

# JUDGE ALONE BILL

## GETS THE APPROVAL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**SEE PAGE 5**



# DISAPPEARING CIVILITY

We reside in a world today in which rapidly developing technology is not only changing the way we experience life on a daily basis, but also, it could be suggested, as a spin-off, is having a deleterious effect on the way we treat each other, even in basic everyday functions. Whilst we might scurry to lay the blame on the changing times or the same technology, it is pertinent to question whether it is not just us, the people, who are the real problem.

Civility in society today — not to be confused with civil society — seems to have become like an outdated mode of dress, such as the Houppelande of the late Middle Ages, a full-length, robe-like garment which fell in folds into a bell shape and

featured a high collar and wide sleeves. While is quite acceptable for taste in fashion to evolve from the outrageous to haute couture only to return to the absurd, why should we, as a society, be just as ridiculous and toss good manners and politeness out of the window? Why are we hastening our descent into this apparently bottomless pit of doom?

Our society is rife with examples of this crass kind of behaviour which has invaded every facet of it. The roll of honour, not unexpectedly to say the least, is headed by those minibus drivers whose daily ambitions seem to be attempts to break every law in the Highway Code Act. They try to out blast the music systems of their competition, overload

their buses on every trip, overtake as many vehicles as space permits and cause as many near accidents and heart attacks to innocent bystanders, as possible.

Customer service or lack of it comes a close second. One can be gripped with dread when having to venture into certain business establishments, not at the fear of being robbed but rather at the thought of having to speak to the employees of the said entity. The culture which permeates indicates that those standing behind the counter are just doing you a favour by attending to you. One could be exposed to this unfortunate development whether one is in Bourda Market, a hardware store, a financial institution, a government

building, or a restaurant.

Gentlemen of yore, those who held doors open for women and children, greeted everyone with a warm smile, and whose vocabulary was littered with phrases such as 'Good Morning, Good Afternoon, Please, and Thank You' are a fast vanishing species in the way of the Dodo. The least uttered on the subject of cursing, the better, as this manner of communicating is now so engrained that to hear children of kindergarten age wield that 'alphabet' with the expertise of a drunken sailor is to realise the depths to which we have plummeted as a society.

It might be proposed that those in positions of leadership should be the ones righting the

keel in this instance, but one might cringe at that idea after casting one's memory back to the rudderless chain of events which unfolded after the 2020 General and Regional Elections. Integrity, without which there can be no civility per se, has long since been abandoned in real terms and the society has evolved into a monster of its own making. The uncouth exchanges which followed on social media between supporters of the two major parties, both locally and in the diaspora, signalled a virtual cold civil war. It was not, in hindsight, something we, as a society, by any means, should be proud of. And to what end? Lifelong friendships with origins dating back to school days, primary school, in some instances, were tried, tested, torn asunder or irreparably damaged by our own lack of civility and basic respect for each other. Now, many of us, probably in our quieter moments of late, are silently bowing our heads in shame, at least those who still possess some element of civility.

Why are we floundering in this abyss? "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars//But in ourselves, that we are underlings," Cassius, a Roman nobleman utters to Brutus in Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar (Act I, Scene III). Cassius is trying to persuade Brutus to stop Caesar from becoming a monarch, by presenting the argument that it is their weak position rather than fate that is preventing them from acting against their will. It would be apt to paraphrase Cassius in this instance, since, only we can be held accountable for this sad state of affairs in which we, as a society, have submerged ourselves. There are no excuses to be had, as good manners and basic decency, the tenets of civility cost absolutely nothing to learn or to put into practice. Fortunately, some good examples of how we should conduct ourselves still exist. We would do well to seek their guidance for a forthright return to civility. Time is of the essence.

Reprinted from Sta-  
broek News

## POLICE INVESTIGATE APPARENT SUICIDE

The police are investigating the death of a young woman who is believed to have died from what appears to have been an apparent suicide. The woman – Melissa Browne, thirty, - was living with her four children – all girls – at Nut Grove. She was a Guyanese national who was said to have been unemployed. There are reports that the woman died by

hanging but when police attached to the Grays Farm station arrived on the scene, the body was no longer hanging.


The call to the police station came in at 1:50 a.m. and informed sources say the call was made by a family acquaintance.

It is expected that an autopsy will be performed on the body to determine the precise cause of death.



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# LABOUR MINISTER CLEARS THE AIR OVER RENEWAL OF WORK PERMIT FOR A FOREIGN JOURNALIST

Attorney General and Labour Minister, Steadroy Benjamin, issued a statement in the House of Representatives on Thursday to 'clear the air' over allegations that the government had refused to renew a work permit for a foreign journalist attached to a local media group.

Benjamin told the nation that the matter of the renewal of the work

permit for the journalist in question – Gemma Handy of the Observer Media Group – was brought to his attention when he received a phone call from vice president of the Inter-American Press Association, Julian Rogers, who queried why the work permit application submitted by Handy was not approved.

"The Labour Depart-

ment has a policy known to all and sundry that applications for work permit renewal must first be submitted to the department at least three months prior to the expiry of the work permit. In the case of Handy, her work permit expired on January 6, 2021, and she did not make her application for renewal until February 16, 2021," Benjamin

explained. Despite her negligence, the labour minister further explained that the officials in the department took it upon themselves to fast-track her application which was placed on his desk for signature the very morning he received the call from Rogers.

Additionally, he said, had she made contact with the department or

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with him as minister, courtesies would have been extended for her to continue work until the work permit was processed, but this was not done. "Because of her profession, the department processed the application in less than the normal processing period and it was placed on his desk on May 4, 2021, as part of a batch of fifty applications," according to Benjamin. He told his parliamentary colleagues that he was

raising the matter in the House of Representatives because there were some in the community who were making an issue of the situation and had been accusing the government of attempting to stifle press freedom. Benjamin vehemently rejected this notion. "This government, was one of the first in the region and the first in the OECS to make criminal libel as an offence, thus leading the way for press freedom. For those

who are peddling false information about the government's stance on press freedom, stop spreading false information. The government's record on press freedom is quite good," he stated. He emphasised that the work permit was granted even though Handy continued to work illegally in the country for more than a month. "We overlooked this fact and granted the work permit anyway," he declared.

## JUDGE ALONE BILL GETS THE APPROVAL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Legislation which will introduce a new system of conducting criminal trials in Antigua and Barbuda has received approval from the House of Representatives.

The House on Thursday passed the Criminal Proceedings (Trial By Judge Alone) Bill, 2021, following a robust debate. Mover of the Bill, Attorney General Steadroy Benjamin, said that as a result of the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, criminal trials in the High Court have been almost completely halted. As a result, there is now an even more serious backlog of pending criminal

matters. "The object of the bill is to facilitate the trial of much of these criminal matters in the High Court by a Judge alone, that is, a judge sitting without a jury," he explained.

Benjamin reported that this legislation was first submitted for further discussion and review to a select parliamentary committee which discussed it at length and recommended its approval by the Parliament. According to the attorney general, the Antigua and Barbuda Bar Association's President, Lenworth Johnson, was part of the select committee and he

made several useful recommendations to the committee.

In addition, Benjamin said several of the other entities involved in the criminal justice system, from police officers to those involved in the administration, are all on board with enacting the legislation and moving ahead with its implementation.

He further explained that the Judge Alone Bill is what he described as a 'sunset bill', which means that it has a specific lifespan. "This law comes into effect on a date prescribe by the minister and will be in operation for a period of

two years," he declared. The law also spells out the cases that are eligible for hearing before a judge sitting alone. However, he noted that consent of the accused must be sought in those cases not listed in the law for judge alone hearings. Barbuda Representative, Trevor Walker, said he had issues with certain provisions of the bill as in his mind it constitutes a major deviation from the system of trials that has been practised in the country over many years.

Walker noted that while earlier in the bill speaks to consent being sought for a judge alone trial,

the prosecution has a right under Section 6 to make application for a judge alone trial under certain circumstances. He suggested that this section gives him reason for pause. In her turn at debate, St Mary's South representative, Samantha Marshall, reassured the House that there was nothing ominous about

the legislation, noting that it is now common practice for judge alone trials in several Caribbean jurisdictions as well as in the United States. She emphasised that because of Antigua and Barbuda's population, the jury pool has become quite limited and the juries have been comprised of the same

people on multiple occasions. Secondly, she noted, there have also been cases where this type of trial may also become necessary because of threats to jurors.

