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UNDER ONE TENT BUILT BY A HERO!

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INSIDE:

- 2 persons of interest in grisly murder released!
- PM's presence a big boost at Expo Dubai
- SVG cops quit rather than get vaccinated

Prime Minister Gaston Browne stands next to his wife and fellow Cabinet Member, Hon. Maria Bird-Browne, the Minister for Lands & Housing, Member of Parliament for St. John's Rural East, and grand-daughter of Antigua and Barbuda's first Prime Minister, National Hero Sir Vere Cornwall Bird Sr, whose matchless legacy and contributions are commemorated annually on December 9, his birth date. Many are of the view that PM Browne himself is way overdue for elevation to the status of National Hero, but we will leave that for another discussion at another time.

Long Live Our Kings (though some like them dead)!

Heroes Day commentary by Dr. James Knight

It was way back in 1970 that I first met Franklyn 'Frankie' Francis, a teacher of West Indian History,

at the Antigua Grammar School.

I was attending the Princess Margaret School but I came to know him through Harold Lovell, a new friend of mine who had come to live in

Gambles Terrace, just up the road from my school.

It was the Black Power era. A time of black consciousness, African awareness, the Civil Rights Movement and the

recent assassination of Martin Luther King. It was the era of the Black Panther Party, the Peace Movement, the Hippies, etc. The young black working class in the Caribbean was



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in fighting mood. The 'conscious' lyrics of reggae and the words of the Rastafarians were just getting here in Antigua and Barbuda, and calypsonians were not left out of the new cry for social justice and freedom.

In the USA, in 1968, soon after MLK's assassination, James Brown sang "*Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud*". It was the first ever such bold and assertive statement to make a hit in the popular music.

Early in 1971, Lester Flax, Harold Lovell and I – under the guidance of Frankie Francis, our editor – began publishing a pamphlet called "Say it Loud" with a cover drawing of Joseph Cinque' who in 1839 led a successful slave revolt aboard the

Spanish slave ship, the *Amistad*. I can remember the late Leonard Tim Hector coming to teach West Indian history at the Princess Margaret School that same year, just after our first or second mimeographed issue, and donating the money to buy the paper for the following one. I now hear Harold Lovell paying glowing tribute to King Frank-I as a "deep thinker" and "intellectual", just as he paid glowing tribute to Tim Hector as a man of "intellectual honesty".

Lovell is also the man who ran in the 1980 general election on the ACLM platform – was a Central Committee member of the ACLM – yet claims that his politics began in the early 1990s with the UPP.

I suppose, then, that all that came before that time were just misguided associations of his youthful years.

For the 10 years and three extra months that Lovell's UPP was in power, did he remember King Frank-I's intellect? Did he remember that the man with whom he traveled all over Jamaica, playing six-base "side-by-side" in UWI's steel-band, "jamming a wicked bass line" was at that time "doing post-graduate work in development economics"? Or that he had "a clear understanding of the global political economy"?

How come Lovell is not known to have recommended King Frank-I as the appropriate Francis when there was talk of a National Social

& Economic Commission? How come King Frank-I's "deep" thought and "intellect" did not seem to qualify him for any significant intellectual (or any other) role when Lovell was in power? We never heard of any effort in that regard.

How can one disregard one's early mentors, find them of little value while they are alive, see no contribution that their talents can make to the advancement of the society – even when one is in power – and then claim that one is grateful to them "for helping me become the person that I am".

Obviously, you are not what those mentors would have expected you to become.

Long live our kings!

Waladi Ruby 40 artwork collection gifted to Antigua and Barbuda

Artist Denize Ledeatte presented an artwork collection titled 'Waladi Ruby 40' to Antigua and Barbuda at the High Commission in London.

According to Ledeatte, the Waladi Ruby 40 was created to reflect and celebrate Antiguan and Barbudan history, the twin-island state's coming of age, and its future potential through an artistic lens.

The art pieces consist of an abstracted figurative triptych painting with four original abstract pieces that are extensions of the central poetic text which creates the storyline reflecting Antigua and Barbuda's journey.

Moreover, the pieces are supported by abstracted photographs with embedded images of her mother and father, their stories of sacrifice and compassion, while contributing to community development in the UK and, more so, Antigua and Barbuda.

Ledeatte reignited her artistic passion following her father's untimely death which imbued a greater sense and inspiration of artist identity and heritage.

Present at the handover via ZOOM was Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Director of Culture Khan Cordice, along with High Commissioner H.E. Karen Mae Hill and Alphonso Peters, president of the Antigua and Barbuda National Association (London).

Prime Minister Browne commended Denize on creating such impressive pieces of artwork in capturing the history of Antigua and Barbuda. He further noted that, "We need to expand the insights towards capturing the country's historical buildings, the landscape as it is now, and our people. Though some



Denize Ledeatte displaying one of her pieces of abstract artwork at the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission in London.

exist, more needs to be done to tell our story."

Echoing the Prime Minister sentiments, High Commissioner Hill congratulated Denize on capturing critical junctures of our history through artistic and visionary lens on canvas.

She also highlighted that there are many gifted, skilled, and talented persons in the diaspora across many critical areas of developmental interest, and said the High Commission will further seek out opportunities for such persons to contribute to the development of Antigua and Barbuda.

Khan Cordice expressed his appreciation for the presentation of the artistic gift to the nation on the 40th anniversary of Independence. The Director of Culture noted that, "In a post-pandemic world, one aspect I want to see in the creative industry is for us to 'build back better' our relations with the diaspora, especially as we look to develop what the world now calls the 'Orange Economy'."

The Director of Culture further added, "We need to have a better connection with persons of Antiguan and Barbudan heritage who are the champions of our country in the diaspora, and see how we can create a platform and create initiatives that are beneficial ... in the development of the creative industry."

Denize is a first-generation diaspora Antiguan and an award-winning artist, having studied at Croydon College of Art and Design, City Lit, Putney School of Art, Kofi Arts and The Essential School of Painting. She is also an award recipient and alumni of the Global Women Inventors & Innovators Network in both British and European categories, as well as a British Innovation Society Award recipient and a former Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Denize's work has been presented at many academic conferences both in the UK and abroad. She was recently invited as a contributor to the final chapter of the *Handbook of Postcolonial Politics* published by Routledge.

GG recognizes and decorates 'faithful and meritorious service'

Governor General Sir Rodney Williams this week recognized the faithful contributions and meritorious performance of four citizens during an investiture ceremony at Government House.

The honourees who received the Governor General's Faithful & Meritorious Service Awards are as follows:

Mr. Joseph 'Jojo' Nunes - *The Governor General's Faithful & Meritorious Service Cross* for meritorious service in sailing Mr. Travis Weste - The Governor General's Faithful & Meritorious Service Cross for meritorious service in sailing Mr. Irving Edwards - The Governor

General's *Faithful & Meritorious Service Medal (Gold)* for faithful and meritorious service in business and community development

Ms. Marion Lucinda Payne for *Faithful Service to Education & Community Development*.

The Governor General's Faithful & Meritorious Service Award is a decoration in the Honours System of Antigua and Barbuda which was established by a warrant issued by the Governor General in 2015 to recognize persons who have given faithful and meritorious services of the highest degree to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Governor General, or to Antigua and Barbuda



Ms. Mavis Simon (left), mother of Mr. Travis Weste, receives the award on behalf of her son from Governor General Sir Rodney Williams.



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A&B cultural event at Expo Dubai

The Antigua and Barbuda delegation in Dubai is continuing to bring attention to the twin-island nation's unique attributes and offerings while at Expo 2020 Dubai.

