

NO LETTING UP IN PUBLIC WORKS!

PICTURES ON PAGE 11

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Whether it's Red Hill Main Road, Crab Hill or St. Mary's School, the Ministry of Works under Hon. Lennox Weston is clearly in maximum overdrive to get things done despite the many resource challenges that have to be confronted in this pandemic period. See if you can identify the location of the construction activities in these pictures which we've arranged as a spread for you inside!

INSIDE: Child Care & Protection take center stage
Another scholarship from gov't of Azerbaijan

Tackling the sargassum menace

Those who feel that sargassum weed is nature's curse being dumped on beaches across the Caribbean, may be comforted by new research which is touting this weed as a potential energy source.

What used to be small deposits of brown seaweed appearing two to

three weeks annually, turned into a massive algae bloom in 2011, producing piles of murky, unsightly weed, lingering for months. The ill effects are felt by the entire region: from the Dominican Republic in the north, Barbados in the east, and Mexico in the west, with 2015 and 2018 posing

the greatest challenge.

From the foul odour caused by toxic gases emanating from rotting algae to beach erosion, the impact on tourism, fisheries, several shore-line activities and biodiversity has been widely felt. For example, it was reported that in 2018, Caribbean tourism suffered a 35 per cent

decline in bookings because of the sargassum problem. Barbados declared a national emergency that year.

The recent mysterious fish kill in Hellshire, St. Catherine, has been blamed on the sargassum weed. The National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) confirmed

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what was well known: When sargassum decays, it produces hydrogen sulphide, which accounts for the unpleasant smell. It also expels vast quantities of carbon dioxide and methane, which can prove deadly for juvenile fish and crabs which seek shelter from predators in these weeds.

NEPA is now organising a clean-up of that beach.

ANNUAL EVENT

Scientists are predicting that the sar-

gassum phenomenon could become an annual event as warmer oceans struggle to cope with multiple threats. That is not good news for Jamaica and the region, because they are still in search of satisfactory control measures. So far, no one has come up with a solution. All efforts have been very costly, as clean-up activities have to be undertaken with due care so as not to risk damaging the beaches.

In this new research, which was done in Bar-

bados with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank, the team assessed the feasibility of using sargassum weed along with waste water from rum distilleries to produce alternative transportation fuel to replace gasoline and diesel.

The researchers say their findings have important implications for policymakers, for they would directly contribute to the objective of becoming a fossil fuel-free nation by 2030. This is the kind of find-

ing that will capture the imagination of coastal dwellers, tourism interests, as well as the man in the street. We hope Barbados pursues this initiative with vigour.

In 2018, a Sargassum Research Group was formed with The University of the West Indies' Professor Mona Webber, a noted marine biologist, as head. The group has been exploring the potential of sargassum as a food additive, for use in breast cancer treatment, and as biofuel to power

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coastal properties. We await their findings. Other regional and international bodies have also been studying ways of exploiting sargassum for industrial and nutritional purposes.

VARIETY OF USES

In the region, countries like Barbados, St. Lucia, the Dominican Republic and Mexico have found a variety of uses for sargassum, ranging from fertiliser and livestock feed to building material.

Sargassum weed is expected to be around for a long time. Tourism, heavily battered by the coronavirus pandemic, could be further devastated if solutions are not found to keep this menace from our shores. We feel it is imperative that the region formulates a plan to tackle the influx by urgently identifying funding for an early-warning system and also to support clean-up efforts.

Indeed, we envisage a regional approach

that will make use of the burgeoning technologies and promising research findings to guide efforts to turn the sargassum problem into an economic opportunity, whether in agribusiness, livestock, pharmaceuticals or construction.

The people of the region have high expectations that our scientists will collaborate and find technological solutions, and if not, at least suggest ways to use the seaweed to boost the

livelihoods of fishermen and other affected persons.

The results of the research are promising, and even though the researchers acknowledged that commercialisation will be a challenge, this hopeful signal may assuage long-term concerns about the negative impact of the weed, particularly on people's livelihoods. *(reprinted from the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper, Monday 13 September 2021)*

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Caribbean drowning in COVID-19 misinformation

A recent report prepared by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is enough to give all inhabitants of the Caribbean pause. Coming from a well-respected regional institution with no political axe to grind, the information contained is – in a word – frightening!

The report revealed that all the known variants of the COVID-19 disease have been detected in the region. That within a six-month period, March to September 12, some countries have recorded increases in infections and rates well above 100 percent.

Additionally, the report said the region has one of the highest rates of vaccine hesitancy in the world. So much so that large amounts of vaccine have expired for lack of use in many countries.

In fact, one donor country is quite disturbed that large batches of life-saving vaccines donated across the Caribbean have had to be discarded while there is growing demand for vaccines in other parts of the world such as Africa,

For example, by 30th August, 1,200 doses of vaccine expired here in Antigua and Barbuda. In Barbados the number totaled 4,000 and in Grenada it was 10,000. In all, across the Caribbean, 49,200 doses of vaccines expired effective August 30.

The one possible glimmer of hope on the horizon has been signs that the weekly report of vaccination rates have been creeping upwards. However, this is fueled by three things: 1. The introduction of vaccines mandates; 2. The arrival of the US-pro-

duced Pfizer vaccines; 3. The increases in infection. Here in Antigua and Barbuda, there have been six deaths reported within a 24-hour period.

From March 01 to September 12, Antigua and Barbuda recorded a 196.7 increase in the rate of infection while the death rate increased to 242.9 percent. It was the highest rate of in-

creases in confirmed cases in the CARPHA member states and the second highest increase in the death rate.

It has been determined that one [factor] that has been driving the high rate of vaccine hesitancy in the region has been the deluge of misinformation that has flooded the region since the advent of



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the pandemic. The ubiquitous smartphone with instant connection to the internet places this misinformation in the hands of many unsuspecting residents of the region who consume this information 'fake news' without questioning.

To combat the misinformation and the vaccine hesitancy, CARPHA has devised a communication strategy to reach out to Caribbean people. In a vaccine acceptance survey it conducted, three things were identified at the root the problem. There were

concerns [about] vaccine safety and the [side] effects. There were also concerns about the speed at which the vaccines were developed and a lack of knowledge about the vaccines generally.

It has been a puzzling development for both policymakers and even ordinary citizens across the region, why the high rate of hesitancy and how can it be effectively tackled? The region has one of the world's highest literacy rates, yet many residents seem all too willing to accept information as being credible simply because its

appears in a Facebook post or some other social media outlet.

CARPHA, the CARICOM secretariat and other policy-making organisations are preparing to take on this problem of vaccine hesitancy, but this is a fight that requires all right-thinking men and women in the Caribbean to become engaged in this battle, as many of our states are [teetering] on the precipice of [survival or failure].

Where do stand in this critical hour of need for our Caribbean civilization?



