

FFRYES R.O. PLANT COMMISSIONED, WATER WOES TO IMPROVE



Japan's Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda H. E. Yutaka Matsubara addresses the head table on Thursday during the ceremony to commission the expanded Ffryes Beach Reverse Osmosis Plant. Seated left to right: Hon. Samantha Marshall, Prime Minister, Hon. Gaston Browne, Hon. Sir Robin Yearwood and Ambassador Daven Joseph. **Story on Page 2.**

Local News



PM: Over \$135 million spent on water resources

Over \$135 million has been spent by the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) over several years to tackle the country's chronic water problem.

The disclosure came from Prime Minister Gaston Browne who reported that APUA, with assistance from the central government, has used these funds to implement the infrastructure to ensure a ready supply of water to consumers at a reasonable



Photos: [Kavi Roberts/Pointe Xpress]

price.

PM Browne was speaking on Thursday at the handing over ceremony of the Ffryes Beach Reverse

Osmosis Plant Expansion.

The expansion of the plant, a gift from the government and people of Japan, now facilitates the production of over 400 thousand gallons of water per day.

He recalled that in 2016, the Cabinet, along with APUA, developed a policy to establish a balance between managing the country's fresh water

supply and reverse osmosis water production to meet consumers' water needs.

"By 2019, we recognised that we had to move to a new policy where one hundred percent of our water supply would come from reverse osmosis, due primarily to our continuing drought situation.












"For example, when we were devising our earlier plans, we could not have anticipated that by 2021 we would have the worst drought since records were being kept dating back to 1928," the prime minister revealed.

According to PM Browne, the issue of cost was also critical to both the Cabinet and APUA.

"We wanted to provide
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NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that **SANTOS MEDINA CIPRIAN** of **Newgate Street** is applying to the Minister for Naturalisation and that any person who knows any reason why Naturalisation should not be granted should send a written and signed statement of the facts to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

Fri 25 Day		Fri 25 Night	
82°		74°	
11% E 16 mph		9% E 13 mph	
Sunny skies. High 82F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.		Clear. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.	
 Humidity 67%	 UV Index Extreme	 Humidity 72%	 UV Index 0 of 10
 Sunrise 6:07 am	 Sunset 6:19 pm	 Moonrise 12:51 am	 Moonset 12:06 pm
		 Last Quarter	

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water from fresh water and RO sources at an affordable price. Currently, we are providing water at a rate of \$22 per one thousand gallons, which is one of the least expensive prices paid for water anywhere," he declared.

The prime minister urged the nation to become active participants in mitigating Antigua and Barbuda's water problem by practicing water conservation at the individual level.

He said consumers should be more responsible when using water and adjust their use of the resource including reducing the time spent in the shower and refraining from allowing water to run continuously while washing dishes.

He also stated that every household in the country should practice water harvesting by building cisterns or purchasing water catchment tanks to collect water from rainfall.

Browne said solving the water problem will not be an 'overnight fix' as each RO plant takes up to a year to build and several months to be shipped to Antigua and Barbuda.

Utilities Minister, Sir Robin Yearwood, outlined the products of the many investments by APUA over the years to include the plant at Pigeon Point and the Ffryes Beach Reverse Osmosis Plant commissioned on Thursday.

Two additional plants

have been purchased which will be erected at Fort James and Bethesda.

Also addressing the ceremony yesterday was APUA's General Manager, Esworth Martin, who spoke of challenges faced in implementing the government's new water policies.

He disclosed that the

delivery of the plants from the manufacturers in Dubai has been quite difficult because of shipping and other constraints caused by world supply chain interruptions and shipping issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Antigua's daily water consumption is 8 million gallons. Currently, RO

supplies 6.5 million gallons.

But according to the Water Business Manager, Ian Lewis, APUA is aiming to generate 12 million gallons daily by the end of the year with the coming addition of the Fort James and Bethesda plants and this latest expansion of the plant at Ffryes Beach.



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

Ffryes Beach Reverse Osmosis Plant Expansion

ST. JOHN'S Antigua, March 24th, 2022 – The government of Antigua and Barbuda established a mandate of increasing water production in Antigua through the process of reverse osmosis to one hundred percent. This aims to substitute the depleted surface and ground water supply that has been significantly impacted due to the prolonged drought. Another successful milestone was made along this journey is the successful expansion of the Ffryes Beach Reverse Osmosis Plant.

Consultations between the Ministry of Agriculture and the People of Japan yielded a substantial gift to expand the production capacity at Ffryes Reverse Osmosis Plant by an additional 400,000 gallons per day. This expansion has increased the daily production to 900,000 gallons per day satisfying the residents and farmers of the southern communities.

The official handover ceremony was held at the Ffryes Beach Reverse Osmosis Plant on Thursday 24th March, 2022. Japan's representative Ambassador Yutaka Matsubara expressed his country's commitment supporting agriculture and food security through a bilateral agreement between states since 1982.

APUA's General Manager Esworth Martin in his remarks noted that 'it is difficult to overstate the impact of Covid on APUA's resources and plans' but was adamant about fulfilling the mandate of transforming and modernizing the Water Business Unit in congruence with the Government's mandate. Mr. Martin also highlighted that a rigorous mainline replacement is also set to commence pending the arrival of additional high density poly ethylene (HDPE) pipes.

Two additional Reverse Osmosis plants have been purchased through funding from the Antigua Commercial Bank and are scheduled for commissioning in June and September respectively:

- Installation of Fort James Reverse Osmosis Plant – 500,000 gallons per day
- Installation of Bethesda Reverse Osmosis Plant – 3,000,000 gallons per day

The effects of climate change have caused the scarcity of water to be classified as a global crisis. We implore all residents to actively engage in water conservation practices, even irrespective that we are surrounded by seawater. The process of reverse osmosis is a costly method and should be conserved as much as possible.

APUA wishes to reaffirm its mandate of providing potable water to its customers and will continue on its commitment to increase water production and storage capacity meeting and exceeding the needs of our customers.

Local News



More RO equipment en route to St. John's

The general manager of Antigua Public Utilities Authority says every effort is being made to get the additional Reverse Osmosis Plants that were ordered imported into the country.

Supply chain challenges have resulted in delays in the arrival of the equipment needed to commission the facilities to ensure improved water supply to the utilities company's consumers.

As he addressed the handing over ceremony of the Ffryes Reverse Osmosis Plant Expansion yesterday, Esworth Martin explained the COVID-19 pandemic added to APUA's challenges.

But he assured that steps are being taken to have the



Esworth Martin

equipment landed.

"This upgrade has been delayed 17 months right here. This plant arrived in October, 2020 and because of COVID, we were not able to install and commission. Our Japanese friends arrived on January 21st, 2022 with

a projected end of February commissioning timeline, and through their diligence and collaborative effort with our team, we were able to test by February 15th. The plant has been operationalised since then, distributing water all the way to Ottos," Martin

stated.

Keeping in mind the need to improve the water supply across the country, the general manager said APUA is working to get the Fort James plant from the manufacturer to St. John's. Additionally, materials for the Bethesda plant are expected within weeks.

"The core equipment should sail in June, and we have September for the commissioning timeline for the Bethesda three million gallons per day plant.

"With a rigorous mains replacement set to commence as soon as the HGP pipes arrive, I believe that the mandate would have been executed," Esworth Martin asserted.



Fuel subsidy takes effect for key sectors

The recent increases in fuel prices are to remain in place for now, but operators in the key sectors of transportation and fishing are now benefiting from lower prices due to a subsidy announced by the government.

This was one of the key decisions made at this week's meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday.

Cabinet sources say taxi and bus operators, along with fisherfolk, are now eligible to reap the benefit of a twenty-five percent subsidy in fuel prices.

"The Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board and the Ministry for Fisheries have developed a voucher system that went into effect Thursday.

"Under this arrangement, transportation service providers and fisherfolk will receive a 25% reduction in the cost of fuel.

"It means, therefore, that taxi and bus fares will remain the same for people utilising these services, and the price per pound for fish and other seafood should remain unchanged," the source revealed.

The issue of the rise in fuel prices was discussed at length this week among Cabinet's members.

It was noted that the price of oil on the world market has been trending upwards for several weeks, with the price per barrel at one point surpassing US\$120.00.

The continued war in Ukraine is having a negative impact on global supply and this has the effect of driving up the per barrel cost.

"Moreover, while other countries in the region have incrementally [raised] their price at the pumps for several years, the price in Antigua and Barbuda remained the same to ensure there is stability and predictability in the cost of fuel, an approach that ensures prices for other commodities such as food remain stable. In

doing so, the government collected less Consumption Taxes, and it is the case that the government collected only \$1.7 million for this month," it was noted.

