



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

# POINTEXPRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

WEDNESDAY 31TH MARCH 2021

| ISSUE 210

| WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

## AG SAYS THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN

SEE PAGE 5



**INVESTOR  
PRESENTATION**  
MARCH 30, 2021

*This is the front cover of the WIOC investor prospectus used for presentations to two separate groups of investors on Tuesday*

**PM, WIOC TOP BRASS MEET POTENTIAL INVESTORS**

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## EDITORIAL

# BARBUDA AND THE FUTURE

The outcome of the local government elections held in Barbuda on Monday ought not to have been a surprise to those who have been following events on the sister island over the past several years.

The Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) swept all five seats contested in convincing manner. With the ongoing loggerhead between the central government and the BPM controlled Barbuda Council over the issue of lands and a strategic plan for the development of the island, it was predictable that the BPM would do well in the elections.

It is common knowledge that the BPM has fostered a belief among many Barbudans that the government (Antiguans) are out to take their lands. So the issue surrounding lands has dominated council elections almost from the time they were introduced right after Independence back

in 1981. It has become a rallying call for the BPM for the past four decades. The party has become so consumed with the land issue that it has offered very little in terms of a development strategy for the island.

It has protested practically every project proposed for the island, yet it has not offered a credible alternative viewpoint. Land is a factor of development, but land is only valuable when it is put to productive use and becomes a key factor in the production of wealth.

The time has come for serious discussions on the future of Barbuda and its place in the overall development imperatives for the country, Antigua and Barbuda. The new council, after it is fully installed, has to do some serious soul-searching: what are its plans for the future of Barbuda and how does it intend to

make those plans reality?

It cannot be that the posture of confrontation with the central government becomes its *raison d'être*. It has to be more than that. If nothing else, this ongoing pandemic has taught us that the world of the future is likely to be one full of challenges, speed bumps and roadblocks that will require skill and agility to successfully navigate.

The future is not going to be a time for petty turf war, but one which requires maturity and discipline to bring true development to Barbuda. The island is blessed with many natural gifts that can serve as the basis for development plans in the future.

Development can take place in Barbuda in tandem with concerns for environmental protection. No one wants to see the island turned into an environmental wasteland, but equally over-playing the envi-

ronmental card does not help anyone either. We have seen how larger countries have ignored the concerns of small states regarding the vaccine to deal with the coronavirus. It is also clear that many of the traditional donors are turning inwards to take care of the wants and needs of their own people. The lesson that is being communicated loud and clear is that small states such as Antigua and Barbuda must now "paddle their own canoes."

In the post-COVID world, there is no room for this internecine warfare. It is time to close ranks, to come together. The newly elected members include new faces as well as some who have been around for some time. Perhaps the new faces can help the council change course and adopt a more conciliatory tone towards development and the central government. This is our hope.

# PM, WIOC TOP BRASS MEET POTENTIAL INVESTORS



Gregory Georges



Carlton Bramble



Carl Farley

A series of consultations is taking place to provide additional information to would-be investors in the West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) now that the government has placed a portion of its shares up for sale to the public.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Gaston Browne along with the executive management team of WIOC, led by its Chief Executive Officer, Gregory Georges, and included Chief Financial Officer Carlton Bramble and Chief Operations Officer Carl Farley, held two virtual meetings with public sector workers and other investors to

explain the processes involved in purchasing shares in WIOC.

The accompanying prospectus provided detailed information on the offering with the prime minister and WIOC officials on hand to explain the process and to answer questions.

The first meeting took place Tuesday morning and it brought together several employees in the public sector. The second meeting, held in the afternoon, was attended by local investors and institutions. During the meetings it was explained that the offer is as follows:

- The Gov-

ernment of Antigua and Barbuda (the “Offeror”) proposes to sell three hundred and one thousand, nine hundred and twenty of its shares in the West Indies Oil Company Limited (the “Offering”).

- This amounts to ten per cent of its fifty-one per cent shareholdings and five per cent of the total issued shares of the WIOC.

The objective of the offer is to fulfil the government of Antigua and Barbuda’s commitment to divest a proportion of its ownership in WIOC to the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda. WIOC is fifty-one per cent major-

ity owned by the government of Antigua and Barbuda, twenty-five per cent by PDV Caribe S.A. (“PDV”) a special purpose vehicle wholly owned by Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (“PDVSA”) the Venezuelan state-owned oil and Natural Gas Company and twenty-four per cent by Fancy Bridge Limited (“Fancy Bridge”) an investment holding company incorporated in the British Virgin Islands.

CEO Georges described both meetings as ‘very informative’ as they indicate strong interest in the company’s decision to make some of its shares available

Cont’d on pg 4

to the public.

"We were able to disseminate much information as the attendees asked a lot of questions and we did our best to provide the answers as clearly as possible. We also used the opportunity to share with them our strategic vision for WIOC as well as how we arrived at the valuation of the company. It is my belief that at the end of both sessions those who were present left much better informed than they did at the beginning," Georges stated. He said PM Browne addressed both meetings, sharing his government's rationale for making the shares

available, explaining that this move forms part of the philosophy of his government to provide opportunities for the empowerment of the people.

According to the CEO, he has received numerous phone calls after the meetings from attendees who expressed satisfaction with the manner in which the company is proceeding with the share offering. He emphasised that fifty per cent of the shares will be reserved for public sector employees, including staff at the various statutory bodies.

The WIOC official feels confident that the share

offering will be fully subscribed as he has received strong interest from a wide cross section of the society.

Further details provided by the prospectus are as follows:

Subscription Allocation

- A minimum subscription of fifty shares per applicant

- A maximum subscription of fifteen thousand and ninety-six shares per applicant

Investor Criteria and Allocation Methodology  
The shares will be allotted to eligible subscribers in the following;

- Antigua and Barbuda citizens

(including nonresidents) and companies of which fifty per cent is allotted to Antigua and Barbuda Public Servants.

- Other CARICOM citizens, companies and institutions for any shares not taken by applicants in the first tier.

In its 2019-2022 strategic business plan, WIOC management shifts its focus to its alternative revenue sources. Not only diversify its revenue stream but also to increase its revenue stream resilience by tapping into unique competitive advantages.

## TENDER NOTICE

### — INVITATION TO BID —

#### CONSTRUCTION OF CONCRETE ROADS - PICCADILLY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PHASE 1

##### CENTRAL HOUSING AND PLANNING AUTHORITY (CHAPA)

The Tenders Board of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA), invites interested vendors to submit a bid/proposal, for works and/or services related to the **Construction of Concrete Roads (Phase 1) - Piccadilly Development Project**.

The **scope of works** and supporting documents related to this tender will be made available via a link at the Tenders Board website at [www.tendersboard.gov.ag](http://www.tendersboard.gov.ag) under **News/Notices**.

The link will provide access to an e-Procurement Platform hosted by EASIBUY where you will be required to register before being able to download the tender documents.

Please be advised that the eligibility of your bid/proposal, is subject to the completion of a Vendor Registration Form, which is also available from the e-Procurement platform.

**Bid/Proposal** for this tender can be submitted by:

uploading to the e-Procurement Platform or submitting two (2) hard copies in sealed envelopes addressed to: Chairman, Tenders Board, Ministry of Finance and **Corporate Governance, Parliament Drive and with the heading "Construction of Concrete Roads (Phase 1) - Piccadilly Development Project"** - Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA).

Bid submission shall be no later than **12:00 noon on Wednesday 19 May 2021**.

Queries or Clarification Requests regarding the specified requirements of this tender, must be emailed to: **Chairman, Tenders Board ([tenders.board@ab.gov.ag](mailto:tenders.board@ab.gov.ag))**, with the subject heading - CHAPA Piccadilly Development Project, Query. Please note that the final day for considering queries related to this tender, is **2:00 PM on Thursday April 15 2021**.



# AG: THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN!

Attorney General Steadroy Benjamin is issuing a stern warning to those in the country who may wish to openly flout the health protocols put in place by the government to curb the spread of coronavirus disease. The AG was commenting on a video that depicted scores of people socialising at the popular Ffryes Beach on Sunday afternoon which went viral as it was viewed by thousands of people.