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COVID Dashboard Update for September 13, 2021

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment from the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre revealed seven (7) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Saturday 11th September 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Twelve (12) samples were processed at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. Two (2) recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 1,516. Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory con-

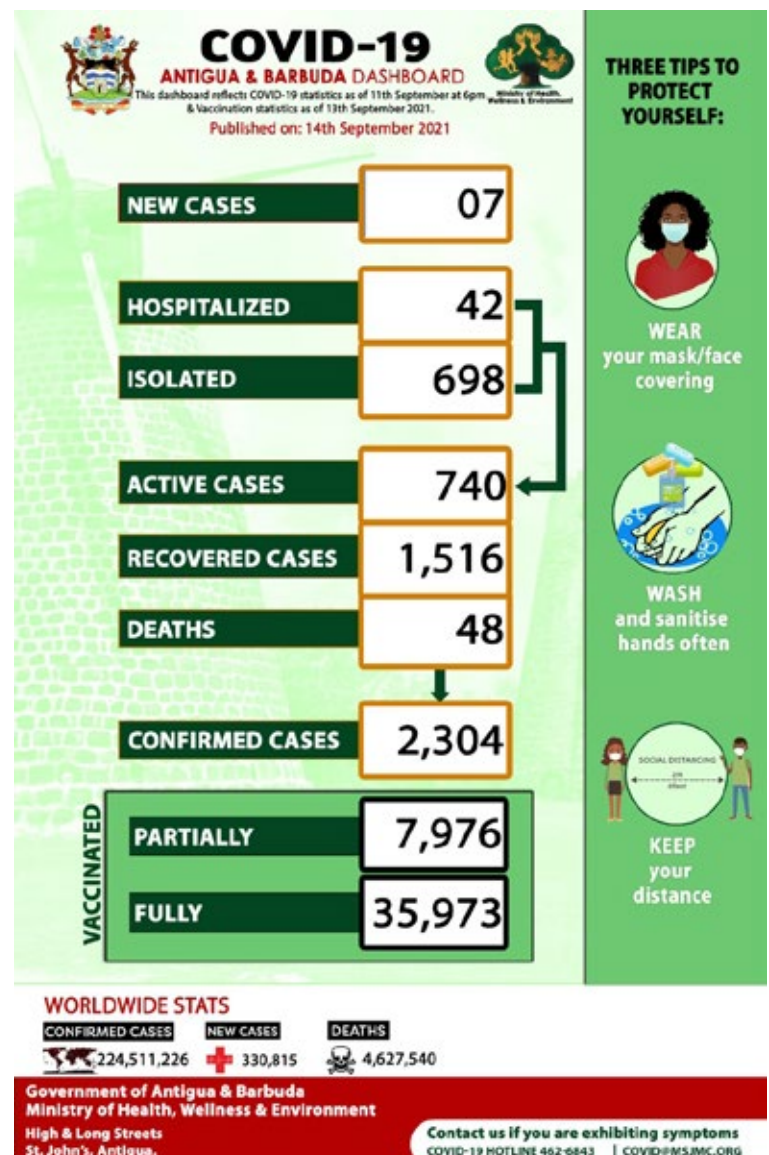
firmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 2,304; which is inclusive of 740 active cases.

There are 42 hospitalized cases; 21 mild, 11 moderate and 10 severe.

Meanwhile, Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 35,973 individuals while 7,976 have only received their first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.

*Please note that five (5) COVID-19 related deaths were recorded and will be published in subsequent dashboards.



Launch of Child Care and Protection Act awareness campaign



Social Transformation Minister Dean Jonas (standing) interacts with a minor student.

The Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development & the Blue Economy, with the support of the United Nations Children's

Fund (UNICEF) Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, has launched a public relations campaign to

raise awareness of the newly approved **National Child Protection Policy**. This new policy seeks to break cycles of poverty and

disadvantage across generations, so that children can live satisfying, productive lives within their families and communities.

The campaign dubbed **Child Care and Protection Our Responsibility** will include a series of information-sharing documents and public education activities. The aim is to build awareness on child care and protection, related policy frameworks, and expected outcomes for children and families. Strategic informative activities will be communicated via radio, television, newspaper, and social media, along with a theatre production which will air in the coming weeks.

Minister for Social Transformation, Human Resource Development & the Blue Economy, Hon. Dean Jonas, commented: *"It is important that we inform the persons affected and our society on these changes; our children are the future."*

Child Care and Protection has to be a part of the development conversation, and it is very timely for this conversation to happen now."

Since 1991, Antigua and Barbuda has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has worked on updating national legislation in line with this international treaty. As a result, in 2015, to ensure that international standards are met progressively, the legislation was changed with the Child Care and Adoption Act and the Child Justice Act. These new laws required extensive changes in national regulations. Thus, the Child Protection Policy sets out societal and departmental standards, which allows for key stakeholders to function collaboratively to ensure that all decisions are in the best interest of the child.

While the policy focuses on achieving outcomes for all children, it acknowledges that some children need additional support and seeks to address,

- Children who are homeless or displaced

- Children with disabilities or mental issues

- Children with a migrant background

- Children in alternative institutional care

- Children in precautions family

- Children in need of care and protection

- Children who live in poverty/disadvantaged circumstances

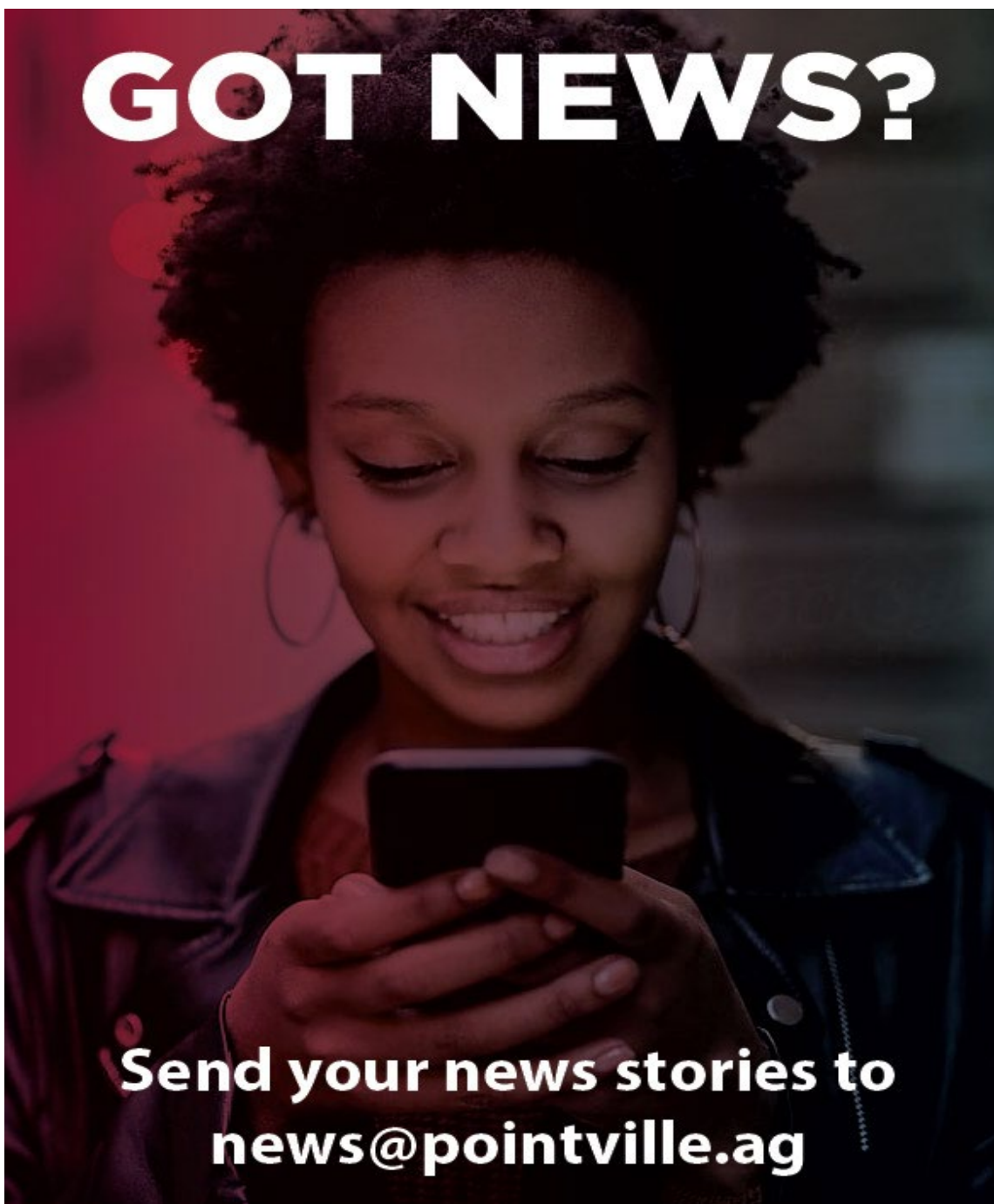
S p e a r h e a d i n g

the policy amendment is Mrs. Feona Charles-Richards, Director of the Family and Social Services Division, and UNICEF who provided technical support.

