

2021: REVENUE RECOVERY YEAR

SEE PAGE 3



POLICING IN THE US COMES UNDER THE MICROSCOPE, FINALLY!

The unrelenting killing of African Americans in the United States by law enforcement officers must be a matter of concern for all of humanity.

The United States has often promoted itself as the leader of the democracy world where the principles of democratic, justice and fair play are deeply embedded into the country's legal and political systems.

Yet despite its self-righteous posture on the world stage, there is an ugly under-belly to the US justice system that has been playing before our collective eyes for generations with no let-up in site. That ugly under-belly of the US justice system is the killing of mainly African American young men by police officers.

Police officers in the United States have enjoyed what is termed qualified immunity

which protects them from civil lawsuits for actions that may have committed in carrying out their duties. "In the United States, qualified immunity is a legal principle that grants government officials performing discretionary functions immunity from civil suits unless the plaintiff shows that the official violated "clearly established statutory or constitutional rights of which a reasonable person would have known". This is how the term is explained in the literature.

The rate of police killings of black people in the US is like a disease in the American body politic; no other race in the US has suffered as much at the hands of law enforcement. What is particularly troubling is that in most cases the victims have been stopped for minor traffic violations or simply for 'be-

ing black'.

By comparison, white alleged perpetrators of mass killings in the US are more likely to be taken in alive by the police, except in those cases where they kill themselves.

The matter moved from the sublime to the ridiculous when the white teenager who killed eight people who were praying at a church, had police officers stopped at a fast food restaurant to purchase food for him. Then the man who murdered another eight people – six of whom were Asian Americans - at massage parlors last month, the police chief reported to the media that the perpetrator 'had a bad day'. White police officer, Derek Chauvin, was convicted for the murder of George Floyd last week for kneeling on this man's neck for nine and a half min-

utes, Yet less than an hour after the verdict, a teenage black girl was shot dead by police in Indiana and in North Carolina the autopsy has indicated that a black man shot dead the day after, was executed.

It is against this background that we welcomed the announcement from the International Commission of Legal Experts that they were releasing a report on Tuesday of their findings on racist police tactics in the US. The commission also found the US guilty of crimes against humanity. (That report has since been released). The report is the culmination of weeks of live hearings in the cases of 45 people of African descent killed by police and one who was left paralyzed, as well as months of review of relevant documents.

The Commission comprised Antigua and Barbuda's Governor General Deputy, Sir Clare Roberts as well as Vice Chancellor of the UWI, Sir Hilary Beckles. The international community took a stance against the apartheid system in

South Africa. It was that pressure that precipitated the fall of the cruel system. There needs to be a similar coalescing of interna-

tional efforts to pressure the US to end the murder of black Americans. Enough is enough!

2021: A YEAR OF REVENUE RECOVERY



Raju Boddu

Revenue collections at the Customs and Excise Division, one of the country's main revenue centres, declined by almost twelve per cent in the last year when compared with the previous year, 2019. However, although revenue collections at the department are down for the first four months of the year compared with the corresponding period last year, Comptroller of Custom, Raju Boddu, is predicting that collections will rebound this year to make up much of the losses encountered last year. Figures from the division show that so far this month collections have totalled \$22,054,321.00 which is less by almost two million from last April's total of \$24,051,354.00. For the period, January to April last year, the Customs Division collected \$119,034,336.00 compared with 104,779,310.00. Overall collections for the year 2020, was \$343.6 million which represented a decline of over eleven per cent over the 2019 figures of \$389.6 million. According to the Customs chief,

the figures for Antigua and Barbuda have been considered to be among the best performance by a customs division throughout the Caribbean. He noted that most Caribbean territories recorded much steeper declines

in revenues from their customs division. Referring to the decline in revenues for the first quarter of the month compared with last year, Boddu said he is not surprised as prior to the lock-down caused by the corona-

JOB VACANCY

IT SUPPORT

APPLICATION DEADLINE
30TH APRIL, 2021

STATE INSURANCE

COMPANY LIMITED

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

<p>REQUIREMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Typing and Data Entry Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 WPM and above • Data Entry Experience • Attention to Detail • Communication Skills • Customer Service • Clerical and Administrative Skills • Written Communication • Completion of Network Administration Tasks such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Configure and maintain the organization's computer network including both software and hardware such as routers and switches. • Setting up user accounts, assigning privileges and passwords for the organization's employees. • Monitor the usage of network by the organization's employees • Examine the network for any performing issues, such as a system crash, and then troubleshoot and document the identified issues. • Coordinate with employees in other departments and teams. • Planning future IT solutions. • Checking and ensuring that all equipment follows the industry standards. 	<p>REQUIREMENTS (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Security • Knowledge of IP addressing, subnet and some common networking protocols like IPv4 and IPv6. • Knowledge of the common operating systems such as Windows. • Knowledge of ISP/Communication Providers and Virtual Private Networks (VPNs). • Microsoft Office Suite • Proficiency in the following – Access, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Publisher and Word; others a plus. • Desktop Management of Microsoft Windows 10 • Microsoft Server 2012 and/or 2016 • MySQL and/or SQL Database Creation and Querying • Other related duties that may be assigned.
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virus pandemic, the division was on the way to recording perhaps its best year ever. "2020 March was a very good month for us; we were off to a flying start. At the end of the first quarter, we were up by a surplus of two million dollars on the best performing year – 2019. This means we were heading towards that goal of collecting in excess of \$400 million before the pandemic derailed all that," he explained.

Boddu predicts that while revenue for the

first quarter of 2021 is down compared with the same time last year that the gains in revenue collections will begin manifesting themselves by the second quarter of this year. The comptroller reported that the second quarter of last year was particularly bad for revenue collections at the division because that period was when the lock-down was fully enforced. "The next quarter – April, May and June – will be better than the last quarter or last year at this time

when there was nearly a fifty per cent decline in economic activity. So by June we should be on par with collections for last year," he stated. As the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions in the country continues and there is some measure of normality, Boddu is firmly of the view that 2021 will see revenues of about \$370 million, much closer to the 389 million collected last year.

According to Boddu, the aim at the Customs and Excise Division is to regain the \$43 mil-

lion lost last year. However, he said the continued spread of the virus in some countries makes achieving this 'a daunting task.' This 'third wave' has had an impact on the supply chain, thus affecting world trade.

"The cascading effect can be felt by some countries like us. We therefore expect to regain \$30-35 million which we lost. 2021 is for me a recovery year, how much we recover depends on how the economic activities unfold," he declared.