Adding his voice to the debate, St Mary's North representative, Sir Molwyn Joseph, said he is concerned that there seems to be the begin-

ning of a narrative which suggests that the government was introducing this type of trial because it wanted to trample on individual's rights.

He stated that this method of conducting trials only became necessary because of the pandemic and the narrative should be rejected outright.



## GOVERNMENT HALTS PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON HEMP BILL

The government has decided to withdraw the proposed Hemp Bill from further consideration by the Parliament.

The announcement was made in the House of Representatives on Thursday by Attorney General, Steadroy Benjamin, who said that this was the recommendation from a select parliamentary

committee that met to consider the legislation ahead of any parliamentary debate and to make recommendations to the full house. "Having heard the submissions of all the parties present and the technical difficulties that appear to result if this bill was passed and enacted, it was felt in the interest of all concerned that this matter

ought not to proceed at this time," he reported. Benjamin listed the concerns as follows: there were submissions by the technical people that it would be impractical and not workable to have both hemp and cannabis being grown in Antigua and Barbuda at the same time. There were also concerns about cross fertilisation be-

tween the two and that would negatively affect the quality of the plants produced here.

He said after listening to the various submissions from both the technical and legal personnel, there was a recommendation to halt discussions on the bill and submit it to further technical and other reviews that may be considered at a later date.





## HOTELIERS TO CONTINUE DELIBERATING VACCINATION STATUS OF EMPLOYEES

*By Shelton Daniel*

Hoteliers and associated private sector stakeholders in the hospitality industry have so far not answered definitively whether they support making vaccination mandatory for their employees, or whether they would like the status quo to remain. The decision on whether or not to present oneself for free inoculation against COVID-19 is for now entirely personal and voluntary. However, the prospect of it becoming mandatory has been

mooted increasingly in recent times amid a considerable slowdown in vaccine uptake by the public. This has jeopardised Antigua and Barbuda's goal of achieving the seventy per cent of its one hundred thousand population that must be fully vaccinated in order to achieve herd immunity by the 2021 summer target date of 1st July. Further, Antigua and Barbuda's heavily-tourism-dependent economy could be further damaged if visitors from its main source markets avoid

the twin-island state as a vacation destination, should it fail to achieve the level of inoculation that would make tourists feel safe or less at risk from the virus. It was with this in mind that the Cabinet of Ministers, chaired by Prime Minister Gaston Browne, invited officials of the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA) to appear before it on Wednesday during the apex executive body's regular weekly meeting. According to the post Cabinet briefing notes, "The assurance

was sought by Cabinet whether, like other hotels associations in the Caribbean, the ABHTA would have a voluntary or mandatory policy regarding vaccination and employment at the hotels.

"The officials did reveal that many North Americans making bookings for the upcoming season, inquired whether the hotels' employees were vaccinated. The Cabinet concluded that there is a strong desire by the travelling public to ensure that the persons with whom they must in-

teract – at the hotels, the taxi drivers, the shops, the places of high historical interest – are safely vaccinated and not likely to make them ill or to infect them.”

According to the Cabinet statement, the hoteliers disclosed that one thousand, nine hundred of their three thousand, six hundred employees are vaccinated – roughly fifty-two per cent by our count.

During the live post Cabinet briefing on Thursday, Information Minister Melford Nicholas was asked whether the hoteliers had committed to a firm position on the voluntary-versus-mandatory vaccination issue. “While the two officers who came were not able to make a broad determination on behalf of the entire Association ... they engaged with us and understood better the thinking of the government, and they will take that back to their Association for a wider plenary discussion.” He continued:

“I think where it’s going to come out is that they are all going to face the challenge of having to meet the expectation in the trade that their clients, their guests, want to feel comfortable in a safe environment. So, it has become a marketing and an economic issue; how do you guarantee your guests when they’re actually booking and asking you, ‘Do you have a safe environment for me to spend my vacation?’ How can you say ‘yes’ when less than half of your employees are currently vaccinated? It’s going to take at least eight to ten weeks to be able to get vaccination if they start in earnest now.”

Nicholas said the vaccination status of employees and prospective employees is an inescapably thorny issue. “As they go back to the question of re-hiring, they may be forced to give priority to those persons who are already vaccinated. These are issues they are going to have to contend with.”



## VACCINATION REQUIRED FOR RESUMPTION OF INTENSE, CONTACT SPORTS

*By Shelton Daniel*

Sports Minister Daryl Matthew is reported to have made “an impassioned plea” during the weekly Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

Matthew, who is also the elected Member of Parliament for St. John’s Rural South, implored his colleagues for support “to allow recreational sports to take place.”

According to the circulated post-Cabinet notes, “On Saturday and Sunday mornings, scores of men gather on open fields to play soccer and other kinds of sporting activities intended to keep their muscles taut and their lungs healthy. The Cabinet agreed that it is to be encouraged, but that every precaution must be taken to ensure

Cont’d on pg 10



that these activities do not lead to [further] spread of the virus.”

The notes went on to spell out some of those recommended precautions: “Those who feel ill are to stay isolated in their homes. Those who participate must not expose themselves, but must practise the protocols that have kept them healthy. They must all be encouraged to vaccinate.”

But should such activities even be considered at this time, given the nature of contact sports such as soccer which cannot be played while wearing masks, is by its very nature not amenable to social distancing, and involves very heavy and forceful expulsion of exhaled droplets via the nose and mouth because the game is quite physically demanding?

These were questions put to Information Minister Melford Nicholas as he hosted the live post Cabinet media

briefing on Thursday morning.

“There will be preconditions that will have to be met and satisfied before the consent is given,” he assured. “But, clearly, there has been some spontaneous engagement of persons on fields across the island – both for cricket and for football – and so the question being asked by the associations is: If persons can afford to be playing in that environment, why not have competitive sports.”

The minister’s attention was drawn to India’s decision earlier this week to discontinue its hugely popular and lucrative Twenty20 cricket tournament, the Indian Premier League (IPL), after several weeks of resisting calls to do just that because of an overwhelming and mind boggling daily surge of new COVID-19 infections, and a mounting death toll. The Indian authorities had held off from taking that precipi-

tous decision, arguing that the IPL was a rare source of entertainment and cheer given the pandemic gloom that has blanketed the Asian subcontinent of 1.3 billion.

But when it became clear that even players’ bubbles were being breached by COVID infections with increasing frequency and regularity, there was really no other choice left, with a growing number of countries refusing to accept trav-

ellers coming from or transiting India.

“There will be concerns that will have to be satisfied,” Nicholas accepted, adding that “maybe one of those conditions will be vaccination of the players to allow for that kind of program to go forward.”

Meanwhile, Cabinet has announced that “a Public Health Protection Policy is being articulated; vaccination being the most important element.”



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*Senator Maureen Hyman*

## HYMAN TO BE APPOINTED MINISTER OF STATE

Senator Maureen Hyman will be appointed as a Minister of State in the Ministry of Legal Affairs at a ceremony that will take place at Government House on Friday morning. Hyman will also be named Leader of Government business in the Senate responsible for piloting government's legislation through the Upper House. Government sources say the appointment of Hyman becomes necessary as the substantive Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Senator Mary Claire Hurst is absent from the state for medical reasons. Her appointment is therefore for a thirty-day period.

## UK PARTNERS WITH THE ONDCP TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The United Kingdom continues its programme of assistance to government agencies concerned with the defence of the nation. The latest donation was made to the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy (ONDCP) which received a selection of equipment that will aid them in performing their duties, protecting the people of Antigua and Barbuda. "Cumulatively, the UK Border Force has donated ECD 30,000 (£ 8,000) of equipment to local law enforcement to increase the protection of officers and the efficiency with which they are able to carry out their duties," a statement from the UK High Commission Representative office in St John's stated. During a handover of the equipment to the Director of

ONDCP, Resident British Commissioner Lindsay Thompson reinforced the UK's commitment to support the Antigua and Barbuda defence and security authorities, noting the challenges both nations share in their fight against crime. Director Lt. Colonel Edward H. Croft, in response, expressed much appreciation to the UK Border Force and the Resident High Commissioner for their timely donation. "Our partnership over the years has resulted in successes against criminals and organised criminal groups by taking the profit out of crime. The donated equipment will improve the protection of the men and women in their duties and enhance the agency's capability in its continued efforts in the fight against drug trafficking,



*UK HCR, Lindsay Thompson (l) and Col Edward Croft (r)*

specified offences, money laundering, terrorism financing and financial crime," he stated. He added that the organisation would be closer to realising its vision which is to become the Caribbean's leading law enforcement agency combating illegal narcotics, money laundering and terrorism financing.



