



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

MONDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2021

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# BROWNE RIDICULES UPP OPPORTUNISM

SEE PAGE 6

*Climate activists around the world demand action from COP26 in Glasgow. Some of the strongest and most urgent calls for action have come from young protesters who say the world they are inheriting is teetering on the brink of a climate catastrophe. Picture shows thousands attending a protest organized by the COP26 Coalition in London on Saturday 6 November. RELATED ARTICLES INSIDE: our EDITORIAL on PAGE 2 and FEATURE on PAGES 14-15*

- INSIDE:**
- UNDP, India provide financial support for vulnerable in A&B
  - Numbers decline, but one more succumbs to COVID-19
  - Principal of top-performing school bemoans poor Internet quality

# Some supposedly good news from the COP26 Global Climate Summit thus far

by **Andy Corley** (re-printed from Good News Network)

At COP26, many of the parties to the Paris Climate Agree-

ment have doubled-down on their commitments to reducing forest-loss and emissions.

Three days into the 2021 United Nations

Climate Change Conference, and fortunately most of the major stories of real note are positive ones. So far there have been commit-

ments to conservation and indigenous people's rights that deserve mention—including an expansion of the Galapagos Marine Reserve.

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KEEP ANTI-CUR CLEAN



Let's take a look at the good news so far in more detail.

### ***Green energy and financing***

South Africa, a major carbon emitter, has signed a financing deal with some G7 countries worth \$8.5 billion to help end its reliance on coal, as it's the 12th largest consumer in the world.

Forty parties including the US, India, Australia, Turkey, the EU, and China have signed onto a UK-led initiative to increase worldwide access to affordable renewable energy by 2030.

UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said that by 2023 the island nation will be the first to force all publicly traded companies to release plans on how they intend to achieve net zero.

Japan, a major

coal and oil consumer, has announced an additional \$10 billion in climate financing over the next few years.

450 global firms will form the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero, and announce membership on Wednesday, while the managers of 40% of the world's total investable assets have signed up to 2050 net-zero goals including limiting global warming to 1.5C.

### ***Conservation***

A Lake Michigan-sized area of ocean, connecting the Galapagos and the Cocos Islands off Costa Rica, has been added to the Galapagos Marine Reserve, totaling 23,000 square miles, about 8-times the size of Yellowstone, and protecting a "marine superhighway" of transiting sharks,

rays, tuna, turtles, and whales.

World leaders who control roughly 85% of the world's forests have pledged to end forest-loss in this decade, for which they have apportioned \$19.2 billion in private and public money. \$1.7 billion has been apportioned by the UK, US, Germany, Norway, and the Netherlands to give directly to indigenous peoples to aid in their substantial contribution to forest and land conservation.

### ***Emissions***

President Biden joined 100 nations in the signing of a plan to cut methane emissions by 30%, which will be accomplished through the scaling back of fossil fuel production. Though CO2 is the principle warming agent, methane, which is more po-

tent but lasts only 12 years in the atmosphere, is being considered as a way to buy time for CO2, which can stay in the atmosphere for up to 1,000 years, to be reduced or captured.

Right at the start of the conference, India, which has up until this point been without a major emissions reduction target, committed to zeroing national emissions by 2070. Experts speaking with The Guardian said that "this demonstrates real leadership from a country whose emissions per capita are about one-third of the global average."

The COP has routinely disappointed activists and green politicians in the past, but there's a sense from the pledges undertaken that this year has generally gotten off to a solid start.



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# Private sector urged to comply with vaccine mandates or face robust enforcement

by Shelton Daniel

Prime Minister Gaston Browne says the introduction of mandatory vaccination for all public sector workers – including those employed with Central Government and Statutory agencies – has turned out “very, very well”.

Speaking Saturday on his weekend radio program, PM Browne said despite threats of pushback and protests against the vaccination mandate, “There has been absolutely no disruption to service within the public sector, and that is because of the high percentage of public sector workers who have gotten vaccinated.”

He said this was especially true within the “educational sector” where it was his “understanding that over 90 percent of the teachers are now vaccinated. So, again, the mandates worked and that is the reason why Antigua and Barbuda is actually within the [top] position in the Caribbean as far as vaccination is concerned.”

He noted that some mandates pertaining to the private sector were introduced recently, calling for workers at establishments with more than five employees to have all staff vaccinated.

“We now have to look at the mechanisms that will be put in place to monitor these private sector entities that are now legally mandated to get their staff vaccinated. In fact, next week at Cabinet, we will be looking at the



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne.**

finer – whether or not the fines are sufficient to serve as a deterrent, because there may be some employers who are not moving with alacrity to ensure that their staff are vaccinated.”

Said the Prime Minister: “The regulation we passed about a week-and-a-half ago which stated that all employers with five or more staff, all of their staff mem-

bers are required to be vaccinated – we will put systems in place to strictly enforce that policy. They might as well comply voluntarily because, at the end of the day, we’re not playing when it comes to protecting people against hospitalizations and deaths – and at the same time, we’re not playing when it comes to protecting the country.”

# PM ridicules job compensation promise made by UPP leader

by *Shelton Daniel*

OUR mandates do not call for the termination of anyone,” Prime Minister Gaston Browne declared as he poured scorn on UPP leader Harold Lovell’s election-style promise to reinstate and compensate all who supposedly lost their jobs as a result of Government’s mandatory vaccination policy for public sector workers – should his (Lovell’s) party regain office.

Calling the vaccine mandate “an unjust policy”, Lovell said a future UPP administration would put in place the legal framework for public servants to claim and be compensated for wrongful dismissal, in addition to all who were still eligible being allowed to return to work if they had been forced to stay home as a consequence of refusing to get vaccinated.

“The public sector has not terminated a single worker to date,” PM Browne stressed. “All we have said is that we have an obligation to keep the work environment safe, and on that basis, individuals have to be vaccinated in order to enter the work premises. Very simple. There is no law, there is no regulation that calls for the dismissal of public sector workers.” Elaborating on what obtains in the private sector, the Prime Minister stated: “Even though we’re saying that private sector workers are also mandated to get vaccinated in order to show that there is a safe work space or to keep the work spaces safe, then clearly the issue of dismissal again does not arise.”



**UPP leader Harold Lovell**

The head of government believes this is another instance of Lovell and his UPP “seeking to encourage people to stay unvaccinated and perhaps to stay unemployed for a period of 16 months – the next elections are constitutionally due in March of 2023, so maybe 17 months – or, if you add the additional three months that ordinarily a government could get depending on the prevailing circumstances, that’s 20 months.

“He is urging them to remain unemployed up to a period of about 20 months; and he is giving them the assurance that if

they take that type of irresponsible position ... they will be rewarded by a UPP administration ... Isn’t that amazing, that level of deceit?”

The Prime Minister denounced this stance by Lovell and the UPP as “irresponsible and opportunistic behavior in which he and his colleagues, up to now, cannot bring themselves to encourage people to get vaccinated”. He said the UPP and its leader were instead “trying to entrench and reward irresponsible behaviors ...”

# Principal of top performing school repeats call for better Internet

by *Shelton Daniel*

The principal of the Baptist Academy of Antigua says not only did the school's CSEC class obtain a 100% pass rate in all the subjects sat for 2021, but 80.1 percent of them achieved Grade One passes.

"They passed all the subjects and it's mostly Grade Ones," said Dr. Hensworth Jonas.

