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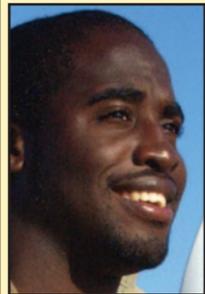
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THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



Dr. Denzil Douglas has led the Caribbean community's call for a "complete and unequivocal" apology from leaders of all colonial powers for their role in the "despicable" trans-Atlantic slave trade, page 2.



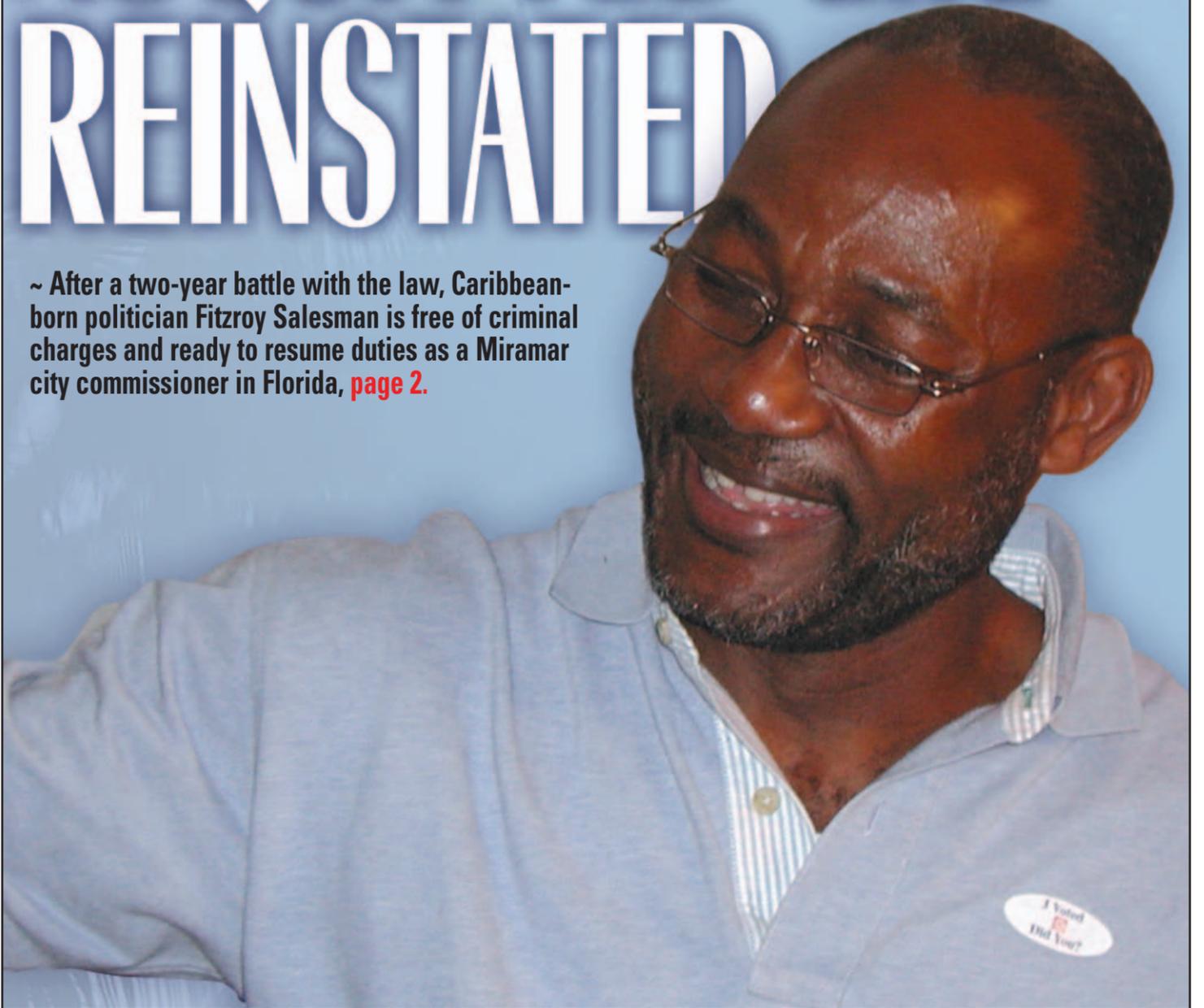
A strong Caribbean link is at the heart of unfolding aviation history. Jamaican-born Miami resident Barrington Irving Jr. has taken off on a journey to become the youngest pilot ever to fly solo around the world, page 8.



Reggae star Luciano led Caribbean-flavored performances that highlighted the "Jazz in the Gardens" music festival in Miami last month, page 15.

ACQUITTED and REINSTATED

~ After a two-year battle with the law, Caribbean-born politician Fitzroy Salesman is free of criminal charges and ready to resume duties as a Miramar city commissioner in Florida, page 2.



CALL CARIBBEAN TODAY DIRECT FROM JAMAICA 654-7782

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CALL CARIBBEAN TODAY DIRECT FROM JAMAICA 654-7782

Salesman freed of criminal charges, returns to Miramar City Commission

DAMIAN P. GREGORY

Fitzroy Salesman does not think he has changed much in the last two years.

He is still charismatic and unafraid to speak his mind - all traits that have served him well in the six years that have been hallmarks of his life in the public eye.

Now the once powerful South Florida politician is anxiously looking forward to returning to his post as Miramar city commissioner after being freed of criminal charges.

"I knew that it was only a matter of time," Salesman told Caribbean Today shortly after his acquittal.

Salesman, 50, was freed late last month after a three-day trial for driving under the influence of alcohol and fleeing a police officer, felony charges that could have landed him in jail for years. Yet, he is still puzzled why he landed in hot water in the first place.

"The whole thing did not make sense," Salesman explained.

"You don't run away from the police and head to your home."

According to Miramar

police, in April 2005 Salesman refused to stop his silver Mercedes when they attempt-



Salesman

ed to pull him over at 3:45 a.m. They claimed he was going 61 miles per hour in a 35 mile per hour zone at the time. Salesman allegedly ran a four-way stop sign before pulling into his driveway and had a blood alcohol level of .16 or twice the legal limit under Florida law. He was arrested and charged.

SUSPENDED

In June 2005, then Florida Governor Jeb Bush suspended him from his \$31,599-a-year job on the five-member Miramar City Commission. Now that he has been exonerated he is entitled to back pay

of about \$60,000, according to Florida law.

Despite the charges, Salesman always maintained his innocence, even as the media splashed his alleged drunken mug shot on the news.

"It was a big sensational story," he said. "Media trucks were in my neighborhood talking to my neighbors."

But his Mar. 26 acquittal, he said, has not received nearly as much attention. The politician said no television cameras were there when a jury cleared him of all charges, after deliberating for two hours.

"I understand it," he claimed.

REFOCUS

On Mar. 30, Salesman was reinstated as city commissioner by current Gov. Charlie Crist. He said he is now interested in refocusing his attention on the issues that he believes were the reasons he got re-elected to another four-year term in Mar. 2005, just months before his suspension. Those issues, which include redevelopment of the city, easing traffic congestion and education, will be among his top priorities when he

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Caribbean demands 'complete, unequivocal' slave trade apology

UNITED NATIONS, New York - The Caribbean community (CARICOM) has called for a "complete and unequivocal" apology from leaders of all colonial powers for their role in the "despicable" trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Speaking on behalf of CARICOM, St. Kitts and Nevis's Prime Minister Dr. Denzil Douglas told the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that while it is commendable that some leaders have expressed "deep sorrow" for the event, it is opportune that others do the same now.

"It is my hope that leaders of other nations that supported and profited from the inhumane activity will come forward in like manner," Douglas told the special commemorative event on the 200th Anniversary of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade late last month.

The event was organized collaboratively by the CARICOM diplomatic corps and the

United Nations.

"However, it is important that leaders of such nations offer to the descendants of African slaves, who were brought to the Caribbean and the Americas, a complete and unequivocal apology," Douglas added.

"It is undisputed that such nations were developed on the blood, sweat and tears of our enslaved forefathers; and it is only right, and the decent thing to do, to make amends and extend their apologies into the realm of atonement for the legal and economic support for the atrocities that were the norm of the slave trade and slavery.

"Countries that were engaged in the slave trade and slavery have a moral obligation to make right those crimes against humanity," Douglas said.

NO CLAIM

The St. Kitts and Nevis

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Obama meets Caribbean nationals at Florida stop

CORAL GABLES, Florida - Barack Obama, the freshman United States senator from Illinois who rose to national attention after speaking at the 2004 Democratic convention and one of the leading candidates for his party's presidential nomination, made a stop here late last month to meet a receptive audience of party faithful including many Caribbean nationals.

The Mar. 25 campaign stop at the posh Biltmore Hotel was one of several scheduled for the area in what is expected to be a key battleground state in the Nov. 2008 U.S. presidential elections. Florida was the decisive state in the 2000 elections and was hotly contested in the last presidential race four years later.

"We're here to change the nature of politics," the presidential hopeful told an enthusiastic crowd gathered at the event aimed at raising a minimum of \$250 per person.

"I've been there long enough to know Washington needs to change."

SUPPORT

His message appeared to have wooed several in the audience.

"I'm a registered Republican, but Obama is my choice," one lady told Caribbean Today, her face

beaming after her young son shook the 45-year-old senator's hand. "This is a big deal



Obama woos support in South Florida.
- Photograph by Peter Webley

for him (her son)."

Jamaican-born attorney Marlon Hill was recognized by Obama as he thanked several key supporters who helped to mobilize the standing room only crowd for the 25-minute speech that hit on democratic party themes, including the war in Iraq, the need to have better healthcare coverage for working Americans and education.

Obama is expected to make several other campaign stops in South Florida as the election nears.

- **Damian P. Gregory**

100 Haitian refugees sail into South Florida

A sailboat carrying more than 100 Haitians landed in South Florida late last month.

According to United States officials, many of the Haitians were hungry, tired and sick when they arrived at Hallandale Beach and several had to be taken to hospital after being at sea for weeks. Dehydration had reportedly left a few in critical condition. The body of an intended refugee, who apparently died during the journey, washed ashore.

One newspaper quoted a U.S. Coast Guard officer as saying it was the largest landing of Haitians on American soil since October 2002, when more than 200 Haitians made it to shore at Key Biscayne, Florida.

The boat used by the 101 Haitians was described by a Coast Guard spokeswoman as "unseaworthy and grossly overloaded."

PLEAS

Up to press time it was still unclear what the fate of the surviving Haitians would be. While U.S. law allows illegal refugee Cubans to remain

in the country, Haitians are usually sent back.

Meanwhile, some local activists have asked that the Haitians not be deported.

"We fear these people will be deported right away," Marleine Bastien, executive



A man takes a look at the sailboat which brought more than 100 Haitians to Hallandale Beach, Florida.

director of Haitian Women of Miami, an advocacy group, was quoted as saying in one newspaper.

"These Haitians, just like the Cubans, should be afforded the right to due process."

Congressman Kendrick

Meek sent letters addressed to Michael Rozos, field office director U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Julie L. Myers, assistant secretary for ICE, asking "that these Haitian nationals be detained in South Florida,

and not sent to other states or other regions" of the U.S.

"I believe that this is absolutely essential to insure the fair treatment of these detainees", the letter added.



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Groups want illegal immigrants given access to driver's licenses

NEW YORK, CMC – A coalition of community groups in New York has called on Governor Elliott Spitzer and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to grant “fair access” to driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, including those from the Caribbean.

