



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

POINTVILLE EXPRESS

TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

MONDAY 4TH APRIL 2022

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 66

WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

PM BROWNE MOURNS PASSING OF NEVIS' FORMER PREMIER

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Local News



PM Browne mourns the passing of former Premier Vance Amory

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne was among the first regional leaders to offer condolences to the family of H. E. Ambassador Vance Amory and the Government and People of St. Kitts and Nevis on Saturday after the region learned the shocking news of his death.

Ambassador Amory died at the age of 72 after a short period of illness.

Ambassador Amory was Nevis' premier from 1992 to 1996 and again served in that position from 2013 to 2017.

Describing their relationship as "extraordinarily warm", Prime Minister Browne said, "In many ways, I regarded him as the embodiment of the best of St. Kitts and Nevis. He was an outstanding cricketer who played for his island and also for the Leeward Islands Team.

"Vance was a politician and statesman who brought a well-honed intellect



Former Premier of Nevis, H. E. Ambassador Vance Amory

to his assigned tasks. As a parliamentarian and Government Minister, he excelled at the portfolios assigned to him.

"H.E. Ambassador Vance Amory made significant contributions to the growth and development of St. Kitts and Nevis. He was very well cultured, a very respectful diplomat and Minister. I have always held him in very high regard and with much admiration.

"St. Kitts and Nevis has lost a great son, and the region has suffered an irreplaceable loss. May the ancestors welcome him into their arms, offering eternal rest and peace."

Similar sentiments have since poured in from Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley and Grenada's Prime Minister Keith Mitchell.

At home in St. Kitts and Nevis, leaders across the political divide expressed shock and sorry at Ambassador Amory's death. They included Prime Minister and leader of the governing Team Unity administration, Dr. Timothy Harris, Premier of Nevis and leader of the Concerned Citizens Movement, Mark Brantley, former Prime Minister Dr. Denzil Douglas, leader of the Nevis Reformation Party, Dr. Janice Daniel-Hodge and former Attorney General of St. Kitts and Nevis Patrice Nisbett.

Haulage price hike for cooking gas 'unconscionable'

The recent announcement by a major hauler of cooking gas that he intends to raise his haulage fee by \$20.00 per 100-pound cylinder has ignited a quick response from the government.

Trade Minister E. P. Chet Greene made it clear that this decision does not have the approval of the government. He described the move as 'unconscionable' noting that it comes at a time when the government has been working hard to keep prices in the country from further escalating.

"I understand that the haulers are independent contractors, but this move does not find favour with the government. While the price of

gasoline and diesel increased by just over \$3.00 per gallon, increasing the price to \$20.00 per 100lb cylinder far exceeds that of the increases in fuel," he stated.

According to the trade minister, about 500 cylinders of propane are delivered weekly in Antigua and Barbuda. Based on this average, the hike in haulage fees would amount to approximately \$40,000.00 of additional expense to consumers each month. Minister Greene is also worried that the unapproved increase could have a knock-on effect on the economy as it could lead to increases in other items and services.

He pointed to the poor timing of the increase, which



has come at a time when the government has called on all sectors to cooperate to stabilise prices as the coronavirus pandemic remains a threat, which is now compounded by the global economic impact of Russia's invasion of

Ukraine.

The price of fuel and LPG, or cooking gas, is controlled in Antigua and Barbuda. Therefore, the government has reminded that there ought not to be increases without its consent.

Department of Environment signs MoU with WOTA Corporation

On March 25, 2022, the Department of Environment (DoE) signed an MoU with the Japanese Corporation WOTA to formalise their collaboration in support of conducting research and testing of WOTA's water treatment devices in select areas in Antigua and Barbuda.

The testing will assess the viability of WOTA's technology and products, in homes and other buildings in the twin-island state and identify best practices for installation.

WOTA's small scale, decentralised, water-recycling technology and products are said to improve the availability of quality water supply that meets applicable water standards.

The DoE and WOTA made their initial connections at the Conference of the Parties 26 (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) where WOTA's Director, Ryo Yamada, conducted a presentation to inform representatives from AOSIS Members States about his company's water treatment technology.

"Climate change and other extreme weather events have compromised water security and hygiene for Antigua and Barbuda and other small island developing states (SIDS). These events have made our nation reliant on desalination or importing water for everyday use.

"Sourcing water in such a manner is costly for the

average Antiguan and Barbudan. This partnership may be able to provide access to clean, safe and affordable water, to Antigua and Barbuda," remarked Minister of Health, Wellness, and the Environment, Sir Molwyn Joseph.

The DoE is already actively investing in innovative technologies, including wind and solar energy. This initiative will increase efforts to achieve the country's environmental and sustainable development goals.



CEO of WOTA Ryo Yamada

To date, the DoE has implemented climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, which support capacity building at the grass-

roots level and increased resilience to adverse climate change induced conditions such as droughts and hurricanes.



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Five Islands Primary to relocate as part of UWI expansion

Minister of Education and Sports Daryll Matthew has been tasked with identifying land that will be suitable to facilitate the relocation of Five Islands Primary School.

This is to allow for the expansion of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (FIC).

As part of its long-term goal to increase enrolment and educational opportunities, the UWI and government officials are examining an expansion plan for the campus, and the lands which the Five Islands Primary School occupy, are included.

The expansion plan, and the acquisition of land to facilitate the process, formed part of the Five Islands Campus's Council meeting discussions last Friday.

"This is an ongoing activity where the government recognises that if the potential of this campus is going to be realised, the continued acquisition of lands for the campus is critical. And it is for this reason that I will



University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus

announce ... that the prime minister and the Cabinet has mandated me to identify suitable lands for the relocation of the Five Islands Primary School, which sits on eight acres of land adjacent to the campus," Minister Matthew revealed.

While he did not state how soon the process will begin, and how long it will take, the education minister said the school will remain in the community and will become an ultra modern primary institution.

"With the development of the university and the

need for the expansion and for additional lands, it gives us an opportunity to really build out the primary school into a state-of-the-art institution where, like the university is now doing, you can adequately plan and build for the future."

Minister Matthew offered the assurance that when the time comes, careful planning will be undertaken concerning the school's relocation and construction.



Pro-Vice Chancellor and UWI Five Islands Campus Principal, Professor

Densil Williams, told the FIC Council Meeting that four parcels of land have been identified that will satisfy the fifty acres needed to expand the campus.

One parcel has already been acquired to begin the infrastructural revolution.

"This is our long-term planning framework that we have now designed. We have engaged an architectural firm that has all the expertise in building out a university infrastructure in a modern way, in a first-class way. They have engaged universities before that have started as high schools, and they have engaged them to build out world class facilities.

"We have now engaged them at the Five Islands Campus, and they have now delivered the long-term planning framework for the campus," Professor Williams concluded.

| Mon 04 Day | | Mon 04 Night | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 83° |  | 75° |  |
| 2% Precip | ESE 12 mph | 5% Precip | ESE 12 mph |
| Mostly sunny skies. High 83F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph. | | Partly cloudy skies. Low around 75F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph. | |
| Humidity 63% | UV Index Extreme | Humidity 72% | UV Index 0 of 10 |
| Sunrise 5:59 am | Sunset 6:20 pm | Moonrise 8:13 am | Moonsset 9:27 pm |
| | | ● Waxing Crescent | |

Minister Marshall attends FAO's Regional Conference of the Americas

Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, Samantha Marshall and Permanent Secretary, Colin O'Keiffe, represented Antigua and Barbuda at the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) 37th Regional Conference of the Americas in Quito, Ecuador from 28th March to 1st April, 2022.

The regional conference is held bi-annually and brings together the governments of the 33 Member States of FAO in Latin America and the Caribbean to establish the regional priorities of the organisation for the next biennium.

Minister Marshall's speech focused on the major challenges faced in the agriculture sector and the government



Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs. Samantha Marshall, amongst Ministers of Agriculture within the FAO's membership.

policies put in place to solve them.

These conferences provide a wider obligation to report, update and engage international partners as they seek to improve objectives domestically, re-

gionally, and internationally.

The delegation within the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Barbuda Affairs viewed the conference virtual-ly.

SLBMC commemorates Autism Awareness Month

Saturday 2nd April 2022 was World Autism Day. It also signalled the start of Autism Awareness Month.

It is designed to celebrate the rights of individuals with autism.

World Autism Awareness Day, established in 2008 by the United Nations, is an international observance to make us mindful of this complex, lifelong developmental disability, which typically appears in early childhood.

This year, Autism Awareness activities are observed under the theme: Inclusive Quality Education for All.

With autism identified as one of the world's fastest-growing developmental disorders, affecting 1 in 100 children according to the

World Health Organization (WHO), there's increasing urgency for intervention and therapy to improve the lives of the people diagnosed and living with this condition—And therefore, the hospital's advocacy continues.

"I think this month gives all in society an opportunity to question ourselves and others about what we've done and what is still left to do", said Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, Pediatric Department Chair at Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

"In my estimation, there is still much work to be done to offer assessment and diagnostic services, to overcome stigma, to train professionals and to make needed services available to persons with autism; never forgetting the support need-

ed by their loved ones".