Last weekend the delegation hosted a cultural exchange event at the Antigua and Barbuda pavilion.

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister, the Honorable Gaston Browne – who was in Dubai on an official visit by invitation of the UAE Government – was present at the event.

“Antigua and Barbuda's presence at Expo Dubai is a prime opportunity to increase awareness and to share ideas and cultures. I am particularly pleased that we have taken the initiative to host an event that is in keeping with the expo theme of connecting minds and creating a future. It is my hope that we leave this expo with a wealth of knowledge, experience and networks that will help position Antigua and Barbuda positively within the Middle East, as well as bring tangible benefits to our tourism and business sectors,” said Prime Minister Browne.

Pavilion director and Special Projects & Events Manager for the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Shermain Jeremy – who was on-site coordinating the day's activities – was pleased with the event.

“The Expo has brought the world to Dubai,” she observed before declaring that, “Antigua and Barbuda's strategic approach is to maximize as much as possible on all the opportunities that this event brings from both a tourism and business perspective, as well as social learning exercise. Our goal is to leave a mark on the minds of as many persons as possible who visit the Expo and by extension the Antigua and Barbuda pavilion.” Additionally, Jeremy noted, the cultural event was designed to increase visitors to the pavilion during a high traffic period around the United Arab Emirates' Independence holiday celebrations that

were taking place over the weekend. The event focused on highlighting Antigua and Barbuda's culinary, cultural and musical traditions as a conduit for social exchange, while building brand awareness around the country as a tourism destination and safe haven for high-level business opportunities.

Visitors to the pavilion were greeted by the music of Antiguan and Barbudan musicians to include The Burning Flames, King Short Shirt, Tizzy, Claudette Peters, Drastic, Tian Winter and many others, with the music playing throughout the 2400 square foot pavilion. Two Warri game stations were also set up to allow

for friendly gaming.

The wooden Warri board has been a highlight for many visitors to the pavilion as the strategic board game is played in numerous parts of the world to include Yemen, the Philippines, Oman, South India, in addition to Germany and many African and Caribbean countries. This activity allowed for the sharing and socializing of a variety of peoples and cultures who share a similar pastime. Prime Minister Browne was seen participating in a game of Warri with the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority's operations manager Javier Jacobs, leaving many on-lookers intrigued.

Lejorn Hill, Executive





The Antigua and Barbuda cultural event, attended by Prime Minister Gaston Browne, attracted scores of visitors to Antigua and Barbuda's pavilion over the past weekend. (Photos by Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority)

Chef at the Paramount Hotel owned by DAMAC – one of the Middle East's largest real estate developers – served-up local cuisine to include goat water as well as saltfish and dumplings with chop-up, allowing visitors a taste of Antigua and Barbuda.

To add to the culinary and cultural exchange experience, the pavilion teamed up with the Denmark pavilion for a friendly local hot sauce taste-off with Susie's and Granny Annie condiments.

Ricardo Drue, Antigua and Barbuda's 'Power Soca' Winner – who was

in Dubai for special appearances over the Independence weekend – gave bystanders and visitors a taste of Antigua and Barbuda's music and carnival experience which was a highlight for many in attendance. Visitors also had a chance to win customized gift bags once they took a brief survey and opted into the destination's mailing list. A key deliverable at the Expo is to create a robust mailing list of potential visitors that can be remarketed and retargeted in the future.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority plans to engage the travel trade in 2022 as the next phase of its Expo strategy. This will take the form of a travel trade week where the Antigua and Barbuda delegation will introduce the destination to qualified travel professionals and influencers from the UAE. Tourism officials also plan to ramp up discussions with key airlines from the Middle East.

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Corrected Press Release: COVID Dashboard Update for December 7, 2021

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment revealed two (2) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Saturday 4th December 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

One hundred and seven (107) samples were processed.

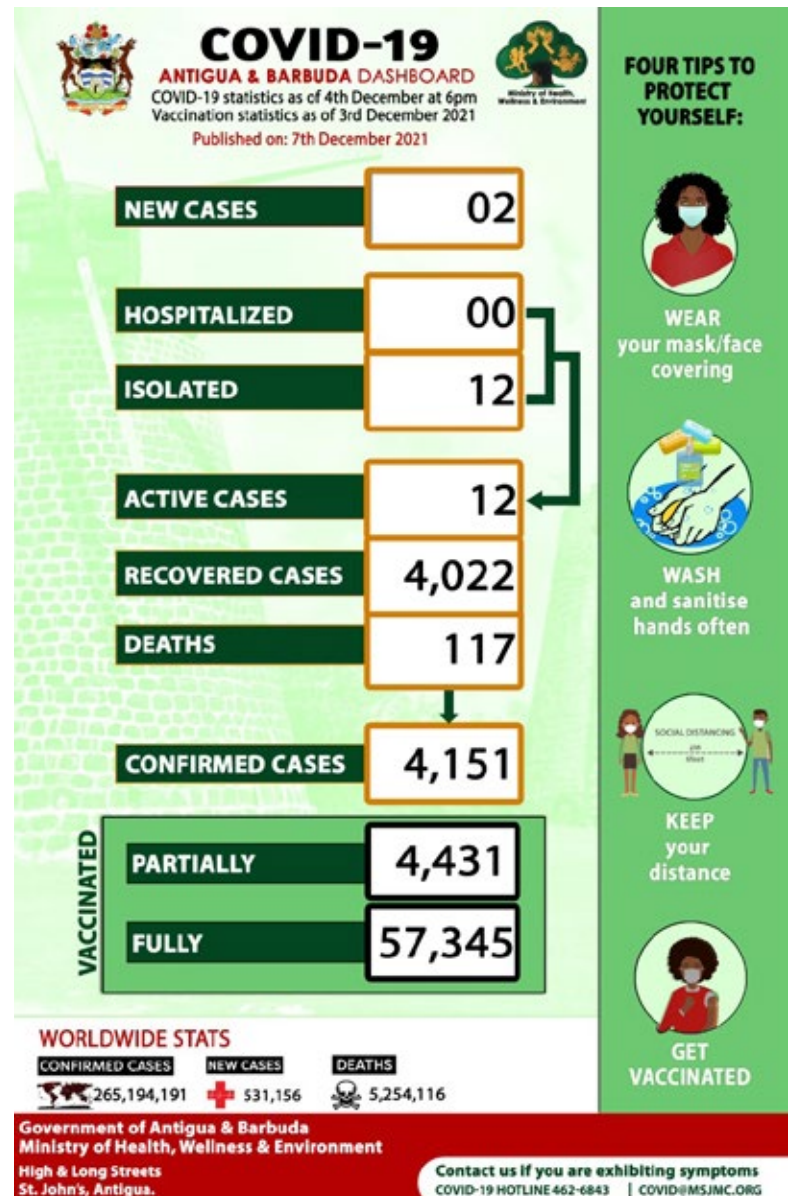
Three (3) recovered cases were recorded, increasing the total to 4,022.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is 4,151; which is inclusive of 12 active cases.

There are no hospitalized cases.

Meanwhile, Antigua and Barbuda has fully vaccinated 57,345 individuals, while 4,431 have only received their first dose.

The dashboard has been updated to reflect these changes.



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Teenager begins culinary journey at Hospitality Training Institute

At only 17 years, Hughon David is a very inspiring young man. In March 2021 he faced the most devastating loss of his dad, Hughon David Snr, a police officer in the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, from complications associated with COVID-19.