He also declared that "ever since we started the school in 2000 ... no one has ever failed Mathematics. No one has ever failed English A [English Language]; and this year, not only did everyone pass the math, everyone got a Grade One."

Dr. Jonas noted that this is a phenomenon not displayed anywhere else in Antigua and Barbuda or the wider Caribbean.

"So, obviously, our methods – our pedagogical skills – are exemplary ... This year, with the English A, all but one [student] got a Grade One; that one got a Grade Two."

The Academy's 2021 CSEC class numbered less than 15 and Dr. Jonas said in several subjects every student got a Grade One.

"Everyone got a Grade One for Mathematics,

Physics, Human & Social Biology, Integrated Science, Principles of Accounts, Principles of Business, and Physical Education & Sports ... For Information Technology, English A, Biology, and Caribbean History, all the students except one got Grade One. Seven of the 13 students had 10 or more Grade Ones," Dr. Jonas outlined.

"This is an exceptional class and ... they have just performed so well," he added.

The Baptist Academy produced the three top performers in this year's CSEC exams: Pia Nichols with 17 Grade Ones; Avein Joseph with 16 Grade Ones and one Grade Two; and Kofi Browne with 15 Grade Ones and two Grade Twos.

"Our worst performer passed eight subjects with five Grade Ones," Dr. Jonas declared.

"I don't allow the children to pick their subjects in my school," the principal disclosed. "That's my decision ... I don't believe you're supposed to have choice in primary and secondary school. You choose when you go to university. My job is to make sure they have a broad education so that they can major in anything they want

at the tertiary level. So I make sure that students take subjects in all the categories ..."

Dr. Jonas lamented that although the Baptist Academy was able to achieve such results via remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was enormously challenging because of sub-par internet quality.

"The service in this country is very poor and we are paying a lot more than other countries. We need to get the fiber optic into the schools," he complained, but indicated that the Academy's



*Principal of the Baptist Academy of Antigua, Dr. Hensworth Jonas.*

teachers were resourceful enough to pull off the tremendous academic achievement despite these noted deficiencies.

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Date: Tuesday, 9th November 2021

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Affected areas: Section of Dunbars south of CTV Cable Site

Date: Thursday, 11th November 2021

Time: 8:30AM-11:30AM

Affected areas: Section of Jennings near the Moravian Church

Kindly note that this schedule is subject to slight variation. Changes will be communicated on the APUA Facebook page.

Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated. For further information and updates please call 311.



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**INVITATION FOR BIDS**

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GOAB) has received financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) - United Kingdom Caribbean Infrastructure Partnership Fund towards the cost of the Road Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing to eligible payments under this contract. Payment by CDB will be made only at the request of (GOAB) and upon approval by CDB, and will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Financing Agreement. The Financing Agreement prohibits withdrawal from the financing account for the purpose of any payment to persons or entities, or for any import of goods, if such payment or import, to the knowledge of CDB, is prohibited by a decision of the United Nations Security Council taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. No party other than (GOAB) shall derive any rights from the Financing Agreement or have any claim to the proceeds of the Financing.

The Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Works (MOW), through its Project Implementation Management Unit (PIMU). MOW has contracted Consultants who will assist the PIMU with delivering the Project.

GOAB now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Construction of an earthen, grassed swale drain and a culvert outlet structure within the VC Bird International Airport compound.

Consideration will be limited to firms or joint ventures of firms, which are legally incorporated or otherwise organised in, and have their principal place of business in an eligible country and are either:

- (a) more than 50% beneficially owned by a citizen or citizens and/or a bona fide resident or residents of an eligible country, or by a body corporate or bodies corporate meeting these requirements; or
- (b) owned or controlled by the Government of an eligible country provided that it is legally and financially autonomous and operated under the commercial law of an eligible country and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the CDB Guidelines for Procurement (2006).

Eligible countries are member countries of CDB.

Eligible bidders will be required to submit full qualification information with their bids establishing their eligibility to bid and qualification to perform the contract if the bid is accepted. Tender and qualification information are to be submitted in the English Language on the prescribed forms inserted in the Bid Documents. Submissions that do not provide the information required, or do not demonstrate the prospective contractor's ability to perform satisfactorily, will not qualify and will not be considered for further evaluation.

Qualification requirements include, inter alia:

- (a) an average annual turnover (defined as certified payments received for works in progress or completed) within the last five years of at least One hundred and fifty thousand United States



Dollars(\$150,000USD) or Four hundred thousand Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD 400,000.00 minimum), of which only the three best years will be evaluated;

(b) a demonstrable cash flow (including access to credit) of fifty thousand United States dollars (USD 50,000.00) or One hundred and thirty-five Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD 135,000.00); and

(c) experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least two (2) assignments of a nature, scope and complexity comparable to the proposed project activity between 1st January, 2015 and submission deadline (to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 80 percent complete).

Electronic Bidding Documents may be obtained by eligible bidders from the first address below. Alternatively, a hard copy may be obtained from the first address below for a non-refundable cash payment of XCD \$150.00. Requests may be made by written application including email. Written applications must be clearly marked: **“Request for Bidding Documents for the Construction of Airport Drainage Channel”**, along with the name, address and contact information of the bidder for which Bidding Documents are being requested.

Applicants who request that documents be forwarded to them must submit an account number from a local courier agent that accepts freight collect charges. Documents will be promptly dispatched, but under no circumstance will MOW or their authorised agent be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so transmitted.

Sealed envelopes clearly marked **“Bid for the Construction of Airport Drainage Channel”**, must be received at the second address below not later than **12:00 noon on 30th November, 2021**. Bid opening will take place immediately after the deadline for submission at the second address below in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend.

All bids must be accompanied by a signed, completed Bid-Securing Declaration. Late bids will be rejected.

GOAB reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for GOAB's action. GOAB will not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

## **Address for Correspondence**

Project Coordinator  
Ministry of Works  
St. John's Street  
St. John's  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Tel: +268 562-9176  
Fax: +268 462 4622  
Email: [projectcoordinator.works@ab.gov.ag](mailto:projectcoordinator.works@ab.gov.ag)

## **Address for Bid Submission and Bid Opening**

Chairman, Tenders Board  
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance  
Government Office Complex  
Queen Elizabeth Highway  
St. John's  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Tel: (268) 562-5825 / 5826  
Fax: (268) 562-1717  
Email: [tenders.board@ab.gov.ag](mailto:tenders.board@ab.gov.ag)

# Tsunami Awareness Day observance



*Bethesda residents gather at the Old Bethesda Primary School grounds as part of their tsunami preparedness community drill in January 2019. NODS Director Philmore Mullin (in yellow shirt with back to camera) supervised the exercise.*

World Tsunami Awareness Day was observed on Friday 5th November and, to mark the occasion, the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) called on residents to continue to familiarise themselves on tsunami safety.

Director of NODS Philmore Mullin encourages residents to reflect seriously on protecting lives, limb and property, and to understand that because we have not been impacted for a long time does not mean we should be complacent.

The level of devastation by tsunamis can be great, so it is imperative that individuals know emergency routes, assembly areas, and general safe areas, especially if they live, work or frequent coastal regions.

Antigua and Barbuda and other regional countries have been

affected by tsunamis in the past, particularly from the Great Lisbon Earthquake in Portugal on 1st November 1755. There have also been more recent impacts, namely two events in 1946 in the Dominican Republic which caused 1,865 deaths.

Mullin says we need to remember that the further ... we move from the last impact, the closer we get to the next one.

