

# NORTH STREET DWELLING DEVOURED BY FLAMES!

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- Human remains discovered at North Sound!
  - Fake News! SLBMC rubbishes report of missing body
  - BREATHE AGAIN – relaxing COVID-19 restrictions

# The narrative of a vindictive person

In all walks of life, you will find that one person, or perhaps a few that hold vindictive personality disorders. It's hard to avoid because many of us are not expert psychologists and have not been trained to see signs in people before it's too late or they have weasled their way into your workplace or life.

If you are anything like me, you always want to see the best in people. You understand that no person is perfect, and that they often are dealing with their own demons that come out in force when they feel that they don't have 100 percent control over a situation.

## *Their pain is unbearable*

A vindictive person has misguided pain. They feel frustrated, helpless, hurt or ignored and are unable to change their circumstances without ensuring

that they affect others in the meantime. They don't have the necessary strength inside to find better ways to handle their feelings.

Instead, they lash out and convert pain into anger and seek revenge by taking that pain out on others.

Most commonly, they want to bring others down with them. They feel by using the power of manipulation, they are able to not have to experience the misery by themselves - they can in fact bring others in.

They are the core of toxic behaviour in the workplace and contrary to many stories you read, it often is someone in a team, and not the manager or leader who is usually too busy to notice what is really going on.

## *They build grudges*

A person with a vindictive personality disorder builds

grudges, stores pain points against themselves and others to justify their feelings. It's always someone else's fault and you will never find them in a situation where they will apologise. They don't realise that they cannot harm others without harming themselves, and not only come unstuck in their personal lives but also in their careers.

If something doesn't go their way, they attempt to intimidate you or manipulate you. They will throw out lines to try and scare you and, if they are in the workplace, will deliberately show co-workers that they have power by deliberately not doing what their job requires, or ensuring that they are spending endless hours at lunch and via

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such mediums as text, messenger and skype to draw you in.

They may seem to be making fun of someone at first and that may seem harmless, but the aim is to build a wedge between you and the target for that day, week, month, year.

Once you become a target, a vindictive person will try and destroy you. They need to prove you are the ultimate loser by destroying you. Unfortunately in this day and age, there is the internet - a perfect forum for people

with vindictive personality disorders to play out their anger or pain, and try and cause reputational damage among other types of damage.

What they haven't realised is that "anger, revenge, and harassment comes from a place of weakness" and eventually they will burn those around them, and ultimately themselves.

*The best ways to manage a vindictive person are:*

- Don't buy into their gossip or attempts to turn you against another person

- Encourage positivity and proactive approaches to life

- Disengage with vindictive and negative people - they will only destroy your mojo as well as the person that is their target

- See the signs as early as possible, and realise that there is no place in your life for people like this

- If they say that they have done something vindictive before, stay away from them. They will most likely be a repeat offender

- They will affect your life no matter what, so avoid at all costs.

Remember, often they are looking for attention or for you to be on their team. If you fall off their team, you may be the next target - so beware. *(Reprinted from Marketing Eye magazine)*

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# Fire in our Pointville neighborhood on North Street!



A wooden dwelling house on North Street was destroyed by fire on Thursday night.

But praises or being heaped on the Fire Service for keeping the blaze contained to a single dwelling and preventing the flames from spreading to other houses in the densely populated community.

The alarm was raised close to 8:00 p.m. and two fire appliances responded, but by the time the second one arrived they are said to have found very little to do as their earlier colleagues had already managed to quell the inferno.

Apart from Fire Department personnel, there were police and employees

of APUA on hand to ensure that electrical hazards did not pose an additional element of threat or complication.

Residents of the area who gathered to watch the situation as it unfolded were soon ordered by police to disperse and repair to their homes because it was already past curfew time.

The cause of the fire is being investigated.

The owner of the burned house is said to be a lady who spends time there during the day but is not known to overnight at the now incinerated property.

The accompanying pictures were taken by Pointville Communications technical staff.



# Police investigate discovery of human remains



Vincia James

The police were last night reportedly carrying out investigations into the discovery of human bones in a pond near North Sound, believed to be of a young woman who went missing several years ago.

Usually reliable sources say that a bag belonging to the missing woman, Vincia James, 26, of New Winthropes, who has been missing since the night of April 7th 2017, led police to the scene for further investigations.

According to the source, it is believed

that the bag contained ID and other items belonging to the woman.

It was not immediately clear who found the bag. However, it is believed that after the items were turned over to the police, they immediately sprang into action to investigate the matter.

James's then boyfriend, Mikhail Gomes of Pigotts, was arrested and charged with her murder. The case has never gone to trial and Gomes is currently out on bail.

Despite strong opposition from the

prosecution, Justice Ian Morley granted bail in May last year in the surety amount of \$200,000 of which \$40,000 had to be paid in cash to the Court.

The judge cited the several delays as well as the coronavirus pandemic as issues

that led to his decision. If the remains turn out to be that of James, this would mark a major turning point in the case, as it was always felt that without a body the prosecution would have had a challenge proving murder.

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Section 34 of the Act

REGISTRATION SECTION	BLOCK	PARCEL
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SOUTH CENTRAL	15 2185E	89

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO REPLACE A LOST LAND CERTIFICATE

TAKE NOTICE that an application was filed in the Land Registry on the 15th day of September, 2021 by Denise Parillon of Jonas Parillon & Co. Inc. of Sir Sydney Walling Highway, St. John's, Antigua on behalf of ALDEN SAMUEL, Personal Representative of the Estate of Alburn Samuel, deceased, the Applicant herein for the replacement of the Land Certificates issued to Alburn Samuel, being the owner of the above-mentioned properties, which have been lost or destroyed.

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TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that in the absence of any objection or information as to the existence of the original Land Certificates within the time specified the Registrar of Lands may proceed to cancel the original Land Certificates and issue new Land Certificates in their place without further notice.

Dated the 23rd day of September 2021.

Registrar of Lands

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# Hospital trashes claims of missing body

*Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) wishes to express its deep dissatisfaction with the Real News Antigua and the Antigua Newsroom (who also published the story) following the publication of the article: **Family Complains They Cannot Find Body of COVID Victim Who Died Since September 25 And Hospital Director is Saying Nothing.***

We find this erroneous and egregious charge leveled against our hospital—which has gained significant attention—disturbing!

