



TIMELY ATTENTION FOR CITY ROADS!

GOODBYE to complaints about potholes *in parts of the capital and other business/residential areas. Works Ministry heavy equipment and repair crews have been laboring nonstop, even throughout the weekend, to ensure that what commuters experience is pleasant to the eye, comfortable to motorists, safe for pedestrians – convenient for all! There's sightseeing value in nicely repaired roads, which is why we have more pictures for you on* **PAGES 6-7**

INSIDE:

Massive explosion in new COVID cases!
Pfizer vaccine not yet available in Barbuda
West Indies Women show grit against SA

We have lost the battle against COVID-19, but you can still reduce your own risk

by Mark Kortepeter

In February 2020, at the very start of the pandemic in the United States, Reuters interviewed me about an unfolding crisis, as dozens of COVID infections were occurring daily among passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship in Yokohama, Japan.

I said then that the infections indicated COVID was an “agent that is highly transmissible” in enclosed environments, and “the virus is unforgiving and there is no room for error in use of personal protective equipment and hand hygiene.”

This is probably one of the smartest things I’ve been quoted as

saying before COVID exploded across the world. Consequently, when we were seeing a decline in cases across the United States in the beginning of this summer, I wrote a cautionary note: “Let’s see how the summer goes before we pop the champagne cork and declare victory over COVID.”

first came out about a year ago, we had the technological advantage to bring the fight to the viral enemy, but our ongoing disunity has essentially guaranteed failure. Texas Governor Greg Abbott banned vaccine and mask mandates, even while testing positive for the virus himself and Texas ICU beds are nearing capacity. In Florida, school districts are being sanctioned by the government for mandating masks, even while cases have overtaken numbers from last winter and deaths are climbing again. A recent discussion I had with my colleagues across the US indicates some are experiencing surges in their hospitals worse than last winter’s record peak.

Amid this back-drop, the fact that some nurses are now protesting vaccine requirements further underscores how factionalized

The current state of COVID spread in the US

I am a pessimist by nature, but even I have been shocked by how quickly COVID cases have skyrocketed again, due in part to the more contagious delta variant, lower vaccination rates in certain parts of the country, increasing cases in younger populations, infections among those previously vaccinated, and a relaxation of mask mandates.

When the highly effective vaccines

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- Financial Institution working knowledge of COSO ERM Framework and/or ISO 31000 ERM Framework as the two widely accepted, international, standards for risk management.

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we have become in our perception of the right way to respond. It is further surprising, given one would assume they have experienced first-hand the carnage in their facilities from COVID, and the data is unequivocal on the vaccines' ability to reduce the risk of hospitalization, severe illness, and death. Requiring proof of immunity through vaccinations against diseases like hepatitis B, chickenpox, measles, and influenza have been common practice in hospitals for decades, so what

is different about Covid? There's an old saying, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." What about after the fourth or fifth time? How many times do we want to re-live this vicious cycle of relaxing public health measures followed by a surge in cases, followed by surges in hospitalizations and deaths? As an infectious disease physician and public health professional, I can only shake my head in frustration at how we continue to repeat this self-defeating cycle of un-

necessary loss, over and over.

The perfect epidemic storm of the Delta variant

Fundamentally, epidemics occur based on the alignment of three factors: a host, a pathogen, and the environment. To cause infection and illness, a host (a human) must be susceptible to a pathogen (COVID). Propagation of the pathogen from one person to another does not occur without an environment that is conducive to

spread. We have the power to mitigate this spread if we choose to exercise it, but parts of the country are doing just the opposite. You can modify the environment to make it less conducive to spread by limiting indoor contact with others, having fewer interpersonal interactions, increasing fresh air flow, or limiting the risk of infectious spray from oral secretions by wearing masks. You can reduce susceptibility and decrease the impact of the virus on the host with a vaccine. Pub-



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lic health is an inherently governmental function, but to be successful in preventing disease, the public has to buy in. The sad irony is that those who seem the most vocal and adamant about resuming normal activities are doing their level best to undermine the very activities that would interrupt the chain of transmission and help achieve their stated objectives.

My conclusion after witnessing the latest disharmony, is that we have lost

the battle—if not the war—against COVID. It will be important to assess whether the approval of the Pfizer vaccine this week will persuade those on the fence to get vaccinated, or whether it will impact spread. But, either way, it is too little too late. People are already entrenched in their individual camps to reach a modicum of compromise for the collective benefit. Individuals who are vaccinated may choose to get a booster soon, but unless

the unvaccinated also get vaccinated, the opportunity for new variants to emerge that thwart vaccines will continue, similar to what happens annually with influenza.

The government's options for a unified response are more limited now than at the start of the outbreak, as officials are reluctant to reinstitute prior lockdown measures, and sectors of the public are pushing back strongly. Given this environment, you

can no longer rely on the government's ability to protect you, especially in those states that are actively torpedoing public health measures. No single measure is guaranteed to prevent infection, but there are measures you can take to reduce your risk.

How to reduce the risk of a COVID infection

Dr. Leanna Wen, a columnist for the Washington Post, wrote a recent edi-



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torial, summarizing measures to protect unvaccinated children in the current environment. I have adapted some of her recommendations below to measures you can take to protect yourself:

- Get yourself vaccinated – it is the single best measure to protect you. Even if children less than 12 cannot yet receive the vaccines, having adults in the same household vaccinated can reduce the children's risk and it may help to limit infection to others inside and outside the household.

- If you have to meet with people, do so outdoors when feasible, where the risk of infection is lower than indoors

- When you are indoors in public places, wear a mask. Even if you are vaccinated, you still have a risk of being infected and transmitting the virus.

- If you develop even mild respiratory symptoms, consider your recent activities and whether you may have been exposed. If so, get tested, because if you know you are infected, you can take measures to minimize perpet-


uating the chain of transmission to others around you.

- Limit your interactions to as few people outside your household as possible, or establish a circle of friends or extended family who will similarly limit their interactions. We have a tendency to assume that interactions with our friend and family networks are safe. We have seen enough spread at events like weddings or other gatherings to remind us that this is not necessarily the case. Remain vigilant.

- Minimize travel where feasible.

- Have your children wear masks in school until we see a decline in community spread.

