



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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## WIOC SHARES GO ON SALE TODAY

SEE PAGE 3



*Aerial view of the storage tanks of WIOC, one area where the company has diversified its operations.*

WOMEN DOMINATE 2020 DADLIHACK WINNERS' ROW

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## EDITORIAL

# West Indies Oil Company going public: A Big Deal

The announcement that the West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) is going public, or put another way, is offering a portion of its shares for sale to ordinary Antigua and Barbudans is indeed, in the words of the company's Chief Executive Officer, Gregory Georges, a Big Deal!

This is so because WIOC's going public can likely change the fortunes of Antiguan and Barbudan for generations to come; that is, if the company is able to skillfully navigate the changing times ahead and to reconfigure itself for those changes and challenges. The idea of purchasing shares in a successful company is not very commonplace for many here in this country. We have not developed that culture of trading shares in companies as is now the norm in countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and even within the OECS grouping. Except for the Antigua Commercial Bank, which announced this week that it is now trading under a new name, ACB Caribbean, there is no other

company here where the shares have been sold publicly.

There is no Antigua and Barbuda company today being traded on the Eastern Caribbean Stock Exchange (ECSE). This will all change later this year as Georges has indicated that the plan is to list WIOC on the ECSE before the end of this year. Currently, he said WIOC is only utilizing the ECSE platform in this its first public offering.

WIOC has a special place in the hearts and minds of Antiguan and Barbudans, especially those in the older age group. Many remember when the company first started operations and the flames from the chimney burning the by-products of the refining processes and the high-paying jobs it ushered in. Many too, recall the skills-transfer that took place as many young men were taught new skills in areas such as welding and as chemical lab technicians to meet the needs of this new industry.

Over the years, WIOC continued to be a much-sought after employment goal for many people

leaving school with its promise of good-paying jobs and the promise of new skills for the nation's youth.

The company was always seen as one of the better managed private sector enterprises in the country and its history of philanthropy over the more than five decades that it has operated here has also been well established. WIOC has sponsored Carnival Queens, the Gemonites Steelband, Carnival troupes, calypsonians as well as assisted many individuals seeking assistance for education and medical purposes.

It also financed the construction of the Double Decker stand at the Antigua Recreation Grounds, arguably one of the most popular stands from which to watch cricket Test matches during its heyday.

Its former owner, Bruce Rappaport and his wife, financed the construction of the National Archives building and made significant contributions to the construction of the Children's Ward at Holberton hospital.

It is for these reasons and more why WIOC has a special place in the hearts and minds of Antiguan and Barbudans of all ages. Therefore, the idea of owning a piece of this company will be a special moment for many. It will be the realization of a dream; a dream to be part of the ownership class in the country; an opportunity to purchase shares and to bequeath to generations to come.

One of the reasons why wealth has not been passed from generations to generations among Antiguan and Barbudans is because there was not much wealth to pass on. Except in cases of land and other properties, not much else has been passed on to succeeding generations.

WIOC's going public provides opportunities to accumulate wealth among a larger section of people from which the lives and circumstance of their offspring may be improved. 'Better days are coming,' says a tune made popular by Jimmy Cliff. Better days are indeed coming! This is a BIG DEAL!

# WIOC SHARES GO ON SALE TODAY



Photo caption: Images from The West Indies Oil Company, Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of The Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Tank Facility in October 2019.

The Antigua and Barbuda government is fulfilling one of its key promises to the people of Antigua and Barbuda when shares in the majority-owned West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) go on sale today, Wednesday 24th March 2021.

When the government purchased the shares of WIOC from the previous owners – National Petroleum Ltd. owned by the late Bruce Rappaport Estate - Prime Minister Gaston Browne made a commitment that one day he would open up the company so that ordinary men and women in the country can purchase shares in the company.

Effective today, shares of the company will go on sale at a price of EC\$60.00 per share. However, shares will in blocks of no less than fifty. In a statement, the com-

pany said fifty per cent of the shares will be reserved for public sector workers. A WIOC statement said the offer opens on 24th March 2021 and runs until 21st April 2021. In the event that the shares are oversubscribed, one hundred and forty-two thousand and eighty (142,080) additional shares will be made available.

WIOC Chief Executive Officer Gregory Georges said he is “quite elated” to be at the helm of the company at this momentous occasion in WIOC’s growth and development. “I am very ecstatic and proud to be in a position where we are taking the company public. Six years ago, we were given a mandate to grow and to transform the company. To be at the point where we are taking the company pub-

lic is testimony of the hard work that we have been doing here at WIOC and the realization of a dream. This is a Big Deal!” he declared.

The WIOC CEO is however mindful that going public will bring with it closer scrutiny and it would require changes in outlook. “This is transformational! Going public requires changes in mindset as no longer will the owners of the company be the Antigua and Barbuda government, the Venezuelan Oil Company and the Chinese firm, Fancy Bridge. The owners will be a wider shareholder group with varying expectations and needs,” he opined. He said the move is the equivalent of WIOC opening its doors and asking the public to scrutinize its operations and procedures. “This comes with much respon-

sibility and it also requires much transparency on our part here at WIOC,” he added.

Details of the procedures for purchasing shares are being made available today on the company’s website. WIOC has appointed the Bank of St Lucia Ltd. as principal broker to handle the sales. That is because there are no local company authorized to serve as broker on the Eastern Caribbean Stock Exchange.

The government of Antigua and Barbuda is expected to raise approximately EC\$18 million to be utilized to fund a number of its critical capital projects. Prime Minister Browne believes that this is a prime opportunity for citizens of Antigua and Barbuda.



## WEST INDIES OIL COMPANY LIMITED Press Release

### THE GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA ANNOUNCES THE DIVESTMENT OF TEN PERCENT (10%) OF ITS SHAREHOLDING IN THE WEST INDIES OIL COMPANY LIMITED

**ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda** – March 24, 2021. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda (“GOAB” or the “Offeror”) announces that it will divest ten percent (10%) of its holdings in the West Indies Oil Company Limited (“WIOC”) commencing 24 March, 2021. This amounts to 301,920 ordinary shares. Fifty percent (50%) of the offer is reserved for public servants and the remainder for other citizens and institutions of Antigua and Barbuda, OECS and CARICOM in that order of priority. Where the offer is not fully subscribed according to the outlined preferential tiered order, the Offeror reserves the right to transfer the shares on a first come, first serve basis.

WIOC is an Antiguan company with a regional presence in the energy sector. Its principal activity of business is the sourcing, marketing, distribution and storage of petroleum products. WIOC was established in 1965 by Natomas and Amoco International Oil. The GOAB, a minority shareholder in WIOC since 1980, gained controlling interest in the Company in 2015, and currently owns fifty-one percent (51%) of the shares.

The share offer (the “Offer”) price is fixed at **XCD60.00** per share with a minimum allocation of fifty (50) shares per applicant and maximum allocation of fifteen thousand, and ninety six (15,096) shares per applicant. The Offer opens on 24 March, 2021 and runs until 21 April, 2021. In the event that the shares are oversubscribed, one hundred, forty-two thousand and eighty (142,080) additional shares will be made available.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda is expected to raise approximately EC\$18 million to be utilized to fund a number of its critical capital projects.

The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Honourable Gaston Browne, believes that this is a prime opportunity for citizens of Antigua and Barbuda.

*“For over 50 years, the West Indies Oil Company Limited has continued to grow, generating profits of over \$26 million dollars in 2019. By going public and offering shares in WIOC, our government is providing the opportunity for Antiguan and Barbudans to build wealth, secure retirement, diversify investment portfolios and build a secure financial future for your children. The management and staff of WIOC have demonstrated their capacity via the profitability and sustainable growth of the company. With the future of WIOC looking very bright we invite citizens of Antigua and Barbuda to seize the opportunity to become a part of the ownership of WIOC. My Government believes that an investment in WIOC will be an investment in your family’s future and the development of our nation’s economy.”* said Prime Minister Gaston Browne.