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WIOC ANNOUNCES NEW CLOSING DATE FOR SHARE OFFER



Gregory Georges CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) has announced a new closing date for the offer of its shares for sale to members of the public. Originally set for 21st April, the company last week indicated that the share offering would be extended for up to a month. In a press statement, WIOC has formally announced that the closing date for the sale is now 21st May 2021. The company has also announced changes to the share offering. "A new closing date of 21st May 2021 has been set and will allow for further investor engagement with the public. Addition-

ally, an amendment to the prospectus allows for the maximum share per applicant to increase from 15,096 shares to 50,000 shares," the statement said. WIOC Chief Executive Officer Gregory Georges said the decision to extend the share offering was based on the need to attract more institutional investors. "We wanted to give them more time to make their decisions regarding their investment strategies. But at the same time, we wanted to make it worth their while hence the reason to increase the maximum amount of shares per applicant from 15,096 to

50,000," he noted, Georges is of the view that many of the institutional players would wish to invest as much as three million dollars, which is what the 50,000 shares represent. Up to 21st April, the first deadline for the share offer, most of the shares were being purchased by the individual investors as up to that point close to five hundred had applied to purchase shares. WIOC has experienced consistent growth across its business throughout the years with the pre-COVID period in the financial year 2019, recorded profits amassing over twenty-six million dollars. In 2020, despite the negative impact of reduced traffic at the V.C. Bird International Airport and limited business with key customers in the hotel and restaurant sector, WIOC generated net income of \$14.5 million dollars. CEO Georges consid-

ers the 2020 performance commendable and a reflection of the Company's resilience and diversity. Georges commented that "although 2020 saw a decline due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, his expectation is that the company will return to pre-COVID-19 levels of revenue and earnings after 2022." He commented further that he is confident in the company's strategic thrust which includes the following projects and initiatives:

1. Investment in renewable energy
2. Rebranding and upgrading of service stations
3. New partnership in fuel supply at the VC.. Bird International Airport

The offer of the sale of shares in WIOC was a commitment made by the Antigua and Barbuda government immediately after it purchased the company from the Bruce Rappaport estate.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne expresses solidarity with India



Prime Minister Gaston Browne wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the Republic of India expressing his gratitude to the Indian government for support during the pandemic. In the letter to Prime Minister Modi, PM Browne expressed the solidarity of Antigua and Barbuda in the crisis which India now faces as COVID-19 cases explode in your many cities and communities. “My heart feels your pain, Prime

Minister, and we can only imagine the mounting challenge which the circumstances now pose for your government and people. We pray for India’s recovery and stand in solidarity with India at this time,” PM Browne said. The country’s leader went on to thank Prime Minister Modi for his extreme generosity and the consistent support shown to Antigua and Barbuda. “Be assured of my country’s contin-

uous support and well-wishes,” PM Browne added. According to CNN, “The country is experiencing the world’s worst outbreak. Daily cases have been rising continuously for the past ten days; on Monday, India reported 352,991 new cases, breaking yet another record for the highest single-day figure globally. On the ground, these numbers translate to heart wrench-

ing tragedy. Photos show grieving families dressed in full protective suits at mass cremations, performing last rites surrounded by dozens of other burning funeral pyres. Hospitals have run out of basic medical supplies, with many patients dying due to oxygen shortages. Family members are driving from clinic to clinic, frantically searching for open ICU beds for their loved ones.”



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Media reports from around the globe are also suggesting that the situation may possibly get worse.

“The government has been scrambling to respond to the crisis, with countries around the world offering aid. But for now, the outbreak shows no signs of letting up, and experts warn it could get even worse.

“I’m afraid this is not the peak,” said Dr. Giridhara R. Babu of the

Public Health Foundation of India on Monday. “The kind of data that we see, (we are) at least two to three weeks away from the peak.”

The majority of the COVID-19 vaccines, which are said to be the best weapon against serious illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19 are coming from the Serum Institute of India (SII) – which is the world’s largest manu-

facturer of vaccines. Countries including Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Dominican Republic have all benefited from India’s humanitarian aid.

During the height of the pandemic in 2020,

India donated one million dollars’ worth of Personal Protective Equipment to Antigua and Barbuda to help fight COVID-19. The items donated to the twin-island state included 115,000 surgical masks, two thousand full-cover protective goggles, 200,000 examination gloves, two thousand face shields, 10,000 disposable impervious gowns, and six ventilators.

UK BORDER FORCE DONATES EQUIPMENT TO CUSTOMS DIVISION



UK's Resident High Commissioner, Lindsay Thompson

The United Kingdom government, through the Border Force, has made a donation of equipment to the Antigua and Barbuda Customs Division.

At a brief hand-over ceremony on Tuesday, Comptroller of Customs Raju Boddu, said the division has been the beneficiary of several pro-

grammes of assistance from the UK Border Force over the past several years. "The UK Border Force has long been a longstanding trusted partner of the Customs Division, advising us on enforcement strategies as well as assisting us in kind or by providing equipment to improve the work that we do,"

he related. In fact, Boddu reported that prior to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, a team from UK Border Force was embedded in the Customs Division, offering advice in several areas. "They helped us to improve the operations at the airport and elsewhere as well as in specialised training," he recalled.

The comptroller announced that the UK Border Force has also been offering advice and training to the local Customs Division on implementing the NCEN software programme. "We have tested and are ready to implement the programme which allows us to share information with other customs divisions across the globe. This programme will help us to secure the borders against illicit trade, illicit drugs and firearms that may be entering the country," he stated.

The UK's resident High Commissioner, Lindsay Thompson, said the donation of fifteen thousand dollars worth of equipment represents

"a further example of the continued close cooperation between the UK and Antigua and Barbuda governments."

"With two flights weekly between our two countries, the UK is keenly aware of the importance of supporting our customs and border partners across the Atlantic," she remarked.

She added that it is important that customs officers carry out their duties in an atmosphere of health and safety. The list of equipment includes the following:

- Shoes (weather-proof and oil resistant leather boots)
- Latex gloves
- Knee Pads
- Goggles
- Flashlights
- Hard Hats
- Ear defenders
- Cameras
- Hex Key Sets
- Binoculars
- Night vision headset
- Ladders

VACCINATION TOTALS EXCEED THIRTY THOUSAND



The number of people who have received vaccines under the government’s vaccination programme has now exceeded thirty thousand.

The Ministry of Health has revealed that to date up to 30, 316 individuals have presented themselves to be vaccinated with their first jab of the vaccine.

Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph expressed his appreciation to members of the public who turned out to receive the COVID-19 vaccine over the weekend at the public market. As a result of the success of the mobile vaccination service at the public market, the Ministry of Health, is expanding the service and taking it to the people in areas with high human traffic. Three additional strategic locations for the mobile vaccination service will be announced during the week.

The ministry has expressed appreciation to healthcare workers, police officers and volunteers for going beyond the call of duty, for their recognition of the importance of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and for their assistance last weekend.



JOB VACANCY UNDERWRITER

JOB PURPOSE
To evaluate applicants for insurance, and determine whether or not a prospective customer should be insured and, if so, recommend an appropriate premium to take on that level of risk.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Analyze information provided on application
- Assist Senior Underwriter in servicing and operational management of accounts
- Negotiate terms of insurance policies with policyholders and or brokers
- Underwrite new and renewal business under supervision by the Senior Underwriter
- Prepare policy documentation
- Issue non-binding/indicative terms
- Review applications for compliance and adherence
- Any other duties as assigned

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum of two (2) years Industry Underwriting experience
- Recognized insurance diploma or certification
- Associates degree in Business Administration, Finance or related

Bachelors in administration, finance or related field an asset

SKILLS AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

- Effective verbal and written communication skills
- Detail Oriented
- Critical thinking skills
- Excellent customer service skills
- Ability to work independently and as a team member
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Proficiency with MS Office



**APPLICATION DEADLINE:
30TH APRIL, 2021**

✉

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Human Resources Manager
State Insurance Company Limited
Redcliffe Street, St. John’s, Antigua

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CALVIN AYRE FOUNDATION MAKES DONATION TO SVG RELIEF



CALVIN AYRE FOUNDATION

The Calvin Ayre Foundation (CAF) has made a significant financial donation to the relief efforts now underway in St. Vincent and the Grenadines where thousands have been made homeless following this month's eruption of the La Soufrière volcano.

