



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

POINTEXPRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

THURSDAY 27TH JANUARY 2022

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 19

WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

15 YEAR-OLD DIES IN TRAGIC TRAFFIC ACCIDENT



Story on Page 5

ABDF Coast Guard facing criticism following Jahmali Smith drowning

The Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard is facing harsh criticism over their response to calls for help in the untimely drowning of Jahmali Smith on the weekend.

Smith's relatives have been vocal in local media regarding what they consider the lack of urgency with which the Coast Guard approached the family's pleas for help to find the missing 23 year-old on Sunday.

Jahmali, who was said to be a good swimmer, disappeared from sight after he went into the water at Pigeon Point Beach during a family outing.

According to a police report, the family immediately began a search for the young man and reached out to authorities for assistance finding the former Caribbean Water Treatment Company employee.

The search ended tragically however when his lifeless body was recovered after 11pm in the ocean's shallows.

He was pronounced dead by a medical doctor shortly after 1am Monday.

His family, however, now claim that the Coast Guard was reluctant to immediately join the search for Jahmali, proposing instead that they would begin the search on Monday morning at first light.

According to the family, the Coast Guard did not turn up for several hours after the initial 911 call for help was



Jahmali Smith

made by Jahmali's mother, Elka Jarvis.

The Dockyard Police Station's log indicates that the distress call was received by them on Sunday at 7:55pm.

More disturbingly, family members claim that they were told the search could not begin because, "the guy that was supposed to come and do the search, it's his day off."

A police press statement on the incident on Monday said the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard and the Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue (ABSAR) responded to the call for help finding Smith. It was not stated when they arrived.

Jahmali's family claims, however, that they were the ones who found their loved one's lifeless body after enlisting the help of a fisherman family friend who made his boat available to comb the dark coastline.

While the family is adamant that there was no sense of urgency in the authority's approach to the search, ABSAR has said that they were made aware of the distress call after 10pm, more than two hours after police records indicate they had been informed.

While the Coast Guard has issued a statement concerning the Smith incident, it has not responded directly to the family's accusations.

This is not the first time the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard has come in for criticism regard-



LtCrd Elroy Smith

ing its response to calls for help stemming from crises at sea.

In late June 2021, the families of fishermen, Lester Small and Leon Sears, slammed the agency after the men went missing at sea.

The families of Small, 49, and Sears, 56, reported the men went missing following what should have been a one day fishing trip on June 23rd 2021. However, the Coast Guard's records stated that they were not called in to begin the search until the morning of 25th June.

After an extensive inter-agency search that covered approximately 1,800 square miles of ocean, the authorities ended the search for the men after a week.

The families ire over the lack of communication from the Coast Guard triggered public outrage which ultimately resulted in Lieutenant Commander Elroy Skerritt of the Defence Force Coast Guard publicly admitting that his organisation failed to adequately communicate with the families.

Responding to the criticism, LtCdr. Skerritt agreed that communication with persons concerned in these sorts of incidents would have to be more organised moving forward.

"We admit that we could have done

cont'd on pg 3



Lester Small

Leon Sears

Coast Guard issues statement on Jamali Smith drowning

On Wednesday afternoon following harsh criticism from Elka Jarvis, the mother of Jahmali Smith who drowned at Pigeon Point Beach on Sunday, the Coast Guard issued a press release addressing the incident.

According to the release: "On receiving the report, the Coast Guard immediately contacted the individual who made the original report to the Police Station, the person was reportedly Elca Jarvis, mother of the missing young man. Miss Jarvis informed the Coast Guard that her son went swimming with some friends at the Pigeon Point Beach between 1:00pm and 5:00pm.

"Persons were subsequently mobilised and at approximately 9:21pm Coast Guard personnel and Dockyard Police arrived at the beach in a vehicle and joined the search party that was already there at Pigeon Point Beach and along the coastline in an attempt to find Jahmali. The law enforcement officials were subsequently joined by ABSAR who provided a search from the water-side.

"A Coast Guard vessel travelled from



Officers conducting patrols aboard an ABDF Coast Guard vessel

St John's to assist with the search arrived on scene subsequently at 11:05pm.

"Jahmali's lifeless body was later discovered about 11:19pm by the shoreline search party at the southern area of the beach, not far from the shore.

"The mother identified the lifeless body to be her son. At approximately 1:05am Dr Warner pronounced Jahmali Smith to be deceased."

The ABDF Coast Guard went on to offer their sympathy to Smith's family.

"The Antigua and Barbuda Defence

Force would like to extend condolences to the family of the deceased as they endure this tragic loss.

"The Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard is committed to the safety of all users of Antigua and Barbuda waters and would always go the extra mile to address marine reports in a timely and professional manner.

"The Coast Guard advises sea bathers to exercise extra care while utilising the beaches," the Coast Guard's statement concluded.

cont'd from pg 2

more to keep the family abreast of our efforts," said LtCdr. Skeritt in July last year.

He also indicated that the Coast Guard had not received a mayday call for help from Small and Sears' vessel, Eden. With this latest incident a mere seven months later, it raises questions concerning how incidents are being communicated across organisations when incidents occur at sea.

In both the Smith drown-

ing and the Sears and Small disappearances, the timelines agreed to and corroborated between the affected parties suggest that there is a con-

siderable delay in communication between calls for lifesaving help to the police when persons fall into distress at sea, and the time this

information is relayed to the Coast Guard and search and rescue so that the necessary machinery can be activated efficiently.

Thu 27 | Day

81°



15%
ENE 13 mph

A mainly sunny sky. High 81F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.

Humidity
67%

UV Index
9 of 10

Sunrise
6:39 am

Sunset
6:00 pm

Thu 27 | Night

73°



23%
ENE 9 mph

Mostly clear skies. Low 73F. Winds ENE at 5 to 10 mph.

Humidity
78%

UV Index
0 of 10

Moonrise
1:54 am

Moonset
1:26 pm

Waning Crescent

U.S. should boost financing to Caribbean nations, PM Browne

By Brian Ellsworth

The United States should increase financing and aid to the Caribbean to help the region recover from the pandemic and cope with the growing impact of climate change, Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne said in an interview with Reuters.

Countries in the region are facing unsustainable debt loads often equivalent to 100% of gross domestic product (GDP), Browne said, adding that many have been relying on loans from China due to favourable terms offered by Chinese banks.

"I feel that the U.S. ought to pay more attention to the Caribbean region in helping us to maintain our standard of living to avoid any mass movement of people," he said in a telephone interview on Tuesday.

"If people are unable to live in (Caribbean) countries, then clearly they'll end up on the shores of the United States as refugees."

China has lent over \$4 billion to Caribbean nations in the last 10 years, according to figures compiled by the Washington-based Inter-American Dialogue, much of which has gone to finance infrastructure development.

The conditions of those loans are



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

more favourable than even those provided by multilateral agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Browne said, adding that borrowing from Chinese banks should not be understood as a political statement.

The U.S. State Department did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The Caribbean was disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the IMF, which last year said tourism-dependent countries in the region saw economies contract by 9.8% in 2020.

Many struggle to get aid because multilateral agencies tend to classify them as a middle or high-income nations based on per-capita GDP measurements, which do not factor in the higher costs facing small island nations or their vulnerability to climate change.

Sustained U.S. support for changing

those criteria would provide a significant boost for the Caribbean, Browne said.

"We expect the United States would use its influence in the multinational financial institutions to effect that change," Browne said, adding he had not seen evidence that this was happening.

The vast majority of some \$336 million in U.S. aid to members of the Caribbean Community, or Caricom, goes to Haiti, with only around \$70 million being distributed among 13 other countries, he said.