“I was appalled at the situation that happened at Ffryes Beach on Sunday afternoon. I cannot believe that the people of Antigua and Barbuda who are aware of the government’s protocols to stop the virus would persist with great disregard for themselves and others’ safety. I am amazed that there are individuals in the society who would put their lives in danger by socialising in a manner as they did on

Sunday without wearing masks etc,” he declared. Benjamin stated that this incident would not happen again as he has already held discussions with the police senior command and officers of the outlying districts to ensure that there is no recurrence.

Noting that those who attended the event at Ffryes Beach displayed “a great sense of irresponsibility,” the attorney general is putting those who are inclined to socialise in this manner that such acts would not be tolerated in the future.

He noted that while the police went to the beach after reports were made, unfortunately no charges were filed. “This will not happen again as the police will be better equipped to round-up everyone in attendance and they will be charged. We also hoped that when those charged appear before a magistrate

they will receive the maximum penalties under the law if found guilty,” he added.

Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph called the staging of the social event on Sunday “a disrespect for the work of the health-

care workers who risk their lives to care for COVID-19 patients.”

He said he could not understand how some people could put their lives at risk with the behaviour that was on display on Sunday.

## JOB VACANCY

OUR CLIENT IS SEEKING SUITABLE APPLICANTS FOR THE ROLE OF:

### IT OFFICER

Position Overview: The IT Officer will be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the computer systems and networks of the Organization. Install, configure computer systems, diagnose hardware and software faults and solve technical and application problems.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- High degree of honesty and integrity
- Confidential
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Demonstrate the ability to handle multiple priorities
- Strong problem solving skills and demonstrated ability to take initiative and work independently
- Ability to think logically
- Strong Analytical & Research Skills
- Ability to prioritize numerous tasks and manage shifting priorities while maintaining strong organizational skills
- Maintain a high level of accuracy and attention to detail
- Excellent customer service skills

**EDUCATION/TRAINING**

- Bachelor Degree Information Technology/Finance/Economics
- Proficient in Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Outlook, Power Point
- SQL & programming languages
- Webpage/site development
- C+ & Networks+ or similar certifications

All interested persons should send applications to:  
**nibbsandassociates268@gmail.com**  
 Deadline: April 15th, 2021

# BPM SWEEPS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



The Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) made a clean sweep of the five seats contested in Monday's local government elections on the sister island.

It was a resounding victory for the BPM with its five candidates all topping the four hundred-vote mark. None of the candidates for the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) was able to muster three hundred votes.

The top vote-getter overall was Wayde Burton of the BPM who tallied four hundred and

ninety-nine votes, followed by Melanie Beazer with four hundred and fifty-eight votes. For the ABLP Alphonso Beazer tallied two hundred and ninety-nine votes.

The Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) said the poll went off peacefully with no incidents reported. ABEC spokesperson, Elisa Graham, said all voters adhered to the strict health protocols by wearing masks as well as social distancing. While law enforcement was pres-

ent, they was never any reason to call them into action.

Returning Officer, Vernest Mack, was the officer in charge of supervising the elections.

Commenting on the elections outcome, ABLP General Secretary Mary Claire Hurst said the party itself took the view that it would not focus on the council election, instead it would focus on development for the island.

"We know that there was much displeasure with the government's stance with respect

to the land issue and matters related to the PLH development. However, the Barbuda branch was of the view that they wanted to contest the poll and we allowed them to proceed. Our focus from the party's point of view is to bring economic development to the island and when the employment situation there improves significantly, then, we may focus on elections; that time is not now," she remarked.

Meanwhile, secretary of the council, Paul Nedd was quite elated with the outcome of the poll but he was not very optimistic about improvements in the relationship between the central government in St John's and the council. "Barbudans have been waiting for something to happen. There has never been a good relationship between the council and the central government and I feel that this outcome will only serve to exacerbate the already bad relationship," he stated.

# HMB HOLDINGS WANTS TO CONFISCATE WIOC SHARES

## GOVERNMENT PLANS TO PUT UP FOR SALE

The long-standing dispute between the government and HMB Holdings, in particular its principal shareholder, Natalia Querard, is taking a curious turn based on a motion she filed in the High Court. Sources with information on the matter said Querard wants the court to order the Minister of Finance, in this case, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, to turn over all the shares in the West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) that the government intends to place on the market for sale.

The government is hoping to raise some eighteen million dollars from the proceeds of the sale and, according to the sources, that is the amount that is still outstanding to be paid to HMB Holdings by the government. Turning over the shares to HMB would therefore settle the outstanding debt owed to the company. Alternatively, she is asking that the mon-

ies raised from the sale should then be turned over to HMB Holdings. According to the sources, the government has paid off the principal amount owed to HMB Holdings, but due to the economic crisis ushered in by the coronavirus pandemic, HMB Holdings, like many other creditors, may not have been paid for several months.

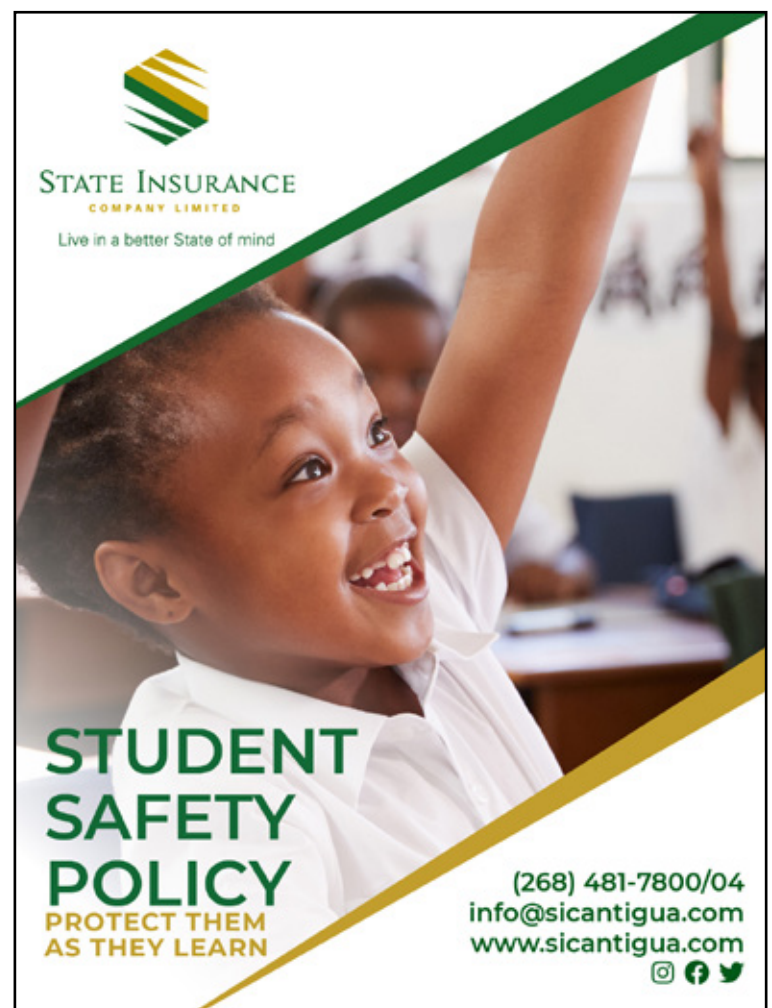
In any event, the government takes the view that HMB Holdings/Querard is like any other creditor owed by the government and that it would be inappropriate for the court to elevate one creditor above the others.

Additionally, the government feels that under the separation of powers arrangement each branch of government – the executive, the legislature and the judiciary – is independent of each other. Therefore, one arm of the government cannot tread on the authority of the other.

“The court cannot dictate to the executive which creditor should be paid first; this ought not to be determined by the court. While the court can review the constitutionality of laws and Acts of Parliament, the court would be exceeding its authority if it attempts to instruct the minister of finance to make payments over mon-

ies which the finance minister has exclusive authority,” our source opined.

The source said that based on the severe economic challenges brought on by the pandemic, the government has had to prioritise its payments to creditors to ensure the proper functioning of the society.



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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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

# ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TO ARGUE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AT BIDEN'S SUMMIT OF FORTY WORLD LEADERS

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, says he intends to make "a robust contribution on behalf of all CARICOM countries" when he participates in the Summit Meeting on Climate organised by US President, Joseph Biden.