This huge loss was before he was set to face his first great academic challenge – CSEC.

Although encouraged to take a year off to come to grips with his loss, Hughon decided to press on, knowing very well that his dad would have wanted him to. Hughon recalls moments in his childhood when his mom would teach him how to cook. This started when he was as young as eight.

But it was not until spending his formative years with his dad that he really began to cook and harness his skill.

He remembers his first dish being curried lobster. With a little help from YouTube, he recalls creating a masterpiece.

With the early lessons from mom and dad and a love for Food & Nutrition during his years at the Antigua Grammar School, Hughon's interest in the study of Culinary Arts was born.

Today, as a high school graduate,

although Hughon knew what he wanted to study, he was unsure of his next step. He recalls his recent journey when, "A few months ago I visited the clinic to get my COVID-19 shot after the Pfizer became available. It was a difficult discussion at the clinic because I was only 17 and had no parental consent. I explained that my dad had passed and my mom migrated. It was only with a caring conversation from Senator Govia that I not only got the vaccine but also learned of the ABHTA scholarship to attend the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute [ABHTI]. Sadly, I did not qualify because the ABHTA does not offer scholarships for the study of Culinary Arts, only Resort, Hospitality & Tourism Management.

He continued: "I was nonetheless asked to submit my application and essay, and advised that they would consider once my CSEC results were out. Fast forward to today and I am very grateful to the ABHTA for listening to my story and giving me this opportunity."

Hughon is also thankful for his family, his elder sister and younger brother with whom he lives, and his church family at the Bethel Gospel Hall – in par-



Culinary Arts student the Hospitality Training Institute (ABHTI), 17-year-old Hughon David

ticular Ms. Peecheeta Spencer, the retired former principal of Antigua State College (ASC) – for keeping him grounded and nurtured throughout his journey.

Hughon remarks that, "Keeping God at the center of my life has brought me this far and I am looking forward to my future and this new experience at the ABHTI. The teachers have been so helpful and kind and I am so happy."

Hughon is now a student of the ABHTI pursuing a degree in Culinary Arts with the generous contribution of the Tourism Development Fund and contributors Curtain Bluff, Hermitage Bay, Galley Bay Resort & Spa, Sugar Ridge, Jumby Bay Island, and Blue Waters Resort & Spa.

Tourism officials applaud local woman's selection for space travel

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism & Investment, Hon. Charles Fernandez, has extended congratulations to Keisha Schahaff, who will be the first Antiguan and Barbudan (and Caribbean) woman to travel to space.

Schahaff is expected to travel to space in 2022, having won two seats on a *Virgin Galactic* space flight during a sweepstakes organized by Vir-



gin Galactic in partnership with fundraising platform *Omaze*.

"You will be carrying the whole of Antigua and Barbuda with you, and this type of recognition

(L-R) Julianne Christian, Tourism Marketing Assistant; Maria Blackman, Marketing Communications Manager; Hon. Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism & Investment; Keisha Schahaff, Virgin Galactic sweepstakes winner; Colin C. James, CEO Tourism Authority; and Karen Joseph, Sports Tourism Officer.

is priceless," said the tourism minister as he extended best wishes to the future astronaut during a meeting earlier this week.

Minister Fernandez presented Schahaff with a tropical bouquet and a tourism gift bag pledging his Ministry's and the country's full support for her on this "phenomenal" journey.

Schahaff said she is looking forward to representing her country and flying the Antigua and Barbuda national flag from space.

Also present at the meeting was CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA)

Colin C. James, Marketing Communications Manager Maria Blackman, and Sports Tourism Officer within the Ministry of Tourism Karen Joseph.

"This is a remarkable opportunity," James stated. "Since your win, you have represented Antigua and Barbuda extremely well and have made us all feel proud.

He added: "We look forward to working with you and hope that your journey to space increases awareness of Antigua and Barbuda, and inspires more persons to visit our twin-island paradise."



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Police release two men questioned about savage killing of woman

by *Shelton Daniel*

Police say “the suspects” who were in their custody assisting with the ongoing investigation into the gruesome death of 25-year-old Neltah Telemaque of Hosford Hill were released last evening pending further investigations.

A police press release says, “Investigators are still in the process of interviewing possible witnesses and recording statements.

“It is important to note that it is not unusual for a person to be taken into custody for questioning by the

police, especially if [there are] reasonable grounds to believe that person has useful information to assist in any investigation.”

The release concludes by noting that, “This does not mean ... the investigation ends there. As ... information comes to hand and ... evidence [is obtained] the police will continue to follow these leads in anticipation of making further arrests and eventually laying charges.”

Telemaque’s mutilated body – bearing what appeared to be numerous slash and puncture wounds – was discovered on Sunday morn-

ing in the vicinity of the old Burma garbage dump by a man tending to his livestock.

Police subsequently issued an appeal to a man of All Saints, requesting that he immediately turn himself in to nearest police station, as they believed he could be of assistance to their probe into the grisly death.

The man complied later that day at the St. John’s Police Station. It appears that, for now, he and the other – but still unnamed – person of interest did not evince any probable causes to be retained as suspects.



The advertisement features a yellow Suzuki Vitara SUV shown from a rear three-quarter view. The car is positioned on a background of orange and white diagonal stripes. To the right of the car, there is a logo consisting of two hexagons. Below the car, the text reads: "Suzuki Vitara", "Fully Loaded All Grip 4WD", "Time to Play", and "Starting at \$76,600". At the bottom right, there is a logo for HADEED MOTORS LTD. with the text "Give us call 481-2500" next to it.

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Democracy Summit missed an essential ingredient



By Sir Ronald Sanders

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

US President Joe Biden declared at the open-

ing of a "Summit on Democracy", which he convened on December 9, that "democracy needs champions".

He is perfectly right and he has good reason for saying so. Last year, the US - which trumpets itself as the bastion of democracy - almost became a fascist state after President Donald Trump, supported by a pliant Republican party, did everything he could

to maintain power, including encouraging a mob to march on the US Congress on January 6 in the wake of his loss of the presidency to Biden.

It was a frightening time for the world where fascist and autocratic leaders had emerged in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, determined to rule with little regard for human and political rights or for democratic principles generally - especially a free press and freedom of citizen expression.

Had Donald Trump succeeded, his behaviour would have emboldened the existing tyrannical leaders and spawned a few more. Tension and conflict would have escalated, dividing the world not on traditional ideological grounds, but on a contest between those that value democracy and those who regard it as a nuisance and an obstacle to their own control.

Democracy in the US

was undoubtedly gravely threatened by President Trump's desire to hold onto power at any cost; to dismantle what his one-time political adviser, Steve Bannon, described as the 'deep state', but which is really the checks and balances of public servants sworn to uphold the US Constitution and the law; and to threaten and coerce compliance, even from elected officials in the US Congress.

But that is not the only aspect of US democracy that was - and remains - a threat. The emergence of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement and the wanton and unconscionable killing of black people by police and individuals, empowered by centuries of oppression and repression, are manifestations of the flawed state of democracy and human rights in the US.

Justice for black people without whose enforced servitude and without whose blood

the US would never have been built (and the word 'never' is used without fear of contradiction), is the putrid sore in US society. Democracy in the US will remain flawed and human rights will continue to be unserved until, as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said, "justice runs down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream".

The saving grace of the US – unlike in many countries in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and a few in Europe – is the strong commitment of decent and well-thinking people to protect and preserve the institutions of the US; persons such as the Secretary of State of Georgia, Brad Raffensperger, who President Donald Trump told to find 11,780 votes so that he could overturn his defeat by Biden in that state and lay claim to the presidency. Outstanding were the judges of the US Supreme Court and State courts, including those appointed by Trump, who put upholding the law above any other consideration.