The population of those countries is around 7.5 million.

"It's just miniscule," Browne said.

Antigua and Barbuda, a nation of two main islands and several smaller ones in the northeastern Caribbean, has, like other countries in the region, faced growing expenses associated with extreme weather events.

Hurricane Irma in 2017 ravaged Barbuda, leaving all buildings uninhabitable and forcing the evacuation of all residents for nearly 18 months. Reconstruction costs were in excess of \$200 million.

Antigua and Barbuda bore most of those costs, but got only \$169,000 in aid from the United States in 2019, Browne said.

LIAT remembers its late chairman



Former Chairman Dr. Jean Holder

Antigua based airline LIAT's management and staff have paid tribute to former Chairman Dr. Jean Holder who passed away on Tuesday aged 85 years.

A statement from the airline read: "He will be remembered for creating the Consultative Mechanism Meetings, a medium of communication between the Management of LIAT and the Standing Re-

gional Consultative Council of Trade Unions within the LIAT System which comprised of the eleven trade unions that represented LIAT employees.

"Dr. Holder was known for his skilled diplomacy, faithful service and commitment to ensuring regional connectivity. We join in mourning the loss of this pre-eminent Caribbean son and

passionate regionalist."

After more than two decades in the position, Dr. Jean Holder announced his retirement as chairman of LIAT on 16th December, 2019, at the company's annual general meeting in Antigua.

The Management and staff of LIAT extend deepest sympathies to the Holder family, his friends, and the

cont'd on pg 5

15 year-old dies in tragic traffic accident

A 15 year-old boy has become the second road fatality of 2022.

The boy, identified up to press time only by the name Azorae, was reportedly run over by a pickup truck while riding his bike on Wednesday evening in Liberta Village.

Witnesses say the accident occurred near the Bargain Centre Supermarket in Liberta.

Emergency Medical Services responded within ten minutes of receiving word of the accident at 6:48pm.

Videos in circulation on social media showed EMTs rendering assistance to the young man who still appeared to be conscious.

Early reports suggested that the teenager succumbed to his injuries after arriving at the Sir Lester Bird Med-



ical Centre.

The circumstances which lead to the youngster being crushed by the truck are not yet clear and up to press, police had not issued a statement.

When contacted by Pointe Xpress late Wednesday night, the police advised that investigations are ongoing and that a statement will be issued when more details become available.



H. E. Dr. Dario Item, Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the UNWTO

UNWTO welcomes newest member, Antigua and Barbuda

Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili met the Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda for the first time since the country became UNWTO's 160th Member State late last year.

The Caribbean destination became UNWTO's newest Member State and eighth in the Caribbean region when its application was approved by the 24th

Session of the General Assembly in December 2021.

The government of Antigua and Barbuda has appointed Dr. Dario Item, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Spain, as its Permanent Representative to the UNWTO as well as its Head of Permanent Mission to the organisation.

Secretary-General Pololikashvili welcomed Dr.

Item, receiving his credentials at the UNWTO headquarters in Madrid. Given the importance of tourism to the islands, the restart of tourism will bring economic growth and social opportunities. In 2020, Antigua and Barbuda welcomed 125,000 international arrivals and tourism receipts totalled US\$349 million.

Now as a Member State, UNWTO and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda will work together to enhance the sector's importance as a pillar of sustainable development, with innovation and tourism education shared priorities.

cont'd from pg 4

people of Barbados.

Dr. Holder served as First Secretary in the Barbados High Commission, which was established post-Independence, before returning to Bridgetown in 1968 to head the Economic and Policy Division of the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs. He spent 30 years in regional tourism, serving as Executive Director of the Caribbean Tourism Research and Development Centre, which later became the Caribbean Tourism Organization.

He then moved into the private sector to become the chairman of LIAT.

Health education critical in addressing lifestyle related diseases

Simple. Practical. Proactive.

This is the ideal approach to health care according to Dr. Collin Coker.

Dr. Coker, a regular on Pointe FM's morning show, Pointe On De Streetz, said on Wednesday that any health care regimen is only as good as the effort made by a patient after they leave their doctor.

In his view, whether a person is coping with chronic diseases such as diabetes or hypertension, or maintaining a healthy body, it is critical that they implement the good advice of their medical doctor as ultimately, they are responsible for their health.

"As a health care educator, it's always important to allow the person, or your target audience, to understand that they too have an extremely critical role in ensuring that the quality of their life is improved by taking simple, practical and proactive steps," said Dr. Coker.

Dr. Coker is also advocating for more health care providers, at all levels, to become better educators and embrace a holistic approach to the treatment of their patients.

He told host Vernon Springer that it is far better to work to prevent the development of some of the chronic diseases that impact people living in the Caribbean, including diabetes, hypertension and their resulting complications, rather than treat them after they occur.

This, he says, is a more sensible approach which will also reduce the burden these lifestyle related diseases create in an already overwhelmed health care system.

"If health care providers were to continue to educate people in practical ways, and get persons to buy into the importance of building their immune system, the importance of making exercise a normal part of their daily life, getting



adequate rest.

"We can't be so busy on our jobs or trying to make money that we don't get enough sleep, and then we break down and then you spend back the money that you made in a health care provider.

"So we have to use a practical approach and a proactive approach," urged the doctor.

Dr. Coker added that one way of addressing the prevalence of chronic illnesses and lifestyle related diseases is by introducing children to healthy habits early in life.

He believes if children learn to appreciate and make wise decisions related to diet and exercise, that will go a long

cont'd on pg 7

Over 1000 active cases of COVID-19 recorded in January

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed

four hundred and nineteen (419) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Friday 21st January, 2022 at 6pm.

Two hundred and twenty-five (225) cases were recorded on January 20th and one hundred and ninety four (194) on January 21st.

Seven hundred and eighty-six (786) samples were processed.

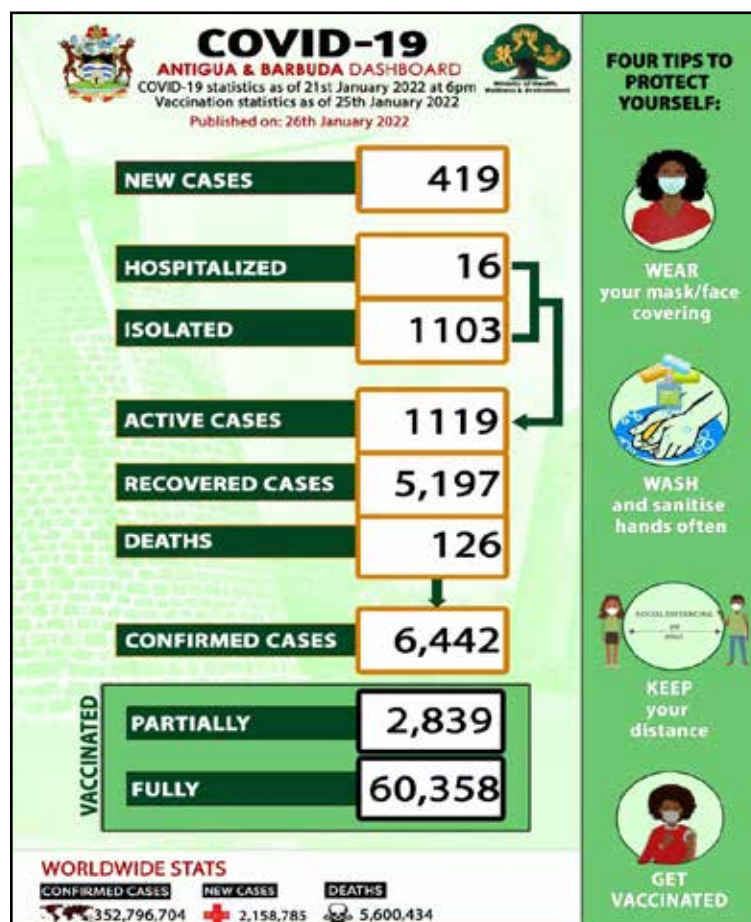
One hundred and seven

(107) recovered cases were recorded.