“At no time was any member of the hospital’s management team contacted by the author or media outlets to check the veracity of the report being made,” said Dr. Albert Duncan, SLBMC Medical Director.

He added: “This news article, which baselessly suggested that our hospital had misplaced a body, is reckless and irresponsible journalism and fear-mongering by these media outlets—and does nothing but serve to undermine the public’s trust in our hospital. We also have no record of being contacted by any member of the deceased’s family inquiring about their loved one, after following up with the funeral home of their choice—which would have been the first place to start, since the body of the deceased was released in their care.”

There are certain pro-

cedures which are followed shortly after a patient dies at our hospital. A part of this involves the next-of-kin being notified of the death and being asked to confirm their preferred choice for funeral home. Once this decision is made, either the hospital or a family member will call the selected funeral home and make arrangements for the body to be transported. This is a decision that is made by the family and not the hospital. In this instance, the appropriate family member was duly notified when their loved one died, and the Barnes Funeral Home was selected for burial arrangements. The family was also in contact with the funeral home about said arrangements. As we’ve said before, we cannot respond to every attention-grabbing headline, news article, or social media post. The professionals of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre are focused on saving lives and keeping people well—and that precious time should not

be wasted on addressing stories which are offensive and unfounded.

We realize we are accountable to the public and constantly work hard to live up to that responsibility. However, in the midst of so much other misinformation [that] our communities are struggling to make sense of, the least this journalist and media outlets can do is not add to it.



*Medical Director of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, Dr. Albert Duncan.*

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# Doctors warned to comply with COVID reporting requirements

by *Shelton Daniel*

Private medical practitioners in Antigua and Barbuda have been simultaneously encouraged and warned to report to the Ministry of Health ALL cases of COVID-19 which they diagnose.

During a press conference on Wednesday to announce new criteria for discharging from isolation persons who have been positively diagnosed – and also for releasing from quarantine others who have been exposed to positively-diagnosed persons – two of country's leading state medical officials noted that some private doctors were not complying with the reporting requirements.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas and Director of the Laboratory Testing Services at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, Dr. Lester Simon, warned non-compliant private doctors that reporting cases of

COVID-19 to the Health Ministry was not optional but something they were legally obligated to do.

Dr. Simon, in particular, called upon what he termed “the rogue doctors out there” to fall in line with what the law requires them to do, stating: “We know who you are,” while referencing that he was a member of the Disciplinary Committee for medical practitioners.

“Us requiring them to do it is not just us requiring it,” CMO Sealy-Thomas emphasized. “It is the law. According to the Public Health Act, if ... they do find a positive case, they are mandated to report that to the Ministry of Health. There are some private physicians who are very good at it [and] religiously report – completely and in a timely manner – the persons they have found positive and there are others who have not ... I urge those who have not been reporting to please, please do so.



**Dr. Lester Simon**

We certainly don't want to have to charge anyone ...”

During the discussion, the two senior medical officials also clarified that private doctors are authorized to direct per-

sons they have diagnosed to go into isolation (if positive) or quarantine (if exposed) – but in all such cases the Ministry of Health must be notified.



# Cabinet highlights: Vaccination on a path of success!

*by Shelton Daniel*

About 70 percent of the target population of 80,000 for the achievement of herd immunity has been inoculated with at least one dose of vaccine, according to Information Minister Melford Nicholas.

That would translate to roughly 56,000 persons, and government is projecting that by the end of November 2021, the target figure of 80,000 would have been attained.

Nicholas was speaking on Thursday morning during the weekly post-Cabinet media briefing.

"We are on a good path, on a good trajectory," he stated. "The intention is that we would want to keep the vaccination program going. We are seeing upwards of 7-8 hundred persons per day coming forward to be vaccinated. That is a very encouraging trend and we want to ensure that [this] continues ..."

Despite the resistance to mandatory vaccination that is being espoused by the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers, it was disclosed that 83% of all public school teachers have been vaccinated.

Government has decided to extend the net of mandatory vaccination to elements of the

private sector that are deemed to be essential or frontline services, such as financial institutions – "banks, credit unions, insurance companies and lending institutions", according to the Prime Minister's chief-of-staff, Ambassador Lionel "Max" Hurst.

Therefore, effective today (Friday 8th October) all beaches are open for full public access from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily, and Nicholas indicated that the extension from the hitherto 5:00 a.m. to midday would also apply to public holidays.

For the most part, during the pandemic to date, beaches were closed entirely on public holidays in order to prevent the traditional mass gatherings that are a celebrated aspect of local culture.

The nightly curfew, from October 15th 2021, is being reverted to 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. from the current 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.

Also effective from 15th October, casinos, gyms, commercial sea vessel operations (pleasure craft) are permitted to open for services to the public – on condition that the operators and patrons are all vaccinated.

Restaurants, which were restricted to serving on a take-

away-only basis, will be allowed to resume the provision of dining-in, also from 15th October.

Bars will remain closed for the time being while a review is undertaken of the timing and conditions for their reopening – one of which is that bar operators and patrons must all be fully vaccinated. Any breach of this mandate will result in offending bar owners being fined \$5,000 each and offending patrons \$1,000 each.

These fines will also apply to operators and patrons of gyms who are found to be in breach of the regulations and conditions for reopening and operation.

The reopening of primary schools has been delayed by another two weeks, while secondary schools with 100% vaccinated students and 100% vaccinated teachers, staff and ancillary staff, may continue to function.

Based on the number of government employees who have continued to show up for work in compliance with the proviso that only those inoculated will be admitted into the offices of the public service, Cabinet has concluded and declared that its policy of mandatory vaccination for public sector workers has been successful.

# Major changes to COVID-19 quarantine and isolation

by *Shelton Daniel*

The frustration of some persons – after being ordered to isolate or quarantine at home – that the health authorities have either failed or been extremely tardy in following-up to check on their status, has this week become a thing of the past.

Isolation is the two-week period that persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 (but their condition does not require hospitalization) are required to spend while their symptoms and condition are monitored to determine if further medical intervention is required or – as determined by testing at the end of that period – if the infection has cleared.