Prime Minister Browne is one of two Caribbean leaders invited by President Biden to the Summit of just forty Heads of Government from around the world. Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness is the other Caribbean invitee. The Summit will be held on 22nd and 23rd April with President Biden as Host. In issuing the invitation, President Biden said he was inviting the leaders of the world's major economies as well as "heads of other countries that are demonstrating strong climate leadership and are especially vulnerable to climate impacts". Since becoming Prime Minister in March 2014, Prime Minister Browne has been a strong voice advocating in international fora, for climate justice for Caribbean

states. As recently as Monday 29th March, Prime Minister Browne told a Meeting of Heads of State and Government on the International Debt Architecture and Liquidity that Caribbean states "are the least contributors to the greenhouse gases that cause Climate Change, yet they are its greatest casualties".

The Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister said he welcomed the invitation to participate in the Summit, organised by the US President, to make the

case for small states everywhere. At today's meeting, co-hosted by Holness and Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Browne argued that small island states "are facing an unprecedented triple-faceted challenge: coping with extraordinary public health demands from the pandemic; managing the social and development impacts of its economic devastation; and preparing for the enlarging effects of Climate Change". Against this background, Browne, who is a former Banker,

laid out proposals "to re-design the international debt architecture and to build a bridge to recovery that works to benefit the world".

The Antigua and Barbuda leader said that, before the April Summit with President Biden and other leaders of major economies, he intends to consult with CARICOM Heads of Government and to work closely with Prime Minister Holness "to present a strong and compelling Caribbean position" for climate justice.

Happy Birthday March Babies!

Do you know when your driver's license expires?

It's always on your Birthday, but what year?

DRIVE SAFELY

Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

# ARTIST CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH THROUGH COMMISSIONED WORK

On Tuesday, March 30th, Prime Minister Gaston Browne received a commissioned art piece from Mr. Carl A Christopher, artist, creative mind, and proprietor of AGWASSA clothing and art studios. The piece which was specifically commissioned by PM Browne was presented in marking the celebration of Women's History Month.

According to the artist, the piece, entitled 'Mudda' which is what we colloquially called our Grandmothers, is based on a Ugandan concept, depicting multitasking and hard-working women. "It is representing the women you may find in our government and in the world of work who are key in keeping the fabric of society together. These women may not get a lot of the credit, may not get their names called, yet they balance work and keeping the family together. This piece helps to celebrate them." In accepting the commissioned artwork, PM Browne said, "This is a beautiful piece that depicts one of our forebears' multitasking, working the field, while at the same time caring for her young.

As we end the celebration of Women's International Month, I want to use this opportunity to recommit myself personally to the empowerment of all women here in Antigua and Barbuda, within the region, and globally. Women are the backbone of our society, and we must love, cherish, protect and empower them."

PM Browne continued by expressing his sincere thanks to the entrepreneur. "Carl, I thank you very much, this is great work, a great story and I hope you will do several more of these pieces as we document our history, not only in word but its art. I hope that other artist will follow your lead and prepare similar pieces which will help to document our history in art and certainly the contribution of our women to the development of our society."

Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture, and society and has been observed annually in March since 1987. Women's History Month takes place March 1st -Wednesday, March 31st.



## PROBATE FORM P7

Rule 15

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

(Probate)

In the Estate of EUGENE MICHAEL HUMPHREYS a. k. a. EUGENE HUMPHREYS late of Brownes Avenue, in the Parish of Saint John in Antigua and Barbuda, Deceased

### ADVERTISEMENT OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT 1<sup>st</sup> PUBLICATION

TAKE NOTICE that an application has been filed by PHILLIP ABBOTT of Woods Estate in the Parish of St. John in Antigua and Barbuda for a Grant of Probate of the Will of the above named deceased who died on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020 without revoking a Will bearing the date of 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020 wherein the Applicant is the Sole Executor and Trustee.

Any person having an objection to the application for the grant of Probate shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated this 30<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021

*Lenworth Johnson*  
Lenworth Johnson  
Attorney-at-Law

Filed by JOHNSONGARDINER, Attorneys-at-Law for the Applicant whose address for service is 51A St. Mary's Street, St. John's, Antigua



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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

# CARICOM Press Release on the AfCAR

## *Joint Statement delivered on the occasion of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*



The CARICOM and African Group of countries made history in the United Nations today, when sixty-eight member-countries of the two groupings delivered a joint statement as part of a new geopolitical grouping, which will be known as AfCAR (Africa Group-CARICOM). The occasion was the meeting of the UN General Assembly “to commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade,” which was held under the theme, “Ending Slavery’s Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice.”

The establishment of the AfCAR Group is an

indication of the growing and deepening ties between Africa and the Caribbean on social, economic, cultural and other issues of common interest. It builds on exchange visits between various African Presidents and CARICOM Heads of Government and on their decisions to strengthen the relationship between the two regions. The opening of a CARICOM office in Nairobi, Kenya is expected to serve as a hub for multiple joint activities and deeper reach into the two regions. It is expected that AfCAR, with its sixty-eight countries, has the potential to be a powerful group representing, advocating for and supporting CARICOM

and African interests on a range of matters in the United Nations and multilateral agendas.

The AfCAR statement was delivered on behalf of the sixty-eight-member grouping by Her Excellency Ambassador Carolyn Birkett of Guyana, who noted in her address that, “the horror of slavery separated twelve million Africans from the motherland and created a diaspora in the Caribbean. Separated from our families, now we are standing here reunited with one voice. Given this historic reality and linkage, it is indeed fitting that AfCAR’s first statement within the United Nations should come as we commemorate the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.”

“We should never cease to denounce all vestiges of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance, as well as modern day slavery, while pro-

moting the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” the Ambassador continued. The AfCAR statement also pointed to the fact that, “urgent action by governments is needed to address issues, which result in social exclusion, the perpetuation of racism, prejudice and discrimination” and lamented the fact that “none of the SDGs explicitly calls for the eradication of systemic racism and racial discrimination.”

The statement also emphasised the “importance of implementing participatory policies that are culturally relevant, free from racism and that promote equality and rights for all persons of African descent.” It underscored that “the issue of reparations is pivotal to restorative justice and to creating opportunity and equity for those whose limbs and lives were used without

mercy or remuneration to build societies and strong economies” and urged member-countries of the United Nations to “take concrete steps to eliminate the scourge of racism, and act decisively to safeguard the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”

The sixty-eight members of AfCAR pledged their “unstinting commitment of the Member States of the African Group and the Caribbean Community” in efforts by the United Nations to dis-mantle racism and other legacies of slavery. The sentiments expressed by AfCAR found strong resonance in the remarks made by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres who observed that, “ending slavery’s legacy of racism is a global imperative for justice.”

The Secretary-General also noted that, “the impact of the slave trade remains visible in racial injustices and inequalities today.” He posited that the transatlantic slave trade “strengthened the colonial project, enriching its multitude of beneficiaries at the expense of the lives of the en-

slaved.” Secretary-General Guterres concluded that “while the transatlantic slave trade ended over two centuries ago, the ideas that propelled it remain alive today. . . . We must counter all lies of racial supremacy. The irrefutable fact is that we are all equally part of one race – humankind.”

Discussions, followed by efforts to put in place and formalise AfCAR, started between the CARICOM and African Caucuses to the United Nations in late 2019, but were interrupted for some months when COVID-19 brought regular UN meetings to a halt. In planning its format and structure, the Caucuses of the two regional groupings decided that the Group would be called the African Group-CARICOM Caucus (AfCAR) Collaboration Initiative at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The purpose of AfCAR is broadly anchored on reinforcing the historical bonds between African and CARICOM states, based on common aspirations and the three principles of solidarity, partnership and multilateralism for the common benefit of the two regions. AfCAR seeks to ensure

a structured and coordinated approach and cooperation on issues of common interest on the agenda of the United Nations at Headquarters in New York and thus facilitate the desire of African and CARICOM Heads of State and Government and the aspirations of the peoples of the two interconnected regions. To advance the interests of the Group, the ambassadors of Botswana, His Excellency Collen Vixen Kelapile, and Grenada, Her Excellency Keisha A. McGuire were appointed as Co-Chairs and regional steering committees established. The region-

al steering committees comprise of, from the African Group, the ambassadors of Algeria, Botswana (co-Chair), Cameroon, Eritrea, Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, and from the CARICOM Caucus, the ambassadors of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada (co-Chair), Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Now that AfCAR has made its debut within the United Nations, the Group is expected to enhance cooperation and be more active on issues of common interest.