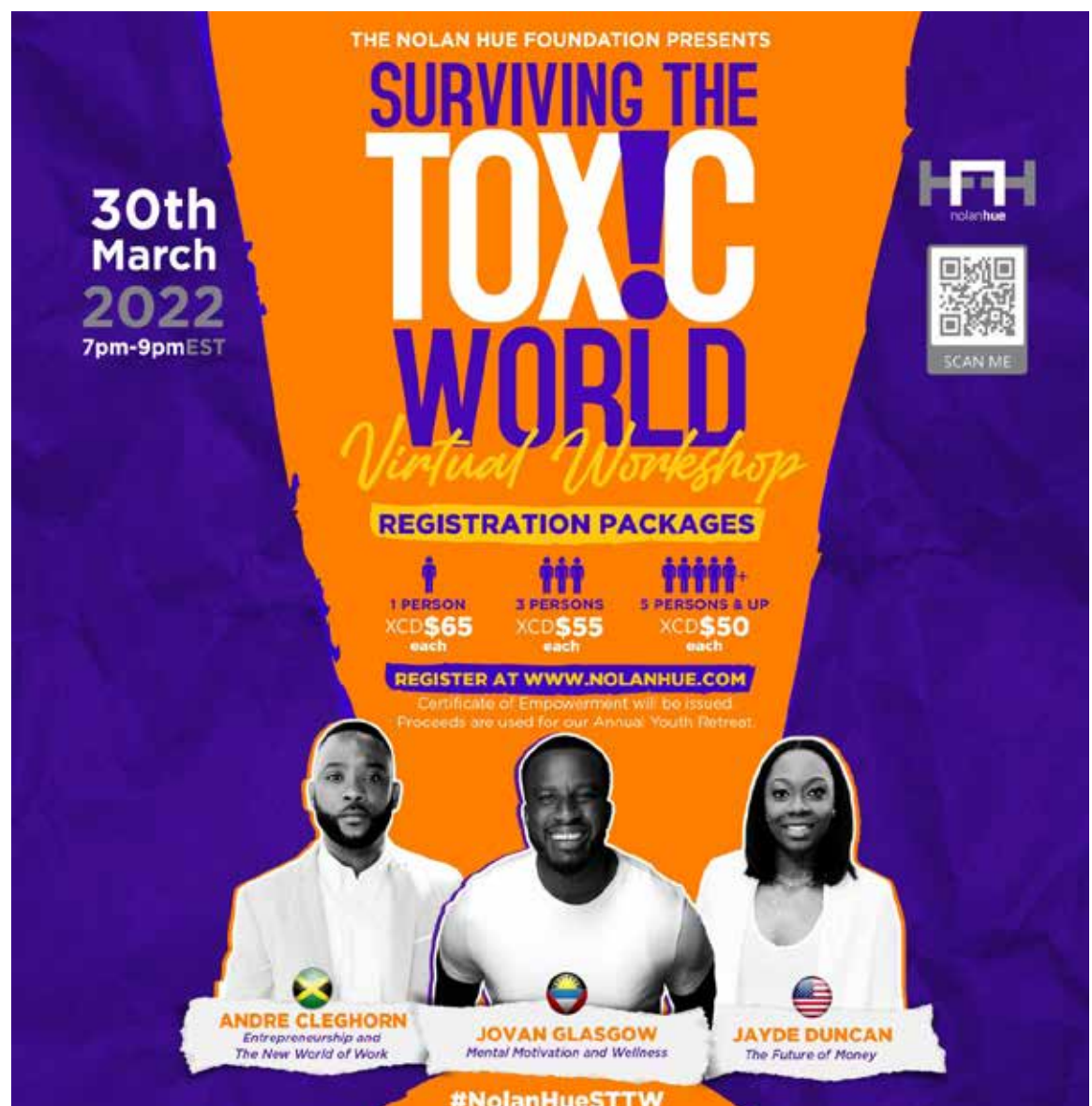
According to sources, Antigua and Barbuda enjoyed the lowest fuel prices in the OECS before the recent increase.

Cabinet has, however, reaffirmed its commitment to continue to monitor the price of oil on the international market and adjust the price downwards when the

price per barrel permits a reduction at the pumps.

Fuel prices in Antigua and Barbuda rose from \$12.50 to \$15.70 for gasoline and from \$12.20 to \$15.50 for diesel over a week ago.

The government announced that it was forced to raise the price of fuel because of the increases in the price of oil on the world market caused by, among other things, the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.



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SLBMC extends some visiting hours

With the number of new COVID-19 cases remaining in single digits and a government supported thrust to return life to a semblance of normalcy, the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) has extended its visiting hours.

At the height of the pandemic, visits to admitted patients were suspended.

Beginning yesterday however, the hospital advised that visiting hours for some wards will now take up a total of nine hours spread over the course of the day.

The new extended hours, however, apply only to the medical and surgical



wards.

The paediatric ward and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) will continue their current reduced hours.

Those desirous of visiting patients admitted to the ICU are urged to call before visiting the hospital so

that they can be informed of the requirements for visits to that ward.

Persons visiting SLBMC are required to adhere to all COVID-19 protocols in place at the facility. These include wearing masks and hand washing

and sanitisation.

SLBMC has indicated that it will continue to review the safety measures in place at the hospital and relax remaining restrictions, congruent with changes related to the state of COVID-19.



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OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTING

Man shot by police in stable condition

Investigations are ongoing into an incident in which 23-year-old Ajante Browne of Swetes was shot by the police.

Around 6:15pm on Wednesday 23rd March, the police were called to a residence in Swetes where Browne, who was wanted in connection with several reports of threats and malicious damage, was seen.

When the police arrived at the property, Browne became enraged and advanced towards them while throwing stones and other objects.

Several attempts were made to bring the situation under control, however, he continued threatening the lives of his family members and the police while causing damage to several properties.

As the situation escalated, Browne armed himself and advanced towards the police who shot him.

Browne was wounded in the hand.

He was transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center, where a medical doctor reported that his condition is stable and the injury not life-threatening.



Twist Fitness's Opening Hours

Monday- Friday
5:30AM-8:30PM

Saturday
9:00AM-5:00PM
5:00PM-7:00PM (WOMENS ONLY HOURS)

Sunday
10:00AM-3:00PM

Local News



Ziggy Beazer's committal pushed to May

The man accused of murdering 64-year-old Jennings resident, Leroy Caesar on 29th December, 2021, will return to court on 19th May this year.

Ziggy Beazer, 31, who is alleged to have killed Caesar at the St. John's Police Station lock up, was to have appeared in the St. John's Magistrates' Court on Wednesday for committal proceedings, however for reasons unknown, he was not taken from the prison to appear before Acting Chief Magistrate Dexter Wason.

According to information made public by the police and Caesar's family, both men were being detained at St. John's Police station on the fateful night when they got into an altercation in the cell.

Police discovered the elderly Caesar unresponsive in the cell some time after the fight and transported him to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre where he was pronounced dead shortly before 11pm that same night.

Beazer was charged with Caesar's murder on 1st January, 2022.

While it is unclear why either man was in police custody last December, Beazer is no stranger to the law.

Nine years ago, Beazer and Dwayne "Little Man" Joseph were charged with the 18th March, 2013, shooting homicide of Jermaine "Six Months" Destin in Villa.

In 2020, however, Beazer was



Ziggy Beazer

deemed unfit to stand trial for that crime after he was diagnosed with schizophrenia in July that year.

Joseph, however, stood trial but was ultimately acquitted of the crime.

STUDENT SAFETY POLICY





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The Way We Think



The jokes that have made people laugh for thousands of years

By Matt Kenyon

The phrase “the old ones are the best ones” might not always be true. But some of the oldest jokes in history are still in use today. What makes a good joke? It’s worth going back a few thousand years to find out.

After months spent poring over medieval texts for her PhD, Martha Bayless made a surprising discovery. She was looking at some of the earliest jokes written in Latin by Catholic scholars (some in excess of 1,000 years old). Few had ever been translated into English before, yet many were still funny – and some even made her laugh out loud.

Shortly after, while waiting for her train, Bayless was reading a copy of *Truly Tasteless Jokes 3* – a popular joke anthology from 1983. She was surprised to find, almost word for word, a joke that she had been transcribing just a day earlier.

The joke lives up to the “truly tasteless” promise of the book. This is how it starts in its 1,000-year-old format: Two men were walking along a road talking of this and that. “What do you think,” says one. “Which is more fun, defecating or having sex?”