According to information from the UWI Seismic Research Centre in Trinidad – which monitors earthquakes in the region – the most likely tsunamis to affect the Eastern Caribbean are those triggered by shallow earthquakes which are less than 50 km in depth and greater than magnitude 6.5.

Over the years, NODS has been informing and educating residents about things they must

do to protect themselves from tsunami impact - one of which is to move to higher ground. The office has also erected signs in those areas that have been validated by international partners – meaning safe areas are identified, evacuation routes established, and awareness activities held such as drills. Three districts have also been designated as Tsunami Ready: The City of St. John's; St. John's City West; and St. John's City South. Mullin says had it not been for the COVID-19 pandemic, this process would have been further advanced, but the office will continue its efforts until all coastal communities are validated.

The Indian Ocean tsunami on 26th December 2004, which claimed over 250,000 lives, is on record as being the worst tsunami catastrophe.

# India, UNDP provide financial support to vulnerable communities here

After more than a year of battling the socio-economic impacts of the novel coronavirus, Antigua and Barbuda received a much-needed cash injection last week.

Over US\$110,000 was distributed to approximately 800 beneficiaries under Output 2 of the project titled, *Strengthening National Health Capacities & Reducing Negative Socio-Economic Impacts of the COVID-19 Crisis in Antigua and Barbuda*.

This project is being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean under the lead of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

The project – funded by the Indian Government through the Office of South-South Cooperation – will adopt a comprehensive approach to

effectively meet the needs of the most affected population of Antigua and Barbuda.

With an emphasis on gender equality, all interventions under the recovery programme will consider the greater impact and seek to address the specialized needs of vulnerable groups during crisis.

The Social Protection Board (SPB), a department of the Ministry of Social Transformation, facilitated the distribution of the payments to the beneficiaries to ensure those most in need were reached. The SPB was established in 2020 to provide for the prevention, reduction and elimination of economic, discriminatory and social vulnerabilities that are related to poverty and deprivation in Antigua and Barbuda. Ms. Mary Baltimore, chairperson of the

SPB noted: “The Social Protection Board would like to thank the United Nations Development Programme in connection with the Government of India for this generous donation. As we serve the most vulnerable, we extend gratitude on behalf of our beneficiaries [who] are all very thankful for your assistance. We are happy and very grateful for this, and we look forward to your continual support as we continue to serve the most vulnerable within our communities.”

Randolph Gage, a beneficiary of the project, expressed his gratitude for the support, stating: “It’s a good thing. People are going through struggles and regardless of the amount, it will go a long way.”

Another beneficiary, Neilwattie Ramnaraine, added: “I am pretty glad for the help



that I am receiving. It is a good gesture, especially for those of us with children.”

This timely intervention simultaneously tackles the health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic at a commensurate speed and scale, and in line with the integrated logic of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mellissa Johnson, head of the UNDP Antigua and Barbuda Office noted: “In line with UNDP’s commitment to sustainable growth and leaving no one behind, this project is driven by soli-

arity, science, and human rights, while focusing on the most vulnerable people.”

At this time when exogenous threats like COVID-19 and natural disasters are impacting the region, it is vital that developmental efforts are continued to reinforce the need for regional resilience and building forward better.

Collaborative projects such as this are part of the work of UNDP Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean in its commitment to promoting economic diversification, job creation and resilience

with the “Blue Economy for Green Islands” vision.

As the Caribbean continues to seek solutions to support traditionally vulnerable groups, UNDP Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean – in partnership with governments and stakeholders – remains dedicated to the advancement of inclusive and sustainable development throughout the region, and building resilient communities that can withstand shocks and crises through targeted projects and programmes.

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# 40 years of unbroken service

Just as the nation of Antigua and Barbuda celebrated 40 years of political independence on 1st November, so too did the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda (RPFAB) celebrate eight members who have given over four decades of unbroken service to the nation.

During an award ceremony held at the Sir Wright F. George Police Academy on Thursday 4th November, His Excellency the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, conferred the Meritorious Service Medal on Assistant Commissioner Elvis Weaver; Superin-

tendents Cecilia Francis, Christopher Warren, and Avil Jacobs; Assistant Superintendents Alston Ryan, Arthur Edwards; and Inspectors John Pelle and Bastin Burke, for their years of unbroken service to the RPFAB and the nation of Antigua and Barbuda.

Assistant Commissioner Elvis Weaver is currently the longest serving member of the police force, having enlisted in the service in February 1979.

Commissioner of Police Mr. Atlee Rodney congratulated the honorees and thanked them for their support over the years. He

further encouraged them to continue being examples to their subordinates, noting that some may have lost the will to carry on and follow in their footsteps.

Retired Commissioner of Police Sir Wright F. George was also presented with a plaque for Meritorious Service to the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda by Commissioner Rodney. Sir Wright's career in the RPFAB lasted from 1951-1990. He retired in June 1990, having served as Commissioner for 16 years.

Acting Prime Minister Steadroy Benjamin delivered the feature address.



# Statement by COP26 lead negotiator Lia Nicholson of A&B on behalf of AOSIS – Sat. 6th Nov. 2021



*by Ms. Lia Nicholson*

I have the honor to speak on behalf of AOSIS (the Alliance of Small Island States), in line with the statement delivered by Guinea for the Group of 77 and China.

We began this week calling to rapidly move to draft decision text. Collectively we achieved

this in some areas, with almost no progress in others.

Starting with the glass half full, in Article 6, we've seen text iterations and appreciate the co-facilitators' preparing for Ministers. Globally, emissions are heading in the wrong di-

rection, even with recent announcements. Markets can add to overall ambition, but can also seriously detract if not properly set up.

As we struggle to get to 1.5-degrees, we need to give the right signal to the market and to build confidence with our

people and the private sector that the Article 6(4) market will deliver an overall reduction in emissions with the highest possible discount rate.

This number should be set here at the CMA. The share of proceeds should also be set here. Five percent is very low and should not be in brackets nor be seen as something to trade.

On Article 6(2), AOSIS appreciates the range of options and is consulting to assist the Chair to move forward. We cannot leave Glasgow without the 1.5-degree goal alive. This is our benchmark for every decision.

The glass is half empty in transparency. The group is deeply concerned that transparency of action is falling far short. Can we really complete our work in time? We must leave this COP with finished tables and formats to have enough time to build the capacity of SIDS, LDCs and all developing countries to be able to report under the new transparency regime. AOSIS calls on the GEF to allocate [US\$2 million] per biennial trans-



parency report for at least three reporting cycles.

The little progress on transparency of action is even less on transparency of support. We underscore the imbalance that transparency of support is not progressing at all. We call on partners to step up with a consistent approach.

If a tree falls in a forest and no one hears, does it make a sound? The NDC Synthesis Report event took place briefly late at night in a small room, with a musical interlude. Colleagues, most of us were not there to hear it. This report reveals a huge ambition gap. We need stronger 2030 NDCs, by next year, with concrete implementation plans. AOSIS requests a presentation to the CMA plenary, and more systematic updating and inclusion of this report going forward.

Emission ranges in the NDC Synthesis Report reveal conditional targets. The failure to deliver [US\$100 billion] per year by 2020 is a missing rung in the Paris Agreement's ratchet-up mechanism. So too is the failure to strike a balance for adaptation finance, which should be at least doubled immediately. Every cog must function for the Paris mechanism to work, and we need it to be working overtime to catch up to a 1.5-degree pathway

and adapt to locked-in impacts.