She added; "We want discussions to be more about improving acceptance and increasing action for people with autism. This means more effort in including them in our communities, more specific job coaching programs and more specialized care for those with complex forms of autism, or who have other medical or mental health conditions. Now more than ever, it is important for us to find ways to accept, understand and support individuals with autism and their families in more robust and meaningful ways. Action to get these needs met is the next logical step."

"All of us should endeavour to ensure those with autism have what U.N.



Secretary General António Guterres calls, "the right to self-determination, independence and autonomy as well as the right to education and employment on an equal basis with others."

Throughout April and beyond, SLBMC is urging the public to become more aware, understanding and accepting of people with autism and other neurodiverse disorders.

Local News



PAHO undertakes perinatal review at SLBMC

Representatives from the Pan American Health Organization have completed a perinatal review of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre in Antigua and Barbuda with the aim of improving the quality of care at the institution.

A perinatal review is key to the SLBMC and the Ministry of Health, Well-being and the Environment as collectively, they evaluate near misses and deaths more accurately so that appropriate planning, correc-



tive steps and training can take place in 2022 and beyond to ensure the survival of each child born at the hospital.

The review, which took

place from 28th March to 1st April, 2022, included staff from community clinics, the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC) and technicians from the

Ministry of Health, Well-being and the Environment.

As part of the review, patients of SLBMC, district clinics and private medical practices were interviewed.

The process also included a staff survey. Additionally, the PAHO team which comprised neonatologists, a public health specialist and an obstetrician, assisted with an audit, which reviewed the environment, facility staff and parental/client perceptions.

ACB Caribbean launches Simply Smarter Business

ACB Caribbean has announced that it has adjusted its commercial lending policies to create funding and support for small and medium-sized businesses (SME). As part of this initiative, ACB Caribbean launched the Smarter Business Virtual Masterclasses for Small-Medium Sized Enterprises on March 30.

The bank has established regional and international partnerships to ensure that its small business customers have opportunities and the technical know-how to enable them to thrive and prosper.

At the start of the sessions on 30th March, guest speaker, Carmen Gomez-Trigg, CEO of the Eastern Caribbean Partial Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECPCGC), shared invaluable insight the process for SMEs in the OECS to access funding via the Eastern Caribbean Partial Credit Guarantee Corporation's loan products.

The ECPCGC mandate promotes economic growth in member territories of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU), which consists of the following countries: St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, Antigua & Barbuda and St. Kitts. In addition, the ECPCGC administers the Partial Credit Guarantee Programme.

The Partial Credit Guarantee Programme offers credit guarantees to participating lenders, like ACB Caribbean, making it easier for qualifying enterprises to access loans. It is open to SME businesses operating in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU).

ACB Caribbean Group Head of Credit, Narcisse Moise attended the event and commented, "ACB Caribbean is pleased to be a facilitating Bank of the ECPCGC programmes. We can now more easily assist our Small-Medium Sized Enterprises to access cred-



it. We remain committed to not only facilitating the lending process, but to give guidance on how to develop these businesses into successful and thriving enterprises. This is the first in our Simply Smarter Business Masterclass Series, and we look forward to continuously providing easily accessible and valuable information to our existing and potential customers."

The webinar is available to those who were unable to participate in the session on ACB Caribbean's YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn channels.

ACB Caribbean has said they will stage additional Masterclasses so that Small-Medium Sized Businesses continue to benefit from expert advice on growing and developing their businesses.

How serious is the Caribbean about reparations?

By Sir Ronald Sanders

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

On March 25, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro, publicly pointed out that “only six of our 34 active member states have ratified the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance”.

Almagro was speaking at an OAS meeting to commemorate the victim of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Poignantly, he asked why 28 states have not ratified the Convention. He emphasized the relevance of his question by inquiring further: “Do we not agree that every human being is equal under the law? Do we not agree that every human being has a right to equal protection against racism, racial discrimination, and related forms of intolerance”?

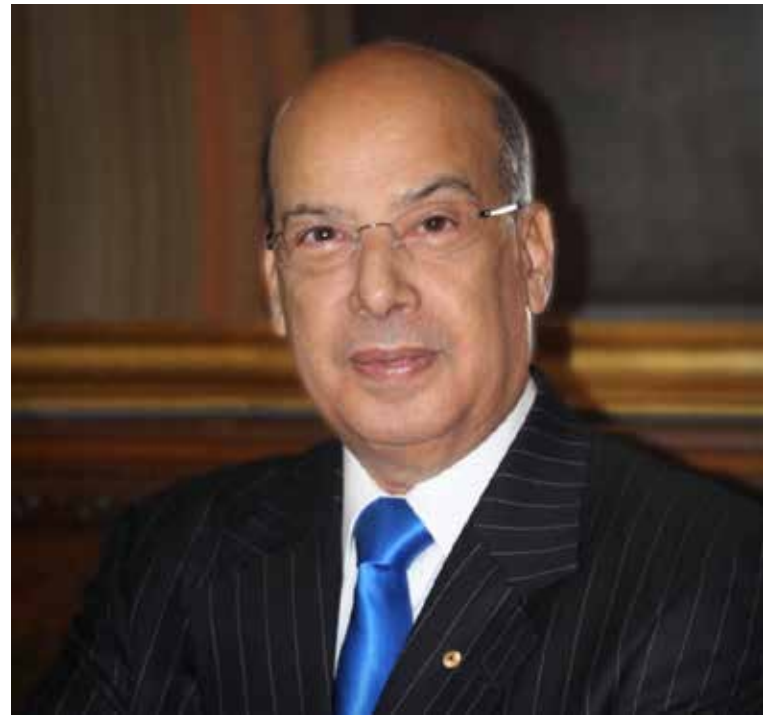
The Secretary-General's questions have great significance for the 14 CARICOM member states of the OAS, because only one Caribbean state - Antigua and Barbu-

da - is among the six hemispheric nations that have ratified the treaty. Yet, the Convention has been open for signature and ratification for nine years since 2013.

The Convention is the only international treaty that specifically identifies “people of African descent” as “victims of racism, racial discrimination, and other related forms of intolerance in the Americas”. For that reason alone, Caribbean states should have signed and ratified the Convention, especially as, in arguing for reparations for slavery, Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have declared that the region “continues to suffer from the effects of slavery today”.

The Convention was not easily achieved. Its adoption took years of hard negotiations during which many member countries of the OAS, including the United States (US) and Canada withdrew from the process. Today, apart from Antigua and Barbuda, the other five countries that have ratified the Convention are: Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay.

The fact that CARICOM states, other than Antigua and Barbuda, have not ratified the Convention is rightfully a bewilderment for other OAS nations. This oddity has gained greater



Sir Ronald Sanders

importance over the last 9 years when blatant and fatal discrimination have been meted out to people of African descent, giving rise to the movement which asserts that “black lives matter”.

While it is true that acts of racial discrimination within a state are matters for the jurisdiction concerned - even when they are fatal, as in the well-known case of George Floyd in the US, Conventions such as the one being discussed here, provide the opportunity for intervention without accusations of interference in the internal affairs of a state. CARICOM states can raise their voices when specific acts of discrimination occur. One of the overarching principles of the Convention is the commitment

by participating states that: “the individual and collective experience of discrimination must be taken into account to combat segregation and marginalization based on race, ethnicity, or nationality, and to protect the life plan of those individuals and communities at risk of such segregation and marginalization”.

The fact that Caribbean countries have not signed and ratified the treaty provides an excuse for other states to do likewise. Caribbean countries can hardly call for the Convention to be ratified and upheld when they have not done so themselves.

Many regard the absence of the majority of CARICOM countries from

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the nations that have ratified the Convention as weakening the quest for reparatory justice from the racial discrimination that is a part of slavery's legacy. And that is perhaps the greatest danger for the Caribbean.

In its statement to the OAS meeting at which Secretary-General Almagro asked his pertinent questions, the Antigua and Barbuda delegation said the following:

"CARICOM countries - where Afro-descendants are the majority, and occupy all levels of business, government, and society - have a moral obligation to insist on the same rights for Afro-descendants everywhere, particularly those in jurisdictions where their rights are routinely and structurally denied".

Antigua and Barbuda praised an earlier public call by Almagro for "rep-

arations to begin now" and supported his position at the March 25 meeting that "to overcome the consequences of slavery, which, even today continue to haunt many of our societies; we must open the dialogue for reparations".

The OAS is the second inter-governmental organization in which the matter of reparations for slavery has been raised, although not formally placed on the table for discussion.

The first was the United Nations where several Caribbean leaders have called for reparations at meetings of the General Assembly. The difference between the UN and the OAS is that the latter's Secretary-General - its Chief Executive Officer - has associated himself with the advancement of the matter.

Caribbean countries have an opportunity to advance the reparations cause in the OAS. It might be an

uncomfortable discussion for some non-Caribbean countries, but it is one that should not be avoided. The task of advancing this cause falls to CARICOM countries.

It requires unity of purpose and a clear and realistic understanding of what is meant by "reparations" and the form it should take.