The donation of EC\$540,000 (US\$200,000) was made to the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS). The announcement was made during a brief presentation with Director Philmore Mullin at his office at NODS.

CAF's Executive Director, Corinna Delowsky, after an extensive review of the situation, said "Now, more than ever, we have to be our brother's keeper. So, on behalf of CAF and Ambassador Calvin Ayre, we're proud to assist by donating this cheque." Media Relations Specialist Jamilla Kirwan said, "One of our Pillars of Giving at the Calvin Ayre Foundation is Emergency Response, which we've been doing since the beginning of this pandemic, and, while we know that the pandemic is

still very real here in Antigua and Barbuda, we think it is incumbent upon us to help our brothers and sisters in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in their time of need."

Mullin expressed his gratitude on behalf NODS and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, for what he considers a timely donation. "I want to use this opportunity to thank the Calvin Ayre

Foundation for this very timely donation to assist the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in a very special way. They are now going through some challenges, which will probably continue for some time and so it would be nice if other good corporate citizens can come forward and make some more donations to assist them." According to Mul-

lin, the donation will assist NODS in procuring essential items from a volcano relief needs list, which will include general needs such as hygiene products and medical equipment such as defibrillators, cardiac monitors, wheelchairs, portable oxygen cylinders, air purifiers, respirator masks. Other sectors of need include health, structural and agriculture.

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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



APUA EXPLAINS TWO-DAY BROADBAND OUTAGES

The APUA Telecoms Business Unit is providing information regarding a two-day broadband outage earlier this week. In a statement apologizing to its broadband subscribers, APUA said the outage, on Sunday and Monday, affected customers in the following areas: Old Parham Road, New Winthropes, Renfrews, Belmont, Buckleys, Cedar Valley, Clarke's Hill, Fitches Creek, Gunthropes, Lightfoot and Potters. According to the statement, some mobile subscribers also experienced challenges during this time as well. "The outage was the result of technical issues that affected the power supply to a major network point at Cassada Gardens. The engineering team was able to isolate the issue and a strong effort was quickly mobilised to restore services. All

units are currently up and running; however, subscribers who may still be without service are asked to contact Customer Support at 611 immediately," the statement added.

APUA is assuring its customers of its commitment to continually improve its services and they can look forward to the new offerings that will be available following its

major network upgrade currently underway.

Application Deadline
30th April, 2021

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

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Review applications for compliance and adherence
- Provide comprehensive quotations and recommendations for cover to corporate and other prospective clients
- Issuance of policies
- Negotiate terms of insurance policies with policyholders and or brokers
- Develop and maintain a profitable portfolio
- Review existing products and identify new products to drive new and renewal business
- Manage client renewal lists
- Train and mentor team members in Underwriting and other techniques
- Any other duties as assigned by the Executive Manager

REQUIREMENTS

- Decision making skills and attention to details
- Team player with excellent interpersonal skills and communication skills
- Negotiation skills and problem-solving ability
- Time and priority management skills
- Excellent computer skills
- Leadership skills

EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of 5 years industry underwriting experience

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Recognized insurance diploma or certification
- Bachelors in administration, finance or related field will be an asset
- Knowledge of insurance laws and practices

JOB VACANCY
SENIOR UNDERWRITER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Email your detailed resume with cover letter to:

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

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AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Instructed by the **ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA DEVELOPMENT BANK** of 27 St. Mary's Street, in the City of Saint John, in the State of Antigua and Barbuda, I will sell by public auction on Tuesday 18 May 2021 at 10:00 a.m. on site, the under mentioned property owned by Ms. Laura Nicholas of Cedar Grove, St. John's, Antigua.

The property is located at Mount Pleasant, St. John's, Antigua and consists of a vacant parcel of land of an area of approximately 11,835.22 sq. ft. / 0.27 Acre.

The service lines for potable water, electricity and telephone which are provided by A.P.U.A are accessible to the property.

The land is registered under the Registered Land Act, 1975 as follows:-

REGISTRATION SECTION:
Hodges Bay & Thibous

BLOCK:
43 1896A

PARCEL:
643

Parcel No. 643 of Block No. 43 1896A is bounded by the following:
On the North by: Parcel 560 ;
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On the East by: Parcel 644 ;
On the West by: Parcel 642

Particulars of the sale can be obtained from:
Mr. Trevor 'Teddy' Santos
Licensed Auctioneer
Office: (268) 562-7653
Cell & WhatsApp: (268) 464-7653
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Facebook: Auction Antigua



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

The UWI's Stellar Leadership Confirmed: Times Higher Education 2021 Impact Rankings.

The UWI Regional Headquarters, Jamaica W.I. Tuesday, April 27, 2021. —The Times Higher Education (THE) has released its long-anticipated, prestigious 2021 Global University Rankings for the category—national, regional and international “Impact”. The best universities are ranked using “Impact” as the criterion for measuring their performance excellence. The rankings for 2021 are more competitive than prior years. In 2020, 768 universities were ranked from 85 countries. In 2021, the number increased to 1,115 universities from 98 countries and cities, an increase of 45%. Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles made the announcement and discussed the University’s performance in these latest rankings during a media conference held earlier today. Joined by Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs, Dr Luz Longsworth and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic, Industry Partnerships and Planning, Professor Densil Williams, he shared details of how The UWI has consistently top performed in Times Higher Education’s rankings since 2018, as well as the University’s strategy for pursuing advancement of the SDGs in the region. The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings are based on universities’ performance across the spectrum of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Universities that met the merit bar for rankings are assessed using four of the SDGs. They are evaluat-

ed using data that highlight their performance in three areas: leadership and stewardship; research output and teaching and advocacy. Of the four SDGs, only one, SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals, is compulsory, while the three other SDGs are open choices. The UWI chose: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being); SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). The UWI's relative performance in these four categories further enhanced its international standing, consolidating its reputation as a global leader. It maintained its status as the only university in the English-speaking Caribbean to make the global elite ranking. According to UNESCO and the International Association of Universities, 20,000 of the 30,586 universities in the world from 196 countries are officially accredited. The UWI

was included in the top 1,115 of these universities for world SDG "Impact Ranking". Using UNESCO's base data, the Times impact ranking positions The UWI in the top 2.5% of the best universities globally in 2021. This impressive result confirms that the strategic leadership and stewardship of The UWI, and its scholastic research output and advocacy, were internationally monitored and measured and adjudged to be excellent. They reflect the excellence of UWI researchers in the SDG categories, and support the effectiveness of The UWI's global partnering strategies. They also give context to the United Nations' selection of our Vice-Chancellor as a higher education strategist to provide visioning for the global university sector up to 2030 and beyond. "THE continues to affirm The UWI's stellar perfor-

mance as a reputable higher educational institution on the global stage. This is a testament that, through the work of our scholars, administrators, and students; and with the support of our governmental partners, plural agencies and the regional private sector, The UWI continues to add significant value to the regional and global community," stated Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Densil Williams, The UWI's lead strategic planner. Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs, Dr Luz Longworth, noted that "The UWI's emergence in the global higher education arena is the basis of its future financial sustainability. Without a respected ranking status there will be no competitive success in winning international students, and securing substantial research grants; and critically, international donor

funding will be minimal without top class international partnerships." These assessments were supported by Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, who said that "through international partnerships universities are positioned to develop innovative research, mobilize science, and distribute knowledge in order to impact policies for economic growth, social inclusion and job creation." He added further, "The UWI is here to serve the development of our region as its top priority. In a community that is vulnerable to existential threats—climate change, chronic diseases, and COVID-19—the impact of universities such as ours has never been more critical. This global ranking confirms that The UWI is at once excellent and ethical."





