbuda. Prior to the ATM installation in the country, residents who wanted to exchange their Bitcoin or Bitcoin Cash for fiat currency would have to do so overseas. With the BATMs now on the island, cryptocurrency holders do not have to wait to go to London to get cash from their cryptocurrency investments. Instead, it may be persons within the region coming to Antigua and Barbuda to cash in their crypto investments. Of all the OECS countries, Antigua and Barbuda has made the greatest strides in the cryptocurrency world. This is due to a government that is open and friendly towards major players in the cryptocurrency space. In not enforcing too many restrictions and regulations on cryp-

tocurrencies, it allows us as a people and a nation to explore this new area of investment. What you need to get started with Bitcoin ATMs The BATMs at both SSID Financial Ltd branches differ slightly; however, they follow the same basic process. You would first need to download the "Bitcoin.com Wallet" app on your Android or iOS phone and follow the onscreen instructions to set up and backup your account. At the SSID Financial Ltd branch, you pay XCD\$2 at the front desk to conduct the transaction. Then you follow the instructions on the ATM screen to insert multiples of USD\$20 bills into the machine. You will verify your transaction with a code sent to your mobile phone and once the transaction has gone through, you will be alerted on the "Bitcoin.com Wallet" app. In less than ten minutes you can begin your journey into cryptocurrency investment.

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Raise GST rates, lower income tax threshold IMF tells Belize

According to the IMF, the economy of Belize has contracted by 14.1% in 2020. In the concluding statement emanating from its recent Article IV consultation, the Fund noted that the primary deficit increased to 8.3% in FY2020/21, while public debt increased to 126% in 2020. Public external debt also rose, while the net international investment position deteriorated. On revenues, the Fund suggests reducing the number of zero-rated items of the general sales tax (GST), taxing them at the standard GST rate instead, and raising the standard GST rate to a level in line with peer countries. The IMF suggests taxing the hotel sector at the standard GST rate instead of the current 9% levy. Other options to mobilize revenues include lowering the threshold for exemption in the personal income tax, increasing excise taxes, and enhancing revenue and customs administration opines the IMF.

Bahamas removed from blacklist; Dominica & Anguilla added

France by way of a decree has removed The Bahamas from its blacklist of non-cooperative states and territories on tax matters but added both Dominica and Anguilla. The Bahamas was added to the French blacklist in December 2019, facing sanctions, which included withholding taxes at a higher rate on financial transactions as a means of discouraging doing business with blacklisted countries. The French Ministry of Economics and Finance updates its list of non-cooperative states and territories in tax matters annually.

Cayman economy shrank by 8.2% in first 9 months of 2020

The economy of the Cayman Islands is estimated to have contracted by 8.2% in the first 9 months of 2020. The economic downturn, amid COVID-19-related lockdown measures and border closures, was led by significant declines in the Hospitality Sector (-64.7%), Other Services (-25.8%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (-12.4%), and Transport (-12.1%), according to the Economic and Statistics Office's 3rd quarter economic report. The finance and insurance services sector decreased by an estimated 0.7%

for the period. The contraction was stanchied somewhat by an expansion in business activity in the 3rd quarter.

GraceKennedy acquires Scotia Insurance Eastern Caribbean

GraceKennedy has come to an agreement with Scotia Insurance Caribbean Limited to acquire 100% of the shares of Scotia Insurance Eastern Caribbean Limited (SIECL), with the associated transaction being subject to regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions. SIECL is a licensed life insurance company operating in seven countries in the Eastern Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. SIECL offers credit protection regionally to customers on personal loans, residential mortgages, personal lines of credit, personal and small business credit cards.

Jamaica piloting new Central Bank Digital Currency in 2021

Minister of Finance and the Public Service Dr Nigel Clarke says that the Bank of Jamaica's new Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) will be rolled out by early 2022. According to Dr Clarke the project will be piloted this year, and the pilot is expected to end in December 2021 with the roll-out to commence early in 2022. However, he cautioned that operationalizing the CBDC will require some amendments to the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) Act to give the bank the sole right to issue digital currency as legal tender, which is the same position the BOJ has with respect to Jamaican notes and coins. CBDC is a digital form of central bank issued currency, which is legal tender not to be confused with cryptocurrency, which is privately issued and not backed by a regulatory authority. As legal tender, CBDC can be exchanged on a one-to-one basis with physical cash. Households and businesses will be able to use CBDC to make payments and store value at no cost.

