

WENDESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2021 | ISSUE 289 |

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INVITING THE WORLD TO BE OUR GUESTS: Antigua and Barbuda's colorful and picturesque pavilion at the Expo Dubai 2021 where the country is being showcased to the faraway United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the entire world as THE top-flight travel and hospitality destination. Find out what it's all about in our comprehensive report on PAGES 6-7

INSIDE: • AG and Astaphan on Pointe FM this morning

- Social Security to make good on outstanding payments soon!
- Medics face jail for issuing fake vaccine cards

GUEST EDITORIAL

Proof that vaccination, not more lockdown, is the answer: 'Zero COVID' strategies being abandoned as Delta variant dominates

New Zealand has become the latest country to abandon a zero COVID strategy, with the virus proving much harder to stop now that the highly infectious Delta variant is dominant.

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adopting After one of the world's strictest approaches to trying to control the spread COVID-19, of New Zealand announced on Monday that the country would no longer pursue an approach that attempt would to eliminate all COVID cases.

This zero COVID strategy, also employed by the likes of China and Taiwan, involves strict lockdowns (even after the detection of just one or a handful of cases) and extensive testing, heavily controlled or closed borders, as well as robust contact tracing systems and quarantine mandates.

The move comes after a lockdown in the city of Auckland failed to stop the virus in the face of the more virulent Delta variant. It is estimated to be 60% more transmissible than the alpha variant, originally discovered in late 2020, and which itself usurped a previous, less infectious version of the virus.

New Zealand has been notoriously strict in its tackling of COVID. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern put the entire country under a strict lockdown in August after a single suspected case of COVID caused by the Delta variant. At that time the country's first coronavirus case in six months was reported in Auckland. But, on Monday, Ardern said the city's lockdown would be eased gradually and the country's strategy for tackling COVID was changing.

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"For this outbreak, it's clear that long periods of heavy restric-



tions has not got us to zero cases," Ardern said during press confera "But that ence. OK. Eliminais tion was important because we didn't have vaccines. Now we do. so we can begin to change the way we do things."

Ardern said it was important that the country maintain strict controls, however, saying it still needed to "contain and control the virus as much as possible while we make our transition from a place where we only use heavy restrictions to a place where we use vaccines in everyday public health measures."

Why it's not working

It's the first time that New Zealand has publicly signaled a shift away from a zero COVID strategy, coming after its neighbor Australia also abandoned its zero tolerance, or "COVID zero" approach in early September, saying it had shifted to a position of "learning to live with" the virus.

Similarly to New Zealand, Australia's decision to abandon the strategy came after a strict lockdown in Melbourne failed to quell an outbreak there.

At the time, Victoria's state premier, Daniel Andrews, noted that "we have thrown everything at this, but it is now clear to us that we are not going to drive these numbers down. They are instead going to increase."

Experts are not surprised by the shift in strategy, noting that the spread of the Delta variant makes such approaches futile.

(Reprinted/ Abridged from MSNBC)



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Greene says SIDS must not be dumping ground for old technologies

Antigua and Barbuda's Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet , has issued a call for the transfer of technologies to help Small Island Developing States (SIDS) tackle issues related to climate change.

Speaking on the theme Advancing the Renewable En-Transition in ergy SIDS: Challenges, **Opportunities** and COP26 during a conference at the site of the World Expo in Dubai, Greene noted that small island states need technologies to fight climate change.

But Greene also warned against using these countries as dumping grounds for old, obsolete technologies.

"Small islands need technology to fight climate change. And yet, the landed cost of technology can be roughly

3 times that of developed economies. This high cost is compounded by barriers to finance. Our countries are also at a grave risk of the transfer or "dumping" of old and obsolete technologies by large economies that are moving ahead with their climate transitions. We have already seen some old technologies flooding our markets and causing social opposition to much-needed climate policies," he noted.

Despite the challenges, Greene said SIDS have come up with their own target in the efforts to stem climate change.

"Notwithstanding these obstacles, the 39 members of AO-SIS [Alliance of Small Island States] have pledged a new target to deliver 10 giga-



Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet

watts of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030. This is a voluntary commitment under the SIDS Lighthouse Initiative that nearly doubles today's 6 gigawatts," he explained.

According to Greene, this will cost about US\$10 billion between now and 2030, in SIDS alone, based on an analysis with IRENA.

"AOSIS can and we will meet this target, with support from our partners, initiatives through like today's new Accelerator initiative. The Accelerator, which aims to mobilize at least US\$1 billion in renewable financing energy through 2030, is a step in the right direction," he stated.





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Antigua and Barbuda pavilion doors open at Expo Dubai 2020

The twin-island paradise of Antigua and Barbuda is on show at the world expo 'Expo Dubai 2020' being held in Dubai under the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future'.

Antigua and Barbuda's pavilion, located in the 'Mobility' section of the expo, displays the remarkable strides the Caribbean nation has made in its socio-economic development over the years.

Officially opening the doors to the Antigua and Barbuda pavilion on Fri-October day 1st Minister of were Tourism & Investment, Hon. Charles Fernandez; CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) Colin C. James; non-resident Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the UAE, His Excellency Gilbert



Antigua and Barbuda's Delegation at Expo Dubai 2020 on October 1 (L-R) Senior Sustainable Tourism Officer, Ministry of Tourism & Investment, Vashti Ramsey; Marketing Executive, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Raynel Carroll; Non-Resident Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the UAE, H.E. Gilbert Boustany; Minister of Tourism & Investment, Hon. Charles Fernandez; CEO Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James.

Boustany; Senior Sustainable Tourism Officer from the Ministry of Tourism, Vashti Ramsey; and ABTA marketing executive Raynel Carroll.

Speaking at the opening, Minister Fernandez said: "Antigua and Barbuda's participation at Expo Dubai 2020 is a momentous occasion and marks another milestone for our country on an international stage. It is an honour to be a part of history as we showcase the progress of the nation and the very best Antigua and Barbuda has to offer; from luxury vacations to first class business and investment opportunities.

Not only that, but Expo Dubai 2020 is the perfect backdrop for the sharing of ideas and culture; particularly our move towards green energy and, of course, our worldclass talent which will also be on display."