What I said about Covid in the Reuters interview back in February 2020 has stood the test of time. We are dealing with a stubborn and persistent viral enemy. Sadly, the disharmony in our communities regarding the appropriate public health response only serves to facilitate that enemy's ongoing fitness. *(Mark Kortepeter is an infectious disease physician, scientist, retired Army colonel and author.)*



APUA ELECTRICITY MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

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

DATE	AFFECTED AREAS	TIME
Monday, 6th September 2021	Section of Old Parham Road near VJ's Bakery	8:00AM - 1:00PM
	Section of Clare Hall near JSC	8:30AM - 11:30AM
	Section of Buckley Line west of the Roundabout	8:30AM - 11:30AM
Tuesday, 7th September 2021	Section of Bendals east of the Primary School	8:30AM - 11:30AM
	New Winthropes and Cedar Valley	9:20AM - 10:30AM
Wednesday, 8th September 2021	Section of Wallings including Zip Line and a small section of Old Road	8:30AM - 11:30AM
	Section of Herberts east of Brownies	8:30AM - 11:30AM
Thursday, 9th September 2021	Piggotts, Fitches Creek, Paynters and Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	8:30AM - 11:30AM
	Burma Road and Sir Vivian Richards Stadium	8:30AM - 9:45AM
Friday, 10th September 2021	Section of Falmouth near Edwards Road	8:00AM - 1:00PM
	Urlings, Johnsons Point and Crab Hill	8:30AM - 11:00AM
	Section of Fort Road, Penny Lane east of the Ice House	8:30AM - 11:30AM

Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated.
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Police and Customs have foiled another attempt to smuggle Cannabis into the country via the Deep Water Harbour.

Cannabis found in bags of rice

A joint drug operation between police and customs turned up 39.5 pounds of cannabis hidden in bags of rice. A press release from the Police Strategic Communications Unit (STRATCOM) said, “The contraband was found among other food items at the Deep Water Harbour on Fri-

day 3rd September.” The illicit stash – estimated to have a street value of EC\$ 316,000 – “was seized and taken to Police Headquarters pending further investigations”.

The STRATCOM release notes that, “For the month of August, both law enforcement agencies seized a

total of 122 pounds of cannabis estimated at EC\$ 976,000. The seizures were made at both main ports of entry and the General Post office. One person was charged and taken before the court, while several others were taken into custody and questioned.”

Pfizer vaccine not yet available in Barbuda

by *Shelton Daniel*

Resident district medical officer for Barbuda, Dr. Jeremy Deazle, on Saturday disclosed that 682 persons on the sister isle have received their first dose of vaccination, while 546 have received both doses.

Dr. Deazle was a guest on Pointe FM's Browne & Browne Show when he provided the information.

He lamented that too many people are basing their choices and decisions about whether or not to get vaccinated on what he termed "nonsensical information" picked up on Facebook and other social media.

Dr. Deazle expressed hope that there will be a silver lining coming out of the recent death of a pastor who, on September 2, became the first COVID-19 fatality recorded in Barbuda.

The 64-year-old minister of religion breathed his last just as he was boarded onto a marine vessel for transportation to Antigua where he would have undergone additional medical interventions in an effort to save his life.

Dr. Deazle also lamented that many persons who are hesitating to get vaccinated are often lax and irresponsible about adhering to safety protocols such as mask wearing and social distancing.

"That is why I sometimes call the police to enforce the law. Because if you are not going to take the vaccine, but still be out and about, not wearing the mask, socializing, having parties, then you are going to



Dr. Jeremy Deazle

put people's lives at risk. And these are the problems we have right now: You don't want to get vaccinated, but at the same time you are not doing what is required to protect yourself and protect other persons," he stated.

Deazle added that unless members of the public play their part, the number of cases would continue to rise.

Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph, who was also a guest on the program, referenced the Pfizer vaccine which is now available and approved for use among minors aged 12-17.

Sir Molwyn urged parents to set the example by getting vaccinated, and also to "take their children to get that vaccine as well".

However, Dr. Deazle explained that the Pfizer vaccine has not yet been deployed in Barbuda.

"We haven't started our Pfizer rollout as yet [because] the Pfizer vaccine is pretty much difficult to store.

That's one of the things we have to work out ... because the Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna, they are much more difficult to store than the AstraZeneca ... That's why it's still rolling out in Antigua but it hasn't reached Barbuda as yet. Until we can put a mechanism in place that we can fully store the Pfizer vaccine appropriately, we cannot yet initiate the rollout here in Barbuda."

He warned that if safety measures – including vaccination – are not adequately put in place for students in time for the reopening of schools on September 13, Antigua and Barbuda could find itself "in a place that will be very difficult to return from ... because kids are the ones who can carry the virus mostly without symptoms".

Dr. Deazle suggested that mandatory vaccination for schools is something that needs to be seriously considered.

New cases jump to well over 100!

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment from the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) revealed 111 new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of

Friday 3rd September 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Thirteen (13) of the cases were from Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and 98 from CARPHA.

One hundred and twenty-three (123) samples were processed at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and 209 at CARPHA.

Eighteen (18) recov-

ered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 1,367.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 1,870; which is inclusive of 457 active cases.

There are 30 hospitalized cases: eight (8)

mild, 18 moderate and four (4) severe.

Meanwhile, Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 34,529 individuals, while 7,193 have only received their first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.