It is important to start a process here to elaborate the global goal on adaptation, including how to assess progress towards the goal. We thank the SBSTA Chair for convening the December 2020 Ocean-Climate Dialogue, the hopeful start of a re-occurring event. The 2020 report highlights that the oceans bear the effects of warming, acidification, and deoxygenation, but also that the ocean is a source of solutions.

We must launch a process to operationalize new and additional loss and damage financing. AOSIS leaders this week called for safeguards against "wipe out risk" – the climate impacts that have forced islands into unsustainable debt, arresting development, and holding us hostage to random acts of charity. Loss and damage must be reflected on the world's balance sheet, starting now and in the new quantified finance goal. We expect discussions on this goal to be transparent, inclusive, and multilateral.

There is universal excitement to move into full implementation mode. The UNFCCC needs a more robust process to address distortions that heighten social and economic risks of the transition. We have heard many Parties

supporting the need to end fossil fuel subsidies in major economies, and to accelerate clear implementation pathways.

Let us stop paying lip service on access to finance. AOSIS has tabled many concrete proposals across agenda items to address chronic challenges that not only SIDS face, but that also inhibit lofty goals to mobilize private finance. Technology will play a key role in achieving mitigation and adaptation goals, yet progress was slow this week. We look forward to the upcoming CTCN funders' roundtable.

In closing, Excellencies, I voice my group's practical concern that no less than four negotiating sessions began with AOSIS not in the room, because three agenda items were happening in parallel. In one case, our Coordinator was outside with the room at capacity. That coordinator represents the voice of 39 Parties in this process.

We place our trust in the COP Presidency to ensure that each Group Constituency has a literal seat at the table.

AOSIS is working tirelessly, along with every delegate here, to uphold Glasgow as a triumph for which we overcame tremendous hurdles. Our people expect nothing less. I thank you.

**MONDAY-FRIDAY**  
**7:00pm - 8:30pm**  
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# COVID Dashboard Update for November 6th 2021

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment revealed four (4) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Friday 5th November 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

One hundred and eighty (180) samples were processed.

Seven (7) recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 3,852.

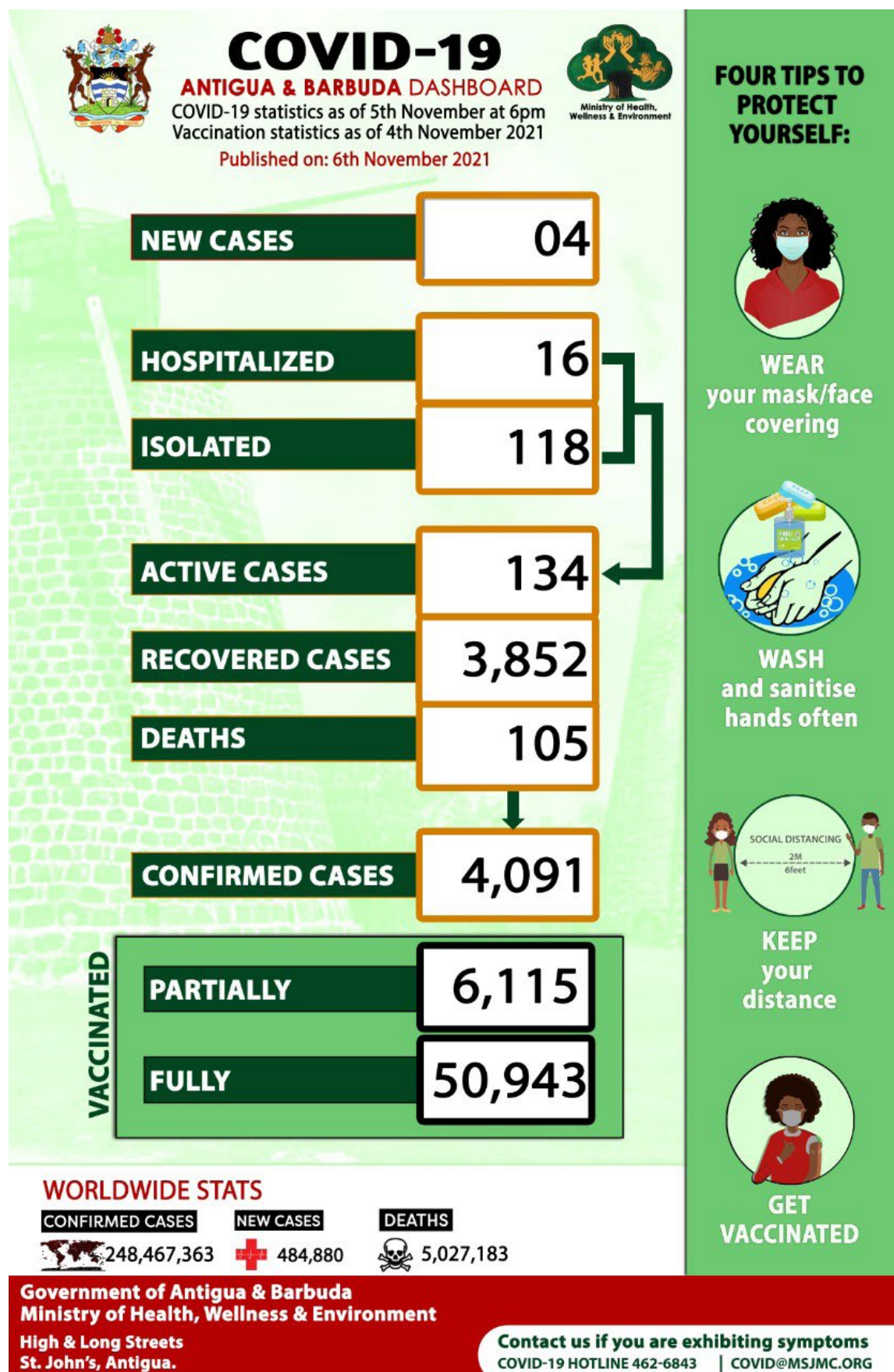
One (1) COVID-19 related death was recorded increasing the total to 105.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 4,091; which is inclusive of 134 active cases.

There are 16 hospitalized cases: nine (9) mild; four (4) moderate; and three (3) severe.

Meanwhile, Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 50,943 individuals, while 6,115 have only received their first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.





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# CARPHA implements whole genome sequencing for member states to identify COVID-19 variants

**CARPHA** - Whole genome sequencing (WGS) testing to detect COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) variants will be underway at the CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) from Monday 15 November 2021.

The process will allow CMML to monitor COVID-19 and track specific mutations of COVID-19 that have been circulating in CARPHA Member States.

This new service will provide a turnaround time of 14 days after receipt of samples by CMML from Member States.

Each virus has its own genomic sequence, characterised by a unique "fingerprint". Whole genome sequencing (WGS) is the most comprehensive method for genetic disease testing and can detect nearly all types of disease-causing genetic variants.

"The whole genome sequencing process will allow the CMML to detect changes that may occur in the COVID-19 virus fingerprint over time and accelerate the delivery of results to Member States. A better understanding of the virus's genet-

ic makeup could save lives by informing public health and clinical management, as well as support the development of medicines and vaccines to combat the virus," stated Dr. Lisa Indar, Director of Surveillance, Disease Prevention and Control at CARPHA.

As a virus evolves, random changes or mutations occur. These changes can lead to the emergence of a new virus lineage, which is quite common. The genomic sequences of these new lineages will differ and are referred to as variations. Although many variants have little effect on the virus's ability to propagate or cause disease, some changes can increase transmissibility, or allow the virus to evade natural or vaccine-induced immunity.