(continued)

Gregory Georges, Chief Executive Officer of WIOC commented that the Board of Directors, Management and Staff are committed to successfully guiding WIOC's strategy with the goal of creating value for their shareholders and all stakeholders, in particular, its customers and employees in the communities in which it operates.

*"Over the past 50 years, WIOC has emerged as a strong and stable company, playing an integral role in the lives of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. The dedication, professionalism and experience of our management team and employees, their commitment to the core values, mission and vision of the company, are evidence of our continued growth and expansion."*

The Offer is subject to the laws of Antigua and Barbuda, specifically the Securities Act 2001 and the Companies Act 1995.

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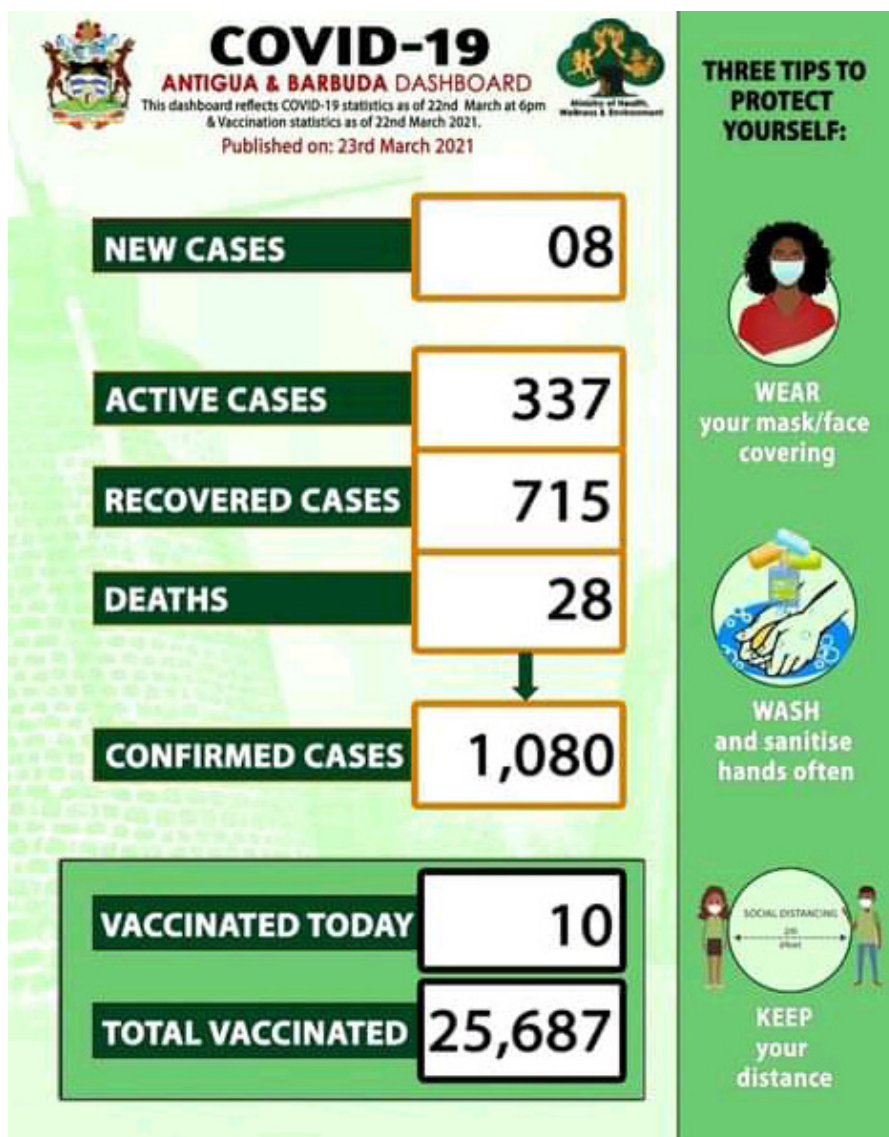


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## EIGHT NEW COVID-19 CASES



The Ministry of Health says the latest report from the Mount St. John's Medical Centre (MSJMC) has revealed eight new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Monday 22nd March 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

These new cases were as a result of one hundred and fifteen samples processed by MSJMC.

Fourteen recovered cases have been recorded, bringing the total to seven hundred and fifteen.

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

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



# Booby Alley Residents – “A better way of living

*...and different environment for us to raise our children.”*



Twelve families from the Booby Alley area in The Point received keys to their temporary homes on Tuesday, representing a monumental shift in housing opportunities for the residents. Prime Minister Gaston Browne presented the featured address at the handing over ceremony for the Booby Alley residents' relocation project on Lower Bay Street, Villa.

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Each house at the Bay Street project will see families moving into a complete structure, offering three-bedroom homes at approximately twelve hundred square feet in size, a laundry room, bathroom, kitchen, and living room with a combination of reinforced concrete, cement base foam panels, metal trusses with angle iron, foam galvanize metal doors and windows. All homes are said to have electricity, water, and internet infrastructures in place. Chairing the handing over ceremony of these newly completed homes, Permanent

Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Clarence Pilgrim, noted the importance of this housing project, and lauded the vision of Prime Minister Browne, along with the committee charged with the Booby Alley relocation project and staff at the Ministry of Works, who are working tirelessly to bring the project to fruition. "The relocation of these families represents a major part of the Booby Alley redevelopment project that will see the structural and environmental revitalization of the Booby Alley area in the Point," Pilgrim not-

ed. According to Prime Minister Browne, "This programme that we are pursuing is a programme of empowerment. Today, we are here to turn over the first twelve keys to occupants of these homes on Bay Street. We have another ten properties close to completion. The whole idea is to relocate individuals temporarily and, within two years, to have the reconstruction of the entire area (Booby Alley) to build modern homes." Prime Minister Browne, who is also the parliamentary representative for the area, noted that this project, along with the recently completed Polyclinic and Community Centre, the continued development of the Villa Primary School, and the housing development at Paradise

Cove are all a part of an overall vision for the holistic improvement of the lives and livelihood of those within the constituency.

Offering the vote of thanks was Booby Alley resident, Makela Daniel, who also received keys to her temporary home at Bay Street. Daniel expressed profound thanks for the initiative, as it presented an opportunity for her and her fellow residents to have a better standard of living.

Daniel said, "The Booby Alley Project has been long-awaited, but patience is a virtue. Today we are seeing a result of a dream that has become a reality. To the Prime Minister and the government, the organizing committee, the residents of the Booby Alley say a heartfelt thank you for your hard work and dedication for seeing this project through to the end. To the Prime Minister and his government, an extra special thank you for having the vision for us, the residents, the opportunity of a better way of living, better living conditions, and a different environment for us to raise our children and our children's children."



# AG dismisses claims of prison officers being made to break quarantine

**By Shelton Daniel**

Attorney General Steadroy “Cutie” Benjamin says there is no truth to allegations that staff of Her Majesty’s Prison on quarantine for possible exposure to COVID-19 are sometimes called back to the facility to assist with pressing matters. Sources within the prison who did not wish to be identified told PointeXpress that the risky recalls were being made because of acute personnel shortages linked to the particular skill-sets or knowledge base of the absent staff members. According to these sources, the officers who are in quarantine are occasionally asked to return for very short periods to help out with the difficult situation facing the prison, despite overall misgivings on both sides about having to resort to this measure.

One officer allegedly recalled in this regard is said to have complained about the possibility of being accosted by police and brought to book for breaking quarantine, but nevertheless consented to cooperate.