Four (4) COVID-19 related deaths were recorded at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is six thousand four hundred and forty-two (6,442); which is inclusive of one thousand one hundred and nineteen (1119) active cases.

There are sixteen (16) hospitalised cases; two (2) severe and fourteen (14) mild.



UPP leader signals readiness to regain governance

The main opposition United Progressive has declared its readiness to assume the reins of government, with its leader reaffirming his ability to lead the party to victory when the next general election is called.

At a pre-campaign launch media briefing yesterday, party leader Harold Lovell said a new and stronger party has emerged following their bruising defeat at the polls in 2014 and in 2018.

While many may have written off the UPP, the party leader pointing to what has taken place in Caribbean states said parties that have suffered defeat would have re-organized and that is what they have done, expressing satisfaction at where they are today, as they focus on taking office again.

"When I look at where we were at the end of 2014 after our electoral defeat and when I look at where we are now, and the launch that is taking place today, with a solid set of candidates, and being totally competitive and expecting another election, that's tremendous progress," Lovell declared.

"That's how I measure it,

and I am satisfied that with the grace of God and the support of the people and the energy that we have within the party, we will regain governance in this country and we will set about implementing an agenda for transformation and we too will have our time and then the time will come when the people will choose another government. The simple word for that is called democracy."

General election in Antigua and Barbuda is constitutionally due in 2023 and while there has been no indication as to whether it will be held in 2022 or 2023, Mr. Lovell stated there is nothing preventing them from being in a state of readiness for what he predicts will be a robust election campaign.

Harold Lovell posited that in a society where snap and early elections are common, the party which he leads cannot afford to be casual and await the announcement of an election date before getting into campaign mode.

"We are satisfied that we have engaged our personnel to the extent where we can do a quick jump, a quick sprint, we

can do a middle distance or we can do a long distance over the next 12 months.

"So our campaign has been designed in a very clear way, so that if the election is called in 21 days time, we are nimble enough that we can be there in 21 days.

"If it's in six months, it means that we would have had enough time to do even more than we would have done in the 21 days, and of course if it goes the distance, we are comfortable with that, because it gives us more time to dig down, double down to meet the electorate. So any of the options that we are faced with, we are very comfortable to meet those options."

The former minister of finance, who lost his Saint John's City East seat to the ABLP's Melford Nicholas in 2014, is heading into a second general election as leader of the party, having failed on his first outing to secure a win for the UPP. Lovell was asked at yesterday's press conference about the criticisms levelled against him regarding his inability to lead the political organization.



Harold Lovell

Lovell brushed those criticisms aside and said he is aware he will be targeted, but acknowledged it comes with the position.

"To the extent I am here, they will throw stones at me, I am the leader and if as they say on their radio station, if they can decapitate the party by hitting at the leader and bringing the leader down, it will be to their advantage, so we have to just be very clear about this, in politics like mas, you can't play mas and fraid [Sic] powder, and you can't be the leader of a party and be afraid of criticism. That's what it's all about," Lovell remarked.

The party also launched its website yesterday with the campaign slogan 'UPP - The Right Choice'.

UPP TV will also be available on Youtube, it was noted. The reason given by party member Dr. Jacqui Quinn is for the party to showcase its content, since they have been "grossly underserved with very little coverage from the national broadcasting station".

Yesterday ended with a mega Drive-in Rally at Potters Playing Field, officially launching the UPP's election campaign.

cont'd from pg 6

way to reducing the prevalence of preventable diseases especially in families that are predisposed to them.

His position is, if parents make healthy choices a part of the norm at home, and schools through their meal programmes offer children healthy food and drink, youngsters will be more inclined to embrace healthy habits that they will take with them through life and pass on in time to their own offspring.

"One of the challenges of health education is sometimes it's not started early enough in life and sometimes not enough emphasis is paid in terms of continuous education.

"Most societies tend to be reactive. In other words, when something goes wrong, we react to it rather than being proactive. So then if you look at the rate of childhood obesity, if we were to even start in the primary schools, to try to educate the children on good eating habits and it can't operate in a vacuum," Dr. Coker explained.

The brotherhood of Guantánamo Bay

By Mansoor Adayfi,

Writer, artist, activist, and former Guantánamo prisoner

I was raised in a family that emphasised strong religious values such as brotherhood, compassion and kindness. I also observed these morals practised throughout my small village in Yemen. At home and school, I was taught to follow the example of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), and especially loved his saying, “I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting the highest morals.”

Years later, it was only through my interactions with fellow detainees at Guantánamo that I fully understood what this meant. Through our shared faith, we developed a bond that could not be broken, even as we suffered the most horrendous torture and abuse.

In the autumn of 2001, I was travelling in Afghanistan when I was kidnapped by local warlords, presented to US forces as a “senior Egyptian al-Qaeda operative” and sold to them. I was just 18 years old. Shortly after, in February 2002, I was transferred to Guantánamo.

Like the other detainees, I did not know where I was, why I was there, or why there were constant beatings and shouting. I was confused, terrified, angry, and would often rebel against the constantly changing rules. Being imprisoned for 14 years, I essentially grew up in Guantánamo. I would often recall the lessons I was taught in my childhood and even during the relentless abuse, would reflect on the Prophet’s tradition and teachings about moral character.

After living together for years, being transferred from one camp

within Guantánamo to another, from makeshift cells to solitary confinement to prison cells, we, the prisoners developed a close-knit community. We had a shared life, culture, and memories. We went through it all together, for better or worse, and became a family.

In 2010 when we were transitioned to communal living in Camp 6, our bond deepened. Interrogators and guards were fewer, camp rules were relaxed to give us more freedom, and we began to interact more with each other, as well as the camp staff.

Instead of praying in separate cages, we were able to pray collectively in rows like we would in mosques. Instead of eating on our own, we were able to enjoy meals together just like we would at home with our families. Instead of playing with a football alone, we were able to play in teams just like we would outside of prison. And instead of talking to the same neighbours every day in the cages, we now could talk to tens of prisoners in different blocks.

We did not have much, but we had each other. When the prisoners would call each other, they would say “our Afghan brothers”, “our Yemeni brothers”, and so on. We taught and learned from each other about many different topics and cultural traditions. We borrowed the best traits from each other’s cultures. Arabs started behaving like Afghans and Afghans started behaving like Arabs.

Unsurprisingly, the interrogators would try to turn us against each other. There were prison blocks where the majority of the detainees were either Arabs or Afghans. One day, when the interrogators wanted to iso-



Mansoor Adayfi spent 14 years at Guantánamo without charge [Photo credit: The New York Times]

late me, they moved me to an Afghan block, thinking that my life would be harder because there were no Arabs I could speak to.

Little did they know that if you ended up in a block with a group that is not your own, you would actually be lucky. You would be treated as their guest as long as you were there, and they would try to comfort you in any way they could.

And this is what happened to me. The Afghans treated me like a family member. I ended up teaching Arabic to an illiterate Afghan prisoner and listening to the beautiful poetry of another – an Afghan poet and singer in his 60s who wrote two books of poetry in Pashto at Guantánamo. He

cont'd on pg 9

cont'd from pg 8

always sang his poetry for the block and would sing for me as well.