WEST INDIES OIL COMPANY LIMITED Press Release

WIOC SHARE DIVESTMENT CONTINUES WITH NEW CLOSING DATE

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda – April 28, 2021

The West Indies Oil Company Limited, (WIOC) – continues its divestment of ten percent (10%) shares owned by the Government of Antigua & Barbuda (GOAB). A new closing date of May 21, 2021 has been set and will allow for further investor engagement with the public. Additionally, an amendment to the prospectus allows for the maximum share per applicant to increase from 15,096 shares to 50,000 shares.

The decision to divest shares is a result of the GOAB making good on its commitment of creating an opportunity for Antiguan & Barbudans to become shareholders of WIOC; the first private Antiguan & Barbudan non-financial institution to go public.

WIOC has experienced consistent growth across its business throughout the years with the pre-COVID period in the financial year 2019, recorded profits amassing over \$26 million dollars. In 2020, despite the negative impact of reduced traffic at the VC Bird International Airport and limited business with key customers in the hotel and restaurant sector, WIOC generated net income of \$14.5 million dollars. CEO Mr. Gregory Georges considers the 2020 performance commendable and a reflection of the Company's resilience and diversity.

Mr. Georges commented that "although 2020 saw a decline due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, his expectation is that the company will return to pre COVID-19 levels of revenue and earnings after 2022". He commented further that he is confident in the Company's strategic thrust which includes the following projects and initiatives:

1. Investment in renewable energy
2. Rebranding and upgrading of service stations
3. New partnership in fuel supply at the VC Bird International Airport

The CEO gave special mention to a Business Park project on Friars Hill Road, adding that the groundbreaking is planned for later this year. "With a healthy portfolio of innovative projects combined with a committed and talented team of employees, the future of WIOC looks bright" ended Georges.

Additional information and Prospectus can be found at www.westindiesoil.com/invest
The Offer is subject to the laws of Antigua and Barbuda, specifically the Securities Act 2001 and the Companies Act 1995.

(continued)

Lead Arranger:

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This advertisement does not constitute a recommendation by the Joint Lead Arrangers, the Offeror or WIOC to any recipient of this material in relation to this Offer. Each person should consult with a financial advisor licensed to provide financial advice by the Eastern Caribbean Securities Regulatory Commission before making any investment decision. Prospective investors understand that there are risks involved in acquiring or holding the securities being advertised. Securities- may fluctuate in value in money terms and the investor may not get back the amount invested. Income (dividends) from the securities may fluctuate in value in money terms. The securities are not traded on the Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange so it may be difficult for investors to sell the security or to obtain reliable information on its value or the risks to which it is exposed. Prospective investors understand that any forward-looking statements made do not constitute guarantees of future performance and involve assumptions, uncertainties, risks and various factors that are difficult to predict and may cause forecasts to materially differ from reality.

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ACCOMMODATING EMPLOYEES WITH NCD'S.

This article provides guidance on best practices for providing accommodations to employees who suffer from Non-Communicable Diseases. NCD's are defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as chronic diseases, which tend to be of long duration, and are the result of a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental, and behavioral factors. The main types of NCDs are cardiovascular diseases like heart attacks and strokes, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), an accommodation is a modification at the workplace which will allow the employee to continue to perform their duties. This includes modifying work schedules, restructuring job functions, providing special leave, providing specialized equipment, or retrofitting workspaces. In general, no one size fits all approach is possible with accommodations. Rather, they must be tailored to suit each indi-

vidual employee and will be based on the requirements of the job they hold and on recommendations from the employee and/or their health care provider. All employers should have an established policy where they embrace diversity in the employee body and understand and accept that employees with a disabling NCD can be valued contributors to the company's success. Clear communication of this policy must begin even before an employee is hired. In many instances, especially where a company does not require a pre-employment physical as part of the recruitment and selection process, prospective employees are afraid to communicate honestly regarding their NCD's out of fear that they will not be selected for the job if they disclose them. Members of HRPAB have noted that when NCD's develop after an employee is already engaged, employees are more likely to discuss their health challenges with their Human Resource (HR) profes-

sionals once there is an atmosphere of trust and the complete confidence that where possible, accommodations may be mutually agreed to. A vigilant HR professional would note a decrease in productivity caused by an increase in sick days as a signal that an employee may be struggling with a health challenge. There must be dialogue between employee and employer for accommodations to take place. HRPAB recommends a simple process for providing accommodations, which may be initiated either by the employee or the HR professional. First, have a discussion with the employee about their requested accommodations. Employee must provide appropriate documentation from their health care provider to support their request, which should disclose the nature of the impairment or medical condition, the severity of the condition and the extent to which the condition impairs the employee's ability to perform his/her duties satis-

factorily.

This will allow HR to discuss the proposed accommodations with the affected employee's direct supervisor or department head to determine whether they are feasible. In some instances, accommodation is not possible. For example, if a porter who is hired to lift boxes sustains an injury to his back which prevents him from lifting boxes permanently, he may not be able to continue in the role in which he was hired. In these circumstances, a reassignment may be appropriate before severance is considered. Analysis should then be done of the request including cost as some accommodations may not be feasible even though they are possible as they may be too costly or too disruptive to normal operations. For example, the provision of a special van to transport a disabled employee to and from work may pose an undue hardship for a small company. After this analysis, it is then HR's responsibility

to communicate with the employee in writing the company's position. HR should also review periodically, the efficacy of the accommodations established as changes may be required.

In summary, though not always practicable, accommodations are an option for employers who value their human resources and want to retain the services of their employees who might otherwise be barred from work due to their medical conditions.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hr-pro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HRPro268.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD

Personal Development



Personal development takes place over the course of a person's entire life. It covers improving self-awareness, identity, potential, goals, enhancing the quality of life and contributing to the realization of dreams and aspirations.



Self-awareness

You must first explore who you are as an individual. Developing an idea for your future gives you a better sense of control over your life.



Goals

Identifying your goals is important. This requires you to ask yourself a few questions. What is important to you? What new skills do you want to acquire? Which achievements would make you happier? Do you want to move ahead to the next stage in your career?



Planning

Make a list. Take a look at your list and select one goal which is most important that you'll work on first. After doing this, arrange your priority list and begin to plan the steps that will be taken to get you closer to your goal(s).



Set a deadline

When planning, we must be realistic. It is always good to determine how long it will take to achieve your goal(s). Once you've established a realistic timeframe for those goal(s), it is important to stay committed.



Take Action

Once you've made a start, the momentum will increase. Take small steps each day.



Monitor Progress

The best motivator in achieving goals is to monitor your progress. It is important to recognize when you are moving forward. Celebrate/commend yourself on the things that you are doing well. If something is not going so well, ask yourself what you can do differently. Apply a new direction and keep moving.