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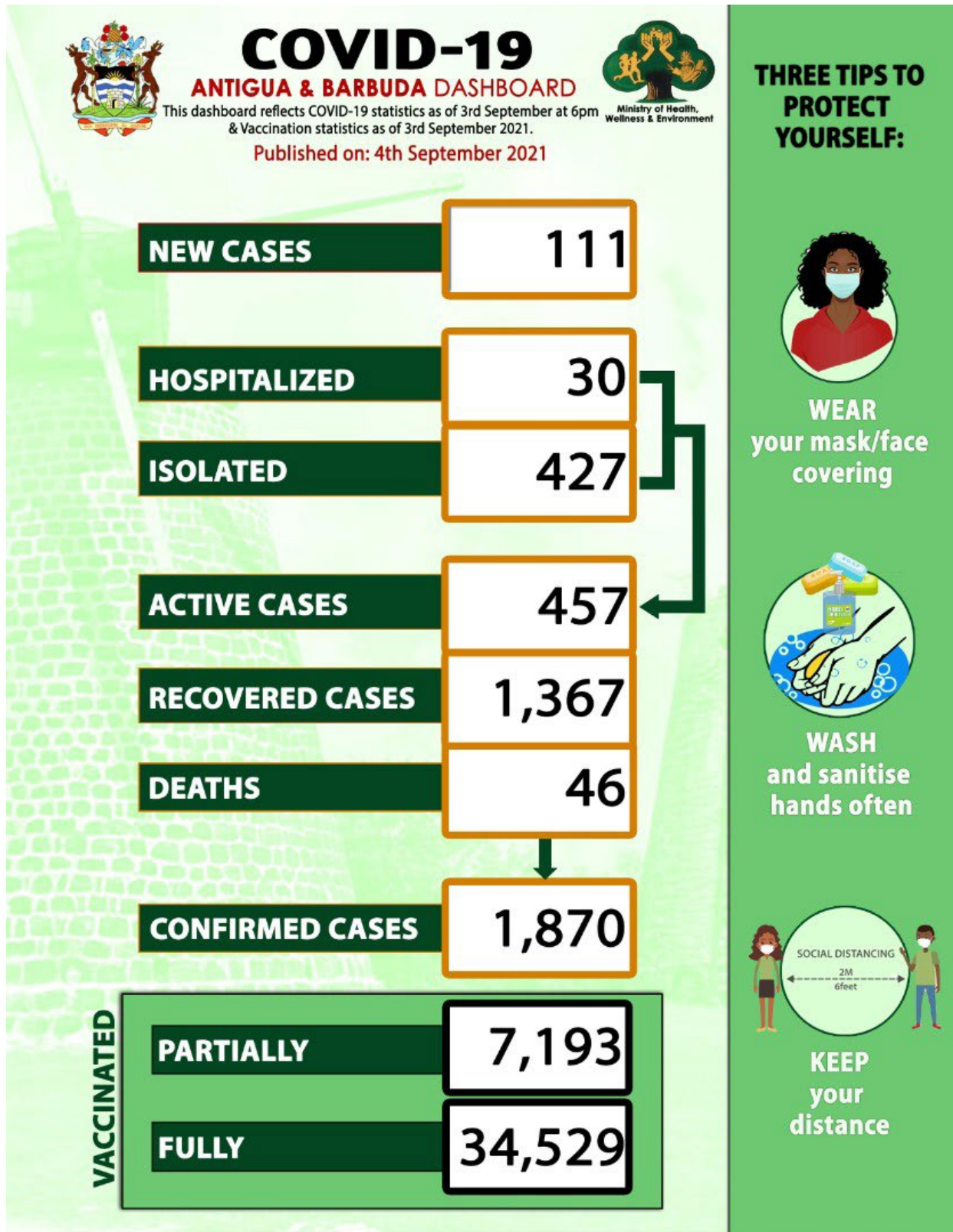
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Dashboard Update for September 4, 2021:



WORLDWIDE STATS

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NEW CASES

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DEATHS

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AOSIS launches new multi-part podcast

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) is today (Monday 6 September 2021) launching its first podcast; the eight-episode series, *Islands on Alert*, highlighting the realities facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as the climate change crisis erodes lives and livelihoods.

The series features real-life stories from the frontline of the fight against climate change, with inspiring testimonies from young innovators, activists, and leading policy makers who are working to build a better future and challenging the world to step up with urgent climate action.

Islands on Alert will release one episode each week leading up to the pivotal, two-week climate negotiations, COP26, that begin in Glasgow, UK, on 1st November.

"AOSIS is proud to provide this platform that unites our Small Island States and demonstrates the exceptional role we are playing, leading the charge against climate change," said AOSIS chair Aubrey Webson, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United Nations (UN), who will be featured on an episode.

He added: "We are thankful for the partnership of the UK Mission to the United Nations on this initiative. The podcast amplifies the voices of our vulnerable communities and, importantly, it links our on the ground realities to COP26.

"Islands are depending on COP26 to mobilise rapid global action to reduce carbon emissions at a pace that will limit global warming to

1.5°C. COP26 will also be the platform for advancement on critical issues such as climate justice, climate finance, adaptation and mitigation, and loss and damage, all of which are integral to supporting island states and providing opportunity for a sustainable future."

The podcast addresses these issues with compelling insights from experts around the world all fighting to save their homes from the devastating effects of climate change.

Featured guests include AOSIS negotiators, scientists, energy specialists, and indigenous and youth voices.

Podcast host Andy Liburd of Antigua and Barbuda is a well-known media professional in the region. Liburd is a veteran of radio and television, and has served as the News Editor of his national newspaper.

The podcast producers are Leila Henry and Lowie Price, with script direction by Bianca Beddoe and Tashwa James.

Each episode will be released to the following channels: AOSIS Website; YouTube; Spotify.

Featured guests include **Dr. Adelle Thomas**, Bahamas, climate scientist and IPCC lead author; **Rueanna Haynes**, Trinidad & Tobago, international climate law and governance specialist; **Clement Yao Mulalap**, Micronesia, legal advisor; former UN Ambassador **Ronny Jumeau**, Seychelles, Permanent Representative to the United Nations; **Leo Brewster**, Barbados, director of the Coastal Zone Management Unit;



Celine Dyer, Cook Islands, climate change coordinator; **Dominique David Chavez**, professor of indigenous natural resources, Colorado State University; **Arieta Rakai**, Fiji, program officer for SIDS lighthouses at IRENA; **Stanley Barreto**, Antigua and Barbuda, project developer and director of MegaPower; **Her Excellency Janine Felson**, Belize, lead negotiator on climate finance for AOSIS and ambassador for Belize; Tina Stege, Republic of the Marshall Islands, climate envoy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; Angeli-que Pouponneau, Seychelles, CEO for SeyCCAT; **Mitchell Lay**, Antigua and Barbuda, fisherman; **Okalani Mariner**, Samoa, Pacific Climate Warriors; Michael Sheldrick, global director of policy and advocacy at Global Citizen; **His Excellency Aubrey Webson**, Antigua and Barbuda, Ambassador for Antigua and Barbuda, chair of AOSIS; **Her Excellency Diann Black-Layne**, Antigua and Barbuda, director, Department of the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda, Ambassador for Climate Change, lead climate negotiator for AOSIS.

Trauma-informed parenting

by K. P. Joseph

There are many types of trauma that a child can and will be exposed to as he/she grows. Trauma in childhood occurs when a child witnesses or experiences an event that poses a real or perceived threat to the life or wellbeing of the child, or someone close to the child. This overwhelms the child's ability to cope and causes feelings of fear or hopelessness.

The impact of trauma on a child is far-reaching; resulting in the inability to find joy in things, people or situations that were once joyful.

Trauma increases

susceptibility to physical illnesses, as well having an impact on the brain. According to research, the brain is likely to be affected by trauma, resulting in changes in brain development. Trauma can cause a disruption in the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis of the brain. This results in social and emotional information being processed differently by traumatized children.

