

COVID DEATHS HIT FOUR-SCORE!

SEE PAGES 4-5

Who says we can't simultaneously fight COVID while preserving and restoring our natural environment, and further explore the gigantic potential of our Blue Economy? In our front-page picture, volunteer members of the community-based Wallings Nature Reserve undertake an ambitious tree-planting exercise at Signal Hill to replace forest cover that has been lost to fire and other destructive human activities. The forestation also aims to suppress further proliferation of the invasive lemongrass. Sandals Foundation has put its support behind the initiative – in the process linking some big name international partners such as the Clinton Global Initiative. We'll always need help and we'll always welcome genuine friends, but nothing beats doing for ourselves what we can and ought to do – as organizations like Rotaract and Wallings Nature Reserve continually demonstrate!

[STORY ON PAGE 11]

INSIDE: UWI Five Islands matriculation: A Raven is the Maven!
Seabed exploration in biggest push yet at Blue Economy!
Gas pumps empty; COVID causing more chaos in UK!

People are dying ... Okay Fine?

People are dying ... Okay fine," was Harold Lovell's response to a surge in pandemic-related deaths in an interview with Dave Lester Payne on Wednesday, where the United Progressive Party (UPP) political leader tried to

differentiate his party's response to the COVID 19 plague, from that of the government.

In his meandering defense of the party's response to the pandemic, the UPP political leader highlighted two public awareness

programmes that were held recently to educate the public about the pandemic.

This was not enough to impress one commenter who stated: "Lovell, you guys just start telling people about taking vaccine. If

y'all was doing it from day one, things would be different! Plus, if supporters of UPP don't trust the government, why didn't you encourage your supporters to take it?"

The United Progressive Party may be in

**POPCORN
CHICKEN**
\$9.99

4 STRIPS
\$9.99

**5 HOT
WINGS**
\$9.99



SNACKABLES



FOR DELIVERY 
736-7845 / 562-9444
or DOWNLOAD THE APP...
Apple Store / Google PlayStore

#StaySafe

 @kfcanu

 @kfcanu

#KFCANU #SOCIALDISTANCING #MADEFRESHEVERYDAY



damage control of sorts, as one of its major candidates – who is unvaccinated – still recovers from COVID 19; while another candidate, who Lovell calls “a slow decider”, has only recently taken her shot.

For the UPP, COVID and vaccination have become political footballs! The party has been a bit ambivalent on vaccination, to say the least, with many of its candidates riding the fence when it comes to encouraging people to take the vaccine, while still encour-

aging “choice”. Some UPP candidates who are vaccinated are simultaneously waging a whisper campaign, seemingly to instill fear in the population. Yet others are pushing home-remedies and what can only be described as disinformation. All this comes at a time when the government has ramped up its efforts to get the country to herd immunity. A new vaccine mandate has seen thousands of residents showing up at vaccine centres to get the jab or

stay off the job without pay come Friday 1st October.

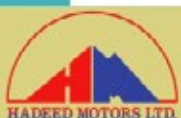
Unfortunately, as many residents have come to expect, the mandatory vaccination programme has come under political fire from the opposition parties; perhaps because they have intentionally mis-labeled it as forced vaccination – or perhaps because it (mandatory vaccination) works!

The mandatory vaccination has not only seen success in the increased number of vac-

cinations, but in general support of the policy!

“I was against mandatory vaccination at first,” said commenter Ivor Edwards. “But in a small island like Antigua, what are the alternatives? The Government cannot allow the whole country to suffer because of the careless action of a few. Unvaccinated individuals are getting sick and we are using a lot of money in the hospital to treat them for something that could have been avoided. Where or when will it end?”

**TIME
TO
PLAY**



Apple CarPlay, Touch Screen, Reverse Camera, Bluetooth Automatic Wipers and Headlamps. Give us a call at 481-2500

Schools reopening conditional on vaccination; COVID deaths push past 80!

by Shelton Daniel

y vaccinations for students and teachers has been made a condition for the reopening of secondary schools on Monday 4 October 2021 – even though it is not explicitly named as such in the weekly Cabinet communications by which the decision was announced yesterday.

It said, “The Cabinet determined, after consultations, that all secondary school students eligible for the Pfizer vaccine [those aged 12-17] and all secondary school teachers and ancillary staff who have received at least one dose of any two-dose vaccine, are to return to face-to-face classrooms commencing Monday 4 October 2021.”

The consultations, according to the post Cabinet briefing notes were with Director of Education Clare Browne and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rhonda Sealy-Thomas who were

“invited to Cabinet to discuss the policy affecting the opening of schools and to provide advice”.

Because of this vaccination conditionality, “The opening of the government secondary schools will be phased, as determined by the Ministry of Education,” the statement added.

However, “All primary schools will close immediately, despite the regulations which allowed for them to open on ... condition that all teachers and staff are vaccinated ...”

It explained that, for the primary schools, “An opening date is not yet determined but the decision will be examined again in two weeks. The decision [at the weekly Cabinet meeting on Wednesday] was based on the number of unvaccinated people and the number of COVID-19 infected people in the wider population; fearing that those below 12 years [of age] may come into contact with in-

fectured persons and, in turn, bring the infection into the classroom ... Those below 12 ... are not eligible for any of the available vaccines, [therefore] teaching by distance learning is to continue for these students, both public and private.”

The 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. curfew remains in place, for the time being, pending review in the next two weeks. The same obtains for the closure of gyms, bars and clubs, and the prohibition of dining-in at restaurants (including fast food outlets) which can only serve food on a takeaway basis.

Beaches remain off-limits from 5:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. Mondays to Saturdays and are open for only seven hours on Sundays from 5:00 a.m. to midday.

An additional PCR machine has reportedly been acquired, that will allow the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center to process additional COVID tests and thereby lessen dependence on the

Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) based in Trinidad.

“The Cabinet was also informed by the CMO that 10 medical doctors who have yet to commence their internship, have been hired to undertake contact tracing. These numbers are still not sufficient since the number of sick and infected people continues to increase almost daily,” the notes disclose.

During the live post Cabinet media briefing on Thursday morning, Information Minister Nicholas said parental consent, which is required for minors (under 18 years of age to get vaccinated) has so far not proven to be a problem of significance since the Pfizer vaccine – approved for use in 12- to 17-year-olds – became available in Antigua and Barbuda.

He said, “Now that we have made it a requirement for children 12-[17] to come forward for the vaccines, we are not seeing that [parental hesitancy] at all. From the last time I did a check, more than 3,000 children of the potential 8,000 students

who are in the ... school system have already come forward for the vaccine, and that number continues to increase incrementally on a day-by-day basis; so we are not seeing the hesitancy in the school population at all. In each instance the Ministry of Health has asked for parental consent, and that parental consent has been forthcoming; so I don’t think we have an issue with that at all.”

Meanwhile, as we put this issue of Pointe Xpress to bed, we have received confirmation of more deaths due to COVID-19, raising the number shown on the official Dashboard published elsewhere in this paper from 79 to somewhere in the low- or mid-80s.

A statement on behalf of Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC), quotes Medical Director Dr. Albert Duncan, thus:

We can confirm that sadly, three patients, have died at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. They had tested positive for COVID-19.

Sex: Male

Age: 51 (with comorbidities)

Admitted: September 6 (severe respiratory distress, requiring ventilation on admission)

Date/Time of Death: September 29 at 10pm

Vaccination Status: Unvaccinated

Sex: Female

Age: 75 (with comorbidities)

Admitted: September 18 (severe respiratory distress)

Date/Time of Death: September 29 at 10:51pm

Vaccination Status: Unvaccinated

Sex: Female

Age: 86 (with comorbidities)

Admitted: September 17 (severe respiratory distress)

Date/Time of Death: September 30 at 4:29pm

Vaccination Status: Unvaccinated

“Our thoughts and condolences remain with the patient’s families and loved ones at this difficult time,” a sentiment that we at Pointe Xpress share and would like to adopt as our own.

Antigua and Barbuda attends Seatrade Cruise Global 2021 as cruise rebuilding continues



Antigua and Barbuda's delegation at the recently concluded Seatrade Cruise Global 2021.

Antigua and Barbuda's delegation to the September 27-30 Seatrade Cruise Global Exhibition and Conference, led by Minister of Tourism and Investment the Honourable Charles Fernandez, comprised of key partners and represen-

tatives from both the public and private sector.

The country's attendance at the world's largest global cruise industry event is critical to the rebuilding of the cruise sector post the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minister Fernandez; CEO

of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James; alongside other Tourism Authority representatives; stakeholders from Calvin Air; The Rendezvous Company and Brysons Shipping, have been conducting meetings

and sharing information with industry partners and cruise executives.

This global forum, also attended by other Caribbean tourism officials, allows for updates within the cruise industry, insight on the latest trends and developments, and the discovery of marketing campaigns and strategic recovery plans going forward in a COVID-19 normal.