# BENJAMIN EXPRESSES SYMPATHY AT PASSING OF FORMER POLITICAL OPPONENT, MICHAEL BURTON

*Media statement issued by Hon. Steadroy Benjamin*



**Michael Burton**

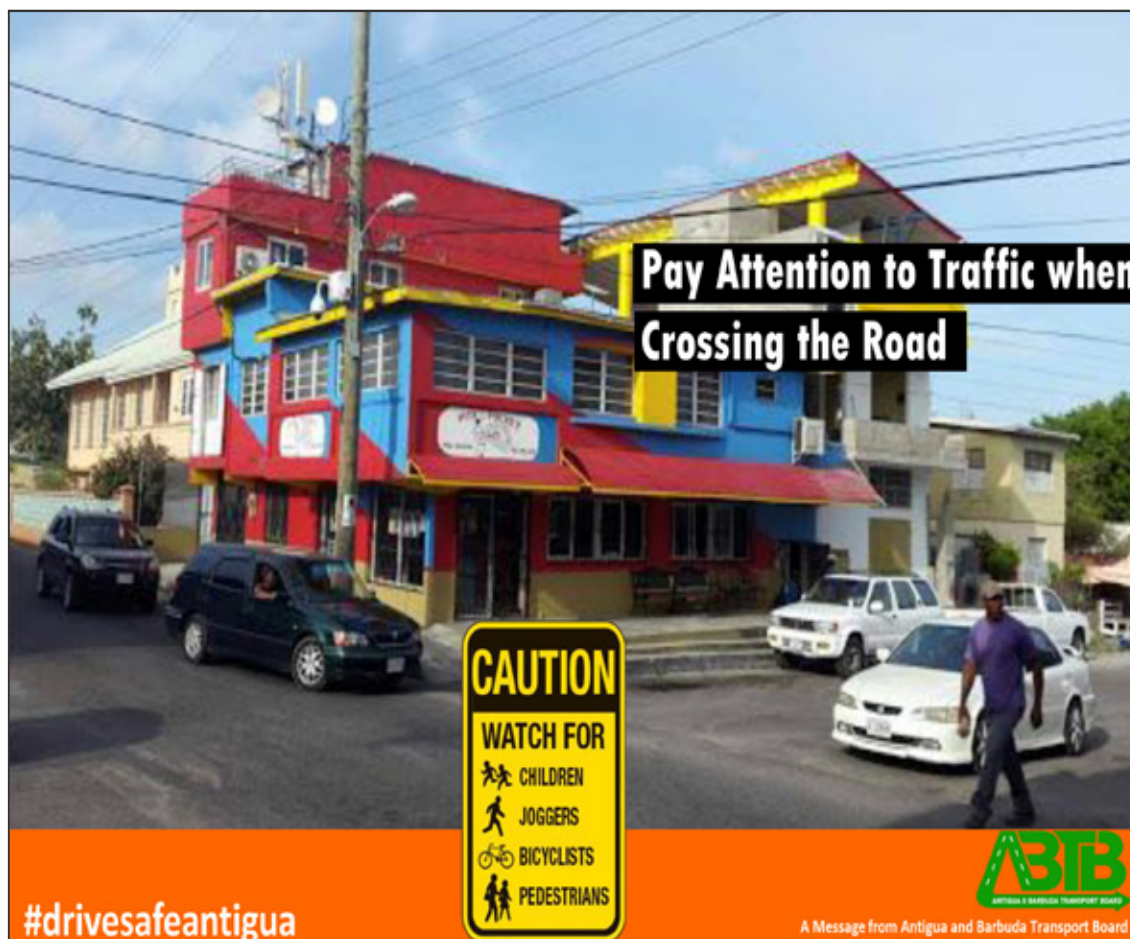
St. John's, 6th May 2021 - "Before Michael Burton was my political rival, he was my friend and protégé, I am truly sorry to learn of his passing." That is how Minister of Le-

gal Affairs and Attorney-General, Steadroy 'Cutie' Benjamin reacted to the news of the death of Michael Burton.

Mr Burton died today at a facility in the United States after ailing for some time. He was a candidate in the 2018 general elections on a United Progressive Party ticket, running against Minister Benjamin who is the elected representative, on behalf of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party, for

the constituency of St John's City South. In expressing his sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr Burton, Minister Benjamin recalled his early association with Michael Burton. He said that "Michael was a member of 'Cutie's Ovals OJ', one of three basketball teams that I had established. He also worked with me in my constituency, and I was very fond of him." The Minister said that he chooses to remember Michael Burton, "not as a rival for political office, but as a friend and supporter," adding that "we had fruitful times together."

On behalf of the people of St John's City South and on his own behalf, Minister Benjamin said, "Our sincerest sympathy goes out to Michael's family and friends. Our hearts and our prayers are with them at this tragic time. May Michael rest in peace."



A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



# LOCAL COMPANY DONATES TO HER MAJESTY'S PRISON



***Ariel Withy, Supervisor of Eye Mobile Vision Care Inc. presented items to Pauline Charles, Junior Prison Officer***

A local company has stepped forward to make a donation of personal protective equipment to officers at Her Majesty's Prison.

The donation was made by Eye Mobile Vision Care Inc. whose Supervisor, Ariel Withy, presented the items to the prison. She stated that the company was very pleased to be making the donation. "At Eye Mobile Vision Care, we are always happy to give back to our community. With the crisis currently being faced by the

prison, we thought it quite timely to make this donation, in our efforts to contribute to the prison officers' healthcare. With the ongoing battle against the pandemic, safety remains a priority within our society," she noted.

The donation of the healthcare package includes personal protective equipment of one hundred face shields and twenty-four safety glasses was made possible through the company's charity, I Can See Foundation.

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# A STORM BREWING OVER HAITI AT THE OAS



**By Sir Ronald Sanders**

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

Strong disagreement may be brewing at the Organization of American States (OAS) on how

to respond to the ongoing, grave political and constitutional crisis in Haiti.

Since January 2020, the Haitian President, Jovenel Moïse, has been ruling the country by decree without any legislative oversight. The mandates of the members of the Haitian Parliament, except for 10 of them, were terminated because elections were not held.

The rising tension in the country, including use of lethal force by

the police against protestors, widespread kidnappings and killing, rape of women, and an arbitrary decision by Moïse to hold a controversial referendum on a new constitution, as well as heightened political contention, caused concerned member states at the OAS, including nine CARICOM countries, to sponsor a Resolution at the organization's Permanent Council to address the situation urgently.

Specifically, the Resolution, adopted on March 17, offered "the good offices of the OAS under the authority of the Permanent Council to facilitate a dialogue that would lead to free and fair elections". It requested the Secretary-General, Luis Almagro, "to advise the Government and other major stakeholders in Haiti, of the Permanent Council's offer to undertake a good offices role and to invite the President of Haiti to consider

inviting the Permanent Council to do so".

Whether or not Almagro wrote to the Haitian President and "other major stakeholders" is unclear. Certainly, no major political party or human rights group in Haiti has confirmed receipt of any communication from him. There has also been silence from him to two official requests, asking for details of stakeholders to whom he might have written and when. There is no need for this – a straight answer is all that is required.

This matter will be mired in controversy, because while uncertainty prevails over whether or not the Secretary-General did write to the President and other major stakeholders in Haiti, a letter dated April 28 was sent to him by Claude Joseph in the latter's capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The letter is significant.