The other man ponders the question before coming up with a solution. I’ll spare you the details, as it is a little rude by today’s standards, but it involved seeking the advice of a sex worker.

It struck Bayless that the joke had continued to be



shared through a spoken culture of joke-telling, starting with the Latin text and culminating with her modern joke book, without needing to be written down for centuries in between.

There is clearly something in this joke that has kept it in use to this day, even if it is crass by today’s standards. But what is it that is still tickling audiences through the centuries? And will some modern jokes still be funny for thousands of years to come? As a comedy writer for BBC Radio 4, I was interested to find out.

It seems that there are recognisable features in even the earliest written jokes. National Public Radio (NPR) in the US suggested in 2016 that the oldest recorded joke is from Bronze Age Sumeria (an early Mesopotamian civilisation dating 3300-1200BC). The joke goes: “What has never happened since time immemorial? A young wife has not farted on her husband’s lap.”

Needless to say, this joke wouldn’t pack out comedy

clubs today. However, it is striking that the earliest recorded joke is about toilet humour. The comic fixation with the crude, bodily and downright scatological is no modern invention, but instead is common in humour across cultures and time.

Bayless, now a director of folklore and public culture at the University of Oregon, has written a number of books on early comedy. She says, “the earliest jokes were dirty jokes. People couldn’t resist them.”

Flatulence, for example, is funny because it shows our “uncontrollable physicality”, says Anu Korhonen, a professor of cultural studies from the University of Helsinki in Finland.

She adds the role of farts in early jokes was to represent our shared humanity and the equality of people, in an interview for the university magazine. Flatulence affects everyone – no one can help it.

Some researchers suggest that because humour brings us together it might have an evo-

lutionary purpose. Perhaps our ability to make light of bad situations helped us to overcome them – by joining together in laughter, we were able to reinforce our social bonds. Some scholars point to the existence of teasing-like behaviours in primates like chimpanzees as evidence of an early evolutionary origin of humour in humans. However, captive animals could be copying behaviours they have seen in us.

But not all rude jokes translate well across cultures. Peter McGraw, a professor of marketing and psychology at the University of Colorado Boulder, explains that cultural norms vary so widely, finding a universally funny joke is challenging. “Even something like belching has a cultural element,” he says. “In some cultures, to belch at the table is highly offensive. If your child does it, you might laugh because they don’t know any better. In other cultures, it might mean ‘Thank you, that was a wonderful meal.’”

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The Way We Think

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By the medieval period, many jokes were so rude you might be forgiven that they originated in bawdy inns and the less salubrious corners of society. But that is not the case at all, says Bayless. "It used to be thought that you had the official level of the [Catholic] Church that was very effete and dignified, and people off in [general society] making jokes – when you do more investigation you find that it's the important people making the jokes as well."

Bayless has found that many of the oldest written jokes were scribbled in the margins of ornate early Latin Bibles. Even in a culture where only academic and religious elites could read and write, early Church scholars were busy entertaining each other with smutty comments.

Jokes in the times of all-powerful medieval monarchs were a risky business. Bayless recounts a story where a joke fell foul of English king Richard I. "Two men had been ridiculing the king at a drunken feast – the king was furious and summoned the men. Clearly disaster was about to befall the men, but then one of them answered: 'We might have said those things, but that was nothing to what we were going to say if the wine hadn't run out!'"

It was a close shave for the men, as "if they hadn't come up with such a witty reply, their fate would have been dire indeed", says Bayless.

There is less risk of being dispatched by an angry monarch these days, but reading the room is still an important skill for a comedian. McGraw says that effective jokes are a "benign violation" always walking a delicate balancing act between too soft and too extreme. The purpose of a benign violation is to elicit laughter and disgust at the same time – which perhaps explains why crude subject matter features so commonly.

"It explains the two ways a joke can fail," adds McGraw. "That is that it can be too benign and too boring, like a child's knock-knock joke. Or it can be too much of a violation. It highlights how delicate joke telling is because it's easier to fail than it is to succeed." So, telling jokes is serious business, and it requires a strong

capacity for understanding the audience.

In fact, McGraw suggests that raw intelligence is the most effective indicator for whether someone is funny (of course a comedy writer would say that – Ed.). Among our ancestors, humour indicated that someone had a strong command of their surroundings. These jokes were made in the context of low life expectancy and a hostile world. But these fundamentals still hold in the modern day in our approach to relationships, and McGraw says "it's important to recognise how enjoyable it is to spend time with someone who is funny, they have the propensity to help you better cope with the difficulties of the world".

For example, jokes help us to subvert emotional states. When dealing with difficult subject matters, a funny punchline can distract us from the negative emotions.

And what about the contemporary panic about "cancel culture" in comedy? For McGraw, this is not such a unique moment in history.

"This phenomenon has been happening ever since there has been stand-up comedy," he says. As the two jesters from Richard I's court demonstrate, comedy has always been risky, and the power has always ultimately rested with the audience.

"What is wrong and what is OK is determined not by the teller, but by the audience member, by the receiver, and by their mood, the context they're in, the number of drinks they've had, their culture, their identity," continues McGraw.

If the power rests with the audience, the comedian has a tricky task in pleasing them. Stand-up comedian Catherine Bohart knows this pressure well. "The psychology of an audience is really interesting because [if] you seem fine, they are willing to trust you," she says. "But if you are being vulnerable, they can sniff out that anxiety and vulnerability."

It is an unusual arrangement to be commanding so much attention for such a long time, and audiences demand value. Bohart is currently touring across the UK and Ireland, and she agrees with McGraw that, while there may be common themes across thousands of years of comedy,

there is no single bit of stand-up material that works 100% of the time. Stand-up comedy is risky precisely because the comedian faces a fresh set of audience members to win over each time.

Bohart says that audience laughter is complicated. "The moment of shock can stifle laughter. Anything we're not supposed to laugh at: death, mental health, brutal self-deprecation. People can shy away from laughing out loud."

Stand-up comedy in recent years has evolved at speed. Kylie Brakeman was one of the early adopters of a new kind of observational comedy that emerged at the start of the pandemic. Her to-camera Twitter videos have attracted millions of views and kicked off an era in which the day's events can be parodied within minutes.

"It's insane that we're living in a world where daily TV is too slow to keep up," says Brakeman. Online comedians are increasingly at the bleeding edge of satire. "If something happened in the news you could jump on it right away. It's an advantage that online comedians have. Even if you're writing for a late night show, the joke has already been made 17 times on Twitter before the show airs at night."

This type of modern comedy, which dates in minutes, is a far cry from a joke scribbled in the margins of a Latin text, which needed to remain funny for the next scholar at whichever time they stumbled across it.

With this accelerated production process comes a different set of risks. But with an audience of millions kept behind a screen, "bombing" online feels less catastrophic. Brakeman says, "If people like it, then they like it. And if they don't, they're really not thinking about it that much. I think it's much less of a severe thing than bombing on stage, because it's just a case of getting no likes on something."

Who knows what audiences thousands of years in the future would think if they unearthed videos of contemporary comedians. Maybe they will look at the cutting-edge comedy of today and see it much like the Mesopotamian fart joke: lacking in some of the finer cultural details, but with fundamentals that stand the test of time.

Seared Salmon in Lemon Butter Sauce

Recipe By: Christopher Sinclair-McCalla

Ingredients:

- 1 Salmon Fillets, thawed and skinned
- Salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tsp coconut oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice and lemon slices for garnish
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1/2 teaspoon honey
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, minced



Method:

1. Allow salmon to rest at room temperature 10 minutes. Slice each in half if the slices provided are too large.
2. Dab both sides of salmon dry with paper towels, season both sides with salt and pepper.
3. In a small saucepan melt 1 teaspoon butter over medium heat.
4. Add garlic and sauté until lightly golden brown, about 1 - 2 minutes. Pour in water and lemon juice.
5. Let sauce simmer until it has reduced by half (to about 3 teaspoons), about 3 minutes. Stir in butter and honey and whisk until combined, set sauce aside.
6. Heat coconut oil in a non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat.
7. Once the oil starts to smoke, add salmon and cook about 3 minutes on the first side until golden brown on bottom then flip and cook salmon on opposite side until salmon has cooked through, about 3-4 minutes longer.
8. Plate salmon (leaving oil in pan) and drizzle each serving with the lemon butter sauce, on top of a bed of sautéed callaloo and carrots.
9. Sprinkle with parsley, top with lemon slices and serve immediately.

'Halo' braves turning the game into a series without much creative spark

By Brian Lowry

"Halo" isn't the first videogame to become a movie or TV show, and it certainly won't be the last. But the series faces a formidable challenge crafting a Paramount+ show around the contours of the game, one that it seeks to master largely by slapping together pieces of established properties -- a little "RoboCop" here, a bit of "Starship Troopers" there, and a whole lot of "The Mandalorian."