Parents can support their children by learning to parent from a trauma-informed lens. When parenting is done from a trauma-informed lens, parents are better able to recognize the im-

pact and respond appropriately. Response is done in a way that does not perpetuate the trauma. Instead, focus on love, connections, healing, and liberation. Studies have shown that having a good support network constitutes the single most powerful tool against becoming traumatized. Safety and terror are incompatible. All parents want their children to feel safe. With this in mind, they must create loving and joyful memories in which the child should be given priority.

Much of our brain-wiring coincides with being in tune with those

around us. Prioritizing positive connections with others supports trauma recovery.

Here are ways parents can help their children:

Be present in your child's life. It is important to focus on quality over quantity. Take time to play with your child. Teach your child a new skill. It is the simple things and your undivided attention the child crave.

Internalize the positive. At the end of the day, take a moment to discuss your child's positive experiences. Encourage your child to internalize a positive experience by thinking about it for a few seconds.



OECS leaders told constitutions support mandatory vaccination laws

Leaders of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) have been told that there is “ample provision” in their constitutions to support mandatory vaccination laws as the sub-region continues the battle to curb the spread of COVID-19 that has infected hundreds of their citizens and killed a significant number of others since March last year.

In addition, the governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Kitts and Nevis, and Montserrat, have been informed that there are corresponding jurisprudence and medical data to support the position of mandatory vaccination.

The position to the OECS governments has been outlined in a 16-page confidential brief, titled “The Legal Dimensions of Mandatory/Compulsory Requirements for COVID-19 Vaccinations, August 2021” undertaken by two prominent Caribbean-born internationally respected jurists.

The issue of mandatory vaccination has surfaced not only in the OECS countries but also in the wider Caribbean Community (Caricom) grouping where governments have been urging their nationals to be vaccinated as part of efforts to curb the spread of the virus that has led to closure of borders, a crippling of economies, and stringent policies such as curfews and states of emergencies (SOE).

The document submitted to the OECS leaders, a copy of which has been obtained by the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), notes that the sub-regional countries would be on firm legal grounds in pursuing mandatory vaccination laws even in the face of counter-arguments alleging violations of rights.

“Having demonstrated ...that mandatory vaccination is constitutionally appropriate, given the leeway granted in favour of public health imperatives, it is submitted that employers could justify a requirement in a pandemic context,

at minimum where the workplace is a high-risk environment, such as health-care, or essential services, or for workers more at risk at the workplace, such as frontline workers interacting with the public.

“It is unlikely that employers would be held to a higher standard than a constitutional standard. This is reasonable both to protect other employees, the interacting public, and even the employee himself or herself,” according to the document.

It notes that, increasingly, the enduring state of the pandemic and the science is pointing to even more liberal rationales for compelling vaccines at the workplace.

“Ultimately, all actions toward compulsory vaccination must be grounded in a firm belief that they are being done in the interest and sustainability of the economy and enterprise, in the public interest, the interests of ALL workers, and as a last resort necessity. Those core principles will be what justifies actions as being reasonable

and proportionate as required, and what will ultimately persuade a court.”

The two prominent jurists also argue that medical ethics support mandatory vaccination, noting that the legal position mirrors the position emanating from medical ethics, as enshrined in the Nuffield Report, which is relied upon by the World Health Organisation (WHO) that “Mandatory vaccination can be ethically justified if the threat to public health is grave, the confidence in safety and effectiveness is high, the expected utility of mandatory vaccination is greater than the alternatives, and the penalties or costs for noncompliance are proportionate...”

The authors of the report say their paper is intended to provide legal support for the policy direction of OECS governments and that, by choice, “It avoids excessive legal jargon and a preponderance of case-law, as one would generally find in a legal brief, although the principles

and positions outlined are informed by comprehensive research.

“Rather, the paper attempts to provide a clear and concise narrative upon which decisions may be based,” they said, adding that, “It is emphasised that man-

datory COVID-19 vaccination, like so many other subject-areas emerging because of the pandemic, brings forth some grey areas for law, especially labour law.”

The report notes that the issue is untested in the region, despite the

fact that some employers and, to some extent, universities like the University of the West Indies (UWI) have already begun mandating vaccination as a policy. The question of who pays for quarantine leave, for example, is a brand new

labour law issue, the authors wrote, adding, “We can extrapolate from existing jurisprudence in analogous situations – HIV pandemic, etc. – but in some instances we will have to wait and see what the courts decide if challenged.”

Haiti racing to rebuild schools destroyed in earthquake

AFP – Haiti is struggling to send children back to class amid the devastation of the earthquake last month that killed more than 2,200 people and destroyed tens of thousands of buildings, including many schools.

It is a logistical and humanitarian challenge in the disaster-prone country — the poorest in the Americas — one that never fully recovered from the huge quake in 2010 that killed more than 200,000 people and caused billions in damage.

Classes for most students, initially scheduled to start September 6, have been pushed back by two weeks. And they have been postponed until October 4 in the three southern departments hardest hit by the 7.2 magnitude quake of August 14.

In those areas, many families lost everything.

Word of the delayed start to the school year launched a countdown for aid workers, who have raced to help the very needy people in the southern departments.

“Of the 2,800 schools in the three affected areas, 955 have been assessed by the government with support from UNICEF, and the first results show that 15 per cent of them

were destroyed and 69 per cent were damaged,” Bruno Maes, head of UNICEF in Haiti.

“It is going to be a race against time because it is just a few weeks to set up protective, safe learning shelters for children in these three departments so they do not miss another school year,” Maes said.

The 2019-2020 school year ended in March of last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following school year was then disrupted for many Haitians by widespread violence from powerful street gangs.

In late 2020 and early this year, gang members carried out many kidnappings for ransom, abducting children or teachers near schools in the capital Port-au-Prince.

About 150 kilometres (90 miles) from Port-au-Prince, the crime wave largely spared Camp-Perrin, but the area was hard hit by the quake.

Welcoming children back to school is a particular headache for private schools, which account for 80 per cent of the schools in Haiti.

“We have students who have not yet paid their tuition for the 2017-2018 school year,” said Maxime Eugene, a teacher at Mazenod high school. “We cannot send them home

and make them miss a year of school over money,” he said.

The quake destroyed every classroom in that well-known Catholic school.

Soldiers have cleared away the debris but school officials are still waiting for help to get the scholastic year going.

“Promises have been made to us but they have not yet been kept,” said Eugene.

“If we get tents in time we can be ready for the start of school on October 4, because we were able to salvage the furniture,” added Eugene. He insisted he is optimistic despite the prospect of having to teach on the school’s football field.



