

SICK LEAVE ABUSERS WARNED!

SEE PAGE 6



*Recipients of new homes provided under the EU-funded Housing Support for Barbuda Project stand proudly with their certificates of handover, four years after their homes were devastated by Hurricane Irma. Standing with them on this occasion of tangible healing is Barbuda Affairs Minister Hon. Samantha Marshall (front row, second from left), while Prime Minister Gaston Browne and European Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans look on from the back row (center) preferring to give the spotlight to the beneficiaries of another **PROMISE MADE, PROMISE KEPT!***

INSIDE: Barbuda homes delivered to hurricane victims
Mandatory vaccination for New York teachers!
Germany to end pay for unvaccinated

COVID-19 vaccination of minors without parental consent: Respecting emerging autonomy and advancing public health

In May 2021, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine received emergency use authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration in adolescents aged 12 to 15 years, with authorization for younger children expected later this year. Despite reported clinical trial data indicating that the vaccine is safe and 100% efficacious for this age range, some parents and guardians may remain hesitant or outright opposed to vaccinating their children, particularly in politically and culturally conservative communities.

Children and adolescents account for approximately 22% of positive COVID-19 cases reported to date, and hospitalizations among this population have recently spiked. Since July 2020, weekly reported case rates for individuals aged 14 to 17 years have gen-

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erally mirrored or exceeded rates among adults. As cases decline in adults owing to vaccination, the current case rate in teenagers now exceeds that of adults 55 years and older.

Although COVID-19 illness is generally less severe in younger people, the disease has nonetheless caused substantial morbidity and [an increasing number of] deaths among US children and adolescents, a burden of disease greater than that of many diseases for which vaccines are routinely recommended in this age group.

Approximately one-third of confirmed COVID-19 cases in minors have been asymptomatic, creating an opportunity for minors to spread the virus unknowingly. The reduction of asymptomatic transmission is essential to slowing the spread of the virus, and growing evidence suggests that

vaccination provides substantial public health benefits by decreasing transmission in addition to its direct, individual benefits. For these reasons, there is an urgent need for increased immunization in younger age groups. Vaccinating minors is critical to protecting them from the virus, reducing transmission—especially to higher-risk populations—and continuing progress toward herd immunity.

Children and adolescents have the capacity to understand and reason about low-risk and high-benefit health care interventions. State laws should therefore authorize minors to consent to COVID-19 vaccination without parental permission.

Minors' Capacity to Consent to Highly Beneficial, Low-Risk Treatments

Before age 14 years, minors are generally thought to lack the cognitive capac-

ity and maturity to make rational health care judgments. Factors such as social pressure, emotional regulation, and planning skills affect minors' ability to make well-considered choices. To account for these developmental facts, laws require parental permission and presume that parents know and will act in the best interest of their children.

Despite this presumption, parents and minors might disagree about health care decisions. In the context of vaccination, some older minors may possess a more accurate understanding of the risks and benefits of a vaccine than their hesitant guardians. In younger children, and depending on the intervention, such cases present challenges and may entail judicial intervention.

However, by age 14 years, minors' reasoning begins to track adult decision-mak-

ing, weighing in favor of respect for minors' autonomy to make health care decisions that advance their health, particularly when these choices have a positive effect on public health. Around this age, adolescents develop cognitive processes—including a meta-cognitive understanding of decision-making, problem-solving skills, and an ability to commit to choices—that foster competent decisions.⁸

Some sensitive health services currently accessible to minors may present greater risk and less benefit than the COVID-19 vaccine. Given the risks and the ongoing devastation of the pandemic, as well as the high benefit of vaccination for individual and public health, existing laws authorizing minors to consent to vaccines should be expanded to include COVID-19 vaccination and adopted nationally.

Policy Recommendations

To balance respect for minors' autonomy with developmental realities and parental interests, a policy allowing minors to receive the vaccine without parental consent would use a sliding scale of decision-making authority, granting greater autonomy to minors as they age while also considering the risks and benefits of vaccination. On such a calculus, COVID-19 vaccines offer high benefit and low risk—a profile that lowers the threshold for determining whether a minor has the capacity to make this decision.

The following age groupings offer a guide for minor consent rules for COVID-19 vaccination:

- Healthy children younger than 12 years would not be permitted to consent to vaccination without parental approval. Children older than 9 years with underlying medical conditions for whom the vaccine could offer increased benefits, however, would be exempt from this general prohibition and, after an affirmative evaluation of their competency, may consent.

- Minors aged 12 to 14 years could consent to vaccination without parental approval with support and

facilitation from their clinicians and other trusted adult figures. In such cases, clinicians should notify minors' parents of their immunization unless notification might pose a risk to the minor. In such cases, weighing the risk of parental retribution or the loss of the therapeutic relationship against the risk of minors contracting the virus would require a careful case-by-case determination.

- Minors aged 15 to 17 years could provide consent without parental approval. Unlike the younger groups, immunization for individuals in this population should remain confidential.

Routine vaccinations among children and adolescents have declined—particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic—while anti-vaccine attitudes continue to grow. In an ongoing public health crisis, children and adolescents should not be placed at continued risk due to their parents' hesitancy over COVID-19 vaccines. Although the percentage of parents who may decline to vaccinate their children is currently unknown, the reported hesitancy among adults—including the age groups that include most parents of minors—suggests

that this number is likely substantial. Given that children and adolescents account for approximately 22% of the US population, a considerable portion of unvaccinated minors could prolong the pandemic, compromise herd immunity, and expose these minors to preventable risks.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, responses to other vaccination programs demonstrate that it is not merely a theoretical possibility that situations will arise in which well-informed adolescents will want the benefits of COVID-19 immunization despite their parents' wishes ... Policy makers and health officials must take action to address these concerns beyond the context of the current pandemic, even if such action occurs at a later time.

Every vaccinated individual counts in the global fight against COVID-19. The ongoing pandemic and its profound consequences for health and societal functioning affirm the urgent need for states to recognize minors' capacity to consent to vaccination to safeguard individual and public health.

*(Published online July 12, 2021 by **Jama Pediatrics** - ABRIDGED)*

AOSIS Leaders' Declaration launched!

The first since 2014, the Declaration highlights SIDS challenges and issues guidance on Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Ocean issues



Hon. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

For the first time in seven years, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) has endorsed a new *Leaders' Declaration*.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have long been raising the alarm about the catastrophic effects of climate change and SIDS' challenges

in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Now, ahead of the pivotal UN COP26 climate negotiations, this Declaration clearly outlines SIDS'

priorities with global calls to action to make recovery and sustainable development for SIDS a reality.

The Declaration was launched on Wednesday 22nd September at the virtual AOSIS Leaders' Summit, occurring on the margins of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

It focuses on three main issues impacting SIDS – climate change, sustainable development and the ocean – and is the first such Declaration ratified by AOSIS since 2014.

Among the key points of the Declaration is a call for G20 countries to take account of their subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, which generates the majority of global greenhouse gas emissions:

“Note that at least USD 1.6 trillion were spent on fossil fuel subsidies over the 5-year period since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015; remind the major emitters that the Paris Agreement, inclusive of its object and purpose, is binding and its obligations must be performed in good faith; and declare that the subsidizing of fossil fuels by major emitters, particularly the Group of 20 (G20), runs

counter to their obligations and is contrary to the best available science.”

