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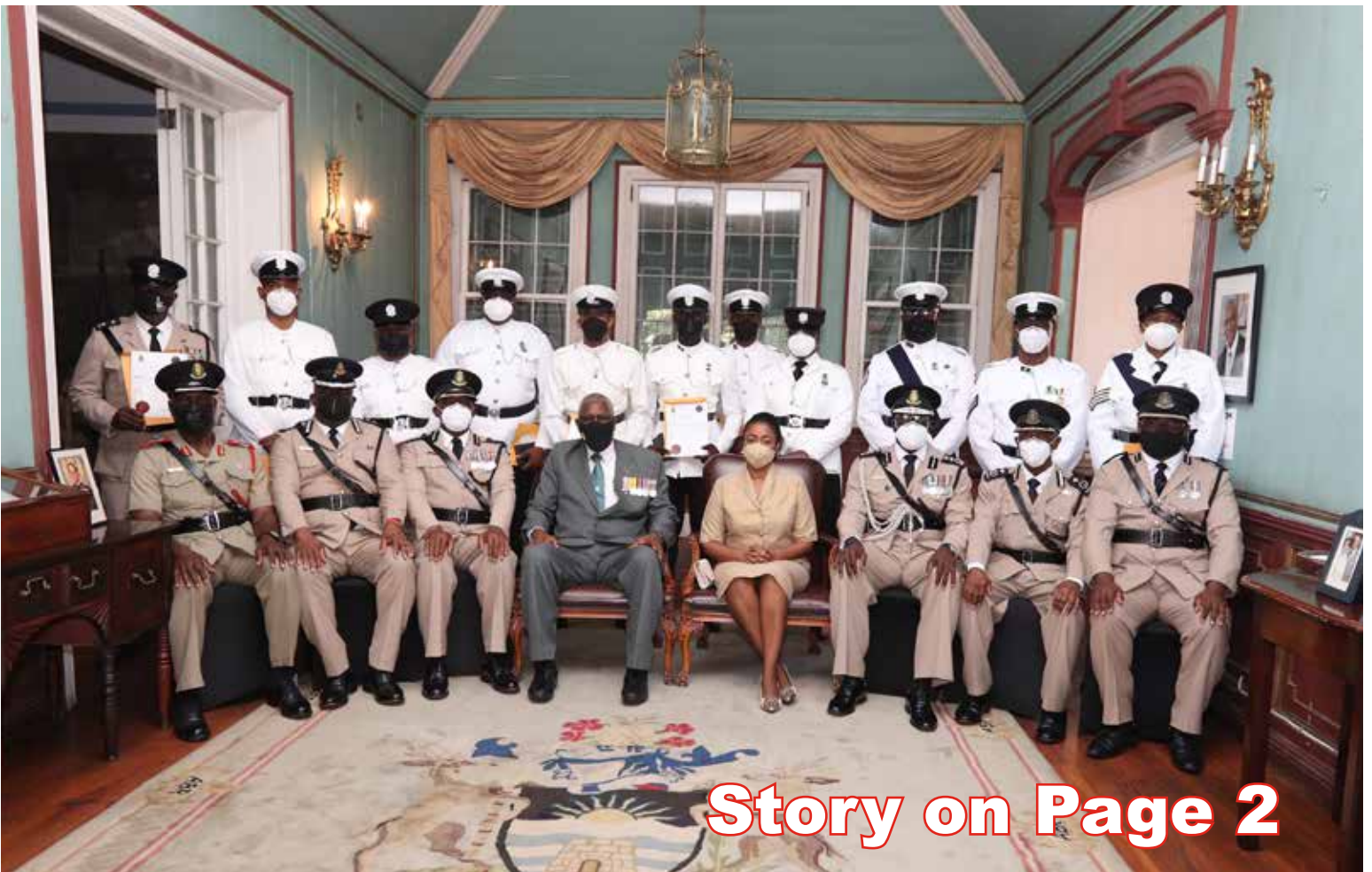
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RSS HONOURS OPERATION LA SOUFRIERE SERVICEMEN



RSS honours for servicemen in Operation La Soufriere

Twenty-nine police officers, soldiers and coast guard personnel were awarded Regional Security System medals yesterday for providing assistance during Operation La Soufriere in 2021.

During an investiture ceremony at Government House, the men and women accepted the honours from Governor General Sir Rodney Williams.

Sir Rodney praised the Antiguan and Barbudan contingent that was deployed to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, following the volcanic eruption, saying the medals represent the country [Antigua and Barbuda] and the region's appreciation for their services in times of disasters.

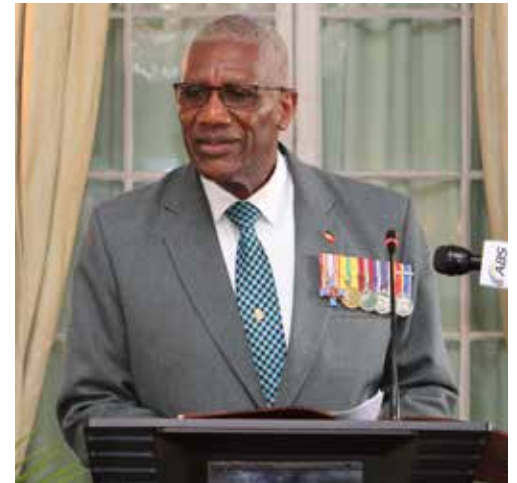
"Our men and women were driven by the philosophy that helping others who are in dire circumstances than themselves is a labour of love and a demonstration of the highest level of humanitarianism. We are pleased that you, our honourees, all passed the test with flying colours, and are here today to reap the fruits of your labour and sacrificial service. We have no doubt that you made a success of what you did, not simply because of your strong personalities, but because of your specialized, quality training, which you received and your professionalism," Sir Rodney said while delivering remarks.

On 9th April, 2021, a Code Red alert was issued in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, following an eruption of the La Soufriere Volcano. The top brass of the Royal Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force subsequently requested security personnel from the RSS in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and security operations.

Antigua and Barbuda, a member of the RSS was one of nine forces within the region that was deployed during 15th April and 18th June, 2021.

On behalf of the ABDF, Vice Chief of Defence, Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Pennyfeather, credited those responsible for establishing the agency that is the Regional Security System, which he said plays a critical role when small island states encounter challenges. The ABDF official reminded the service men and women that because of their efforts, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is in a better position today, following the volcano that had threatened to cause major damage to the island. He applauded the officers for leaving their families behind and putting their own lives on the line.

"That is why we wear the uniforms that we wear and we serve with the commitment in which we serve. That's why we exist, we exist for the common good of our elective nation and region,



H.E. Governor General Sir Rodney Williams

and I do wish to commend you recipients of these medals for the task that you accomplished and not simply accomplished, but did and did well."

Commissioner of Police Atlee Rodney recalled it was a difficult period when the officers were called up for deployment with vaccine mandates, strict quarantine requirements and protocols that were taking place all at the same time. But despite those rigours, they rose to the occasion.

"We appreciate the sacrifice you make, because we saw the conditions that you had to work under, where you had to live, where you had to operate, and the type of duties, and also the length of duties... So you are commended for your sacrifice, and for the service you gave to the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Antiguan and Barbudan contingent that formed part of Operation La Soufriere was lead by Assistant Commissioner of Police, Desmond Dinard.

The decision to award RSS medals to service men and women was taken several years ago at the level of the Council of Ministers. Officers qualify once they participate in such operations for 14 days or more.



Photo Credit: Government House

Two drivers could face charges in Azorae Pennant's death

Both drivers involved in the sequence of events that led to 16 year-old Azorae Pennant being killed on Wednesday night are facing charges.

On Thursday, the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda issued an update on the circumstances that led to the Roman Hill teenager's death.

According to police, the 16yr old pedal cyclist was travelling from South to North along Tyrells

road, while the drivers of a silver Honda CRV Motor Jeep, A43605 and a blue Toyota Hilux Motor Pickup, C744 were both travelling in the opposite direction.

The driver of the SUV was executing a right turn when Azorae swerved east to avoid a collision. Instead, he collided with the rear of the jeep, lost control and was thrown from the cycle into the path of the pickup.

Police say the incident occurred at 6:25pm on Wednesday.

Emergency medical services were called and transported the teen to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre where he was pronounced dead at 7:42 pm.