Guyana: AG wants common legislation for Caribbean to tackle corruption

Guyana Chronicle – ATTORNEY General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, S.C., has expressed a preference for a common, specific legislation in the Caribbean which addresses corruption, especially now that Guyana is an oil-producing nation, a sector which introduces novel challenges, risks and responsibilities.

This was discussed during a courtesy call to the Attorney-General on Friday last by Bo Shakira Harris, Associate Programme Management Officer, and Jason Reichelt, Crime and Prevention Office at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The courtesy call on the Attorney-General was so as to update him on the recently completed three-day anti-corruption workshop in Guyana, which was facilitated by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, with support from the UNODC, and was aimed at building institutional capacity for reporting and fighting corruption.

The UNDOC officers informed Minister Nandlall that Guyana is currently under review, and as such their role is to support that process, thus, the workshop focused on the

checklist process which involves Guyana assessing itself against the United Nations (UN) Convention Against Corruption.

After the checklist will have been completed, there is a desk-based review where recommenda-

tors. He said he would prefer that there is a common, specific legislation in the Caribbean to address the issue at hand.

The UNODC officers have indicated that they provide assistance to countries as it relates to re-

the fact that the country has signed on to all major international anti-corruption agreements in the hemisphere.

Further, he reminded that the government has taken a strong stance against corruption and



Standing from left: State Counsel Chevy Devonish; Crime & Prevention Officer at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Jason Reichelt; Deputy-Chief Parliamentary Counsel, Joanna Bond; Attorney General & Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, S.C.; and UNODC Associate Programme Management Officer, Bo Shakira Harris.

tions would be made highlighting how Guyana can strengthen its laws, policies and institutions dealing with anti-corruption, which will then enable the country to fully implement the Convention.

Minister Nandlall highlighted that the government has to take the requisite steps to build the regulatory framework to address the issue of corruption in the various sec-

viewing and preparing draft laws and legislation. As such, the Attorney General informed the visitors that Impact Justice Caribbean has prepared a model Anti-Corruption Bill for the region which the UNODC officers indicated a willingness to review.

The Attorney General reaffirmed that Guyana is committed to combatting corruption in all its forms and this is evidenced by

has instituted several legal proceedings to tackle corruption which permeated and flowed from the previous administration both in the civil as well as criminal courts.

Also present at the meeting were Joanna Bond, Deputy-Chief Parliamentary Counsel and Chevy Devonish, State Counsel of the Attorney General Chambers.

Union to vote on whether to defy police

IWN SVG - The Public Service Union (PSU) will vote Saturday on whether to defy the police and have a march in Kingstown next week.

The response of the police to the union's notice of demonstrations and a march in the capital were the subject of a meeting of members of the union Thursday night.

Union president Elroy Boucher told iWitness News on Friday that 155 people attended the virtual meeting.

They were asked to vote on defying the order of the police and hold the procession in Kingstown on Wednesday, or comply with the route outlined by the police and march from Arnos Vale to Sion Hill even though they know that the police are "wrong".

Boucher said one-third of the people voted to have the procession in Kingstown.

He said, however, that when the vote was taken on whether to have the procession from Arnos Vale to Sion Hill, as the police had indicated, only 10 persons voted.

Boucher said since it was past 10 p.m., it was suggested that the meeting reconvene on Saturday so that members could vote.

On Thursday, Boucher told iWitness News that the PSU has put into the hands of its lawyer, the response by Commissioner of Police Colin John prohibiting demonstrations outside Parliament next week.

John has also instructed the union to hold between Arnos Vale and Sion Hill a procession that it had planned for the capital.

"We raised the matter with the legal counsel who will, based on our instructions, draft a response to the Commissioner," Boucher said.

"We disagree with the Commissioner's interpretation of the Public



President of the Public Service Union Elroy Boucher (left) and Commissioner of Police Colin John.

Order Act," he said, adding that this was communicated to the police during a meeting with the Commissioner and his top brass this week.

"We understand that the Commissioner seems to be saying [that] a meeting and a demonstration are the same thing. We don't see how [they] could be the same thing," Boucher said.

"In addition, too, the Trade Union Act gives us the legal authority to demonstrate but those are not given consideration by the Commissioner. So we are very much disappointed with their response, of course."

The union's events in September are part of its efforts to get the Government to rescind changes to the public health laws [that were] passed into law on Aug. 5.

The changes mandate COVID-19 vaccines for certain categories of government workers who could

lose their job if they refuse to take the jab.

The amendments allow and give doctors, specially selected by the state, the final say on who would be granted an exemption on medical grounds regardless of what people's personal physicians say.

In two letters, dated Aug. 25 and 26, general secretary of the PSU Phillip Bailey wrote to Commissioner John, notifying him of the union's intention to engage in a procession around Kingstown on Sept. 9 and to engage in a demonstration in front of the Kingstown Vegetable Market, Paul's Avenue Road, and White Chapel Road, from Sept. 7 to 10.

In Aug. 31 letters in response, Commissioner John, citing the Public Order Act, said the Kingstown Vegetable Market is within 200 yards from a point within the curtilage of the High Court and Parliament.

Florida gunman killed 4, including mom still holding baby

Associated Press

— A man wearing full body armor fatally shot four people, including a mother and the 3-month-old baby she was cradling, and engaged in a massive gunfight with police and deputies before he was wounded and surrendered, a Florida sheriff said Sunday. An 11-year-old girl who was shot seven times survived.

Polk County sheriff Grady Judd said during a press conference that even after 33-year-old Bryan Riley was arrested Sunday morning, he was so aggressive that he tried to wrestle a gun from police as he lay on his hospital gurney.

Judd said Riley, a former Marine who served as a sharpshooter in both Iraq and Afghanistan, seemed to have targeted his victims at random and appeared to be suffering from mental health issues. Judd said Riley's girlfriend told authorities Riley had been slowly unraveling for weeks and repeatedly told her that he could communicate directly with God.

"They begged for their lives and I killed them anyway," Judd said Riley

told them during an interrogation.

Investigators said preliminary evidence shows 40-year-old Justice Gleason just happened to be an unlucky stranger out mowing his lawn Saturday night when Riley drove by his home in Lakeland, about 30 miles (48.28 kilometers) east of Tampa, saying God told him to stop because Gleason's daughter was going to commit suicide.

A second, unidentified person also confronted Riley, telling him that story wasn't true and warned they'd call police if he didn't leave, Judd said. He referred to the person as a victim but declined to clarify which one.

Authorities responded to the scene but never found Riley.

About nine hours later, around 4:30 a.m., Riley returned to the home, laying out glowsticks to create a path leading to the house to draw officers "into an ambush," Judd said.