The Declaration also notes the need for the international community to scale up support that is critically needed for finance, as SIDS do not have adequate access to funding and endure a complicated process of application.

While representatives were heartened by Tuesday's news from US President Joe Biden that the US will double its climate finance action in developing countries to \$11.4 billion a year by 2024, they noted more ambition is needed from global powers to close the climate and development gaps.

“We call on the UN and our partners to enhance the support provided to SIDS by the UN system, including through on-the-ground presence. The support to SIDS should be responsive at a speed that is required by the challenges we face,” said the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of AOSIS.

“As a voice for the most vulnerable countries, we note that the challenges are great, yet there are solutions, and the momentum is here and

now,” Chairman Browne stated.

Heads of State and Government of the 39 AOSIS member countries also shared urgent calls for enhanced solidarity and action from the international community:

The Honourable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica: “It is imperative that, as SIDS, we are able to invest in the resilience of our economies to climate change and other external shocks. Consequently, the COP 26 discussions must be action-oriented and serve to focus our attention on fiscal space and debt sustainability in SIDS, alongside climate finance commitments.”

His Excellency Miguel Díaz Canel Bermúdez, President of the Republic of Cuba: “The developed countries must shoulder their responsibilities and support the efforts to achieve sustainable development for all the peoples and to preserve the planet from the threats that they themselves have created.”

His Excellency Te Beretiteni Taneti Maamau, President of the Republic of Kiribati: “As highlighted by the UN's assessment of countries' performance over the Millen-

nium Development Goals, the SIDS were lagging behind because of unique and similar characteristics including limited resources base, climate vulnerabilities, and limited digital connectivity. It is clear that our SIDS family needs to move our economies forward in an increasingly globalized and competitive world, to establish economies of scale, and reassert our resilience.”

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State of Emergency to continue!

The State of Emergency (SOE) which has been ongoing for 18 months in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is set to be extended beyond the expiry of its current cycle.

Parliament convened yesterday, Thursday 23 September 2021, for the purpose of extending the SOE which can only be imposed for 90 days at a time, after which it must be renewed/extended by resolution of Parliament.

The current SOE is set to expire at the end of this month; therefore a further extension can carry through to the end of 2021.

However, Parliament can also meet before the end of the 90-day period to amend or repeal the extension which has to be publicly gazetted in order to become legally enforceable.

"The Cabinet was informed by the Minister of Health that the recently-published Regulations—that provide for all government employees to be vaccinated by September 30, 2021, or to remain at home without pay beginning October 1, 2021—are having the desired impact," according to the post Cabinet briefing notes.

It says that, "On average, more than 1,000 adults and 12- to 17-year-olds are accessing the ... vaccines daily since September 20 when they became fully available.

"Smaller numbers of infected adults are being hospitalized daily since the September 20 rollout began, and the number of active cases is estimated to have declined, attesting to the wisdom of encouraging and mandating government employees to vaccinate ..."

Concerning the resolution opposing mandatory vaccination that was published by the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (ABUT), following a virtual meeting on Tuesday 21 September 2021, Cabinet has opined that it "flies in the face of the law and is also fatally flawed.

"The Government has an obligation to provide a safe environment for children who are compelled to attend school up until age 16 years. That is not the responsibility of the ABUT. The teachers' union has no locus to determine for children what is safe. The ABUT is a workers' organization of teachers.

"All teachers are required to be vaccinated

by October 1, 2021, and a majority of more than 800 of the 1,400 teachers employed by the Government are vaccinated."

Cabinet has also announced that it "intends to take to Parliament an amendment to the Public Health Act which would make a person liable for a fine (possibly of \$5,000) and/or confinement (of possibly 6 months), should that person, having been informed that she/he is COVID-infected, discharges him/herself [from medical treatment] without the permission

of ... medical personnel, rather than await instructions to further the treatment of that infected person".

A warning has also been issued to workers (and their doctors) who abuse sick-leave provisions included in the labour contracts under which they are employed.

"Additional scrutiny is to be paid to doctors who enable false claims. If so determined, the false diagnosis will result in severe penalties to the doctors as well, including the loss of licence to practice."

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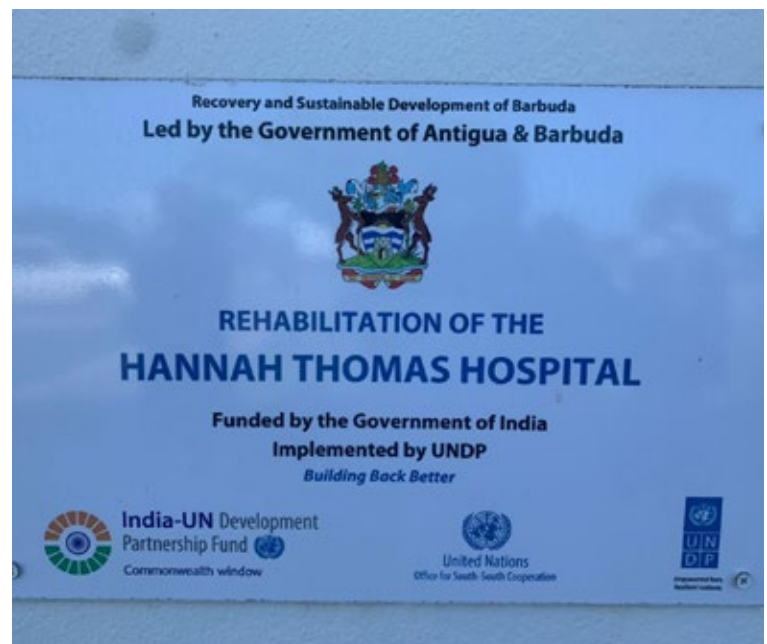
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Indian High Commissioner in multiple engagements on official visit

The High Commissioner of India to Guyana and the Eastern Caribbean, Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, on an official visit to Antigua and Barbuda, met with Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Foreign Affairs Minister Chet Greene (*see story on PAGE 11*). Dr. Srinivasa also met with Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas and medical personnel – including resident medical officer Dr. Jeremy Deazle -- on the sister isle of Barbuda where the Government of India has provided critical financial assistance for rebuilding of the Hanna Thomas Hospital. Pictures show the High Commissioner in a variety of these official interactions.





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COVID Dashboard Update for September 23, 2021

The most recent reports received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment from the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) revealed 74 new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Monday 20th September 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Ninety-eight samples were processed at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and 118 were processed by CARPHA for September 20th. No samples were processed for September 19th.