Similarly, quarantine is the mandatory 14-day period in which persons who have been exposed by contact or proximity to an infected person – but have themselves not tested positive for the virus – must spend in isolation and during which time any infection would manifest via associated symp-

toms, and confirmed by testing.

Isolation is therefore for those confirmed as infected, while quarantine is for those possibly infected but not yet confirmed.

Many persons had complained that after going into isolation or quarantine, they remained thus, long past the 14 days, without being contacted by any health ministry personnel to administer the end-of-fortnight test or issue them the clearance to emerge and resume their normal lives.

In some cases, the affected persons have alleged, this impacted their ability to resume work at their places of gainful employment, with harmful implications for their livelihoods and job security.

During a special press conference on Wednesday, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas made the following announcement:

“Based on the recommendations from the World Health Organization [WHO] and our internal consultations, we have



*Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas*

made a decision that quarantine for contacts of COVID-19 cases will end after 14 days as recommended by the World Health Organization. But we will not be doing any testing for the release of persons from quarantine, because WHO has advised that this is not necessary at this time.”

Dr. Sealy-Thomas made sure to elaborate on exactly what this means and how it would work out in practice.

“No testing for the persons who are in quarantine, once they remain asymptomatic. I have to stress that, because persons

who are in quarantine, once they are symptomatic, they would need to seek medical attention and possibly get tested for COVID-19.”

She said persons in quarantine could be released “immediately” and “without a test” if they had “remained asymptomatic for the last 14 days”.

She listed the symptoms that a quarantined person should look out for as “fever, cough, stuffy nose, loss of smell, loss of taste, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing”.

Concerning those in isolation, the CMO was asked whether



they would still need two successive negative tests in order to be diagnosed as recovered and eligible for discharge from isolation. She said the answer was no and, in fact, that policy had been amended for quite some time.

“Initially, WHO had recommended that persons who had been confirmed as having COVID, in order to be released from isolation, they would need two real-time negative PCR tests done within 24 hours of each other before they were released [from isolation]. WHO has since changed that – since June last year they have updated their guidelines – and said that for persons who have been confirmed as having COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic and remain asymptomatic after being con-

firmed, they can actually be released from isolation without a test ... Because ... once they are asymptomatic, they will be shedding just dead, non-infective, virus.

“For those who are symptomatic, they have to be asymptomatic for a period of time ... But despite that recommendation from WHO and PAHO, what we did – because of an abundance of caution – we decided that we would still continue to test persons ... We are going to change that, since WHO has said they really don’t need a test. But, still being cautious, we are going to continue to test, but use a negative antigen test for release from isolation.”

Head of the Laboratory Testing Services at Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, Dr. Les-

ter Simon, expressed regret for what some persons have until now had to go through while in quarantine or isolation. He explained that it was because resources to undertake the expected follow-up were stretched thin.

“Our profuse apologies for the length of time people have had to stay in quarantine beyond the 14 days because we are just inundated with a large number of cases ... and that is not going to happen again.”

Dr. Simon expressed “thanks to those who called and made a fuss.” He said, “It may sound as if they are cantankerous, but those are the good ones, because there are some people ... you put them in quarantine and the very day they are off somewhere. Thankfully those are in the minority.”

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# UK marine scientists in Antigua and Barbuda ahead of COP26

*(Press release from British High Commission, St. John's)*

As part of the Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) Programme, a team of marine scientists from the National Oceanography Centre (NOC), UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), and Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) are undertaking a series of surveys in Antigua and Barbuda to improve the country's knowledge of its coastal environments and ecosystem services and inform its Nationally Defined Contribution (NDC) – a commitment made by the country to act on climate change.

NOC scientists are currently on the island of Antigua conducting surveys and sediment coring field campaigns that will improve the understanding of the health, extent and importance of seagrass in capturing carbon.

Lindsay Thompson, Resident British Commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda stated: "I'm delighted that our scientific experts are undertaking this important work with their Antigua and Barbudan counterparts. Their efforts are a further example of the UK's commitment to supporting Antigua and Barbuda as it delivers priorities identified in its Maritime Economy Plan. As we head towards COP26 in Glasgow, never has it been more important for our two countries to work together to ensure NDCs are met."

NOC scientists are working with the Department of the Environment (DOE) to measure both the depth and carbon-content of the Antiguan seagrass meadows, providing the first quantitative assessment of their blue carbon potential.

The marine surveys will also provide environmental and ecosystem information that scientists from CEFAS will combine with recent Satellite-Derived Bathymetry data to extend the seabed habitat maps developed under Antigua and Barbuda's National Adaptation Plan.

The NOC's lead scientist for the work in Antigua and Barbuda, Dr James Strong, believes understanding the blue carbon potential of the seagrass meadows will be relevant to other countries that have extensive seagrass habitats and are dependent on their marine ecosystems to guide sustainable economic growth.

Following completion of the NOC and CEFAS environmental surveys, the UKHO will assist with complementary seabed mapping surveys required to support the habitat assessments and enable new navigational charts to be produced for greater situational awareness and safer navigation.

A team from the UKHO, led by Ian Davies, will support the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services & Merchant Shipping (ADOMS), who have previously received equipment through the CME Programme, to enable them to undertake seabed mapping.

The CME Programme is funded and delivered on behalf of the UK Government to aid Commonwealth small island developing states (SIDS). It is led by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and aims to ensure marine resources that belong to Commonwealth SIDS are better understood and managed, with the aim of enabling sustainable and growing marine economies that create jobs, drive national economic growth, reduce poverty, ensure food security and build resilience.



# Antiguan owned company makes worthwhile donation to Customs Division

The Antigua and Barbuda Customs & Excise Division has benefitted from the kindhearted and generous outreach of one of its valued business partners.

Antiguan-owned sanitization company JanServ has come forward with a timely contribution of six Purell sanitizing wipes wall-mounted dispensers for the division's St. John's headquarters.

Mr. Delano Semper, the company's Sanitization Sales Technician Specialist, handed over the gift to Senior Inspector Randy Baltimore at JanServ's office on

Sir George H. Wal-ter Highway on 13th September 2021.

In accepting the donation, Baltimore expressed his appreciation on behalf of the management and officers of the Antigua and Barbuda Customs & Excise Division.

