

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTX PRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

MONDAY 3TH MAY 2021

| ISSUE 223 |

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**LABOUR
DAY EDITION**
2021

LABOUR DAY

A TIME FOR REFLECTION

Today, Antigua and Barbuda officially celebrates sixty-eight years of Labour Day, in recognition of the quest for equality and equity in our society and the right for workers to share equally and equitably in the fruits of their labour. This is not something that should be taken for granted as the modern country that we all enjoy would not have developed without the strength of the labour/workers movement in Antigua and Barbuda. An extremely brief synopsis of the realities of industrial relations in this nation prior to 1950 should suffice. Antigua and Barbuda, like the rest of the English speaking Caribbean, was a colony of Britain. For about three hundred years, the economy of these British colonies was based on a form of agriculture that thrived on the exploitation of black people. White plantocrats captured and enslaved Africans, forcing them to work for free on plantations in the Caribbean. In 1834, as a result of the agitation of abolitionists and the economic realities of the time, the British Parliament legally abolished the system of slavery. The planters in Antigua and Barbuda opted for full emancipation of slaves, while the other islands invoked a four-year apprenticeship period in which the slaves were “taught” how to be free people. Make no mistake; Antigua and Barbuda’s move towards the immediate and full emancipation of slaves in 1834 had nothing to do with the benevolent intentions of the planters. Instead, it had everything to do with economics, as the planters did their calculations and realised that it was more profitable to grant full freedom. On the granting of full freedom, the ex-slaves in Antigua had no choice but to return to the plantations to work because almost all land in Antigua was owned by the planters so the newly freed men, women, and children had nowhere to live, except on the plantation. Secondly, the planters ensured that they passed vagrancy laws that made it a crime for one not to be employed. Through this dual approach, the ex-slaves had to return to the planta-

tion and the planters could pay whatever they chose since there was no alternative for the Blacks. This system ensured that the planter class retained firm control on labour relations in Antigua and Barbuda for over one hundred additional years, from 1834 until 1951. Such was the hubris of the planter class that one very ignoble member is reputed to have asserted that they would “starve workers into submission” when the populace dared to take a stand for their rights. However, there are some moments that signalled things were about to change. A series of unrests throughout the English-speaking Caribbean from 1934 to 1939 forced the British government to institute the Moyne Commission. One of the results of that Royal Commission of Inquiry was the formation of trade unions throughout the British West Indies,

due largely to the influence of Commissioner Sir Walter Citrine, president of the International Federation of Trade Unions. Thus, the Antigua Trades and Labour was born in 1939. Another seminal moment occurred in 1951 when the first Labour Day celebrations took place in Antigua and Barbuda, and again in 1953 when the law officially recognised the right of workers to celebrate that day. Through this process of agitation and negotiation, the AT&LU was successful in securing important rights for workers in Antigua and Barbuda. The Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union, and all other workers’ organisations in Antigua and Barbuda can trace their genesis to the AT&LU; it is therefore appropriate for that institution to be referred to the progenitor of unionism in this country. Through their com-

bined efforts, trade unions have secured important rights and privileges for workers in this nation. One can examine the various sectors and see just how effective trade unions have been. Whether it is in tourism, banking, the public service, education, nursing, the telecommunications industry, any private sector area, or air traffic control, workers’ representatives have been at the very heart of

change. Sometimes, the fights became acrimonious, but there was always the singular goal of ensuring that workers benefitted fairly and equitably from their labour. Today, trade unions have generally moved towards a more consultative approach, recognising that fighting among ourselves does more harm than good, and this new approach has yielded very effective results. It is this rich tapes-



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try of the history of trade unionism in Antigua and Barbuda of which today reminds. In a time of COVID-19, the nation is unable to celebrate with the usual pomp and circumstance. Nonetheless, today is as important as it was back in 1951 and 1953 and it becomes our sacrosanct duty to transmit this knowledge to the younger generation. Elders have a ten-

dency to complain that there is a certain amount of apathy on the part of the younger generation and that they have very little appreciation for the hardships endured by previous generations to secure the freedoms they now take for granted. However, we at PointeXpress posit that young people cannot spontaneously know and appreciate. As a na-

tion, we have a collective responsibility to continuously speak about these things and transmit the knowledge we possess. Each one must teach one! Let us "gird our loins and join the battle" to protect and transmit the freedoms that our forbearers worked so hard to secure!

Editorial note: The Antigua Trades and Labour Union

(AT&LU) has argued, with strong merit, that the first Labour Day was in fact held on 1st May 1951 and therefore, the anniversary should be counted from that day. It should be noted that legal recognition was given in 1953, hence the use of sixty-eight years in the opening sentence of this Editorial.

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PRISON REPORTS NINETY-SEVEN PER CENT RECOVERY OF COVID-19 CASES



Authorities at Her Majesty's Prison are reporting a high rate of recovery for inmates who contracted the deadly COVID-19 virus.

Acting Superintendent Jermaine Anthony said of the thirty-seven inmates who contracted the virus, thirty-four have since recovered, with only three people still

among the nation's active cases. These inmates remain housed at the prison's quarantine facility located within the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force's base at Crabbs Peninsula.

Six inmates who were recently sent to the prison on remand have also been transferred to the facility, pending the return

of tests results to determine their COVID-19 status. "These newly arrived inmates are sent immediately to the quarantine facility and are not allowed to join the regular prison population until they complete that process. Should their results come back positive, then they are placed in the isolation unit at the facility. In the event of a



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Shelton Daniel

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negative result, then they must complete a mandatory fourteen-day quarantine,” Anthony told PointeXpress.

Since the outbreak of coronavirus within the country, the prison instituted tough measures to protect the prison population. Among them was the banning of members of the public from entering the compound as well as stopping the practice of family

members taking food for their loved ones who are part of the penal system.

The only exemption allowed was for prisoners who are on special diets and needed to eat accordingly. However, Anthony said there has been some easing of these restrictions. “We have started to allow snacks and personal care items for prisoners from the general public, while continu-

ing to accept special meals for those with these needs,” he explained.

On the question of how the virus entered the prison even with these precautions, Anthony said prior to 7th March this year, there was no testing done for those entering the prison. They were placed in quarantine and after fourteen days allowed to join the general prison population. Addi-

tionally, it could have been a member of staff who was asymptomatic and brought it into the prison. The cause of the outbreak has never been determined.

However, since the outbreak, regular tests are carried out on both inmates and members of the prison staff. At the last test, just over a week ago, none of the results, for either prison officers or inmates, came back positive.

CELEBRATE YES, MARCHES, NO!

For a second consecutive year, the trade union movement in Antigua and Barbuda has had to observe the annual Labour Day celebrations in unusual ways.

The government has placed restrictions on large gatherings due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the usual marches organised at Labour Day have been cancelled due to those restrictions.

The general trade unions, the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU) and the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU), both of which are aligned to the two main political parties, have traditionally held marches on Labour Day.

