

WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2021 | ISSUE 239 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

RUSSIAN VACCINE

APPROVED, BUT STILL A HOLDUP!

SEE PAGE 3



Orchestra thanks bank with performance

Members of the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra (ABYSO) pose inside CIBC-FirstCaribbean International Bank where they rendered a musical performance of gratitude for a hefty donation by the financial institution. (STORY ON PAGE 13)

WHAT IS THE TRUE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE "CREATIVE INDUSTRIES"? (STORY ON PAGE 11)

THOUSANDS MORE VACCINE DOSES DUE TO ARRIVE TODAY (STORY ON PAGE 6)

Cultivating vistas of broader international relations

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Sergei Lavrov yesterday (via the ZOOM virtual platform) signed a bilateral agreement to further develop cooperation between the two countries in areas including – but not limited to – trade, economy, social fields, culture, education, sports, healthcare, science and technology.

With the most apt timing and relevance, considering the annual season of hurricanes into which we have just entered – again! – the agreement between Moscow and St. John's also includes mutual cooperation for the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters.

The ground for yesterday's signing had been laid two years ago when Prime Minister Browne and Foreign Minister Lavrov met during the Antigua and Barbuda leader's brief stay in the Russian city of St. Petersburg to attend an International Economic Forum.

Lavrov, who spoke first, described the agreement just signed as “an historic document, a treaty on basic relations between the Russian Federation and Antigua and Barbuda”. Significantly, as Lavrov was elated and eloquent

to point out, “This agreement provides an additional foundation to bold-stream the relationship between our countries, following an agreement on the visa abolition for the mutual trips of our nationals that we signed back in June 2019.”

Prime Minister Browne, acknowledging that he will be taking up the rotating chairmanship of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) “within a matter of weeks”, pledged to do “all that is within the power of Antigua and Barbuda, utilizing its influence, to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the CARICOM region and Russia.”

But perhaps most notable was Prime Minister Browne's reiteration of Antigua and Barbuda's considered and purposeful policy of “reaching out to countries external of the traditional relations that we would have enjoyed for decades ...” One important area of collaboration between Antigua and Barbuda and Russia, PM Browne pointed out, was the issue of climate change – the effects of which are known only too well in the Caribbean region – none more poignantly than this twin-island State whose destructive guests have

sported some rather memorable names such as Irma and Luis.

We have made this otherwise protocol news item into an editorial, because it highlights – yet again – the bold, imaginative, visionary and innovative character and quality of leadership that Antigua and Barbuda enjoys under the leadership of Prime Minister Gaston Browne and his Cabinet when it comes to foreign policy and international relations that place the interests of this country and the benefits to its people as foremost considerations.

Posturing on the global stage for the mere purpose of identifying with dubious and irrelevant ideologies, or aligning with geopolitical polarizations that take no account of our particular disadvantages and vulnerabilities, are absurdities that cannot be entertained within Antigua and Barbuda's pragmatic quest for sustainable development, sensible self-reliance – and a decent, self-respecting attainment of manifold resilience to the maximum extent that we alone can determine for ourselves to be realistic and possible.

Chairman says Pharmacy Council has already approved Russian vaccine

By Shelton Daniel

The Antigua and Barbuda Pharmacy Council says it has already granted permission for the Russian-manufactured Sputnik-5 vaccine to be used in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Council's chairman, Michael Joseph, told *Pointe Xpress* that the body he heads is not the one standing in the way of Sputnik-5 being administered to persons. He said there appears to be a misunderstanding that Saturday's reference by Prime Minister Gaston Browne that "health officials here have said they

are awaiting WHO approvals" for use of the Sputnik-5, was pointing a finger at the Pharmacy Council.

But he said even though WHO has not yet given the nod to Sputnik-5, the Pharmacy Council has decided, nonetheless, to go ahead and give the greenlight based on its own assessments, inquiries and research.

He said it was another advisory body set up by Cabinet, which, while it is not empowered to grant or withhold permission, has been urging Cabinet not to roll out the Russian vaccine until WHO has for-

mally sanctioned its use, like it did for the Oxford-AstraZeneca jab that is currently in almost exclusive use here in Antigua and Barbuda. "There are two different bodies. There is the Antigua and Barbuda Pharmacy Council which is the regulatory body for all pharmaceuticals, including vaccines, that has the authority to grant approval for use of any drug in Antigua and Barbuda. So far, the Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and, most recently, the Sputnik and the SinoPharm have been approved for use in Antigua and Barbuda.

"However, there is a second body – and this was in the news just after COVID started and the idea of Covax came about – where the Ministry of Health put together a body called the National Technical Working Group to advise Cabinet on vaccines; how to use them, when to use them in Antigua and Barbuda. This is the body that is chaired by the esteemed Dr. Lester Simon.

"So, what the Prime Minister was referring to was that they were given the approval for use by the Pharmacy Council, but the role of the National



Technical Working Group is to say to Cabinet, 'Yes, this is approved for use in Antigua but we are not ready to use it yet, we don't think we should use it yet.' And this is what the National Technical Working Group has said to Cabinet: That although it's approved for use in Antigua and Barbuda by the Pharmacy Council, they are recommending not to use it until WHO gives its approval."

Joseph told *Pointe FM's* morning program Starting Pointe on Tuesday that this was his understanding of what Prime Minister Browne had stated on stated in Satur-

day, in effect, "That the intention is to have a discussion this week with the National Technical Working Group ... to come to some sort of consensus around the use of [the Sputnik-5 vaccine] ... Some individuals will err on the side of caution with its use; and some individuals, for other reasons, will say 'If it's approved for use, let's go ahead and use it'."

In Joseph's assessment, Prime Minister Browne was alluding to "meeting with the Technical Working Group, either as a body or, if not, with the Chairman as to the way

forward".

Michael Joseph reached out to *Pointville Communications* after reading our article titled Authorization holdup has Sputnik

vaccines sitting idle, undelivered which was published in the Pointe Xpress newspaper of *Monday 7th June 2021*.



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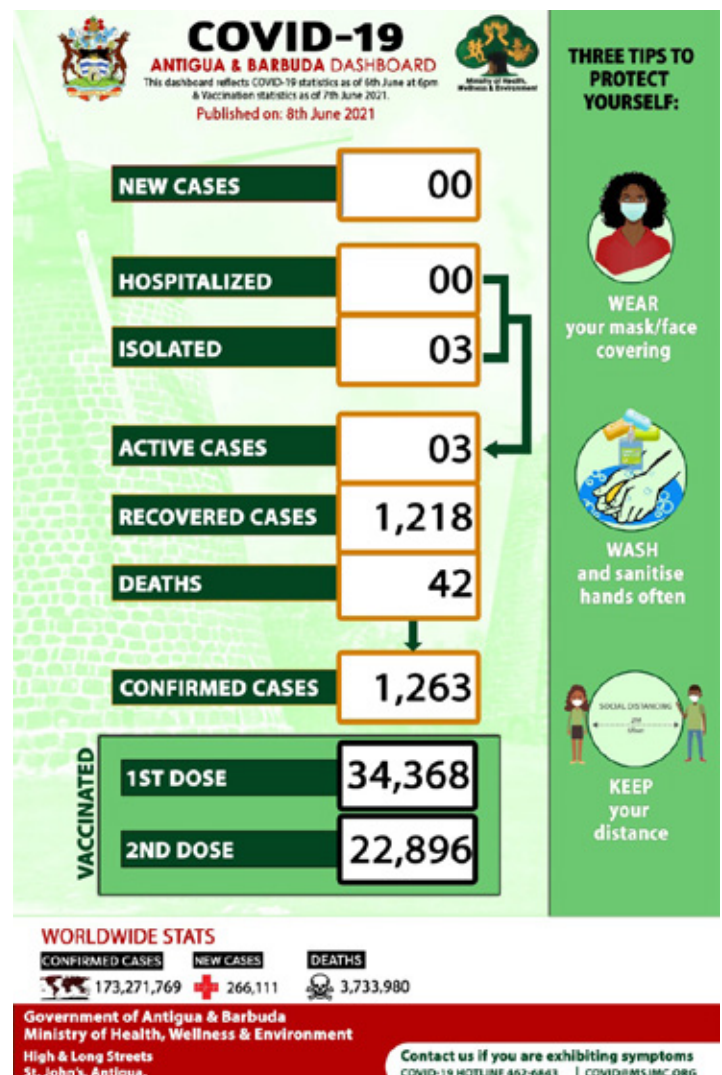
COVID Dashboard Update for Tuesday 8th 2021

