



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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A SMALL CARICOM STATE'S VULNERABILITY TO DISASTERS: COVID PLUS A SUSTAINED VOLCANIC ERUPTION

By Elizabeth Morgan

The Caribbean is beautiful, but it is fraught with danger. Here in the northern Caribbean, natural disasters are hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, droughts, bush fires and a rare cold spell. In the islands of the eastern and south Caribbean, volcanic eruptions are included. We are now seeing the eruption of La Soufrière on the island of St Vincent. In the 20th century, this volcano erupted twice, in 1902 and 1979. Despite being a history and geography enthusiast, I didn't know of either. The Jamaican Gleaner did carry short reports about the eruptions which began on 13th April, 1979 and lasted through June. It had also reported on the eruptions from 6th May into October 1902.

Volcanoes in the Caribbean islands are visible, potential dangers as the islands were formed by volcanic activity. There is evidence of this activity in nearly all the islands, particularly those

in the south and east. In Jamaica, our mineral springs, specifically the hot spring at Bath in St Thomas, is evidence of volcanic activity. Prior to the 1990s, the only Caribbean volcanic eruption I was aware of was Mount Pelée in the French island of Martinique, which occurred on 23rd April, 1902, destroying the town of Saint-Pierre and killing twenty-nine thousand people. I am now learning that just a few days later, La Soufrière in St Vincent also erupted, killing one thousand, six hundred and eighty people. It would erupt again seventy-seven years later in 1979. Note that 'soufrière,' from the French word for sulphur, soufre, is a common name for volcanoes in the eastern Caribbean, where there was the influence of French language and culture.

THE 1995 ERUPTION
I became aware of volcanic eruptions in the English-speaking Caribbean when, after centuries dormant, the Soufrière Hills Volcano

erupted in the British territory of Montserrat in 1995 continuing into the 2000s. By 2000, two-thirds of the population of nearly twelve thousand had been evacuated and large tracts of the small island had become uninhabitable. Montserrat, a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), saw its gross domestic product of one hundred and twenty-two million Eastern Caribbean dollars in 1995 reduced to EC\$16 million by 1999. Today, its population is under five thousand and, in the shadow of a still smouldering hill, recovery remains an ambition.

In travelling through the region, I have visited some of the volcanic sites, Watten Waven and Soufrière hot springs in Dominica; the Soufrière Volcanic Centre in Saint Lucia driving through the open crater; and, in Trinidad and Tobago, the mud volcano, the Devil's Woodyard. Dominica has several active volcanic sites and has been exploring the use of thermal energy.

So, last week, forty-two years later, St Vincent's La Soufrière erupted again, spewing thick black smoke and ash over the island. The plumes have extended to other islands, including Barbados. With the monitoring of The University of the West Indies, modern science and past experience, the warnings from the volcano, being issued since December, were heeded. People in the danger zones were evacuated. Reports indicate that scientists are expecting a much bigger eruption in coming days. The 1902 and 1979 eruptions show that this crisis could last for weeks, possibly months.

This eruption also comes in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. St Vincent and the Grenadines, to date, has recorded one thousand, seven hundred and ninety cases in a population of one hundred and ten thousand, five hundred and eighty-nine. The tourist industry, since March 2020, has been crippled by measures to

contain COVID-19. A vaccination and testing programme was being implemented in a recovery plan. In remarks on 7th April, Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves, in an assessment of his country's economic situation, had said that it might not be possible to pay civil service salaries, national insurance contributions and pensions. For 2020, revenue collection fell by about thirty per cent and the economy contracted by about five per cent. The PM signalled that the country was now under real pressure. The economic crisis has worsened and the econom-

ic prospects are now mired in deep volcanic ash.

CARICOM has mobilised to assist St Vincent and the Grenadines through the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency. Prime Minister Keith Rowley, as CARICOM chair, pledged regional support to a sister country in its time of peril. Members are providing assistance. It is a time for cooperation.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This situation highlights that CARICOM should have done more in the last twenty years to promote sustainable

development and build economic resilience. Regional cooperation should have been accorded higher priority. The international community also played its role. It is again witnessing the vulnerability of small island developing states and why GDP criteria are misleading, which place islands such as St Vincent and the Grenadines in the middle-income category, limiting access to/or graduating them from development support. St Vincent and the Grenadines needs immediate regional and global assistance in this time of compounded crises.

Volcanoes are not to be taken for granted even when dormant for decades, even centuries. They are sleeping catastrophes. Montserrat is the example. We also cannot forget that hurricane season is less than two months away and it was very active last year. Some countries are still recovering from their previous super blows. Haiti has yet to recover, too, from its 2010 earthquake. And, COVID and its impact are still with us. It is a very stressful time for all of us.

Elizabeth Morgan is a specialist in international trade policy and international politics.

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CRUISE SHIPS' RELOCATION TO ST JOHN'S POSSIBLE BY WEEKEND



General manager of Antigua Cruise Ports Dona Regis

Discussions have been finalised that will lead to at least two cruise ships relocating from Barbados to St John's Harbour for what is described in the cruise industry as 'lay-up.'

At Thursday's post-Cabinet briefing, Information Minister Melford Nicholas revealed that the government has given the green light to the arrangement, subject to final approval from the Ministry of Health.

Under the arrangement, at least two cruise ships may opt to relocate to Antigua and Barbuda because of the ash-fall from the La Soufriere Volcano in St Vincent and the Grenadines which has severely affected areas of

Barbados. General manager of Antigua Cruise Ports Dona Regis further disclosed that two cruise lines owned by Celebrity Cruises will relocate to St John's and that a third vessel from another cruise line may likely follow suit. "We are working closely with the Ministry of Health which must give the green light before any such arrangements can proceed as strict health protocols will be in place ahead of the vessels' arrival," she explained. According to Regis, the vessels can arrive in Antigua as early as Saturday if the Ministry of Health gives the clearance for them to come.

"Under the arrangement, the vessel will arrive and dock at

one of the piers in the St John's harbour where they will power down for an extended period of time. Additionally, several maintenance work will be carried out. There are also going to be crew change overs, creating some economic activity for hotels and taxi drivers while here," she stated. Regis further explained that the crew members will be required to stay aboard the vessels as adherence to the health protocols will be emphasised at all times. This 'lay-up' arrangement differs from the home-porting where vessels will be based in Antigua for five months and would be the base from which they begin their respective cruises. That arrangement takes effect from this year August and runs until December.

The Cabinet Notes reported that cruise ship operators are examining the success of the administration in reducing infections; the extent to which inoculations have been administered to the population of taxi drivers, shop operators, vendors, restaurateurs—all those people with whom their cruise passengers are likely to have contact when onshore. These will be taken into account when deciding which destinations they will serve, beginning June 2021.



DIXIE CALLING IT QUILTS BUT SHOWS HEART FOR EMPLOYEES

By Shelton Daniel

Dixie Operations, the call center business that has been operating in Antigua for the past two decades, has confirmed that it is definitely closing down for good.

Word of Dixie's impending closure has been floating through the local grapevine after staff, though still formally employed and being paid, were for several weeks allowed to stay home and not perform any work nor required to report for duty at the company's premises on Old Parham Road. News reports soon surfaced online that the staff had been laid off, but Dixie's management strenuously denied this, pointing to the fact that there had been no cessa-

tion or reduction of pay to any employee, even as the company contemplated its future.

In between, meetings were held with top government officials, including Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Information Technology Minister Melford Nicholas, to see if the company's operations and the one hundred and fifty jobs it provided could be saved.