Form RLNC 6

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
THE REGISTERED LAND ACT, CAP 374

Section 34  
of the  
Act

REGISTRATION SECTION  
BENDALS

BLOCK  
51 1888A

PARCEL  
489

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO REPLACE LOST LAND CERTIFICATE

TAKE NOTICE that an application was filed in the Land Registry on the 15th day of March, 2021 by Peyton J. V. Knight, Attorney-At-Law of Peyton J. V. Knight & Associates of Upper Newgate Street, Saint John Parish, Antigua on behalf of HAZEL-ROY BARNES Personal Representative of the Estate of Mr. Hazel Barnes, the Applicant herein for the replacement of Land Certificate # RL-200702339 dated the 16<sup>th</sup> day of April 2007 issued to HAZEL BARNES, being the owner of the above-mentioned property, which has been lost or destroyed.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that anyone who objects to the issue of a new Land Certificate or who has knowledge of the original Land Certificate must within the period of one (1) month from the Second Publication of this notice in the newspaper inform the Registrar of Lands in writing.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that in the absence of any objection or information as to the existence of the original Land Certificate within the time specified the Registrar of Lands may proceed to cancel the original Land Certificate and issue a new Land Certificate in its place without further notice.

Dated the 22nd day of March, 2021

  
Registrar of Lands

# WATER FIGHT: ISRAEL TURNS OFF JORDAN'S WATER SUPPLY AMID DROUGHT

## *AND 'PERSONAL FRICTIONS,' MEDIA REPORTS*



RT - Already in trouble with Jordan, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu escalated tensions with his country's closest Arab ally on Friday by unilaterally rejecting its request to increase water supply to the drought-hit kingdom.

Netanyahu's decision – reportedly influenced by a souring of his personal relationship with Jordanian King Abdullah II –

went against the security services recommendation to avoid risking historic water-sharing agreements critical to peace in the region.

According to the Haaretz newspaper, Netanyahu did not “respond positively even though professionals in water matters and defence establishment officials recommended acceding to the request.”

In accordance with the 1994 peace agreement between the two neighbours, Israel routinely supplies the kingdom with water it pumps out of the Jordan river. There has also been a tacit understanding between the countries that Amman could ask for – and would be granted – additional amounts during dry seasons.

The latest request, submitted

earlier this month, was discussed last week by a bilateral joint committee. However, as Haaretz reported, “Netanyahu and the National Security Council delayed their answer in a manner that attested to his intention of denying the request.”

The episode revealed the depth of the crisis between the two countries – at least part of which has been attributed to “personal friction” between the two heads of state.

“The major problem is there is no dialogue between the number ones, that is the prime minister and the king of Jordan,” Oded Eran, a former Israeli ambassador to Jordan, told Al-Jazeera.

Noting that the “lack of trust” had been exacerbated by Israel’s moves

last year to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, Eran said the two leaders might not have met or spoken for at least three years.

In recent weeks, the two countries have engaged in public tit-for-tat snubs. According to the Middle East Monitor, tensions mounted after Netanyahu’s pre-election visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) earlier in March – what would have been his first since signing normalisation agreements last year – had to be called off.

Although the official line put the cancellation down to “difficulties in coordinating his flight in Jordan’s airspace,” Israeli broadcaster Kan reported that Jordanian authorities had refused to clear any routes through its

airspace.

According to Israeli daily Maariv, an incensed Netanyahu responded by directing aviation authorities to close Israel’s airspace to flights from Jordan – in flagrant violation of the peace agreement. The order was later rescinded. That episode came a day after a dispute over security arrangements over a proposed visit by Jordan’s Prince Hussein to the Temple Mount compound in Jerusalem. According to Haaretz, the Jordanians demanded that the prince be accompanied by an entourage of his armed bodyguards.

“A compromise was reached with the Shin Bet [Israel’s internal security force] regarding the number of guards and the weapons they would carry, but then

another dispute broke out over the prince’s wish to visit some churches in the city. The Shin Bet objected and the Jordanians cancelled the visit,” the paper reported.

Netanyahu was recently quoted as saying that “the Jordanians need us much more than we need them.” As well, journalists with ties to the prime minister have reportedly presented Jordan as “a weak state whose importance is diminishing against the backdrop of Israel’s normalisation agreements.”

According to Haaretz, however, Israel’s defence establishment sources have “strongly disputed this assessment” and continue to view Jordan as a crucial national security ally.

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# DOMINICA MEETS WITH UNITED NATIONS SUB-REGIONAL TEAM FOR BARBADOS AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN



The government of Dominica engaged in a high level dialogue with the United Nations Sub-Regional Team for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, to provide a road map for a more upscaled partnership and better tailored support to meet the priority needs of the government and people of Dominica.

The Dominica delegation was headed by the Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, and included members of cabinet and senior public officers, while the UN Team led by UN Resident Coordinator, Didier Trebucq, included the heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The virtual talks sought

to affirm, at the highest level, the UN's commitment to strengthening cooperation with Dominica. This includes identifying key priorities or gaps to be addressed, based on national strategies and development challenges, opportunities for advancing progress on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and establishment of a joint national steering committee to provide oversight for effective programme implementation, monitoring and reporting.

Describing the meeting as a right step in strengthening Dominica's relationship with the UN, Prime Minister Skerrit welcomed the efforts

by the UN Development System to streamline its support and improve administrative coordination towards Dominica's national agenda. "Over the years, the UN has been a trusted and reliable partner to the government of Dominica. In the last few years, particularly post Hurricane Maria, Dominica's engagement with the UN has intensified with support from more agencies within the UN system, for social protection programmes, disaster risk reduction and recovery, climate resilience strategy, and economic development," he noted.

UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Didier Trebucq, underscored the UN's continued commitment

to responding to Dominica's unique needs, operationalised through a new Dominica-UN Implementation Plan to provide the country with a more integrated support from the UN system, and enhanced by the presence of an in-country UN Coordination Officer. "As part of our ongoing UN Reform efforts, we have been increasing our diverse support for SIDS and particularly to address their vulnerabilities as a result of COVID-19. It is about bringing a distinctive upscaled offer that better tailors our policy and technical support to each country in alignment with national needs and regional priorities," he underlined.

# FIRST BATCH OF COVAX VACCINE ARRIVES IN GUYANA

*31,000 Guyanese already vaccinated*



**Guyana Chronicle** - The first batch of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine for COVID-19 through the COVAX facility, comprising a quantity of twenty-four thousand doses, were received on Monday morning at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA). The COVAX facility is a global mechanism that was created to ensure the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. COVAX is made up of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI); the Vaccine Alliance Gavi; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);

the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO); the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other stakeholders. During the initial distribution phase from COVAX, Guyana is expected to receive a total of one hundred thousand, eight hundred doses of vaccine. Pan American Health Organisation/World Health Organisation (PAHO/WHO) Country Representative to Guyana, Dr. Luis Codina, at the handing over ceremony held at the CJIA, noted that this first delivery will be complemented with the remaining doses expected be-

tween April and May. According to allocation figures on Gavi's website, fifteen Caribbean countries will receive just over 2.1 million doses of COVAX vaccines by May. Guyana is part of the smaller grouping of Advance Market Commitment (AMC) countries which will receive their first tranche of vaccines for free. Even though the first batch is a small portion of the overall supply of vaccines to be made available to the country through the COVAX facility, it is expected to go a long way to continue the vaccination drive that is currently ongoing.