Jamaica opens fiscal year with cash reserves of \$90 billion

Jamaica’s Finance and the Public Service Minister, Dr. Nigel Clarke, says the island opened the 2020/21 fiscal year with cash reserves of approximately \$90 billion, or more than 4% of GDP. Clarke attributed this was to the policy of amassing the country’s cash reserves to pay down debt. This resulted in Jamaica’s ability to finance a 3.5% fiscal deficit without materially increasing nominal debt. In addition, Clarke said the country’s stock of foreign-denominated debt decreased during the fiscal year.

“This compares with previous economic crises where nominal USD debt increased during the crisis... this me...in the worst economic crisis in our history, nominal USD debt actually decreased,” Clarke said.

OECD projects global growth of 5.6% for 2021

The Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development has raised its 2021 global growth forecast to 5.6%, which is 1.4 percentage points higher than estimated in December. Activity has picked up in many sectors of the economy and the rollout of vaccines, while still uneven, is gaining momentum, the organization concluded in its latest interim economic outlook. The \$1.9B fiscal stimulus in the USA is projected to lead to domestic growth of 6.5% in 2021, while the OECD estimates that it will add one percentage point to global growth this year. The interim economic outlook therefore calls for ramping up vaccinations; for swifter, more targeted fiscal stimulus; and for maintaining income support for people and businesses hard hit by the pandemic, while preparing the ground for a sustainable recovery. The OECD estimates that world output is expected to reach pre-pandemic levels by mid-2021.

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COVID'S IMPACT FELT ON QEH'S MEDICAL AID SCHEME



Executive Chairman of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Juliette Bynoe-Sutherland.

Barbados Advocate - Few patients have had the opportunity to travel overseas for treatment via the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's (QEH) Medical Aid Scheme, on account of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Executive Chairman of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Juliette Bynoe-Sutherland revealed the above recently during the Estimates debate, in response to a query posed by Opposition Leader Bishop Joseph Atherley about the Scheme's performance. Bynoe-Sutherland noted that in the last financial year patients

have been brought back home amidst the pandemic, but funds attached to the Scheme remain in place, to aid persons needing to access healthcare overseas, in the future.

"The Medical Aid Scheme number has remained fairly static, particularly over the last financial year, because with the onset of the COVID pandemic, we have not had patients travelling," Bynoe-Sutherland revealed.

"This is a very, very important part of the service offerings of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the health system more

generally. Where there are services that are not available or expertise that is not available in Barbados, persons can access overseas treatment and care, through referrals from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. How do you access this service? This service usually is accessed in a very deliberate and organized way. There is a committee and a request is usually made by one of our consultants within the hospital system. He will have to give the justification, the prognosis for the patient and then that committee, that doesn't include ad-

ministrators, that is purely clinical, will make an assessment as to whether or not the case can benefit from overseas treatment," the QEH's Executive Chairman explained.

"Once that decision is taken, our Social Work Department then goes through a very systematic assessment of the person's ability, in terms of whether they have some insurance cover or not and ultimately comes up with a formula for that person to be able to access care overseas. And then our Social Work Department arranges with our clinicians, to have those persons travel overseas," she added.

Bynoe-Sutherland maintained, "As a result of the COVID pandemic, we have not had significant overseas travel. In fact, I think we had a few patients overseas that we were able to get back in, but we recognize that although we did not have a significant call on the Medical Aid Scheme budget in the last financial year, we have maintained it at the existing level, so that we can ensure that those resources are available, should people need to access care not available at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital."

NEW REPORT ANALYSES SOCIOECONOMIC REPERCUSSIONS OF COVID-19 IN THE CARIBBEAN



SANTIAGO, Chile (CMC) — A new, joint report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) has analysed the socioeconomic repercussions of COVID-19 in the Caribbean and the urgency of moving towards a systemic approach to disaster risk.

According to ECLAC, the special report also addresses challenges, opportunities and recommendations for moving towards a “risk-informed recovery and development model in the Caribbean.”

“The large-scale and long-lasting effects of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), combined with the possible impact of other hazards and re-

cent events, threaten to damage or destroy vital infrastructure and the life-support systems of large parts of societies and economies,” the report warns.

“That is why it is urgently necessary to move towards a systemic approach to disaster risk, primarily in the Caribbean, which is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with economies dependent on foreign tourism and heavy debt burdens,” it adds.

The report — “The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic: an opportunity for a systemic approach to disaster risk for the Caribbean,” emphasises that disaster risk is “systemic” and that it “generates complex interactions between human, social, political and economic systems on the one hand, and natural systems

on the other.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the extent to which a single hazard has the potential to trigger a series of cascading effects, impacting the life-support systems of societies and economies worldwide,” the report says. Alicia Bárcena, ECLAC’s executive secretary, said that “this crisis underscores the need for disaster risk management to be incorporated into national planning in order to guarantee a comprehensive response to disasters.”