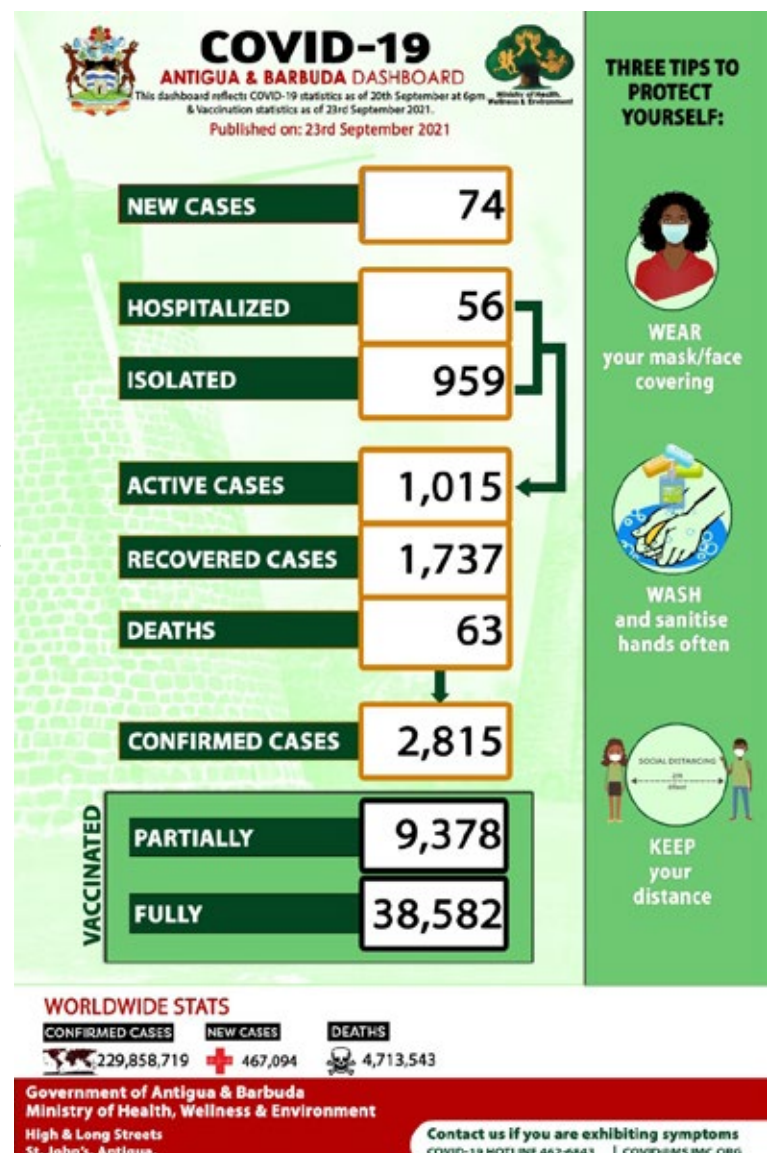
Seventy-nine recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 1,737.

Three COVID-19 related deaths were recorded; two on September 19th and one on September 20th, increasing the total to 63.

Consequently, the total number of persons [who have had] laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 2,815; which is inclusive of 1,015 active cases. There are 56 hospitalized cases; 38 mild, three moderate, and 15 severe.

Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 38,582 individuals, while 9,378 have only received a first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes



Indian High Commissioner pays courtesy visit to The UWI Five Islands



Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Densil Williams (third from right), hands over a gift to Indian High Commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda, His Excellency Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, while members of The UWI Five Islands senior management team and India's Honorary Consul in Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Vijay Tewani (third from left) look on.

The University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus welcomed the Indian High Commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda, His Excellency, Dr. K.J. Srinivasa to its campus on Tuesday 21 September.

The High Commissioner paid a courtesy visit accompanied by Honorary Consul of India in Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Vijay Tewani.

This visit was in keeping with a pledge by Honorary Consul Tewani who paid a formal visit to the campus in May 2021.

Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Densil Williams, thanked the High Com-

missioner for including the university in his visit and looked forward to working with him and the Government of India, as well as other Indian stakeholders, to build strategic partnerships.

Discussions were held between High Commissioner Srinivasa and the senior management team of the Five Islands Campus, and included potential areas of collaboration between Indian institutions and The UWI, as well as opportunities for expanding training and exchange programmes.

One major area of discussion was the collaboration in Informa-

tion Technology, as India is an 'IT global powerhouse'. The UWI Five Islands launched its School of Science, Computing & Artificial Intelligence in August 2021, which aims to prepare upcoming digital learners for transformation in the job market.

The High Commissioner thanked Principal Williams and his team for hosting him and pledged his support in working to build the alliances that will help to benefit The UWI and the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

Indian government still wants Choksi repatriated



Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Immigration, Hon. E.P. Chet Green (left) with India's High Commissioner to Guyana and the Eastern Caribbean, Dr. K.J. Srinivasa.

The Indian government's High Commissioner to Guyana and the Eastern Caribbean, Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, has again raised the issue of the repatriation of fugitive from Indian justice Mehul Choksi to face charges in his native country's legal system.

Dr. Srinivasa made the request for Choksi's deportation during a courtesy call Thursday with Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who assured the Indian High Commissioner that Choksi would be deported to India as soon as the legal process is completed here in Antigua and Barbuda.


Choksi is alleged to have been the mastermind of a massive fraud against one of India's leading financial institutions, the Punjab National Bank. He attained Antigua and Barbuda cit-

izenship through the Citizenship by Investment Program (CIP), and while India has formally requested his extradition, Choksi has waged a legal challenge in the courts to have the request nullified. The High Commissioner also paid a courtesy call on Foreign Affairs Minister E.P. Chet Greene, during which a detailed accounting of India's on-going programme of assistance to the country was done.

Greene reported that the Indian Government offered a USD 10 million line-of-credit to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for solar energy and climate-change-related projects. To this end, he added, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is awaiting a proposal from the Department of Environment. According to the minister, the Minis-



try of Foreign Affairs received communication from the Indian Government on special capacity building courses, training, and deputation of experts, based on pri-


ority needs and requirements of Antigua and Barbuda. The training courses are currently being offered virtually due to the pandemic.





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Barbuda homes handed over by PM Browne and EU officials



A recipient stands proudly in the doorway of her new home provided under the Housing Support to Barbuda Project.

Eleven previously displaced families were all smiles this week as they were presented with keys to their newly renovated homes by Prime Minister Hon. Gaston Browne and Vice President of the European Union (EU) Commission Mr. Frans Timmermans.

The handover ceremony was a segment of the high-level visit to Antigua and Barbuda by the EU delegation to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean Countries, the OECS, and CARICOM/CARIFORUM.

The 11 homes are part of 84 to be provided in the final stage of the €5 million-euro project to repair and rebuild homes

that were either destroyed or severely damaged during the passage of Hurricane Irma (in September 2017) under Phase 2 of the EU Housing Support to Barbuda Project.

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Hon. Gaston Browne stated: "I am very happy with the progress that has been made during the last 12-18 months. Barbuda, obviously, has made a lot of progress. Eighty percent (80%) of the homes have been restored and the PLH Project is going well. We have this energy plant, as well, in which 14 hours of the day have been supplied with green energy. So a lot of prog-

ress has been made and the future of Barbuda is very bright."

Speaking on the behalf of the EU, Mr. Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, noted: "I'm really excited to be here today to see the marvelous work done by the UNDP with support from the European Union. If you can help so many people with such limited funds to restore their houses and create high-level housing, that's marvelous! I admire what UNDP does worldwide, but here they have done an excellent job and I want to commend the people of UNDP for that."