However, this year the union

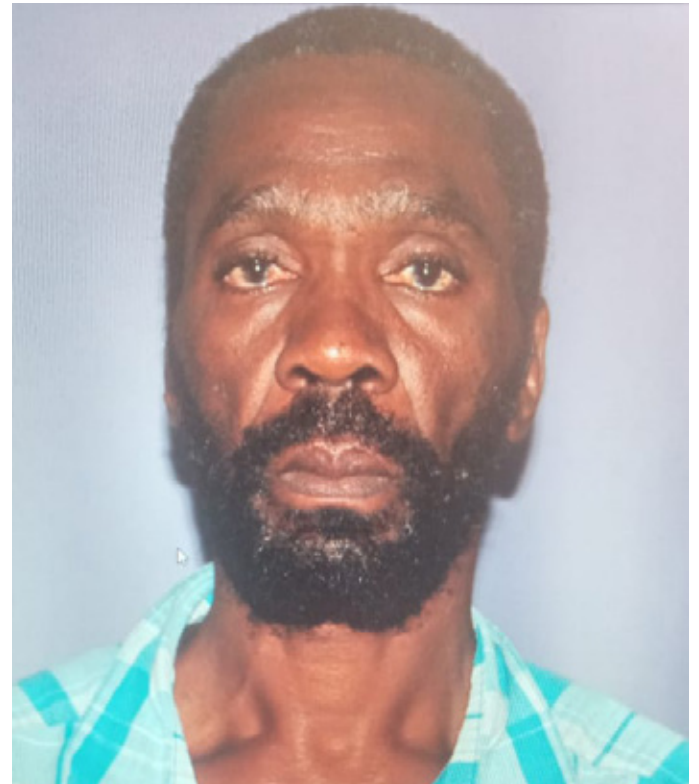
leadership will address the nation through the media of television and social media. Sunday morning, the leadership of the AT&LU joined members of the Salvation Army for worship at the Citadel on Long Street.

This morning, the union will hold a virtual ceremony as part of Labour Week activities under the theme ‘Seventy Years of Protests and Progress’. It will feature an update from the General Secretary, Hugh Joseph and remarks from the President Wigley George. Several cultural performances will also take place as well as the reading of the first Labour Day message from then President of the AT&LU, Vere Cornwall Bird Sr., later to become ‘Father of the Nation.’

Meanwhile, the ABWU will also address its membership through state-owned television. Several senior members of the executive will address the nation, including President, Kem Riley, 1st Vice President, Andre Sharpe, 2nd Vice President, Abraham Samuel, General Secretary, David Masiah, Deputy General Secretary, Chester Hughes as well as the youth arm leader, Raisa Roberts.

There are no face-to-face activities planned by either trade union to mark Labour Day. With the beaches closed because of the pandemic, the usual beach picnics and stage shows that would normally climax the Labour Week activities have been cancelled.

MAN WANTED FOR SEVERAL 'CRIMINAL OFFENCES'



A nationwide wanted bulletin has been issued by the police for the immediate arrest of Benjamin 'Ras' Silcott of Cas-sada Gardens.

In issuing the bulletin, the police say he is wanted in connection with several criminal offences in the Langford's Area. He is described as slimly built, dark in complexion and about six feet, four inches in height.

"Anyone with information on his whereabouts is asked to contact the Langford's Police Station at 562-5730, Police Headquarters at 462-0125 or the Criminal Investiga-

tions Department at 462-3913 or 462-3914 without delay," a STRATCOM media release stated.

In the statement, the police are advising the general public not to harbour, facilitate or in any way assist this person in eluding law enforcement personnel.

"The police are appealing to him to surrender at any police station accompanied by an attorney, or a family member," the statement urged.

There has been no update from the police since this bulletin was issued on Saturday night.

Form RLNC 6

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

THE REGISTERED LAND ACT, CAP 374

Section 34 of the Act

APR 22 2021

REGISTRATION SECTION	BLOCK	PARCEL
Martins Village	611 1791C	135


NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO REPLACE A LOST OR DESTROYED LAND CERTIFICATE

TAKE NOTICE that an application was filed in the Land Registry on 27th day of April, 2021 by Lenworth Johnson, Attorney-at-Law of JOHNSON GARDINER of 51A St. Mary's Street on behalf of PHILLIP ABBOTT of Woods Estate, St. John's, Antigua, Executor & Trustee of the Estate of EUGENE MICHAEL HUMPHREYS a. k. a. EUGENE HUMPHREYS, deceased, the Applicant herein for the replacement of Land Certificate #712/97 dated the 7th day of February, 1997, to EUGENE HUMPHREYS being the owner of the above-mentioned property, which has been lost or destroyed.

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

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

Dated the 27th day of April 2021.


Registrar of Lands

Mobile COVID-19 Vaccination Unit marks a 'Rolling Success'

Recently, the country has marked a milestone in administering over thirty thousand doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine. However, with an aim of achieving herd immunity through seventy to eighty thousand people vaccinated, the Ministry of Health is finding creative ways of hastening that race.

Since the reopening of the vaccine centres in April, health authorities have noted that there has been a 'slow up-take' of the vaccines in phase two. The health ministry explained that phase two of the COVID-19 roll-out is public vaccination for everyone over the age of eighteen years. This phase differs from phase one where the health ministry prioritised certain members of the public for vaccination; those being health-care workers, senior citizens, front-line workers, and teachers. Though hundreds rushed to the



centers previously, the situation now offers a stark contrast. Recognising the need to embark on further education on the vaccines, and making the vaccines more accessible to the public, the health ministry has rolled out a mobile vaccination unit over the last three weekends. According to the health ministry, "The success of the mobile vaccination drives at the public market over the last two Saturdays influenced the Ministry to stage additional mobile vaccination events last week. Minister of Health, Sir Molwyn Joseph, says it is important to bring the COVID-19 vaccination programme into the community and the familiar spaces of the people to facilitate ease of access to the vaccines." With mobile units posted in All Saints, Woods Center, and Jolly Harbour from 30th April to 1st May, the health ministry recorded three hundred and thirty-nine persons vaccinated, including vaccinations at the four central stations. "The greatest uptake for

the mobile vaccination unit last week was in Jolly Harbour, where almost one hundred persons turned out to receive their vaccine, despite the rainy weather. We saw a variety of persons taking up the opportunity to get their first dose. Persons utilising the supermarket, em-

ployees in the Jolly Harbour area, and even persons who travelled from nearby villages came to the mobile unit. One of the youngest persons who turned out to receive their first dose was young Antiguan singer and songwriter Au/Ra," a member of the COVID-19 vaccine

roll-out team said. The vaccination centres will continue normal operations from Tuesday 4th May 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., offering the first dose of the vaccine. The second dose of the vaccine is set to commence by the second week of May 2021.