First, it does not refer



to any communication received from Almagro. Instead, it references the Permanent Council's Resolution of March 17 as the basis for writing. Second, it states that "the Government of the Republic of Haiti is willing to receive an OAS mission in support of the ongoing dialogue with all the nation's stakeholders with a view to concluding a political agreement that will facilitate the organization of the constitutional referendum and elections at all levels during the course of 2021".

On the second point, the OAS Resolution of 17 March did not offer its good offices "to facilitate the organization of the constitutional referendum". The proposed referendum is entirely of President Moïse's making and is mired in claims of unconstitutionality. The highly respected U.S. Congresswoman, Maxine Waters, describes it as "Moïse's most audacious and dangerous power grab". Legal experts inside and outside Haiti have opined that the existing Constitu-

tion specifically prohibits its referenda to decide constitutional changes because a former dictator, Jean Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, had used that artifice to proclaim himself President-for-Life. Therefore, if the OAS accepts that facilitation of the referendum is a condition of its good offices' role, its purpose and credibility are undermined even before it starts. No stakeholder would participate in any dialogue where organisation of a constitutional referendum is a condition. It is important to recall that, prompted by the rapidly deteriorating democratic and human rights situation in Haiti, the offer of good offices by the Permanent Council resolution was "to facilitate a dialogue that would lead to free and fair elections". Nowhere did the Resolution venture to suggest that the OAS' role would include facilitating the organisation of a referendum to alter the constitution.

Particularly significant is that on April 26, two days before Joseph sent his letter to Almagro,

68 members of the U.S. Congress wrote to Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, pointing out that Moïse "lacks the credibility and legitimacy to oversee a constitutional referendum scheduled for June 2021, or to administer elections that are free and fair".

This position by such a large number of U.S. Congress persons, led by Gregory W. Meeks, the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, is a remarkable development. It shows that important U.S. lawmakers are deeply concerned about what they describe as, "lack of preparedness of electoral institutions to hold elections, as well as the unconstitutional composition of the prevailing electoral council". Contrary to law, Moïse hand-picked the members of the Council.

Of especial note is that the 68 U.S. Congresspersons urged Secretary Blinken to use the U.S. vote within the OAS "to ensure U.S. taxpayer dollars are not spent in support of this referendum".

Last year, the OAS and CARICOM, held all the parties in Guyana to account to deliver a credible result to general elections held on March 2. It took five months of the active attention and diligence of CARICOM, the Commonwealth, the European Union and the OAS to ensure that democracy and the rule of law were upheld in Guyana, and that general and regional elections were not stolen by the incumbent government.

What is happening in Haiti now is no less egregious than what was resisted in Guyana in 2020 and is now being condemned in other member states of the OAS – and even in countries outside of it.

The OAS must act in the interest of Haiti and the Haitian people to uphold their rights to democratic governance, human rights, and the opportunity for economic development. The governing Charters of the OAS mandate it.

Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com)

# FIVE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA NATIONALS

**among pannists taking part in  
regional competition**

Five Antigua and Barbuda pannists are among top steel pan players from across the Caribbean and the world taking part in the 2021 PanoGrama competition.

The competition is organised by PanoGrama Entertainment out of Trinidad and Tobago which is headed by its founder, Nevin Roach. The eliminations are taking place via virtual means starting tonight and conclude on Sunday night. Antigua and Barbuda's entries are: Demetre Samuel of Hell's Gate Steel Orchestra, Japhon Barthley of Gemonites, Kevhani Greenaway of Hell's Gate, Samany Brazier and Maurisha Potter of Panache. Director of Culture, Khan Cordice, who is himself an arranger for a steelband, is very optimistic about the chances of the Antigua and Barbuda five in the competition. "These five were selected from seven from this country who submitted audio tapes to the organisers as part of the selection process. While they are all young people, they are also quite accomplished pannists. Antigua and Barbuda has the second highest number of representatives and I expect us to have representation right through to the semi-finals and perhaps beyond," he remarked.

There are thirty pannists taking part in the competition from across the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, the U.S. and Canada. Last year, Antigua and Barbuda's lone representative, Amarni Gomes, made it all the way to the finals. He described the experience as his greatest accomplishment to date.

People in Antigua and Barbuda may follow the competition live on several social media platforms.

Following is media release from the organisers:

## **MUCH NEEDED BOOST FOR PANOGRAMA**

A major goal of PanoGrama Entertainment (PE) for this year was to deliver a vastly improved staging of PanoGrama. Now, with the invaluable support of the National Lotteries Control Board (NLCB) of Trinidad and Tobago confirmed just days before the international competition, that goal can be achieved more comfortably. The NLCB PanoGrama is set to make waves in the musical ocean from May 7.

Nevin Roach, CEO and founder of PE, was



elated when he received the news, stating, "It's a great feeling to know that all the hard work, which started since the end of last year's event, continues to bear fruit. I couldn't be any happier with this development and I am grateful for the efforts of my team and for the NLCB coming on board." A smiling Roach also said that he is getting accustomed to saying "The NLCB PanoGrama".

The NLCB indicated that "culture has been identified as one of the five pillars of commitment, which is directly aligned to PE's groundbreaking and historic event, borne with the advent of COVID-19 last year. Hence, the need to discover innovative ways to be entertained, harnessing the skills of our pannists and more importantly promoting the phenomena that is steelpan, which is notably one of the many wonders of Trinidad & Tobago, and the world.

The NLCB registered its pleasure to be associated with PanoGrama, "to be able to contribute to strengthening the culture of this paradise on earth, that is Trinidad & Tobago, and remains engaged on a daily basis in enriching the lives of individuals."

Prelims for the highly anticipated NLCB PanoGrama are taking place from May 7-9, 2021 at 8:00 p.m. AST on PanoGrama's Instagram (@pano.grama), YouTube (youtube.com/panograma) and Facebook (@pano.grama1). The line-up is as follows:



## MAY 7

Aquila Pereira (T&T)  
Maurisha Potter (Antigua)  
Mikiel Smith (Grenada)  
Gabriel Chartrand (Canada)  
Shovon Brown (T&T)  
Carlton Lyons (T&T)  
Matthew Kiser (US)  
Kevhani Greenaway (Antigua)  
Charlton Alfonso (T&T)  
Tyesha Alexander (T&T)

## MAY 9

Andre Forde (Barbados)  
Megan-Leigh L (T&T)  
Mathieu Borgne (France)  
Demetre Samuel (Antigua)  
Vivian Williams (T&T)  
Al Alexander (St. Lucia)  
Deja Cain (T&T)  
Kion Robinson (T&T)  
David Yundi (US)  
Earl Brooks Jr. (T&T)