“At the global and regional levels, it is crucial that those of us who work in international organisations seek ways to promote and foster a new development model, and a global framework that would enable us to provide a coordinated and adequate response to

the next pandemic,” she said.

The document indicates that the duration of COVID-19 increases the likelihood that the risk of disasters originating from other threats occurs simultaneously, or that post-disaster reconstruction be delayed.

The document specifies that the selection of the Caribbean to exemplify the potential effects of systemic disaster risk is no coincidence.

“This region was chosen because it is highly vulnerable to hydrometeorological or extreme climate phenomena, it has more than ninety per cent of the population living in coastal areas, and its economies are dependent on foreign tourism and are highly indebted,” says the report, adding that the economic and social effects of COVID-19 have been devastating for the Caribbean and will last for several years. According to the report, the pandemic has brought to light “the cracks in current development models and highlighted their limitations, both globally, as well as in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean in particular.”

CELAC SUPPORTS CARICOM CALL FOR GLOBAL VACCINE SUMMIT

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) welcomes the support of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) for its call for a global summit to address urgently the issue of equitable access and distribution of vaccines to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

CARICOM Chairman, Dr Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago had written in January, on behalf of the Community, to the Director-General of the WHO Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus urging him to convene at the earliest possible opportunity a Global Summit to address urgently equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, particularly for developing countries. The Summit, Dr Rowley proposed, would be held in the context of the Organisation's ACT-A Facilitation Council. The call was repeated by CARICOM Heads of Government following the Inter-session Meeting which they held late last month.

The CELAC statement issued by Mexico as the President Pro Tempore



of the group, expressed concern over the lack of delivery of vaccines to the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Region. The statement said that while CELAC supported the COVAX mechanism, it called for the Caribbean to "receive the vaccines as quickly and equitably as possi-

ble."

"We are convinced that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of maintaining a strong, united and caring Latin American and Caribbean region, where no country is excluded from universal, fair, equitable and timely access to medicines, vaccines

and medical supplies.

Therefore, Mexico joins the call made by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to hold a Global Summit within the framework of the World Health Organization to address the urgent equitable access to said vaccines," the statement said.

T&T, INDIA IN FRICTION OVER COVID VACCINES



PM Dr Keith Rowley

The Trinidad Guardian - The diplomatic friction between the government of Trinidad and Tobago and Indian High Commissioner Arun Kumar Sahu over the availability of COVID-19 vaccines from that country seems to be worsening.

Guardian Media Saturday learned that Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Amery Browne was supposed to have a pre-planned call with Sahu but that Sahu was suddenly unavailable. In a text exchange with Guardian Media Saturday, Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley, who first gave an insight into the situation during his Conversation with the Prime Minister on Thursday night, acknowledged that the situation was “difficult” and said that while it was triggered by Sahu’s behaviour, it was compounded by Oppo-

sition leader Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

“A difficult situation has been created by the behaviour of the High Commissioner, compounded by the obscene unnecessary intrusion of the Opposition Leader into the normal protocols between states by inviting the Indian Prime Minister into the affairs of Trinidad and Tobago in a way that certainly embarrasses New Delhi and undermines the foreign policy initiatives of Trinidad and Tobago,” Rowley said.

“In situations like these, sometimes the best answer is no answer. The situation was not helped by the appetite for and the proliferation of misinformation fed to the media in furtherance of the many and varied agendas.” There have been questions about

the role of Trinidad and Tobago’s High Commissioner to India, Dr Roger Gopaul and whether he had to shoulder some of the responsibility for the lack of proper communication to the government about the availability of a vaccine facility available to CARICOM.

But Rowley defended Gopaul Saturday.

He said Gopaul reviewed all of the High Commissioner’s incoming communications and was able to confirm that it received nothing from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs about the vaccine allocation to Trinidad and Tobago. Rowley said that this confirmed to him that there was no offer of any vaccine from India.

“A few CARICOM countries (outside of CARICOM efforts) bilaterally approached India for help. A few others joined in after the story of vaccine diplomacy and the presence of an offer of five hundred thousand extended to CARICOM is a fallacy propagated in the media by certain persons,” he said.