The prospect of Donald Trump returning to the presidency in 2024 no doubt brings a shudder down the spine of many, including President Biden. So, this Summit on Democracy is not just concerned with "the global competition of the 21st century" which the President said "is one defined by democracies versus autocracies"; it is also about competition for the soul of the US and the direction it takes.

The agenda of the Summit was set by the US government, even though over 100 leaders were invited. They were each given the agenda and asked to speak on particular issues which focused on combating corruption, defending against authoritarianism, and promoting human rights.

However, opening the Summit, President Biden said that "working with our Congress, we're planning to commit as much as \$424 million in the next year to shore up transparent and accountable governance, including supporting media freedom, fighting international corruption, stand-

ing with democratic reformers, promoting technology that advances democracy, and defining and defending what a fair election is." But an essential element is missing from the US plan. It takes no account of the imperative of spending money on correcting global economic inequities and on development. Essential to sustaining democracy globally is development. In underdeveloped countries with large pockets of poor, unemployed and discontented, political parties exploit these conditions to foster unrest and civil disturbance.

So, it is all well and good to provide money to defend against authoritarianism and to promote human rights. These things are extremely important, but they are not enough. By themselves, they will not sustain democracy anywhere, including in the US.

In part, it was the dissatisfaction of the poor, the unemployed and the disgruntled who responded to President Trump's coded message to "Make America Great

Again". It is also what helped to bring authoritarians to power in other parts of the world.

Two days of an organised and rigid virtual meeting with a pre-planned outcome statement, and a pledge of money to fight corruption, demand transparent and accountable governance, standing with democratic reformers, promoting technology that advances democracy, and defining and defending a fair election, may send a signal to countries not invited to the Summit, but it won't satisfy hunger, unemployment, poverty and need.

If governments can't overcome those conditions and improve the lives of their people, then no offering of democracy will cut it.

We must welcome President Biden's efforts to champion democracy, but the plan needs rethinking – this time with the involvement, rather than the attendance, of the leaders of the most vulnerable countries.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

Caribbean creatives urged to position themselves for growth opportunities

Loop Barbados - Caribbean creatives will continue to have issues when seeking capital to fund their innovations, since most have challenges selling their ideas to potential investors.

Entrepreneur and investor Joe Pires made that assessment as he contributed to the 'Re-capitalising the Creative Sector' panel at the Caribbean Creative Industries Business Summit hosted by AEGIS Business Solutions on November 26.

"Everybody thinks their company is worth US\$1million. Take your emotions out of it and look at how an investor will look at it or get someone from outside to help you. When you are emotionally attached to something, your reality sometimes gets swept out the door," he stated.

Pires noted it was important for creatives to also look beyond the borders of their island or region because investors want to receive maximum returns on their investment.

On the flip side,

Shawn Flynn, principal of Global Capital Markets, said investors want to get in on the latest trends but they are outliers in the creative space.

Flynn noted social media is one of the best places for creatives and investors to meet each other.

"In the past, you would have had to rent out an art gallery or a space to show your work. Now you have Instagram and Pinterest. They are the biggest galleries in the world. You can build a personal brand and it can help you build a network. Venture capitalists are looking on and they want to get into the Non-fungible token (NFT) craze but they are being told 'You are not part of our network'," he said.

"There is money out there," he added, "It is now up to you to attract the interest in what you have to offer."

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), through its Cultural & Creative Industries Fund (CCIF) and C15 Studios, are two of the

agencies helping the region's creatives to fund their projects.

Malene Joseph, Consulting Project Coordinator of CCIF, told attendees that over 30 creatives from T&T, Jamaica, Barbados, Haiti and Belize were supported over the last three years via a US\$2 million pilot investment.

Joseph noted that the fund had experienced challenges where it receive either a limited response to its grant calls or a volume of projects that don't "translate well" through the evaluation process.

She encouraged creatives to be clear in their application for funding.

"You are your best salesman/woman and it is important that you know where you are in the ecosystem. Even if CCIF is unable to fund your project, we can pass your proposal on to another department," she stated.

Lorraine O'Connor, general manager of C15 Studios, and Chester Wilkins, International Standard Re-



Shawn Flynn, principal of Global Capital Markets.

cording Code (ISRC) coder, stressed the importance of information and metadata since they are losing out on money.

"A lot of Caribbean artistes, writers and producers aren't getting money when their music is put on the internet. Right now, I'm working with some of the estates of a few deceased artistes and we have seen revenue increase significantly once we have coded and uploaded the music," Wilkins said.

He noted that having accurate data and other statistics will drive interest in creative products.

Guyana Health Ministry workers accused of forging COVID-19 vaccine booklets

Guyana Chronicle - WITH three health ministry-affiliated workers currently before the courts for allegedly forging government-issued COVID-19 vaccination booklets, Health Minister Dr. Frank Anthony warned that persons found guilty would be removed from the Ministry of Health.

would not be working with the ministry anymore.

"It is unfortunate that nurses who were placed in a position of trust to administer these vaccines and make sure that the process goes smoothly, have chosen to breach that trust and sell the vaccination cards," Dr. Anthony added.

sion," he reasoned.

Concerns were raised in the public about the frequency of persons purchasing COVID-19 vaccination booklets to access public buildings which require those booklets as a primary condition for entry.

Where persons do not have booklets, they are sometimes required to present results from a COVID-19 test that proves they tested negative for the deadly virus.

The health authorities have stressed the need for persons to get vaccinated to increase the chances of herd immunity in the country and, ultimately, reduce the mortality rate from the virus. Just a few days ago, Guyana recorded 1000 COVID-19-related deaths. That number continues to climb, though minimally, every day.

In his update, the health minister said there is a good uptake of COVID-19 vaccines among the adult population in Guyana.

The challenge has been, however, that persons primarily between the ages of 18 to 39 years – which Dr. Anthony

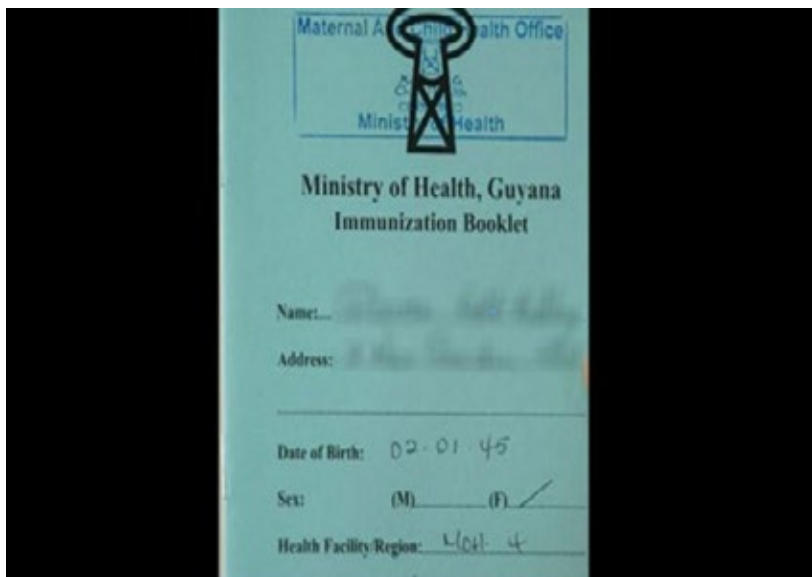
identified in previous briefings as a particularly active demographic group – have not returned for their second COVID-19 vaccine dose.