Gloria Cephas, a mother of 8 who, like the 10 additional beneficiaries, was devastated after losing her home to the hurricane, expressed her gratitude to the Government, the EU and UNDP stating “Getting back my home today was the best relief I have had in the last four years – we can actually go back home! The house that we have been waiting for is finally ready and it is a relief. Without the housing project, we would not have been able to rebuild

any time soon, so we are more than grateful and very thankful.”

Construction of the 11 homes began in July 2021, with another cluster of homes slated to be completed by the beginning of November using the “Build Back Better” (BBB) approach in compliance with the 2015 OECS Building Code as well as the Antigua and Barbuda Building Guidelines. The Project – led by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda with support from the European Union (EU)

and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean – runs until 2022. The Office of the National Authorising Officer (ONAO), with the assistance of the Beneficiary Selection Committee (BSC), will continue the selection process to repair the most impacted homes, totaling 104 homes overall.

Ugo Blanco, Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, reiterated

UNDP’s commitment to governments in the region as they build forward better, improve resilience and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the SDGs noting: “Sustainable inclusive development reaches all aspects of society and ensures no one is left behind. Thus, projects and partnerships such as these are catalytic as they address poverty, inequality and exclusion while creating an enabling environment for local and national growth.”

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Sagicor donates to Antigua and Barbuda Employers Federation

Sagicor recently partnered with the Antigua and Barbuda Employers' Federation (ABEF), which is celebrating 70 years of service. The Caribbean insurance company donated \$1,000 and also as-

sisted with preparing the food hampers that were delivered to individuals who have been affected by the pandemic. The donation also represents an act of kindness by Sagicor, which has com-

mitted to doing 180 acts of kindness across all its markets in the Southern Caribbean in observance of 180 years in business.

In the accompanying photos, from left, are: Arlene Martin, executive

secretary of ABEF, along with Sagicor advisors Mara Simon and Karrit O'Mard-Lewis, giving a final once-over to the packages before they are delivered to those in need.





Wanted man charged with attempted murder!

Lance Williams aka “Lenny” of Parham, who was sought by the police in connection with a wounding incident on Friday 17th September, is now charged with attempted murder.

He is accused of wounding 41-year-old Tyrone Monroe, also of Parham, with a sharp object during an altercation at Parham.

The accused later fled the scene; however, he surrendered to the police at Parham Police Station around 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, accompanied by his attorney.

Monroe is currently at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, nursing what was reported to be a puncture wound to his lung. His condition is reported to be stable.

Haitians: fear at home, no hope abroad



By Sir Ronald Sanders

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

The abrupt resignation of the US Special Envoy to Haiti, Daniel Foote, came like a bolt of lightning from a clear blue sky. It was as unexpected as it was unprecedented.

The public resignation and sharp responses from officials of the State Department – in-

cluding Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman who, only two days before, met CARICOM Foreign Ministers virtually – indicated a deep division in the principal foreign relations agency of the US.

Foote had himself served as Deputy Secretary of State and those, like me, who have interacted with him, know him to be a suave and likeable man and a persuasive diplomat. He had assumed the post of Special Envoy to Haiti only two months ago amid a constitutional, political, and humanitarian crisis in Haiti.

From all accounts that I heard from groups within Haiti, Foote had quickly connected with the various factions and was apparently well-liked. These groups also knew

that Foote and the US Ambassador to Haiti, Michele Sison, had differences of opinion on the strategy the US should employ in Haiti to achieve its objectives.

From statements reported in both the New York Times and the Miami Herald, it appears that Sison's point of view commanded more support than Foote's. Deputy Secretary Sherman told Miami Herald reporters that Sison is "an excellent ambassador", adding, "We have tremendous faith in her and in her leadership."

Whether or not it is the lack of establishment support for his opinion on US strategy in Haiti that caused Foote to resign, the reason he gave for doing so – in his letter to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken – is one that has resonated

throughout the Caribbean and the black community in the US.

"I will not be associated with the United States' inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees and illegal immigrants to Haiti, a country where American officials are confined to secure compounds because of the danger posed by armed gangs in control of daily life".

On any objective grounds, the large-scale deportation of Haitians from Texas by the plane loads, that are continuing, is inhumane. The Haitians have genuine fear for their lives, but they are being rounded-up like cattle and deported without a hearing.

Were these events taking place in any other country in the hemisphere, a complaint against US authorities would already have been lodged at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and demands would have been made for a special session of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) to make a declaration against it.

But nothing has been said in the OAS and nothing brought before the IACHR, and the like-

lihood of anything being done is remote. Even if a few CARICOM countries were minded to do so, garnering wider support from a sufficient number of other OAS member states would be near impossible.

Silence and inaction do not change the distressing situation which has been exacerbated by photographs of the Haitian refugees being hunted – including by a border guard on horseback wielding what looks like either a whip or a lasso as he pursues an unarmed and clearly terrified man. The photograph elicited statements of lamentation from both President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, but the deportations continue in the full display of their harshness.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has so far also been silent about this affair. In part, the reason for this is the archaic way in which CARICOM makes decisions and authorises public statements. The organization waits for a member state, meaning the government, to draw a matter to its attention and to discuss it with the head of government – or a designee present – before it will say anything. The last time CARICOM made an immediate

statement concerning Haiti – apart from condemning the assassination of Jovenel Moïse – was well after the event had occurred.

In all this, the government of Haiti has not brought the matter to the attention of CARICOM nor has it sought any support for a statement calling on the US authorities to adopt a more tolerant or humane approach to the problem. Indeed, every approach initiated by CARICOM to be helpful to Haiti in its continuing crises has either been ignored or rebuffed.

So, when the question is asked: where is CARICOM in all this? The answer is that CARICOM's decision-making process is archaic and centred on the presumed necessity to involve the government of the country concerned. In this situation, there is unlikely to be any CARICOM response any time soon.

This does not stop individual governments and organizations from stating their own positions. And they should. Right now, the Haitians who are being herded in Texas and deported to fear-some conditions, need a champion – not to justify their illegal entry to the US, or to demand that they be allowed to remain – but to treat them

compassionately, give them a right to a hearing, and provide them basic humane conditions until they can be accepted or deported in an orderly fashion.

Foote's public resignation gave a rare insight into the workings of the US government when he said: "Our policy approach to Haiti remains deeply flawed, and my recommendations have been ignored and dismissed, when not edited to project a narrative different from my own".

The last observation deserves a sharp intake of breath.

In the meantime, little or nothing is being done about the conditions in Haiti that are creating refugees and illegal immigrants. The notion that presidential and other elections can be held any time soon in a country run by gangs with people living in fear, and that such elections will be free and fair, is "deeply flawed". So too is the idea that once elections are held, those who have dictated to Haiti for years, even by deciding their leaders, can simply walk away – Foote's resignation notwithstanding.

(Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)

CJ laments unused rights under Treaty of Chaguaramas

Barbados Today - President of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) Justice Adrian Saunders has bemoaned the fact that Caribbean people, for the most part, have not been making greater use of their rights under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

He was speaking at the handing-over ceremony in which third-year law students of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies – who participated in a Trade Lab Clinic, hosted in conjunction with the Shridath Ramphal Centre for Trade Law, Policy and Services (SRC) – produced 34 summaries of CCJ decisions.