But, in the end, it appeared futile; with suggestions that Dixie would shut down next month (May 2021) proving far behind schedule, as the company on Wednesday informed staff and others that it would completely wind up its business here on 27th April.

Here is the complete text

of a terse statement on Wednesday from Dixie: Following completion of our comprehensive consultation with employees in Antigua and Barbuda, 888 has taken the difficult final decision to close its Antigua Operations (Dixie Operations Ltd) on 27 April 2021. We understand this is a very challenging time for our colleagues who are affected by this restructuring and, as a result, 888 will provide all its staff with enhanced severance entitlements, extended notice pay, and extended private medical insurance. In addition, we will offer wellness support and career counselling. We would like to place on record our thanks for the hard work and dedication of our employees

over the last 20 years. 888 Holdings, the parent company which owns Dixie Operations Ltd, is an online gaming operator and platform provider that specialises in activities such as online casino, sports betting and poker games. It is described as being one of the most popular and best performing of its kind.

The weekly briefing notes issued on Thursday morning stated that Cabinet, during its meeting the previous day, "discussed the situation at the call center on Old Parham Road that is planning to close its doors and to eliminate approximately one hundred and fifty jobs. The intervention by the administration has result-

ed in superior terms of severance for the workers, such that the severed employees will receive almost one hundred per cent of their annual salary, retain health insurance for the rest of 2021, and will become the owners of the computers

which they once used as a tool at work. Discussions have already begun with another call center to establish a presence here in Antigua.”

One of the workers who spoke anonymously with PointeXpress, despite expressing sadness at the

loss of a job which she said had contributed immensely to her personal development, said she was nonetheless satisfied with the generous separation terms and benefits offered by the company. These include the legally stipulated severance

payment, computed according to length of service and other applicable criteria; three months’ salary; retention of company laptop; payment of a bonus; continuation of medical insurance; and provision of counselling and career guidance.

LIMITATIONS REMOVED ON REOPENING OF SCHOOLS, BARS MUST REMAIN CLOSED



By Shelton Daniel

Bars will remain closed for the time being, even as consideration is given to some easing of the State of Emergency of Emergency restrictions that are in place to prevent further spread of COVID-19 in Antigua and Barbuda. The nine-hour nightly curfew from 8:00 p.m. to

5:00 a.m. has been shortened by three-hours as of last night, Thursday 15th April 2021, and now runs from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. until further notice. The previously announced limited reopening of schools – with only classes facing crucial examinations in the near future to be permitted face-to-face tuition – has also been amended.

Instead of the partial reopening which began on 12th April (and was limited to secondary forms 4-5; post-secondary 6th forms; and primary school grades 5-6) an across-the-board reopening of all schools at all levels has now been announced to take effect from Monday 19th April. These decisions were taken by Cabinet during

its weekly meeting on Wednesday, after it was advised by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of “a thirty per cent decline in infections, moving Antigua and Barbuda to an average of three infections daily.”

Speaking Thursday morning during the weekly post-Cabinet press briefing, Information Minister Melford Nicholas said “bars will continue to remain closed,” despite government being “mindful that the ability for persons to socialize and to recreate is an important health factor.”

He however noted that, “Given the reckless behaviour we have witnessed in some bars, we are going to take it a bit slower in respect of that particular endeavour.”

He went on to explain that

the decision to expand the reopening of schools was taken after consultation with the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (ABUT) and the Director of Education. "Regular face-to-face classes will resume, subject to all of the sanitisations and those particular treatments which are well-known to the Ministry of Education and educators themselves within the school compounds."

Elaborating further, Nicholas said in cases where schools were unable to provide the required social distancing due to space constraints, "Those schools will move to a form of scheduling; some will come in the mornings and some will go in the afternoons."

He said the availability and quality of internet services continue to pose challenges for the education system, and at primary schools in particular. "It has been an ongoing project; one that requires a significant outlay of capital and engineering ... That work continues. The expectation is that before the end of the summer – certainly when the students return in September – those primary schools

... will be fully equipped, as are the public secondary schools."

He disclosed that private schools had previously also requested government assistance "to facilitate getting IT (information technology) implemented within [their] infrastructure ... My ministry has been charged with looking at that as well; so it's an ongoing piece of work, and given the challenges that the government has, we are forecasting that by the end of this summer the public primary schools will be so equipped."

Minister Nicholas was subsequently asked about


measures to minimise the risk of COVID in schools since most students are below eighteen years of age and therefore too young to be vaccinated, while vaccination is optional for teachers like everyone else.

He said despite the voluntary basis of inoculation, it was clear that significant and encouraging numbers of teachers had been presenting themselves for the jab since roll-out of the vaccination programme nearly two months ago.

Nicholas said teachers who opted not to be inoculated could still function within the system by adhering to additional or en-

hanced safety measures. Said the Minister: "We did discuss that the optimal number of teachers within the public sector was twelve hundred persons ... Many of them have already availed themselves of the vaccine ... Where there are exceptions ... those persons would be required to undergo frequent testing to be able to continue to operate within the public school space."

He said this would apply not just to the teachers, "but to ancillary staff as well," such as cleaners and staff of the school bus service among others.



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NOTICE TO OUR PENSIONERS

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Management

OFFICIALS TO RECALIBRATE VACCINATION ROLL-OUT

Officials in the Ministry of Health are spending time to re-calibrate the second phase of the vaccination roll-out programme because of lower than expected uptick in the first few days of the exercise.

On Thursday, a total of three hundred and seventy-three (373) persons presented themselves to be vaccinated. The overall figure between Tuesday and Thursday is one thousand three hundred and seven-

ty-one. That contrasts with the first few days of the first roll-out in March when the numbers averaged approximately two thousand, four hundred.

Several options are currently under consideration, including one where the vaccination teams 'take the roll-out to the public.'

This could mean that the vaccination teams could possibly move out from the centres and meet people in areas where

there are large numbers of people such as the public market or either of the two bus stations.

No decision has yet been made on what steps the officials will take but there is an urgent desire to have more people vaccinated as this has both health and economic implications as articulated by government and health officials from time to time.



BOOBY ALLEY DEMOLITION BEGINS

The Booby Alley housing development and renewal project is moving one step closer to becoming reality with heavy duty equipment starting demolition of those properties earmarked to be torn down to make way for the construction of new homes for residents.

Project manager, Kem Hodge, said the bulldozers spent Wednesday and Thursday at the site and will return for a third consecutive day today, Friday. He disclosed that residents of the area are now fully onboard in support of the project. "We are getting extremely good co-operation from the residents who are anxious to be part of a project

that will improve their living conditions immensely," he stated.

Not all the properties will be destroyed as some that are in better condition will be moved elsewhere.

Hodge expressed some concerns that finding adequate housing for all the residents may pose a challenge. "The twenty temporary houses at Bay Street (twelve) and at Pestaina Street (ten) cannot accommodate the more than two hundred and fifty people. It is especially difficult to find accommodation to especially house those single-person or two-person households. However, we have a

plan which we submitted for approval and once we have that then we should be okay," he stated.

The development is at the core of a promise made by area representative, Prime Minister Gaston Browne to the people of Booby Alley in the Point to bring housing improvements to the area.

The Chinese government has agreed to finance and construct the new homes. Construction is expected to start before year-end.




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MARGARET MYRTLE MCCARTY PETERS IS 103 TODAY!

Margaret Myrtle McCarty Peters is a member of a very rare club, the Centenarians Club of Antigua and Barbuda.