As the regional reference laboratory, the CMML continues to conduct tests for suspected COVID-19 cases and provide timely reporting of laboratory results to its Member States. The CMML boasts a turnaround time of 48 hours for PCR test results for Member States.

Dr. St. John the Executive Director stated

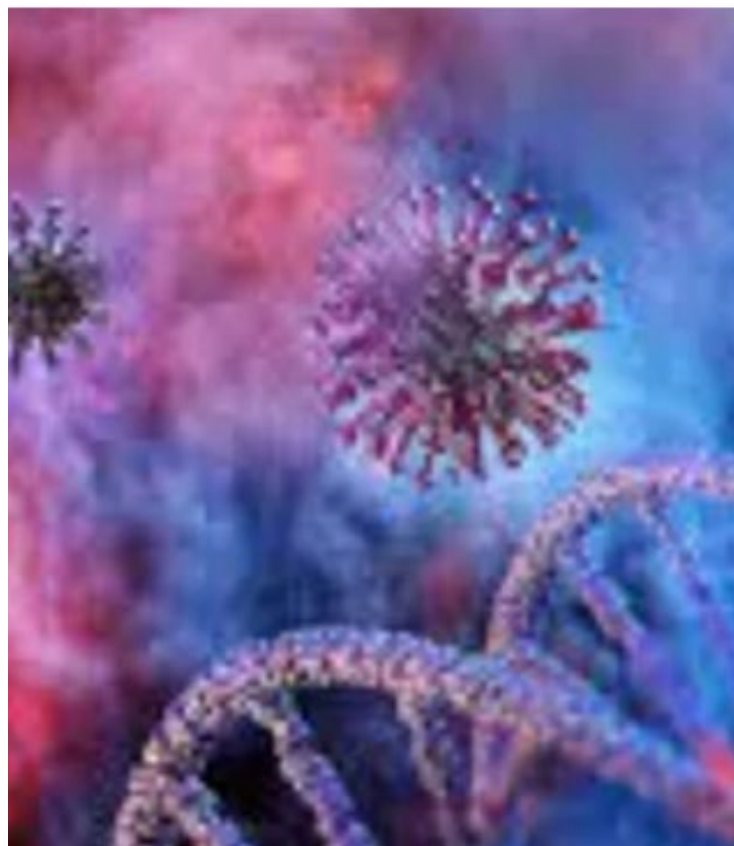
"CARPHA is pleased and very grateful that our International Development Partner, the World Bank, supported the expansion of the suite of services that we can offer our Member States in bolstering their fight against COVID-19."

From December 2020 until present, CARPHA and the University of the West Indies (UWI) embarked on a joint project to determine the different lineages of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that circulate in the Caribbean. UWI will continue testing samples, and further communication with our Member States will de-

termine how many samples they can accommodate.

The CMML has plans to expand the scope of its gene sequencing services to include laboratory surveillance of other types of viruses and diseases of public health concern.

CARPHA also announced its new service during the virtual 35th Caribbean Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) Managers' Meeting which took place from 3 – 5 November 2021. The meeting was hosted by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).



# Life imprisonment, millions in fines for electoral breaches

**Guyana Chronicle** - To ensure that Guyana never faces a recurrence of last year's six-month-long elections debacle, stricter consequences for electoral breaches have been outlined in government's proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Act (RoPA). The proposed amendments are currently in the public domain for review and feedback, ahead of presentation to the National Assembly.

With Guyanese voters still awaiting Statements of Poll (SoP) from the former A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC), the amendments assert that, going forward, all SoPs must be promptly certified and posted on the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM)'s website by the Chief Elections Officer (CEO).

It outlined that the CEO would be committing an offence should he or she "post or caused to be posted, an electronic copy of a statement of poll that is not a true copy of the certified copy of the Statement of Poll delivered to him,

or that contains a false statement."

Such a breach, according to the amendments, would see the CEO being "liable on summary conviction to a fine of 10 million dollars and to

is liable on summary conviction to a fine of 10 million dollars and to imprisonment for life," the amendments indicated. Similar consequences also apply in cases where the CEO



imprisonment for life."

The amended document also outlines strict penalties for persons such as the returning officers who supply the CEO with falsified tabulation forms.

"A person who fails to deliver to the Chief Elections Officer a true, certified copy of a Tabulation Form ... or who delivers a Tabulation Form with falsified information, commits an offence and

fails to calculate the total number of votes on the basis of information contained in the District Tabulation Forms, which are the only basis for the calculation of votes.

As it is, former GECOM CEO Keith Lowenfield is before the court on charges pertaining to electoral fraud, having attempted to declare the 2020 General and Regional Elections in favour of the

then APNU+AFC Government, using figures provided by the Region Four Returning Officer Clairmont Mingo, who is also before the courts, having been accused of inflating the Region Four votes in favour of the APNU+AFC.

With Region Four being the largest voting district and the most problematic as the previous elections would indicate, it is proposed that the region be split into sub-districts with each having its own returning officer who ultimately reports to the Region Four Returning Officer.

The amendments also outline a \$10 million fine and 10 years jail for a sub-district returning officer who fails to submit a true and certified copy of the sub-district Tabulation Form to the Region Four Returning Officer.

Nonetheless, in relation to the physical copies of the SoPs which are hung outside each polling station at the close of polls, persons found removing or tampering with these would be liable to a fine \$10 million as well as 10 years in prison.



# Barbados: FSC asked to intervene in transfer of RRSPs

**Barbados Today** - The Financial Services Commission (FSC) has been asked to intervene urgently to try to stave off another possible CLICO debacle by protecting those pensioners whose Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSP) are being transferred by a local commercial bank.

The Barbados Association of Insurance & Financial Advisors (BARAIFA) said on Sunday it is “deeply” troubled that CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank – which has decided to transfer the RRSP accounts of its clients to insurance giant Sagicor – has not given these customers enough time to make well-informed options about their hard-earned investments. According to the notice from CIBC – dated October 1st 2021 – if the holder of the RRSP wished to have it transferred to Sagicor, they are to fill out the necessary application form and the related onboarding documents and send them to an email address provided, no later than November 1st 2021. However, clients – who have been venting their frustration to Barbados TODAY – complained that they only received the notification at the end of October.



***The Barbados Association of Insurance & Financial Advisors (BARAIFA) has expressed grave concern that CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank has decided to transfer the RRSP accounts of its clients to insurance giant Sagicor without giving these customers enough time to contemplate options.***

Further, the letter to the clients said: “If we do not receive a withdrawal or transfer request from you by November 8th 2021, we will understand you to require a transfer of assets (less 25 percent withholding tax) and we will communicate with you further in this regard, if necessary.”

But president of BARAIFA Tyrone Lowe said that one month’s notice is far from enough time to give these people whose pensions will be the only source of survival in their latter years, and who could be seriously

disadvantaged by being rushed into a last-minute decision.

“We at BARAIFA stand ready to call members to a meeting, if necessary, but we believe the FSC needs to get involved for the benefit of protecting the integrity of the financial services industry. We believe that FirstCaribbean needs to get involved and extend the time for people to make a more informed decision; and we believe those persons who are still uncertain should reach out to their financial advisors immediately to see how best they can get guid-

ance,” Lowe told Barbados TODAY.

