

# SUBSIDY ENDS, FUEL INCREASE COMING TODAY

*Story on Page 2*



From left: Ministers Samantha Marshall and Sir Molwyn Joseph, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Sadhguru and Machel Montano after signing the Save the Soil MoU on Friday. *Story on Page 7*

# Local News



## Fuel prices to increase this week

Antiguans and Barbudans have enjoyed a fixed gasoline rate at the pump of \$12.50, the lowest in the OECS, for a very long time. The rate was kept this low through the intervention of the government which took the decision to cut consumption tax on fuel to the consumer.

But the war in Europe has driven crude oil prices to more than US\$140 per barrel and the government now says it can no longer keep domestic fuel prices artificially low.

Over the weekend, Prime Minister Gaston Browne said the increase in fuel prices can be expected as early as this week. He added it is likely that an announcement will be made by the government today concerning the new rates for gasoline and diesel.

“We had said that at \$120 we would have to review [the subsidy]. It’s now at \$146 and diesel is at \$163 per barrel, US. So if we maintain the current pricing level, it means that we will have to pay WIOC (West



Indies Oil Company Ltd.) between \$2 - \$2.5 million a month in order to subsidise fuel at the pump,” said the prime minister.

“I don’t know that we can justify subsidising prices at the pump in order to keep the petroleum prices artificially low; not even in Trinidad and Tobago, which they produce oil, that they’re actually subsidising the prices to that extent. In fact, they too have announced that there will be an increase in pricing there.

“All over the world there have been increases in petroleum products, so we have no choice,” Mr. Browne continued.

He also gave an idea of what the new rates for fuel at the pump could look like, adding that it is an unfortunate, but necessary move that must be taken so the government can continue to function as smoothly as possible in already challenging times.

“It’s definitely going to be in excess of \$15. That is

the reality of it. Even just to make sure that we break even, we will have to increase the price. It would be good if the government can get even \$2.5 million or \$2 million a month so that it can continue to meet some of its obligations, especially during this period in which revenues are already down by 20 percent.”

The prime minister was mindful that the increase will have a significant impact on consumers, in particular transportation providers. However he has appealed for the public’s patience and understanding.

“Motorists just have to conserve the use of fuel now and bus drivers and so on will be a little concerned. We wanna ask them to hold strain.

“We’re hoping this is just a temporary situation and that this war in Ukraine will not protract.”

Mon 14   Day		Mon 14   Night	
<b>82°</b>		<b>75°</b>	
18% ENE 20 mph		24% ENE 18 mph	
A few clouds from time to time. High 82F. Winds ENE at 15 to 25 mph.		Mainly clear skies. Low near 75F. Winds ENE at 15 to 25 mph.	
Humidity <b>68%</b>	UV Index <b>Extreme</b>	Humidity <b>75%</b>	UV Index <b>0 of 10</b>
Sunrise <b>6:15 am</b>	Sunset <b>6:16 pm</b>	Moonrise <b>3:14 pm</b>	Moonset <b>3:49 am</b>
		○ Waxing Gibbous	



## EU threatens to revoke CIP nations' visa-free access

Recently passed European Union (EU) legislation has paved the way for the group to revoke visa-free travel privileges for citizens of nations offering economic citizenship.

In its ultimatum, the EU has made it clear that the only way nations, including Antigua and Barbuda, can avoid having to seek a visa to visit the EU's 27 members nations is if they abandon their Citizenship by Investment programmes (CIP).

This blow comes on the heels of a glowing review of Caribbean's CIPs by London-based CS Global Partners, the world's leading CIP government advisory and marketing firm.

According to CS Global's World Citizenship Report (WCR), CIP options in the region rank among the top 30 percent in the world.

The WCR measures 187 countries against five motivators that are relevant amongst High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs). These motivators include Safety and Security, Economic Opportunity, Quality of Life, Global Mobility and Quality of Life.

The report considers data from the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2021 and World Governance Indicators (WGI) and scored the Caribbean region highly in the Safety and Security, Quality of Life and Global Mobility motivators.



*Prime Minister Gaston Browne*

One of the factors which makes a country an attractive CIP option to applicants is the strength of its passport which is determined by the number of countries it has visa-free access to.

In 2021, the Henley Passport Index ranked Antigua and Barbuda's passport at 30th in the world with visa-free access to 150 nations. In the region, this placed Antigua and Barbuda only behind Barbados, 23rd and St. Kitts and Nevis, 25th.

CIPs in the region are also massive revenue generators which have significantly contributed to improved economies and standard of living for participating nations' citizens.

In his 2018 budget presentation, Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne credited the CIP with contributing a whopping 20 percent to the nation's GDP in the previous year.

On 9th March, 2022,

however, the European Parliament voted overwhelmingly to limit CBI programmes in the EU.

The vote, formally adopting a report by Sophie in 't Veld, a Dutch Member of Parliament (MEP), called on the European Commission to enact legislation to phase out CBI programmes and establish strict regulations governing residence-by-investment ("RBI") programmes.

While its target was Europe, more than 100 nations the world over offer an economic citizenship or residency by investment programme, and it holds implications for each of them.

The potential benefits of CIP/RBI programmes are manifold. Successful applicants of these programmes implemented by EU states and the Caribbean nations of St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Dominica, St. Lucia, and Antigua and Barbuda can freely enter the EU Schengen Area (a bloc of 26 countries that

have officially abolished all passport and other border controls at their mutual borders) and the UK, without having to apply for a visa or undergo additional screening by EU authorities.

All this could come to an end however with last week's decision of the European Parliament. If the EU holds to its threat, it could mean the end of CIPs the world over as each nation's programmes' attractiveness relies on the strength of its passport which would be significantly diminished if visa-free access to Europe is terminated.

While residency by investment would remain an option, it is a far less attractive option for those seeking the benefits of economic citizenship.

Over the weekend, Prime Minister Browne addressed the matter.

"If you don't have visa-free access into the Schengen area, then clearly it will undermine the viability of these programmes because a lot of people who get our citizenship is also to get visa-free access into that region.

"As you know, Canada was part of it, but Canada has literally suspended visa-free access for all countries, including Antigua and Barbuda. We were the final casualty of that policy in which

*cont'd on pg 4*

# Local News



*cont'd from pg 3*

they felt that we had a CIP programme that they would not continue to allow us visa-free access into Canada.

Antigua and Barbuda launched its CIP in 2014. According to PM Browne, in just over one year from its commencement, the country earned over \$200 million from the programme, in large part due to its, then, visa-free access to Canada. But there was a significant slump in the numbers after Canada revoked its visa waiver.

“After that, the programme fell, I think, to about as low as \$67 million in one year. On an average since then we’ve been doing about \$100 million.

“Now, if these countries are successful in undermining our CIP programme, then I have to tell you it’s going to create significant problems for the OECS currency union countries.

“In the case of Antigua and Barbuda, about 10 percent of our revenue, maybe if I’m exaggerating, no more

than 12 – 15 percent, comes from CIP. But in some countries within the sub-region, the CIP contributes as much as 50 percent of their annual revenue, so you can imagine the impact on those countries.

The onslaught on global CIPs is coming not only from the EU, but also the United States where US Congressmen Burgess Owens and Steve Cohen introduced the Trafficking Ban Act on 3rd March, 2022, which intends to remove from the US Visa Waiver Program countries that operate CIPs.

The No Travel for Traffickers Act wants to bar all countries that sell passports from participating in the US visa waiver programme and requires the Executive Branch to publicly list all countries with investment citizenship.

Additionally, this programme will lead the Executive Branch to work with the United Kingdom and the European Union to eliminate visa-free travel to the Schengen area for CIP nations and

to ban the use of US taxpayer funds to verify “golden passport” applicants so that taxpayer dollars are not used to enable these programmes.

The US Congress contends that CIPs are abused by human traffickers, international criminals, and corrupt oligarchs.

Prime Minister Browne reported that he has taken action in the hope that it will cause the EU and US to reconsider their position on the matter of CIPs.

“I have taken the opportunity to write to policy makers [and] parliamentarians in Europe, as well as those two congressmen who are now tabling this legislation, to let them know the impact they are about to inflict on our CIP programmes, and the impact on our economies.

“As far as we’re concerned, our Citizenship by Investment Programmes do not represent any risk to these countries as how they so put it,” said Prime Minister Browne.

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Point residents on Friday morning surveying the aftermath of the previous night's devastating fire.

## Inadequate space to rebuild Point houses destroyed by fire

As he begins to assist those who lost their properties in last Thursday evening's fire in Point, City West MP, Gaston Browne, has said some of the affected residents will not be able to return to the area.

Five homes were destroyed on lower St. George's Street, while others nearby sustained varying degrees of damage in the blaze that is now under investigation.

Prime Minister Browne who pledged immediate relief for his constituents, visited the burn site with contractors on Friday to assess the work that needs to be undertaken in order to rebuild. But a new issue arose.

The destroyed wooden houses were all located on a single plot of land, and the prime minister is convinced approval will not be granted for the replacement of all the structures.

