

WALLINGS NATURE RESERVE NAMED AMONG TOP 20 CARIBBEAN ATTRACTIONS



As farmers make their way across historic Signal Hill which forms part of the Wallings Nature Reserve (WNR), newly replanted grasses that are indigenous to the area can be seen in the foreground. WNR boss Refica Attwood says one of the greatest threats to the reserve are the fires which are deliberately set by rogues each year that denude the hillside of both flora and fauna. [Photo: Wallings Nature reserve]. [Story on page 2.](#)

Wallings Nature Reserve nominated as a 2022 Caribbean top attraction

Director of the Wallings Nature Reserve, Refica Attwood, joined host of Pointe FM's Pointe on de Streetz on Tuesday to discuss the ongoing preservation efforts taking place at the reserve.

The Wallings Nature Reserve is unique in Antigua and Barbuda as it is located inside the country's last remaining rainforest in John Hughes. As such, it is a protected area and organised, ongoing efforts of public and private sector stakeholders, including the non-profit company, Wallings Nature Reserve, are a vital part of this endeavour.

According to Attwood, the group, established in 2018, was pleasantly surprised this week to learn that it had been nominated by the USA TODAY 10 Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards as one of the top attractions in the Caribbean region.

"Yesterday (Monday) I didn't think we would have gotten to this point after three years. Wallings was nominated in the 10 Best, along with Nelson's Dockyard, as one of the best Caribbean attractions

for 2022," beamed Attwood.

This is the first time that the Wallings forest has made the prestigious annual list where this year it joins eighteen other attractions selected from across the region.

Once voting has ended, the list will be reduced to the top ten.

Attwood said the goal is to get both nominated Antiguan and Barbudan attractions into the top five of the ten spot list. The public will be important in this process as it is open to voting which can be done online via the link <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-caribbean-attraction/>

"We're asking persons to go out and vote. I am for country, so as long as Antigua and Barbuda has Nelson's Dockyard and Wallings Nature Reserve coming in the top five, I am going to be super elated!" said Attwood.

"[Voting] started on [Monday] so you have an opportunity to vote every day until the 14th February," she continued.

According to the group's

website, "The Wallings Nature Reserve is the first Community-Managed National Park in the twin-island state of Antigua and Barbuda established in 2018.

"The Reserve is being used as an international case study to garner the impact that a local community can have in making a difference in the fight against climate change while empowering women, youth and vulnerable communities and promoting gender equality.

"The reserve also practices sustainable development and protecting the biological diversity of Antigua and Barbuda. Wallings Nature Reserve is a not for profit, non-government organisation. Wallings Nature Reserve monitors, maintains, and manages 1680 acres or 680 hectares of rainforest in the Sherkley Mountain Protected Area."

Since its founding, it has undertaken widespread reforestation and beautification efforts in the park with the aid of international, regional and local donors including



Director of the Wallings Nature Reserve, Refica Attwood the Sandals Group and the United States Federal Government.

Meanwhile, in light of the hard work of the volunteers who undertake the work being done, Attwood made an appeal for vandals who have been undoing their efforts to be more respectful of the work being done to preserve the national treasure.

"I'm imploring persons who are going up to Signal Hill and walking on the plants and pulling up the plants: you're not hurting me. You're hurting yourselves.

"You need to think about your future. Think about three or four years [down the road] while you're hiking that you can eat as much food as you want while you're at Signal Hill.

"If you're going to take out the foods after, that's where we're gonna have a problem. We are going to start charging you if you decide to take the food out," Attwood said.

Wed 19 Day 82° 20% E 14 mph Mostly sunny skies. High 82F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.		Wed 19 Night 74° 17% E 14 mph Mostly clear skies. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.	
Humidity 71%	UV Index 9 of 10	Humidity 76%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 6:40 am	Sunset 5:56 pm	Moonrise 7:32 pm	Moonset 7:59 am Waning Gibbous

MoH to study consumption of SSBs

Researchers within the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment are seeking the public's participation in a study that will examine the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages in the country.

In a post on its social media page, the ministry said the results of the study will be used to guide interventions to improve health and wellbeing in the country.

A link that will lead to a questionnaire is located on their Facebook page.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States defines sugar sweetened beverages as any liquids that are sweetened with various forms of added sugars to include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, and sucrose.

The CDC says the consumption of



SSBs is associated with weight gain/obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, kidney diseases, non-alcoholic liver disease, tooth decay and cavities, and gout, a type of arthritis.

In 2018, Prime Minister Gaston Browne said his administration, alarmed by the high rate of non-communicable diseases, was discussing taxing certain products, with the expectation that it will help stem what was fast becoming a major problem. He said then, one way in which that will be done is by targeting sugar sweetened beverages and that they were heading

to Parliament to tax the drinks.

He explained in 2018 that the idea behind the move was to reduce the demand. Mr. Browne indicated increasing the cost for such products to reduce consumption was insufficient and proposed the need for a public health education campaign, commencing in schools throughout the country.

In the interview three years ago, the prime minister indicated that in addition to the proposed tax, government's intention was to incentivise the use of nutritional foods.

However, since then, the matter appeared to have been placed on the back burner.

The Heart Foundation of Jamaica lists Barbados and Dominica as the only two Caribbean states that have implemented taxes on sugar sweetened beverages. In both countries, a 10 percent tax was applied to sodas and similar products.



SAFETY FIRST #drivesafeantigua

Watch your **SPEED**

SAFER SPEED

SAVE LIVES

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TRANSPORT BOARD

A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

Swiss Rowing Team Winners of Talisker Whiskey Atlantic Challenge

Members of the first team to cross the finish line in the Talisker Whiskey Atlantic Challenge 2021 are basking in their latest accomplishment while getting much needed rest.

Team Swiss Raw made up of Roman Mockli, Ingvar Groza, Jan Hurni and Samuel Widmer arrived in Nelson's Dockyard on Sunday as the official overall winners of the race; known as the world's toughest rowing challenge.

They completed the journey from La Gomera in the Canary Islands in 34 days, 23 hours and 42 minutes.

According to FMITODAY in Switzerland, the four-member team from the Hallwilersee Rowing Club began preparing for the challenge approximately three and a half years ago. Their coach, Annick Kohler said the "strenuous years were worth it".

"They have never sat in a rowing boat and therefore never held an oar in their hands. When we started, we first had to explain everything. You handled it really well."

Swiss Raw's Manager, Yves Neupert noted, "they want to support children in Switzerland who do not have an easy life. That's why we support them with the excess capital that we have



Photo credit: Atlantic Campaigns

collected and will collect. The money goes to the Kovive Foundation."