The summaries of the CCJ decisions between 2008 and 2020 were prepared by Chelsea Lawrence, Mya Brathwaite, James Morris, and Régine Mondesir.

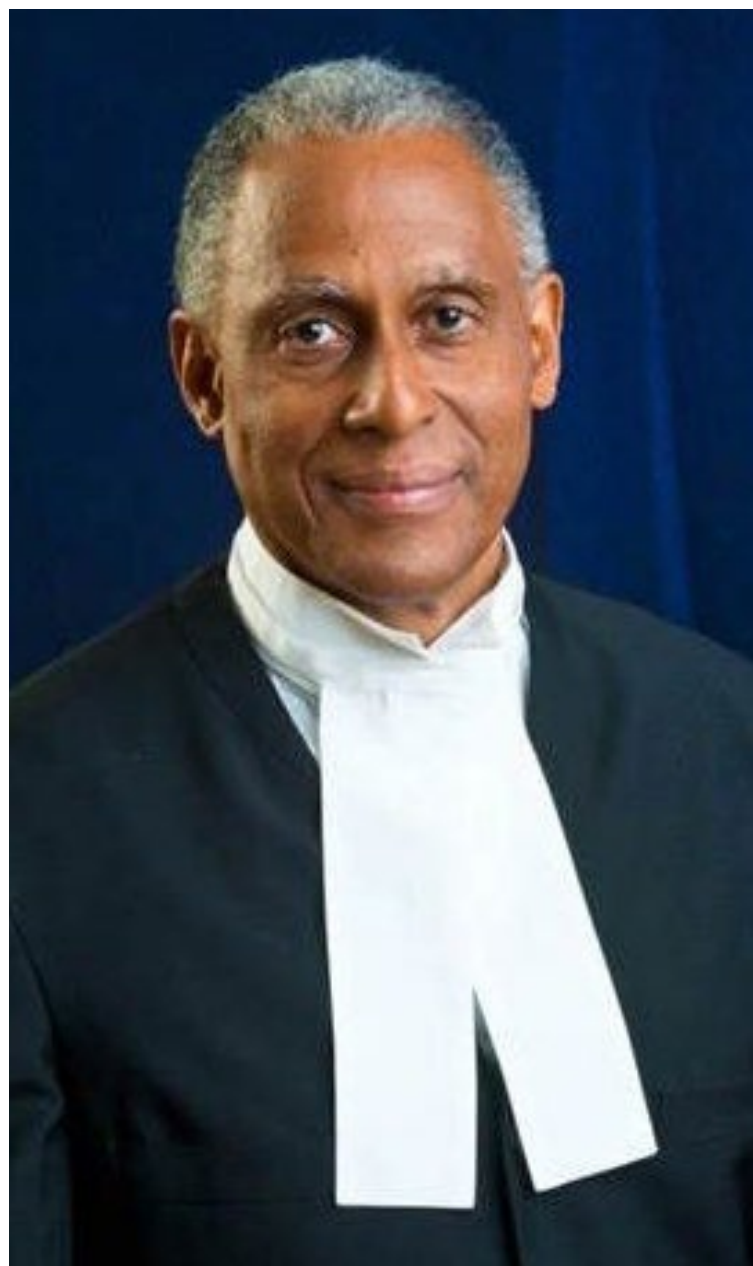
The students were supervised by SRC director Dr. Jan Yves Remy and lecturer in the Faculty of Law Dr. Ronnie Yearwood, while international

trade law practitioner Claude Chase acted as mentor to the students.

Dr. Remy, who conceptualised the trade lab, explained that the project was established to deepen the “understanding of the Court’s role in interpreting and applying the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas and deciding on issues regarding freedom of movement, trade, services and money in the CARICOM region”.

In a presentation to students, Remy said it was her desire that the project will achieve greater implementation of “this hope of Caribbean integration”.

In his comments, Justice Saunders commended the project. “Any initiative that highlights how the rights are to be enjoyed; that places a spotlight on the jurisprudence that has been developed in this area; and that makes this jurisprudence more easily accessible to the people and States of the Community, does a tremendous service to the region,” he said.



President of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) Justice Adrian Saunders.

Moreover, the senior regional judicial officer said the “digest is more than just concise summaries of the cases. It includes aids that give significant added value for researchers, quite apart from providing a readily accessible snapshot of the deci-

sions for the public at large.”

Dr. Yearwood noted that the CCJ summaries would allow practitioners and academics to “digest and reach into the cases in a quicker way”.

Guyanese man held over fatal chopping of Trinidad toddler



Trinidad Express—Over 24 years of domestic abuse suffered by a Tarodale family culminated in the killing of one of their youngest children, a one-year-old girl, during a bloody cutlass attack on Sunday night by a rejected lover.

Little Sariah Williams, who celebrated her first birthday in June, was chopped on the head as she sat in the lap of her grandmother.

Sariah's grandmother Michelle Williams and mother Nikita Williams used their bodies as human shields over the infant as the man repeatedly swung the cutlass at them in the gallery of their home at Sion Drive, Phase One.

As she tried to fend off the cutlass, Michelle, 50, was chopped on her right wrist and two fingers were chopped and fractured on her left hand.

The man retreated only after relatives and neighbours went after him upon hearing the screams of the family. He hid in a room until police arrived at the scene.

Police detained a 58-year-old painter, a Guyanese national, in connection with the killing.

The grandmother said the man had threatened to kill her, adding she and other members of her family had endured violent confrontations and abuse from him on numerous occasions.

Michelle said she believed the attack on Sunday night was premeditated because she had recently turned down his marriage proposal and wanted him to leave her home.

After receiving threats in 89 voice notes on Friday and Saturday and a photo of a cutlass from the man,

she confided in a close friend that she was going to the police yesterday morning to start the process for a restraining order against him.

Michelle told the media, "We were together for 24 years and I took the abuse. He slapped me, kicked me with boots, knocked me out, threw pitch-oil on me, threw thinners on my daughter, tried to light me afire and stab my son in his face.

"I had a lot of fear. Since last week he said he was going to kill me and kill all of the children to make an example. And so, he really did it. He killed my grandchild. She now started to walk and talk. She was a nice child."

'Blood was just flowing'

On Sunday, the grandmother, a security guard, went to her workplace while Nikita used her (Michelle's) kitchen to cook food for a curry-que that day to raise funds to purchase schoolbooks, devices and school materials.

Nikita is a single mother of eight, with Sariah, her last child. When she returned home from work, Michelle was washing the dishes and cleaning the kitchen when the suspect began to quarrel with her.

"When I started to wash the dishes, he started to cuss. 'You only for your children, everything is your children. Why are you letting them make money off of you and I am not getting anything', he told me.

Several arrested as Jamaicans protest against mandatory vaccination

CNW – Jamaican police have detained several members of the small opposition United Independents' Congress (UIC) who took to the streets on Wednesday, protesting against mandatory vaccination.

Police clashed with protestors as they marched from St. William Grant Park to Gordon House, the Jamaica Parliament, in the capital.

Police had on Tuesday warned against staging an illegal march in the capital, "stating categorically that it is not in receipt of any application to hold this or any similar march across the island.

