

ONLY VACCINATED TO BE ALLOWED IN BARS!

SEE PAGES 6-7



MINISTER REVIEWS PROGRESS OF PROJECTS

Hon. Maria Browne (front left) – Minister for Housing, Land & Urban Renewal – during a tour of Government housing developments at Lightfoot and Paynters on Thursday 22 July 2021. The media was invited and Minister Browne, in picture, grants a photo request by momentarily removing her mask, which she otherwise kept on throughout the dual tour.

Dangerous Delta variant of COVID-19 confirmed in A&B! (LEAD STORY ON PAGES 3-4)

Vaccinate or test – or stay home without pay! (page 8)

COVID-19: Economic strength essential for preventing a third wave

Since the emergence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), in December 2019, the COVID-19 has spread throughout the world and has been described as occurring in several peaks in waves. The term “wave” as used in infectious disease cycles, is generally used to describe the rising and declining trends of infections over a prolonged period.

Naturally, epidemics and/or pandemic infection cases fluctuate by surging and falling intermittently, with a possibility of rising to a peak or declining and/or never rising again.

The wave phenomenon of epidemics and/or pandemics, when presented diagrammatically, resembles the frequency curves. Several infections are seasonal in nature, and they recur after fixed time intervals.

The waves of COVID-19

COVID-19 has continued relentlessly for the last 18 months, but in every geographical area it has affected, there have been periods of surges that have been followed by periods of reduced infections. Infectious disease waves differ across countries, regions, state, and cities and each is distinct in its own science. Concerning

the COVID-19 pandemic, some countries have experienced their fourth wave while others are yet recovering from their second wave. Typically, such series of waves manifest over different time frames and the epidemics and/or pandemic might not be necessarily over until affected countries, regions, state, and cities have gone through the impact of the wave. Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the first wave referred to the onset of the infection and its primal consequences in populations. It was the period when all clinical cases of infections and diseases, hospital admissions, hospital readmissions, disabilities and deaths were directly linked to COVID-19. Technically, any country that recorded any positive case of COVID-19 experienced the first wave.

The second wave referred to the rise in active cases after the microbiology of the virus and its interaction with man was known and infection prevention and control practices were implemented to limit the spread of the infection. Technically, any country that recorded surges in positive cases of COVID-19 after the implementation of the preventive measures to the virus experienced the second wave.

The **third wave** is the increase in the number of active cases after the decline

in cases from the second wave whose impact is on the social determinants of health. Many factors combine to affect the health of individuals. Whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their individual characteristics and behaviour, their physical environment and their social and economic environment (WHO, 2017). Examples of the physical environment and the social and economic environment of people include their place of residence, state of their environment, income levels, educational levels, unemployment levels, availability of social support services, micro-economic variables, relationships with family and friends etc.

However, the major elements include access and use of health care services. The third wave will worsen health inequalities through severe economic injuries.

The health impacts caused by this worsening economic recession will be complex, especially where healthcare might just be the benefit of a few. For instance, many hospitals around the globe are already short-staffed and overwhelmed with patients, and some are short on oxygen, forcing a rationing of care.

Simply put, the third wave is the increase in infections due to the citizens of a country letting their

guard down on the preventive measures of the infections, due to harsh economic situations, which results in pressure and inequalities in healthcare seeking services where only the able can access health care. Complications of this wave are that people die not directly from COVID-19, but due to the economic fallout; job losses and other financial pressures that are known from historical recessions to increase physical and mental stress. ***This wave is not far from many countries.***

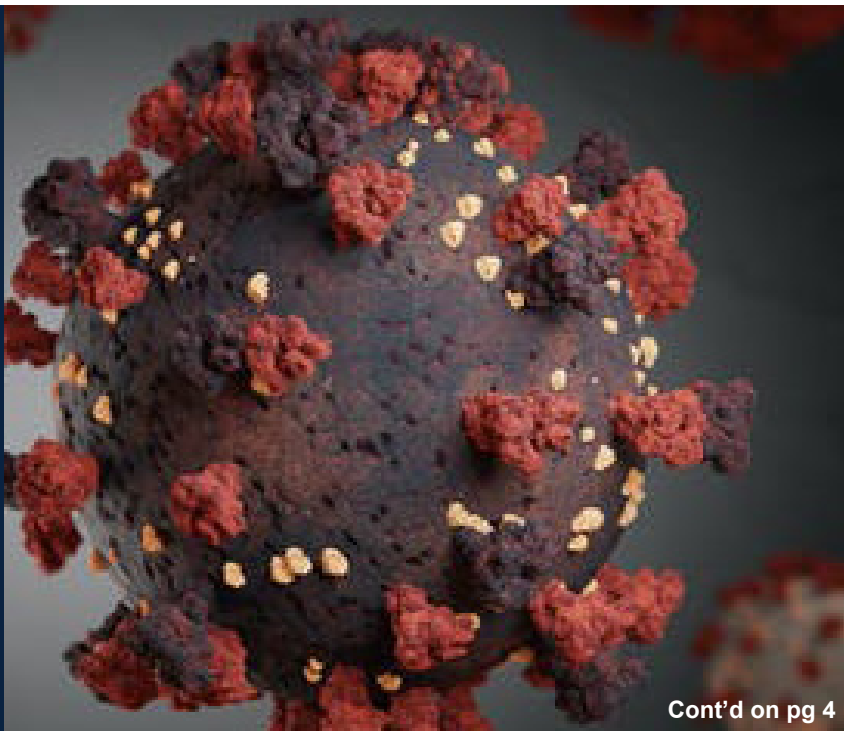
To prevent the third wave, countries must act now to repair, fix and strengthen their economies. They also need to prioritize access and utilization to basic and specialized healthcare needs of their citizens, or else the countries risk continuum into subsequent waves which will impact generations unborn.

The lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, both positive and negative, can be overwhelming; yet the reality of this pandemic is that ***the virus has got into everything about our daily lives.***

As scientists work around the clock to eliminate the virus, let us continue to act responsibly and adhere to the precautions and preventive measures. (Reprinted from CitiNews, June 28, 2021)

Delta variant of COVID confirmed in Antigua!

The Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment says it has received confirmation from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) of the Delta variant strain of the SARS CoV-2 in Antigua and Barbuda. This information is contained in a press release issued by the Ministry on Thursday afternoon. It says the Delta variant of concern, first identified in India in October 2020, was found in one of a group of seven samples taken in Antigua and Barbuda between May 5 and July 2, 2021.



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The alpha variant of concern, first identified in Antigua and Barbuda late last month, was identified in the other six samples. The Delta variant – identified by multiple spike protein mutations – is more transmissible, may cause more severe disease, hospitalizations, increased intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, and death. There is also preliminary evidence of twice the rate of hospitalization for unvaccinated persons when compared with those who are vaccinated. The World Health Organi-

zation has so far confirmed four variants of concern circulating globally. “Antigua and Barbuda has been sending samples to CARPHA for genomic sequencing to detect variants since October 2020 as part of a CARPHA/UWI project.