With Arabs making up the majority of detainees at the camp, many were involved in protests and resistance against the torture and the abuse there. In the beginning, most of the Afghans and prisoners of other nationalities tried not to get involved. The camp administration took that as a sign of fear and tried to exploit it to create divisions.

One day, a Pashto translator came to distribute sheets of paper just for Afghan prisoners. Written on it in Pashto and Dari was the word “hypocrites” with some Arab prisoners’ photos.

The first Afghan prisoner who received that paper threw it at the translator and spat at him. Interrogators really did not understand our brotherhood. They were deluded into thinking they could change us.

The longer we stayed together the stronger our bond grew. The hardship, torture, and mistreatment we suffered brought us together and strengthened our camaraderie. We developed a unique form of solidarity.

When interrogators would torture one of our brothers, most of us would stop talking to them. It was never coordinated and no one told us to do it – we just felt obligated to stand up for our brothers who



The torture and abuse at Guantánamo did not kill our humanity. It only strengthened it.

were suffering.

In the rare moments of joy, we were also together. All of us would celebrate when a prisoner received good news, especially when one of their kids got married or when they became grandfathers. We celebrated our religious holidays together. We fasted the holy month of Ramadan together and marked Eid al-Adha. And when prisoners were transferred from Guantánamo, there would be a big celebration.

Guards and other camp personnel were surprised by our behaviour. They were told that they would meet the worst of the worst – killers, “terrorists”, monsters who were capable of

snapping their necks in a second. When the guards started to work with and talk to us, their views completely changed. Many prisoners and guards developed strong friendships, and some of the guards even converted to Islam.

The bonds we formed and the good moral character I witnessed in each of my fellow prisoners showed me the power of the Prophet’s teachings. Islam is based on perfecting the relationship between us and our Creator (Allah), but also the relationship with ourselves, our families, neighbours, and all who may surround us – including our enemies.

These bonds are inter-

connected, interdependent, and shape who we are and who we become. They challenge us, nurture us, and strengthen us even in times of hardship. I learned that even when we cannot control what happens to us, even when others shed their humanity, we must do everything in our power to preserve ours. We still have the power to embody a high moral ethic as individuals and our relationships with one another. In Guantánamo, we practised the Prophet’s precepts every day.

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect Pointe Xpress’ editorial stance.

The Value of Human Resources

It has been stated that businesses and organisations depend mainly on three key resources to be successful: physical, financial and human. It has been argued that as a resource, people play a vital role in an organisation and it has been generally agreed that the human resource element is the most important.

Human resource (HR) management is a critical function of any organisation. It manages the life cycle of employees through a series of functions such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, health and safety, labour relations, and compensation and benefits. HR practitioners are responsible for ensuring that employees contribute efficiently and effectively towards the overall achievement of organisational goals through the execution of strategies, guidelines, policies and procedures.

An HR professional is generally defined as a skilled and qualified HR expert whose role is to bridge the gap between an employee's performance and an organization's strategic objectives. As mentioned in a previous article not everyone is suited for this role and there are certain characteristics that one must possess to perform this role satisfactorily. Maybe it is because HR practitioners are expected to be endowed with what used to be called soft skills, that the profession is still seen as less technical

than others. However, these core skills that are based on one's personality and attitude, are indeed integral to understanding how we can connect with each other and improve engagement in the workplace.

In addition to these core skills though, we feel that an effective and strategic HR professional needs to also exhibit leadership, agility, technological savvy and business acumen. Firstly, the need to be a transformational leader. This means having the ability to clearly articulate a vision and inspire team members to work towards accomplishing that vision. We must be successful in getting others to not only see the vision but encourage them to exceed expectations by understanding how their personal and professional goals fit into the organisational goals.

Then there is agility. That capacity to be flexible, recognizing that our roles have changed from being primarily focused on recruitment and retention to now being centered on talent development, performance management and fostering a positive workplace environment through employee engagement and managing health and safety. Some experts in the field have posited that the role of the HR practitioner has evolved due to the ever-changing nature of the workplace and the demands placed on increased organisational diversity.

Sukant Ratnakar is the founder of Systovation, a



non-profit organisation dedicated to helping professionals remain relevant in the fast-changing business world. He is quoted as saying that our future success is directly proportional to our ability to understand, adopt and integrate new technology into our work. In HR, fostering a strong relationship with technology is instrumental in helping us build business intelligence that enables us to analyse data and make better decisions. Technology when utilised efficiently, allows for the strategic alignment with business objectives while reducing time and costly mistakes.

A benefit of having good business acumen is the ability to use HR metrics to not only make good HR decisions but also to make decisions that align with our organizations' strategic goals and stakeholder expectations. Business acumen also involves understanding financial metrics. It is critical in these times for us as HR professionals to understand what drives cash flow and profits and to be able to interpret financial statements and analyse performance measures. We need to be aware of how our actions impact

the bottom line.

As we close our anniversary celebrations this month, we hope to build on our continued efforts to highlight the value of HR to every business, regardless of size. We are aware that smaller businesses may not have the resources to hire a dedicated HR professional so we urge you to reach out to HRPAB to provide these services for you through any of our experienced member consultants.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB's growing membership represents private and public organisations as well as independent consultants specialising in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hrpro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HRPro268.

Beating back non-communicable diseases through ancient Indian traditional healing, YOGA

By Tajeram Mohabir

With non-communicable diseases (NCDs) eating up millions of dollars in treatment yet accounting for some 70 per cent of all deaths in Guyana annually, the need for a workable and cost-effective solution to tackle these challenges remains a priority. According to the Health Ministry's Strategic Plan for Integrated Prevention and Control of Chronic Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their Risk Factors 2013-2020, the annual indirect costs of all NCDs were estimated at between US\$207.5M, or 10 percent of GDP, in 2010. The report added that the total annual costs accruing due to NCDs are estimated at US\$221.5M.

Specifically, it noted that the annual direct costs of treating diabetes and or hypertension are estimated to be between US\$7.2M and US\$10.8M, and for cardiovascular diseases and cancer, the estimate is between US\$0.3M and US\$2.5M. The report further noted that of these sums, clinic visits, laboratory tests, treatment and drugs account for the highest burden of these costs.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO) Country Statistics (2016), cardiovascular diseases account for 34 per cent of all deaths in Guyana, followed by cancer and diabetes (eight per cent each), chronic respiratory diseases (three per cent) and other NCDs (14 per cent). Almost seven out of every 10 deaths of Guyanese aged 23-60 years are caused by cancers, chronic lung diseases, diabetes, heart disease and hypertension.

Given the seriousness of these health challenges, and the social and



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading International Yoga Day in 2019

economic costs on the State and families, a lingering question is natural and inevitable: Is there a solution that is workable, cost-effective and available in Guyana? The answer to both questions is a resounding "YES".

WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh says YOGA is a vital tool to increasing physical activity and decreasing non-communicable diseases. Physical exercise, she said, is key to life-long health and well-being, pointing out that it "improves muscular and cardiorespiratory fitness, enhances bone and functional health, and helps prevent depression and promote mental health."

Importantly too, she shared that physical exercise helps to reduce life-threatening NCDs, particularly hypertension, stroke, heart attack and diabetes, which claim millions of lives across the planet every year.

So much for physical exercise, but what is YOGA? Agnela Mazrekar, a

yoga teacher certified by AYUSH, a Government of India Ministry that develops, educates and conducts research in the field of alternative medicine, says, in a nutshell, Yoga connects the body, mind and spirit through the practice of an eight-fold path created by Sage Patanjali more than 2,000 years ago.