Benjamin – who is also the Minister for Justice, Legal Affairs, Public Safety and Labour – was swiftly dismissive of that allegation when he spoke with PointeFM

99.1 during a live interview on Tuesday morning.

“Absolutely no truth in that,” he declared, adding that the Acting Superintendent of Prison, Jermaine Anthony, has “made it clear that once you have interacted with anybody ... who is suspected of being infected, that person would not be within the walls of the prison.”

Taking the opportunity to congratulate the acting prison boss “for doing an excellent job,” Minister Benjamin continued, “I know Mr. Anthony. He has not reported that to me.”

The Attorney General also declared having no knowledge of another allegation brought to his attention on the Starting Pointe programme: That an inmate of Her Majesty’s Prison with a pending coronavirus test result was taken from the facility and brought to work on the Prison Farm several miles away, according to prison staff who spoke with PointeXpress on condition of anonymity.

They said the inmate, whose name they provided, subsequently tested positive for COVID-19, with the result coming while he was still out on the farm.

“This created a tremendous amount of panic back at

the office. Frantic calls were made to the driver for the inmate to be brought back to the compound immediately,” one of our sources claimed. “He should never have been taken out of the prison until they were sure of his status. For that matter, he should have been in quarantine while they were waiting for his test result.”

Another officer who claims to have been forced into quarantine because of prior interaction with that inmate said, “Because of this poor procedure, the driver and others who accompanied that inmate to the farm

could have been exposed and would then be forced to quarantine as a result. What this would have done is put further and perhaps unnecessary strain on the staff that we have available to man the prison.”

But asked about this during the interview, Benjamin stated that he had not been told, nor heard elsewhere, anything about this alleged incident. “I’ll investigate that this morning to make sure ... But I can assure you that Dr. [Leyland] Powell, as the doctor of the prison, has been doing a fantastic job.”



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# HEALTH TECHNICIANS KEY TO 1735 COVID CHALLENGES



**By Shelton Daniel**

The government minister with portfolio responsibility for Her Majesty's Prison says technical hiccups within the public health services have adversely affected the response to a rash of COVID-19 infections at the correctional facility.

Attorney General Steadroy "Cutie" Benjamin is pointing the finger at "technicians within the Ministry of Health" who, he says, "need to do much better."

Benjamin was referring to what he regards as an unacceptably sluggish pace of returning laboratory results for inmates and staff tested for COVID-19, and an equally slow rate at which the administration of vaccines to those within the penal institution's walls has proceeded thus far. "Cabinet passed a decision that each person coming to Her Majesty's Prison must have two things with them: One, a warrant for them to be detained; and, second-

ly, a COVID test to show that they were not infected. This has not happened yet. Regrettably – very regrettably – the technicians within the Ministry of Health have not carried out their duties, and I am not here to hide anything anymore. I'm here to put cards on the table," he told PointeFM's Starting Pointe programme on Tuesday morning.

Benjamin also responded to revelations that disposable personal protective equipment (PPE) was not being released or supplied to prison staff despite confirmation that abundant supplies are available. "I know for a fact that we have thousands upon thousands of PPEs here in the State, but yet those PPEs are not yet made available in sufficient quantities to the prison wardens." The minister expressed astonishment that correctional officers at the overcrowded facility were being ordered to wash and reuse the disposable PPEs

which are meant for single use. "That is unacceptable. So, I made it my duty to call the Chief Medical Officer and the Procurement Officer and make certain that those bits of equipment – which they have in abundance – be given to the front-line workers; that is to say, the prison wardens." Benjamin added, "What bothers me even more is that we had made representation to the Ministry of Health that the prison wardens ought to be vaccinated. Only a small proportion have been vaccinated so far, and there are other persons who have gone out on their own and [gotten] vaccinated. So, we are demanding that all of the prison wardens be vaccinated. Not only they, but the persons within the prison as well." Elaborating on his unhappiness with the testing, the Legal Affairs and Public Safety Minister stated: "We are still awaiting the results of those persons who have been tested and

have not yet had the results turned out. We must get the attention of the technicians within the Health Ministry." Careful to make clear that he was not taking any swipe at his Cabinet colleague, Benjamin declared further, "I can't fault the Minister of Health. He's done the best he can in the circumstances. But, the technicians have let him down, regrettably."

Despite such challenges, Benjamin said he was pulling out all the stops to ensure that the inmates and staff of Her Majesty's Prison are protected. "Every officer from today will have the protective gear. Every prisoner on remand or in custody for sentencing, or whatever, must have a COVID test before they come in ... And I'm certain that they will be comforted to know that they will have the PPEs to work with on a daily basis. And once we can get the full cooperation of the technicians within the Ministry of Health, all will be well."

Conceding that the Health Ministry technicians he referred to could themselves be overburdened, Benjamin said while he is cognizant of this and sympathetic, the troubling situation at the prison cannot be allowed to continue, as the perils posed could worsen and progress to a much wider impact.



# WOMEN DOMINATE 2020 DADLIHACK WINNERS' ROW



The winners of the 2020 Dadlihack, a joint presentation of the Ministry of Trade and the United Nations Office for Special Projects (UNOPS), were presented with their prize monies on Tuesday 23rd March 2021.

Trade minister E.P. Chet Greene presented cheques valued at US\$10,000.00 to three teams as the top winners of the 2020 Dadlihack, the annual hackathon which is part of the UNOPS Global Innovation Challenge which brings together innovators, entrepreneurs and other developers to harness creative ideas and identify solutions for building climate-resilient infrastructure.

"The government of Antigua and Barbuda has made an investment in young people

and the innovative industry, which is really part of a global revolution. In just about every country in the world this is the 'in thing.' So for our young people who are involved and who have taken an interest by demonstrating their creative juices, the government sees it as its obligation to facilitate this expression on the part of our young people. The prizes are not 'big' but are symbolic and speak to a commitment of support for these ventures," Greene stated.

The trade minister revealed that several major projects are earmarked for the Innovation and Incubation Park, the facility made available for the UNOPS funded project in Antigua and Barbuda. He also announced plans to relocate the

park from its current location at the former US Tracking Station (southeast of the airport) to another area deemed to be more conducive for the activities of an innovation park.

Greene also noted that all the winning teams were comprised of all females or led by a female. While congratulating the winners, the minister also threw out a challenge for more males to get involved in the creative field and to make full use of the facilities available at the park.

The overall winners were Team Antigua Island Girls (members: Kevinia Francis, Elvira Bell, Samara Emmanuel and Christal Clashing). They received a cheque for US \$5,000.00 for their concept of a coastal ocean

rowing programme and a youth development initiative combined with improving the eco-tourism industry. Second place went to Dadli Yellow, a team led by Launesha Barnes and Christal Clashing which is exploring the possibility of turning the invasive sargassum seaweed into materials to make swimwear and other items of clothing. That team received a cheque for US\$2,500.00, Third prize went to ARK Team (members: Seimone Joseph and Elijah James) who presented (A)ccess to (R)esilience and (K)nowledge (ARK), a mobile marketplace which connects farmers to market and provides resilient data to optimise their product yields. This team also received a cheque for US\$2,500.00.



## OLD ROAD MAN CHARGED WITH MULTIPLE HOUSE BREAK-IN AND LARCENY OFFENCES

An Old Road man is due in the All Saints Magistrate's Court today to answer several charges filed by the police.

A police release said they arrested and charged Mark Willock of Old Road with multiple counts of house break-in, larceny, and malicious damage.

"The nineteen-year-old man is accused of breaking into three separate houses in Old Road, and stealing several household items including, one electrical fan, cosmetics, jewellery, mobile phones, food items, and an undisclosed sum of money," according to the release.

The police say the alleged incidents reportedly occurred sometime

between 6th and 19th March 2021.

The release also said Willock is also accused of maliciously committing

damage to seven vehicles in Old Road during the same period, and allegedly stole monies and other valuable items.