The police recorded measurements of the scene, and both drivers were warned of intended prosecution.

Investigations into the tragedy are ongoing.



Azorae Pennant

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ARE YOU READY
FOR THE
WEEKEND



#drivesafeantigua



A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

Almost half of drivers have felt
blinded by others



Vaccine requirement for travellers remains for now

Discussions surrounding the possible lifting of the vaccine mandate for incoming passengers has been deferred following initial discussions held at the Cabinet level on Wednesday.

It was Prime Minister Gaston Browne who first revealed last weekend that consideration will be given to removing the requirement, as part of the overall plan to fully re-open the economy.

The pros and cons of such a decision were examined, with the country's epidemiological standing being at the centre of those discussions.

Concluding that the vaccine mandate currently in place has not had a negative

impact on visitor arrivals, government has indicated there is no urgent need to effect changes to what exists.

"We have not yet seen any pronounced impact of the original policy of requiring people to be vaccinated. It has not really dampened the enthusiasm for persons who would want to come here for a vacation," Information Minister Melford Nicholas told reporters during the post-Cabinet press briefing yesterday.

He said reports from the hotel sector are they have not been affected by the mandate.

"And accordingly, we have decided that notwithstanding the prescription of





the World Health Organization to maintain this level of caution, at least for the time being, and to continue to operate in the manner that we had at the start of the year."

The information minister acknowledged that the government is acutely aware that the current mandate will not prove beneficial for Antigua and Barbuda economically, if it is to remain in place indefinitely. Therefore, there is an understanding that at some point the requirement will be removed.

"At some future point in time globally, as we become more comfortable living with COVID that these modalities would have to change, and

clearly, what is now a competitive position in Antigua, if we maintain that position for much longer, could also turn out to be uncompetitive if the global community moves there. So, this is not a fixed position for once and for all. We are looking at it at this particular point in time, having respect to all of the circumstances, we are going to maintain caution for the time being," Minister Nicholas revealed.

It means arriving passengers must continue to show proof of vaccination and must also present a negative rapid or PCR test result. The same will apply for Antiguan and Barbudans re-entering the country. Discussions were also held on whether the requirement should be removed for unvaccinated Antiguan and Barbudans abroad. The Cabinet spokesman said there will be no "dual treatment for that, so citizens who are abroad who are in that particular position, will be required to meet the requirements for re-entry".

Fri 28 Day	Fri 28 Night
80° 	73° 
19%  ENE 14 mph	13%  E 8 mph
Sunshine along with some cloudy intervals. High near 80F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.	A mostly clear sky. Low 73F. Winds E at 5 to 10 mph.
Humidity 70%	Humidity 73%
UV Index 9 of 10	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 6:39 am	Moonrise 2:59 am
Sunset 6:01 pm	Moonset 2:21 pm
	Waning Crescent

Greater collaboration needed between APUA and Works Department

With residents placed on notice that several roads will be dug up to facilitate the laying of new pipes, Cabinet Spokesman Melford Nicholas says he has stressed the need for improved communication between Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) and the Works Department.

For years, residents have complained that the two departments are not working in tandem and no sooner they begin benefitting from paved streets and roads, it is only a matter of time before they are destroyed to allow for APUA to carry out repairs.

Those concerns are being renewed after the Cabi-

net notes revealed that when the pipes arrive and work commences, streets in Point, Camacho Avenue, South Street and all of Montrula will be inconvenienced, since the roads will be dug up in order to replace old pipes.

Information Minister Melford Nicholas said yesterday he is pressing for more dialogue to ensure when work is complete, there won't be the need to dig up areas that were resurfaced.

"Where they're dealing with large development, certainly before the pipes are commissioned, it may be necessary for them to make another intervention below the road, so where they are doing

these large interventions, it may not be appropriate for them to close the road back up and resurface it immediately, until the pipelines are commissioned," he said.

Minister Nicholas agreed that the lack of cooperation by the two departments is a matter that must be addressed.

"It has been a decades old problem and it requires

greater coordination between APUA in the first instance and Public Works. It would be my dream that we would have some type of joint working committee that before an intervention is made that a study is done of the terrain to ensure that after the intervention, there is going to be restitution of the environment to its original useful position," Nicholas posited.

Managers of APUA told the Cabinet on Wednesday that work on replacing old pipes will commence once they arrive from Europe. They are being purchased there because they are less expensive than in the United States.

Supply chain issues have affected the timely delivery of the polyurethane pipes.

APUA will undergo a major project to improve water supply to consumers throughout the country. They have blamed drought conditions and leaking pipes as reasons for the worsening water woes being experienced.

According to the utilities company, more than 20% of potable water is lost through leaking pipes.




BARBUDA EXPRESS

SUNDAY

AB 12:00
BA 3:45

MONDAY

AB 7:00
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TUESDAY TO FRIDAY

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THANK YOU!



UPDATED SCHEDULE

Proportional Representation in elections – key to democratic representation

By Sir Ronald Sanders

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

The second consecutive general elections in Barbados on January 19, at which Mia Mottley's Barbados Labour Party (BLP) won all 30 seats in the House of Representatives, were hailed as historic. They certainly were for Barbados, but not for the English-speaking sub-region of the Caribbean.

The New National Party (NNP) of Dr Keith Mitchell achieved this feat three times in Grenada. Under the system of constituency divisions and first-past-the-post, which also exists in Barbados, the NNP won all 15-seats in 1999, 2013 and 2018.

Winning all the seats in both Grenada and Barbados left opposition political parties without representation in the legislature, and, therefore, unable to question the laws being proposed or the policies being pursued by the governing political party. Thus, an important check on the actions of the ruling party does not exist.

Usually in the liberal

democratic system which English-speaking Caribbean countries inherited from the British, there is a separation of the powers of the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary: the legislature makes the laws; the executive puts the laws into operation; and the judiciary interprets the laws. The powers and functions of each are separate and are expected to be carried out by separate personnel - in the case of the legislature, by elected representatives of governing and opposition parties. The theory is that power, so divided, should prevent the exercise of absolute power by a single group.

In Grenada and Barbados, since the executive and the legislature are both fully controlled by the ruling political party, notwithstanding Senates comprising a majority or persons appointed by the leader of the governing political party, the executive and the legislature are effectively not separated.

However, these conditions have arisen in Grenada and Barbados as a result of democratic elections in which the majority of the electorate decided who should govern their affairs. There was no question that the five elections in both countries were free, fair and transparent. Subsequently, the results reflected



Sir Ronald Sanders

the desire of the majority of the electorate not to install a political party in which they had no confidence or trust.

When these circumstances occur, particularly in small countries such as Grenada and Barbados, checks and balances fall primarily on an independent judiciary which is the custodian of the rights set out in national constitutions. In Barbados and Grenada, the independence of their Courts from the political system is not in question. The Barbados Courts and its highest court of Appeal, the Caribbean Court of Justice, are as independent as the Eastern Caribbean Courts and the British Privy Council which serve Grenada.

But the day-to-day vigilance relies more particularly on a free and vigilant media – these days the social media platforms on which information, commentaries and views are widely shared, whether or

not they are accurate. Governing parties, wishing to be re-elected, follow the criticisms on these unbridled social media platforms carefully.

Notwithstanding, the role of the judiciary and the media – both traditional and social – as checks on ruling political parties with no elected oppositions, the question arises as to whether the electoral system of multiple constituencies and first-past-the-poll should not now be changed constitutionally to always allow for an elected opposition.

It is universally accepted in Caribbean countries that candidates for elections have less appeal than political parties and their leaders. Electors vote for the party and leader they believe could best serve them and the country. It is only in exceptional circumstances that an outstanding candidate could win a constit-

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Opinion

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uency where the majority reject the party and leader concerned.

Further, in small countries, divisions between communities in terms of their needs, aspirations and interests have dissolved with modern road transportation, instant telecommunications, and shared expectations. With the disappearance of these divisions, the electorate votes less for individual candidates and much more for parties and their leaders.

If these two realities are recognised, perhaps the time has come to consider a change of the electoral system to one of proportional representation in which the entire country becomes one constituency to elect contending parties to the House of Representatives. This system would be guaranteed to elect both a ruling party and its leader as well as opposition parties in accordance with the

proportion of votes they receive. Each of the party leaders would submit, in advance of the elections, names that would serve in the House of Representatives or National Assembly.