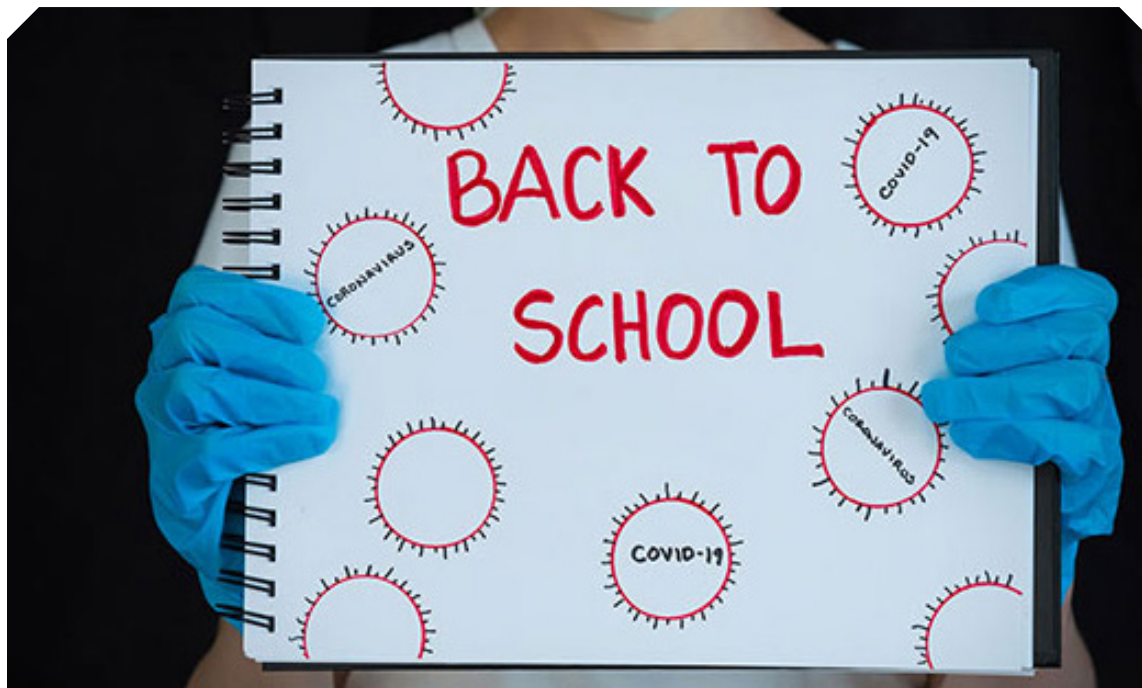
Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, advisor to the Ministry of Health, who represented the Government of Guyana at the handing over of the vaccines, disclosed that thirty-one thousand individuals residing in Guyana have so far received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Dr. Ramsammy, a former Health Minister, noted that with the arrival of the first batch of vaccines through the COVAX facility and the expected arrival of the two hundred thousand doses of the Russian Sputnik V vac-

cine in a matter of days, it is the government's intention to inoculate ten thousand persons per day, starting this week. Further, this week, the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines will be available to those persons who received their first 'jab' during the initial stages of vaccination. "So, Guyana is on the road, we are demonstrating that we are Guyana strong and we are on the road to ensuring that all persons resident within our borders are vaccinated in 2021," Dr. Ramsammy said.

Dr. Ramsammy commended the COVAX initiative and expressed gratitude on behalf of the government of Guyana to the stakeholders of the initiative for the timely donation.

"The intent [of COVAX] was to ensure that we put a dent in the inequity for vaccine supply. We may not have prevented the inequity but they are aggressive steps being made to ensure that no matter which country, we will be vaccinated against COVID-19," Dr. Ramsammy said.

# FRIDAY CALLS FOR DETAILS ABOUT SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS



**iWitness News** – St. Vincent and the Grenadines Leader of the Opposition Godwin Friday says that Education Minister Curtis King must say how students are to return to the classroom safely on 12th April.

Students are scheduled to return to the physical classroom on 12th April for the first time this year, following an uptick in COVID-19 cases late December.

The number of active cases has since fallen dramatically, standing at one hundred and forty-one on Saturday, down from a high of over one thousand a few weeks ago.

Speaking at a New Democratic Party press

conference, Friday noted the discussions about the reopening of schools.

He said that it is important that students return to the classroom, but this should only be done if it is safe to do so. “The current upsurge in COVID-19 cases here and the death of ten people have understandably caused great pause among our people, [causes] fears; and people have retreated,” he said.

He said that most people have responded by taking and continuing to take the necessary measures to protect themselves and others, especially the wearing of face masks.

“This is what I under-

stand the teachers — who are the ones who deliver the programme, and they know what their students are missing out on — to be saying.

“We must also reflect on how they are going to make up for the lost time.”

He noted that Southern Grenadines MP Terrance Ollivierre, the opposition spokesperson on education matters, raised at this month’s meeting of Parliament the issue of making up for time lost as a result of the pandemic.

“With young people, where you are building the foundation at primary school, you don’t say, well, ‘Them things past, we done leave

those subjects behind, let’s move on to something else’, because the one builds upon the other, so we have to have the foundation properly laid, so we have to go back and lay that foundation now or when we can do so, the soonest we can do so,” Friday said.

He said that the education minister has to have a plan as to how lost time is going to be made up for.

“It can’t just be simply that we move forward again as quickly as possible to get to where we should be in the third term of the secondary school or the primary school.”

He said he thinks that the impact is greatest on primary school “because when you build a foundation, if it is not solid, everything else it’s built upon, it becomes jeopardised. So we have to look at this very seriously.”

He said that the online classes in which students were engaged was a heroic effort by many teachers, especially those who teach younger children.

# THE UWI RISING



**Prof. Sir Hilary Beckles**

## **Barbados Advocate** -

The University of the West Indies (The UWI) can today boast of being one of the world's most globalised universities with academic and physical centres across five continents.

The institution has been transformed and its reputation regionally and globally has never been higher.

"The UWI of ten years ago is no longer," Vice Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles declared during "The State of Our University Address" yesterday.

The UWI continues its upward trajectory on the Times Higher Education list, ranking in the top four per cent of the world's finest universities in a field of over twenty-six thousand universi-

ties.

"The Times Higher Education informed us that what we have achieved is quite spectacular. That many universities had taken thirty years to achieve what we have achieved in a mere three years," Professor Beckles said. However, he admitted that one area where the university is weak and needs to be fixed is in its global presence.

"The ranking matrix when simulated showed that UWI needed to go global if it wished to join the elite band of respected universities. We could stay local and remain average or we could go global and rise up to the elite standard of the best universities in the world – we chose to go global. "The UWI chose to go global and in so doing

reinvested and transformed The University of the West Indies. We are now a fully-fledged, elite, first-class, global university rooted in the Caribbean," he told regional media.

Professor Beckles said that The UWI was never meant to be small and small-minded, parochial, and inward-looking. "This is why we were able to withstand and provide leadership in the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This is why we were able to transition to online education, mobilise our students, mobilise our faculties and managers, implement online teaching and learning, and take a generation of students through the completion of their academic programmes," he said.

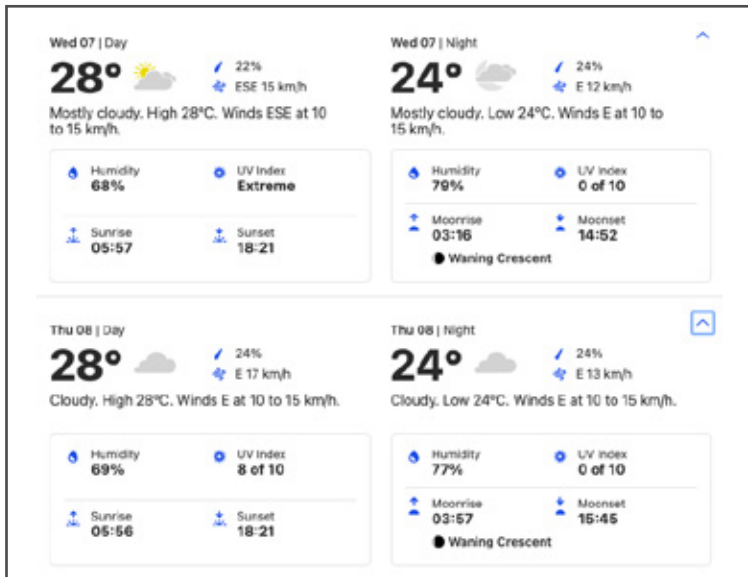
The Vice Chancellor further insisted that the Caribbean deserves and has always demanded a University having a teaching, research, and global presence in every continent of the world.