Notice of intention of CMFG Life Insurance Company and CUNA Caribbean Insurance Society Limited to make application for transfer of the insurance business to CUNA Caribbean Insurance OECS Limited.

CMFG Life Insurance Company, a company incorporated under the laws of Iowa, United States with its Head office located at 5910 Mineral Point Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53705, CUNA Caribbean Insurance Society Limited, a company incorporated under the Companies Act Chap 81.01 of the laws of Trinidad and Tobago, with its registered office located at Savannah East, 3rd Floor, 11 Queen's Park East, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago and CUNA Caribbean Insurance OECS Limited, a company incorporated under the Companies Act Cap 13.01 of the laws of St. Lucia located at the St. Lucia Credit Union League Building, William Peter Boulevard, Castries, St. Lucia

Hereby give notice:

That they have made an application to obtain the confirmation of the Financial Services Regulatory Commission to transfer the insurance business of CMFG Life Insurance Company and CUNA Caribbean Insurance Society Limited in Antigua and Barbuda to CUNA Caribbean Insurance OECS Limited in accordance with a Scheme pursuant to the provisions the Insurance Act 2007 of the laws of the Antigua and Barbuda. CUNA Caribbean Insurance OECS Limited is registered to conduct insurance business in Antigua and Barbuda.

And

That all documents relating to this transfer of business are available for inspection by the policyholders and shareholders of CMFG Life Insurance Company and CUNA Caribbean Insurance Society Limited for a period of fifteen (15) days after the publication of this notice. These documents will be made available at:

Bryson's Insurance Agency
Friars Hill Road,
P.O. Box 162
St. John's,
Antigua

And

That every shareholder and policyholder of CMFG Life Insurance Company, CUNA Caribbean Insurance Society Limited and CUNA Caribbean Insurance OECS Limited is entitled to a copy of the agreement under which the Scheme is proposed to be effective and may request the same in writing to either the above named companies at the address shown above. Policyholders will also receive individual notices of the proposed transfer and a copy of the agreement and the actuarial reports upon which the agreement is founded, by mail. The Scheme will not impact the policy rates; terms and conditions; coverage and benefits; services and administration of policies.

The Financial Services Regulatory Commission has ordered that the said application shall be heard on the May 19, 2021, via Zoom meeting:

Time: 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Meeting ID: 832 9196 5270
Password: 884322

Yours sincerely,

CMFG LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Laureen Ann Winger
Mrs. Laureen Ann Winger
Executive Vice President - Chief Finance and Product Officer

CUNA CARIBBEAN INSURANCE SOCIETY LIMITED

Andre Goindoo
Mr. Andre Goindoo
Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer

CUNA CARIBBEAN INSURANCE OECS LIMITED

Ms. Rosemarie Henry
Ms. Rosemarie Henry
Vice President, Risk & Compliance



MASS MOBILISATION AND INCENTIVES FOR VACCINATION COMING SOON

By Shelton Daniel

Government will explore other means of persuading Antiguan and Barbudans to keep coming forward voluntarily for vaccination against COVID-19 before any consideration is given to

making inoculation compulsory.

The position was outlined on Saturday by Prime Minister Gaston Browne during his weekly radio programme, The Browne and Browne Show, on PointeFM 99.1. He said, “Even though the process

has become arduous and the roll-out has slowed, we continue to soldier on because we know that we MUST achieve herd immunity as soon as possible in the national interest ... Instead of going the route of mandatory vaccination,

we have decided to introduce a programme of incentives.”

As for the details, PM Browne said Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph “will speak to the nation very shortly on the various incentives.” He however dis-



APUA ELECTRICITY MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

These planned outages are necessary for our continuous upgrade and maintenance programme to provide reliable and consistent service to our customers.

Tuesday, 4th May 2021	Wednesday, 5th May 2021	Thursday, 6th May 2021	Friday, 7th May 2021
Dickenson Bay Street, St. Georges Street & Popeshead Street 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Jolly Harbour, Hermitage Hotel & Gabriel Development 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Section of Gray Hill 8:45 AM - 11:30 AM	Section of American Road & Radio Range 8:45 AM - 11:00 AM
Section of Langford east of the Chinese Embassy 8:45 AM - 11:30 AM	Section of Pares near the Baptiste Retreat Centre 8:45 AM - 11:30 AM		Section of Patterson south of the horse stable 8:45 AM - 11:30 AM
	Section of Hatton 8:345 AM - 12:00 PM		Adele School, Gambles Buff & Corts land Road 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Kindly note that this schedule is subject to slight variation. Changes will be communicated on the APUA Facebook page. Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated. For further information and updates please call 311.

closed that his governing Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party intends to undertake “a grass-roots campaign to get the people out ... We’ll be encouraging [parliamentary] representatives to get out there and to mobilise their people. In fact, the government will fund all the public education programmes ... We’ll take the information to the people, we’ll mobilise ...”

The Prime Minister said he was appalled to hear some of the country’s entertainers “taking the position that they do not wish to get vaccinat-

ed ... The irony of it is that they depend on large gatherings to make a living. So I don’t understand the type of irrational thinking that is taking place ... They are undermining themselves.”

Browne said his government has been “trying to avoid introducing any mandatory requirements to force vaccinations. But I want to signal here, if we have to do it, we will do so ... It’s going to be an inescapable fact that our people have no choice but to get vaccinated. They either do so voluntarily to pro-

tect lives and livelihoods, or be forced to do so.”

Until now, it has been the policy of the Antigua and Barbuda government that vaccination for COVID-19 should remain entirely voluntary. Saturday was the first time that the Prime Minister mooted the possibility that it could become otherwise.

“At the end of the day, myself and my Cabinet will make whatever decision that is in the best interest of the country; and it’s not a threat. This is just encouraging people to voluntarily get vaccinated.”

He ended by acknowledging that there were segments of the population with deep-seated convictions, medical problems and other legitimate reasons or objections for not wanting to be vaccinated. But the Prime Minister suggested that those not of any such persuasion or known stance were being irresponsible to spurn vaccination on mere whims or conjecture.

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 ;
On the South by: Public Road;
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

Email: info@go-going-gone.com

Instagram: tts_auction_antigua

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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



VACCINATION WINDOW FOR ACHIEVING HERD IMMUNITY IS CLOSING FAST

By Shelton Daniel

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in this country if we do not get herd immunity within the next sixty to ninety days,” according to Prime Minister Gaston Browne. He made these remarks Saturday during his weekly radio programme, The Browne and Browne Show, on PointeFM 99.1.

He lamented the tremendous slowdown in the rate of vaccinations since the general public roll-out launched last month, noting that many persons seemed not to realise that although the decision to get vaccinated is a personal one, the responsibilities attached to that decision extend far beyond individuals. Said the Prime Minister: “We have to understand that with a small open economy, if we are unable to return

to normalcy very soon there will be some serious economic scars that could last at least for decades. Already, we have lost about a decade of growth, and to have a situation now in which – based on our own negligence that we refuse to get vaccinated and we end up not achieving herd immunity within a short period of time – clearly we are putting our progress and the entire country at risk.” The Prime Minister said, “Our vaccination programme has been a mere trickle during the last week. My understanding is that we only had one hundred individuals during the whole week who got vaccinated. That is unacceptable.”