"But now it's time to rest and enjoy the Caribbean. And above all, lots of food. During the 34 days on the open sea, the rowing team lost between 16 and 21 kilograms in weight."

Four teams had completed the race up to yesterday afternoon, and more competitors were expected to complete the journey last evening and others in the coming days.

The 2021 challenge is made up of 4

solo rowers, 10 pairs, 6 trios, 15 quartets and one team of five.

Carsten Heron Olsten, CEO and race director speaking on state television yesterday said it has been another successful year for the challenge, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparing the race with similar events, he noted they have managed every aspect of it effectively.

"When we're down in La Gomera, it's quite easy for us to control the whole thing in regards to the pandemic, so everyone was safe and sound we sent them off and because they do not arrive here [Antigua] at the same time, it's also manageable here," he stated.

Olsten pointed out that safety is guaranteed because of the relationship with the National Parks Authority and other stakeholders.

No Antigua team participated in the 2021 race, but the race director is looking forward to representation from the country in 2022.

To date, for Antigua teams are recorded in the history books of the Talisker Whiskey Atlantic Challenge.



Photo credit: Atlantic Campaigns



Sandals Grande Antigua Public Relations Manager hands over items to Ottos Comprehensive School Principal Foster Roberts. Foundation volunteers Gift Shop Manager Maria Jeffery and Training and Development Manager Carlene Spencer.

Sandals Foundation Bolsters School's Literacy Programme with Learning Resources

Teachers and students within the newly established Student Support Unit at Ottos Comprehensive School have received a boost to their Literacy Centre after the recent donation of educational equipment by the Sandals Foundation.

The items, which include a projector, visual smart board and a 32" television, will support the learning process of students who are facing challenges with reading and writing and are currently enrolled in the school's pilot Special Education Literacy Programme.

Principal at the secondary school, Foster Roberts said, "The system did not cater for such children and so Ottos Comprehensive Secondary School was chosen and is one of the pilot schools for this special literacy program. In fact, we had the teachers with the basic training, but did not have the tools to go with it.

"So now that we have the tools to go with it, the children will certainly benefit tremendously. They will now be able to interact with their teachers on the devices that were given to us

by Sandals Foundation. So thank you very much for partnering with us in delivering quality education to our children."

Special Education teacher and head of the school's Resource Centre, Andrea Roberts said, "The students will have extra resources to help with the delivery of their lessons as integrating technology with teaching will always benefit students, especially those who learn differently. In addition to that, should schools within the system be forced to go back to virtual learning, the equipment gifted to Ottos Comprehensive School will be used for delivery classes to students at home."

Executive Director of the Sandals Foundation, Heidi Clarke, commented, "Our support of literacy programmes is an integral part of our work in education and learning institutions across the Caribbean. It is through the development of strong literacy skills that children and adults can build a solid foundation to advance in other areas of study and reach their potential."

"It is our fundamental belief that nurturing the capacity and love for



Executive Director of Sandals Foundation, Heidi Clarke.

reading is the best vehicle to nurture confidence. It is our duty to support this literacy programme in reaching those that are in need of added intervention to ensure they have a chance at a bright future," she continued.

The Sandals Foundation is an associated partner of the United Nations with its programmes recognised for contributing to the sustainable development goals. Quality education is Goal#4 of the 17 developmental targets for achieving an end to poverty and a more equitable world.

Festivals Commission Mourns Eduardo Pyle

The Ministry of Creative Industries, Innovation and the Orange Economy has expressed sadness at the passing of musician Eduardo Pyle, leader of the Soca Monarch Band and long-standing member of the All Star Calypso Band.

Mr. Pyle passed away last weekend following a period of illness.

In a statement, the Ministry said “Mr. Pyle established special relationships with everyone whom he came in contact. He approached his duties with professionalism of the highest standard and provided exceptional leadership to those with whom he worked and mentored. His loss will

be felt by all those who knew and worked with him”.

Chairman of the Festivals Commission, Maurice Merchant said that Eduardo was a calm soul who played a pivotal role in the development of soca and calypso music in Antigua and Barbuda.

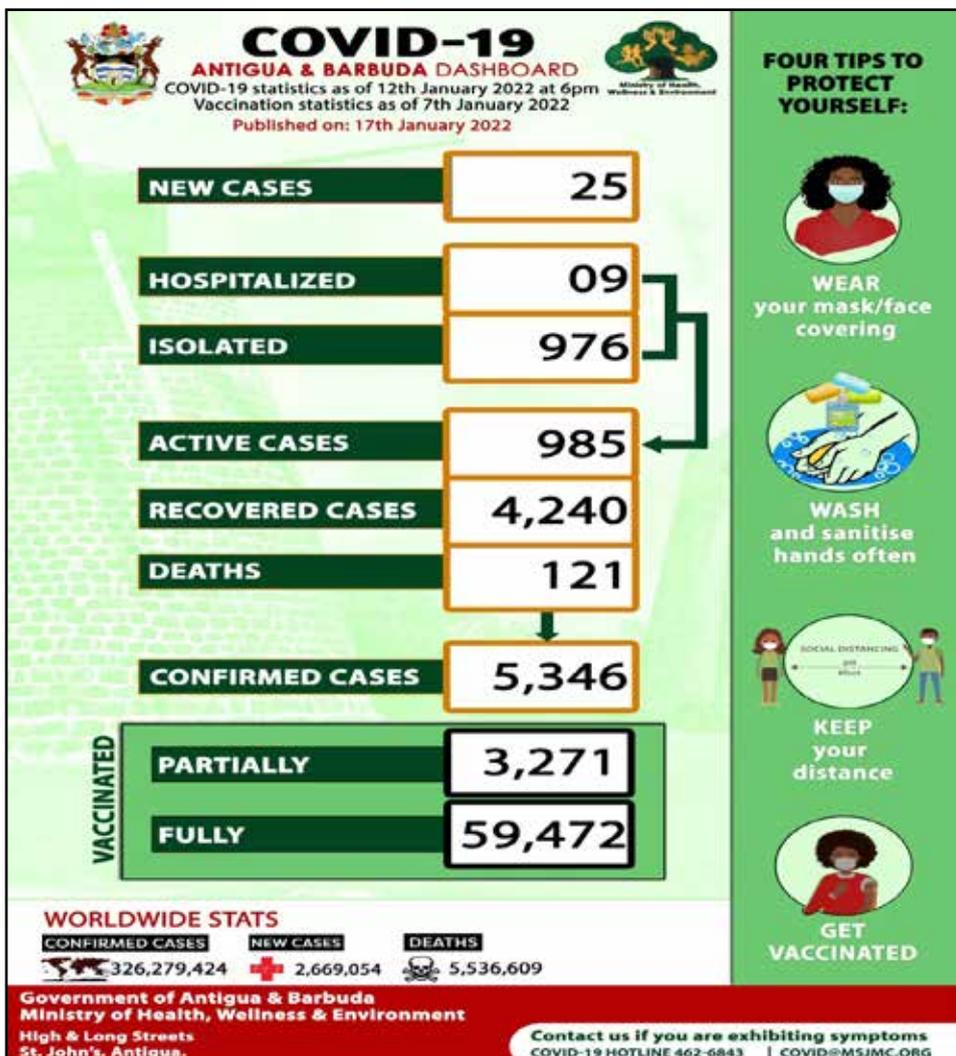
“For Eduardo, what mattered most was the delivery of the most impeccable quality of music during our annual summer festival. He was the guiding wisdom to many young musicians during the over two decades of service to culture and the arts. His loss is irreplaceable,” Merchant said.