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Chief Executive Officer of the ABTA Colin C. James said the team will take advantage of opportunities available in Dubai.

"Expo Dubai 2020 will serve as an international platform for us to raise awareness of Antigua and Barbuda as a tourism destination, to draw attention to our sound financial banking sector, ship registry offerings,

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Hon. E.P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Immigration is with the Antigua and Barbuda delegation at Expo Dubai 2020.

and Citizenship by Investment programme." He added that, specific to airlift, there are plans to "re-engage Emirates Airline about starting direct service".

Visitors to the Antigua and Barbuda pavilion will learn to play the traditional game of warri, be entertained with cultural storytelling, browse and purchase masterpieces of local artisans, and experience the pulsating rhythms of Antigua and Barbuda's vibrant music.

The destination's marine attributes are also on display with highlights of the UNESCO World Heritage Site: Nelson's Dockyard and related archeological sites – alongside sailing, attractive vachting and watersport conditions. The Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) will also have representation over the next six months, highlighting the country's maritime and shipping opportunities.

Additionally, Antigua and Barbuda's sporting greats both past and present are being featured, with athletes highlighted in the pavilion design. A special appearance by National Hero and sporting legend Sir Vivian Richards KNH, OBE, has been planned for Expo Dubai 2020.

S i s t e r - i s l a n d Barbuda is being highlighted as the 'Untouched Eco-paradise', while the destination's latest sustainable initiatives and moves towards green energy will be discussed.

The Citizenship by Investment Unit (CIU) will also be present to encourage foreign direct investment. The CIU is scheduled to host the country's first Business Briefing.

The Antigua and

LOCAL NEWS PAGE 7

Barbuda delegation will look forward to hosting, for expo attendees, the 'Antigua and Barbuda's National Day', a rich cultural and historic presentation to commemorate Antigua and Barbuda's Anniversary 40th Independence of November 1st on 2021. Attendees can expect performances by top Antigua and Barbuda performers such as the "Soca Diva" Claudette "CP" Peters, OH and renowned steel pannist Khan Cordice, alongside other cultural talents.

Being held from 1st October 2021 -March 2022. 31st Expo Dubai 2020 joins businesses from around the world to create new opportunities, attract investment, forge business agreements, and promote international cooperation and growth. purpose-built The 4.8-square-kiloexhibition metre grounds highlight opportunity, mobility and sustainability as interconnected drivers of progress.

PAGE 8 LOCAL NEWS

AG Benjamin and SC Astaphan discuss court case against defeated ABPSA this morning on Pointe FM

The Antigua and Barbuda Public Service Association (ABPSA) is pondering its next move after the High Court on Monday rejected its attempt to legally overturn government's recently imposed policy of mandatory vaccination for public sector workers.

Lawyers representing the ABP-SA are said to be contemplating whether an appeal is warranted or likely to achieve a different result.

The High Court dismissed the AB-PSA's application saying the organization had not have the requisite standing or legitimate interest to justify it taking up such a legal challenge against the government in this particular matter.

One of the grounds for that ruling is that the 's recognition as representathe tive and/or bargaining agent for public servants is not current, as the certificate to acknowledge it as such expired more than a year ago and is yet to be renewed.

Xpress Pointe has also learned that the respondents named by the ABPSA in its suit were incorrect and do not represent the proper recognized and legally entities or personas against whom such an action can lawfully be brought.

Attorney Gen-



Senior Counsel Anthony Astaphan

eral Steadroy Cutie Benjamin and government's lead lawyer on this case, Senior Counsel Anthony Astaphan, are expected this morning (Wednesday 6th October 2021) on the morning program Starting Pointe to further discuss and elaborate on the matter.

AG Benjamin and SC Astaphan are expected on the program from its scheduled start at 9:00 a.m. on *Pointe FM* 99.1



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Barbuda Senator Knacyntar Nedd-Charles donates 10 Iaptop bundles to students



Barbuda Senator Knacyntar Nedd-Charles poses with the young recipients of her generosity.

With a total of 10 Barbudan students selected, five from the Sir McChesney George Secondary School and five from the Holy Trinity Primary, Barbuda Senator Knacyntar Nedd-Charles donated a series of laptop bundles to aid their remote learning needs. The laptop bundles – valued at approximately EC\$19,000 – contained laptops, printers, bagpacks, flash-drives, calculators, laptop s c r e e n - c l e a n e r s , printing papers, and ink cartridges.

Each selected student received a bundle with the above-mentioned items.

Senator Nedd-Charles explained that, "With this new era of virtual classes, children need all the help they could possibly get to ensure that 'no child gets left behind'."

The Senator from Barbuda went on to explain that the selection process was manned by the teachers and principals from both schools who were given the charge to select five students each.

"I stated that the criteria should be based on students whose parents were facing financial constraints and were not financially able to provide learning tools for their children, and the students should also be displaying great academic performance," Senator Nedd-Charles said.

Nedd-Charles continued, "It was very important [for] me to donate simply because we are in an era where learning is taking place online and the online platforms, such as Google Classroom, require a certain amount of space to function properly on a device.

"In conversations with secretaries at both schools, I came to learn that most of the students were using their parents' cell phones to access these learning platforms and they kept having issues. I thought it best to try and help to remedy this issue. "Making this donation also falls within my capacity to give back. I always love to give back to the community of Barbuda, especially in the areas of education and health. This was a way of giving back, touching the lives of 10 students." Nedd-Charles also indicated that although 10 students were recipients, the benefits of the donation have a much greater reach, as at least four of the students have siblings within the same classes who will also benefit from the devices. "There is actually a recipient who has two other siblings in her class, so basically these items would benefit three children within a household," Nedd highlighted.

In paying recognition to the recipients, Senator Nedd-Charles said: "I wish to encourage the Corporate Community in Barbuda to make small yet significant investments such as these in our youths, for they are our tomorrow. Thank you to all those who contributed to make this a reality: B.R.F., Ms. Glo Cephas, Mr. Julio Charles, Typhoon Express, Mr. Bernette Beazer, Mr. Daniel "Bimbo" Jones, Ms. Nakiea Walker, Ms. Jahmeel Jones, and the Hon. Samantha Marshall. Blessings on each and every one of you."