Modern-day yoga scholar Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, in a paper titled 'The History of Yoga from Ancient to Modern Times', identified the eight-fold paths as Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yoga instructor Mazrekar said "health and wellness are closely related to the lifestyle of the individual, the latter of which has a tremendous effect on the person's health, depending on how he lives. The principles of yoga, equips the practitioners to balance the body, mind and spirit, and on achievement of this balance, they become

cont'd on pg 12

cont'd from pg 11

better able to deal with the stresses of life without any great monetary cost or mental or physical strain”.

Yama, involves attitudes towards the environment; Niyama, attitudes towards oneself; Asana, physical postures and stretches; Pranayama, restraint or expansion of the breath; Pratyahara, withdrawal of the senses; Dharana, focus or concentration; Dhyana, meditation; and Samadhi, spiritual connection which involves a meditative consciousness.

“Yoga is a universal practice; it is not related to religion, caste or creed, and so anyone can join a yoga session. Yoga is not just about exercises [simple and complex postures], but the integration of the mind, body and spirit into one harmonious whole,” said Mazrekar, an Indian national who used to teach the 5,000-year-old Indian traditional practice at the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in New Haven, Bel Air, Georgetown and now runs her own Yoga Studio called Namaste Yoga Studio in Ogle, East Coast Demerara.

High Commissioner of India to Guyana, H.E. Dr. K.J. Srinivasa states that Yoga, as a way of life has become a Ray of Hope at a time when the entire world was battling the Corona pandemic. India celebrates the International Day of Yoga every year on 21st June which is based on a UN Resolution. In 2020, the theme was “Yoga



at Home and Yoga with Family” while the 2021 Theme was aptly named “Yoga for Wellness”.

In 2021, the High Commission of India in Georgetown celebrated the International Day of Yoga with the Guyana Defence Force, and with the enthusiastic participation of the general public, dignitaries and Indian Diaspora in Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis and Anguilla.

Indian Prime Minister Modi conveyed in his Yoga Day message that, “Today, even medical science lays emphasis on the healing process, besides medical treatment. Yoga helps in the healing process. Doctors have used the ancient practice as an armour to treat patients.”

The concept of International Day of Yoga was proposed by Prime Minister Modi in 2014 during his speech at the UN General Assembly and UN recognised June 21 as International Day of Yoga, which has since evolved into a

mass movement for health around the world. In collaboration with WHO, India has taken another important step. Now there will be a mYoga app which will help us in our “One World, One Health” motto.

BENEFITS OF YOGA

Yoga Guru Agneta Mazrekar claims that after one session, yoga improves brain function, lowers stress levels, and increases flexibility, and that after a few months of practice, participants experience lower blood pressure, improved lung capacity, improved sexual function, reduced chronic neck and back pain, anxiety relief, lower blood sugar levels in diabetics and an improved sense of balance. After years of practice, the expert said practitioners develop stronger bones, healthy weight, and lower risk of heart diseases.

The Journal of Social Sciences and Diabetes in 2017 reported that based on traditional and scientific thinking, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus and hypertension

are some of the NCDs for which yoga may be used with “a favourable effect in modern medicine”.

“Yoga does not only involve stretches to tone the muscles of the body, but it includes meditation, which relaxes the spirit, and together they put the body at complete ease; no tension and stress to increase the blood pressure and sugar levels.” Yoga, aside from helping people cope with NCDs like diabetes, CVD and Hypertension, has also helped many people to overcome severe emotional situations.

LIFE

In addition to helping persons to avoid and cope with various lifestyle diseases, Yoga is also a useful tool in helping persons to overcome physical injuries. According to the Harvard Medical School in an article titled “The physical benefits of yoga”, the ancient Indian practice helps in stress management, promotes flexibility and reduces joint pain.

It's time to start practising Yoga.

Cuban prosecutors say 790 people charged for July anti-gov't protests

AP — Some 790 people who participated in anti-government protests in Cuba last year face prosecution for sedition, violent attacks, public disorder, theft and other crimes, the attorney general's office said Tuesday.

The announcement was the first from prosecutors since August, a month after thousands of Cubans protested in Havana and other cities over grievances including power blackouts, economic hardship and the tightly controlled political system.

The demonstrations were the biggest and most unruly in decades in a nation where freedom of assembly is heavily restricted.

Most of the suspects remain in jail pending the outcome of the mass trials. Some could face prison sen-

tences of up to 30 years in prison if convicted.

The attorney general's office said sedition charges related "to the level of violence demonstrated," noting that some protesters threw stones at hospitals, gasoline stations and other facilities, and also looted.

Human rights groups say the crackdown shows how Cuba's judicial system is routinely used to snuff out dissent.

Cuba, in turn, alleges US-based opposition groups are trying to instigate unrest through social media campaigns.

So far, Cuban courts have heard cases involving 710 people involved in the protests on July 11-12, and 172 have been convicted and sentenced, according to the attorney general's office.

About half of the 55 mi-



Mothers show photos of sons who were arrested [Photo credit: AP]

nors involved in the protests are in detention, it said. Cubans can be prosecuted as adults from the age of 16.

Justicia 11J, a human rights group that monitors the cases and tries to contact the families, had reported 1,300 arrests.

After the protests, Cu-

ban leaders acknowledged some complaints were justified and said they would seek to alleviate distress through social and economic programs.

The government blames a US economic embargo, rather than its state-centred policies, for its problems.

Opposition leader in Belize steps down amid domestic violence row

Opposition Leader in Belize, Patrick Faber, has resigned his position as well as that of the leader of the main opposition United Democratic Party amid a domestic violence row that led to the police issuing a warrant for his arrest last week.

"It is with a very heavy heart that I stand before you today to signal my departure as Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives and leader of our great

United Democratic Party. Both resignations I wish to become effective in a few days, on January 31st, 2022," Faber, a former education minister, said in a statement.

Last week, Faber's fiancé, Dr Shanika Arnold, made a report to the Domestic Violence Unit where she made a complaint against him.

Commissioner of Police Chester Williams indicated that the report had been "one of a domestic nature where

she is alleging that Mr Faber has caused damage to her laptop and had also assaulted her as she was about to leave their home..."

Williams confirmed then that a warrant had been issued in the first instance for the arrest of Faber adding, "the fact is that we have obtained a statement from her in which she had requested court action and so we will proceed with the matter before the court."



UDP Leader Patrick Faber

However, Arnold took to social media to indicate that she had formally withdrawn her report in the presence of attorneys David Morales and O.J. Elrilater, describing

cont'd on pg 14

CARICOM says situation in Haiti is unprecedented

CMC – The 15 member Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on Friday said it is deeply concerned by the deepening of the multi-dimensional crisis in Haiti, telling the international community that its efforts to assist Haiti should go beyond strengthening the police and the judiciary.

CARICOM Secretary General, Dr Carla Barnett, addressing a virtual international meeting on Haiti, organised by Canada, said the situation of institutional collapse with the executive, legislature and judiciary having become dysfunctional at different times and for different reasons is unprecedented.

“There is, consequently, no constitutional or legal way of filling the present institutional void in the absence of elections,” she added.

Earlier, Canadian Prime Minister

Justin Trudeau told the meeting that Haiti’s allies must act immediately to help tackle a spike in violence that is worsening an already precarious humanitarian situation.

He said that the international community also needs to address deep governance problems that are fuelling a political and security crisis in the western hemisphere’s “In order to address Haiti’s humanitarian needs, we must also address the challenging security situation. The increase in violence is only worsening the already precarious humanitarian situation,” Trudeau told the meeting being attended by foreign ministers.