“The Ministry of Health Wellness & the Environment has also increased its surveillance for SARS CoV-2 variants at the laboratory at the Sir Lester Bird Mount St. John’s Medical Centre, which now has the capacity to detect SARS CoV-2 variants.

“As a result of this in-

creased surveillance, we have been able to identify the alpha, beta and delta variants of concern in Antigua and Barbuda,” the release further states.

“The public is reminded that after recording no active cases of COVID-19 for a few weeks we are now seeing an increase in the number of cases,” it adds. “This reinforces the fact that we must continue to adhere to the public health measure to prevent and control the disease. “These include physical and social distancing, using face masks and

practicing hand hygiene and cough etiquette. “The public is further reminded that vaccination is one of the most effective measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic.” The Ministry’s statement concludes by urging persons “to get fully vaccinated utilizing the AstraZeneca and Sinopharm vaccines readily available at our vaccination centres in the Multipurpose & Cultural Centre [at Perry Bay in St. John’s Rural West] and the Villa Polyclinic [in St. John’s City West]”.

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Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas.



Death of 7-month-old: CMO reminds that anyone can contract COVID

by Shelton Daniel

A 7-month old infant who died recently had contracted COVID, authorities have confirmed. Information Minister Melford Nicholas said how that infant contracted COVID is a matter that is under investigation by the Ministry of Health. Nicholas spoke Thursday morning as he hosted the weekly live post-Cabinet media briefing.

“I think this brings a particular underlining and a particular caution to the challenge that we all face

in terms of the contact tracing ...,” the Minister stated. He described the pediatric fatalities as “one of the sad moments that confronted us during our deliberations in Cabinet” on Wednesday during its regular weekly meeting. On Tuesday, during *Pointe FM’s Starting Pointe* morning program, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas had taken the opportunity to remind all that “anyone can get COVID” and there was no way of telling how the infection would progress in any

particular person. She said vaccination remains the best means of protection against becoming seriously ill (to the point of requiring hospitalization), and preventing death from the disease. But, Dr. Sealy-Thomas pointed out, in the cases of persons so young as to be ineligible for vaccination, their protection has to come from the adults responsible for them and others with whom they come into contact.

The CMO therefore urged Antiguan and Barbudans to continue coming forward to

get vaccinated, and not allow any unfounded fears – or fearmongering that is either misguided or mischievous – to deter or dissuade them from getting inoculated. She said even the well-known “fear of needles” should be shaken off, in consideration of the far greater and graver implications of what is at stake: people’s lives and long term health, given that the effects of COVID can linger and remain problematic long after a person has clinically “recovered”.

Proof of vaccination to be required for admission to bars, clubs, etc.

by *Shelton Daniel*

In just a little more than a week from today, bars, night-clubs, restaurants and other places of indoor entertainment and recreation will have to require proof of vaccination from their patrons before permitting them to enter. That is the policy position taken by Cabinet at its weekly meeting on Wednesday, and publicly announced the following

morning by Information Minister Melford Nicholas during the live post-Cabinet media briefing. He said the decision was spurred by two recent incidents in which police cracked down on overcrowded and safety-violating entertainment gatherings that were taking place at Potters in St. George and Pensioners Beach in St. John's Rural West. Said Minister Nicholas: "Clearly, gatherings like these where persons

are unprotected by the vaccines, present a real threat, not only to the individuals who are participating, but because of the potential for great spread – rapid spread – of the virus in the community, and the impact that it will have on the tourism industry by forcing us to have another shut-down; by our friendly market governments turning us into a no-fly zone, a no-contact environment; we would have

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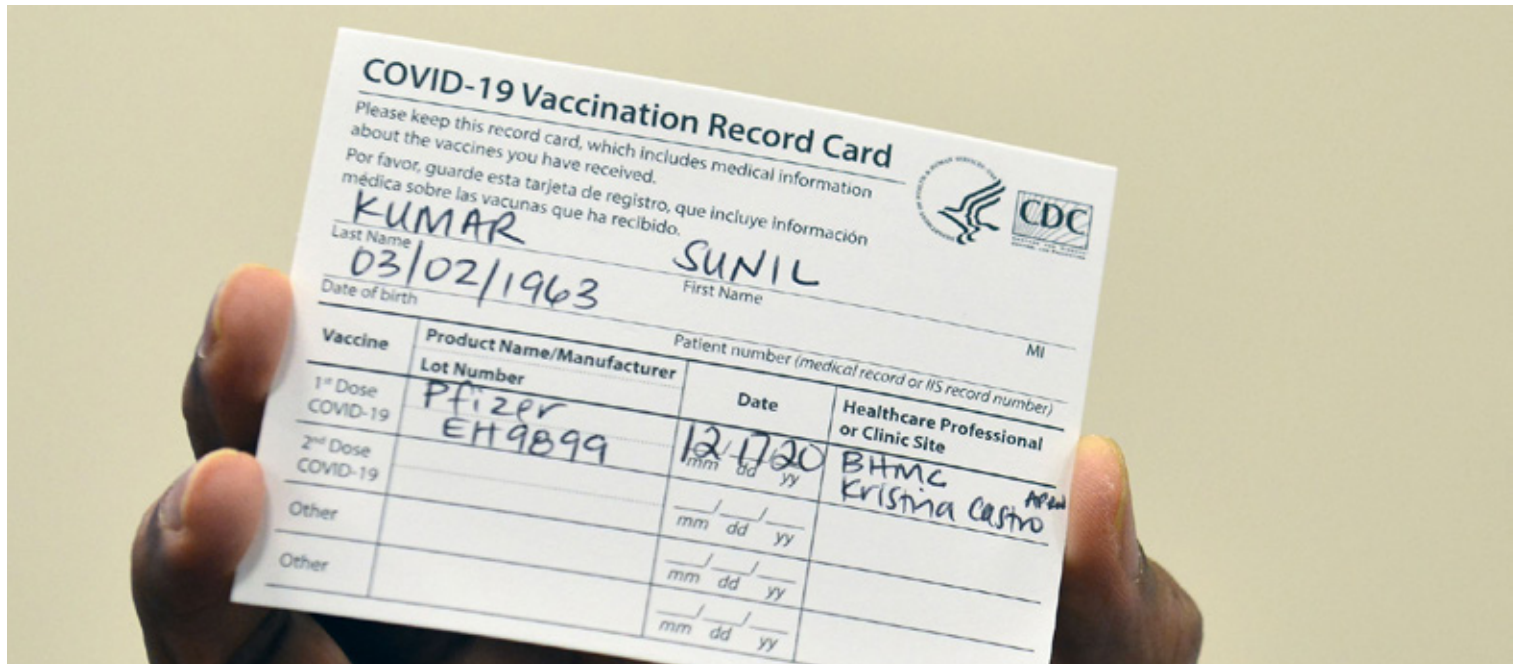
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done ourselves not only clinical harm, but also economic harm.” Nicholas said these were the considerations that led to Government concluding “that it must provide further restrictions to these types of events.”