That's not necessarily all bad, and the series generally looks splashy, although the action is heavily frontloaded in the first of the episodes previewed. But nor does it feel special or distinctive, and while committed players might welcome seeing this world fleshed out, the derivative touches can't help but make the whole exercise feel generic, exhibiting a lot of hardware



Pablo Schreiber (centre) plays Master Chief in 'Halo' on Paramount+.

but not much creative spark.

Set in 2552, the series opens with the denizens of the planet Madrigal fighting for independence from Earth, before they're attacked by ugly and murderous alien invaders. The battle looks completely lost until the intervention by a unit of Spartans, super-sol-

diers said to be worth 100 Marines each, later described by Earth's resident mad scientist (Natascha McElhone) as "enhanced and trained for one purpose: To fight for us."

The mission brings the Spartan leader, Master Chief John 117 ("The Wire's" Pablo Schreiber), into con-

tact with a strange artifact that risks jolting him out of his carefully programmed stupor. He also rescues a young girl, Kwan (Yerin Ha), creating the stop-if-you've-heard-this-before framework of an armoured warrior protecting a vulnerable minor that he squires

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Miley Cyrus' plane forced to make emergency landing after being struck by lightning

By Chloe Melas

Miley Cyrus was on her way to Paraguay when her flight had to make an emergency landing.

The singer posted a message Wednesday to her fans on her Instagram, telling them that the plane had been struck by lightning. The post included a video of a flash of lightning seen from one of the plane's windows.

Cyrus was headed to perform at the Asunción music festival.

"To my fans and everyone worried



Miley Cyrus

after hearing about my flight to Asunción," Cyrus wrote. "Our plane was caught in a major unexpected storm and struck by lightning. My crew, band, friends and family who were

all traveling with me are safe after an emergency landing. We were unfortunately unable to fly into Paraguay. I LOVE YOU."

Cyrus posted a photo of where the plane was struck and the damage done by the lightning.

Weather conditions were so bad in Paraguay that the first day of the festival was cancelled. That means that other artists including Foo Fighters, Machine Gun Kelly and Doja Cat were unable to perform.

Atlanta Caribbean Carnival 2022: The Next Great North American Carnival Experience

By *Entertainment Junkie*

Hot on the heels of the recent Trinidad & Tobago 'Taste of Carnival', the Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Bandleaders Association (ACCBA) is preparing to serve a whole buffet of Caribbean culture this May in the centre of Georgia's energetic capital city with the 2022 edition of the beloved 'Atlanta Caribbean Carnival'.

Atlanta Caribbean Carnival', which has been in existence for 35 years, takes place from 27th - 30th May 2022 and is already gearing up to be a major highlight of the Memorial Day Weekend (the unofficial start of the US Summer festival season).

With all of the buzz following last October's Miami Carnival, online communities of international carnival enthusiasts have been referring to the upcoming ATL extravaganza as 'The Next Great North-American Carnival Experience' on the calendar. The event's organizers have put all of their energies



into curating an unforgettable holiday weekend affair. Attendees can expect lively fetes, J'ouvert, a wide array of cross-cultural food vendors, a beautiful display of costumes (inclusive of Carnival Queens) at the parade, and an unmatched line-up of the region's top performers onstage at the Atlanta Carnival festival village.

This year's entertainment cast includes St. Vincent's Skinny Fabulous, T&T's Nadia Batson, Barbados' Lil Rick & Edwin Yearwood, St.

Lucia's Motto, and Grenada's Tallpree. During 2022's Atlanta Caribbean Carnival, Skinny Fabulous will also be honoured with a proclamation by the city of Atlanta and will serve as Grand Marshall at this year's parade.

Regarding the importance of hosting the upcoming festival within the metropolitan area of downtown Atlanta, ACCBA President Patricia Henry shared, "It is very important to showcase the culture in mainstream settings where persons from

various backgrounds can observe and embrace it. We want folks to come out and see what the Caribbean has to offer so the festival can be a platform for encouraging tourism for the entire region."

The famous annual downtown Atlanta tradition has previously attracted celebrities such as stars from the Love & Hip Hop and Real Housewives TV show franchises and will this year feature the participation of Jamaican Reggae singer, actress, model, and brand ambassador D'Angel.

Most notably, the 2022 festival will support the efforts of charitable organization 'Blessed Hands Generous Hearts'. The overall mission of the ACCBA is for the city to have one major, truly united Carnival celebration and to continually use the festival to promote respect and equality for Atlanta's Caribbean community. 'Atlanta Caribbean Carnival' takes place May 27th-30th 2022.

cont'd from pg 13
across the galaxy.

There's a bit more to it than that, including glimpses of The Covenant, an alien command centre that resembles a giant floating mushroom. The producers (a long roster that includes Steven Spielberg) also incorporate a nod to what's come before by casting "2001: A Space Odyssey" star Keir Dullea in a supporting role, as Master Chief returns to his home planet, Reach, and a new set of bureaucracy

and challenges.

"Halo" has gone through a series of creative contortions through the years -- including plans for a movie, then a series, and input from different showrunners -- before landing at Paramount+, and that history appears evident in the hodgepodge nature of the enterprise.

Essentially, the streaming service's bet is that some of those millions of players will be curious enough to check it out -- a reasonable assumption

based on the viability of concepts like "Tomb Raider" and the recent "Uncharted," if hardly a sure thing.

At one point, someone marvels that the alien object in Master Chief's possession is "like nothing I've ever seen."

Yet the main problem with "Halo" is that if you're at all familiar with the movies mentioned above and their ilk, it actually feels like bits and pieces of everything you've ever seen, just wrapped up in shiny new armour.

Barbadian Kiddies to play mas - but at school

By Katrina King

Kiddies Kadooment is not returning for Crop Over 2022, but that doesn't mean children will be exempt from playing mas. Chief cultural officer at the National Cultural Foundation (NCF), Andrea Wells announced that the Culture Ministry has partnered with the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training to orchestrate an immersive School Masquerade Project from April to July.

While providing updates on Crop Over 2022, during a press conference at Queen's Park Gallery on Tuesday, Wells explained that Junior Kadooment band camps will go into the schools and teach the students about designing and conceptualising their own costumes. The costumes will then be presented over a series of parade days, coinciding with the last week of school.

"The idea was we want to celebrate creativity. We wanted to give the creatives who normally express themselves in that medium, an opportunity but meanwhile minimise any sort of interaction or cross-contamination - if indeed there should be a spike or an outbreak. So by keeping it within the schools, the schools have essentially become a bubble.

"The idea was how can we give the creatives any opportunity to practice their skills while minimising a potential negative impact of our children and school population. And we agreed that not only is this an opportunity for them to introduce some of their creativity to their schools and teach children some of those skills but also have an opportunity to have it showcased to the schools at the end of the school term," Wells expanded.

The chief cultural officer added that the students will be exposed to more than the "jump and wave" aspect of the festival, but delve into the history and intricacies of designing.



Kiddies Kadooment 2017

Following the individual parades, school jumps as presentations of Junior the NCF will record and package the Kadooment for the public to view.

Pointe Xpress Weekend Puzzle

ACROSS

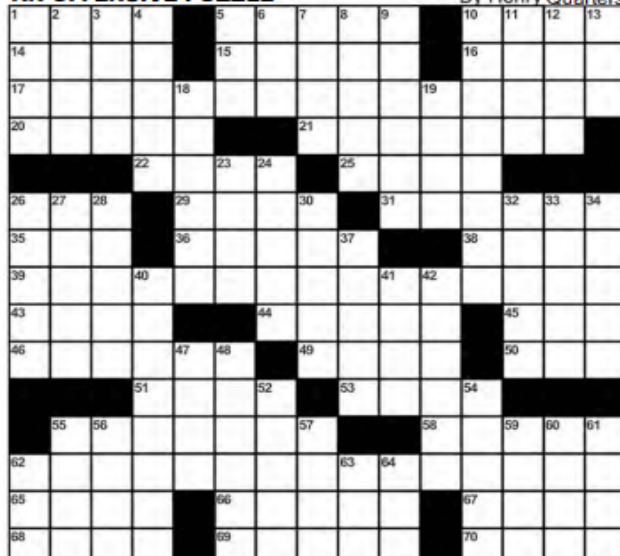
- 1) Actor Guinness
- 5) Journalist Boothe Luce
- 10) Things to repent for
- 14) "Do you take me ____ fool?"
- 15) Gobi green
- 16) Bright brain concoction
- 17) Using more and more credit
- 20) Old-fashioned music hall
- 21) Eternal
- 22) Immature salamanders
- 25) Go to ____ (deteriorate)
- 26) Almanac feature
- 29) After the deadline
- 31) Worked hard
- 35) Altar avowal
- 36) Zinc ____
- 38) Like desert growth
- 39) Revealing
- 43) Nero's robe
- 44) Artist's plaster
- 45) Poem type
- 46) A tool for 55-Across
- 49) Ice Follies venue
- 50) Bird's beak
- 51) Extremely deep sleep
- 53) And others, for short
- 55) The grim one and others
- 58) Short summary, for short
- 62) Promoting
- 65) Good bit of land
- 66) Acts of the Apostles?
- 67) Many household pets
- 68) "Use" homophone
- 69) Leave the flock
- 70) Leader in home entertainment?