Had such a system been in place in Barbados for the 2020 general elections, based on preliminary published results, the BLP would have won 21 seats in the 30-member Assembly (roughly 71% of the vote) with Mia Mottley as Prime Minister as the majority of the electorate clearly intended; and the Democratic Labour Party would have won 9 seats (28%).

The majority of the electorate would still choose the leader and governing party they prefer, but the minority would have a voice in the national legislature and the leader of the opposition would exist with all the rights, duties and obligations which the Constitution of the nation confers upon that office.

In Guyana, the only English-speaking Caribbean country in which the British changed the electoral system to proportional representation, elections return representatives of several political parties, giving the governing party a majority in Parliament and ensuring opposition representation.

Electoral reform in the English-speaking Caribbean has been discussed for decades without any attempt to reform the Constitution to make it possible. Now that many countries are again considering constitutional reform in the context of changing from Monarchical to Republican status, perhaps it is also time to consult the people of these countries on reforming the electoral system to ensure that all votes result in representation in Parliament as government and opposition.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com



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Jahwan Joseph, 25, murdered in suspected road rage incident

Antiguan national, Jahwan Joseph, was murdered in Bronx, New York this week in what American authorities say they believe is a road rage incident.

The 25 year-old carpenter was involved in a multi-car crash on Tuesday near the Bronx River Parkway and 177th Street after 9 p.m.

When police arrived Joseph was found unresponsive inside a grey Acura sedan with Georgia plates. He had suffered a gunshot wound to the back.

He was transported to the St. Barnabas Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

"Twenty-five years old. Kid have his whole future in front of him, and they just gun him down for nothing," Jahwan's father, Kenny Jo-



Jahwan Joseph
seph told US media.

"He had to go buy something and come back. I message him and ask him if he's good. He messaged me back and said, "yeah I'm good."

"Next thing I know, three o'clock in the morning, police knocking on my door telling me my son got shot."

He says he can't understand what happened.

"I went over there, it looked like they shot him on the Bronx River Parkway,



Jahwan was found shot to death in his car on Tuesday

and he barely made it off the highway and just veer off to the side," he said.

Kenny said Jahwan, the eldest of his three children, worked alongside him as a union carpenter in Manhattan.

Jahwan, who moved to the US ten years ago with his family, has no criminal record.

"My kid is a good kid. He goes from work to home.

He's not on the street. He have nothing going on out there, nothing at all. Nothing, he has no beef with nobody out there," his father said.

Police have no leads on the gunman who fled the scene immediately. It is also unclear if the shooter was also involved in the accident.

So far there have been no arrests.

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Alleged XPZ arsonist returns to court in March

The man accused of setting fire to XPZ Supermarket located on the Sir Sydney Walling Highway last year will return to court on 16th March for committal proceedings.

Tianzhao "Alex" Feng, a former employee of the supermarket which opened in 2018, is accused of setting the blaze that was responsible for the destruction of the building.

Feng, 29, came under immediate suspicion after he went missing in the days following the 1st June, 2021 fire.

He was subsequently charged and made his first appearance before the St. John's

Magistrates' Court that same month.

Feng has remained on remand at Her Majesty's Prison as his applications for bail have all been unsuccessful. The national of China's immigration status has expired since his arrest and he has been unable to produce his passport. He has also been unable to get an Antigua and Barbuda national to stand as surety, which is a requirement for bail.

This is the third adjournment in the matter. Come March, Feng will learn whether sufficient evidence has been uncovered in order for the matter to proceed to trial in the High Court.



Tianzhao "Alex" Feng

Sandals couple pays tribute to late Antiguan educator by donating to local school

Retired American educators Joseph and Teresa Furnari, who are currently vacationing at Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa have made a donation to the Greenbay Primary School, in honour of the memory of their dear friend, Antiguan educator, Alfonse Ferris, who passed away recently in the United States of America.

The New York residents were friends with Ferris for some 50 years both professionally, through teaching, and personally after he relocated to the United States where he earned a doctorate in Education and served as an administrator for several years.

“When he passed away two weeks ago, we thought it fitting since we were coming to Antigua that we would honour his legacy and contribution to education locally and internationally by donating to his alma mater Greenbay Primary School,” Joseph said.

On Friday, the couple along with Sandals Public Relations Manager Leon Norville journeyed to the educational institution where they met with the school’s principal Temika Christian to officially hand over a cash donation.

Christian was grateful to meet the couple and said, “The money donated will help us at this time especially since plans are in the pipeline to have sanitising products purchased for each classroom as we look to increase efforts to keep our students and teachers safe during this Covid-19 pandemic.”

Before the couple’s departure from the school Christian presented them

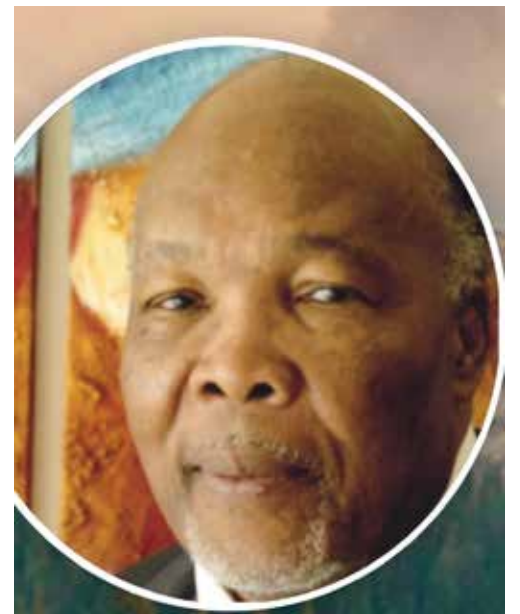


(L-R) Teresa Furnari, Principal of Greenbay Primary School Temika Christian and Joseph Furnari

with a local souvenir - “A Little Bit of Paradise” - which the couple plans to present to Ferris’s wife when they return home.

Teresa was moved by the entire experience and said, “I think it is very important particularly in these times when money is tight, and the technology needed for education is probably not as effective or existing across the globe, that we help wherever we can and in this case, make this donation to the school.

“We feel honoured that we could give a little back to what was important to our friend Al, rather than just make some gesture in terms of flowers or some other thing back home in the US. I know he is looking down and he is saying thank you Joe and Teri for supporting the place where he started his education.”



Late Antiguan Educator Alfonso Ferris

Sandals General Manager Matthew Cornall commended the couple and thanked them for their kind gesture.

He said, “It is small acts of goodwill like these that helps create an impact within our local communities. Here at Sandals Grande Antigua we are always supportive of our guests who visit our beautiful island and choose to leave their mark, no matter how big, or how small, by supporting our residents and giving back to our communities.”

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Police sources say they’re working to determine if this was a road rage incident. They also haven’t ruled out the possibility that it may have been a stray bullet and not a targeted attack.

“Find out who shot my son because

I want justice for my son. My kid is a good kid,” Kenny Joseph said.

“This is too much for me. These guns they have on the street, they need to get them off. Trust me, this is crazy. No parent’s supposed to have to bury their child.”

Entertainers in Dominica to run the show this carnival

Entertainers and event organisers will have the chance to awaken the spirit of Carnival in Dominica this year. Dominica's Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skerit has indicated that this year, Mas Domnik will take the form of special events for the fully vaccinated.

Last week, discussions were still being held to determine how to proceed with the festivities. However, this week PM Skerit announced that provisions have been made to allow the entertainment industry to realise some economic benefits.

Speaking on Sunday's edition of his Anou Parle show, the PM informed that after intense internal discussions and consultation with stakeholders of the entertainment industry, guidelines and protocols have been put in place for the hosting of special events at two designated



venues, one in and the other near the city of Roseau

The Windsor Park Stadium Forecourt will be designated as the main event venue to accommodate a maximum of 500 patrons. The Old Mill Cultural Centre will be approved for virtual events and cater for up to 200 patrons. All patrons, performers, staff, staff support - including health and security and vendors at the event shall be fully vaccinated and present a negative antigen test result within a 24-hour period prior to each event," Skerit explained.