He said this will require immediate action to mitigate violence.

“We must also address the deep governance problems that are fuelling the current political and security crisis.



That includes taking action against corruption.”

Meanwhile, the CARICOM Secretary General said preceding meetings of senior officials have been extremely useful in helping to identify areas and details of the assistance which Haiti’s international partners are willing to provide. She said particular attention has been placed on security, as well as the political and economic.

cont’ d from pg 13

the situation as a “misunderstanding,” and that it was the couple’s intent to resolve the matter privately.

But despite her statement, there had been growing calls for Faber to resign.

The Special Envoy for Families and Children, Rosana Briceño, in calling for Faber’s resignation, noting that the issuing of a warrant for his arrest and then the complainant withdrawing the charges is “a very common occurrence in the cycle of abuse.

“Our women need our support, not criticism, as they navigate the terrible scourge of abuse and violence. It is important that victims know

they are not alone,” Briceño said, adding that domestic violence is mostly perpetrated by current or former intimate partners.

In 2021, Belize recorded over 2,000 cases, almost 30 per cent of which are still open. Briceño has called for a multi-sectoral approach to reach households, communities, educational institutions, businesses, and leaders to demand a zero-tolerance for violence against women and families.

UDP chairman and former attorney general, Michael Peyrefitte, publicly condemned Faber’s behaviour, saying “if we stand with the current situation, we will not get the respect of the Belizean

people and it is my job as chairman of the party to say that we do not stand by that, me specifically as well.

“I do not support that, I do not defend that. Under the circumstances, in the best interest of the party, he needs to resign and he needs to resign now.

“I have a 17-year-old daughter, how do I face her as the chairman of an organisation whose leader, not once, not twice, three times involved or from what we know in these situations. So I would hope that he would do the right thing and just step down,” he said.

Faber, who was due to host a news conference, cancelled the event and instead

issued a statement announcing his resignation.

“While I maintain that the information circulating about matters with Dr Shanika Arnold are not the facts, the ills that come with these allegations are simply too much of a burden for me to place on the shoulders of our beloved party and its faithful membership. I have made a decision to focus my attention on giving my fiancée, in this, her time of need, my full attention and support,” Faber added.

While he has announced his resignation as party leader, Faber sought to reassure his constituents that he will continue to work in their best interest.

Hundreds march in Burkina Faso to show support for new junta

AP — Hundreds of people marched through the streets of Burkina Faso's capital Tuesday in a show of support for the new military-led junta that ousted democratically elected President Roch Marc Christian Kabore and seized control of the country.

Days of gunfire and uncertainty in Ouagadougou ended Monday evening when more than a dozen soldiers on state media declared that the country is being run by their new organisation, the Patriotic Movement for Safeguarding and Restoration.

"Today's events mark a new era for Burkina Faso. They are an opportunity for all the people of Burkina Faso to heal their wounds, to rebuild their cohesion and to celebrate what has always made us who we are: integrity," said Capt. Sisdore Kabre Ouedraogo.

On Tuesday, Ouagadougou was packed with people cheering, singing and dancing and there were reports of celebrations in other parts of the country. The coup came after several demonstrations were held against the Kabore government which was criticised for its ineffective response to Islamic extremist violence.

"I'm happy to be here this morning to support the junta in power. We wish that terrorism be eradicated in the months or the years to come," said Salif Kientga who was at the rally in the capital.



hundreds of people marched the streets of Burkina Faso's capital

Some supporters waved Malian and Burkina Faso flags and held up photos of Mali's junta ruler, Col. Assimi Goita, beside Burkina Faso's new leader, Lt. Col. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba, saying that military rule was the only way to pull both countries out of crisis. Others chanted "Down with ECOWAS," the West African regional bloc that recently sanctioned Mali for delaying elections and which has also condemned the military takeover in Burkina Faso.

The junta closed the borders, imposed a curfew, suspended the constitution and dissolved the government and parliament and said it would return Burkina Faso to constitutional order, but did not specify when. The soldiers said the overthrown president is safe, but did not reveal where he is being held. A publicly circulated resignation letter signed by Kabore said that he was quitting his

office in the best interest of the country.

The coup comes after months of growing frustration at the Kabore government's inability to stem a jihadist insurgency that's wracked the country, killing thousands and displacing 1.5 million people. However, it's unclear what might change under the new junta, as the ill-equipped military has struggled to battle the jihadists linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group.

"A simple change in leadership is unlikely to turn the tide," said Constantin Gouvy, a Burkina Faso researcher who works for the Netherlands-based Clingendael Institute. "If they choose to redouble military efforts, the coup leader, Damiba, has gained experience in a key military leadership position as the commander of the country's 3rd military region ... But a change in leadership is likely not enough on its

own to reverse the deteriorating trend we've been seeing. Burkinabe forces are generally ill-equipped to fight this war."

While not much is known about the new leaders, they appear young and are said to be mid-ranked officers. The new apparent leader, Lt. Col. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba, is a published author in his early 40s and was recently promoted by Kabore.

One mutinous soldier who insisted on anonymity for his security told The Associated Press that younger officers who had experienced war should run the country, rather than older ones who had never used their guns outside of military training, in a nation that had never previously seen fighting. He said the younger men might not have governance experience but they could learn. The junta is now meeting with religious and community leaders as well as the previous government to discuss a way forward, he said.

To some in Burkina Faso, the soldiers' youth is one of the reasons they believe they'll be able to succeed.

"If you look at those who have taken power they seem to be younger and we hope they will bring younger ideas, bring better ideas than we have seen up until now," said Aliou Ouedraogo, a resident of Ouagadougou.

Meanwhile, the international
cont'd on pg 16

Daily US death toll from Covid now matches Delta

BBC - Statistics show that an average of over 2,000 people are dying from the virus in the US every day, roughly on par with the deaths seen in late September.

A large portion of the dead are older than 65 years old or unvaccinated.

To date, more than 866,000 people have died of Covid-19 in the US.

According to statistics from Johns Hopkins University, the daily average of confirmed Covid-19 deaths surpassed 2,000 on 21 January and stood at 2,033 on 23 January.

That's just short of where it was at the peak of the surge in Delta variant cases in September.

But there are many more people in hospital now due to the virus than there were back then, due to much higher case loads.

The average daily number of new confirmed cases in the US far surpasses previous waves.

Dr Abraar Karan, an infectious disease doctor at Stanford University, told the BBC that the high death toll is largely a factor of the high hospitalisation rate, even if the symptoms of the Omicron variant are generally less

severe than those of Delta.

"When you have a more transmissible virus, it would exponentialise the number of severe cases and deaths. Even if you have a low percentage of severe cases, the absolute number can still be quite high. A small percentage of a very large number is still a large number."

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that a vast majority - as much as 75% - of those dying are older than 65.

Additionally, statistics suggest that the unvaccinated are approximately 100 times more likely to die from Covid-19 than those who have been vaccinated and boosted.

"The common thread throughout the Omicron wave is that it is largely impacting the unvaccinated, in terms of severity of illness, hospitalisation rates and indeed, risk of dying from the infection," said Dr Mark Cameron, an associate professor in the department of population and quantitative health sciences at Case Western University in Ohio. "It's crystal clear".

In the US, approximately 63% of residents are fully vaccinated, and



The number of Americans dying each day from Covid-19 now stands as high as it did during the Delta variant's peak, a grim figure that experts believe will rise. [Photo credits: Getty Images]

12% of people are partially vaccinated.