DOWN

- 1) Bushy hair style
- 2) Clear's partner
- 3) Coastal eagle
- 4) It's due for a paddling
- 5) One in jail
- 6) Drop back
- 7) Largest continent
- 8) "The Lord of the ____"
- 9) Have great respect for
- 10) Fries, often
- 11) Caesar's bad day
- 12) Bills on birds
- 13) Obeyed "Down in front!"
- 18) Receivables
- 19) Fake butter
- 23) Uber competitor
- 24) Emulate an angry bee
- 26) Some baseball gear
- 27) Committee type
- 28) Bess' love
- 30) Lawn straightener
- 32) Disclose
- 33) Wear away
- 34) Star in Cygnus
- 37) Borden cow
- 40) Bran muffin alternatives
- 41) "____ It Romantic?"
- 42) Amusement park racing vehicle
- 47) Arizona Indian
- 48) Corrects text
- 52) In-group lingo
- 54) "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" host
- 55) "Con mucho dinero"
- 56) Beige shade
- 57) "Judge Judy" hopeful
- 59) "Bye bye"
- 60) Crafts partner
- 61) "Hey ... over here"
- 62) Mary ____ Cosmetics
- 63) After-hours school grp.
- 64) Not outgoing

AN OFFENSIVE PUZZLE

By Henry Quarters



Regional News



Prince William calls slavery “abhorrent”, Jamaica PM says “We’re moving on”

Huffington Post - Prince William expressed his “profound sorrow” when speaking about slavery during a state dinner held by Sir Patrick Allen, the governor-general of Jamaica, on Wednesday.

“I strongly agree with my father, the Prince of Wales, who said in Barbados last year that the appalling atrocity of slavery forever stains our history,” William said in his speech, referencing comments Prince Charles made while attending Barbados’ ceremony to remove his mother, Queen Elizabeth, as head of state in November.

“I want to express my profound sorrow. Slavery was abhorrent. And it should never have happened,” William said, according to video captured by ITV News royal editor Chris Ship. “While the pain runs deep, Jamaica continues to forge its future with determination, courage and fortitude.”

William’s comments



The Duchess of Cambridge and Prime Minister of Jamaica Andrew Holness watch as Prince William, Duke of Cambridge speaks on stage during a dinner hosted by the Governor General of Jamaica at King's House on March 23. [Credit: Samir Hussein via Getty Images]

come at a precarious time for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, who have been plagued by protests on their royal tour of the Caribbean during the queen’s Platinum Jubilee year. After protests over the Cambridges’ presence in Belize, Jamaicans held a demonstration in Kingston at the British High Commission on Tuesday ahead of the royal couple’s arrival. The protest, organized by the Advocates Network, included an open letter

that lists “60 reasons for apologies and reparations from Britain and its royal family.”

A Bahamian organization also released a response to the Cambridges’ impending visit to the Bahamas, asking them to acknowledge and apologize for the British royal family’s role in colonization and to make reparations payments.

On Tuesday, The Independent reported that Jamaica was in the process of removing Queen Elizabeth as

the country’s head of state, something Prime Minister Andrew Holness had spoken about in December and that has long been a topic of discussion in the country.

Holness addressed the country’s desire to become a republic during a meeting with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on Wednesday.

“There are issues here which are - as you would know - unresolved. But your presence here gives an opportunity for those issues to be placed in context, put front and centre, and to be addressed in as best we can,” Holness told the royals.

“But Jamaica is, as you would see, a country that is very proud of our history and very proud of what we have achieved,” he told the royals. “And we are moving on. And we intend to attain, in short order, our development goals and fulfil our true ambitions and destiny as an independent, developed, prosperous country.”

Cuba says fuel shortages due to spike in demand, troubles at power plant

Reuters - Cuba’s government said on Wednesday a spike in demand for fuel, caused in part by the failure of the country’s largest power plant last week, had led to fuel shortfalls at service stations nationwide, prompting hours-long queues for gasoline.

Lines of cars, buses, trucks and motorcycles as long as a kilometre formed at gas stations in Cuba’s capital this week, piling fresh frustration atop a biting economic crisis that has already left

food and medicine in short supply across the island.

Ruling Communist Party newspaper Granma said Cupet, the national fuel distributor, had been forced to deliver more gas and diesel recently to service stations as well as the country’s back-up system of smaller generation plants called into action after the Antonio Guterres power plant broke down last week.

“The distribution of diesel and gasoline to service centres in the country has



Cars line up for gas in Havana, Cuba, March 21, 2022. REUTERS/Stringer

been affected in recent days due, among other causes, to an increase in demand,”

cont'd on pg 18

Human rights group decries deportation to 'chaos' in Haiti

AP - Human Rights Watch released a report Thursday demanding the U.S. and other countries stop deporting Haitians to their homeland, calling it "unconscionable" and warning that they are putting people's lives in danger.

More than 25,700 people have been deported to Haiti from January 2021 to February 2022, with 79% of them alone expelled by the U.S., according to the International Organization for Migration.

"Haitians and their children, many born abroad, are being returned to a country in chaos," said César Muñoz, senior Americas researcher with Human Rights Watch, a non-profit organization based in New York.

Haiti's turmoil deepened significantly in the past year with inflation, kidnappings and violence spiking as the country tries to recover from the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and a 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck in mid-August, killing more than 2,200 people and destroying or damaging tens of thousands of homes. Jobs also have become even scarcer in a country of more than 11 million people where 60% of the population makes less than \$2 a day.

In addition, gangs have grown more powerful amid ongoing political instability, with reported kidnappings soaring by 180% and homicides by 17% in the past year, according to a report by the United Nations Security Council. An estimated 19,000 people have lost their homes due to gang violence, and many are still living in temporary shelters in extremely unhygienic conditions.

"Port-au-Prince is now hell," said Cassandra Petit, a 39-year-old mother of two whose partner was killed last year when he went back to the home



Haitians deported from the United States try to board the same plane in which they were deported, in an attempt to return to the United States, on the tarmac of the Toussaint Louverture airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021. (AP Photo/Odelyn Joseph, File)

they had fled amid ongoing gang violence to retrieve clothes and school backpacks for their children. "He never returned."

She is now staying with her former partner's cousin and tries to make some money by selling used clothes, but "it's not every day that you make a sale."

"When I come back, I don't know what the kids will eat in the evening," she said. "I start to cry before I make it to the house."

The U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization recently reported that some 4.5 million people across Haiti require urgent assistance given a severe lack of food.

Muñoz said no one should be deporting people to Haiti given those conditions.

"It is unconscionable that any government would send people to Haiti while it experiences such a deterioration in security and a heightened risk to everyone's life and physical integrity," he said.

He also decried a public health law known as Title 42 created under former

U.S. President Donald Trump that the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden has used to quickly expel Haitians and fly them to their homeland, barring them from trying to seek asylum in the U.S. Most of the Haitian migrants detained in recent months along the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas have been deported under that law.

Muñoz also noted that there is no system in place in Haiti to track or help deportees, and that civil society members have told Human Rights Watch that the deportees are at risk of being kidnapped because gangs think they have money for travel or relatives abroad who can pay ransoms.

The arrival of thousands of deportees puts an even bigger strain on resources that already were severely limited in Haiti. Many had left the country years ago as they fled an economic crisis that worsened in the aftermath of a 7.0 magnitude quake that struck in 2010, killing an estimated 300,000 people. Many of them lived in countries including Chile and Brazil before trying to reach the U.S. as the pandemic dried up jobs.

Among those trying to survive Haiti's deteriorating situation is Jertha Marie-Paul, 61, who lived for nearly half a century in the Port-au-Prince community of Martissant — ground zero for warring gangs — before the uncontrolled violence split up her family and forced her to move. She now stays at a friend's house where she sleeps in a corner on a flimsy foam mattress.