The coalition, which comprises labor, religious and civil rights leaders, said in a statement issued last month that the state's current policy discriminates against undocumented Caribbean immigrants because of their status.

“Equal access to a driver's license, regardless of immigration status, is essential to the security and well-being of the working people of New York State,” said Denis Hughes, president of the broad-based American Federation of Labor–Congress of International Organizations (AFL-CIO).

“We need such access now,”

he demanded, stating that access to driver's licenses is a labor and civil rights issue that would make all New Yorkers “safer and more secure.”

OBSTACLE

Caribbean immigration advocates say the state's denial of a driver's license to illegal immigrants essentially prohibits them from earning a “decent and legal living wage.”

They say many of these immigrants must possess a driver's license to perform jobs, which, among other things, entail trucking and landscaping.

“The civil rights of tens of thousands of New York residents have been and continue to be violated each day,” said Cesar Perales, president and General Counsel of the Puerto Rico Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.

“The new DMV commissioner and the Spitzer administration must make timely

changes to their policies so that families are no longer suffering because they cannot obtain driver's licenses or state ID (identification) cards based on illegally promulgated rules and immigration status,” he added.

The state said the new measure has been instituted as part of a broader national policy in curbing terrorist attacks.

But Chung-Wha Hong, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition, opposed the policy, stating that restricting access to licenses, based on one's immigration status, does not bolster national security.

“We are more secure when more people are registered with state authorities and accounted for in public records,” she said. “Keep in mind, people who apply for a license are subjecting themselves to scrutiny.”



IN THE NAME OF HAITI



United States Congressman Kendrick B. Meek (D-Florida) recently met with Grammy Award winning entertainer Wyclef Jean in his office on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Rep. Meek represents parts of Miami-Dade and Broward counties, including “Little Haiti”, and has sponsored legislation in Congress providing preferential trade status to Haiti. Named a “roving ambassador” by Haitian President Rene Preval, Haitian-born musician Wyclef Jean established Yéle Haiti, a nonprofit charitable foundation to benefit his homeland. Jean recently testified on Capitol Hill before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on Haiti's economic and development needs.

Voters deny Caribbean-born candidate city commission seat

Caribbean-born George Pedlar lost his bid to regain a seat on the Miramar, Florida City Commission last month after he finished third in the race for Seat #4.

Pedlar, 63, who is originally from Jamaica, received 378 votes, according to the unofficial voting count. The clear

winner was Yvonne Garth, 37 and the youngest candidate in the field of four, with 879 or 45.12 percent of the votes polled at 32 precincts.

Alex Casas, 58, polled 379 votes, one ahead of Pedlar, who was once part of a historic Caribbean majority on the Miramar City Council. Pedlar

was elected a commissioner in 2003, the same year current commissioner Winston Barnes, also from Jamaica won a seat. At that time, Fitzroy Salesman, also Jamaican-born, had been a member of the five-member commission.

In June 2005 legal issues forced Salesman to relinquish

his seat. However, in 2003 the Miramar City Commission became the first publicly elected political body in the United States to hold a Caribbean-born majority membership. Last month Salesman was reinstated on the commission.

Last month, the four contested a seat vacated by Marjorie Conlan, who retired after serving for 13 years.

Miramar was one of two Broward County, Florida cities monitored by the U.S. Justice Department to make sure they complied with the Voting Rights Act. The law forbids discrimination based on race, disability or language.



Salesman freed of criminal charges, returns to Miramar City Commission

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

replaces John Moore, who was elected in a special election following Salesman's removal from the dais. The Caribbean American insisted he had kept abreast with Miramar's business during his suspension.

“I was always involved and I would help residents who would come to me and ask, wherever I can,” Salesman said. “So I was never really out of the groove, but because I wasn't a part of the commission there are certain executive things that I was not privy to.

“It will be a matter of digesting a lot of information quickly, in order to get fully up to speed,” he added.

He also insisted he is not bitter following his two-year legal ordeal.

“I don't have any beef here,” Salesman said. “It is not about me, it is about the people and I don't take that responsibility lightly.”

First elected to office in 2001, Salesman was joined by two other Jamaican nationals, businessman George Pedlar and radio personality Winston Barnes in 2003. For a while the three held the largest

majority in United States politics by Jamaican-born elected officials.

That majority broke up in 2005, following Pedlar's election loss. Subsequent bids—most recently last month—by Pedlar to regain a seat on the commission, which governs the city between Miami and Fort Lauderdale, have been unsuccessful. Estimates are that about 400,000 Jamaicans live in South Florida, many of whom live in Miramar.

Salesman's reinstatement to the commission came after Crist's General Counsel's Office reviewed the paper-

work making sure that the charges were the sole basis for the suspension, the governor's spokeswoman Kathy Torian told Caribbean Today from Tallahassee, the state capital.

Meanwhile, the popular commissioner is grateful for the support he received from the community and vows to continue working hard for the underdogs of his city.

“I cannot find words to express how supportive people have been,” a happy Salesman said. “I want the residents to know that nothing has changed about Fitzroy Salesman.

Whether you supported me, yes or no, I will work for you.”

When asked whether he plans to go after the City of Miramar for the over \$42,000 he paid in legal bills for his defense, Salesman told Caribbean Today: “Of course, it was their police department that charged and arrested me.”

Damian P. Gregory is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.

Duane Crooks

- CMC



NEWS

www.caribbeantoday.com

N.Y. mayor grants Haitian legislator's request for special City Council election

NEW YORK, CMC - New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg last month granted a Haitian legislator's request for a second special election after the City Council refused to officially swear him amid growing concerns about his residency.

Bloomberg called the new poll for April 24, two months after voters in the predominantly Caribbean 40th Councilmanic District in Brooklyn overwhelmingly elected Dr. Mathieu Eugene to the City Council.



Eugene

Eugene created history in the first special election on Feb. 20, by becoming the first-ever Haitian to be elected to political office in New York City. But his celebration was short-lived, as questions arose about his residency at the time of the poll, forcing the City Council to block the official swearing-in ceremony.

Eugene then wrote the mayor requesting a new poll after the Board of Elections last month certified that he was the duly elected winner by a wide margin.

DEFIANT
A defiant Eugene said he will contest the new poll this month, confident that he will again emerge triumphant. "I am convinced that we will prevail again," he said in announcing his candidacy in the new election.



Quinn

Eugene had sought to replace Yvette D. Clarke, the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, who was elected to the United States House of Representatives in last November's general elections. Clarke and her mother, Una Clarke, who had preceded her daughter as the City Council representative for the same district, had endorsed Eugene in the special election.

Christine C. Quinn, the City Council speaker, said she did not swear Eugene in because he failed to cooperate with city investigators about his residency. Eugene had listed the Brooklyn district of Canarsie, a few miles from the 40th Councilmanic District, as his address with Board of Elections.

Quinn, however, said in a

terse statement that she supported Eugene's decision to call another special election.

"Dr. Eugene won the election by an overwhelming majority, as the certification of his election clearly demonstrates," she said.

Eugene said he had signed a lease for an apartment in the district on Feb. 1 and had moved there before the poll. He, however, reportedly failed to produce copies of his lease and other documents when asked by City Council investigators. He also declined to sign a Quinn-mandated affidavit about residency requirements.



Bloomberg

Quinn had asked Attorney General Andrew Cuomo to interpret the residency law on special elections, which many political observers said was too vague. Cuomo responded that candidates must live in the district at the time voters go to the polls.

Election officials estimate it would cost the city another \$340,000 for the rescheduled poll.

Eugene said the "vague and unclear" law and "unfair treatment" prevented him from

being sworn-in after the first poll.

CWC murder investigation widens beyond Jamaica

On-the-field action might have shifted from Jamaica late last month, but investigations into the death of the Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer could also follow some of the players, officials and fans to other territories participating in the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup 2007 as well.



Shields

Deputy Police Commissioner Mark Shields told a news conference in Jamaica that some of his investigators may be traveling to the other territories to interview anyone who was staying at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, the day Woolmer was killed.

Woolmer was murdered by strangulation on Mar. 18, one day after the Pakistanis lost, unexpectedly, to Ireland and were eliminated from the World Cup.

The coach was declared

'Sorry' ex-Bahamian banker jailed for four years in N.Y.

NEW YORK, CMC - A federal judge in New York has sentenced a former investment banker in The Bahamas to four years in prison for money laundering.

United States District Judge John Keenan last month imposed the term on Martin Tremblay, 44, former president of Dominion Investments Ltd., in Nassau, Bahamas.

Canadian-born Tremblay, who was convicted for laundering about \$20,000 in drug proceeds, had already served 14 months in prison for the charge. He was initially charged with laundering millions of dollars from drug traffickers.

GUILTY

Prosecutors had also charged that over \$1 billion in the illegal gains had passed through Tremblay's Bahamian account. Last November, he pleaded guilty to a lesser charge.

Keenan said he did not want to sentence Tremblay to 70 months in prison because the penalty, as recommended by federal sentencing guidelines, was "too large in this case."

dead at the University Hospital of the West Indies in Jamaica, after he was rushed there from the hotel. He was discovered lying in an unconscious state in his 12th floor room at the hotel, shortly before noon.

Shields said that members of the West Indies and Irish teams and officials who stayed at the hotel could also be questioned as part of the investigations.

"Everybody that was in the hotel will be DNA tested; not just team members; the focus will be on everybody who was in the hotel, and so we are urging everybody who was in the hotel to come forward between those material times," he said.



Woolmer

There are also reports that Scotland Yard police have been called in to assist with the investigations.



PLEA

Defense attorney Martin Auerbach told the court that Tremblay was not motivated by avarice, stating that he only pocketed \$500 from the sting operation.

"I don't see the behavior of someone who was motivated by insatiable greed," he said.

Tremblay expressed contrition at his sentencing.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I apologize to my family and to the court."



African diaspora wants 'recognition, status'

UNITED NATIONS, New York, CMC - Former Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Professor Rex Nettleford has called for "recognition and status" for the African diaspora within globalization, saying it threatens to be a "calculus of inequality" for the "ex-slave, post-colonial Caribbean."

Delivering the keynote address at United Nations activities commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade last month, Nettleford said such "dignity and freedom in praxis must continue to be on the agenda of concerns and positive action for the African diaspora in the new millennium.

"Crossing the boundary of thought to programs of action that will benefit the millions that

tenant the African diaspora is itself an imperative," he said, adding, "hence the need to incorporate designs for social living and a positive sense of self into mainstream development strategies of a newly-globalized world."



Nettleford

MAINSTREAM INCLUSION

Nettleford said the aim of the diaspora Africa must be geared towards helping to determine the mainstream "and not merely to float along with the

currents wherever they may take one."

Nettleford said the abolition of the slave trade could not help but facilitate the "re-humanization of the offspring" of millions who were "involuntarily and inhumanely lured/dragged from West Africa and the Congo across the Middle Passage.

"The idea of the Caribbean person being part-African, part-European, part-Asian, part-Native American but totally Caribbean is still a mystery to many in the North Atlantic who has been spoiled by the very hegemonic control it has had over empires and far-away real estate for half a millennium, and with the indulgences of a trade in slaves, slavery and colonialism acting in tandem," he said.



Jamaican businessmen extradited to U.S.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - The Court of Appeal last month ruled against Jamaican businessmen Leebert Ramcharan and Donovan Williams. The two were then extradited to the United States to face drug charges.