"The problem is though, I don't know that we can rebuild five properties on such a small parcel of land. I do

not know either that DCA [Development Control Authority] will give approval to rebuilding five homes on a parcel of land that is probably about 6,000 square feet," the City West MP revealed on his radio show on Saturday. A delicate process must now begin as at least three families must now be relocated.

Nicole Lawrence is one resident who will be able to return since her father, Walter Lawrence (The Mighty Leopard), owns part of the land.

For the others, a situation existed where they owned the houses, but not the land. This would make the reconstruction of new homes almost impossible.

"[Nicole Lawrence's] father is putting in near \$40,000. I'm putting in some cash as well, and I think we can build her property, we will build her property, because again, there is no issue of land and land title," Mr. Browne said.

Meanwhile, Fire Chief Elvis Weaver has denied ac-

cusations that the All Saints fire tender arrived on the scene without water. Some residents who claimed this was the case argued that less houses would have been burnt if the fire department

arrived prepared.

The Coolidge Fire Station also responded to the fire.

The firemen's job was further complicated on Thursday evening as they battled the blaze amidst high winds.

## UTILITIES ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

### DISCONNECTION NOTICE

APUA would like to remind both residential and commercial customers to stay connected by Managing Your Account. Customers are reminded to settle Electricity and Water accounts that are overdue by 30 days or in arrears. Disconnections will be carried out during the period **March 21st to March 31st, 2022.**

**Please be advised that reconnections are carried out within 1-2 business days after payment.**



# Local News

## Education system returns to normal

Thousands of primary and secondary students are heading back to school this morning as full time face-to-face classes resume.

It is one of several restrictions imposed since 2020 that was lifted by the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda last week, after expressing satisfaction that low COVID-19 cases being recorded allowed for the resumption of full face-to-face classes that until now were being conducted through a blended system.

Director of Education, Clare Browne said before the announcement of the decision that the Ministry of Education was prepared for resumption of full time classes if the science al-



*First grade students participating in a class at the Holy Trinity Primary School in Barbuda [Photo: Susan Gately]*

lowed for it.

Face masks will not be a requirement for returning students. However, face masks worn by security personnel, the administrators and those who will likely have contact with a

large number of students and other personnel is encouraged.

Officials have acknowledged that with many of the requirements being removed, social distancing among the school popu-

lation will be impossible. However, sanitizing and temperature checks will continue.

This latest development is welcomed news for parents who have had to find ways to work and monitor their children on days when they attended classes virtually.

Reflecting on the last two years, Director Clare Browne said the education system is emerging from the pandemic better than what it was. He detailed that many lessons were learnt and they will now move ahead with a bigger, better education system, in the interest of students across Antigua and Barbuda.



**Hello Monday**

**MONDAY SETS THE TONE FOR THE WEEK**

**DRIVE WISE**

**NOBODY DIES**

**BE A BEAST TODAY.**

**ATB**  
A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

## Caribbean nations sign MOU for the Save Soil movement

Heads of Government and Ministers for Health, Agriculture, and Environment from four Caribbean nations participated in a historic moment, endorsing the Save Soil initiative by signing a memorandum of understanding with Conscious Planet founder and global leader Sadhguru.

On Friday, Trinitonian singer and “King of Soca” Machel Montano, who played a critical role in galvanizing Caribbean leadership towards this movement, opened the event, sharing a firm commitment to use his music as “a platform to reach



*Prime Minister Gaston Browne presenting a gift to Sadhguru.*

as many people with the critical message to Save Soil.”

Honorable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, expressed his “pleasure to participate in this initiative to sign this memorandum of understanding with Conscious Planet as we [support] the Save Soil movement.

The issue of soil degradation, which could potentially become soil extinction, is a significant threat to the planet. Over 30 years ago, when climate change was identified as a significant threat, it was small island states in the Caribbean that were in the forefront of this fight. It is instructive that, 30 plus years later, it is the very Caribbean small island states that are now seeking to drive this process of saving our soil from extinction.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) predicts

that soil extinction could become a reality if soil degradation continues at present rates. Moreover, the FAO estimates that all the world’s topsoil may be extinct in 60 years. By 2045, food production may drop by 40% as the population crosses 9.3 billion. Soil extinction could lead to catastrophic crises worldwide, including food and water shortages, droughts and famines, adverse climate changes, mass migrations and unprecedented rates of species extinction.

Prime Minister Browne garnered the support of his Caribbean counterparts, including Prime Minister of Dominica, Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister of St. Lucia, Philip J. Pierre, and Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis Dr. Timothy Harris.

*cont’d on pg 8*

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# Local News



*cont'd from pg 7*

Each of the heads of government spoke passionately about the importance of taking decisive action to regenerate and restore the world's soil, with a clear commitment to institute soil-friendly policies.

St. Kitts and Nevis' Prime Minister Harris expressed his commendations "to bring this initiative to the Caribbean region" noting its "critical importance for the sustainability of all life on Earth."

Prime Minister Skerrit of Dominica shared his "absolute support" for the Save Soil initiative, with conviction that "agriculture holds the promise [to] feed the society [and] all people. We have to recognize that the soil is in fact the most important element on earth."

St. Lucia's Prime Minister Pierre

explained that his country "is at a stage where we need to revive our agriculture" and that "this initiative will suit us very well."

He was joined by the country's Agriculture Minister, Alfred P. Prosper.

Sadhguru affirmed that "these small nations, these pearls in the ocean, [can] make that turn around and demonstrate" that every nation can and must save its soil in the interest of all future life on the planet. Additionally, he emphasized that "we have lost connection with what nurtures our lives. Seeing soil as an inert substance that you can extract from is a completely wrong approach. It is a living soil. This is the most important message that needs to go to the young generation and the future generations: soil is a living entity."

The heads of government were

joined by Antigua and Barbuda's Minister for Health, Environment and Wellness, Sir Molwyn Joseph and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, Samantha Marshall.

Special thanks were given to Special Economic Envoy and founder of Global Citizen Forum, Armand Arton for assisting in carrying this initiative forward to the Caribbean Leaders.

The memorandum was created in consultation with the top scientists in the world, considering each region's latitude, climate, economic conditions, and traditional agricultural practices. The resolution, titled Soil Revitalization - Global Policy Draft & Solutions Handbook was presented by Sadhguru and accepted by the Caribbean Heads of States as an urgent and unifying initiative to restore soil health.



Antigua and Barbuda  
Social Security Board

## VACANCY NOTICE Customer Communications Associate

### JOB SUMMARY:

This position supports the Corporate Relations team with a variety of tasks. The incumbent will assist with promotional materials, designing simple graphics, managing social media and outreach, launching email campaigns, researching media coverage, and promoting products. He/she will also typically perform administrative duties as needed.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Must have seven (7) CXC subjects, must include Mathematics, English, Information Technology and Social Sciences
- Excellent computer skills and knowledge of MS Office applications. Excellent drafting skills.
- Adequate knowledge of Adobe photoshop and Microsoft Office Suite.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the Social Security Act & Regulations.

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist in the planning and implementation of the ABSSB communication strategies.
- Assist in creating and delivering Corporate Relations related emails, brochures, newsletters, and other publications.
- Keep track of the ABSSB related matters published in the media.
- Assist in drafting media releases and media kit development.
- Copyedit, proofread, and revise communications, as required.
- As instructed, initiate, plan, review, and engage the organization's general media promotion and social media.
- Develop and consolidate relations with the media.
- Schedule and assist in managing advertising and promotion campaigns.
- Assist in developing and maintaining promotional communication materials such as print-outs, pamphlets, and WebPages.
- Contribute towards the ABSSB image through appearances and strategic marketing planning.
- Record, review and update the ABSSB communication strategies, as instructed.
- Assist in customer service delivery when required.

### CORE COMPETENCIES

- Excellent communication skills - verbal and written.
- Ability to work on tight schedules.
- Work well within a team or independently.
- Commitment to Continuous Learning.
- Proven analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Reflects a positive image of the Organization by way of character, deportment, and appearance.
- Is customer service oriented.
- Dependable and trustworthy.
- Pays keen attention to detail and accuracy.
- Is Client & Results Oriented.
- Is innovative and Creative.
- Political Awareness.

Qualified persons should apply no later than March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022:

The Human Resources Manager  
Antigua & Barbuda Social Security Board  
Or via email to: [hr@socialsecurity.gov.ag](mailto:hr@socialsecurity.gov.ag)

Only suitable applications will be acknowledged.



Antigua and Barbuda  
Social Security Board

## VACANCY NOTICE Customer Service Representative

### JOB SUMMARY:

The incumbent will act as a liaison, provide services information, answer questions, and resolve any emerging problems that our customer accounts might face with accuracy and efficiency.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Associate Degree, State College Diploma with seven (7) years related working experience
- Adequate knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the Social Security Act & Regulations.