Hon Minister Dean Jonas gave further comments on the impact of COVID-19 and praised technicians in the Family and Social Services Division.

"The COVID-19 virus has negatively impacted the globe economically and socially. Unfortunately, our vulnerable, including our children, experience the highest risk.

"Given this context of increasingly complex challenges, I commend the Division for pressing forward with this policy."



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Second national secures scholarship to study in Azerbaijan

A 23-year-old Antiguan man has secured a scholarship to pursue studies in the eastern European nation of Azerbaijan.

Grantley Edwards of Parham has been awarded the full scholarship to pursue studies in his chosen field of business management, sponsored by the Azerbaijani government.

The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission in London was instrumental in arrangement for the scholarship.

Foreign Minister E.P. Chet Greene congratulated Edwards during a courtesy call and he used the opportunity to admonish the young man that while in Azerbaijan

he must see himself as an ambassador for the country. As such, he has been advised to always be on his best behavior.

“Your parents, your community and your country are all depending on you. You need to grasp the opportunity to gain the level of education that will potentially lift both you and your family to a higher level of existence,” Greene noted,

The Minister also took note that as a male he is quite pleased to see Edwards making this positive step, hoping that other young men would see this as an example to follow.

On the question of vaccination, Minis-



Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. E.P. “Chet” Greene (right)

ter Greene said he is pleased to learn that Edwards is fully vaccinated as he announced that he will advise the chairman of the scholarship committee that all students who obtain scholarships to study abroad must be fully vaccinated.

“In case they become sick, their care will be the responsibility of the Government so getting

fully vaccinated is one way to prevent this,” he noted.

Edwards and Dr. Drickesha Aska, the first Antigua and Barbuda student to receive a scholarship from the Azerbaijani government, paid a courtesy call on Minister Greene. Dr. Aska is returning to Azerbaijan to complete her residency.

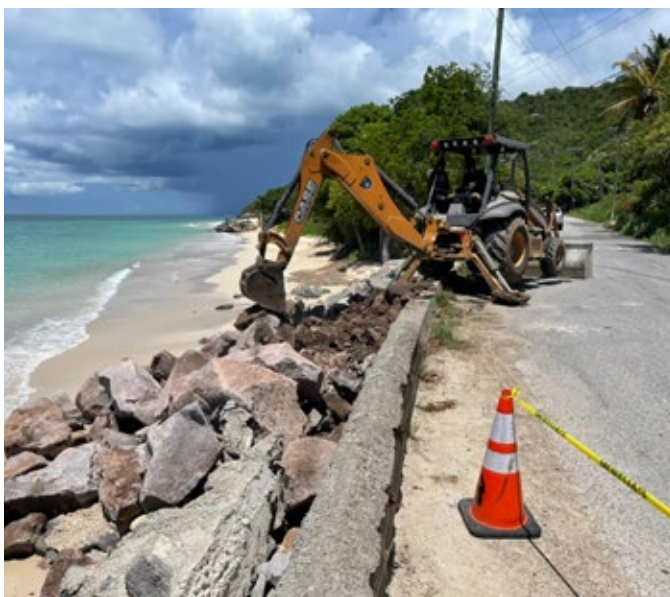
Friday charged with murder

Kelly Friday of Bolans has been charged by the police on Tuesday for the alleged murder of Selwyn Mannix of Friars Hill Road.

On Saturday 12th September,

the accused allegedly armed himself with a sharp object that he used to inflict several stab wounds to the deceased during an altercation at Point Wharf

Fisheries. He is expected to make his first court appearance sometime today, Wednesday 15th September 2021.



Rasta sage lights up weed-for-vaccine incentive

Jamaica Gleaner - Montego Bay-based medical cannabis dispensary Outlier has joined the effort to get Jamaicans vaccinated against COVID-19 with the novel 'Weed for Vaccine' campaign which it hopes will push smokers to line up for the jab.

But one of Jamaica's most influential Rastafarian voices has bristled at the twinning of vaccines with a plant the religious group views as a sacrament.

Outlier follows in the steps of companies offering discounts and/or giveaways to vaccinated people. The company was granted a permit by the Cannabis Licensing Authority (CLA) in 2019. The dispensary falls under the Outlier Biopharma group of biotechnology companies focused on research, development and manufacturing of cannabis and cannabinoid-based products.

Managing Director Brian Thelwell said Outlier was "really excited" to give away pre-rolls to persons 18 years and older who visit the store with proof of full vaccination.

"We want to do our

part to inspire both Jamaicans and tourists to be safe and stay healthy," said Thelwell.

Persons will also need a medical recommendation or medical marijuana card from a licensed dispensary. In lieu of this, persons can see an Outlier's doctor at a reduced cost, the company said in a statement.

The coronavirus lockdowns have slowed foot traffic to its store, spokesperson Abigail Rowe disclosed, but Outlier is confident of an uptick in interest.

However, the weed-for-vax campaign does not sit well with Ras Iyah V, who heads the Westmoreland Hemp and Ganja Association.

"I don't like the idea of linking the herbs to the vaccine because Rastafari doesn't support the vaccine, especially this one that has not gone through any clinical trial of note," said the Rastafarian elder. "This idea of giving away pre-roll looks like the offering of a bribe to me and I really don't like that at all."

But Marlon Rowe, who reported having a permit to legally purchase cannabis, said Outlier's



Ras Iyah V, who heads the Westmoreland Hemp and Ganja Association.

offer could not have come at a better time.

"I am double-vaccinated, so I will be having a fine time until this campaign is over. It is good to be getting something free in these times of very little money, so I see this as a form of savings for me," said Rowe.

"Mi sorry for my unvaccinated friends because they will be missing out."

The 'Weed for Vaccine' promotion, which will last until September 25, will be available to the first 50 persons who visit the store each day.

Outlier's campaign mirrors the 'joint for jabs' initiative in Washington DC. Early in that campaign, it was reported that 10,000 joints had been given away within weeks.

US Embassy: Only vaccinated can apply for certain visas come October

Loop TT - The United States (US) Embassy has announced that starting October 1, 2021, immigrant visa, K-visa and non-immigrant visa applicants recommended for a medical exam will be required to obtain full COVID-19 vaccination.

The embassy said this comes following a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) policy.

Some waivers may be available in countries where a COVID-19 vaccine is not routinely available or if the vaccine is not age-appropriate.

"Unlike other required vaccinations, applicants must complete the entire vaccine series for the medical examination to be considered complete," the US Embassy said.

This requirement does not apply to non-immigrant visa classes such as tourist or student visas.

"US Embassy Port-of-Spain encourages all applicants to get vaccinated prior to their medical exams," it said.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/panel-physicians/covid-19-technical-instructions.html.

For information on applying for visas, visit <https://tt.usembassy.gov/visas/>.