Then came the declaration: “As of the 1st of August, the government will implement measures and will hold bar owners – and other social events like the ones that took place at the two locations I mentioned earlier ... but bar owners are going to be required to ensure that their

patrons are fully vaccinated in order to facilitate their entry.” Nicholas went to explain that, “What this means is, as a pre-requisite, the Ministry of Health – in collaboration with the Ministry of Information & Technology – will provide each of the fully vaccinated persons with a new vaccination card that is portable, that will be laminated, that will have some unique identifiers on it, that will allow them to present them when required for entry into these entertainment establishments.” He added that those seeking ad-

mission in this manner “will presumably have to present those cards along with a photo ID as a pre-requisite to enter. Those will be reflected in the upcoming regulations.”

Next was the warning of what would befall the non-compliant: “Where bar owners and other entertainment organizations permit non-vaccinated persons to enter – upon inspection and it is found out – they will be faced with stiff financial penalties, and the option, as well, of being shut down for definitive periods.”

ABEC meets with UPP

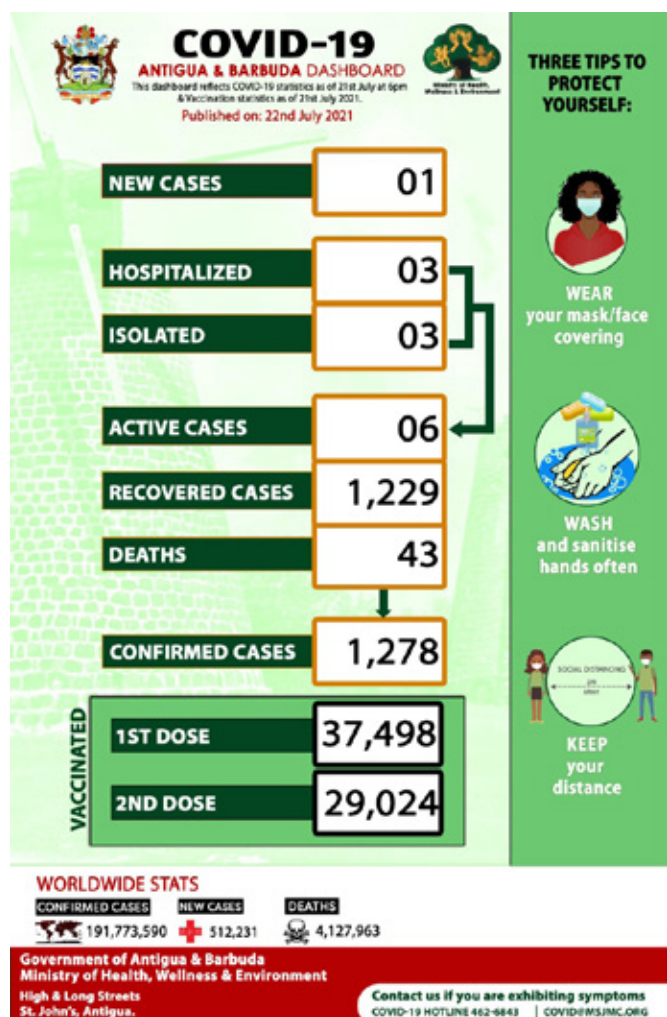
The Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) on Wednesday met with a delegation from the United Progressive Party (UPP) at its request, to discuss several areas of concern raised by the opposition political party. The four-member delegation was comprised of former prime minister Baldwin

Spencer; chairperson of the UPP, D. Giselle Issac; general secretary of the UPP, Senator Shawn Nicholas; and Mr. Alister Thomas. Among the main areas discussed were: the late publication of the Register of Electors, the location of registration units outside of the Constituency; the conditions for persons who wish to regis-

ter after becoming citizens as a result of the Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP); and the transfer process.

ABEC’s chairman, Mr. Nathaniel Paddy James, said the meeting was productive. James emphasized that the same courtesy will be extended to the other political parties.

COVID Dashboard Update for July 22, 2021



The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment from the Sir Lester Bird Mount St. John Medical Centre has revealed one new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case in Antigua and Barbuda as of Wednesday 21st July 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Ninety-four samples were processed at Sir Lester Bird MSJMC. Four recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 1,229. Consequent-

ly, the total number of persons who have had laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 1,278; which is inclusive of six active cases. There are three hospitalized cases, all considered mild. Meanwhile, 37,498 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccines have been administered, and 29,024 have received the second dose. The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.

Either get vaccinated or get tested – or stay home without pay!

Public servants who refuse to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and who also refuse the alternative of getting tested every 14 days will be barred from coming to the workplace – and their forced absence will be without pay! That was the blunt declaration on

Thursday morning by Information Minister Melford Nicholas as he announced government's policy on the matter. It was formally adopted by Cabinet during its weekly deliberations on Wednesday and Minister Nicholas articulated the position while conduct-

ing the live post-Cabinet media briefing. "Persons who have this objection – it's clear, we want to ensure that the environment in which you work remains safe – and if you are not willing to take the vaccine, then you must give your other co-workers and the oth-

er frontline persons the assurance that it is safe to work along with you. If you are not prepared to do that, then you are imposing on yourselves further restriction that will include being asked to stay at home without pay," he stated.

(by Shelton Daniel)



Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chairman of CARICOM, Hon. Gaston Browne.

CARICOM to open diplomatic mission in Kenya soon – Community Chair, PM Browne

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will soon open a diplomatic mission in Kenya, the Hon. Gaston Browne said as he committed to strengthening relations between CARICOM and Africa during his term as Chair of the regional integration movement.

The Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister made the announce-

ment during a televised statement to observe Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July 2021.

“CARICOM will, within weeks, formally open a diplomatic mission in Nairobi, Kenya. I have spoken on several occasions to my dear friend, President Uhuru Kenyatta, and we are both delighted by this development.

“This mission will serve as CARICOM’s platform in Africa with a mandate to develop beneficial relations with all countries on the African continent,” he said.

Prime Minister Browne said he intends to strengthen the institutional relationship between CARICOM and the African Union.

“We have made the first steps, and these efforts will certainly intensify in the months and years to follow,” he said.

The Prime Minister added that there was much that could be done at the bilateral level to “unleash the economic and cultural dimensions of our relations”.

Two local EMS workers complete overseas paramedic training

Two Antiguan and Barbudan Emergency Medical Service (EMS) employees have recently completed a major paramedic course in Trinidad.

According to the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment, "The Ministry wishes to congratulate Joanna Otto and Brandon Browne for successfully completing their paramedic

course in Trinidad." The paramedics spoke with Public Relations Officer at the Ministry, J'noure Smith-Kellman, about their experience over the past two years, and detailed how they will use their new skills for the betterment of the twin-island state. In speaking with the Health Ministry's PRO, paramedic Otto said the course was 'life-changing'.

"The benefit of this challenging course is that we can now do more medically invasive stuff. We can intubate and administer certain medication. We were trained to put in catheters, etc., and we are now more in-depth in the medical field," Otto said. Funding for the scholarship was provided by the Board of Education, the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the

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Environment, and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. The now highly-trained paramedics indicated that they had to undergo up to 500 hours of rotations.