The Ministry of Creative Indus-



Eduardo Pyle

tries, Innovation and Orange Economy has expressed warmest wishes and deepest sympathies to his wife, children and extended family and to those who knew and and loved him.



Ministry of Health reveals 90 new COVID-19 cases

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed on Tuesday ninety (90) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda.

This number represents the statistics available as of Thursday 13th January, 2022 at 6pm.

One hundred and sixty-seven (167) samples were processed.

Fifty-one (51) recovered cases were recorded.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is five thousand four hundred and thirty-six (5,436); which is inclusive of one thousand and twenty-four (1,024) active cases.

There are nine (9) hospitalized cases; five (5) moderate and four (4) mild.

From tacos to wings, learning to cook with plant-based meats

By Katie Workman

It's that time of year when many people resolve to eat less meat. The "whys" are varied: sustainability and worry for the planet, health considerations, ethical concerns over the treatment of animals.

One increasingly popular option is "plant-based meat," which can be found from grocery store meat sections to restaurants.

These products aim to imitate meat in taste, texture, appearance and smell, and the likenesses are now pretty impressive. The ingredients usually include a plant-based protein, such as soy or pea, and sometimes other beans, wheat or potato.

Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods are the two monster names in this arena, but there are dozens of brands. In grocery fresh food sections, plant-based options centre on ground "beef," burger patties, meatballs and sausages. In the freezer aisles, there's that and also a lot of products designed to replicate specific dishes, such as "chicken" nuggets, pot pies or stir-fry kits.

So, how to cook with these products at home?

"The veggie meats are an easy substitute," says Angela Campbell, a pescatarian living in Portland, Maine, who relies on plant-based meats to enhance her cooking. She says she can use the imitation ground beef and sausage 1:1 in recipes.

They can be used in pasta sauces, stir fries, casseroles, fajitas, etc.

Like ground meat, the



By looks alone this Beyond Burger is difficult to distinguish from a beef burger. Plant-based meat products aim to imitate meat in taste, texture, appearance and smell, and the likenesses are now pretty impressive. (The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

plant-based crumbles are perishable, so treat them as you would ground beef, using them within a few days and cooking them thoroughly.

Many of them cook more quickly than their meat counterparts, and seem to be more sensitive to precise cooking times; the packages often warn against under- or overcooking. So you might want to add them towards the end of cooking a dish. Most of the brands' websites offer recipes.

Campbell says she has had more limited success with the "chicken" products.

"Long-simmering chicken dishes or dishes made with whole breasts can't be replicated," she says. "The (plant-based) chicken is generally best in a stir fry, or with a sauce prepared separately. The chicken might brown, but nothing crisps up."

Cheyenne Cohen, a food photographer in Brooklyn, New York, eats vegan at home, and says, "When I use plant-

based meat, I'm never trying to perfectly recreate a meat-eating experience. I like to get to know the texture and general taste of each brand/variety and then experiment with preparation and seasonings until I find something that works well."

She loves using soy crumbles as taco meat or any way you'd normally use ground beef, and says it's generally easy to make that swap.

Instead of featuring the meat substitutes as the centre of the dish, Cohen finds them "a good recipe ingredient," just one component.

Jade Wong, owner of Red Bamboo in New York City, has run restaurants that specialise in plant-based meat offerings for 20 years. She says their menu is geared towards vegetarians and vegans who are looking for comfort food.

"Do you really want a salad on a cold winter's day? Or would you rather have a chicken parmesan hero or a burger?" Wong says.

Red Bamboo makes their own plant-based meat products (Absolute Vegetarian and Absolute Vegan) and sells them wholesale to other restaurants. Wong notes that many store-bought, plant-based meats are precooked so they just require heating.

She suggests marinating soy burger patties in your favourite marinade before giving them a quick sear on a griddle. And cooking soy-based meat substitutes on a ridged grill pan offers the eye-appeal of traditional grilled meat dishes.

Crumbled "sausage," Wong says, makes a great pizza topping or, when sauteed and mixed with vegetables, an addition to pasta dishes, perhaps bound together with sauce and seasonings.

At the restaurant, they get more creative, offering options like barbecued buffalo wings that consist of soy-based "chicken" wrapped in bean curd (they even put a stick in the wings to mimic the bone).

Some plant-based products are like blank slates, meant to be used in your favourite recipes. Others are prepared in a heat-and-eat way.

Gardein is a huge presence in the frozen foods section, known for their "chik'n" products; they also make home-style beefless tips that you can skewer, saute, or stir fry, and sweet and sour porkless bites. Before the Butcher makes seasoned, ground, plant-based meat products and patties with interesting flavour profiles like roasted turkey burgers. They also make a lower priced line

cont'd on pg 9

It's Official: Dog Owners Live Longer, Healthier Lives

By Amanda Macmillian

In case you need another reason to snuggle your pup: According to a 2017 study of more than 3.4 million people, owning a dog is linked to a longer life.

The research, published in *Scientific Reports*, is the latest in a growing body of research suggesting that canine companions may be good for human health—especially for people who live alone.

To study the link between dogs and longevity, researchers at Uppsala University in Sweden reviewed national registry records of Swedish men and women, ages 40 to 80. They focused on 3.4 million people who had no history of cardiovascular disease in 2001, and followed their health records—as well as whether they registered as a dog owner—for about 12 years. Dog ownership registries are mandatory in Sweden, and every visit to a hospital is recorded in a national database.

They found that dog owners had a lower risk of death due to cardiovascular disease than people who did not report owning a dog, as well as a lower risk of death from other causes. That was true even after adjusting for factors such

as smoking, body mass index and socioeconomic status.