Today, 16th April, Peters turns one hundred and three years old, an even rarer feat as not too many members live on to celebrate multiple birthdays after joining the club.

The day's event will be marked in an unusual manner because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying restrictions. But family members and others, including Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, Social Transformation Minister, Dean Jonas, as well as officials from the Ministry of Social Transformation will express congratulations by virtual means. Peters was the last of four children for her par-

ents Jane Ame Louisa Dumbar McCarty and Theophilus William McCarty. She married Samuel Milton Peters of Grays Farm. She never had any children of her own, but she is said to have mothered many children as she raised children up to the fourth generation. She was a very hard worker. She was a housewife who usually carried milk on her head from Green Castle to Grays Farm and Whenner Road. She was later call the 'milk lady.' She was still seen working in her yard up her yard up to age ninety-nine years.

She is said to be a God fearing person who participated in many functions in her church. She was Sunday School teacher, choir member, Mother's Union member, and stewardship member. She was born 16th April 1918.





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PRISON POPULATION DECLINES WITH MORE PEOPLE GETTING BAIL



The number of people incarcerated at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) is down to less than two hundred and fifty as the court system has allowed more people to get bail with less strenuous conditions.

Acting Superintendent of HMP, Jermaine Anthony, disclosed that the courts have been more lenient with persons seeking bail and that this has led to a reduction in the number of individuals who are sent to prison on remand. "Because of the COVID-19 concerns, the courts have instituted cashless conditions for people seeking

bail in several cases as that requirement was a major hurdle for many appearing before the courts," he explained. "Additionally, the High Court has granted bail to several other individuals, who are what has been described as 'indigent' and has accepted their appeals to receive less burdensome bail conditions. Our present population of all categories of prisoners: remand, convicted males and females, is two hundred and forty-three."

According to the acting superintendent, the court is conscious that the pris-

on is a vulnerable place as excessive overcrowding may lead to widespread COVID infection within the prison walls.

Anthony reported that a total of thirty-six inmates have been infected with coronavirus. Upon testing positive, the inmates are immediately transferred to a quarantine area at the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force base at Crabbs Peninsula. Eighteen of these inmates have since tested negative and have been returned to the prison. "We expect that number to reduce further as some are coming up to the end of their quarantine thus needing a further test. Luckily, none of the inmates displayed symptoms associated with the disease," he further reported.

All convicted or remand prisoners must have a COVID-19 test before joining the general prison population. One pris-

oner tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday and he was immediately sent to Crabbs to quarantine.

The recent steps to reduce the prison population have been applauded, especially against the background where at one time the prison population was close to four hundred in a facility built to accommodate one hundred and fifty people.

The minister responsible for public safety reported to Cabinet on Wednesday that the number will be further reduced in the coming weeks by forty-three additional prisoners to be discharged.

All prisoners and staff have been tested, and one hundred and seventy-seven have been vaccinated. The list of diseases for which a potential government employee is to be lawfully tested, will now include the new coronavirus disease.



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CONSULTATIONS HELD TO MEASURE THE COUNTRY'S PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Joy Marie King

Antigua and Barbuda is in the final stages of completing its Voluntary Nation Report for presentation to the United Nations in July on the steps it has made towards achieving the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The International Trade Unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs along with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are currently conducting a series of consultations to gauge the nation's progress towards the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda also known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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“This process involves consulting with a wide cross-section of stakeholder groupings inclusive of government agencies, the private sector, youth, academia, NGOs and the media. This initiative will inform the nation’s first Voluntary National Report (VNR) to be presented at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum slated for July 2021,” Director of International Trade in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Joy-Marie King indicated.

She said Antigua and Barbuda’s VNR is expected to capture the experiences, successes, challenges and lessons learned towards the implementation of the SDGs. “It will be conducted under the theme ‘Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development,’” King revealed.

Separate consultations were held Thursday that focused on the

private sector, NGOs, youth, academia and the media. In offering welcoming remarks, King stated that “Over the past year, Antigua and Barbuda and the region have been grappling with the catastrophic actualities of the COVID-19 pandemic, a reality which has rapidly evolved and expanded beyond just being a serious health concern to include economic and social fall-outs.” She further expounded that “As a region, we are now faced with the very real possibility of this pandemic substantially eroding development achievements in addition to undermining efforts towards the im-

plementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.” In conclusion, Director King emphasised the need for “a renewed commitment, redoubling of efforts towards building a resilient society and utilising the sustainable development goals as the impetus for such an achievement.”

Elizabeth Emanuel, a consultant acquired through the assistance of ECLAC, during her presentation outlined the importance of localising the Sustainable Development Goals and aligning them with the national development strategy while Catarina Cama-

rinhas, a representative of ECLAC, underscored the importance of each stakeholder participating in the consultation process and its value towards the implementation of the goals.

The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda in 2019 charged the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the responsibility for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs comprise of seventeen interlinked goals designated as a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. They were adopted in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly.



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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

SENIOR LECTURER / LECTURER SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE, COMPUTING AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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

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

QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING & EXPERIENCE:

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

The successful candidate will be required to:

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

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

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

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



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

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

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

The successful candidate will be required to:

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

QUALIFICATION, TRAINING & EXPERIENCE:

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

REQUIRED SKILLS:

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

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

Small countries need an IMF that is a lender of conscience



By Sir Ronald Sanders

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

As undesirable as it may be, governments of Caribbean countries that are not in International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes are

being pushed in that direction.

Through no bad policy decisions that they have made, governments are confronted with considerably reduced revenues and extraordinary expenses because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many countries, particularly those regarded by the international community as 'high income', have exhausted their capacity to borrow from commercial markets and to issue bonds. They have been denied access to concessional financing by the IMF and World

Bank. Faced with sudden high unemployment caused by the severe decline in tourism, and continuous high expenditure on public health, including managing the coronavirus and purchasing costly COVID-19 vaccines, as well as gravely reduced income, Governments will have to engage the IMF as a lender of last resort.

It is either an IMF programme or a prolonged period of economic decline that will make recovery even more difficult than it already is. The present financial predicament in many Caribbean countries is worse than any plight caused in the past by hurricanes. It is far deeper in its effects and much longer in its duration.

Many governments have been unable to service their international debt that lenders, especially those in the Paris Club, continue to insist must be repaid in full, adding interest

that is building a huge burden that will weigh down countries for decades to come. They have also incurred debt with domestic banks and other creditors that provide services. In the reduced financial circumstances in which they operate, governments are strained to settle these obligations, tightening conditions in the economy, and limiting the possibilities of new borrowing.

Hope, by tourism dependent countries, that the industry would have rebounded by now, has been dashed. Realistically, there is no bright prospect that, even by the last quarter of this year, tourism by sea and air will bounce back sufficiently to make a meaningful difference. And, with the best will in the world, diversification into import substitution projects, while helpful and necessary, will not have a substantial impact on revenues and employment.

The tourism situation is worsened by the latest methodology adopted by the US Centres for Disease Control that places most Caribbean countries at 'Level 4' – very high risk. Changing that categorization will require measures to curb the rate of COVID-19 infection further, and to accelerate inoculation of the population. These measures need funds that governments are hard pressed to find.

In terms of inoculation, as of April 15, the following was the level of inoculation in CARICOM countries: Antigua and Barbuda, 27.6%; Montserrat 25.3%; Dominica 24.6%; Barbados 22.9%; St Kitts-Nevis 19.6%; St Lucia 11%. Thereafter, all CARICOM countries are below 10% with five of them below 3%.