Professor David Larsen, an epidemiologist and global health expert at Syracuse University in New York, said that the rising number of vaccinated individuals - who in many cases will change their behaviours and intermingle with their peers more - may also be contributing to rising hospitalisations and deaths among the remaining unvaccinated.

Dr Cameron added that in many cases, the dangers of Americans being unvaccinated is compounded by other factors, including age and comorbidities such as obesity or hypertension.

cont'd from pg 15

tional community has condemned the takeover.

The West African regional bloc known as ECOWAS, demanded that the soldiers return to their barracks and urged dialogue with the authorities to resolve the issues. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on coup leaders to put down their arms.

On Tuesday, French President Emmanuel Macron,

said he stands by ECOWAS in condemning the coup and that his priority is seeing that Kabore is safe and keeping the situation calm. He said France is monitoring the situation closely. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ravina Shamdasan, said she "deeply deplores" the military takeover and called on the military to immediately release Kabore and other high-level officials who have been de-

tained.

The U.S. State Department said it was deeply concerned by events in Burkina Faso, calling for restraint by all actors, adding that it would be carefully reviewing the events on the ground for any potential impact on assistance.

"We condemn these acts and call on those responsible to deescalate the situation, prevent harm to President Kabore and any other mem-

bers of his government in detention, and return to civilian-led government and constitutional order," said a statement from department spokesman Ned Price issued late Monday. "We acknowledge the tremendous stress on Burkinabe society and security forces posed by ISIS and JNIM but urge military officers to step back, return to their barracks, and address their concerns through dialogue."

Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany agree to new talks

AP — Presidential advisers from Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany met for more than five hours Wednesday over the long-running Ukraine conflict, and reached no breakthrough, but promised to meet for new talks in two weeks in Berlin.

The French president's office released a statement after the Paris talks saying the parties support "unconditional respect" for a cease-fire in eastern Ukraine.

The talks focused on the 2015 Minsk peace agreement aimed at ending the long-running conflict, and the statement didn't address the current concerns about a Russian invasion.

The U.S. has made no concessions to the main Russian demands over Ukraine and NATO in a long-awaited written response delivered to Russia on Wednesday in Moscow, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said.

Blinken said the U.S. response, delivered to the Russian Foreign Ministry by U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan, gave up no ground on "core principles" such as NATO's open-door membership policy and the alliance's military presence in Eastern Europe.

Blinken said the document made clear that the U.S. is standing by its oft-stated positions. "There is no change, there will be no change," he said. But, he said the written response to Russia also contains "serious" offers for a diplomatic path to de-escalate soaring tensions over Ukraine by addressing Russian concerns on other matters.

Russia has warned it would quickly take "retaliatory measures" if the U.S. and its allies rejected its demands.

Blinken said he expects to speak again with Russian Foreign Minister



U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan. [Photo credit: AP News]

Sergey Lavrov in the coming days to get the Russian reaction. But, he said that whether Russia accepts them is entirely the decision of President Vladimir Putin. "That is up to President Putin," he said. "We'll see how they respond."

The U.S. proposals, echoed in a separate document sent to the Russians by NATO, include the potential for negotiations over offensive missile placements and military exercises in Eastern Europe as well as broad arms control agreements as long as Russia withdraws its estimated 100,000 troops from the Ukrainian border.

Moscow has demanded guarantees that NATO will never admit Ukraine and other ex-Soviet nations as members and that the alliance will roll back troop deployments in former Soviet bloc nations. Some of these, like the membership pledge, are nonstarters for the U.S. and its allies, creating a seemingly intractable stalemate that many fear can only end in a war.

The Kremlin has repeatedly de-

nied it has plans to attack Ukraine, but the U.S. and NATO are worried about Russia massing its troops near Ukraine and conducting a series of sweeping military manoeuvres.

As part of the drills, motorised infantry and artillery units in southwestern Russia practiced firing live ammunition, warplanes in Kaliningrad on the Baltic Sea performed bombing runs, dozens of warships sailed for training exercises in the Black Sea and the Arctic, and Russian fighter jets and paratroopers arrived in Belarus for joint war games.

Speaking to Russian lawmakers, Lavrov said he and other top officials will advise Putin on the next steps after receiving the U.S. reply.

"If the West continues its aggressive course, Moscow will take the necessary retaliatory measures," Lavrov said.

But he indicated Russia wouldn't wait forever. "We won't allow our proposals to be drowned in endless discussions," he said.

Djokovic return date confirmed following Australian visa saga

Novak Djokovic is set to return to action at next month's ATP Tour event in Dubai.

The world number one is on the entry list for the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, which begin on 21 February.

It is set to be Djokovic's first appearance since his deportation from Australia ahead of the Australian Open earlier this month.

The 34-year-old has not spoken publicly since returning to Serbia

but has been photographed on a trip to Montenegro.

Entrants to Dubai do not need to be vaccinated against Covid-19 and it is a tournament Djokovic has often played in the past, with the 34 year old winning the title five times.

Djokovic is likely to find playing options severely limited if he remains unvaccinated, and will probably be unable to compete at big events in Indian Wells and Miami in March.



Novak Djokovic

English Cricket comes under fresh fire over racism

English Cricket is back in the firing line over racism in the game after "stereotypical" and outdated views were expressed about the reasons for a lack of interest in the game among Britain's ethnic-minority communities.

Former Yorkshire player Azeem Rafiq delivered harrowing testimony to lawmakers in November in which he said his career had been ended by the abuse he received at the county club.

The Pakistan born off-spinner, who had dreamed of playing for England, said cricket was blighted by institutional racism "up and down the country".

The parliamentary Digital, Cultural, Media and Sports committee issued a report earlier this month



Middlesex chairman Mike O'Farrell

saying English cricket must root out "deep-seated" racism or face losing public money.

Lawmakers on the committee heard evidence from a number of chairmen of English county clubs during their latest session looking into the issue on Tuesday.

Middlesex chairman Mike O'Farrell appeared to

offer generalisations about the reasons why individuals from the African-Caribbean and South communities drifted away from the sport.

"In terms of the South Asian community - we're finding that they do not want to commit necessarily the same time that is necessary to go the next step because they prefer - not

always saying they do it - they prefer to go into other educational fields where cricket becomes secondary."

Rafiq said he was staggered by the remarks, believing they underline the problem the sport faces. He added that O'Farrell's views on black and South Asians players were "a stereotypical way of trying to blame a minority group for why there is a problem in the game."

Ebony Rainford-Brent, the first black woman to play for England and who is now director of women's cricket at Surrey, tweeted: "These outdated views in the game are exactly why we are in this position."

"Unfortunately the decision makers hold onto
cont'd on pg 19

Senegal criticised after striker plays on despite suspected concussion

Senegal have been criticised after Sadio Mane continued playing despite suffering a suspected concussion in a “sickening collision” Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha.

Mane remained on the pitch for several minutes despite appearing to sustain a head injury in the incident during Tuesday’s Africa Cup of Nations match.

The Liverpool striker scored before eventually being substituted.

Brain injury association Headway said Mane’s health had been put at risk.

“On the face of it, this seems to be yet another example of football putting results ahead of player safety,” said Luke Giggs, deputy chief executive of Headway.

“This was a sickening collision that clearly left both players in enough distress for a concussion to have surely been considered a possibility at the very least. At that point, the principle of if in doubt, sit out should have result-



Sadio Mane

ed in Mane being substituted without another ball being kicked.”

Vozinha was sent off for the challenge with Mane and had to be helped off the pitch while visibly unsteady on his feet.

Mane, however, remained on the pitch, despite seeming to lose consciousness in the incident.