"As such, the public is advised not to participate in what would be an illegal march," the statement said, adding that "while the Constitution allows for peaceful gathering, a march of that nature would not be authorized at this time, as it would be in breach of the Disaster Risk Management Act (DRMA) which stipulates that no more than 10 persons must be gathered in any public place."

The police said the protest would not be in compliance with Section 7 of the Public Order Act which, among other measures, notes: "Where any person desires to organize any public march in day-



light, he shall, at least three days before such intended public march, make an application for a permit to the senior officer of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) for the parish in which the public march is to take place, or to the Commissioner of Police if the appli-

cation relates to the Corporate Area of Kingston and Saint Andrews."

As police arrested several of the protestors, some members of the public were demanding their release. During the protest, the UIC reiterated its demand for all 63 Members

of Parliament to resign.

The Andrew Holness government has been urging people to get vaccinated against the virus, indicating also that it wants to have at least 65 percent of the population vaccinated by March 2022 so as to achieve herd immunity.

UWI ranked in top 1.5 percent of universities in the world

Caribbean Loop - The University of the West Indies (UWI) now stands in the top 1.5 percent of universities in the world, up from three per cent in the prior year.

The UWI revealed today that the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking system results for 2022, released in early September, show that The UWI moved up 94 places.

This result places The UWI alongside the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany.

It also locates The UWI in the elite band of BRICS universities in Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa with 3.2 billion people, compared to the 6.2 million in the English-speaking Caribbean.

UWI is the only university in the Caribbean that qualified for the assessment.

Commenting on the achievement, UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles said: "While we have maintained our number one position in the Caribbean, and top one percent of the best in Latin America and the Caribbean, the surge to the top 1.5 percent in the world gives us a considerable degree of professional satisfaction as a management and leadership team."

The 1,668 elite universities ranked in the study were assessed under five pillars of excellence: teaching and learning, research, scholarly and professional citations, industry income, and international outlook and participation.

Results are validated by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

The UWI said its robust comparative performance was driven by improved results in

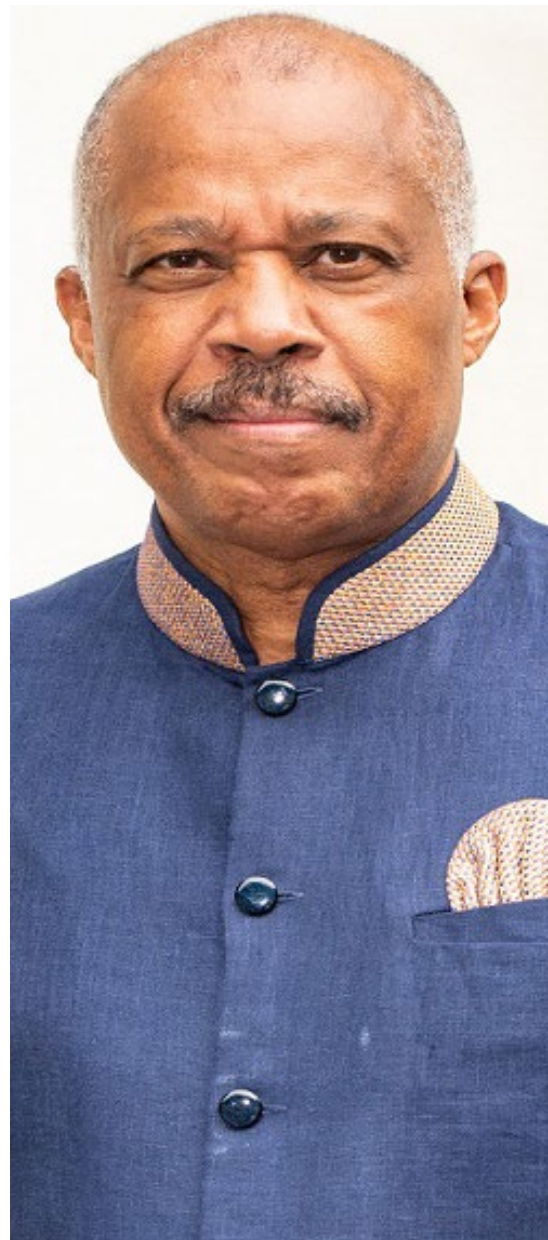
teaching and learning, research and professional citations, and global outlook and participation.

Speaking to the media at a press conference announcing the news, Sir Hilary said the global recognition of the quality of research, publications and citations of the work, gave the UWI the biggest bump in its ranking.

"We are here to generate public research, pedagogy, academic work that the world will consume and, yes, there was tremendous consumption of the UWI academic and professional output, and that gave us the biggest bump, but the others moved up as well," he said, stating that the UWI has the longest history of research on climate change.

Commenting on the impact of the ranking for the UWI and its students, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Strategic Planning, and Principal of the Five Islands Campus [in Antigua and Barbuda], Professor Densil A. Williams, who guided the global ranking engagement, said the UWI now has a stronger footing on which to approach its partners and a stronger foundation to negotiate partnerships with the business sector, Government and other stakeholders in the university sector.

"It also gives you the ability to partner with professors with world-renowned stature to come to your university. They are looking at this and say this is a high-quality university that I want to be associated with and, as a result of that, mobility of teachers, mobility of students will increase and we have to take these things into account



UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles.

as we strategise on the revenue revolution we are getting into over the next few days," he said.

The UWI said, despite the improved ranking, areas of concern that are red-flagged and identified for improvement remain constant: insufficient private sector investment in research and volatility in government funding that raise questions [about] the enterprise's financial sustainability.

These areas are placed at the centre of strategic planning for the next five-year period.

'Vaccine apartheid': Africans tell UN they need vaccines

Jamaica Gleaner - The inequity of COVID-19 vaccine distribution came into sharp focus Thursday as many of the African countries whose populations have little to no access to the life-saving shots spoke at the United Nations annual meeting of world leaders.

Some called for member states to relax intellectual property rights in order to expand vaccine production.

"No one is safe unless we are all safe," was the common refrain.

"The virus doesn't know continents, borders, even less nationalities or social statuses," Chad's president, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, told the General Assembly. "The countries and regions that aren't vaccinated will be a source of propagating and developing new variants of the virus. In this regard, we welcome the repeated appeals of the United Nations secretary general and the director general of the (World Health Organization) in fa-

vour of access to the vaccine for all. The salvation of humanity depends on it."

The struggle to contain the coronavirus pandemic has featured prominently in leaders' speeches over the past few days — many of them delivered remotely, exactly because of the virus.

Country after country acknowledged the wide disparity in accessing the vaccine, painting a picture so bleak that a solution has at times seemed impossibly out of reach.

South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, pointed to vaccines as "the greatest defence that humanity has against the ravages of this pandemic".

"It is, therefore, a great concern that the global community has not sustained the principles of solidarity and cooperation in securing equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines," he said.

"It is an indictment on humanity that more than 82% of the world's vaccine doses have been acquired



In this photo taken from video, South Africa's President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa remotely addresses the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in a pre-recorded message, Thursday, September 23, 2021, at UN headquarters.

by wealthy countries, while less than 1% has gone to low-income countries."

He and others urged UN member states to support a proposal to temporarily waive certain intellectual property rights established by the World Trade Organization to allow more countries, particularly low- and middle-income countries, to produce COVID-19 vaccines.