He pleaded with Antiguan and Barbudans “not to wait for a third wave of hospitalisations and deaths to get vaccinated ... We

saw what happened between January and April of this year.”

The Prime Minister warned those who were refusing vaccination that they would bear responsibility “for any protracted unemployment, the attendant poverty, and the future hospitalisations and deaths.” He said this was because “we have the weapon to deal with COVID, and if these individuals are going to refuse to avail themselves of the vaccines and they allow a third wave to come and wipe out more people and you have even more hospitalisations – and then you have a situation where we can’t revive the economy because we have too many COVID cases – then we have to blame these irresponsible people who refuse to get vaccinated.” He reminded hospital-ity workers that their

decisions on whether to get vaccinated or not would be a strong determinant on whether tourists choose Antigua as a vacation destination. The Prime Minister said the same obtained for even local clientele of establishments such as bars, as people would likely be hesitant to patronise such businesses if they knew that the staff with whom they come into contact had not been vaccinated.

“It’s one thing to have, maybe, two hundred people in a day. But my understanding is that in some instances we have like twenty people, eleven people, at these [vaccination] centers – Monday to Friday – and, as a consequence, barring today [Saturday, we only vaccinated over one hundred people. That is totally unacceptable,” the Prime Minister reiterated.

Residents urged to take up entrepreneurship opportunity in Yorks/McKinnon's area

The people who live in the Yorks/McKinnon's area are being urged to make use of an opportunity for them to establish themselves as small business owners and to become self-reliant.

This comes as the Department of Environment has announced an 'Expressions of Interest' through which it wants landscaping business owners to apply for investment assistance.

According to the circular, this investment opportunity, however, is being offered solely to members of the public within certain communities. It said, "Persons who are eligible for support are those who live in the McKinnon's, Yorks, Lower Fort Road and Lower Gambles areas who currently own and operate a landscaping business. Special consideration will be given to women who own or have ownership in a landscaping business."

The department went on to indicate that the expression of interest is for persons from landscaping business owners in the McKinnon's watershed project area.

"Investment assistance will include low-interest small loans to operate a landscaping business, access to zero-cost climate-friendly electric landscaping equipment, and business training.

"Individuals and businesses who receive investment support will be required to assist in keeping the McKinnon's community waterway clear and free from flooding and disease vectors," the department stated.

In explaining how and where the funds for this project is being sourced, the environment division said, "Funding for this programme has been approved by the Adaptation Fund and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda funded project, 'An

integrated approach to physical adaptation and community resilience in Antigua and Barbuda's north-west McKinnon's watershed' and is being delivered through the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund (SIRF Fund)."

One of the persons encouraging residents from the area to make application for funding under the project is the constituency representative, Hon. Charles Max Fernandez. "The COVID-19 pandemic has not only caused serious economic constraints but it has also forged a dynamic catalyst for entrepreneurship. We have recognised a number of residents within the communities of Rural North actively engaging in entrepreneurship in a variety of economic sectors. We continue to lend support to these young business owners and encourage others to do the same. This expression of interest being

offered through the Department of Environment presents an exciting opportunity for our residents to capitalise on enterprise development. As the Parliamentary Representative, I am encouraging residents to apply and take advantage of this opportunity, soonest."

The MP also indicated that this project will not only benefit those entrepreneurs who are applying for funding but will also seek to enhance community economic growth, while helping to mitigate issues the community has faced in the wake of climate change.

The environment department added that the purpose of this programme is to assist owners of landscaping to take advantage of the benefits of transitions to a low carbon economy as well as to provide the community services to keep McKinnon's waterway clean.

LABOUR DAY ESSAY COMPETITION

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

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



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



POINTEXPRESS **LABOUR** **DAY** **SPECIAL 2021**

Featuring special messages for Labour Day from the Minister of Labour as well as the leadership of the country's major trade unions

Cont'd on pg 16-25

LABOUR DAY MESSAGE

FROM MINISTER OF LABOUR,
HON. STEADROY BENJAMIN

Seventy years ago, in 1951, the leaders of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU), after having tried for five continuous years, or since 1946, to make Labour Day a holiday, determined that workers would take the day-off in celebration with other workers around the world.

Vere Cornwall Bird, the President of the AT&LU who had been elected to the Parliament in July 1946, led workers to the West Bus Station where a huge rally was held. They then walked, sailed and were bused to Fort James in order to celebrate the historic occasion. It was the first time that Labour Day was being celebrated in Antigua and Barbuda, despite the colonials opposition to it. "Those who wish for freedom must strike the first blow," he told thousands of workers gathered at the West Bus Station.

The AT&LU would proceed to dismantle colonialism in Antigua and Barbuda, first with State-



hood in Association on 27th February 1967. Then, fourteen years later, with sovereignty and Independence on 1st November 1981. This is the proud legacy and these are the hallmarks of achievement of the AT&LU and its daughter organisation, the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP), in the seventy years since 1951.

When Ministerial governance was introduced in 1960, the General Secretary of the AT&LU, who had been re-elected each year to the post since 1947, and elected to Parliament in 1951, was nominated to serve as Minister of Trade, Production and Labour. Lionel Hurst became the Minister of Labour. Vere Cornwall Bird became the first Chief Minister in 1960. Antigua and Barbuda was on the move.

There have been five Ministers of Labour preceding me. The second Minister of Labour, the late Donald Halstead, a product of the AT&

LU, introduced the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code in 1974. It was an important step in our legal history for it codified into law many of the struggles that caused labour and capital to clash. It shortened working hours and provided for payment of overtime; it ordered twelve days annual holidays as a minimum for all workers; and, it codified sick leave and maternity leave thereby reducing the need for a battle with employers. There would no longer be any reason to strike to compel employers to grant these privileges; they were the law.

It was a remarkable step away from the Contracts Act, that allowed workers who were employed or contracted to fulfil a particular task to be charged for unsatisfactory work and thus compelled to pay the employer instead, or be jailed by a Magistrate. The tables were turned and fairness would characterise the relations between employer and employee. Employers

thereafter claim that the Labour Code places them at a disadvantage. An Industrial Court and other systems designed to ensure fairness continue to characterise the search for fairness between capital and labour.

Since 2014, I have had the rich opportunity to serve as Minister of Labour in the Gaston Browne-led administration. These seven years have seen numerous amendments to the Labour Code and other systems of regulation that are designed to improve working conditions and to provide more certainty to both employer and employee. This task is never finished.