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Handle customer complaints, provide appropriate solutions and alternatives within the time limits; follow up to ensure resolution.
- Provide accurate, valid, and complete information by using the right methods/tools
- Assist in providing relevant benefits details and completing benefit applications as needed.
- Assist in operating the switchboard and redirect calls promptly and efficiently.
- Receive applications for benefits, ensuring that forms are accurately completed.
- Identify and assess customers' needs to achieve satisfaction
- Processing forms, applications, and requests.
- Sort and distribute immigration and labour letters.
- Receive and sort all incoming correspondences.
- Assist in database updates for life certificates, payment details change, etc., as required.
- Ensure that the department's resources are properly utilized and protected against damage, wastage and/or pilferage.

### CORE COMPETENCIES

- Loyalty to the Organization as a first priority.
- Customer service oriented.
- Reliability and confidentiality in the execution of duties.
- Comprehensive knowledge of applicable legislations.
- Adherence to the Act & Regulations and policies and procedures.
- Acceptable professional conduct and deportment when representing the Organization.
- Trustworthiness at all times and in all dealings.
- Pursuance of personal and professional development.
- Punctuality and reliability.
- Work well within a team or independently.
- Good communication skills - verbal and written.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Ability to prioritize tasks and perform effectively under pressure.
- Reflects a positive image of the Organization by way of character, deportment, and appearance.

Qualified persons should apply no later than March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022:

The Human Resources Manager  
Antigua & Barbuda Social Security Board  
Or via email to: [hr@socialsecurity.gov.ag](mailto:hr@socialsecurity.gov.ag)

Only suitable applications will be acknowledged.



## Officials look to fetes to boost vaccine numbers

Government is hopeful that the return of fetes and the requirements in place for patrons will boost its vaccination figures. Cabinet last week approved a maximum of 5,000 people for any fete that will be held going forward. Additionally, those who will be in attendance must be fully vaccinated and test negative for COVID-19 within three to four days leading up to the events.

With social activities returning after an almost two-year hiatus, there is the belief that many are making plans to unwind after having to adhere to strict protocols. For those who are not vaccinated, the only way in which they will be able to participate is through inoculation.

Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, Ambassador Lionel 'Max' Hurst said with that in mind,



the administration is aiming to achieve a 70 percent vaccination rate by the summer, counting on those that will fulfill the requirement to boost the figures.

"Between now and June, you can certainly take both vaccines and allow them to work themselves into your body's system, so that you have a sufficient number of antibodies to fight off the virus should it enter into your

body," Mr. Hurst detailed.

"And that's why we're setting ourselves a target date, as well as the number of people who we are going to try to reach between these times, in order to ensure that at carnival, more than the 70 percent will in fact have taken the vaccines, in order to protect themselves."

Last week, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas said more than

61,000 people were fully vaccinated in Antigua and Barbuda, leading other OECS territories. She revealed PAHO/WHO data indicate the country is the only one in the sub-region that appears set to reach the 70 percent target outlined by the World Health Organization.

Ambassador Hurst stressed the relevance of vaccination, in light of the unpredictability of the virus.

"We have no idea what variant will occur next. We understand that in France for example, there is a variant that behaves very much like the Omicron, but is as harmful as the variant which preceded it. So, we are encouraging people to take the vaccine, because there is no way you can know which variant is going to emerge that is going to be very harmful," the Chief of Staff concluded.

March 2022

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	01	02	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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### ACP Cruise Ship Weekly Calendar

(March 14-20)

ETA Date	ETA Time	ETD Date	ETD Time	Type	Vessel Name	100% Capacity	Brand	Assigned Berth	Status
14 March 2022	7:00AM	14-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	Azura	3,100	P&O Cruises	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
14 March 2022	8:00AM	14-Mar-22	7:00PM	Transit	Seven Seas Navigator	557	Regent Seven Seas	Nevis Pier	Confirmed
14 March 2022	8:00Am	14-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	Riviera	1,258	Oceania Cruises	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
15 March 2022	7:00AM	15-Mar-22	7:00PM	Transit	Norwegian Gem	2,873	Norwegian Cruise Line	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
15 March 2022	7:00AM	15-Mar-22	7:00PM	Transit	Costa Deliziosa	3,000	Costa	Nevis Pier	Confirmed
15 March 2022	8:00AM	15-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	AIDAprera	3,250	AIDA	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
16 March 2022	7:00AM	16-Mar-22	6:00PM	Transit	Grandeur of the seas	1,950	RCI	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
16 March 2022	8:00AM	16-Mar-22	5:00Pm	Transit	Silver Spirit	540	Silversea Cruises	Nevis Pier	Confirmed
16 March 2022	8:00Am	16-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	Spirit Of Adventure	999	Saga Cruises	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
17 March 2022	7:30AM	17-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	Viking Sea	930	Viking Ocean Cruises	Heritage Quay	Confirmed
17 March 2022	8:00AM	17-Mar-22	11:00PM	Transit	Seabourn Odyssey	450	Seabourn Cruise Line	Nevis Pier	Confirmed
18 March 2022	8:00Am	18-Mar-22	5:00PM	Transit	Star Legend	343	Windstar Cruises	Falmouth	Confirmed

T/A: Turnaround or Homeport

\*Kindly note that this is the capacity of the ship, occupancy may vary

\*Assigned berth is subject to change



# Guest Opinion



# Tony And The Cat22

*"This is a catastrophe", Vladimir the leader growled. He had summoned the entire council of Ministers to discuss and take action against what he considered a catalogue of crimes against them. Attending the meeting were Boris, a known fighter, Igor, Rasputin and the "God-like" Mikhail, as well as the female members, Anastasia, Karina, Sabina, Luna and Pinky. Rasputin, always looking for trouble, corrected the Chairman. "Vlad," he pointed out, "This is really a cat-actylism. The whole world has banned us regardless of our category."*

Pinky blushed, "Are they declaring war on pussy like that Trinidadian bird who was afraid that we would bite him? That is one Sparrow I would have loved to catch. I would have eaten him raw." Anastasia was not as angry. "No. He loved dogs," she reminded them.

"He was very sorry for the poor little puppy in the Russian Satellite." This immediately made Luna tick, "You're all so blind. Like you have cataracts and can't see that we are all in trouble?"

Vladimir howled at her, "The entire world is already declaring war on us. The cat federation has banned us because that other Vladimir attacked Ukraine." "But didn't Ukraine attack us?" Boris asked. This was the last straw for Vladimir. He snarled, "We have now been catapult-

ed into a global war. If the Kremlin crumbles we might end up eating crumbs. In fact, now that KFC and Pizza Hut are closed, who do you think they will eat?" Everyone was stunned. The kind and gentle Mikhail then suggested, "Why don't we ask that other Vladimir to stop the war so we cats can survive?" Vladimir hissed angrily, "Do you know that he has six dogs and no cat? He hates us."

The very quick Sabina said, "You think the Jamaicans will have me? They named a cricket ground after me?" Rasputin supported her, "Yes, they will listen to me too. They don't call me Ras' for nothing. We can make a catamaran and sail there." Boris was still stuck on the central issue, "We can't even look at the man because while a cat can look at a king, we know Russia is no longer a kingdom. It is definitely a country with a leader to match."

Karina jumped in with, "Can't we go to Trinidad instead? They have a Carenage named after me and Barbados too. It has a Careenage." Vladimir angrily yowled, "It is said that you get back what you put in, and Putin has put us in serious trouble. While he is letting loose his dogs of war, we should get together, form a 'cat o'nine' tail and beat the "schiz" from his ras. Right Rasputin?" All the cats looked closely at Vladimir to show their support for him. In



Tony Deyal

their world, the eyes have it.

This is a cat's eye view of the situation in Europe, especially the banning of the Russian cats from international competition. I was born just when World War Two ended and when I was growing up, we had "cat's eyes", made from glass beads, to improve road safety at nights.

There were white ones which identified the road centre, and red ones for the sides. There were also people who we called "cat-eye". We didn't know that "Cat Eye Syndrome" (CES) is a very rare genetic disorder that makes the eyes look similar to a cat's.

In my case, I've had my eyes on cats for a very long time. I still remember asking my older children, "What happened to the pregnant cat that swallowed a ball of

wool?" "Instead of kittens, it had mittens."

If you think this is bizarre, about ten years ago, there was an article in England's Daily Mail that made me laugh at several levels. First of all, British newspapers are known for their humorous headlines like, "Iraq Head Seeks Arms", "Is There A Ring Around Uranus", "Queen Mary Having Bottom Scraped" and "Sex Education Delayed – Teachers Request Training." Secondly, they tend to tell it like it is. Most of all, they are like death- they're not respecters of persons or personalities.

This headline read, "KIT-NAPPED: MP's wife found guilty of stealing her love-rival's cat after court sees this damning CCTV footage." I am sure you can imagine

*cont'd on pg 11*



*cont'd from pg 10*

how and why many Caribbean people laughed loudly and for a long time without going beyond the headline. The fact is that the domesticated feline mammal, *Felis catus*, has two meanings for us - it is a pet which you can find in most houses, and a vulgarity used to describe a very, very special part of the female anatomy. Worse, the much-used tautology (a phrase in which the same thing is said in different words), "pussy cat" is both familiar and vulgar.