Expressing fears that these clients could lose the full benefits of their investments if they are not allowed time to properly resolve any doubts or concerns regarding the future of their pensions, Lowe recalled the financial collapse of CLICO International Life Insurance Company, which then led to Government issuing bonds and other financial instruments to reimburse investors and pensioners who lost their money. He remembered that several of these failed to benefit from their investments, as was expected and at the time they were due, because the offer was restructured for them to wait much longer.

“Based on what we are seeing, the RRSP, therefore, is giving people some pension savings. If now, at this stage, people are being forced at short notice to find an alternative investment, that could very well impact on their options. We want to recall recently Barbados has had two problems with pensioners. Remember the Reslife/CLICO scenario where many persons who were reaching pension age had to wait to have access to their funds; and then the bonds further delayed



the maturity of the pensions,” the senior financial advisor observed.

Lowe added: “There were people who already had Government bonds and so on in Central Bank, looking expectantly for their money; and then there was that particular extension of the maturity periods and even a decrease of the interest rate.”

“At 60 or 65 when you are about to enjoy your pension, the last thing you want to have is a scenario where you are not quite sure what is the next step. To our minds, what is troubling for us is that it affects this particular component. It also does something for the wider financial industry. One of the things the FSC seeks to do is to make sure that investor confidence is propelled; and therefore, if you have an issue where people are uncertain about their future after planning and saving for it, that does something for the wider insurance and financial community,” the head of the BARAIFA said.

Lowe also urged CIBC to immediately reengage its clients before implementing this transfer, pointing out that these customers’ financial future could be jeopardized by the bank if it insists on “rushing ahead” with the move.

# St. Vincent students to revert to long clothes because of dengue



**IWN SVG** - Five days after students returned to classrooms for the first time this year, and three days after the Teachers’ Union raised the issues, all students in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are being allowed to wear long clothes to school to avoid the mosquito-borne disease Dengue.

As of January this year, Dengue had killed at least eight people in SVG, including five students, during the current outbreak.

And, on Tuesday, president of the SVG Teachers’ Union, Oswald Robinson noted at a Union press conference that students were told to wear their full uniform to school, even as Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Simone Keizer-Beache was warning that dengue remains an issue.

“Somebody is not thinking right,” said Robinson, who also high-

lighted some of the situations on and around school campuses that contributed to mosquitos breeding and the dengue problem.

Then, on Friday, the Ministry of Education, in a circular to heads of all educational institutions, said that with immediate effect schools are to revert to the recommendations provided by the CMO that were implemented during the last academic year to reduce the spread of dengue fever.

“Accordingly, students are permitted to wear long pants, tights and long sleeve tops if their parents desire for them to do so,” the Ministry said.

It referred to the recommendations that were received last year from the CMO and said principals should ensure that the recommendations are once again implemented to reduce the risk of den-

gue fever infection.

“We urge you to advise your staff, students, parents and all other stakeholders accordingly. We shall continue to work together to provide a safe environment for all users of our schools. Your usual support is anticipated if we are going to achieve this objective,” the Ministry said.

In a communiqué to the Chief Education Officer on Sept. 21, 2020, Keizer-Beache said the current Dengue Fever outbreak, first noted in July 2020, was the worse the country had seen to date.

She said predominance of the disease in the younger age groups was most likely due to the fact that the *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito, which carries the dengue fever virus, typically bites during the daytime when persons are at school.

“Additionally, the school population is vulnerable because the last outbreaks in St. Vincent and the Grenadines were in 2010 and 2012, and so persons younger than 8-years-old have had no exposure to Dengue Fever, and so no chance of immunity,” Keizer-Beache said.

# Iran holds large-scale military drill after US navy confrontation

**Al Jazeera** - Iran's army is holding a large-scale sea, land and air military drill, which comes shortly after the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and United States Navy had a confrontation in the Sea of Oman over a seized oil tanker.

The drill was launched on Sunday morning and is expected to incorporate soldiers, vessels, armoured vehicles, manned and unmanned aircraft, and missile and radar systems in both offensive and defensive capacities.

Abdolrahim Mousavi, commander-in-chief of Iran's army, told state television that the exercises will be held in an area encompassing one million square kilometres (386,000 sq miles) east of the Strait of Hormuz, the Sea of Oman, and the northern parts of the Indian Ocean.

On land, the drill will be held in the general area of the southeastern provinces of Sistan and Balochistan, and Hormozgan, in addition to the coasts of Makran.

"Since we are aware that the enemy is trying to gather its required information after our forces mobilised in the area, from today we are reinforcing our efforts to monitor en-

emy movements that had begun days ago," he said from the south-eastern port of Konarak.

Mousavi also detailed that on the first day of the drill – which is expected to last several days – vessels and commandos will undertake an operation to breach enemy shore defences from the sea, while Iranian forces and missile and radar systems will simulate defending beach lines.

State TV also aired footage of speedboats manoeuvring at sea, soldiers boarding combat helicopters, and commandos parachuting out of aircraft to land on beach areas.

Iran's army and the IRGC have held several large-scale drills in different parts of the country in recent months amid tensions with the US, threats by Israel, and disagreements with northwestern neighbour Azerbaijan.

Iranian military officials on Sunday continued to praise the country's military capabilities in relation to a confrontation over a Vietnamese-flagged tanker publicised on Wednesday that they said the US tried to seize in order to "steal" its cargo of Iranian oil. It was unclear where the tanker was heading.



Yadollah Javani, the IRGC's political deputy, told the state broadcaster that the US was trying to prevent Iranian oil sales and enforce unilateral sanctions it imposed following its 2018 withdrawal from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal.

"But the Americans were caught unawares because ... IRGC Navy forces used heliborne operations to deploy troops on the tanker that wanted to steal Iranian oil and redirected the ship to Iranian waters from a long distance," he said.

Earlier this week, state television aired dramatic footage of the incident, which happened on October 25, showing Iranian soldiers boarding the vessel. They were also shown warning off a US ship and helicopter, and escorting the tanker back.

The tanker, called the Sothys, and its crew are now in Iranian custody and Vietnam said it has begun talks to release them. US officials have offered a contrasting

account of what happened during the incident, saying the Iranian claim that it had been trying to steal their oil was not true and that US forces were present simply to monitor the situation.

The incident was publicised a day before the 42nd anniversary of the takeover of the US embassy in Tehran, which led to a hostage crisis lasting 444 days.

Iranian officials celebrated the anniversary on Thursday with anti-American and anti-Israeli messages, and IRGC commander-in-chief Hossein Salami praised the response to the tanker incident and pledged to resist American influence in the region.

Iran on Wednesday announced that talks with world powers in Vienna to restore its nuclear deal – which, if successful, will lift US sanctions – will resume on November 29 after halting in June to allow President Ebrahim Raisi to form his administration.



# Koalas are dying from chlamydia, and climate change is making it worse



(CNN) - A silent killer is spreading through Australia's koala population, posing a threat that wildlife experts say could wipe out the iconic marsupial across large parts of the country.

The culprit is chlamydia, a sexually transmitted virus that infects more than 100 million people worldwide annually and can cause infertility in humans if left untreated.

For koalas, uncontrolled chlamydia can cause blindness and painful cysts in the animal's reproductive tract, that may lead to infertility or even death.

Worse still, antibiotics used to treat the disease can destroy the delicate gut flora that koalas need to consume their staple diet of eucalyptus leaves, leading some to starve to death even after being cured.

The disease can also spread quickly.

In 2008, there was a "very, very low chlamydial prevalence" -- about 10% -- in the koala population in Gunnedah, a rural town in

northeast New South Wales, according to Mark Krockenberger, a professor of veterinary pathology at the University of Sydney.