"This donation will certainly serve an extremely valuable purpose. As we provide an essential service to our economy, we are duty-bound to ensure that all our officers and the members of the public who move through our offices can do so safely," Baltimore stated.



In response, Semper noted: "This gift was made as a demonstration of our commitment to doing our part in keeping Antiguan and Barbudans safe during this CoViD19 Pandemic.

"The Customs Department is a strategic partner and service provider of our company, so we have

an acute interest in assisting to keep its employees safe," he further stated.

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# Roots of Latin American and Caribbean underdevelopment planted by 'lost' Columbus



**By Sir Ronald Sanders**

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

Every year at the Organization of American States (OAS), Spain, as an observer state, has placed on the Organization's

agenda a celebration of Christopher Columbus' stumbling on what is now called The Bahamas on October 12, 1492.

This 'celebration', according to Spain, is to mark the "Encounter of two worlds". In the view of Europeans, those worlds were the "civilized" nations of Europe and a new, savage world which Columbus ran into by chance, mistakenly believing he had arrived in 'the Indies', as China, Japan, India and Indonesia were collectively known.

The truth is that he was hopelessly lost. But his inability to find his way unleashed consequences which reverberate today to the detriment of the "new world" that Columbus and his patrons thought he had "discovered".

Treasure and resources were transferred to Europe or placed in the control of European colonial settlers who seized lands, killed or displaced indigenous peoples, and introduced brutal slavery. Most of the wealth and power in today's world is concentrated in the same hands that began the grab in 1492, while most of the poverty exists in former colonies in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

This is why on October 5 at the OAS, I made a statement calling on Spain – supported by some governments in Latin America and North America – to stop "celebrating" an event

which has brought suffering and underdevelopment to many countries in the Americas.

I reproduce below, for clarity, the full text of my remarks.

I preface my statement by placing on my record my Government's high regard for the present-day government of Spain and the role it plays in global affairs, and more especially for its support of this Organisation of American States.

However, my delegation would be less than a true friend of Spain if we were to pretend that this occasion is one that we welcome or support.

Indeed, the absence of several delegations at this meeting indicates the concern of a number of member states.

On the last occasion that the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda made a statement on this unfortunate topic that is persistently presented to this Permanent Council, we



made it clear that Antigua and Barbuda has no wish to linger over a past relationship.

We emphasised that much of that past had a very dark side with repercussions that have cast a long shadow to this day.

Part of that dark past was genocide and enslavement of the native peoples of the Americas, and the gateway that was thrown open for centuries of brutal slavery of African people and the exploitation of Asian indentured labour in some Caribbean countries.

That past was indeed linked to an “encounter between two worlds”.

It was an encounter between a lost Italian – Cristobal Colon or Christopher Columbus – and the people who had long inhabited the islands and mainlands that have come to be called “The Americas”.

The native peoples of these lands were not in need of discovery; they already had a civilization, a rich culture, and knowledge that suited the sustainability of their environment.

All that was either

destroyed or desecrated by the arrival of Columbus and his crew who stumbled upon these lands in the mistaken belief that they had navigated a new route to the Indies.

That encounter should not be celebrated; it should be lamented.

It was an encounter contrived on the ideology of European superiority that is today commonly called – racism.

The freedom that the European settlers sought in these lands now called “the Americas” came at the expense of the lives, lands, labour, blood, and resources of non-white people.

That is what we remember; it is what we recall; it is what we see every time this so-called “Encounter of two worlds” is celebrated and not lamented.

It does our relationship no good.

That is why my delegation has appeared here today to call again for the discontinuance of this event that re-opens wounds and re-enforces the strong desire for reparatory justice.

On October 12th

2018, the Antigua and Barbuda delegation said, in this Permanent Council, that it is time we stop trying to perpetuate that mistake and, instead, to acknowledge it and, in doing so, vow never to repeat it.

Despite our exhortations, this topic continues to be thrown in our faces, complete with a wreath-laying ceremony, except we are not commemorating the millions of indigenous people who were exterminated or the millions of Africans who were enslaved, brutalized, and exploited for the enrichment of Europe.

We are commemorating those who exterminated people, erased the accomplishments of a thriving civilisation, stole lands, enslaved people, and profited from denial of the most fundamental human right – the equality of all humankind.

As my delegation has repeatedly stated, our country greatly values its modern-day relationship with Spain.

We congratulate Spain on the positive role it plays today in global affairs, and we

welcome its efforts to make its present-day encounters with our nations mutually beneficial for all.

We especially welcome Spain’s participation in our Organization of American States as an honoured Permanent Observer.

In our relationship, we would like to stride forward to a bright future, not look backward at a dark past.

The encounters on which we should all concentrate are those which proffer a better future for our common humanity on our shared planet.

There is much that we can do together to end the scourge of communicable disease; to stop the pervasive destruction of Climate Change and Global Warming; to cooperate in economic and social development; to end global inequality; and to foster peace in our shared world.

It is time we advance the reality of one world which our one humanity must make better.

*Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com)*

# Decreased VAT among new measures to 'save' Bahamians



*Governor-General Cornelius Smith*

**Caribbean Loop** - The newly installed government of the Bahamas has pledged to tackle several economic and social issues affecting islanders as they seek to rise above challenges posed by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Among those measures will be a reduction in Value Added Tax (VAT) across the board.

"The present economic crisis has left a trail of unprecedented misery among the Bahamian people and our public finances in a dismal state," Governor-General Cornelius Smith said as he read

the throne speech which was titled "Blueprint for Change" during yesterday's opening of Parliament.

"Despite this bleak outlook, my government will introduce measures that will bring immediate relief to the Bahamian people and to businesses."

Increased pensions for seniors along with enhanced social assistance programs are also in the pipelines.

Bahamian youth will also benefit from a National First-Job' programme that allows people between the ages of 16-25 to gain a one-year Govern-

ment-subsidised placement in a field of national priority.

A Second Chance Programme will also be established to give youth, who made bad choices, an opportunity to give back to society.

Smith said his government will pursue measures to "rescue, restore, and strengthen the economy" by using strategies and policies to meet the country's infrastructural needs as well as stabilize public finances and increase public revenue.

After years of consultation, the government may soon establish a can-

nabis industry as Smith announced that the "regulatory framework" will be introduced.