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment has received no new reports from the Sir Lester Bird Mount St. John Medical Centre or the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) in Antigua and Barbuda as of Sunday 6th June 2021 at 6:00 p.m. One (1) recovered case was recorded from the samples processed over the weekend. Consequently, the total number of persons

with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda remains at 1,263, which is inclusive of three (3) active cases. There are no hospitalized cases.

Meanwhile, 34,368 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccines have been administered, while 22,896 second doses were administered.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.



16,800 additional vaccines doses arrive today



In April 2021 the Government of Antigua and Barbuda received 24,000 COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccines through the COVAX facility.

Today, 16,800 doses of the Astra Zene-ca vaccine will arrive in Antigua and Barbuda.

According to the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, “These doses were secured through the COVAX facility.”

Collecting the vaccines at the V.C Bird International Airport on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda will be Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph and Director of Pharmaceutical Services Alfred Athill.

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additional vaccines is in tandem with the national call for more residents to come out and get vaccinated. The public, according to health authorities, are being encouraged to actively participate in the COVID-19 vaccination program to create herd immunity, whereby the majority of the population is protected from becoming seriously ill with COVID-19. With herd immunity, it is expected that the country will return to some degree of normalcy, thereby facilitating

economic, social and cultural activities with greater ease of travel. To date, 34,368 first doses of the Covid-19 vaccines have been administered, while 22,896 second doses were administered.

Meanwhile, residents are reminded of the four vaccination sites: Villa Polyclinic, Glanvilles Polyclinic, Perry Bay Multipurpose Cultural and Exhibition Center, and the Precision Center in Paynters. The public vaccination sites will operate on Mondays through Fridays

from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment is reminding the public that pre-registration for COVID-19 vaccination continues. For online registration, visit www.vaccineantiguabarbuda.com and select the ***"Vaccine Registration"*** tab.

Persons who have received the first dose are also advised to secure their vaccination cards, as these must be presented for the second COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Halo Foundation and Royal Drawing School offer training for local art teachers

The Halo Foundation has partnered with the Jumby Bay Fund, the Royal Drawing School (RDS) United Kingdom, and The G (Art Gallery) in providing a 3-month certification course for art teachers in Antigua and Barbuda.

The project is endorsed by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries, and provides teachers the opportunity to learn contemporary art techniques and develop new

ways for incorporation into the existing art curriculum.

The course, which will run from September to December 2021, will facilitate the collaboration of two artists from the Royal Drawing School with Antigua's local artist, Anson Henry, to administer a series of workshops aimed at the development of visual arts education in the twin-island nation. Mr. Henry, who had previously produced a portrait rendering as a gift

for HRH Prince Charles, The Duke of Cornwall, welcomed the opportunity to share his expertise as the local counterpart.

In addition to the strengthening of skills, the Halo Foundation will award a grand prize of 5-days/4-nights in London to the participating teacher with the most impressive submissions by that school's students to Halo's annual Christmas Art Competition.

With a tentative 2022



File photo (2019): At Royal Drawing School in Scotland, UK. (L-R): Jeremy Cross, International Networking Manager, The Prince's Foundation; 2 artists from RDS; H.E. Sir Rodney Williams; Janet Casey, International Partnerships Manager, Royal Drawing School and H.E. Lady Williams.

opening for the Sir Selwyn Walter Art Gallery at Government House, Her Excellency Lady Williams anticipates that pieces from the workshops will

be on display at the gallery's first art exhibition. "This will create an alternative avenue for us to showcase and highlight the talent of our local artists — and will foster a greater appreciation for the arts," expressed Lady Williams. "The training offered will augment our home-grown creative talent and hopefully, not only hone the skills of art teachers in schools, but entice young, interested artists to tap into employment opportunities within the creative industry."

According to its website, "The Royal Drawing School

is an independent, not-for-profit resource that aims to raise the standard and profile of drawing through teaching and practice. [It is] one of only a few institutions in the world offering in-depth, quality tuition in drawing from observation".

Approximately 20 teachers from primary and secondary schools, both private and public, have already enrolled in the programme. The Royal Drawing School's instructors will be flown to Antigua by the Halo Foundation in August at the start of the project.

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Antigua and Barbuda and UNDP pledge to strengthen cooperation

Antigua and Barbuda and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have pledged to continue to build on the commitment and cooperation that have expanded over the past 40-plus years of their relationship.

The commitment came as the Bridgetown-based UNDP representative for Barbados and the OECS, Valerie Cliff, presented her credentials to Prime Minister Gaston Browne in a virtual presentation that also involved Foreign Minister E.P. Chet Greene; Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Aubrey Webson; and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Anthony Liverpool.

In her remarks, UNDP representative Cliff spoke of the longstanding relationship between the twin-island state and the UNDP and

she expressed hope that this will continue in the years ahead. She identified the areas of focus for the UNDP, to include tourism. She noted that PM Browne recently participated in high-level dialogue with his Dominica counterpart, Roosevelt Skerritt, as well as the UNDP's Assistant Secretary, Luis Felipe Lopez-Calva,

as part of efforts to assist with the re-activation of this sector.

According to Cliff, it is the small and micro enterprises in tourism that remain the organisation's special focus for the immediate future.

"Our focus is small and micro enterprises that are part of the supply chain of tourism. We have a small amount of grant

funding available for these entities. We are rethinking ways to keep more of the tourism dollar in-country, and how to make these benefit people in-country rather than the large multi-national corporations," she stated.

Noting Antigua and Barbuda's vulnerability to natural disasters and climate

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change, the UNDP representative said her organization is also working to help countries in the Caribbean access more financing because of their 'extreme vulnerability'.

"This goes beyond GDP, even what the UNDP has done over the last few decades, as one disaster can wipe away years or achievements and good decisions by a government," she added.

In his remarks, PM Browne thanked the UNDP for the work it has done for Antigua and Barbuda over the years, including assisting with building capacity. He noted that while climate change has been identified as an existential threat to small island states, the UN and its several agencies have helped to

provide a platform for these states to amplify their concerns. This, he noted, has led many large countries to add their voices to advocacy on the issue of climate change.