One of the first meaningful steps in showing that they are serious about moving forward the discussion on reparations is for Caribbean countries to ratify the only Inter-American Convention that specifically identifies "people of African descent" as "victims of racism, racial discrimination and inequality of treatment". If not, the question will be asked: how serious are Caribbean states about reparations?

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com



The advertisement features a collage of four smiling people of diverse ages and ethnicities on the left. On the right, a large '20 20' graphic with a cricket player silhouette is positioned above a purple banner that reads 'PIC 20TH ANNIVERSARY'. Below this, the text 'special offer' is written in a green script font. The main body of the ad contains the text: 'We raise our bat for 20 years of Excellent Service to the people of Antigua & Barbuda.' followed by 'Celebrate & Enjoy' and a bulleted list of offers. At the bottom left is the PIC logo and the company name 'PEOPLES INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.'. At the bottom right is the slogan '“We Put People First.”'. The footer contains contact information: a phone icon, '(268) 481-3740', an email icon, 'info@picinsuranceanu.com', a globe icon, and 'www.picinsuranceanu.com'.

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Hello darkness my old friend

By Tony Deyal

I suffer from O.C.D.- Obsessive Coffee Disorder. In order to stop, I tried a famous local tea named after one of our great athletes (or so Errol Fabien of the regional Gayelle Television station says) the former sprinter, Ato Boldon.

To twist an old joke, when one of my female friends tried “Ato-Tea”, after taking just one sip she angrily claimed that it would take ten of those to make a good, thick, black coffee. Alphabetically speaking, if you want to turn a “T” into a “P” you drink it.

Essentially, I am like the homeless man who drinks only coffee because he has no proper tea. Worse than everything else, with war, threats of war and attempted Russian satellite states, I continue drinking coffee in case the Russian President offered me a cup of tea.

I would have to refuse it because one never knows what Vladimir Putin. Given that I already went after the Caribbean Media Corporation last week, I plan to replace their use of the letters “CMC” with “Coffee, More Coffee”. The new brand will know how and when to use the word (and drink) “Eclipse” appropriately.

The reason I am in such a manic mood this morning has nothing to do with Mount Gay. What bothers me is that despite my love of coffee, there seem to be two sides to its effects and

benefits. However, having looked at the evidence presented by all parties, I cling to my belief that it is not all black and white but shades of grey, just like the little bits of hair that remain on my scalp.

First the bad news that blackens the image and reputation of coffee despite two African countries – Ethiopia and Kenya- having the best in the world. Colombia is third mainly because it was unable to make an offer to the judges they couldn’t refuse.

The first salvo from the sour grapes groupies and Dietitians is that there are “6 Incredible Effects of Giving Up Coffee For A Month.” It used to be “eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we may diet” but now you can only eat.

Without the coffee there is no way you can be merry. In fact, you will have to shorten the four-letter word “diet” and be ready at very short notice for the first three letters only. The writer of the article, author of “Eat This, Not That”, Brianna Ruback admits, “From kickstarting your morning to providing an afternoon pick-me-up, drinking coffee is a tried-and-true way to get a much-needed boost of energy.”

She then claims that although coffee consumption is tied to a range of benefits-including decreased risk of various diseases, increased metabolism, and improved



Tony Deyal

mood, there are also some less appealing side effects.” These include increased heart rate, heightened anxiety, and irritable bowel symptoms.

However, unlike the writer, I don’t blame the coffee for these side effects. I blame her. Just reading what she wrote has already increased my heart rate and anxiety.

I can even feel the bowel symptoms coming, especially when she adds, “Kicking your coffee habit may initially sound quite daunting, due to the possibility of withdrawal symptoms like headaches, moodiness, and fatigue.”

In Trinidad “fatigue” can mean “tiredness” but generally it is used to make fun of someone. I know if I stopped drinking coffee, I would not only be fatigued

but also get “fatigue” like “Even if coffee keeps you from sleeping, better latte than never,” or “Tony, you know that sleep is a weak substitute for coffee?”. However, I get my own back when the Barista at Starbucks asks me, “Sir, how do you take your coffee?” and I answer, “Seriously. Very seriously.”

Ms. Ruback boasts that there are several major benefits for not drinking coffee and even got some experts to help identify them. The first is that you sleep better if you avoid coffee within at least six hours of going to sleep.

What my wife and family know is that I generally drink a cup of coffee just before I go to sleep. The advice that “Giving up caffeine could reverse the ef-

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Guest Opinion



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fect, allowing you not only to get more restful sleep but fall asleep in a shorter time” leaves me twisting and turning for hours. In fact, I don’t drink coffee to wake up. I wake up to drink coffee.

The second reason we are advised to stop drinking coffee is that it causes “dry mouth”. Since saliva fights bacteria, the drier your mouth the greater the risk of cavities.

I grew up with people whose saliva was so bad that I wished instead of dessert I could give them a desert under some seriously hot sun to keep their mouths dry. However, if that is not enough, the experts also insist that coffee is a highly acidic drink that can cause

enamel wear and decay. Even if I let the chips fly where they may, and prefer enamel ware to ceramic, it still depends on how many cups of coffee you drink each day. Also, there are many so-called health foods which are more acidic than coffee.

These include salad dressings, tomatoes, fruits, soft drinks, carbonated beverages, lemon and other fruit juices. White wine is higher on the list than my black “wine” which is generally good to the last droplet.

Actually, my faith in coffee and my preference for it are supported by recent research. The best news comes from CNN (and not CMC): “Drinking coffee could benefit your heart


and help you live longer, research finds.” The article starts, “Contrary to worries among some doctors and the public, drinking coffee may actually protect your heart instead of causing or worsening heart problems.


Drinking two to three cups of coffee daily has been associated with a 10% to 15% lower risk of getting heart disease, heart failure or a heart rhythm problem, or dying early for any reason, according to three research abstracts...” The leader of one of the research groups, Dr. Peter M. Kistler, said, “We found coffee drinking had either a neutral effect – meaning that it did no harm – or was associated with benefits to heart health.” For those

who doubt the findings, Dr. Kistler and other researchers used data which follows the health outcomes of more than 500,000 people for at least 10 years.

I could have saved them the huge research cost. I’ve been drinking coffee since I was just over three-years-old and at 76 going on 77, I can still put my coffee cup on the back of my hand and drink from it without spilling a drop. The first time I drank Kenyan AA coffee, it was perched on my fist and I asked passionately, “Where have you bean all my life?”

**Tony Deyal was last seen talking about the man who died after falling into a vat of coffee. His wife told reporters, “At least he didn’t suffer - it was instant.”*

|  | | | | |
|---|-------|------------------|------------------|--|
| Statement of comprehensive income | | | | |
| | Notes | 2021 USD | 2020 USD | |
| Interest income | 14 | 5,675,057 | 4,658,591 | |
| Interest expense | 15 | (1,303,909) | (1,473,370) | |
| Net interest Margin | | 4,371,148 | 3,185,221 | |
| Fee and commission income | 16 | 1,057,124 | 1,158,337 | |
| Fee and commission expense | 17 | (601,278) | (641,378) | |
| Net fee commission (expense)/ income | | 455,846 | 516,959 | |
| Dividend income | | 42,126 | 36,107 | |
| Currency results | | (60,789) | 96,914 | |
| Gain less losses from investment securities | 18 | 716,349 | (1,063,865) | |
| | | 697,686 | (930,844) | |
| Operating income | | 5,524,680 | 2,771,336 | |
| Depreciation expenses | | (593) | (1,628) | |
| Personnel expenses | 19 | (482,897) | (482,752) | |
| Other operational expenses | 20 | (1,722,457) | (1,742,055) | |
| Net profit/(loss) for the year | | 3,318,733 | 544,901 | |
| Other comprehensive income | | | | |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | | - | - | |
| Profit tax | | (82,968) | (13,623) | |
| Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year | | 3,235,765 | 531,278 | |

|  | | | | |
|---|-------|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| Balance sheet | | | | |
| | Notes | Dec. 31, 2021 USD | Dec. 31, 2020 USD | |
| Assets | | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 5 | 11,258,803 | 10,711,339 | |
| Investment securities - financial assets at fair value profit or loss | 6 | 6,149,355 | 5,786,176 | |
| Derivative financial instruments | 7 | 681,053 | 479,880 | |
| Overdrafts | 8 | 58,664,464 | 50,971,552 | |
| Other assets | 9 | 1,972,541 | 1,748,523 | |
| Property, plant and equipment | | 0 | 593 | |
| Total assets | | 78,726,216 | 69,698,063 | |
| Liabilities | | | | |
| Margin account | 10 | 14,327,721 | 8,645,525 | |
| Due to customers | 11 | 38,687,441 | 38,630,728 | |
| Derivative financial instruments | 7 | 682,200 | 489,509 | |
| Other liabilities | 12 | 190,188 | 329,401 | |
| Total liabilities | | 53,887,550 | 48,095,163 | |
| Shareholders' equity | | | | |
| Share capital | 13 | 5,000,000 | 5,000,000 | |
| Retained earnings | | 17,998,948 | 15,407,491 | |
| General banking risk reserve | | 1,839,718 | 1,195,409 | |
| Total shareholders' equity | | 24,838,666 | 21,602,900 | |
| Total equity and liabilities | | 78,726,216 | 69,698,064 | |
| Approved by the Board of Directors on March 25, 2022 and signed on its behalf by: | | | | |

Reputed Canadian citizen threatens service of Caribbean-born Commonwealth Secretary General

Dear Editor,

As a single geographical unit, the constant intent of the larger Caribbean nations to dominate the psychological space of a bewildered regional public is simply unacceptable.