Transparency in public business was a major concern for Bahamians during the last administration.

"My government will not tolerate corruption and is committed to introducing effective anti-corruption legislation. My Government will govern for the many, not for the few, and promote the best interests of Bahamians and The Bahamas," the governor-general said as he noted provisions of the Freedom of Information Act will be implemented.



# BVI: Teachers to receive discounts at local businesses



*Dr. Natalio Wheatley.*

**BVI News** - The Minister of Education, Dr. Natalio Wheatley, is asking for more local businesses to offer educators discounted rates during Teacher's Week and the rest of October.

Dr. Wheatley said he has already reached out to several local businesses with the request.

"Many have responded favourably. You will receive digital coupons either through your VI Schools email directly or from your principal. These coupons

must be presented at the business to benefit from the discounts," the Minister stated on Wednesday.

Wheatley said he will also sponsor a Happy Hour for all educators on the four main islands from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Friday, October 8.

"On Tortola, it will be at the Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies, and on the other islands, your principal will inform you of the venues," the Education Minister added.

Teachers will also re-

ceive \$300 in reimbursements for a portion of personal funds used on the job. Wheatley says the money can be used for any reason and is not limited to school supplies.

"And, of course, we are strong advocates for increases in salary for teachers, and we are looking forward to the salary review commissioned by Cabinet and being undertaken by the Deputy Governor's Office via the human resource department," he added.

World Teacher's Day is celebrated worldwide on October 5. The theme for this year is "Teachers at the Heart of Education Recovery".

The United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) chooses the theme every year. Wheatley noted he found the theme fitting as educators have shown perseverance and dedication during the ongoing pandemic and are key to a country's recovery plan.

# Saint Lucia launches \$10 million housing programme

*St. Lucia Times* - Saint Lucia on Wednesday launched a \$10 million National Housing Assistance Programme (NHAP) funded by the Republic of China (Taiwan).

The Department of Housing & Local Government will implement the initiative to assist the underprivileged by improving their living conditions.

NHAP will identify and create an inventory of households with the most urgent housing needs, assess their priority, design suitable assistance packages, and disburse them in the form of technical assistance, building material, and/or labour grants.

Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre told the launch that the NHAP is part of his administration's promise to put people first. "Putting people first is not a slogan; it's a philosophy; it's a way of life. It isn't something that we said to win an election. We really mean it, and in the projects that we are going to be delivering to the people of Saint Lucia, the whole ethos and the philosophy of putting people first is going to be clear," Pierre told his audience. He explained



that while economic numbers and infrastructure are essential, the depth of the government's policies will be putting people – which means everyone – first.

"We are going to include everyone. The elections are over," Pierre declared, adding that now his administration is going to do

what it promised.

In this regard, he invited everyone to join, not the ruling party, but the country, under the umbrella of doing better for the people of Saint Lucia. According to Pierre, the initial thinking behind the National Housing Assistance Programme was not to see about housing for

needy and poor people, but to address other 'needed' things.

"It took the Cabinet through the Minister to convince the Taiwanese and the other officials that a more immediate need was to repair the houses of people in this country," the Minister of Finance disclosed.



# PM appeals to teachers as union withdraws online teaching

**IWN SVG** - Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves on Wednesday appealed to teachers to continue to deliver online classes even as the union has voted to withdraw their services on Wednesday and for two days next week.

"I am disappointed to learn that a number of teachers, not a large number, who attended an online meeting of the Teachers' Union, that a decision has been taken not to do online teaching for three days, today being one of the days," Gonsalves said during his weekly show on NBC Radio.

"Now, why would anybody want to do a thing like that? The reason, I understand, is that they want to protest against teachers being frontline workers and requiring vaccination," the prime minister said.

The government has classified teachers as frontline workers, meaning that if they want to continue in their post, teachers will have to take a COVID-19 vaccine, unless they receive a medical exemption.

The union, in a press release on Tuesday, said a virtual meeting on Monday decided to file an injunction against the government on the vaccination issue.

The meeting, which had



**Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves**

an optimal attendance of 183 members, also voted to refrain from online teaching on Wednesday, as well as next Monday and next week Friday, Oct. 14.

"The membership will reconvene before the 18th October 2021 to strategize the way forward," the union said.

Students were scheduled to return to the physical classroom this past Monday for the first time since December 2020.

However, a surge in COVID-19 cases – which has seen the country recording some 1,200 active cases since Sept. 9 – has put that on hold for two weeks in the first instance.

To date, there are 1,279 active cases of COVID-19 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Gonsalves said: "You want to punish the students? You want to hold the country to ransom? What is so difficult about taking the vaccine? Teachers are, in fact, frontline workers.

"We were seeking to see whether something could be done there but the demand [is] coming from the teachers who are vaccinated and other teachers too and parents and what's happening in other parts of the world, progressive countries, the teachers are vaccinated."

The prime minister said he was hoping that teachers would have voluntarily taken the COVID-19 jab.

"... I don't have the full figures but the numbers, certainly, are below one-third," he said, referring to the fraction of teachers who have taken a COVID-19 vaccine.

He noted that in Barbados, 80% of teachers have taken the jab.

"Now, if you have that number, you may not in those circumstances say that you should give the choice of either you vaccinate or find another job because of the large number of the teachers who have gone and taken the vaccine.

"Please, take this vaccine nuh — for yourself, for your children's sake, your students. You can't abandon your students at times like this. You can't compromise their safety, you can't compromise their education. I don't know what could get in the heads of persons who are responsible to come to such kinds of conclusions. What you want to do? This is politics? Is this just vanity? What is this? Because it just doesn't have any rational basis.

"Teachers are not doing 'a favour'. It's not voluntary work. People are paid for doing this job. Come on, please take the vaccine, teachers. I understand that more and more people are taking it. Let's not wait until the regulations come into force. Let's get vaccinated."

As of Sunday, 34,386 doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered in SVG, representing 13,556 second doses and 20,830 first doses.

# African scientists' historic malaria breakthrough celebrated by peers

(CNN) - The World Health Organization's decision to recommend the widespread use of a long-awaited vaccine against malaria is an endorsement of the African scientists involved in developing it, a top official in the global health body told CNN on Thursday.