He also highlighted the work of UNDP in the areas of the blue economy and the COVAX facility through which Antigua and Barbuda has been able to acquire vaccines to fight the COVID-19 virus.

For his part, Foreign Minister Greene spoke of the several projects being undertaken jointly between the government and UNDP, including the Barbuda housing development programme where more than 30 islanders have so far received keys to new homes under an EU-funded

programme managed by the UNDP.

Minister Greene singled out the work being done to highlight the role of women in nation-building. "The work we do with our women, as part of the remit of the UNDP, is again a signature arrangement for us in Antigua and Barbuda as we focus on the challenges women have had in the Caribbean, including Antigua and Barbuda, in terms of equality, equity, and participation in national life," he remarked.

As a government, Greene said, the administration looks forward to working along with UNDP to record even more successes in this area.



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Project to determine true economic contribution of creative industries

The second phase of a project involving the collection of data from contributors to the creative/cultural industries is being restarted after it was halted for almost a year.

The mapping project, which runs until January 2022, is titled “Measuring the economic contribution of cultural industries to Antigua and Barbuda’s national development.”

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has contributed US\$50,033 to fund the implementation of this project.

Mapping is an important method of measuring and investigating the value of cultural and creative industries. It assists policymakers with creating evidence-based policies that will allow for the sustainable development of such industries.

This project is expected to spotlight the contribution of creative industries to the national economy by improving the collection and dissemination of related cultural statistics and data related to this.

In the long term, the increased availability of data demonstrating the immense economic value of cultural/creative industries to national development are expected to encourage increased coordinated investment and policy attention to the country’s

cultural/creative sectors. It is also expected to raise the profile of the Department of Culture and highlight its important role in the nation’s advancement.

By the project’s end, an online cultural information portal will be created to publish a national cultural industries database and reports that will result from the project. The cultural information portal is expected to improve public information sharing and exchange.

The manager for this and other UNESCO IFCD/ICH-sponsored projects is Dr. Hazra Medica, advisor on culture to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

She told Pointe Xpress that, “Things are moving steadily along for those of us in the cultural sector and those of us in the cultural and creative industries.”

She recalled that, “Back in 2018 we made an application to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)” which, “out of 1,000 applications, I think we were one of eight to be successful.”

Director of Culture Khan Cordice said the project would help to cure a long-standing challenge “to measure the true contribution of creatives to the economy of Antigua and Barbuda. The phase we are now going to get into is that in which we will be speaking with people

on the ground, getting the information from them, using that data and channeling it ...”

Cordice added that Antigua and Barbuda has many people who make “a full-time living from the creative industries, and this living is also impacting the movement of trade within Antigua and Barbuda and even to our export markets as well. That is what we are now trying to document ...”



Mr. Khan Cordice



Dr. Hazra Medica

PM Browne congratulates centenarians on 5th Annual Centenarian Week

Today, Prime Minister Gaston Browne joined the nation in congratulating 26 centenarians and their families as they embark on the Fifth Annual Centenarian Week, recognized on the Antigua and Barbuda calendar.

In a message to Antigua and Barbuda's golden group, PM Browne said, "For more than 385 years, the people of modern Antigua and Barbuda have been slowly transforming the very harsh and oppressive conditions under which they were compelled to live and die. During the past 82 years, the effort to improve was intensified with the founding of the Antigua and Barbuda Trades and Labour

Union (AT&LU) in 1939. While increasing wages was a focus of the union, seeking to improve living conditions required taking hold of the law-making machinery, the union leaders concluded. The success of the union resulted in better conditions of work for the generation birthed after 1921. The centenarians are evidence of improved medical care, better diets, more rest and recreation, access to learning and to greater formal schooling by the time of their 20th birthday. A much sturdier nation of people was being nurtured, thanks to the agitation of the Union."

PM Browne continued, "Our 26

centenarians being celebrated during this Annual Week, provide testimony to the success of this great small island-state. Despite the grip with which the Covid-19 disease may now be choking our economy, we are all fighting to succeed utilizing our imagination and drive. It is the spirit and resilience of the centenarians which strengthen the determination of our many sectoral leaders."

"May the God of our forebears continue to bless our people with power and even greater endurance, and may many more centenarians continue to grace our population. Much love and blessings." PM Browne said.

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Bank donates \$\$\$ to Youth Symphony Orchestra

CIBC FirstCaribbean hands over donation to ABSYO

On Monday, the Antigua & Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra (ABYSO) gratefully accepted a charitable donation from CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank (CIBC-FCIB) of \$13,500 to assist with the further development of the orchestra and its training program.

In a thank you post by the musical youth group, the ABYSO said, "On hand to receive the cheque at the handing-over ceremony were ABYSO Board representa-

tives Eurileen Thibou, head of fundraising, and Claudine Benjamin, chief operating officer."

Thanking the financial institution for its generosity, six of the musicians performed a short recital (see our front page picture) to express the orchestra's profound gratitude. ABYSO musicians' representatives – violinist Alfrankiue Joseph, J'herdine Browne, Khara Joseph, and Calynia Edwards – displayed their talent, along

with Viola, Shamma Samuel, Cellist Khadijah Ladoo, and Joelle Michael.

The group's tutor in residence, Litsa Tunnah, also attended and played a solo piece during their short performance.

The organization says it would "welcome and invite more support for the orchestra as [it seeks] to expand [its] objectives in realizing musical excellence among talented young Antiguan and Barbudans".

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Antigua's UN Ambassador leads global declaration on plastic pollution



H.E Ambassador Aubrey Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

–“76 nations sign Oceans Day Plastic Pollution Declaration championed by islands”

On Tuesday 8th June 2021, the world celebrated 'World Oceans Day'. While countries celebrated the internationally recognized day, small island states' used the opportunity to stand up against plastic pollution and has since garnered a swift and enthusiastic response at the UN.

According to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), during their World Oceans Day Messaging: "At a high-level UN General Assembly debate last week on ocean conservation, chair of the Alliance of Small

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Island States (AOSIS), Ambassador Aubrey Webson of Antigua and Barbuda, made a declaration for a new global agreement on plastic pollution. The declaration has already gained 76 country signatures in a week.”

AOSIS went on to state, “Marine plastic pollution is an issue of particular concern for island nations. The plastic produced globally can easily overwhelm the marine ecosystem services that these nations depend on for their survival.”

“Millions of tons of plastic waste are dumped into our oceans every year,” said Ambassador Webson. “We have spent too long trying to address this issue from various angles, across various instruments, and it’s abundantly clear that this ad hoc approach is not working.”

Buoyed by the wide and rapid support for the declaration, Ambassador Webson is optimistic the UN could successfully adopt a resolution this year to launch formal negotiations for a legally binding global agreement to combat plastic pollution.

“We need a dedicated global instrument to guide urgent and transformative actions before it’s too late.” The Antiguan Ambassador said.

Locals urged to increase knowledge of BitcoinSV during free livestream



Local entrepreneur Calvin Ayre is inviting all Antiguan and Barbudans to watch the CoinGeek Conference, which will be broadcast live without charge from Zurich, Switzerland from June 8-10.

The theme of the seventh CoinGeek Conference is igniting the power of data on the Bitcoin SV (BSV) blockchain. BSV is the only protocol that lives up to the original vision of peer-to-peer electronic cash as described in the 2008 Bitcoin white paper, as well as the only protocol capable of scaling to handle enterprise-level data needs.