Serving as Attorney General simultaneously has allowed my office the privilege, in consultation with the Cabinet, to guide the agenda of law-making in Parliament. The success of the administration which I now serve is in part due to the legislative agenda which has been pursued na-

tionally.

Labour Day 2021 is taking place at a time when COVID-19 has caused our largest economic activity to stall. In 2019, the hotels enjoyed a bumper season and this uptick had a positive impact on tourism and investments. As the nation works towards eliminating the threat of further decline by vaccinating its adult population, everyone is called upon to do their national duty.

Labour Day 2021, the seventieth year of its celebration, ought to be treated as a marker in the return of the Antigua and Barbuda population in battling the circumstances that adversely affected work, employment, and cultural norms. Their reversal requires the fighting spirit of the 1939ers. We must rekindle the spirit of 1951. We must strike the blows necessary to save our country from backwardness and ruin by pressing forward towards the goal.



SEVENTY YEARS OF LABOUR DAY: 1951 TO 2021

by President Wigley George, Antigua
Trades and Labour Union 3rd May, 2021

Labour Day reveals a turning point of triumph over oppression, of conquest over exploitation, of labour exceeding the might of capital. Our Antigua and Barbuda in the years before and after 1834 was a nation characterised by extreme poverty; by barefoot people dressed in ragged clothing; by illiteracy and superstition. Read Sir Novelle Richards' *The Struggle and the Conquest*.

The AT&LU DESTROYED COLONIALISM

The Antigua and Barbuda Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU), founded on 16th Jan-

uary 1939, was the vehicle upon which rode the movement from colonial domination to sovereignty. It spawned the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP), which carried the struggle to independence and beyond. The AT&LU/ABLP destroyed colonialism in Antigua and Barbuda.

The changing global circumstances, leading to the dismantling of colonialism—generated principally by the creation of the United Nations in 1945—enabled small islands to become sovereign states. General Assembly Resolution 1514/XV

outlawed colonialism in 1960. Labour Day 1951, forced by the AT&LU/ABLP, ushered in that expression of a changing world, new prospects for better circumstances, and a superior island-country to emerge from three hundred years of brutality.

Upon a slate of five AT&LU members becoming elected to the eleven-person Legislature in July 1946, the five-person team tried valiantly to persuade the unelected majority-members of the legislature to amend the Holidays Act to include "Labour Day"—a holiday for workers. There were

national holidays for bankers, another for merchants, but none for workers. The unelected majority in the Legislature would not support declaring a workers' holiday. After five years of trying without success, beginning in 1946, the AT&LU decided to take the holiday without the benefit of law on 1st May 1951—exactly seventy years ago. Hundreds of workers gathered at the open space near the Public Market/Bus Station to defy the lawmakers. They listened to speeches by the leaders and then walked, sailed or were bused to Fort James in order to celebrate

the increasing popularity of the union/party. That tradition continues—except for these two COVID-19 pandemic years, 2020 and 2021. The workers' objections led to the promulgation of a new constitution in that same year, 1951, bringing adult suffrage to a colonial outpost, and dividing Antigua and Barbuda into eight constituencies on 20th December 1951. Colonialism was being dismantled, and the AT&LU was leading the building of a new Antigua and Barbuda.

LUCY ISHMAEL AND AVERYL WYNTER REMEMBERED

Two women are etched into the history books for their courage and daring on rules governing Labour Day, withholding of labour, unfair dismissal, and freedom to picket.

Lucy Ishmael, a domestic worker, informed her employer no less than three times that she would join her union on 1st May 1951, and that she was prepared to forego the pay she would have earned on that day. Yet, on the day following Labour Day when she reported to work, Lucy Ishmael was dismissed.

Her union picketed the home where she worked, and an enterprise operated by her employer. The union asserted that a man employed at the enterprise was being utilised to undertake Ishmael's domestic duties. The owner sued the union for picketing both his home and his business, and the Court granted his wish for an injunction and damages. The union seemed to have suffered a loss.

Then came Averyl Winter, in 1955, a clerk in a drug store who was dismissed unfairly. Her union picketed the enterprise from which she was severed. That owner utilised the same legal tools and arguments as the Lucy Ishmael employer. This matter went all the way to the Privy Council in London, and after nearly five years, a judgment was rendered in favour of the union. Picketing of an enterprise or a home is allowed and the union may exercise that tool to voice its displeasure with the employer, the Court ruled. No liability attaches to the union, and a union is free to picket whenever it chooses. The Lucy Ishmael de-

cision was essentially overturned. That freedom extended to the union, allowed by law, gave the union greater momentum in its struggle against the owners of capital who controlled those who sold their labour. The scales of justice, customarily imbalanced in favour of the captains of the sugar industry and their merchant-class supporters, were being dethroned. Two very brave women were at the forefront of this struggle and their union took their cause to the Courts and eventually found justice. Labour Day was the critical event that generated the forward movement of an entire people who wished to transform their lives and that of their progeny.

LABOUR DAY IS MADE LAWFUL BY THE PARLIAMENT IN 1953

There existed in 1953 two legislatures governing the Leeward Islands: The Legislative Council, and the General Legislative Council. By 1953, the Legislative Council in each of the Leeward Islands was elected. But the General Legislative Council was selected from the local Legislative Coun-

cil with a formula based on the size of the local Legislative Council. That General Legislative Council made Labour Day lawful throughout the Leeward Islands. However, the AT&LU/ABLP continues to mark Labour Day as commencing in 1951. Therefore, seventy years of Labour Day is appropriate.

May the workers of Antigua and Barbuda never forget the bravery and courage required to fight for workers' rights, rather than to continue to acquiesce to the superior power of the colonials who wished continued poverty and control over the forebears of today's Antiguan and Barbudans. We give thanks to those who learned a lesson which Vere Cornwall Bird frequently repeated and practised: Those who wish to change their circumstances, must cast the first blow.

May the AT&LU, now more than eighty years old, and its political arm, the seventy-five-year-old heritage ABLP, continue to demonstrate that the work of the labour movement is unfinished.



THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA WORKERS UNION

BY DAVID MASSIAH, GENERAL SECRETARY ABWU

The second verse of our beloved Anthem of Antigua and Barbuda states and I quote:

“Raise the standard! Raise it boldly!
Answer now to duty’s call
To the service of thy country
Sparing nothing, giving all;
Gird your loins and join the battle
‘Gainst fear, hate and poverty,
Each endeavouring, all achieving,
Live in peace where man is free.”

Today on Labour Day, I salute ALL workers: I salute you for your unswerving hard work and I salute you for your steadfast contribution in building our nation. Without you, we would all be doomed, as no society can survive without the presence of its workers.

As trade unionists, we are more concerned and more supportive of workers as it has been revealed how workers and their families are being attacked by the advent of COVID-19, not only in Antigua and Barbuda but globally. This pandemic has exposed how fragile and inadequate our support for workers has been, in terms of unemployment or natural disasters. Sadly, this pandemic has uncovered how workers, who have been deemed as essential and have worked through this crisis, are still unable to stand up for themselves even though their working conditions are unsafe and some

are inadequately paid for their service. What does this mean and how can we rectify the anomaly for these affected workers?