A total of 140 entities are participating with representation from focus areas such as tourism destinations, hospitality, ports, shipbuilding and infrastructure, technology, sustainability.

The Antigua and Barbuda delegation held over a dozen face-to-face and virtual meetings with cruise executives that provided the opportunity to inform the stakeholders about the nation's capabilities pertaining to the massive port development project, tourism infrastructure investments, the transformation of eco-friendly Barbuda, and to place emphasis on the new mandatory vaccination mandate.

Antigua and Barbuda's

'sun, sea, and safe' protocols – that seek to ensure the safety of the cruise passengers and local communities alike – were also shared. These will help to make the destination a 'must' for inclusion in the respective cruise itineraries.

The cruise lines welcomed Antigua and Barbuda's robust protocols, particularly as it relates to the country's mandatory vaccination policy for arriving passengers 12 years and older. The lines were excited at the efforts of the destination to now facilitate homeporting, fuel bunkering and, shortly, provide access to liquefied natural gas (LNG). This is now becoming the gold standard for fuel in the latest generation of luxury ships.

The destination was able to confirm 85 calls for the remainder of the season with Royal Caribbean's Oasis-class Harmony of the Seas, the largest ship in the world, which will be making its inaugural call to Antigua on November 24, and a second call on December 22.

Another notable achievement in rebuilding the

cruise sector is the advent of Virgin Cruises, the world's newest cruise line which will make its inaugural call on November 17th 2022, plus an additional 14 calls toward the end of the 2022/23 season.

In offering his comments on the success achieved in the local cruise industry so far, Minister of Tourism & Investment, The Honourable Charles Fernandez said: "The entire tourism sector, and particularly our cruise partners, have had an extremely difficult journey over the past 18 months. The fact that the Seatrade Cruise Global Conference is taking place this year – albeit as a hybrid of in-person and virtual meetings – brings a positive element of hope to the industry and faith in its ability to recover in an impactful way for the success of all partners. We are confident that Antigua and Barbuda has implemented measures that will allow us to welcome cruise guests in a safe and sustainable manner as we work to rebuild the sector."

CEO of the Tourism Authority Colin C. James reported that "Antigua & Bar-

buda has welcomed 12 port calls with 2,858 passengers since the reopening ... the port in July ... this year. Our goal is to continue to negotiate for more calls and to work with the Antigua Cruise Port (Global Ports Holding) to improve the seamless passenger welcome and the product experience. We are known in the industry for providing unique shore excursions that include a UNESCO World Heritage site, guided tours, diving, hiking, and local culinary immersions. These will continue, but will now be done against

the backdrop of ensuring the health and safety of our locals and visiting cruise guests."

The cruise industry sector has become an important contributor to the national economy over the years. Cruise tourism continues to be an important pillar in the tourism strategy for Antigua and Barbuda; and, as such, cruise executives from Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Carnival, Disney, Princess, Holland-America, Seaborne, Virgin Cruises, MSC, all confirmed that the current 35-40 percent capac-

ity will grow exponentially over the next few months. The destination's ability to safely accommodate cruise passengers will be critical in allowing the cruise lines to increase the percentage of paying passengers back to 60-70 by year-end. This commitment by the destination is directly aligned with that of the major cruise lines to carry only fully vaccinated crew and passengers. Antigua and Barbuda looks forward to safely welcoming back all of its cruise line partners and their guests.



ACB Smart Card Pick up! It's easy



Don't join the main line to collect your ACB Smart Card. Please check with Security at the main entrance, for guidance.

Collection is alphabetical by location
Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm:

A-G | Market Street
H-P | Main Branch
Q-Z | Village Walk

Requirements for collection:

- Two pieces of government issued IDs
- Proof of address

E: acbdebitcards@acbonline.com
T: 481-4399 or 481-4191

www.acbonline.com f i n

Life | Medical

Claudine Benjamin

**State is totally
hassle free!**

'Own the moment'

Live in a better STATE of mind



STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED

268,481-7800
info@sicantigua.com
sicantigua.com



PM Browne wants debt forgiveness, not restructuring



Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Hon. Gaston Browne.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has made the case for small island developing countries such as Antigua and Barbuda to be granted debt forgiveness rather than debt restructuring as a way out of the debt crisis they now face.

Speaking in an interview with CNN International on Thursday, PM Browne confirmed that Antigua and Barbuda as well as other Caribbean states have accumulated heavy debt burdens as they have been forced to borrow to cope with the challenges brought on by the COVID-19

pandemic. "All of the countries ran large deficits as they had to borrow extensively, thus exacerbating their already debt crises. Therefore the issue of debt cancellation that we spoke about months ago remains a central issue for us in the Caribbean. We all have unsustainable levels of debts and we need assistance to reduce our debts through cancellations. Additionally, countries in the Caribbean still require official development assistance. We did receive support from the International Monetary Fund, but this only represents

10 percent of what's needed," he explained. The prime minister made it clear that his call is for debt cancellation given the heavy debt overhang with which many countries are now coping.

He also emphasised the need for traditional assistance to help countries in the Caribbean navigate the difficulties ahead as the world seeks to emerge from the many crises caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

PM Browne was also asked to address the issue of vaccine mandates imposed on all government employees. He said the decision to go that route was informed by the need to protect lives and livelihoods in the country.

"Ultimately, we want to make sure that we keep the deaths and hospitalizations down to a minimum and we also had to ensure that we had a safe environment, not only for our local population but for visitors as well," he remarked.

Effective today, all public sector workers are required to have received at least one dose of the anti-COVID vaccine or face the possibility not being paid if they remain so for an extended period of time.

Environment Minister discusses COP26 ambitions for A&B and AOSIS



Minister for Health, Wellness & the Environment, Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph.

The Minister of Health, Wellness & the Environment, the Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph, provided strong remarks to the global media station CNBC on the role that Antigua and Barbuda and other countries within the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which Antigua and Barbuda currently chairs, hope to play at the upcoming Conference of the Parties 26 (COP26).

Minister Joseph spoke to the issue of climate change as “one

of the most important issues facing human kind today”. He urged the G20 to be more ambitious in setting goals in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and expressed hope that these developed countries will make the necessary commitments at COP26 that had been expected since the creation of the groundbreaking Paris Agreement in 2015 at COP21.

“We have an opportunity in Glasgow to learn from the mis-

takes [of] the past, and to make the necessary hard decisions to rid this global environment from the ... greenhouse gases that are undermining human development, both on the level of health and the economy.”

The Minister underscored that despite the fact that the small islands produce negligible amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, they are still setting ambitious targets. He gave the example of Antigua and Barbuda, stating that by 2030 Antigua and Barbuda hopes to “succeed in converting 100% of vehicles ... using electricity rather than fossil fuels”.

The Minister stated that in these crucial moments, the global community must make a commitment to the next generation. However, he noted that despite the small size of the countries making up the AOSIS, the expectation is to make a big impact at the upcoming international meeting.

“I think you will find that, at Glasgow, the small island states will roar.”

To view the interview, please visit <https://www.cnbc.com/video/2021/09/30/g-20-must-come-up-with-better-ambitions-at-cop26-antigua-and-barbuda-lawmaker.html>

Gov't signs seabed development agreement

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Odyssey Marine Exploration, a global leader in marine exploration with over 25 years of experience in the discovery, validation, and exploration of subsea resources, for a project called *"The Antigua and Barbuda Sustainable Seabed Resource Development Programme"*.

The Government and Odyssey share the goal of exploring opportunities in the waters of Antigua and Barbuda to understand potential resources in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and wish to establish a long-term partnership to explore respectful and environmentally sustainable activities within the island's marine space.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne outlined that the signing of the MoU is a very important step in exploring the resources of the seas around the islands in a sustainable manner.

"Given Odyssey's extensive history and record in developing and executing deep-ocean exploration projects, we felt they would be an excellent partner to help us understand our ocean and seabed resources," PM Browne added.

"The goal of our Blue Economy initiative is to support the sustainable use of our ocean resources for economic growth and improved livelihoods while protecting ocean health. The first step is a thorough understanding of our ocean and seabed resources within our EEZ which expands up to 200 miles from our beaches and coastline. We are pleased to be planning this first step with Odyssey Marine Exploration whose advanced capabilities to sur-

vey and map our surrounding ocean will allow us to understand what mineral resources may be present, while also providing invaluable mapping and environmental data that will benefit future marine spatial planning, our fisheries, and defining our marine habitat," said the Honourable Minister for the Blue Economy, Dean Jonas.

"Odyssey is excited to enter into this partnership with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda who share our love and respect of the ocean. Our global team of scientists, environmental experts, and deep-ocean professionals will collaborate on the project with the Government and local stakeholders, sea users and academic institutions. We are developing a robust deep-sea exploration programme that includes scientific and environmental studies, the data from which will be shared with the Government and will contribute to the overall understanding of Antigua and Barbuda's ocean resources," said John Longley, Odyssey President and COO.