He is expected in the All Saints Magistrate's Court today, Wednesday 24th March 2021.



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my already robust international medical education. The amazingly rich culture, warm-hearted people, and extensively diverse academics and practitioners exceeded my highest expectations. So, if you are interested in a cultural investment and exploring roads less trodden, while acquiring a sound education, why not apply?" High Commissioner Hill said that the university programmes on offer are

for preparatory courses, undergraduate, graduate (taught and Research) and General Medicine/Residency, noting that additional information is available from the Commission's website at [www.antigua-barbuda.com](http://www.antigua-barbuda.com). She urges suitably qualified Antiguan and Barbudans to avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue higher education in a country rich in history and culture.

Antigua and Barbuda nationals now have an opportunity to pursue studies in the eastern European country of Azerbaijan. The announcement comes from the High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Karen-Mae Hill, who said applications are being accepted for students here to pursue studies in Azerbaijan. "This initiative was made possible through the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) and the government of Antigua and Barbuda. The scholarship covers all expenses including, flights, full tuition, allowances, and accommodation," she said. Hill noted that as a current Chair of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), Azerbaijan is happy to provide an opportunity for selected

candidates from NAM countries on an annual basis to study in the leading universities of Azerbaijan at the preparatory courses, undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, general medicine/residency programmes. "In this context, I would like to strongly emphasize a productive and constructive relationship with Antigua and Barbuda which is progressing on an excellent level," noted Tahir Taghizadeh, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the United Kingdom. According to Dr Drickesha Aska, currently a resident Anesthesiologist - Critical Care Specialist at the Azerbaijan Medical University, "After working in dozens of hospitals and clinics in Antigua and the U.S., Azerbaijan offered an added exotic facet to

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## DEADLINE 30 MARCH 2021



# LOCAL FARMERS CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM CROWDFUNDING



The Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fishers has announced that another farmer has benefited from crowdfunding initiative.

According to the agriculture ministry, "Avery Smith was another beneficiary of the crowdfunding project entitled, 'Mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 through the supply of fresh food to rural households,' which is an Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) initiative, being done in collaboration with the Min-

istry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)."

Through this project, the local farmer can increase his agricultural productivity.

Smith expressed his gratitude to IICA, CARDI, and the Ministry of Agriculture for their support in helping him set up the irrigation system and even teaching him how to make use of it and maintain it as it will be his first time making use of this technology. He ex-

pects to do more on his farm and get a greater yield and better quality produce now that he has this system.

The agriculture ministry went on to explain that CARDI technician Bradbury Browne stated that with the project they are aiming to accomplish two main things. "Firstly, to get more farmers in tune with modern technology which would be the drip irrigation system and the fertigation system. Secondly, to boost the production of food during the COVID-19

pandemic and the drought season so this is a way for farmers to still be able to produce food despite these problems."

The beneficiaries of the project will also receive information on how and when to irrigate, the types of fertilizers to use, types of pesticides to use, among other things.

Another aspect of the project will include training of farmers in the use of drip irrigation and fertigation systems which includes the six beneficiaries of the project and twenty-five other farmers





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# 40 THINGS HR SHOULD GIVE UP FOR LENT

The Lenten season is a time to reflect, plan for the journey ahead and to detach from things that may be getting in the way of your vision. Though we only have about ten days left until we come to the end of this reflective season, we thought it prudent to share a list that can be carried forward

throughout the remainder of the year. The past thirteen months have proven to be a trying time for all and more so Human Resources (HR) Professionals who are, in many instances, leading the charge in their organizations towards what will be the “new normal”.

We developed this list with Ms. Rhonda Hutson. Rhonda is an HR Business Partner who resides in Barbados and has worked with Cable & Wireless Barbados. She is currently a trainer with the National Initiative for Service Excellence (NISE) Inc.

Here are forty things we believe that Human Resource Professionals should give up during this period and in the future to help strengthen our contributions towards organizational goals.

1. Leading the Company's Covid-19 response alone.
2. Blindly following Managers.
3. Saying yes to frivolous investigation requests.
4. Planning the staff picnic/gala alone.
5. Taking the blame for absenteeism.
6. Taking the blame for the abuse of sick days.
7. Leading the Company's employee engagement initiatives without help from other managers.
8. Completing tasks and reports for other departments.
9. Being the only advocate for diversity and inclusion.
10. Not speaking out for gender and pay equality and equity.
11. Being the person in the Company who is always saying “No” or creating barriers and obstacles.
12. Operating the Complaint Department.
13. Putting Policy before People.
14. Fearing external influence and partners.
15. Staying on the periphery of organizational decision -making.
16. Being confined/stagnated by traditional HR methods.
17. Being defined by what HR does and not by what HR delivers.
18. Being the policy police and regulatory watchdog while still making sure that all the required routine work continues.
19. Disconnecting from the real work of the organization.



20. Thinking HR can transform itself alone.
21. Being content with the gains made in diversity and engagement.
22. Being ambiguous or complex with our needs, wants and expectations.
23. Not leveraging information and technology to drive business results.
24. Prolonging the process to turn strategy into action.
25. Letting go individuals with institutional knowledge and abilities, who can drive the Company forward in a global economy.
26. Deferring taking the lead in proposing, creating, and debating best practices in culture change.
27. Not taking stock of the work of HR and setting clear priorities.
28. Downplaying the value of intrapreneurship.
29. Avoiding having serious talks about how organizational capabilities create value for investors, customers, and employees.
30. Being resistant to change.
31. Immediately trying to copy innovations “wholesale”, instead of learning to adapt, not adopt.
32. Not upgrading our professional development.
33. Expecting it to business as usual.
34. Missing opportunities to strengthen our company culture.
35. Going a single day without showing appreciation to our teams.
36. Thinking that we cannot produce original, fun, engaging content for the Company.
37. Thinking that we do not have a say in marketing/branding campaigns.
38. Being left out of the run up to negotiation meetings.
39. Thinking that the Company cannot run without us and refusing to take vacation.
40. Allowing employees to speak ill of the West Indies Cricket Team.

It is our firm belief that if HR Professionals were to give up even just a handful of these debilitating beliefs that we would be able to lead the HR revolution that is necessary to preserve the future of our economy.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally

from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and

development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hrpro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HR-Pro268.





# PROTESTS ALLOWED BUT OVERSEAS HOLIDAYS BANNED UNDER NEW CORONAVIRUS LAWS IN THE UK

**By Lizzie Deardon**

Protests will be permitted but holidays abroad will be banned under new coronavirus laws coming into force from 29 March. The government has published the new “steps” leg-

islation for England, which will govern the gradual easing of restrictions into the summer.

The laws, which will expire on 30 June unless they are scrapped or changed in the meantime, cre-

ate new powers for police to fine holidaymakers £5,000.

They create a formal prohibition on “leaving the United Kingdom without a reasonable excuse.”

Permitted reasons include

work, study, legal obligations, moving home or major life events such as attending weddings or funerals.

Anyone breaking the new ban can be fined £5,000 and the law also creates

Cont'd on pg 19



an obligation to fill in a form declaring reasons for travel. Anyone who fails to disclose the required information could be fined £200. The travel ban does not apply to those going to the common travel area of the Channel Islands, Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland unless that is not the final destination.

The home secretary announced in January that holidays violated lockdown rules and said police would be patrolling airports, but the prohibition was not explicit and police said they would not routinely stop holidaymakers leaving the country.

Many provisions in the new Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021, which come into effect on 29 March, have already been announced by the government.

But ministers added a new passage making protests an explicit exemption to

restrictions on large gatherings, following lobbying by MPs and campaign groups.

Pressure mounted to clarify the situation following a backlash to arrests at vigils for Sarah Everard, after the Metropolitan Police claimed demonstrations were illegal during lockdown but campaigners said they were wrong.