According to the approved guidelines, events shall not exceed a duration of six hours and only one event shall be held per day. There should be no street jump-ups, no village carnivals, no unauthorised gatherings of groups and troops and no activities without having first applied for and received a permit," Skerit stressed.

Approved activities are intended to be managed events for vaccinated patrons within a safe zone to ensure the health and safety of patrons and the wider public, he

said.

On February 28 and March 1, Carnival Monday and Tuesday, events will be held at the forecourt of the Windsor Park Sports Stadium. On both days, events will cater for up to 500 people and will be streamed live online.

Revellers will enjoy the activities from 2 pm to 8 pm. Revellers must be fully vaccinated and show proof of a negative antigen test up to 24 hours before the event.

The policymakers are using these as pilot activities that will aid in the planning of events in the near future. The events will be assessed to determine successes and failures.

"Where there are gaps, we will adjust accordingly to ensure the safety of all patrons and minimise or eliminate completely the threat of COVID-19 spread at events," Skerit said.

Cardi B wins defamation lawsuit against YouTuber Tasha K

CNN - Grammy award-winning rapper Cardi B won a lawsuit Monday against YouTuber Tasha K for defamation, invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress, and was awarded a seven-figure sum in damages.

Cardi B, whose real name is Belcalis Marlenis Almanzar, was targeted by Latasha Transrina Kebe, who goes by the name Tasha K, in a "malicious" campaign to "damage and destroy" her reputation among her fans, according to a 2019 lawsuit filed in the US District

Court Northern District of Georgia.

"Kebe published multiple false and defamatory statements about Plaintiff, including that Plaintiff was a prostitute, that Plaintiff was a user of cocaine, that Plaintiff had and still has herpes," the lawsuit read, which was filed against Tasha K and Kebe Studios LLC.

"By making and publishing the statements, and campaign of harassing videos, including the Defamatory Videos, Defendants were intending to cause Plaintiff emotional distress," the lawsuit stated, and also claimed Cardi B "suf-



Cardi B, Grammy Award artist.

ferred severe humiliations" and "mental anguish."

A jury on Monday awarded Cardi B \$1.5 million in punitive damages, \$1

cont'd on pg 11

Rihanna's foundation donates US\$15 million to climate justice

AP - Rihanna is backing her belief that climate change is a social justice issue by pledging US\$15 million to the movement through her Clara Lionel Foundation.

The We Found Love singer Tuesday announced the donation to 18 climate justice organisations doing work in seven Caribbean nations and the United States, including the Climate Justice Alliance, the Indigenous Environmental Network, and the Movement for Black Lives.

"Climate disasters, which are growing in frequency and intensity,



Rihanna has pledged US\$15 million to climate justice.

do not impact all communities equally, with communities of colour and island nations facing the brunt of climate change," Rihanna said in a statement, adding that is the reason her foundation

prioritises both climate resilience and climate justice work. The grants, made in partnership with Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey's #StartSmall philanthropic initiative, are focused on groups with female, LGBT, and black and indigenous leaders because their communities are at greatest risk.

"Funders must build partnerships with grassroots organisations, acknowledging their deep understanding of what is necessary to achieve climate justice in their own communities," Justine Lucas, Clara Lionel Foundation's executive director, said in a statement.

'Jeopardy!' champion Amy Schneider's history-making run ends



Television show contestant Amy Schneider on the set of "Jeopardy!" After 40 games, Schneider's winning streak has ended. (Casey Drkin/Sony Pictures Television via AP)

AP — "Jeopardy!" champion Amy Schneider's dazzling streak is over, snapped Wednesday by a Chicago librarian after 40 consecutive wins and nearly \$1.4 million in prize money.

Schneider's success put her in the ranks of Ken Jennings, who's serving as guest host, and the quiz show's other all-time greats. It also made Schneider, a trans woman, a visible symbol of achievement for often-marginalised people.

"It's still a little hard to believe," she said of her im-

pressive run. "It's something that I'm going to be remembered for, and that's pretty great."

New champ Rhone Talsma had the correct response to the final "Jeopardy!" clue for a winning total of \$29,600. Schneider, who found herself in the unusual position of entering the last round short of a runaway, was second with \$19,600.

"I'm still in shock," Talsma said in a statement. "I did not expect to be facing a 40-day champion, and I was excited to maybe see someone

else slay the giant. I just really didn't think it was going to be me, so I'm thrilled."

Schneider told The Associated Press that Talsma played well and did a "great job of taking the opportunities when they came up and putting himself in a position to be able to win."

The answer that stumped Schneider was about countries of the world: The only nation whose name in English ends in an "h" and which is also one of the 10 most populous. (Cue the "Jeopardy!" music — and the response is, "What is Bangladesh?")

Among her immediate reactions when the game and her streak ended: She was sad but also relieved that "I don't have to come up with anymore anecdotes," the stories that contestants share during game breaks.

cont'd from pg 10

million for general damages -- such as pain and suffering or reputational injury -- and \$1,338,753.47 in litigation expenses, court papers show.

She was also awarded \$250,000 in medical expenses, but both parties agreed to reduce that to \$25,000.

Cardi B thanked the jury in a statement and said, "These past couple of years have

been difficult for me and constantly reliving it. Very hard for me.

"Thank you to the jurors, you know. The jurors took time off their regular lives ... and made a very fair and right decision," the rapper said in a statement to the media that was published by TMZ.

On Monday afternoon, Tasha K said on Twitter: "My Husband, Attorney's, & I fought really hard," adding, "it's only up from here."

Green gaslighting: Another face of climate denialism

We are living in a moment of our planet's history where carbon dioxide concentrations have peaked for the first time in 3 million years. Humanity is well on track to see an absolutely devastating temperature increase of more than 3C by the end of the century, which would drown coastal cities, render soils in some areas uncultivable, and produce even worse and more prolonged droughts, floods, and heat-wave-induced fires. Addressing climate change requires a profound transformation of global economic and political systems. This needed to happen yesterday, not 10 years from now.

Commitment to immediate and comprehensive action should have been made at the much-awaited UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow last year. Instead, governments, financial institutions and corporations made pledges about reaching "net zero" emissions, building "climate resilience" and "ending deforestation".

While these terms appeal to desires for a modern and ecologically-neutral society, they reflect 20 years of climate solutionism that has changed little to nothing beside filling the pockets of the wealthy. In fact, these words are used to obscure the climate crisis in an act of global gaslighting of epic proportions.

Green gaslighting

According to the Oxford Dictionaries, the word "gas-



A woman walks through a forest land adjacent to Mount Rainier National Park in the state of Washington, US, which is part of a project to sell "carbon credits" to individuals and companies - including Microsoft Corp - who are hoping to offset their carbon footprints [File: AP/Ted S Warren]

lighting" means "the action of manipulating someone by psychological means into accepting a false depiction of reality or doubting their own sanity".

There has been a meteoric rise in the use of "gaslighting" ever since the 2008 global financial meltdown. In its aftermath, political elites spent billions in taxpayers' money bailing out financial institutions which had engaged in various speculative practices, bringing executives and shareholders vast profits. At the same time, they imposed austerity measures that devastated working and middle-class households, while gaslighting them into believing that this is the only way to "fix the economy".

Today, the same tactic is deployed vis-à-vis climate change: "climate solutions" that protect, if not boost, profits of big corporations are deployed and presented as the

only way to combat climate change. Quite often, these very same corporations are responsible for the environmental devastation leading to the present climate crisis.

Green gaslighting goes beyond greenwashing, which constitutes the use of ecological themes as a marketing tool to cover up ecological harm of profit-making activities. Gaslighting does more than deceive the public, it also disempowers and undermines the potential to identify the root causes of climate change and ways to address them. In essence, green gaslighting is just another form of climate denialism.

Gaslighting over ecological concerns is also not a new phenomenon. Indian historian V M Ravi Kumar, for example, documented how in the 19th century British colonialists displaced Indigenous communities to cut down forests for shipbuilding

across South India, which led to significant environmental degradation. When forest loss became a concern for their interests, they blamed the locals for it, planted monoculture tree plantations as a response and declared they had successfully resolved an ecological problem.

The current political and economic powers dominating the planet are taking a page out of the same colonial playbook. Those largely responsible for the current environmental disaster we are experiencing are seeking to gaslight the public into ignoring this fact and accepting the continuation of a dangerous status quo as a solution for it.