Ramcharan, who has been designated a drug kingpin by U.S. President George W. Bush, had contended that such a designation would prevent

him from getting a fair trial.

But the court, comprising Justice Paul Harrison, president of the Court of Appeal, Justice Howard Cooke and Justice Hazel Harris, unanimously held that the designation would not prevent Ramcharan from getting a fair trial in the U.S. The court said the kingpin designation, though unflattering, has not been shown to be of such a

dimension that it will affect the trial process.

In June 2004 the two men were ordered extradited to the U.S. to face conspiracy charges. The men had appealed against a Supreme Court ruling in Sept. 2006, which turned down their application to have the extradition orders set aside.



Consulate honors 18 Jamaicans in South Florida

DAMIAN P. GREGORY

MIAMI - Eighteen members of the South Florida's Jamaican diaspora, including the publisher of Caribbean Today, were honored late last month at the Consulate General of Jamaica Community Service Awards Ceremony and High Tea at the ritzy Coral Gables Biltmore Hotel here.

The Mar. 25 ceremony featured remarks by Jamaica's Governor General Professor Kenneth O. Hall, who encouraged the crowd of mainly Jamaicans living in Florida to support their homeland. The ceremony honored Jamaican nationals who have made and are continuing to make contributions to lives of people.

HONOREES

Those honored were:

Norma Bancroft, for her work as one of five people who hosted the first Jamaica Independence Ball in South Florida. Bancroft, is the founder and president of the Florida Organization of Jamaicans, a charity for the poor and imprisoned in Jamaica and disadvantaged expatriots from South Florida.

Ron Burke, a veteran broadcaster and producer in South Florida, who first hit

radio airways in 1981 at WDNA-FM. He is currently at MYSTIK 1400 AM.

Winsome "Lady C" Charlton, a veteran broadcaster who pioneered the 24-hour Caribbean radio format in the United States. Charlton is still a producer at WAVS 1170 AM and produces the annual ReggaeSoca Music Awards.

June Chin, one of five to host the first Jamaica Independence Ball in South Florida. Chin is the founder of both the Florida Chapter of Missionaries for the Poor and Florida Organization of Jamaicans.

Lloyd Daley, founding member Members Only Social Club of Miami and Jamaica United Relief Association.

Norma Darby, for her contribution to and dissemination of Jamaican music, history, folklore, and dance in South Florida. She has been the leader of the Jamaica Folk Review for almost three decades.

Carson "Eddy" Edwards, producer of the longest running Caribbean radio program in South Florida. Edwards is also director of the Jamaica Awareness Inc., which has brought entertainment to South Floridians for over 20 years.

Rev. Dr. Dennis Grant, a human rights activist in South

Florida who is the pastor of Restoration Ministries.

Elizabeth Grier, the longest serving staff member at the Consulate General of Jamaica in Miami. She joined the office in 1987.

Dale Holness, the current vice mayor of the City of Lauderdale, Florida. Holness established a sister city partnership between Lauderdale and Falmouth, Jamaica last year.

Laurice Hunter-Scott, chairperson of the Coordinating Council of the Kingston-Miami Sister Cities program since 1989.

The program has contributed to the establishment of trade, education, disaster preparedness and cultural exchange between Jamaica and the U.S.

Rev. Noel Hyatt, pastor of the Gateway Church in Fort Lauderdale. The church has had South Florida's predominant Jamaican congregation



Caribbean Today's publisher Peter Webley, displays his community service award while flanked by Jamaica's Governor General Kenneth O. Hall, left, and Jamaica's Consul General in Miami Ricardo

for more than three and a half decades.

Claudette Parkin, one of the five members of the first Jamaica Independence Ball in South Florida. Parkin was the founding member of the Jamaica Nurses Association of South Florida and the Convent of Mercy Alpha Alumae chapter in South Florida.

Sydney Roberts, president of Jamaica Awareness, Inc. Roberts was also one of the five who brought the first Jamaica Independence Ball to South Florida.

Joan Seaga-Gonzales, the founder of the Jamaica United Relief Association, an organization which supports health-care management and delivery to the neediest persons in both South Florida and Jamaica. Seaga-Gonzales was also one of five who brought the first Jamaica Independence Ball to South Florida.

Egeta Thompson-Martin, played an active part of both the Clint O'Neil Needy Kids of Jamaica Foundation and the Caribbean Music Festival. Thompson-Martin has also been the host of the Grand Jamaica Independence Ball for almost 21 years.

Peter Webley, publisher of Caribbean Today, which has been in continuous circulation since Dec. 1989. The paper has a monthly circulation of 40,000 in the United States and in the Caribbean.

Phillip Wong, South Florida businessman who serves on the board of the St. George's College Old Boys Association.

Story and photograph by Damian P. Gregory, a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



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IMMIGRATION KORNER

Checking fiancée's application; traveling without a 'green card'

Question: How would I know if my fiancée petition was approved? It was filed by my boyfriend in California last April 2006?

Answer: A fiancée petition usually takes approximately eight months before the United States government approves it, say attorneys Kirk Palma and Courtney Smith of the Law Office of Palma & Smith.

Once the petition has been approved, the government will notify the U.S. citizen's fiancée, by sending out an approval notice to the address given on the petition, added the attorneys. The government will then forward the file to the U.S. embassy that controls the jurisdiction where the beneficiary resides; thereupon the U.S. embassy in that jurisdiction will contact you, Palma and Smith said.

If neither of you have received any communication you can contact the National Visa Center and refer to any communications you have received so far, i.e. the receipt notice forwarded to your U.S. citizen fiancée when he filed the petition added the attorneys.

If advice is needed, you may contact your attorney or the District Office near your home for a list of community-based, non-profit organizations that may be able to assist you in applying for an immigration benefit.

Q: I am currently awaiting my Permanent Resident Card or "green card" through an adjustment of status petition, but wish to travel home soon to visit an ailing relative? Is this possible and how can I obtain permission?

A: The U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Service says individuals with an application for adjustment of status to that of lawful permanent resident or those who have been granted Temporary Protected Status or have an application for an application for relief under section 203 of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA 203), or an asylum application, must obtain permission to travel or advance parole by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document with the agency before traveling abroad.

Advance parole is permission to re-enter the U.S. after traveling abroad in order to continue processing for adjustment of status. Individuals must be approved for advance parole before leaving the U.S. USCIS officials warn that travel outside of the U.S. without advance parole has severe consequences and individuals who violate this law may be unable to return to the U.S. and their applications may be denied.

Applicants can apply for advance parole at local USCIS service centers. Note, processing time for centers ranges from 90 to 150 days, so applicants needing to travel abroad should plan ahead due to the busy summer travel season.

You must file USCIS Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, complete with supporting documentation, photographs and applicable fees to the center in their neighborhood along with a check made payable to the USCIS for \$170. This form can be

downloaded directly at <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/i-131.htm>

Note, however, that under the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, migrants who depart the U.S. after being unlawfully present in the U.S. for certain periods

can be barred from admission to lawful permanent resident status, even if they have obtained advance parole. Those migrants who have been unlawfully present in the U.S. for more than 180 days, but less than one year are inadmissible for three years, while those who have been unlawfully present for a year or more are inadmissible for 10 years. Migrants, who are unlawfully present, depart the U.S. and subsequently reenter under a grant of parole, may nevertheless be ineligible to adjust their status.

Compiled By Felicia Persaud. This is a column created especially for immigrants concerned or unsure of issues pertaining to the U.S. immigration law. If you have an immigration question, then log on to www.immigrationkorner.com and submit your question. Personal answers will not be provided. The answers provided here are for information purposes only, and do not create attorney-client relationship, nor is it a substitute for legal advice, which can only be given by a competent attorney after reviewing all the facts of the case.



Six women get Caribbean Citizens Awards

Six Caribbean women were honored for their contributions to the region during Women's History Month in March.

Jacqui Quinn-Leandro, newly elected president of the Inter-American Commission on Women (CIM) of the Organization of the American States (OAS), made the announcement last month.

Outstanding Caribbean Citizens Awards went to women who have been highlighted for international acclaim. They are:

- Gloria Ballantyne, St. Vincent and the Grenadines' first lady of sports and leading netball administrator;
- Jamaican Dr. Christine Cummings, a renowned cricket fan, sports columnist and

commentator and lecturer in sports, politics and the media at the University of the West Indies;

- St. Lucian Nadine George, a top order batswoman who in Mar. 2004 became the first West Indies woman cricketer to score 100 runs in a Test match. For her efforts, Nadine George was awarded the prestigious MBE medal by Britain's Prince Charles.
- St. Lucian Verena Felicien, a cricketer who played for the West Indies team;
- St. Kitts and Nevis educator and painter Joan Mallalieu, for her contribution to fine arts; and
- Trinidad and Tobago's Giselle La Ronde, who in 1986 became the twin island republic's first ever Miss World.



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Jamaican takes off on historic solo flight around the world

GORDON WILLIAMS

MIAMI - A strong Caribbean link is at the heart of unfolding aviation history. And inspiration is the vehicle called on to help it take off.

Barrington Irving Jr., who has lived in Miami Gardens since he migrated from his birthplace Jamaica as a six-year-old, took off from South Florida's Opa-Locka Airport last month on a flight around the world that, when completed – predictably sometime in early May – will make the 23-year-old the youngest pilot ever to do it solo.

At approximately 11:30 a.m. Mar. 23, Irving pulled shut the door of his Colombia 400 plane, which he named "Inspiration", and propelled into the bright blue sky on a journey that he dreamt about years ago and is now using to promote aviation as a career, especially among children, after himself being encouraged as a teen to find his wings by another Jamaican, commercial pilot Gary Robinson.

MARK

For the hundreds of children who showed up at the airport to witness Irving's take-off on the "Experience Aviation World Tour", which was preceded by an aviation career fair and an elaborate ceremony to mark the occasion attended by his parents Barrington Sr. and Clovalyn, aviation experts, government officials and a host of well-wishers, the young pilot has already made his mark.

"It (Irving's feat) motivates me to pursue the goal," said Chris Leslie, a Jamaican-born teenager with interest in aviation and, who, along with his parents attended the function.

"I can't fly planes," explained 10-year-old, Rolik Beauburn, "but I think I can learn."

Yet the youngsters were not the only ones inspired by Irving's planned trip, which will take him more than 40 days to complete, crossing continents and oceans on a journey that can be tracked via computer. Adults too embraced him, some openly emotional and filled with pride.

"He's like a fruit from a tree with strong roots," was how Jamaican-born Miami resident Michelle Hylton described her admiration for Irving as she held a large Jamaican flag above her head. "(Irving's accomplishment) shows the value coming out of our island. We've always been leaders and we set good examples."



Last minute checks are made to "Inspiration", the plane that is expected to take Barrington Irving Jr. around the world.

DUE CREDIT

Leading up to the historic morning, Irving had always credited his Caribbean background and family influence. "Mom, dad, we made it," he told last month's audience to loud applause.

Irving again pointed to his roots as the source of his inspiration, but his aim targeted a future in which he visions more underprivileged children following his lead by pursuing worthwhile careers.

"I didn't start off rich, I didn't have much," he told the youngsters in the audience. "I started off with nothing, absolutely nothing. You too can live your dream."

After hearing a tribute from his father, an emotional Irving Jr. rubbed away tears. Irving Sr., who himself once harbored dreams of flying airplanes, but shelved those to tend to his family as a new immigrant arriving in the United States, deflected much of the credit for his son's accomplishment.

"I think I'm just blessed to be the vessel chosen to carry a child of destiny," he said shortly after "Inspiration" disappeared into the distant skies.