COVID-19 has affected all workers globally, and the difficulties are not far-fetched, relating only to geographical locations; therefore, the cry is felt in every backyard of every nation - rich and poor. With this, the rise in unemployment is raging unchecked and there is no safety net for anyone. Workers have not been able to act collectively as their basic rights are so difficult to navigate.

In this moment, trade unions are in transition, seeking greater ground to address the prevailing issues that workers face and the strategies used are new to most of us so there is no guideline or blueprint to follow to resolve the current impact and its grip on our economy.

The rise in unem-

ployment, the challenge of principled governmental assistance, the unpredictable course of the pandemic solution all seem to present a new obstacle to workers' economic freedom. Be that as it may, workers were already struggling to maintain their rights through collective bargaining, and those without such protection are on a limb of uncertainty.

What is different for a small island state such as ours is our rebound is hitched on the revival of the tourism sector, unless we can hastily diversify our economy with full inclusion of our population, to identify their meaningful participation in this recovery.

COVID-19 has revealed an existing, enduring, problematic issue of inequity, inequality, occupational safety and health quagmire, and layers of discrimination between the genders, especially as it pertains to front-line workers whose families are left without maternal care.

This Labour Day is calling on us to relinquish our insular views of workers' rights, and to put in place national administrative controls to prevent workers from losing their equity as a result of any pandemic, natural catastrophe, or any other act that calls for the adjustment of livelihood and subtraction of economic activity.

This Labour Day we must

reflect on the struggles and hardship LIAT workers are facing in not being able to get their severance. Many of our hotel workers are also unemployed. It has become completely obvious that we cannot rely on government to protect workers. We need to rely on workers to coalesce their power to protect their own safety and health through reorganising and through a system of collective bargaining. All aspects of work have safety and health standards and if we were able to join workers together we would all be able to achieve.

This Labour Day, the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union is calling for:

- The establishment of an unemployment fund - this fund will clearly help to mitigate the kind of hardship that has been experienced by workers during this pandemic.
- The enacting of a severance protection fund.
- The government to urgently bring to the Parliament the review of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code and the Occupational Health and Safety legislation for enforcement – A National Health/Safety Policy.

We do feel that it would be more than fitting in celebrating workers' rights and dignity.

We, as a trade union, pledge to enact reforms that promote workers' collective powers. These reforms must be responsive to the lessons we have learned and are learning from the challenges faced during the pandemic. Workers' lives, and the health and safety of working families depend on their ability to have a say in how they do their jobs. This crisis will continue to reshape our fragile economy, our workforce, and our very livelihood, but it must not destroy our hard earned and fought for rights and privileges.

The phenomenon of unions fighting for workers' rights is not new. The current pandemic has further unmasked even more deficiency in our workplaces and in our society, and we cannot afford to continue as in times past. We need to work collectively, focused, and for the benefit of the working man/class.

This union needs you and we invite you, our workers, to have a voice in the shaping of your own work lives as we seek to regain our rightful place in society.

May this Labour Day bring unity in diversity as it is through the efforts of all our workers that this twin island state of Antigua and Barbuda keeps growing.

Have a happy, safe and blessed Labour Day!



LABOUR DAY MESSAGE FROM

THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION

BY JOAN PETERS, PRESIDENT OF THE ABPSA

Sisters and Brothers, Comrades, Members and Friends:

As we celebrate another Labour Day, we look around at the current state of affairs both here and abroad and ask ourselves, "What is it that we are truly celebrating?"

Year after year we claim that the plight of our forefathers allows us to be a better version of ourselves but to what avail? The world over, rights and privileges that were paid for in blood have been trivialised and trampled upon by those mandated to be in authority and to what end? We the people have seemingly gone asleep, letting partisan

politics divide us as a workforce and as a nation. I ask again, to what end?

To what end are we working towards; to what end are we fighting towards; to what end are we being silent towards; to what end? In a time where free will and freedom of expression are commonplace, it would appear that instead of progress, the world at large, and the country more specifically, has regressed since the humanitarian aspect of humanity has somehow gotten lost, lost in translation. Rather than looking at what is best for the collective, the emphasis more and more is being placed on what is good

for a few to the peril of the collective and I ask again, to what end?

As workers, and more importantly as citizens, it is time for us to re-evaluate our roles in society and ask ourselves what is it we are working towards, what is it that we are living for? We need to take a hard look at ourselves and ask more importantly, to what end?

To what end are we sitting idly by as our brothers and sisters struggle for basic rights; to what end do we stay silent when issues arise around us because "it's not my business to get involved"? When will

we realise and fulfil the national motto “each endeavouring, all achieving”? Notice it says ALL ACHIEVING while we each endeavour. It is not by accident as our forefathers had the vision that we each must work to a common purpose... achieving. What are we achieving today? With the proliferation of double and triple standards and the propensity to repeat rather than seek the truth for oneself, I ask again, what are we achieving?

With workers’ rights being trampled upon daily and the constant and deliberate moving of the established goalpost, I ask again, what are we achieving?

With the lack of standards or the lacklustre implementation of precedence that are to the benefit of the working class, what are we achieving? In an era of equal work for equal pay and the proliferation of exploitation of the working class, I ask again, what are we achieving?

Notwithstanding the trials and tribulations, we must acknowledge those who get

up daily to put their best foot forward, those shoulders on whom the nation rest, those who without their continued effort and dedication, the economy would be in shambles, those who, without their expertise and talents, we would be thrust right back into the dark ages.

It is those people who we celebrate this Labour Day and stand in solidarity with them in knowing that although things are far from perfect, the effort has not gone unnoticed. Although it may feel like the work done is in vain, today is a day where we let you know that you are not forgotten and that you should be equitably compensated. When it seems as if all is lost, we are here to say: where there is life, there is hope.

This hope is personified through the caring for each other and being our brother’s keeper. This hope is personified when we as a people stand with each other and say wrong is wrong, no matter the colour, creed or political affiliation. We know, however, that hope without action is like giving a man a

basket to carry water. Therefore, we are calling for action, action across the nation to show that workers’ rights are human rights, making it known throughout that, without workers who are fairly compensated within a clearly established and equitable system, the country will collapse.

We are making it clear that unless we as workers band together, we will continually suffer at the hands of those who seek to get much with little or nothing. We must band together to ensure that we all prosper and are made better off, since sunlight today does not mean sunlight forever. We must listen and be respectful of each other so that all views are expressed and the best solution sought. We must band together, brothers and sisters, for as a body has many parts, together they make one body to serve a higher purpose. That higher purpose is to build on what our forefathers have fought and suffered for and not let those rights be trivialised and trampled upon, especially in the name of progress.