Dr. Akpaka Kalu, WHO Regional Advisor for Tropical & Vector-borne Diseases, said positive results from ongoing pilot programs of malaria vaccinations in three African countries – Ghana, Malawi and Kenya – had led the organization to recommend widespread use of RTS,S/AS0 or Mosquirix among children in sub-Saharan Africa.

"The datasets that were generated in these studies and field trials were by African scientists," Kalu said.

The vaccine, a product of 30 years of research, was developed by British drug manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline in collaboration with Seattle-based health nonprofit PATH and a network of African research centers, with partial funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Founda-



tion, the WHO said.

Kalu said there are ongoing discussions to transfer vaccine manufacturing technology to Africa as facilities on the continent build out local infrastructure to produce COVID-19 vaccines.

"We hope that the same technology used for COVID vaccines will be used to manufacture malaria vaccines and other vaccines in the future," he said.

"This long-awaited vaccine, developed in Africa, by African scientists, is a breakthrough for science, child health, and malaria control," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a thread on his official Twitter account Wednesday.

Proud colleagues

In Ghana, Dr. Keziah L. Malm, Program Manager at the National Malaria Control Programme, told CNN she was proud of the contributions made by her colleagues who took part in the clinical trial.

Keziah said malaria is disease that mostly impacts Africans and it was important that research on prevention and treatment be led by experts on the continent.

Malaria is the leading cause of death and illnesses in children under the age of five in sub-Saharan Africa. To date, more than 800,000 children have received the pilot vaccine through clinics, the WHO said.

Clinical trials have concluded that the vaccine offers 39% protec-

tion against malaria in newborn children between the ages of five and 17 months. Further research also suggests that the vaccine's benefits fades over time.

Dr. Doyin Odubanjo, a public health expert and Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Academy of Science, said the vaccine is another tool for combating malaria and should not be seen as a magic bullet for its prevention.

"The vaccine is effective enough in reducing the cases of severe malaria, though it is not generally highly effective and its effect wanes quickly," Odubanjo said.

"This means that we must not abandon the other tools."



# US senators agree to extend debt ceiling to avoid default

**BBC** - Senators in the United States have agreed to extend the country's debt ceiling, less than two weeks before it was due to be reached.

Disagreements over the ceiling - the limit on how much the government can borrow - are not new in US politics.

But the current row between Republicans and Democrats had caused jitters in the financial markets.

There were fears that the US would default on its national debt, with catastrophic implications.

However Senate Majority leader Chuck Schumer, a Democrat, said on Thursday that lawmakers had reached a deal to extend the debt ceiling until early December.

The announcement came after what Schumer's Republican counterpart, Mitch McConnell, said were negotiations "in good faith" that had continued through the night.

The agreement comes less than two weeks before 18 October, the day the US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned was the deadline to prevent

the first ever US default.

The US debt currently stands at around \$28tn (£21tn).

The temporary debt compromise will still need to be passed by both chambers of Congress, and US lawmakers will still have to address this issue near the new December deadline to avert a default.

If the US defaulted on debts analysts say it would severely hurt the country's credit rating, plunge the global financial system into turmoil, and possibly lead to a self-inflicted recession.

The US government spends more money than it collects in taxes, so it borrows to make up for the shortfall.

Borrowing is done via the US Treasury through the issuing of bonds. US government bonds are seen as among the world's safest and most reliable investments.

In 1939, Congress established an aggregate limit or "ceiling" on how much debt the government can accumulate.

The ceiling has been lifted on more than 100 occasions to allow the government to borrow



*Republican Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell said Republicans and Democrats negotiated through the night "in good faith".*

more. Congress often acts on it in a bipartisan manner and it is rarely the subject of a political standoff.

But some Republicans have voiced frustration over new spending proposals that Democrats are trying to push through without

Republican support.

Democrats have pointed out that raising the debt ceiling is about paying off existing obligations rather than paying for new ones, and that President Joe Biden's policies have only contributed to 3% of existing debts.

# Now in power, Taliban set sights on Afghan drug underworld

(AP) — Now the uncontested rulers of Afghanistan, the Taliban have set their sights on stamping out the scourge of narcotics addiction, even if by force.

At nightfall, the battle-hardened fighters-turned-policemen scour the capital's drug-ravaged underworld. Below Kabul's bustling city bridges, amid piles of garbage and streams of filthy water, hundreds of homeless men addicted to heroin and methamphetamines are rounded up, beaten and forcibly taken to treatment centers. The Associated Press gained rare access to one such raid last week.

The scene provided a window into the new order under Taliban governance: The men — many with mental illness, according to doctors — sat against stone walls with their hands tied. They were told to sober up or face beatings.

The heavy-handed methods are welcomed by some health workers, who have had no choice but to adapt to Taliban rule. "We are not in a democracy anymore, this is a dictatorship. And the use of force is the only way to treat these people," said Dr. Fazalrabi Mayar, working in a treatment facility. He was referring specifically to Afghans addicted to heroin and meth. Soon after the Taliban took power on Aug. 15, the Taliban Health Ministry issued an order to these facilities, underscoring their intention to strictly control the problem of addiction, doctors said.

Bleary-eyed and skeletal, the detained encompass a spectrum



*Drug users detained during a Taliban raid wait for a medical check in the detoxification ward of the Avicenna Medical Hospital for Drug Treatment in Kabul, Afghanistan, Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021.*

of Afghan lives hollowed out by the country's tumultuous past of war, invasion and hunger. They were poets, soldiers, merchants, farmers. Afghanistan's vast poppy fields are the source of the majority of the world's heroin, and the country has emerged as a significant meth producer. Both have fueled massive addiction around the country.

Old or young, poor or once well-off, the Taliban view the addicts the same: A stain on the society they hope to create. Drug use is against their interpretation of Islamic doctrine. Addicts are also stigmatized by the wider, largely conservative Afghan community.

But the Taliban's war on drugs is complicated as the country faces the prospect of economic collapse and imminent humanitarian catastrophe.

Sanctions and lack of recog-

nition have made Afghanistan, long an aid-dependent country, ineligible for the financial support from international organizations that accounted for 75% of state spending. An appalling human rights record, especially with respect to women, has rendered the Taliban unpopular among international development organizations.