The 'net zero' deception

One of the policies that helps governments and corporations maintain the status quo is "net zero emissions", which derives from the idea that carbon emissions and the natural processes of carbon absorption can be assigned value (as carbon credits) and traded.

COP26 will probably go down in history as the conference of the "net zero pledges". There were many of them: from India's desire to be carbon neutral by 2070, China's by 2060, to the EU's goal of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent by the year 2030, to US commitments to cut emissions by 50 percent by the same year.

But these are all illusory climate action measures.

cont'd on pg 13

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“Net zero emissions” does not actually mean bringing emissions down to zero. Rather it refers to a set of policies that aim to compensate continued emissions with projects that absorb carbon elsewhere. These policies are supposed to help remove the extra emissions from the atmosphere through measures like tree planting, enhanced forest protection (i.e. preventing deforestation), and costly carbon capture and storage technologies.

The problem is that evaluating compliance with “net zero” goals is extremely difficult, and so is proving the full efficacy of these “carbon offsetting” measures. For example, over the past 20 years of discussions about carbon offsets, no solid solution has been found to the problem of verifying in a transparent manner how emissions reductions are achieved.

Furthermore, offsetting projects can

have negative social consequences for vulnerable communities. The push for forest expansion, for example, could result in mass displacement of peasants and Indigenous communities from their ancestral lands and into peri-urban slums where devastating poverty awaits them.

Corporations are already eyeing land in developing countries for lucrative “carbon credit” projects. In a report entitled “Nature and Net Zero” by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and management consulting firm McKinsey & Co, published in January 2021, the “economic feasibility” of land around the world was mapped to establish its “carbon abatement potential”. The report assigns different value to different types of lands and estimated costs of realising “natural climate solutions” (i.e. carbon offset) projects on them.

“High feasibility” lands are considered those which are “low cost” – that is, real or potential agricultural rent from

them is low and therefore, they would be more likely to be converted to forests, for example. But while the WEF and McKinsey & Co may consider such areas “cheap land”, for small-scale farmers, pastoralists and Indigenous communities, they are ancestral lands that often have significant cultural, religious and communal value.

Needless to say, the report does not mention the potential social and human cost of displacement and the economic and physical violence acquiring such land is likely to lead to. “Carbon credit accounting” standards that are being set up currently require that a forested area be at least 25 million hectares (roughly the area of the US state of Vermont) to qualify for carbon credits. One can only imagine what a reforestation effort trying to meet this standard would look like and the amount of forced displacement it would take to achieve it.

cont'd on pg 14



MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS & THE ENVIRONMENT

Booster Schedule Update

EFFECTIVE MONDAY, 24TH JANUARY 2022

VACCINE TYPE	DATE FINAL VACCINE DOSE RECEIVED	DATE VACCINE BOOSTER DUE	INTERVALS	RECOMMENDED VACCINE BOOSTER TYPE	ALTERNATE VACCINE BOOSTER
AstraZeneca	May - October 2021	January 2022	3 Months	AstraZeneca	Pfizer
Pfizer (over 18 years of age)	August - October 2021	January 2022	5 Months	Pfizer	AstraZeneca
Pfizer (over 12 -17 years of age)	August - October 2021	January 2022	5 Months	Pfizer	Pfizer
Johnson & Johnson	May - November 2021	January 2022	2 Months	Pfizer	Johnson & Johnson
Sinopharm	July 2021	January 2022	6 Months	Sinopharm	Sinopharm

Once you have recovered from COVID-19 go ahead and get your booster shot.

Booster Vaccines available at:

Multipurpose Cultural and Exhibition Centre and Villa Polyclinic.

Vaccination sites open:

Mon-Thu, 9:00am-5:00pm
Fri, 9:00am-3:00pm

Original COVID-19 vaccine card (paper) & ID are required

Environment

cont'd from pg 13

The report also does not address the fact that eviction of small-scale farmers from their “cheap land” might actually result in local food crises, given that a significant portion of the world’s population is fed by small farms. In fact, Oxfam and others have warned that the drive for and monetisation of reforestation may lead to worsening global hunger.

The WEF and McKinsey report, however, does make clear the potential for profit from “natural solutions” that can be monetised as “carbon credits” and “sold” to polluters. Governments and corporations have already jumped at the opportunity. Leading the way on carbon offsets through forest conservation is the Lowering Emissions by Acceler-

ating Forest Finance (LEAF) coalition, which in November announced that it has met a target of \$1bn in commitments to support forest-linked carbon offsetting projects.

The coalition was launched on Earth Day last year by the US, Norway, the UK and a number of corporations. It has already been joined by “carbon credit buyers”, such as AirBnB, BlackRock, Delta Airlines, Burberry, Walmart, Unilever, Amazon, Bayer-Monsanto, and Nestlé. Meanwhile some 23 jurisdictions and countries, including Ghana, Nepal, Vietnam and Ecuador, have initiated technical screening procedures to enrol into the offsetting initiative.

The standards that LEAF is set to observe in supporting efforts to grant these participants tradeable “carbon credits”

sound promising. They are supposed to “promote transparency and prevent corruption”, “respect the rights of the Indigenous peoples and local communities” and ensure their “meaningful participation” in the “design, implementation and periodic assessment” of these carbon offset projects. But how many of these governments and corporations actually have a good track record of combatting corruption and respecting civil, land and Indigenous rights?

One would not be wrong to question whether this and other initiatives, donations and pledges are not just a fig leaf to cover up the intention of large corporations to continue their carbon-fuelled growth and profit pursuit unabated. It seems that these schemes would do little for the environment but they would enable an airline or an online retailer to continue their fossil-fuel-heavy operations by paying a minuscule amount of their profits for a reforestation scheme that may wipe out the livelihood of a whole rural region in the Global South.

The said corporations would get the “net zero” label, make their customers feel better about themselves and also retain bragging rights about how they are “creating jobs”. The general public would then be gaslighted to believe that this is the only way to address our pressing environmental problems.

Monetising ‘climate resilience’

Because governments and corporations know that they would never do what is necessary to rein in climate change, they have come up with a few terms to placate the masses: “climate resilience”, “climate adaptation” and “climate mitigation”. All of these refer to our supposed ability to respond to and deal with the effects of climate change and are based on the premise that humanity can actually pull through a climate catastrophe with minimal consequences, while maintaining the global economic status quo.

But “climate resilience”, “climate
cont'd on pg 15

Pointe Xpress Weekend Crossword

ACROSS

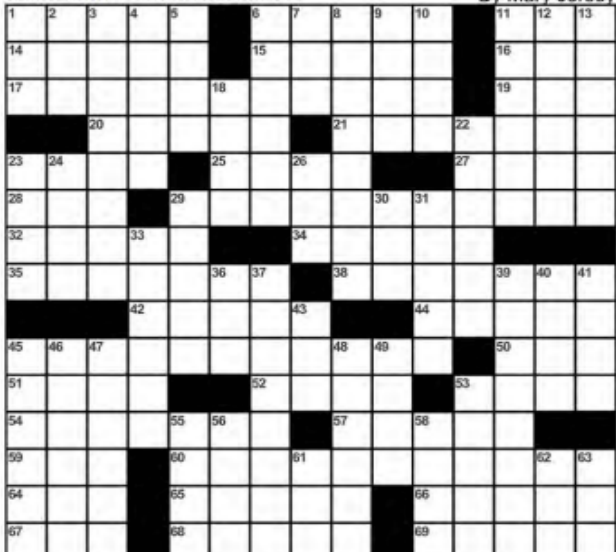
- 1) Run-of-the-mill
- 6) Raised
- 11) -30-
- 14) "101 Dalmatians"
Dalmatian
- 15) Birthday bash
- 16) Fish eggs
- 17) Collegians' getaway time
- 19) Scientist's eggs
- 20) Pool growth
- 21) What some skirts are
- 23) "Step aside!"
- 25) Volcanic output
- 27) Evening hour
- 28) "___ got it!"
- 29) Houseplant necessity
- 32) River mouth
- 34) Unsettling
- 35) Narrowly restricted in outlook
- 38) Reveal to Customs
- 42) Confused struggle
- 44) Fancy cravat
- 45) Useful thing for dirty pans
- 50) Enter a marathon
- 51) Duke's counterpart
- 52) Labor strenuously
- 53) Crumbly white cheese
- 54) Burger flipper
- 57) ___ New Guinea
- 59) Young child
- 60) Preparing for a kiss
- 64) Helm heading, sometimes
- 65) TV studio sign
- 66) Discharge through the pores
- 67) Baseball great Williams
- 68) "Out crowd" members
- 69) Ascends

