

A&B: DIVISION AMONG CARICOM DANGEROUS

Story on Page 2



A stunning panoramic view of St..John's at dusk. [Photo: Pointe Xpress]

A&B issues warning to CARICOM



Chairman of COFCOR, E. P. Chet Greene, delivering the opening address at 25th Meeting of COFCOR in Georgetown, Guyana

Antigua and Barbuda has issued a stern warning to its partners in CARICOM about the dangers of individualism in an increasingly hostile international environment.

The warning came from Foreign Affairs Minister E. P. Chet Greene, as he addressed Wednesday's opening of the 25th meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations, which is taking place in Georgetown, Guyana.

Greene reminded his colleagues that their meeting is taking place under the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic, whose impact on regional economies contin-

ues. "This is a situation made worse by the global effects of the Russian war on Ukraine that have not spared our countries, as fertilisers, food and oil supplies are restricted and costs spiral. And, of course, continuing to loom large over our countries is Climate Change and its attendant Global Warming.

"Colleagues, we enter the hurricane season next month with great trepidation. We all know how devastating a major storm would be to our now weakened economic circumstances," he noted.

To meet these challeng-

es successfully, Minister Greene said CARICOM must deepen its collaboration in the international community and strengthen its functional cooperation regionally.

"The forces aligned against us are of such magnitude that none of us can overcome them on our own. This is a time for more - not less - integration; a time for united - not divided - action," the Antigua and Barbuda Foreign Minister declared.

He expressed the view that as a group, the Council of Foreign Ministers has a special responsibility as guardians of the integration

movement and champions of the region to the rest of the world.

For example, he said where any element of the sacred agreement under the Revised CARICOM Treaty is breached by any member state, it falls upon them all to address it immediately and ensure that it is remedied.

"Our failure to do so would be a failure both in our obligations to uphold the Treaty, and in our duty to maintain the cohesion of our economic grouping," he emphasised.

Minister Greene, who assumed chairmanship of COFCOR at its current meeting, has identified fostering of closer relations with African countries, through the African Union or through direct contacts, as one of his goals.

"The African continent offers many prospects, ranging from Trade and Investment to Information sharing in numerous crucial areas, including Climate Change," he said.

Thu 19 Day 85° Partly cloudy. High around 85F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.		Thu 19 Night 77° A few clouds from time to time. Low 77F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.	
4% E 12 mph	8% E 11 mph	Humidity 68%	UV Index Extreme
Sunrise 5:34 am	Sunset 6:33 pm	Humidity 77%	UV Index 0 of 10
Moonrise 10:37 pm		Moonset 8:50 am	
Waning Gibbous			

PM Browne participates in agriculture forum in Guyana

Prime Minister Gaston Browne arrived in Guyana yesterday from London to participate in the inaugural Agri-Investment Forum and Expo.

The 19th – 21st May event is being hosted by Guyana’s President Irfaan Ali, who serves as head of government with responsibility for agriculture in CARICOM’s Quasi Cabinet and brings together leaders from Barbados, Belize, The Bahamas, Dominica, Montserrat and Trinidad and Tobago.

According to the CARICOM Secretariat, the Agri-Food Investment Forum and Expo is being held under the theme: “Investing in Vision 25 by 2025.” Its aim is to achieve the vision of reducing regional food imports by



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

25 percent by 2025, by fostering accelerated and targeted investment in agriculture and food production and its business ecosystem within CARICOM member states.

Guyana’s Minister of Agriculture,

Zulfikar Mustapha, said the event is “an opportunity for potential investors to contribute to food and nutrition security, with a view to identifying specific areas in which investment is needed to overcome existing structural and operational challenges”.

Prime Minister Browne will join his regional counterparts in discussions with partners and investors concerning opportunities to reduce high food import bills and stimulate investments in the agricultural sector within the region.

New and emerging opportunities in CARICOM agriculture, as well as focusing on youths and gender in the sector, will also form part of the agenda at the three-day event.

MILKSHAKE

...IT'S BACK

LARGE	\$11^{.50}
SMALL	\$ 9^{.99}

Order Pickup + Delivery on **AllMart**

allmartplace.com

FOR DELIVERY **QUICK SERVE**

736-7845 / 562-9444
or DOWNLOAD THE APP...
Apple Store / Google PlayStore

@kfcanu

Vanilla

Vitz driver charged for mowing down cyclists

A Hatton resident appeared in Court yesterday to answer a charge of dangerous driving.

39-year-old Kennyatta Benjamin of Union Road, Hatton, was arrested and charged yesterday for allegedly injuring four cyclists, one of them critically. Kennyatta Benjamin was the driver of the red Toyota Vitz

that struck Andre Simon in the vicinity of Dee's Service Station on Sunday 8th May. In an attempt to flee the scene, he struck three other cyclists.

In a failed effort to continue his ill conceived escape, he crashed his car near the Furniture Gallery on the Sir George Walter Highway.

Two of the cyclists,

Sean Weathered and Tiziano Rosignoli, were treated and released from hospital that Sunday. Ghery Coates, however, was observed overnight and later released. Andre Simon sustained severe injuries and remains in critical condition at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Benjamin's bail was set at \$ 20,000, with a cash component of \$ 2,000 and

his driver's license suspended. As part of his bail conditions, he must surrender his travel documents and report to the Grays Farm Police Station 3 days a week.

A GoFundMe account has been established in Andre Simon's name, where financial donations can be made that will assist in his recovery. To date, donations have exceeded US \$ 18,000.

High Court rules against Barbuda Council for breach of contract

The High Court in St. John's has ruled against the Barbuda Council for breach of contract in favour of Barbudan Yannick Beazer who brought a case against the island's local government.

Beazer, a truck operator, signed a contract in 2017 with the ABLP-controlled Council to remove materials and other debris across the island following the passage of Hurricane Irma.

The court heard that when the Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) assumed control of the Council in 2018, the new Council discontinued payments to Beazer. In December, 2018, Beazer engaged the services of an attorney who wrote to the Council on his behalf, reminding them that his client was owed money by the

Council and that he wished to make some arrangements for payments.

According to Beazer, the new Council declined all offers to settle the matter amicably and faced with no other choice, the matter reached the High Court. Even attempts at mediation proved futile, he added.

The ruling by the High Court is seen as a severe setback for the usually financially-strapped Council. Beazer was awarded damages amounting to almost \$400,000 with cost to be added.

The case was heard before Master Charon Gardner-Hippolyte, with Wendel Robinson appearing for Beazer. Senior attorney, Justin Simon, QC, appeared for the Barbuda Council.



STATE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

GET GYM FIT WITH STATE INSURANCE

Life | Medical

OUR POLICY HOLDERS RECEIVE PREFERRED GYM RATES

Buff up Gym
Stay Fit Gym
National Fitness Centre
Iron Basics Gym
Keep Fit Gym
Twist Fitness Gym

Organizers to launch Carnival 2022 tonight

‘Reigniting the Spirit’ is the theme for the launch of Antigua’s Carnival 2022, taking place tonight at the Interpretation Centre at Dow’s Hill.

The event is being organized by the newly created Ministry of Creative Industries and Innovation, under whose aegis Carnival falls. The event will see the officials outline their plans for the festival, which is being re-energised after a two-year hiatus caused by

the coronavirus pandemic.

Carnival 2022, will take place at the Antigua Recreation Grounds, which will be significantly improved prior to the July/August events. Reports are that major upgrades of the ARG will begin shortly. Sponsorship for the planned events have already been secured with the exception of two.

This week, the Minister respon-

sible for the Creative Industries, Michael Browne, informed the Cabinet that eighty-seven (87) fetes have been approved since the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

The information reaching the minister confirms that promoters are reporting brisk sale of tickets and are all seemingly profitable enterprises, confirming the speculation of a pent-up demand for entertainment.

More drug seizures at ports of entry

The police have seized approximately half a million dollars in Cannabis in less than 48 hours at the country’s two main ports of entry.

Twenty-nine (29) pounds of cannabis were discovered in a cardboard box on Tuesday at the cargo shed at V.C Bird International Airport during a search conducted by the Police and Customs departments.