Hence, with the support of the finest universities in the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Europe, The UWI has created a network of global aca-

demic activity. The UWI is making connections with Chinese expertise through its partnership with the Global Institute of Software Engineering (GIST) in Suzhou, China; The State University of New York (SUNY) and The UWI are collaborating in a unique mission to tackle some of the world's most pressing problems through the SUNY-UWI Centre for Leadership and Sustainable Development; a collaboration with the University of Johannesburg for the Institute for Global African Affairs at Cave Hill Campus; working towards the creation of an Institute for Industry-Academic Partnership with Coventry University; working with the University of Lagos (UNILAG) to develop the UNILAG-UWI Institute of African and Diaspora Studies – an institute at the University of Lagos in southwestern Nigeria; and The UWI-University of Havana in Cuba.

Moreover, in the next two weeks, a Centre in Barbados between The UWI and the University of Glasgow will be established.

## LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST



## COMICS

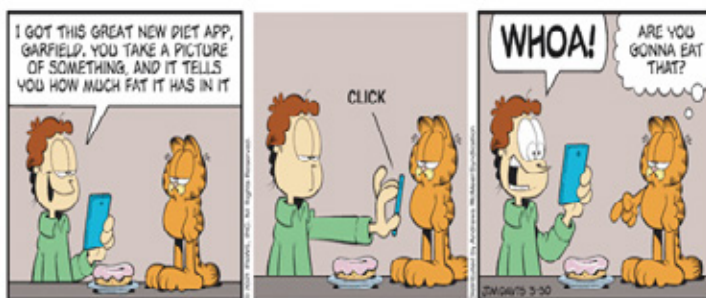
Dilbert

March 30, 2021



Garfield

March 30, 2021



Luann

March 30, 2021



## COMMUNITY NOTICES

“The Ministry of Tourism and Investment would like to advise all small and large property owners that ALL tourism accommodations MUST be inspected and certified to operate in the current Covid climate.

Once certified, the property will be published on the official “certified tourism accommodation” list that is updated daily and shared with the relevant airport and health authorities.

Once your property is found to be operating without the proper certification, you will be reported to the health authorities who will take all necessary corrective actions.

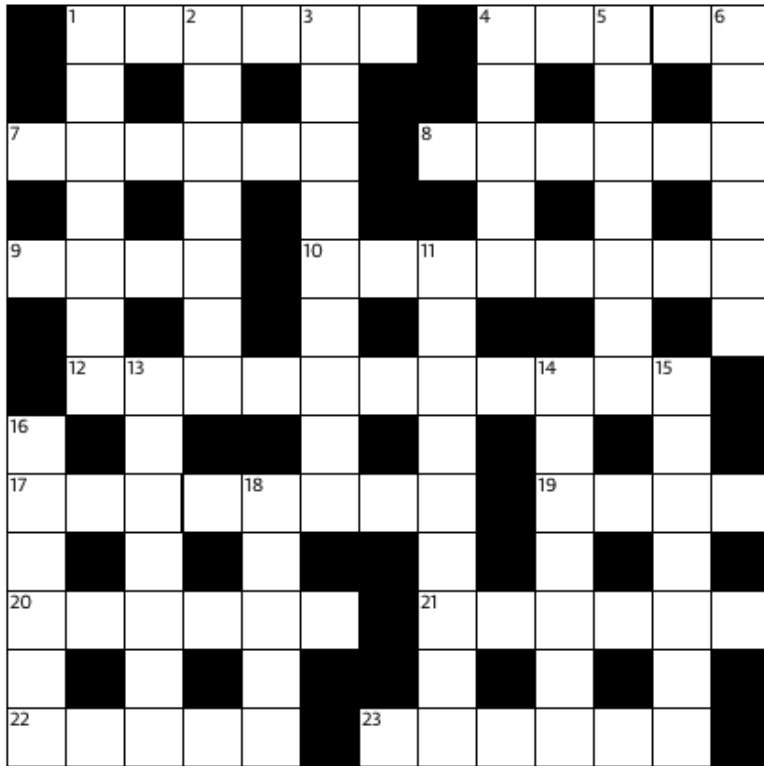
Please be guided accordingly.”

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

Submit community notices to

**news@pointville.ag**

# QUICK CROSSWORD



## Across

- 1 Immature (6)
- 4 Finish (3,2)
- 7 Debacle (6)
- 8 Extreme aversion (6)
- 9 Sandwich-maker (4)
- 10 Disregard (8)
- 12 Cosset (11)
- 17 Fairground attraction (3,5)
- 19 Bridge (4)
- 20 Inception (6)
- 21 Antagonism (6)
- 22 Loose (5)
- 23 Under the influence (of drink or drugs) (6)

## Down

- 1 Professional outfit (7)
- 2 Calming (7)
- 3 First version of a new product (9)
- 4 Escort (5)
- 5 Force to take part (7)
- 6 Stunts (6)
- 11 Lent me oil (anag) — it's soothing (9)
- 13 Unfinished (7)
- 14 My Old Man's job (7)
- 15 Successfully demanded (7)
- 16 Take in (6)
- 18 Alarming — unshaven (5)

# YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



### ♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Dance and enjoy romance under the light of tonight's Full Moon. In the week to come, you may experience a positive and uplifting shift in your key relationships. Cement existing partnerships with acts of loyalty.

### ♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Widen your sphere of influence in the week ahead. You won't meet anyone by sitting around the house, so get out and about for the best results. You and a special someone might find time for special moments tonight.

### ♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

You like books but especially enjoy the book of love. Although there is no actual user's manual for romantic gestures or encounters, you can use your imagination to delight your loved ones this week.

### ♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

During the upcoming week, you may have the enthusiasm and desire to add creative touches to every project. Put the pedal to the metal when you have something to accomplish that requires a discerning eye.

### ♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

The traffic lights of love will likely be green in the week ahead, so feel free to cruise the streets of romantic bliss. Someone may admire your good manners and judgment and express a desire to get to know you better.

### ♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Love might be your favorite four-letter word in the upcoming week. The kindness and sensitivity that other people demonstrate might make you feel treasured. Make smart decisions about spending.

### ♎ LIBRA Sept. | 23-Oct. 22

The Full Moon in your sign can brighten the night as well as your own inner landscape. You may shine in the reflected light of a loved one's success and enjoy heightened romantic thoughts in the week ahead.

### ♏ SCORPIO Oct. | 23-Nov. 21

Plan your work and work your plan. In the week to come, you may handle both career and money matters with an air of refinement and delicacy that everyone likely will admire. Take time to chat with close friends.

### ♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your inner compass might point you in the right direction so that you can find the one you cherish the most. The week ahead is likely to offer you more opportunities for happy social interactions and pleasures.

### ♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Show your family how much you love them. Your home could be the center of dynamic activity in the week ahead. There could be helpful changes within the family unit. You can expect to hear some good news.

### ♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Don't let one lucky break or a few successes go to your head and make you cocky. No matter how good you are, there is always something new to learn. Keep your feet on the ground and your ego in check in the coming week.

### ♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Express your love of beautiful things and invest in them as the week unfolds. Your creative side may be activated by inspiring people, and you can put your own imaginative ideas to use on anything you work on.

# ‘Lighting a fuse’: Amazon vote may spark more union pushes

AP Alabama - What happens inside a warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama, could have major implications not just for the country's second-largest employer but the labour movement at large.

Organisers are pushing for some six thousand Amazon workers there to join the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) on the promise it will lead to better working conditions, better pay and more respect. Amazon is pushing back, arguing that it already offers more than twice the minimum wage in Alabama and workers get such benefits as healthcare, vision and dental insurance without paying union dues.

The two sides are fully aware that it's not just the Bessemer warehouse on the line. Organisers hope what happens there will inspire thousands of workers nationwide — and not just at Amazon — to consider unionising and revive a labour movement that has been waning for decades.

“This is lighting a fuse,



which I believe is going to spark an explosion of union organising across the country, regardless of the results,” says RWDSU president Stuart Appelbaum.