The COVAX facility, organised by the World Health Organization, promises deliveries of supplies it has negotiated with major pharmaceutical companies. But governments of rich countries, rep-

resenting 18% of the world's population, have bought 4.6 billion doses or 60% of available supply. The competition by the governments of the remaining 82% of the global population is obvious.

There have been pledges to donate money to COVAX to help developing countries, such as those in the Caribbean, to obtain vaccines. But many of the pledges have not yet been delivered. More importantly, the main producers of COVID-19 vaccines cannot fulfil any new orders before the first quarter of 2022.

Regrettably, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and the rich nations that control their policies, continue to apply criteria for access to funding that should long have been discarded and which make little practical sense in today's conditions. But, CARICOM countries, apart from Guyana and Suriname with their high growth rates and revenues from

oil and gas, have little choice but to engage the IMF for support programmes.

Recourse to the IMF is a last resort. Over the years, the tough conditions for support from the Fund have caused countries to avoid it. But, in the current circumstances, for many countries, the IMF has become the necessary option to get the financial liquidity that they need urgently.

It is claimed that the language and approach of the IMF have changed, and that the institution has become more flexible and less dogmatic. The proof of that pudding is in the eating. Therefore, governments will engage the IMF, recognising that their options are limited. They will do so with caution. The last thing they want is additional debt tied to stringent conditions such as more taxes, cuts in public service employment and immediate repayment of foreign debt.

For its part, the IMF policy makers should appreciate that small

Caribbean states cannot be measured by the same yardstick as richer and larger nations. COVID-19 and other disasters affect all countries to some extent, but the extent in small states is total. We need look no further than St Vincent and the Grenadines. Already reeling from the effects of COVID-19, the eruption of the Soufriere volcano, which has not yet reached its zenith, has crippled it.

The vulnerabilities of small countries are lived experiences that must be taken fully into account if the IMF is to make a credible difference. The Fund should also remember that it is lending money, not granting it. The terms of engagement should be such that countries can repay their debts and yet survive, giving their people opportunities to grow.

The question is: can those who control the IMF make it, at least, a lender of conscience.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com



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For further information, please e-mail: src@sta.uwi.edu or call 1-868-662-4659

For Immediate Release

The UWI Seismic Research Centre receives CCRIF grant towards new equipment for monitoring La Soufrière

The UWI St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago. Thursday, April 15, 2021— The UWI Seismic Research Centre (UWI-SRC) has received a grant from the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF SPC) to support its monitoring efforts during the ongoing eruption of the La Soufrière volcano in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The \$17,150 USD grant will fund equipment to strengthen the network, rebuild existing monitoring sites and provide back-up equipment for this ongoing event. As a result of this investment, new communication and ground deformation equipment will now be added to those already deployed, increasing the UWI-SRC's capacity to understand the volcano's eruptive processes and provide advanced warning of hazardous activity to the Vincentian population in the future. The UWI-SRC Director Dr. Erouscilla Joseph says the additional equipment will help scientists to "better monitor the volcano that caused approximately 10,000 residents to evacuate."

La Soufrière began erupting effusively in late December 2020, with little detectable precursory activity. Since it was first observed on December 27, a new lava dome had grown steadily; encircling the dome left behind after the 1979 eruption. On April 9, 2021 the eruption entered an explosive phase, covering most of mainland Saint Vincent and neighbouring Barbados in ash. This volcano is the most active in the Eastern Caribbean chain, having erupted in 1718, 1812, 1814, 1902, 1971 and 1979. The most explosive eruption during the historical period occurred in 1802, claiming an estimated 1600 lives.

The UWI Seismic Research Centre expresses its gratitude to CCRIF for its timely intervention. This gesture is only the latest instance of collaboration involving CCRIF and the UWI-SRC who have worked together in the past on various disaster risk reduction and response projects in the region. CCRIF was formed in 2007 to assist Caribbean governments in limiting the financial impact of devastating natural hazards. The Cayman Islands based institution offers earthquake, tropical cyclone and excess rainfall insurance policies to Caribbean and Central American governments.



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MOOCs – Massive Open Online Courses

A massive open online course is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. In addition to traditional course materials, such as filmed lectures, readings, and problem sets, many MOOCs provide interactive courses with user forums to support community interactions among students, professors, and teaching assistants, as well as immediate feedback to quick quizzes and assignments. – Wikipedia definition



About MOOCs

MOOCs aren't accredited. This means certificates gained from these courses aren't recognized as Tertiary Education, neither can the credits gained be transferred when applying to tertiary institutions.

Although most MOOCs are free, some may require a small registration fee.

MOOCs learning contents are created by educational institutions. Sometimes these institutions use past material from Tertiary Education Syllabi's to perform research on various learning styles.

People who are considering educational advancement sometimes enroll into MOOCs as a way to familiarize themselves with material to determine if they want to pursue a particular area of study.

Some employers may encourage their staff to enroll into MOOCs as a form of professional development and skill-building. This usually helps to improve productivity and positively impacts performance appraisal.

Recent MOOCs Trend

Statistics have shown that the MOOCs market is rapidly growing, with the highest peak projections to be from 2020 to 2026. Because of this, some accredited institutions have decided to partner with MOOCs to offer degree and certification programs, making them more affordable and accessible to learners.

While this may be a plus, it is always a good idea to still ensure that your program is quality assured.

Short List of MOOCs

Alison Courses
Stanford Online
Digital Business Academy
Open 2 Study
Coursera
EdX
Udemy
Udacity
Harvard Extension Courses



Tel: (268) 562-8173

Location: 2nd Floor, Aflak Building (office of NTA - Upstairs Beautyrama)

Email: abnab@ab.gov.ag

Facebook: [abnab](https://www.facebook.com/abnab)

Instagram: [abnationalaccreditationboard](https://www.instagram.com/abnationalaccreditationboard)



CARIBBEAN CONSULAR CORPS OF MIAMI, FLORIDA

Caribbean Unity – Support to St. Vincent and Grenadines



The Caribbean Consular Corps in Miami is supporting the neighboring island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) with a shipment of essential supplies of water and face masks, to victims of the recent volcanic eruption on the island caused by the La Soufrière Volcano. At an urgent meeting convened by the Caribbean Consular Corps on Tuesday, April 13th, 2021 it was agreed that they would join in solidarity to support the people of SVG.

According to a joint statement from the group, “we are standing with our brothers and sisters in this time of need. As Caribbean people, we believe it is important that we stand together in solidarity. At any time, any one of our countries could be affected by a natural disaster”. It was further stated that the Consuls General were pleased that the Caribbean diaspora has been responding favorably to the needs of the victims and that they will jointly give these initiatives their support wholeheartedly. The initial reports highlighting the devastation included clouds of ash blanketing the island causing water and power outages. Thousands of residents were evacuated as it is expected that explo-

sions could continue for days or weeks causing further damage. “The residents, especially the frontline workers, will desperately need all our support at this time”, the statement continued. According to the team of Consuls General, it was agreed that each Consulate would contribute to the cause by donating essential medical supplies of masks and personal care packages, and also large volumes of water. The Consuls General are working to boost the support of their respective Governments.

The team included Consuls General, Hon. Gilbert Boustany of Antigua and Barbuda, (Dean of the Consular Corps in Miami); Hon. Linda Mackey of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas; Hon. Neval Greenidge of Barbados; Hon. Dianne Perrotte, Deputy Consul General of Grenada; Hon. Stéphane Gilles of Haiti; Hon. R. Oliver Mair of Jamaica; Hon. Tassa Jean of Saint Lucia; and Hon. Jean Andria Narinesingh, Acting Consul General of Trinidad and Tobago.