"We are committed to conducting our marine exploration activities in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. At this early stage, exploration activities include marine scientific research with limited sampling to understand the environment, and do not have any material impact to the marine environment. We want to assure the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda that we continuously monitor and evaluate the environment and our processes, and if at any point data indicates that serious harm would occur, we re-assess the project."



Hon. Dean Jonas, Minister responsible for the Blue Economy.

This subsea exploration programme has the potential to unlock a host of economic, societal and scientific benefits for the nation through capacity building programmes, acquired scientific data, and Odyssey's engagement of local businesses and services while operating on and offshore in Antigua and Barbuda.

Exploration activities will provide data to help the Government develop Maritime Blue Economy initiatives in an environmentally responsible manner. Throughout the planning and operational phases of the exploration programme, Odyssey is committed to working with local sea users, fisheries and the tourism industry of Antigua and Barbuda to ensure the project does not interfere with their work.

The planning phase is in early stages and will take place over the next several months. All facets of the exploration programme will be approved by the appropriate Government agencies prior to taking place.

The UWI Five Islands recognises AUA for donation of lab equipment



Professor Williams receives one of the items donated from AUA. (from left): Dr. Curtis Charles, Director of Academic Affairs; Professor Densil Williams, Principal, The UWI Five Islands Campus; Mr Vernon Solomon, Vice President of Administration & Community Affairs, American University of Antigua (AUA); and Professor Eulalia Kahwa, Nursing Consultant, The UWI Five Islands Campus.

The University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus received a donation of lab equipment from the American Univer-

sity of Antigua (AUA) as it continues to build its programmes in the School of Health & Behavioural Sciences. The handover took

place at The UWI Five Islands Campus on Friday 24th September and was attended by officials from both institutions.

Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Densil Williams thanked AUA for their generosity and timely donation.

He noted that building relationships in the academic ecosystem was important and AUA was a natural partner through its experience in growing a world class educational experience in Antigua.

Professor Wil-

liams acknowledged that the collaboration with AUA – which has excellent physical infrastructure and a strong academic corps – will benefit the training of health workers for Antigua and Barbuda and, by extension, the OECS.

Vice President of Administration & Community Affairs, Vernon Solomon acknowledged the exciting opportunity presented to AUA to

work with The UWI Five Islands Campus. He noted that while there is a void in the healthcare system in the areas of medicine and nursing, the vision of filling these gaps with quality professionals is shared by both institutions.

Mr Solomon added that this collaboration by institutions in the country can only help to produce better physicians and nurses for Antigua and Barbuda

and the region.

The donation of lab equipment forms part of a wider collaboration between The UWI Five Islands Campus and American University of Antigua. This collaboration will see the universities [exploring] inter-professional collaboration between the medical and nursing students, as well as other key areas in the health education sector.

NOTICE

To: Her Worship,
The Licensing Magistrate.
District "A" Magistrate court
Grays farm
St John's Antigua

To: Commissioner of Police
Police headquarters
American road
St Johns Antigua

Dear Sir/ Madame,

Re: Notice-Application for Tavern License

I, Kareem Nicholas of McKinnon's, with registered business is situate at Dickenson bay in St John's Antigua and Barbuda, **DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE** that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm, St. John's Antigua on Thursday 7th October, 2021, next ensuring, for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to Section 11(5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act, Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as **"Kareem's Salt Life Tours"** situate at St Johnston Village in St John's Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 15th day of September ,2021

NOTICE

To: Her Worship,
The Licensing Magistrate.
District "A" Magistrate court
Grays farm
St John's Antigua

To: Commissioner of Police
Police headquarters
American road
St Johns Antigua

Dear Sir/ Madame,

Re: Notice-Application for Tavern License

I, Cheryl Thompson of McKinnon's, with registered business is situate at Dickenson bay in St John's Antigua and Barbuda, **DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE** that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm, St. John's Antigua on Thursday 7th October, 2021, next ensuring, for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to Section 11(5) of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act, Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as **"Jam Plus"** situate at St Johnston Village in St John's Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 15th day of September ,2021

Sandals Foundation aids Wallings Nature Reserve to rehabilitate Signal Hill



Wallings Nature Reserve volunteers planting fruit and forest trees towards the rehabilitation of Signal Hill. The programme is funded by the Sandals Foundation and forms part of biodiversity protection and climate action activities.

Six hundred (600) fruit and forest trees are set to be planted for the rehabilitation of the island's second highest peak, Signal Hill.

Standing at 1,198 ft. or 365 meters,

Signal Hill has over the years been affected by fires lit by persons trying to access the area. The result has been the loss of healthy forest coverage and overgrowth of the invasive lemon-

grass plant.

Now, as part of the Sandals Foundation's commitment to climate action across the Caribbean, the philanthropic arm of Sandals Resorts International (SRI)

has donated some US \$15,000 to the community-run Wallings Nature Reserve for labour, personnel, tools, equipment, travel and planting of the 600 trees by November this year.

One hundred and seventy-one (171) trees have been planted to date, with the reforestation project also set to clean and expand the existing water catchment area.

Refica Attwood, Executive Director at the Wallings Nature Reserve, says the decision to plant fruit trees was strategic of the community-based organization. “We want to ensure food security and so we’re planting majority fruit trees to ensure that future generations can always count on the Wallings Nature Reserve to provide food. In the next 5 years, persons will be able

to have breadfruit, lemons, tangerines and others even as they’re hiking in the Reserve.”

Heidi Clarke, Executive Director at the Sandals Foundation, says: “Protecting our natural resources has never before been more important. We will continue to partner with organizations like Wallings, because we share a common goal of strengthening and conserving our region’s biodiversity.”

Clarke continued, “Together, we hope to showcase the natural beauty of our islands while also utilizing these nature reserves to teach the importance of

biodiversity to both locals and visitors alike.”

The Signal Hill Rehabilitation Project forms part of the Sandals Foundation’s climate action commitment under the Caribbean Tree Planting Project which is being coordinated by the Caribbean Philanthropic Alliance in collaboration with Trees That Feed Foundation and the Clinton Global Initiative.

The foundation aims to plant over 10,000 trees across the Caribbean by June 2022 with an expansive planting programme also being executed in Grenada, Jamaica and The Bahamas.

Do you want to print?

- Business Cards •
- Letter Heads •
- Flyers •
- Booklets •
- Annual Reports •
- Certificates •
- Business Forms •
- Invoices •
- Receipt Books •
- Brochures •
- Calendars •
- Magazines •
- Invitations •
- ID Cards •

We print it for you.

QUICK DELIVERY
LOWEST PRICE
INSTANT PRINTING

INTER SOLUTIONS
268-562-4989
268-725-0636
268-770-4518
Lower North Breeze
St. John's, Barbados
email: inter.solutions@gmail.com

YOU THINK IT WE PRINT IT

Life | Medical

Ellis Richards
*If I get injured,
State has
my back!*

‘Own the moment’
Live in a better STATE of mind

STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED

268.481-7800
info@sicantigua.com
sicantigua.com

Facebook Twitter Instagram

COVID-19 UPDATE

COVID Dashboard Update for September 30th 2021

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment from the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) revealed 43 new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Tuesday 28th September 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Seventy-four (74) samples were processed at SLBMC and 180 at the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

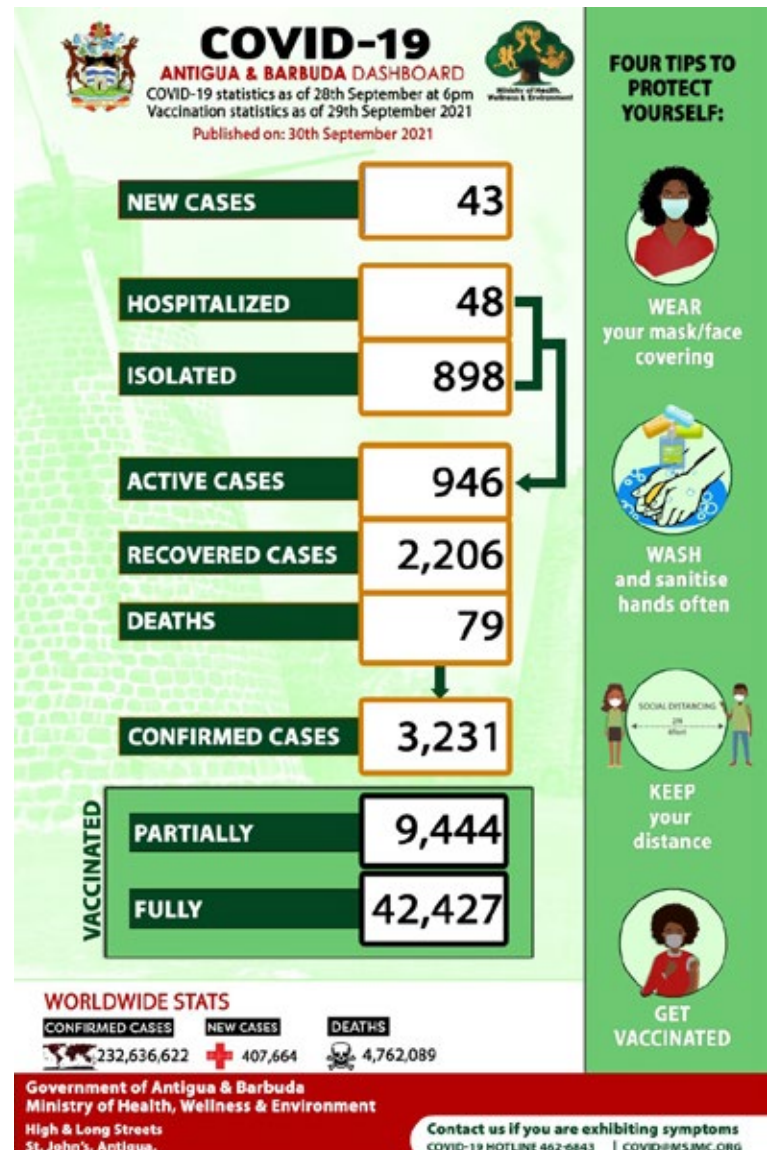
Seventy-two (72) recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 2,206.