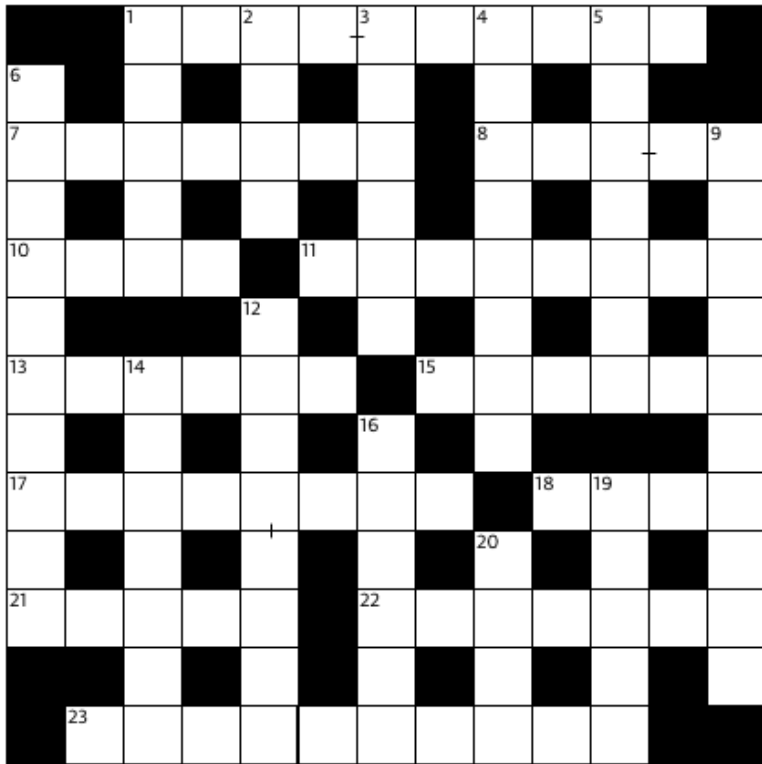
Rowley forwarded a copy of a message from Gopaul which confirmed that there was no communication on the mat-

ter. “Prime Minister, to fortify your revelations of Saturday night...our T&T High Commission in Delhi has reviewed all of its incoming communication and confirms that they had received no communication from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on any vaccine allocation to T&T or Caribbean states. There appears to have been exclusive reliance on the Indian High Commissioners in our region,” the message said.

On 23rd February, Rowley wrote to India Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking about the vaccine donation and a request to purchase vaccines. There has been no response to that letter to date.

Saturday, Browne told Guardian Media that as per proper protocol, “The Prime Minister’s letter on vaccines to the esteemed Prime Minister of the Republic of India was transmitted to the government of India via the High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago in Delhi. “Also as per the proper protocol, a copy of the relevant diplomatic note was shared with the High Commission of India in Port-of-Spain,” Browne said.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Fortune-hunter (4-6)
- 7 Blue, carpet or gulf (7)
- 8 Short sharp fight (3-2)
- 10 Vessel with handle and spout (4)
- 11 Activist (8)
- 13 Come about (6)
- 15 Recurring sound pattern (6)
- 17 Very large (8)
- 18 Legislation (4)
- 21 Descendant (5)
- 22 1971 Elstree comedy film — Up ___ (7)
- 23 See dollars (anag) — not-for-profit item for sale (4,6)

Down

- 1 Eat like a pig (5)
- 2 Wild animal's abode (4)
- 3 Hopper, Nilsen or Potter? (6)
- 4 Manipulate someone psychologically into thinking that they are mad (8)
- 5 Pull out (7)
- 6 Stunned into silence (10)
- 9 Like Pollyanna? (10)
- 12 Something sailors (and others) don't want to be on (4-4)
- 14 Condition (7)
- 16 Flexible (6)
- 19 Obvious (5)
- 20 Surrounded by (4)

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 By now you may have realized that addressing problems as they occur can erase the worries that bog you down. In the week ahead, the good example that you set can filter down to loved ones who might imitate your efficiency.

♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20
 "Everything changes" could become your favorite motto as you learn to flow with the times and adapt to new concepts. Friends could encourage you to schedule more time for entertainment in the upcoming week.

♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20
 Take pride in showing that you can be a responsible and reliable individual as this week goes by. You may find yourself locked into important routines that prevent you from hanging out with friends.

♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22
 You might be torn in different directions when friends go against the status quo or become involved in new interests. Part of you wants to join them, but another part of you may be doubtful. Remain balanced this week.

♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22
 Stay on top of the tasks and obligations you've agreed to handle in the week ahead. A partner or loved one might be immersed in fulfilling their own responsibilities, which can make it challenging to find time to spend together.

♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22
 There are plenty of fish in the sea, so if one friend isn't available, another can fill in. As the week unfolds, you may find it is rewarding to be methodical about your tasks and abide by the rules.