Guyana: citizens shun lockdown calls from 'opposition elements'

Guyana Chronicle – RESIDENTS throughout Guyana have shunned a call from elements of the opposition for a shutdown of the country for business.

On Monday, all businesses and government offices in the various regions were in full operation.

At the various markets throughout Guyana, vendors were busy hawking their goods as a steady stream of customers made their daily purchases and went about their business.

Outside the market, the roads were busy as vehicles – notably a large number of minibus operators – plied their trade while private hire car drivers solicited passengers at every opportunity available to them.

Aside from public transportation operators, business operators and customers at the various markets, persons were seen offloading goods from trucks and transporting them to stores on the busy roads and pavements of Georgetown and other towns in the regions.

Some of the shop owners and customers approached by this newspaper for a comment politely declined, but others who spoke on condition of anonymity say they have 'mouths to feed' and their families to look after, and therefore have no time for attention to petty politics.

In relation to the shut-



down call, one person, Eshwar Aziz, commented on the Chronicle Facebook page: "Most of these vendors depend on a daily sale when they day is up. When these people go on lockdown who will provide from [sic] them?" pointing out that most of the people who are calling for the lockdown are either well-off or have fixed incomes.

Another person who commented compared the lockdown call to "making a sacrifice".

On Monday, contrary to claims being peddled on social media, Home Affairs Minister Robeson Benn confirmed that the government has not issued any lockdown orders for the country.

NO LOCKDOWN

"There is no shutdown that the government has mandated, and those who

are calling for a shutdown are irresponsible," Minister Benn said during an appearance on the Guyana Today programme aired on the National Communications Network.

The minister said pointedly that instead of harmful lockdowns, the government has been pushing vaccinations and other health protocols as a means of safely exiting the ongoing pandemic.

"The COVID-19 guidelines and the period over which people should not be out and about are well-known... 10:30 in the evenings to 4 'o' clock in the morning. It gives us enough time to make life go on in a reasonable way, in a sustainable way," Benn noted.

He cautioned Guyanese against falling prey to the misinformation and an-

ti-vaccination messages being peddled largely by persons who are already fully vaccinated.

"In spite of the best efforts of Dr. Frank Anthony, the Ministry of Health and the wider government, there is [sic] some out here, who, for whatever reason, are suggesting or are trying to create a movement to delay our return to a situation where we are safe and secure from a health perspective," Benn recognised.

Notwithstanding the negativity being peddled by some sections of society, Benn said it is important for Guyana to achieve herd immunity in a hurry so as to prevent any uncontrolled mutations of the virus, which could possibly nullify the efficacy of the vaccines that are currently in use worldwide.

Haiti prosecutor calls for prime minister to be charged over president's killing

The Guardian - The investigation into the assassination of the Haitian President Jovenel Moïse has taken a sensational turn after the country's chief prosecutor asked a judge to charge Haiti's prime minister in connection with the crime.

Ariel Henry, a 71-year-old neurosurgeon, became Haiti's principal leader in July, two weeks after Moïse was killed at his home in the capital, Port-au-Prince.

Supporters describe Henry as an upstanding member of Haiti's medical community who had been grappling with the unenviable task of trying to stabilize a country rocked by the murder of its president and then a 7.2-magnitude earthquake that killed more than 2,000 people.

But, on Tuesday, Haiti's prime minister was sucked into the heart of the alleged plot behind Moïse's murder as the country's chief prosecutor, Bed-Ford Claude, asked a judge to charge him with suspected involvement.

"There are enough compromising elements ... to prosecute Henry and ask for his outright indictment," Claude wrote in the official request, according to the Associated Press.

The Haitian newspaper *Le Nouvelliste* said Claude had also asked immigration officials to prevent Henry from leaving the country because of the "gravity" of the facts that had emerged.

Haiti's prime minister made no immediate comment. But, last weekend,



Ariel Henry is alleged to have spoken to a former justice ministry official for seven minutes following the shooting of the president. Henry has vowed to find 'the real culprits'.

amid reports that murder investigators wanted to quiz him about telephone conversations he was alleged to have had with one of their chief suspects, Haiti's leader vowed he would not be distracted from his mission and insisted "the real culprits" would be tracked down and punished.

In the two-page request he submitted on Tuesday, Claude claimed Henry had spoken to the former justice ministry official Joseph Felix Badio for at least seven minutes following Moïse's 7 July shooting.

Henry was allegedly

at Port-au-Prince's Hotel Montana at the time while Badio was thought to have been speaking from somewhere near Moïse's residence.

Badio has yet to be apprehended and his current whereabouts are unknown.

More than two months after the assassination, much about the killing remains a mystery.

Dozens of suspects have been arrested, including 18 former Colombian soldiers – some of whom were among the assault team that swept into Moïse's residence in the early hours of 7 July.

Police have claimed

that one key conspirator was Christian Emmanuel Sanon, a Florida-based pastor with an apparent plan to take over as Haiti's leader. But few believe the real masterminds have been identified, let alone caught.

In an interview with the *New York Times*, the widow of the slain president said she suspected wealthy "oligarchs" were responsible for a crime that has shaken an already fragile and impoverished nation struggling with a series of interlinked economic, political, humanitarian and security crises.

China's ambassador Zheng Zeguang banned from UK Parliament

BBC - China's ambassador to the UK has been told he cannot come to Parliament while sanctions remain in place against a number of MPs and peers.

Zheng Zeguang was due to attend a Commons reception on Wednesday, hosted by the all-party group on China.

But after protests, Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle and Lord Speaker Lord McFall ruled this out.

The Chinese embassy said it was a "despicable and cowardly" decision that would harm both countries' interests.

The ban, which was first reported by the Daily Telegraph, comes at a time when tensions between the two governments are high.

In March, China imposed travel bans and asset freezes on five MPs and two peers whom it accused of spreading lies about the country.

This was in response to the UK's decision to impose its first sanctions against Chinese officials for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

Despite this, the China parliamentary group still decided to invite Mr. Zheng to its summer



Zheng Zeguang had a virtual audience with the Queen on his appointment as ambassador in July.

party on the Commons terrace pavilion overlooking the Thames.

Last week, the five Conservative MPs who were sanctioned – Sir Iain Duncan-Smith, Tom Tugendhat, Nusrat Ghani, Neil O'Brien and Tim Loughton – wrote to the Speaker voicing their concerns.

The two sanctioned peers – crossbencher Lord Alton and Labour's Baroness Kennedy – wrote to the Lord Speaker. They said: "The sanctions imposed by the Chinese government represent an attack not just on members directly targeted but on Parliament, all parliamentarians, select committees, and parliamentary privilege.

"We should never allow our place of work to become a platform to validate and promote such sanctions.

"We know that this is a view shared by a great many Right Honourable and Honourable Members who will wish their protests to be heard if this visit is to go ahead."

They added: "It is unthinkable, therefore, that parliamentarians should have to suffer this infringement on our liberties whilst the prime representative of the Chinese government in the UK is still apparently free to come to Westminster and to use facilities here as a mouthpiece for his regime."

Nusrat Ghani welcomed the "unprece-

dent" ban on the ambassador, telling BBC News: "Sanctioning MPs is a direct threat to Parliament and our democracy. "We will not be silenced nor intimidated by any regime, and our Parliament will not become a tool of propaganda for Chinese Communist Party absurd sanctions."

Another sanctioned MP, Tim Loughton, tweeted: "If the genocidal Chinese regime think they can shut down free speech by parliamentarians in a democracy, there are consequences; and, in this case, it is that the Chinese regime must not have a platform in the Mother of Parliaments."