Meanwhile, the pilot's mother downplayed suggestions that she was overly nervous about her son's solo trip. She plans to stay in close contact with Irving Jr. throughout.

"As a mother you have that feeling, just thinking about him flying around the world by himself," said Clovalyn Irving. "(But) I told him that everywhere he goes he should get in touch with me as soon as he lands."

Irving's first stop after leaving Miami was expected to be Cleveland, Ohio, to meet with officials from the National



Barrington Irving Jr. makes his way from the stage following the function to mark his historic flight. Immediately behind him are his parents, mother Clovalyn, followed by father Barrington Sr. In front of Irving Jr. is Gary Robinson, the Jamaican commercial pilot who he said inspired him to pursue aviation.

Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Then it was on to New York before departing the U.S. for Canada. His average time on flight legs is being projected at six to eight hours, with longest – from northern Japan to Sheyma, Alaska along the Aleutian Islands – running 10 to 12 hours. Power settings, weather conditions and fuel capacity will determine the range of each leg.

MINOR MIRACLE

That the world tour even took off has been described as a minor miracle. Irving strug-

gled to meet his fundraising target of close to \$1 million last year, which led to a postponement of the tour. Then predicted weather conditions during winter shelved the trip until last month.

Irving has been labeled a "hero" and "a symbol" for his efforts. During the ceremony tributes poured in from civic and political leaders, including a message relayed from Jamaica's Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller, who said "we in Jamaica will be closely following your progress."

"It's incredible, almost beyond

description," said Jamaica's Consul General in Miami Ricardo Allicock, who claimed his government donated \$10,000 to Irving's efforts. "(What Irving) is doing is still almost unimaginable. It is a glorious, glorious achievement for black America, Jamaica and mankind."

Irving appeared to understand the implication as well. "Give me a quick minute to just soak this in," he said as he surveyed the large audience before take-off. "This is truly amazing for me."

"This moment," he added later, "I could not picture it any other way."

Photographs and story by Gordon Williams, Caribbean Today's managing editor.



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CORRECTIONS/APOLOGIES

Technical difficulties resulted in errors appearing in Caribbean Today's March 2007 issue. Among them:

- The wrong photograph was used to identify flag of St. Kitts and Nevis on the cover.
- The name for the flag of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was

omitted from the display of flags on the cover.

- No page 16 appeared in the publication. Instead a duplicate of page 18 appeared in that spot.

We sincerely wish to apologize for these errors and we are working to correct them.

U.S. blasts prison conditions in the Caribbean

NELSON A. KING

WASHINGTON – The United States Department of State has painted a dismal picture of prisons in the Caribbean community (CARICOM), describing conditions as very unsatisfactory.

In its "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2006", the U.S. pointed to what it described as grave human rights violations. The comprehensive, scathing report, released here last month, said prison conditions throughout the region are generally "poor".

"Overcrowding was a major problem", it stated about the Bahamian prison system, pointing out that the men's maximum-security block, originally built in 1953 to hold 450 inmates, held more than 725 of the approximately 1,500 total inmate population in 2006.

"Male prisoners placed in the maximum-security unit were crowded into poorly ventilated cells that generally lacked regular running water, toilets, and laundry facilities", the report added, stating that most prisoners lack beds, slept on concrete floors, and were locked in small cells 23 hours per day, "often with human waste".

The report said prison conditions in Jamaica are similarly poor, primarily due to overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions. It said the Department of Correctional Services adopted measures during the year to improve catering services, and also entered into a new contract for insect and rodent control for all facilities. It added that medical care is also poor, primarily because of few doctors on staff.

UNFAIR DETENTION

The report said though the law requires police to present a detainee in court within a reasonable time period (but) in practice, authorities continue to detain suspects for lengthy periods, often up to two or three years, which the government attributed to an "overburdened court system".

In Antigua and Barbuda, the report said prison conditions are also poor, pointing out that the country's only prison holds 193 inmates with inadequate toilet facilities.

"Prison overcrowding was attributed in part to a law that limited the ability of magistrates to grant bail to those accused of certain offenses", the report stated.

"Due to space limitations,

authorities sometimes held persons on remand together with convicted prisoners", it added.

The report said that in Barbados, where "the government generally respected the human rights of its citizens", prison conditions remained "very poor".

It said prisoners continue to be held in the temporary prison facility, constructed at Harrison Point, after the Mar. 2005 riots destroyed Glendairy Prison. A new permanent prison, designed to meet modern international standards, is under construction, with completion slated for Aug. 2007.

The State Department alluded to media reports in attributing the motive behind the Glendairy Prison fire to "widespread incidents of rape within the prison", alleging that rape is also "prevalent" at Harrison Point.

It referred to an account by a released British citizen, who was incarcerated at Glendairy at the time of the riot, highlighting prison conditions at both facilities.

"His account alleged unchecked gang violence, indifference of guards to medical needs, cramped quarters, and unsanitary conditions", the report stated.

The State Department said prison conditions in Belize are "poor" and have failed to meet international standards.

"During the year, there were reports that prison authorities brutalized troublesome prisoners, including placing inmates in a small, unlit, and unventilated punishment cell called 'supermax'", it said. "Inmates claimed that prison officials sometimes withheld food and water as further punishment, conducted strip searches and beatings, and extorted money for transfers to better conditions", the report stated.

EXCESSIVE PUNISHMENT

It said an ombudsman's investigation determined that "punishment was excessive" and the officers involved should be punished; however, no further action was taken.

The State Department said Dominica's lone prison, Stock Farm, is in a state of "disrepair", adding that "conditions remained unsanitary and overcrowding was a seri-

ous problem".

It said the prison holds 301 prisoners in a facility designed for fewer than 200 inmates.

"Juvenile detainees were held with adults, and pretrial detainees were held with convicted prisoners, due to a lack of separate facilities", the report stated.

The State Department said prison conditions in

Grenada generally meet international standards, with the exception of overcrowding.

"Overcrowding was a significant problem as 334 prisoners were housed in space designed for 98 persons", the report stated.

"There was no separate facility for juveniles, so they were mixed in with the general prison population", it said.

In Guyana, the report said prison and jail conditions are poor, "particularly in police holding cells". In quoting the Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA), the State Department said: "while the Prison Authority was committed to creating a humane and professional prison service, capacity and resource constraints were a problem".

"Overcrowding was, in large, part due to backlogs of pretrial detainees", it added.

The report said the prison system also faces staffing constraints and lack of resources.

"However, attempts were made to give all prison offi-

cers human rights training, and the senior level management of the Prison Service made serious efforts to combat cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in the prisons", it said.

"The GHRA did not consider mistreatment of prisoners a problem in the prison system", it added.

In Haiti, the State Department said the prisons remain "overcrowded, poorly maintained, and unsanitary".

It said prisoners and detainees continue to suffer from a lack of basic hygiene, malnutrition, poor quality health care, and the presence of rodents, the report said.

"Furthermore, most prisons lacked adequate food and sanitation and periodically suffered from lack of water, especially in the provinces", it added, noting that the incidence of preventable diseases, such as beriberi, AIDS, and tuberculosis decreased during 2006 but remain "a serious issue".

The report said prison and detention centers in St. Kitts and Nevis are overcrowded, and resources are limited.

It said the prison on St. Kitts, which has a capacity for 150 prisoners, held 204 prisoners at year's end. The report stated that some prisoners slept on mats on the floor.

In St. Lucia, the report said prison conditions generally meet minimum international standards at the three-year-old Bordelais Correctional Facility, which has a capacity of 500 prisoners, holding approximately that number. But in neighboring St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the State Department said prison build-

ings are "antiquated and overcrowded", with Her Majesty's Prison in Kingstown, the capital, holding 377 inmates in a building originally designed for 75.

After renovations, the prison was intended to hold about 150 inmates.

"These conditions resulted in serious health and safety problems", the report said, pointing out that despite prison reforms, problems still exist, such as "endemic violence, understaffing, underpaid guards, uncontrolled weapons and drugs, an increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS, and unhygienic conditions".

The report said in Suriname, most facilities, particularly older jails, remain "unsanitary and seriously overcrowded, with as many as four times the number of detainees for which jail capacity was intended".

VIOLENCE

It said violence among prisoners is common, and prisoners continue to complain of mistreatment by guards.

"Human rights monitors expressed concern about conditions in pretrial detention facilities, which remained overcrowded", the report said. The State Department said conditions at the eight prison facilities in Trinidad and Tobago have been "somewhat upgraded but continued to be harsh". It said the recently built maximum-security prison in Arouca has helped in relieving overcrowding at the Port of Spain prison.

The report said staff shortages compelled the prison service to limit the "airing" time provided to prison inmates, serving as the basis of a complaint filed against the prison service by death row inmate Alladin Mohammed, which was still pending at year's end.

- CMC



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FEATURE

Drug trafficking poses major problems for Caribbean ~ U.S.

NELSON A. KING

WASHINGTON – Illicit drug trafficking continues to pose major problems in the Caribbean, according to the United States Department of State.

In its 2007 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, released last month, the U.S. State Department identified a number of Caribbean countries, including The Bahamas, Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, Suriname and the Eastern Caribbean, as major transit points for cocaine and/or marijuana bound for the U.S.

The report stated that cocaine flow originates in South America and arrives in The Bahamas by go-fast boats, small commercial freighters, or small aircraft from Jamaica, Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic) and Venezuela.

Sport fishing vessels and pleasure crafts then transport the cocaine from The Bahamas to Florida, blending into the legitimate vessel traffic that moves daily between these locations.

Larger go-fast and sport fishing vessels regularly transport between 1,000 to 3,000 pounds of marijuana shipments from Jamaica to The Bahamas, which are moved to Florida in the same manner as cocaine.

“The Bahamas will likely continue to be a preferred route for drug transshipment and other criminal activity because of its location and the expanse of its territorial area”, the State Department said, urging the Bahamian government to continue its “strong commitment to joint counter-narcotics efforts and its cooperative efforts to extradite drug traffickers to the U.S.”, the report said.

UNLUCKY SEVEN

The State Department said the seven Eastern Caribbean countries – Antigua and

“insignificant”.

“The Government of Guyana’s inability to control its borders, a lack of law enforcement presence, and a



Drugs and money seized by U.S. law enforcement officers.

Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines – form the “eastern edge” of the Caribbean transit zone for drugs, mostly cocaine and marijuana products, going from South America to U.S., Europe and other markets. It said illicit narcotics transit the Eastern Caribbean mostly by sea, in small go-fast vessels, larger fishing vessels, yachts and freight carriers.

“Drug trafficking and related crimes, such as money laundering, drug use, arms trafficking, official corruption, violent crime, and intimidation, have the potential to threaten the stability of the small, democratic countries of the Eastern Caribbean and, to varying degrees, have damaged civil society in some of these countries”, the report stated.

The State Department also said Guyana is a transshipment point for cocaine destined for North America, Europe, and the Caribbean, noting that in 2006, domestic seizures of cocaine were

lack of aircraft or patrol boats allow traffickers to move drug shipments via sea, river, and air with little resistance”, the report said, stating that the Bharrat Jagdeo administration is yet to implement the “substantive initiatives” of its National Drug Strategy Master Plan (NDSMP) for 2005-2009.

“Government counter-narcotics efforts are undermined by the lack of adequate resources for law enforcement, poor coordination among law enforcement agencies, and a weak judicial system”, the report added.