♎ LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22
 As this week goes by, you may often be reminded that being neat and organized can make your life easier. There likely will be time to rearrange your desk so that everything is where you can find it when needed.

♏ SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You might be put in contact with someone who wishes to change the world, so enjoy seeing a different perspective. As the week unfolds, you may become more aware of the ways traditions enrich your family life.

♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 During the week ahead, you may face a gap in your knowledge that must be filled. The subject could be formidable and challenge you to commit to learning. You'll likely succeed in mastering the subject if you persevere.

♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 You might not be able to power through obstacles to reach your objectives in the upcoming week. Exercise patience and self-discipline to help reach your goals. Your persistence and refusal to quit can eventually pay off.

♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 The determination to attain your career aspirations might grow as this week unfolds. You may need some extra knowledge, a professional certification or additional experience to improve your rsum.

♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Interacting with an array of people and forming new friendships in the week ahead might give you new perspective on your place in the world. And yet you'll also see the things people have in common.

LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST

<p>Mon 22 Day</p> <p>28° ☀️</p> <p>23% ESE 17 km/h</p> <p>Generally clear. High 28°C. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 km/h.</p> <p>Humidity 67% UV Index Extreme</p> <p>Sunrise 06:09 Sunset 18:18</p>	<p>Mon 22 Night</p> <p>23° 🌙</p> <p>11% ESE 16 km/h</p> <p>Generally clear. Low 23°C. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 km/h.</p> <p>Humidity 74% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 12:36 Moonset 01:18</p> <p>☾ Waxing Gibbous</p>
<p>Tue 23 Day</p> <p>27° ☀️</p> <p>21% ESE 17 km/h</p> <p>Generally clear. High 27°C. Winds ESE at 15 to 25 km/h.</p> <p>Humidity 66% UV Index Extreme</p> <p>Sunrise 06:08 Sunset 18:18</p>	<p>Tue 23 Night</p> <p>23° 🌙</p> <p>24% E 14 km/h</p> <p>Partly cloudy. Low 23°C. Winds E at 10 to 15 km/h.</p> <p>Humidity 77% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 13:32 Moonset 02:10</p> <p>☾ Waxing Gibbous</p>



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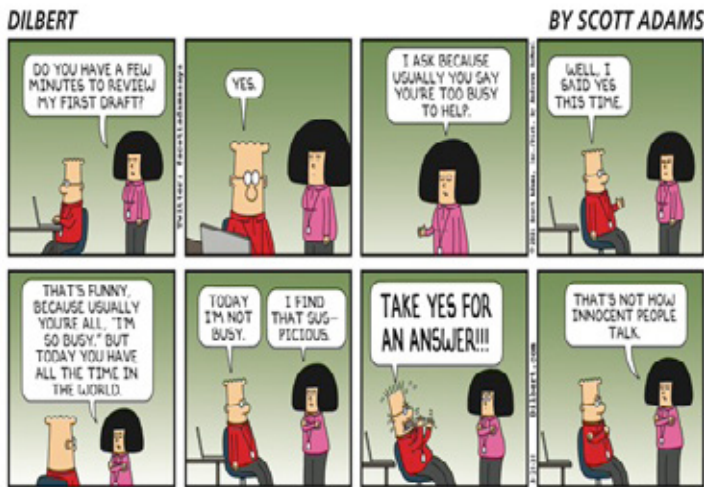
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Biden administration tries to get control of border, story

WASHINGTON (AP) — As migrants surge at the U.S.-Mexico border, President Joe Biden's administration has been caught on its heels and is now scrambling to manage a humanitarian and political challenge that threatens to overshadow its ambitious agenda.

Administration officials say Biden inherited an untenable situation that resulted from what they say was President Donald Trump's undermining and weakening of the immigration system.

But with Congress pivoting to taking up immigration legislation, images and stories from the border have begun to dominate the headlines, distracting from the White House's efforts to promote the recently passed \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill. The White House dispatched Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to four Sunday news shows in an effort to stress that it was working to get things under control. "Our message has been straightfor-



ward — the border is closed," Mayorkas said. "We are expelling families. We are expelling single adults. And we've made a decision that we will not expel young, vulnerable children."

The White House has steadfastly refused to call the situation a "crisis," leading to a Washington battle over the appropriate description of the tense situation. Career immigration officials had warned there could be a surge after the November election and the news that Trump's hard-line policies were being reversed.

In the first days of his term, Biden acted to undo some of

Trump's measures, a rollback interpreted by some as a signal to travel to the United States. While the new administration was working on immigration legislation to address long-term problems, it didn't have an on-the-ground plan to manage a surge of migrants.