In a statement, Sir Lindsay said he held regular meetings with ambassadors to "establish enduring ties between countries and parliamentarians."

But he added: "I do not feel it's appropriate for the ambassador for China to meet on the Commons estate and in our place of work when his country has imposed sanctions against some of our members.

"If those sanctions were lifted, then of course this would not be an issue."

Lebanon gets new government; first since deadly 2020 blast

(CNN) - A new government has been formed in crisis-ridden Lebanon, ending a more than year-long power vacuum that began shortly after the August 2020 Beirut port blast.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati – a billionaire who has already twice served as premier – will lead a cabinet of ministers that will preside over an economic depression which the World Bank considers one of the world's worst since the mid-19th century.

Mikati visited Lebanese President Michel Aoun at the Baabda Presidential Palace where he signed a decree to form the new government in the presence of Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, the Lebanese Presidency said.

Addressing the nation after the meeting, Mikati said he would try to “stop the country’s collapse.”

“The situation is difficult, it is very difficult,” Mikati said as his voice choked up during an emotional speech. “However it is not impossible if we unite ... our priority is to appease the suffering of the Lebanese people” he said, adding: “I won’t spare an opportunity to open doors with the Arab world. Today Lebanon is in need of the Arab world.”

The new government includes George Qiradhi, who was previously the host of popular television show “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire”; and a controversial finance minister, Yousuf Khalil.

Khalil was the director of finan-



Najib Mikati, Lebanon's new prime minister, is a billionaire who has already twice served as the country's premier.

cial operations at Lebanon Central Bank and the architect of a financial program that sought to attract deposits by offering high interest rates. The program contributed to a banking crisis that has decimated deposits around the country.

The new health minister, Firass Abiad, heads the first public hospital that received coronavirus patients and played a leading role in tackling the pandemic.

Foreign Minister Abdallah Bouhabib was Lebanon's ambassador to Washington from 1983 to 1990.

Lebanon is facing a severe financial crisis which has resulted in the currency losing over 90% of its value. Following Friday's announcement, the Lebanese lira appreciated on the black market from 19,000 lira to the dollar to

around 15,000 to the dollar.

The cabinet is also expected to come under massive international pressure to usher in economic reforms, ensure 2022 parliamentary elections take place as scheduled, and to restart negotiations with the International Monetary Fund.

Mikati was the third politician to be tasked with forming a cabinet after former Prime Minister Hassan Diab resigned in the wake of a port blast that claimed more than 200 lives and devastated whole neighborhoods in the capital.

Days after the explosion, French President Emmanuel Macron spearheaded an initiative to broker a political resolution in Lebanon in a bid to stave off state collapse.

Gunmen storm Nigerian jail to break out more than 200 prisoners

CNN - At least 240 prisoners have escaped in a prison break in Nigeria's north-central Kogi State after gunmen carried out a blitz attack on the facility, prison authorities said Monday.

A spokesman for the Nigerian Correctional Service said in a statement that the correctional facility in Kogi's Kabba district came under fire from unidentified gunmen who raided the site and "immediately engaged the armed guards in a fierce gun battle".

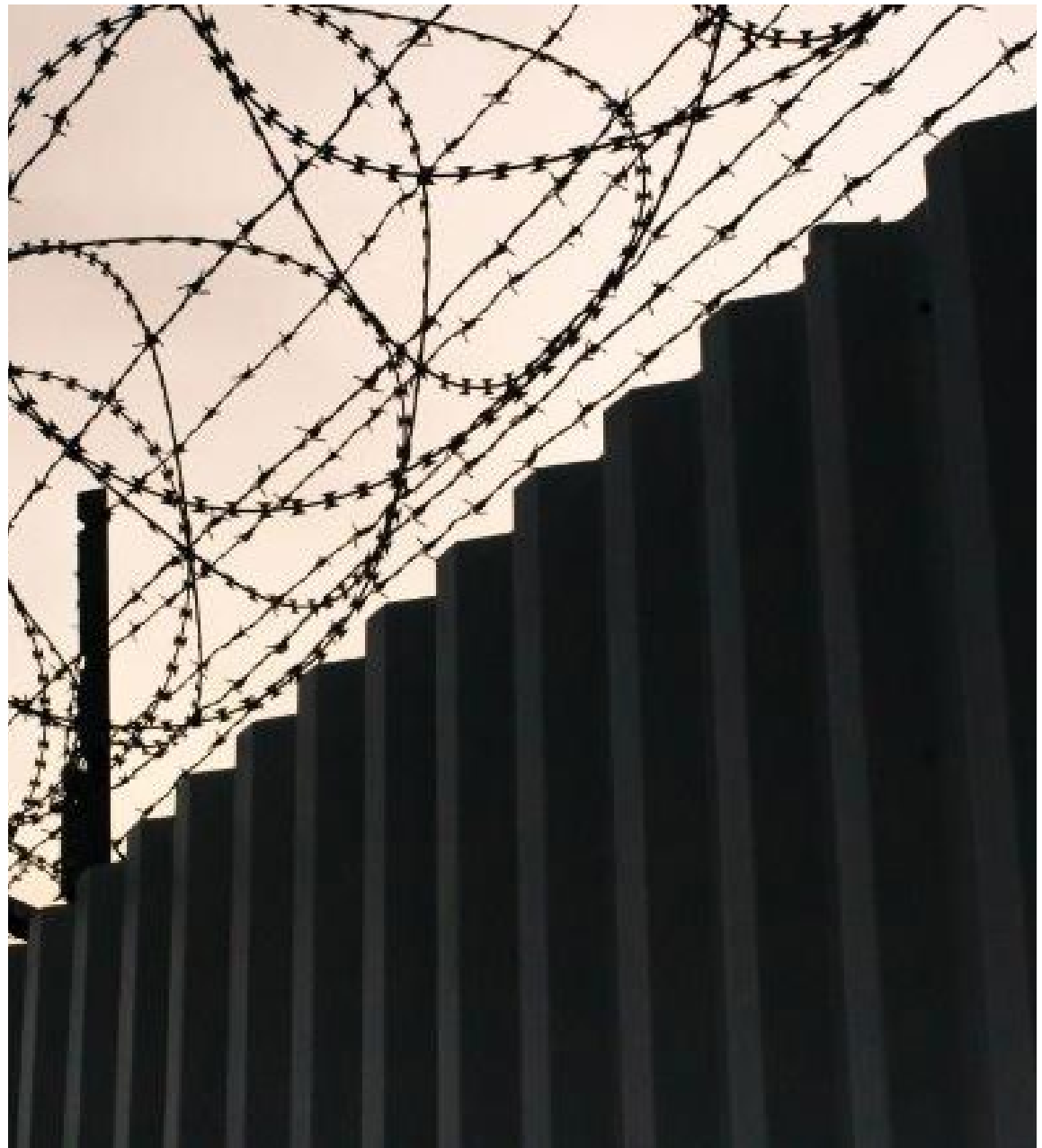
"The incident took place at about 2345hrs on 12 September 2021," said Francis Enobore, spokesman for the Correctional Service.

Enobore said no fewer than 294 inmates were in custody at the time of the attack, stating that "224 are pre-trial detainees and 70 convicted inmates".

He added that a "recapture procedure" had been activated to find the fleeing inmates.

A regional police chief told CNN one policeman was killed during the raid.

"Gunmen in large numbers attacked from all angles and didn't give the correctional service any opportunity of responding," said Ede Ayuba Ekpeji, an Assistant Inspector-General of Police for the region.



"One police inspector was killed, another police inspector was injured and taken to hospital," he added. "Three of the escaping prisoners have been rearrested."