By 2015, that figure had risen to as high as 60%. Now, about 85% of that koala population is infected with the virus, Krockenberger said.

"If you think about it, that's not a viable population anymore because of infertility. Pretty much every female that's infected with chlamydia becomes infertile within a year, maybe two years maximum ... Even if they survive, they're not breeding," he said.

Experts say situations like that in Gunnedah are playing out among koala populations across Australia, threatening populations already vulnerable to worsening bushfires and habitat loss due to deforestation.

Scientists are now trialing vaccines against chlamydia to protect the animals.

"We run a very high risk if this vaccine strategy doesn't work ... of localized extinctions," Krockenberger said.

There are few Australian animals more emblematic than the koala.

The gray, fluffy-eared marsupial which eats leaves from the eucalyptus tree and carries its young in its pouch, can only be found in Australia and is regularly seen in cultural representations of the country.

But koalas face a number of threats to their survival. Apart from disease, the marsupials suffer habitat loss and are often attacked by wild dogs and hit by cars.

The koala is listed as "vulnerable" on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, which catalogs species at risk of extinction. The IUCN says there are between 100,000 and half a million koalas in the wild, but the Australian Koala Foundation says the number is closer to 58,000.

Confusion about the size of Australia's koala population inspired the government to commit 2 million Australian dollars (\$1.47 million) last year to a national koala census to work out where they are and how many are left.

The country's koala population suffered severe losses during the catastrophic bushfires of 2019 which destroyed more than 12 million acres (48,000 squares kilometers) of land across New South Wales alone.

The fires killed or displaced nearly 3 billion animals, according to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). That figure includes more than 60,000 koalas that either died, lost their habitat, or suffered injury, trauma, smoke inhalation and heat stress from the flames.



# US braces for surge of vaccinated international travelers

(Reuters) – The United States is expecting a flood of international visitors crossing its borders by air and by land on Monday after lifting travel restrictions for much of the world's population, first imposed in early 2020 to address the spread of COVID-19.

United Airlines is expecting about 50% more total international inbound passengers on Monday, compared to last Monday when it had about 20,000.

And Delta Airlines' chief executive Ed Bastian has warned that travelers should be prepared for initial long lines.

"It's going to be a bit sloppy at first. I can assure you, there will be lines, unfortunately," Bastian said, adding that, "We'll get it sorted out."

Delta said in the six weeks since the US reopening was announced it has seen a 450% increase in international point-of-sale bookings versus the six weeks prior to the announcement.

White House spokesman Kevin Munoz said on Twitter, "As we expect high demand when the US lifts its existing air and land travel restrictions Monday, we are taking critical steps to be prepared by providing additional resources."

The Biden administration has held multiple calls with US airlines to prepare for the influx of additional travelers that will begin arriving at US airports, and has warned travelers crossing from Canada and Mexico by land or ferry to be prepared for longer waits starting Monday.

For Bhavna Patel, a flight from



London will take her to New York on Monday to see her first grandchild after more than a year of watching him grow via FaceTime.

The rules have barred most non-US citizens who, within the prior 14 days, have been in 33 countries -- the 26 Schengen countries in Europe without border controls, China, India, South Africa, Iran, Brazil, Britain and Ireland.

Trade group US Travel said the countries accounted for 53% of all overseas visitors to the United States in 2019 and border communities were hit hard by the loss of tourists crossing from Mexico and Canada. The group estimates declines in international visitation "resulted in nearly \$300 billion in lost export income" since March 2020.

US airlines are boosting flights to Europe and other destinations that were impacted by the restrictions. Airlines are planning events on Monday, with executives meeting some of the first flights.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and United Airlines president Brett Hart are holding an event at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport on Monday to mark

the reopening.

US officials plan an Instagram live chat on Nov. 9 to help answer questions.

Many international flights are expected to operate close to full or full on Monday, with high passenger volume throughout the following weeks.

Airlines will check vaccination documentation for international travelers as they currently do for COVID-19 test results. At land border crossings, US Customs & Border Protection will ask if travelers have been vaccinated and spot check some documentation.

Children under 18 are exempt from the new vaccine requirements. Non-tourist travelers from nearly 50 countries with nationwide vaccination rates of less than 10% will also be eligible for exemption.

Also Monday, new contact tracing rules will take effect requiring airlines to collect information from international air passengers if needed "to follow up with travelers who have been exposed to COVID-19 variants or other pathogens".

# Elon Musk holds Twitter vote over \$21bn Tesla share sale



*Elon Musk is critical of a “billionaires tax” being proposed by some Democrats.*

**BBC** - Tesla billionaire Elon Musk has launched a Twitter poll of his 62.6 million followers asking if he should sell 10% of his shares.

The vote, which was due to close later on Sunday, could see him dispose of \$21bn (£16bn) of stock in the electric carmaker.

He promised to abide by the result of the poll, a response to a “billionaires tax” proposed by US Democrats. The plan could see Mr. Musk, one of the world’s richest men, face a huge tax bill.

By mid-afternoon on Sunday, with about 3 hours to go before the poll was due to close, 57.2% of the 3.2 million respondents had voted “yes”.

The Tesla chief executive owns more than \$200bn worth of shares and is due to exercise options next year that will boost his worth even further, but leave Mr. Musk with

what he said would be a “massive” tax bill. Under plans proposed by the Democratic Party in the Senate, billionaires could be taxed on “unrealised gains” when the price of their shares goes up - even if they do not sell any of their stock.

In another tweet on Saturday, Mr. Musk said: “Note, I do not take a cash salary or bonus from anywhere. I only have stock; thus the only way for me to pay taxes personally is to sell stock.

“Much is made lately of unrealized gains being a means of tax avoidance, so I propose selling 10% of my Tesla stock,” he tweeted. It is thought that the proposed tax on capital gains, whether or not assets have been sold, could hit about 700 billionaires in the US. Critics have pointed out that the value of assets do not always go up.

Mr. Musk has an option, which expires in August next year, to buy 22.86 million Tesla shares at \$6.24 each - a fraction of Tesla’s closing share price on Friday of \$1,222.

He recently said that he would sell \$6bn in Tesla stock and donate it to the World Food Program, provided the organisation disclosed more information about how it spent its money.

The poll has raised some eyebrows in the world of finance.

“We are witnessing the Twitter masses deciding the outcome of a \$25B coin flip,” Venture investor Chamath Palihapitiya wrote on Twitter.

“Looking forward to the day when the richest person in the world paying some tax does not depend on a Twitter poll,” Berkeley economist Gabriel Zucman tweeted.





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**SCHOOL VACCINATION DRIVE!**

Effective 5th November 2021

The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment has organized a school vaccination drive for eligible students as follows:

Friday 5th November	- Sir Novelle Richards Academy
Monday 8th November	- Antigua Grammar School
Tuesday 9th November	- Antigua Girls High School
Wednesday 10th November	- Princess Margaret School
Thursday 11th November	- Glanvilles Secondary School (9:00 am) Pares Secondary School (11:30 am)

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED AT THE VILLAGE CLINICS DURING THEIR OFF DAYS AND AFTER SCHOOL FOR THOSE ENGAGED IN IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION:

All Saints Clinic	- All Saints Secondary, Irene B Williams Secondary and Island Academy
Jennings Clinic	- Jennings Secondary, St Mary's Secondary School and Trinity Academy
Clare Hall Clinic	- Clare Hall Secondary School, Divine Academy, St Joseph's Academy, St. Anthony's Secondary and Christ the King High School
Brownes Avenue clinic	- Ottos Comprehensive School, Baptist Academy and Seventh Day Adventist Secondary

ALL OTHER VACCINATION CENTERS WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL 5:00PM TO ACCOMMODATE PARENTS WHO WISH TO UTILIZE THOSE CENTERS.