The illicit substance, which was seized and transported to police headquarters, has an estimated value of \$ 174,000.

On Monday, 54.4 pounds of cured Cannabis were seized during an operation at Deep Water Harbour.

The Cannabis, valued



at \$320,400.00, was concealed among food items

inside three barrels.

No arrests have been

made in either drug bust.

Investigations are ongoing

ABTA launches “Love Lane” this June

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) in partnership with the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority has launched a ‘Love Lane’ fast track service for couples travelling to the destination during Antigua and Barbuda’s Romance Month in June.

Couples entering the ‘Love Lane’ on arrival at the award-winning V. C. Bird International Airport from 1st – 30th June, will be fast-tracked through immigration via a special couples-only lane for the month of June celebrations.

The ‘Love Lane’ experience will be open to couples travelling to Antigua and Barbuda to get married, to celebrate their honeymoon or to enjoy a romantic escape. Couples are encouraged to pre-register prior to travel via the registration link.

Couples who pre-register for the complimentary service will receive a confirmation email containing a digital E-Card, which they must present upon arrival, in order to receive the fast-track service.

“We want all couples visiting Antigua and Barbuda to feel the love starting from the moment they arrive in the country.

“Romance month has been a fixture on the marketing calendar for over 10 years and now that we are moving beyond the pandemic and couples can now begin to plan their special occasions again, we want them to think of enchanting Antigua and Barbuda”, says Shermain Jeremy, Special Projects and Events Marketing Manager within the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

Chief Executive Officer of the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority Euletta Francis says, “We are once again delighted to be partnering with the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority in yet another initia-



During Antigua and Barbuda’s Romance Month in June, couples arriving in Antigua for a romantic getaway will be whisked through the ‘Love Lane’. (Photo Courtesy: The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority)

tive that promises to enrich the experience of visitors arriving at the V.C Bird International Airport.”

Romance Month is celebrated for the entire month of June each year and seeks to position Antigua and Barbuda as the premiere romance

destination in the world.

This year’s celebration will see the return of special promotions such as the celebrity destination wedding and a global romance webinar for all trade partners across the major source markets.

Active COVID-19 cases continue to climb

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed sixty (60) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Saturday 14th May, 2022 at 6pm.

Forty-seven (47) cases were recorded on May 13th and thirteen (13) on May 14th.

Ninety-nine (99) samples were processed.

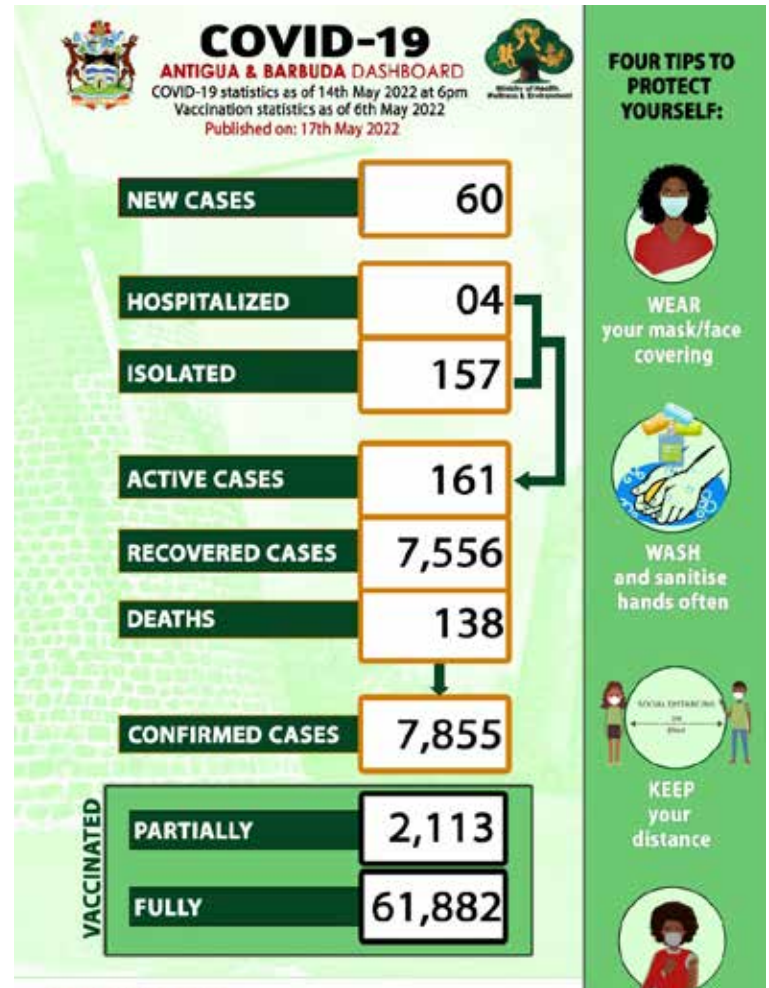
Twenty-one (21) recov-

ered cases were recorded.

One (1) COVID-19 related death was recorded on May 14th.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is seven thousand eight hundred and fifty-five (7,855); which is inclusive of one hundred and sixty-one (161) active cases.

There are four (4) hospitalised cases; one (1) moderate and three (3) mild.



STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

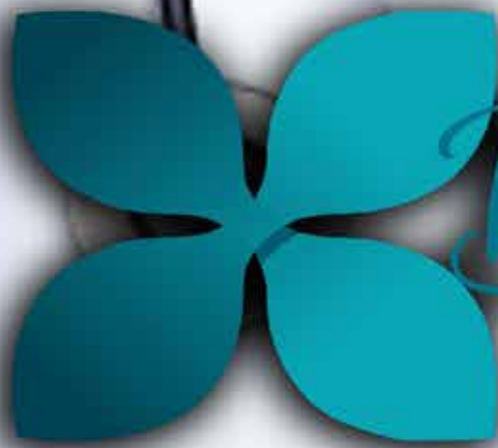
STATE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
 Live in a better State of mind

www.sicantigua.com
 info@sicantigua.com
 1 (268) 481-7800\04

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter icons



**LET'S TALK
HEALTH**
4:00pm - 6:00pm
EVERY MONDAY



BLUE Haven
Medical Center

DR. HANYBAL YAZIGI
CONSULTANT ONCOLOGIST

DR. ALBERT ROLLE.
GENERAL PRACTITIONER WITH A SPECIAL INTEREST IN MENTAL HEALTH.

DR. DAMIAN GORDON
AESTHETIC MEDICAL PRACTITIONER AND FAMILY
PHYSICIAN WITH POST-GRADUATE TRAINING IN GENERAL AND SURGICAL
DERMATOLOGY.

SYDNEY RETEMYER
MENTAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGISTS, CERTIFIED ADDICTION SPECIALIST AND THEOLOGIAN
AREAS OF THERAPY INCLUDE PSYCHOTHERAPY, PSYCHOEDUCATION,
LOGOTHERAPY, RELATIONSHIP COUNSELING, SPIRITUAL COUNSELING,
ADDICTION COUNSELING, AND MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY.

The inevitability of the office romance

By Bryan Lufkin

Work is a prime breeding ground for relationships to blossom – and there are good reasons we often fall for our colleagues, whether in person or virtually.

It is decidedly less sexy to send a colleague a winking emoji over messages than to exchange a coy look at the coffee machine. Yet even as the passing interactions that once kindled office romances became impossible during lockdown, colleagues have still found each other – even without conference tables or desks for sparks to fly over.

February 2022 data from the US's Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) suggests workplace romance may have actually increased as employees hunkered down at home.

A third of the 550 Americans surveyed responded that they began or sustained a relationship with a colleague during the pandemic – a 6% rise since the pre-pandemic days of 2019.

Even in a global pandemic, workers have found a way to keep dating colleagues – a fact that underscores the inevitability of office romance. The workplace is a breeding ground for love and lust, even though many companies frown on colleagues dating, and view it as an HR nightmare. Experts say there are specific reasons why workers just can't stop hooking up with their colleagues – even while siloed during a global health crisis.