Randomly, a lieutenant far in the distance heard popping noises and immediately put the agency on active-shooter mode, bringing all state and local law enforce-

ment in the area to the scene.

Following the sounds of gunfire, authorities arrived at the home and found Riley's white truck ablaze and an unarmed Riley outside, dressed in camouflage.

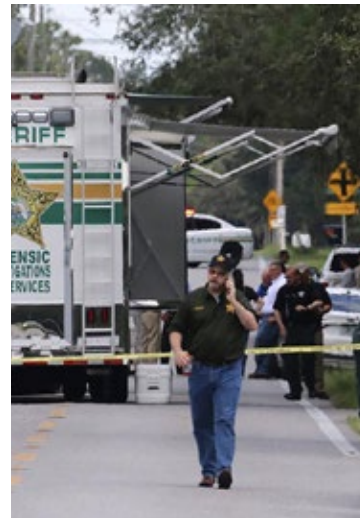
Riley immediately ran inside, where authorities heard another round of gunfire, "a woman scream and a baby whimper," Judd said.

Officers tried to enter the front of the house, but it was barricaded. When they circled to the back, they encountered Riley, who appeared to have put on full body armor including head and knee coverings and a bulletproof vest.

Authorities exchanged heavy gunfire, with dozens "if not hundreds of rounds" fired, before Riley retreated back into the home, according to the sheriff.

Everything fell silent, Judd said, until a helicopter unit alerted authorities on the ground that Riley was coming out. He had been shot once and was ready to surrender.

Meanwhile, officers heard cries for help inside the home, but were unsure whether there



An 11-year-old girl, shot seven times, survived.

were additional shooters and feared the home was booby-trapped. A brave sergeant rushed in and grabbed the 11-year-old girl who had been shot at least seven times.

She told deputies there were three dead people inside, Judd said, adding that she was rushed into surgery and was expected to survive.

Deputies sent robots into the home to check for explosives and other traps. When it was clear, they found the bodies of Gleason; the 33-year-old mother; the baby; and the baby's 62-year-old grandmother, who was in a separate home nearby. Authorities released only Gleason's name, and did not say if or how he was related to the other victims.

Schools in Nigerian state shut after mass kidnapping of students by gunmen

(CNN) - Schools in Nigeria's northwestern Zamfara State have been ordered closed after scores of students were kidnapped by gunmen on Wednesday.

At least 73 students were abducted from a state-run high school in Zamfara's Maradun district, local police said in a statement, adding that the high school was targeted by "armed bandits."

"The abduction followed the invasion of the school by a large number of armed bandits," according to Zamfara State Police Command.

"A search and rescue team has been deployed to work with the military to locate and rescue the abducted children... Security has also been beefed up at Kaya Village and environ to forestall further attacks on the communities," the statement added.

Zamfara's Information Commissioner, Ibrahim Dosara, told CNN on Thursday that schools in the state have been closed down to avoid further attacks.

"We have closed primary and secondary schools in the state," Dosara said, adding "but schools currently writing examinations are asked to stay behind until they finish their examinations... Heavy security presence will be provided to protect those writing exams."

The latest kidnapping comes days after 91 schoolchildren



earlier abducted in north-central Niger State were released by their captors after thousands of dollars were paid by their families as ransom.

Peter Hawkins, UNICEF's representative in Nigeria told CNN the Zamfara kidnapping "highlights the fragility of education and security" in the state.

"The bandits have reached a stage now where all schools in Zamfara state have been closed down through their actions. The impact this will have on children who want to learn will be profound — not only on those 73 children whose lives are at stake for purposes of extortion, but for all children in Zamfara who are prevented from being able to go to school and learn," said Hawkins, who added that an estimated 1.3 million Nigerian children have been affected by frequent raids on schools by gunmen.

Kidnapping for ransom has become one of the major security challenges in Nigeria, with

Zamfara and other neighbouring northwestern states being hit with several mass kidnappings this year.

Prominent among the string of kidnappings in Zamfara was the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in the town of Jangebe in February. The students have since been freed, with authorities insisting no ransom was paid to secure their release.

Between June 2011 and the end of March 2020, an estimated \$18.34 million was paid in ransoms, Lagos-based SBM Intelligence said in a report last year titled "The economics of the kidnap industry in Nigeria."

Amnesty International has described this latest incident in Zamfara as "disturbing," saying in a tweet that "attacks on schools and abductions of children are war crimes."

"The children abducted are in serious risk of being harmed. Nigerian authorities must take all measures to return them to safety," Amnesty added.

Covid-19: Vaccine passports to start in England this month

BBC - Vaccine passports in nightclubs and other indoor venues in England will be required at the end of this month, the vaccines minister has confirmed.

Nadhim Zahawi said it was the right time to start the scheme for sites with large crowds as all over-18s will have been offered two jabs by then.

Asking people to show certificates with COVID vaccination proof has been criticised by venues and some MPs.

Mr. Zahawi said it would ensure the economy could remain open.

"The best way we can keep those industries open in my view, in our view, is to work with the industry," he told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show.

The vaccines minister said: "One thing that we have learnt is that in large gatherings of people, especially indoors, the virus tends to spike and spread."

Mr. Zahawi also indicated the government's plans to offer a COVID booster jab to most vulnerable people – including all over-50s – could get the go-ahead this month.

And he said extending the vaccine rollout to all 12-15 year-olds would "absolutely" be the right thing to do if the UK's chief medical officers recommended it.



Asked about vaccine passports, Mr. Zahawi referred to Premier League football clubs asking some fans to show proof they have been jabbed, which allowed stadiums to reopen to capacity crowds last month.

However, only a small number of clubs have made COVID-19 checks a mandatory condition of entry.

Mr. Zahawi added: "When the evidence that you are presented is so clear cut and that we want to make sure the industry doesn't have to go through [an] open-shut, open-shut sort of strategy, then the right thing to do is to introduce that by the end of September when all over 18 year-olds have had their two jabs."

The prime minister's official spokesman last week said the plans first unveiled in July remained in place, adding: "We set out broadly our intention to require vaccination for nightclubs and some other settings."

The Night Time Industries Association has said plans for vaccine passports could "cripple the industry" and see night clubs facing discrimination cases.

Opposition to the plans has also come from Tory MPs on the COVID Recovery Group as well as the Liberal Democrats, whose leader, Ed Davey, described them as "divisive, unworkable and expensive".

Meanwhile, Scottish Labour has refused to support plans to require vaccine passports for entry to nightclubs and many large events in Scotland from later this month.

Opposition is building to the Scottish government's proposal, which First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has said would be the least restrictive way to keep people safe.