"We have seen large numbers of migration in the past. We know how to address it. We have a plan. We are executing on our plan and we will succeed," Mayorkas said. But, he added, "it takes time" and is "especially challenging and difficult now" because of the Trump administration's moves. "So we

are rebuilding the system as we address the needs of vulnerable children who arrived at our borders."

Biden officials have done away with the "kids in cages" imagery that defined the Trump family separation policy but have struggled with creating the needed capacity to deal with the surge. Unaccompanied children and teenagers in Customs and Border Protection custody must be transferred to the care of Health and Human Services within three days, although the minors coming now are being held for days longer than that.

Chicago suburb's plan to pay Black residents reparations could be a national model



EVANSTON, Ill. (Reuters) - Decades ago, in the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Cordelia Clark ran a restaurant out of her kitchen and parked cabs for her taxi company in her backyard because Black residents were effectively barred from owning or renting storefronts in town.

Now Evanston is poised to become the first U.S. city to offer reparation money to Black residents whose families suffered lasting damage from decades of discriminatory practices.

"It's about time that something has come from the hard work of African Americans in this city, proving that they should be treated as

anyone else," said Clark's great-granddaughter, DeLois Robinson, fifty-eight.

Evanston's initial approach to reparations is narrow and targeted. The city council, which has already committed ten million dollars over a decade to the effort, will vote on Monday to begin with a four hundred thousand dollars round of payments. The first phase will provide twenty-five thousand dollars to a small number of eligible Black residents for home repairs, down payments or mortgage payments in a nod toward historically racist housing policies.

The programme could become a model for other cities and states grappling with whether to pursue

their own reparations programmes. The burgeoning national movement has gained traction amid a reckoning on racial inequity following the police killing of George Floyd and other Black Americans last year.

In Congress, a bill that would establish a national reparations commission to study the issue has drawn around one hundred and seventy co-sponsors in the House of Representatives, all Democrats. President Joe Biden has not endorsed the legislation but says he supports a study. Advocates plan to lobby the White House for executive action if the bill, as expected, fails to pass a divided Senate.

Other cities, including Chicago; Providence, Rhode Island; Burlington, Vermont; Asheville, North Carolina; and Amherst, Massachusetts, have launched initiatives, though none has yet identified specific funding. California passed a bill modeled after the federal legislation, and lawmakers in New York and Maryland have introduced similar measures.

Private institutions have also announced cam-

paigns. The Jesuit order of Catholic priests last week pledged one hundred million dollars million to benefit the descendants of the enslaved people it once owned.

"Reparations is the public policy prescription that addresses - and redresses - systemic racism," said Ron Daniels, who oversees the National African American Reparations Commission, which consulted with Evanston on its proposal.

The practicality of implementing reparations programmes, especially on a national scale, is still a matter of debate.

Reuters/Ipsos polls taken in June 2020, at the height of racial justice protests, found only one in five respondents agreed the United States should pay damages to descendants of enslaved people.

Some opponents ask whether taxpayers can afford to pay out what could be billions, or even trillions, of dollars. Others question how eligibility for such programmes would be determined, whether by race, ancestry or evidence of discrimination.

Qantas boss: Governments 'to insist' on vaccines for flying



BBC World News - The boss of Australian airline Qantas has told the BBC that "governments are going to insist" on vaccines for international travellers.

Coronavirus vaccines are seen as crucial to reviving an industry that saw worldwide passenger numbers fall 75.6 per cent last year. Chief executive Alan Joyce said many governments were talking about vaccination as "a condition of entry." Even if they were not, he thought the airline should enforce its own policy. "We have a duty of care to our passengers and to our crew, to say that everybody in that aircraft needs to be safe," Mr Joyce

said. He believes that would justify changing the terms and conditions on which tickets are booked. And Mr Joyce thinks passengers would be willing to accept the change. "The vast majority of our customers think this is a great idea – ninety per cent of people that we've surveyed think it should be a requirement for people to be vaccinated to travel internationally."

But some powerful voices are among those who disagree, including the World Health Organisation. Its director of digital health and innovation, Bernardo Mariano, told the BBC: "We don't approve the fact that a vaccinations

passport should be a condition for travel."

He added that - regardless of what the private sector wanted - a unified approach from governments would be needed to make such a change work.

Aviation is vital to the global economy. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) estimates that it supports \$1.8 trillion (£1.3tn, A\$2.3tn) in global economic activity. But government restrictions and fears of catching coronavirus have led to an unprecedented fall in passenger numbers in an industry which carried 4.5 billion people in 2019.