Three (3) more

COVID-19 related deaths were recorded, increasing the total to 79. Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 3,231; which is inclusive of 946 active cases.

There are 48 hospitalized cases; 28 mild, 13 moderate and 10 severe. Meanwhile, Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 42,427 individuals while 9,444 have only received their first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.



Top 2021 matriculant at Five Islands!



Raven Joseph signs matriculation register at the 2021 matriculation ceremony.

Raven Joseph is the 2021/2022 top matriculant for The UWI Five Islands Campus. Ms. Joseph was recognised at the 2021 Matriculation Ceremony which was held virtually on Friday 24th September 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Joseph is the first daughter of Mureene Quinland and Patrick Joseph. Raven began her educational journey at the Seventh-Day Adventist Primary School. She later advanced to Antigua Girls High School. While at Antigua Girls High School, she was a member of the Optimist Club, the Universi-

ty and College Christian Fellowship and the Volleyball Club.

On completion of her secondary education she received awards for outstanding performances in French, Spanish and History. She was also a 2018 National CSEC Gold Awardee, having successfully passed 10 CSEC subjects.

Miss Joseph then attended the Antigua State College where she completed a CAPE Associate's Degree programme in Modern Languages and also graduated on the Honour Roll, being recognised as the Most Out-

standing Student in the Humanities Department.

In addition to her academic, Raven enjoys socializing with family and friends, Netflix, and playing sports.

She will pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Resource Management at the School of Business & Management.

One 197 students matriculated to The UWI Five Islands Campus for the academic year 2021/2022.

This year also saw the first students entering programmes in the School of Science, Computing & Artificial Intelligence.

No such thing as 'turns' for Commonwealth Secretary-General



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)

The announcement by the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, that his government has nominated the country's energy minister, Monica Juma, for the post of Commonwealth Secretary-General, has re-opened the contention surrounding "turns" to hold the post.

However, there is no such thing as 'turns' in the rules of the Common-

wealth, and the concept of 'turns' has never been used as a criterion for proposing candidates for the job.

'Turns' is a contrivance utilised by governments of countries in regions of the world that have not held the post. The job of Secretary-General has always been open to any Commonwealth citizen qualified for consideration by

the Heads of Government. Below, I set out the Secretaries-General of the Commonwealth from the inception of the job; the countries from which they came; and the candidates who challenged them, to demonstrate that 'turns' is a stratagem of recent vintage which, if slavishly followed, would deprive the Commonwealth of the best talents to carry out the vital duties of Secretary-General.

In 1965, when the Heads of Government elected the Canadian Arnold Smith as Secretary-General, there were five other contenders from Australia, New Zealand, Sierra Leone and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

In 1975 and again in 1980, Shridath 'Sonny'

Ramphal of Guyana was elected unopposed, but he was unsuccessfully challenged by an Indian in 1985. In 1990, Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria was elected, having fended off a strong contender in Malcolm Fraser of Australia. Term limits were then limited to two, and Anyaoku was re-elected in 1995 when the period of a term was reduced from five to four years.

In 2000, Don McKinnon of New Zealand was elected, but he had to fight off a challenge from Farook Sobhan of Bangladesh. In 2008, Kamlesh Sharma of India was elected, but faced a strong challenge from Michael Frendo of Malta. In 2014, the contenders were Baroness Scotland (nominated by Dominica and pro-

moted by Britain where she had been Attorney-General and continues to be a member of the British House of Lords) along with Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba of Botswana and me from Antigua and Barbuda.

The Commonwealth secretaries-general, therefore, have come from: Canada, Guyana, Nigeria, New Zealand, India, Dominica. In terms of regions and the contrivance of 'turns', this translates into: Canada, Caribbean, Africa, Pacific, Asia, Caribbean.

But if 'turns' were really the criterion, after India (Asia) it should not have been the Caribbean's 'turn'; it should have been the turn of Europe (either Cyprus or Malta), and if Europe gave-up its 'turn', it should have gone to Canada – at which point the cycle should have been re-started.

However, the reality is that there is no such criterion as 'turns' for the job of Commonwealth SG. And if there is, then the Caribbean jumped its turn in 2015 and it should now definitely be the turn of either Malta or Cyprus before returning to Canada. If

not, Europe and North America are being denied the chance of nominating candidates for the post. The idea of regional 'turns' is limiting and self-defeating.

Some countries in the Caribbean are insisting that it is the Caribbean's "turn" to hold the post for two terms (eight years). Therefore, even though English Baroness Patricia Scotland was elected (ostensibly as coming from the Caribbean because she was born in Dominica, which she left at the age of two) for the term 2016 to 2020, it is contended by her Caribbean supporters that she is entitled to a second term running from April 2020 to 2024.

The story gets complicated because the Baroness' elected-term officially ended in April 2020. But because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Commonwealth Heads of Government could not meet to consider candidates for the term 2020 to 2024. Consequently, the Baroness was allowed to remain in the post until such time as the election could be held. She has, therefore, not only served the term

for which she was elected by a majority of one vote with several abstentions, she has also segued into a further year and six months, so far, into an unelected term.

This period has not been uncontroversial. In February 2020, Boris Johnson, who has been serving as Chair of the Commonwealth since 2019 when he was elected Prime Minister of Great Britain, stated in a letter to all Commonwealth Heads of Government that a majority of them had indicated to him their rejection of a plan "to offer Lady Scotland another four years in office". The leaders agreed only to a short three-month extension of her contract which ended on 31 March 2020.

As it turned out, the Heads of Government meeting, slated for Rwanda in June 2020, was postponed twice – first to June 2021, and now to later this year.

The Government of Kenya now feels that – in so far as it believes 'turns' exist – the Caribbean has had its turn and now it is Africa's turn. Significantly, African countries did not support the

British Baroness at the 2015 election in Malta. They stood solidly behind the Botswana candidate, Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba, in the second round of voting. I was eliminated in the first round because promised African votes went to Masire-Mwamba.

In reality, the notion of 'turns' was never a criterion for the job and persons are only elected for one term at a time. The criterion for the job was – and should be – a Commonwealth citizen with a proven track record of knowledge and experience of Commonwealth affairs; a deep commitment to its values; a vision of the role it can play in effectively serving the interests of each of its 54 states, especially its 32 small members; and advancing the Commonwealth as a force for good in global affairs.

There should be a contest for the post, and outstanding candidates from anywhere in the Commonwealth should contend without restriction.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

Lovell's attack on healthcare workers **MUST** be condemned!

Dear Editor: It is undeniable that we are living in unprecedented times. While this is not the world's first experience of a pandemic, it is the first in the era of globalization. Social media and the ease with which the world connects by air and sea have truly caused us all to be more connected than ever before.

Once upon a time, people used to get away with unrecorded utterances and hearsay that lingered in the memories of those who heard and repeated them. Virtually nothing remains hidden in today's world. Every accidental or unintentional or downright reckless word spoken, action taken, or word written, is capable of being captured and irretrievably reposted across social media. Unfortunate, sometimes, but that is the simple



Harold Lovell wearing one of his many different faces or personas.

truth about our world today.

The fact that the individual has so little control over where the things we say or do can end up, once they have been recorded, requires a great deal of self-control, responsibility and awareness. Anyone who leads, and those who aspire to lead a country, must demonstrate a greater degree of composure, consciousness and self-regulation for the things they say, far more than the average Joe.

I have listened to Harold Lovell for many years now – for probably the last three decades as he rose to some degree of political relevance – and I have become more and more disenchanted each time. I accept blame for my high threshold of political forbearance. But, as a citizen, I believe he deserved to be heard; because, at the end of the day, he has offered to serve over many decades and that, in and of itself, is a remarkable sacrifice.