It said Haiti, a “major transit country for cocaine” from South America, is experiencing a surge in air smuggling of the drug out of Venezuela, and is a “significant transit country for cocaine destined for the United States and to a lesser extent Canada and Europe”.

The report said the number of drug smuggling flights from Venezuela to Hispaniola increased by 167 percent from 2005 to 2006, about one-third of which went to Haiti.

“In addition to 1,125 miles of unprotected shoreline, uncontrolled seaports, and numerous clandestine airstrips, Haiti’s struggling police force, dysfunctional judiciary system, corruption, a weak democracy and a thriving contraband trade contribute to the prolific use of Haiti by drug traffickers as a strategic point of distribution”, the report said.

The State Department said Jamaica, too, is a major transit point for cocaine en route to the U.S., and is also a key source of marijuana and marijuana derivative products for the Americas.

“Jamaica’s difficult to patrol coastline, over 100 unmonitored airstrips, busy commercial and cruise ports, and convenient air connections make it a major transit country for cocaine”, the State Department said, noting, at the same time, that the country remains the Caribbean’s largest producer and exporter of marijuana.

The report added that Suriname – a transit point for South American cocaine en route to Europe and, to a lesser extent, the U.S. – is unable to control its borders.

LACKING RESOURCES

It added that Suriname is also hampered by inadequate resources, limited training for law enforcement agents, lack of a law enforcement presence in the interior, and lack of aircraft or patrol boats.

“The GOS (Government of Suriname) is unable to detect the diversion of precursor chemicals for drug production, as it has no legislation controlling precursor chemicals and, hence, no tracking system to monitor them”, the report stated.

“The lack of resources, limited law enforcement capabilities, inadequate legislation, drug related corruption, a complicated and time-consuming bureaucracy, and overburdened and under-resourced courts inhibit GOS’s ability to identify, apprehend, and prosecute narcotic traffickers”, it added.

“Suriname’s sparsely populated coastal region and isolated jungle interior, together with weak border controls and infrastructure, make narcotics detection and interdiction efforts difficult”, it continued.

The State Department said Trinidad and Tobago is a transit country for illegal drugs from South America to the U.S. and Europe.

But it noted that while there has been an increase in illicit drug traffic out of Venezuela, the quantity of drugs transiting Trinidad and Tobago “does not have a significant effect on the U.S.”

“Cannabis is grown in Trinidad and Tobago, but not in significant amounts”, it said, pointing out, however, that the country’s petrochemical industry imports and exports chemicals that can be used for drug production.

But the State Department said the Patrick Manning government has instituted export controls to prevent diversion.

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VIEWPOINT

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White or blue collar, indeed

TONY ROBINSON

There is currently a huge lottery scam taking place in Jamaica, where people in the United States are contacted and told that they have won millions, so they are to send money to cover "fees".

What's amazing is how many fall for this, sending out thousands of dollars, even though they never entered any lottery. Pickpockets, cutpurses, chain grabbers, fowl thief, praedial larcener, embezzler, fraudulent converter, thief, all have the same thing in common, they want a lot for as little effort as possible.

At times though, they really put a lot of planning and effort in bilking you or your organization out of hard earned money, that it makes you wonder how well off they'd be if they had put their resources to a positive use. But there's thrill in crime and there's profit in it. Trust me, if there wasn't, they would not do it.

That Enron case years

ago in the U.S. is as bizarre as it's fascinating. If it didn't really happen, and some writer concocted such a tale or a movie was made about it, nobody would believe it, as it seems so far fetched. But truth is indeed stranger than fiction and thieves are even more inventive and have more vivid imaginations than pulp fiction writers or scribblers of screenplays.

Enron was real, and very scary. That a few 'executives' could sit down and cook up such a scheme to rob thousands of people, many of them old pensioners, of their life's savings and investments, is simply criminal. One Enron exec swiped \$850 million, another \$350 million, while a few small fry took only a few million apiece.

What does one man do with \$850 million U.S. dollars anyway? But the fact is that putting bigtime executives in jail for perpetuating accounting fraud has proved very hard to do. On Aug. 2, 1999, Fortune magazine ran an article that spotlighted the



accounting scandals of the time. "Of the big ones then generating tales of absolutely egregious behavior, none has produced jail sentences." That was taken from an article, "White collar crime, hard time, hardly", Fortune magazine.

HOME GROWN

But let's bring it closer home where the people at Enron could perhaps learn a trick or two from our entrepreneurs in criminology. The downtown pickpocket - he cruises the shadows, eyes darting furtively from victim to unsuspecting victim, seeking out the weak, the unwary, the unwitting, just like the harbor shark. His fingers are nimble, his hands are quick, and just like Jack, his legs can take him faster and higher with the stolen candlesticks. 'A fool and his money are soon parted,' is his motto.

Our pickpockets are legendary, as tales abound about their prowess. They will relieve you of your cash secreted away in your undergarments, delicately removed like the master surgeon removing a tumor, without spilling a drop of blood.

"All me money gone and a didn't feel a thing," the victim wails.

Once a friend of mine, a prominent surgeon, got taught a lesson in the delicate art of cash removal, from one of those guys. He was buying his usual Sunday papers at the spotlight, when one so called vendor neatly relieved him of all his paper money, but leaving the wallet still clutched in my friend's hand. Well you should see the good doctor jump out of his Benz and run down thief. And he caught him too, but he was also secretly impressed with the guy's dexterity.

"This bredda could easily enroll in the micro surgery faculty," he quipped, as he draped the thief and carted him off.



TONY ROBINSON

But the fact is, for someone to have that skill, it must have taken years of practice to master, and his many victims all wondered what hit them. Most

didn't even know until they reached home and felt for their money. Oh, don't let the occasional catching and beating of a few fool you, most get away and aren't even felt or seen as the ply their secret trade.

EASY MEAT

But why suffer in the hot sun with the threat of being chased and beaten, even by your own kind, when you can relax in the comfort of your air conditioned office and reap your unjust rewards? Pillaging, storming castles, robbing and looting went out with medieval times. Now, in the computer age, it's the era of the white collar crime, and there's profit in it. We now seem to have a spate of executives, middle managers, managers and general workers willing and able to take their companies out to lunch, and stick them with the bill. Every day we read or hear how so and so from this or that company has defrauded the institution of millions and absconded. Even white collar crime has different terms. A grab thief, grabs and runs, but an office thief defrauds and absconds. What an easy way to make money, juggle and flee without breaking a sweat.

This plague is in our banks, our credit unions, our school bursaries, and anywhere easy money can be had. Rarely is it a one-time thing, as the auditors always show that it was going on for five or six years or more. That's another thing, purloining cash

seems to pay so much that people make a habit of it and are never satisfied. They just can't stop, but make a career of it. They wouldn't even take a one lick and move, but instead stay and thief, stay and thief, settle down and stay and thief some more, even as they laugh and chat up with the other employees.

Sure, some get caught, but for every two caught, 20 are living it up in Hawaii or Switzerland or

somewhere in the South of France. The other irate employees may say, "But look how she plan and scheme and rip and run, what a damn thief." But secretly and ever so fleetingly the thought just may go, "A wonder how she do it, why I couldn't tink of it? But me can't take shame yah, and me nuh have nuh luck."

For most of us, jail time is not a happy prospect.

FREE WILLIES

Speaking of jail, you won't find any of those white collar criminals in jail serving any long sentence. Oh, they'll steal millions, but only serve a few months. "The bigger the crime, the lesser the time," goes the ditty.

White and blue collar crime pays so much that everybody's into it. From the mechanics who say they put in new parts, but put in old instead, that is if they even bother to change the part at all, to hospitals that pad their bills and charge thirty dollars for one aspirin. From lawyers who take people's house deposit money and build mansions of their own, to contractors who build two houses out of your house material. From car dealers who sell your car but refuse to hand over your money, to bank workers who skim from old dormant accounts, to bursars who filch from school fees and book money. From parsons who accept all denominations, especially the large bills, for the "church building fund", to con men who spin tales of woe or assure you of get rich quick schemes.

We live among them and they do it because there's profit in it. If crime didn't pay, they wouldn't do it. And damn the risk they say, but if you get caught don't bother to bawl. If you can't do the time, don't do the crime.

seido1@hotmail.com

CARIB Comments

• "Can the world, without anguish, accept itself as part this, part that, part the other but totally human without one part of it trying to dominate the other?" - Former University of the West Indies Vice Chancellor Professor Rex Nettleford last month addressing the issue of the African diaspora's inclusion in globalization.

• "I believe it was a night on which all people of Caribbean origin were proud as millions around the



world were treated to a stunning spectacle" - Chris Dehring, chief executive officer of ICC Cricket World Cup 2007 commenting on the event's opening ceremony in Jamaica last month.

• Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders were also pleased with the tournament's launch:

"It was fantastic, it was A-plus, it was just wonderful" - CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington.



"I feel like a little baby just born. I'm really excited" - Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Mitchell.

"Anywhere you go in the world, I do not believe anyone could put on a more fantastic show than what happened here at Trelawny, Jamaica" - host Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller.



"It was magnificent, I was so filled with joy I almost wanted to cry; you know the talent we have, the color, the pageantry, the way everything was brought together" - St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves.

"It must be understood that in every CARICOM member state police officers are accorded certain responsibilities under the law. Their authority as set out in law cannot be varied by any agreement. It will not be tolerated" - Barbados Deputy Prime Minister Mia Mottley last month condemning the searching of local police officers by Cricket World Cup security officials and calling on the tournament's organizers to know their limits.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Romantic escapes to Caribbean resorts

ELEANOR M. WILSON

Hope has begun in earnest, touting weddings and honeymoons for this century's most romantic date - 7/7/07. Why dwell on one date when romance awaits you year-round at several all-inclusive Caribbean resorts?

We're all familiar with Sandals and SuperClubs, so let's look at inclusions that are perhaps not so well known.

Galley Bay Beach Resort spreads leisurely along one of Antigua's famous white beaches. From the Sugar Mill reception entrance, guests are whisked by golf cart across the lagoon's wooden bridge to this secluded resort. Sip "Sundowners" while sunset watching on the Teepee Bar's open deck. Savor sounds of the surf during a romantic candlelight dinner under your own individual palapa at the Gauguin Restaurant.

Walk right onto the beach from your first-floor deluxe or premium beachfront room, and rinse off at your outdoor

shower. Premium beachfront suites have sunken living rooms, extra large tubs plus his-and-hers showers, and upholstered wicker lounges for snuggling on the patio or balcony.

Go Tahitian in a Gauguin Cottage overlooking the resort's lagoon. A sheltered breezeway connects two thatched roof roundabouts. One contains your air-conditioned bedroom, and the other a dressing room and bathroom with shower. The cottage opens to a terrace and private plunge pool inside a walled garden.

Nothing says romance like The Caves, located just south of Rick's Café in Negril. Just 10 handcrafted cottages are hidden among lush foliage on



the flat cliff top. Steps carved into the cliffs lead to several naturally formed, secluded grottoes. Enjoy a relaxing hot tub au deux with sea view in one, an intimate candlelight dinner in another, while rhythmic waves crash below. Duet cliff dives from several levels entice adventurous couples. A gauze-curtained spa pavilion hangs on the edge of the rocks, providing a romantic setting for couples massages. Similar dramatic spots invite super seclusion for sunset watching. (Room tax and gra-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

A new way for guys to pop the question

For centuries male suitors have agonized over how to surprise their girlfriends with a marriage proposal. Should he "pop the question" during a quiet picnic in the country? Or kneel down in a romantic European piazza to pose that surprise question - "Will you marry me?"