Statement on behalf of Sir Lester Bird Death: October 4 at Medical Centre (SLB-*MC*)

Dr. Albert Duncan, SLBMC Medical Director said the following:

"We can confirm ber 20 (respiratory that sadly, two patients, who testpositive for ed COVID-19, have died at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. Here are the details:

Sex: Female

Age: 85 (comorbidities)

Admitted: September 27 (respiratory distress and hypoxic)

Date/Time of 11:05pm

Vaccination Status: Unvaccinated

Sex: Male Age: 73 (with co-

morbidities) Admitted: Septem-

distress and hypoxic, requiring intubation and ICU admission)

Date/Time of Death: October 5 at 3:23pm

Vaccination Status: Unvaccinated

"Our thoughts and condolences remain with the patient's family and loved ones at this difficult time."

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Do our teachers care anymore?

Dear Editor:

This is a serious question. Most of those elderly persons who have died have been the result of them living with children or grandchildren who were anti-vaxxers who refused to have the old people vaccinated. And then they brought the COVID into the house and killed off their elderly relatives while the strength of youth saved them.

Do they feel any remorse? Do they feel guilty? I wonder. My take is that they don't give a damn. But they will have to face St. Peter at the Pearly Gates when their time comes.

The same applies to teachers who are putting our children at risk if schools are forced to re-open. We cannot keep schools closed forever.

It has been 18 months and counting since our children's education has been disrupted. It is the children of the poorer classes who are being impacted. The middle class kids have all the computers and internet they need.

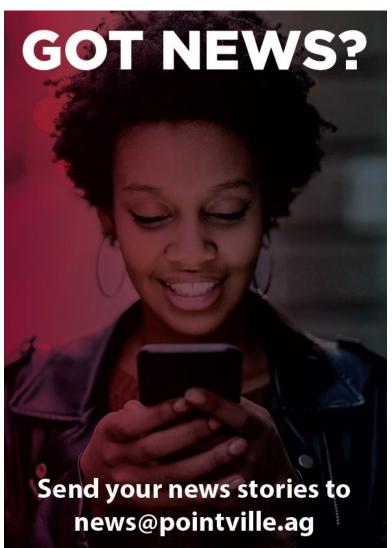
Let's call a spade a spade: This behaviour by some teachers is criminal. One, they are exposing our children to COVID; and, two, they are denying our children an education.

The question is, are these people really teachers? Teaching is not just a job. It is a vocation. The time has come for the Ministry of Education to examine the types of persons who are employed as teachers – these same so-called teachers in the government schools who can only produce five of the top

100 of students in what used to be the Common Entrance Examinations.

The Government secondary schools are just as bad, so time to clean house.

> (Signed) Reds



Outstanding Social Security pension payments soon

Social Security pensioners, some of whom are owed up to two months in outstanding payments, are being advised that they can look forward to relief soon.

Director of the Social Security David Matthias confirmed that payments are outstanding to some pensioners for the second half of August and for September. He blamed the prevailing economic conditions in the country for the difficulty in making timely payments to pensioners.

However, there has been a glimmer

of hope as the government last week announced that it had secured a loan of US\$25 million from the Caribbean Development Bank for budgetary support, and that it will allocate some of these funds to the Scheme to allow it to clear outstanding arrears.

Matthias said he has no information on how soon these funds will be paid over to the Social Security. He promises that as soon as this is done, the payments will follow immediately.

According to the Social Securi-



Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Social Security Scheme, Mr. David Matthias.

ty Director, measures adopted by the government to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus have negatively impacted businesses in the country, and this in turn has had a domino-effect on the Scheme's intake of contributions.

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In these circumstances. he explained, the law provides for the central government to make up the shortfall to enable the Scheme to fulfill its obligations to pensioners.



The UWI Five Islands Campus thanks Governor General for donation

The UWI Five Islands Campus, 05 October 2021— During the 2021 UWI Global Giving campaign, a team from The UWI Five Islands Campus paid a courtesy visit on His Excellency, Sir Rodney Williams, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda.

The team comprised of Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal, Professor Densil A. Williams; Frances Ann Mellanson, Senior Financial Manager; Stephanie Cain, Executive Assistant to the Campus Principal; and Shavar Maloney, Marketing Officer.

Professor Williams thanked His Excellency for his timely donations to scholarships for students at The UWI Five Islands for the academic year 2021/2022.

Governor General Sir Rodney Williams accepts a token of appreciation from Principal of The UWI Five Islands Campus, Professor Densil A. Williams.

UN chief sees Barbados as regional 'knowledge hub'

Barbados Today - United Nations (UN) Secretary General (SG) Antonio Guterres envisions Barbados becoming a hub of knowledge to not only better provide for its people but the entire region, he said here on Sunday. After being "inspired" from a dialogue involving young members of Future Barbados, touring coastal protection projects on the West Coast before heading to Codrington College where families displaced by Hurricane Elsa are being housed, Guterres expressed confidence that Barbados is on the right track but expressed concern that its efforts, like those of other small island developing states, are being stymied by inequality.

He said: "This visit is a visit of solidarity, solidarity with Barbados and its people, solidarity with the Caribbean and solidarity to all SIDS. That solidarity is entirely justified because these countries and Barbados are the main victims of the inequality that prevails in the world. We have seen that inequality in the way vaccines have been distributed, he said, adding that SIDS were also the first victims of the impact of climate.

"The impacts are already there; I had the opportunity to see some very important works of adaptation."



United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

The UN secretary general is the fourth to visit Barbados since the landmark global conference on the sustainable development of small island developing states when Boutros Boutros-Ghali attended the first UN conference organised in a small island in 1994.

In January 2002, Kofi Annan inaugurated UN House at Marine Gardens, the home of the world body's national and Eastern Caribbean offices.

Ban Ki-moon visited twice: in July 2007, he launched a major report on HIV/AIDS and in August 2015 he took part in a high-level symposium focused on sustainable development in the Caribbean. Guterres' visit came one day ahead of Barbados' hosting of the 15th meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD) and with just a month to go before the world body brings world leaders together for a crucial climate summit, COP26, in the Scottish city of Glasgow.