A tale as old as time

Despite being considered somewhat taboo, 75% of respondents to the SHRM survey said they were fine with colleagues dating each other. (After all, half said they'd fancied a colleague at some point in time.) And as much as fraternisation is a headache for many companies, romance among colleagues has existed for decades – if



not centuries.

“Even going back to the Industrial Era, there was still some discussion about people becoming attracted to each other in the workplace,” says Amy Nicole Baker, professor at the University of New Haven, US, who studies workplace romance and organisational psychology. As far back as the 1800s, there's been pearl-clutching around romantic interactions in the earliest days of white-collar work, with women and men in offices engaging in ‘behaviours that had no name’, according to critics at the time.

But many lovers meet at work, and it doesn't necessarily end in scandal (conversely, it could lead to a fairy-tale ending, like the Obamas, who met at a Chicago law office while in their 20s).

Data from 2017 shows that as many as one in 10 heterosexual couples in the US say that they met at work. Considering some data shows people in the US between the ages of 20 and 50 spend nearly four times as much time with colleagues than they do with friends, this seems all but bound to happen.

“It's not surprising that so many people are interested in people at work”, as work has been “taking up more and more and more of our time”

for years, says Vanessa Bohns, associate professor of organisational behaviour at Cornell University US, who studies the dynamics of workplace romance.

While the most common methods of meeting mates fluctuate – more people get together online now, for example, and fewer people meet through family friends – those finding love at work “is a constant” statistically, says Baker.

That constant has lasted into the pandemic, a time in which hooking up with colleagues may actually feel less risky, since you're out of the watchful eye of your boss or teammates. (Some colleagues are even secretly working from each other's homes as remote work stretches on.)

“As long as people are interacting together in a shared work environment, you see the basic mechanics of human attraction happening,” says Baker – whether that environment is physical or virtual. And the psychology behind those mechanics keeps inevitably nudging colleagues into something more, even during a pandemic.

‘Intimacy and familiarity’

The workplace is a prime place for two key drivers for attraction to develop, says Amie Gordon, assistant

cont'd on pg 10

Relationships



cont'd from pg 9

professor of psychology at the University of Michigan, US, who studies the psychology of relationships. Spending so much time with someone in an environment like the workplace “very likely could lay the ground for romance, because of all the factors we know contribute to romance: intimacy and familiarity”, she says.

First, the more a person sees something (or someone), the more they are disposed to like it. This favouring of familiarity is a psychological bias called the mere-exposure effect. “Just seeing someone repeatedly” can lead to attraction, says Gordon.

Similarly, research on workplace romance has shown that being in the same proximity as someone for a long time can help spur a preference for that person; the more often we see someone physically close, and the more interactions we have with them, the faster interpersonal attraction builds. (That bias could even apply to bosses favouring employees who put in more face time with them.)

But this bias is by no means limited to physical proximity. “It’s also an emotional proximity and an intellectual proximity,” says Baker.

Whether on email, Zoom or Slack, “you’re still interacting with each other”, she says. This consistent exposure and interaction still builds preference, regardless of physical location – which may explain why office romance has survived in the remote-work era.

Another factor that transcends a physical office is people’s preference for those similar to them – which could potentially extend to work, considering colleagues picked the same career and company.

“If you’re both lawyers, or both trained the same way, or both think of the world in the same way, that similarity will also foster a liking and understanding,” says Baker.

This chemistry can be magnified

when people tackle a problem together. Research has long shown stressful situations can build social bonds. But the same phenomenon “absolutely” applies to the workplace, says Baker: “Think about all the common workplace stressors. You have crises that come up: it could be a toxic boss, it could be the logistics of the job, long hours, intense work.” Weathering a gruesome all-nighter or a fallout with a client, “getting through something hard together leads to a sense of ‘we-ness’”, explains Gordon.

It’s inevitable – now what?

Although office romance is practically inevitable – and widely accepted – it’s still complicated.

First, colleagues getting together can increase the risk of sexual harassment claims and reports of hostile work environments, as well as create conflicts of interest.

More commonly, an office romance can also make the rest of the team uncomfortable, and affect performance. Observers of the romance can feel unnerved, because “you go from pretty clear workplace norms about what’s acceptable behaviour. Once someone on the team has a dual relationship – so that they’re not just a co-worker – that changes the norm in a way that’s awkward”, says Bohns. “You don’t know what’s appropriate anymore.”

Given office romance isn’t going away, however, some experts say smart companies will allow employees to date, while making sure professional lines aren’t being crossed. “Managing it, as opposed to pretending it doesn’t exist – or shouldn’t exist – is the better approach,” says Johnny C Taylor Jr, CEO of SHRM. He believes mandatory disclosure – at least to HR and a worker’s direct manager – is key (and many companies have so-called ‘love contracts’ that require workers to do exactly that).

If you’re entering an office ro-

mance yourself, experts urge you to think about your motives, and weigh the pros and cons.

Crucially, if you’re involved with a boss or subordinate, they urge immediately disclosing the relationship to HR, and asking for a supervisor re-assignment.

But if you’re dating a peer, a situation Baker says most people view as less risky or problematic than dating someone at a different power level, it’s up to you to tell anyone beyond HR. Just know the rest of your team “are going to figure it out”, says Taylor.

Baker feels sooner rather than later should be the approach; the longer someone waits to disclose a relationship, the more others will start “to feel like something was being hidden from them” and will “react negatively”.

They may mentally review their past interactions with you and your colleague, and re-examine any comments each person made, or suddenly be suspicious about why the two of you went on a business trip, or if you are sharing resources or information the rest of the team doesn’t have.

“The more people have to reassess the past, the more problematic” it could be, says Gordon.

All of these risks and complications of office romance exist, whether people are sharing a desk or exchanging Slack messages from different post codes.

Despite these rules and potentially precarious situations, though, office romances will still happen – and with all the psychological factors involved, it’s hard to blame colleagues for falling for each other.

Still, it’s important for workers to be aware of the implications, no matter how relaxed their team may be, or how trivial ripple effects may seem. After all, not every office romance ends in forever – and there’s no fun in spotting your ex’s face on the grid during a Zoom call every day.



Palau's world-first 'good traveller' incentive

By **Lindsey Galloway**

In a world-first initiative, visitors to Palau will be offered exclusive experiences based on how they treat the environment and culture, not by how much they spend.

Despite being home to fewer than 20,000 residents, the Republic of Palau is making an outsized impact to preserve the planet. Not only did the country – made up of 300-plus islands in the South Pacific – adopt the world's first anti-nuclear constitution in 1979, but it also implemented the Palau Pledge in December 2017, which requires international visitors to sign a pledge

stamp in their passports that promises the children of Palau that they will “tread lightly” and “preserve and protect” the islands.

Now, as the archipelago opens up to tourism again after two long years of lockdown, a new programme called Ol'au Palau is offering a world-first initiative of “gamifying” responsible tourism, whereby travellers will be offered exclusive experiences based on how they treat the environment and culture, not by how much they spend.

The programme, managed via a custom app that's launching in the coming months, offers points to

those who treat the island nation gently and respectfully by making sustainable decisions like using reef-safe sunscreen, visiting culturally important sites (such as the Belau National Museum and Bai, the oldest in Micronesia) and eating sustainably sourced local food.

Guests can then redeem their points to unlock cultural and nature-based experiences that are normally reserved for Palauans and their close friends, such as taking an unmarked hike, swimming at a secret cave, sharing a meal with locals and elders or casting a reel in a secluded fishing spot. It also promises new expe-

periences that may have once been rare for tourists to partake in, including a first birth ceremony, which is an important cultural event.

The idea for this programme and the Palau Pledge both came about in 2015, by which time tourism had reached 150,000 visitors annually – more than seven times the country's population – many of whom didn't understand the fragile ecosystem or how important sustainability was to residents. While Palauan culture values hospitality and treating visitors with respect, locals could see how under-educated visitors

cont'd on pg 12

cont'd from pg 11

were eroding their environment.