A liquidity crisis has set in. Public wages are months in arrears and drought has exacerbated food shortages and disease. Winter is weeks away. Without foreign funds, government revenues rely on customs and taxation.

The illicit opium trade is intertwined with Afghanistan's economy and its turmoil. Poppy growers are part of an important rural constituency for the Taliban, and most rely on the harvest to make ends meet.



# UN expert calls for easing of sanctions on North Korea

**(Reuters)** – North Korea's most vulnerable risk starvation after it slipped deeper into isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, and UN sanctions imposed for its nuclear and missile programmes should be eased, a UN rights investigator said in a report seen by Reuters.

The worsening humanitarian situation could turn into a crisis and it is coinciding with a global "creeping apathy" about the plight of North Korea's people, said Tomas Ojea Quintana, UN special rapporteur on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"Sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council should be reviewed and eased when necessary to both facilitate humanitarian and lifesaving assistance and to enable the promotion of the right to an adequate standard of living of ordinary citizens," he said in a final report to the UN General Assembly, to be presented on Oct. 22.

North Korea does not recognise Ojea Quintana's mandate or cooperate with him, and its mission in Geneva did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The government in Pyongyang does not take questions from foreign media.

Leader Kim Jong Un in June said the food situation was "tense" because of natural disasters last year and acknowledged that citizens had faced sacrifices during the pandemic. In April, North Korean officials called a UN report on child malnutrition a "sheer lie".

North Korea has not reported any COVID-19 cases and has im-

posed strict anti-virus measures, including border closures and domestic travel curbs.

But many North Koreans relying on commercial activities along the border with China have lost their incomes, and that has been compounded by the impact of sanctions, Ojea Quintana said.

"People's access to food is a serious concern and the most vulnerable children and elderly are at risk of starvation," he said, adding that North Koreans "should not have to choose between the fear of hunger and the fear of COVID-19".

"Essential medicines and medical supplies are in short supply and prices have increased several fold as they stopped coming in from China, and humanitarian organisations have been unable to bring in medicines and other supplies."

Most diplomats and aid workers have left North Korea amid strict travel restrictions and a shortage of essential goods and health facilities, Ojea Quintana said.

Progress in vaccination, women and children's health, and water and sanitation, was eroding, he said.

"The current worsening humanitarian situation could turn into a crisis and must be averted," he said.

He also voiced concern that growing challenges to obtaining information were "leading to a creeping apathy in global attention to the worsening human rights situation there".

Ojea Quintana called for easing military tension on the di-



vided peninsula and urged the United States and South Korea to "send clear signals" to revive diplomacy aimed at securing the North's denuclearisation.

In recent weeks, North Korea carried out a series of weapons tests, including ballistic missiles and a cruise missile with potential nuclear capabilities.

Ojea Quintana welcomed a pledge by US President Joe Biden and South Korean President Moon Jae-in last May to work to improve North Korea's rights situation.

"In any possible upcoming peace negotiations, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America should secure commitments with measurable benchmarks ... to a meaningful process of engagement on human rights," he said.

North Koreans are still detained in political prison camps, along with their families, while some have been released from labour training centres due to the unavailability of food and work, he said. The camps, known as kwanliso, the existence of which is denied by the state, can be qualified as constituting crimes against humanity, he said.

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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



# Emma Raducanu 'eclipsed Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic'

Emma Raducanu eclipsed the usual interest in Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic as she stormed to US Open success, Tim Henman has claimed.

Raducanu has become an iconic figure over the last few months following her incredible victory at Flushing Meadows.

The teen sensation stunned the tennis

world by winning the US Open despite starting the tournament as a qualifying minnow.

She captured the imagination of aspiring tennis stars by not dropping a single set through a grueling 10-match schedule.

Raducanu defeated Canada's Leylah Fernandez 6-4, 6-3 in a thrilling final in New York.



*Emma Raducanu stunned the tennis world with her US Open win (Image: GETTY)*

There has been plenty of attention in Raducanu ever since. She is this week set to feature for the first time since the US Open at Indian Wells.

And former British No. 1 Henman has insisted that there is more interest in Raducanu's US Open journey than there usually is in any of the 'Big Three'.

"One of the beauties of our sport are the combined events, there has been huge interest in the big three of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic," Henman, a mentor for Raducanu,

told talkSPORT.

"I think there was an element of caution going into the US Open because Federer and Nadal would not be playing.

"For me, that was the best grand slam of tennis I probably watched in my life and was headlined by the women's event and what Raducanu did.

"Indian Wells is a combined event and looking forward to seeing Emma get back out on a match court and likewise with Leylah Fernandez.



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# Ballon d'Or 2021: Messi to be announced winner, clinching record-extending 7th award!

Lionel Messi now wears the colours of Paris Saint-Germain.

The 34-year-old left Barcelona as a free agent this summer after over two decades at the club.