The protective effect was especially prominent for people living alone, who have been found to have a higher risk for early death than those who live with other people. People who lived alone with a dog had a 33% reduced risk of death, and an 11% reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, than people who lived alone without a dog.

The study—with a sample size hundreds of times larger than any other studies on this topic—was not designed to show a cause-and-effect relationship between dog ownership and reduced risk of death or cardiovascular disease, or to determine why these factors may be related. It's possible that people who choose to own dogs may simply be more active and in better health to begin with, say the authors.

But it's also possible—and very likely, says senior author Tove Fall, a veterinarian and associate professor of epidemiology—that taking care of a dog prompts people to stay active and live a healthier lifestyle. “I have met numerous owners that are convinced that their pet has been instrumental for them, often in terms of social support,” says



Scientists say they have proven that owning a dog is linked to a longer life [Shutterstock]

Fall. “As a dog owner, I also notice that the people I meet during walks are often other dog owners, especially in bad weather.”

Another possible explanation, she adds, could be a dog's effect on its owner's microbiome. Other studies have suggested that growing up with a dog in the house can decrease allergies and asthma in children, and Fall says that pets may provide immune-boosting benefits for adults as well. Studies have also suggested that dog owners have lower reactivity to stress and faster recovery of blood pressure following stressful events.

The study authors were also surprised to find that people who owned dogs that were originally bred for hunt-

ing—like terriers, retrievers and scent hounds—were the most protected from heart disease and death. Because these dogs typically need more exercise than other breeds, their owners may be more likely to meet physical activity guidelines, they say.

Fall says the study's results can be generalised to the entire Swedish population, and likely to other European countries with similar living standards and culture regarding dog ownership. They also probably apply to the United States, she says.

Scientists can't say that getting a dog will definitely help a person live longer, but Fall believes it's not a bad idea. “I think that a pet brings a lot of joy and companionship into a house, so if a person has the capacity to take care of it, they certainly should,” she says. “There are numerous studies showing that dog owners get more physical activity, which could help to prolong a healthy life.”

cont'd from pg 8

of burgers under the name Mainstream, designed to compete with beef patties not only in flavour but in price.

Celebrity chef and restaurateur Ming Tsai recently launched a line of Ming's Bings, a comfort-food bonanza of ground, plant-based

meats, vegetables, cheese, and varied seasonings enclosed in brown rice wrappers that get fantastically crisp when baked.

Some plant-based meat products are vegan, some vegetarian, some gluten-free, some dairy-free; if you have dietary issues, read the packaging carefully.

Barbados holds first election since becoming a republic today

Barbados will today hold general elections called by Prime Minister Mia Mottley, the Caribbean nation's first vote since it became a republic last year by removing the British Queen as its sovereign.

Mottley, whose Barbados Labour Party now controls 29 of the legislature's 30 seats, in December said the vote would help promote unity in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, which has heavily hit the country's tourism-focused economy.

Barbados in November removed Queen Elizabeth as head of state and replaced her with President Sandra Mason in a ceremony coinciding with its independence day that included the presence of Britain's Prince Charles.

Mottley in a campaign speech in the community of Pie Corner on the northeast end of the island on Monday made little mention of the pandemic, focusing instead on public works carried out under her party and berating rivals' lack of leadership.

Verla De Peiza of the opposition Democratic Labor Party has called the snap election - called a year and a half before the law requires - "alarming to our democracy" and raised questions about the public health risks of the vote and limitations on suffrage of those infected with COVID-19.

Some 5,000 people of a population just under 300,000 were in isolation after being infected with coronavirus, according to official figures.



Philip Catlyn of the Barbados Sovereignty Party failed in his attempt to get an injunction on Tuesday to call off Barbados' elections today.

On Monday said the opposition had filed a court injunction seeking to stop the election.

The lawsuit alleged that the exclusion of people quarantined due to the coronavirus is a violation of voting rights, according to local media reports.

However, late on Tuesday Justice Cicely Chase threw out the suit brought to halt the General Elections, saying she did not have jurisdiction to hear the matter and that it ought to have been brought before an election court.

She said the action was incorrectly filed.

Arguments were heard from attorney Lalu Hanuman, who brought the challenge on behalf of St Thomas constituency hopeful, Philip Nathaniel Catlyn, of the Barbados Sovereignty Party (BSP), as well as Queen's Counsel Alick Scott who represents President The

Most Honourable Dame Sandra Mason and Queen's Counsel Roger Forde who appears for the Attorney General.

Catlyn was seeking a restraining order against the holding of today's General Elections until "the disenfranchisement of thousands of electors who are in quarantine due to the zoonotic COVID-19 viral pandemic is resolved beforehand".

The suit challenged Dame Sandra Mason's dissolution of Parliament on December 27, last year, and the issuing of Election Writs, saying the act was unauthorised, contrary to law and illegal; arbitrary, unreasonable, irrational, irregular and an improper exercise of discretion; that it was capricious, erroneous, an excess of jurisdiction, ultra vires and an abuse of power and that it was in conflict with Section 6 of the Representation of the People Act.

La Soufriere volcano starts 2022 with no lahars, low seismic activity

Loop - Seismic activity at the La Soufriere volcano in St Vincent and the Grenadines continues to be at a low lev-

el since the tremor associated with the explosion and ash venting on April 22, 2021.

No lahar signals have

been recorded during the reporting period.

The UWI Seismic Research Centre says the current

activity is consistent with a period of unrest after an eruption.

cont'd on pg 11

Guyanese Health minister investigating deaths of four young COVID patients

Loop - A probe has been ordered into the deaths of four children who died after being infected with coronavirus (COVID-19) in Guyana.

This was announced during the COVID-19 update Monday by Health Minister Dr Frank Anthony.

“In the last couple of days, we would have seen the four deaths of children. And this is something we will do some further investigation on. Because of the four, three of the children arrived at the hospital, they were dead before arrival,” the minister disclosed.

“When the mother was interviewed in some cases, we would have heard that the child was irritable the night before, had some fever and by the next morning had difficulty breathing. On arrival at hospital, when they did an antigen



test, they found the child was positive.”

A team of doctors from

the Ministry of Health will be reviving the children’s charts.

Since March 2020, 15 children have died of COVID-19 in Guyana.



La Soufriere volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

cont’d from pg 10

This can continue for weeks to months.

While volcanic activity has been on a decline, there is the continued presence of near-surface hot spots, daily seismic activity and persistent degassing

UWI SRC notes there is a small, but not insignificant, possibility that magmatic activity might restart, should there be an influx of new magma from depth.

The volcano is at alert level YELLOW.