The union push could spread to other parts of Amazon and threaten the company's profits, which soared eighty-four per cent last year to twenty-one billion dollars. At a time when many companies were cutting jobs, Amazon was one of the few still hiring, bringing on board five hundred thousand people last year alone to keep up with a surge of online orders.

Bessemer workers finished casting their votes on Monday. The counting begins on Tuesday, which could take days or longer depending on how many votes are received and

how much time it takes for each side to review. The process is being overseen by the National Labour Relations Board and a majority of the votes will decide the final outcome.

What that outcome will be is anyone's guess. Appelbaum thinks workers who voted early likely rejected the union because Amazon's messaging got to them first. He says momentum changed in March as organisers talked to more workers and heard from basketball players and high-profile elected officials, including President Joe Biden.

For Amazon, which employs more than nine hundred and fifty thousand full- and part-time workers in the U.S. and nearly 1.3 million worldwide, a union could lead to higher

wages that would eat into its profits. Higher wages would also mean higher costs to get packages to shoppers' doorsteps, which may prompt Amazon to raise prices, says Erik Gordon, a professor at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business.

In a statement, Amazon says it encouraged all its employees to vote and that “their voices will be heard in the days ahead.”

Any push to unionise is considered a long shot, since labour laws tend to favour employers. Alabama itself is a “right-to-work” state, which allows workers in unionised shops to opt out of paying union dues even as they retain the benefits and job protection negotiated by the union.

# Exclusive: U.S. investigations into cartels paralysed by standoff with Mexico



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. efforts to battle powerful drug cartels from inside Mexico have ground to a halt since January as strained relations between the two countries have frozen attempts to corral drug kingpins, according to current and former senior officials in both nations.

Until recently, U.S. and Mexican authorities routinely, if cautiously, shared intelligence on major cases. But in December, Mexico enacted a law requiring U.S. authorities to report their law-enforcement contacts in the country to the Mexican government, which American investigators widely view as corrupt. The new policy has led investigators on both sides of the border to pause their

cooperation, fearful that the new disclosure rules could compromise cases - or worse, get informants or Mexican officials helping the Americans killed.

On-the-ground operations, including raids on Mexican drug labs, have largely ceased and U.S. authorities are now struggling to track movements of U.S.-bound cocaine from Venezuela and Colombia through Central America and into Mexico, according to two sources familiar with the matter. Some U.S. drug agents working in Mexico reported that they had been tailed by local police, raising alarms about their safety. And dozens of U.S. law enforcement agents cannot get visas to work in Mexico.

"Most of our most

important cases are at a standstill," a senior U.S. law enforcement official told Reuters. "If we have to report our sources to their foreign ministry, it jeopardises our sources and methods. The system is set up intentionally now so that Mexican law enforcement can't help us."

A senior Mexican military official said his country has engaged in virtually no anti-drug efforts with the United States since the new law was passed.

"Without U.S. support - in technology and intelligence - it will be more difficult to contain crime," the official said.

Spokespersons from Mexico's Secretariat of Public Security, the foreign ministry and the Mexican Navy, which

play leading roles in the country's international drug interdiction efforts, did not respond to queries for this article. But a Mexican official familiar with the matter described the rift as more administrative and temporary than substantive.

"It's not that cooperation is now paralysed," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The official predicted that things will return to normal when it becomes clear which Mexican officials will have access to sensitive information.

Mexico adopted the new law shortly after the United States arrested former Mexican defence minister Salvador Cienfuegos on charges that he helped the cartels smuggle thousands of kilos of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine.

The arrest was part of what some U.S. officials described as a new willingness by American investigators to target ties between drug cartels and top echelons of Mexico's government. But in Mexico, it triggered an unexpected backlash.

# More work needed to rule out lab leak theory says WHO

**BBC World News -**

The head of the World Health Organisation (WHO) says further investigation is needed to conclusively rule out a theory that COVID-19 emerged from a laboratory in China. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Tuesday that although a laboratory leak is the least likely cause, more extensive research is needed.

The virus was first detected in Wuhan, in China's Hubei province in late 2019.

The Chinese government has dismissed the allegations of a virus leak. Since the novel coronavirus was first identified, more than 2.7 million people are known have died from it, with more than one hundred and twenty-seven million cases worldwide.

An international team of experts travelled to Wuhan in January to probe the origins of the virus. Their research relied on samples and evidence provided by Chinese officials.

Dr Tedros said the team had difficulty accessing raw data and called for "more timely and comprehensive



data sharing" in the future. The team investigated all possibilities, including one theory that the virus had originated at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The institute is the world's leading authority on the collection, storage and study of bat coronaviruses. Former US President Donald Trump was among those who supported the theory that the virus might have escaped from a lab.

But a report by WHO and Chinese experts released on Tuesday and seen by AFP news agency, said the lab leak explanation was highly unlikely and the virus had probably jumped from bats to humans via another intermedi-

ary animal.

However the theory "requires further investigation, potential with additional missions involving specialist experts," Dr Tedros said.

"Let me say clearly that as far as WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table," he added.

Also on Tuesday, WHO investigation team leader, Peter Ben Embarek, said his team had found no evidence that any laboratories in Wuhan were involved in the outbreak.

He added that his team had felt under political pressure, including from outside China, but said he was never pressed to remove anything from the team's final report.

Dr Embarak added that it was "perfectly possible" that cases were circulating in the Wuhan area in October or November 2019. China informed the WHO about cases on 3rd January, a month after the first reported infection.

Shortly after, the US and thirteen allies including South Korea, Australia and the UK, voiced concern over the report and urged China to provide "full access" to experts. The statement said the mission to Wuhan was "significantly delayed and lacked access to complete, original data and samples."

The group pledged to work together with the WHO.

# Witness: Officer in Floyd case gave onlookers a 'cold' stare



MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — As onlookers pleaded with Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin to take his knee off George Floyd's neck, Chauvin just gave them a "cold" and "heartless" stare, the teenager who shot the harrowing video of the arrest testified Tuesday at Chauvin's murder trial. In sometimes-tearful testimony, Darnella Frazier, eighteen, said Chauvin continued to kneel on Floyd's neck and fellow officer Tou Thao wouldn't let onlookers get close, even when one of them

identified herself as a firefighter and begged repeatedly to check Floyd's pulse.

"They definitely put their hands on the Mace, and we all pulled back," Frazier told the jury.

Frazier said of Chauvin: "He just stared at us, looked at us. He had like this cold look, heartless. He didn't care. It seemed as if he didn't care what we were saying."

Floyd's death last May, along with the video of the Black man pleading that he couldn't breathe and onlookers angrily

yelling at the white officer to get off him, triggered sometimes-violent protests around the world and a reckoning over racism and police brutality across the U.S.

Frazier testified that she began recording the scene because "it wasn't right, he was suffering, he was in pain."

She said she had walked to a convenience store with her nine-year-old cousin when she came upon the officers, and sent the girl inside because she did not want her to see "a man terrified, scared, begging for his

life." Frazier breathed heavily and wept as she viewed pictures of Chauvin kneeling on Floyd and after a prosecutor asked her to describe how the encounter changed her life.

She said she looks at her father and other Black men in her life, and "how that could have been one of them."

"I stay up at night apologising to George Floyd for not doing more ... not saving his life," she said, adding of Chauvin: "It's not what I should have done, it's what he should have done."

Chauvin's attorney Eric Nelson sought repeatedly to show that Chauvin and his fellow officers found themselves in an increasingly tense and distracting situation, with the growing crowd of onlookers becoming agitated and menacing over Floyd's treatment.

Under cross-examination from Nelson, Frazier said bystanders became increasingly upset by what they were seeing and got louder and louder, "more so as he was becoming more unresponsive."



# THIRIMANNE FIFTY BLUNTS WI AFTER BRATHWAITE TON

*By Andrew Fernando*

Stumps Day 2: Sri Lanka 136 for 3 (Thirimanne 55) trail West Indies 354 (Brathwaite 126, Mayers 49, Cornwall 73, Lakmal 4-94, Chameera 3-69) by 218 runs

SPNCricinfo - Kraigg Brathwaite completed a ninth Test century in the first over of the day, before Rahkeem Cornwall and later Lahiru Thirimanne completed half-centuries during a meandering day of Test cricket that ended with neither team ascendant, again.