CANNABIS REFORM WILL NOT BE POLITICIZED - FELIX



St Lucia Commerce Minister, Bradley Felix

LOOP SLU News - The Saint Lucia government's point person on marijuana reform has given assurance to the Rastafarian community that the decriminalization of marijuana will not be used as a political football.

Commerce Minister Bradley Felix's comments come against the backdrop of statements made by the Caribbean Rastafari Organization (CRO). "Nothing strange if

the government, in an act of desperation, decriminalize the herb just before general elections to get our votes. It will not surprise me. Anything can happen," so said CRO Chairman, Burnett 'Bongo Wisely Tafari' Sealy in an exclusive interview with Loop News on April 8.

"From day one I said this is not going to be a political instrument," Minister Felix responded.

In July 2020, the Allen Chastanet administration agreed to proceed in drafting legislation for cannabis reform in Saint Lucia, following which the island would see the establishment of a cannabis industry.

The initiative was also highlighted on March 17th 2021 by Governor General Sir Emmanuel Neville Cenac during his Throne Speech.

The Commerce Minister is appealing to

the Rastafarian community for patience on the matter to ensure that what will be presented is up to standard and accommodative to all parties. "It is not a matter of rushing the AG's Chambers to prepare the draft for us, but let them do it, learning the lessons from other countries who have passed their legislation, and then we learn from that and go forward," Felix said. "I have also said that I would like for this matter to be dealt with before the next elections," he added.

According to Felix, the Attorney General has a draft prepared to be perused.

"We could not have dealt with it because we have Budget Debate this week. I am hoping Monday come, before Cabinet, we will be able to sit down and have a look at it to ensure that in keeping with the discussions we've had in Cabinet, all the bases are covered," Felix said.

IMF PREDICTING ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES



WASHINGTON, United States (CMC) —

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Thursday that growth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) recovered briskly in the second half of last year, yet still more slowly than the global economy and other emerging markets.

It said that is despite unprecedented policy support, strong performance of trading partners, soaring commodity prices, and accommodative global

financial conditions. “The persistence of the health crisis in many countries casts a shadow on the near-term outlook. People and economies continue to require a short-term shot to exit from the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, while the aggravation of several underlying structural fragilities poses significant long-term challenges,” said Alejandro Werner, the director of the Western Hemisphere Department of the IMF. He

said the region’s contraction of seven percent in 2020 was the sharpest in the world by far, exceeding the global slowdown of 3.3 percent. “Growth for 2021 is projected at 4.6 percent, below the 5.8 percent estimated for emerging markets, excluding China. Income per capita will not catch up with its pre-pandemic level until 2024, resulting in a 30 percent cumulative loss relative to the pre-pandemic trend.” According to the IMF,

economic growth for tourism dependent Caribbean countries, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, is estimated at 1.4 per cent this year, as compared with minus-10.1 per cent last year. The IMF also notes that economic growth in these countries for 2022 is estimated at 5.1 per cent.

LA SOUFRIERE HASN'T 'RUN OUT OF STEAM' — VOLCANOLOGIST

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (CMC) — Volcanologist, Professor Richard Robertson is warning that while the explosions at La Soufriere volcano have been getting weaker and less frequent over the last two days, this does not mean that the eruption has ended.

"We are not convinced that the magma down there has all come up," he said Wednesday evening on "Round Table Talk" on the state-owned VC3 cable channel. "We are not sure how much [magma] it is and we are not convinced that it is completely up, that it is out, or that it has run out of steam," he said, adding, "It will take us a little while to be sure it is really ended". The volcanologist, the lead scientist from the Seismic Research Centre (SRC) of the University of the West Indies (UWI) which is monitoring the volcano, said residents must remain on their guard, avoid the Red Zone, and take steps to minimise the impact of the ash.

He said the safe zones are expected to remain



La-Soufriere-from-Congo-Valley

that way for the duration of the eruption.

The news comes even as Robertson and his team, as well as other professionals in the United Kingdom, had feared that the volcano had returned to "pre-historic" eruptions as occurred 15,000 years ago. Such an eruption had the potential to turn St. Vincent into a "desert", Robertson said. After 42 years without any explosive activity, La Soufriere blew its cap on Friday morning, three months after it began to erupt effusively. The 8:40 a.m. (local time/Atlantic Standard Time) eruption came a mere 15 hours after authorities issued an evacuation order, having been advised by Robertson that

the monitoring team could not say that the volcano would not erupt in 24 to 48 hours. The violent eruption sent plumes of ash 29,000 feet into the atmosphere, but was surpassed by an even more powerful one that same afternoon, which sent ash 50,000 feet into the sky.

Since then, there has been between "at least 29 discrete explosions or ash venting," Robertson said, adding, "That's a quite busy volcano."

He said the last four discrete events took place over the last two days and, therefore, most of them occurred during the first three days of the eruption "when there was an almost continuous jetting of

steam and ash.

"So it was quite busy Friday, Saturday, Sunday and it sort of reduced its rate."

Robertson said volcanoes develop patterns and at La Soufriere it is almost as if the magma is in the chamber and "is trying to do something".

The question is whether the magma contains enough gas to be jetted out. Therefore, the magma is moving jerkily in its attempt to get to the surface. As these jerky movements get more frequent, they then get bigger and produce tremors.

The size of the tremors increases and there is an exposition at the summit of either very gas-rich plume or one containing ash.

NHC STARTS CLEANUP EFFORTS

Barbados Advocate - The National Housing Corporation has been mobilised in its effort to begin the cleanup of its residences in the wake of the recent ashfalls from the La Soufriere volcano in St. Vincent. With the future still unclear as it relates to further explosive eruptions of the volcano, a national initiative has begun in earnest.

Speaking to members of the media yesterday as he made rounds to several sites, including the corporation's Wildey office, Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance, Dr. William Duguid explained that their cleanup effort would prove to be extremely critical to the health and safety of many Barbadians.

"As Barbados' biggest landlord, the National Housing Corporation is also looking at the start of the cleanup of the National Housing Corporation estates. Starting with the driveways, the roadways, looking at the down-pipes, looking at any tanks they may have and, most importantly, checking the drains. As the rains come and we don't have the integrity of those drains, then we will suffer a lot of flooding all throughout the country.



Housing Minister Dr. William Duguid (r) looking on as workers continue to remove ash from NHC units at Wildey

So drains are very, very important. We are trying to keep as much ash out of the drains as possible," he said, going on to plead with Barbadians to ensure as little ash as possible was washed into the drains. Asking all Barbadians to responsibly bag the ash for collection by the Sanitation Service Authority, he noted that the cleanup would be started at the offices before expanding to involve more and more residential areas. "We have started the

programme here in Wildey and we will be fanning out and more and more people will be joining the programme and moving to more and more areas to get Barbados back to where it should be; back to clean and sparkling as we want it to be. The paradise that we are accustomed to." Dr. Duguid stated that it was impossible to predict the ashfalls, but the aim was to keep working at it until Barbados was clean once again. He finished by saying that the

energy among NHC staff was good, as everyone understood the objective. "I think that everybody recognises that this is a national programme and of national importance, and everybody is putting in 150% and I'm very happy with the response of the staff so far. It is tedious work and it's back-breaking work, but as you can see the men are happy to be able to be of assistance to their country," he said. (MP)

**GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
MINISTRY OF WORKS
NATURAL DISASTER MANGEMENT - REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION
LOAN (HURRICAN IRMA) PROJECT CONSTRUCTION OF HERBERTS ROAD
INVITATION FOR BIDS**

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GOAB) has received financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in an amount equivalent to USD 28,540,000.00 towards the cost of the Natural Disaster Management - Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Loan (Hurricane Irma) (the Project) and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing to eligible payments under this contract. Payment by CDB will be made only at the request of (GOAB) and upon approval by CDB, and will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Financing Agreement. The Financing Agreement prohibits withdrawal from the financing account for the purpose of any payment to persons or entities, or for any import of goods, if such payment or import, to the knowledge of CDB, is prohibited by a decision of the United Nations Security Council taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. No party other than (GOAB) shall derive any rights from the Financing Agreement or have any claim to the proceeds of the Financing.

The Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Works through its Project Implementation Management Unit (PIMU). The Ministry of Works has contracted Consultants who will assist the PIMU with delivering the Project. The Consultants have prepared designs and contract documentation and will assist in tender administration and evaluation and supervise Project activities.

The Ministry of Works now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Construction of the Herberts Road, which is approximately 3.34km long). The works include, but are not limited to the following:

Drainage Works: Construction of reinforced concrete drains and earthen drains and circular pipe culverts.

Roadworks: Excavation for pavement foundation; Compacted Subbase Layers; Compacted base layers; Asphalt Concrete Surfacing; Road Signage and markings; and Ancillary Works

Consideration will be limited to firms or joint ventures of firms, which are legally incorporated or otherwise organised in, and have their principal place of business in an eligible country and are either:

- (a) more than 50% beneficially owned by a citizen or citizens and/or a bona fide resident or residents of an eligible country, or by a body corporate or bodies corporate meeting these requirements; or
- (b) owned or controlled by the Government of an eligible country provided that it is legally and financially autonomous and operated under the commercial law of an eligible country and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the CDB Guidelines for Procurement (2006).

Eligible countries are member countries of CDB.

Eligible bidders will be required to submit full qualification information with their bids establishing their eligibility to bid and qualification to perform the contract if the bid is accepted. Tender and qualification information are to be submitted in the English Language on the prescribed forms inserted in the Bid Documents. Submissions that do not provide the information required, or do not demonstrate the prospective contractor's ability to perform satisfactorily, will not qualify and will not be considered for further evaluation.

Qualification requirements include, inter alia:

- (a) an average annual turnover (defined as certified payments received for works in progress or completed) within the best three of the last five (5) years of at least Four million, Two hundred thousand United States dollars (USD 4,200,000.00 minimum) or Eleven million, four hundred thousand Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD 11,400,000.00 minimum);
- (b) a demonstrable cash flow (including access to credit) of Seven hundred and fifty thousand United States dollars (USD 750,000.00) or Two million Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD 2,000,000.00); and
- (c) experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least two (2) assignments of a nature, scope and complexity comparable to the proposed project activity between 1st January, 2015 and submission deadline (to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 80 percent complete).

Electronic Bidding Documents may be obtained by eligible bidders from the second address below via the Link provided. Alternatively, a hard copy may be obtained from the first address below for a non-refundable cash payment of XCD \$150.00. Requests may be made by written application including email. Written applications must be clearly marked: **"Request for Bidding Documents for the Herberts Road"**, along with the name, address and contact information of the bidder for which Bidding Documents are being requested.

Applicants who request that documents be forwarded to them must submit an account number from a local courier agent that accepts freight collect charges. Documents will be promptly dispatched, but under no circumstance will Ministry of Works or their authorised agent be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so transmitted. Submissions of bid may be made electronically via the link in the second address. Alternatively, sealed envelopes clearly marked **"Bid for the Construction of Herberts Road"**, must be received at the second address below not later than **12:00 noon on 19th May, 2021**. Bid opening will take place immediately after the deadline for submission at the second address below in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend. Qualification information **only** must be simultaneously submitted to the third address below.

All bids must be accompanied by a completed Bid-Securing Declaration. Late bids will be rejected.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for Government of Antigua and Barbuda's action. Government of Antigua and Barbuda will not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

Address for Correspondence

Project Coordinator
Ministry of Works
St. John's Street
St. John's
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Tel: +268 562 1867
Fax: +268 462 4622
Email: projectcoordinator.works@ab.gov.ag

Address for Bid Submission and Bid Opening

Chairman, Tenders Board
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance
Government Office Complex Queen Elizabeth Highway
St. John's ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Tel: (268) 562-5825 / 5826 Fax: (268) 562-1717
Email: tenders.board@ab.gov.ag
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For registration and instructions to bidders who wish to submit bids electronically.

**Address for Completed
Qualification Information Only**

Procurement Officer
Procurement Policy Unit
Caribbean Development Bank
P O Box 408, Wildey
St. Michael
BARBADOS, W. I.
Tel: +246-539-1600 Fax: +246-426-7269
Email: procurement@caribank.org

**GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
MINISTRY OF WORKS
NATURAL DISTASTER MANAGEMENT - REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION
LOAN (HURRICANE IRMA) PROJECT CONSTRUCTION OF ROYAL GARDENS ROAD
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The Ministry of Works now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Construction of the Royal Gardens Road, which is approximately 3.32km long). The works include, but are not limited to the following:

Drainage Works: Construction of reinforced concrete drains and earthen drains and circular pipe culverts.

Roadworks: Excavation for pavement foundation; Compacted Subbase Layers;
Compacted base layers; Asphalt Concrete Surfacing; Road Signage and markings; and Ancillary Works

Consideration will be limited to firms or joint ventures of firms, which are legally incorporated or otherwise organised in, and have their principal place of business in an eligible country and are either:

- (a) more than 50% beneficially owned by a citizen or citizens and/or a bona fide resident or residents of an eligible country, or by a body corporate or bodies corporate meeting these requirements; or
- (b) owned or controlled by the Government of an eligible country provided that it is legally and financially autonomous and operated under the commercial law of an eligible country and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the CDB Guidelines for Procurement (2006).

Eligible countries are member countries of CDB.

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- (c) experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least two (2) assignments of a nature, scope and complexity comparable to the proposed project activity between 1st January, 2015 and submission deadline (to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 80 percent complete).

Electronic Bidding Documents may be obtained by eligible bidders from the second address below via the Link provided. Alternatively, a hard copy may be obtained from the first address below for a non-refundable cash payment of XCD \$150.00. Requests may be made by written application including email. Written applications must be clearly marked: **"Request for Bidding Documents for the Royal Gardens Road"**, along with the name, address and contact information of the bidder for which Bidding Documents are being requested.

Applicants who request that documents be forwarded to them must submit an account number from a local courier agent that accepts freight collect charges. Documents will be promptly dispatched, but under no circumstance will Ministry of Works or their authorised agent be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so transmitted. Submissions of bid may be made electronically via the link (or email) in the second address. Alternatively, sealed envelopes clearly marked **"Bid for the Construction of Royal Gardens Road"**, must be received at the second address below not later than **12:00 noon on 19th May, 2021**. Bid opening will take place immediately after the deadline for submission at the second address below in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend. Qualification information only must be simultaneously submitted to the third address below.