"If you only get one dose of the vaccine, it is not going to give you that protection," the health minister warned as he urged persons to complete their vaccine dosage to be fully protected.

Dr. Anthony said a similar low vaccination trend is noticed among adolescents and teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years.

For this group, the health minister disclosed: "The first dose is still lagging behind... at 40.5 percent [of the total population of that group] and [the] second dose is at 28.4 percent. So we really need to do a lot more work here."

Dr. Anthony called on parents, teachers, and influential persons in communities to encourage young people to take their vaccines. He noted that if an adolescent or teen does not attend school, they can still present themselves at a vaccination centre to receive their COVID-19 vaccine.



Speaking during his daily COVID-19 briefing, the health minister said he is aware there are persons who have been arrested in connection with forging vaccination booklets and commended the Guyana Police Force (GPF) for their investigations.

Maintaining the presumption of innocence guaranteed to persons under the law, the Minister said if persons are found guilty, "They

The health minister said nurses are governed by specific laws which empower the Nursing Council, and being found guilty of such an offence would be a breach of professional conduct.

"We would be taking stringent actions by sending this information to the Nursing Council for them to act upon, because we cannot have nurses who are found in breach like this; it runs counter to the profes-

St. Vincent: 32 cops quit ahead of mandate; 13 refused job

IWN SVG - Thirty-two police officers in St. Vincent and the Grenadines either resigned or retired from the Force ahead of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, while a further 13 did not take the job and were considered to have resigned their jobs.

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves disclosed the data on NBC Radio on Wednesday.

He said that of the 1,200-plus officers that make up the Police Force — including the Coast Guard Service and Fire Brigade — 32 had either resigned or retired before the mandate.

Two of these former officers would not get any money under the police pension rules as one had served for one year and another for eight years.

“All the others, most of them have served over 20 years. Some of them late 20s and a couple in the early 30s — like 31, 32. One actually served 33 years. So that person is pretty much at the end of their 33-and-a third for their maximum pension.”

The prime minister said he suspects that some of these people retired because they didn't want to take the COVID vaccine “and some of them, they would have retired in any case, because every year you'll have a certain number of retirements and resignations”.

He said that in addition to the officers who resigned or retired, there were 13 under the aegis of the commissioner of police — from the rank of constable to sergeant — who did not take the vaccine and, accordingly, “would have abandoned their jobs ...



“And they're deemed to have resigned their office because of their abandonment. One of them is a sergeant, two of them are corporals, and the rest of the 13 are constables.”

Gonsalves said there is a police station sergeant who is considered to have abandoned his job but, because of his rank, his case is being handled by the Public Service Commission.

On Wednesday, station sergeant Brenton Smith, who is also head of the Police Welfare Association, told iWitness News that the Public Service Commission had written to him, indicating that he was deemed to have resigned his job.

Meanwhile, Gonsalves said, two

people at the Immigration Department had not taken the vaccine.

One of them, who had received a temporary exemption, was expected to take the job on Wednesday and the other was awaiting a response to a religious exemption application.

At the Customs Department, 18 out of about 200 staff members had not taken the vaccine.

“So ... Customs is functioning quite fully, but five of those 18 have maternity leave.”

The prime minister said one of the staff is expected to take the job by Dec. 30 and another at an earlier date, while two others have sought religious exemptions.

Trinidad: unvaccinated bank workers served warning letters



Loop TT - Some unvaccinated bank staff have allegedly received warning letters after being unable to afford mandatory PCR tests.

Jason Brown, 2nd Vice President of the Banking Insurance & General Workers Union (BIGWU), was speaking during a meeting of a Joint Select Committee on unemployment issues during the pandemic yesterday. He said the letters were served after new company policies mandat-

ing that unvaccinated staff pay for weekly PCR tests. He said these policies arose due to a lack of proper consultation. "There is a legal duty to bargain in good faith. If that had happened, we could have averted going to the industrial court. That matter is not going to be heard until February 1.

"You have [bank] workers now who are receiving warning letters for not being vaccinated and not providing a PCR test

which they can't afford. "If you follow the bank's timeline as to how they're going to treat with those workers, those workers will possibly be suspended in January, before the court date in February."

He said the court matter involves working conditions surrounding the pandemic, including matters affecting unvaccinated workers.

"On November 29, 2021, [the bank] issued and began its mandate to issue warning letters to un-

vaccinated workers who have not provided PCR tests and simply can't afford it."

He said BIGWU is still in the process of data collection; but, to date, 100-300 members have contacted them. The Permanent Secretary at the Labour Ministry said a draft paper and guidelines on vaccination policy were developed by the Industrial Relations Advisory Committee and submitted to Cabinet, and is currently being reviewed.

Africa needs China and the US to work together

BBC - Seventeen African countries are taking part in a two-day Democracy summit hosted by US President Joe Biden, billed as an event to discuss ways to defend against the rise of authoritarianism.

Observers say it highlights the contrasting priorities of the US and China on the continent.

The summit comes just over a week after the triennial Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (Focac) was held in Senegal's capital, Dakar, which has grown in significance as China became the continent's largest trade partner.

China's president Xi Jinping announced investments of at least \$40bn (£30bn) in projects spanning agriculture, digital economy, climate change, industrialisation, as well as one billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in donation and joint manufac-

turing. "It appears counter-intuitive, but the more democratic a country, the closer they get to China," said W. Gyude Moore, a senior policy fellow at the Center for Global Development.

"The biggest need in Africa happens to be infrastructure, and the funder to turn to in the last 20 years has been China," he added.

At the Focac event, a photo of Sierra Leone's foreign minister David John Francis handing over an artist's impression of a yet-to-be-built 7km (4 mile)-long bridge to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, demonstrated China's important role in Africa.

The estimated \$1.2bn (£900m) Lungi bridge, linking the peninsula capital Freetown to the main airport, will offer a quick alternative to ferries which take hours and can be unreliable.

Some observers



say President Julius Maada Bio sees the bridge project as key to his 2023 re-election campaign, although others say there is no economic justification for it; pointing out that the money could be better spent on dealing with social challenges like illiteracy and maternal deaths.

In The Gambia, President Adama Barrow recently won re-election after touting the Chinese-built bridges which have boosted trade with neighbouring Senegal, as well as promising to deliver a China-backed road project.

F o l a s h a d e Soule-Kohndou, a senior research as-

sociate at the University of Oxford, says African politicians often need Chinese infrastructure funding to deliver their electoral promises.

According to the African Development Bank, the continent needs \$130-170bn a year to meet its infrastructure needs, but there's currently a massive shortfall in the range of \$68-108bn.

That gap could potentially be filled by the European Union's (EU) new \$340bn infrastructure plan, the Global Gateway, as well the US's Build Back Better (B3W) scheme, which are both being promoted as alternatives to

China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI).

But for the moment, these two projects are short on detail, compared to BRI which has already built roads, railways and ports around the world.

Trade expert Francis Mangeni says it would be best for Africa if the various initiatives focused on synergy, not competition.

"Rather than seeing Chinese influence in Africa as negative and responding by competition and antagonism or containment, I think the other powers should complement it," he said.

But he adds that it is up to African countries to assert

their collective influence to ensure that this happens.

However, the Global Gateway and B3W can have advantages over China's initiative if they focus more on technology transfer, faster delivery of projects, and on investment that is less centred on debt, Ms. Soule-Kohndou said.

Mr. Moore agrees, saying, "Africa needs to diversify its infrastructure funding, so this is a good problem to have."