In recent years, madly in-love guys have conjured up ever more novel ways to ask for their chosen one's hand - ranging from aerial banners flown over crowded beaches to "I love you" signs lighting up stadium scoreboards.

Now, enamored men will have yet another unconventional venue to surprise the lady in question: Princess Cruises "Engagement Under the Stars" - a pre-arranged proposal on a giant shipboard movie screen, on the high seas under the stars, displaying the gentleman's proposal. Starting in June, with the launch of its newest ship, Crown Princess, the program will complement line's successful "Tie the Knot" shipboard-wedding program.

Not only will the new program surprise the unsuspecting lady, it will also turn the couple into instant shipboard celebrities, starring in their own real-life show - by having the prospective groom make his wedding proposal via a personal video displayed on the ship's top-deck 300-square-foot LED movie screen, before an audience of fellow cruise passengers. A photographer standing by will capture the couple's special moment when he surprises her with the ring on deck.

ROMANCE

Princess Cruises, one of whose ships was famous as the romantic setting for "The Love Boat" television series, will coordinate the surprise proposal to take place just prior to one of the ship's nighttime outdoor feature films. At a prearranged time, the proposer will bring his girlfriend to the scene under

the guise of watching the movie. The proposal, in fact, will have been filmed in a secret session with the ship's videographer to create a personalized and unique segment.

On that special evening, the couple will receive a celebratory glass of champagne and a red rose immediately following the proposal and a bottle of champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries in their stateroom that night.

Throughout the voyage they will be treated to a series of special amenities including a dinner for two at one of the ship's intimate dining venues, a romantic balcony breakfast and participation in a pottery class offered through the ship's learning program, *ScholarShip@Sea*, at which the couple will design a commemorative "engagement plate".

Other super perks include candid photographs of the proposal, plus an engagement portrait session, a pampered, couple's massage in the shipboard Lotus Spa and a \$100 credit toward a wedding-at-sea package on a future voyage.

After its debut on Crown Princess, "Engagement Under the Stars" will later be extended to all Princess ships that feature "Movies Under the Stars". Those intrigued by the magic of an engagement at sea may visit www.princess.com or call 1-866-444-8820 for more information.

"All the gentleman has to bring is the ring and the question," says Jan Swartz, Princess's senior vice president of customer service and sales.

And if he forgets the ring?

"Not to worry," adds Swartz. "The shipboard boutique has a range of fine jewelry - including engagement rings - just in case he overlooked that important detail!"

- Brides News Network



Air J offers upgrade to Caribbean newly weds

Air Jamaica is offering brides and grooms traveling to get married in any of its Caribbean destinations a free upgrade to the airline's new Executive Business Class.

To qualify, the bride and groom must book a minimum of 22 seats (including themselves) through Air Jamaica's

group sales office.

By booking as a group, couples and their guests gain savings on flights to their destination. The airline also provides a specially designed invite to inform guests of the discount. The bride and groom request their upgrade once the group is ticketed.



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~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Weddings on idyllic islands: It's all in the planning

Whether it's a gentle tropical breeze and the swaying of palm trees that provide the allure or just jetting away to somewhere exotic, destination weddings have become the marriage celebration of choice for many couples.

Today, almost two in 10 weddings are destination events - with Caribbean islands leading the list.

And it's no surprise why. Tropical destinations have increasingly attracted celebrity couples - golf icon Tiger Woods and his bride Elin Nordegren and Hollywood's Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner have made Caribbean islands their wedding destinations.

But island nuptials are no longer just the domain of the rich and famous. In fact, thanks to package deals and seasoned wedding planners, destination weddings are not only becoming more attainable for many, they're easier than ever to achieve.

To ensure a perfect outcome with the desired personal touch, it is important to find an experienced wedding guru who can, with an excellent support staff, watch every



Bride and groom at wedding at gazebo, Jolly Beach Resort in Antigua.

detail and relieve the pressure, so that the bride and groom can totally enjoy their dream wedding ceremony.

SUGGESTIONS

Beverly King, of Jolly Beach Resort on the Caribbean island of Antigua, has been planning island weddings for almost 20 years. She offers these suggestions: "Do your homework; it's important to remember that marriage requirements vary among des-

tinations. And if you have your heart set on a particular date, make arrangements well in advance if possible, as certain times of the year tend to book quickly. For instance, we find that the peak months for weddings are February, April, May, June, and November.

"Couples who decide on a destination wedding might also want to break free from traditional wedding attire," adds King. "I tell my brides and grooms to consider the climate and look for pieces that not only look great but travel well, like a cocktail dress in a light fabric and color. And while an island breeze helps set the tropical mood, it makes a veil difficult

to control. As an alternative, I suggest wearing a small tiara or using fresh flowers as accents. Grooms should also dress with comfort in mind, say a light linen suit, or dress pants paired with a shirt and vest or a classic guayabera for a true island feel."

PACKAGES

Brides and grooms desiring a sun-kissed destination wedding shouldn't have trouble finding a wedding package to fit any budget. For instance, Jolly Beach Resort's "Dream Wedding Package" (www.jollybeachresort.com) offers amenities and choices ranging from cake and champagne to photos and bou-

quets, to fulfilling the legal requirements. Moreover, engaged couples can choose to have their ceremony at any location on the 40-acre property; which includes two wedding gazebos - one located on the resort's dazzling half-mile-long beach.

With the aid of an experienced wedding planning team, an altar-bound couple can rest assured that their wedding day will be hassle-free. King, for example, not only handles the details of the wedding ceremony and reception, but she even personally schedules the appointment to apply for the marriage license and she, or a member of her team, escorts the couple to ensure that

Romantic escapes to Caribbean resorts

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

tivities are not part of the all-inclusive rate here.)

COZY

At the other end of Negril, winding paths through landscaped gardens lead to Sunset at the Palms' wooden cottages on stilts. Central outdoor stairs reach two cozy accommodations per cottage. The double daybed on an open porch is a perfect hideaway for intimate moments reflecting on nature...or each other...in jungle-like seclusion.

Inside, the large double shower streams jets from all directions to rejuvenate and reenergize. Public buildings continue the wooden theme, with both indoor and pavilion-style restaurants. The freeform pool, surrounded by plants and palms, has a Jacuzzi at one end and a central swim-up bar, also accessed by a curved bridge.

Across the street on Negril's famous seven-mile strand, mix and mingle at The Beach Club's huge circular bar, or hide under a palm tree at one of many picnic tables. Changing rooms and showers are available, along with a fully equipped watersports center.

UNIQUE OPTIONS

For a more upscale getaway, the Royal Paradisus

Villas at Paradisus Punta Cana, a resort in the Dominican Republic, promise royal treatment in every way, beginning with airport VIP greeting. These beachfront suites have everything, including butlers to pack and unpack for you, arrange golf tee times and spa treatments, or make dinner reservations at one of eight a la carte restaurants on premises (plus two with buffet service). Punta Cana is known for its sparkling beaches, and this one is perfect for long walks in the moonlight.

You can't go wrong honeymooning at any Couples resort in Negril or Ocho Rios. Since they specialize in couples, everything is geared to pairs...swings, lounges, Bali beds, spa treatments and the like. One unusual value here is that "all-inclusive" means excursions off property as well. This can be a trip to Dunn's River Falls, horseback riding, a greathouse tour and so on.

No matter which you choose, romance is sure to thrive at these romantic all-inclusives.

Eleanor M. Wilson is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



everything goes smoothly.

"There is no residency requirement to be married in Antigua, but we need couples to be here one working day prior to the ceremony to process the necessary documents," she said.

With all of the preparations completed and the license obtained, couples can simply relax and be absolutely certain that they have chosen a stunning backdrop for their celebration, guaranteeing a wedding album full of joyous memories.

Photographs and story obtained from Bridal News Network.

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OECS fights fake drugs

CASTRIES, St. Lucia, CMC - A senior official of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has called for new measures aimed at combating the proliferation of counterfeit drugs in the Caribbean.

The OECS Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, the agency responsible for purchasing drugs for the nine-member sub-region, said it would be embarking on an early warning strategy dubbed "Counterfeit Drugs Can Kill" in an effort to educate the public on the dangers of faked drugs.

In a statement, the agency said it was reminding the population of a United Nations report that warns that faked

prescription medicines were flooding developing nations with sometimes deadly consequences.

Head of the OECS Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Francis Burnett, said the slogan would be a simple message intended to alert the population in the sub-region to the dangers of faked drugs as well as being vigilant with the purchase of drugs over the counter.

Burnett said the worse case has so far been in Haiti, where three years ago, scores of children were hospitalized after ingesting counterfeit cold syrup.



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Dental exams key to control of oral health

You take pretty good care of your teeth, brushing and flossing daily. Is it really necessary for you to schedule dental exams unless there's a problem?

Oral health professionals say there are numerous reasons to keep those checkups on your calendar, even if you take good care of your teeth.

"Just because it's been awhile since you've had a cavity or a dental health issue, don't give up on those visits to the dentist," said Dr. Max Anderson, DDS, a national oral health advisor for Delta Dental Plans Association in the United States.

"Dental checkups continue to be an important part of taking good care of teeth, preventing problems and providing people with greater control of their oral health."

for lack of a checkup can progress into more serious stages possibly resulting in pain, tooth loss and other problems. If caught early, periodontal disease is easier to



manage and, in some cases, reverse.

EARLY DETECTION

Preventive checkups provide dentists with opportunities to identify and intervene early in dental diseases. This can reduce any pain and the financial costs associated with more severe forms of dental diseases.

For example, periodontal disease that goes unnoticed

Dental professionals can also use today's dental exams to screen for periodontal (gum) disease, oral cancer and other health issues that can be difficult to spot on your own. More than 120 diseases can cause specific signs and symptoms in and around the mouth and jaw. Dental professionals

performing checkups can spot symptoms that could indicate serious health problems elsewhere in the body that need attention.

The prevention connection extends to recent changes in your health. Regular checkups allow your dentist to keep up with changes to your health status. Upon learning of medical conditions you've developed or treatments you're receiving, your dentist can recommend strategies to help you proactively counter the negative effects the conditions and treatments would otherwise have on your oral health.

"Your smile and your breath, the foods you can eat and social interactions are all enhanced through better oral health," said Dr. Anderson. "Dental checkups are a great investment in your oral and overall health."

- Information obtained from Delta Dental Plans Association, based in Oak Brook, Illinois, a U.S. network of independent not-for-profit dental service corporations specializing in providing dental benefits programs.



Tips for headache free travel

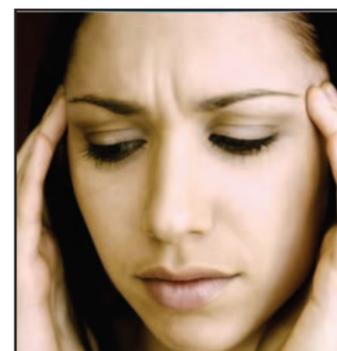
Preparing for vacations and traveling can produce an added amount of stress and tension - two key triggers in the onset of headaches.

The National Headache Foundation (NHF) (www.headaches.org) in the United States offers travelers the following tips:

Maintain normal sleeping and waking patterns - Late-night visits and early morning tours can lead to headaches by tempting you to stay up past your bedtime and wake up earlier than usual. Try to go to sleep and awaken the same time as you usually do, even on weekends.