DOWN

- 1) ___ and downs
- 2) Conciliatory bribe
- 3) Figures out, as a mystery
- 4) Quick-witted
- 5) "___ time, no see"
- 6) Cheerful
- 7) Golf norm
- 8) Ready ahead of time
- 9) "And others" abbreviation
- 10) TV legend Dick Van ___
- 11) Titillating
- 12) Nine-day period of prayer
- 13) Use novocain
- 18) Festive party
- 22) Cherubim, e.g.
- 23) Skirt for the modest
- 24) Baking chamber
- 26) Neck shape, for sweaters
- 29) Australian horse
- 30) State of seeing red
- 31) Battery type
- 33) Commotion
- 36) "Fight of the Century" loser
- 37) Budget item?
- 39) Farmers' holdings
- 40) Defeat decisively
- 41) Volcano in Sicily
- 43) One of a Freudian trio
- 45) Duo, trebled
- 46) Ness adversary
- 47) Addressed a crowd
- 48) "Eleventh day of Christmas" gift
- 49) Banned apple reddener
- 53) Mold
- 55) Fairy tale's second word
- 56) Crescent-shaped piece
- 58) Marina sight
- 61) Young goat
- 62) "___ it or lose it"
- 63) The eight in a gal.

A RINGING ENDORSEMENT

By Mary Jersey



cont'd from pg 14

adaptation” and “climate mitigation” are no more than buzzwords that drive investment and profit. Unsurprisingly, they were prominently used at COP26, where one of the outcomes was the announcement of various financial pledges for “nature-based solutions for climate resilience”.

These terms also feature in reports by economists praising the monetary value of nature and calling for investment in it. For example, a 2020 report funded in part by National Geographic, found that the economic benefits of conserving 30 percent of the earth’s land and oceans outweighs “the costs by at least 5-to-1”.

The report frames nature’s value as a lucrative asset – “a single underexploited type of asset”, which provides \$125 trillion worth of benefits to humanity. Its preservation can prevent economic losses from climate change by building “resilience” and generating profits in the form of booming tourism sectors, growing agricultural and forestry outputs, and regenerated fish stocks, among others. As one of the report’s co-authors concludes, it is time “to finance nature”.

This absurdity, however, does not stop at treating nature as a financial asset instead of the sole guarantor of human existence and survival that it is. The climate resilience/adaptation/mitigation mantra is also used to “greenwash” industrial and infrastructural projects that harm nature.



All of a sudden, proposed new real estate, airport, roadway, and shipping developments that increase the anthropogenic impacts on climate and ecological breakdown – are being spun as “green” investments – or climate “impact investments”. All they have to do is claim to “provide climate solutions”, “mitigate” climate change impacts or provide “sustainable living” and voilà... New swish developments are given the “green” light.

One example is Royalmount, a \$7bn real estate project under construction in the Canadian city of Montreal, which promises “experiential attractions, retail, office space and accommodations... firmly rooted in nature, rejuvenation and sustainability-minded strategies”. It claims that it will be “carbon neutral”, will reduce energy consumption by 34 percent and plant 450,000 trees, shrubs and perennials.

That pretty landscaping is not the same thing as pay-

ing attention to ecology, that the project’s “impact” on Montreal’s residents, already struggling with high rents, will not be a positive one and that “nature” will certainly be better off without this new development are facts carefully obscured by “green investment” proponents.

In essence, climate “impact investing” that is meant to “build climate resilience” is no different from investing in traditional asset classes, as there is no way to guarantee that the sought-after “impact” helps nature or local communities. And just like the “net zero emissions” slogan, it is simply a deception meant to make people believe that those most responsible for the climate crisis – rich countries, venture capitalists, and multinational corporations – are in fact the most ecologically-minded.

While COP26 illustrated the extent to which these deceptions have captured the global discourse on climate changes, there are also

signs that there is growing awareness of this ongoing green gaslighting. Less than a month after the conference concluded, the American film “Don’t Look Up” was released on online platform Netflix and broke the viewership record. Making a clear reference to our climate disaster reality, the motion picture portrays the absurdity of how corporate and political interests hold back humanity’s response to an extinction-level threat, while actively gaslighting the public.

We may not be facing an approaching asteroid, as the characters in the film do, but our climate change response must be just as urgent. And that has to start with resisting the green gaslighting that continues to waste precious time and tuning out corporate and elite-led solutionism.

We need to stop centring attention on the false “solutions” the wealthy and powerful are offering and refocus on the plight of the ordinary people who are already suffering from the climate crisis: the urban poor, peasants and pastoralists as well as Indigenous people. Their needs and struggles need to be central to a genuine ecological response that couples emissions reductions with degrowth, living wages and dignified working conditions, eliminates the use of fossil fuels, and reorganises the global economy away from neocolonial land grabs, resource abuse and underpaid labour and towards social justice. Anything short of this is smoke and mirrors. The people will not be fooled.

Woman apologises after false claims about “roach burger”

Loop - A woman in Saint Kitts and Nevis is facing heavy criticism after she made false claims about finding a roach in a meal she bought at a popular restaurant in Port Zante.

The woman claimed that she got sick after eating a burger and fries she purchased at the establishment. She further alleged that she visited the JNF hospital where she was informed that she had food poisoning.

According to reports, the woman then went to the police where she lodged a complaint, saying she found a dead roach between the burger buns.

When contacted, the owner of the establishment refuted the claims and presented a video which appeared to show the woman placing something into the burger.

In videos being circulated on social media, the woman can be seen putting what is believed to be a dead roach into the burger before taking a healthy bite.

She has since apologised for attempting to tarnish the reputation of the restaurant.

In a statement posted on social media, she said: “I am taking responsibility for my actions which I am very sorry for. I was wrong for what was done.

“I had no motive due to the situation, I saw it as an opportunity not to pay for the burger.

“I wish not to say where I got the roach from but I am taking responsibility for my actions. The situation is very bad as it is. I had no motive or intention.”

In response to the incident, the restaurant stated: “An unfortunate situation was caught via our security system showing footage of a woman

inserting a cockroach into a burger at our establishment.

“We would like to let the public know that this was a disgusting act against Truth and that we are no way responsible for her actions nor this was a collaboration.

“This was clearly a targeted attempt to tarnish Truth and our business entities. Further action will be taken and we will keep our customers updated as the matter is dealt with.”

The people of Saint Kitts and Nevis have taken to social media to share their angst over the woman’s actions.

One man posted: “I am perplexed as to if someone in their right mind will do something like that.”

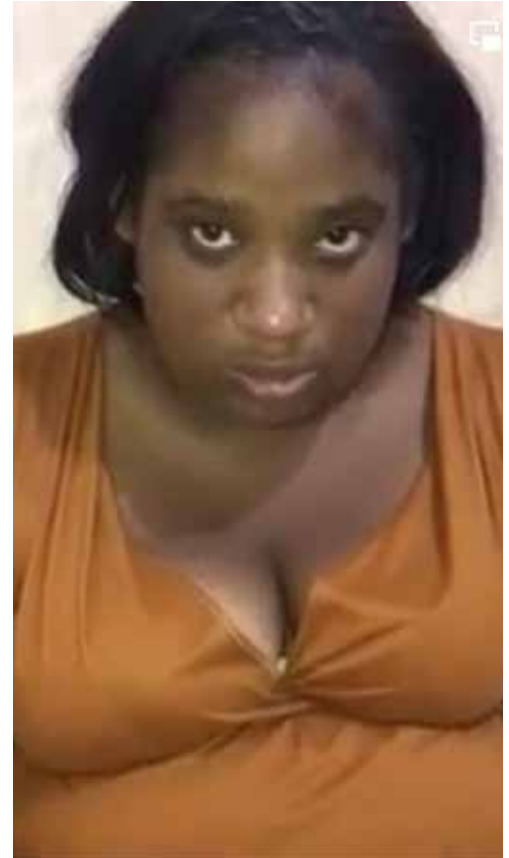
“I applaud this establishment. Thank God they had the funds to install these cameras, not only for safety, transparency but for incidents like this.