To combat this, Palau needed a way to educate travellers and have them earn the privilege of being a trusted friend, said resident Laura Clarke, who co-founded the Palau Legacy Project with Palauan Jennifer Koskelin-Gibbons to spearhead these preservation initiatives.

With Clarke's background in marketing and advertising, and Koskelin-Gibbons' work in national preservation efforts, O'lau Palau was born.

"O'au in Palauan means to invite someone into your space," said Clarke. "So, if you're on a beach, for example, and someone calls out 'O'au', it means, 'Hey, come over here, come be with us, share our food, come to this thing.' Visitors have a chance to earn that privilege of being a friend by doing certain behaviours."

Why should I go now?

As an economy that relies heavily on tourism, Palau was severely impacted by Covid lockdowns. The country opened back up in April 2022 to fully vaccinated travellers, and residents are eager to re-introduce the world to its remote white-sand beaches and wildlife-rich dive spots, which have earned it the nickname "the underwater Serengeti".

A battleground in World War 2, Palau also has both Japanese ship and plane wrecks that draw history-buff divers. In addition, the country recently established the world's first National Marine Sanctuary, banning any type of extraction (including commercial fishing) in 500,000 sq km of ocean, making it an ideal spot to catch a glimpse of one of 135 species of sharks and rays that now thrive here.

"This year has been good. The corals are flourishing and the reefs are beautiful," said Scott Arni, who captains the Palau Aggressor II ship and has led dive expeditions in Palau for 10 years.

"The diving has been amazing with loads of sharks and great manta ray encounters at German Channel [a human-made channel within Palau's south-west barrier reef]."

O'lau Palau rewards can be tailored to what the visitor is interested in, whether that's diving, hiking or engaging with the local community. Clarke recommends a 10-day to two-week trip to really get the most out of the programme, especially since travel time to the remote archipelago – located 890km east of the Philippines and 1,330km south-west of Guam – can eat into your stay.

"You want the first five days to start collecting your points, and you want a good amount of time, like five or six days, to redeem them," she advised.

Travel with no trace

Unsurprisingly, sustainability is core to many businesses here, and Palau's commitment to responsible travel makes it easy to find companies that adhere to green practices at any budget. Plus, staying and dining at these places earns points in the Ola'u Palau programme.

For those looking for luxury, Koskelin-Gibbons recommends the oceanside Palau Royal Resort on Malakal Island. Her pick for travellers on a budget is the family-run VIP Hotel, located in the heart of the country's commercial centre, Koror.

Both are part of the Palau Business Pledge (a sub-programme of the Palau Pledge), which means they actively work to minimise their environmental impact while educating guests to do the same through signage and education on the importance of the environment.

Eating local fish and produce is one of the easiest ways to sustainably support the economy. Recently named the country's "national soup", demok, made from taro leaf, coconut broth and land crab, delights both locals and

visitors alike. "Not only is it healthy, it's amazingly hearty and lovely after a long day out on the water," said Koskelin-Gibbons.

"The family-run Penthouse Hotel Restaurant can make it in a minute and sources the ingredients from their own family members."

Similarly, seafood restaurant Drop Off on Malakal Island displays daily photos of the fisherman who caught your meal (look for shots of the owner, he's a sport-fisherman who brings in the Sunday catch).

To explore the island above and below, Clarke recommends the 100% Palauan-owned Sam's Tours. Not only do they hire local guides for their kayak, hiking and dive excursions, but they also incorporate sustainable practices within their tours (like eschewing single-use plastics and serving locally made lunches), enforce environmental rules and operate with a zero-trace policy.

Know before you go

In addition to vaccination, Palau currently requires visitors to submit a negative PCR or antigen test a few days prior to departure, and to be tested again following their arrival.

Palau was one of the last countries to be affected by Covid, with its first case only emerging in August 2021. It is especially vital that visitors remember that there's not a "new normal" here yet, and that the small community is still rightfully wary of exposure.

Nearly 5,000 residents (25% of the population) have contracted the disease, and six residents have died. In such a small community, the impacts are widely felt.

"We are still mourning the loss of those who have died whom we know and care about. Especially in a small community, where everyone knows everyone," said Koskelin-Gibbons. "So please wear your mask and sanitise. It will show you respect the community and are doing your part."

Global pollution kills 9 million people a year, study finds

By **Seth Borenstein**

A new study blames pollution of all types for 9 million deaths a year globally, with the death toll attributed to dirty air from cars, trucks and industry rising 55% since 2000.

That increase is offset by fewer pollution deaths from primitive indoor stoves and water contaminated with human and animal waste, so overall pollution deaths in 2019 are about the same as 2015.

The United States is the only fully industrialised country in the top 10 nations for total pollution deaths,

ranking 7th with 142,883 deaths blamed on pollution in 2019, sandwiched between Bangladesh and Ethiopia, according to a new study in the journal *The Lancet Planetary Health*. Tuesday's pre-pandemic study is based on calculations derived from the Global Burden of Disease database and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in Seattle. India and China lead the world in pollution deaths with nearly 2.4 million and almost 2.2 million deaths a year, but the two nations also have the world's largest populations.

When deaths are put on a per population rate, the United States ranks 31st from the bottom at 43.6 pollution deaths per 100,000. Chad and the Central African Republic rank the highest with rates about 300 pollution deaths per 100,000, more than half of them due to tainted water, while Brunei, Qatar and Iceland have the lowest pollution death rates ranging from 15 to 23. The global average is 117 pollution deaths per 100,000 people.

Pollution kills about the same number of people a year around the world as

cigarette smoking and second-hand smoke combined, the study said.

"9 million deaths is a lot of deaths," said Philip Landrigan, director of the Global Public Health Program and Global Pollution Observatory at Boston College.

"The bad news is that it's not decreasing," Landrigan said. "We're making gains in the easy stuff and we're seeing the more difficult stuff, which is the ambient (outdoor industrial) air pollution and the chemical pollution, still going up."

cont'd on pg 14



A pedestrian walks on a bridge above vehicle traffic in New Delhi, India, Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2019, as the city is enveloped under thick smog. The air quality index exceeded 400, about eight times the recommended maximum. A study released on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, blames pollution of all types for 9 million deaths a year globally, with the death toll attributed to dirty air from cars, trucks and industry rising 55% since 2000. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup, File)

Environment



cont'd from pg 13

It doesn't have to be this way, researchers said.

"They are preventable deaths. Each and every one of them is a death that is unnecessary," said Dr. Lynn Goldman, dean of the George Washington University School of Public Health, who wasn't part of the study. She said the calculations made sense and if anything, was so conservative about what it attributed to pollution, that the real death toll is likely higher.

The certificates for these deaths don't say pollution. They list heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, other lung issues and diabetes that are "tightly correlated" with pollution by numerous epidemiological studies, Landrigan said.

To then put these together with actual deaths, researchers look at the number of deaths by cause, exposure to pollution weighted for various factors, and then complicated exposure response calculations derived by large epidemiological studies based on thousands of people over decades of study, he said. It's the same way scientists can say cigarettes cause cancer and heart disease deaths.

"That cannon of information constitutes causality," Landrigan said. "That's how we do it."

Five outside experts in public health and air pollution, including Goldman, told The Associated Press the study follows mainstream scientific thought. Dr. Renee Salas, an emergency room doctor and Harvard professor who wasn't part of the study, said "the American Heart Association determined over a decade ago that exposure to (tiny pollution particles) like that generated from the burning of fossil fuels is causal for heart disease and death."

"While people focus on decreasing their blood pressure and cholesterol, few recognise that the removal of air pollution is an important prescription

to improve their heart health," Salas said.

Three-quarters of the overall pollution deaths came from air pollution and the overwhelming part of that is "a combination of pollution from stationary sources like coal-fired power plants and steel mills on one hand and mobile sources like cars, trucks and buses. And it's just a big global problem," said Landrigan, a public health physician. "And it's getting worse around the world as countries develop and cities grow."

In New Delhi, India, air pollution peaks in the winter months and last year the city saw just two days when the air wasn't considered polluted. It was the first time in four years that the city experienced a clean air day during the winter months.