His sacrifice is probably more historical than anything else, as there is no other politician in the history of Antigua and Barbuda who has lost more

contested elections than Harold Lovell. To continue doing what he does at this stage of his life is either a show of inspirational commitment, or a sign of something that requires a professional diagnosis that I am unqualified to offer.

One would think that after so many years of being an attorney and having served in government, that the leader of the United Progressive Party would have more empathy for the persons that he worked alongside for the 10 years he spent in office. His disingenuous attempt at expressing care and concern for what is happening – with the recent escalation in the death rate for persons contracting COVID-19 – is as translucent as can be. This is nothing short of a swipe at all the professionals who sacrifice time, family and – above all, self – to save lives in this country.

Politicians do not provide healthcare and his obviously pretentious expressions were aimed at trying to convince anyone who would listen that there may be an issue of political leadership contributing to this.

This hypocritical and disingenuous attack of our

healthcare workers should be strongly condemned. Leave them out of your political desperation and thirst to see government from the inside again. It is unbecoming of someone of your experience and stature. Call on people to take care of their health; to go to their doctors at the first signs of COVID-19 or any other illness; and, above all, encourage them to get vaccinated – especially those with comorbidities.

At the end of the day, I sometimes see politicians as superheroes not because they have any special powers but their responsible actions can help save a life. They withstand a barrage of attacks on their reputation and person, and still manage to walk away unscathed most times – at least to our eyes.

But then you have those who seem to speak irresponsibly faster than a speeding bullet, overload you with more promises than they can carry in a locomotive, and amazingly, leap over and then land in ignorance with a single bound.

Tracee L.

African, Caribbean nations press ahead with new partnership

Barbados Today - Trade and investment links between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the African Union (AU) are in line for major strengthening as officials of the African Import-Export Bank (Afreximbank) hold talks with officials in Bridgetown and the rest of the region.

President of Afreximbank, Professor Dr. Benedict Oramah said he was eager to see major trade taking place between Africa and the Caribbean.

He told a press briefing on Wednesday that upon his return to Cairo, he would be discussing with his Board members the possibility of establishing a US\$250 million facility to help with the intended trade of goods and services between the two regions.

Professor Oramah indicated that he has already met with the Secretary General of CARICOM, Dr. Carla Barnett, Prime Minister Mia Mottley, and several interest groups including the local business community and youth entrepreneurs.

"We have agreed in principle that Africa Export-Import Bank will put in place an initial amount of US\$250 million in a facility we are going to call Africa-Caribbean Trade & Investment Financing Facility. We will put that facility in place so that banks,

companies, if they want to do business among themselves, there is financing to support it. We believe this is the first hurdle we must cross and so we are going to go back and get the Board to consider it and approve it as quickly as possible," he said.

He said several priority areas have already been identified where cooperation must be strengthened including tourism and direct air, shipping and communication links.

"We must develop logistics facilities and also work to begin to diversify the economies of the Caribbean," he said.

"We have to find ways of also creating opportunities for investment for African businesses who want to invest in the Caribbean, and a lot of Caribbean businesses want to invest in Africa," he added.

"The Afreximbank will be taking some Caribbean students on internships every year. We are also discussing how to attach some young entrepreneurs from the Caribbean in big African corporations and vice versa. So these interventions and other plans we are putting in place, and we will have continued dialogue at the leadership and political level and also at the business level," he explained.

Declaring that everyone he came into contact



President of Afreximbank, Professor Dr. Benedict Oramah; and Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

with was "ready" for the expansion of trade and investment opportunities in Africa, Dr. Oramah said he was expecting a trade agreement to be put in place.

"One of the discussions we are having here in Barbados is the possibility of launching the Caribbean-Africa Free Trade Agreement. I believe that the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat (AfCFTA), as well as the CARICOM Secretariat, would find this very good because that is the only way to begin to convert the intention into something concrete. I would not be surprised if in the very near future these discussions commence," he said.

Dr. Oramah said he was not pleased with the current low levels of trade taking place across the borders, pointing out that Prime Minister Mottley, who has been championing greater ties between CARICOM and Africa, would continue to engage her CARICOM colleagues on the matter.

"We agreed how to take things forward. We expect that we would be the bridge to link businesses here in the Caribbean and the businesses in Africa. There is a lot of interest to get this started," he said, giving the assurance that he would keep up the momentum.

"We didn't come here to convince anybody. We came here to implement our plan. So everything went very well. We are just pinning down going through the granular details to know what we have to do to show results as quickly as possible. There is no doubt this is one way of improving the lives of our people. We cannot continue the old way because the old way has not worked for us. We must find new ways," he said.

Oramah was unable to say how soon businesses in CARICOM or Africa could expect to trade across the regions but said he was expecting all the policies to be in place soon, and that it would depend heavily on political will.

Court awards multi-million dollar compensation to Jamaican woman



Sandra Russell

CMC - Acting Chief Justice Roxane George on Wednesday awarded compensation totalling GUY\$3.1 million (One Guyana dollar = US\$0.008 cents) to a 56-year-old Jamaican woman who had been illegally detained in prison for eight months.

Attorney Darren Wade had filed the multi-million-dollar lawsuit against the State for breach of Sandra Russell's fundamental rights to freedom after she was unlawfully imprisoned by members of the Guyana Police Force.

Russell had asked the State for GUY\$10 million per day for every day she

had been in unlawful custody, in excess of GUY\$20 million for the inhumane and degrading treatment she had endured in the lockups, GUY\$20 million for the breach of her freedom of movement, and GUY\$50 million for false imprisonment.

She had been wrongfully detained at the East La Penitence Police Station in the capital, Georgetown, shortly after being released from prison after serving a sentence for trafficking narcotics.

Russell said she had become depressed and stressed since the ventilation at the station was

poor and she was forced to sleep on a thin mattress on the concrete floor.

In 2018, Russell was sentenced to eight months in prison and fined GUY\$135,000 by Chief Magistrate Ann McLennan for the possession of 70 grams of cannabis. But she had her sentence reduced to three-and-a-half months. However, on November 10th 2018, Russell was released into the custody of a female Immigration Officer who told her that she would be deported to Jamaica. But that never materialized. Instead she was kept in custody at the East La Penitence Police Station and released eight months later on GUY\$10,000 bail on July 7th 2019. Lawyers representing the State had asked the High Court to dismiss the application, claiming that the Jamaican Consulate in Guyana could not ascertain Russell's identity and links to Jamaica ... [This] prompted further investigations since her deportation was now complicated.

The lawyers argued that Russell was kept in custody according to the Immigration Act and was considered a "prohibited immigrant" while an investigation was being conducted on her identity.

But, in her ruling, the acting Chief Justice said,

"The State must do better as regards to facilities for the incarceration of persons. "The claim of so-called third world status cannot be permitted as a continual excuse for poor conditions and cannot be countenanced as being the best the State can do."

Justice George said that under the Immigration Act, the applicant should have been kept in custody for three months while a tribunal was established.

She awarded Russell GUY\$2.5 million for compensatory damages as well as GUY\$600,000 for being subjected to poor conditions while being wrongfully detained.

The State has also been ordered to pay GUY\$250,000 in costs.

The Acting Chief Justice also ordered that Russell should leave Guyana as soon as possible at her own expense.

"Since the applicant is not a citizen of Guyana and has clearly overstayed her time, unless some accommodation is granted by the State, she must leave. This should not be at the expense of the State. As such, unless she can stand the expenses of her return to her home country, such expense is to be deducted from the award," Justice George said.

Eastern Caribbean countries overwhelmed by COVID pandemic

PAHO - A senior official of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on Wednesday said the health systems in most of the islands in the Eastern Caribbean have "limited capacities" to respond to the community spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

"In most of the Eastern Caribbean countries we are observing the situation of community transmission with limited additional capacity to respond and the risk of health services becoming overwhelmed in the context of the predominant Delta variant circulation," Dr. Sylvain Aldighieri, PAHO's deputy director, told the weekly PAHO news conference.

He repeated a statement issued by the Barbados-based PAHO office in the Caribbean that indicated nearly 8,000 confirmed new coronavirus cases had been reported over the last three weeks of September, a 52 per cent increase over the 4,231 cases recorded last month in Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts-Nevis and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

He said the increase of cases is largely noted in persons who are unvaccinated and the new reported cases also showed a proportion of the cases, 15-25 per cent, to be children under the age of 18 years old driven by the



Dr. Sylvain Aldighieri, PAHO's Deputy Director

highly transmissible Delta Variant of Concern.

PAHO said in the last seven days, the increase in number of cases is led by St. Vincent and the Grenadines (231.8 per cent, representing 282 new cases), followed by St. Lucia (36.2 per cent or 872 new cases), and Antigua and Barbuda (74.2 per cent).

"In this context, a larger combination of measures needs to be put in place to limit the transmission, manage the cases, and ensure the control of the epidemic," Dr. Aldighieri told the virtual news conference.