## MAY 8

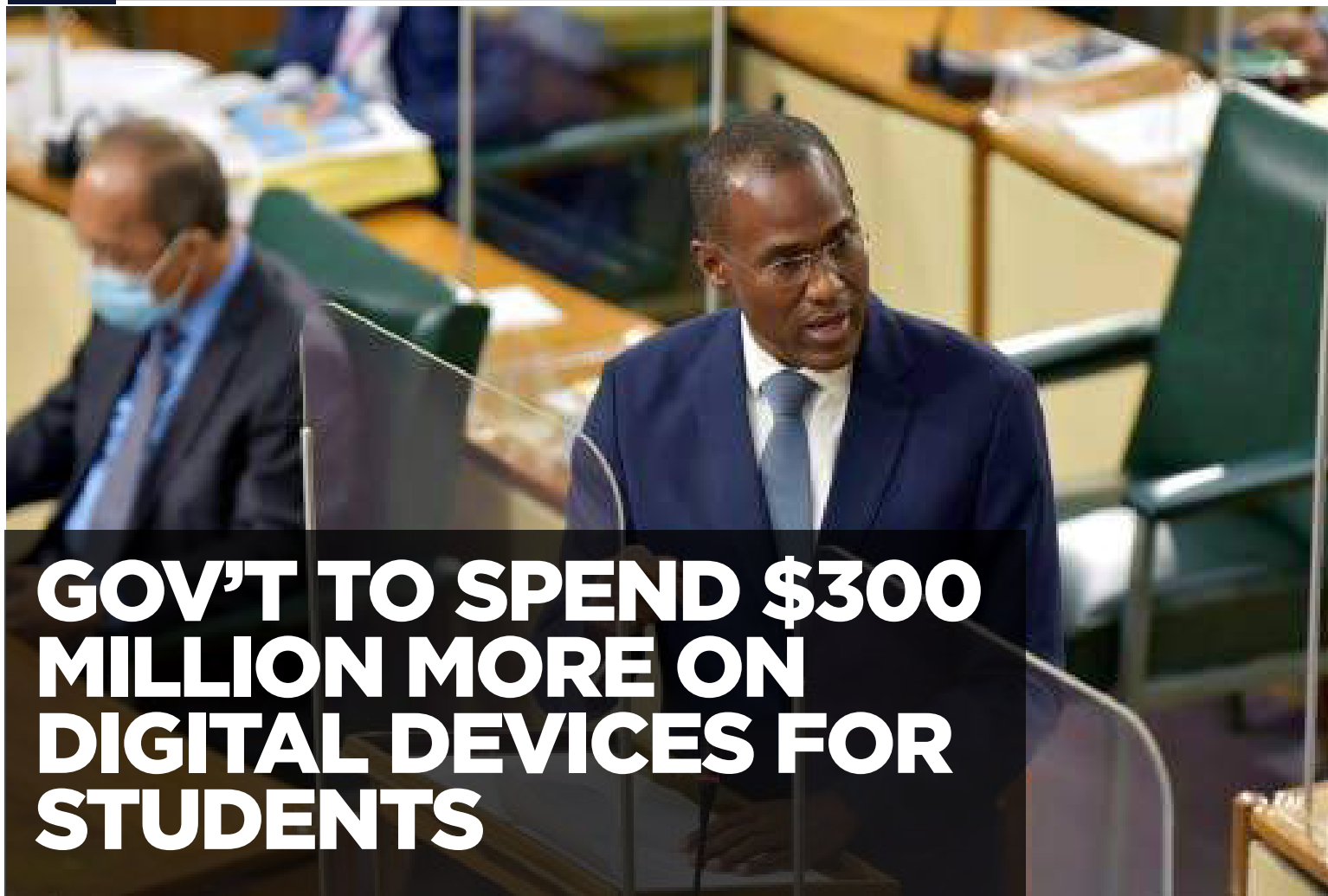
Jamel Cadette (T&T)  
Japhon Barthley (Antigua)  
Hanif Goodridge (T&T)  
Samanya Brazier (Antigua)  
Douglas Dallaway (England)  
Detroy Dey (Guyana)  
Keishaun Julien (T&T)  
Shaquille Forbes (T&T)  
Leroi Simmonds (US VI)  
Dejean Cain (T&T)

The semifinals will take place on May 13 and the finals on May 22.

Visit [pano-grama.com](http://pano-grama.com) for more information.

ENTERTAINMENT





## GOV'T TO SPEND \$300 MILLION MORE ON DIGITAL DEVICES FOR STUDENTS

KINGSTON, Jamaica (Jamaica Gleaner) — Several needy students are set to benefit from over \$300 million allocated by the Government to purchase digital devices under the SERVE Jamaica Digital Device Programme.

This was announced by the Minister of Finance and Public Service, Dr. Nigel Clarke, during yesterday's sitting of the House of Representatives.

According to Dr. Clarke, \$189 million will be made available for needy students identified by Members of Parliament who have not benefited from other Government lap-

top/digital device programmes; while \$140 million will be made available for the purchase of digital devices for needy students identified by councillors.

The Minister said once the devices have been procured by e-Learning Jamaica Company Limited, the ministry will make payment directly to the supplier by instruction from the Accountant General's Department.

He said the programme is a collaboration between the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service; the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology; the

Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; Members of Parliament through the Constituency Development Fund; the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, and councillors.

Dr. Clarke noted that 122,000 digital devices would have been provided for PATH and non-PATH students by the end of the school year through initiatives such as the Own Your Device Programme, the One Laptop or Tablet per Child Initiative in collaboration with the diaspora and corporate Jamaica, as well as the Government procurement programme for

PATH students.

"All the members of this House know from experience that with the best-designed and best-implemented social programmes anywhere in the world, for a variety of practical reasons, there will always be coverage gaps. Members of Parliament and councillors know needy constituents and families who are not enrolled in PATH, for instance; and others who, for technical reasons, wouldn't qualify but who are – in every practical sense – in need of assistance," the minister said.



Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley

## Help for former LIAT workers

Barbados Advocate - After over a year of being out in the cold, displaced LIAT workers are set to receive a measure of relief as government has pledged a commitment to a helping hand in the coming days.

Just under 100 former LIAT workers are expected to receive a one-off gift of \$2,000 – compliments of the Central Bank of Barbados – by Friday or early next week at the absolute latest. This was revealed in a statement from the Prime Minister's Office which was made available to the media late yesterday evening. During an extensive Zoom meeting with several of the former workers, Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley made the promise, which is expected to give authorities some

time to put other measures in place that would offer relief over a longer period. With the Barbadian-based workers having already exhausted their unemployment benefits and awaiting their severance from the National Insurance Scheme, the statement shed light on the situation which has kept them empty-handed for over a year. "All former Barbadian LIAT employees who were based here, paid contributions into the local National Insurance Scheme and are therefore entitled to severance, will now benefit from expedited hearings by the NIS Tribunal. It is expected that these hearings will also begin as early as next week, with the hope that they will be wrapped up in time for

payments to be made just after the end of the month. Prime Minister Mottley explained that it had become necessary for the cases of these workers to go before the Tribunal since the Judicial Administrator of LIAT in Antigua, Cleveland Seaforth, had so far failed to sign and deliver to Barbados the paperwork that would have automatically triggered severance payments," the statement read.

As it relates to those Barbadians that were based in Antigua, their deductions were made to that country's Social Security Scheme and they are entitled to severance under the country's laws. However, they are expected to be extended an advance in the interim. Arrangements are now

being put in place to allow them to receive an advance of \$2000 per month from the Government of Barbados, to be paid back at a future date from any eventual severance settlement.

Prime Minister Mottley explained that this would be provided for up to one year, to be terminated earlier if they are able to find alternative employment before the end of that year.

Mottley stressed that she understood that \$2000 a month would not equate to their salaries or erase the debt or hardships they have accumulated since they stopped working, but she was trying to assist them while balancing it against all the other urgent needs of Barbadians.

# PMO WARNS AS YOUNGER PEOPLE DIE FROM COVID: YOU ARE NOT IMMUNE



Trinidad Guardian - As Trinidad and Tobago recorded its largest number of infections since the start of the pandemic, health officials are sending a strong warning that young people without comorbidities are dying from the virus.

Four people, including a 42-year-old man, are among the latest victims, pushing the toll to 189. The Health Ministry Wednesday announced a record 399 new infections.

Health officials are now signalling that the parallel healthcare system has only seven more days at this rate before

collapsing, as the number of positive active cases reached 3,024 up to 4:00 p.m. yesterday.

As she implored younger people who were not previously adversely affected by the virus to heed the warnings, Principal Medical Officer (PMO) Dr. Maryam Abdool-Richards said, "Young people, we are seeing deaths and sudden deaths from the 30s onwards. Please don't think you are immune."

She sought to drive home just how dire the situation is now, as she spoke during the Ministry of Health's media briefing yesterday and referred

to COVID-19 as the great equalizer as it was no respecter of class, education, age, sex, nationality, ethnicity and financial status.

"This concept of a bubble that I have been hearing touted around does not work," she said, adding, "Different persons from different households carry different exposure risks, so by you saying you will be liming, or zessing, or wessing, or whatever term you want to use with the same group of persons...while you are interacting with persons at the supermarket or at your workplace, it means you have a different level of exposure."

Abdool-Richards urged the populace to listen to the advice from health officials, saying this could save their lives and that of their loved ones as well.

She lamented the long lines of people seen buying food in Woodbrook on Monday, some of whom were not wearing their face masks properly. It was a heartfelt plea that Abdool-Richards made as she went on, "I am asking everyone to stop the co-mingling, stop the mixing of persons. It is becoming overburdening to our health system and it may impact on the treatment of your relatives."