Unlike other protocols that have abandoned their original designs in favor of serving as an inert ‘store of value,’ BSV’s commitment to virtually unlimited scaling allows it to function as it was originally intended: a friction-free, low-cost payment channel that can handle transactions both large and small, quickly and with miniscule fees.

This capacity to handle true micro-transactions is driving innovative

new business models that were previously unfeasible due to traditional fee structures. These include new social media platforms that allow users to generate micro-payments through other users’ likes and shares of social media posts.

Larger enterprises are employing BSV’s data-handling capacity to introduce new efficiencies in the global food chain that promise to reduce waste and lower commodity prices. Other projects aim to improve handling of medical records to enhance safety measures by reducing the likelihood of inaccurate diagnoses and prescriptions.

Whatever the level of one’s BSV knowledge, all those who check out the CoinGeek Conference’s free livestream will come away more empowered to take advantage of all that BSV has to offer.

Visit coingeekconference.com to register for the virtual event, peruse the schedule of events and list of speakers, and embrace the future of electronic commerce.



Job search During a Pandemic

Under normal circumstances, the job search process can be extremely stressful. We are eighteen months into the Pandemic and we see the situation being compounded even further with a downturn in the economy and hiring freezes in many industries leading to scarce employment options and greater competition for the available vacancies.

It is encouraging though that in the face of all of this we are still seeing postings for vacancies mostly in the hospitality sector but also in other ar-

reas as we prepare for the long anticipated kickstart of economic activities in our country. This certainly makes for a hopeful outlook and as human resource (HR) practitioners we are encouraging all job seekers to develop practices that will aid in making the process less daunting.

First, be strategic. As desperate as things may seem right now, the last thing one wants to do is to spend their entire day consumed with job search activities. This could lead to feeling overwhelmed and be-

ing burnt out. Plan carefully and start with the obvious: the type of job you want based on your qualifications and experience and the level of compensation you require based on your responsibilities. Salary expectations must be managed as compensation has changed somewhat due to the Pandemic and one must be flexible and willing to negotiate a package of salary AND benefits.

Once you have decided on the job you would like to land your search can be more fo-

cused. There are several local hospitality offerings in the newspapers and the One Stop Employment Centre (OSEC) has recently advertised registered vacancies ranging from Assistant Chief Engineer to Salon Stylist. If you are willing to relocate, you could consider regional and international postings and widen your search to social media and job market sites. So, part of your strategy is also knowing where and how to target your search.

According to Brandy Simula, a professional development specialist and life design coach, "Approaching a job search strategically also requires resisting the urge to apply wildly. It's useful to apply widely but letting anxiety and fear about the lack of availability of positions drive you to apply to every position for which you're qualified regardless of how interested you are or how strong a candidate you are, is not the most effective use of your time".

Next, dedicate some time to updating your resume and sharpening your skills. Currently employment options are limited and your resume should differentiate you from other candidates. Trinidadian Master Resume Writer, Akeem Branford puts it this way, "The modern jobseeker must have a world-class resume that can stand up to intense scrutiny and shows MS Office sophistication. The resume must show a fully developed professional identity coupled with robust experience and qualifications.

Perfection is not expected, but surely a willingness to go the extra mile".

In addition, the reduction in economic activity, makes it an opportune time to "level up" on a skill or take advantage of opportunities provided locally to become competent in a new area such as agro-processing or hydroponics. As the adage says: luck happens when preparation meets opportunity.

Then, develop a network of support. This specific group includes those professionals who would be willing to give strong written references regarding your character and ability. It would also include persons who may be able to guide you and make representations on your behalf in their own circles and spheres of influence. You will also need individuals who could offer advice on your resume or prepare you for an interview. Most interviews these days are conducted virtually so extra preparation is needed for that as well as a stable internet connection. Interruptions and disruptions are distracting to recruiters. Do not forget to make self-care part of the process. Over the past year many persons have been finding it very difficult to cope under these trying circumstances. If you have not yet developed self-care practices, now is the time. You need to understand how your body responds to stress and develop a routine to deal with these stressors. You need to know how to prepare

for an interview and how to decompress after one. No matter how accomplished or experienced you are, your job search will undoubtedly include rejections and disappointments. You need to know how to react to any such news that you will receive as part of the process. It is also imperative that you learn how to acknowledge and celebrate small achievements along the way.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hrpro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HR-Pro268.



Building your home – one of the most serious financial investments in your life

By Colin John Jenkins



(Executive Board Member at Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), Antigua and Barbuda)

Unfortunately, reports from disgruntled homeowners who have had poor experiences with designers/contractors and/or other series of unfavourable events can turn this sweet dream into a nightmare. Fortunately, the good news is that their experience does not have to be yours if you follow these basic preliminary steps [which pertain to] a general Caribbean context:

1. One of the first aspects of owning your own home involves “knowing what you want”. Personal taste and/or family needs differ from person to person and we need to be sure that what we tell our design consultants reflects the way we want to live in our new dwelling place. You may hear persons make remarks like, “I want a large living room, kitch-

en and bedroom; the rest doesn’t matter.” Does this statement reflect your needs? Truth is, it may or may not. Your needs may vary from a studio-type setting to a multi-level minimalist structure. I cannot stress how important it is to be certain of what you want. After all, you may have to live with this decision for a very long time.

2. Ensure all of your documents in relation to the design and construction phase are in place with the aid of your residential designer. These include several pieces of information that the Planning Department would ask for as part of the application process for example:

(a) Ownership information: As per norm, if the property is in your name, then the Land Deed identifying that the property belongs to you and/or a copy of ownership information (which can be obtained from your Land Registry Department) will be necessary. If the property is not in

your name or does not belong to you, then a copy of a lease agreement as well as a letter allowing you permission for construction will be needed.

(b) Land Survey Information: The property should be surveyed by a professional (a licensed surveyor) in an effort to verify boundaries. The issue of boundaries has been a “bone of contention” among many, so the importance of this step speaks for itself. The Block & Parcel Number of your property (which can be found on your Deed or Land Registry Document) will provide the prerequisite information to obtain a printout of your property from the relevant authorities. This printout is of value during your initial conceptual, project brief and planning states, as it identifies dimensions and boundary placements for your property. In Antigua, such printouts may be obtained from the Land Survey Office.

(c) Topographical Survey (sometimes optional): The gradient (i.e. the slope) of your property will determine whether a topographical survey is necessary. In many cases (especially if the property isn't cleared), the naked eye may perceive the property as having a very gentle slope or as being flat. However, during the actual building process issues resulting from misperceived steepness may occur. A topographical survey maps out the contours of the property giving the architect and his team (engineers, contractors, etc.) an accurate understanding of the said property. This information is a valuable influence on building design, as it allows for the consideration of changes in levels of the property.

A topographical survey may save you from budget overruns in the early stages of construction. Too many homeowners are stuck having to build an extra floor level or make foundation walls higher in order to compensate for poorly perceived land gradients. These changes can be costly. It is therefore beneficial to let your architect, land surveyor or engineer advise you accordingly, although it may seem like a lot of money upfront. Better safe than later sorry.

3. Have a percolation test done. This is another requirement that

is equally important. A percolation test simply records the absorption capacity of the soil. Data obtained from percolation tests is very useful in the design of proper waste management systems. Most design consultants can direct you to persons that specialize in this process. Other tests may need to be carried out, such as test pits, etc. Depending on the circumstances, discuss with your design and building team to ensure that you are on the right track.