It is baffling why, even in times of turmoil fuelled by escalating wars and widespread pandemic, the Prime Minister and Government of Jamaica would wish to insert their own candidate (reputedly a citizen of Canada) into the “non-race” for Secretary General of the Commonwealth. The position, currently held by Dominica-born, Right Honourable Baroness Patricia Scotland QC of Antigua and Barbudan parentage, is NOT “up for grabs”.

In 2016 when the eminently qualified Baroness was voted into office fairly and squarely by the majority of the 54 Commonwealth countries, it was expected that she would serve for two terms (8 years). She has executed her role with professionalism and poise, advancing the progress of many nations through dialogue and direction. She is overwhelmingly supported by the Caricom (Caribbean Community) member states. The more informed and rational leaders have expressed their content with the work that Baroness Scotland continues to do.

As a Jamaican, the attitude of my government can only be described as embarrassing. While we all understand the craving for total independence, and

while many comprehend the meaning behind the call for reparations, the blatant effort of the Jamaican Prime Minister to berate the Queen’s representatives, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, on their recent state visit to Jamaica was totally undignified and unnecessary.

If the Honourable Prime Minister felt so strongly about the significance (or lack thereof) of the Royal visit, it was his prerogative to decline at the time that initial letters of intent were exchanged. The proud figurative beating of his chest was a clarion call for political attention. Further, it is paradoxical that Hon. Andrew Holness should wish to proffer a candidate for a position within an organisation headed by none other than Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II!

The Jamaica Observer of today ‘s date (3rd April, 2022) reports Antigua and Barbuda’s Prime Minister, the Honourable Gaston Browne, as saying: “I think Jamaica’s proposed candidate for Commonwealth Secretary General is a monumental error, which could only serve to divide the Caribbean.”

Well said, Mr. Prime Minister! I can safely assume that other Caribbean luminaries like the Hon. Mia Mottley (Barbados) and the Hon. Roosevelt Skerritt (Dominica) would agree with you wholeheartedly.

From my observation, Baroness Scotland has played fair ball — highlighting issues which affect all nations of

the Commonwealth. For her, each state is equally as important. She knocks on the doors of all countries and continents. But if the overall situation is assessed, it appears that the “Big Boys” like the United Kingdom and Canada have introduced subtle bullying tactics. These powerful nations are continuously attempting to rid the Commonwealth of a leader that they regard to be excessively in favour of the smaller, more fragile island developing states. Is their latest seeming support of Jamaica’s newly announced, freshly minted candidate another case of divide and rule?

In this life, will we ever come to terms with fairness, equity and peace? Will we forever be striving to short-change and trample upon each other? Will the political backbiting and character brutalisation ever stop? There is little wonder that we find ourselves in a world wounded by human greed and ambition.

Well said, Prime Minister Gaston Browne! “Our consensus decisions should never be broken without overwhelming cause; that will not undermine the unity of our integration movement or violate the treaty provisions”.

It is expected that other Caribbean Heads of Government will voice their public support for the Baroness in short order. If we cannot stand together, then we will fall apart.

*Yours truly,
C. Daniel*



APUA **ELECTRICITY** MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

These planned outages are necessary for our continuous upgrade and maintenance programme to provide reliable and consistent service to our customers.

| Monday, 4th April 2022 | Tuesday, 5th April 2022 | Wednesday, 6th April 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| Section of Cedar Valley south of Solomon's property 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM | Section of Johnson's Point near the Sunshine Home for Girls 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM | Section of Parham near the Primary School 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM |
| Section of Fort Road, Villa, Runaway, Dry Hill and Fort James 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM | — | — |

Kindly note that this schedule is subject to slight variation. Changes will be communicated on the APUA Facebook page. Any service disruptions outside of this schedule were not anticipated. For further information and updates please call 311.

How to get a Cuban COVID jab in 1,000 easy steps: The story of how I finally got my made-in-Cuba booster in Havana

By Belen Fernandez

On Valentine's Day 2022 in Havana, Cuba, I received the Soberana Plus booster shot, one of the island nation's five homegrown COVID-19 vaccines. The jab had been a long time coming.

For the past year, I had been fixated on the idea of being injected with a made-in-Cuba coronavirus vaccine. While obviously not offering protection against the imperial machinations of my homeland and Cuba's chief antagonist, the United States, the Cuban serums were at least being developed in the interest of global public health rather than pharmaceutical profit or "vaccine apartheid", as World Health Organization (WHO) Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has described it.

Having inadvertently taken up residence in Mexico at the start of the pandemic in 2020, I had initially determined to fly to Havana in April 2021 to await vaccine availability.

This plan underwent seemingly infinite adjustments, as the pandemic-induced suspension of straightforward air trajectories between Mexico and Cuba – normally a two-hour trip – left me with flight options like Mexico City-Cancun-Vancouver-Heathrow-Frankfurt-Havana and Mexico City-Cancun-Panama City-Bogota-Madrid-Havana.

The search for flights was rendered all the more enjoyable thanks to interference by the US – which, in addition to subjecting Cuba to a debilitating 60-year-long embargo for the crime of refusing to submit to capitalist tyranny, has also ensured that travellers wishing to peruse



flights to Cuba on the website of the Mexican airline Aeroméxico cannot do so without being bombarded with warnings about US restrictions on travel to the country. Required to certify that I qualified for one of the permissible motives for visiting Cuba as a US citizen, I selected "support for the Cuban people" – as if this has ever been a real concern for the global superpower that has since the 1960s literally schemed to starve the nation into submission.

Unfortunately, the pandemic provided the US with the opportunity for even more sadistic treatment of Cuba – and, rather than lift sanctions as per the urgent encouragement of United Nations human rights experts, the administrations of Donald Trump and his successor Joe Biden instead intensified them.

The embargo's obstruction of medical imports to Cuba – a lethal business if there ever was one – means that Cuba has had to contend with an acute shortage of, inter alia,

syringes and ventilators.

In an August 2021 dispatch for NBC News, Havana-based journalist Ed Augustin specified that "two Swiss companies that had previously sold Cuba ventilators said they could no longer continue trading with the island after they were bought out by Vyaire Medical, an Illinois company" – such being the nature of US efforts to isolate an already isolated island.

And in a May 2021 article for the Guardian, Augustin reported that the various Cuban research teams working on the COVID-19 vaccines had to "share just one spectrometer – a machine essential for quality control – powerful enough to analyse a vaccine's chemical structure". As the machine's British manufacturer had been bought out by a US firm – go capitalism! – the Cubans were no longer able to buy spare parts directly.

Nor has Biden's decision to leave
cont'd on pg 13

cont'd from pg 12

Cuba on the official State Sponsors of Terrorism list – to which it was added in an unceremonious fit during Trump's final days as president – facilitated the country's ability to engage on the international financial panorama.

This, despite the fact that designating Cuba a State Sponsor of Terror is more or less the equivalent in absurdity of applying the Terror Sponsor label to Stonehenge or the pasta aisle at any given supermarket.

In light of such technically incapacitating hurdles, it is no less than utterly astounding that Cuba has managed to manufacture no fewer than five

coronavirus vaccines – not to mention its own ventilators and other medical equipment. As of December 2021, more than 90 percent of the Cuban population had already been vaccinated with at least one dose – making it not only the world's smallest country to produce its own COVID-19 vaccines but also a world leader in vaccine administration. Various Cuban vaccines have already been reported to enjoy an efficacy rate of more than 90 percent.

Ultimately, though, it is all of a piece with Cuba's flourishing biotechnology industry and the Cuban *modus operandi* of sticking it to the empire by exerting national sovereignty.

It is not an accident that Soberana, the name of the vaccine I eventually received, means “sovereign” in English.

Abdala, the name of another of the Cuban vaccines, is inspired by a poem by Cuban independence hero José Martí. And all of this, of course, drives the US crazy.

Notwithstanding my dream of being vaccinated in Cuba, I myself would receive the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in New York City in August 2021 in the interest of facilitating international travel – which was just as well since, by the time I touched down in Havana in February 2022, the Cubans had begun requiring vaccination certifi-

cation as a prerequisite for entry.

I arrived in the Cuban capital just in time for the sixtieth anniversary of the US embargo on February 7. Basic goods like coffee and milk were in short supply. Vaccines, on the other hand, were not.

I was directed to the Cira García clinic in Havana's Miramar neighbourhood, which was one of the go-to spots for foreigners wishing to inject themselves with Cuban coronavirus vaccines and which featured a portrait of Fidel Castro in the lobby.

For Cubans, obviously, the vaccine is entirely free – as is healthcare in general – but for me, I was told,

cont'd on pg 14



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Health & Wellness



cont'd from pg 13

the Soberana Plus booster would incur a fee of \$45.