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PRESIDENT'S LABOUR DAY MESSAGE

BY SORIA DUPIE-WINSTON

Fellow labour unionist, colleagues in the nursing profession, and all workers in Antigua and Barbuda, I deem it a privilege and an honour to celebrate with you Labour Day 2021. As our country faces challenging times and we learn how to cope and func-

tion within the dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic, the front-line workers, our nurses, as well as other healthcare workers, continue to labour tirelessly and sacrifice for love of humanity and country. Moreover, nurses in Antigua and Barbuda continue

to function in a pivotal role at all levels of the healthcare spectrum, in order to mitigate against the effects of this dreadful pandemic that threaten our daily lives and sources of existence. This indeed was driven home when our fraternity was dealt a hard

blow when one of our fellow colleagues became a casualty of COVID-19 while being in active duty. To this end, as we celebrate Labour Day 2021, the Antigua and Barbuda Nurses Association is looking forward to seeing our government come to the realisation and recognition of the invaluable and selfless contribution that nurses have made and continue to make towards national health and safety. Firstly, we

look forward to our government showing gratitude for the invaluable services rendered, and justly rewarding such service. Secondly, today, celebrated as workers' day, we call on our government for support in seeking and implementing innovative ways to retain our most skilled and valuable nurses, to ensure that the healthcare facilities and services in Antigua and Barbuda can meet the healthcare needs of the popu-

lace. Finally, we also call on our government to ensure that the working environment in which nurses and other healthcare providers work are maintained and fully equipped with the necessary tools and equipment needed to provide the best quality of healthcare services. In conclusion, I take this opportunity to salute all nurses and nursing personnel in Antigua and Barbuda, the Caribbean and the world. The sacrifice,

love and care that has been exhibited, especially during this global pandemic, is exemplary and commendable. I encourage you to continue fighting the good fight; I encourage you to continue running the race; and, most importantly, I encourage you to remain faithful to the great and noble profession of nursing.

I conclude by wishing all workers in Antigua and Barbuda a Happy Labour Day!



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'CHURCH HAS ROLE IN FIGHTING PANDEMIC'



Worshippers at an Easter Sunday service at Our Lady of Perpetual Help RC Church in San Fernando

Trinidad Guardian - President of the Inter-Religious Organisation of T&T (IRO) Rev. Dr. Knolly Clarke says the church has its role to play in keeping the pandemic from spreading by adhering and adapting to the new COVID-19 protocols. He was speaking in response to changes in the Public Health Regulations No. 11 of April 30 to "allow religious or ecclesiastical organisations or any other religious organisations to conduct religious meetings or services – (a) by

electronic means; or (b) for the purposes of recording or live streaming same, where the gathering of persons at any place used for that purpose does not exceed five persons." Prior to this, Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley announced that certain businesses including all places of worship will be closed until May 23 to treat with the rising number of COVID-19 cases. Speaking to the Sunday Guardian on Saturday, Clarke said "We have to adapt to the

new normal. We don't want to create additional problems. "The pandemic is challenging enough for the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health. We have to take it seriously and not to cause crowding and breach COVID restrictions. "We must take into consideration the health and safety of the doctors and nurses on the frontline against this virus. We don't know how long it will continue. Everyone can do their part and we don't want people to suffer for

someone's irresponsibility. If I broke protocols and something happened to me, I would be denying my congregation entry to church." He said church services were closed. However, the IRO had adapted to the pandemic times by having its meeting Saturday on Zoom, he conducted Bible studies online, opened the new law term last year on Zoom, and the Anglican Church will be holding its Synod next week in the virtual domain. Clarke said one of the positives of COVID-19 was that the virus had brought the church into the 21st-century via digital technology, cellphones, Zoom and other online platforms. He said he will be officiating at a funeral with a limit of 10 people present and other family, friends and members from the parish can participate online in real-time. Clarke said he was not that electronic savvy, but his children, neighbours, and members of his congregation help him to get on the digital pulpit.



Three people who were part of a rally in Bermuda to protest

Scores join rally to protest COVID-19 restrictions in Bermuda as death toll rises

HAMILTON, Bermuda (CMC)—Dozens of people took part in a rally on Sunday against the government's promotion of COVID-19 vaccinations and continued imposition of public health restrictions. This is despite two more residents succumbing to the disease, taking the death total to 29, of which 17 have occurred since April 1. In what was dubbed

the "Bermuda Freedom Car/Bike Rally", protesters were asked to assemble on Front Street in the capital before driving around the island. It was estimated that almost 200 cars, plus 20 motorcycles, took part in the rally. Many of the cars appeared to be filled with families. Vehicles were adorned with signs, some of which said "My Body

Belongs to God", "Don't Segregate Us", "All Jobs Are Essential, Reopen" and "Revoke Emergency Powers". Mark Roberts, an organiser, said the aim was to "send a message to the government that we've had enough of these restrictions". He added: "We're law-abiding citizens who want to have our own freedom of choice. I'm not against vaccina-

tion, but I believe people should be able to make their own informed decision. That's not what's going on here." Bermuda remains under an 8:00 pm to 6:00 am (local time) curfew with 540 active cases of COVID-19, down from a recent high of 904. There are 25 people in hospital with the disease, with four patients in intensive care.



Indian industry body urges curbs to economic activity to save lives

Volunteers stand next to burning pyres of persons who died due to COVID-19 at a crematorium in India

Reuters - A leading Indian industry body on Sunday urged authorities to take the “strongest national steps” and to curtail economic activity to save lives, as the country battles surging coronavirus cases that have overwhelmed the healthcare system.

The rate of new infections dipped marginally but deaths kept climbing. Authorities reported 392,488 new cases in the previous 24 hours, pushing total cases to 19.56 million. Deaths jumped by a record 3,689, taking the overall toll to 215,542.

Billionaire Uday Kotak, managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank (KTKM.NS), said a “maximal response mea-

sure at the highest level is called for to cut the transmission links”, as building healthcare infrastructure will take time.

He was speaking on behalf of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) where he is the president.

“At this critical juncture when toll of lives is rising, CII urges the strongest national steps including curtailing economic activity to reduce suffering,” Kotak said in a statement.

Hospitals have filled to capacity, medical oxygen supplies have run short and morgues and crematoriums have been swamped as the country deals with the surge in cases: more than 300,000 daily cases for more than 10 days straight.

Concerned about the economic impact of shutting down the economy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government is reluctant to impose a national lockdown. At least 11 states and union territories have imposed some form of restrictions.

The Indian Express newspaper reported on Sunday that the country’s COVID-19 taskforce has advised the federal government to impose a national lockdown.

The eastern state of Odisha and northern industrial state Haryana became the latest to announce new lockdowns on Sunday, joining Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka and West Bengal.

Other states, including

Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan have either imposed night curfews or weekend lockdowns.