According to paramedic Browne, “The rotations were great and I really enjoyed it.”

He went on to describe some of the medical procedures they had to perform during their 500 hours of rotation.

“During the rotation ... has changed my view [of] the whole medical system. Working in the hospital makes you gather a greater sense of appreciation of what EMS can be fully capable of,” Browne said.

The two paramedics used the opportunity to encourage their colleagues and the wider medical community to undertake the course. They also expressed sincere thanks to Mr. Greenidge, Director of Emergency Medical Services, and the Ministry of Health for affording them the opportunity to undergo their studies.



EMS paramedics Joanna Otto (left) and Brandon Browne.

UNGA President touches down in Antigua



Current president of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Mr. Volkan Bozkır (center) upon his arrival in Antigua and Barbuda for an official visit on Thursday 22 July 2021; following which, he is to visit St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Barbados. To His Excellency's right is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Walton “Aubrey” Webson. At left (wearing mask) is the twin-island state's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Immigration, Hon. E. Paul “Chet” Greene.



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THE TRANSFER PROCESS

The Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (ABEC) wishes to remind persons who no longer reside in a particular constituency to apply for a transfer to the constituency where you now reside.

Here are the steps involved in the transfer process:

- ⇒ If a person who has moved from their initial registration address and resides at a new address for a period of six months and over, the law dictates that you seek a transfer of your registration.
- ⇒ This application for transfer may be done at the Registration Unit located in the new Constituency of residence or the former one, where the registration initially took place.
- ⇒ At the Registration Unit, applicants will indicate to ABEC's Registration Personnel that they are seeking an application to be transferred to the new constituency. Persons may be asked a number of questions to further validate the process such as proof of address and contact information.
- ⇒ Please note that residency verification may also take place.
- ⇒ The necessary paperwork will then be compiled and the applicant will be given a receipt of the application. The application will then be submitted to the Head Office for further processing. The applicant is advised to secure the receipt, which must be presented upon receiving a call from the Head Office.
- ⇒ The application is then published on The List C (persons who no longer qualify to be on the register in a said constituency or whose information has been altered). This forms part of the claims and objections period for the particular month (31 days) after the last day of the registration for the previous month.
- ⇒ After the Claims and Objections period has ended, once there are no objections to the application for transfer, the transfer applicant will be called by the Head Office to complete the process, which will be validated with the applicant's fingerprint.

IN PRAISE OF A BLACK CARIBBEAN WOMAN



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)

CARICOM should be proud of the success of a Caribbean woman who was at the center of the effort to manage the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Dominican born Dr. Carissa Etienne, the Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), deserves

the greatest admiration and respect of all the 37 nations of Latin America and the Caribbean that she and her team piloted through the impact of the pandemic.

It was good to see her being praised, at a meeting of the OAS Permanent Council on July 21, by the Secretary-General of the

OAS, Luis Almagro, and many delegations that spoke at a special session of the Organization's Permanent Council.

The meeting was called to discuss the implementation of a resolution on "The Equitable Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines" that Antigua and Barbuda had drafted and negotiated to adoption in February 2021. It was not called to focus on the outstanding role of the Director, but it was inevitable that she would be singled out; for without the guidance, technical expertise and provision of equipment to 37 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, COVID-19 would have infected many more than the millions that it has. It would also have killed more than the hundreds of thousands that it did.

It is not often that the competence of a woman is complemented, and even more rare if the woman is black. But

it happened on July 21.

In my own remarks at the meeting, I stated that the countries of the Caribbean were greatly aided by the guidance provided by PAHO experts and by the medical equipment the organization supplied.

In truth, the majority of countries in the world were ill-prepared for a pandemic of any kind, let alone one that moved with the swiftness and deadly impact of COVID-19.

The figures given by Dr. Etienne at the meeting underscored the unpreparedness of all our countries. Seventy-five million cases in our hemisphere and two million deaths are frightening figures, evidencing the fact that our region was one of the worst affected in the world.

While progress has undoubtedly been made in the production of several vaccines that can help to suppress and contain the virus, much of the world – including many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean – remain deprived of much-needed vaccines.

CARICOM countries and other developing nations ought not to have been placed in the untenable situation in which they have to beg for vaccines to save their people from the deadly coronavirus.

This point was emphasized by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, E. Paul ‘Chet’ Greene at the meeting. He said, “If this pandemic has taught the world a single salutary lesson, it is that humanity should never again experience conditions in which a few countries use their wealth to purchase almost all the vaccines produced, leaving the majority of nations in dire straits.

“While we are grateful that countries, such as the United States, are making quantities of their oversupply available to nations in need, the point is that this situation should not have occurred. Nations ought not to have to plead for vaccines to save the lives of their people, or to spare their economies the harmful impact of a pandemic.”

Developing countries

are forced to beg for vaccines because of two circumstances: First, a few rich countries purchased more than 70 percent of the total vaccines produced by the major pharmaceutical companies. In some cases, these countries bought as much as three times the quantity of vaccines needed to vaccinate all their people. They left the rest of the world floundering.

Second, while vaccines against this lethal virus and its variants should have been a global good, available to all mankind, it became a commodity to be sold on commercial terms to the largest and richest purchasers, ignoring the needs of many citizens of our one planet. The pharmaceutical companies left people quite literally dying for vaccines.

Conscious that the populations of Caribbean countries are too small to allow them to bargain effectively for supplies of the vaccines at an affordable price, Dr. Etienne and her team at PAHO have again taken up cudgels on behalf of the Ca-

ribbean and other deprived countries in Latin America.

Through its Revolving Fund for Access to Vaccines, which can buy in much larger quantities than individual countries, PAHO has engaged various manufacturers, whose COVID-19 vaccines have been approved by the World Health Organization (WHO), to negotiate supply, delivery and costs. PAHO’s success would provide more vaccines on a reliable and predictable basis to Caribbean countries.

PAHO believes that these negotiations are close to completion and vaccines could be available by the last quarter of 2021.

The Caribbean and Latin America owe much to the dedication and resourcefulness of PAHO – and particularly to the black Caribbean woman at the center of its operations – Dr. Carissa F. Etienne.

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Citizens First

by Risa V

To be a government official cannot be an easy thing.

While I feel they must bear the burdens of the job they signed up for, I do not in any way condone the ignorance that everything they have is 'thief they thief it', or that they are using tax payers money for personal gain.

Understand: I am in no way being naïve; corruption is definitely a topic that must not be ignored. This has been acknowledged, and the government, in turn, is held accountable by laws and ethics committees that require assets declarations, etc.

Such committees will run investigations in questionable matters of conflicts of interest. Outside of that, government officials are citizens first and their employment does not require them to forego those rights, so they are in every way still entitled to the same privileges.

The government is elected by the people – meaning we have confidence in their

capabilities to run the affairs of Antigua and Barbuda. It is their ambitions that lead them to be fit for such a job and they will continue to be ambitious. To have a government consisting of individuals who are not only educated but confident, resourceful, driven, strategic, flexible, creative, and who possess great multi-tasking and negotiating skills, is a win-win.