He said the particular focus should be on prevention and early detection of "potential super spreading events," adding,

"I would like to stress the recommendations of the Pan American Health Organization that individuals are encouraged to accept COVID-19 vaccinations when offered."

He said individuals should also "quickly practice the preventive measures."

"I would like to assure the countries and our partners in the Caribbean that the Pan American Health Organization continues to provide test kits and laboratory supplies, oxygen concentrators, in addition to the deployment of emergency medical teams that have been deployed at the moment to assist."

Earlier this week, PAHO warned regional countries that the presence of

variants of concern (VOC) is to be considered with the high transmission, and that one of the reasons why variants might emerge are the 'selection pressures' brought about by widespread transmission of the virus.

PAHO said the importance of limiting transmission to reduce the risk of the emergence of variants of concern cannot be overstated.

"Variants of concern are known to spread more easily, cause more severe disease, escape the body's immune response, change clinical presentation, or decrease effectiveness of known tools – public health measures, diagnostics, treatments, and vaccines."

T&T: Police Service Commission completely crumbles as chairman resigns

CMC - The chairman of the beleaguered Police Service Commission (PSC) resigned on Thursday amid controversy over the selection of the twin-island republic's next top cop.

A brief statement from the Office of the President indicated that President Paula-Mae Weekes "today accepted the resignation with immediate effect of Ms. Bliss Seepersad as Chair[person] and Member of the Police Service Commission".

Seepersad is the last member of the PSC to step down, following Courtney McNish, Dr. Susan Craig-James and Roger Kawalsingh who resigned between last week and this week.

The three had disagreed with Seepersad's handling of issues that arose after the PSC began selection of a Police Commissioner.

Gary Griffith, whose three-year contract as Commissioner of Police (COP) ended on August 17th 2021, was to remain acting in that position until completion of the selection process for the post.

He went on two weeks' vacation leave in early September, during which time Deputy Commissioner of Po-

lice McDonald Jacob performed the duties of COP. However, Griffith was suspended in a letter from Seepersad dated September 17, in which he was instructed to immediately cease reporting for duty until further notice.

The notice of suspen-

sion was withdrawn six days later after Griffith agreed to go on voluntary leave pending the outcome of an investigation into allegations of corruption in the granting of firearm users' licences and possible interference in a police investigation against the

head of the legal unit in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS).

Despite the withdrawal of the letter, Griffith is set to return to court on November 10 to seek a declaration from the court that his suspension was unlawful.



Ms. Bliss Seepersad

Ethiopia orders expulsion of top UN officials for 'meddling'

Al Jazeera - Ethiopia's government has ordered the expulsion of seven senior United Nations officials from the country for "meddling" in its internal affairs.

The move on Thursday came as humanitarian workers have been sounding the alarm about limited access to the embattled Tigray region, which has been racked by conflict for nearly 11 months.

The seven officials, who include individuals from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), have been declared "persona non grata" and given 72 hours to leave the country, a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Thursday.

Grant Leaity, deputy humanitarian coordinator for OCHA; and Adele Khodr, UNICEF representative in Ethiopia, were among those expelled.

OCHA's Kwesi Sansculotte, Saeed Moahmoud Hersi, Ghada Eltahir Midawi and Marcy Vigoda were also ordered to leave; along with Sonny Onyegbula of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he



was "shocked" by the expulsion, the UN spokesperson Stephanie Tremblay told a news briefing.

"We are now engaging with the government of Ethiopia in the expectation that the concerned UN [personnel] will be allowed to continue their important work," Tremblay said.

Al Jazeera's diplomatic correspondent James Bays, reporting from the UN headquarters in New York, said the Ethiopian government's move had caused "very deep concern" at the UN.

He noted that the UN chief has pursued "a very quiet, patient diplomacy ... not saying too much, at least initially in public, not condemning it too much, because he thought he could nudge

[Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed] in the right direction".

"[But] that strategy has clearly not worked," Bays said.

Separately, the US said it will impose sanctions related to Ethiopia's "absent significant progress", White House press secretary Jen Psaki explained.

Earlier, in a briefing with reporters, Psaki said the Biden administration condemns a move by the Ethiopian government to expel UN officials, two days after the UN aid chief warned that people in the northern region of Tigray were likely experiencing famine due to a government blockade of aid.

Fighting in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region

has been raging between federal forces and those aligned with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) since November 2020. Thousands of people have died in the conflict marked by gang rapes, mass expulsions and the destruction of medical centres.

Findings from a joint investigation into the war by the UN Human Rights Office and the government-created Ethiopian Human Rights Commission — a rare setup that has drawn concern and criticism — are scheduled for release on November 1.

It was not immediately clear if the probe will be affected by the expulsion of Onyegbula, a UN member of the joint team.

Chaos in the UK: pumps dry, medicines disrupted and pig cull fears

(Reuters) – More than two thousand British gas stations were still dry on Thursday due to a shortage of truck drivers which was starting to disrupt deliveries to pharmacies, while farmers warned a lack of butchers could lead to a massive cull of pigs.

In a chaotic week where fights broke out at gas stations and people filled up old water bottles with petrol, British ministers have repeatedly said the crisis was easing, though they ordered soldiers on Wednesday to start driving fuel tankers.

Ministers have rejected accusations that the trucker shortage was caused by Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, pointing to similar shortfalls elsewhere after COVID-19 lockdowns halted thousands of truck driver tests.

The Petrol Retailers Association (PRA), which represents 65% of Britain's 8,380 forecourts, said members reported on Thursday that 27% of pumps were dry, 21% had just one fuel type in stock, and 52% had enough petrol and diesel.

"This is running out



A driver walks past his tanker after completing a fuel delivery to a BP filling station in Hersham, Britain, September 30, 2021

quicker than usual due to unprecedented demand," said PRA Executive Director Gordon Balmer who said he was still hearing of verbal and physical abuse against gas station staff.

Reuters reporters visited 10 petrol stations in London and surrounding areas on Thursday. Three were open. A line of dozens of drivers snaked back from one of the open stations with staff attempting to direct the queue.

Such is the shortage of truckers that pharmacies were being affected.

"The whole supply chain has been impacted from inbound

wholesale depot supply down to outward depot deliveries to pharmacies," said a spokeswoman for the association which represents large pharmacy operators.

Besides fuel and medicine, the farming industry warned that hundreds of thousands of pigs may have to be culled within weeks unless the government issues visas to allow more butchers into the country. Transport ministry data indicated that motor traffic had decreased by six percentage points on Monday from the previous week, to the lowest volume on a non-holiday Monday

since July 12.

England ended COVID restrictions on July 19.

The disruption, and the spike in prices it is expected to fuel, threatens to undermine Britain's economic growth, projected at 7% this year.

Data released by the Office for National Statistics on Thursday showed the economy grew by more than previously thought in the April-June period before what looked like a sharp slowdown more recently as post-lockdown bottlenecks, including the shortage of truck drivers, mount.

USA: Nearly 50 million seniors could face Social Security payment delays



(CNN) - Nearly 50 million senior citizens could face delays in their Social Security payments if Congress does not suspend or raise the debt ceiling in the coming weeks, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told lawmakers Thursday.

"It would be catastrophic for the economy and for individual families," Yellen said at a House Financial Services Committee hearing.

"Nearly 50 million seniors could stop receiving Social Security payments or receive them delayed," Yellen said, echoing what she wrote in a Wall Street Journal op-ed earlier this month. "Our troops would not know when they would get their next paycheck. We have 30 million families who rely on the monthly child tax credits and they would not receive that relief, at least not on time."

Unless Congress addresses the debt limit by October 18, the federal government will no longer be able to borrow to pay for its operations, forcing it to limit its spending.

Although the House has twice passed measures to do so, the effort is expected to fail again in the Senate where Republicans are united in their opposition to the bill.

Just what it would mean for Americans remains uncertain since Congress has always stepped in to raise, extend or revise the definition of the debt limit in the past. The Treasury Department could still pay some of its bills since it would still have tax revenue coming in, but it's not known what it would decide to pay and when, experts said.

Social Security beneficiaries would be at risk for not receiving their payments for the first time since the program was created in 1935, said Max Richtman, CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. They are scheduled to receive \$90 billion in payments in October.

Some 40% of beneficiaries depend on the monthly checks for at least 90% of their income, and two-thirds of recipients depend on the infusions for at least half

of their income, he said.

"Not having a check for a few weeks or a month is devastating," Richtman said. "Beneficiaries are going to have to decide: Do I pay my rent? Do I buy food? Do I buy my medicine?"

Also, millions of parents who are set to receive three more monthly installments of the enhanced child tax credit this year may also have to wait for the funds if there is a default.

The Internal Revenue Service is scheduled to send approximately \$15 billion in payments on the 15th of each month, and many families are depending on the money to buy food and necessary items for their children. Parents receive up to \$300 for each child up to age 6, and up to \$250 for each one ages 6 to 17.

Meanwhile, more than 42.3 million Americans who receive food stamps could be left waiting for their monthly benefits – an average of \$227 per person.