Plan in advance - A well-

planned trip can ease the stress of traveling. Be prepared for extra long lines and wait times at the airport and arrive at least two hours before your sched-



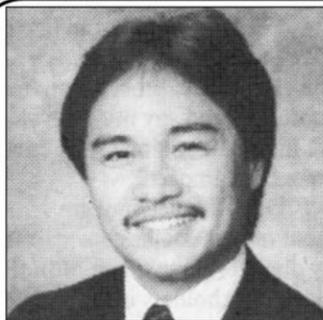
uled departure.

If you plan to travel by car, plot your course and make

hotel reservations in advance. It is also advisable to bring medication in a carry-on bag, as opposed to checked luggage, but be sure to follow security guidelines about liquids, gels and aerosols.

Discuss travel plans with your healthcare provider - If you are flying long distances, ask your healthcare provider about your dosage schedule. Some medications should be adjusted for high altitudes, lack of activity and different climates.

Don't skip or delay meals - An empty stomach could trigger a headache. Carry snacks.



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Caribbean stars jazz up Miami Gardens music festival

GORDON WILLIAMS

MIAMI GARDENS - Caribbean-flavored performances added pizzazz to "Jazz in the Gardens", emerging among the main highlights of the two-day festival held here last month.

Despite the presence of world-renowned musicians at the Mar. 24-25 event, including American soul singer India.Arie and Latin icons like Brazil's Sergio Mendes and Cuban-born Paquito D'Rivera, it was Jamaican star Luciano who generated the most excitement from the audience at Dolphin Stadium in this South Florida city.

Performing on the closing day and in front of a much smaller crowd than day one, Luciano's delivery lifted the music festival from a mellow slumber into a soul-searching roots reggae revival.

SHOWMANSHIP

Dressed in khaki with long dreadlocks flashing and bouncing throughout, the acrobatic Luciano displayed showmanship wrapped tightly

in a spiritual armor. "The Messenger", as he is often called, belted out several of his biggest hits, including "Sweep Over My Soul", "Lord Give Me Strength", "It's Me Again Jah" and "Your World And Mine", which had the crowd rising from its seat, applauding and dancing in the aisles.

And when he leapt from



Othello Molineaux, from Trinidad and Tobago, plays on pan.

the stage to mingle with the audience, they rushed to embrace him. He too honored them, saluting people "from



Jamaican Luciano entertains the crowd at Miami's "Jazz in the Gardens".

all over the Caribbean" with songs that at once thoroughly entertained while offering a message of peace, hope and happiness.

"We need the spiritual element in our lives," he told the crowd, which roared its approval.

QUALITY

Those who attended the second "Jazz in the Gardens"

also received quality music elsewhere, beginning the first day. Pieces Of A Dream, Boney James and Bobby Caldwell, who replaced Will Downing in the line-up, all delivered pleasing sets in front of some 5,000 people on a cool, breezy South Florida evening.

Day one closer India.Arie took the crowd on a sentimental journey with selections

from her third album "Testimony: Vol. 1, Life & Relationship", showing her wide-ranging musical talent and versatility dressed in a "story" style all of her own.

Day two attracted a crowd less than half the size and served up not only some of the Caribbean's best entertainers, but the most "vibes" as well. Trinidad and Tobago's Othello Molineaux and his quartet set the regional tone with beautiful pan music. His reggae style "Sentimental Mood" was special, as the heavy bass mingled with the sparkling sound of steel drum. It was like a thoughtful cruise with a pleasant breeze soaking in, and the crowd loved it.

Molineaux was followed by Jamaican Dean Fraser on saxophone. Fraser's 15-minute set was sweet and to the point, and his popular rendition of Bob Marley's "Redemption Song" never disappointed.

Yet when Fraser made way for Luciano, it was clear that "Jazz in the Gardens" needed a spark. "The Messenger" delivered. And when Luciano left the stage, with D'Rivera and Mendes still to come, most of the crowd left with him, underlining the dominance of the Caribbean influence on the show.

Photographs and story by Gordon Williams, Caribbean Today's managing editor.



St. Lucia to host musical extravaganza

~ Rodney Bay Village Music Bash to be held April 23-25

Some of the Caribbean's top calypso, soca and reggae musicians are scheduled to perform at a three-day musical extravaganza, from April 23-25, in St. Lucia.

The opening day of the "Rodney Bay Village Music Bash", to be held at the Digicel Coco Cabana in Rodney Bay, will feature Trinidad and Tobago's David Rudder and Jamaican crooner Beres Hammond.



Destra

They will be followed the next day by Sean Paul, the Jamaican Grammy-winning ambassador of dancehall reg-



Rudder

gae, who will share the stage with Trinidadian Queen of Soca Destra.

The extravaganza closes with Grammy winner Shaggy, and Grammy nominee Maxi Priest.

The three-day event is being sponsored by Coco Resorts, TurnKey Productions, Omni Entertainment and Digicel's Coco Cabana.

For more information, call 758-458 2626.

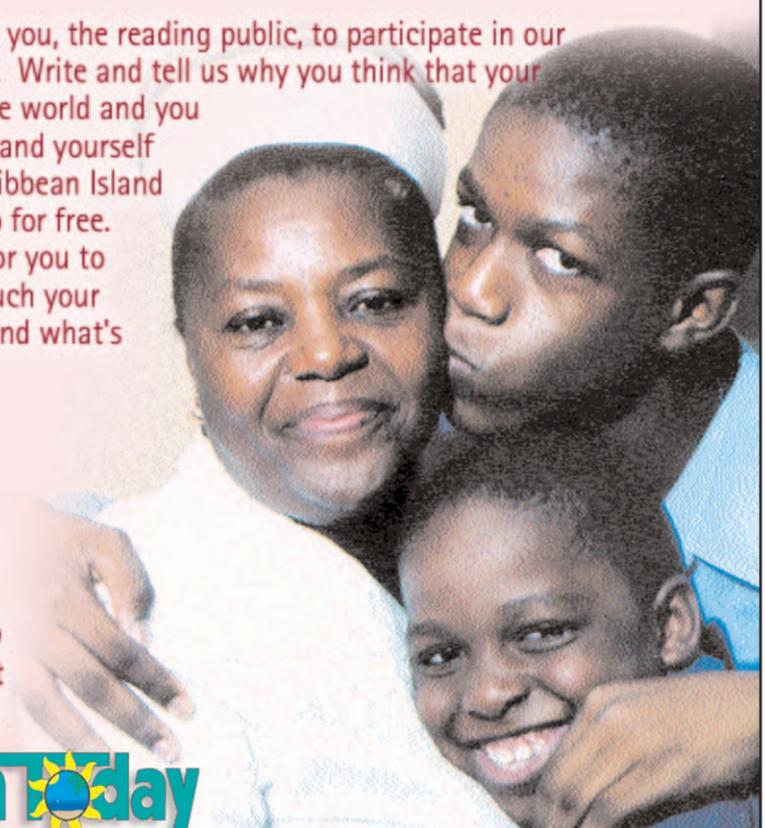


*Dear mamma,
How I love you. You have been there since birth for me, with your nurturing, loving, caring self. You have made me into who I am today, and I want to tell you how grateful I am to you, because there is no other like you for me.*

Caribbean Today invites you, the reading public, to participate in our "Dear Mamma" contest. Write and tell us why you think that your mother is the best in the world and you could find your mother and yourself jetting away to any Caribbean Island that Air Jamaica flies to for free. This is a great chance for you to show the world how much your mother means to you, and what's even better you could WIN!! WIN!! WIN!!

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Caribbean Today



U.N. launches scheme to reduce cost of remittances to Caribbean

UNITED NATIONS - A United Nations agency dedicated to eliminating rural poverty has launched a global initiative aimed at reducing the cost of remittances services to the Caribbean and other countries.

The \$10 million Financing Facility for Remittances was unveiled by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Guatemala City, the U.N. said in a statement issued last month.

It said the first batch of grant recipients is expected to be selected and announced later this year.

The Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) has said that remittances to the Caribbean and Latin America will continue to grow in coming years.

GROWTH

MIF Manager Donald F. Terry presented the estimate for money transfers made by Caribbean and Latin American migrants on the eve of the two-day annual meeting of the IDB Board of Governors in Guatemala City. "Given present economic and demographic trends in Latin America and the Caribbean and in industrialised countries, remittances will continue to

grow in volume over the next few years to more than \$100 billion a year by 2010," he said.

But Terry said, for the IDB and the MIF this growth was not a cause for celebration because it reflected the fact that the region cannot generate sufficient income opportunities to prevent millions of people from migrating. He, nevertheless, said remittances will continue to flow and have already exceeded both foreign direct investment and overseas aid to Latin America and the Caribbean, helping millions of families to escape poverty.

Terry said last year Caribbean and Latin American countries received about \$62.3 billion from migrants, mostly in North America, Europe and Asia. That figure was 14 percent higher than the amount for 2005. He said he expected remittances to the Caribbean and Latin America to rise to about \$72 billion for 2007.

Terry said the MIF will support the new IFAD program.



Terry

LIFELINE

Pedro de Vasconcelos, the coordinator of the funding scheme, described remittances as a vital lifeline for rural families around the world.

"These transfers go directly to improve the living standards of millions and millions of poor households," he said.

But he added, while competition had driven down the cost of remittances services between major cities, it remained more expensive to send money to rural areas, which often lack formal financial services.

The U.N. said the new financing facility would give funding priority to those projects or proposals, which link remittances with the provision of other financial services, such as savings, insurance and loans. "It will assist financial institutions, which either want to provide remittances services directly or as agents of banks or money transfer companies", the statement said. The new scheme is established with the financial support of the European Commission, Luxembourg, the U.N. Capital Development Fund, the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor and the IDB.



St. Kitts P.M. urges Caribbean business sector to think regional

BASSETERRE, St. Kitts, CMC - Prime Minister Dr. Denzil Douglas has called on Caribbean businessmen to develop opportunities to take advantage of the Caribbean community (CARICOM) Single Market (CSM).

Speaking last month at the Trinidad-headquartered CLICO Group opened a new headquarters here, Douglas said it was important that companies engaged themselves in the philosophy of effective regionalism and explored the emerging economic environment of the Caribbean region.

"Certainly, it is critical that the focus of regional companies takes into account the global competitiveness of the

region, and is fully and actively engaged in the growth and development of the people of the Caribbean community," he said.

The prime minister said the proposed Organization of Eastern Caribbean (OECES) economic union would also go a long way towards assisting the corporate sector in the sub region expand its business scope.

"This proposal is aimed at further strengthening the Treaty of Basseterre, thus pro-



Douglas

viding the framework to take OECES member states to the next logical level of functional corporation, and is intended to provide a fundamental nexus to the evolving CSME," he added.

CHALLENGING

Douglas said over the next 10 years the region would be entering a period that was challenging and exciting at the same time.

"It is up to all of us to commit ourselves to the ideal of being productive, creative and efficient, of being remarkable for our Caribbean friendliness and professionalism," the St. Kitts and Nevis leader added.



CCAA appoints new president

Washington, D.C. - The Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA) has appointed Manuel A. Rosales the organization's new president.

Rosales joins CCAA after serving as the assistant administrator for the United States Small Business Administration's (SBA) Office of International Trade.

At SBA, he served as the SBA administrator's principal

advisor on international trade, educational and technical assistance, risk management and finance programs designed to assist U.S. small businesses in the international marketplace.

BANKING CAREER

Rosales has a long career in banking and finance. He has served as vice president of

the Bank of California. He was also vice president for Shareholder Relations at the Capital Preservation Fund (now known as the Benham Capital Management Group).