This is what makes

them great leaders and we cannot be so ignorant to think that these attributes that make them who they are should be limited to their jobs in government.

This is impossible! It is only natural that they are this way in all aspects of their lives. It is not a switch-on switch-off situation. You did not give them these qualities when you elected them; they possessed them long before. I want a gov-

ernment official who is self-empowered. That gives me more confidence that he can achieve the same for our country. Leaders who possess opposite qualities will only be counter-productive.

So, the next time a government official is heard of obtaining personal assets, ask yourselves if you would rather one who has never done so, because I would definitely question his usefulness to this country.

BVI: Arrest them! USVI border breaches should not be tolerated



BVI Minister of Health & Social Development, Carvin Malone

BVI News - Persons who falsify COVID-19 test results from the BVI in order to circumvent the required health protocols should be arrested and charged.

Health Minister Carvin Malone shared this position during the governing Virgin Islands Party's Let's Talk radio show Tuesday evening.

The US Virgin Islands recently implemented stricter entry protocols for travellers from the BVI after the BVI began to experience a dramatic surge in COVID-19 cases.

In just over two weeks, the BVI has recorded more than 1,500 positive COVID-19 cases and has seen some 23 deaths related to

the virus. The Health Minister said he received reports that persons have been falsifying and forging their COVID-19 test results to enter the neighbouring USVI. He said USVI officials also questioned him about whether these persons should be prosecuted.

"They are so kind. They say, 'well look, we don't want to embarrass them so we don't want to arrest them,'" Malone related. "I say arrest them, charge them, give me their names, ranks and serial numbers so that we can get this stopped."

The Health Minister said the BVI will not hamper its relations with the neighbouring territory which he said is working around the

clock to ensure the BVI comes up to speed. He said the behaviour of persons intent on forging their documents will not be tolerated at any time for any reason.

Recently, USVI Governor Andrew Bryan Jr warned that persons found 'gaming the system' by trying to circumvent or breach the newly implemented health requirements between the two territories will be prosecuted to the fullest.

"We are not playing," Governor Bryan Jr stated at the time.

He said the USVI had already made one arrest and cautioned that there would be more to come.

Dominican Dr. Valda Henry selected as next ECCB Deputy Governor

ECCB - Dr. Valda Henry will be the third Deputy Governor of the ECCB and the first woman to assume the position.

Her five-year term will commence in September 2021.

Following an open process supported by SRI executive search and a report from the Monetary Council-appointed selection panel which interviewed the shortlisted candidates, the Monetary Council has determined that the next Deputy Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) will be Dr. Valda F. Henry.

Dr. Henry, a native of the Commonwealth of Dominica, is the holder of a PhD in Industrial Relations and Business, a Master's in Business Administration, a Bachelor's in Management, and a Bachelor's in Law.

She is also a Chartered Financial Analyst and a Certified Global Professional in Human Resources, a SHRM-SCP.

Dr. Henry worked as senior investment officer at the ECCB from 1994-1998. She brings a wealth of experience to her new role with over 20 years' experience in the public, private and financial sectors.

Dr. Henry is the founder and CEO of VF Consulting Inc., an HR consulting firm which she started in 2005.



A vibrant promotional graphic for 'The Good Vibes Show'. It features a man wearing headphones and a black shirt, pointing upwards. The background is a warm, orange-red gradient with a subtle pattern. In the top left corner is the 'PLATINUM Fm 97.9' logo with the tagline 'We Entertain You'. In the top right corner is a small logo for 'ITAL LION FROM ZION' featuring a lion. A red 'ON AIR' button is positioned over the man's chest. The show's title, 'THE Good Vibes SHOW', is written in large, stylized, golden letters. Below the title, it says 'with Ital Lion'. The broadcast schedule 'WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY' and time '12PM - 2PM AST' are displayed in bold yellow and white text. At the bottom, there are social media links: 'www.Twitch.tv/platinumfm979' and 'Platinum FM 97.9 f', along with two phone numbers: '268-780-9790' and '268-562-9790/9'.



Protests rock northern Haiti city ahead of president's funeral

(Reuters) – Unrest roiled the northern Haitian city of Cap-Haitien on Wednesday as demonstrators set up road blocks in protest against the assassination earlier this month of President Jovenel Moïse whose body will be laid to rest there on Friday. National police chiefs arriving in Cap-Haitien to help over-

see Moïse's funeral were met by protests from the slain president's supporters who hold police responsible for the killing at his residence on July 7. Government officials say Moïse was murdered by a team of mostly Colombian mercenaries, but many questions remain unanswered, including why the president's security forces

did not do more to protect him. At least one person lay dead in the streets of Cap-Haitien following the disturbances which took place just as Moïse's widow attended her first public event since returning from Miami at the weekend.

Dressed in black, wearing a face mask and with her heavily plastered

right arm in a sling, Martine Moïse sat in silence beneath a portrait of her husband as a priest delivered a eulogy to the dead statesman.

Martine, who was injured in the attack on her husband, spoke no words but shed tears as the commemoration ended to the strains of a woman singing "Ave Maria".

Jamaica: Uptick in COVID-19 cases could see some strict measures re-imposed

Jamaica Observer - WITH an uptick in the numbers of new novel coronavirus cases island wide, possibly signaling the beginning of a third wave, in the few weeks since the Government released Jamaicans from months of restrictive protocols, Prime Minister Andrew Holness on Tuesday hinted at the possibility of a reintroduction of strict measures.

Speaking in Parliament, the prime minister said "indiscipline, complacency and lack of diligence in observing the protocols" on the part of Jamaicans have been driving the spread.

"Based on the early warning signs that we are seeing, the COVID sub-committee of Cabinet will be meeting this weekend to review the situation to consider whether there may be need to tighten some of the measures in advance of August 10, and I will report to the nation by a press conference, possibly Tuesday, if we intend to make any new changes to the orders," Holness said.

He said in the three weeks since June 22 when the Government announced in Parliament the recrafting of measures which took effect on July 1, the number of new infections have gathered speed.

"After the measures came into effect, based on the latest report from this morning (Tuesday), Jamaica recorded 122 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. Our cumulative cases of COVID-19 are now at 51,404. Sadly 1,163 persons have died," Holness said.

According to health officials, since March 20, 2021, during which Jamaica peaked at 15,944 new cases, the number of new cases of COVID-19 has been decreasing month-on-month. In April, the country saw 6,234 new cases; 2,817 new cases in May; 1,572 new cases in June; and

1,238 new cases so far this month.

"Our July numbers are showing an uptick relative to June. In June 2021, we averaged 52 cases per day. So far in July we are averaging 62 cases per day. Yesterday we recorded 122 new cases, our single highest day in terms of numbers in over eight weeks since May 20, 2021," the prime minister said.

He noted that while a single day's case number is not by itself indicative of a trend, there are other factors that are cause for concern, such as the positivity rate by epidemiological week since the start of the pandemic in Jamaica.