A default and extended impasse could also have major implications for the national economy, with federal spending cuts potentially triggering a downturn comparable to the Great Recession, according to Moody's Analytics. Nearly 6 million jobs could be lost, stock prices could drop by one-third and about \$15 trillion in household wealth could evaporate.

A 2011 showdown – which was ultimately resolved late in the game – spooked the stock market, raised borrowing costs and eroded consumer confidence.

Facebook grilled over mental-health impact on kids

BBC - Facebook has defended the impact of its products, saying Instagram has “affirmatively helped” young people.

Its global head of safety, Antigone Davis, testified to the US Senate, about child protection.

It comes after a leak exposed how Instagram’s own research had found the platform could harm children’s well-being.

Previously, Instagram boss Adam Mosseri said the app’s effects on teenagers’ mental health were “quite small”.

The committee opened by reiterating Facebook’s own research - first reported on by the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) - which found Instagram could have a negative impact on body image and self-esteem.

Teenagers “blame Instagram for increases in the rate of anxiety and depression”, it said.

But Ms. Davis then told the committee: “We conduct this research to make our platform better, to minimize the bad and maximize the good, and to proactively identify where we can improve.”

“We want our platforms to be a place for meaningful interactions with friends and family and we cannot achieve that goal if people do not feel safe.”

But Richard Blumenthal – who chairs the Senate commerce, science, and transportation subcommittee on consumer protection, product safety, and data security – highlighted how Facebook had, in August, denied it was aware of any research that showed a negative correlation.

“We know it chooses the

growth of its products over the well-being of our children,” he said.

“And we now know that it is indefensibly delinquent in acting to protect them.

“It is failing to hold itself accountable and the question that haunts me is how we or parents or anyone can trust Facebook?”

In the hearing, Ms. Davis repeatedly failed to answer the committee’s questions and said she would have to check with the relevant Facebook teams

Facebook disputes the WSJ’s reporting.

“It is simply not accurate that this research demonstrates Instagram is ‘toxic’ for teen girls,” head of research Pratiti Raychoudhury blogged.

“The research actually demonstrated that many teens we heard from feel that using Instagram helps them when they are struggling with the kinds of hard moments and issues teenagers have always faced.”

But Facebook, releasing slides to illustrate its research, admitted: “One exception was body image.”

One in three teenage girls who had already experienced body-image issues told Facebook using Instagram made them feel worse.

In particular, filtered images, posting selfies, and viewing content with hashtags, affect well-being, the slides suggest.

It comes just days after the company paused its scheduled rollout of Instagram Kids, which had been due to launch this year for users aged under 13.



Facebook head of safety Antigone Davis testified to the US Senate about child protection

“As every parent knows when it comes to kids and tweens, they’re already online,” Ms. Davis told the committee.

“We believe it is better for parents to have the option to give tweens access to a version of Instagram that’s designed for them, where parents can supervise and manage their experience - rather than to have them lie about their age to access the platform that wasn’t built for them.”

Ms. Davis said Instagram was also testing a feature called Take a Break which “would encourage somebody to take a break” from their screen.

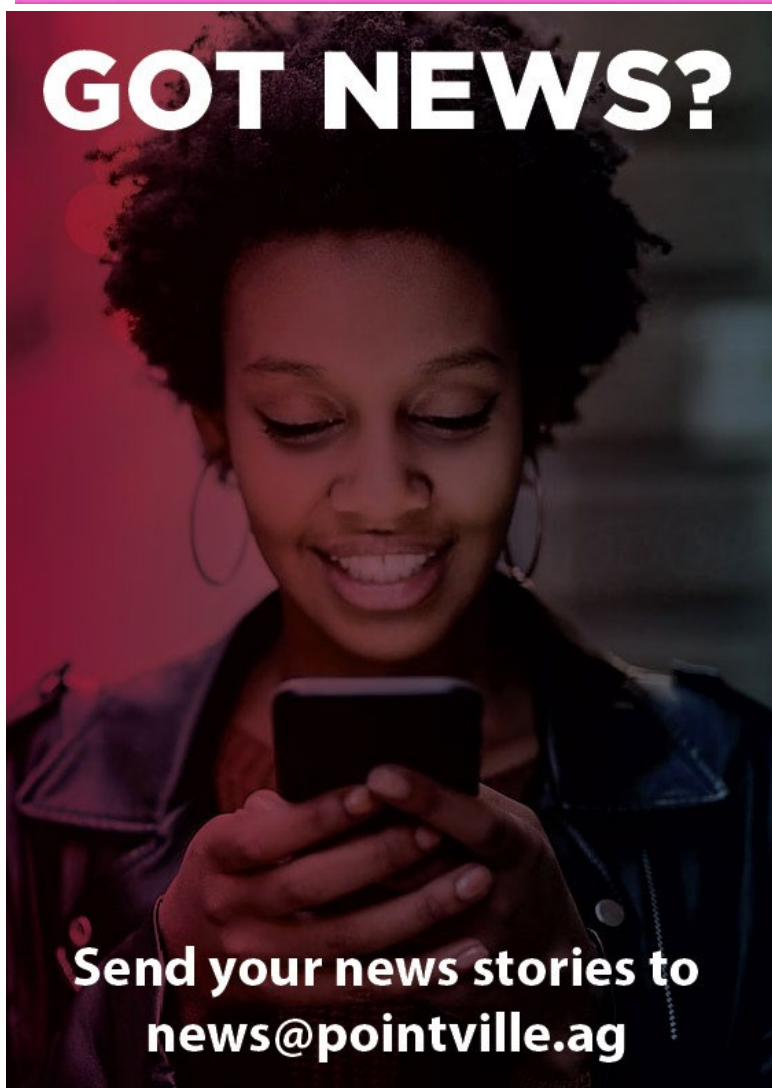
This would display “when we think [users] may be ... on the app too long.”

The whistleblower who leaked the documents to the Wall Street Journal will testify in a separate hearing next week and the committee said it would be seeking interviews from other social media companies in regards to children’s mental health harms.



A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

GOT NEWS?



Send your news stories to
news@pointville.ag



TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Submit community notices to
news@pointville.ag

Naomi Osaka says Serena Williams 'literally built champions'

HER LEGACY IS MORE THAN HER BEING SERENA. I started playing because of her."

Four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka has spoken about her respect for Serena Williams and how she has been inspired by her.

Williams' coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, has also praised Williams for "changing tennis" and "opening doors" for players.

Naomi Osaka has credited Serena Williams for "literally building champions" as she praised the legacy that the 23-time Grand Slam champion is leaving behind.

Osaka, a four-time major winner, is currently taking a break from tennis following her surprise third-round defeat at the US Open earlier this month.

She has revealed that she could be back on court in the

near future, and has also talked this week about how Williams has been an inspiration for her.

"If I were to retire from tennis, I would want people to remember me with how I acted towards people and like how I interacted," she told HBO's The Shop.

"Serena. Her legacy is more than her being Serena. I started playing because of her. I'm sure there's so many other girls that started playing because of her, so she literally built champions. "And I think passing it down is how the newer generations get inspired."

Williams, who has not played since suffering an injury in the first round of Wimbledon in July, is still bidding to win a 24th Grand Slam title that would move her level with Margaret Court's all-time record.

Even if she doesn't lift another



Serena Williams is being hailed for her positive influence on other top flight international tennis stars.

er major title, her coach Patrick Mouratoglou agrees with Osaka that she should be appreciated for everything else she has done for the sport.

"She changed tennis," he told AFP. "She brought an athletic dimension that there was not there at all, she opened the doors, with her sister Venus, to a whole generation of players because it was a white sport. She invented tennis intimidation because she has a presence that makes others fear her. For a very

long time, it was impressive.

"She also brought the business to women's tennis. Before her, the business was very small and with her it became huge because she has such an aura, she has become such a marketing object, too, that huge contracts are possible for the players."

Neither Williams nor Osaka will be playing the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells, which starts on October 4, and will feature US Open champion Emma Raducanu.

CALL & SIGN UP TODAY
(268) 562-9023/4
Email: antiguainfo@kingocean.com

OUR NEW SERVICE

SHOP IT AND SHIP IT
ANTIGUA BROKERAGE AND PICK UP SERVICE

YOU SHOP & SHIP WE WILL TAKE CARE OF THE REST

You will:

- Sign up for program
- Submit invoices by email
- Pick up your package(s) at our office

We will:

- Clear your package(s) at customs
- Bring it to our offices for collection
- Create one bill for your duties, BL, cost, Brokerage and Handling fees

Call us for more information.

DREAMERS TURNED BELIEVERS: AFGHANISTAN'S GRAND AMBITIONS!

Up until 2010, Afghanistan had not so much as competed in the group stage of a Men's ICC World Cup. Eleven years on, participation is no longer the goal. Rashid Khan dreams of winning a World Cup and he sees no reason why they cannot make that a reality.