Wales says it has no plans to introduce COVID passports for venues, while ministers in Northern Ireland have not yet announced a position on a scheme.

On the issue of offering COVID jabs to all 12 to 15-year-olds, Mr. Zahawi said he did not want to "pre-determine" the decision of the UK's chief medical officers but would accept their advice.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) decided not to recommend the rollout be extended, saying the benefits to younger children on health grounds alone were "marginal". They have now asked the chief medical officers to consider the wider implications – including transmission rates and disruption to schools.

Prof Peter Openshaw, a member of the Nervtag group that advises the government on virus threats, said he was "a little surprised" at the JCVI's decision.

"We do know the virus is circulating very widely amongst this age group, and that, if we're going to be able to get the rates down and also prevent further surges of infection perhaps later in the winter, then this is the group that needs to become immune," he told BBC Breakfast.

Interim advice from the JCVI has also suggested giving a third dose of a COVID vaccine to more than 30 million people.

Rich countries to have 1.2bn surplus COVID vaccine doses

Al Jazeera - Wealthy countries could potentially have a surplus of more than one billion COVID-19 vaccine doses available by the end of the year that are not designated as donations to poorer nations, according to a new analysis

Vaccine stock in Western countries has reached 500 million doses this month, with 360 million not earmarked for donations, according to new research by data analytics firm Airfinity. By the end of the year, these countries will have a potential of 1.2 billion surplus vaccine shots, with the overwhelming majority – 1.06 billion – not marked for donations, it said.

The full report, which focuses on the available supply of vaccines in the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Canada and Japan, will be published on September 7.

Vaccine inequality has been denounced by many prominent health figures and officials. COVAX, the UN-backed global vaccine-sharing scheme, had initially aimed to provide two billion vaccine doses to people in 190 countries this year – including 92 lower-income countries – ensuring at least 20 percent of populations are vaccinated.

However, the wealthy

countries' deals with vaccine manufacturers have limited the vaccines available to COVAX and led to vaccine hoarding.

Last month, the director of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, told reporters he was "really disappointed" with the scope of vaccine donations worldwide as many countries struggle to provide first and second doses to more than small fractions of their populations, while wealthier nations maintain growing vaccine stockpiles.

Ghebreyesus went on to say that of the 4.8 billion vaccine doses delivered globally, 75 percent have gone to only 10 countries – while vaccine coverage in Africa is at less than two percent.

This was echoed by John Nkengasong, the head of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), who described the vaccine rollout on the continent as a "total disappointment".

On Sunday, former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown accused rich countries of committing a "moral outrage" by stockpiling COVID-19 doses while poor countries were struggling to get supplies.

Brown, who is a United Nations special en-



An employee performs an air quality test at the Thermo Fisher plant, a supplier of AstraZeneca for the production of its COVID-19 vaccine, on February 10, 2021 in Seneffe, Belgium.

voy, called on US President Joe Biden and other Group of Seven leaders to urgently ship vaccines from warehouses in America and Europe to Africa.

"We are in a new 'arms' race – to get vaccines into people as quickly

as possible – but this is an arms race where the West have a stranglehold on the vaccine supplies," Brown said.

The stockpiling has also delayed dose-sharing by G7 countries with Africa and low-income countries, Brown said.

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Sarwan, Newsroom's Akeem Greene call for CWI T20 tournament; Kittitian journalist Vernon Springer disagrees



Vernon Springer



Ramnaresh Sarwan

by Sean Devers

Kaieteur News – Speaking on the last ‘Sean Devers Sports Watch’ on Kaieteur Radio, former Guyana and West Indies Captain Ramnaresh Sarwan said he feels there should be a T20 tournament run by CWI to provide regional players the opportunity to showcase their talent and earn places in the West Indies T20 team.

His view was supported by local sports journalist Akeem Greene from the Newsroom, while Vernon Springer – Chief Operations Officer of the Leeward Islands Cricket Board (LICB), cricket analyst and owner of Vasports Media – disagreed with the suggestion.

Since 2013, the privately run CPL, a franchise tournament which includes some

of the best T20 players globally, is the only tournament used to pick the West Indies Men’s T20 team. However, a regional T20 tournament is used to pick the West Indies Women’s team in that format. Akeem Greene brought up the point of off-spinner Kevin Sinclair being in the West Indies 18-man squad and not being able to play a match as yet for Warriors despite his good bowling in the power-play overs in the recent international T20 series. Sarwan, the new chairman of the Guyana Cricket Board (GCB) selectors, agreed that Sinclair should be playing.

“Of course the franchise owners’ main focus will be to see their franchise winning and their emphasis won’t be so much giving the local players a chance to play, so I feel that CWI should

think of playing their own T20 tournament for only local players ... I think CWI should have its own tournament without foreign players for the West Indian selectors to [choose] from ... this will give them a chance to see more players.” The 41-year-old Sarwan has played 77 T20s, including 18 for the West Indies. Sarwan – who led Guyana to the inaugural Stanford T20 title in 2006 in Antigua and the Caribbean T20 Championships in 2010 in Trinidad when Guyana qualified for the 2010 Champions League in South Africa – said the Stanford tournament included 18 Caribbean sides and Guyana, and unearthed a lot of unknown talent.

“The franchise’s ultimate goal is to win the tournament and not to expose young West Indian players,” continued

Sarwan, who averaged above 40 in both Test and ODI cricket. “A West Indies T20 Tournament is not the answer. What is the answer, is for us to prepare our potential T20 players for next level and export them to the different leagues around the world,” said Springer from Antigua. Springer, a native of St. Kitts and Nevis who attended the Yorkshire Cricket School where he honed his professional coaching skills, asked when the CWI T20 tournament would be played? “There is no room for another T20 tournament to be played and added that the regional boards should be the ones to organise T20 tournaments, which is not the case,” said Springer, who helped formulate the 13-and under-tournament in St. Kitts and Nevis when he returned from England.

Some of the regional boards, including Guyana, play domestic T20 tournament – but the Leewards are not one of those. The West Indies team for the first T20 World Cup in South Africa in 2007 was selected from the Stanford T20, a 19-team competition held in Antigua.

This tournament was played in 2006 (when Sarwan captained Guyana and won the title) and 2008 (when T&T won) by virtue of being the defending Stanford T20 Champions after Texan financier Allen Sanford was jailed in

2009. Trinidad and Tobago, under the leadership of Daren Ganga, qualified for 2009 Champions League in India and lost in the final. The Caribbean T20 was first played in 2010 when Guyana, led by Sarwan, beat Barbados

in the final in Port-of-Spain to qualify for the Champions League in South Africa.