4. Finally and maybe most importantly, ask your bank or credit union's loan officer for your credit limit. This should probably be your first step if you are considering building a home. It is important to have an idea of what you can afford before any sort of design commences. Normally, there are rates for different types of construction that are used as a guide by your consultant, although it is a budget estimation. If your architect knows what your actual (not perceived) budget is, then they may be better able to design something tailor made to your pocket AND your needs.

I make reference to "actual budgets" and "perceived budgets" because we often believe that we have a certain amount of spending power (perceived budget), only to find out from the "fi-

nancial lenders" that, according to their protocol for debt ratio, our spending power is a lot less (actual budget).

Some homeowners tend to execute this process in reverse, having drawings made for unsustainable homes only to be informed that the actual cost of the plan is beyond what the banks are willing to lend them. These homeowners must then return to the drawing board with their consultant; a process which of course requires more time, plus further payment, due to the Cost-Time-Resource relationship.

Let's face it: Building a home is an expensive venture; so it is especially important to get it right the first time. One last note: As much as possible, avoid rushing the design process. Most well-executed home designs take time to develop – sometimes several months to a year. Luckily, 3D technology provides an excellent tool for visualizing the finished product, both inside and out, thus ensuring minimal changes.

With all the above points considered and discussed, you are on your way to a great start!

(Previously published October 28th 2014 on the author's LinkedIn page. Reprinted with permission.)



TALKING POINT

TUESDAY - FRIDAY
10:30AM TO 1:30PM

DR. MASERATI

SENATOR COLIN BROWNE

Guyana COVID-19 vaccination rollout 'injected' with 100,000 more Sputnik V jabs



The 100,000 doses of the Russian Sputnik V vaccines that arrived at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana

Guyana Chronicle - As Guyana continues its aggressive COVID-19 vaccination rollout, after already administering more than 210,000 people with their first of two doses, an additional 100,000 first doses of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine were received on Monday afternoon at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA).

The amount of vaccines received on Monday was confirmed by the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Ministry of Health, Shabana Shaw. In total, Guyana received about 305,537 doses of the Sputnik V vaccine as well as 118,400 AstraZeneca doses and 20,000 Sinopharm vaccines.

The Russian Sputnik V vaccine, like the AstraZeneca and Sinopharm vaccines, is given in two doses. The first dose, according to scientists, helps the body to recognise the virus and allows the immune system to respond. The second dose, on the other hand, is known as the 'booster dose' and it helps to strengthen immunity. Unlike the AstraZeneca and Sinopharm vaccines which have

identical first and second doses, the second dose of the Sputnik V vaccine is made differently from the first.

Recently, the Ministry of Health announced that there has been a shortage of the second dose of the Sputnik V vaccines, owing to a delay in shipment. The Guyana Chronicle understands that the shipment is expected soon.

Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony, recently explained that if people are due for their second dose of this particular vaccine but are unable to receive it because of the shortage, there is no need to worry since the date for the second dose has been extended.

For clarity, the Health Ministry had asked people who received their first dose of the Russian vaccine, by way of writing in their blue vaccination books, to return four weeks after to get their second dose. This was because the Gamaleya Research Centre, which developed the Sputnik V vaccine, advised that the second dose should be given at this time.

More recently, however, the Research Centre, by way of a press

release, noted that it is possible to increase the minimum interval between the first and second vaccine doses up to 12 weeks (or three months) after getting the first. This has been accepted by the local Health Ministry.

As such, those people who are now due for their second Sputnik V dose, but are unable to receive it due to the shortage, can wait until the consignment of second doses arrives to get that jab.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health has noted that those who require the second dose of the AstraZeneca and SinoPharm can get those vaccines now.

Guyana has ordered a total of 800,000 Sputnik V vaccines; 400,000 first doses and 400,000 second doses.

The Adviser at the Ministry of Health, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, said the fact that Guyana was able to secure such a large number of vaccines when other countries have not been able to do so, proves that the government has been "very aggressive" in its efforts to tackle the disease.

St. Lucia considers virtual carnival in 2021



XUVU Carnival Band's intended 'Heaven on Earth' theme for St. Lucia Carnival 2020

Loop St. Lucia - Plans are afoot to host a virtual carnival production in St. Lucia, the first of its kind since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2021, Loop News has confirmed.

Details surrounding the production were not divulged to Loop News. However, the entity tasked with the production is said to be the Events Company of Saint Lucia, according to Minister for Culture and Creative Industries, Senator Fortuna Belrose.

According to sources close to the Events Company of Saint Lucia, while the matter is still at a discussion level, a decision will be made in line with the guidance of the

Ministry of Health and increased concerns about the spread of COVID-19.

"There are a number of proposals on the table, some of which are still under review, some of them from private promoters. However, a decision has not been finalized as yet. At this time, we cannot confirm an entire calendar of events for the season, but we do know there is an absolute sincere plan for there to be some kind of carnival activity."

Carnival has become a staple in Saint Lucia's culture, growing tremendously over the years to become the biggest festival on the island.

Director of Red Carnival Band, Thaddeus Antoine, welcomes the idea of a virtual event and highlights its economic benefits.

"You can get sponsors to come on board, you could have a pay per view. But sometimes the economic benefits are not simply in cash, but also keep the buy-in, keep people going, keep people encouraged, have them look forward to something bigger and better, I think it is more important...We have to get more of the island involved in carnival," Antoine said.

A number of islands are making plans to host a virtual carnival, including Bermuda.

SVG recognizes locally produced medicinal cannabis products



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St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Agriculture Minister, the Hon. Saboto Caesar, has commended locally owned and operated company "Medicinal" on the recent launch of an extensive line of locally produced medicinal cannabis products.

The island nation has embarked on a path for the establishment of a modern medicinal industry that entails not only the production of raw material from plants and fungi, but also the processing of raw material for the nutraceutical and pharmaceutical industry.

Traditional cultivators have been significantly affected by ash fall as a result of the explosive eruptions of

La Soufriere volcano. Several major commercial operators have also established vigorous cleaning operations to restart production following the most recent eruptions.

The list of items launched by Medicinal includes lotions and tinctures.

Minister Caesar noted that St. Vincent and the Grenadines has an established and fast maturing platform for the production of medicine in the hemisphere.

"I wish to encourage our scientists to continue to dedicate their efforts in research and development with the objective of lifting the profile of the industry," Minister Caesar concluded.



Honourable Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry & Labour, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Jamaican Justice of the Peace under probe for having 14-year-old girl as bartender



Jamaica Observer - A St. Andrew-based justice of the peace (JP) is now the subject of an investigation by the police after it was discovered that she has had a minor working in a bar she operates.

The girl, who is now 17 years old, has claimed that she had been working in the bar since she was 14.

Under Section 34 of the Child Care and Protection Act: "No person shall employ a child who has attained the age of 13 years, but who has not attained the age of 15 years, in the performance of any work other than in an occupation included on the list of prescribed occupations...consisting of such light work as the minister responsible for labour considers appropriate for the

employment of any child of the age referred to..."

In addition, the legislation states: "No person shall employ a child in the performance of any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual or social development; or in night work or an industrial undertaking."