After getting a first-hand look at the impact of climate change on Barbados, Guterres said SIDS have not received the help from the international community that they are entitled to and the support that is provided is only a small portion of what is needed.

The UN SG said: "Developing countries were able to organize about 28 percent of their GDP in support of their economies, middle-income countries about six percent and least developed countries about two percent; and the truth is many countries are facing a dramatic situation because, being middle-income countries, they have no access to a number of instruments that would be necessary – namely, in relation to debt relief."

Prime Minister Mia Mottley stressed that Barbados and SIDS were in the middle of a climate crisis even as they battled other challenges.

She said: "It is important to show what we are doing and why we are having to spend money on coastal protection at the very time that we also need to be spending money on education, health care and all of the other things to make our society whole, to get us to the sustainable development goals. But because of the climate crisis, in particular, we have to divert our spending to be able to protect our people."

Mottley said climate change remains a pressing issue as she pointed to Glasgow's COP26 which is expected to attract representatives from the UN's 197 member states to advance global efforts to tackle the phenomenon's impact.

Guyanese medics risk jail time for providing fake vaccine cards

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Guyana's COVID-19 vaccination card.

Caribbean Loop News - Health care workers in Guyana have been warned that they will face the full brunt of the law if they participate in the distribution of false coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination cards.

The warning came from Health Minister Dr Frank Anthony who said these medics are enabling a "dangerous" practice.

"When we catch you, you are going to face the full brunt of the law," Anthony said.

"This is a very dangerous thing. If you are facilitating somebody to get the card but they didn't get the vaccine. Then when they get sick, we probably think they have been immunized and we are getting a breakthrough infection. We have to put an end to this practice."

He warned that any doctor or nurse caught facilitating this fraud will be expelled from the medical service and face time in jail.

Currently, about 15 cases of vaccine card fraud are before the courts.

The minister said he was happy to note that only a small fraction of the medical fraternity is engaged in this illegal behaviour.

At least 209,506 adults (57.9 per cent of the age group) and over 12,000 adolescents are fully vaccinated. Anthony disclosed a new type of COVID-19 vaccination card will be distributed soon.

He said: "We are going to change the current system. So, we are working on that right now, and very soon we are going to introduce a different type of card that's going to be harder to forge, and if people did not have the proper documentation in the first place, then they are not going to get the new card that we'll be putting in."

Businesses that continue to flout the COVID-19 order, which requires persons to show they are vaccinated or COVID-19 negative before they enter an establishment, have also been put on notice about their breach of the law.

"Unless we have compliance and everybody playing their role, we are going to have a situation where we are going to continue to have spread," the minister stated.

Antony also expressed concern that Guyanese are still hesitant to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as he noted this group "is most at risk" of developing severe infections.

Guyana has over 4,106 active infections, with Regions Four and three being the hotspots.

Jamaica: POVERTY WILL WORSEN!

Jamaica Observer -The central bank yesterday received more flak for its decision to increase deposit interest rates by one percentage point, with the Jamaica Manufacturers & Exporters Association (JMEA) describing it as misguided and insisting that the move will weaken the economy and push the poorest Jamaicans into further penury. "A move of this nature by the central bank will result in higher lending rates to consumers, including manufacturers small and exporters, affecting their ability to pay their bills and keep staff employed," the JMEA said, adding that it was strongly recommending that the Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) seriously reconsider the decision. The JMEA's criticism comes after Opposition spokesman on finance Iulian Robinson last Thursday said the rate hike will drive up borrowing costs for businesses and consumers who are already struggling to survive in a very challenging economic environment.

Also on Thursday, Dr. Adrian Stokes, financial economist and senior vice-president and head of insurance and wealth management at Scotia Group Jamaica, who had slammed the signal that BOJ's policy rate could be hiked in September, maintained that the move is misguided, given the current economic conditions facing Jamaica.

The rate hike from 0.5 percent to 1.5 percent became effective last Friday, taking the benchmark policy rate to the highest it has been since February 2019. This is the first increase in interest rates from the BOJ in 13 years. It comes following 32 rate cuts since June 2009, when it was 17 percent.

The rate has been at 0.5 percent since August 2019 — a period spanning just over two

years.

The central bank, in notes accompanying the rate hike decision, pointed to increasing inflation, saying its decision is "aimed at ensuring that the annual increasein the prices of consumer goods and services remains within the bank's inflation target of 4.0 percent to 6.0 percent".

Inflation in August reached 6.1 percent, which is above the BOJ's target. The bank had forecast the increase in consumer prices, signalling in August that inflation could breach the upper limit of the target in the just-concluded September quarter. It then indicated that it

would increase interest rates at its September meeting to control the price increases.

Yesterday, the JMEA said the inflationary increases being experienced by the country are indicative of global shortages, increased transportation cost, and ongoing logistics challenges.

"In addition, it has been demonstrated in the past that the devaluation of the Jamaican dollar against international currencies has more to do with foreign currency shortages and the level of confidence in the Government's economic policies than adjustments in interest rates," the JMEA said.



St. Kitts-Nevis: 75% of target population now vaccinated!

St. Kitts Nevis Observer - As a remote dual-island [nation] in the Caribbean region, St. Kitts and Nevis has made strides over the years to build a self-sustaining economy. Much of the country's revenue depends on tourism.

St. Kitts and Nevis's government spends over \$18 million to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Three quarters of St. Kitts and Nevis's target population is vaccinated with first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

The Prime Minister of the twin-island Federation has thanked St. Kitts and Nevis's bilateral partners for their generosity in providing vaccines.

St. Kitts and Nevis has spent over EC\$18 million implementing measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, said Prime Minister Timothy Harris during a news conference.

He added that the funds were being used to access vehicles, wards, quarantine facilities and testing aid.

The news comes as the Prime Minister announced the first-dose vaccination of over 75 percent of the Federation's target population last week.

According to Prime



St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris

Minister Harris, an additional five million dollars on this health initiative will be spent by the end of the year. This will bring the total cost of COVID-19 related expenditure to more than EC\$23 million.

During his virtual address at the UN General Assembly, he expressed the need to continue investing in a resilient health system.