"I'm living in conditions that I've never lived before in my life," she said, adding that she even has to buy buckets of water for 10 gourdes (nine U.S. cents) each because the utilities don't work. "Nothing is easy around here."

PAHO calls for increased investments in Tuberculosis services

Loop - The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) calls for urgent investment in resources, support, care and information for the fight against tuberculosis (TB), as the COVID-19 pandemic reverses gains made against one of the world's deadliest infections.

World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24 each year to raise awareness of one of the world's top infectious killers and catalyse action to address its devastating health, social, and economic impact around the world.

The theme of World TB Day 2022 is "Invest to End TB. Save Lives."

Every day, more than 70 people die and 800 fall ill from TB in the Americas.

While efforts to combat the disease have saved more than 1.2 million lives in the region since 2000, yearly deaths have increased by an estimated 3,000 in 2020 due to interruptions in essential services.

"People with TB are among the most marginalised and vulnerable in society, and face barriers to accessing life-saving care," said Marcos Espinal, Director for Communicable Diseases and Environmental Determinants of Health at PAHO.

"All necessary steps must be taken to fully restore TB services disrupted by the pandemic, especially for the most vulnerable. Investing more in TB

will save millions of lives, including children."

An estimated 18,300 children aged 15 years and under live with TB in the Americas, yet more than half lack access to diagnosis and treatment services.

COVID-19 has also had a disproportionate impact on children and adolescents with TB, leading to increased transmission in the household, a reduction in active surveillance, lack of access to health services, and limited follow-up treatment.

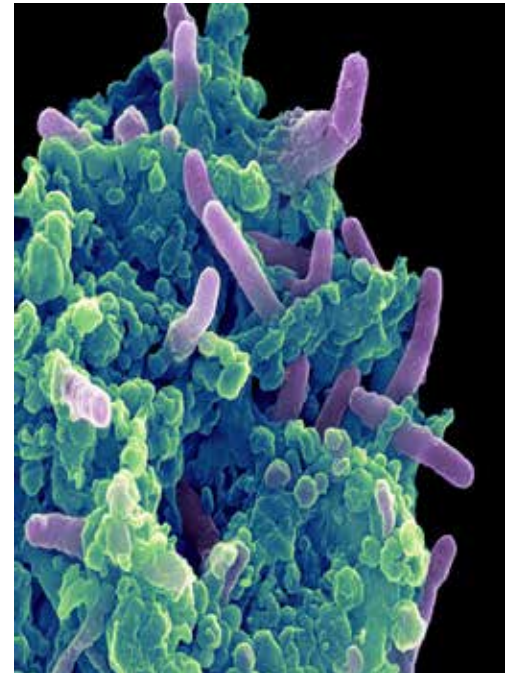
This week, the World Health Organization (WHO) released updated guidelines for the management of TB in children and adolescents.

They include recommendations for expanded diagnostic testing and treatment, medicines to treat drug resistant-TB in children, and new models of decentralised and integrated care to improve access to care and preventive treatment closer to home.

"Children and adolescents with TB are lagging behind adults in access to prevention and care," said Dr Tereza Kasaeva, Director of WHO's Global TB Programme.

"The WHO guidelines are a gamechanger for children and adolescents, helping them access diagnosis and care sooner, leading to better outcomes and cutting transmission."

Although 66 million lives around



the world have been saved since 2000, TB deaths increased in 2020 for the first time in over a decade.

Ongoing conflicts across Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East have further exacerbated the situation for vulnerable populations.

Increased investment in TB services and research would accelerate the recovery of gains against the disease.

Global spending on TB diagnostics, treatment and prevention in 2020 were less than half of the global target of US\$ 13 billion annually by 2022.

According to WHO, an additional US\$ 1.1 billion per year is needed for research and development.

cont'd from pg 16

reported Granma.

The Antonio Guiteras plant came back online Tuesday. Cupet said it continues to make "enormous efforts to guarantee the usual supply (of fuel) to the economy and the population," according to the Granma report.

On Wednesday in Havana, long lines at service stations once again formed early throughout the city. Tourists driving rental cars were given preferred access to two service stations in the capital, according to local media.

A Matanzas provincial official told a local state-

owned newspaper late last week that rationing in that province, which began Sunday, would be temporary and was primarily due to distribution issues, not fuel shortages.

Cuba's fuel supply has grown increasingly precarious in recent years, according to experts, as U.S. sanctions

have complicated imports and both domestic production and refining have declined.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and related sanctions and boycotts have led to increased oil prices and concerns over supply globally, further complicating Cuba's efforts.

North Korea fires first suspected ICBM since 2017

CNN - North Korea has fired what is believed to be its first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in more than four years as Western leaders gather in Brussels for a security summit.

The suspected ICBM flew to an altitude of 6,000 kilometres (3,728 miles) and to a distance of 1,080 kilometres (671 miles) with a flight time of 71 minutes before splashing down in waters off Japan's western coast on Thursday, according to Japan's Défense Ministry.

Thursday's launch is North Korea's 11th of the year, including one on March 16 which is presumed to have failed. Analysts said the test could be the longest-range missile yet fired by North Korea, exceeding its last ICBM launch in November 2017.

Japan's Vice Défense Minister Makoto Oniki told reporters Thursday the missile's altitude would suggest it is a "new type of ICBM," a potential sign North Korea is



Kim Jong Un

closer to developing weapons capable of targeting the United States.

The US joined allies South Korea and Japan in strongly condemning the launch Thursday and called on North Korea to refrain from further destabilising acts.

US President Joe Biden is currently in Belgium, where he is attending a G7 summit alongside Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. The gathering is part of a series of meetings, including an extraordinary NATO summit, as

Western leaders seek to align their responses to Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. A European Council meeting will also take place Thursday.

According to analysts, the recent spate of North Korean missile tests suggest the country's leader, Kim Jong Un, is attempting show an increasingly turbulent world that Pyongyang remains a player in the struggle for power and influence.

"North Korea refuses to be ignored and may be trying to take advantage of global preoccupation with the war in

Ukraine to force a fait accompli on its status as a nuclear weapons state," Leif-Eric Easley, associate professor of international studies at Ewha Woman's University in Seoul, told CNN.

"North Korea is nowhere near initiating aggression on the scale of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But Pyongyang's ambitions likewise exceed self-defence as it wants to overturn the post-war security order in Asia, added Easley.

Thursday's test also comes just two weeks after South Korea elected a new conservative President, Yoon Suk Yeol, who is expected to take a harder line against North Korea than outgoing office holder President Moon Jae-in.

In response to Thursday's suspected ICBM test, South Korea's military launched several warning missiles for the first time since 2017, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a text sent to reporters.

U.S. announces new Russian sanctions, plans to admit thousands of Ukrainian refugees

NBC - The U.S. announced a package of new sanctions against Russia and further aid for Ukrainian refugees as President Joe Biden looked to rally the leaders of some of the world's most powerful democracies to increase their efforts to aid Ukraine in a series of high-stakes meetings.

The U.S. said it would place additional sanctions on more than 400

Russians and Russian entities, including the Duma and more than 300 of its members, along with more than 40 defence companies, said a senior administration official. It also plans to take additional steps to prevent Russia from attempting to prop up its economy.

The White House also announced it would allow as many as 100,000

Ukrainians to enter the U.S., with a focus on those who are most vulnerable. The administration is also prepared to offer more than \$1 billion in additional funding towards humanitarian assistance and \$11 billion over the next five years to address food security threats after the disruptions to the Russian and Ukrainian agricultural industry.

cont'd on pg 20

Rich countries getting new COVID vaccine before poorer ones

AP - The company behind a COVID-19 vaccine touted as a key tool for the developing world has sent tens of millions of doses to wealthy nations but provided none yet to the U.N.-backed effort to supply poorer countries, a sign that inequity persists in the global response to the pandemic.

COVAX had planned to make available 250 million doses from Novavax by March, but the U.N. agency in charge of deliveries says the first shipments now likely won't be made until April or May.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. CEPI, one of the organizations leading COVAX, gave Novavax \$388 million to fast-track the vaccine's development, aimed at making the

shot available in poorer countries as the pandemic was exploding two years ago.

The investment guaranteed COVAX the "right of first refusal" to the first Novavax doses, but the deal applied only to factories in the Czech Republic, South Korea and Spain, said CEPI spokesman Bjorg Dystvold Nilsson.

There are other factories that aren't part of the deal — and their shots are going elsewhere.

The Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine maker, has manufactured millions of Novavax doses.