“Had it not been for the cameras this business would have been under heavy scrutiny by the health department and may even be made to close their doors because of this ignorance. Nevertheless, may this be a lesson learnt for her. Change your ways lady!!!” one woman posted on Facebook.

One commenter even appealed for help for the young woman: “People this young lady needs help. Please for the human race, someone reach out to her and give her the help I think she needs. It could be mental, physical or some other form.”

Meanwhile, another called for her to be made to do community service at the establishment.

“Second chances are good but some lessons need to be learnt. I



This woman was seen placing what appeared to be a dead roach in the burger before taking a bite.

think she should be made to do some volunteer work at the restaurant and see how hard those people whom she was trying to sabotage have to work to make a living especially in these times.”

“I’m sure someone would have gladly paid for the burger for her. Is she even from St.Kitts???” another asked.

One man urged other commenters to be less harsh in their responses. He posted: “Please, stop casting stones at her.

“We have all done something wrong at some point in our lives... positive encouragement is the best way to go people, let’s all just please say a prayer for ourselves, her and anyone else with those intentions.”

SVG Teachers' Union: Dismissed teachers going on 2 months without pay

Loop - Teachers in St. Vincent and the Grenadines who were deemed to have resigned for not taking a COVID-19 vaccine or who did not receive an exemption from the government's vaccine policy are suffering economically as the end of January nears.

The SVG Teachers' Union and the Public Service Union held a joint press conference recently.

Industrial Relations Officer Andrew John reminded that those who were dismissed were persons with responsibilities and were left without anything to cushion the impact of their bills.

The IRO claims there

have been disruptions in the school system due to COVID-19 since the January 3 return to classes. In addition, John said there is a shortage of teachers from the tertiary level to primary.

Meanwhile, President of the SVG Teachers' Union Oswald Robinson has assured members that the union continues to fight the battle.

He again issued a call for the government to repeal what he describes as 'the wicked act' of forcing someone to take something against their will.

Robinson reminded that the Union has filed in the high court to seek judicial review with respect to the



vaccine policy.

He also appealed to those who are retired and heading back to work to be mindful they are depriving other persons of having a job.

And, President of the Public Service Union Elroy Boucher raised concerns about a nurse who has taken

the Cuban Abdala vaccine but is yet to be re-employed despite submitting the relevant information on taking the vaccine.

Boucher said he understands re-employment can occur once that position is still vacant and he is aware there is a shortage in the nursing system.

65 charged with being on party boat

Trinidad Express - Sixty-five people are to be charged by way of summons with being on a party boat earlier this month, in contravention of the Public Health Ordinance.

Instructions were given yesterday to charge all 65 who were originally detained around midnight on January 3.

According to police reports, officers of the Coastal and Riverine Patrol Unit (CRPU) intercepted a "party boat" at sea while on an operation in the western peninsula.

The police team maintained surveillance while at Alcan Bay, Chaguaramas, during which time they observed several vehicles entering the area. The officers saw both adult males and females exiting vehicles while dressed in what appeared to be clothing for a party.

At different intervals, the persons then boarded a pirogue which was mak-



65 people charged for breaching party rules and regulations [Photo credit: Trinidad Express]

The police later observed a white 44-foot catamaran, Shenandoah, sailing west of Point Gourde, with a large group on board being served drinks and dancing to music.

The police instructed the captain of the vessel to stop, and went aboard the vessel, which was then taken to Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) headquarters at Staubles Bay.

With the assistance of Coast Guard personnel, a search of the vessel was conducted and 65 people were on board. Also, in a stairwell compartment, one Sig Sauer pistol fitted with a magazine containing ten rounds of nine-millimetre ammunition was seized.

All persons on board the vessel were conveyed to Carenage Police Station, where they were interviewed and released, pending further investigations.

Having conducted further investigations, all 65 were charged with breach of gathering in excess of ten persons, contrary to the Public Health Ordinance Regulations 2021 Section (3).

The captain of the vessel along with a female suspect were also charged with holding a public party contrary to Regulation 4(1) (b) of the Public Health Ordinance Regulation 2021 Section (3).

Earthquake strikes off Tonga's coast days after volcanic eruption

AlJazeera - A magnitude 6.2 earthquake has been recorded off the coast of Tonga almost two weeks after the Pacific kingdom was devastated by a volcanic eruption and tsunami.

The epicentre was located 219km (136 miles) north-west of Pangai, a town on the remote island of Lifuka, at a depth of 14.5km (9 miles), according to United States Geological Survey (USGS) data.

There have been no immediate reports of damage but communication is limited after the earlier eruption severed the main underwater cable connecting Tonga to the world. The area has seen daily earthquake activity since the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai volcano erupted on January 15, killing three people and sending a tsunami across the wider Pacific.

The volcanic event, the



At least three people were killed and a tsunami was sent across the wider Pacific after the January 15 eruption.

biggest since Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991, released a huge ash cloud that blanketed the Pacific island nation and prevented surveillance to determine the extent of the damage.

There are an estimated one million undersea volcanoes that, like continental volcanoes, are located near the Earth's tectonic plates where they form.

According to the Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration group, about

“three-quarters of all volcanic activity on Earth actually occurs underwater”.

In 2015, the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai spewed so many large rocks and ash into the air that it led to the formation of a new island.

On December 20 and then on January 13, the volcano erupted again, creating ash clouds that could be seen from the Tonga island Tongatapu.

On January 15, the massive eruption triggered a tsunami

nami around the Pacific, in a process whose origins are still debated among scientists.

Satellite images showed a plume of ash, steam and gas rising like a mushroom above the blue Pacific waters, with a sonic boom heard as far away as Alaska.

In Tonga, it sent tsunami waves crashing across the shore, forcing people to rush to higher ground.

The delivery of humanitarian aid was initially hampered by a thick coat of ash covering the international runway. It was later cleared of volcanic debris, allowing the first relief flights to be deployed.

The launch of relief efforts has brought concerns over the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in Tonga, one of the few countries in the world that is COVID-free and has maintained strict border controls.

More than 15,000 people displaced in new Darfur violence, U.N. says

Reuters - Renewed tribal violence near the western Sudanese city of El Geneina over the past week has displaced more than 15,000 people, the United Nations said.

The war-weary Darfur region has seen an increase in violence recently, humanitarian groups say, which analysts link to a peace deal signed in October 2020 that has led to some groups to jostle for power while not adequately addressing security concerns.

According to the U.N. Office for

the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, a personal dispute in the village of Adikong between two men from the Masalit tribe and an unspecified Arab nomadic group sparked the conflict.

Armed nomads attacked the local market, set fire to part of the village, and killed nine people including two children, it said.

The fighting, which spilled over into other villages, caused 11,100 people to be displaced within the El Geneina locality, and an estimated



Internally displaced girls ride donkeys during a sandstorm outside ZamZam IDP's camp [Photo credit: Reuters]

4,500 others to flee across the border to Chad.

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Ukraine crisis: Nord Stream 2 pipeline could be axed, US warns

BBC - The US has threatened to halt the opening of a key pipeline that would send Russian gas to Western Europe, if Russia invades Ukraine.

Nord Stream 2 would run from Russia to Germany, and on Thursday officials in Berlin said the project could face sanctions if Russia attacks.

Western allies say they will target Russia's economy if it invades, and the latest comments signal a hardening of their stance on the lucrative pipeline.

Russia denies it is planning an attack.

But the build-up of tens of thousands of Russian troops on Ukraine's borders in recent weeks has stoked tensions and escalated fears of an invasion.

"I want to be very clear: if Russia invades Ukraine one way or another, Nord Stream 2 will not move forward," US state department spokesman Ned Price told NPR.

But he added that he was "not going to get into the specifics" of how it would



Ukrainian soldiers are facing some 100,000 Russian soldiers massed on their borders. [Photo credit: Getty Images]

be stopped, and questions remain over whether the US would have the power to cancel the project.

"We will work with Germany to ensure it does not move forward," Mr Price said.

While the US insisted that it would stop the opening of the pipeline completely, Germany only said it would not rule out imposing sanctions on the project.