But a Jamaica Observer source said the girl, who was recently stopped by the police in Half-Way-Tree, St. Andrew, and charged for breaching the Disaster Risk Management Act as she was not wearing a face mask in public, claimed that she has been a bartender for some three years.

In the process of issuing her a

summons to attend court, the police were told that the girl did not have any form of identification with her. She told the cops that she was employed and could call her boss to identify her.

When the employer arrived at the police station, she declared that she was a JP as she sought to have the girl released into her custody.

But investigators had the girl call her mother to come to the station. When the mother arrived, she told the police that her daughter ran away from home when she was 14 years old.

According to the mother, months later she saw her daughter again when she was taken back home by the JP.

Hundreds arrested in massive global crime sting using messaging app



BBC - More than 800 suspected criminals have been arrested worldwide after being tricked into using an FBI-run encrypted messaging app, officials say.

The operation, jointly conceived by Australia and the FBI, saw devices with the ANOM app secretly distributed among criminals, allowing police to monitor their chats about drug smuggling, money laundering and even murder plots.

Officials called it a watershed moment.

Targets included drug gangs and people with links to the mafia.

Drugs, weapons, luxury vehicles and cash were also seized in the operation which was conducted across more than a dozen countries. This included eight tonnes of cocaine, 250 guns and more than \$48m (£34m) in various worldwide currencies and cryptocurrencies.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the op-

eration had “struck a heavy blow against organised crime” around the world.

European Union police agency Europol described Operation Trojan Shield/Greenlight as the “biggest ever law enforcement operation against encrypted communication”.

The FBI began operating an encrypted device network called ANOM and covertly distributed devices with the chat app among the criminal underworld via informants.

The idea for the operation came after two other encrypted platforms were taken down by law enforcement agencies, leaving criminal gangs in the market for new secure phones.

The devices were initially used by alleged senior crime figures, giving other criminals the confidence to use the platform.

“You had to know a criminal to get hold of one of these customised phones. The phones couldn’t ring or email. You could

only communicate with someone on the same platform,” the Australian police explained.

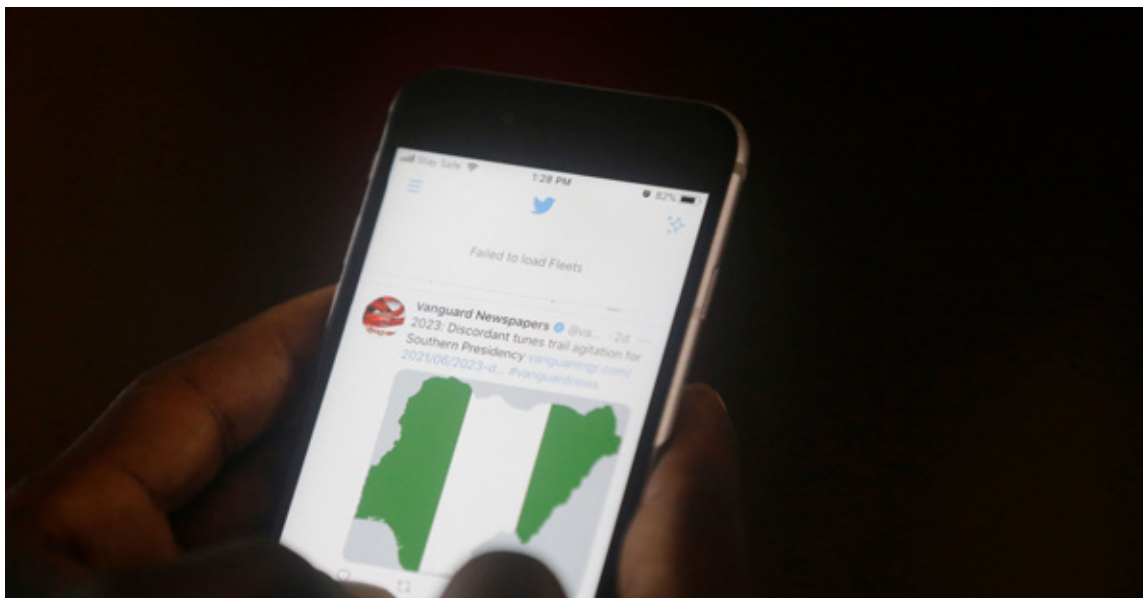
Australian fugitive and alleged drug trafficker Hakan Ayik was key to the sting, having unwittingly recommended the app to criminal associates after being given a handset by undercover officers, police said.

Dubbed the “Facebook gangster” by Australian media outlets, Ayik is seen in social media photographs with large tattoos and a muscular physique. Local outlets say he has been living in Turkey since evading arrest, living a luxury lifestyle with a Dutch wife.

Police said he was “best off handing himself in to us” as soon as possible, as he may be in danger himself, having unwittingly helped the FBI with their sting.

In total, some 12,000 encrypted devices were used by around 300 criminal syndicates in more than 100 countries.

Nigerians launch legal action against government's Twitter ban



Twitter said it will work to restore access for all those in Nigeria who rely on it 'to communicate'

Aljazeera - Dozens of Nigerians and a local rights group have filed a lawsuit at a regional court seeking to lift the government's ban on Twitter, describing the decision to suspend the hugely popular social media platform's operations as an attempt to silence criticism of the government.

Authorities announced the ban on Friday, two days after Twitter removed a post from President Muhammadu Buhari that threatened to punish regional secessionists.

The government's move prompted an immediate backlash among social media users and human rights activists, with #NigeriaTwitterBan and #KeepitOn trending on the platform as Nigeri-

ans used virtual private networks to access the site. The government has said those who continued to use Twitter would be prosecuted.

On Tuesday, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), a local rights group, and 176 Nigerians filed the lawsuit at the Economic Community of West African States Community Court of Justice in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, calling for an interim injunction restraining government from implementing the ban.

"The suspension of Twitter is aimed at intimidating and stopping Nigerians from using Twitter to assess government policies, expose corruption, and criticize acts of official impunity by the agents

of the Federal Government," the suit read, according to the group.

Kolawole Oluwadare, SERAP's deputy director, said the ban "negatively impacted millions of Nigerians who carry on their daily businesses and operational activities on Twitter," calling it "final proof of shrinking civil space in Nigeria and the intention of government to stifle any dissenting voice". In 2021, Nigeria ranked 120th out of 180 countries in the Reporters without Borders (RSF) World Press Freedom Index.

Africa's most populous country has been celebrated as one of the few on the continent attracting investment into its tech ecosystem, but was recently shunned when Twitter chose neighbouring

Ghana for its first African headquarters.

Gbenga Sesan, executive director of the Paradigm Initiative, a pan-African social enterprise working on digital inclusion and rights, told Al Jazeera the suspension of Twitter sent the wrong signal to foreign investors, adding that small businesses using Twitter as a source of livelihood in Nigeria would be affected. "Businesses in Nigeria use digital media to reach customers, expose their brands and communicate with various stakeholders. That will definitely be affected by this erratic decision," he said.

Information minister Lai Mohammed told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that the suspension had nothing to do with Buhari's tweet being deleted, but rather with "separatists inciting violence" online.

"Regulating social media is not about stifling press freedom. All we are talking about is the responsible use of these platforms," said Mohammed, adding that Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube were still accessible.

Washington state kicks off 'Joints for Jabs' to promote COVID-19 vaccinations



ABC News - Adults can claim a complimentary joint of marijuana in Washington State this week when they receive a COVID-19 vaccine shot. The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board announced Monday that the promotion, called "Joints for Jabs," was effective immediately and would run through July 12.