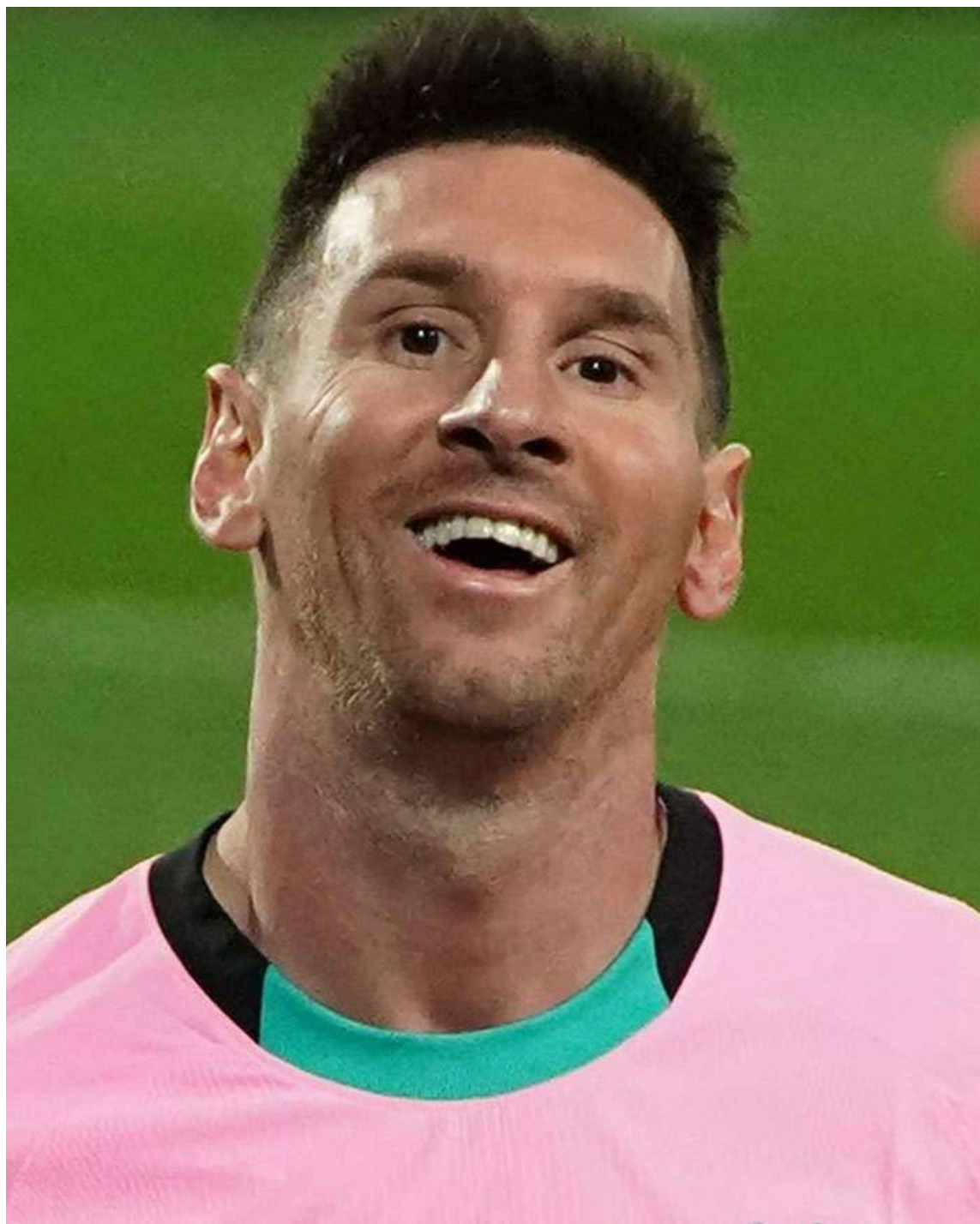
In another month, Messi is expected to win his record-extending seventh Ballon d'Or.

The Argentina captain is the only player to have won the award six times. His eternal rival Cristiano Ronaldo has five gongs to his name.

After scoring 33 goals and providing 13 assists in all competitions for Barca last season, Messi is widely expected to win the prize.

Messi boosted his chances by winning the Copa America with his country, after a 1-0 win over Brazil in the final.

With his move to PSG, you can expect that he will continue to win trophies and



be in the conversations for next year's award at this least.

But this year, he will likely share the stage with Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski.

This year, France Football will announce two winners, because the event was cancelled last year due to COVID-19.

Lewandowski led

Bayern to victories in Bundesliga, the German Cup and the Champions League with 55 goals in 47 appearances across all competitions.



# LeBron James, Lakers' injury woes begin with Trevor Ariza out to start season



LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers are looking for a fresh start this season after getting hit with a rash of injuries the previous year. But it looks like the injury bug has returned just as they've resumed on-court action.

Lakers reporter Mike Trudell revealed that Trevor Ariza is going to be out of commission for at least two months after undergoing a procedure on his ankle.

"Trevor Ariza had an arthroscopic debridement procedure performed on his right ankle today," per the Lakers press release. "He is expected to make a full and complete recovery. Team doctors will

reevaluate Ariza in approximately 8 weeks, and an update will be provided at that time."

While the Lakers' starting lineup isn't set in stone and it was unclear whether Ariza would have been a part of it, the veteran would have definitely gotten decent minutes within LA's rotation. Ariza played a key role for the Miami Heat last season, averaging 28 minutes per contest while acting as the ideal veteran 3-and-D wing.

It's definitely a tough blow as Ariza's floor-spacing and defensive chops complement the high-usage players the Lakers have littered

throughout their roster. LeBron James, Russell Westbrook, and Anthony Davis need players who can do the dirty work and hit open shots as they do most of the heavy lifting.

The Lakers do still have guys like Kent Bazemore and Wayne Ellington to try and fill that role while Trevor Ariza recovers. Early season rotations are bound to be fluid as coach Frank Vogel figures out the best way to maximize the roster.

Hopefully, this injury setback will be a rare blip for the purple and gold this season.





*Tyson's fight with Jones Jr was entertaining and worth the hype*

## MIKE THE MERCIFUL!

*Mike Tyson reveals what he would have done to Evander Holyfield after watching Vitor Belfort KO; discusses Lennox Lewis rematch*

Mike Tyson admitted he would have shown Evander Holyfield more mercy than Vitor Belfort had they agreed to fight instead.

The heavyweight rivals endured two tough fights against one another in the 1990's and talks about a trilogy took place in 2020.

Tyson instead fought Roy Jones Jr in an exhibition match which earned them both great credit and achieved strong pay-per-view figures.

However, when Holy-

field stepped in to replace a COVID stricken Oscar De La Hoya last month to face Belfort, a former UFC champion, it ended in somewhat acrimonious circumstances.

The former two-weight world champion was stopped inside of a round and took plenty of unnecessary shots during the brief bout in Florida.

Reflecting on the fight, Tyson admitted he would have been far more magnanimous to his former foe if they fought.

He told USA Today: "He's [Holyfield] always known for taking a great punch and I didn't think he took a good punch.

"If he would've boxed me, I would've never tried to hurt him. It would've gone eight rounds or 10 rounds, but it would've been really exciting, you know.

"I mean, they're doing well, fighting hard, he didn't get hurt, but that's my intentions."

Talks again collapsed earlier this year between

the two men, with Tyson instead suggesting he would target another former foe in the shape of Lennox Lewis.

The two also shared a bitter rivalry at the turn of the Millennium, with the 55-year-old remaining coy about the possibility of one more round.

"Well things happen," he said. "But you know, keep your ears open because you'll be surprised by other things you hear."

**IDEWS**