Angola's president João Lourenço said it was "shocking to see the disparity be-

tween some nations and others with respect to the availability of vaccines".

"These disparities allow for third doses to be given in some cases, while in other cases, as in Africa, the vast majority of the population has not even received the first dose," Lourenço said.

The US, Britain, France, Germany and Israel are among the countries that have begun administering boosters or announced plans to do so.

Germany to end quarantine pay for those without vaccinations

(Reuters) – Germany will stop paying compensation to unvaccinated workers who are forced into quarantine by coronavirus measures, as it is unfair to ask taxpayers to subsidise those who refuse to get inoculated, Health Minister Jens Spahn said on Wednesday.

The rules – which will be implemented by the governments of Germany's 16 federal states – will take effect by Oct. 11 at the latest, Spahn said, confirming the details of a draft document seen earlier by Reuters.

The rules will affect people who test positive for the virus and those returning from trips to countries designated “high risk” for COVID-19 – which now include Britain, Turkey and parts of France, among others.

Unvaccinated travellers from such countries are required to quarantine for at least five days. Those who have been vaccinated or have recently recovered are not required to do so.

Critics have said such rules would be equivalent to a mandate for COVID-19 vaccinations because many workers cannot afford to stay at home without pay.

“We should see this differently,” Spahn told a news conference. “It’s about fairness. Those who protect themselves and others via a vaccination can rightly ask why we should have to pay somebody who ended up in quarantine after a holiday in a risk area.”

There are also privacy concerns. Germany has tough laws regulating data privacy because of its history of Nazi and Communist state surveillance of citizens, and employers usually have no right to ask staff for information on health issues.

Vaccinations are not compulsory in Germany but authorities have been taking measures that make it increasingly inconvenient to be unvaccinated.




Doctor Steffen Lueder takes a nasal swab from a person for a rapid antigen test at a testing site at the “Revolte Bar”, after the bar was closed due to coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions, in Berlin, Germany, April 15, 2021

COVID-19 tests required, for example, to dine in indoor restaurants, will stop being free of charge from Oct. 11.

Also, some German states are allowing businesses such as restaurants or sports stadiums to choose whether to admit people with negative

tests, or only those who have been vaccinated or have recently recovered from COVID-19.

Germany has fully vaccinated 74% of adults, compared to 72.3% across the European Union as a whole, official data show.



Judge gives Dutch boy OK for COVID vaccine amid parental dispute

The 12-year-old secondary school student went to court because his parents, who are separated, could not agree on the issue.

(AP) — A 12-year-old boy has gone to court in the Netherlands to get permission to receive a COVID-19 vaccine so he can visit his grandmother who is battling lung cancer, according to a written court ruling published Thursday.

The boy, whose identity was not released, “is afraid that he could infect his grandmother, and he is convinced that if she is infected, it could immediately be life-threatening for her,” the Dutch court’s written ruling said.

A judge who heard the case earlier this week gave the boy permission to get a vaccine shot. Children ages 12-17 years can get vaccinated in the

Netherlands with parental approval. If parents do not consent, “then you can ultimately decide for yourself to get vaccinated,” the Dutch government says in a message to children on its website outlining their right to vaccination.

The 12-year-old secondary school student went to court because his parents, who are separated, could not agree on the issue. His mother gave him permission, but his father would not, citing concern about short-term and long-term side effects.

The judge at the Northern Netherlands Court in Groningen said the father’s concerns about short-term side effects

were “understandable”, but added that the side effects he cited are very rare and treatable and were taken into consideration by Dutch health authorities when they approved COVID-19 vaccines for children.

The judge said the father’s concerns about long-term side effects “lack any factual foundation”.

Lawyers for the parents did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The mother’s lawyer, Bennie Werink, told Dutch broadcaster RTV Noord that the case was the first he had seen in which a family dispute about vaccination ended up in court.

Judge lifts temporary pause on vaccine mandate for NYC teachers, who must now be vaccinated by Monday

A judge has lifted a temporary pause on New York City's vaccine mandate.

That means all teachers must be vaccinated by Monday, or lose their jobs.

A separate decision on a state mandate for health care workers has been delayed.

City officials and union representatives debated the issue Wednesday in court.

More than a month ago, Mayor Bill de Blasio said all teachers must get the shot by Sept. 27 or lose their jobs. The state said the same for health care workers.

"When we had the COVID outbreak it was very, very scary, even for us the health care workers. So I think people should be vaccinated," health care worker Marita Edet said.

But many disagreed. Seventeen health care workers filed lawsuits and several municipal unions sued the city, saying the mandate violates constitutional rights and that it shouldn't be a condition of employment.

"I think it's not right that they demand that. It's freedom of speech. It's freedom of religion. It should be freedom of choice," said Caroline Dipilato, who works in a school.

In separate court rulings, judges temporarily halted the mandatory vaccines until Wednesday. But on Wednesday, one court ruled



in de Blasio's favor, making it mandatory for teachers.

Manhattan Judge Lawrence Love ruled that "state and federal courts have consistently held that a mandatory vaccine requirement does not violate substantive due process rights" and challenges from a coalition of public sector unions that filed a lawsuit "will be unable to establish a likelihood of ultimate success on the merits" of their case.

"Everyone understands what happens if you're not vaccinated in time, what the penalties are. I don't expect a lot of people want to experience those penalties," de Blasio said.

There have also been staffing concerns if employees refuse to get at least one shot by the deadline – Monday. But Gov. Kathy Hochul said hospitals have emergency plans in place, and de Blasio says there will be no shortage of teachers.

"We have a huge corps of

vaccinated substitutes ready to move in," de Blasio said.

The United Federation of Teachers says while it believes its members should get the vaccine, it should not be a condition of employment.

The city says latest numbers show 87% of teachers are already vaccinated along with 80% of all Department of Education workers, but there have been staffing concerns if employees refuse to get the shot — not having enough teachers or substitute teachers, or health care staff in hospitals.

The city has allowed religious and medical exemptions for school staff, but the mayor says there have been very few requests. Only medical exemptions are approved for health workers. The state is still debating religious exemptions, and that decision is expected Oct. 12.

This is not the final ruling on vaccines, as the unions will still have an opportunity to challenge the decision.