But he adds that China has built cost-competitive infrastructure on the continent and it will therefore be tough, especially for US construction companies, to compete.

He suggested that the US and China have different strengths that can be complementary to meet infrastructure, health, education and security needs in Africa.

"The US has great strength in human-capital investment. Its universities are the best in the world, so are its health systems. China could build the hospitals and the US could train the doctors," Mr Moore said. With the continent's population projected to double to 2.5 billion people by 2050, the focus on economic, social and political development is key.

Austrians refusing COVID vaccine will face up to \$4,000 fines

Al Jazeera - Austria's conservative-led government has announced details of its plan to make coronavirus vaccines compulsory, saying it will apply to people aged 14 and above and holdouts face fines of up to 3,600 euros (\$4,071) every three months.

About 68 percent of Austria's population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, one of the lowest rates in Western Europe. Many Austrians are sceptical about vaccines, a view encouraged by the far-right Freedom Party, the third-biggest in parliament.

As infections set records three weeks ago, the government announced a fourth national lockdown and said it would make vaccinations compulsory for all, the first European Union country to do so.

"We do not want to punish people who are not vaccinated. We want to win them over and convince them to get vaccinated," the minister for constitutional affairs, Karoline Edtstadler, told a news conference with Health Minister Wolfgang Mueckstein on Thursday.

The vaccine mandate, which must be approved by parliament, is due to start on February 1 and last through January 2024. Two opposition parties support it, suggesting it will pass easily.

There will be quarterly vaccination deadlines, Mueckstein said, adding that the authorities will check a central vaccination register to see if members of the public are in it.

"If that is not the case, proceedings will be brought. In regular proceedings the amount of the fine is 3,600 euros," Mueckstein said, adding people's in-

come and other financial obligations will be taken into account in calculating fines.

"As an alternative, the authorities have the option to impose a fine in shorter proceedings immediately after the vaccination deadline. Here the amount of the fine is 600 euros," he said, adding that if this was not paid it would lead to regular proceedings.

Mueckstein said there will be exemptions for pregnant women – though he stressed that vaccinations are recommended for them too – for people who cannot get vaccinated for medical reasons, and for people who have recovered from COVID-19 in the previous six months.

He also said that people who are eligible for exemptions will have to register those in a central vaccination register which will be checked at regular three-month intervals. The first cut-off date will be March 15.



A protester holds a placard reading 'Against Compulsory Vaccination' during a rally in Vienna.

Actor Jussie Smollett found guilty of falsely reporting a hate crime



Actor Jussie Smollett, seen arriving Wednesday at the Leighton Criminal Court Building in Chicago.

Washington Post - Jussie Smollett was on Thursday found guilty of staging and falsely reporting to police that he had been the victim of a hate crime in Chicago three years ago.

A jury in Cook County, Ill., found the former "Empire" actor guilty on five of six charges of felony disorderly conduct, according to the Associated Press.

He was acquitted on one.

Sentencing for Smollett – who was not taken into custody – will take place at a later date. His representatives did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Smollett, who is Black and gay, told Chicago police in January 2019 that

he had been physically attacked and subjected to racist and homophobic slurs late at night in the city's Streeterville neighborhood. He said his assailants poured an unknown chemical substance on him and yelled, "This is MAGA country," referring to Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign slogan.

When the news hit social media, Smollett, 39, received an outpouring of support from advocacy organizations and fellow celebrities alike, including his on-screen parents played by Terrence Howard and Taraji P. Henson, as well as "Empire" co-creator Lee Daniels who urged his Instagram fol-

lowers to "love each other regardless of what sexual orientation we are."

But within days, people began to wonder whether Smollett was telling the truth. In his first television interview after the incident, Smollett told "Good Morning America" anchor Robin Roberts that all the doubt made him angry and that he would "never be the man that this did not happen to".

Police questioned Smollett's alleged attackers in February 2019 and announced that the information they gleaned from the interviews had "shifted the trajectory of the investigation". They later identified the two people as brothers Abimbola and Olabinjo Osundairo who had both worked on "Empire". Smollett was named a suspect in the case and arrested that same month, charged with disorderly conduct for filing a report about an attack police believed he had staged.

That March, a grand jury indicted Smollett on 16 felony counts, to which he pleaded not guilty. But a mere 18 days later, in a stunning reversal, prosecutors dropped the charges, citing Smollett's volunteer work and lack of a criminal background.

The move attracted widespread criticism from Chicago officials, including Mayor Rahm Emanuel (D). Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx was accused of mishandling the case. In June, a judge instead appointed special prosecutor Dan Webb to determine how to handle the situation.

In February 2020, Smollett was indicted once again, this time on six counts of felony disorderly conduct. The trial began Nov. 29, 2021 at the Leighton Criminal Court Building in Chicago, with testimony lasting for a little over a week.

The jury deliberated for more than nine hours following the heated and at times salacious trial. Smollett's attorneys accused the Osundairos of homophobia, arguing that Abimbola Osundairo, who served as Smollett's personal trainer, had exploited the "sexual tension" between them to advance his own acting career.

While testifying, Smollett said he had done drugs and participated in sexual acts with Osundairo, who denied he and Smollett had a sexual relationship, but added that as the actor's friend, trainer and occasional drug dealer,

he felt close enough to Smollett to have considered him a brother. He said he did believe Smollett could help his acting career, and that when Smollett asked the brothers to yell slurs and “fake beat him up”, they agreed because Osundairo

“felt indebted to Jussie”.

Smollett testified over two days, stating early on that he “came to terms with my sexuality” in his early 20s after volunteering at an organization that fought AIDS in Black communities. He said he was drawn

to the role of singer-songwriter Jamal Lyon on “Empire” because he hadn’t seen such a depiction of a gay Black man on television. By the show’s fifth season, Smollett earned \$100,000 per episode.

Finland’s Prime Minister apologizes for not isolating after nightclub photo surfaces

Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin apologized to the public on Wednesday after a photo surfaced of her in a nightclub following the foreign minister testing positive for COVID-19.

“I did wrong. I should have considered the situation more carefully,” Marin said in a television interview by public broadcaster Yle on Wednesday night.

Marin said she decided not to cut her night out short on Saturday after being told she had been exposed to the coronavirus the day before, she wrote Monday on Facebook after a Finnish gossip magazine published a photo of her in a crowded nightclub.

Economic Affairs Minister Mika Lintila attended a floorball match between Finland and Latvia on Sunday despite being advised to avoid contact with others, Helsingin Sanomat newspaper reported on Wednesday. Defense Minister Antti Kaikkonen went to a dinner party on Saturday while Finance Minister Annika Saarikko and Science & Culture Minister Antti Kurvinen canceled their attendance of the same event to avoid contacts, evening paper Ilta-Sanomat reported on Tuesday.



Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin.

All three ministers were exposed on Friday at a meeting attended by Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto who tested positive for COVID-19 on Saturday.

Marin said she was at a restaurant when she received a phone call from her State secretary informing her about the exposure.

“He said ministers would not be quarantined because they all have been vaccinated twice,” Marin wrote on Facebook, explaining why she continued socializing.

The Prime Minister’s office later said it had sent the exposed ministers two text messages on Saturday recommending they avoid contact with other people.

Marin said she had left her official phone at home and instead relied on aides reaching her on her personal phone.

Marin has since taken two COVID-19 tests that were negative. Lintila and Kaikkonen have also tested negative.