NATO chief invites Russia to new talks as Ukraine tensions mount

AlJazeera - NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has invited Russia to more talks on the Ukraine crisis as fears mount over a possible break-out of conflict in Europe, but Moscow says it wants answers from the West over its sweeping wish list of security demands before engaging in further discussions.

Speaking to reporters in Berlin on Tuesday, Stoltenberg said he had proposed a series of meetings in the NATO-Russia council to address both Moscow and the West's concerns and "try to find a way forward to prevent any military attack against Ukraine".

He did not give an exact date for when the talks would take place, but said the discussions had been suggested for the "near future".

"The main task now is to make progress on the political way forward," Stoltenberg said at a news conference following talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. "The risk of a conflict is real."

Moscow has overseen a recent military build-up of up to 100,000 troops near Ukraine's borders, prompting fears in Kyiv and among its Western allies of an impending invasion.

Russia, which annexed neighbouring Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula in 2014 and is accused of fomenting a pro-Russian separatist war in the country's east, has denied having any such plans.

The Kremlin has emphasised that it is free to deploy its forces wherever it considers it necessary on its territory and has instead blamed the United States and the Washington-headed NATO military alliance for undermining the security situation in the region.

Last month, Moscow unveiled a wish list of security demands it argues needs to be met to calm the existing



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg

tensions.

However, many of the proposals are seen as non-starters in the West, in particular a call for NATO to give up military activity in Eastern Europe and Ukraine and never embrace the latter as a new member.

A bout of diplomatic talks between Russia, the US, NATO and other Western powers held in various European capitals last week failed to produce a breakthrough in the crisis.

On Tuesday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Moscow wanted answers on its security proposals from the military alliance and Washington before continuing talks over Ukraine.

"We are now awaiting responses to these proposals – as we were promised – in order to continue negotiations," he said at a joint press conference with visiting German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock.

"Let's hope these talks will continue," he added.

US President Joe Biden's top diplomat, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, was scheduled to fly to Kyiv on Tuesday ahead of a meeting with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Wednesday. Blinken will then head to Berlin to meet with officials from Germany, France and the United Kingdom on Thursday.

He will "discuss recent diplomatic engagements with Russia and joint efforts to deter further Russian aggression against Ukraine, including allies' and partners' readiness to impose massive consequences and severe economic costs on Russia," the US State Department said in a statement on Tuesday.

Ahead of his trip, Blinken spoke with Lavrov by telephone on Tuesday and urged de-escalation, the department said in a separate statement.

In an interview with the Washington Post on Tuesday, US envoy to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield stressed that talks with Russia have not broken down, and that Washington is "continuing to engage" with Moscow.

"We're still talking to the Russians. But we're also watching their actions, and we're watching their actions very, very closely," Thomas-Greenfield said.

But hopes for any imminent defusing of the crisis appeared slim, with the announcement of his trip coinciding with Russia and Belarus launching snap military exercises.

The Belarusian defence ministry said it was hosting the combat readiness drills because of the continuing "aggravation" of military tensions "including at the western and southern borders of the Republic of Belarus".

Belarus borders Ukraine to the south and NATO member Poland to the west.

Neither Moscow nor Minsk has disclosed the number of troops involved in the military exercises, but a video published by the Belarusian defence ministry showed columns of military vehicles including tanks being unloaded from trains blanketed in snow.

Nobody warned me drinks event was against rules - Boris Johnson

BBC - Boris Johnson has "categorically" denied he was warned a drinks party in the No 10 garden risked breaking lockdown rules.

"Nobody warned me that it was against the rules," the prime minister said, adding: "I would have remembered that."

Former aide Dominic Cummings says he warned Mr Johnson at the time, and has accused him of misleading MPs about it.

Asked if he would resign if he was found to have misled MPs, Mr Johnson said: "Let's see what the report says."

Senior civil servant Sue Gray is due to publish a report into alleged Covid rule breaking at lockdown get-togethers in Downing Street and government departments.

In his blog, Mr Cummings, who was still working in Downing Street at the time of the drinks party on 20 May 2020, claimed the PM had waved aside his warnings.

Mr Cummings said the idea that a senior aide - the PM's Principal Private Secretary Martin Reynolds - would not have checked with Mr Johnson, after he was warned his invitation to drinks in the Number 10 garden broke the rules, "is not credible".

Two other former Downing Street officials

told the BBC they remembered Mr Cummings telling them on that day he had advised the prime minister not to allow the drinks to go ahead.

Asked about Mr Cummings' claims on a visit to a North London hospital, Mr Johnson said: "I can tell you categorically that nobody said that this was something that was against the rules, that was in breach of the Covid rules."

Responding to his latest statement, Labour's deputy leader Angela Rayner said: "Boris Johnson clearly knows it's the end of the road.

"He's the prime minister, he set the rules, he didn't need anyone to tell him that the party he attended broke them.

"If he had any respect for the British public, he would do the decent thing and resign."

In his interview, Mr Johnson repeated the apology he made to MPs last week for "mistakes" made over the May 2020 get-together.

"As I said in the House of Commons, when I went out into that garden I thought that I was attending a work event."

He said he had not seen the email sent by Mr Reynolds inviting staff to "socially distanced drinks in the No 10 garden".

"I only saw it the other



UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson

day. I only saw it when it emerged," said the PM.

"What I remember is going out into that garden for a short time and for 25 minutes thanking staff who'd worked on Covid, who were continuing to work on Covid, and then going back to office.

"If I had my time again, I would not have allowed things to develop in that way."

Asked if he had lied to Parliament over the parties, he said: "No. I want to begin by repeating my apologies to everybody for the misjudgments that I've made, that we may have made in No 10 and beyond, whether in Downing Street or throughout the pandemic."

He appeared to be distressed as he was quizzed about No 10 parties on the eve of the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral in April last year.

Breathing heavily behind his mask, he said: "I deeply and bitterly regret that that happened.

"I can only renew my

apologies both to Her Majesty and to the country for misjudgements that were made, and for which I take full responsibility."

On Friday, Downing Street apologised to Buckingham Palace over the two staff parties - which were not attended by Mr Johnson - on 16 April, 2021.

The following day, the Queen sat alone - socially distanced from her family - as she mourned her husband.

Mr Johnson said he would make a further statement on alleged rule-breaking in Downing Street when Sue Gray publishes her report, which is expected shortly.

Six Conservative MPs have publicly declared no confidence in the prime minister so far, while Labour, the Liberal Democrats and SNP are urging him to resign.

Fifty-four Tory MPs must write letters calling for Mr Johnson to go in order to trigger a party leadership contest.