"There was a general decrease in positivity between week 11 and week 25 of 2021 from the peak of 38.9 percent to six percent in the week ending June 26, 2021.

"Since week 26, however, there has been an increase in positivity. Our average positivity rate for the last seven days was 8.8 percent, and for week 29 the positivity rate so far is 9.9 percent. This puts us in the high transmission range. Our target is to get our positivity rate down to five percent or below. We are almost doubling that now," the prime minister stressed.

As for the reproductive rate which shows how fast the virus is spreading by measuring how many additional persons are infected on average by one infected person that is now at 1.1.

Epidemiologists have said this figure needs to remain below 1.0 for at least six weeks.



A deserted Orange Street in Kingston during the Easter Weekend lockdown by the Government to contain spread of the novel coronavirus. An uptick in cases could see a re-imposition of strict guidelines.

Half of Europeans vaccinated, but concern grows over Delta variant



Germany has seen an incidence rate of 12.2 new cases per 100,000 people over the past seven days – more than double the rates in early July.

Al Jazeera - More than half of all European adults are now fully vaccinated, the European Union said, but the milestone came as countries across the world are battling fresh outbreaks blamed on the fast-spreading Delta variant. The EU said on Thursday that 200 million Europeans had been fully vaccinated, more than half of the adult population, but still short of a 70 percent target set for the summer. The fresh data came as German Chancellor Angela Merkel said cases in her country were rising “exponentially” and she urged more Germans to get jabs.

“The number of infections has been rising again for a few days now, with a

clear and, in my opinion, worrying momentum. The whole thing is driven by the Delta variant of the coronavirus,” she said at a Berlin news conference on Thursday.

Germany has seen an incidence rate of 12.2 new cases per 100,000 people over the past seven days – more than double the rates in early July.

“With a rising incidence rate, it could be that we need to introduce additional measures,” she said.

Germany joins a number of European nations that have seen cases climb in recent weeks spurred by the Delta variant, first detected in India.

European Central Bank chief Christine Lagarde

warned of growing economic uncertainty caused by the Delta variant, as the bank kept its vast stimulus for the Eurozone firmly in place following a meeting of its 25-member governing council.

“The euro area economy is rebounding strongly,” Lagarde said, but the Delta variant could dampen the post-lockdown recovery “in services, especially in tourism and hospitality.”

France this week rolled out new rules requiring a so-called health pass for all events or places with more than 50 people before being extended to restaurants, cafés and shopping centres in August.

People need to show

proof of vaccination or a negative test to gain access, after the country reported a new surge – more than 21,000 new cases on Wednesday, the highest level since early May.

The Italian government, also looking to contain a fresh surge in coronavirus cases, announced on Thursday that from August 6 people must present proof of immunity to access an array of services and leisure activities.

Cases are also soaring in the United Kingdom where most restrictions were lifted this week, and on Thursday British supermarkets warned of possible food shortages because staff were being forced to self-isolate.

\$150M initially for victims in Florida condo collapse



Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Michael Hanzman speaks during a hearing in Miami on Wednesday 21 July 2021, at which tenants shared their thoughts regarding the future of the site of the Champlain Towers South building that collapsed in Surfside, Florida.

Miami Herald - As the remaining rubble from the collapse of a 12-storey oceanfront condominium was cleared away Wednesday, a Florida judge said victims and families who suffered losses will get a minimum of \$150 million in compensation initially.

That sum includes about \$50 million in insurance on the Champlain Towers South building and at least \$100 million in proceeds from the sale of the Surfside property where the structure once stood, Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Michael Hanzman said at a hearing.

"The court's concern has always been the victims here," the judge said, adding that the group includes visitors and renters, not just condo owners. "Their rights will be protected."

The \$150 million does not count any proceeds from the numerous lawsuits already filed since the June 24 collapse which killed at least 97 people. Those lawsuits are being consolidated into a single class action that would cover all victims and family members if they choose, the judge said. "I have no doubt

no stone will be left unturned," Hanzman said of the lawsuits.

So far, 97 victims have been identified, many of them using DNA analysis.

Miami-Dade officials had said Wednesday evening they believed they have two more victims to identify, but another person's name was released later in the day — meaning there may be just one more.

Officials have not yet announced an end to the recovery effort.

Meanwhile, the site of the tragedy has mostly been cleared away with the debris relocated to an evidentiary collection site near the airport where a thorough search will continue "with enormous care and diligence", said Mayor Daniella Levine Cava. She spoke about the difficulties of the search in a statement on Wednesday.

"The enormous pressure of the weight of the collapse and the passage of time also make it more challenging," she said, stressing that workers were still carefully combing through the rubble for the remaining victims as well as personal property and religious artefacts.

UK to launch daily COVID tests in food sector to tackle 'pingdemic'

(Reuters) – Daily contact testing will be rolled out to workplaces in Britain's food sector so staff who have been 'pinged' by the COVID-19 app can keep working if they test negative rather than isolating, the government said on Thursday.

Some supermarkets are facing shortages of specific products - mainly those in demand in hot weather - and some petrol stations have had to close after the health app told workers to isolate following contact with someone with the virus.

British newspapers carried front-page pictures of empty shelves in supermarkets, declaring a "pingdemic".

With cases rising to nearly 50,000 a day in the United Kingdom, hundreds of thousands of people have been advised - or "pinged" - by the National Health Service's contact-tracing app to isolate for 10 days.

The government said priority testing sites would be set up at the largest supermarket distribution centres this week, and up to 500 sites would start next week.

"As we manage this virus and do everything we can to break chains of transmission, daily contact testing of workers in this vital sector will help to minimise the disruption caused by rising cases in the coming weeks, while ensuring workers are not put at risk," Health Secretary Sajid Javid said.



Contact testing is designed to limit the spread of COVID-19 by identifying people infected by being in proximity to someone with the virus, either via the app or human contact tracers, but who have no symptoms themselves.

The government said supermarket bosses had downplayed fears of shortages, saying problems were not widespread.

Sainsbury's, Britain's second largest grocer, said customers may not be able to find the exact product they want.

"Large quantities of products are being delivered to stores daily and our colleagues are focused on getting them onto the shelves as quickly as they can," a spokesperson said.

Asda, the industry's No. 3

player, said although more staff were being forced to self-isolate, the level of absences remained well below what it saw at the height of the pandemic last year.

"We're also not in a position where we would have to close any stores," said a spokesperson.

Product availability was "largely OK across the board", though some stores were short of warm weather lines: beers and soft drinks, bottled water, ice cream, and salad leaves.

But smaller rival Iceland said it had closed a number of stores due to staff shortages.

British Petroleum (BP) said it had to temporarily close a handful of petrol stations due to a lack of fuel, with a shortage of HGV drivers exacerbated by

COVID-19 isolations.

Official data showed the app had told nearly 620,000 people to isolate in England and Wales in the week up to July 14.

Britain has allowed some workers in critical roles to carry on working, even when "pinged".

Companies must apply for authorisation for their staff, and it will only be granted to designated workers in approved workplaces who are fully vaccinated, the government said on Thursday.