Australia's government has closed its

borders to almost all foreigners and has also periodically closed internal borders. Even with vaccines, Mr Joyce thinks that "once we open up our international borders, we're going to have the virus circulating."

"And that's going to be a big change for a lot of Australia, to find that acceptable," he said. "We need people to understand they can't have zero risk with this virus. We manage risk in so many different other ways for other parts of life."

The lack of passengers means that in the last six months of 2020 Qantas lost \$800m (£580m, A\$1.03bn). That compares with a profit of \$596m (£430m, A\$771m) in the same period of 2019. It's also meant 8,500 job cuts from a pre-pandemic staff of about 29,000. And thousands of others are on furlough, with the Australian government paying their wages. Other international carriers have seen similar reversals in their fortunes.

Foreign holidays: Minister refuses to rule out COVID ban extension



BBC World News - An extension to the ban on foreign holidays in order to control the spread of coronavirus cannot be ruled out, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has said.

Mr Wallace told the BBC that booking a trip abroad would be “premature.”

It comes after a scientist on a government advisory body said summer holidays overseas are “extremely unlikely” because of the risk of travellers bringing variants to the UK.

The earliest date people in England could holiday abroad is 17th May.

The Scottish and

Welsh governments also said international travel will not be possible before 17th May, while Northern Ireland has not set a date. While the devolved nations issue their own guidance on international travel, they have been broadly in line with Westminster.

Non-essential travel is currently banned from the UK and those coming to the UK must quarantine. A government taskforce will report to the prime minister on 12th April detailing when and how international travel can resume. People can currently travel abroad for a limited number of

reasons, such as education or work.

Mr Wallace told the BBC’s Andrew Marr Show that he had not booked a holiday abroad, adding it would be “premature” to do so while we are “seeing growing variants.”

When asked whether the ban on foreign holidays could be extended, Mr Wallace said: “I think we will play it by ear... I’m not going to rule anything in or anything out. I think the first thing is we are not going to do anything that puts at risk this national effort to control this pandemic. All the indications are in the right direction at the

moment and let’s take it step by step.”

When asked about trips abroad, Dr Mary Ramsay, head of immunisation at Public Health England, told Andrew Marr it was “too early to say.”

“I think everyone has to wait and see. We really don’t know. The situation changes so quickly. Numbers are going up at the moment in continental Europe and that’s very concerning,” she said.

She added that she hoped countries on the continent can get their vaccine programmes “on track” to mitigate the rise in cases. “But obviously the safest thing is to stay where you are. And to avoid anything that increases your risk and I think it’s really too early to say what sort of summer we might be able to experience,” Dr Ramsay said.

She added that even those who have been vaccinated could potentially still transmit the virus, saying that restrictions could last for “quite a long period of time”.

Milan-San Remo: Jasper Stuyven wins as lively Tom Pidcock impresses



The win is the biggest of Stuyven's career to date

By Matt Warwick

BBC - Belgium's Jasper Stuyven took a surprise victory at Milan-San Remo after breaking away from many of the world's best riders in a late attack.

Trek-Segafredo's Stuyven, twenty-eight, narrowly held off Lotto-Soudal's Caleb Ewan and defending champion Wout van Aert to win the

299km 'monument.'

Britain's Tom Pidcock was 15th for Ineos Grenadiers, but led the race with only three kilometres to go. Pidcock, twenty-one, crossed the line just metres behind the first three.

In only his fifth World Tour race, Pidcock came to the front of the leading group of riders - including Deceuninck-Quick Step's Julian Alaphilippe, the

in-form Mathieu van der Poel (Alpecin-Fenix) and Jumbo-Visma's Van Aert.

Pidcock led down much of the Poggio descent in the closing stages of the race. As the race wound through tight and twisty roads surrounded by the famous greenhouses on the outskirts of San-Remo, Stuyven, who had previously won mainly one day 'semi-classic' races in Belgium, launched a surprise attack. Stuyven was caught by Soren Kragh Andersen of Team DSM near the final kilometre, but surged again with the line in sight to win by a bike length from the group of chasing sprinters.

'La Classicissima' - one of cycling's five showcase 'monument' one day

events - is famous for its draining parcours and exciting descent to San Remo's Via Roma main street. "The three guys [Van der Poel, Van Aert and Alaphilippe] who are really strong, everyone knows," said Stuyven, who collapsed off his bike and onto race organisers and team staff after he crossed the line.

"I just tried to go for it," he added. "I really felt good all day. I just had to try all or nothing. Eight out of ten times you get nothing - my legs were empty by the end."