A High Court judge refused to intervene in the dispute, which arose because current lockdown laws neither explicitly ban or explicitly allow protests. From Monday, the new law will create an exception to gathering restrictions for protests, “organised by a business, a charitable, benevolent or philanthropic institution, a public body or a political body”, and where organisers, “take the required precautions,” to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Sam Grant, head of policy and campaigns at human rights group Liberty, said:

“It is welcome that the next stage of lockdown contains the explicit exemption we’ve been calling for – this should have remained in place throughout the current lockdown and it is unacceptable for it to wait until next week.”

The government is separately backing a controversial new package of laws that would make it easier for police to impose restrictions on demonstrations and prosecute people for breaking them.

The new coronavirus laws will also allow students to return home during the Easter holiday.

The regulations, which will be voted on by parliament on Thursday, replace the previous tier system with a series of “steps”, following the proposed dates of the government’s roadmap out of lockdown for England.

The previous exemptions to the rules apply, such as having a reasonable excuse for work, volunteer-

ing, childcare and other caring responsibilities.

Step One will begin on Monday, permitting up to six people meeting outdoors but restricting indoor gatherings of two or more people. Some outdoor sports will be permitted.

Step Two, which is scheduled to start on 12 April, will allow non-essential shops to reopen as well as businesses such as hairdressers and hospitality venues that serve customers outside. Weddings and wakes would then allow up to 15 people to attend. The third and least restrictive “step”, scheduled to begin from 17 May, will allow groups of six to meet inside and up to 30 people outside.

The need for the restrictions must be reviewed by 12 April and at least once every 35 days afterwards.

Reprinted from The Independent

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# REDUCE **SALT** CONTENT



1Dr. Natasha Sobers-Grannum

## **Barbados Advocate -**

A reduction in the amount of salt being added to food can make a significant difference in this island's fight against non-communicable diseases.

"Salt is very critical in increasing your risk of hy-

pertension and therefore increasing a person's risk for stroke. We tend to have over seven hundred strokes per year, so we can do a lot in decreasing our risk of hypertension by reducing our salt intake," stated Lecturer in Public

Health and Epidemiology with the University of the West Indies, Dr. Natasha Sobers-Grannum.

Speaking on yesterday's episode of the COVID Communications Unit's series 'COVID Queries', she suggested if persons

slowly brought down their salt intake, it would make a significant difference in lowering their blood pressure.

Pointing out the love Barbadians have for bread, she stated by slowly reducing the salt content of this highly popular staple and other foods, stroke numbers could decrease.

"What they did in the United Kingdom is they gradually decreased the salt content in bread, so people's taste buds got accustomed to it. It was a mandatory thing where it said, 'We have to lower our salt level.' And I think that will really go a long way to helping our hypertension fight and helping our fight with strokes and myocardial infarctions. For me, the big fight is in prevention and in these upstream policies that we see," she stated.

With a large number of Barbadians suffering from chronic non-communicable diseases including hypertension and diabetes, the Lead Researcher with the Barbados National Registry was adamant that Barbadians seriously looked at reducing the high levels of salt and sugar in our diets to improve the health of the nation.



# WEEKEND LOCKDOWNS IN JAMAICA TO HELP CURB COVID-19 SPREAD



**Jamaica Gleaner** – Face-to-face classes have been shut down for all students and lockdowns imposed for three weekends from 26th March until 12th April as the Holness administration seeks to rein in a runaway wave of COVID-19 infections.

The country has recorded five hundred and thirty-three deaths and more than 35,300 cases – with 18,426 infections classified as active. Nine new deaths were tallied on Saturday.

Addressing a Jamaica House press briefing on Sunday, Prime Minister Andrew Holness said that the lockdowns would begin from midday on Saturdays to Mondays at 5 a.m. Arguing that compliance with the current measures to restrict the spread of the

highly contagious virus was not being achieved by moral suasion, Holness said that the tougher new restrictions would be policed with rigour and breaches prosecuted.

With the public hospitals at breaking point, some exceeding their capacities by up to one hundred and fifty per cent, the prime minister noted that the government had no option but to impose tighter restrictions.

“We face what could be described as an existential threat. The potential breakdown of our health system ... is a serious threat, and it is of grave concern and we have to take the measures that we have put in place today (Sunday) in order to bring these numbers down rap-

idly,” the prime minister said at a press briefing.

Making it clear that there would be more stringent policing of the new restrictions, Holness said that the security forces have been given several days in advance to draft plans to enforce the measures.

Prior to the additional measures under the Disaster Risk Management Act, students preparing for exit exams were allowed to attend face-to-face classes at primary and high schools. However, the government has instructed that all students and teachers return to online or virtual learning until 13th April. The directive also applies to independent schools.

However, nurseries will be allowed to remain open.

Holness said that the exist-

ing restrictions on funerals and burials will remain in place until Tuesday.

But beginning on Wednesday 24th March until 13th April, burials will be allowed between Mondays and Fridays during the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. The number of mourners is restricted to ten. An additional five persons, including clergy, gravediggers, and undertakers, will be allowed. Additionally, only thirty minutes have been allotted to bury the dead.

The ban on funerals will be maintained.

The number of attendees allowed at weddings has also been slashed from twenty-five to fifteen.

Meanwhile, the new restrictions are expected to have a negative impact on commercial operators, who have been hard-hit by the prolonged and shortened curfew hours over the past year.

Businessman Paul ‘Bigga’ Young of Urmonie Mart financial services in Portland, lamented that Jamaica had been forced to impose a new round of lockdowns because of the irresponsible behaviour of commuters.

## DEYALSINGH DENIES FAMILY LINK IN VACCINE DEAL ... THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST TWO WHO POSTED CLAIMS

*Trinidad Guardian* - Hours after allegations of a link between a relative of Health Minister Terrence Deyalsingh and a local company that the government was using to order COVID-19 vaccines from Hong Kong surfaced, the minister was pursuing legal action against Suzette Lowe and Marcia Braveboy for making the claims and publishing them on social media. In a two-page release via the Health Ministry Monday, Deyalsingh condemned the allegations and denied there was any connection between himself and the VARY Medical and Scientific Company. The Braveboy Report had on Sunday claimed that the government had ordered the vaccines from Hong Kong through a local medical company linked to Deyalsingh's family. The report named the Hong Kong-based company Hewasky Quest Global as the international contact through which VARY Medical and Scientific Company allegedly made the request. It was also alleged that VARY Medical and Scientific Company has an office on Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain and that



*Minister of Health, Terrence Deyalsingh*

a relative of the minister was the owner of a company that allegedly shares the same address as VARY Medical and Scientific Company.

In dismissing the allegations Monday, Deyalsingh's release stated, "There is no affiliation between the Honourable Terrence Deyalsingh, Minister of Health, or anyone in his family and VARY Medical and Scientific Company. "There is no affiliation between the Honourable Terrence Deyalsingh, Minister of Health, or anyone in his family and any other COVID-19 vaccine and/or pharmaceutical manufacturer and/or distributor.

"VARY Medical and Sci-

entific Company does not share a business address with any organization linked to the Minister of Health or his family." Deyalsingh's release noted, however, that VARY Medical and Scientific Company did contact the ministry on the issue of vaccines.

"VARY Medical and Scientific Company did write to the Minister of Health, the Secretary of Health, Wellness and Family Development at the Tobago House of Assembly, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and the Chief Medical Officer offering COVID-19 vaccines to Trinidad and Tobago for purchase," the release said. "The local au-

thorized distributor for AstraZeneca and AstraZeneca themselves confirmed that VARY Medical and Scientific Company is not authorized to offer COVID-19 vaccines for sale, on behalf of AstraZeneca. There is no contractual arrangement between the Ministry of Health and VARY Medical and Scientific Company for the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines, nor is any such arrangement being contemplated."