For example, Trinidad has about 50 calypsoes on cats or pussies. The Trini Calypsonian, Lord Blakie, made much headway with, "Hole the pussy, hole the pussy, hold the pussy cat..." In the US, Johnny Carson, the host of the "Tonight Show", once interviewed the flamboyant actress, Zsa Zsa Gabor, who had a small feline mammal which she petted constantly during the interview. In seeming innocence, she asked Carson archly, "Do you want to play with my

pussy?" To which he replied, "You have to get that cat off your lap first."

For those of us who continued reading the rest of the Daily Mail article, the very "Liberal Democrat", John Hemming, had a 53-year-old wife with three children for him, and a 36-year-old mistress with one. Initially, Hemming had an agreement with his wife to split his time between her and his mistress, but then he left home for "good".

When questioned by the police about stealing the cat, Hemming's wife told them, "I thought not only has he replaced me, he has replaced our cats." Interestingly, while some people felt that the husband should have been jailed, others insisted that the wife deserved to be imprisoned for stealing the cat belonging to the mistress, especially since neither the mistress nor the MP had seen her cat since.

For some reason, after reading the story of the MP, I continued to think of him as a total MC or Minister of Con-

catenations (linking things together in a series like "wife" and "mistress"). Because of the dilemma in which the Russian cats (and people) find themselves, I initially named the article "A Categorization of Catricide" (meaning "different ways of killing cats") Then I thought of a "A Heller on Earth" or "To Heller and Back" after Joseph Heller, the author of "Catch 22". A Catch 22 is "a dilemma or difficult circumstance from which there is no escape because of mutually conflicting or dependent conditions."

What I believe, "categorically" (so to speak), is that the Russian soldiers should be made to return to their country while Putin and his entire entourage must be permanently imprisoned in Siberia. After all, with the dogs away, the cats will play.

*\*Tony Deyal was last seen saying that Putin was going through customs at a German airport when the Customs Officer asked him, "Occupation?" "No" Putin replied. "Just visiting."*



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# Caribbean History



## Grenada: 38 years after a triple assassination, the short-lived revolution still inspires

By Danny Shaw

On October 25th, 1983, 7,300 U.S. troops, accompanied by U.S.-trained soldiers of CARICOM countries calling themselves “The Caribbean Peace Force,” invaded the tiny island of Grenada. This October marks the 38th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of the land of Julien Fedon, Jacqueline Creft, Maurice Bishop and the 110,000 people of Grenada.

What lessons can we learn from the four-and-a-half-year revolution? In a hemisphere on fire, with chronic social unrest and anti-imperialism on full display from the streets of Medellin to Mexico City, where does Grenada line up in the Global Class Struggle in the 21st century?

### “The Revo”

On March 13th, 1979, the leaders of the New Jewel Movement overthrew Eric Gairy, widely seen as being pro-imperialist, setting in motion one of the great revolutionary experiments in Caribbean history. Those who lived through the 1979 to 1983 Grenadian Revolution were forever transformed.

Grenadian Professor of Political Science Wendy Grenade from the University of West Indies charts some of the gains made during the short period: “Raising levels of social consciousness; building a



*Maurice Bishop walking among the Grenadian people following the 13th March, 1979 Revolution.*

national ethos that encouraged a sense of community; organising agrarian reform to benefit small farmers and farm workers; promoting literacy and adult education; fostering child and youth development; enacting legislation to promote gender justice; constructing low income housing and launching house repair programmes; improving physical infrastructure and in particular the construction of an international airport; providing an environment that encouraged popular democracy through Parish and Zonal Councils etc.”

Slogans and billboards emblazoned the country’s landscape: “Never Too Old to Learn,” “Ed-

ucation is Production Too,” “Every Worker a Learner,” and “Women, Committed to Economic Construction.”

Angela Davis captured what “the revo” meant to the Black nation within the U.S.: “The experiences that I’ve had here in Grenada have confirmed in a very powerful way where we are headed, what the future of the entire planet ought to look like – this beautiful, powerful militant revolution.”

The chief spokesperson of the revolution, Maurice Bishop, famously came to New York City in June 1983 inspiring a crowd of thousands of African-Americans and anti-imperialists as he detailed his people’s

achievements.

Glen “Pharoah” Samuel was a middle-school pupil at the time and was part of a crowd of students who raced to save Maurice Bishop, Jacqueline Creft and other revolutionary leaders from execution at Fort George.[5] Sitting down in a neighbourhood bodega, he explained Grenada’s role in the global class struggle known as “The Cold War:”

“As a Black, English-speaking country very close to America, imagine America has a population of over 42 million Afro Black Americans; obviously they understand our swag because we are all Black people, African people. So Ronald Reagan feared the situation and we had just finished our international airport which was sponsored by Cuba and the Soviet Union.”

Internationalist educator Chris Searle’s book *Grenada Morning: A Memoir of the “Revo”* details the accomplishments of the revolution in overcoming a history of colonial and neo-colonial servitude and degradation. Gerhard Dilger of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation studied the revolutionary contributions of poets and calypso singers from 1979 to 1983. Dr. Horace Campbell’s *Rasta and Resistance* highlights the participation of the

*cont’d on pg 13*



# Caribbean History

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*cont'd from pg 12*

Rastafari community, long oppressed under the Gairy dictatorship, in the Revolutionary People's Government and Army.

All of Grenada was ablaze with the flames of revolutionary optimism, unity and growth.

## **The Invasion: An Attempt to Kill Hope**

Alarmed at the existence of another workers' state in Washington's "backyard," Ronald Reagan and the U.S. foreign policy establishment were hellbent on overthrowing the four-and-a-half-year revolution.

Internationalist scholar Carlos Martínez artfully captures the U.S. campaign of psychological warfare and sabre rattling. In 1981, Reagan mobilized over 120,000 troops, 250 warships and 1,000 aircraft to Vieques, an island that is part of Puerto Rico, for a mock invasion.

They code-named the operation "Amber and the Amberines" because Grenada's official name is Grenada and the Grenadines, as it includes the two smaller islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique.

U.S. intelligence worked overtime to monitor the cracks in the revolutionary leadership and create divisions in order to exploit them, ultimately leading to the assassination of the revolution's top leadership.

Eighteen civilians were killed when the U.S. Navy bombed a hospital for patients with mental challeng-

es. 24 Cuban construction workers were murdered.

It was David vs Goliath but David stood up to the invasion. Maurice Bishop sounded the battle cry: "This land is ours; every square inch of its soil is ours, every grain of sand is ours, every nutmeg pod is ours, every beautiful young Pioneer who walks on this land is ours. It is our responsibility and ours alone, to fight to defend our homeland."

The break in the top leadership of the New Jewel Movement and Reagan's accusation that 600 American medical students were

in danger, provided the humanitarian cover for the illegal assault on a people's democracy.

The U.S. military project then helped prop up a pro-U.S. power structure that sought to dismantle the very memory of the revolution. Artist Suelin Low Chew Tung writes that "images of the revolution[ary] years were deliberately erased from the landscape ... Three decades later, as far as local visual art records are concerned, it is as if the Grenada Revolution never happened."

It was apparent that this


generation feels disconnected from Grenada's definitive break with neo-colonialism.

To many youth, it appeared this was ancient history. How many Grenadians born after 1983 fully comprehended that their small homeland inspired the world?

The Washington Examiner, owned by right-wing billionaire Philip Anschutz, captures how U.S. ruling circles viewed military action against Grenada as a strategic, easy victory after defeat in Vietnam and Iran.

In an editorial on Sep-

*cont'd on pg 14*



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# Caribbean History



*cont'd from pg 13*

tember 12, 2021, Michael Rubin of the American Enterprise Institute advocated for a Grenada-like invasion to shore up respect for America after the humiliating defeat of the U.S. in Afghanistan: "Where and under what circumstances might a future commander in chief send troops to draw a new red line for America's enemies?"

He ominously ends the article warning: "There will be a new Grenada; the question to ponder is where and when."

## The Blackout: Liquidating Memory

On August 26th, 2021, this writer sat down with Dr. Terence Marryshow, Captain of the People's Revolutionary Army responsible for the personal security of Maurice Bishop and NJM leadership, former politi-

cal leader of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) and grandson of T.A. Marryshow, the father of the West Indian Federation. He elaborated on Pan-Caribbeanism in Grenada today.

"Caribbean leaders today are not pursuing this goal as vigorously as they ought to in the interests of the people of the Caribbean. The problem is many of them are not willing to give up that lofty position that they hold. During the period of the revolution there was certainly a great effort with the People's Revolutionary Government led by Maurice Bishop to forge that kind of Caribbean integration. But with his demise there is no real voice out there [in Grenada] championing that cause.

Today leaders are hardly concerned with that. Yes, we

do have CARICOM which in the final analysis is really a talk shop because nothing like concrete decisions and progress for the people comes out of it.