No specific category of prisoners was targeted for release by the attackers, Ekpeji said.

The jailbreak in Kogi comes five months after nearly 2,000 inmates

broke free from a prison in Imo State, southeast Nigeria, after armed men invaded the custodial center and used explosives to blast parts of the prison, authorities said at the time.

The Nigeria Police Force blamed secessionist groups in the southeast region for the attack which occurred in April.

Nigeria's president,

Muhammadu Buhari, had described the Imo prison break as "an act of terrorism", but has yet to comment on the latest raid on the Kogi prison.

Nigeria is grappling with one of its worst security crises in recent years as insurgency, separatist conflicts, banditry and kidnappings for ransom remain on the increase.

Thailand: Migrants plead for vaccines as COVID takes lives, jobs

Al Jazeera - When the first COVID-19 case was detected in the Thai border town of Mae Sot in April last year, Hnin Hnin was able to keep her school for migrant children open; spending her mornings, as she usually did, drawing up word games on a large whiteboard as her five-year-old pupils looked on.

Infections and deaths at the time remained in the single digits, and Hnin Hnin, a teacher from Myanmar, was cautiously optimistic that the pandemic would end soon. Her school – which runs on aid from a local charity – received ample donations of food, hygiene kits and masks.

But one year later, an outbreak driven by the highly contagious Delta variant has led to spiralling infections at factories in the area, overwhelming hospitals and prompting a prolonged lockdown of the provinces on the Thai-Myanmar border and forcing Hnin Hnin's school to close.

"Lots of people started dying," she told *Al Jazeera*. "Lots of my friends died. It spread

very quickly and now many areas in Mae Sot are infected."

The virus hit particularly close to home when Hnin Hnin's friend and her fellow teacher fell ill due to COVID-19 in July. Her friend had tried to go to hospital when her condition deteriorated but was turned away – they said they did not have a bed for her. When she made attempts to call for aid to reach her house, no one came.

"She received no help from the Thai government," Hnin Hnin said, adding that paramedics only respond to calls from Thai nationals. Hnin Hnin's friend eventually died at home at the end of July.

"She was just one of many of my friends who got sick."

The latest wave has shaken Thailand, pushing COVID-19 cases to almost 1.3 million with more than 13,000 recorded deaths. Thailand is reporting at least 15,000 cases a day with an average of about 175 daily deaths – in contrast to last year's figures when daily cases were few and deaths rare.



As COVID-19 surges, organisations working on the border say the thousands of migrants and more than 90,000 refugees there are facing a range of challenges such as the lack of access to coronavirus-related healthcare. And, as factories and places of work close once again, their livelihoods are also in jeopardy, creating a ripple effect on many migrants' mental health, experts say.

Hnin Hnin now faces the possibility of clos-

ing her school for many months.

"With the lockdown, people started running out of jobs and money," Hnin Hnin told *Al Jazeera*. "At first we relied on donated money, but it is running out."

Hnin Hnin used to make approximately 3,000 Thai baht (\$100) per month. But now she can barely afford enough food. She feels a responsibility to her students, worries about their safety, hoping they do not fall into trouble while not in class.

AVAILABLE VACANCIES AT OSEC

(effective September 7, 2021 – valid until September 23, 2021)

We at the Labour Department's ONE STOP EMPLOYMENT CENTRE (OSEC) ARE WORKING DILIGENTLY TO ASSIST JOBSEEKERS FIND EMPLOYMENT AND/OR TRAINING DURING THIS PANDEMIC AND CLOSURES OF MANY LOCAL BUSINESSES IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA.

ONE STOP EMPLOYMENT CENTRE IS A PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CENTRE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT THAT OFFERS COMPLIMENTARY SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA (FREE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES) INCLUDING SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYER.

SOME OF THESE SERVICES INCLUDE (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) FREE MONTHLY WORKSHOPS, COMPUTER & QUICKBOOKS CLASSES, CAREER COUNSELING, RESUME & COVER-LETTER ASSISTANCE, IN ADDITION TO RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS.

OUR CENTRE IS A PART OF THE MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, PUBLIC SAFETY & LABOUR. OVERALL, OSEC OFFERS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO JOBSEEKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS – AT NO COST TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.

ASSISTANT COOK (RESTAURANT)

Minimum 5 years' experience

Must have extensive knowledge of Indian Cuisine to include Marinades, Sauces & Appetizers etc.

Must be a team-player

ASSISTANT PHARMACIST

Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role

Must be a Licensed Pharmacist in Antigua & Barbuda

Must pay strict attention to detail

Must be able to analyze information received whether written or verbal

AUDIT ASSOCIATE

Bachelor's Degree in Accounting required

Great communication & analytical skills

Excellent written & verbal communication skills

Strong computer skills; Able to work in a team environment

AUDIT SENIOR/SUPERVISOR

Minimum 3-4 years' experience of progressive public accounting experience

In-charge auditing experience desirable

Bachelors' Degree in Accounting required

CPA or ACCA or similar license required

Excellent analytical, organizational and engagement management skills

Excellent written and verbal communication skills

Strong computer skills including proficiency in Microsoft Office and audit preparation software

BAKER

Minimum 5 years' experience

Secondary School Completion

BOAT CAPTAIN

Licensed Boat Operator with 10 or more years' experience as a captain
Boat Safety Training Certification
Firm knowledge of marine craft communication, signaling and navigation systems
Basic Knowledge of weather as its changes and affect the operation of sea going vessels
Maintenance and engineering experience or understanding
Strong Customer Services Skills
Ability to react quickly in emergencies
Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions
Skill in making necessary minor and emergency repairs to marine equipment and docks
Excellent leadership, etiquette and communication skills

CASHIER

Minimum 2 years' working experience as a Cashier
Secondary School Certificate
Must be able to speak English & Spanish

CASHIER CLERK/STORE CLERK

Minimum 1 year experience
High School or College Completion
Must be Computer Literate
Must be efficient with strong attention to detail
Must be a fast learner and customer service-oriented

CLEANER

Minimum 3 years' experience

COMMERCIAL HELICOPTER PILOT

Must have a minimum of 1000 Commercial Flying Hours
ECCAA Commercial Helicopter License required
Must have a good personality
Must be a team-player and able to work

COMPOUND SUPERVISOR

At least 20 years' experience within the Boatyard & Marina Industry
Must be fluent in English, French & Italian
Great Customer Relation skills
Knowledge of Antigua & Barbuda Health, Safety & Trespassing regulations
Must be physically strong; Strong attention to detail is necessary

COOK (ROTI MAKER)

Minimum 3-4 years' experience
Secondary School Completion; Must have a valid Food Handler's License
Must have experience in preparing Indian dishes
Must have a valid Driver's License

DECKHAND/SNORKEL GUIDE

Basic Boating experience required; Must not be prone to motion sickness
High School Completion | Must be a competent swimmer
Boatmaster 3 license desirable but not required

DENTIST

Must be a Registered General Dentist with a minimum of 10 years' experience
Diploma or Certificate of Course or Training of Root Canal & Children Dentistry

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT OPERATIONS

Minimum 10 years' experience
Excellent Strategic thinking along with good leadership and analytical skills
Strong Decision making skills required

DRIVER/OPERATOR

Minimum 3 years' experience
High School Completion along with Trade School Diploma
Must be able to drive and operate Heavy Machinery & Equipment including
Grader, U-Box/18 speed transmission equipment
Must pay attention to detail | Must be punctual, honest, empathetic and trustworthy
Must possess an F6 Driver's license
Must be flexible to work on weekends and public holidays | Must be an effective team player