Five more Brazilian variant cases, nine in a week



People join queue to be vaccinated in T&T

Trinidad Guardian

- There is now growing concern about the spread of the Brazilian variant in this country after five additional cases were reported Monday, bringing the number of people with the highly transmissible variant of COVID-19 to nine in a week.

Health officials now fear that the variant could be circulating in the population.

In a statement Monday, the Ministry of Health confirmed that the Brazilian SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern (P.1) was detected in five additional unlinked people within the country's borders.

SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19.

The first P.1 infection in a local sample was confirmed on Monday, April 19, by the University of the West Indies which screens for the variant. It was found in a migrant in Mayaro.

Last Friday (April 23) the Ministry of Health revealed that three additional samples tested positive for the variant. The samples were taken from the Caroni, Victoria, and St. George West counties. One was a non-national, one a national, and the other a minor.

Monday's variants of concern were detect-

ed in three people from St. George Central and two people in St. George West. These five were all nationals.

The Ministry of Health's release yesterday noted that none of the now nine people infected with the variant have any epidemiological link to each other and cited their detection in people from varying areas across the country.

"All contact tracing and isolation procedures are in progress and are being managed by the relevant County Medical Officer of Health with the aim of reducing the spread of this Variant of Concern," the Ministry's release

said.

The growing number of people testing positive for the Brazilian variant comes as the country records triple-digit figures of COVID-19 cases.

Yesterday, 120 positive cases were recorded. The death count now stands at 159.

Hours earlier, the Ministry's Epidemiology Division's Technical Director, Dr. Avery Hinds, acknowledged the probability that there were other people infected with the variant outside of those already identified.

"While we cannot yet say that this is an established set of community

spread, what we can say is that in the absence of geographic and epidemiologic links we continue to monitor. But it's entirely possible that once the variant is introduced into the population, then it does what variants do, which is to establish itself as one of the circulating strains," he said.

Further increasing this likelihood of it being in circulation undetected, is the university's limited screening capacity which currently only allows for the random testing of samples, not all collected. However, Dr. Hinds noted, there are other effective ways to work around the limited capacity.

"All positives cannot yet be tested for variants of concern, but the appropriate follow up for those who've already been confirmed in terms of contact tracing and subsequent testing, will shed some light on additional spread in addition to the current random sequencing that is being done," he said.

Dr. Hinds indicated that there are ongoing discussions about increasing the university's capacity to screen for the variant.

Jamaica hoping to be on list for US vaccines



A shipment of AstraZeneca vaccine arrives in Jamaica

Jamaica Observer - MINISTER of Health and Wellness Dr. Christopher Tufton says the Government has been in communication with the United States and is hoping that Jamaica will be one of the beneficiaries of the 60 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines to be distributed by the US soon.

"We have to wait and see, but we have been in discussions through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade with our partners in the US Administration around accessing vaccines, whether for sale or grant. Those discussions continue, and so we would certainly hope that is the case," Tufton told the Jamaica Observer yesterday at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston.

Monday, the White House announced that the Biden Administration is expected to share as many as 60 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines in coming months, following federal safety reviews.

But whether or not Jamaica is a recipient of such aid in the now over-a-year-long COVID-19 fight is a decision that lies solely in the hands of the US.

"They make those decisions, and our communication lines are open and have been for some times," said Tufton.

Jamaica Monday received a fourth shipment of vaccines when 55,200 doses of AstraZeneca arrived in the country through the COVAX medical facility. In response, Tufton said the country has been making "some progress" in receiving the drug, and that another shipment is expected in May.

"We hope that May shipment will be more than the 55,200 we got this time around. The vaccine does not have the virus in it. There's a view that somehow the vaccine give you COVID and you're therefore going to have the risk of suffering. There's no way the vaccine is going to create the virus in you. What is important to know is that when you get the first dose of the COVID vaccine, you need between 21 to 28 days for the vaccine to take effect," he said.

PM considers early release of 50 prisoners



SVG PM Dr. Ralph Gonsalves speaking with reporters on prison release

Kingstown, St. Vincent, iWitnessNews - Between 40 and 50 prisoners could be released this week following a meeting of the Committee of Mercy.

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves told the media on Saturday that he has asked to be sent a list of prisoners who could be considered for release on compassionate grounds. Speaking in Belle Isle outside the correctional facility his government commissioned in that

North Leeward area in 2009, Gonsalves said:

“Prisoners are coping OK. There are contingency plans if we reach at this stage in relation to moving people from here, but that hasn’t arisen.”

He said the Superintendent of Prisons had reported to him “that the prisoners have been very cooperative in this matter” — an apparent reference to the impact of the on-going eruption of La Soufriere volcano.

“I’ve requested a list from the Superintendent of Prisons; persons which are minor offences and people who haven’t paid a fine and might be there and so on, who we can release and couple of people who inside for maintenance monies and them kinda thing,” said Gonsalves, who, as minister of national security, is responsible for prisons.

“So I am trying to see if I can organise that for later this week to have a

meeting with the Committee of Mercy,” he said, adding that the number of persons being considered for release “would not be a significant number”.

“I would say across the population of 400, might be 50, 40, from the list which I did a rough, cursory analysis. It shouldn’t be a lot,” the prime minister said.

He added: “The Committee of Mercy, on these things, is usually very conservative.”

TAKING TO THE AIR: SCIENTIST TO VISIT VOLCANO FROM THE SKY



Bottled water were some of the items shipped from some of the islands

Barbados Advocate - Seismologist Roderick Stewart is expected to visit the summit via aircraft on Monday to see if La Soufrière is building a new dome. On the state-owned radio, Professor Richard Robertson and Dr. Stewart gave Vincentians an update on the volcano's activity since its April 22 eruption.

The scientists confirmed that there were

32 distinct eruptions at La Soufrière. Both radio guests also indicated that a posting station located near the summit has been destroyed and this has affected their ability to collect data on La Soufrière. While the volcano is still active, activity has been low.

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) in its April 25th 6:00 p.m.

situation report stated that, in the last 24 hours, a few long-period hybrid and volcano-tectonic earthquakes have been recorded – there have been no further tremors. The warning level remains red.

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) posted images of more supplies arriving on the island. Guadeloupe and Marti-

nique shipped toiletries, bottled water and mattresses which arrived on the Trinity Transporter on Saturday.

In the St. Joseph's Convent in Kingstown, individuals were treated to homemade meals which included freshly prepared bread. A baker known as "Carib" was designated to prepare the bread for the evacuees' dinner.

QUICK CROSSWORD

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8	6	7	1					
	1	2						

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

An inspiring idea can be refreshing and stimulating. Certain actions might be misconstrued, or a sincere explanation could be thought inappropriate, so consider staying silent if love or money is a primary issue.

♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

Gather all the facts before you implement innovative techniques. Wait for better timing to revise your schedule or adjust your agenda. Use your people skills to navigate challenging situations.

♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

Misunderstandings are possible, so it's a good idea to tread carefully around topics that might be considered sensitive. Discuss the most important matters with your most loyal friends before acting.

♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

It might be tempting to overreact or lose your temper due to a mystery or a misunderstanding. You could feel threatened by someone's avid interest, but it might only be a bit of self-doubt at work.

♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

Working conditions can quickly improve if you can negotiate a better distribution of duties. A friend or partner might be able to offer some inventive ideas that will make everything run more smoothly.

♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

It's not wise to test the depth of the water by jumping in headfirst. Loved ones might be overly sensitive if you challenge their ideals or actions. Say the right things to reassure them.

♎ LIBRA Sept. | 23-Oct. 22

If you rush in to do a job without thinking it through first, you can end up entangled in messy details. Straighten things out by showing your trustworthiness and people will rely on your sincerity.

♏ SCORPIO Oct. | 23-Nov. 21

There may be very little opportunity or little time to put your knowledge to use. Someone may become uncomfortable if you ask them personal questions. However, a partner or loved one will likely be glad to take your side.

♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

If you turn on the charm, it will be easy to get along with others and do a difficult job. Organize your thoughts so you can present a convincing argument if needed.

♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

It may be difficult to make progress if you are faced with talented competition. There may be great pressure on you to perform at your absolute best, so schedule plenty of breaks and get lots of rest.

♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Avoid making crucial financial decisions or major expenditures at this time, and delay the signing of any agreements. Some of your spur-of-the-moment decisions may help you achieve your primary goals but won't grant all your wishes.

♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Your day may feel like you are playing a game of musical chairs. Someone might urge you to try something that isn't a fit for your abilities, leaving you feeling out of the loop.

TAKE ME HOME 



This sweet pup is about 12 weeks old and is a bundle of energy and excitement. Ideally, she should join a family with at least one child to play with to help her work off her energy. She is available for adoption at the Humane Society's animal shelter in Bethesda. The adoption fee of \$100 covers worming, treating for ticks and fleas, vaccinations, and neutering. If you would like to adopt this pup or any of our other dogs or pups

PLEASE CALL US AT 461-4957 FOR MORE INFORMATION. WE ARE OPEN TUESDAY TO SATURDAY FROM 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST

<p>Wed 28 28°/24° AM Showers</p> <p>Wed 28 Day 28° 51% E 21 km/h</p> <p>Morning showers. High 28°C. Winds E at 15 to 30 km/h. Chance of rain 50%.</p> <p>Humidity 70% UV Index Extreme</p> <p>Sunrise 05:43 Sunset 18:26</p>	<p>Wed 28 Night 24° 24% E 17 km/h</p> <p>Mostly cloudy. Low 24°C. Winds E at 10 to 15 km/h.</p> <p>Humidity 74% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 20:19 Moonset 06:56</p> <p>Waning Gibbous</p>
<p>Thu 29 Day 28° 31% E 23 km/h</p> <p>Morning showers. High 28°C. Winds E at 15 to 30 km/h. Chance of rain 30%.</p> <p>Humidity 68% UV Index 8 of 10</p> <p>Sunrise 05:42 Sunset 18:26</p>	<p>Thu 29 Night 24° 33% E 16 km/h</p> <p>Showers late at night. Low 24°C. Winds E at 10 to 15 km/h. Chance of rain 30%.</p> <p>Humidity 77% UV Index 0 of 10</p> <p>Moonrise 21:27 Moonset 07:51</p> <p>Waning Gibbous</p>

COMICS

Dilbert April 27, 2021

HOW DID YOUR ZOOM CALL WITH THE CLIENT WORK OUT?
I LOST ALL RESPECT FOR HIM AFTER SEEING HIS POORLY STAGED BOOKSHELVES IN THE BACKGROUND.
BUT WE'LL STILL TAKE HIS MONEY, RIGHT?
YES, HE DOESN'T DESERVE TO KEEP ANY OF IT.

Garfield April 27, 2021

POH!
ONE OF MY LEGS IS ASLEEP
I'VE GOT YOU BEAT BY THREE

Luann April 27, 2021

GUNTHER? HI! YOU WERE WITH BETS?
NOT ANYMORE. WE WENT TO TIFFANY'S THEN WE LEFT THEN SHE LEFT WHEN I SAID I LOVE YOU AND NOW... HERE I AM.
AND I THINK I LOST HER.
YOU DEFINITELY LOST ME.
I FOLLOWED. HE TOLD TIFFANY WE LOVES HER.

TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Submit community notices to news@pointville.ag

LABOUR DAY ESSAY COMPETITION

Open to students 12-21 years, enrolled in a learning institution in Antigua & Barbuda




PRIZES

12 - 15 YEARS
1st Prize 1 Laptop
2nd Prize \$500 Educational Gift Certificate
3rd Prize \$250 Educational Gift Certificate
16 - 21 YEARS
1st Prize 1 Laptop
2nd Prize \$500
3rd Prize \$250

Trade Unions paved the way for the success of political parties in the Leeward Islands and beyond. These collective bargaining institutions created leaders who challenged the colonial systems that controlled English-speaking Caribbean countries post-1834.

Write an essay at least 500 to 750 words that explains:

- Why did Trade Unions so easily nurture political parties in Antigua and Barbuda after their founding?
- List several important Dates and Unions.
- Who are the most noteworthy leaders emerging from the Unions after 1939?
- Are Trade Unions playing the same roles today in 2021?

Note that 70 years have passed since the first labour day was celebrated.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE MAY 4 2021

Submit in a Sealed Enveloped addressed to:
AT&LU (Essay Competition)
46 North Street
St. John's, ANTIGUA

Winners will be announced on **Monday 10 May 2021** on ABS TV



Brexit: Tensions overshadow EU vote on UK trade deal

EU Commission Chief, Ursula von der Leyen oversees trade relations with the UK

BBC WORLD NEWS - The European Parliament is expected to ratify the post-Brexit EU-UK trade deal - a key move to ensure that tariff- and-quota-free trade continues.

The Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) has been operating provisionally since January. MEPs are expected to vote for it after 20:00 (18:00 GMT).

Brexit tensions remain, including a French threat of "reprisals" against the UK over new fishing restrictions.

Northern Ireland trade is also a thorny issue.

Under a separate protocol, Northern Ireland remains a de facto part of the EU's single market, so goods arriving there from Britain have to undergo EU checks. Since Brexit there has been some disruption to that trade.

The TCA covers EU-UK trade in goods, but not services. The UK economy is dominated by services - sectors such as banking, insurance, advertising and legal advice.

The TCA has still resulted in more paperwork, extra costs and less trade between the two sides since the UK left the EU.

Among the areas not covered by the deal are foreign policy, financial services and student exchanges. Cross-Channel tensions Before the MEPs' debate started, French Europe Minister Clément Beaune accused the UK of blocking fishing rights. He said the EU could respond with "reprisals" in financial services.

"The United Kingdom is expecting quite a few authorisations from us for financial services. We won't give any for as long as we don't have guarantees on fishing and other issues," he said on French news

channel BFMTV.

French fishermen have complained of being prevented from operating in British waters because of difficulties in obtaining licences.

Meanwhile, British seafood exporters have been hit by an EU ban on UK exports of live shellfish. Scottish firms account for most of that business, and some now face collapse.

The UK made fishing rights a key issue in the negotiations, with control over access to its waters seen as a sign of British sovereignty.

CDC says many Americans can now go outside without a mask

NEW YORK (AP) — The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eased its guidelines Tuesday on the wearing of masks outdoors, saying fully vaccinated Americans

don't need to cover their faces anymore unless they are in a big crowd of strangers.

And those who are unvaccinated can go outside without masks in some cases, too.

The new guidance represents another carefully calibrated step on the road back to normal from the coronavirus outbreak that has killed over 570,000 people in U.S.