# NBA: LA Lakers fall to fifth defeat of the season with loss to Portland Trail Blazers

The Los Angeles Lakers fell to their fifth defeat of the season, losing 105-90 to the Portland Trail Blazers.

The depleted Lakers, who were without star player LeBron James because of an abdominal strain, lost Anthony Davis after just seven minutes with illness.

The Blazers led by 34 points at one stage with Damian Lillard top-scoring with 25 points.

Lakers coach Frank Vogel said Davis did not have Covid-19 and had "woken up with a bit of a stomach bug".

"He came back in and said his thumb felt pretty good, good enough to play, then he went and threw up in the back," he said.

"He still wanted to give it a go, but by the time tip-off came around he had already thrown up four times. He wanted to see if getting out on the floor would change it, but wasn't able to go."



*Damian Lillard top-scored with 25 points in the Portland Trail Blazers' victory over the Los Angeles Lakers.*

## NBA fixtures and results

Elsewhere, Tyler Herro and Jimmy Butler starred as the Miami Heat held on to defeat the Utah Jazz 118-115 to record their sixth win in seven games.

Herro scored 29 points while Butler added 27. Kyle Lowry also scored 20 as part of a triple-double for the Heat. Donovan Mitch-

ell starred for the Jazz, finishing the game with 37 points, but defeat saw their three-game winning streak come to an end.

Elsewhere, the Denver Nuggets edged the Houston Rockets 95-94, with Aaron Gordon sinking back-to-back three-pointers in the final two minutes.

The Phoenix Suns overturned a 12-point deficit in the fourth quar-

ter to beat the Atlanta Hawks 121-117, with the Suns' Devin Booker finishing the game with 38 points.

Luka Dončić scored a match-winning three-pointer on the buzzer as he finished with a game-high 33 points to help the Dallas Mavericks defeat the Boston Celtics 107-104. Joel Embiid scored 30 points as the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Chicago Bulls 114-105.

# Saint Lucia's Levern Spencer retires

After an illustrious career that spanned more than two decades, St. Lucian high jumper Levern Spencer has called time on her athletic career.

A four-time Olympian, Spencer is a multiple CAC and PanAm Games champion who created history in 2018 when she became the first St. Lucian to win the high jump gold medal at the Commonwealth Games held on Australia's Gold Coast.

However, after failing to make the finals of the high jump at the Tokyo Olympics in August, the 37-year-old St. Lucian star has decided it was time to hang up her spikes.

"After 23 consecutive years of representing St. Lucia in the sport of track-and-field, I have – after careful consideration and analysis – made the tough decision to retire, effective 31st October 2021," she said in a statement released on Wednesday.

"It was a challenging journey laced with lots of literal blood, sweat, and tears, but a very rewarding journey as well, which led me to four consecutive Olympics, eight consecutive World Championships, five consecutive Commonwealth Games, and gave me 16 Sportswoman of The Year titles.

"So as I hang up my spikes as Commonwealth Champion, Central America & The Caribbean Champion, Pan American Champion and North & Central America and the Caribbean Champion, I say a big thank you to the Government and People of St. Lucia for the privilege of flying our flag regionally and internationally for all these years, and for your support on this journey." She thanked corporate St. Lucia for its support and the media "for consistent-

ly reporting on all that I did for my country. "As I say farewell to a sport that I love so much, I do so with a great sense of pride and joy knowing that I did my best, against all odds, to give our tiny nation the best representation possible, on and off the field."

Spencer – whose personal best was 1.98m, a national record – had her best performance at an Olympic Games in Rio 2016 when she cleared 1.93m to finish sixth in the final.





# Russian Federation beat USA to claim victory in Billie Jean King Cup final!



*Team Russia (L-R) Liudmila Samsonova, Ekaterina Alexandrova, Igor Andreev (captain), Veronika Kudermetova, Anastasia Pavluchenkova and Daria Kasatkina pose for media with their trophy after winning the Billie Jean King Cup tennis match finals.*

The Russian Tennis Federation beat Switzerland 2-0 to win the Billie Jean King Cup in Prague and become the first team to triumph in the revamped format.

Making their first appearance in the final since 2015, the Russians had to make a late tweak to their line-up after it emerged that Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova had suffered a flare up of an existing knee injury.

That set-back meant that Liudmila Samsonova would face Olympic champion Belinda Bencic in the second match of the tie.

But before they could take to the court at the O2 Arena, it was the turn of Daria Kasatkina and

Jil Teichmann, with the former getting the Russians off to the perfect start.

Kasatkina stormed into a 5-0 lead in the opening set, and although her opponent fought back late on, she was able to serve out for a 6-2 win.

The second set went with serve until the seventh match and it was the Russian world number 28 who got it, to take a 4-3 lead.

Teichmann broke back immediately but then lost her next service game and Kasatkina was able to serve out for a 6-2 6-4 victory.

In the second match of the tie, Samsonova and Bencic traded breaks early in the set before the

Swiss player won the decisive match on her opponent's serve to take a 5-3 lead. The Olympic champion then held to take the opening stanza.

Samsonova saved four break points at the start of the second set and then profited from a loose game from Bencic to take a decisive 4-2 lead.

The Russian world number 40 started the third set in dominant mood, breaking in the first game and almost backing that up at 2-0.

Bencic saved it on that occasion but had little answer to her opponent as Samsonova secured a 3-6 6-3 6-4 victory to give the Russians the title.





## CHRIS GAYLE CONFIRMS HE IS NOT RETIRING – WANTS TO PLAY HIS LAST GAME IN JAMAICA

West Indies batter Chris Gayle has revealed he is not retiring for now.

Gayle had tricked the fans earlier in the day by hinting that the game against Australia might be his last.

While walking back to the pavilion, Gayle acknowledged the crowd by raising his bat.

He also received the guard of honour from his teammates.

After this, the cricket fraternity started speculating that the “Universe Boss” might bid adieu to the game on Saturday, November 6.

However, the veteran said he will play his last game in Jamaica.

“I was just having some fun over there. I want to play one more World Cup. However, I don’t think they’ll allow me,” Gayle said laughingly in a video.

“I didn’t announce my retirement, but [if] they (West Indies Cricket Board) gave me one more game in Jamaica in front of my home crowd, then I can say, ‘Hey guys, thank you so much for your support,’” he added.

This might not be the last game for Chris Gayle

but he doesn’t have much international cricket left in him for sure. Post the defeat against Australia, West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard hailed Chris Gayle and Dwayne Bravo for their contribution and said their retirement will mark an end of an era.

Notably, all-rounder Dwayne Bravo also earlier had announced that the game against Australia will be his final international game.

“For me, it’s the end of a generation/era where you have some guys who have done some good

things for T20 cricket, not only in the Caribbean but around the world,” Pollard said after the match.

“Sometimes, one tournament, you don’t want to sum up the entire thing when it comes to that; but, rationally, these guys have done pretty well for themselves and we as people are very, very proud,” he added.

Pollard also thanked his fans, while apologizing to them for West Indies’ dismal show where they lost four of the five games.

**IDEWS**