"We believe strongly that no one is safe until everyone is safe. That re-

quires equitable access to vaccines and other medical products," the Prime Minister said. "We took action providing social protection programs for those in need. Indeed, we implemented an EC\$120 million COVID-19 stimulus package. We reduced corporate income tax for employers to retain 75% of the workforce and introduced VAT and import duty waivers for pandemic related products."

The Prime Minister also thanked St. Kitts and Nevis's bilateral partners for their generosity in providing vaccines. The nation's Foreign Affairs Minister Mark Brantley, who was in New York for the UNGA, thanked Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for facilitating the timely distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, which he said enabled him to attend the event.

French church abuse: Victims demand action after inquiry



"You must pay for all these crimes," Francois Devaux, head of a victims' association, said at the launch of the report.

BBC - Victims of sexual abuse in the French Catholic Church have demanded action after the publication of a damning new inquiry.

Since 1950, clergy in the organisation have sexually abused some 216,000 children, according to the report mostly boys.

Pope Francis "felt pain" on hearing about the inquiry's finding, a Vatican statement said.

Those abused are demanding compensation after the revelations.

François Devaux, who founded the former victims' association La Parole Libérée (Freed speech), said there had been a "betrayal of trust, betrayal of morale, betrayal of children". He called for compensation for the victims. "You must pay for all these crimes," he said twice on stage at a launch event for the report.

Another survivor, Olivier Savignac, who is the head of victims' association Parler et Revivre (Speak out and Live again), described the report as "an earthquake". He similarly called for "real compensation" for those affected.

"It's not simply a couple of thousand euros - with a little payment, we sweep it away. No. It's about a real compensation based on the suffering of each person."

The French Church has previously announced a plan for "financial contributions" to victims, beginning next year.

A group of victims' associations said they expected "clear and concrete responses by the Church" in light of the inquiry.

According to the report there were at least 2,900-3,200 abusers. It said the number of children abused in France could rise to 330,000, when taking into account abuses committed by lay members of the Church such as teachers at Catholic schools, and also called for the victims to be compensated.

The Vatican statement said the Pope had expressed "deep sadness" for the victims, hailing "their courage in coming forward".

The report's release follows a number of abuse claims and prosecutions against Catholic Church officials worldwide. The independent inquiry was commissioned by the French Catholic Church in 2018. It spent more than twoand-a-half years combing through court, police and Church records and speaking to victims and witnesses. Most cases assessed by the inquiry are thought to be too old to prosecute under French law. The report, which is nearly 2,500 pages long, said the "vast majority" of victims were boys, many of them aged between 10 and 13.

It said the Church had not only failed to prevent abuse but had also failed to report it, at times knowingly putting children in contact with predators.

"There was a whole bunch of negligence, of deficiency, of silence, an institutional cover-up," the head of the inquiry, Jean-Marc Sauvé, told reporters on Tuesday.

He said that until the early 2000s, the Church had shown "deep, total and even cruel indifference" towards victims. INTERNATIONAL NEWS AROUND THE WORLD PAGE 21

Facebook products 'harm children, stoke division' – whistleblower

Al Jazeera - A former Facebook Inc. employee has said the social media giant's products harm the mental health of some young users, stoke divisions and weaken democracy, urging United States lawmakers to regulate the company.

Whistleblower Frances Haugen told a US Senate subcommittee on Tuesday that Facebook has repeatedly misled the public about the damage it knows teenage girls suffer from its photo-sharing app Instagram, as well as how its products fuel division.

"I'm here today because I believe Facebook's products harm children, stoke division and weaken our democracy," Haugen said in a statement before her testimony on Capitol Hill.

"Congressional action is needed. They won't solve this crisis without your help."

Her testimony came a day after Facebook and two of its main services, Instagram and messaging app WhatsApp, suffered an hours-long global outage and after weeks of mounting pressure on the social media company to explain its policies for young users. Haugen went public in an interview with CBS on October 3 and revealed she was the one who provided documents used in a Wall Street Journal investigation and a Senate hearing on Instagram's alleged harm.

The WSJ stories showed compathe ny contributed to increased polarisation online when it made changes to its content algorithm; failed to take steps to reduce vaccine hesitancy, and was aware that Instagram harmed the mental health of teenage girls.

"As long as Facebook is operating in the shadows, hiding its research from public scrutiny, it is unaccountable," Haugen told the panel on Tuesday.

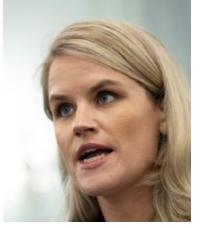
"Until the incentives change, Facebook will not change. Left alone, Facebook will continue to make choices that go against the common good," she said. "Facebook hides behind walls that keep researchers and regulators from understanding the true dynamics of their system."

Lena Pietsch, a Facebook spokeswoman, disputed Haugen's knowledge of the company's inner workings. "We don't agree with her characterization of the many issues she testified about," Pietsch said in a statement after the hearing.

Another spokesperson, Kevin McAlister, said in an email to the Reuters news agency that the company sees protecting its community as more important than maximising profits. He also said it was inaccurate to say that leaked internal research demonstrated that Instagram was "toxic" for teenage girls.

That echoed testimony Facebook's head of global security, Antigone Davis, delivered before the same Senate committee last week. "We care deeply about the safety and security of the people on our platform," Davis said at that time. "We take the issue very seriously ... We have put in place multiple protections to create safe and age-appropriate experiences for people between the ages of 13 and 17."

But at Tuesday's hearing, US senators accused Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg of pushing for higher profits while being cavalier about user safety. They also demanded that US regulators investigate Haugen's accusations that the com-



Former Facebook employee and whistleblower Frances Haugen is urging US lawmakers to regulate the social media giant.

pany's products harm children and stoke divisions. In an era of deep political divisions in Washington, DC, both Republican and Democratic lawmakers agreed on the need for big changes.

In an opening statement, Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal, who chairs the subcommittee holding the hearing, said Facebook knew that its products were addictive, like cigarettes.

"Tech now faces that Big Tobacco jaw-dropping moment of truth," Blumenthal said.

He called for Zuckerberg to come before the committee, and for the Securities and Exchange Commission and Federal Trade Commission to investigate the company.