Mark Cavendish was the last British rider to win Milan-San Remo, for Colombia-HTC in 2009. Before then it was Tom Simpson in 1964.

Honda Classic: Matt Jones maintains advantage for five-shot win

Australian Matt Jones shot a two-under-par final round of 68 to win the Honda Classic by five shots in Florida.

The forty-year-old led by three going into the final round and extended his advantage to secure his first PGA Tour title since 2014. "I've had some tough times be-

tween then and now," Jones said.

American Brandon Hagy was second on seven under while Jones' playing partner JB Holmes dropped from second to a tie for 46th after a nine-over 79.

"I'm pretty emotional - seven years [between wins]. I just worked

hard," added Jones.

"I had some tough times putting but worked hard with my coach in Australia and it has finally paid off."

Jones, who also led after the opening day, started well with birdies at the first and third as he built an almost unassailable lead, before dropping

a shot at the seventh to turn in 34. He dropped another at the 11th before making birdies at the 12th and 13th to restore his advantage.

Another bogey at the 14th was cancelled out by a birdie at the 16th and he always had enough daylight to see him home.

Jason Holder's five-for gives West Indies control

Kemar Roach chips in with three as Sri Lanka collapse around Lahiru Thirimanne's battling 70

By Madushka Balasuriya

ESPNCricinfo - Kemar Roach and Jason Holder combined for eight wickets between them as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 169 on the opening day of the first Test in Antigua. Lahiru Thirimanne top scored for the visitors with a hard-fought 70 off 180 balls, but only three other Sri Lankan batsman would get to double digits, as they crumbled against a disciplined bowling performance from the hosts.

While it was Roach that was arguably the more impressive of the two, with his impeccable lines and lengths, it was Holder that would reap the benefits of the pressure created, picking up his eighth five-wicket haul in Tests. Roach, meanwhile would finish with figures of 3 for 47. John Campbell and Kraigg Brathwaite saw off an hour without any hassles, with West Indies end-

ing on 13 without loss.

While Holder had been tight throughout the day, it was in an uninterrupted spell after tea that he burst into life. He picked up four of his five wickets during this spell, including the wickets of both Dickwella and Thirimanne - Sri Lanka's last two recognised batsmen - just as the pair would have been harbouring hopes of fashioning an unlikely rearguard salvo, having put on 58 for the sixth wicket.

The first to go was Dickwella, who up until that point had played an uncharacteristically reserved innings. Having left several wide outside off alone, and having flayed a couple somewhat fortuitously backward of square on the offside, Dickwella finally produced the edge he had been teasing as Rakheem Cornwall completed a comfortable take at slip.

That would put a considerable dampener on

an already slow scoring rate, the pressure of which would tell a few overs later as Thirimanne played on to his stumps, to one that was angled in from around the wicket - a tactic that the West Indies had employed across the board to Sri Lanka's left-hand batsmen.

Holder would then have Suranga Lakmal out caught in his next over before trapping Lasith Embuldeniya lbw to close-out the innings, either side of Roach producing an absolute ripper to oust Dushmantha Chameera's off peg.

Roach had undoubtedly been the standout performer until that point, exemplified by his spell after the lunch break, when he picked up the wickets of both Dhananjaya De Silva and Pathum Nissanka.

His first victim was De Silva; having got a few to move away past the outside edge of the right-hander, he eventually got

his man, luring him into the drive but this time seaming the ball back in past the inside edge to clip the top of off stump. It was a well setup wicket, and one that was just reward for a consummate Test-match spell.

And it was more of the same for Roach's second. Immediately after the drinks break, he would get another good length delivery to move ever-so-slightly away from the batsman - this time Nissanka - whose gentle defensive prod could only find its way to first slip.

Much of the damage for the visitors however took place in the morning session when they yet again lost their top-order for barely 50 runs on the board. Cornwall and Holder had picked up a wicket a piece, while Kraigg Brathwaite had effected a splendid runout.

SERENA WILLIAMS WITHDRAWS FROM MIAMI OPEN

Serena Williams has pulled out of this week's Miami Open after having oral surgery.

The twenty-three-time Grand Slam singles champion was knocked out of the Australian Open semifinals by Naomi Osaka in January.

"I am disappointed to withdraw," said thirty-nine-year-old Williams, who has won the Miami Open eight times.

"Miami is a special tournament for me because it's my home and I am sad I won't be able to see the incredible fans this year."

The men's draw has already been depleted by the withdrawals of world number one Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and world number four Dominic Thiem.

It gets underway on Monday.

Photo Caption: Serena Williams has lost four Grand Slam finals since her return to the tour in 2018

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