EXECUTIVE CHEF

Minimum ten years' culinary experience in an upscale environment with a
minimum of five years'
experience in a culinary leadership with a luxury/ultra-luxury resort.
Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Arts, Hotel Management or other relevant fields
Exceptional internal/external guest relations skills
Demonstrated project management experience in organizing,
planning and executing large-scale projects from conception through implementation
Demonstrated experience in leading and developing staff
Strong verbal and written communication skills
Demonstrated knowledge of hospitality systems/software
Solid business acumen with Professional presentation
Must be able to speak, read and write English; Fluency in other languages preferred

FARM MANAGER

Minimum 5 years' experience | Farming experience preferred
Secondary School Completion; Must be Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
Must be knowledgeable in the maintenance & repairs of small engines
Must have a valid Driver's License

FINANCE MANAGER

At least five years of financial, auditing and accounting experience within an
international organization or multinational company
Bachelor's degree in accounting or finance with CPA/ACCA designation
Strong Knowledge of QuickBooks and SAP
Highly Proficient in NetSuite
Advanced PC skills, particularly knowledge of MS Word and MS Excel software
Strong analytical skills with ability to set priorities, complete work with minimal supervision,
and meet deadlines Ability to work in a dynamic organization
Excellent communication skills | Result oriented with strong organizational skills

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SUPERVISOR

2+ Years relevant food and beverage experience in a luxury hotel environment

Strong leadership, problem solving, customer service, communication and organization skills

Proficiency in Microsoft Office

FRONT OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

At least three years' working experience in office administration or similar position

Knowledge of administrative or clerical procedures

Knowledge of basic bookkeeping | Excellent knowledge of MS Office (especially Excel & Word)

Proficient in the use of QuickBooks

Knowledge of customer service principles and practices | Good organizational and multi-tasking abilities

HOTEL MANAGER

Minimum 10 years of experience in the Hospitality industry with applicable International and Caribbean experience

Extensive managerial experience is required, with at least 2 years' experience at the Executive level and a track record in leading Hotel Company with good business and standards

Respectful, passionate, and leads by example with an engaged and positive approach

Articulate, creative, and curious underscored by strong analytical skills; Knowledge of Opera PMS and Micros Symphony

Internationally versed and stays abreast of market trends in the luxury hospitality

Thorough knowledge of luxury guest experience expectations and is culturally astute

Exceptional communication and persuasion skills underscored by a high level of emotional intelligence

An eye for detail, with exceptional ability to prioritize, organize, follow-up and effective problem resolutions skills

Extensive knowledge of forecasting and budgeting, statutory legislation, and industrial relations

KITCHEN ASSISTANT

No experience required | Secondary School Completion

LEAD TOUR SPECIALIST

Minimum 1 year experience of working in a customer service environment

Previous sales and supervisory experience is an asset

Good command of written and spoken English

Minimum of High or Secondary School Diploma

Must be computer literate with knowledge of Microsoft Office Software: Access, Excel, Outlook etc.

LEGAL CLERK

Minimum 1-2 years' experience as a Legal Clerk

Must be Computer Literate | Must be proficient in the use of QuickBooks

LIVE-IN MAID/NANNY

Minimum 4 years' experience in a similar role

High School Completion | Good communication skills

Must have a valid Driver's license | Must be able to cook

Must have knowledge of the basic lifesaving support (CPR-certified) | Must be a good swimmer

MUST BE FULLY VACCINATED

MESSENGER/CLEANER

Minimum 1 year experience

MULTILINGUAL REAL ESTATE SALES AGENT

8 plus years of proven experience as a Real Estate Agent or Real Estate Salesperson within a global market.

Proven track record of leading the real estate functions in a fast-paced, growing company.

Real Estate License is a plus.

Ability to understand and present contracts.

Ability to maintain secrecy and confidentiality on multiple new projects impacting the current workforce and maintain trustworthiness of the Chairman and members of executive management.

Ability and flexibility to travel both locally, regionally and internationally throughout the year.

Strong negotiating and selling capabilities.

Excellent communication skills and presentation skills with the ability to network.

Multilingual (both written and verbal)

Working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications

PADI OPEN WATER SCUBA INSTRUCTOR

Minimum 1 year working experience as a PADI Open Water Scuba Instructor

Must have issued at least 50 certifications & logged at least 1000 dives

Boatmaster 3 License required

Higher Level Boating & TEC Diving Qualifications is an asset

PLUMBER

Previous plumbing experience, ideally gained within a hotel or commercial building environment

Minimum High School Completion with CXC passes in English and Maths

Qualification in General Plumbing & Maintenance required; Pumps; Pools; Sewage

Plants and related equipment

SECURITY OFFICER

Minimum 3 years' experience as a Security Officer | Excellent communication skills

SENIOR MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN

Minimum 5-6 years' experience in a similar role

High School Diploma

Must have formal technical training or diploma

In-depth knowledge of HVAC, electrical, plumbing and hydraulic systems

Must be able to speak Italian | Must work well under pressure and meet tight deadlines

Effective problem-solving and accounting abilities

Good Communication skills; Good Organization & Execution skills

Strong analytical and solutions creations skills

SPA MANAGER (Hotel

3+ Years of managerial experience in a 5-star luxury hotel or resort spa

Degree/Diploma in Spa Management/Business Management/Hospitality Management or similar

SOUS CHEF (Hotel)

3+ Years experience required

Strong leadership, problem solving, customer service, communication and organization skills

Proficiency in Microsoft Office

Basic Food Hygiene Certificate

VIP HOST (CUSTOMER SERVICE AGENT)

Minimum 1-2 years' experience

High School & College Completion necessary | Excellent communication skills (verbal & written)

Ability to work well under pressure; Ability to work effectively as part of a team or alone

Must be self-motivated; A quick learner and a creative/critical thinker

WAREHOUSE/SALES CLERK

Minimum 2 years' experience in a similar role | Secondary School Completion

**DEADLINE FOR ALL APPLICATIONS is
Thursday 23rd September 2021**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT IN ORDER TO REGISTER
YOU MUST BRING WITH YOU THE FOLLOWING:
VALID PASSPORT | SOCIAL SECURITY &
MEDICAL BENEFITS CARDS
RESUME | CERTIFICATES/DIPLOMAS
OSEC IS LOCATED ON REDCLIFFE STREET**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE CALL 562-8533/34**

COMMUNITY NOTICES



AGHS Student Attendance

Students of the Antigua Girls' High School will return to school in person by respective levels per day for the first week of school only. Students are to be attired in their white dress uniform for this week, and will be present from 7:55am until 12:30pm.

Mon. 13th Sept - 1st Form only

Tues. 14th Sept - 2nd Form only

Wed. 15th Sept - 3rd Form only

Thurs. 16th Sept - 4th Form only

Fri. 17th Sept. - 5th Form only

For further information parents may email info@aghs.edu.ag or call 462-0404.