Infections had been rising in Britain for several weeks, but a vaccination programme appears to have weakened the link between infections and deaths, with daily fatalities remaining relatively low.

Vaccinations rise in some states with soaring infections



Rochelle Walensky, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), left, and Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Associated Press - Vaccinations are beginning to rise in some states where COVID-19 cases are soaring, White House officials said Thursday, in a sign that the summer surge is getting the attention of vaccine-hesitant Americans as hospitals in the South are being overrun with patients.

Coronavirus coordinator Jeff Zients told reporters that several states with the highest proportions of new infections have seen residents get vaccinated at higher rates than the nation as a whole. Officials cited Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri and Nevada as examples.

"The fourth surge is real, and the numbers are quite frightening at the moment," Louisiana Gov. John Bel Ed-

wards said on a New Orleans radio show. Edwards, a Democrat, added: "There's no doubt that we are going in the wrong direction and we're going there in a hurry." Louisiana reported 2,843 new COVID-19 cases on Thursday, a day after reporting 5,388 — the third-highest level since the pandemic began. Hospitalizations are up steeply in the last month, from 242 on June 19 to 913 in the latest report. Fifteen new deaths were reported Thursday.

Just 36% of Louisiana's population is fully vaccinated, state health department data shows. Nationally, 56.3% of Americans have received at least one dose of the vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Aly Neel, a spokesperson for Louisiana's health department, said the state has seen "a little bump" in vaccinations recently, adding that details would be available Friday. Warner Thomas, president and CEO of the Ochsner Health system serving Louisiana and Mississippi, said the system had seen a 10% to 15% increase in people seeking vaccination over the past week or two. It has administered vaccines at churches, the New Orleans airport, basketball games and the mall.

"We see each person we get vaccinated now as a victory," said Dr. Katherine Baumgarten, director of infection prevention and control for the 40-hospital system, noting that it has been bringing in traveling nurses

and that projections show its ICUs could fill up at the current rate of infection.

Dr. Catherine O'Neal, chief medical officer and an infectious disease specialist at Our Lady of the Lake regional medical center, said on Thursday that the most shocking aspect of the surge has been its speed. The caseload has roughly tripled in the course of a week, she said.

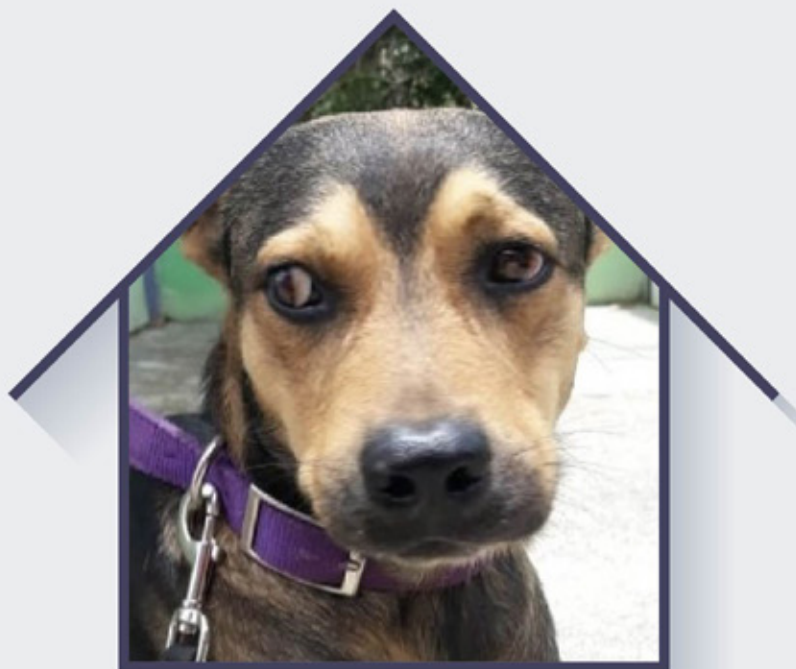
On Sunday, the medical center stopped taking transfers of coronavirus patients from hospitals in other parts of the state because they simply did not have the capacity, she said.

In Missouri, which is second only to Arkansas and Louisiana in the number of new cases per capita over the past 14 days, officials have rolled out a vaccine incentive program that includes \$10,000 prizes for 900 lottery winners. The state lags about 10 percentage points behind the national average for people who have received at least one shot.

Hospitals in the Springfield area are under strain, reaching pandemic high and near pandemic high numbers of patients.

"Younger, relatively healthy and unvaccinated. If this describes you, please consider vaccination," tweeted Erik Frederick, chief administrative officer of Mercy Hospital Springfield, noting that half of the COVID-19 patients are ages 21 to 59 and just 2% of that group is vaccinated.

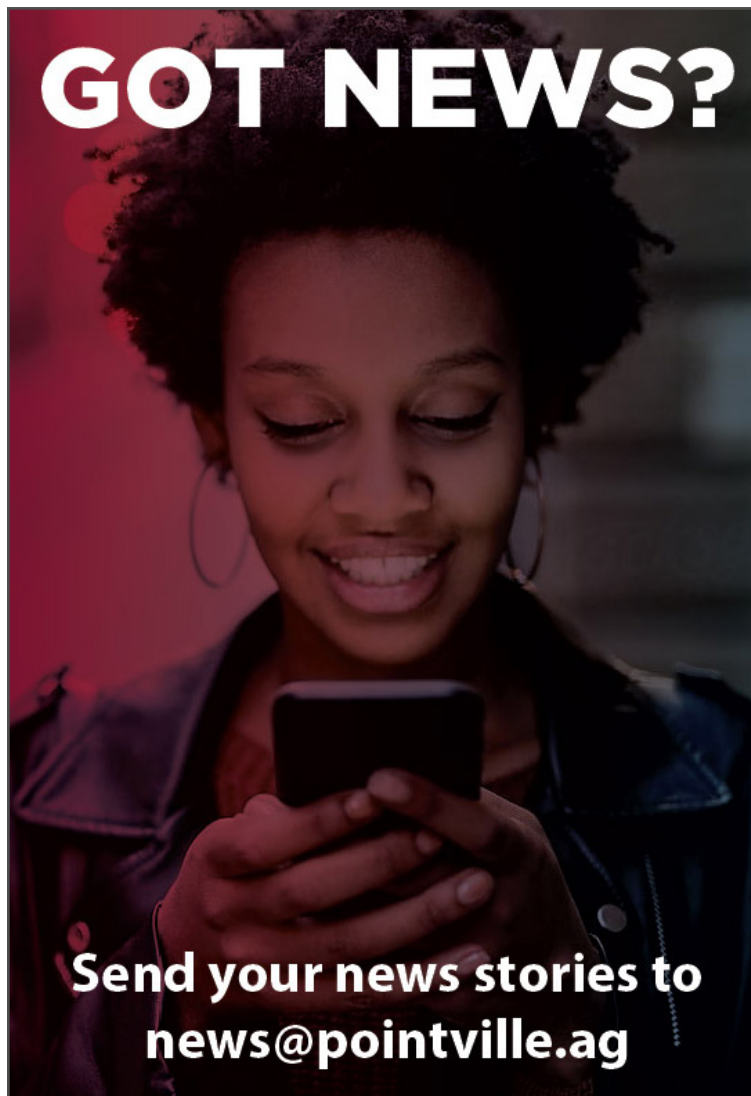
TAKE ME HOME



This handsome young fellow with a big bark hopes you can offer him a new home. He is available for adoption at the Humane Society's Animal Shelter in Bethesda. We are open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**FOR FURTHER
DETAILS CALL 461-4957.**

GOT NEWS?