This, I reckoned, was a small price to pay to atone for the excesses of my country, and was the least I could do in terms of “support for the Cuban people”.

Although the price was in US dollars, however, the currency could not be utilised as a form of payment – nor could any other form of cash currency. Rather, a Cuban MLC card (standing for Moneda Libremente Convertible, or freely convertible currency) was required – and, significantly, US dollars could not be placed on said card.

Thus ensued an adventure in which I had to find a Cuban willing to lend me his MLC card and accompany me to a bank and then to the clinic after depositing the equivalent of \$45 to his card.

We descended upon the bank with

my collection of euros, Mexican pesos, and Turkish lira, and obtained the desired equivalent, after which we headed to Cira García to realise my yearlong dream, or so I thought.

At the clinic, my elation was promptly superseded by panic when the kindly septuagenarian doctor whipped out a blood pressure monitor – an apparatus that has inspired an unnatural terror in me for as long as I can remember.

It was not possible, apparently, to administer my Soberana Plus booster without first obtaining a blood pressure reading indicating that I was not having a stroke and/or heart attack – and, sure enough, my readings were off the charts, even after the doctor had spent half an hour trying to calm me down with tales from his four years of medical service in Mozambique back in the day.

Today, Cuba continues to post tens of thousands of medical per-

sonnel abroad, in keeping with its decades-long policy of “doctors, not bombs” – which has seen the diminutive nation undertake to combat the global proliferation of everything from malaria and tuberculosis to Ebola and coronavirus.

At home, Cuba presides over the greatest doctor-to-patient ratio in the entire world – never mind right-wing propaganda from my own all-powerful country that prefers to bomb rather than save people, and to proliferate a narrative according to which Cuba’s “slave trade in doctors” has resulted in a shortage of domestic medical personnel.

When the Cuban doctor’s Mozambican escapades failed to lower my blood pressure, the owner of the MLC card – who himself hailed from none other than Guantánamo province, site of the illegal US offshore penal colony-cum-torture centre

cont'd on pg 15

#drivesafeantigua

HAPPY Monday

Plan to leave home earlier than usual to avoid traffic on your way to your destination

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DRIVE SAFELY!

ASIB
A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

cont'd from pg 14

(talk about unnatural terror) – brought me home-made wine at the hospital in an effort to chill me out.

Nothing worked, and I was sent home with instructions to monitor my blood pressure daily.

The elderly doctor emphasised that, if the readings continued to be high, he could arrange a psychological evaluation to determine what underlying explanations there might be for my neurosis – a far cry, to be sure, from the US approach to healthcare, which is basically to lucratively medicate the hell out of any and all symptoms without endeavouring to detect any root cause or connect the dots.

In the end, I got my Soberana Plus booster in Havana. Suffice it to say that it was not at the Cira García clinic and there was no blood pressure machine involved – although the whole episode did prompt me to order one such apparatus off of the internet to my home in Mexico, such that I might practise behaving like a non-neurotic human being in the future.

This undertaking, too, was temporarily thwarted when I discovered that, due to US sanctions, a person physically located in Cuba cannot order a blood pressure apparatus via Amazon Mexico to be delivered to their home in Mexico, and that one's mother in the US state of Kentucky must en-

ter into one's Amazon account to order the device for them.

Meanwhile, Cuba is ploughing ahead with plans to deliver tens of millions of doses of home-grown coronavirus vaccines to countries in the Global South – a sure-fire antidote to the WHO's diagnosis of global "vaccine apartheid".

As even the pro-imperialist Washington Post reported in disgruntled fashion last year, Cuba was said to be "developing cheap and easy-to-store serums.

They are able to last at room temperature for weeks, and in long-term storage as high as 46.4 degrees [46.4C or 115.5F],

potentially making them a viable option for low-income, tropical countries that have been pushed aside by bigger, wealthier nations in the international scrum for coronavirus vaccines".

The majority of Cuban children aged two to 18 have now been fully vaccinated, which, as the Reuters news agency noted in February, "proved pivotal in beating back the highly infectious Omicron variant before it ever took hold on the island".

And as Cuba continues to put much of the world to shame on the coronavirus front, you might say that the Cuban people are supporting us much more than we are supporting them.



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Regional News



CARICOM split on post of Commonwealth Secretary General

CMC - Antigua and Barbuda has described as a “monumental error” the decision by Jamaica to announce the nomination of its Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister, Kamina Johnson Smith, for the post of Commonwealth Secretary General.

Antigua Prime Minister Gaston Browne told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that “Jamaica was party to a recent Caribbean Community (CARICOM) consensus endorsing the re-election of Baroness (Patricia) Scotland” for the position, adding “I think Jamaica’s proposed candidature for Commonwealth Secretary General, is a monumental error, which could only serve to divide the Caribbean”.

Dominica’s Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit has not yet commented on the Jamaica position which was announced late on Friday night. Scotland is a Dominican-born national, whom Skerit had again backed for re-election.

At the end of their Inter-session summit held in Belize last month, CARICOM leaders issued their communique in which they “expressed their overwhelming support for the re-election of Baroness Patricia Scotland as Secretary-General of The Commonwealth”.

Scotland was elected



to the post at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta in 2015 and her re-election is scheduled to take place during the June 20-25 Commonwealth summit in Kigali, Rwanda.

Scotland is the second Secretary-General from the Caribbean and the first woman to hold the post.

In its statement announcing that Johnson-Smith would be seeking to replace Scotland, the Office of the Prime Minister in Jamaica described her as “eminently qualified for the post” and that she has “held several crucial leadership posts both regionally and internationally.”

“Her qualifications for the post of Secretary-General, including her high moral character, diplomatic and political acumen, proven competence, and commitment to the work of the Commonwealth make her an excellent candidate,” the statement continued.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness, in supporting his senior minister for the position, said “she will bring a wealth of experience to the position, and is committed to international public service, with special regard for sustainable development, gender and the interests of small states, which will contribute significantly to the work of the Organisation towards 2.5 billion citizens of the Commonwealth.”

Johnson Smith has served as President of the OACPS Council of Ministers, Chair of CARIFORUM and the CARICOM Council on Trade and Economic Development and has represented Jamaica at numerous bilateral, regional, hemispheric and international encounters. She was also the first Jamaican foreign minister to be invited to G7 and G20 ministerial meetings.

Jamaica is currently the African, Caribbean and Pacific Coordinator within the World Trade Organization,

a role headed by Johnson Smith, the statement noted.

But Browne, the first CARICOM leader to respond to the nomination, said that “as an integration movement, the reliability of our decisions should be preserved to keep our region united and strong.

“Our consensus decisions should never be broken without overwhelming cause; that will not undermine the unity of our integration movement, or violate the treaty provisions.”

He said it now appears that having failed to get the separate regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific to successfully field a candidate; “those who seek to divide and rule, are encouraging Jamaica to present a candidate in opposition to the current Secretary General, who is serving on a CARICOM rotation.

“The issue of Baroness Scotland’s dominant nationality is a now moot point. The reality is, she was born in Dominica, with Antiguan & Barbudan lineage. She is a Caribbeaner, she is a member of our CARICOM family deserving of the respect, solidarity, and protection against those who seek to vilify and emasculate her.

“I would have argued previously that, the manoeuvrings to replace Baroness Scotland risk diving the commonwealth; we now

cont’d on pg 17

Nevis' former Premier, Ambassador Vance Amory, has died

St Kitts and Nevis was plunged into mourning on Saturday over the news that former Premier of Nevis, H. E. Ambassador Vance Amory had died after a period of illness.

He was 72.

Ambassador Amory served as Nevis' second Premier from 1992 to 2006. He was again elected to the position from 2013 to 2017.

He was an accomplished cricketer having played on the Leeward and combined Leeward and Windward

Islands squads during the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

Among the first to issue a statement on the passing of Mr. Amory was St. Kitts and Nevis' Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris.

"I am very saddened by the passing of Ambassador Vance Amory, my reliable friend, mentor and advisor, illustrious founding member of Team Unity. My condolences are with his loving wife Vernita, his daughters, the rest of his family and wide circle of friends and



Former Premier of Nevis, His Excellency Ambassador Vance Amory

well-wishers.

"The people of St. Kitts and Nevis have lost our El-

der Statesman. May his soul find eternal peace," Harris

cont'd on pg 18

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risk dividing CARICOM," Browne said, adding "Baroness Scotland's performance as Secretary General is comparable to many of her predecessors, yet, she is being hounded out of office.

"Those who are hounding Baroness Scotland out of office have now skilfully engineered a plan to divide CARICOM and to stain the performance of the region.

"We must not fall prey to these Machiavellian tactics. Despite the pledges of support, there is some level of naivety for Jamaica to believe that the success of its candidature will be assured.

"To the contrary, it would only serve as a gateway for a non-CARICOM secretary general to succeed," Browne said, adding "Jamaica should not fall for this mirage, by exposing one of its finest daughters to this Machiavellian trap.