That air pollution remains the leading cause of death in South Asia reconfirms what is already known, but the increase in these deaths means that toxic emissions from vehicles and energy generation is increasing, said Anumita Roychowdhury, a director at the advocacy group Centre for Science and Environment in New Delhi.

"This data is a reminder of what is going wrong but also that it is an opportunity to fix it," Roychowdhury said.

Pollution deaths are soaring in the poorest areas, experts said.

"This problem is worst in areas of the world where population is most dense (e.g. Asia) and where financial and government resources to address the pollution problem are limited and stretched thin to address a host of challenges including health care availability and diet as well as pollution," said Dan Greenbaum, president of the Health Effects Institute, who wasn't part of the study.

In 2000, industrial air pollution killed about 2.9 million people a year globally. By 2015 it was up to 4.2 million and in 2019 it was 4.5 million, the

study said. Toss in household air pollution, mostly from inefficient primitive stoves, and air pollution killed 6.7 million people in 2019, the study found.

Lead pollution — some from a lead additive which has been banned from gasoline in every country in the world and also from old paint, recycling batteries and other manufacturing — kills 900,000 people a year, while water pollution is responsible for 1.4 million deaths a year. Occupational health pollution adds another 870,000 deaths, the study said.

In the United States, about 20,000 people a year die from lead pollution-induced hypertension, heart disease and kidney disease, mostly as occupational hazards, Landrigan said. Lead and asbestos are America's big chemical occupational hazards, and they kill about 65,000 people a year from pollution, he said. The study said the number of air pollution deaths in the United States in 2019 was 60,229, far more than deaths on American roads, which hit a 16-year peak of nearly 43,000 last year.

Modern types of pollution are rising in most countries, especially developing ones, but fell from 2000 to 2019 in the United States, the European Union and Ethiopia. Ethiopia's numbers can't quite be explained and may be a reporting issue, said study co-author Richard Fuller, founder of the Global Alliance on Health and Pollution and president of Pure Earth, a non-profit that works on pollution clean-up programs in about a dozen countries.

The study authors came up with eight recommendations to reduce pollution deaths, highlighting the need for better monitoring, better reporting and stronger government systems regulating industry and cars.

"We absolutely know how to solve each one of those problems," Fuller said. "What's missing is political will."

Family of ex-Haitian senator implicated in the assassination of President Moïse to be deported

CMC - The family members of former Haitian senator Jean Joel Joseph, who appeared in a United States court last week, charged with the July 7 assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse last year, are to be deported from Jamaica.

Joseph was extradited from Jamaica last weekend and now the Kingston and St Andrew Parish Court has ordered that his wife, Edume, 38, and her two sons, Schopenhauer, 17, and a nine-year-old boy be deported to Haiti.

Their lawyer, Donahue Martin, had applied for refugee status but it was denied.

Joseph and his family had fled to Jamaica and was charged with illegally entering the Caribbean Island by boat after they were discovered in the southern parish of St. Elizabeth in January.

In February, Martin made an application for refugee status to the



Jean Joel Joseph

Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) for Edume and their two sons, arguing that the family fled Haiti and entered Jamaica illegally over fear of being killed by angry citizens in Haiti who believe they were

involved in President Moïse's murder and the attempted murder of his wife. But the application was denied.

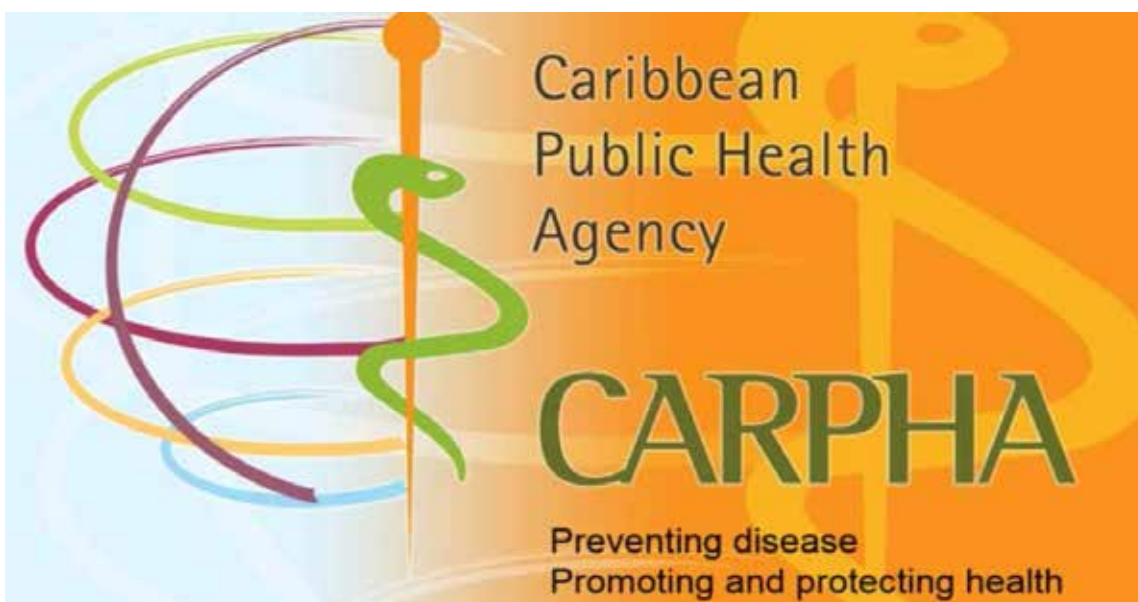
Martin had promised to appeal the ruling, but he told the court on Monday that he was abandoning the appeal as the matter would not have been heard before this court date.

He, however, asked the court to admonish and discharge the charge against his clients especially since they would have spent four months in custody.

Senior Parish Judge Lori-Ann Cole-Montague granted the request of the attorney and admonished and discharged the illegal entry charges against the three.

Joseph has been charged with the same offenses as two previous defendants who were brought to Miami earlier this year in connection with the assassination of Moïse at his private residence overlooking the capital Port au Prince.

CARPHA receives support to address infectious disease surveillance in the Caribbean



CMC - The Trinidad-based Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is receiving funding assistance from the Republic of Korea to strengthen laboratory systems and networks.

CARPHA said that the US\$656,743 grant will also assist in strengthening human resources capacities in health sectors to accurately detect, characterise and treat infectious diseases.

Financing for the project
cont'd on pg 16

Regional News



US to ease a few economic sanctions against Venezuela

AP - The United States government is moving to ease a few economic sanctions on Venezuela in a gesture meant to encourage resumed negotiations between the U.S.-backed opposition and the government of President Nicolás Maduro.

The limited changes will allow Chevron Corp. to negotiate its licence with the state-owned oil company, PDVSA, but not to drill or export any petroleum of Venezuelan origin, two senior U.S. government officials told The Associated Press late Monday. The officials spoke under the condition of anonymity because the formal announcement had not been made.



Children play on the letter "P" that is part of the acronym for the state-run oil company Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA) on the sidewalk in Caracas, Venezuela, Jan. 2, 2022. (AP Photo/Matias Delacroix, File)

Additionally, Carlos Erik Malpica-Flores — a former high-ranking PDVSA official and nephew of Venezuela's first lady — will be removed from a list of sanctioned individuals, they said.

Hours after the announcement Tuesday, the opposition and Venezuela's government acknowledged they had begun conversations on possibly restarting negotiations.

The moves follow good-

will gestures by Maduro after meeting in March with representatives of the administration of President Joe Biden and a recent gathering in Central America between U.S. officials and the main Unitary Platform opposition coalition to discuss a path forward.

Scores of Venezuelans, including the country's attorney general and the head of the penitentiary system, and more than 140 entities, among them Venezuela's Central Bank, will remain sanctioned. The Treasury Department will continue to prohibit transactions with the Venezuelan government and PDVSA within U.S. financial markets.

cont'd from pg 15

ect "Strengthening Health Systems in CARICOM to Address Infectious Diseases" is provided by the Republic of Korea through the Republic of Korea-CARICOM (ROK-CARICOM) Cooperation Fund.