Muslim girls wearing Hijab barred from classes at Indian college

When A H Almas, 18, and two of her friends stepped into their classroom on a December morning, the teacher immediately yelled at them: “Get out.”

The Muslim girls were not allowed to sit in the classroom because they were wearing Hijab, or headscarf.

“When we arrived at the door of the classroom, the teacher said we cannot enter with the Hijab,” Almas told Al Jazeera. “She asked us to remove it.”

Since then, a group of six Muslim students at a government-run women’s college in Udupi district in India’s Karnataka state in the south are forced to sit outside the classroom because the college administration alleges they are defying the rules since Hijab is not part of the uniform.

But the girls told Al Jazeera the Hijab is “part of their faith” and practising it is “their right guaranteed under law”. They have maintained a defiant stance even as the administration has allegedly used “pressure tactics” to coerce them to give in. The girls have been marked absent from their classes since December 31 even as they say they are going to the college every day.

“We are not going to budge, no way,” Aliya Assadi, who is a part of the group, told Al Jazeera.

A photo of the students clad in Hijab and college dress while sitting on the steps outside their classroom has gone viral on social media.

“It is because of this photo that our issue got highlighted in the media,” said Assadi.

Their protest has riled up the college administration which, according to the group, forced them to write a letter accepting they missed the classes by staying home on their own.

“We tried to refuse but the principal and the teachers threatened us that they would ruin our careers,” Muskan Zainab, another student, told Al Jazeera.

Zainab said they are happy the “whole world” has seen them forced to sit outside the classroom, thus making the claims of



The photo of the girls sitting on the stairs of the college that went viral on social media [Al Jazeera]

the administration fall flat.

However, the students have also faced humiliation and discrimination for their defiance.

“Having to stay outside the class all day is not a pleasant thing to do. Our teachers and fellow students taunt us. They ask us what our problem is in taking off the Hijab. Why can’t you just follow the rules, they ask,” Almas told Al Jazeera.

“One of my friends fell sick because of this mental torture.”

The students say they are worried about the attendance percentage that is required to be able to sit the annual exams.

Rudre Gowda, the college principal, told Al Jazeera they cannot allow the students to wear Hijab in classrooms “as it is not part of the uniform”. He said they are abiding by the directives issued by the education ministry.

Gowda said it was the first time such issues were cropping up in the college, but the alumni said they had faced similar problems in the past.

“Once a teacher made a hijab-wearing student sit on the floor in the middle of the class and stripped her hijab off. We faced a lot of humiliation for choosing to wear the hijab. But at that time, they did permit us inside the classroom,” Athiya, who is currently studying at Manipal University in Karnataka, told Al Jazeera.

The Hijab ban has sparked outrage in India, with student and rights groups accusing the college administration of bias against the Muslim minority.

“We stand firmly with them in absolute solidarity and support. We demand

that those in the administration who are stopping Muslim girls from wearing Hijab be suspended and that these girls should be allowed to enter their classrooms with their Hijabs, their self-respect and dignity,” activist Afreen Fatima, secretary of Fraternity Movement in New Delhi, told Al Jazeera.

“It is Islamophobia. It is apartheid,” she said.

A local lawyers’ association has written to the state government, demanding an investigation against the college administration and teachers for “harassing” the students. The Campus Front of India (CFI), an organisation of Muslim students active in southern Indian states, has urged the college to rescind its rules over Hijab and allow the students to wear it while attending classes.

The student body met the college and university officials to get the issue resolved but Akram said no action has been taken yet. He alleged the college and district authorities are under pressure from the state government to deny the girls their rights.

After the controversy over Hijab erupted in Udupi, students in at least two other colleges in the state, including members of the right-wing Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), held protests as they donned saffron scarves inside the colleges, demanding a ban on Hijab.

ABVP is a student group affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the far-right ideological mentor of the BJP with millions of members across India dedicated to their aim of creating an ethnic Hindu state in India.

Over the years, Karnataka has seen a rise in Hindu nationalist activities and the targeting of the state’s religious minorities, mainly Muslims and Christians.

Last month, the Karnataka state assembly passed legislation that effectively bans religious conversions, with the BJP government alleging that Christian missionary groups were conducting “forceful conversions” of Hindus, an allegation rejected by Christian religious leaders.

CHEERS 2022



POINTVILLE
COMMUNICATIONS INC.



DAZZLE YOUR MINDS FOR THE NEXT 22 DAYS OF JANUARY WITH THIS SPECIAL OFFER
ENJOY 20.22% OFF ON ANY RADIO OR NEWSPAPER RATES

HURRY UP AND CALL #562-4989

SPECIALS START ON JANUARY 10TH 2022 OFFER ENDS ON JANUARY 31ST @20:22

TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

Olympic athletes urged by activists not to criticise China

AP - Athletes at the Beijing Olympics were urged by human rights activists Tuesday to avoid criticising China because they could be prosecuted.

The International Olympic Committee has said athletes will have freedom of speech at next month's Winter Games when speaking to journalists or posting on social media. However, the Olympic Charter rule that prohibits political protests at medal ceremonies also requires "applicable public law" to be followed.

The IOC has not yet publicly committed to how athletes who speak out would be protected, activists said in a briefing hosted by Human Rights Watch.

"Silence is complicity and that's why we have concerns," said Rob Koehler, the director general of the Glob-

al Athlete group. "We know the human rights record and the allowance of freedom of expression in China, so there's really not much protection."

The IOC has not responded to requests in recent days to clarify how Chinese law could apply at the Beijing Games, which open on Feb. 4.

"Chinese laws are very vague on the crimes they can use to prosecute people's free speech," Human Rights Watch researcher Yaqui Wang said, citing potential offences of provoking trouble or inciting subversion.

China's treatment of its Muslim-majority Uyghur people and policies toward Tibet, Hong Kong and Taiwan have come under increased scrutiny ahead of the Olympics. China also drew criticism following the near-total



Student activists wear masks with the colours of the pro-independence East Turkestan flag during a rally to protest the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games, outside the Chinese Embassy in Indonesia last Friday. Dozens of students staged the rally demanding the cancellation of the Beijing Olympics over alleged human rights violations against Muslim Uyghur ethnic minority in China's region of Xinjiang. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana)

disappearance from public view of tennis player Peng Shuai. She wrote in a social media post that she was sexually assaulted by a former senior member of the ruling Communist Party.

Two-time Olympic cross-country skier Noah

Hoffman said he knew the United States team was now shielding its athletes from facing questions.