All bids must be accompanied by a completed Bid-Securing Declaration. Late bids will be rejected.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for Government of Antigua and Barbuda's action. Government of Antigua and Barbuda will not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

Address for Correspondence

Project Coordinator
Ministry of Works
St. John's Street
St. John's
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Tel: +268 562 1867
Fax: +268 462 4622
Email: projectcoordinator.works@ab.gov.ag

Address for Bid Submission and Bid Opening

Chairman, Tenders Board
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance
Government Office Complex Queen Elizabeth Highway
St. John's ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Tel: (268) 562-5825 / 5826 Fax: (268) 562-1717
Email: tenders.board@ab.gov.ag
Visit www.tendersboard.gov.ag under caption News/Notice.
For registration and instructions to bidders who wish to submit bids electronically.

**Address for Completed
Qualification Information Only**

Procurement Officer
Procurement Policy Unit
Caribbean Development Bank
P O Box 408, Wildey
St. Michael
BARBADOS, W. I.
Tel: +246-539-1600 Fax: +246-426-7269
Email: procurement@caribank.org

Ukraine's Zelenskiy to hold talks with Merkel, Macron about Russia standoff

The leaders of Ukraine, France and Germany will hold three-way talks on Friday about Ukraine's standoff with Russia over the conflict in the eastern Donbass region, President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said in a video released to media on Thursday.

Zelenskiy will travel to Paris to meet French President Emmanuel Macron and they will speak to German Chancellor Angela Merkel on a video conference, he said.

The meeting would lay the groundwork for a meeting in the so-called "Normandy" format, he said, though he gave no indication whether or when such a meeting could happen.

The "Normandy" format talks involve the leaders of France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia and have not taken place since December 2019.

"...This is an important preparatory meeting for the Normandy format," Zelenskiy said, adding that "the situation in Donbass is now under control."

Ukraine and Russia have traded blame over a spike in violence



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy

in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, where Ukrainian troops have battled Russian-backed forces in a conflict that Kyiv says has killed 14,000 people since 2014.

Ukraine and its Western allies have accused Russia of a "provocative" build-up of troops near Ukraine's eastern border and the annexed Crimea.

Zelenskiy also thanked Turkey for its support and said Ukrainian tour-

ists should visit Turkey after Russia restricted travel there.

Meanwhile, Turkey is not picking a side in the conflict between Ukraine and Russia and supports a diplomatic resolution of the issue, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday, amid concerns over a Russian military build-up along Ukraine's border.

The United States and NATO have been

alarmed by the build-up at the border and in Crimea, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. Last weekend, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan called for an end to the "worrying" situation in eastern Ukraine's Donbass region and offered Ankara's support.

Russia subsequently said Turkey and other nations should not feed "belligerent sentiment" in Ukraine.

U.S. imposes wide array of sanctions on Russia for 'malign' actions

The United States on Thursday imposed a broad array of sanctions on Russia, including curbs to its sovereign debt market, to punish it for interfering in last year's U.S. election, cy-

ber-hacking, bullying Ukraine, and other alleged "malign" actions. The United States warned Russia that more penalties were possible but said it did not want to escalate.

The Russian foreign

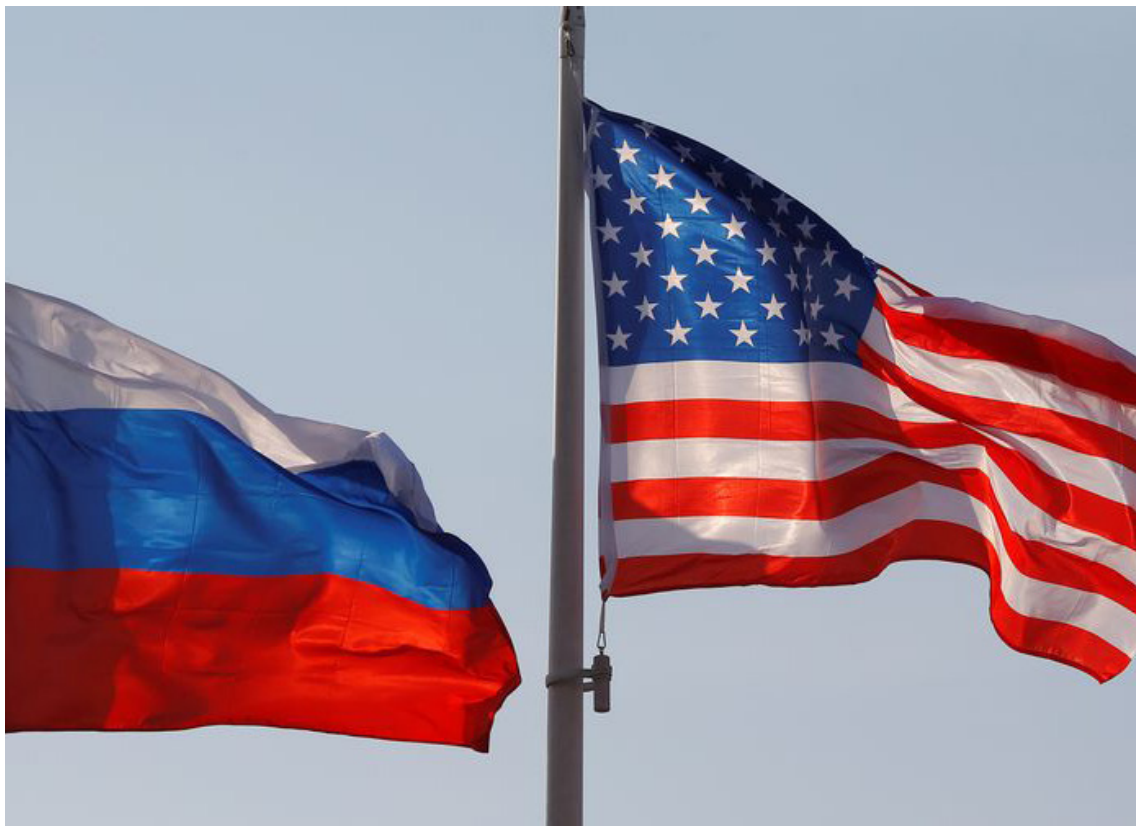
bank, national wealth fund and finance ministry. The United States warned Russia that more penalties were possible but said it did not want to escalate. The Russian foreign

Russia denies meddling in U.S. elections, orchestrating a cyber hack that used U.S. tech company SolarWinds Corp (SWI.N) to penetrate U.S. government networks and using a

up of Russian forces in Crimea and along the border with Ukraine, though a top U.S. general saw only a "low to medium" risk of a Russian invasion in the next few weeks. Biden, who also proposed a U.S.-Russian summit, is trying to strike a balance between deterring what Washington sees as hostile Russian behavior while avoiding a deeper deterioration in U.S.-Russian ties and preserving some room for cooperation.

"Our objective here is not to escalate. Our objective here is to impose costs for what we feel are unacceptable actions by the Russian government," said White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki.

Among his moves, Biden signed an executive order authorizing the U.S. government to sanction any area of the Russian economy and used it to restrict Russia's ability to issue sovereign debt to punish Moscow for interfering in the 2020 U.S. election.



Russian Federation and US flags

ber-hacking, bullying Ukraine, and other alleged "malign" actions.