Eleven years old when Afghanistan made their debut at a major ICC event - the T20 World Cup 2010 in West Indies - Khan stepped onto the big stage for the first time at the 2016 edition in India.

He took 11 wickets at 16.63 for the tournament, finishing as the second-highest wicket-taker as Afghanistan reached the Super 10 stage. Two of those wickets came in the surprise result of the tournament when Afghanistan beat West Indies by six runs. They were the only team in the tournament to beat the eventual champions.

In the five years since Afghanistan have developed further in men's cricket. In 2018, they played their first Test match, and in 2019 they enjoyed their first victory in the format.

"We have achieved a lot over the last 10 years as a team," Khan, an ICC Live the Game ambassador, said. "Where we came from, where we had no facilities, we came from that stage and we've played lots of World Cups. It's a dream of every country to be called a Test team and we've got that as well, we've played Test games. We have achieved a lot."

But it's in white ball cricket where they have truly thrived.



Automatic qualifiers for the Super 12 stage of next month's T20 World Cup, Afghanistan have two of the top five T20I bowlers in the world on the ICC rankings in Khan and Mujeeb ur Rahman, and the No.1 T20I all-rounder in Mohammad Nabi.

He won't put a timeframe on it, but given the talent they have nurtured, he is confident Afghanistan can now dream of collecting silverware.

"We have that target in the future that one day we have the ability to win the World Cup, especially the T20 World Cup. That's the focus of everyone back home.

"That's the dream of everyone, that's the target of every player and we are capable of achieving that target. We have that belief in our skills and ourselves, and I'm pretty sure we're going to achieve that target in the future."

The leg-spinner has already fulfilled things beyond his wildest imagination, being crowned the ICC

Men's T20I Player of the Decade at the start of the year.

"Unbelievable," he said. "I never had that in the mind to be called ICC T20I Player of the Decade.

"To be called the Player of the Decade was more than special for me. It was a dream."

Having had his own eyes opened to where cricket could take him and his compatriots as a youngster, he harbours ambitions of doing the same for the next generation. "To take Afghanistan cricket to the next level. As soon as we achieve that level, especially for the youngsters back home, it gives them lots of hopes, lots of future plans and gives them the kind of energy to come up and do the same for the cricket of Afghanistan.

"That will be the target to win the World Cup for the country."

That next generation is already coming through. Khan himself is only 23 years old, but he's among the more experienced

members of Afghanistan's T20WC squad with 95 T20Is to his name.

As an elder statesman in everything but age, he sees exciting things to come from 16-year-old wrist-spinner Noor Ahmad, who took seven wickets at the last ICC Men's U19 Cricket World Cup but is still waiting for his first senior cap.

"He is someone who can deliver well in the future for Afghanistan."

Among the current squad, there's also 19-year-old Rahmanullah Gurbaz, who has sat as high as 14th on the T20I batting rankings, and 23-year-old Hazratullah Zazai, who has been as high as fifth.

"These two are really destructive batsmen. If they look after themselves well, then they have that kind of self-belief that they can play at any stage and they can play some massive, massive innings."

While the spinner would not put a timeline himself on just when Afghanistan can collect that silverware they are dreaming of, it would be foolish to rule them out of going all the way this year.

After all, they have won seven of their past eight T20I series, with only a rained out tri-series final against Bangladesh denying them the chance to make that a perfect eight from eight.

They'll have to step it up a gear to improve on their second stage performance from 2016 but there's no doubt that is within reach.

Afghanistan begin their T20 World Cup campaign on 26 October in Sharjah.

Wasim Khan steps down as PCB CEO four months before contract ends

Wasim Khan, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) CEO, has resigned from his position four months before the end of his contract, the third big exit since the arrival of Ramiz Raja as the new chairman of the board.

Wasim follows the departures earlier this month of head coach Misbah-ul-Haq and bowling coach Waqar Younis, both of whom left after Ramiz's formal appointment.

"When I arrived in 2019, there was a real need to build relationships and restore and enhance the global image and reputation of the PCB and Pakistan cricket," Wasim said in a statement. "With decisive and strategic decision-making, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, we succeeded in earning the goodwill and respect of the global cricketing family, which I am hopeful will lead to increased international cricket being hosted in Pakistan in future."

"With a five-year strategy in place, new domestic structure in its third season and the investment in women's cricket in an upward direction, I feel it is the right time to move on and reunite with my young family. They have sacrificed a lot so that I could fulfill my dreams of contributing to Pakistan cricket, which will always remain very close to my heart."

Wasim's departure continues a period of uncertainty for Pakistan, with the new chairman starting to settle down, and the pullouts of New Zealand and England. That has affected Pakistan's on-field preparations for the T20 World Cup; without the New Zealand and England T20Is, Pakistan will have played one out of the 12 games they had scheduled in

the run-up to the event.

Wasim had four months left on his current contract, though he had been verbally offered another three-year term by Ramiz's predecessor, Ehsan Mani. He was, however, thought to be undecided about whether he wanted to take that up, primarily because he was unsure how secure his role would be should Mani move on. Ramiz's arrival has brought with it considerable change already, not least in his more hands-on steering of the board than Mani's.

Ramiz has been the more prominent face of the PCB's response to the fallout from the tour cancellations and has held multiple meetings with players of the men's national team, as well as PSL franchises. Wasim is also believed to not have had any input in the appointments of Matthew Hayden and Vernon Philander on to Pakistan's coaching staff - all situations and decisions in which a board CEO would ordinarily play a role.

All this would've been a drastic change to the role Wasim had been in over since early 2019. Though the revamp of Pakistan's domestic cricket was forced upon the board by the Prime Minister Imran Khan, Wasim was tasked with its implementation. He oversaw a difficult dismantling of the previous mix of departmental and regional cricket by implementing the provincial-team model - difficult because, in the shrinking of the player pool, a large number of first-class cricketers were overnight in danger of being bundled out of their careers and livelihood. But, by revamping the PCB's domestic cricket department and combining it with National Crick-



Wasim Khan had begun his stint as PCB CEO in 2019

et Academies and turning it into a high-performance centre, more roles were created for some of the more established and senior first-class cricketers. Positions were also found for other players in the second XI sides of provincial teams as well as in newly-built city associations. Wasim was also a key figure in improving Pakistan's status as a venue that is safe and welcoming for touring teams. But for the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan would have staged two entire PSLs in the country. Under his tenure, there was also the return of Test cricket to the country. It could be argued that the groundwork for these developments was laid by the board administration before Wasim's arrival, but the key move under him was that the PCB was not luring teams to visit by paying them extra money.

Wasim's personal relationship with key figures, especially in England, was instrumental in convincing teams to tour Pakistan. But, with New Zealand and England both pulling out - and with Wasim so closely associated in ensuring that Pakistan visited England in their time of need and in convincing players to undergo especially tough isolation in New Zea-

land - the fallout is bound to have reflected poorly on the progress he had made.

Though his role was often curtailed by events and factors beyond his control, Wasim was the first CEO to be operating under a new board constitution in which the role actually had some influence. Previously, board chairmen have been all-powerful but, under this constitution, the CEO held more say in the day-to-day management of board affairs.

The chairman, as is becoming clear with Ramiz, still holds considerable power, but more at policy level. The chairman, according to the constitution, holds no final say in the selection of national teams for any series or event or has the power of naming a captain and vice-captain, with the CEO overseeing that responsibility and the chairman only allowed the final say, for which the chairman will be briefed by the CEO.

But PCB will not name a replacement - permanent or interim - for Wasim at the moment. His departure is not expected to impact any operational matters and all signs point towards Ramiz, as chairman, taking on more of the role.



Usain Bolt personally thanked Sir Alex Ferguson for the return of Cristiano Ronaldo (inset) as the sprint legend watched Manchester United comeback to beat Villarreal.

USAIN BOLT THANKS SIR ALEX FERGUSON FOR 'BRINGING CRISTIANO RONALDO BACK' AS LEGEND WATCHES MAN UTD VS VILLARREAL

Huge Red Devils' fan Bolt was back at Old Trafford after a lengthy absence and made a beeline for Fergie.

The Red Devils were quick to mark to mark Usain Bolt's latest appearance at Old Trafford for Wednesday night's Champions League tie vs Villarreal. Bolt was pictured in

the crowd watching on nervously during United's ding-dong tie with Villarreal until Cristiano Ronaldo scored a stunning late goal to hand Man Utd a comeback to win.

Legendary ex-United boss Ferguson helped secure 36-year-old Ron's shock re-signing from Juventus on deadline day.

And eight-time Olympic gold medallist Bolt was thrilled to finally see a United game as he is excited by Ron's return.

He told United's media team before kick-off: "He helped to build the club and it was wonderful when he was here, the energy. So I'm happy he's back.

"I just saw Alex Fer-

guson inside and I thanked him for bringing Cristiano back, so I'm happy about it.

"I'm happy to be here. I haven't been back to Old Trafford in a while.

"So I'm just happy to be here in the stands with everybody to watch the game."

DEWS