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news@pointville.ag**



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA REPARATIONS
SUPPORT COMMISSION

EMANCIPATION ACTIVITIES 2021

"So I don't know anything about the land of my roots...I wanted to know for sure when my family was brought to the West Indies. I wanted to know from the horse's mouth how was the journey from Africa to this side of the world, how rough it was, what cause them not to die before they reach here...I wanted to know what my family was like in Africa. After slavery end, almost every Antiguan did not want to hear anything about slavery. Nothing whatsoever. They were ashamed but I wanted to know'....Papa Sammy (1877-1982) an Antiguan workingman

WED. 28th JULY

**EVENING OF FASHION
AND POETRY**

The nation's poets, fashion houses and designers celebrate Emancipation.
(ABS-TV and Facebook - 8pm)

FRI. 30th JULY

AFRICA DRESS DAY

Be at your glamorous best - all day, all night. Participate in our social media 'Best dressed' campaign. Post your picture for the world to see your expression of pride.
PRIZES TO BE WON!

SAT. 31st JULY

WATCHNIGHT GATHERING

Join us as we usher in Emancipation Day with speeches and cultural performances in honour and respect of our ancestors who won freedom on August 1st 1834. This year's Gathering is dedicated to the Republic of Iran and its citizens.
(ABS-TV and Facebook - 10pm)

SUN. 1st AUGUST

**PARTICIPATION IN THE
GREENBAY MORAVIAN
CHURCH EMANCIPATION
DAY SERVICE AND
BREAKFAST**
(65.30am on Zoom)

SUN. 1st AUGUST

**EMANCIPATION DAY
TREASURE HUNT**

(In collaboration with Nolan Hus Foundation)
An interactive activity for friends and family groups to learn more about our history and heritage.
(Please register at nolanhus.com or call 268 725-0454)
(2pm - 5pm)

COMMEMORATE AND CELEBRATE
**EMANCIPATION
2021**



Positive COVID-19 test for Windies



The individual who returned a positive COVID-19 test result ahead of the West Indies second ODI against Australia has been confirmed to be a non-playing member of the West Indies staff.

The match between the teams, which was scheduled for Kensington Oval today, was postponed shortly after the toss as news of the positive test reached the units.

According to the existing

COVID-19 protocols, all players, management teams and match officials will return to their hotel rooms where they will isolate before undergoing a round of PCR testing. According to Cricket West Indies CEO Johnny Grave, a decision will be taken on when or if the match can resume once the testing is completed. "Everyone will be re-tested later today. In the meantime, everyone will have to stay in isola-

tion until the results of those PCR tests are confirmed," Grave said.

"We'll make a further decision when the match can be replayed at a later date, once all the test results are back in, which will hopefully be by tomorrow morning."

Australia currently leads the three-match series 1-0 after securing a 133-run win via the DLS method in the first match on Tuesday.



The Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Mirpur, Bangladesh

Australia to tour Bangladesh in August for five-match T20 series

Australia will tour Bangladesh in August with bio-security arrangements agreed, despite a surge of COVID-19 cases in the country. The tourists will play five Twenty20 Internationals (T20I) between 3 and 9 August at the Sher-e-Bangla

Stadium in Mirpur. "Both boards have worked extremely hard to do all we can to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in the tour," said Cricket Australia (CA). Australia's limited-overs side are currently playing in the West

Indies. The Aussies lost the T20 series there 4-1, but are 1-0 up in the three-match one-day international series that follows. The same squad will travel to Bangladesh from the Caribbean.

Koeman feeling positive after Barcelona begin pre-season victory



Ronald Koeman

Ronald Koeman was left feeling positive for the future after Barcelona kicked off their pre-season campaign with a hard-fought 4-0 win over 10-man Gimnastic at the Estadi Johan Cruyff.

Albania striker Rey Manaj, who has never played a competitive game for Barca and is expected to move on this window, scored a second-half hat-trick in Wednesday's friendly in front of around 2,000 supporters. Alex Collado netted the other goal for Barcelona, but the game was not as one-sided as the scoreline suggests as three of the four goals were scored in the final five minutes.

Koeman named a different line-up in each half, with the likes of Sergino Dest, Gerard Pique, Miralem Pjanic, Sergi Roberto, Riqui Puig and Samuel Umtiti starting the game. New signing Yusuf Demir, brought in on an initial loan from Rapid Vienna and described as the 'Austrian Messi' for his playing style, also played his first 45

minutes for the Catalan giants.

The second half saw a far more inexperienced side fielded and contained just one player, goalscorer Collado, with a competitive appearance for Barca under his belt. Manaj stole the show with his three goals, the pick of those an angled finish into the roof of the net as Gimnastic, who had Alex Quintanilla sent off in the first half, started to tire. Without Lionel Messi as the superstar forward delays signing a new contract, as well as new signings Eric Garcia, Sergio Aguero and Memphis Depay, Koeman was pleased with what he saw. "The important thing is that everyone has played 45 minutes; it is something important for the physical side of things," he told Barca TV. "We dominated and we got a good result. The game leaves positive feelings. "My players have returned well. They also trained hard this morning – it's all about getting fit. With two different teams, everyone has had a chance to show their

quality. "It goes without saying that there are certain names that stood out." Following a season played behind closed doors due to the coronavirus pandemic, Wednesday's game marked the first time Koeman has managed Barca in front of a home crowd. "It was strange having people here, but thank goodness they were here," the Dutchman said. "I love that there is an audience and also the players do too. They helped us. We really needed it."

Barca have tougher tests to come than third-tier Gimnastic, with Girona up next on Saturday before facing Stuttgart and Salzburg in Germany and Austria respectively.

"On Saturday we will have more players available," Koeman added. "We have a little time now to train all together."

"In Germany we will have good games, against high-level rivals, where we can draw good conclusions."



YASCO SPORTS COMPLEX CERTIFIED BY WORLD ATHLETICS

Antigua and Barbuda's Yasco Sports Complex has been officially certified by World Athletics.

The certification means the freshly-overhauled facility has met all technical requirements for track-and-field competition. This paves the

way for the return of the inter-school track and field competition. It also allows Antigua and Barbuda to host regional and international athletes and vie to stage regional competitions.

Mondo officials completed the track in March

2021, signaling the culmination of a collaboration between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee (ABNOC), dating back to 2017.

The Sports Ministry supervised the work,

while funding was facilitated by ABNOC.

Sports Minister Hon. Daryll Matthew and ABNOC President Hon. E.P. Chet Greene have welcomed this development.

DEWS