According to India's Ministry of External Affairs and the institute, more than 28.9 million of those dos-

es were sent to the Netherlands in January and February, while Australia received about 6 million doses. Indonesia also received about 9 million doses in December.

Thousands of other Novavax doses were also shipped from a Netherlands factory to other EU countries.

"Whatever the reason, a vaccine that was believed to be highly suitable for poor countries is now in large part going to rich countries," said Zain Rizvi, a drug policy expert at the U.S. advocacy group Public Citizen.

"It's tragic that in year three of the pandemic, we still cannot get the resources, attention and political will to solve vaccine inequity."

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The additional efforts come as senior administration officials say Biden is trying to raise pressure on other nations to increase their support to Ukraine as he himself has been under pressure himself at home to do more as he attends a series of summits Thursday.

Biden attended an emergency gathering of NATO leaders in the morning where a senior administration official at the meeting described the mood as having been "sober, it's been resolute and it's been incredibly united."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also addressed the meeting, where he requested continued and increased security assistance. But he didn't re-



U. S. President Joe Biden

peat his request for a no-fly zone or NATO membership — two moves the group has rejected, the senior administration official said.

The NATO summit will be followed by a meeting with leaders of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations and an address to European Union leaders, the White House said.

Biden was also expected to discuss the long-term U.S. military posture in Europe with the allies, as well as how the countries would respond if Russia were to carry out nuclear or chemical warfare, National security adviser Jake Sullivan

Sullivan said the group would also have an announcement Friday after

Biden's meeting with the European Union leaders about a plan to reduce European dependence on oil from Russia.

Along with the new sanctions, the U.S. and other members of the G7 and the EU will also announce plans to try to blunt the Central Bank of Russia's ability to prop up its economy by making clear that any transaction involving gold related to the Central Bank of Russia is prohibited, said a senior administration official.

The G7 also plans to jointly say that international organizations and multilateral corporations should no longer conduct their activities with Russia in a business-as-usual manner, said the second official.

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The delay is the latest setback for COVAX, which has been repeatedly hit by supply problems and has missed numerous targets to share doses.

Last year, WHO's director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus decried the chasm in vaccine supplies between rich and poor countries as a "catastrophic moral failure."

Vaccine availability has been improving in poorer regions recently, but logistical problems persist.

According to data from Oxford University, only about 14% of people in low-income countries have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. More than 680 million doses of COVAX-provided vaccines remain unused or have expired, according to government data.

Even with vaccine supplies improving, some officials were eagerly awaiting the Novavax vaccine in particular because it is easier to transport and store than some other coronavirus shots.

They also hoped it might be more enticing to people sceptical of the AstraZeneca vaccine, which suffered through a botched rollout in Europe.

Countries including Zimbabwe, the Central African Republic and Kiribati were among those in line to be offered Novavax doses by March from COVAX.

Before the pandemic, Novavax was a small



A worker moves boxes carrying Novavax's COVID-19 vaccine at SK Bioscience Co. in Andong, South Korea, on Feb. 9, 2022. Before the pandemic, Novavax was a small American company that had never brought any vaccine to market. Its shots have proven highly effective, but it is relying heavily on other companies to make them. (Kim Hyun-tae/Yonhap via AP, File)

American company that had never brought any vaccine to market. Its shots have proven highly effective, but it is relying heavily on other companies to make them.

The company, struggling to scale up production, also has delayed delivery to other countries, including some in the European Union. COVAX is supposed to receive more than 1 billion Novavax doses.

In a statement, the Gaithersburg, Maryland, company acknowledged that it had yet to share any shots with the vaccines alliance Gavi, which fronts the COVAX effort, but said it stands ready to do so.

"We continue to work with Gavi to reach our

shared goal of ensuring global access to our protein-based vaccine where it is needed most," Novavax said.

Gavi suggested part of the delay is that the Novavax vaccine wasn't authorized by WHO until December. Gavi said it planned to allocate Novavax in the future and was "in close touch with the manufacturer and expects the supply to be available for delivery when countries need it."

Health officials also worry that the urgency to vaccinate people everywhere against COVID-19 has disappeared — especially as many countries roll back precautions and the world's attention is diverted.

"Rich countries have moved on from COVID and everyone is fixated on the war in Ukraine, but COVID-19 remains an acute crisis for most people in the world," said Ritu Sharma, a vice-president at the charity CARE.

She said COVAX was still desperately short of vaccines and that based on the current pace of vaccination, the world was still "years and years" away from immunizing enough people to stop future COVID-19 waves.

Other experts said it was incumbent on public health agencies to ensure their investments into vaccines would benefit poor countries and to be more transparent about what went wrong.

Unlikely fightback rescues England in Grenada

Jack Leach and Saqib Mahmood were England's unlikely saviours after the tourists' top order collapsed on day one of the decisive third Test against West Indies.

On a lively pitch, England crumbled to 114-9 before Leach and Mahmood shared a crucial last-wicket partnership of 90 in Grenada.

Mahmood was bowled in the final over of the day for 49, his highest score in professional cricket, but not before he and Leach had dragged England to 204.

That represents an admirable recovery from England, who were facing being dismissed below 100 when they fell from 23-0 to 90-8 earlier in the day.

Captain Joe Root was caught behind for a duck in the morning session while three wickets fell for no runs in an abject spell after lunch - England unable to deal with the movement found by West Indies' pace attack.

But as the ball softened and pitch flattened out, Leach, who finished 41 not out, stoutly stopped the procession of wickets before he and Mahmood added valuable runs, including one fine Mahmood six.

They ensured England's bid to earn a first series win in the Caribbean since 2004, which would also halt their miserable run in Tests, was not all but



over on the opening day.

The previous two Tests in this series have been played on flat batting tracks, England showing positive signs in two draws, but in Grenada, top-order wickets tumbled with the same depressing familiarity as during their 4-0 Ashes defeat.

When Mahmood and Leach came together the highest partnership in the innings was the ninth wicket stand of 24 between Leach and Chris Woakes, who made an important 25 before becoming the third batter to be clean bowled.

Batting became much easier as the seam movement of earlier lessened, but that should not take away from Leach and Mahmood's performance.

Third Test, St George's, Grenada (day one):

England 204 Mahmood 3-40, Mayers 2-13
49, Leach 41*; Seales West Indies: Yet to bat

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2022

SATURDAY JUNE 25TH

INTRODUCING NOVICE COMPETITION

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA AMATEUR BODYBUILDING & WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION

Dean William Lake Cultural Centre

NOVICE COMPETITION: 11:00AM
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: 8:00PM

ATHLETES' REGISTRATION
Early 30th April, 2022
Late - 14th May, 2022

TICKETS ON SALE AT GYMS SOON

ABBWF national and novice competitions share the stage in June

The Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation (ABBWF) will stage its national championships and a novice competition on the same day in June this year.

The nationals, the organisation's flagship event, will be held at the Dean William Lake Cultural Centre at 6pm on 25th June, while the novice competition will take place at 11am at the same venue.

The ABBWF's Public Relations Officer, Melissa Seaforth, said the timing of this year's nationals is strategic as it will allow the body to evaluate athletes and select the team who will represent Antigua and Barbuda at the 49th Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Championships.

"The reason for hosting our nationals on June 25th is that we have to take into account that CAC will be held four weeks later on July 27th in Barbados. This will give the (ABBWF) executive enough time to select a team, coordinate travel plans and give the athletes feedback on where they can improve so that they can stand the best possible chance of achieving their pro card," she explained.

With respect to other competitions, Seaforth disclosed that Antigua and



Winners in the 2021 National Bodybuilding Championships from left: Yvette Butler-Masters Bikini Fitness; Duncan Corbin Overall Men's Physique; Makiva Elvin-Bikini Fitness; Franklin Carbon-Masters Bodybuilding; Kala Francis-Bikini Wellness and Shaquella Thomas-Classic Physique. (Photo: ABBWF)

Barbuda's flag will be flown in Aruba this weekend at the Giovanni Arends Classic.

"Kenroy ['Spartan'] Christian will represent Antigua and Barbuda at the Giovanni Arends Classic in Aruba this weekend on March 26th. Christian, who is also a four-time tall class champion and two-time overall national champion, will be competing in the Men's Physique category in the hopes of achieving his pro card," she said.

Meanwhile, the bodybuilding federation has reported that its first training seminar this year was well attended.

According to an ABBWF press release, the virtual Train for Success

seminar on 19th March was well attended.

The release said presentations by International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) Elite Pro, Randy Christopher, and physiotherapist Gregson Matthew were informative, insightful and well received.

"The importance of understanding and linking our anatomy with the demands of our training is as fundamentally important to a healthy lifestyle as what we consume.