'Pandora papers' show London is a key hub for tax avoidance

AP — Transparency advocates are calling on Britain to tighten the country's defenses against money laundering and tax avoidance after a massive leak of financial data showed how London is a key destination of choice for some of the world's richest and most powerful people to conceal their cash.

The cache of almost 12 million files shows how wealthy people around the world reportedly set up offshore companies to buy property and avoid taxes.

Foreign individuals identified as beneficiaries of these types of offshore accounts in London include Jordanian King Abdullah II, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and associates of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan.

KingAbdullah has denied any impropriety and Khan tweeted that his government would investigate anyone mentioned and take appropriate action if wrongdoing is found. Aliyev hasn't commented.

The leaked financial data, dubbed the "Pandora Papers," was published Sunday by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and its media partners, including Britain's Guardian newspaper and the BBC.

Though the purchases are legal under British law, they highlight the complicated — and often anonymous — financial practices wealthy individuals use to avoid tax, far removed from the everyday experience of most of the British population.

London is a go-to for the rich



and powerful because it's home to a sophisticated ecosystem of businesses that can help in the process, including creative wealth management firms, highend lawyers and long-established accounting firms.

A 2019 analysis by transparency group Global Witness indicated that around 87,000 properties in England and Wales were owned by anonymous companies registered in tax havens.

It said that 40% of the anonymously owned properties identified were in London and that the total value of the properties was likely to be more than 100 billion pounds (\$135 billion). Popular areas were said to include the boroughs of Westminster, where the U.K. Parliament is located, Camden, and Kensington and Chelsea.

The London property market has for years struggled to shake off a reputation for playing a central role in how rich people around the world seek to hide and accentuate their wealth, with many prime properties in the heart of the city owned by non-nationals. Russian oligarchs have been high-profile purchasers of London properties in recent years, for example.

For decades, authorities in the U.K. have pushed a light touch approach to regulation in order to attract foreign capital and talent. Critics say that has been a magnet for tax avoidance, which can be legal, as well as more criminal activities, including money laundering.

Duncan Hames, policy director at the campaign group Transparency International U.K., said the disclosures should act as a "wake up call" for the government to deliver on long-overdue measures to strengthen Britain's defenses against what he termed "dirty money."

"These leaks show that there is one system for corrupt elites who can buy access to prime property and enjoy luxury lifestyles and another for honest hard-working people," he said. "Once again Britain's role as an enabler of global corruption and money laundering have been exposed with the same loopholes exploited to funnel suspect wealth into the country."

Transparency International U.K. is urging the government to close a loophole that allows companies in the U.K.'s offshore financial centers such as the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands to hold property in the country without requiring these companies to reveal the names of their true owners.

Singapore passes law to tackle 'foreign interference', giving authorities the power to block internet content

CNN - Singapore's Parliament has approved a law giving broad powers to the government to deal with foreign interference -sparking concern from the opposition and experts about its wide scope and limits on judicial review.

The small and open city-state, which says it is vulnerable to foreign meddling, targeted fake news with a far-reaching law in 2019.

The bill, formally known as the Foreign Interference Countermeasures Act (FICA), was passed late Monday local time with 75 members voting in favor, 11 opposition members objecting and two abstaining, local media reported.

Among the measures, FICA allows authorities to compel internet and social media service providers, as well as website operators, to provide user information, block content and remove applications.

Those deemed or designated as "politically significant persons" under the law will have to comply with strict rules relating to donations and declare their links to foreign entities.

Instead of court, an independent tribunal -- chaired by a judge -- will hear appeals against the minister's decisions, a move the government says is necessary to protect national security. The tribunal's decisions will be final.

The government said FICA does not cover the building of overseas partnerships, soliciting



Singapore's Parliament House, pictured in March 2019.

overseas businesses, networking with foreigners, sourcing for donations or those discussing policies or political matters that affect their businesses with foreign colleagues or business partners, or supporting charities.

"As long as they are done in an open and transparent manner, and not part of an attempt to manipulate our political discourse or undermine public interest such as security," K. Shanmugam, minister for home affairs, said in Parliament.

It will also not affect Singaporeans expressing their own views or engaging in advocacy.

The Home Affairs Ministry has also previously said it would not apply to foreign individuals or publications "reporting or commenting on Singapore politics, in an open, transparent and attributable way."

But some critics say its broad

language risks capturing even legitimate activities, while rights group Reporters Without Borders said the law could ensnare independent media outlets.

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Experts and Singapore's opposition parties have called for narrowing the scope of executive powers and more oversight through the judiciary.

The bill was passed without strengthening "the circumscribed checks and balances, particularly judicial review," said Eugene Tan, a law professor at Singapore Management University. "While assurances were given, they could have been given unequivocal expression through legislative codification."

However, Shanmugam said the bill represented the "best balance ... between dealing with the risks and providing checks against abuse."

AVAILABLE VACANCIES at OSEC (effective October 1, 2021)

We at the Labour Department's One Stop Employment Centre are working diligently to assist jobseekers find employment and/or training during this pandemic and closures of many local businesses in Antigua!

One Stop Employment Centre is a public employment services centre of the Labour Department that offers complimentary service to the community of Antigua and Barbuda (FREE EMPLOYMENT SER-VICES) including services to both jobseekers and employer. Some of these services include (but not limited to) free monthly workshops, computer & QuickBooks classes, career counseling, resume & cover-letter assistance, in addition to recruitment and screening services to employers. Our Centre is a part of the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Public Safety & Labour. Overall, OSEC offers employment and training services to jobseekers, employers, and other stakeholders – at no cost to both Jobseekers and Employers.