During the afforded time period, state-licensed cannabis retailers are permitted to give one free pre-rolled joint to customers who are

21 or older when they receive their first or second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine at an active, on-site vaccination clinic.

Customers can only claim the complimentary joint from the retail location during the same visit as receiving the jab, according to the board.

The Board said it has "received multiple requests from cannabis retail licensees to engage in promotions to support State vaccination efforts." The Board recently allowed for a

beer, wine or cocktail to be provided at no cost for those 21 or older who are vaccinated by June 30. More than 44% of the Evergreen State's population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to latest data from the Washington State Department of Health. Meanwhile, over 42% of the U.S. population is fully vaccinated, according to latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Washington is not the

only U.S. state to get creative in incentivizing people to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. In Arizona, a cannabis dispensary is handing out free pre-rolled joints and gummy edibles in exchange for getting vaccinated.

On April 20, a day widely considered the unofficial pot holiday, cannabis reform activist group D.C. Marijuana Justice (DCMJ) gave away more than 8 pounds of locally-grown cannabis rolled up into over 4,200 joints at 30 vaccination sites across Washington, D.C. Then New Jersey partnered with 13 local breweries to offer free beer to residents who got their first vaccine dose in May.

Meanwhile, several states have launched COVID-19 vaccine lotteries in which vaccinated residents are eligible to win cash prizes.

Since the start of the pandemic, more than 33 million people across the United States have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and nearly 600,000 have died from the disease, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University.

French leader Macron slapped in face on visit to small town

Associated Press - French President Emmanuel Macron denounced "violence" and "stupidity" after he was slapped in the face by a man on Tuesday during a visit to a small town in southeastern France.

The incident prompted a wide show of support for the head of state from politicians across the ideological spectrum.

Macron was greeting the public waiting for him behind barriers in the town of Tain-l'Hermitage after he visited a high school.

Two videos show a man slapping Macron in the face and his bodyguards pushing the assaulter away as the French leader is quickly rushed from the scene.

"I'm always going to meet people," Macron told reporters on Tuesday evening as he was greeting a crowd in the nearby city of Valence, accompanied this time by his wife, Brigitte Macron.

"Some people express anger, sometimes disarray ... that's legitimate anger and we will continue to respond. Stupidity and violence, no, not in democracy," he said.

A few hours earlier, Macron had taken another 25-minute walk in the narrow streets of the city, posing for selfies with a small crowd and chatting with many people in a laid-back atmosphere.



Macron, in an interview with local newspaper *Le Dauphine Libere*, described the incident as an "isolated act".

"We must not let isolated acts, ultra-violent individuals, like there had been some also in (street) protests, dominate the public debate: they don't deserve it," he said.

Macron said he didn't have specific concerns after the assault.

"I greeted the people who were by the man's side and made pictures with them. I continued and will continue. Nothing will stop me," he said.

A bodyguard, who was standing right behind Ma-

cron, raised a hand in defense of the president, but was a fraction of a second too late to stop the slap. The bodyguard then put his arm around the president to protect him.

Macron just managed to turn his face away as the aggressor's right hand connected, making it appear that the president took more of a glancing blow than a direct slap.

The man, who was wearing a mask, appears to have cried out "Montjoie! Saint Denis!" a centuries-old royalist war cry, before finishing with "A bas la Macronie," or "Down with Macron."

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Most cheese lovers will enjoy these select cheeses from various traders on the island. These price controlled cheeses represent all the many milks and textures to create a great assortment of cheeses to be enjoyed at any party or affair or sampled individually as a snack.

Item	Size	Price
Anchor High Calcium Singles	200g	\$6.44
Anchor Yellow Cheddar Cheese	250g	\$10.18
Anchor White Blanco Cheddar Cheese	250g	\$10.18
Anchor White Blanco Cheddar Cheese	500g	\$18.98
Cheddar Cheese	1kg	\$45.56
Cheddar Cheese	2kg	\$95.57
Crest Cheese	1.0kg	\$41.81
Crest Cheese	2.2kg	\$87.77
Happy Cow Regular Block Cheese	120g	\$4.76
Happy Cow Block Ham Cheese	140g	\$5.36
Happy Cow Regular Sliced Cheese	200g	\$7.27
Happy Cow Burger Sliced Cheese	200g	\$7.27
Tastee Cheese	250g	\$13.84
Tastee Cheese	500g	\$24.31
Tastee Cheese	1.0kg	\$42.24
Tastee Cheese	2.2kg	\$88.49

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Item	Size	Price
Anchor White Vegetarian Cheese	250g	\$10.18
Anchor White Vegetarian Cheese	500g	\$18.98

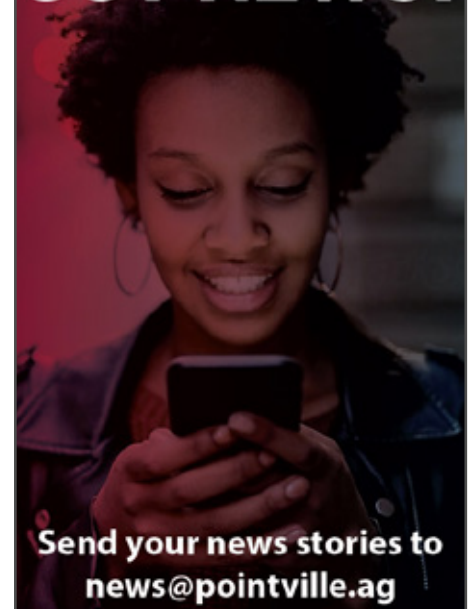
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Tennis: Federer follows Osaka in withdrawing from French Open

Roger Federer

ROLAND GARROS, France – Roger Federer became the latest high profile player to withdraw from the 2021 French Open. The world number eight ranked player indicated that he was withdrawing to save his knee ahead of Wimbledon, the next Grand Slam.

Federer, 39, made the announcement via Twitter, saying, “It’s important that I listen to my body and make sure that I don’t push myself too quickly.”

Federer continued: “After discussions with my team, I’ve decided I will need to pull out of the French Open today (Sunday). After two knee surgeries and over a year of rehabilitation it’s important that I listen to my body and make sure that I don’t push myself too quickly on my road to recovery. I am thrilled to have gotten 3 matches

under my belt. There is no greater feeling than being back on the court.”

Federer ended by saying to his fans, “See you soon.”

In three matches at the French Open, Federer looked dominant. He dropped just two sets over those matches, setting up a match against Matteo Berrettini in the fourth round.

Other top players who have withdrawn from the ongoing French Open include **Naomi Osaka**, for not wanting to attend mandatory press conferences, and **Petra Kvitová** after revealing that she injured herself while attending press requirements.

“It is with great disappointment that I announce my withdrawal from Roland Garros. During my post-match press requirements

on Sunday, I fell and hurt my ankle,” Kvitová said in a statement on Twitter.

Osaka withdrew from the 2021 French Open last week, citing mental health reasons after she declined to attend the mandatory post-match press conference and was fined \$15,000. She was threatened with disqualification and a ban from future tournaments if she did not reverse her position. However, one day later, the Slams issued a press release with a much softer tone. “On behalf of the grand slams, we wish to offer Naomi Osaka our support and assistance in any way possible as she takes time away from the court,” read the statement. “She is an exceptional athlete and we look forward to her return as soon as she deems appropriate,” the release read in part.