"Replacing Scotland would ultimately shorten CARICOM's second term and divide our region. We should continue to maintain the principle of rotation, which would see Africa as-

suming the office of secretary general in 2024 when the Caribbean term comes to an end, followed in turn by the Pacific," Browne added.

Late last year, Prime Minister Browne warned the 54-member Commonwealth that it risks being divided over the re-election of Scotland.

"Our Commonwealth family has, until now, held to the tradition of at least two terms for a secretary general and to the principle of rotation between regions," Prime Minister Browne wrote in a September 14, 2021 letter addressed to all Commonwealth heads of state and governments.

The Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister, who was also then serving as CARICOM secretary general, said it now appears that the separate regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific "have been or are being encouraged to present candidates in opposition to the current secretary general.

"This runs counter to the principle of rotation which would see Africa assuming the office of secretary general in 2024 when the Caribbean term would normally come to an end,

followed in turn by the Pacific," said Browne in the letter, a copy of which had been obtained by the CMC.

In his letter, Browne reiterated the 15-member CARICOM grouping's support for Scotland to be given another term in office.

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta is reported to have written regional leaders seeking their support for a new candidate being proposed by Kenya. Kenyatta had nominated his Cabinet Secretary for Defence Monica Juma, for the post.

Media reports in Britain said that United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Liz Truss, had met with Kenya's Foreign Minister last year to discuss Juma's bid.

Juma is offering herself as a consensus building candidate with Scotland also facing opposition for a second term, with Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is the current "chair-in-office" for the Commonwealth, indicating in 2020 that he hoped the heads of government can instead agree just to extend Scotland's contract temporarily until they meet.

Regional News



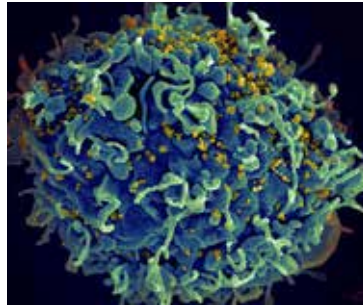
Guyana government gets funds to control, eliminate HIV, TB

CMC – Guyana’s Ministry of Health, through Global Fund has received US\$4.1 million to aid the country’s efforts to control and eliminate the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Tuberculosis (TB).

Earlier this week, Health Minister, Dr. Frank Anthony, and Executive Director of the National Coordination Coalition (NCC), Simone Sills signed an agreement which will see a partnership to implement activities and programmes to tackle the diseases.

“We believe that the partnership that we have here would help us to extend the kind of programmes that we need to reach people, especially those who have fallen out of the treatment programme,” said Anthony.

He also said that the partnership will also assist the government in getting more educational content out to the regions, especial-



ly on the importance of TB treatment to prevent drug resistance.

“Part of this relationship that we have would help us to do more TB education so that people can become more compliant and in addition to becoming more compliant, we would then be able to prevent multiple drug resistance TB,” he added.

The health minister said non-governmental bodies will help the ministry to reach its target of achieving 90 percent of the population knowing their HIV status, 90 percent who tested positive receiving treatment and 90 percent on treatment being virally suppressed.



Guyana's Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony

Meanwhile, Sills said the non-governmental organisations are pleased to be a partner in the fight against the diseases.

“This partnership will entail, working in six regions across Guyana to as-

sist in addressing the three what we call the three 90s goal for persons living with HIV, as well as increasing the number of persons that have access and treatment to TB treatment as well as services,” she said.

cont'd from pg 17

said in a Facebook post.

Deputy Prime Minister, Shawn Richards, said Mr. Amory will be remembered for his hard work and dedication in advancing the cause of Nevisians.

“I shall always remember him for the role he played, along with myself as Leader of the People’s Action Movement, PAM, and he as Leader of the Concerned Citizens Movement, CCM, jointly working with the Leader of the PLP, Dr. Timothy Harris, to

help fashion a government of national unity.

“Vance Amory was a committed citizen and leader, whose legacy of achievements should inspire future and present generations.

“At this moment of sorrow our prayers and thoughts must be with the wife and family of our late colleague and former Premier of Nevis,” Richards stated.

Tributes were also paid by Premier of Nevis and leader of the Concerned Citizens Movement, Mark Brantley,

leader of the Nevis Reformation Party, Dr. Janice Daniel-Hodge, former Prime Minister Dr. Denzil Douglas and present leader of the St. Kitts Nevis Labour Party, Dr. Terrance Drew as well as former Attorney General and Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs, Patrice Nisbett.

Regional leaders including Antigua and Barbuda’s Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Barbados’ Mia Mottley, were among the first to issue statements of condolence at Ambassador Amory’s passing.

Ukraine accuses Russia of civilian 'massacre'; Russia denies this

Reuters - Ukraine on Sunday accused Russian forces of carrying out a "massacre" in the town of Bucha, while Western nations reacted to images of dead bodies there with calls for new sanctions against Moscow.

Russia's defence ministry denied the Ukrainian allegations, saying footage and photographs showing bodies in Bucha were "yet another provocation" by the Ukrainian government.

The images from Bucha came after Ukraine said on Saturday its forces had reclaimed control of the whole Kyiv region and liberated towns from Russian troops.

They prompted outrage in Ukraine and abroad, adding to pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin by increasing the likelihood of further Western sanctions. Western nations have already sought to isolate Russia economically and punish it for the invasion, which began on Feb. 24.

"Bucha massacre was deliberate," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on Twitter.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken described the images as "a punch in the gut". German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Russia must pay for "war crimes" and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said his government would step up sanctions.



A local woman walks along an empty street, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in the town of Bucha, in Kyiv region, Ukraine April 1, 2022. REUTERS/Oleksandr Ratushniak

"Putin and his supporters will feel the consequences," said German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, adding that Western allies would agree further sanctions in the coming days.

Germany's defence minister Christine Lambrecht said the European Union must discuss banning the import of Russian gas - a departure from Berlin's prior resistance to the idea of an embargo on Russian energy imports.

In Russia's first public comment on the allegations, the defence ministry in Moscow described photos and videos from Bucha as "another staged performance by the Kyiv regime for the Western media".

Russia has previously denied targeting civilians

and has rejected allegations of war crimes in what it calls a "special military operation" aimed at demilitarising and "denazifying" Ukraine. Ukraine says it was invaded without provocation.

On Saturday, Reuters saw bodies in a mass grave and still lying on the streets, while on Sunday the mayor of Bucha, Anatoliy Fedoruk, showed reporters two corpses with white cloth tied around their arms, one of which appeared to have been shot in the mouth.

Oleksiy Arestovych, an aide to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said Ukrainian troops had found the bodies of women who had been raped and set alight as well as the bodies of local officials and chil-

dren.

In Bucha, 37 km (23 miles) northwest of Kyiv city centre, town mayor Fedoruk said 300 residents had been killed during a month-long occupation by the Russian army.

Reuters could not immediately verify the allegations by Arestovych and Fedoruk.

Ukraine's foreign minister called on the International Criminal Court to collect evidence of what he called Russian war crimes, while the foreign ministers of France and Britain said their countries would support any such probe.

However, legal experts say a prosecution of Putin or other Russian leaders would face high hurdles and could take years.

Pakistan in political turmoil as leader dissolves parliament

AP — Pakistan's prime minister threw the country into political limbo on Sunday, accusing the United States of attempting to oust him and cancelling a no-confidence vote he was poised to lose. He then ordered the National Assembly dissolved so new elections can be held.

The moves by Imran Khan appeared to trigger a constitutional crisis: Pakistan's Supreme Court must rule on their legality, but it adjourned until Monday and gave no indication when the matter would be settled. In Pakistan, the Muslim holy month of Ramadan has just begun.

The dramatic episode was the latest in an escalating dispute between Khan and parliament, after defectors within his own party and a minor coalition partner joined the opposition and attempted to oust him from power. It was unclear on Sunday where the powerful military — which has directly ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 75-year history — stood in the fray.

The former cricket star turned conservative Islamic leader sought to justify the measures by accusing the United States of trying to overthrow his government. His Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry accused the opposition of collusion with a foreign power when he successfully filed the motion to the deputy speaker of parliament to throw out the vote.

The opposition, which



Security personnel stand guard during a protest in Islamabad, Pakistan, Sunday, April 3, 2022. Pakistan's embattled Prime Minister Imran Khan said Sunday he will seek early elections after sidestepping a no-confidence challenge and alleging that a conspiracy to topple his government had failed. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

accuses Khan of mismanaging the economy, arrived in Parliament ready to vote Khan out of power, and say they have the simple majority of 172 votes in the 342-seat assembly to do so.

Khan, who was not in Parliament on Sunday, went on national television to announce he was submitting the dissolution request, which President Arif Alvi later executed.

"I ask people to prepare for the next elections. Thank God, a conspiracy to topple the government has failed," Khan said in his address. According to Pakistan's constitution, an interim government inclusive of the opposition will now see the country toward elections held within 90 days.

In the capital Islamabad, security forces braced for the worst, locking down much of the city as a defiant Khan called for supporters to stage demonstrations country-

wide. Giant metal containers blocked roads and entrances to the capital's diplomatic enclave, as well as Parliament and other sensitive government installations.