For most of the past year, the CDC had been advising Americans to wear masks outdoors if they are within 6 feet of each other. The change comes as more than



half of U.S. adults have gotten at least one dose of coronavirus vaccine, and more than a third have been fully vaccinated. “It’s the return of freedom,” said Dr. Mike Saag, an infectious disease expert at the University of Alabama at Birmingham who welcomed the change. “It’s the return of us being able to do normal activities again. We’re not there yet, but we’re on the exit ramp. And that’s a beautiful thing.”

More people need to be vaccinated and concerns persist about variants and other possible shifts in the epidemic. But Saag said the new guidance is a sensible reward following the development and distribution of effective

vaccines, and about 140 million Americans stepping forward to get their shots.

The CDC, which has been cautious in its guidance during the crisis, essentially endorsed what many Americans have already been doing over the past several weeks.

The CDC says that fully vaccinated or not, people do not have to wear masks outdoors when they walk, bike or run alone or with members of their household. They can also go maskless in small outdoor gatherings with fully vaccinated people.

But from there, the CDC has differing guidance for people who are fully vaccinated and those who are not.

Unvaccinated peo-

ple — defined by the CDC as those who have yet to receive both doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or the one-shot Johnson & Johnson formula — should wear masks at outdoor gatherings that include other unvaccinated people. They also should keep using masks at outdoor restaurants.

Fully vaccinated people do not need to cover up in those situations, the CDC says.

However, everyone should keep wearing masks at crowded outdoor events such as concerts or sporting events, the CDC says.

And the agency continues to recommend masks at indoor public places such as hair salons, restaurants,

shopping centers, museums and movie theaters. Dr. Babak Javid, a physician-scientist at the University of California, San Francisco, said the new CDC guidance is sensible.

“In the vast majority of outdoor scenarios, transmission risk is low,” Javid said.

Javid has favored outdoor mask-wearing requirements because he believes they increase indoor mask-wearing, but he said Americans can understand the relative risks and make good decisions.

“The key thing is to make sure people wear masks indoors” while in public spaces, he said. He added: “I’m looking forward to mask-free existence.” “The timing is right because we now have a fair amount of data about the scenarios where transmission occurs,” said Mercedes Carnethon, a professor and vice chair of preventive medicine at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.

What’s more, she said, “the additional freedoms may serve as a motivator” for people to get vaccinated.

Cyber-attack hackers threaten to share US police informant data

BBC World News - Washington DC's Metropolitan Police Department has said its computer network has been breached in a targeted cyber-attack, US media report. A ransomware group called Babuk is reportedly threatening to release sensitive data on police informants if it is not contacted within three days. The FBI is investigating the extent of the breach, US media reported, citing the Washington DC police department. Ransomware is used to scramble computer networks and steal information. Attackers target companies or organisations and can lock their systems, then demand large sums of money in return for ending the hack. On Monday, Washington DC's police department said in a statement that it was "aware of unauthorised access on our server", AP news agency reported. "While we determine the full impact and continue to review activity, we have engaged the FBI to fully investigate this matter," the statement added, without providing further details of



Washington DC's Metropolitan Police have not provided details of the reported breach

the reported breach. It is not clear if attackers managed to lock police out of their systems during the breach. Babuk, a Russian-speaking ransomware group that emerged earlier this year, said it had downloaded "a sufficient amount of information" from the police department's internal networks, AP reports. Screenshots said to have been posted by the group on the dark web and shared on social media appeared to suggest it had gained access to information on criminal gang activity and police intelligence reports. The head of UK-

based cyber-security consultancy Bridewell Consulting, James Smith, said a risk remained for companies and organisations even if a ransom was paid. "With these types of attacks, the data has probably been stolen already, before it was encrypted, and the likelihood that the data will be sold or stored by the hacker is great," he said in a statement to the BBC. Earlier this month, Babuk reportedly targeted the Houston Rockets basketball team with ransomware and claimed to have accessed documents including player contracts and financial

data. A spokeswoman for the Houston Rockets, Tracey Hughes, said that while the group had accessed some information, it failed to install its ransomware because of a security system in place.

Last week, a Russian man in the US pleaded guilty to plotting to extort money from the electric car company Tesla. He planned to use ransomware to steal company secrets for extortion, prosecutors said. According to media reports, US government agencies have been targeted 26 times so far this year.

Medical supplies flow into India as COVID-19 deaths near 200,000



Hospitals in India are overwhelmed by recent surge in COVID cases

Reuters - Vital medical supplies began to reach India on Tuesday as hospitals starved of life-saving oxygen and beds turned away coronavirus patients, and a surge in infections pushed the death toll close to 200,000.

A shipment from Britain, including 100 ventilators and 95 oxygen concentrators, arrived in the capital, New Delhi, though a spokesman for Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Britain had no surplus COVID-19 vaccine doses to spare.

France is sending eight large oxygen generating plants this

week, and Ireland, Germany and Australia are sending oxygen concentrators and ventilators, an Indian foreign ministry official said, underlining the crucial need of oxygen.

India's first "Oxygen Express" train pulled into New Delhi, laden with about 70 tonnes of oxygen from an eastern state, but the crisis has not abated in the city of 20 million at the epicentre of the latest wave of infections.

"The current wave is extremely dangerous and contagious and the hospitals are overloaded," said Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind

Kejriwal, adding that a large public area in the capital will be converted into a critical care hospital.

With frustration mounting, relatives of a recently deceased COVID-19 patient attacked staff with knives at a hospital in the southeast of New Delhi, injuring at least one person, a hospital spokeswoman said.

A video posted on social media showed several people brawling with guards at the same hospital. Delhi High Court has advised local authorities to provide security at hospitals.

The World Health Organization said it was working to deliver 4,000 oxygen concentrators to India, where mass gatherings, more contagious variants and low vaccination rates have sparked the outbreak.

With vaccine demand outstripping supply in the world's second-most populous country, two U.S. drug makers have offered support.

Gilead Sciences said on Monday it would give India at least 450,000 vials of its antiviral drug Remdesivir, and Merck & Co said on Tuesday it was partnering with five Indian generic drug makers to expand production and access to its experimental COVID-19 drug Molnupiravir.

India is also negotiating with the United States, which has said it will share 60 million doses of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine with other countries. A senior official participating in the talks said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been assured of priority for India.



COUNTDOWN BEGINS TO FOOTBALL FOR FRIENDSHIP eWORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

News Americas, NEW YORK, NY, Tues. April 27, 2021: The countdown has begun to another Football for Friendship eWorld Championship (eF4F), set for Istanbul, Turkey, this May.

Some 211 countries and regions will be represented this time at the Gazprom's International Children's Social Programme – taking place again this year in a digital, multiplayer simulator format, because of the pandemic.

Since April 19th, football academies all over

the world have been invited to nominate girls and boys aged 12 to 14 as players. The draw that will put the kids into International Teams of Friendship will be in the middle of May. The Football for Friendship eWorld Championship (eF4F) will take place from May 27-29.

International team matches can be organised on this platform in real time. The individual users, each of whom is a player on the team, come from different countries. The team

consists of a goalkeeper, a defender, two midfield players and two attackers. There is also a trainer and some substitutes. A game runs for 2 halves of 3.5 minutes each.

For more, log on to footballforfriendship.com/

The International Children's Social Programme Football for Friendship has been run by Gazprom since 2013. Over the previous eight seasons, the programme has brought together more than 15,000 participants from 211

countries and regions, and in excess of 6 million supporters.