"Feedback has been overwhelmingly encouraging and information on the next seminar will be made available as soon as it is finalised," said the ABBWF.

Chelsea: Club allowed to sell tickets after government alters licence



BBC - Chelsea will be allowed to sell tickets to away games, cup matches and fixtures involving the women's team after the UK government made alterations to the club's special licence.

The club have been unable to sell tickets since owner Roman Abramovich

was sanctioned by the government as part of its response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Under the changed licence, proceeds from ticket sales will go directly to the Premier League and then be distributed to the relevant party.

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Sports News



NYC mayor allows unvaccinated athletes play home games

AP – New York City’s mayor exempted athletes and performers — including Brooklyn Nets star Kyrie Irving — from the city’s vaccine mandate Thursday, while keeping in place the rule for countless other workers who faced losing their jobs for refusing to get vaccinated.

The city’s sweeping vaccine mandate still applies to many, including private workers and government employees. Critics of Mayor Eric Adams’ decision, including several public employee unions whose members were fired for not getting vaccinated, blasted the mayor for seeming to lift the rule only for wealthy and famous athletes.

The city’s largest police

union, which has sued the city over the mandate, said its officers “don’t deserve to be treated like second-class citizens.”

“We have been suing the city for months over its arbitrary and capricious vaccine mandate — this is exactly what we are talking about. If the mandate isn’t necessary for famous people, then it’s not necessary for the cops who are protecting our city in the middle of a crime crisis,” said its president, Pat Lynch.

Adams officially announced the change for athletes and performers Thursday at Citi Field, where the Mets play. The exemption was effective immediately.

The Municipal Labour Committee, an umbrella



Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving (11), who is not permitted to play games in New York because he’s unvaccinated for COVID-19, drives against Orlando Magic guard R.J. Hampton (13) during an NBA basketball game on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, in Orlando, Fla. (AP Photo/Phelan M. Ebenhack, File)

group of unions that together represent about 350,000 city workers, said the city should offer a way for fired workers to get their jobs back.

“There can’t be one sys-

tem for the elite and another for the essential workers of our city. We stand ready to work out the details with the mayor, as we have been throughout this process,” the group’s chair Harry Nespoli said.

Adams contended that making the athletes and performers exempt was important for the city’s economic recovery, saying “players attract people to the stadium.”

The city last month fired more than 1,400 workers who failed to comply with the vaccine mandate. The uneven application could likely invite more legal challenges over the mandate.

Adams’ predecessor, Mayor Bill de Blasio, made vaccination mandatory as a workplace safety rule last year, before leaving office.

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As part of the licence changes Roman Abramovich’s company Fordstam Ltd was to pay £30m into Chelsea for its running costs.

The move means Chelsea will be able to sell tickets for their home Champions League quarter-final against Real Madrid on 6 April and the FA Cup semi-final at Wembley Stadium on the weekend of 16 April against Crystal Palace.

Away fans can buy tickets for Premier League games at Stamford Bridge, with revenue going to the Premier League.

Chelsea’s next Women’s Super League game is on 3 April at Kingsmeadow against Reading.

Chelsea have requested that any money generated by ticket sales, which the club would have usually received, be donated to victims of the war in Ukraine and

the Premier League said that “beneficiary charities will be announced in due course after consultation with the club”.

Sports minister Nigel Huddleston said: “I would like to thank fans for their patience while we have engaged with the football authorities to make this possible.

“Since Roman Abramovich was added to the UK’s sanctions list for his links to [Russian president] Vladimir Putin we have worked extensively to ensure the club can continue to play football while ensuring the sanctions regime continues to be enforced.”

While only Chelsea season-ticket holders and those fans who bought tickets before the sanctions can attend Premier League home games, the government said an exception had been made for the WSL as “there is a risk of empty stands for these matches”.

ABCF to stage Avalanche race this weekend

The Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) will stage its third event of the season on Sunday.

Cyclists will compete in the Avalanche race that will start on the Friar's Hill Road at 9am.

Team Terminix will try to hold on to their impressive start to the domestic season after making a clean sweep of the Elite Male Class during the last event, the Pan Am Base Circuit Race on 13th March.

Kohath Barton, Shawn Weathered, Emmanuel Gayral and Conroy Thomas of Team Terminix captured the four top spots in the Elite Male Class of the 25 lap Pan Am Base Circuit Race.

It will likely be difficult for their contenders to stop them this weekend as the Elite males will be required to complete only 10 laps in the Avalanche race.

Lindsay Duffy of Road Runners Cycling Club is also a favourite to win the Elite Female Class, which will be



Road Runners Cycling Club's Newell Mack, centre, Micah Gore, left, and Tiziano Rosignoli, right, will seek top honours in the Sports Class of the Avalanche race on Sunday. (Photo courtesy ABCF)

conducted over six laps.

Newell Mack, Micah Gore, Tiziano Rosignoli and Tacuma Davis of Road Runners Cycling Club are expected to dominate the Sports Class which is also staged over six laps.

Competitions will also be held in the Masters Division over eight laps and Junior Males category over 10 laps.

The Junior Females will battle for supremacy over six laps, as will the Cadets in the 14 to 17 age category. Cadets in the 11 to 13 age group will compete over two laps.

Other teams contesting Sunday's Avalanche race include N&R Wheelers, Wadadli Cycling Academy, East-side Riders and Team Independent.

Naomi Osaka bounces back with first-round win in Miami after Indian Wells exit

BBC – Japan's Naomi Osaka says she wants to move on from her traumatic early exit at Indian Wells after winning her opening match at the Miami Open.

The former world number one beat Australia's Astra Sharma 6-3 6-4, 10 days after heckling from the crowd reduced her to tears during a second-round defeat by Veronika Kudermetova.

"I didn't want to let anything bother me, no matter what happened," said 24-year-old Osaka, who added that "the last match I played was not the greatest



Osaka missed much of the 2021 season has dropped to 77 in the world rankings [Reuters]

memory for me".

"I wanted to prove that I could come back out here and compete, and no matter

if I won or lost, to just know that I had the best attitude I could."

Osaka's win was her 50th in WTA 1000 tournaments and sets up second-round meeting with 13th seed Angelique Kerber.

In the men's draw, Australia's Nick Kyrgios sealed a comfortable first-round victory over Frenchman Adrian Mannarino.

Wildcard Kyrgios, who has slipped down the world rankings from 13th to 102, hit 12 aces and did not face a single break point in his 7-6 6-3 win.

"It was a hell of a performance," said Kyrgios, who stressed that he will be a "complete underdog" when he faces Russian fifth seed Andrey Rublev in the second round.

Britain's Jack Draper, the world number 146, is also through to round two where he will face British number one Cameron Norrie.

Draper, 20, beat Frenchman Gilles Simon 7-5 6-1 to earn his first Masters-level victory and boost his hopes of moving into the world's top 100.



Cars race during an event at the North Sound International Raceway on 4th May, 2020. (Photo: ABDRA)

New ABDRA executive sanctions Test and Tune event

The newly elected executive of the Antigua and Barbuda Drag Racing Association (ABDRA) has sanctioned the first test and tune event since taking office.

According to the President of ABDRA, Jerome “Jerry” Roberts, the association has given its blessings to a local organisation to host the meet at the North Sound International Raceway this Sunday.

Roberts also predicted that this weekend’s event is likely to attract many young people as is the case with ABDRA’s other regular meets.

“There is an event this Sunday which is being put on by a team called 1320 Performance.

“They are having a test and tune event on Sunday at the track starting at 2pm,” Roberts told Pointe FM’s

Sports Overflow.

“It is a good way for people to come out and get the bug back, and every other Tuesday night we have what we call Tension Tuesdays to which you can bring your street car. It doesn’t have to be a full race car. You are encouraged to come and run on the track, get a time, see how your reaction time is to the staging lights and everything.

“I am telling you, that is what is supported by young people, the Tuesday nights, and we will get good support on Sunday.”

The ABDRA executive body was elected during its Annual General Meeting on 14th March. The other executive members who will serve a two-year term include Brian Williams, Vice-President, Amy Lake,

Secretary and Shaquille Norris, Treasurer.

Meanwhile, Roberts noted computerised engine tuning has been attracting keen interest.

“Believe it or not, right now, I would say the secret to getting success on the race track is tuning the engine. Most engines are computerised now and young people will gravitate to the tuning of engines.

“Therefore, you are now finding that a lot of young people, computer literate people, are getting involved in drag racing because they can make an engine perform a lot better than what they come with from the factory just by simply tweaking the computers that the cars come with and a few other added parts. That’s why young people are gravitating to it so much.”