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Tertiary qualification in Hotel or Bar Management or its equivalent from a recognized university
Must be HACCP Certified | Must have current food & beverage handling licenses/permits
Complete working knowledge of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
Must have a passion for teamwork and very strong leadership skills

ASSISTANT FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER

Minimum 4 years' experience as a Food & Beverage Manager at a five star hotel
Diploma/Degree in Hotel Management required | Second language would be an asset
Must have a genuine passion for food and able to work within a busy environment & thrive under pressure
Must be a team-player | Must be service-oriented
Effective communication skills | Leadership/People Management skills

AUTO MECHANICS INSTRUCTOR

Minimum 3-5 years' experience working in the Auto mechanic industry
5 CXC Passes (including English & Mathematics) or Tertiary Level Completion
Knowledge of career and technology skills and competencies in Auto Mechanics
Experience in teaching in a classroom setting with diverse students is a plus

AUDIOVISUAL TECH/ IT SUPPORT

Associate degree in instructional media and technology or related field in addition to a minimum of two years' professional audio-visual experience | InfoComm CTS certification highly desirable
Advanced knowledge of circuitry, electricity, electronics, and the ability to read and follow schemata and technical manuals | Experienced with video recording, editing and production
Strong working knowledge of AV switching control systems (e.g. Extron, Crestron)
Superior interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to work well with people.
Excellent verbal and written communication skills | Must be available to work evening and weekend hours
Must be able to lift and carry 50 pounds on a regular basis

BAKER'S ASSISTANT

No experience required | High School Diploma with at least 4 CXC Passes
Must be able to stand for long hours

BAKER/PASTRY MAKER

Minimum 4 years' experience in a similar role | High School Completion
Artistic and creative in decorating cakes and other confections including chocolate and sugar art decorations
Must be physically fit
Excellent knowledge in the use of patisserie and their various possible combinations

BARTENDER

Minimum 1-2 years' experience in a similar role | High School Diploma
Must be customer-service oriented | **MUST BE FULLY VACCINATED**

COLOUR MATCHING TECHNICIAN

At least 2 years' experience in mixing paints
Minimum five (5) CXC subjects including Math and English.
Must pay attention to detail and have a good eye for colour
Strive to provide prompt and professional service to customers
Strong interpersonal skills and positive attitude
A driver's licence and a vehicle would also be a plus

COOK (RESTAURANT)

Minimum 1-2 years' experience | Must be trustworthy & reliable

CLEANER

Minimum 2 years' experience

CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

Minimum 7+ years' relevant experience in a customer focused environment with post-secondary degree or certifications with 5-7 years people management experience

University Degree or Tertiary education with experience

Strong leadership, analytical, communication and record-keeping skills | Must pay attention to detail

DELIVERY TRUCK DRIVER

Minimum 2-3 years' experience in a similar role | High School Completion

Must be able to drive and have a Class 3 Drivers' License

DENTAL ASSISTANT/HYGIENIST

5+ years' experience as a Dental Assistant/Hygienist | Good Understanding of Dental/Medical software

Ability to assist in making clinical diagnosis | Perseverance, Motivation, Confidence

Flexibility, Communication, Teamwork | Problem Solving, Leadership, Organization

General computer skills including Microsoft Suite & Google Docs

FOREMAN

Minimum 5 years' experience | Welding, Refrigeration & Electrical skills required

Must be bilingual (Able to communicate in English & Spanish)

GARDENER

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

Must be physically fit and able to lift at least 60 lbs.

GIFT SHOP ATTENDANT

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role

GROUNDS SUPERVISOR

Minimum 3 years' experience in a similar role

HEAD CHEF (RESTAURANT)

Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role | High School Completion

Good communication skills | Must be physically fit & able to operate heavy duty equipment

HOTEL DRIVER

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role | Must have a valid Driver's License

INSTRUCTOR/ ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY

MD or PhD Degree

A minimum of five years teaching experience in the pre-clinical curriculum at an accredited university

Ability to supervise, advise and train students and faculty members

Ability to advise and train remediating students | Ability to foster a co-operative work environment

KITCHEN ELECTRONIC & REFRIDGERATION TECHNICIAN

Minimum 3 years' experience as a Kitchen & Refridgeration Technician at an international first class hotel

| Must be proficient in Basic MS Office

Must have knowledge dealing with Hydraulic Installations, Convection Ovens, Dishwashers, Fryers etc.

KITCHEN STEWARD

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role

LABOURER

Minimum 3 years' experience in a similar role | Secondary School Completion | Must be physically fit

LABOURER/GROUNDS ATTENDANT

Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role

Must have knowledge propagating and maintaining plants

Must be a team player & must have a Driver's license | **MUST BE FULLY VACCINATED**

LINE CHEF (FINE DINING RESTAURANT)

Minimum 3 years' experience in a similar role | Able to work unsupervised

Certificate from a Reputable Culinary School OR 5 years in Reputable restaurant

Food Handlers Certificate required | Must be punctual, motivated, passionate & disciplined

MARKETING MANAGER (HOTEL)

Minimum 5 year experience in a similar role | Minimum High School Diploma or equivalent

Must be able to perform job functions with attention to detail, speed and accuracy; Must be creative and a clear-thinker |

Must reflect a positive attitude at all times

Relevant Qualifications required | Must have a valid Driver's License

Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite & Adobe Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, After Effects etc.) | Web design preferable

MASONRY INSTRUCTOR

Minimum 3-5 years' experience as a Mason

Technical Diploma and/or Certification in Construction trade | 5 CXC Passes (including English & Mathematics) or Tertiary Level Completion

Experience in teaching in a classroom setting with diverse students is a plus

MECHATRONIC TECHNICIAN

Experience in Blow Molding and Distillery applications | Plc experience

Ability to troubleshoot electromechanical system | Boiler overhauls and maintenance

Knowledge of Fiber Optic communications & VFD programming

Experience dealing with Pumps and motors repairs | Process Operations | Hi and low-pressure compressor process

MULTILINGUAL BARTENDER

Minimum 3 years' experience | Fluency in English & Additional Language required

MULTILINGUAL CLERK

Minimum 3 years' experience | Fluency in English & Additional Language required

PLUMBING INSTRUCTOR

Minimum 3-5 years' experience working in the Plumbing industry

5 CXC Passes (including English & Mathematics) or Tertiary Level Completion

Technical Diploma and/or Certification in Construction trade

ROTI MAKER

High School Completion

Must have a valid Food Handler's Permit | Must have knowledge of Roti preparation

SALES CLERK (PET STORE)

Minimum 1 year experience in a similar role | Must be customer service-oriented

Must like animals and willing to learn how to take care of them

SECURITY OFFICER

Minimum 2 years' experience as a Security Officer | Secondary School Completion

SENIOR PROJECT DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT

Minimum of 15 years hands-on experience in the development, management or overseeing of (multiple) major mixed-use real estate projects in the hospitality or leisure industry in the Caribbean
Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree in the related fields of real estate, urban planning, architecture, construction management or civil engineering, business or finance preferred
Experience negotiating, engaging, managing and directing third party consultants and contractors
Strong analytical skills including financial analysis
Working knowledge of land use and zoning processes
Strong computer efficiency, written, oral communication and presentation skills

SHAWARMA COOK

Minimum 4 years' experience in a similar role
High School Completion | Valid Food Handlers' Certificate required
Good Communication and customer service skills
Must be able to work under pressure

SKILLED CARPENTER

Minimum 10 years' experience as a Carpenter | Secondary/Vocational School Completion

TILE SPECIALIST

Minimum 3 years' proven experience as a Tiler

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YOU THINK IT WE PRINT IT

CWI announces official tour operators and license ticket partners for England tour of West Indies

WEST INDIES v ENGLAND
T20I SERIES 2022

1 ST T20I	SAT, JAN 22
2 ND T20I	SUN, JAN 23
3 RD T20I	WED, JAN 26
4 TH T20I	SAT, JAN 29
5 TH T20I	SUN, JAN 30

IT'S OUR GAME. **BARBADOS**

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has confirmed the official tour operators and licensed ticket partners for England's T20I and Test tours to the West Indies in 2022.