"That makes me upset and I am scared for their safety when they go to China," Hoffman said. "They

cont'd on pg 17

West Indies U19 stay alive with win over Scotland

Loop - Trinidad and Tobago's Shiva Sankar and Anderson Mahase accounted for five wickets as West Indies defeated Scotland by seven wickets to keep alive their chances of making it to the quarterfinals of the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup.

Australia beat the West Indies by six wickets in their opening game on Friday to dent the home team's chances of making the playoffs.

However, the West Indies bounced back on Monday at Basseterre to bowl out Scotland for 95 in 35.1 overs.

Left-arm pacer Sankar took 3 for 17,



Trinidad and Tobago and West Indies U19 player, Shiva Sankar.

while right-arm medium pacer Anderson Mahase had 2 for 16.

Onake Amory had figures of 2 for 16 against a Scotland team where only Ol-

iver Davidson (43) resisted the West Indies attack. West Indies opener Shaqkere Parris (26) top-scored with 26, while Teddy Bishop (23 not out) and Jordan Johnson (14 not out) saw the hosts home with 30.2 overs to spare.

With Sri Lanka beating Scotland in their opening game, West Indies must now beat Sri Lanka on Friday to get into the quarterfinals.

Summarised scores: Scotland 95 in 35.1 overs (Davidson 43, Sankar 3/17) vs West Indies 96/3 in 19.4 overs (Parris 29, Pete 1/15). West Indies won by seven wickets

England investigate after police break up post-Ashes party

BBC - The England and Wales Cricket Board will investigate after police were called to break up an early-hours drinking session at the team hotel.

England and Australia's players and staff got together to mark the end of the Ashes at the tourists' Hobart base.

Video shows England captain Joe Root, bowler James Anderson and Australia trio Nathan Lyon, Alex Carey and Travis Head being told to disperse by police.

"The England party have apologised for any inconvenience," said the ECB.

"The hotel management received a noise complaint by a hotel guest and, as is commonplace in Australia, the local police attended the scene.

"When asked to leave by hotel management and the Tasmanian police, the players and management in question returned to their respective hotel rooms.

"The ECB will investigate further. Until such times, we will make no further com-



Players from both teams traditionally get together after the final Test of an Ashes series.

ment."

The investigation will not only focus on the incident itself but also how the video of the police intervention got in the public domain.

The video showed four officers ordering Root, Anderson, Head, Carey and Lyon, who were sat around a table populated by beer bottles, to disperse from a roof terrace.

It was shot by England assistant coach Graham

Thorpe, who can be heard naming the players and saying he was "videoing this for the lawyers".

Thorpe took charge of England for the drawn fourth Test in Sydney when head coach Chris Silverwood was in isolation after testing positive for Covid-19.

England's coaching team were already under pressure following England's 4-0 series defeat.

The incident comes the day after a newspaper report suggested a drinking culture had developed on the tour among England staff and players, exacerbated by Covid restrictions placed on the tourists.

Tasmania police confirmed they were called to the Crowne Plaza hotel after 06:00 local time following a report of "intoxicated people". They said no further ac-

tion would be taken.

BBC Sport chief cricket writer Stephan Shemilt said: "The fact that England and Australia players were drinking together after the series is not new or shocking, neither is the fact they were socialising until the early hours - post-match duties at the end of the day-night Test would have gone on until midnight on Sunday.

"The most embarrassing thing from England's point of view is that the video of the police intervention has been widely shared online. How did it get out? And why?"

"Serious questions will be asked of Thorpe, whose position was already under scrutiny given the dismal performance of England's batters across the Ashes series.

"It is a fittingly low end to what has been a miserable Ashes tour."

cont'd from pg 16

can speak out when they get back."

Activists cited the cases of Peng, wrestler Navid Afkari, who was executed in Iran in 2020, and the treatment of athletes by the authoritarian regime in Belarus as examples where the IOC could have done more to protect athletes.

Amid concerns about data privacy and spying in China, some Olympic teams in Europe have also advised athletes not to take personal telephones and laptops to Beijing.

"Any person with a sane mind who hears all these things," Koehler said, "must have concerns."

BGI box office opens for WI vs Eng T20I series with special promotion for local fans

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (CWI) – Cricket West Indies (CWI) today announced the opening of the box office at Kensington Oval for the first ever five match Betway T20 International (T20I) Series between West Indies and England.

The highly anticipated five-match Betway T20I Series will feature two consecutive weekends of back-to-back T20Is starting on Saturday January 22 and concluding on Sunday January 30. CWI has been working with the Government of Barbados, the Barbados Cricket Association (BCA) and Kensington Oval to provide the safest venue possible for fully vaccinated fans.

The ticket box office, located on the Western side of Kensington Oval between the venue and Fontabelle Road, opens today, and will be open from 10am to 6pm for the duration of the Series. Tickets range from US\$40 to US\$80 for any of the seated stands, and Caribbean fans are entitled to a 50 percent discount on all tickets except the Banks Party Stand, so long as they present their local/national ID. Fans can buy a maximum of four tickets per person per day.

A special ticket price of US\$75 is available for the Banks Party Stand presented by Power By Four,



Kensington Oval box office to open today for Betway T20I Series

either through the box office, online ticket service or through Power by Four representatives. Party Stand fans must also present a negative rapid antigen test, administered by one of the Barbados governments approved list of testers/testing locations, taken no more than 48 hours ahead of each match day.

For fans wanting to pay with credit or debit card, this is only available through CWI's new ticket service at www.windiescricket.com/tickets. In addition to being able to choose and pay for your seats in advance from anywhere in the world, the service allows fans to save their purchased tickets to their device for ticket scanning at the venue, avoiding the need for queues and travel to the box office.

There is limited availability of seats available with a high chance that tickets will be sold out before the day of each game

because the venue is operating at 50% capacity as a result of COVID-19 protocols. Fully vaccinated fans will be able to sit with their family or travel groups, whilst marshals and stewards ensure social distancing between groups of fans. Fans are reminded that only those fully vaccinated against COVID-19 - the sole or second dose of a recognized COVID-19 vaccine must have been administered more than 14 days before the start for the match - will be allowed into the venues on presentation of their vaccination documentation. Fans must also wear face masks at all times other than when eating and drinking.

CWI Commercial Director Dominic Warne said: "We are excited to open the box office today for this historic Betway T20I Series. A huge collaborative effort has allowed for fully vaccinated fans to see these

five matches in a safe environment. A range of ticket prices allows for different viewing locations and budgets, and we're sure that local fans will be excited by a special 50% off price when they present their local ID. We encourage all fans to carefully follow the COVID-19 protocols at the venue to enjoy thrilling T20I cricket between two exciting teams."