In an extensive interview, the Cuban-trained physician stated that "concerning teaching on the revolution in the schools there is a complete blackout. There is a concerted effort not to speak about it except for groups like The Maurice Bishop and October 19th Martyrs Foundation, the Grenadian Cuba Friendship Society and the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement. But there is no space on the [mainstream school] curriculum today for teaching anything about that revolutionary period."

A soldier of the People's Revolutionary Army, nicknamed Salt, who chose to remain anonymous and only wanted his nickname published, remembered what it meant to stand up to the hegemon of the north. He remembered the Center for Popular Education, his own exposure to critical Marxist texts and the day the call came from his superior officers to prepare to defend the country.

Speaking on censorship today, Salt explained: "The educators are not documenting anything and are not teaching our young people about the progress the revolution made."

To add insult to injury, the invaders and new rulers of Grenada disappeared the bodies of the key New Jew-

el Movement leaders. Local community leaders showed me where the invaders and their underlings disappeared Maurice's Bishop's body.

Bishop's mother Alimenta captured the horror of not knowing where her son's body was.

Having already lived through her husband's murder at the hands of Eric Gairy and the same U.S.-backed state machinery, she stated that, "I could go to the grave and say this is the spot where my husband is buried, but I can't say that for my son." This was what Grenadians remember as the triple assassination of their revolution.

## Which Way Forward?

In 2019, the Venezuela government published a bilingual tribute to Maurice Bishop and the October martyrs in the Correo del Alba. Unpublished testimonies of dozens of cadres and combatants of the revolutionary process express how it brought Grenada closer to Africa and all oppressed nations and set Grenada on a path to defiant participation in CELAC, ALBA, and PetroCaribe.

Today Grenada is charting a path of friendly relations both with imperialism and the blockaded Bolivarian nations attempting to emerge from centuries of colonialism and decades of U.S. hybrid war. What is clear is that the Grenadian Revolution was an example for the world that the colonised can stand up, organise and win.

## Weekend Puzzle Solution

GOT IT!

By Rob Lee





## Everything you need to know about Commonwealth Day

Today is Commonwealth Day. It is an annual celebration observed by people across the Commonwealth in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe.

Falling every year on the second Monday in March, it is marked with a service attended by the Queen and the rest of the royal family at Westminster Abbey.

The aim of Commonwealth Day is to honour the history and shared values of Commonwealth states. It is a public holiday in a few Commonwealth countries.

### What is the Commonwealth?

The Commonwealth of Nations, generally known simply as the Commonwealth, is a political association of 54 member states, almost all of which are former colonies of the British Empire.

Formed in 1949, it now includes about 2.6 billion people and makes up a quarter of the world's land mass.

Member countries have no legal obligations to one another but are connected through their use of the English language and historical ties as former colonies.

Their stated shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law are enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter and promoted by the Common-

wealth Games, which take place every four years.

The head of the Commonwealth is currently Queen Elizabeth II. Prince Charles has been appointed to be her successor, although the position is not hereditary.

The Queen is the head of state of 15 member states, known as the Commonwealth realms, while 34 other members are republics, and five others have different monarchs.

Not all Commonwealth countries were former British colonies. Rwanda and Mozambique became members in 2009 and 1995 respectively, neither of which were colonised by the British.

In 1926, the Imperial Conference was held with leaders of Australia, Canada, India, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, New Zealand and South Africa. At the conference Britain and these Dominions agreed that they were all equal members of a community within the British Empire. This community was called the British Commonwealth of Nations.

As more and more countries gained independence from the British Empire, at a Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting in London in 1949, it was decided that republics and other countries could be part of



*Queen Elizabeth II walks past Commonwealth flags in St George's Hall at Windsor Castle to mark Commonwealth Day 2021.*

the Commonwealth. Thus, the modern Commonwealth of Nations was born.

### Why was the Commonwealth formed?

The Commonwealth has its roots in the British Empire. Over time different countries within the British Empire gained varying levels of freedom from Britain. Semi-independent countries were called Dominions. Leaders of the Dominions attended conferences with Britain from 1887.

Since 1949 independent countries from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Pacific have joined.

### What is the history behind Commonwealth Day?

Originally known as "Empire Day", Commonwealth Day was established in 1902 to honour Queen Victoria the year after she died. However, the idea of a day that would "remind children that they formed part of the British Empire"

was conceived in Canada back in 1897.

Empire Day wasn't officially recognised until 1916, having been celebrated unofficially in Canada for 14 years. It took another 10 years for it to truly reach a level of popularity – in 1925, an Empire Day Thanksgiving celebration at Wembley Stadium drew around 90,000 in attendance.

In 1958, the then-Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, rebranded Empire Day as Commonwealth Day.

### What will happen on Commonwealth Day this year?

The Queen is expected to attend the annual Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey, her first major public appearance since recovering from COVID and reaching her Platinum Jubilee milestone.

She hopes to attend the service, to be delivered by

*cont'd on pg 16*

# Regional News



## US Coast Guard repatriates 198 Haitian migrants

CMC - The United States Coast Guard says that the crew from its cutter Venturous recently repatriated 198 Haitian migrants.

In a statement on Friday, the Coast Guard said “a good Samaritan” notified Coast Guard Sector Key West watch standers last Sunday, at about 1:00 p.m., of a blue Haitian vessel grounded off Ocean Reef, Southern Florida.

It said it collaborated with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency and partner agencies in rescuing 356 Haitians from the vessel about 200 yards off Ocean Reef in Key Largo, Florida.

“The Coast Guard maintains a strong relationship with our partner agencies and Haitian authorities, allowing us to work together to protect lives at sea,” said Captain Adam Chamie, Commander of Sector Key West. “These grossly overloaded vessels operate without proper safety equipment and are not built for these hazardous voyages which can lead to casualties.”

Since October 1, 2020, the US Coast Guard said its crews have interdicted 1,152 Haitian migrants



compared to 1,527 in Fiscal Year 2021; 418 in Fiscal Year 2020; 932 in Fiscal Year 2019; 609 in Fiscal Year 2018; and 419 in Fiscal Year 2017.

Meantime, CBP said its Air and Marine Operations (AMO) and Border Patrol agents teamed up Tuesday to rescue a group of 10 undocumented migrants from Haiti left stranded by smugglers in Desecheo island off Puerto Rico.

“Smugglers have no respect for the security and well-being of the migrants they transport,” said Augusto Reyes, director of the Caribbean Air and Marine Branch. “Our agents will continue to use our advanced aeronautical capa-

bilities to procure the safety and security of people in distress throughout our coastal borders.”

CBP said that, on March 6, “a concerned citizen contacted the Ramey Sector indicating that a group of migrants were abandoned in Desecheo island,” a desolate island 13 miles (21 km) from Rincón on the west coast of Puerto Rico.

“With a rough sea state in the Mona Passage, impeding a safe removal on a boat, an AMO Black hawk was diverted from another mission to remove the migrants from the island,” CBP said.

“Ramey Sector Border Patrol Agents departed with the AMO crew and reached

the migrants on the side of the island where they were abandoned,” it added. “The agents guided the migrants through the rough terrain and elevation to another side of the island where the Black hawk was able to land.”

CBP said the 10 migrants, six males and four females, were in good health and were transported to the Ramey Border Patrol station for processing under US immigration law.

During World War II, and until 1952, Desecheo was used as a bombing range by the United States Armed Forces.

From 1952 to 1964 the United States Air Force used Desecheo for survival training, CBP said.

In 1976, it said the administration of the island was given to the US Fish and Wildlife Service; and, in 1983, it was designated as a National Wildlife Refuge.

### *cont'd from pg 15*

the former Archbishop of York, alongside the Prince of Wales, Duchess of Cornwall and Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Highlights of the service at Westminster Abbey today will include an address by the former archbishop Lord Sentamu, a

reflection by young Tongan leader Elizabeth Kite and special musical performances from Emeli Sande and Mica Paris.

Coronavirus restrictions last year meant that for the first time in nearly 50 years the annual service at Westminster Abbey was cancelled.



# Expensive prisoners!

Jamaica Observer – It is costing the Government over half a billion Jamaican dollars annually to feed inmates at the island's correctional facilities.

Figures obtained by the Jamaica Observer showed that in 2020 it cost \$13,000 to feed one inmate per month and the island's prison population currently amounts to just about 3,700.

The revised Estimates of Expenditure for the current financial year show a food bill of \$527, 374,000 million, with that figure expected to rise to \$581,431,000 for the coming financial year 2022/2023 for diet charges.

The issue of the feeding of prisoners has been a vexed one for many Jamaicans over the years. It is popular opinion that prisoners should be made to work to pay their debt to society and feed themselves.

There are two farm prisons in Jamaica — the Tamarind Farm Correctional Centre in St Catherine and the Richmond Adult Correctional Facility in St Mary. But sources tell the Sunday Observer that there is very little taking place in terms of work and productivity on the farms which mostly lie fallow.