Fans will be able to book from a range of attractive tour packages covering every permutation of T20I and Test fixtures, enabling fans to access preferred tickets and itineraries in advance of the general sale of tickets to the wider public.

The West Indies vs England five-match T20I Series takes place at the Kensington Oval in Barbados from January 22-30, 2022, including two weekends of back-to-back matches offering a sun-soaked, action-packed start to the year.

This will be followed by the three Test matches in March, which will renew one of cricket's greatest rivalries dating back close to 100 years. The arch-rivals will compete for the first time for the newly minted

Richards-Botham trophy, named in honour of legends Sir Vivian Richards and Lord Ian Botham. The Test series opens appropriately at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua from March 8-12, followed by the second Test

at the historic Kensington Oval from March 16-20. The third and final contest will be at the idyllic Grenada National Stadium from March 24-28. All three Tests are part of the ICC World Test Championship.

WEST INDIES v ENGLAND
TEST SERIES 2022 | RICHARDS-BOTHAM TROPHY

1 ST TEST	MAR 8 - 12	SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS STADIUM, ANTIGUA
2 ND TEST	MAR 16 - 20	KENSINGTON OVAL, BARBADOS
3 RD TEST	MAR 24 - 28	NATIONAL STADIUM, GRENADA

IT'S OUR GAME.

Cricket West Indies advises that only fans who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 should consider purchasing tour packages or tickets. Fans will need to bring their vaccination documentation with them to be able to enter the venues. The date of a full vaccination (or single dose vaccination) must be at least two weeks prior to the first match that any fan intends to attend.

Tickets will go on general sale in mid-December as CWI introduces its new online ticket service.

FULL MATCH SCHEDULE

- **January 22: 1st T20I at Kensington Oval**
- **January 23: 2nd T20I at Kensington Oval**
- **January 26: 3rd T20I at Kensington Oval**
- **January 29: 4th T20I at Kensington Oval**
- **January 30: 5th T20I at Kensington Oval**
- **March 8-12: 1st Test Match at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium**
- **March 16-20: 2nd Test at Kensington Oval**
- **March 24-28: 3rd Test at Grenada National Stadium**

Elaine Thompson-Herah receives diplomatic passport from Jamaica gov't



Prime Minister Andrew Holness presents Elaine Thompson-Herah with a diplomatic passport on Tuesday.

Olympic Games sprint double champion Elaine Thompson-Herah on Tuesday was presented with a diplomatic passport from the Government of Jamaica. The presentation of the document was made to the Jamaican sprinter by Prime Minister Andrew Holness during a courtesy call at the Office of the Prime

Minister. "Elaine has displayed the best of Jamaica with extraordinary talent, confidence and passion," Holness posted on social media. Last Wednesday, Thompson-Herah won the World Athletics Female Athlete of the Year at a virtual awards ceremony. She became the first woman to win

100m, 200m and 4x100m gold medals at one Olympics since Florence Griffith Joyner in 1988.

Thompson-Herah also clocked the second-fastest 100m and 200m times in history (10.54 and 21.53), trailing only Griffith Joyner's world records.

"I used the opportunity this morning to congratulate Elaine on being awarded the 2021 World Athletics Female Athlete of the Year," wrote Holness.

He added: "We are very proud of her achievements and encourage her to continue breaking records and expanding brand Jamaica."

In response, the sprinter expressed her gratitude for the passport, which makes it easier for her to travel overseas.

"Always have an attitude of gratitude. Thanks @andrewholnessjm @hon.oliviagrange for the hand over of my diplomatic passport," wrote Thompson-Herah on social media.

Since her accomplishments this summer, the sprinter has received seven awards, including being conferred with the national honour of Order of Distinction, Commander Class.

JFF fires coach Theodore Whitmore amid poor World Cup qualifying



Theodore Whitmore

Jamaica's national senior men's football coach Theodore Whitmore was fired Thursday amid the Reggae Boyz' poor run in the ongoing Concacaf World Cup qualifying.

The Jamaica Football Federation (JFF) said in a statement that "Theodore Whitmore has been relieved of his duties with immediate effect."

The statement further stated that, "The JFF wishes to thank Mr. Whitmore for work that he has put in with the team over the years."

With six of 14 games yet to be played, the Reggae Boyz sit in sixth position on just seven points. Canada lead the group on 16 points, followed by the United States on 15, Mexico and Panama on 14 each, and Costa Rica on nine. El Salvador on six points and Honduras on three, round out the bottom two places.

The top three teams after 14 games will automatically book their spot in next November's FIFA World Cup in the Gulf state of Qatar. The fourth placed team will engage in

a play-off game with a team from the Oceania region. With Jamaica precariously perched on seven points from eight games, the Boyz are in serious danger of not contesting for even the fourth placed spot.

Calls have been mounting for the JFF to sever ties with Whitmore, the darling of Jamaica's historic 1998 World Cup campaign when the Reggae Boyz achieved what many thought was impossible by qualifying for the Paris tournament. In so doing, Jamaica became the first team from the English-speaking Caribbean to qualify for football's showpiece. At the time, the Jamaicans were guided by the indomitable Brazilian, Rene Simoes.

Whitmore was one of the stars of that campaign and scored both goals against Japan in Jamaica's only win in the preliminary round. The Boyz defeated Japan 2-1 in an exciting encounter.

Now in his third stint as head coach, the JFF is no longer confident that Whitmore is the man

for the job. Ironically, his sacking comes on the back of perhaps Jamaica's best performance when they were held to an exciting 1-1 draw against the USA at Kingston's national stadium in a game that – but for an officiating error and several missed chances – the Boyz should have won.

Jamaica has also given up late goals in defeats to Mexico and El Salvador and suffered a 3-0 home defeat to Panama. Throughout the tournament, Whitmore's team selection has been questioned and at times he appeared not to be confident on the sidelines.

Whitmore's latest stint as coach started in 2016, but he had an interim stint in 2007 and an assistant coach role in 2008 before taking over again as an interim coach in the same year.

His first role as head coach came in 2009 and ended in 2013.

Jamaica's next game in the World Cup qualifiers is against Mexico on January 27 at the National Stadium.

TRAIL BLAZERS GUARD CJ MCCOLLUM DIAGNOSED WITH COLLAPSED LUNG

The Portland Trail Blazers have revealed CJ McCollum suffered a collapsed right lung in a defeat to the Boston Celtics last weekend.

McCollum was injured in the final quarter of an emphatic 145-117 loss at the hands of the Celtics on Saturday.

The guard missed a 102-90 defeat to the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday and a scan revealed the extent of the damage done.

Portland stated that Mc-

Collum, who is averaging 20.5 points, 4.1 rebounds and 4.5 assists this season, will be out indefinitely.

The 30-year-old joins All-Star Damian Lillard (abdominal injury), Anfernee Simons and Nassir Little (both ankle) on the sidelines.

Portland also lost guard Ben McLemore to a hip injury during the defeat to the Clippers, while center Cody Zeller is struggling with a bruised right quad.

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