Modi said last month that all efforts should be made to avoid a lockdown. He imposed strict curbs on movement and social and economic activity last year in the early months of the pandemic, and economic output fell a record 24% in April-June 2020 compared with the same period a year earlier.

The current devastating second wave has also led to a shortfall in medical staff. Kotak also said healthcare workers may not be able to tackle the influx of patients, given the escalating caseloads.

US general: Afghan forces could face 'bad possible outcomes'

WASHINGTON (AP) — Afghan government forces face an uncertain future and, in a worst-case scenario, some “bad possible outcomes” against Taliban insurgents as the withdrawal of American and coalition troops accelerates in the coming weeks, the top U.S. military officer said Sunday.

Gen. Mark Milley described the Afghan military and police as “reasonably well-equipped, reasonably well-trained, reasonably well-led.” He cited Afghan troops’ years of experience against a resilient insurgency, but he declined to say they are fully ready to stand up to the Taliban without direct international backing during a potential Taliban offensive.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, spoke in an interview with Associated Press and CNN reporters flying with him from Hawaii to Washington just hours after the formal kickoff of the withdrawal.

Asked whether he believes the Afghan forces can hold up under increased strain, Milley was noncommittal.

“Your question: The Afghan army, do they stay together and remain a cohesive fighting force or do they fall apart? I think

there’s a range of scenarios here, a range of outcomes, a range of possibilities,” he said. “On the one hand you get some really dramatic, bad possible outcomes. On the other hand, you get a mil-

ernment in Kabul and the Taliban. This, he said, would avoid the “massive civil war” that some fear could happen.

Within about two months of the U.S.-led invasion in October 2001,

Afghan military has operated in recent years with less reliance on U.S. and coalition advisers. Among the key exceptions are special operations commandos and the defense ministry.



Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley (left) and Sen. Lindsay Graham, R.S.C at the Capitol Building April 28, for the US president national address

itary that stays together and a government that stays together.”

“Which one of these options obtains and becomes reality at the end of the day? We frankly don’t know yet. We have to wait and see how things develop over the summer.”

He said there is “at least still the possibility” of a negotiated political settlement between the gov-

the country’s Taliban rulers were removed from power and militarily defeated. But within several years, they had regrouped, rearmed and reasserted themselves, taking advantage of sanctuary in neighboring Pakistan. In recent years the Taliban achieved a battlefield stalemate with U.S.-supported Afghan government forces.

Milley noted that the

“But for the most part, there’s no advisers out there anyway,” he said in one of his few interviews since President Joe Biden announced April 14 that all U.S. military personnel will withdraw this summer. Milley said the commonly cited total of 2,500 troops rises to 3,300 if special operations forces are counted. “We’re taking it down to zero,” he said.



JENNER SAYS TRANSGENDER GIRLS IN WOMEN'S SPORTS IS 'UNFAIR'

In this Jan. 18, 2020, file photo, Caitlyn Jenner speaks at the fourth Women's March in Los Angeles (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes, File)

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Caitlyn Jenner, the former Olympic champion and reality TV personality now running for California governor, said she opposes transgender girls competing in girls' sports at school.

Jenner, a 1976 decathlon Olympic gold medalist who came out as a transgender woman in 2015, told a TMZ reporter on Saturday that it's "a

question of fairness."

"That's why I oppose biological boys who are trans competing in girls' sports in school. It just isn't fair. And we have to protect girls' sports in our schools," Jenner said Saturday during a brief interview in a Malibu parking lot.

It was Jenner's first comment on the controversial issue since announcing her can-

didacy to replace Gov. Gavin Newsom in a recall election. Five states have passed laws or implemented executive orders this year limiting the ability of transgender youths to play sports or receive certain medical treatment. There's been a vehement outcry from supporters of transgender rights.

Jenner, a Republican, supported Don-

ald Trump in the 2016 presidential election but later criticized his administration for some discriminatory actions against transgender people.

Many transgender-rights advocates have criticized Jenner, saying she has failed to convince them that she is a major asset to their cause.

Police said officers had to be drawn in from neighbouring forces to help Greater Manchester officers deal with the protestors

MANCHESTER UNITED V LIVERPOOL

GAME POSTPONED AFTER FAN PROTEST



Manchester United's Premier League game against Liverpool was postponed after about 200 fans broke into Old Trafford to protest against the Glazer family's ownership of the club.

The fixture was scheduled to kick off at 16:30 BST on Sunday.

"This is a collective decision from the police, both clubs, the Premier League and local authorities," said the Premier League.

Police said two officers had been injured following the protests.

It is the first time a Premier League match has been postponed

because of fan protests.

Supporters are currently not allowed into grounds because of the coronavirus pandemic but some United fans got on to the Old Trafford pitch to protest and, even though they were removed, some then made it back on to the grass later on.

"We understand and respect the strength of feeling but condemn all acts of violence, criminal damage and trespass, especially given the associated Covid-19 breaches," added the Premier League.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side are currently

second in the Premier League and a Liverpool win on Sunday would have handed Manchester City the title for the third time in four seasons. Talks will now take place about re-arranging the game.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) said "it became clear that many of those present were not intending to exercise their right to peaceful protest" and that "flares were let off and bottles thrown at officers. Two officers have been injured with one officer being attacked with a bottle and sustaining a significant slash wound to his face

requiring emergency hospital treatment."

Why are the protests taking place?

There has been a long-standing campaign against the Glazer family since the Americans' controversial leveraged takeover of the club in 2005. The Manchester United Supporters Trust (MUST) said it had "zero trust in the owners", adding that Joel Glazer "and his family have shown time and again that their sole motivation is personal profit at the expense of our football club".



IPL 2021: KIERON POLLARD SMASHES MUMBAI INDIANS TO STUNNING WIN OVER CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

Kieron Pollard blasted 87 not out from 34 balls as Mumbai Indians completed a stunning chase of 219 against the Chennai Super Kings on the final ball.

The West Indian came in with 138 needed from 62 balls and hit eight sixes and six fours for a four-wicket win.

Mumbai needed 16 from

the final over - and Pollard, dropped two overs earlier on 68, hit a six, two fours and scampered a two from the last ball.

It was the second highest chase in Indian Premier League history.

England all-rounder Moeen Ali had earlier hit 58 from 36 balls before Ambati Rayudu blasted a 27-ball 72 to lift top-

of-the-table Chennai to 218-4. "Probably one of the best T20 games I have ever been part of," Mumbai captain Rohit Sharma said. "I have never seen a chase like that before. One of the best innings, also, from Polly." On a flat pitch and small ground in Delhi, Mumbai started well in pursuit through openers Rohit (35) and Quinton de

Kock (38), before slipping from 71-0 after 7.3 overs to 81-3 in the 10th.

But Pollard produced a brutal assault, hitting three big sixes in four balls off left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja early in his innings.

He continued to clear the boundary with ease and reached his fifty from just 17 balls.



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