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FOUNDATION TO
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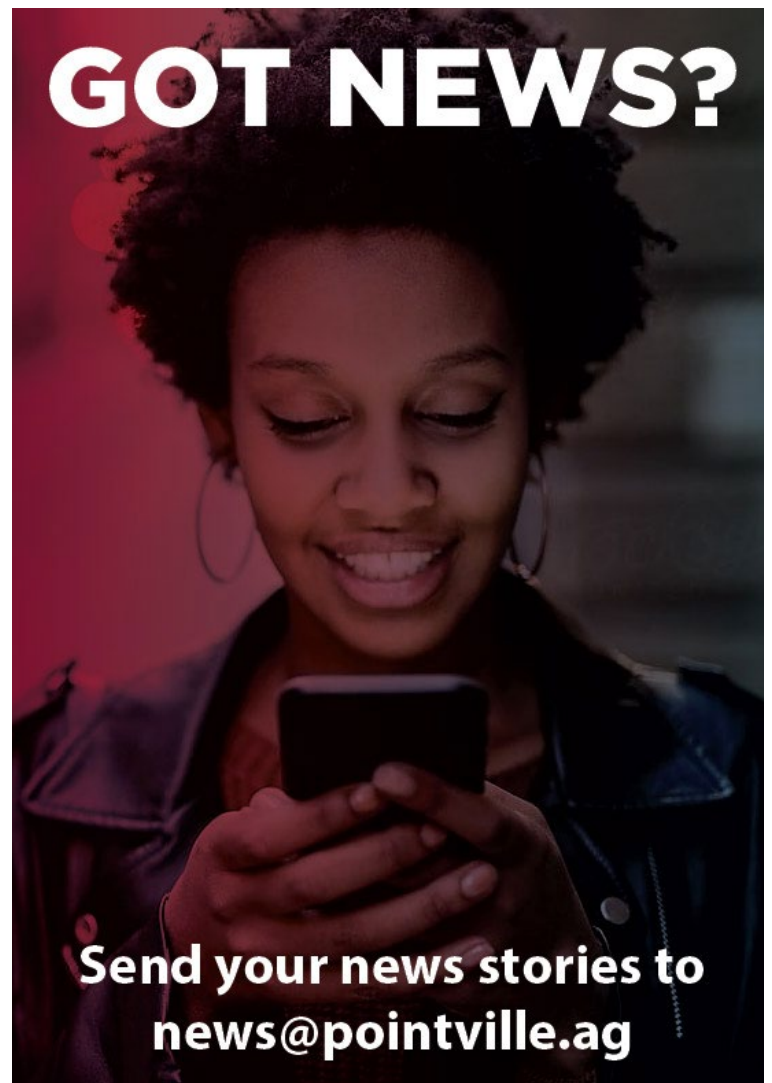
CONTACT US AT
TEL: 779-8971 / 778-2792

TAKE ME HOME



This happy, healthy pup named Sugar is available for adoption at the Humane Society's Animal Shelter in Bethesda. She has been treated for internal and external parasites and vaccinated and will be spayed when she is old enough all of which is included in the \$100 adoption fee. We are open Monday to Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. For further details call 461-4957.

GOT NEWS?



Send your news stories to
news@pointville.ag

Sport's list of billionaires including Floyd Mayweather, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi

The life of an elite athlete is enough to guarantee a life of wealth and luxury, very few reach the financial pinnacle of becoming a billionaire.

While the average Premier League footballer earns a staggering £60,000 per week, only two

footballers in sporting history have become billionaires according to various reports.

In fact, there have been very few athletes in the whole of sport who have reached such illustrious levels of wealth. Prize money and contracts tends to be the primary

revenue streams generated by athletes, however, it is the lucrative sponsorship deals and so-called 'add-ons' which can tip an athlete into the astronomical pay scales.

Mirror Sport has taken a look at Sport's list of billionaires.

Cristiano Ronaldo

When is not bagging braces and delivering aces on the pitch, Cristiano Ronaldo is raking in the cash off the pitch also.

The Portugal captain, who scored twice in his return for Manchester United against Newcastle, may have agreed a minor pay cut to sign for the Red Devils, but he is still earning £500,000 per week at Old Trafford.

However, it is his financial earnings and assets of the pitch which sets him apart

from most, as he brings in an estimated £36m from various endorsements and sponsorships of the pitch, according to Forbes. Through career earnings alone has pocketed over £500m alone, and with his lifetime sponsorship agreement with Nike as well as his CR7 band extending into clothing, accessories, hotels, and gyms, the Portuguese star is a one of the highest earners in sporting history.



Ronaldo joined the exclusive club in 2020

Floyd Mayweather's net worth is said to be around \$1.2 billion

Floyd Mayweather

Considering he earned £220m for his fight against Conor McGregor in August 2017, the 50-0 boxer certainly lives up to his nickname.

Despite various suggestions that Mayweather is broke, the boxer is always quick to insist that isn't the case by claiming a number of 'smart investments' are enough to provide him with an extra seven figures every month.

His wealth is so vast he can afford to keep his black cars and his white cars at separate proper-

ties in Las Vegas and Los Angeles respectively.

Of course, these cars are not stored at a fancy car garage, they are kept at some of the most incredible homes in the United States, with his Los Angeles home being worth an estimated £19m.

If he does not fancy travelling from A to B in one of the cars from his £20m car collection, he can always hop into his £50m private jet and take the aerial route to his home.

FLYWEATHER
PROMOTIONS

Lionel Messi was the highest paid football player in the world last year

Lionel Messi

The Argentine was extremely emotional when he had to leave his boyhood club Barcelona after spending over 21 years at the Nou Camp.

Fortunately, he has enough cash to dry his eyes with, as Paris Saint Germain are reportedly paying the 34-year-old £500,000 per week at the Parc Des Princes.

Equating to a yearly salary of around £25m, it is understood this is to be the starting salary which could increase even more through add-ons.

It is less than half of the £1.15m he raked in a week at Barcelona, as well as image rights and bonuses of £175,000 and £250,000 per week respectively.

He also lives like a player with six Ballon'D'Or titles to his name as he can relax in his £5.5m mansion 12 miles away from the Nou Camp, or even stay in one of the many hotels to his name.

The biggest of which is in the beautiful coastal town of Sitges on the Barcelona coast, and it is worth a monstrous £26m.

Sponsorship deals with the likes of Adidas and Pepsi also help the Argentine tick over, and he also released a special limited edition Budweiser beer last year.



South African batter Lizelle Lee

PROTEAS WOMEN CLAIM ODI SERIES WIN OVER WEST INDIES

The Proteas Women secured their first series win in the Caribbean when they chased down 157 with 13.2 overs to spare to complete an eight-wicket win over the West Indies Women on Tuesday.

Dane van Niekerk's team have an unassailable 3-0 lead in the series with two matches still to play.

Winning the toss and electing to field, the opening bowling duo of Marizanne Kapp and Shabnim Ismail applied the necessary pressure from the outset and were rewarded with a wicket

each when they had openers, Hayley Matthews (2) and Chedean Nation (1) back in the dugout inside five overs.

Speedster, Ismail was the pick of the bowlers for the Proteas as she picked up (3/31). Ismail struck early in her spell starting with Matthews (11) who was brilliantly caught and bowled in the third over.

Kapp joined in on the action as she continued her impressive streak on this tour with the wicket of Chedean Nation (6) who was caught at slip by Dane Van Niekerk.

Notwithstanding the 77-

run partnership between Rashada Williams (37 off 79) and Deandra Dottin (71 off 123) the hosts did not offer much in the innings as wickets continued to tumble with a combination of some fine bowling and fielding as the West Indies were bowled out for 157.

Ayabonga Khaka (2/22) and Sune Luus (2/25) helped set up the Proteas for a relatively easy chase which was beautifully orchestrated by the opening pair of Lizelle Lee 78* (120) and Laura Wolvaardt 52 (68). The duo were in no mood to waste any

time as Wolvaardt brought up her 21st half-century and Lee shortly followed shortly after with her 22nd fifty.

They made the home side pay by putting on 122-run for the first wicket, the seventh century stand between the pair. Despite a couple of wickets falling towards the latter stages, Lee and Van Niekerk saw the Proteas home.

The two sides will be back in action on Thursday for the fourth match in the series.

IDEWS