ASSISTANT COOK (RESTAURANT)

Minimum 5 years' experience Must have extensive knowledge of Indian Cuisine to include Marinades, Sauces & Appetizers etc. Must be a team-player

BABYSITTER/NANNY

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role Early Childhood Certification required | Must have experience working with babies High School Diploma | Must have a valid Driver's license Must be FULLY VACCINATED

BARTENDERS

Minimum 2-5 years' experience in a similar role On the job training preferred or High School Completion Hotel Training School Completion preferred

BAKER

Minimum 5 years' experience Secondary School Completion CAR PARK ATTENDANT

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No experience required Must have a valid Driver's license

CLEANER

Minimum 3 years' experience

CLEANER/HANDYMAN

Minimum 1-2 years' experience working in a Car Wash and/or Cleaning homes/property

COMPOUND SUPERVISOR

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

CHEF/COOK

Minimum 2 years' experience in a similar role On the job training preferred or High School Completion Hotel Training School Completion preferred

DECKHAND/SNORKEL GUIDE

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

DIGITAL SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR

Minimum 10-15 years' experience as a Digital Integrator Must be the holder of an Electrician certificate with a license from a Government accredited program Must have training in SAV courses with vast Lutron control systems experience At least five years' experience leading a crew of apprentices for a major contractor Ability to work multiple tasks at the same time Proven leadership skills with the ability to delegate tasks

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT OPERATIONS

Minimum 10 years' experience Excellent Strategic thinking along with good leadership and analytical skills Strong Decision making skills required DISHWASHER Minimum 3 years' experience



DOMESTIC

Minimum 2 years' experience as a Domestic

DRIVER/OPERATOR

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

EXECUTIVE CHEF

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

FARMER

Minimum 1 year experience as a Farmer | High School Completion

FARM ASSISTANT

Minimum 3 years' experience Must be able to tend the plants i.e. weeding, spraying, planting & harvesting etc. Good oral & written communication skills Must be able to handle small equipment, sharp tools & toxic chemicals safely

FARM HAND

Minimum 3 years' experience in a similar role

FINANCE MANAGER

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

GARDENER/GROUNDSKEEPER

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role Must be able to use professional gardening equipment Strong manual skills | Strong work ethic and physical fitness Must be a team-player | Must be flexible

GENERAL MANAGER

Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role Project Management experience required | Experience working in a 5 Star Hotel High level of competency in Food & Beverage Management Knowledge of and focus on the digitalization of the Hospitality Industry Proven team leadership skills

HOSPITALITY CONSULTANT

Minimum 10 years' experience in a similar role | Masters' Degree in Hospitality Administration/Management required International experience in operating as a General Manager of Luxury Resorts

HOSPITALITY SALES & MARKETING CONSULTANT

Minimum 10 years' experience in a similar role Must be knowledgeable in Yield & Revenue Management Bachelors' Degree in Hospitality Management | Must be proficient in Opera PMS, LHW & GDS systems

INDIAN COOK Minimum 10 years' experience

KITCHEN ASSISTANT

No experience required | Secondary School Completion

LEAD TOUR SPECIALIST

Minimum 1 year experience of working in a customer service environment Previous sales and supervisory experience is an asset Good command of written and spoken English | Minimum of High or Secondary School Diploma Must be computer literate with knowledge of Microsoft Office Software: Access, Excel, Outlook etc.

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LEGAL CLERK

Minimum 1-2 years' experience as a Legal Clerk | Must be Computer Literate Must be proficient in the use of QuickBooks

LEGAL SECRETARY

Minimum 3-5 years' experience as a Legal Secretary Secondary School Completion with CXC passes in English & Maths; Additional Education would be an asset Sound Knowledge of Outlook and MS Office | Good oral and written communication skills Good customer service and organization skills

LIVE-IN MAID/NANNY

Minimum 4 years' experience in a similar role High School Completion | Good communication skills Must have a valid Driver's license | Must be able to cook Must have knowledge of the basic lifesaving support (CPR-certified) | Must be a good swimmer MUST BE FULLY VACCINATED

MESSENGER/CLEANER

Minimum 1 year experience

PADI OPEN WATER SCUBA INSTRUCTOR

Minimum 1 year working experience as a PADI Open Water Scuba Instructor Must have issued at least 50 certifications & logged at least 1000 dives Boatmaster 3 License required Higher Level Boating & TEC Diving Qualifications is an asset

PLUMBER

Previous plumbing experience, ideally gained within a hotel or commercial building environment Minimum High School Completion with CXC passes in English and Maths Qualification in General Plumbing & Maintenance required; Pumps; Pools; Sewage Plants and related equipment PORTER/STEEL FABRICATOR/RIGGER Minimum 8 CXCs including English & Mathematics Must have a valid Driver's License | Must be customer-service oriented | Strong oral communication skills Must be a team-player

RESTAURANT HOST/HOSTESS

Minimum 2 years' experience in a similar role or as a Team Leader Minimum 5 CXCs including English & Mathematics | Hospitality Management Diploma or equivalent

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SECURITY OFFICER

Minimum 2 years' experience as a Security Officer High School Diploma Must be able to walk and stand for extended periods | Excellent communication skills

SERVER/PIZZA MAKER

Minimum 3 years' experience Must be able to multi-task | Able to work in a fast-pace environment Must be punctual, trustworthy and honest

SMOOTHIE BAR OPERATOR/MANAGER

Minimum 6 years in a similar role Must be certified & trained in Food & Beverage Management Must be able to mix smoothies, make wraps and cook vegan food

TALLY CLERK (SALES REPRESENTATIVE) Minimum 1 year experience

TRAINEE WELDER/FABRICATOR

No experience required Minimum High School Completion | Training will be required

VIP HOST (CUSTOMER SERVICE AGENT)

Minimum 1-2 years' experience | High School & College Completion necessary Excellent communication skills (verbal & written) Ability to work well under pressure; Ability to work effectively as part of a team or alone Must be self-motivated; A quick learner and a creative/critical thinker

WAITER/WAITRESS (CATERING SERVICE)

Minimum 2 years' experience in a similar role On the job training preferred or High School Completion Hotel Training School Completion preferred

WAITER/WAITRESS (RESTAURANT)

Minimum 5 years' experience

WAREHOUSE/SALES CLERK

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

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WELDER/FABRICATOR

Minimum 10 years' working experience as a Welder Basic Welding & Fabrication skills with knowledge of welding processes Ability to measure in Imperial & Metric, and understand Basic Drawings

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Babar Azam breaks Chris Gayle's record!



Pakistan captain Babar Azam



ISLAMABAD: major achievea ment, Pakistan captain Babar Azam has record books by becoming the fastest batsman to score 7,000 runs in the T20 format.