The new ticket service will also offer advance ticketing access for every West Indies home fixture, delivering tickets direct to fans' mobile devices for presentation on mobile screens for entry into the stadium. Alternatively, fans can print out their tickets at home to bring to the game. Every fan can receive special match day incentives and promotions through their ticket accounts.

Betway T20 International Series, West Indies v England at Kensington Oval, Barbados

Play starts 4pm local time (3pm Jamaica)

Match schedule
 Saturday, January 22: 1st Betway T20 International
 Sunday, January 23: 2nd T20 Betway International
 Wednesday, January 26: 3rd Betway T20 International
 Saturday, January 29: 4th Betway T20 International
 Sunday, January 30: 5th Betway T20 International

Nets' star Irving steadfast on vaccine despite Durant injury

AP - Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving insists an injury to teammate Kevin Durant won't change his stance on not getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Irving, who only recently returned to action after a drawn-out stalemate over getting vaccinated, said Monday following a loss to the Cavaliers that he has no intention of getting the shot — and nothing will sway him.

“That’s my decision already, and I’m standing on it,” Irving said.

The seven-time All-Star point guard has become a lightning rod of sorts for his decision not to get the vaccine. And due to COVID-19 mandates in New York City concerning public arenas, Irving is not permitted to play in home games.

His decision to remain unvaccinated is having a dramatic impact on the Nets and their ability to contend for an NBA championship, something that almost seemed assured when the team landed Irving, Durant and James Harden.



Brooklyn Nets' Kyrie Irving (11) drives against Cleveland Cavaliers' Isaac Okoro (35) in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Jan. 17, 2022, in Cleveland. (AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

With Durant potentially sidelined for six weeks with a knee injury suffered Saturday, Irving was asked if he's feeling more pressure to get vaccinated.

Irving made it clear he's not been moved to act.

“That’s what I think comes into a lot of this culture and basketball and sport and entertainment,” Irving said in his strongest comments on the sensitive subject. “You bring in teams and you bring in situations. Kev’s going to heal. Kev’s going to be OK, and we’re going to have to deal with

that as his teammates.

“But in terms of where I am with my life outside of this, I stay rooted in my decision and that’s just what it is. It’s not going to be swayed just because of one thing in this NBA life that somehow it’s brought to my attention to being more important than what’s going on in the real world.

“It’s just not happening for me.”

Irving scored a team-high 27 points in Brooklyn’s 114-107 loss to the Cavaliers. It was just his fourth game back this season with

the Nets, who have been dealing with injuries — and other distractions — since acquiring Harden to play with Irving and Durant.

During his postgame interview, Irving said he’s bothered that his decision is being questioned and that it’s almost always framed in the context of his profession — not his personal life.

“I respect everyone else’s decision,” he said. “I’m not going to try to convince anyone of anything or anything like that. And though we’re dealing with this right now with Kev, I just know that I’m protected by the organization. I’m protected by my teammates. I’m protected by all the doctors I’ve talked to and I’m just staying rooted.”

The 29-year-old Irving has never shied away from speaking his mind on any subject, and that openness has often led to criticism, and in his view, being misunderstood.

Irving took offence at being asked if there was anything that would make him reconsider the vaccine.

cont'd from pg 19

is the head coach, Kieron Pollard, who is the white ball [captain] and Director of Cricket, Jimmy Adams.

“If CWI wants to be able to salvage any pride and save West Indies cricket, we have to clean shop! Because to me, what we’re actually doing is we’re almost making folks a scapegoat. So

we’re trying to make Roger Harper and Miles Bascombe the scapegoats from the performances of the West Indies white ball team.

“I think we have to examine the coaching structure and the coach has to be held accountable, because in fairness, he’s not bringing home the goods, he’s not bringing home the

results. They are getting preparation; CWI have been investing heavily in the white ball team. But the results? Nah! We’re not getting anything.

“So maybe it’s time to be able to clean shop and the time has come where Phil Simmons has to go, along with Kieron Pollard,” Springer concluded.

Vernon Springer: Time for Windies to “clean shop”

By Eboni Brandon

Veteran sportscaster Vernon Springer says the underwhelming performances of the West Indies senior men’s team in recent times should serve as a wakeup call for cricket administrators that swift and decisive changes must be made.

Springer, a seasoned sports analyst, expressed the view that the issues with the composition of the Windies’ men’s squads go beyond poor choices by Cricket West Indies (CWI) selectors. He believes scrutiny should be extended to the management of the team, beginning with head coach, Phil Simmons.

“The overall of West Indies cricket can’t only start with the selectors, and it is a bigger problem than just the selectors. One has to examine the coaching structure of the present West Indies senior men’s team.

“When you can go to the T20 World Cup and, relatively you can say, only one game, out of the competition after being the defending champions, I think that is almost a let down.

“And then moreso, to compound the problem, to lose the ODI series which was just completed in Jamaica to Ireland is almost like a sinking low,” Springer lamented.

Ireland achieved a historic series win over the West Indies after coming out victorious in the deciding one-day international by two wickets at Sabina Park last Sunday.

The 2-1 come-from-behind series

victory from the third ODI gave Ireland a first ODI series win away from home against a full member.

This also was only its second series win against a full member, after Zimbabwe at home in 2019.

He went on to zero in on specific areas in support of his opinion, particularly in relation to the team’s white ball performances.

“When you look at the West Indies white ball team, they almost look out of sorts.

“First the T20 team, we were out-bowled in the T20 World Cup. And then in the Ireland v West Indies series, where the matches were played in Jamaica, Ireland just outbowled us *and* out batted us in the three game series!

“So I think the time has come where we maybe need to examine the role of the West Indies head coach, Phil Simmons.

“Phil Simmons is coaching the test team, the T20 team, the ODI team. We maybe have to start asking ourselves some questions: is Phil Simmons fit enough for the job? Is he capable? Can he turn his team around? Because when you look at the present team, there’s a decline in all of our cricket; our feilding, our batting and our bowling, and it certainly means that we are not getting our combinations right,” said Springer.

The sports journalist expressed some optimism over the recent news of Barbadian Sir Desmond Haynes’



Cricket analyst Vernon Springer says CWI needs to “clean shop” starting with Windies head coach, Phil Simmons

appointment as CWI’s new Lead Selector. He will be joined on the new panel by former West Indies captain, Ramnaresh Sarwan.

Sir Desmond, 65, who replaces Roger Harper whose term came to an end in December last year, will lead the selection panel until 30th June 2024.

But Sir Desmond and the new panel of selectors do not take up their new roles until after the first West Indies v England tour this year which gets underway on 22nd January.

“They don’t come into play until, I think, after the England series, but before you now have Phil Simmons, who *cont’d on pg 24*