NBA Playoffs Round Up

Brooklyn Nets steamroll the Bucks

The Brooklyn Nets had an emphatic win on Monday when they defeated the Milwaukee Bucks 125-86.

Playing at home without their star guard, James Harden, the Nets led from the tip off and never trailed. The duo of Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving combined for 54 points to lead the Nets.

The Nets led by as much as 49 points in their most lopsided playoff win ever and held the NBA's highest-scoring team 34 points below its season average.

The Bucks were led by Giannis Antetokounmpo who scored 18 points and pulled down 11 re-

bounds. Khris Middleton gave good support with 17 points, but the Bucks were no match for the Nets. The Bucks swept the Miami Heat in the first round and will need two big games at home in order to avoid being swept themselves. The Brooklyn Nets now lead the Eastern Conference semifinals 2-0. The series now shifts to Milwaukee.

Phoenix Suns show good form against Denver Nuggets

The Phoenix Suns continued their good form, defeating the Denver Nuggets 122-105 to go ahead 1-0 in their Western Conference semifinals. The Suns' starters contributed with balanced scoring.

Mikal Bridges led all scorers with 24 points, while Chris Paul and Devin Booker each scored 21 points and dished out 11 and eight assists respectively. The Suns also benefited from Deandre Ayton, who had 20 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 22 points, but went cold when the Suns made their second half run. The Suns trailed for most of the first half and 70-60 early in the third quarter, but rallied to take the lead late in the third quarter. The final score belies the closeness, as there were four lead changes and three ties.

Game 2 of their western conference semifinals is tonight in Phoenix.

WI cricket 13-man squad named

GROS ISLET, St. Lucia – The Cricket West Indies (CWI) senior selection panel has named the West Indies 13-man squad for the first **Betway** Test Match against South Africa.

The squad includes one newcomer in Jayden Seales, the exciting 19-year old fast bowler from Trinidad and Tobago, and former member of the West Indies Under-19 World Cup squad in 2020.

The panel also recalled Shai Hope, the top-order batsman, and Kieran Powell, the left-handed opener. Hope last played Test cricket in England in July last year, while Powell's last Test appearance was in Bangladesh in December

2018. Speaking on the team selection, chief selector Roger Harper said: "Jayden Seales is young, very enthusiastic and has a big heart. In the 'Best vs Best' matches he bowled with pace, got movement and has displayed the ability to take wickets. We think that he is capable of adding potency to the bowling attack."

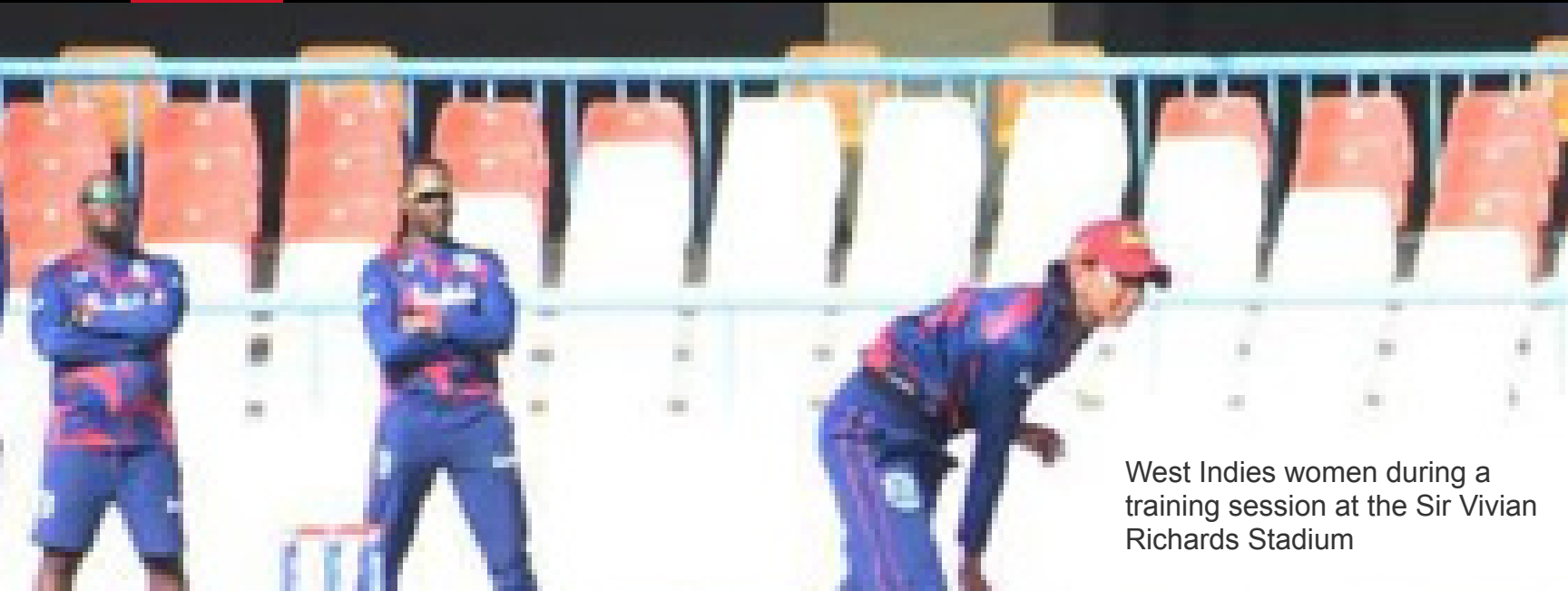
"Kieran Powell, we know, is a very capable batsman who we expect to add quality and depth to the batting department. He put himself in the mix with his performance in the Best vs Best match." Harper continued: "The aim is to continue building on the last two Test series and keep improving as

a Test team. The training camp gave the players the opportunity to prepare for the **Betway** Test Series in all departments, considering that no real red ball cricket has been played since the series against Sri Lanka in March."

West Indies take on South Africa in the first Test, starting tomorrow at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground. The teams will be playing for the Sir Vivian Richards Trophy. The two-match **Betway** Test Series will be played from 10-14 June and 18-22 June. These are the final matches in the current cycle of the ICC Test Championship table.



FINAL SQUAD: Kraigg Braithwaite (Captain), Jermaine Blackwood (Vice Captain), Nkrumah Bonner, Roston Chase, **Rahkeem Cornwall**, Joshua DaSilva, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, **Alzarri Joseph**, Kyle Mayers, Kieran Powell, Kemar Roach, and Jayden Seales.



West Indies women during a training session at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium

WOMEN'S CRICKET TRAINING CAMP

The West Indies women's team recently completed week three of their high performance training camp at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium. One of their assistant coaches, Robert Samuels, says he is pleased with what he

saw. The former West Indies batsman and Jamaica captain has been working closely with head coach Courtney Walsh to get the players fully prepared for their next international assignments. Samuels, speaking with the media

recently, said: "The bowlers are being challenged, so for me that means that the batters have basically stepped up their game and the batters have been challenging the bowlers ... it's a good look." The camp is now in high gear, with play-

ers running into form, as the team prepares to return to competitive international cricket shortly. The West Indies women's team will continue to live and train in their bio-secure bubble for the duration of the camp.

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