Deyalsingh also urged the public to refrain from sharing misinformation "which could derail the efforts of the government of Trinidad and Tobago to secure authentic, WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines for



# DOMINICA POLICE INVESTIGATE CASE OF ALLEGED ILLEGAL MIGRATION



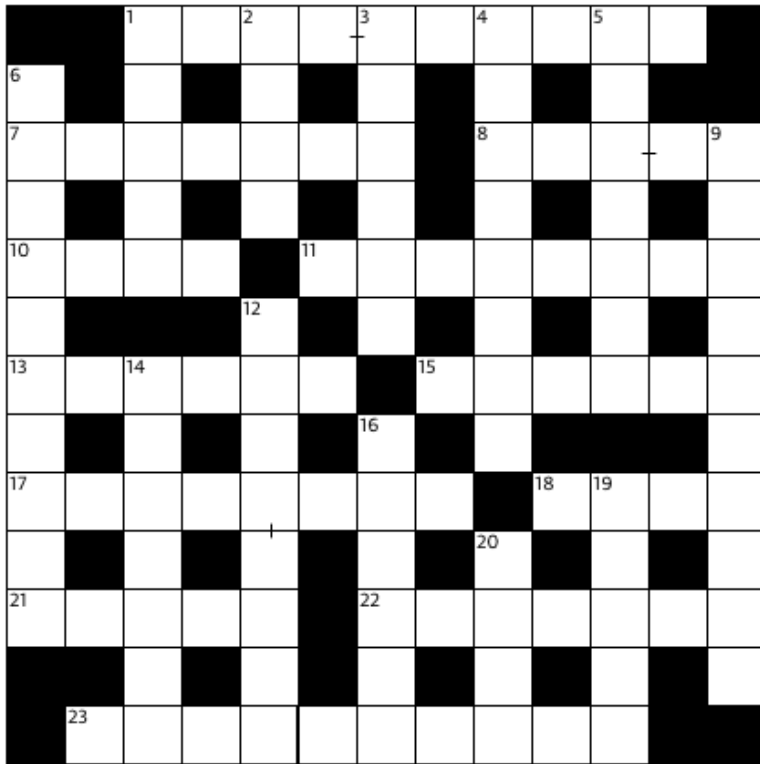
**Dominica News Online** - Police say they are investigating a case of "alleged illegal migration" after they intercepted an open keel vessel in the sea off Scotts Head today. According to Police PRO, Inspector John Carbon, nine people were found on board the vessel during the interception which was carried out by the Dominica Coast Guard.

"On Monday 22nd March 2021, about 12:00 noon, the Commonwealth of Dominica Coast Guard intercepted one open keel vessel named 'One Shot' registration #J7090SFE powered by one sixty horse power Yamaha engine four nautical miles west of Scotts Head," Inspector Carbon reported. "Two Dominican nationals and seven Haitian nationals were

found on board." He said all those found on board the vessel have been transported to the government quarantine facility in Portsmouth and police investigations into the matter continue. Last month, just four days after arresting nine people in connection with an incident of illegal entry in the Marigot/Wesley area, Dominica police are reporting that

they have made another such interception at Toucarie in the northern part of the island. According to Inspector John Carbon, four Haitian nationals were arrested for illegal entry after a joint operation between the police and customs intercepted an open keel vessel powered by two 250 horse power Yamaha engines.

## 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

A live-and-let-live attitude helps keep people out of trouble. Most big efforts require teamwork, and supporting each other makes every day proceed more happily. It isn't necessary to rush through the day.

## ♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Your smiles and friendliness might not be able to ward off a dispute over money or property. You might not see eye to eye with someone who's in a hurry and unlikely to be satisfied with how things are proceeding.

## ♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Stay calm, cool and collected. Don't let minor aggravations get under your skin, as they could cause you to lose your temper and diminish the harmony. Misunderstandings can be avoided if you remain patient and wise.

## ♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

Sharp words can cut like knives. Someone may be too intense or aggressive for your tastes and put you on the defensive. Focus on maintaining the peace as well as your peace of mind by not taking someone's words personally.

## ♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

You may prefer things relaxed, but it may be time to be realistic and concentrate on achieving ambitions. You might have better luck if you focus on business and financial matters rather than social affairs and entertainment.

## ♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Misunderstandings are nothing to laugh about when you or someone else misreads the signals and feelings get hurt. Wait a few days to circle back and try to clear things up. You will likely meet with a warmer reception the next time.

## ♎ LIBRA Sept. | 23-Oct. 22

You may sometimes enjoy trading friendly insults or jokes, but today someone's cutting remarks might rub you the wrong way or create hard feelings. Let it go and find satisfaction by exploring the least expected options.

## ♏ SCORPIO Oct. | 23-Nov. 21

Your attention may turn to your job and getting ahead in the workplace. It's possible your health habits are too sporadic. A small step taken now, such as starting a daily planner, can help you progress.

## ♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Something you buy in haste without doing your homework might not live up to your expectations. There could be a disagreement over money, but don't let a few cross words get under your skin.

## ♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Arguments and heated debates are seldom constructive, so do everything in your power to avoid them. It's possible you're being too clever and calculating for your own good. Try to be kinder and more mindful.

## ♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

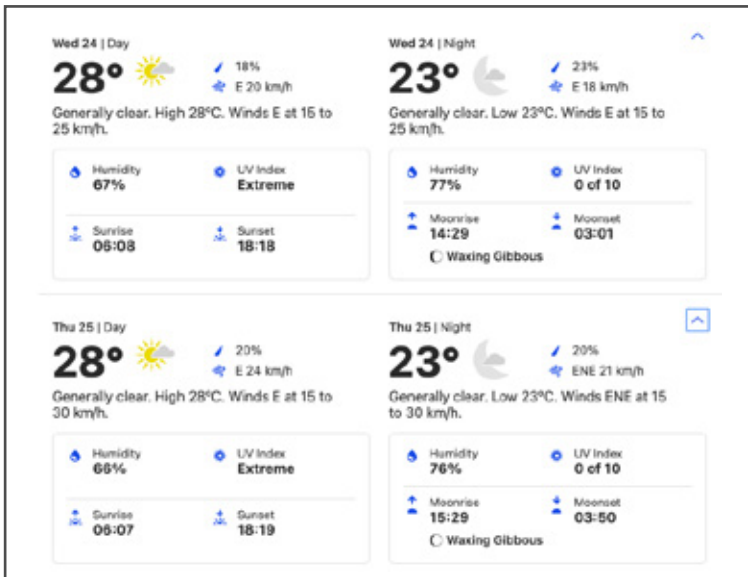
Nothing is ever perfect, but now you're more likely than usual to find fault with something or someone. Lucky for you, a loved one or partner is probably cheerful and may gently remind you to look on the bright side.

## ♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Remember that people's actions are almost always based on their issues and not on you. If people become quarrelsome or negative, don't take it personally. You can be tough-skinned and persistent about reaching practical goals.