Babar Azam smashed West Indian cricketer Chris Gayle's record to become the fastest to reach the 7,000 runs mark in T20 cricket.

Babar reached the *from just 52 innings*, landmark during Central Punjab's National T20 Cup clash against Southern Punjab, playing his 187th inning. He only four needed runs to reach the milestone when he walked in to bat on Sunday.

Chris Gayle had crossed the 7,000 T20 runs mark in his 192nd inning.

Babar was three innings short of Chris Gayle's record when reached he 6.000 runs earlier this year. Since then, he has taken only 22 innings

In to add another 1,000 runs to his total T20 runs tally. Of his 7,000 T20 runs, 2,204 have managed to rewrite been scored in T20Is. In April this year, Babar Azam had surpassed Virat Kohli's record to become the fastest to make 2,000 runs in T20 internationals, beating the Indian skipper by a margin of four innings.

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Azam had scored 2,000 **T20I** runs whereas Kohli, who previously held the record for being the fastest to make 2,000 T20I runs, managed to do the same in just 56 innings.

Last week, Babar smashed the sixth T20 century of his career to register a record for the most number of T20 hundreds by a Pakistani batsman. With 64 scores of 50 or more from 186 innings, Babar Azam has the best ratio of 50s/innings in T20 cricket among all the top batsmen in the world.

Andrew Wiggins: Golden State Warriors forward has COVID vaccine after exemption request rejected

forward Andrew Wiggins has had the Covid-19 vaccine, after the NBA rejected his request for a religious exemption.

rules require those aged Canadian - the number 12 and over at large indoor events to have had the vaccine. The NBA said Wiggins could not play in Warriors home games "until he fulfils the city's vaccination re-

Golden State Warriors quirements".Speaking last week, Wiggins said: "I'm confident in my beliefs and what I think is right." However, on Sunday, Warriors head coach Steve San Francisco's health Kerr said the 26-year-old one overall draft pick in 2014 - had now been vaccinated.

> The Warriors' first home game of the regular season is on 21 October.



Andrew Wiggins is entering his eighth season in the NBA

Oshoala helps Barcelona down Arsenal in Women's Champion League

Arsenal lost for the first time since February as Barcelona's Asisat Oshoala haunted her old club in their Women's Champions League Group C opener.

Mariona Caldentey scored the rebound from an Oshoala shot for the first.

Nigerian Oshoala ran down the right wing and squared it for Alexia Putellas to slot home and added a third herself from a sublime Mariona through ball.

Frida Maanum bundled in a consolation for the visitors before Lieke Martens chipped in Barca's fourth.

Putellas should have made it 5-1 deep into stoppage time but her penalty was saved by Manuela Zinsberger. Oshoala, 26, played for Arsenal from March 2016 to February 2017, helping them to win the



Asisat Oshoala was the BBC's first Women's Footballer of the Year in 2015.

FA Cup, and did not celebrate her goal at the Johan Cruyff Stadium.

It took Arsenal 55 minutes to have a shot, with Vivianne Miedema's weak effort rolling straight to goalkeeper Sandra Panos.

The Gunners did create more chances as the game wore on with

Nikita Parris having a shot cleared off the line shortly before Maanum struck.

Jonas Eidevall's Gunners were one of the form teams in Europe coming into the game, with eight wins from eight games in all competitions this season, scoring at least three in each match.

They were unbeaten in 20 games in all competitions, going back to February.

Unfortunately for them, Barcelona had also won all their matches this season - five in the league and this was the first time they hit fewer than five goals in a game.

Barca showed why they will be tough to stop this season and should definitely have extended that scoring run, ending with 35 shots, 14 on target

Shoaib Malik breaks Shahid Afridi's record

Pakistan's veteran all-rounder, Shoaib Malik, played an exceptional match-winning knock against Sindh in the ongoing National T20 Cup. He was awarded the player of the match trophy as he single-handedly rescued the in-

ing 85 runs off 47 balls which included 8 boundaries and 5 sixes.

This was Malik's 35th player of the match award, the most by an Asian in T20 cricket history. Malik surpassed former

nings of Central Punjab, scor- Pakistan all-rounder, Shahid Afridi who had won a total of 34 such awards during his career.

> Here are the Asian players with the most player of the match awards in T20s:

Player	Match	es]	Player of the Match Aw	ards
Shoaib Malik	440		:	35	
Shahid Afridi	326		:	34	
Mohammad Nabi	303		:	32	
Kamran Akmal	281		:	29	
Rashid Khan	282		:	29	
Rohit Sharma	354		:	29	
Virat Kohli	316		:	28	
Shakib Al Hasan	341		:	27	
Azhar Mahmood	230		:	26	
Mohammad Hafeez	339		:	26	
Malik also became	West	Indian	bats-	African batter, AB de	Here are the top five

the fifth player in the man, player –of-the-match a walloping 60 troawards.

Chris Gayle, Legendary phies. Former South

Villiers is next on the players with the most world with the most leads the charts with list with 42 player-of- player of the match the-match awards to awards: his name.

Player	Matches	Player of the Match Awards
Chris Gayle	448	60
AB de Villiers	337	42
Kieron Pollard	566	40
Shane Watson	343	38
Shoaib Malik	440	35



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NAOMI OSAKA: FORMER WORLD #1 DROPS OUT OF TOP 10 IN RANKINGS

Naomi Osaka is a four-time Grand Slam winner

Naomi Osaka has dropped out of the women's top 10 for the first time since winning the 2018 US Open title.

The Japanese player, who is now 12th, withdrew from this year's French Open and missed Wimbledon to focus on her mental health. Osaka, 23, also took a break from tennis in September after her defence of the US Open title was ended by Leylah Fernandez in the third round.

Great Britain's Emma Raducanu, who beat Fernandez in the final, is ranked 22nd. Raducanu, 18, is set to play in her first event since winning the US Open at the Indian Wells tournament, having been given a wildcard into the main draw.

Indian Wells starts on Monday and runs until 17 October. On Monday it was announced Raducanu has also entered next month's Upper Austria Ladies Linz tournament.

Former world number one Osaka, a four-time Grand Slam winner, recently said she will return to tennis soon after getting the "itch" to play again.



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