West Indies' eventual 354 was more than Sri Lanka would have liked to concede. But at stumps, Sri Lanka had gotten to a reasonable 134 for 3. On a pitch that offered little assistance to the bowlers, they were still in the hunt to haul in the opposition's lead.

This was, however, a slow day of Test cricket. Only six wickets fell, and despite that, only 203 runs were scored across 86 overs - a scoring rate of 2.36. Only Cornwall batted with adventure, in the first hour of the day, with both West Indies' and Sri Lanka's remaining batsmen choosing to dig in on a slow track. The visitors had Dinesh Chandimal and Dhananjaya de Silva not out at the close. Chandimal was 34 off 80; de Silva 23 off 95. Slow.

There had been some excitement in the earliest overs of the day, however, as Brathwaite moved from his overnight 99 into triple figures with a single to fine leg. Cornwall then also completed a half-century, edging a ball behind point for four in the third over of the day.

It was in the first hour of play that West Indies made the most ground, and it was Cornwall who did most of the damage: flicking, punching, driving and sometimes edging fortuitously as Sri Lanka grew visibly frustrated that the eighth wicket had taken them so long. The pair batted through the first hour and wound up producing a century stand, the first of the innings. Their partnership was worth 103 when Cornwall holed out to mid-on to give Suranga Lakmal his fourth wicket, ending with 73 off 92 balls.

Kemar Roach attempted to hang in and managed to stick around for 36 balls while Brathwaite continued to hold his end tight, progressing only gradually. Dushmantha Chameera put an end to the innings though, having Roach caught behind and getting Brathwaite to play on for 126 in successive overs. Still, West Indies had frustrated the visitors for an entire session, and grown their total by 67 runs.

Sri Lanka's response was sedate from the outset. Although Thirimanne began confidently, driving his second ball through mid-off for four, he quickly settled into a measured rhythm. That first boundary did set up something of a trend as Thirimanne collected four of his eventual six boundaries down the ground. But it was the less ambitious strokes that defined the innings - the blocks, the leaves and the singles square of the

wicket. Not long after tea, he reached 50 with a run to point. It was his third consecutive half-century.

Around him though, the top order faltered. Dimuth Karunaratne fell cheaply again. He took a single off the first delivery he faced, remained scoreless for the next 15 balls, then fell attempting an expansive drive off the bowling of Alzarri Joseph. Karunaratne's thick edge might have passed between the cordon and gully, but Nkrumah Bonner provided the best piece of catching in the series when he leapt hard to his right and clinched the ball one-handed as it threatened to zip rapidly by him.

Oshada Fernando produced an uncharacteristically pained innings, making 18 off 71 as he survived several close lbw shouts before eventually succumbing to a Kyle Mayers delivery that jagged in off the seam. Not long after, Thirimanne fell after inside-edging a Roach ball that hit his pad, then ricocheted into the stumps.

Chandimal and de Silva were meticulous in their defence as they took Sri Lanka through to the close. West Indies thought they had de Silva caught behind in the last over, but his bat had flashed right past the leg-side delivery from Cornwall bowling a negative line around the stumps, and the hosts lost a review. De Silva padded away the next delivery to end the day's play.

# JAMES EARNS WALES LATE WIN IN FIERY WORLD CUP QUALIFIER



By Dafydd Pritchard

BBC Sport Wales at Cardiff City Stadium - Daniel James' late header gave Wales a precious win over the Czech Republic in a fiery World Cup qualifier in which both teams

had a man sent off. The visitors dominated a goalless first half with Jakub Jankto missing several chances, while Gareth Bale wasted the best opportunity of all for

Wales. Czech striker Patrik Schick was shown a straight red card early in the second half for raising his hand to the face of Connor Roberts, who was later sent off for a second booking. As both sides searched desperately for a winning goal, Bale delivered an inviting cross from the left wing, which James met with a brilliantly directed header to secure Wales' first win of the campaign. The result moves Wales up to third place in Group E, one point behind the Czech Republic in second and four adrift of leaders Belgium, albeit having played one game fewer than both. Despite only being Wales' second game of the campaign, this fixture already had a heightened sense of significance for both sides.

When the draw was made, Belgium were overwhelming favourites to top Group E and qualify automatically as the world's number one-ranked team. As a result, Wales and the Czech Republic were expected to battle it out for second place and a play-off spot, though the visitors might have set their sights higher after drawing with Belgium on Saturday. Wales may also have felt they could chance their arm for a shot at top spot because winning their Nations League group in November had already all-but guaranteed them a play-off place.

Sores in the match:

Wales: 1

Czech Republic: 0



## WESTBROOK SETS TRIPLE-DOUBLE NBA RECORD IN WIN FOR WIZARD

SportsMax - Russell Westbrook took an NBA record in his stride after landing a dazzling triple-double in the Washington Wizards' 132-124 win over the Indiana Pacers. Former MVP Westbrook had 35 points, 14 rebounds and 21 assists, becoming the first player in NBA history with at least 35 points, 10 rebounds and 20 assists in the same game. The 32-year-old said: "One thing I always cherish and enjoy about this game is that you get to go out and compete. One thing I always pride myself on is making sure I leave it out on the floor every single night. I've been blessed with an opportunity to be able to do that and I

don't take it for granted. Along those lines, different records and different things may happen. "But one thing I always do is stay humble, stay true to myself, and always continue to give everything I have and pride myself on being (able to) create some consistency for my team-mates." Speaking about his rebounding ability, Westbrook said: "Being athletic helps me being able to get it, but I don't know if anybody's better at my size at rebounding the basketball consistently." Scoring 20 or more points, grabbing 10-plus rebounds and at least 20 assists has been achieved only six times since 1963-64 in the NBA, and Westbrook has had

four such games, with Magic Johnson and Rod Strickland the other two players on that list. Earlier in March, Westbrook also became the first player in franchise history to record at least 35 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists in a game. New team-mate Chandler Hutchison, formerly of the Chicago Bulls, was impressed with his first experience of having Westbrook on his side. Hutchison scored 18 points, his second-highest haul in a game behind the 21 points he scored for the Bulls in January 2020 - which also came in a clash against the Pacers. Hutchison said of Westbrook: "He just commands an energy that's extremely contagious.

You see and you hear and you read all sorts of things about how he is as a player and as a person.

"I knew I was going to figure out who he really was, and just with being here a couple of days I already know the type of team-mate he is. He cares a bunch about his team-mates. "It just shows with his ability to be unselfish and make the right plays. And obviously he's a heck of a talent to be able to go out there and put up a statline like he did tonight and carry us to a win."

## JCA CALLS FOR CWI STRUCTURAL REFORM

AFTER 'EMBARRASSING' POSTPONEMENT OF CWI ELECTIONS

SportsMax - The Jamaica Cricket Association (JCA) and president Wilford Heaven have re-ignited calls for structural reform, following the postponement of Cricket West Indies (CWI) elections at the week-end.

The election would have pitted incumbent president Ricky Skerrett and his vice-president Kishore Shallow, against challengers Anand Sanasie of Guyana and Calvin Hope of Barbados. The event was, however, called off after a quorum could not be reached, following the absence of representatives from Barbados and Guyana.

The reason presented by both the Guyana Cricket Board and Barbados Cricket Association (BCA) is that Cricket West Indies (CWI) had failed to observe protocol by submitting an audited financial statement fourteen days before the AGM.

The JCA, through a release issued on Monday, claims the decision to postpone the election, once again spoke to the need for government reform.

"This occurrence which is potentially

damaging to the reputation of the people in the Caribbean as well as those in the diaspora highlights the urgent need for change to the structure of CWI," the release read.

JCA president Wilford Heaven, a part of the CWI finance committee, responsible for distributing the financial report called the inability to reach a quorum regrettable. He claimed that five regional boards had already agreed to waive the fourteen-day requirement for the consolidated report. The fault, Heaven explained, was that of the auditors and as such there was little the CWI could do.

"We have to ensure that this does not happen again in West Indies cricket. I believe it is an embarrassment to everyone concerned and it's obvious that we need for better governance to ensure better leadership," Heaven said.

"The Wehby report is an outstanding agenda item that we now need to pay serious attention to. It is now even more important given what happened to the AGM."

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