A source close to the Richmond Adult Correctional facility said: "There isn't enough staff and we have to focus more on security, so farming takes a back



seat. We do a little here and there but nothing on a wide scale. We supply some of the other institutions with eggs from a small chicken farm and our pig rearing is at an all-time low. I believe it is time for the authorities to take a close look at what is going on because there is enough land available for cultivation and production and we should be putting more into the system in terms of ground provisions, meat and vegetables. That would lessen the burden on the taxpayers and funds could be shifted to assist with more rehabilitation programmes."

Richmond Farm once incorporated a large banana cultivation with cash crops mixed in, including corn, string beans, bok choi and cucumber.

A correctional officer at a high-security facility said many staff members are furious that the Government is

laying out so much on feeding inmates and is calling for an audit of the services.

"The Auditor General's Department needs to look deeply into what is taking place in prisons. From where many of us sit we see this as a money-making thing. Jamaica is in problems in terms of fish heads...It's a friendship thing and somebody needs to look at how the produce contracts are awarded."

He continued: "You have many prisoners who desperately want to work. They want to be doing something. So why is a man sentenced to hard labour and he can laze about all day, sometimes making mischief. It is an absolute disgrace that so many acres of land at Richmond and Tamarind Farm remain under-utilised and are turning into forest and the institutions are buying things like yam, sweet potato, cabbage, callaloo and ba-

nanas. The taxpayers of this country need some answers.

"If there was better management of the men, they would be able to supply all of the fresh produce that is required," he added.

Minister with responsibility for the correctional services Zavia Mayne and the Commissioner of Corrections Lt Col (Ret) Gary Rowe remained tight-lipped about the feeding programme in the service, refusing to respond to questions posed by the Sunday Observer.

Another area of concern raised by the correctional officer is in the area of dietary needs for inmates who suffer from diabetes and/or hypertension.

"We are supposed to have nutritionists and doctors who screen and make recommendations for certain inmates with medical conditions. But from what I have observed they are just fed what is there and the daily menu leaves a lot to be desired.

"I know this prison, but what is served raises questions about where all that money is going. For example, every day there is rice and dumplings. Sometimes there is cornmeal porridge and crackers. They have recently introduced salt fish and there is a limited variety of meat kind. So, what is half a billion dollars being spent on annually?"

## Cuba to start vaccination campaign against polio

Cuban public health ministry (MINSAP its Spanish acronym) announced today that the 61st National Oral Polio Vaccination Campaign will begin next Monday, March 14, in the country.

The ministry reported on its website that during the two stages of the campaign, all children from 1 month old to 2 years, 11 months and 29 days of age will be vaccinated.

Likewise, all nine-year-old children will be reactivated with a dose of oral polio vaccine.

The first stage of the campaign will take place between March 14 and March 19, 2022, with a catch-up week

from March 21 to 26.

The second one between May 16 and May 21, 2022, with a recovery week from May 23 to 28.

Poliomyelitis is an infectious-contagious disease that affects the central nervous system, mainly in children, and can cause muscular atrophy, paralysis, deformity and in some cases death.


Cuba carried out the first immunization campaign in the first half of 1962, thus beginning the elimination of the disease, and since that date six vaccine-preventable diseases and some serious forms of other diseases have been eradicated in the country.




Conditions such as tetanus, haemophilus influenzae type b meningitis, typhoid fever and meningococcal disease register rates of less than 0.1 per 100,000 inhabitants in Cuba.


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# Russia intensifies strikes around Kyiv as it warns US against arming Ukraine

CNN - The Russian assault across Ukraine raged Saturday as explosions were heard in Kyiv and fighting intensified around the capital. Hours later, Russia warned the United States that it would fire on weapon shipments to Ukraine, raising the risk of direct confrontation between Moscow and a NATO country.

A number of major cities are under pressure as Russian strikes hit civilian structures. Smoke rose east of the river in Dnipro early on Saturday where CNN journalists felt at least two explosions and saw the cloudy remnants of what looked like anti-aircraft fire.

A large swath of Makariv, a village 30 miles west of Kyiv, has sustained significant damage from apparent Russian airstrikes.

CNN geolocated and verified the authenticity of photos, posted to social media Saturday, which show major damage to apartment complexes, schools and a medical facility. One of the starker images from Makariv shows a large hole in the northern wall of an apartment building from a military strike. Many of the buildings in the photos have sustained damage on their northern facades, evidence that points to military



*Russia has intensified air strikes around Kyiv and has warned the US against arming Ukraine.*

strikes that hit them as being Russian.

In Chernihiv, some 100 kilometres north of Kyiv, local landmark Hotel Ukraine was hit overnight. "I am here now. There is no hotel anymore," Vyacheslav Chaus, head of Chernihiv region administration, said Saturday.

The northern city, which is close to the Belarus border, has been surrounded by Russian forces for more than a week and video from the city showed the collapsed floors of the hotel as well as widespread damage from missiles and airstrikes.

Chaus said civilians were dying from the strikes, which brought down the city's electricity network. "Many people are being injured. The enemy shells civilian infrastructure, where

there is no military," he said, saying the city has "no electricity, almost no water, gas, and heat."

The Russian Ministry of Défense has repeatedly claimed that Russian forces are not targeting civilians.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in a Saturday address the whole country was now a front line. "A few small towns just don't exist anymore. And this is a tragedy. They are just gone. And people are also gone."

Zelensky said negotiations to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine "must begin with a ceasefire," adding that Ukraine has lost about 1,300 troops as of Saturday. CNN has been unable to independently verify these numbers.

Later Saturday, Zelen-

sky said that he was grateful for international support but urged allies to provide more aid.

"I keep reiterating to our allies and friends abroad; they have to keep doing more for our country, for Ukrainians and Ukraine. Because it is not only for Ukraine, but it is for all of Europe," he said. "The evil which purposefully targets peaceful cities and ambulance vans and explodes hospitals will not stop with just one country if they have the strength to keep going."

The US and NATO say they're taking steps to help Ukraine defend itself against Russian troops, and they have continued to provide Ukraine with security assistance, including anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons. But the US and NATO have also tried to avoid being drawn into an outright conflict with Russia. US President Joe Biden emphasized that point on Friday, that the US will not send ground troops into Ukraine, which is not a member of NATO.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov on Saturday warned the US against transferring weapons to Ukraine, saying convoys with foreign weapons would be considered "legitimate targets."

## Saudi Arabia executes 81 men in one day, the biggest mass execution in decades

Reuters – Saudi Arabia executed 81 men on Saturday, including seven Yemenis and one Syrian, for terrorism and other offenses including holding “deviant beliefs,” authorities said, in the biggest mass execution in decades.

The number dwarfed the 67 executions reported in the kingdom in all of 2021 and the 27 in 2020.

“These individuals, totalling 81, were convicted of various crimes including murdering innocent men, women and children,” the interior ministry said in a statement.

“Crimes committed by these individuals also include pledging allegiance to foreign terrorist organisations, such as ISIS (Islamic State), al Qaeda and the Houthis,” it added.

Some travelled to conflict zones to join “terrorist organizations,” the



*A Saudi Arabia flag flies on the top of the country's consulate building in Istanbul.*

statement said.

The ministry did not say how the executions were carried out.

The men included 37 Saudi nationals who were found guilty in a single case for attempting to assassinate security officers and targeting police stations and convoys, the ministry added.

The kingdom executed 63 people in one day in 1980, a year after militants seized the Grand Mosque in

Mecca, according to state media reports.

A total of 47 people, including prominent Shiite Muslim cleric Nimr al-Nimr, were executed in one day in 2016.

Rights groups have accused Saudi Arabia of enforcing restrictive laws on political and religious expression, and criticised it for using the death penalty, including for defendants arrested when they were minors.

Saudi Arabia denies accusations of human rights abuses and says it protects its national security according to its laws.

SPA, Saudi Arabia's state news agency, said the accused were provided with the right to an attorney and were guaranteed their full rights under Saudi law during the judicial process.

## Irbil attack: Missiles from Iran hit northern Iraqi city, US says

BBC - Several ballistic missiles launched from Iran have struck the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, US officials say.

The missiles damaged buildings near the US consulate complex but no casualties were reported, officials in the Kurdistan Regional Government said.

The US said none of its facilities were hit in the “outrageous attack”.

There has been no confirmation of the launch from Iran, but Iranian state media

cited sources as saying that “secret Israeli bases” were targeted.

The attack came six days after two senior officers in Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps were killed in a suspected Israeli air strike near the Syrian capital Damascus. The IRGC had vowed to make Israel “pay for this crime”.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Kadhimi joined the US in condemning Sunday's attack.



“The aggression which targeted the dear city of Irbil and spread fear amongst its inhabitants is an attack on the security of our people,” he

tweeted.

“Our security forces will investigate and stand firm against any threats towards our people.”



## West Indies fined for slow over-rate against India

West Indies have been fined 40 per cent of their match fee for slow over-rate during their ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2022 match against India in Hamilton, New Zealand on Friday.

According to the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offences, players are fined 20 per cent of their match fee for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time.