The project also enables the procurement of a KingFisher Flex Purification System and the required reagents and is regarded as a primary step in the PCR process and will contribute to the continued pandemic response for coronavirus (COVID-19) detection, as well as ongoing surveillance for diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and zika viruses, and routine respiratory surveillance of influenza and non-influenza viruses.

"The Republic of Korea has been very responsive to the needs in our region, providing over 1.5 million

US dollars' worth of resources for Health Systems Strengthening to address Infectious Diseases and support for our regional COVID 19 pandemic response.

"This tangible demonstration of solidarity in health at a time of need was much appreciated," said Dr. Douglas Slater, CARICOM Assistant Secretary-General, Human and Social Development.

"History will show that Korea was one of the first larger economies to reach out to us in our time of need, an action we cannot and will not forget."

Korea's ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Dongil Oh, underscored CARPHA's role of converging the various health ministries and capacity-building for medical staff across CARICOM.

"I am firmly convinced that this

project will serve as a critical stepping stone for CARICOM member states to bring infectious diseases under control."

Host Health Minister, Terrence Deyalsingh, said the launch of a project of this kind underlines the need to establish robust and resilient healthcare systems in the CARICOM region.

"This partnership with the Republic of Korea will help us strengthen not only a national response in Trinidad and Tobago but also a CARICOM response.

"Strong healthcare systems bolster, not only the supply and delivery of quality healthcare to CARICOM residents and citizens but can curb the potential detrimental and irrevocable effects of current and future pandemics," he added.

Portugal finds five monkeypox cases in men as outbreak spreads

AP - Portuguese health authorities on Wednesday confirmed five cases of monkeypox in young men, marking an unusual outbreak in Europe of a disease typically limited to Africa.

Portugal's General Directorate for Health said they were also investigating 15 suspected cases and that all were identified this month in the area around the capital, Lisbon.

All the Portuguese cases involve men, most of them young, authorities said. They have skin lesions and were reported to be in stable condition. Authorities did not say if the men had a history of travel to Africa or any links with recent cases in Britain or elsewhere.

British health authorities said earlier this week they had identified four cases of monkeypox spread in London among gay and bisexual men. Spain's Health Ministry said it had detected eight suspected cases of monkeypox that still needed to be confirmed.

The disease belongs to a family of



viruses that includes chickenpox and smallpox. Most people recover from monkeypox within weeks.

Dr. Ibrahim Soce Fall, the World Health Organization's assistant director-general for emergency response, said the spread of monkeypox in the U.K. needed to be investigated to understand how the disease was being transmitted among men who have sex with other men.

Fall said that health officials still need a better understanding of how monkeypox spreads in general, even in the countries where it is endemic.

He noted that while there were more than 6,000 reported cases in Congo and about 3,000 cases in Nigeria last year, there are still "so many unknowns in terms of the dynamics of transmission."

Britain previously reported three earlier cases of monkeypox, two involving people who lived in the same household and the third someone who had travelled to Nigeria, where the disease occurs frequently in animals.

The virus has typically spread to people from infected animals like rodents, although human-to-human transmission has been known to occur. Among people, the disease is spread when there is very close contact with lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets or contaminated materials, like bedsheets.

Some British experts said it was soon to conclude that monkeypox had spread through sexual contact, although the outbreak there suggested that possibility.

Mozambique declares polio outbreak linked to Pakistan

AP - Health authorities in Mozambique declared a polio outbreak Wednesday after confirming that a child in the country's northeastern Tete province had been paralyzed by the disease.

The case in Mozambique is the second imported case of polio in southern Africa this year, following a case discovered in Malawi in mid-February. It's the first case of wild polio in Mozambique since 1992, although cases linked to a mutated virus from the oral

vaccine were detected in 2019.

The latest case in Mozambique was found in a child who experienced signs of paralysis in late March, according to a statement issued by the World Health Organization.

Sequencing indicates that the case in Mozambique is linked to a strain of polio spreading in Pakistan in 2019, similar to the case reported in Malawi earlier this year.

WHO declared Africa *cont'd on pg 18*



A baby receives a polio vaccine during the Malawi Polio Vaccination Campaign Launch in Lilongwe, Malawi, on March 20, 2022. In neighbouring Mozambique, health authorities declared Wednesday May 18, 2022, an outbreak of wild poliovirus after confirming that a child in the country's northeastern Tete province had contracted the disease. (AP Photo/Thoko Chikondi, File)

Bad Kitty: German town grounds cats to save rare birds

AP – What a cat-astrophe!

Authorities in the southwest German town of Walldorf have ordered some cat owners to keep their pets indoors until the end of August, to protect a rare bird during its breeding season.

The decree is designed to help save the crested lark, which makes its nest on the ground and is therefore easy prey for feline hunters.

The bird’s population in Western Europe has declined sharply in recent decades.

Authorities in Walldorf wrote that “among other things the survival of the species depends on every single chick.”

The decree, which applies to all cats in the southern part of the town and will be repeated for the coming three years, has reportedly prompted meows of anguish from pet owners.

Regional daily Rhein-Neckar-Zei-



A crested lark feeding her young.

tung reported Wednesday that the head of the local animal protection association plans to take legal steps to challenge the decree.

“Please remain calm,” it quoted him as saying. “I can assure you we’ll do our best to stop this disproportionate measure.”

cont’d from pg 17

free of the wild polio virus in August 2020 even though numerous countries

across the continent have reported outbreaks linked to the vaccine in recent years. There is no differ-

ence between the disease caused by the wild virus or the mutated virus from the vaccine.

“The detection of another case of wild polio-virus in Africa is greatly concerning, even if it’s unsurprising given the recent outbreak in Malawi.

“However, it shows how dangerous this virus is and how quickly it can spread,” said Matshidiso Moeti, the World Health Organization’s Africa director.

In response to the case in neighbouring Malawi, Mozambique recently carried out two mass vaccination campaigns in which 4.2 million children were vaccinated against the dis-

ease, said WHO.

Disease surveillance is being strengthened in five countries: Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Vaccination campaigns in the coming weeks are planned to reach 23 million children aged five years and below.

Polio is highly infectious, spread mostly via water and largely affects children younger than five years.

There is no cure for polio, and it can only be prevented by immunisation. WHO and its partners began an effort to eradicate polio globally in 1988 and have missed numerous deadlines to wipe out the disease.



MATCH DAY 4
MAY 22ND 2022

3:00
GAME 1 LEGACY FC VS EXTRAORDINARY MEN

4:20
GAME 2 DUN BAR CREW VS UP & OVER FC

5:40
GAME 3 TUN & BANG VS TURF MASTERS

7:00
GAME 4 GOLDEN GROVE MASTERS VS WESTHAM FC

VENUE: ABFA TECHNICAL CENTER

US Soccer equalises pay in milestone with women, men

AP - The U.S. Soccer Federation reached milestone agreements to pay its men's and women's teams equally, making the American national governing body the first in the sport to promise both sexes matching money.

The federation announced separate collective bargaining agreements through December 2028 with the unions for both national teams on Wednesday, ending years of often acrimonious negotiations.

The men have been playing under the terms of a CBA that expired in December 2018. The women's CBA expired at the end of March, but talks continued after the federation and the players agreed to settle a gender discrimination lawsuit brought by some of the players in 2019. The settlement was contingent on the federation reaching labour contracts that equalised pay and bonuses between the two teams.

Led by Alex Morgan and Megan Rapinoe, American women have long pressed for gender equity.

"I feel a lot of pride for the girls who are going to see this growing up and recognise their value rather than having to fight for it. However, my dad always told me that you don't get rewarded for doing what you're supposed to do — and paying men and women equally is what you're supposed to do," U.S. forward Margaret Purce said.

"So, I'm not giving out any gold stars, but I'm grateful for this accomplishment and for all the people who came together to make it so."