Karim Nelson



Ashelle-Morgan

## SENATOR, PROSECUTOR 'PERSONS OF INTEREST' AS SHOOTING INVESTIGATION CONTINUES IN SVG

*iWitnessNews*, SVG

– Lawyer and government Senator Ashelle Morgan and assistant director of public prosecution Karim Nelson are “persons of interest” in an on-going investigation into the shooting of Diamond Estate resident Cornelius John, 60, at his home on April 13, St Vincent and the Grenadines. Commissioner of Police Colin John told *iWitness News* on Wednesday.

The police chief, however, said he could not say how soon the investigation would be completed. He confirmed that Nelson and Morgan — who is also Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly — have filed

reports against John.

The shooting victim told *iWitness News* on Wednesday that he reported the shooting to police the very night it occurred, and that it was the police who had taken him to the hospital. The commissioner said he was not aware that John’s wife, Nicole John, also of Diamond Estate, had filed a report against her husband.

“I have not seen a report. I cannot say for sure that she hasn’t, but I have not seen a report she has filed against him.”

The commissioner was asked what he would say to persons who might express concern about whether the police would investigate

the matter thoroughly in light of the fact that senior public officials are involved.

John told *iWitness News* that Morgan and another man were among a trio who entered his yard about sometime after 6 p.m. on April 13. He said he had just exited his house when he saw the trio and called out to them, thinking that they had come to order his concrete products.

He said that the shorter of the two men went and stood behind him and the taller one greeted him saying, “Good evening, Mr. John.”

He said that when he returned the greeting, the man said, “You want to

kill the senator?”

“I said, ‘What you’re talking about?’ I had no understanding of what he was talking about so I asked, ‘What you’re talking about?’”

He said that when he said this, “the tall guy” ran up to him, kicked him off the blocks and started stomping on him on the ground.

John told *iWitness News* that the man then took a gun from his waist and shot him in his left leg, just below the knee, causing the bone to break.

John said that the woman is Morgan, who he recognised by her physique and voice as she grew up in the community.



## EU 'ready to discuss' COVID vaccine patent waiver as drug makers push back

Reuters - The European Union is willing to discuss a proposal to waive intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Thursday, as drug makers stood their ground and their share prices slipped.

U.S. President Joe Biden voiced support on Wednesday for a waiver, in a reversal of the U.S. position, and his top trade negotiator, Katherine Tai, swiftly endorsed negotiations at the World Trade Organization.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

reached for capital letters in a tweet calling Biden's move a "MONUMENTAL MOMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST #COVID19", and said it reflected "the wisdom and moral leadership of the United States".

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala told member states that she "warmly welcomed" the U.S. move, adding: "We need to respond urgently to COVID-19 because the world is watching and people are dying."

Von der Leyen, speaking to the European University Institute in Florence, said the EU was ready to discuss any proposals that

address the crisis "in an effective and pragmatic manner".

"That's why we are ready to discuss how the U.S. proposal for a waiver on intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines could help achieve that objective."

But drug makers – who have produced coronavirus vaccines in record time – said the proposal could have the opposite effect by disrupting a stretched and fragile supply chain.

They urged rich countries to instead share vaccines more generously with the developing

world.

Germany, the EU's biggest economic power and home to a large pharmaceutical sector, rejected the idea, saying the reasons for the lack of vaccines were capacity and quality standards.

Health Minister Jens Spahn said he shared Biden's goal of providing the whole world with vaccines, but a government spokeswoman said in a statement that "the protection of intellectual property is a source of innovation and must remain so in the future".



# Florida Gov signs GOP voting law critics call 'un-American'



*Surrounded by lawmakers, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, speaks at the end of the legislative session*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a major rewrite of Florida's elections law on Thursday, tightening rules around drop boxes and mail-in voting in the presidential battleground.

Critics say the changes will make it harder for voters, particularly the elderly and people of color, to cast ballots. It's the latest victory in the nationwide push by Republicans to restrict access to the polls, which party leaders say is necessary to deter fraud. The campaign has been fueled by former President Don-

ald Trump's false claim that his reelection was stolen from him, an assertion widely repeated across the GOP. Florida's Republican legislators passed this law — without a single Democratic vote — even though they acknowledged there were no signs of fraud in the state which Trump won handily in November.

DeSantis, widely viewed as a potential presidential candidate, clearly saw the political advantage in fighting for what his party describes as "election integrity." In an extraordinary move, he staged his bill-signing live on the

Fox & Friends show with no other media outlets allowed. The morning's event apparently came as a surprise to FOX News Channel. The network said Thursday that it had booked DeSantis' appearance on its program "as an interview and not as a live bill signing. Neither the network nor the show requested or mandated the event be exclusive to Fox News Media entities."

A spokesperson for the governor, Taryn Fenske, said later that the actual bill signing took place elsewhere and the event televised by FOX News was purely ceremonial,

even if it was advertised as a bill signing. This new law restricts when ballot drop boxes can be used and who can collect ballots — and how many. It mandates that drop boxes must be guarded and available only when elections offices and early voting sites are open. To protect against "ballot harvesting," an electoral Good Samaritan can only collect and return the ballots of immediate family, and no more than two from unrelated people.

Elections supervisors across the state did not ask for the changes, warning that some of the new rules may prove cumbersome and expensive to implement. Voter advocates assailed the law as a blatant attempt to impede access to the polls so Republicans might retain an advantage. The league joined the Black Voters Matter Fund, the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, and others, in assailing the new law in a federal lawsuit filed minutes after the signing. A separate federal suit filed in Tallahassee by the NAACP and Common Cause also says the law targets people who are Black, Latino, or disabled.

# Global COVID-19 death toll more than double official estimates - IHME



*Men wearing protective gear place a white cloth over the body of a relative who died from COVID 19 disease in India*

(Reuters) - The COVID-19 pandemic has caused nearly 6.9 million deaths across the world, more than double the number officially recorded, a new analysis from the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) estimated.

Deaths go unreported as most countries only record those that occur in hospitals, or of patients with a confirmed infection, the report showed. The IHME is an independent health research organization that provides comparable measurement of the world's health prob-

lems and has been cited in the past by the White House. Its reports are watched closely by public health officials.

The reported COVID-19 mortality is strongly related to the levels of testing in a country, the IHME said.

If you don't test very much, you're most likely

to miss COVID deaths," Christopher Murray, director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, said in a briefing call with journalists.

IHME estimated total COVID-19 deaths by comparing anticipated deaths from all causes based on pre-pandemic trends with the actual number of all deaths caused during the pandemic. In the United States, the analysis estimated COVID-19 related deaths of more than 905,000. Official figures from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday estimated 575,491 deaths due to the novel coronavirus. The CDC did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on the report.

The report only includes deaths caused directly by the virus, not deaths caused by the pandemic's disruption to healthcare systems and communities.

"Many countries have devoted exceptional effort to measuring the pandemic's toll, but our analysis shows how difficult it is to accurately track a new and rapidly spreading infectious disease," Murray said.



# Brazil: At least 25 killed in Rio de Janeiro shoot-out

BBC World News - At least 25 people, including a police officer, have been killed in a shoot-out in Rio de Janeiro, according to local media. The shoot-out took place during a police operation in a favela in the Jacarezinho area of the city. Police launched the operation after receiving reports that drug traffickers were recruiting children for their gang.

Two passengers on a metro train were hit by bullets but survived.

Police in the Brazilian city confirmed the death of one of their officers, Inspector Andre Leonardo de Mello Frias. A statement on Facebook said "he honoured the profession he loved and will be missed". Police Chief Ronaldo Oliveira told Reuters news agency that Thursday's raid was "the largest number of deaths in a police operation in Rio". According to local news, the gang targeted in this raid engages in drug trafficking, mugging, murders and kidnappings. Television images showed suspects trying to escape across rooftops as police entered the favela. Meanwhile, residents of Jacarezinho have shared accounts of what they witnessed on social me-



*Rio de Janeiro is one of Brazil's most violent states*

dia. One resident posted a photo of his blood-covered floor and said two people had died in his house as police chased the criminals. The man, who did not want to give his name, said he would try to move out of the area as soon as possible.