The U.S. government blacklisted Russian companies, expelled Russian diplomats and barred U.S. banks from buying sovereign bonds from Russia's central

ministry reacted angrily, summoning the U.S. ambassador for a diplomatic dressing-down to tell him "a series of retaliatory measures will follow soon." A ministry spokeswoman also said a possible summit could be imperiled.

nerve agent to poison Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

U.S. President Joe Biden on Tuesday spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin to raise concerns about these issues and the build-

Defense rests without Chauvin testimony at murder trial



Defense attorney, Eric Nelson (l) and former Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin address the judge as testimony raps up

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Former Officer Derek Chauvin chose not to take the stand as testimony at his murder trial ended Thursday, passing up the chance to explain to the jury and the public for the first time what he was thinking when he pressed his knee against George Floyd's neck. Closing arguments are set to begin Monday, after which a racially diverse jury will begin deliberating at a barbed-wire-ringed courthouse in a city on edge — not just because of the Chauvin case but because of the deadly police shooting of a 20-year-old black

man in a Minneapolis suburb last weekend.

Before the jury was brought in Thursday morning, Chauvin, his COVID-19 mask removed in a rare courtroom moment, ended weeks of speculation by informing the judge he would invoke his Fifth Amendment right not to testify. Shortly afterward, the defense rested its case, after a total of two days of testimony, compared with two weeks for the prosecution. Judge Peter Cahill reminded the jurors they will be sequestered starting Monday and said: "If I were you, I would plan for long and hope for

short." Chauvin, 45, is charged with murder and manslaughter in Floyd's death after the 46-year-old Black man was arrested on suspicion of passing a counterfeit \$20 at a neighborhood market last May. Bystander video of Floyd gasping that he couldn't breathe as bystanders yelled at Chauvin to get off him triggered worldwide protests, violence, and a furious examination of racism and policing in the U.S. The most serious charge against the now-fired white officer, second-degree murder, carries up to 40 years in prison, though state guidelines call for

about 12. Prosecutors say Floyd died because the officer's knee was pressed against Floyd's neck or close to it for 9 1/2 minutes as he lay on the pavement on his stomach, his hands cuffed behind him and his face jammed against the ground.

Law enforcement veterans inside and outside the Minneapolis department testified for the prosecution that Chauvin used excessive force and went against his training, while medical experts said Floyd died of asphyxia, or lack of oxygen, because his breathing was constricted by the way he was held down. Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson called a police use-of-force expert and a forensic pathologist to help make the case that Chauvin acted reasonably against a struggling suspect and that Floyd died because of an underlying heart condition and his illegal drug use. Floyd had high blood pressure and narrowed arteries, and fentanyl and methamphetamine were found in his system.

Prince Philip: Duke's four children to walk alongside coffin at funeral

Princes Charles, Andrew, Edward and Princess Anne, as well as grandsons Princes William and Harry, will follow a Land Rover hearse in a procession to St. George's Chapel, Windsor. The guest list for the service includes 30 people, with three German relatives.

Those attending will wear morning coats with medals, or day dress, but not military uniform. The congregation will put on masks and socially distance in line with Covid lockdown rules, with the Queen

seated alone. The details of Prince Philip's ceremonial royal funeral at the chapel in the grounds of Windsor Castle at 15:00 BST were released by Buckingham Palace. A Palace spokesman said the plans have been modified to take account of current public health guidelines, but the ceremonial aspects of the day and the service remain in line with the duke's wishes. He said the service will be a reflection of Prince Philip's military affiliations and personal elements of his life. The

other guests include the Duchess of Cornwall and the Duchess of Cambridge; all of the duke's grandchildren and their spouses; the children of the Queen's sister, Princess Margaret, and Bernhard the Hereditary Prince of Baden; Donatus, Prince and Landgrave of Hesse; and Prince Philipp of Hohenlohe-Langenburg. The Countess Mountbatten of Burma, previously known as Lady Romsey and later Lady Brabourne, who was Philip's carriage driving partner and one of his clos-

est friends, will also be in attendance. The 67-year-old countess is the wife of Earl Mountbatten, Norton Knatchbull - the grandson of Prince Philip's uncle the 1st Earl Mountbatten, who was killed by the IRA in 1979. Buckingham Palace said the Queen faced "some very difficult" decisions in selecting the guests permitted under Covid rules, from original plans for a 800-strong congregation, adding she wanted all branches of her husband's family to be represented.



HRH Prince Philip



KOBE BRYANT WILL BE PRESENTED BY MICHAEL JORDAN AT HALL OF FAME

Michael Jordan will present Kobe Bryant into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame at the induction ceremony on May 15, the Hall announced in a news release on Thursday. The class of 2020 ceremony – postponed last year because of Covid-19 – is one of the most star-studded classes in Hall history. Patrick Baumann, presented by Russ Granik (2013); Vlade Divac 2019; Kobe Bryant, presented by Michael Jordan (2009); Tamika Catch-

ings, presented by Alonzo Mourning (2014); Dawn Staley (2013); Tim Duncan, presented by David Robinson (2009); Kevin Garnett, presented by Isiah Thomas (2000); Kim Mulkey, presented by Michael Jordan (2009); Barbara Stevens presented by Geno Auriemma (2006); Muffet McGraw (2017); Eddie Sutton, presented by John Calipari (2015); Bill Self (2017); Sidney Moncrief (2019); Rudy Tomjanovich, presented by Calvin Murphy (1993); and Hakeem Olaju-

won (2008). Presenters, who must already be in the Hall of Fame, are often on stage alongside the inductee, but they normally don't give speeches. The Hall of Fame said presenters are chosen by incoming Hall of Famers, or their family members if recognized posthumously. Bryant, his daughter Gianna, and seven others, died in a helicopter crash on January 26th 2020 in California, mere weeks before the Hall of Fame announced Bryant as a finalist.



HOLDER RECEIVED MAJOR HONOUR

Former West Indies captain Jason Holder has been named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers-of-the-Year, confirming his status as one of the top performers in world cricket.

The Barbadian was announced on Wednesday, joining Englishmen Zak Crawley, Dom Sibley and Darren Stevens, along with Pakistani Mohammad Rizwan, as the five most influential players identified by cricket's most respected and authoritative voice.

Wisden, while making the announcement, said Holder played an instrumental role in West Indies only win over England as captain during last year's historic three-Test tour at the height of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

He bagged six for 42 in the first innings of the opening Test at the Rose Bowl in Southampton to bowl out the hosts for only 204, laying the foundation for the visitor's four wicket victory.

The 29-year-old said the award means a lot and he is delighted with his performance. Holder said his hard work and dedication have been paying off and he just wants to continue growing and reach greater heights.

Holder becomes the third regional player in the last nine years to bag the award, joining Shai Hope (2018) and retired stroke-maker Marlon Samuels in 2013.

President of Cricket West Indies (CWI) Ricky Skerritt was high in praise for Holder, congratulating the former skipper for making West Indies proud with his all-round excellence. Skerritt said Holder is a very intelligent athlete.



NO VENUES HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR HOME SERIES

Cricket West Indies (CWI) chief executive Johnny Grave said no venues have been selected for the forthcoming home series against South Africa, Australia or Pakistan.

Trinidad Newsday reported on Tuesday that the entire South Africa tour of the West Indies is tentatively set to be hosted in Trinidad.

Grave said on Tuesday that CWI hasn't yet agreed on venues for the internationals against South Africa, Australia and Pakistan.

Grave explained that CWI

is still talking to Ministries of Health in the region to understand what the protocols might be for both internationals and regional cricket. The Englishman said he thinks the lowest risk countries will get the nod.

The just-concluded tour of the West Indies – which involved three T20 Internationals, three One-day Internationals and two Tests – was staged entirely at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds and the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, both in Antigua.

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