Perhaps the biggest sticking point was World Cup prize money, which is based on how far a team advances in the tournament. While the U.S. women have been successful on the



Former members and members of the U.S. Women's National soccer team, from left, Briana Scurry, Margaret 'Midge' Purce, Kelley O'Hara, Julie Foudy, and Cindy Parlow Cone, President of U.S. Soccer, pose for a photo with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

international stage with back-to-back World Cup titles, differences in FIFA prize money meant they took home far less than the men's winners. American women received a \$110,000 bonus for winning the 2019 World Cup; the U.S. men would have received \$407,000 had they won in 2018.

The unions agreed to pool FIFA's payments for the men's World Cup later this year and next year's Women's World Cup, as well as for the 2026 and 2027 tournaments.

Each player will get matching game appearance fees in what the USSF said makes it the first federation to pool FIFA prize money in this manner.

Women's union projections have compensation for a player who has been under contract to increase 34% from 2018 to this year, from \$245,000 to \$327,000. The 2023-28 average annual pay would be \$450,000 for a player making all rosters, with the

possibility of doubling the figure in World Cup years depending on results.

The federation previously based bonuses on payments from FIFA, which earmarked \$400 million for the 2018 men's tournament, including \$38 million to champion France, and \$30 million for the 2019 women's tournament, including \$4 million to the champion United States.

FIFA has increased the total to \$440 million for the 2022 men's World Cup, and its president, Gianni Infantino, has proposed that FIFA double the women's prize money to \$60 million for the 2023 Women's World Cup, in which FIFA has increased the teams to 32.

For the current World Cup cycles, the USSF will pool the FIFA funds, taking 10% off the top and then splitting the rest equally among 46 players — 23 players on the roster of each team. For the 2026-27 cycle, the USSF cut increases to 20% before the split.

Girmay out of Giro after eye injury caused by prosecco cork

AP – An accident with a prosecco cork while celebrating his historic stage victory at the Giro d'Italia forced Biniam Girmay to pull out of the race on Wednesday.

The Eritrean rider became the first Black African to win a stage at a grand tour when he beat Mathieu van der Poel in the sprint to the line in Jesi in the 10th stage on Tuesday. But he had to be taken to a local hospital after getting injured when he popped a prosecco cork into his eye during the podium celebration.

The 22-year-old Girmay celebrated with his Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert



Eritrea's Biniam Girmay touches his eye after spraying sparkling wine on the podium to celebrate winning the 10th stage of the Giro D'Italia cycling race from Pescara to Jesi, Italy, Tuesday, May 17, 2022. Girmay was then taken to a local hospital after getting injured when he popped a champagne cork into his eye during the podium celebration. (Massimo Paolone/LaPresse via AP)

ert Matériaux teammates when he returned from the hospital.

“When I arrived at the hospital, the bad moment, I enjoy a bit with my team-

mates, the staff, everybody,” Girmay said in a video on his team’s social media channel. “I’m also happy now. I was a bit sad about what happened with the champagne but when I come back to the hotel they were super happy also.

“They were a bit afraid but when I looked OK we really enjoyed. But today luckily, I didn’t start the race because still my eyes, I need some rest to give more power to the eye ... I’m OK now, see you soon.”

In March, Girmay became the first rider from a sub-Saharan country to win a single-day classic at the Gent-Wevelgem race.

Tiger Woods says he’s all about majors, a Mickelson rebuke

AP – Tiger Woods is all about majors and legacy, a point he drove home Tuesday in a sharp rebuke of Phil Mickelson and his support of a Saudi-funded golf venture that led to Lefty not defending his title at the PGA Championship.

Even as Woods resumes a remarkable return from a car crash 15 months ago that nearly led to his right leg being amputated, the PGA Championship cannot escape the absence of Mickelson and speculation about who might sign up for Greg Norman’s new Saudi-backed golf series.

Woods said he has not tried to reach out to Mickelson since his self-imposed hiatus from golf three

months ago, mainly because of their difference of opinion on how golf should be run.

“I understand different viewpoints, but I believe in legacies. I believe in major championships. I believe in big events, comparisons to historical figures of the past,” Woods said.

“There’s plenty of money out here,” he said. “The tour is growing. But it’s just like any other sport — it’s like tennis — you have to go out there and earn it. You’ve got to go out there and play for it. We have opportunity to go ahead and do it. It’s just not guaranteed up front.”

That was a reference to some of the Public Investment Fund money



Tiger Woods smiles on the driving range before a practice round for the PGA Championship golf tournament, Tuesday, May 17, 2022, in Tulsa, Okla. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

out of Saudi Arabia being offered to players to join Norman and his LIV *cont'd on pg 21*

A&B coaches receive boost after completing CWI workshop

Coaches in Antigua and Barbuda were part of an impactful, day-long seminar at the Coolidge Cricket Ground last Friday which was jointly hosted by Cricket West Indies (CWI) and the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association (ABCA).

The main aim of the event was to re-engage previously accredited coaches and provide them with an opportunity to share their knowledge on various aspects of cricket coaching, reconnect with each other and identify opportunities to work together to move Antiguan cricket forward. Among the coaches involved were former Test cricketers Winston Benjamin, Kenny Benjamin and Sylvester Joseph, as well as former regional first-class players and national representatives.

CWI High Performance Unit Staff including Coach Development Manager Chris Brabazon, High Performance Manager Graeme West and High Performance Coach Steve Liburd guided the twenty-two participants through a range of topics including the West Indies Cricket Pathway, Coaching Philosophy, Applied Skill Acquisition across fielding and batting as well as how to plan and deliver effective, contemporary training sessions.

“It was great to have so many local



CWI High Performance Unit Staff including Coach Development Manager Chris Brabazon speaks with some of the participants in last Friday's coaching workshop at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds

coaches committed to ongoing developing of their coaching skills. We know that good coaching plays a massive role in the recruitment and retention of players and this group of Antiguan coaches are well placed to have a massive positive impact in the community.

“CWI are looking forward to rolling out more of these types of workshops across the region where we can reconnect with previously accredited coaches, share some key development priorities from the upper echelons of our West Indies Cricket Pathway and then have our local coaches head back out into their communities and address

these areas with our junior players,” Brabazon said.

The workshop in Antigua follows a series of Coach Development events held in St. Kitts over the Easter weekend which included CWI Level 1, Level 2 Coaching Courses and observations of CWI High Performance Programme (Level 3) participants.

In its promise to lift coaching standards, over the past three years CWI has delivered over 600 new coaching certificates across eight Caribbean countries, while 16 CWI Coach Developers have also been trained to deliver Level 1 Courses locally.

cont'd from pg 20
Golf Investments.

According to various reports out of Britain, some top players were being offered more than the \$120 million Woods has made in career PGA Tour earnings.

Mickelson showed his hand in two interviews published in February. He accused the PGA Tour of

“obnoxious greed” while playing in Saudi Arabia, and more incendiary comments followed when Alan Shipnuck published an excerpt of his unauthorised biography on Mickelson.

Mickelson said the Saudis were “scary mother-(expletives) to get involved with,” and then dismissed its human rights atrocities

— such as the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi — by saying it was worth it to gain leverage to make changes on the PGA Tour.

He also said he didn't care if the Saudi league failed, as long as the tour made changes he wanted.

Mickelson decided last Friday he would not play at

Southern Hills, missing out on a chance to be celebrated for his historic win last year at Kiawah Island when at age 50 he became golf's oldest major champion.

He is the first PGA champion not to defend since Woods was recovering from knee surgery in 2008 and skipped Oakland Hills.

41 to compete in National Bodybuilding Championship

Forty-one athletes have registered to compete in this year's Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation's (ABABWF) National Championship at the Dean William Lake Cultural Centre on 25th June.

Among them are several champions who will defend their titles won at last year's first virtual National Championship, which also featured over 40 competitors.

The ABABWF attempted to increase participation this year by offering a 50 percent discount on the registration fee of \$100 for persons registering by 30th April.

After this date, competitors were required to pay a fee of \$200 before the 14th May deadline.

President of ABABWF, Hazel Went-Defreitas, said although the overall numbers are satisfying, some categories still lack participation.

"There are good numbers, but there are some categories where the amount of people registering is not quite what we would like it to be, particularly the male bodybuilding categories," Went-Defreitas said.