Young Players and Young Journalists are the participants in the programme – boys and girls aged 12, including children with disabilities. Young Players represent different countries and cultures united in the mixed teams of the Football for Friendship World Championship. They show that nationality, gender, and physical abilities aren't barriers to becoming a team. Young Journalists

cover the events of the programme in the International Children's Press Center. All participants become Young Ambassadors of the programme and continue to share their Football for

Friendship experience and promote universal human values: friendship, equality, fairness, health, peace, devotion, victory, traditions, and honour.

In 2020, Football for

Friendship was held online. A special digital platform connected over 10,000 players of all ages. It has become the home for international children's competitions and a playground where

anyone can train, join in the international mixed teams and play their favourite game in the Football for Friendship format without leaving the comfort of their home.

TOKYO 2021: BENOIT PAIRE BARRED FROM REPRESENTING FRANCE OVER 'DEEPLY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR'

Benoit Paire has been barred from representing France at the Tokyo Olympics in July because of his "deeply inappropriate behaviour".

As the French number four and world number 35, Paire would have been able to qualify to represent his country. He has been criticised for his on-court behaviour, most recently for spitting at the Argentina Open in March.

The French Tennis Federation (FFT) said Paire's behaviour was "totally incompatible with the Olympic spirit".

Paire has lost nine of his 10 singles matches this season and has made repeated social media posts about how "boring" he finds the tour.

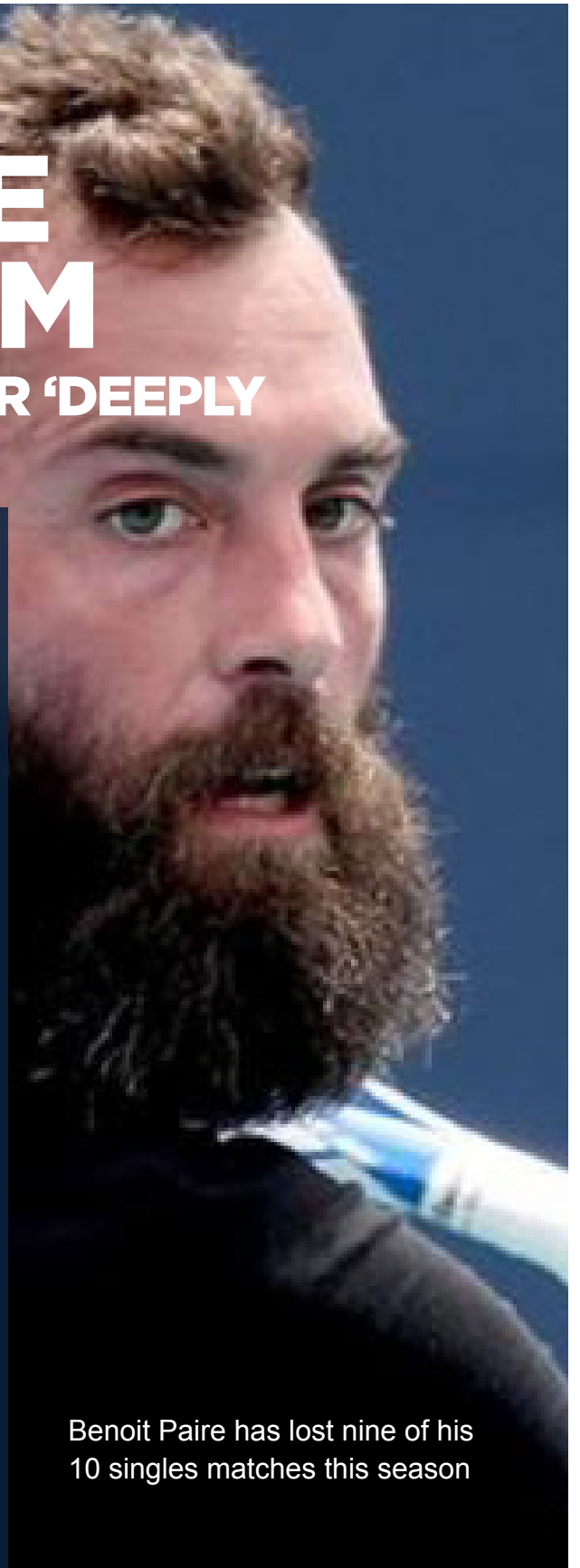
After his first-round exit in Monte Carlo on Sunday, Paire said tennis "does not make me happy anymore" and criticised the Covid-19 bubble protocols.

The FFT said Paire had apologised for his behaviour in Argentina but his comments in Monte Carlo meant they would not take him to Tokyo.

Paire was previously sent home from the 2016 Olympics in Rio for poor behaviour and breaching team rules.

"It is the duty of each player and each high-level player to respect the values of our sport," FFT president Gilles Moretton said.

Paire has been offered support by the governing body.



Benoit Paire has lost nine of his 10 singles matches this season



IPL PLAYERS LEAVE AMID COVID-19 CONCERNS

Adam Zampa and Kane Richardson have joined fellow Australian Andrew Tye in ending their Indian Premier League (IPL) season early to return home. India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, 34, also said he is taking a break from the IPL to support his family.

The news comes as India struggles with a surge in coronavirus cases.

Tye, who was with Rajasthan Royals, flew to Sydney on Sunday, citing the “stress of bubble life” and concerns about borders closing in Australia. “I just thought I should try and get on the front foot and get home before I got locked out of the coun-

try,” the seamer told Australian radio station SEN.

England limited overs captain Eoin Morgan, who is skipper of Kolkata Knight Riders, says the tournament should continue as long as it does not hamper the efforts to combat Covid-19. “... you can play sport while the country is almost in full lockdown ... as long as it doesn’t disturb what’s happening in the public eye.”

Morgan added that the players are aware of the rising cases in India. “We’re constantly talking about the situation that is unfolding outside of our bubble,” he added. “It’s not nice watching from afar, considering how lucky

we are to be in a bubble and not be affected by it very much.”

India has been reporting more than 300,000 daily cases for several days, setting new daily global records. On Monday, it had the highest number of daily coronavirus cases for a fifth straight day, reporting 352,991 new infections and another 2,812 deaths in the previous 24-hour period.

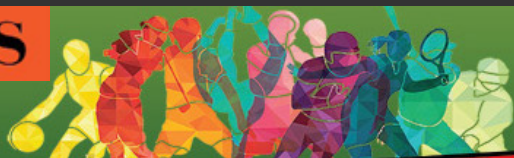
Meanwhile, Kolkata Knight Riders’ paceman Pat Cummins has asked his fellow players to join him in contributing to help India’s hospitals deal with the pandemic. Cummins, 27, who is among a number of Australia’s top players to remain in India, has pledged 50,000 Australian

dollars (£28,006) to the PM Cares Fund, specifically to purchase oxygen supplies.

“There has been quite a bit of discussion over here as to whether it is appropriate for the IPL to continue with Covid-19 infection rates remain high. I’m advised that the Indian Government is of the view that playing the IPL while the population is in lockdown provides a few hours of joy and respite each day at an otherwise difficult time for the country.”

Cummins said he hoped that “by making this public appeal we can all channel our emotions into action that will bring light into people’s lives”.

DEWS



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