Khan has accused the opposition of being in cahoots with the United States to unseat him, saying America wants him gone over his foreign policy choices that often favour China and Russia. Khan has also been a strident opponent of America's war on terror and Pakistan's partnership in that war with Washington.

Khan has circulated a memo which he insists provides proof that Washington conspired with Pakistan's opposition to unseat him because America wants "me, personally, gone ... and everything would be forgiven." He offered no concrete evidence of US interference.

Political chaos also spread to Punjab — the country's largest province

— which is set to vote for a new chief minister. Khan's favoured candidate faced a tough challenge, and his opponents claimed they had enough votes to install their own ally. After a scuffle between lawmakers, the provincial assembly was adjourned until April 6 without any vote.

Pakistan's main opposition parties — a mosaic of ideologies from leftists to the radically religious — have been rallying for Khan's ouster almost since he was elected in 2018. Then, his win was mired in controversy and widespread accusations that the army helped his Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (Justice) Party to victory.

Asfandiyar Mir, a senior expert with the Washington-based U.S. Institute of Peace, said the military's involvement in the 2018 polls undermined Khan's legitimacy from the outset.

"The movement against Imran Khan's government is inseparable from his controversial rise to power in the 2018 election, which was manipulated by the army to push Khan over the line," said Mir.

"That really undermined the legitimacy of the electoral exercise and created the grounds for the current turmoil."

Pakistan's military has a history of overthrowing successive democratically elected governments and indirectly manipulating others from the side lines.

cont'd on pg 21

Taliban clamp down on drugs, announce ban on poppy harvest

AP – Afghanistan's ruling Taliban on Sunday announced a ban on harvesting poppies, even as farmers in some parts of the country began extracting the opium from the plant that is needed for making heroin.

The Taliban warned farmers that their crops will be burned and that they can be jailed if they proceed with the harvest. The harvest and planting seasons vary across Afghanistan. In the Taliban heartland of southern Kandahar the harvesting has begun but in the east of the country some farmers are just beginning to plant their crop.

In desperately poor Afghanistan the ban seems certain to further impoverish its poorest citizens at a time when the country is in an economic free fall.

The decree was announced by Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid at a news conference in the capital of Kabul. The order also outlawed the manufacturing of narcotics and the transportation, trade, export and import of heroin, hashish and alcohol.



Afghan farmers harvest poppy in Nad Ali district, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Friday, April 1, 2022. Afghanistan's ruling Taliban have announced a ban on poppy production, even as farmers across many parts of the country began harvesting the bright red flower that produces the lucrative opium which is used to make heroin. (AP Photo/Abdul Khaliq)

The ban is reminiscent of the previous Taliban rule in the late 1990s when the movement espousing a harsh interpretation of Islam outlawed poppy production. At that time, the ban was implemented countrywide within two years, and according to the U.N. largely helped eradicate poppy production.

However, after the ouster of the Taliban in 2001, farmers in many parts of the country returned to poppy production. Poppies are the main source of income for millions of small farmers and day la-

borers who can earn upwards of \$300 a month harvesting them and extracting the opium.

Today, Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium, despite billions of dollars spent by the international community during its 20 years in Afghanistan to eradicate the drug. In 2021, before the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan produced more than 6,000 tons of opium, which the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime said could potentially yield 320 tons of pure heroin.

Afghanistan produces more opium than all opium-producing countries combined and last year was the sixth straight year of record opium harvests.

During the years-long Taliban insurgency, the movement reportedly made millions of dollars taxing farmers and middle men to move their drugs outside Afghanistan. Senior officials of the U.S.-backed government also reportedly made millions on the flourishing drug trade.

Washington spent more than \$8 billion trying to eradicate poppy production in Afghanistan during its nearly 20-year war, which ended with the Taliban takeover of the country in August.

Nearly 80% of heroin produced from Afghan opium reaches Europe through Central Asia and Pakistan.

According to a U.N. report in 2021, income from opiates in Afghanistan was between \$1.8 billion and \$2.7 billion, more than 7% of the country's GDP. The same report said "illicit drug supply chains outside Afghanistan" make much more.

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The opposition also blames Khan for high inflation that's hitting households. But his government is also credited with maintaining a foreign reserve account of \$18 billion, bringing in a record \$29 billion last year from overseas Pakistanis.

Khan's anti-corruption reputation is credited with encouraging expatriate Pakistanis to send money home. His government has also received international

praise for its handling of the COVID-19 crisis and implementing so-called "smart lockdowns" rather than country-wide shutdowns. As a result, several of Pakistan's key industries, such as construction, have survived.

Khan's leadership style has often been criticized as confrontational.

"Khan's biggest failing has been his insistence on remaining a partisan leader to the bitter end," said Michael Kugel-

man, deputy director of the Asia Program at the Washington-based Wilson Center.

"He hasn't been willing to extend a hand across the aisle to his rivals," said Kugelman.

"He's remained stubborn and unwilling to make important compromises. As a result, he's burned too many bridges at a moment when he badly needs all the help he can get."

Sports News



Guyana to host CPL finals for three years

The Hero Caribbean Premier League (CPL) finals will be hosted by Guyana for the next three years, starting in 2022. This is the first time the Hero CPL final will be held in Guyana and this long-term staging agreement will see the culmination of the tournament also taking place in Guyana in 2023 and 2024.

This season, Guyana will host seven group games, three knockout matches and the Hero CPL final which will take place on Friday, September 30 at The Guyana National Stadium in Providence.

The Hero CPL final will be the climax of festivities surrounding these games taking place in Guyana. The Government of Guyana in collaboration with the local private sector will also stage two weeks of events which will form a Cricket Carnival. This Carnival will celebrate the best that Guyana was to offer, showcasing the music, food and culture of



this vibrant and fascinating country.

Over the previous nine seasons of Hero CPL there has been massive support for the tournament from Guyanese fans and the tournament is expecting significant excitement at the prospect of these hugely important matches taking place in the country.

Guyana's economy is growing rapidly, and the country has a fantastic reputation as a destination for tourists looking for unspoiled nature. The Hero CPL finals will further showcase this wonderful

country to a massive global audience – the total viewership for Hero CPL passed 500million in both 2020 and 2021.

Pete Russell, Hero CPL's CEO, said:

"We are blessed with amazing fans across the Caribbean, and this is very clear whenever we visit Guyana where the atmosphere at Providence is electric. The idea of having the Hero CPL final in front of this wonderful crowd of passionate and knowledgeable cricket fans is a mouth watering prospect. We are very grateful to have such

a positive relationship with the government and cricket authorities in Guyana and we thank them for helping us come to this hugely exciting agreement."

His Excellency Dr Mohammad Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, said:

"Cricket is much more than a game for us in Guyana, it is a passion, part of our culture and a unifying force. As we celebrate "One Guyana" the hosting of the CPL final will be an energizing force. We are building a product that will be spectator focused, integrated with our Regional partners for a global market. Cricket carnival is a fusion of entertainment and celebration that will be mind blowing and unbelievably different from any other global cricketing event. We welcome all to the greatest celebration of music, pageantry, Caribbean vibes with a South American touch and of course Cricket played loudest."

Woods heads to Augusta but still undecided on competing at Masters



Tiger Woods

Reuters - Tiger Woods will make a "game-time decision" on competing at next week's Masters, the five-times champion said on Sunday as he continues his recovery from the serious leg injuries he suffered in a car crash in February 2021.

Woods said six weeks ago that he had a "long way to go" in his recovery but speculation mounted with each passing day that his return could come at the April 7-10 Masters as he re-

frained from removing his name from the field of competitors.

"I will be heading up to Augusta today to continue my preparation and practice. It will be a game-time decision on whether I compete," Woods said on Twitter.

Woods' single-car crash resulted in a three-week hospital stay in Los Angeles where he faced the possibility of having his right leg amputated.

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CWI donates bowling machines

Cricketers in host countries for the recent ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2022 are set to benefit from a donation of 15 bowling machines which were purchased by Cricket West Indies (CWI) for the sixteen participating squads to use in their World Cup practice sessions.

CWI has donated four bowling machines each to Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago, with three donated to Antigua and Barbuda. The bowling machines have been distributed among territorial cricket boards and cricket clubs, in accordance with CWI's pre-tournament objective of enhancing cricketing infrastructure in the host nations for the ICC U19 showpiece. The ICC U19 World Cup was held from January 14 to February 5, 2022, and concluded with India beating England in the final at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

"We talked about the valuable legacy for the West Indies in hosting the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup, and this is a tangible example of how our regional cricket will be impacted positively," noted CWI President Ricky Skerritt, presenting the four bowling machines in St. Kitts to President of the St. Kitts Cricket Association, Dennis Phillip.

"Our young cricketers, as well as club players and those in high-perfor-



President of the St. Kitts Cricket Association, Dennis Phillip (left) with CWI President Ricky Skerritt

mance development programmes, will have the opportunity to fine-tune their batting skills with these high-calibre machines. Cricket West Indies has a vested interest in helping to improve the standard of cricket in all our member territories, and thereby the standard of West Indies cricket. This donation further underlines CWI's commitment to one of our most important stakeholders – our players."