The tournament, which was last won by T&T, was played until 2013 when CPL franchise league was inaugurated.

West Indies are two-time T20 World Cup winners (2012 & 2016) and defending champions heading into this year's tournament which will be hosted by the UAE next month.

STUNNING PERFORMANCE FROM RAMHARACK AS WI WOMEN END ON A HIGH!



Match 3 of CG Insurance T20I Series

Venue: Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground

Toss: South Africa won and decided to bat

Result: West Indies won by 5 wickets

A career-best bowling performance from Karishma Ramharack led West Indies Women to a magnificent victory over South Africa Women on Saturday. The 26-year-old off-spinner came into the attack in the 15th over in her first match of the series. She took a wicket with her third ball and returned the superb figures of 3-0-8-3 to receive the CG Insurance Player-of-the-Match award.

This limited the Proteas to a mere 80-9 off their 20 overs and West Indies then strolled to 81-5 off 11.5 overs to level the series 1-1. Ramharack was well assisted by some excellent fielding when Chadean Nation ran around to her right at long-on, dived full length and held onto a catch to dismiss Chole Tyron. Two overs later, Kyshona Knight snapped up a sharp chance to remove Trisha Chetty, and Ramharack got her third when she clean-bowled Ayabonga Khaka in the 19th over.

Earlier in the innings, Britney Cooper again demonstrated her im-

mense skills in the outfield with a stunning running and diving catch at mid-on to pick up the key wicket Lizelle Lee for nine off Aliyah Alleyne, who ended with 2-16. It proved to be a very important wicket moment in the match as Lee fell in single digit for the first time in the series. In the previous knocks, Lee made a run-a-ball 30 and 75 off 52 balls to be named CG Insurance Player-of-the-Series.

In reply, West Indies easily reached the target, closing out the match at 81-5 off 11.5 overs to win with 49 balls to spare. Deandra Dottin again led the charge with a pur-

poseful knock of 31 off 21 balls. She hit three fours through the on-side and a massive straight six off a flighted delivery from left-arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba.

Left-hander Kycia Knight also played well – with 26 off 27 balls – which included four flowing boundaries, as she added 53 for the second wicket with Dottin.

The two teams will now switch to the CG Insurance One-Day International Series. The opening match will be at the Coolidge Cricket Ground on Tuesday. First ball in the day/night match is 2:45pm (1:45pm Jamaica Time).

Tough start for Rising Stars U19s as England win opening ODI



Match 1 of Youth ODI Series
Venue: County Ground, Beckenham

Toss: West Indies U19s won and decided to bowl

Result: England U19s won by 166 runs

West Indies Rising Stars U19s went down to England Under-19 by 166 runs in the opening encounter of the Royal London six-match Youth One-Day International Series on Saturday.

After captain Ackeem Auguste won the toss and decided to bowl first, England posted 289-9 in their allotted 50 overs. The total was built around half-centuries by captain Jacob Bethell (69), James Rew (59) and wicket-keeper Alex Horton (53).

With the ball, the West Indies' main wicket-takers were the pace trio of Isai Thore (3-51), An-

del Gordon (2-45) and McKenny Clarke (2-58).

Bethell and Rew added 87 for the third wicket before the partnership was broken by the 16-year-old Thomas who bowled with good pace throughout his 10-over spell. He later returned to get the wicket of Horton who played a late cameo which included four fours and a six as England scored 85 runs in the last 10 overs.

In reply, the West Indies total of 123 had its main contributions from openers Anderson Amurdan (33) and Matthew Nandu (21) who gave the West Indies a 46-run opening stand in the initial 10-over powerplay. Amurdan faced 47 balls and hit five boundaries, while left-hander Nandu faced 28 balls and hit two fours. But, led by a five-wicket haul from off-spin-

ner Tom Prest (6-2-18-5) who was well supported by the leg-spin of Rehan Ahmed (3-22) and left-arm orthodox Fateh Singh (1-28), they combined effectively to bowl out the visitors in the 30th over.

The two teams will return to the same venue on Monday for the second match of the series. First ball is 10:30am (5:30 Eastern Caribbean/4:30am Jamaica).

Match Schedule and Results

Saturday, September 4: 1st Youth ODI – England won by 166 runs at Beckenham; **Monday, September 6:** 2nd Youth ODI at Beckenham; **Wednesday, September 8:** 3rd Youth ODI at Beckenham; **Friday, September 10:** 4th Youth ODI at Canterbury; **Tuesday, September 14:** 5th Youth ODI at Canterbury; **Friday, September 17:** 6th Youth ODI at Canterbury.

Shericka Jackson (right) competes at the Tokyo Olympics Games.

SHERICKA JACKSON PULLS OUT OF POLAND MEET ON SUNDAY

Shericka Jackson has pulled out of the Kamila Skolimowska Memorial in Silesia, Poland, on Sunday, a World Athletics Continental Tour Gold meeting.

Jackson, who has been concentrating on the shorter sprints this year, won the bronze medal in the 100m behind her Jamaican compatriots Elaine Thompson-Herah and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games last month.

Jackson, who ran all Diamond League meets following the Tokyo Olympics, was down to

face off with Fraser-Pryce over 100m in Poland but decided to rest before next weekend's Wanda Diamond League final in Zurich. She is qualified to run both 100m and 200m in Zurich.

After running 21.98 on Friday for second to Christine Mboma (21.98) of Namibia in the Brussels Diamond League, Jackson said she was looking forward to returning to Jamaica in a social media post.

She also said she had two races to end her season.

Before Brussels, Jackson ran 10.76 at the Pre-

fontaine Classic, 10.92 in Lausanne, and 10.97 in Paris.

With Jackson out, two-time Olympic 100m champion Fraser-Pryce should prove tough to beat, having clocked a PB of 10.60 in Lausanne on August 26 to pull off an upset victory over Thompson-Herah. Jackson completed a Jamaican clean sweep of the top three places.

Fraser-Pryce's 10.60 is the third-fastest women's 100 metres in history. The 34-year-old took 0.03 off the personal best she set in Jamaica in June, nine years after winning her

second Olympic title in the 100.

Both Fraser-Pryce and Thompson-Herah have improved their times since Thompson-Herah retained her Olympic title in Tokyo in a blazing 10.61, where Fraser-Pryce took silver in 10.74.

Thompson-Herah took her personal best down to 10.54 at the Prefontaine meeting in Eugene, Oregon. That is second all-time to Florence Griffith-Joyner's 33-year-old world record of 10.49.

DEWS