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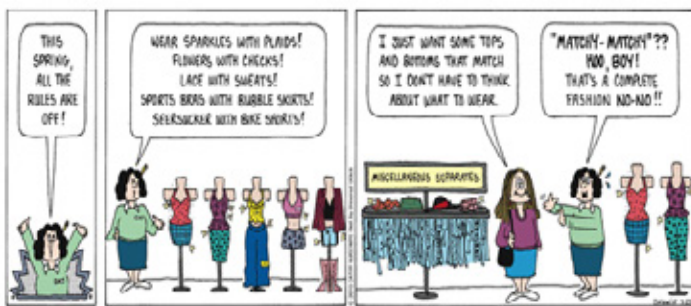
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## COMICS

Cathy Classics

March 23, 2010



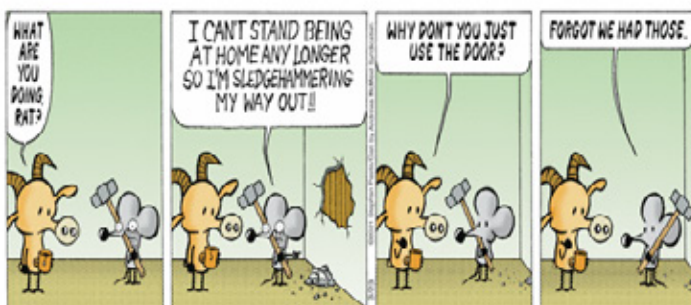
Big Nate

March 23, 2021



Pearls Before Swine

March 23, 2021



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# Biden to join EU leaders' video conference in bid to rebuild ties

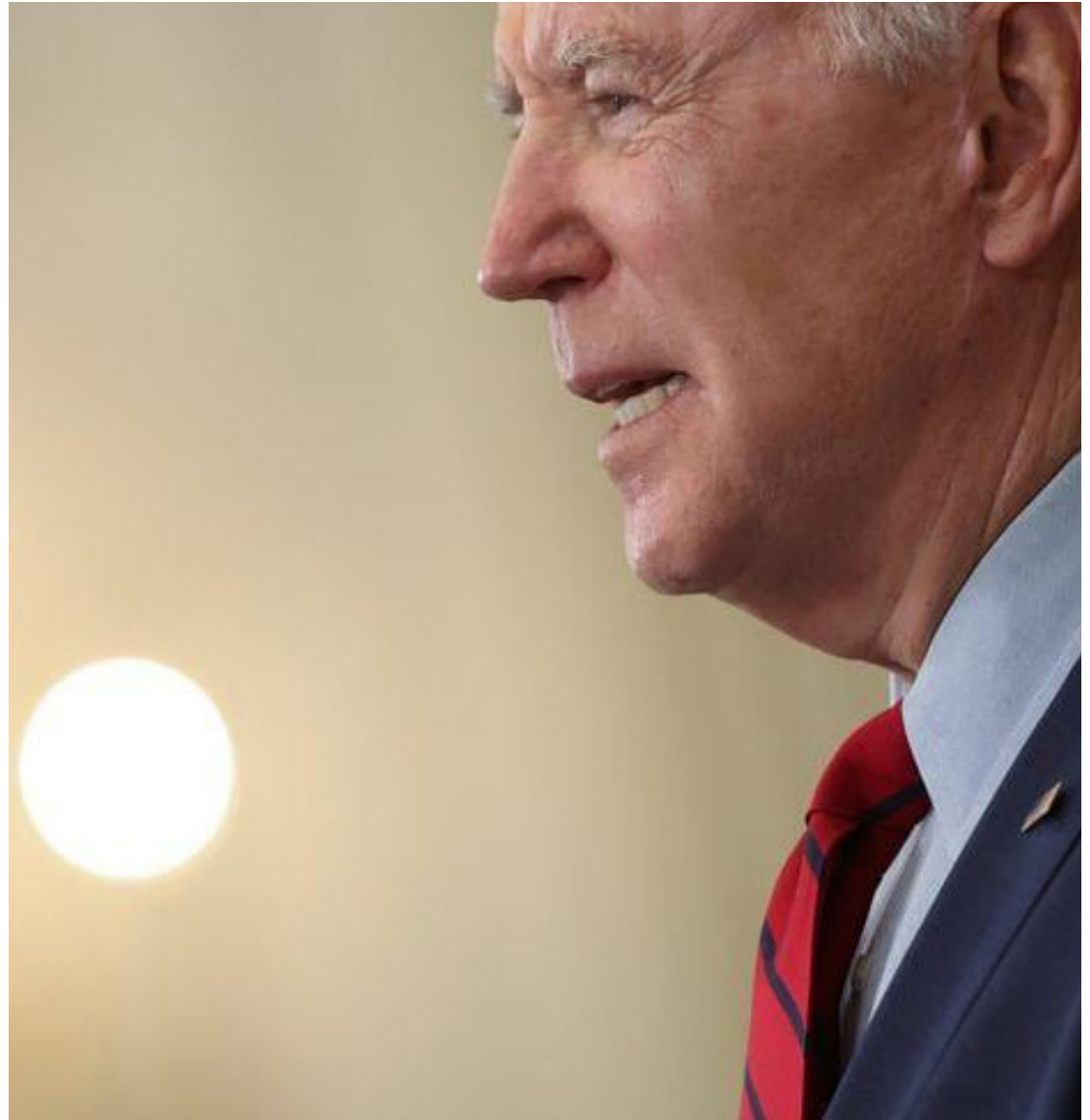
*BRUSSELS (Reuters)* - U.S. President Joe Biden will join a video conference of EU leaders on Thursday as both sides try to repair ties after four difficult years with former president Donald Trump.

Many European leaders watched with shock as Trump pulled the United States out of the Paris climate change agreement and the Iran nuclear deal, imposed tariffs on EU goods and spurned multilateral bodies that Washington had backed for decades.

"Looking forward to welcome @POTUS at this week's European Council meeting," European Council President Charles Michel, who chairs summits, said on Twitter.

"I have invited the President of the US to join our meeting for him to share his views on our future cooperation. Time to rebuild our transatlantic alliance."

The last time a U.S. president addressed an EU summit was in 2009, according to an EU spokesman, although both Europe and the United States have held regular summits at NATO.



*President Joe Biden*

EU leaders will meet via video conference on Thursday and Friday to discuss vaccines, Russia, Turkey and industrial policy. Biden is expected to join at 19:45 GMT on Thursday, an EU spokesman said. A White House statement said Biden "will engage with European Union leaders about his desire

to revitalize U.S.-EU relations, work together to combat the pandemic and address climate change, and deepen the world's largest trade and investment relationship." Biden will also discuss China and Russia with the leaders of the twenty-seven EU states, who have welcomed his presidency as an op-

portunity to reinforce EU priorities on human rights and global warming. However, the tough U.S. stance on China, Germany's push to complete a gas pipeline with Russia and U.S. insistence that Europeans spend more on defence are still flashpoints in the relationship, diplomats say.



# Exit polls indicate no clear winner in Israeli election

JERUSALEM (AP) — Exit polls indicate there is no clear winner in Tuesday's Israeli election, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's fate uncertain and signalling continued political deadlock.

The polls on Israel's three main TV stations showed Netanyahu and his religious and nationalist allies, as well as diverse array of opponents, both falling short of a parliamentary majority. That could set the stage for weeks of paralysis and even an unprecedented fifth consecutive election. Exit polls are often imprecise and the official results may not be known for days.

The exit polls conducted by Channels 11, 12 and 13 were nearly identical, showing Netanyahu and his allies with 53-54 seats in the 120-seat Knesset, Israel's parliament. His opponents were projected to win 59, and Naftali Bennett's Yamina party was projected to win 7-8.

If the final results are in line with the exit polls, both sides will have to court Bennett, a former Netanyahu ally with strained relations with the prime minister, to

form a majority of at least 61 seats.

Bennett shares Netanyahu's hardline nationalist ideology but has signalled he would be open to cooperating with his rivals if given the chance to be prime minister.

The election is widely seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's divisive rule, and once again, opinion polls had forecast an extremely tight race.

The three-month campaign was largely devoid of substantive issues and focused heavily on Netanyahu's personality and whether he should remain in office. In contrast to past elections where he faced off against a clear rival, this time a diverse array of parties is trying to topple him, having little in common beyond their shared animosity toward him.

"Vote, vote, vote, vote, vote," Netanyahu said after casting his ballot in Jerusalem, his wife, Sara, at his side.