Six minutes later he scored an excellent goal for Senegal, before laying down on the halfway line.

It was only then that he was substituted.

“The image of the player collapsing on the ground and having to be helped from the pitch after scoring a goal should tell you everything you need to know about the impact and the effect it had had on his brain,” added Giggs.

In a statement from the Senegal FA, team doctor, Dr. Abdourahmane Fedior, said Mane had been “replaced due to the vertigos

he had on the pitch” after scoring.

“After this we felt it was safer to bring him to the hospital for a scan which didn’t reveal any brain injury or bone lesion. We left the hospital a few moments later and we went to the hotel. For now, he feels well.”

Senegal captain Kalidou Koulibaly denied Mane’s health had been put at risk by being allowed to continue playing.

cont’d from pg 18

these myths.

“The black community only likes football, and Asian community is only interested in education. Seriously, the game deserves better.”

The National Asian Cricket Council tweeted it’s disappointment with O’Farrell comments.

O’Farrell issued a statement apologising for any “hurt” his earlier remarks may have caused.

“I was aiming to make a point that as a game, cricket has failed a generation of young cricketers, in systematically failing to provide them with the same opportunities that other sports and sectors so successfully provide,”

he said.

England and Wales Cricket Board chief executive Tom Harrison told MPs that former England captain Clare Connor would lead a promised review of dressing room culture and that a new anti-discrimination unit would be put up and running by the end of May.



West Indies announce ODI squad for tour of India

CWI - The Cricket West Indies (CWI) Selection Panel today announced the Senior Men's squad for the upcoming three-match One-Day International (ODI) Series against India.

The West Indies will visit the sub-continent from February 6 to 20, where they will also play three T20 Internationals (T20Is).

The ODIs will be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on February 6, 9 and 11.

These matches form part of the ICC ODI Super League and the West Indies will have the opportunity to win points to be one of the top seven teams, excluding hosts India, to gain automatic qualification for the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

The T20Is will be played at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on February 16, 18 and 20, with the squad expected to be announced on Friday.

Kemar Roach, the experienced fast bowler; Nkrumah Bonner, the middle-order batsman, and Brandon King, the opening batsman, have been recalled to the squad.

Roach has so far played 92 ODIs with 124 wickets.

Bonner made his ODI debut in Bangladesh a year ago and has so far played three matches, while King has so far played four matches in this format.

"Kemar Roach is one of our leading fast bowlers and we believe we need bowlers upfront to get early wicket, and Kemar, with an economy rate of five, is certainly good enough to play.

"Over the last few years, Nkrumah Bonner's cricket has come on leaps and bounds and we believe he should be given an opportunity to play in the 50-over format."

Haynes added: "We want to have

competition for places.

"We want to reach a stage where we have a lot of players fighting for positions.

"We want to broaden the pool of players we have to choose from.

"The team we have selected is a very good side and we are looking at this tour as part of the preparations for the World Cup in India in 2023."

FULL SQUAD

Kieron Pollard (Captain), Fabian Allen, Nkrumah Bonner, Darren Bravo, Shamarh Brooks, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Nicholas Pooran, Kemar Roach, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Hayden Walsh Jr.

Full Match Schedule

February 6: 1st ODI at Ahmedabad

February 9: 2nd ODI at Ahmedabad

February 11: 3rd ODI at Ahmedabad

cont'd from pg 22

of three left-arm seamers in the same side failed to pay dividends as only Reece Topley (1-30) threatened, while Garton and Tymal Mills were expensive.

Leg-spinner Adil Rashid was excellent as usual in taking 1-25 but fellow spinners Livingstone and Moeen Ali, captaining in place of Morgan who pulled out just before with a slight quad injury, both went at 14 runs per over.

Morgan has placed importance on development over results in this series and the performances of Banton and Salt will give him encouragement.

Banton, who also kept in the absence of Sam Billings through illness, made his highest T20 international score, striking six sixes to give England hope before he picked out Jason Holder off Kieron Pollard.

Salt similarly smashed anything on length in clearing the ropes five times, but was ultimately left with too much to do before he was bowled by a fine yorker from Romario Shepherd in the final over.

England stand-in captain Moeen Ali said, "A fantastic partnership took the game away from us but I'm proud of the way the boys batted at the end.

"We are confident in our side and

we said from the start it would be a brilliant series."

Meanwhile, player of the match Rovman Powell: "I know I can strike the ball well. I had a problem against wrist spin and the last seven months I went away and have been working on that and opening up the off side.

"Everything came out of the middle today."

Third Twenty20 international, Barbados:

West Indies 224-5 (20 overs): Powell 107 (53), Pooran 70 (43)

England 204-9 (20 overs): Banton 73 (39), Salt 57 (24); Shepherd 3-59

West Indies won 20 runs; lead series 2-1



BARBUDA EXPRESS

SUNDAY
 AB 12:00
 BA 3:45

MONDAY
 AB 7:00
 BA 10:00

TUESDAY TO FRIDAY
 AB 7:00
 BA 3:45

SATURDAY
 AB 7:00
 BA 10:00

TYPHOON EXPRESS

**WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
 (FROM CRABBS)**
 AB 10:30
 BA 3:45

CONTACT US FOR RESERVATIONS +1 268 764-2291

THANK YOU!



UPDATED SCHEDULE

Sports

THURSDAY 27TH JANUARY 2022

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
POINTX PRESS
TRUSTED NEWS AND FEATURES TODAY

West Indies v England: Powell hits fine ton to lead hosts to victory in third T20

Rovman Powell hit a majestic century to lead West Indies to a 20-run victory over England in the third Twenty20 in Barbados.

Powell struck 107 off 53 balls, including 10 sixes, as he ruthlessly punished wayward bowling by England to record his maiden T20 ton.

He put on 122 for the third wicket with Nicholas Pooran, who smashed 70 off 43, as the hosts posted 224-5, their highest T20 score against England.

In reply, England opener Tom Banton made 73 off 39 and T20 debutant Phil Salt hit 57 off 24.

But the rest of the order failed to fire as the much-changed tourists, without injured captain Eoin Morgan, could only reach 204-9.

West Indies now lead the five-match series 2-1, with the final two games to be played on Saturday and Sunday.

After taking 10 deliveries to play himself in, Powell unleashed his tremendous power - hitting the ball particularly cleanly down the ground in his first appearance of the se-



Rovman Powell's previous highest T20 international score was 54 runs.

He dismantled both seam and spin, dispatching the bowlers whenever they missed their lengths.

The Jamaican also showed guile to work good deliveries into gaps in the field in order to scurry ones and twos as he became only the third West Indies batter after Chris Gayle and Evin Lewis to hit a T20 international ton.

Powell, 28, has featured fairly regularly in West Indies' T20 side since his debut in 2017, without ever firmly establishing himself, but they will hope this knock signifies a com-

ing of age.

He built tremendously on the work of Pooran, who made an early onslaught before taking a relative backseat to Powell.

The left-hander had posted his highest score in T20 internationals before he picked out Liam Livingstone at long on; the Lancashire player also taking a fine sliding catch to end a memorable knock from Powell.

England made five changes from the side which won the second T20, with batter Harry Brook and left-arm pace bowler George Garton making

their first international appearances.

Garton started well, producing a fine ball that knocked back Brandon King's off stump, but failed to find that length regularly enough as Pooran and Powell climbed into his bowling.

England's shaky death bowling has come under increased scrutiny in recent months, but they erred throughout the whole innings here - failing to vary their pace well enough to check West Indies' progress.

The rare combination
cont'd on pg 21