West Indies were two over short of the mark, thus a fine of 40 per cent was imposed on the West Indies by Shandre Fritz of the Emirates ICC International Panel of Match Referees. On-field umpires Eloise Sheridan and Paul Wilson, third umpire Ahmed Shah Pakteen, and fourth umpire Ruchira Palliyaguruge levelled the charge on West Indies.

After losing the toss in Hamilton against India, West Indies failed to fin-



ish their 50 overs in time while bowling first. Following the game, West Indies captain Stafanie Taylor accepted the sanction and there was no need for a formal hearing.

India posted a total of 317/8,

thanks to hundreds from Smriti Mandhana (123) and Harmanpreet Kaur (109). They followed it up by a sensational performance with the ball to limit West Indies to 162, winning the match by 155 runs," according to the

## Paralympics close to end Asia's run at centre of world sport

AP – The president of the International Paralympic Committee expressed "hopes for peace" as the Winter Paralympics closed Sunday but avoided mentioning Russia's war on Ukraine.

The closing ceremony marked the end of an almost six-week run for international sports in the Chinese capital that began with the opening of the Winter Olympics on Feb. 4.

IPC President Andrew Parsons sounded a note of unity at the ceremony in the Olympic stadium after athletes from Russia and Be-



Fireworks ignite during the closing ceremony at the 2022 Winter Paralympics, Sunday, March 13, 2022, in Beijing. (AP Photo/Shuji Kajiyama)

larus were expelled earlier.

"Differences here did not divide us," Parsons said, speaking before an audience that included Chinese

President Xi Jinping.

"Through this unity we have hope. Hopes for inclusion, hopes for harmony and importantly hopes for

peace," Parsons said. "Humankind hopes to live in a world where dialogue prevails."

The ceremony ended a run for Asia of hosting four of the last eight Olympics and Paralympics, starting with the 2008 Beijing Olympics. It's unclear when sports' largest stage will return to Asia.

The next Summer Olympics and Paralympics are in 2024 in Paris, followed by Winter Games in Milan-Cortina, Italy in 2026, and Los Angeles in 2028 with the Summer Games.

# Sports News



## Shirville Jarvis to launch Over-40 League

An event is being created to give retired footballers in Antigua and Barbuda a chance to return to the field of play and be engaged for several weeks in a league competition.

The Antigua Over-40 Premier League, designed for players over age 40, will kick off at the end of April.

Its chief organiser is former national under-13 player, Shirville Jarvis, who is also an actor and model in New York.

Speaking to Sports Overflow on Pointe FM, Jarvis said he made the decision to organise the league after witnessing the enthusiasm former players still have for the sport.

“We are shooting for April 30th to start the Over-40 Antigua Premier League.

“What ignited it was when I first went to some games in the Antigua Premier League and saw the older players in some teams being left on the bench and people saying they were too old.

“I felt many of these players still had better quality than what was being displayed on the field. If they were given a chance to start the game, these guys were still being substituted no matter how good a game they were having. So I was like, no, that is not right,” Jarvis said.

“Then we met recently with former national coach Zoran Vranes, who came to visit. There were sever-



*Shirville Jarvis is the organiser of the Antigua Over-40 Premier League. (Photo: Shirville Jarvis)*

al former national players who showed up at the playing field to meet Vranes. From the conversations, these players were having with Vranes, you could see how these guys missed the game.

“So, in my head, I then started to think about putting something together to see these guys playing again. I decided to organise this league and I didn’t expect the feedback that I have been getting.

“It’s ridiculously great feedback. A lot of people can’t wait for it to start.”

Jarvis, who is from All Saints Village, said the league’s April start is to give sufficient time to final-

ise match venues.

Jarvis said he hopes to be granted use of the ABFA’s Technical and Training Centre in Paynters, however this has not yet been confirmed. Meanwhile, he is also exploring other venues.

“Right now, it’s a positive look for the technical centre, the new football stadium, but we haven’t confirmed that as yet because all the national teams are currently training there,” he said.

“But I am looking to play the games on Sundays for now. I would also like to have Saturdays and Sundays to play two games per day, but if we have to play all four games on a

Sunday, we would start at about 3:30pm and finish at 9:30pm.”

He also shared the registration contact information for teams wishing to participate.

“Teams can register via email at 40football268@gmail.com, or they can WhatsApp message 646-3187574. We would like for each team to have at least 11 players by March 14.”

Jarvis also explained the format the league will take and noted that it will follow a round robin format.

“I have 10 prospective teams and 7 of those teams are confirmed, so we are just waiting on one more team,” he said.

The teams committed so far are Bolans Men which features ex-national striker and coach Derrick “Pretty Boy” Edwards; Dunbars of Hoppers featuring former national captain George “Sour” Dublin; Legacy FC which will be managed by Jarvis; Extraordinary Men; Turf Masters with which Prime Minister Gaston Browne will appear; Golden Grove Masters; West Ham FC and All Saints.

Pigotts and Young Blood of Jennings have also shown interest.

“We are starting off with eight teams who will play against each other over two rounds. Each team can register up to 22 players, but on game days, it is only 16 players allowed on a ros-

**cont’d on pg 23**



## Naomi Osaka: Former world number one in tears after heckling during Indian Wells defeat

BBC - Former world number one Naomi Osaka was brought to tears by a heckler during her 6-0 6-4 defeat by Veronika Kudermetova at Indian Wells.

The four-time Grand Slam winner was taunted in the first set by someone in the crowd yelling "Naomi, you suck".

Osaka was playing her third event since taking a break in September.

Speaking on court after the match, an emotional Osaka said it reminded her of Venus and Serena Williams being heckled at the same tournament in 2001.

While holding back tears, Japan's Osaka said: "I've been heckled before and it didn't really bother me.

"But being heckled here. I've watched video of Venus and Serena get heckled here and if you've never watched it, you should watch it.

"And I don't know why, but it went into my head and got replayed a lot."

The Williams sisters boycotted Indian Wells for 14 years over the events of 2001.

Venus had pulled out of a semi-final match against her sister with a knee injury, and when she and her



Former world number one Naomi Osaka

father Richard took their seats to watch Serena in the final against Kim Clijsters the next day the crowd jeered. Serena was also subjected to boos throughout the match.

Serena went on to win the title and embraced Venus and her father courtside, with Richard later saying he was the target of racial abuse.

In an interview in 2021, Serena said she was still traumatised by the incident two decades later.

Osaka's second-round exit at Indian Wells is the earliest she has been knocked out of a tournament since returning from an indefinite break that began last year after her US Open title defence ended in the third round.

That break was her second of the year, after she withdrew from the French Open amid controversy over her wish not to speak to the media after matches, and revealed she has struggled with her mental health since first becoming a Grand Slam champion in 2018.

The 24-year-old also missed Wimbledon before returning to the sport later in the summer at the Tokyo Olympics, where she lit the flame at the opening ceremony.

*cont'd from pg 22*

ter," Jarvis said.

"The reason for that is, it's a sub-in and out each player once per half so you don't want to substitute the whole team and get fresh legs and the other team is not capable of doing that.

"To me, it would not be fair because it would put one team at a disadvantage.

"Also with the league, you could register five players who are between

the age of 35 and 40, but only three of those players can be on the field of play at the same time. It's an 80 minute game; 40 minutes per half."

He also indicated that the search for sponsors is still on ahead of the start of the tournament.

"I don't have any sponsors yet, so I am looking out for sponsors. If you are out there, you can reach out to me at 646-3187574 or 268-7805236 or email me at 40football268@gmail.com."

## Coaches select squads for CAF Advance Academy

The final group of players who will participate in the third Calvin Ayre Foundation (CAF) Generation Next Football Club's (GNFC) Advance Academy have been selected.

The trials, which were sponsored by the Calvin Ayre Foundation for the third successive year, commenced at the Fort Road Playing Field on 22nd February.

Originally planned to cover four sessions, four days over a two-week period for players in the Under-13, Under-16 and Under-19 boys, females and goalkeepers' categories, the large turn-out of over 230 players saw the trials extended to 8th March. This gave coaches a better opportunity to evaluate players before selecting the boys Under-16, Under-19 and goalkeepers' squads who will attend this year's Advance Academy.

The coaches were able to select the female and Under-13 Boys squads in the initially prescribed two-week period.

The Under-16 Boys squad selected to attend the Advance Academy includes Sadique Adams, Jewel Andrew, Jetaime Barret, Deair Bartley, Jayden Bowen, Malachi Francis, Lucah Gomes, Eroy Gonsalves, Shayan Hastings, Joseph Jacobs, Jevaughn Jarvis, Julian Joseph, Koeina Jo-



*Coach Desmond 'Zeco' Bleau, left, addresses players during the trials of the CAF-GNFC trials for the advance academy at the Fort Road playing field on 8th March, 2022. (Photo: Elwin Francis)*

seph, Amejah Nibbs, Arturo Pantoja, Jevauhn Parker, Omawalle Samuel Jr., Jonathan Shoy, Ne-Quan Tanner and Greg Williams.