"We're trying to sell the house as fast as possible. We can't continue to live here," he said. Other residents said officers had seized their phones, accusing them of warning gang members of the raid. Sociology professor Ignacio Cano from

the Laboratory for the Analysis of Violence at Rio State University, dismissed the reasons the police gave for the raid:

"To say that drug traffickers recruit children and teenagers to deal drugs is almost laughable because everyone knows that these gangs have minors who work for them. To say that you're going to launch a massive raid because you've discovered that traffickers recruit children is a joke," he told O Dia newspaper.

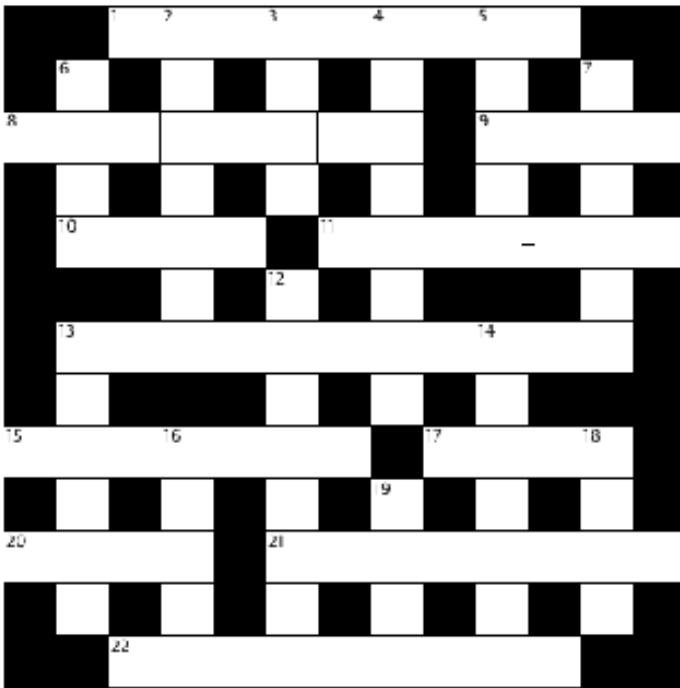
Rio de Janeiro is one

of Brazil's most violent states and vast areas are under the control of criminals, many of them linked to powerful drug-trafficking gangs.

Security forces in Brazil have often been accused of excessive use of force against the civilian population during anti-crime operations in major cities. A court ruling last June restricted police action in poor neighbourhoods of Rio during the pandemic unless it was deemed essential.

# QUICK CROSSWORD

Speedy crossword No 1,335



## Across

- 1 Symbol for the word "and" (9)
- 8 Intermittently (3,3,2)
- 9 Quote (4)
- 10 Freshwater fish (4)
- 11 Panacea (4-3)
- 13 Streamlined (11)
- 15 White of an egg (7)
- 17 Off-straight (4)
- 20 Killer whale (4)
- 21 Moment of revelation (8)
- 22 Anyhow (9)

## Down

- 2 Wander at random (7)
- 3 Whirlpool (4)
- 4 Positive, optimistic (8)
- 5 Suitable position (5)
- 6 Some way away (4)
- 7 Letter in sloping script (6)
- 12 Indolence (8)
- 13 Attraction, fascination (6)
- 14 Strike while the iron is hot (4,3)
- 16 Edict, decree (5)
- 18 Become weaker (4)
- 19 Prospect; opinion (4)

# YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

## ♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Some people might think you're brash, but if you go out of your way to be sociable, you can win them over. You could easily work at cross purposes with someone who is more ambitious and less warmhearted than you are.

## ♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

When you love someone, you want them to have the best that money can buy. Don't spend carelessly or buy something based on an attractive wrapper. Investigate before you invest in something.

## ♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

Although your heartstrings are plucked, it may be wishful thinking that makes you believe you hear the song of true love. For some reason, a romantic spark may refuse to catch fire. It's probably best to stay in the friend zone.

## ♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

Apply everyday organizational methods to stay on track with your budget. For instance, you could add some reminders to your calendar to be sure that bills are paid on time. Focus on achieving joint goals with a partner.

## ♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

You may be motivated to place duty ahead of pleasure. You can do well with any task that requires quick thinking and organizational skills. It might appear that a partner is too negative and holds you back from doing what you think is best.

## ♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Use your powers of persuasion and a friendly demeanor to arrive at a compromise that pleases everyone. You may encounter more thorns than roses while performing a tiresome job, but you'll be well compensated.

## ♎ LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22

Never lose sight of what's truly essential to your happiness. Endless wishing without concrete efforts can't make your fantasies come true, so take action to get what you want. A friend may challenge you to think logically.

## ♏ SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Unwavering faith in a fulfilling future can reveal limitless possibilities. You could be empowered by a passing opportunity if you have the foresight to accept it. Maintain a positive attitude about anything important in your life.

## ♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

that glitters is not gold, and not all things that attract your attention are worth pursuing. This isn't an ideal time to begin a new romantic relationship because you might project your idealistic fantasies onto others.

## ♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You may be consumed by ambition and focused on making headway toward material success. You could miss out on opportunities if you take too much time to prepare for business projects or meetings.

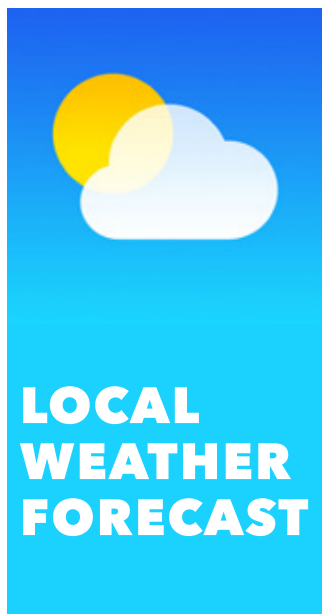
## ♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

When you're too wrapped up in your own ambitions, you might inadvertently push away those who admire you the most. You could underestimate someone's skills and talents. Do your best to handle obligations as promised.

## ♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Being vague or keeping your intentions private may be the technique you think will help avoid criticism. However, this may leave some people mystified. Be more straightforward to overcome someone's concerns.





<b>Fri 07</b> <b>83°/76°</b> Mostly Sunny <span>17% E 14 mph</span>	
<b>Fri 07   Day</b> <b>83°</b> 17% E 14 mph Mostly sunny skies. High 83F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.	<b>Fri 07   Night</b> <b>76°</b> 18% ESE 12 mph Mostly clear. Low 76F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph.
Humidity <b>66%</b> UV Index <b>Extreme</b> Sunrise <b>5:39 am</b> Sunset <b>6:29 pm</b>	Humidity <b>76%</b> UV Index <b>0 of 10</b> Moonrise <b>3:12 am</b> Moonset <b>3:21 pm</b> Waning Crescent
<b>Sat 08</b> <b>84°/77°</b> Mostly Sunny <span>19% E 15 mph</span>	
<b>Sat 08   Day</b> <b>84°</b> 19% E 15 mph Mostly sunny skies. High 84F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.	<b>Sat 08   Night</b> <b>77°</b> 22% E 13 mph Partly cloudy skies. Low 77F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.
Humidity <b>67%</b> UV Index <b>Extreme</b>	Humidity <b>78%</b> UV Index <b>0 of 10</b>