The country's foreign minister, Annalena Baerbock, told parliament that Western allies were "work-

ing on a strong package of sanctions" covering aspects "including Nord Stream 2".

But she added that she would prefer to "continue the dialogue" with Moscow.

Her comments came after the German ambassador to the US Emily Haber tweeted that "nothing will be off the table, including Nord Stream 2" if Russia violated "Ukraine's sovereignty".

The 1,225km (760-mile) pipeline took five years to build and cost \$11bn (£8bn). The energy project, which would run under the Baltic

Sea, is designed to double Russia's gas exports to Germany.

But as yet it has not started operating, as regulators said in November it does not comply with German law and suspended its approval.

Major European businesses have invested heavily in Nord Stream 2, which is run by former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. But many groups object to the plan.

Environmentalists question how it will fit in with German efforts to cut emissions and tackle man-made climate change, while politicians at home and abroad fear it could increase Europe's dependence on Russian energy.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has previously described the pipeline as a "dangerous geopolitical weapon".

cont'd from pg 18

A joint security force was dispatched to the area, the UN statement said.

El Geneina and the surrounding area saw several incidents of violence in 2021, and more than half of residents are in need of humanitarian aid according to UN estimates.

The early-2000s conflict in Darfur between rebel groups on one side and govern-

ment forces and allied militias on the other caused an estimated 300,000 deaths. About 2.5 million people live in displacement camps across Darfur, according to the U.N. refugee agency UNHCR.

Darfur residents complain that the militias continue to carry out attacks on villages and camps. Some 430,000 people have been displaced in 2021, a four-fold increase over 2020, aid groups say.

Lewis Hamilton to feature in record 8th Formula One

Lewis Hamilton has been backed to continue racing and secure a record breaking eight Formula One title by former McLaren team-mate Jenson Button.

The future of the Mercedes driver remains uncertain after the controversial conclusion to the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in December which saw Red Bull's Max Verstappen win the Championship on the final lap of the 2021 campaign.

Hamilton has been conspicuous in his absence from social media since the debacle in the desert, but Button, who



Lewis Hamilton (left) with Jenson Button (right)

was a team-mate to the fellow Briton at McLaren, does not believe the 37-year-old will retire yet, especially being tied with Michael Schumacher on seven

championships.

Race director Michael Masi received criticism after he was accused of bending the rules to allow a one-lap shoot-out and while an FIA inquiry has been launched it will not be made public until the eve of the 2022 season opener in Bahrain on March 20.

Button added, "I hope he will be racing. I think he will be racing. You know he wants to win that eight title and be the most decorated Formula One driver in F1 history. He will do that, I really think so."



Morgan scored 17 and 13 in his two outings in the T20 series against West Indies

Eoin Morgan ruled out of West Indies T20 series because of injury

England captain Eoin Morgan will miss the final two matches of the Twenty20 series against West Indies because of a thigh injury.

Morgan missed the third game, which England lost, on Wednesday after feeling some pain in the warm-up.

The England and Wales Cricket Board said tests had showed Morgan sustained a right thigh muscle injury which was "relatively minor".

England trail the series 2-1, with the last two games on Saturday and Sunday.

Morgan scored 17 in the opening match, in which his side were convincingly beaten after being bowled out for 103.

England then levelled the five-match series 1-1, with Morgan contributing 13 on the way to a one-run victory. West Indies won the third game after England failed to chase down a total of 224.



IOC to meet Peng Shuai during Olympics

The International Olympic Committee said on Thursday that it has spoken with Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai again and plans to meet her in Beijing during next month's Winter Olympics Games.

Peng, a former world number one in doubles, has been the subject of worldwide concern since alleging in November that she had been "forced into sex by former vice-premier Zhang Gaoli during an on-off relationship."

Beijing's censors swiftly removed the allegation from China's tightly controlled Internet and the 36-year-old was not seen in public for nearly three weeks. In one brief video conversation with a Singaporean newspaper she said she had never claimed anyone sexually assaulted her. International fears that Peng may not be free have persisted despite her public reappearance with some fans at the Australian Open recently donning T-shirts bearing the slogan "Where is Peng Shuai?"

FIFA President suggest more World Cups will save migrating Africans from dying at sea

Gianni Infantino, president of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), sparked outrage on Wednesday after he claimed that hosting a World Cup every two years could help save African migrants from death in the sea.

“We need to find ways to include the whole world’ to give hope to Africans so that they don’t need to cross the Mediterranean in order to find, maybe, a better life but, more probably death in the sea,” Infantino said.

“We need to give opportunities and we need to give dignity.”

Many parties expressed anger at Infantino’s comments on the African migrants crisis, including players and fans alike. This includes Tony Bur-

nett, the head of Kick it Out, an organisation dedicated to fight equality and eliminating racism with football.

“FIFA is a multi-billion profit-making organisation. They already have the funds to invest in creating and inspiring opportunities for disadvantaged people around the world,” Burnett said in a statement.

“It is therefore completely unacceptable to suggest that a biennial World Cup as the answer to any existing problems,” Burnett continued.

Infantino’s comments come as Africa continues to see significant problems with migrants dying in an attempt to flee the continent. FIFA delegates have been told switching the staging of football’s biggest international tourna-



FIFA President Gianni Infantino

ment would generate \$3.3 billion in additional revenue over a four year cycle.

Infantino later said his remarks had been misinterpreted.

“I wish to clarify that, in my speech, my more general message was that everyone in a decision-making position has a responsibility to help improve the situation of people around the world,” he said.

Egypt and Equatorial Guinea win on penalties to reach Afcon quarter-finals



Egypt celebrate their win over Ivory Coast

Egypt beat Ivory Coast 5-4 on penalties to reach the quarter-finals at the Africa Cup of Nations in Cameroon following a 0-0 draw.

The North Africans

got the upper hand in the shoot-out when substitute keeper Gabaski saved Eric Bailly’s effort in the third round of spot-kicks.

And Liverpool striker Mohamed Salah netted the



Equatorial Guinea took the win over Mali

decisive penalty to send record seven time champions through.

Goalkeeper Jesus Owono was Equatorial Guinea’s hero as they shocked Mali in the pen-

alty shootout to reach the quarter-finals of the Africa Cup of Nations.

Owono 20, saved twice in the shootout to help them go through 6-5 on spot-kicks after a 0-0 draw.

Nandu's maiden century gives Rising Stars big win

Matthew Nandu made a match-winning century as West Indies Rising Stars U19s had a big win over Papua New Guinea U19s to advance to the semifinals of the Plate of the ICC Men's U19 World Cup.

The West Indies will now face the United Arab Emirates, while Papua New Guinea are set to take on Uganda in the Plate play-offs.

The home side were in blistering form as they took on Papua New Guinea in the quarter-final.

Shaqkere Parris (64) and the left-handed Nandu combined at the top of the order to add 155 runs before the first wicket fell, Parris caught behind off the bowling off Rasan Kevau.

Nandu kept scoring alongside Teddy Bishop before he had to go – playing and missing a good ball from Patrick Nou.

Nandu, who was captain for the first time, would eventually bring up his first Youth ODI hundred on the final ball of the 42nd over, sweeping for four to earn his first century of the tournament, the landmark coming from 112 balls.

Kevin Wickham made 64 not out off 48 balls with four sixes, his second half-century in as many innings.

Nandu made 128 off 134 balls with 15 boundaries and two sixes, before a late fight back by Boio Ray. Nandu was the first of Ray's victims as he claimed three wickets in the penultimate over.

The West Indies eventually ended with an imposing 317-6 off 50 overs. Ray could not add to his heroics as he was bowled first ball by Nathan Edward and was soon joined in the dugout by Peter Karoho and captain Barnabas Maha as PNG slipped to 56 for three.

Opener Christopher Kilapat then looked to dig in but was eventually out having scored just five from 46 balls.

Not content with top scoring with the bat, Nandu then took two wickets in two balls as Papua New Guinea's hopes of a win grew slimmer.

Aue Oru reached 27 not out to be Papua New Guinea's top scorer but his 52-ball innings was in vain as Rasan Kevau was run out on



seven to see his side fall 169 runs short of their target.

Nandu then came back with his off-spin to be the leading bowler with 2-14

off his six overs. Fast bowlers McKenny Clarke (2-34) and Isai Thorne (2-30) were also penetrative to secure the win.