The Under-19 Boys squad is comprised of Maliko Anthony, Rushane Brooks, Kadeem Campbell, Traquan Crump, Oskhine Daniel, D'Ran Defoe, Joshua Ferdinand, Depaul George, Diondre Harrigan, Isaiah Hughes, Marquis Jackson, Blaivon James, Mali Johnson, Andre Kellman, Terrol Marsh Jr., Joshua Mason, Daryl Massicot, Nyro Parker, Timothy Sanasie, Joylan

Sinclair, Tyrique Thwaites and Sean Tomlinson.

The goalkeepers who were chosen are Jayden Dowdye, Kyle Edwards, Daniel Freeland, Nalian Gonsalves, Jaylon Joseph, Khaliq Joseph, Alyssa Laviscourt, Yannick Merchant, Taj Moore, Oniyah Prince and Max Williams-Angmor.

Offering congratulations to all the players selected for the Advance Academy, President of CAF-GNFC, Ambassador Ricky Santos, said this year's try-outs have been the largest to date.

"Congratulations to all

the selected players in the CAF-GNFC Advance Academy. We want to thank all the players who participated as well. This is the third CAF-GNFC Advance Academy and it has been the most successful to date with much more participants than we were anticipating at the trials," he said.

National Under-20 head coach Desmond "Zeco" Bleau, is head of coaching at CAF GNFC and coach of the Under-19s at the Advance Academy.

Bleau and his team will provide the players selected for the CAF Advance Academy with weekly specialised training throughout the year and the players, especially the Under-19s, will also be given SAT lessons free of charge.

Ambassador Santos said the Advance Academy training this year will continue at Fort Road, but will break during the summer.

He said the SAT classes, which are funded by the Calvin Ayre Foundation, will re-commence on 19th March, 2022.

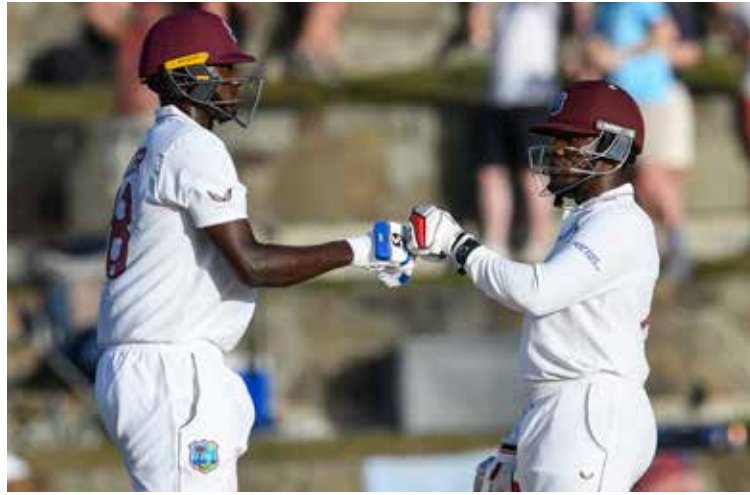
"Training for the advance academy will be at Fort Road football field on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I cannot stress enough our sincere gratitude to our benefactor, Calvin Ayre Foundation, which has made this initiative possible," he added.



## Bonner, Holder help West Indies earn a draw in first Test against England

Nkrumah Bonner and Jason Holder drew the sting of England's depleted attack in a tense final session of the first Test in Antigua, as their 80-run partnership, spanning 34.4 resolute overs, thwarted a well-judged declaration from Joe Root that briefly looked set to deliver an unlikely victory in a previously bat-dominated contest. After Root himself had become England's third centurion of the match - a feat they last achieved on the tour of India in 2016-17 - West Indies were left needing a stiff but tantalizing target of 286 in a minimum of 71 overs, against an attack lacking the services of Mark Wood, the man whose habitual 90 mph pace might have been expected to unlock an unforgiving surface.

Instead, England's fight was carried by the disciplined, probing spin of Jack Leach, who bowled with great accuracy, and with five men camped around the bat for the majority of the final session, but with little luck to finish with 3 for 57 in 30.1 overs. Ben Stokes was England's other main threat as he once again belied the pre-match caveats about his



fitness to bang out 13 more overs for 24, but having pried out the key early wicket of Kraigg Brathwaite, he too was unable to get the better of a dogged fifth-wicket pair.

After 21 wickets had fallen on the first four days of the match, the likelihood of England forcing victory on an unforgiving surface at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium had always been slim. And slim seemed to have left town when it was confirmed that Wood - who had been withdrawn from the attack before lunch on day three - would play no further part in the match, after reporting "acute pain" in his injured right elbow during a nets session before the start of play.

With Wood's participation in the rest of the series now in serious doubt, it

would have been understandable had England chosen to shut up shop from the outset, after resuming their second innings with a stalemate at their mercy on 217 for 1. However, in adding a further 132 runs in 25 overs of an extended morning session, the evidence from the day's outset was that England always intended to have a dart at West Indies' brittle batting in the final two sessions.

By the time Bonner had batted for 493 balls across his two innings, and found typically indomitable support from Holder - a man who never needs to be asked twice to produce his best performances against England - West Indies had located a backbone to reinforce their remarkable home record in the Wisden-turned-Rich-

ards-Botham-Trophy

Despite being thwarted at the death, there were plenty of positives for England to take away from the first five days of their so-called red-ball reset. With centuries already in the bag for Jonny Bairstow and Crawley, the captain Root made it three for the match in the morning session - his 24th in Test cricket and 13th as captain, overtaking Alastair Cook's previous record. After a stellar year in 2021, it was Root's first of the new calendar year, and his first in his new berth at No. 3 as well.

But in strolling off the pitch with an indomitable stand to their names, and with West Indies' unbeaten run in Tests against England in Antigua extended into the 42nd year, Bonner and Holder did more than enough to remind their opponents that they are in a tussle once again in this series, with their next challenge looming large in Barbados next week.

*West Indies 375 (Bonner 123, Brathwaite 55) and 147 for 4 (Bonner 38\*, Holder 37\*) drew with England 311 (Bairstow 140, Seales 4-79) and 349 for 6 Dec (Crawley 121, Root 109)*

*cont'd from pg 26*

the Wings' football division has now resumed regular practice sessions on Saturday mornings at the St. John's Catholic Primary School Grounds.

She said junior and senior players are gradually returning to training

sessions which are conducted by head coach and former senior national player Karanjah Mack with assistance from ex-Antiguan midfielder Rolston "Lexie" Phoenix. Coates is also a coach, however she works with toddlers.

"On average we have about 30

youngsters, sometimes a bit more, but they have been coming back. Not as regularly as we would have liked, but they are returning and now that we are looking forward to our football festival, we have a little bit more coming back," Coates said.

## Wings to host youth football festival this month

Following a two-year break due to the pandemic, the football branch of the Concerned Parents Teachers Sports Associations (CPTSA) Wings Sports Club will host its soccer festival this month.

Chairperson of the Wings Football Committee, Barbara Coates, said the club will stage the Youth Football Festival at the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Technical and Training Centre at Paynters.

"We have the 9th edition of the Wings Youth Football Festival that comes up on the 26th and 27th March where we have age groups from Under-7 right through to Under-17, and it does include girls as well," she said.

"Teams are registered at \$20 per team and \$10 per player and we are going to have prizes. For the first, second and third place winners we will give trophies like we normally do.

"Registration is still open. We have a cut-off date for registration on 18th March."

She also noted that the matches will take a unique format to make the best use of the time they have been allowed use of the stadium.

"It is 20 minutes per game with 10 minutes per half because we know that we have a short time at the training centre, so we have to be able to do it properly so that it flows well and make sure that everybody is pretty much happy at the end of the day."

Coates also disclosed a new addition to this year's basketball festival aimed at helping students preparing



Barbara Coates, right, gives instructions while coaching members of the Wings Sports Club's football team at the St John's Catholic Primary School Grounds on Saturday 12th, March, 2022. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

for CXC's.

"We are introducing something new. We are going to give the fourth and fifth form students an opportunity to be a part of this event so that they can understand what it is, even in terms of their SBAs (School Based Assessment), when they do their PE (Physical Education). They [will now] know what they are required to do," Coates said.

"We have reached out to Ottos Comprehensive, Christ the King High School and St Joseph's Academy and they have all come on board.

"What we are going to do is to have those students who are going to be doing PE for CXC be a part of this. They are going to be helping to collect the data, they are going to be helping in the scheduling of the games, be-

cause when the registrations come up they are going to understand what it is if we are going to do a round robin or if we are going to do a knockout.

"We are going to have the students engaged as commentators and journalists as well, because we are trying to get them into a career path as early as possible.

"We understand that it is a part of the PE curriculum for SBAs and so we are giving them a real-life experience to see how this is done.

"We will have our food stalls so they will understand what it is to help to get the monies to be able to execute something like this. So this is a real life opportunity for the school students."

Coates said after being forced to curtail training because of COVID-19,

*cont'd on pg 25*