"We want to ensure our cricket boards and clubs are in a better position to respond to players' needs by having the appropriate facilities and

equipment to propel cricket development, especially among youth. It is also a gesture of appreciation for the priceless support which CWI received from the host governments, as well as from local cricket authorities and clubs. It's been a wonderful partnership," elaborated Skerritt.

Additionally, the President Skerritt stressed the importance for local cricket clubs "to maintain certain minimum standards and a state of readiness to host matches, in case opportunities arise to be involved in more global tournaments".

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He was then confined to a hospital-type bed for three months at his home in South Florida.

The 46-year-old Woods has not played on the PGA Tour since the November 2020 Masters. His only event since the accident came last December when he finished runner-up along-

side his son in a 36-hole exhibition played on a flat course with no rough.

Playing at Augusta National, however, represents one of the more taxing walks on the PGA Tour given its undulating terrain that all but assures golfers will hit from any number of uneven lies during the week.

But Woods is no strang-

er to playing through pain, something he famously proved at the 2008 U.S. Open where he prevailed in a thrilling playoff at Torrey Pines while competing on what was essentially a broken leg.

Woods capped one of the most remarkable comebacks in professional sport when, at the age of 43, he

won the Masters in 2019 after enduring years of surgery and personal problems that convinced many the best golfer of his generation was done.

Former world number one Rory McIlroy had said it would be "phenomenal" for the sport to have Woods return to competition at Augusta.

Sports News



Pares, OCS win in latest matches in school volleyball competition

Pares Secondary prevailed 2-1 over Princess Margaret School in the latest round of the Boys' Division matches in the Advanced Level Schools Volleyball Championships.

Playing at the indoor facility at the YMCA Sports Complex on Friday, Pares recovered after losing the opening set 22-25 to win the other two sets to take the match 25-23, 15-11.

Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) also came from behind to beat Island Academy in their encounter. They lost the first set 18-25, but took the second 25-23 to level the match at 1-1 before prevailing 15-12 in the third and decisive set.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy brushed aside the boys from All Saints Secondary in straight sets, winning 25-11, 25-21.

There were mixed fortunes for Jennings Secondary and Princess Margaret School in the Boys' Division matches played the previous day.

Jennings prevailed 23-25, 25-16,



The Ottos Comprehensive School in yellow shirts, compete against Island Academy in the Inter-schools' volleyball championships at the indoor facility at the YMCA Sports Complex on Friday, 1st April, 2022. (Photo: Elwin Francis)

15-13 against Clare Hall Secondary, but later lost to Princess Margaret School 26-24, 18-25, 5-15 in a re-scheduled game.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy had earlier defeated Princess Margaret School 27-25, 25-27, 15-12.

In other matches, Antigua Girls'

High School recorded straight sets win over All Saints Secondary in the Girls' Division, winning 28-26, 25-14.

Ottos Comprehensive School also beat All Saints Secondary 25-17, 25-15 and Sir Novelle Richards Academy defeated Jennings Secondary 25-21, 25-16 in the Boys' Division.

Australia Outclass England in ICC Womens World Cup Final

Australia's women's cricket team underlined their status by outclassing England to win the Women's World Cup.

The Australians shattered records in Christchurch on their way to adding the 50-over title to the T20 World Cup and Ashes crowns they already hold.

Alyssa Healy crashed an astonishing 170 from 138 balls, the highest score in either a women's or men's



World Cup final. Her partnership of 160 with Rachael Haynes and Australia's total of 356-5 are also women's

final bests, the latter a record for any team against England.

England, who were huge underdogs to defend the title

they won in 2017, will rue their decision to field first in perfect batting conditions. They also dropped Healy and Haynes in the same over.

Faced with such a mammoth chase, England lost wickets too regularly to ever be in contention, but Nat Sciver batted with authority for a century of her own.

Sciver was 148 not out when England were finally bowled out for 285, spinners

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Police advance to final of Dave Joseph contest

Derek Mourillon cracked an unbeaten century to propel Police into the finals of the Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Dave Joseph Limited Overs Championship over the weekend.

Mourillon hammered 118 not out as Police romped to an emphatic 82-run victory over D&R Construction Sea View Farm in their semi-final encounter at the Police Recreation Grounds on Saturday.

Mourillon's knock was supported by West Indies women's player Shawnisha Hector's 21, which lifted Police to 199 for 8 off their allotted 35 overs.

Egbert Phillip grabbed 3 for 26, Alfred Jarvis claimed 2 for 35 and Emroy Lee captured 2 for 44.

Lashorn Barnarde then snapped up 4 for 31 and left-arm spinner James Cornelius picked up 2 for 23 as Sea View Farm tumbled to 117 all out.

Left-hander Rolston "Triss" Phillip top scored



with 54 and Kerry Burton contributed 20 for Sea View Farm.

Meanwhile, Pigotts Crushers made an impressive start to the defence of their Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) State Insurance Two-Day Championship over the weekend.

The Pigotts men trounced Caribbean Union Bank Bethesda Golden Eagles by an innings and 76 runs at Bethesda on Saturday's opening day.

After winning the toss and opting to bat, Pigotts made 174 all out in 41.5 overs with Captain Elroy Francis Jr getting 57, Gershum Phillip 28 and wicketkeeper/bats-

man Demari Benta 26.

Right-arm medium pacer Jawakie Joseph captured 4 for 48, fast bowler Timmo Thomas claimed 2 for 16, right-arm fast bowler Kelvin Pitman had 2 for 34 and left arm medium pacer Jamaul Fernandez picked up 2 for 42.

In reply, Bethesda were bundled out for 41 in 12.4 overs in their first innings,

with right-arm medium pacer Jared Jno Baptiste snapping up 5 for 16 and right-arm off-spinner Essan Warner grabbing 3 for 16. Only Thomas with 18 got into double figures for Bethesda.

With a deficit of 133 runs, Bethesda were asked to bat again, but they performed only marginally better, crashing to 57 all out in 19.4 overs in their second innings.

Fernandez, who top scored with 31 and Emanuel Lawrence with 13, were the only batsmen to reach double figures for Bethesda. Right-arm medium pacer Kadeem Henry snatched 4 wickets for 7 runs, while Jared Jno Baptiste picked up 2 for 19.

Weekend Puzzle Solution

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

By Elizabeth C. Gorski



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Alana King and Jess Jonassen taking three wickets apiece in Australia's 71-run win.

It was a disappointing end to an England turnaround that saw them reach the final despite losing their first three games of the tournament.

Meanwhile, awesome Australia were crowned world champions for the sev-

enth time with a perfect record of nine wins from nine matches.

Women's World Cup final scorecard, Christchurch Australia 356-5 (50 overs): Healy 170, Haynes 68, Shrubsole 3-46

England 285 (43.4 overs): Sciver 148*, Jonassen 3-57, King 3-64

Australia won by 71 runs

ABNA president satisfied with Village League

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association (ABNA), Karen Joseph, has said it is long past due for a community/village league to be staged.

Following an official opening ceremony and knockout contest on Sunday 27th March, the ABNA Community and Village league competitions got underway with three matches at the YMCA Sports Complex on Thursday evening.

Joseph, a legendary former national captain and goal shooter, expressed satisfaction that the YMCA is once again buzzing with netball action.

"It's long overdue. We had planned the Village League before COVID-19 set in and then we were out for two years, but right now the players are interested, and I am really pleased with the outcome.

"The crowd, the camaraderie, and I give God thanks for that, because netball is back. Netball is back in the YMCA and netball is back in Antigua," Joseph said.

The ABNA president also expressed delight at the return of the Inter-Schools' Netball League, which commenced with a secondary school competition on 14th March at the YMCA.

"Everything is a complete package from the schools' league to the association's village league and we at the national association are looking to stage the association league later down in the year," she said.

"However, I decided to stage the Village League now where we are not only going to be playing at YMCA, but we will also go into other communities and play. In that way, we will get the community spirit."

Although 24 teams are already registered to compete in female and mixed division competitions, Joseph said the ABNA will facilitate the addition of several more teams that have expressed their desire to participate in the already launched leagues.

"For the females, we have 14 female teams and I think we have 10 mixed teams and that's a great number to start after what we would have experienced during the break due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But we are also looking forward to adding some more teams."

Joseph is also heartened that a number of former players have been lending their support to the ABNA's programmes by volunteering skills as athletes and officials.

"When you see the old time players coming back and wanting to play, it is a joy to me. Even though some of them are playing, there are also others who are officiating, scoring and helping to organise the games. The national players are giving back to netball," Joseph said.

Meanwhile, in the opening round of matches in the mixed division, Draz Eastsiders beat John Hughes Flyers 25-6, and Gray's Green Tigers trounced All Saints All Stars 26-10



President of the Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association Karen Joseph. (Photo: Elwin Francis)

with Randy Frederick scoring 25 of his 29 attempts.

Gray's Green Tigers also prevailed 21-19 against Ovals Flyballers Red Rockets in the female division. Tyea Ladoo sank 11 of her 16 shots for the victors while Carlena Knight converted 11 of her 19 tries for Ovals.

Matches are played on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday evenings at the YMCA Sports Complex.