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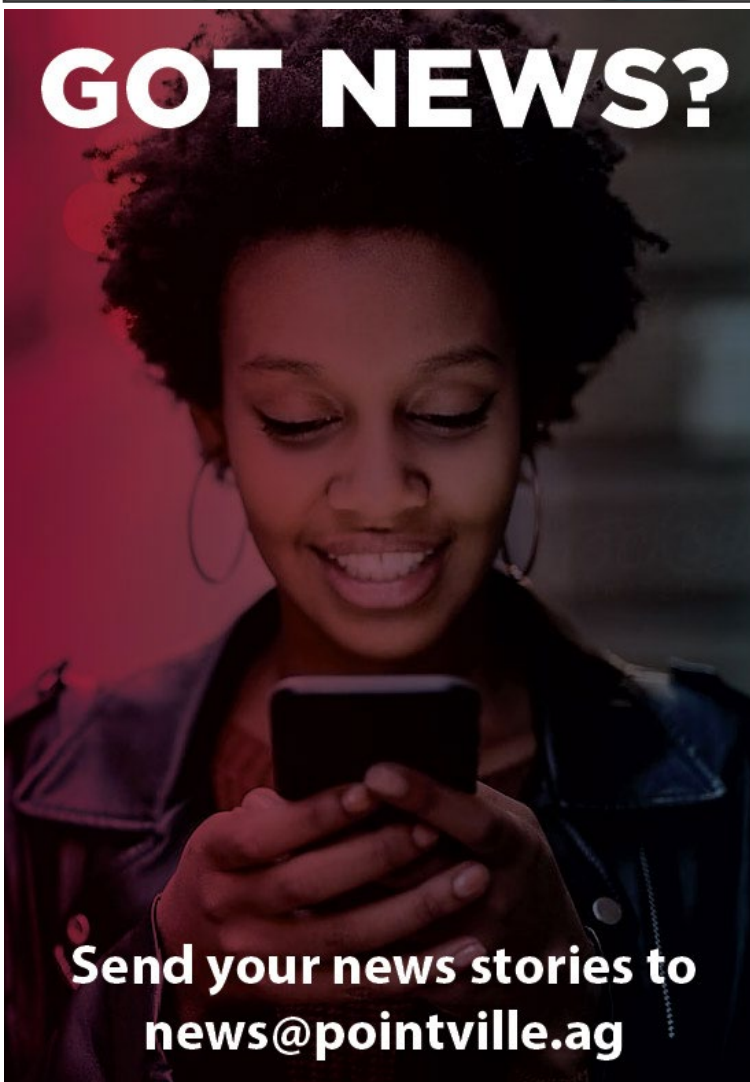

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Riddick Bowe yanked from Lamar Odom showdown

by *Hans Themistode*
(*Boxing Insider*)

After watching an older former boxing legend in Evander Holyfield suffer a brutal knockout defeat at the hands of Vitor Belfort, there was public outcry surrounding Riddick Bowe's return to the ring.

The 54-year-old former heavyweight champion was set to end his 13 year retirement on October 2nd in a celebrity boxing match against 41-year-old former NBA star Lamar Odom.

However, after careful consideration, Bowe has been yanked from the card.

Although Bowe will no longer take part in the event as a boxing participant, he'll still play a key role in promoting the show.

"This is entertainment," said Damon Feldman, CEO of Celebrity Boxing, during a recent interview. "I'm trying to put on a show. I'm not trying to get anyone's head knocked off."

Public outcries to have Bowe removed from the card began once Holyfield succumbed to a first-round stoppage defeat just a few short weeks ago. While he appeared to be in terrific

shape, Holyfield simply wasn't the same Hall-of-Fame fighter many had grown accustomed to seeing over the course of his career.

Holyfield's unfortunate demise, coupled with recent workout footage of Bowe, forced Feldman to reconsider the main event on the night. While Bowe will no longer enter the ring, Odom is still expected to remain on the card. Currently, a replacement opponent is now being sought after.

Following a decade-and-a-half playing career in the NBA, Odom is now trying his hand at boxing. After months of working on his craft, Odom stepped into the ring to take on singer/celebrity Aaron Carter in an exhibition contest. With the former ballplayer holding a ten-inch reach advantage, he had little to no trouble dealing with his man on the night, scoring the first-round stoppage win.

Also making an appearance on Odom's upcoming card will be social media star Corey B, as he looks to put his long-standing feud with former two-division boxing champion Paulie Malignaggi to rest.



Former world champion Riddick Bowe after 13 years of retirement from boxing.



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Elaine Thompson-Herah Set To Walk Out of MVP Track Club

posted by Nationwide Newsnet | 23 Sep, 2021

Nationwide Sports of Jamaica says it understands that Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah is set to leave the MVP Track Club.

Our sources say Thompson-Herah's camp has reportedly sent a letter to MVP and her major shoe sponsors, Nike, indicating her decision.

Thompson-Herah will no longer be coached by Stephen Francis.

It's understood that Thompson-Herah is about to sign with one of Nike's biggest rivals, Puma, in a mega deal.

When contacted ..., MVP Track Club president Bruce James told Nationwide

Sports that discussions are underway regarding Thompson-Herah's future at the track club.

Mr. James was asked whether it's true that Thompson-Herah has sent a letter parting ways with MVP.

James reiterated that discussions are underway with Thompson-Herah's camp.

Thompson-Herah recently became the first woman to defend the double sprint titles at the Olympic Games, both in Olympic record time.

She later went on to become the second fastest woman ever, with a stunning 10.54 seconds clocked at the Diamond League meeting in Eugene, Oregon, USA.



Cricket West Indies

CEO discusses tour with Pakistan counterpart

Cricket West Indies
CEO Johnny Grave.



Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Cricket West Indies (CWI) Johnny Grave contacted his Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) counterpart Wasim Khan on Tuesday to discuss security arrangements ahead of the Caribbean side's tour to Pakistan in December later this year.

West Indies would play three ODIs and three T20Is in Pakistan if PCB is successful in addressing CWI's security concerns following the successive setbacks that recently hit Pakistan cricket in the form of cancellations of series against New Zealand and England, respectively.

Speaking to a publisher in Pakistan, Grave said, "I called Wasim Khan to find out ev-

erything that had happened during the past week, on the back of New Zealand abandoning their tour and England's decision not to go there.

"I suggested to him that we should have another call later this week after receiving a briefing from my operational teams about our men's and women's tours that are scheduled for later this year."

Grave clarified that CWI would not be fazed by the decisions of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB), as CWI would adhere to the same security SOPs (standard operating procedures) that it did before touring Pakistan back in 2018.

CWI has hired an independent security consultant, ESI, to brief the former with the overall security situation of Pakistan and security arrangements taken by the PCB for the safety of CWI men's and women's teams.

ESI is hired by the International Cricket Council (ICC) and almost all the international cricket boards to provide a detailed security outlook before touring a specific country.

CWI had also hired the services of ESI ahead of Pakistan's tour in 2018. While ESI had issued the security clearance to CWI back then, it remains to be seen whether it will give a greenlight to CWI after what has happened in recent days.



RAISIBE NTOZAKHE CLEARED TO BOWL AGAIN IN INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

South Africa Women's off-spinner Raisibe Ntozakhe has been cleared to bowl in international cricket again by the ICC, following remedial work after she was banned for an illegal bowling action.

Ntozakhe was found to have an illegal action in October 2018 and was suspended from bowling in international cricket on the day she was named in South Africa's squad for the T20

World Cup. Ntozakhe was reported during an ODI against West Indies in September 2018 in Barbados and had undergone an independent assessment of her bowling action at the University of Pretoria.

The assessment revealed that all of her deliveries exceeded the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the regulations.

On Thursday, the ICC

announced that after further assessment, her elbow extension was found to be within the limit.

"Ntozakhe's remodelled bowling action was assessed at the University of Pretoria on 10 September, where it was revealed that the amount of elbow extension was within the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the ICC Illegal Bowling Regulations," the ICC

said in a release.

"Match officials may still report Ntozakhe if they believe she is displaying a suspect action and not reproducing the legal action from the reassessment. To assist the match officials, they will be provided with the report, images and video footage of the bowler's legal bowling action."

DEWS