"Everybody has different reasons for not entering, but we were hoping that they would come in this year, but it didn't happen."

In 2012, the Muscular



The winners in last year's National Bodybuilding Championship from left to right: Yvette Butler -Masters Bikini Fitness, Duncan Corbin Overall Men's Physique, Makiva Elvin - Bikini Fitness, Franklyn Carbon - Masters Bodybuilding & Bodybuilding, Kayla Francis - Bikini Wellness and Shaquelle Thomas - Classic Physique. (File photo)

and Men's Physique divisions were launched as a new International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) sport discipline. It has proven to be a very popular category. This has caused the IFBB to increase the number of Men's Physique categories from two to six.

Went-Defreitas said since the IFBB has introduced Men's Physique, Antigua and Barbuda, like the rest of the world, has seen a decline in participation in bodybuilding.

"I think we are seeing the same thing everywhere, all over, but it may just be that there are so many different categories on offer now. Before, it was just bodybuilding with male bodybuilders getting big and performing on stage," Went-Defreitas said.

"Now, it is different cat-

egories which made it a little easier for some people who really don't want to build a lot of muscle and so on, so maybe that might be a part of it. But we are hoping that it will eventually turn around."

Despite this downward trend, there is a slight increase in the number of participants in the men's bodybuilding categories for next month's competition.

Last year's lone competitor Franklyn Carbon, will defend his Men's Bodybuilding and Masters Bodybuilding titles against other competitors this year.

Dwayne George, Semaj Barnes and Steve Simon are hoping to dethrone Carbon as men's bodybuilding champion.

Only Alfred Jarvis, however, will take on Carbon in Master's Bodybuilding.

The Men's Physique division has attracted the

greatest interest. Twelve athletes have registered, including last year's overall champion Duncan Corbin.

Nine competitors have registered in the Classic Physique Division, including reigning champion Shaquelle Thomas.

Also registered is reigning Bikini Fitness Masters champion, Yvette Butler, who will defend her title against four other competitors.

Butler will also join five other contestants who will try to replace last year's Bikini Fitness champion, Makiva Elvin.

Only Samantha Persaud will compete against reigning Bikini Wellness champion Kayla Joseph for this year's title.

Other categories in the competition include Bikini Fitness Novice and Classic Physique Novice.

“Bouncing” Joseph: Cricket at AGS has bright future

Coach Sylvester “Bouncing” Joseph believes the Antigua Grammar School will be a strong force to reckon with in schools’ cricket competitions for at least the next two years.

Earlier this month, the undefeated Antigua Grammar School (AGS) overcame their toughest challenge of the season by pulling off a 26-run victory over Clare Hall Secondary in the final to capture the T20 title at the Rising Sun playing field.

Joseph said the winning team will be able to represent AGS in future schools’ cricket competitions for at least the next two seasons.

“The future certainly looks bright, because due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were not able to play for two years. We did not get much time to practice and train the players...and you see what we were able to do in terms of dominating the competition this year,” Joseph said.

“So, to see where they are at now and with the time that we have - I have another year with most of them, and another two years with the others - during that time, I think they will definitely get better because we will get some more time to train and practice.

“This means we will get a chance to improve on the weak areas that I see, but overall, the talent is there and the thought process is also there for the growth and development that will ultimately lead to success.”

Principal Samuel Roberts has also said that cricket and football remain the two strongest sports disciplines in which AGS continues to excel.

Joseph, a former West Indies batsman and former Leeward Islands and Antigua national team captain, said the overall standard of this year’s schools’ cricket programme was not the best, but felt the absence of the competition over the last



Coach Sylvester Joseph, left, and Antigua Grammar School athletes celebrate after winning the Schools’ T20 Cricket title by defeating Clare Hall Secondary in the final on 5th May, 2022. (File photo)

two years was a major factor behind this.

“I must agree that the standard this year was not the best, but we have to remember we are coming out of two years where we had no cricket.

“We didn’t have much time to work with the players and so that is probably the main reason why we didn’t see a higher standard by the various school teams,” Joseph said.

“I think it was good that we had something for the players to get involved with after two years of no cricket...so I am not going to be too critical about this year.

“We just have to continue to work with the players in the various schools because we see that the talent is there, it is just for all of us to continue working with the players and we will see better quality coming through.”

cont’d from pg 24

“We also get activity funding in terms of assistance and that is the funds we will use to assist our national associations so we will be putting forward our case in that regard.

“At the end of the day, those determinations as to what type of funding we will eventually be able to receive will ultimately be made following our meeting with Pan Am Sports this week.”

The aim of Olympic Solidarity is to organise assistance for all National Olympic Committees (NOCs), partic-

ularly those with the greatest needs, through multi-faceted programmes prioritising athlete development, training of coaches and sports administrators and promoting the Olympic Ideals (Olympic Charter, Rule 5).

The IOC does not receive donations or grants. Instead, it relies on broadcasting and licensing deals to generate revenue.

Ever since the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896, it has relied on contributions from commercial partners in order to stage the games and support the Olympic movement.

According to the IOC’s own numbers, 73% of its revenue comes from broadcasting rights, 18% from marketing rights and 9% from other rights and revenue streams.

Olympic Solidarity redistributes the revenue generated from its broadcast rights from the Olympic Games to programmes offered to its 206 National Olympic Committees.

All Olympic Solidarity programmes are aimed at developing and promoting sport worldwide, and encouraging athletes’ participation in the Olympic Games.

Greene and Williams attend meeting with Panam Sports

President of the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee (AB-NOC) E. P. Chet Greene and General Secretary Cliff Williams will meet with Panam Sports' President Neven Ilic Alvarez in Miami, Florida, on Friday.

Alvarez was unanimously re-elected as president by 41 NOCs at the first virtual Panam Sports General Assembly from 15th – 16th December, 2020.

The General Assembly was scheduled for Cancun, but was moved to a virtual platform because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a major campaign in April 2017, and a close vote with his contender Jose Joaquín Puello, Alvarez became the first President Elect of the Pan-American Sports Organization since the death of former president, Mario Vásquez Raña, in 2015.

"It's an annual meeting. It is something that Panam Sports started since they had the election and had the new president Neven Ilic at the helm. So, it is something that he normally does with the presidents of the national federations annually around this time of the year," Williams said.

"It is also done to assess the member associations in terms of what we need and analysing our performances over the last two games, get our input and areas that we might need to focus on.

"For example, it is at one of these meetings where discussions came up pertaining to funding for the resurfacing of the track at YASCO Sports Complex.

"So, it is these sort of discussions that we will be having. It is sort of like an assessment from Panam Sports and then our input in terms of what we would like to do within this year.

"It is different associations that Panam Sports will be meeting with. They met with a batch of affiliate members about three weeks ago and this is another batch, including Antigua, St. Vincent and St. Lucia, so in one day, they will meet with members of about 12 different associations."

The Pan American Sports Organization represents the 41 National Olympic Committees in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean on the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

It is affiliated with the International Olympic Committee and its affiliated bodies, including ANOC, the Association of National Olympic Committees, and serves as the continental association of the Americas and Caribbean region.

Just like the International Olympic Committee, Panam Sports has its own flag. In 2017, Panam Sports underwent a complete rebranding of the organisation, including changes to its commercial name (now Panam Sports), brand and flag.

The organisation's flagship event is the quadrennial Pan American Games, which was first held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1951.

The Pan American Games are an Olympic-style competition for athletes from all nations of the Americas and



General Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee, Cliff Williams. (Photo: Cliff Williams)

Caribbean region. They are conducted every four years, always one year before the Olympic Games.

While in the US, Williams will attend a workshop dealing with the Olympic Solidarity Programme in Miami today (Thursday).

"On Thursday I will be attending a workshop on the Olympic Solidarity Programme in terms of accessing and all what it entails and on Friday will be the meeting with Panam Sports," Williams said.

"The Olympic Solidarity Programme is where the NOCs get our funding from the IOC. Normally, we would get the operational funding from Panam Sports so maybe that might increase or decrease.

cont'd on pg 23