## COMICS

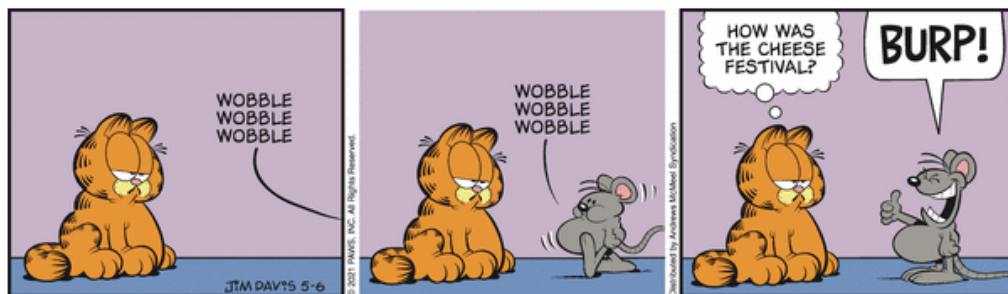
Dilbert

May 06, 2021



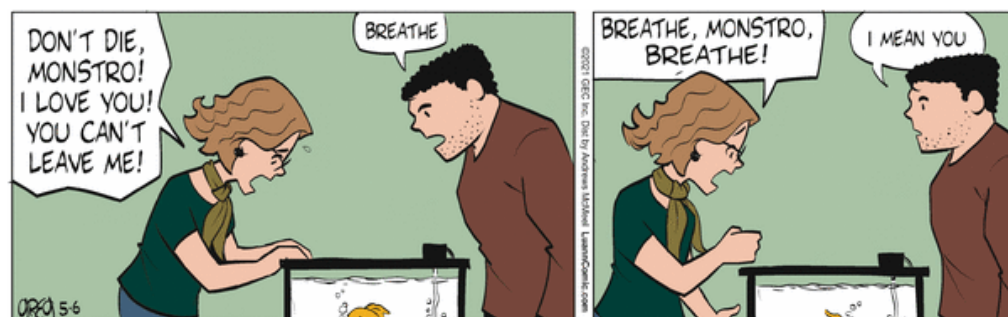
Garfield

May 06, 2021



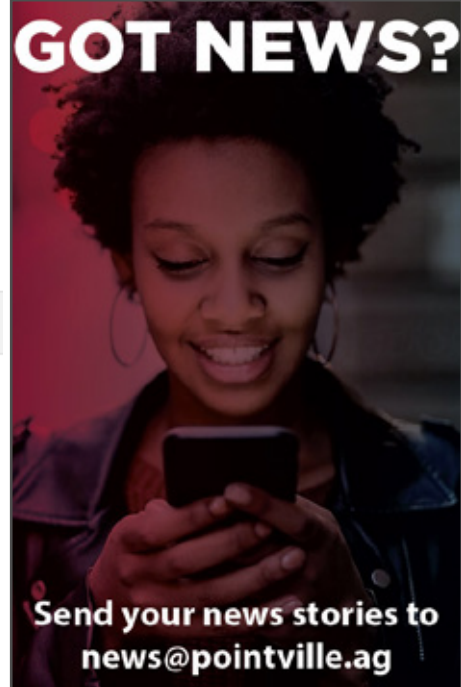
Luann

May 06, 2021



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## CHELSEA SUBDUE REAL MADRID TO SET UP ALL-ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

Chelsea will face Manchester City in the Champions League final in Istanbul after convincingly overcoming a fading Real Madrid at Stamford Bridge.

On a night of high tension, even behind closed doors, Chelsea fully deserved a victory that sets up an all-English final against Pep Guardiola's Premier League leaders on 29 May.

Thomas Tuchel's hosts were grateful to goalkeeper Edouard Men-

dy for two fine first-half saves from Karim Benzema. But they were able to build on the 1-1 draw they achieved in Madrid when Timo Werner headed in from almost on the goal-line in the 28th minute after Kai Havertz had lofted a finish on to the bar.

It set the platform for a second half of total Chelsea domination that was nevertheless laced with anxiety as the hosts missed chance after chance to put the

game to bed. Real's former Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois saved from N'golo Kante and Havertz, who also headed against the bar, while Mason Mount shot wildly over the top when clean through.

It was Mount, though, who finally sealed Chelsea's place in their first Champions League final since they won the competition in 2012.

The outstanding Kante, who was also instrumental in the open-

ing goal, fed substitute Christian Pulisic and his cross was turned in by Mount with five minutes left.

The result adds another chapter to the remarkable transformation under Tuchel since he succeeded the sacked Frank Lampard in January - and gives him the chance to make amends for the 2020 Champions League final, when his Paris St-Germain side lost to Bayern Munich.



# KYLE MAYERS AND NKRUMAH BONNER REWARDED WITH THEIR FIRST WEST INDIES CONTRACTS

West Indies central contracts list

All-format contracts: Jason Holder

Red-ball contracts: Kraigg Brathwaite, Jermaine Blackwood, Nkrumah Bonner, Rahkeem Cornwall, Joshua Da Silva, Shannon Gabriel, Kyle Mayers and Kemar Roach

White-ball contracts: Kieron Pollard, Fabian Allen, Darren Bravo, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Evin Lewis, Alzarri Joseph, Nicholas Pooran and Hayden Walsh Jr



ESPN Cricinfo - Kyle Mayers and Nkrumah Bonner, who helped West Indies secure the fifth-highest successful chase in Test history at Chattogram earlier this year, and then were also impressive during the home Test series against Sri Lanka, have been rewarded with their maiden red-ball central contracts, for 2021-22.

Wicketkeeper-batter Joshua Da Silva, who narrowly missed a hundred in the Dhaka Test, also got his first red-ball deal.

Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein won a white-ball contract for the first time. Hosein, who picked up three

wickets on his ODI debut in Bangladesh, was impressive against Sri Lanka as well. Roston Chase, who had an all-format contract last year, was dropped altogether from the list this time. That means former captain Jason Holder is now the only one with an all-format deal. Shimron Hetmyer, Sheldon Cottrell, Osane Thomas and Kemo Paul were among those who failed to keep their white-ball contracts.

Chase, Hetmyer, Cottrell and Thomas had missed the white-ball fixtures against Sri Lanka at home after failing to reach the minimum fitness standards set by

CWI. Later, Chase and Hetmyer cleared the fitness tests but were not picked for the Tests against Sri Lanka.

Shane Dowrich and Shamarh Brooks – who both played their last Test in 2020 - lost their contracts. “I am happy for all the players who have been offered retainer contracts for the upcoming period,” Jimmy Adams, CWI director of cricket, said in a statement. “Especially pleasing was the number of players who were awarded first-time contracts in recognition of their performances during the period under review. I know that the 11 players who have lost

their International retainers will be striving and fighting hard to get back into the teams and earn back their central contracts next year. “These players, along with our T20 specialists, will ensure that we have genuine competition for places that will push everyone to attain higher standards of performance.”

Despite being dropped for the white-ball series at home against Sri Lanka following mediocre returns in the Super50 Cup (seven wickets in six matches at an economy of nearly 7), Hayden Walsh Jr retained his white-ball deal.



## QIANA JOSEPH, UNCAPPED KAYSIA SCHULTZ HANDED WEST INDIES CENTRAL CONTRACTS

*In all, eighteen women players have been offered deals, an increase of three from the last season*

ESPN Cricinfo - Qiana Joseph and the uncapped Kaysia Schultz have received their first West Indies central contracts, for the 2021-22 season.

Shawnisha Hector, who has played just a solitary international - an ODI against India in 2019 - also got a central contract as West Indies look to widen their talent pool.

In 2019, Stafanie Taylor blamed a poor domestic women's structure for failing to nurture young talent, despite West Indies having won the T20 World Cup in 2016. However, this recent development of offering rookies contracts could potentially be an encouraging sign. In all, 18 women players

have been offered deals, an increase of three from the last season.

"The last contract period did not see many international matches, as we only played five T20I matches against England," Ann Browne-John, CWI's lead selector for women's and girl's cricket, said in a media release. "Despite this, the contracted players were able to keep themselves fit and match ready. It was therefore the fairest decision to return all 15 to contract."

"Additionally, it is really a positive that three new development contracts have been awarded for the upcoming year. This will allow the requisite focus to be placed on these young players as

they continue to progress their careers. There has been a lack of left-arm orthodox bowlers in the region, therefore Joseph and Schultz will hopefully help fill this void; with Joseph also bringing her left-hand batting skills, which is also limited in the region. Hector is one of the bright young fast bowlers who has been bowling with great aggression in the past few training camps."

After crashing out of the 2020 T20 World Cup in Australia, with just one win in four league games, West Indies toured England for a five-match T20I series in which they were blanked 5-0. The West Indies Women are currently working with their new coach Court-

ney Walsh in Antigua. Walsh was appointed to the post last October following the England tour.

West Indies Women's contracted players: Aaliyah Alleyne, Shemaine Campbelle, Shamilia Connell, Britney Cooper, Deandra Dottin, Afy Fletcher, Cherry Ann Fraser, Sheneta Grimmond, Shawnisha Hector, Chinelle Henry, Qiana Joseph, Hayley Matthews, Anisa Mohammed, Chedean Nation, Kaysia Schultz, Shakera Selman, Stafanie Taylor.

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