Netanyahu, 71, who even after twelve years in office remains a tireless campaigner, continued throughout the day. At one point, he marched along a Mediterranean beach imploring people



*Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara cast their ballots at a polling station in Jerusalem*

over a megaphone to go vote.

"This is the moment of truth for the state of Israel," said one of his challengers, opposition leader Yair Lapid, as he voted in Tel Aviv.

Netanyahu has emphasized Israel's highly successful coronavirus vaccination campaign. He moved aggressively to secure enough vaccines for Israel's 9.3 million people, and in three months the country has vaccinated some 80% of its adult population. That has enabled the government to open restaurants, stores

and the airport just in time for Election Day.

He also has tried to portray himself as a global statesman, pointing to the four diplomatic accords he reached with Arab countries last year. Those agreements were brokered by his close ally, then-President Donald Trump.

Netanyahu's opponents, including a trio of former aides who share his nationalistic ideology but object to what they say is his autocratic leadership style, see things far differently.

# Officials: Gun in supermarket shooting bought six days earlier



BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — Police on Tuesday identified a twenty-one-year-old man as the suspect who opened fire inside a crowded Colorado supermarket, and court documents showed that he purchased an assault weapon less than a week before the attack that killed ten people, including a police officer. Supermarket employees told investigators that Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa shot an elderly man multiple times Monday outside the Boulder grocery store before going inside, according to the documents. Another person was found shot in a vehicle next to a car registered to suspect's brother.

Authorities said Alissa was from the Denver suburb of Arvada and that he engaged in a shootout with police inside the store. The suspect was being treated at a hospital and was expected to be booked into the county jail later in the day on murder charges.

Investigators have not established a motive, but they believe he was the only shooter, Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty said.

In Washington, President Joe Biden called on Congress to tighten the nation's gun laws.

"Ten lives have been lost, and more families have been shattered by gun violence in the state of Colorado,"

Biden said at the White House.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer vowed to bring forward two House-passed bills to require expanded background checks for gun buyers. Biden supports the measures, but they face a tougher route to passage in a closely divided Senate with a slim Democratic majority.

The suspect purchased the assault weapon just six days before the shooting, on 16th March, according to the arrest affidavit released Tuesday. It was not immediately known where the gun was purchased.

The shooting came ten days after a judge blocked a ban on assault

rifles passed by the city of Boulder in 2018. That ordinance and another banning large-capacity magazines came after the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, that left seventeen people dead.

A lawsuit challenging the bans was filed quickly, backed by the National Rifle Association. The judge struck down the ordinance under a Colorado law that blocks cities from making their own rules about guns.

A law enforcement official briefed on the shooting said the suspect's family told investigators they believed Alissa was suffering some type of mental illness, including delusions. Relatives described times when Alissa told them people were following or chasing him, which they said may have contributed to the violence, the official said. The official was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to AP on condition of anonymity.



# Russia and China hit back at Western sanctions

BBC World News - Russia and China have jointly condemned Western sanctions, a day after the EU, UK, US and Canada black-listed some senior Chinese officials for rights abuses against ethnic Uighurs.

The joint attack came during a visit by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to Guilin in southern China. He said EU "unilateral decisions" had "destroyed" ties with Russia. His Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, said the era of interfering in China's internal affairs had "gone forever."

It is the first time the EU has imposed new sanctions on China over human rights abuses since the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown. However, the Western allies have imposed sanctions on Russian officials close to President Vladimir Putin over matters including:

- Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula



- The conflict in eastern Ukraine
- Alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US presidential election
- The nerve agent attacks on ex-spy Sergei Skripal and anti-Putin campaigner Alexei Navalny.

Visiting Nato in Brussels on Tuesday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken also stressed his government's strong opposition to the Russian Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, which will run under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany.

Germany risks US sanctions over the nearly-completed pipeline, as the US government sees it as a Russian tool to further divide Europe. The pipeline bypasses Ukraine and Poland - who also strongly oppose it.

Lavrov said he and Mr. Wang agreed that sanctions were "unacceptable" as a way to conduct international relations.

Rights groups believe China has detained more than a million Uighurs over the past few years in what the state defines as "re-education camps."

China denies the Western charges, saying the camps are "re-education" facilities used to combat terrorism. China responded with its own sanctions on European officials on Monday.

Mr. Wang said powerful countries "should not wantonly meddle in others' internal affairs according to their own standards, or use the banner of democracy and human rights to build their power."

# King George V Grounds lighting system being upgraded



Minister of Sports Daryl Matthew

On Monday representative for the St. John's Rural West constituency, Londel Benjamin, Minister of Sports Daryl Matthew, chairman of the board of the Antigua and Public Utilities, Luther Lee, and a representative of the Empire Football Club met

the King George the V Grounds to witness the digging of the holes to plant new posts to install a brand-new modern lighting system.

The Minister of Sports, who has been on a roll recently with the completion of the track at YASCO, said

he was pleased to see one of the most historic sporting facilities on the island being upgraded to afford the young men and women in the community more contact time to improve their skills.

Matthew said that a part of the Ministry of Sports' mission is to have all sporting facilities around the island properly illuminated.

Benjamin, whose vision and mission are centered on the improvement of education and sports within the community, said the project is a welcomed one and he is excited that his constituents will be able to spend more time on

the field honing their skills.

Benjamin stated that after the completion of King George V Grounds the focus will move to Perth, the home of the Hoppers Football Club. The project will be supervised and managed by Lee, one of the leading mentors of athletes over the past thirty-five years. Lee has assisted over forty athletes to attain scholarships to universities in the United States, including the present president of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association, Everton 'Badow' Gonsalves.

The project is expected to be completed in six to eight weeks.

## COVID-19 hit Reggae Boyz in Austria

Two Jamaican national football players have returned positive COVID-19 results, following PCR tests conducted on the entire delegation at the team's hotel in Austria.

One player is based in England and the other travelled from Jamaica. Both players have been isolated. Another set of PCR tests was done Tuesday per UEFA match day

protocols requirement.

These results will be available today. The protocols are being strictly followed in the hotel and every individual is constantly reminded of his responsibility by team doctor Ruchelle Brown Calvert and manager Roy Simpson.

The Reggae Boyz are scheduled to play the United States on 25th March.





# BELIZE NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM BUS ATTACKED BY GANG



The Belize National Football team was briefly held at gunpoint on Monday after they arrived in Haiti for their World Cup qualifiers.

The team, which had a four-man police escort, was on a bus travelling from the airport to their hotel when they

were stopped by armed men on motorbikes. A video of the incident, taken from inside the team bus, has been making the rounds on social media.

The team's police escort were able to negotiate with the armed men and the bus was eventu-

ally allowed to continue on. Haiti has been in a state of emergency since 18th March and is currently experiencing intense political and economic turmoil ahead of several elections in the coming months, including a constitutional referendum.

The Football Federation of Belize (FFB) released a statement on Monday condemning the incident, and communicated that the team was shaken, but unharmed. Belize tackle Haiti today in a World Cup qualification match.



## ALZARRI JOSEPH TO JOIN WORCESTERSHIRE

Antiguan Alzarri Joseph has signed to play for Worcestershire in the English County Championships as their overseas player.

According to ESPNcricinfo, the West Indies fast bowler will leave for the United Kingdom on 4th April where he will be available for the first seven fixtures in the County Championships.

Joseph, who has grown in stature as an effective bowling all-rounder over the past year, said he is excited to be joining

Worcestershire for the early part of the summer.

"I had no hesitation in joining the team once I learned they had an interest in my service," Joseph noted. The twenty-four-year-old from All-Saints said he is looking forward to working with bowling coach Alan Richardson.

Worcestershire Cricket Steering Group chairman Paul Pridgen said he is happy to have the young fast bowler who is a quality performer.

## DEWS



## TOUCH LINE

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



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