Rosales replaces Federico Sacasa, who served as executive director of CCAA from 2002-2005 and president from 2005-2007.



Jamaica's business on show at JAPEX

Jamaica's indigenous goods and services will be on display during the 17th annual Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX) to be held in the Caribbean island this month.

The theme of JAPEX 2007, from April 29-May 1 in Ocho Rios, St. Ann, is "Eden by the Falls". The aim of the event is to showcase Jamaica's natural beauty, while promoting its unique selling opportunities.

One of the Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) largest trade shows, JAPEX is expected to attract some 36 delegates from

25 buyer companies and 128 delegates from 34 supplier companies at the Sunset Jamaica Grande Resort and Spa.

Utilizing a partnership with the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), JAPEX plans to offer a forum for leading suppliers of the Jamaican tourism product to meet with travel wholesalers and tour operators from Europe and the Americas.

To obtain more information on JAPEX, visit www.jhta.org/japex.htm

Legislation seeks to alter U.S. expatriation rules

STEVEN M. ROSENTHAL
MICHAEL ROSENBERG

Recently, legislation was once again proposed that would alter the United States tax consequences with respect to a person who is deemed to "expatriate" from the U.S.

The proposed rules, which are similar to prior proposals which were never enacted into law, would subject certain U.S. citizens and long-term residents who relinquish their U.S. citizenship or residence status to tax on the appreciation in all property they own at the time of their expatriation as if such property were sold for fair market (commonly referred to as a "mark-to-market tax").

Any gain from such deemed sale would be subject to current U.S. taxation to the extent it exceeds \$600,000 (\$1.2 million in the case of married individuals filing a joint return, both of whom relinquish citizenship or terminate residency). This \$600,000 exclusion amount will be increased each year by a cost of living adjustment factor.

EXCEPTIONS

Two exceptions exist to this new proposed mark-to-market rule. The first exception applies to an individual who was born with citizenship both in the U.S. and in another country; provided that 1) as of the expatriation date the individual continues to be a citizen of, and is taxed as a resident of, such other country, and 2) the individual was not a resident of the U.S. for the five taxable years ending with the year of expatriation.

The second exception applies to a U.S. citizen who relinquishes U.S. citizenship before reaching age 18-and-a-half, provided that the individual was a resident of the U.S. for no more than five taxable years before such relinquishment.

Notwithstanding these proposed rules, a person expatriating will be permitted to make an irrevocable election to continue

to be taxed as a U.S. citizen with respect to all property that otherwise would be subject to the mark-to-market tax. This election is an "all or nothing" election; an individual is not permitted to elect this treatment for some property but not for other property.

RULES

Under this election, following expatriation, the individual continues to pay U.S. income taxes at the rates applicable to U.S. citizens on any income generated by the property and on any gain realized on the disposition of the property. In addition, the property continues to be subject to U.S. gift, estate, and generation-skipping transfer taxes.

In order to make this election, the taxpayer is required to waive any treaty rights that would preclude the collection of the tax.

In addition, under the proposal, an individual is permitted to defer the payment of the mark-to-market tax. Under the election, the deferred tax attributable to a particular property is deferred until the property is sold or otherwise disposed of. In such case, interest will be charged for the period the tax is deferred at a rate two percentage points higher than the rate normally applicable to underpayments of taxes. The election is irrevocable and is made on a property-by-property basis.

UNCLEAR

As similar legislation has been proposed in the past, it is unclear if this new proposal will ultimately be passed into law. Furthermore, if in fact enacted, it is unclear when the new law would become effective.

Michael Rosenthal is a shareholder and Steven Rosenberg is an associate with the Coral Gables, Florida law firm of Packman, Neuwahl & Rosenberg and can be reached at 305-665-3311.



SPRING/SUMMER EDUCATION

www.caribbeantoday.com

~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Youth set to embrace nature at Caribbean summer camp

Developing a positive outlook for nature will be the focus of the 8th Wider Caribbean Environmental Youth Program to be held in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) this summer.

Under the theme of "Natural History, Ecology and Conservation on Caribbean Islands" the program will be presented at the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS) from July 30 to Aug. 4.

The program focuses on the decision makers of tomorrow by providing Caribbean young people with awareness on environmental issues in a fun, yet educational way. This year's eco camp is sponsored by the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA), its environmental subsidiary, the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST), American Airlines and Clean Islands International.

"One of the program goals is to facilitate the development of a positive environmental ethic by students, which builds their awareness and strengthens their commitment to conservation of the

natural environment and sustainable development for the good of human society," coordinator Randy Brown said in a recent press release.

ACTIVITIES

Students ages 12 to 18 will be immersed in activities that cover natural history and ecology of selected Caribbean



Educating children about their environment will be beneficial in the future.

ecosystems – coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove wetlands, dry forest and moist forest – conservation issues, natural resources management strategies, and environmental careers. The daily schedule includes field activities such as

guided plant walks, hikes to petroglyphs and reef bays, as well as group discussions on personal experiences, eco-systems and environmental ethics.

Instructors include professional presenters and local experts with practical experience in conservation, biology, marine biology, terrestrial tropical ecology, environmental policy, waste management and environmental education.

Cultural and environmental exchanges are components of the program. As part of the curriculum, each group will be invited to make a presentation about their history, environmental issues and concerns affecting their country. Students will also take turns to prepare a local dish from their country and present it to the entire group at dinner.

"The key for the success of

this program is that participants are immersed in a real, first-hand experience with nature; not only do they learn about

the surrounding eco-systems, but they see and feel them as

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)

Guyana pursues literacy program for prison inmates

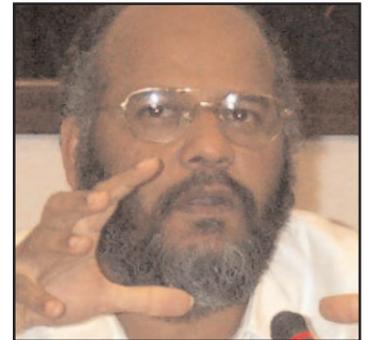
GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC - The Guyana government says it will be aggressively pursuing a literacy program for prisoners this year in addition to training in various skills, craft and agriculture.

Home Affairs Minister Clement Rohee said that religious and recreational activities within the prison's environment would be a continuing feature.

"We are committed to improving our prisons' condition and the literacy capabilities of prisoners," he said recently.

The Government Information Agency (GINA) said that some of the programs being projected this year include effective training of ranks to deal with the multi-dimensional challenges in the prison environment, developing security capabilities at each prison location and reducing dietary expenditure through self-sufficiency.

"In this respect we will



Rohee

work towards utilizing the prisons' estate to cultivate and rear livestock and produce more food. This will help us to ease the budgetary allocation to dietary expenditure. This money will now be used up in other areas," Rohee said.

GINA said that the state pays an estimated \$95 monthly to treat one inmate, noting that there are 19,000 prisoners.

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SPRING/SUMMER EDUCATION

~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Caribbean man is new president of Florida Memorial

A Jamaican-born educator has taken over the leadership reins of an institution of higher learning in South Florida.

Economist Karl S. Wright, PhD., has become the 11th president of Florida Memorial University (FMU).

"I always wanted to work with students. I thoroughly enjoy working with young people," the 54-year-old Wright told the Miami Herald newspaper before his installation as head of FMU last month.

"That's my commitment; that's my passion: to open doors for

our young men and women to allow them to realize the American dream."

Wright attended Knox College high school in Jamaica. He came to the United States more than 35 years ago.

Wright was inaugurated the new president of the 128-

year-old South Florida university on Mar. 16, during the school's annual Founders' Day Convocation.

GOALS

During the inaugural address, Wright outlined goals for his administration, including continuing to increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body, attracting top-tier professors and administrators to the University's faculty, and building strong relationships with South Florida's business and civic communities.

"Our university is a one-of-a-kind resource that provides young men and women access to high-quality academics while promoting cultural diversity, global awareness, and the principles and values of responsible citizenship – all

within the context and tradition of a historically black university," Wright told the audience.

"As president, I look forward to partnering with our faculty and staff to uphold our growing reputation for academic excellence and to develop new relationships for Florida Memorial at the local, national and international levels."

SUCCESSION

Wright succeeds Albert E. Smith, who served as FMU's president from 1991 until he retired in July 2006. Wright

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)



Wright

Miami-Dade College

Barbados calls on schools to enforce cell phone ban

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - The Ministry of Education here has mandated primary and secondary school principals to rigidly enforce a ban on the use of cellular phones by students while at education institutions.

Amidst widespread public concern over the use of cellular phones by school students, the Ministry said the phones and other communication devices, such as pagers, were not permitted at schools and called on principals to ensure that the ban, which it first imposed in Mar. 2003 was enforced.

"Students are not permitted to bring cell phones, pagers or any other communication devices to school", Chief Education Officer

Griffith Watson advised school principals in a recent memo.

"Students who defy this rule will have these devices confiscated and their parents summoned to collect them".

While the Education Ministry had mandated a ban of the devices since Mar. 2003, the word from education officials was that the ministry's policy was not being strictly enforced at all

the 100-plus government primary and secondary schools across the island. In addition to government run schools, the education official's latest recommendation was that the guidelines be also observed at privately-run institutions.



Youth set to embrace nature at Caribbean summer camp

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

part of the learning process," said Deirdre Shurland from CAST, adding that participants are also encouraged to conserve water and energy, recycle, and respect the wildlife around the camp.

The deadline for reservations is May 28, and the program is available for up to five students and one chaperone from up to seven Caribbean

islands, for a maximum of 42 participants.

For more information and the full program of the 8th Wider Caribbean Environmental Youth Program, including fees, contact Randy Brown at 410-647-2500; via email at: rb@islands.org or by visiting <http://www.islands.org/virgin/viers/aacha1.htm>

SPRING/SUMMER EDUCATION**www.caribbeantoday.com**

~ A Caribbean Today advertising feature

Community forum to aid education grant applicants

BROWARD COUNTY, Florida – Broward County Commission's Cultural Division will this month offer a community forum to aid applicants for the Education and Community Development (ECD) grant program.

The forum will be held from 10 a.m. to noon April 30 in the Main Library, room A/B, 100 S. Andrews Ave. in Fort Lauderdale.

The grant program supports arts education collaborations that promote skills, knowledge, and an appreciation of the arts. Projects occurring in low-income com-

munities are encouraged to apply.

The forum will offer grantees, applicants and other community art stakeholders, the opportunity to discuss current issues related to the application and management process of the Education and Community Development grant program.

AGENDA

Scheduled agenda items include: how have revisions to the ECD grant guidelines improved the grant application and management process; what additional changes to the

guidelines will further improve the grant application and management process; and an open discussion of participants' concerns.

Grant awards range from \$3,100 to \$30,000. Eligible applicants include Broward County public entities – cities, towns, public libraries, Native-American nations, Broward County not-for-profit, cultural organizations, and qualified individual artists from Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, or Monroe counties.

The application deadline is Dec. 1, 2007 for projects running from Oct. 1, 2008–Sept. 30, 2009.

Organizations looking to develop arts education programs should attend the forum even if they are not eligible to apply. The forum will teach about the necessary collaborations for submitting an eligible application.

For more information, call Patricia Zeiler, arts education assistant, at **954-357-8010** or e-mail

pzeiler@broward.org.



Summer tips to keep up academic skills

Want to help your children keep up their academic skills over the summer? Here are some tips from the experts:

- Set aside at least 20 minutes each day for reading.
- To keep writing skills fresh, buy children a notebook and let them decorate the cover. Then tell them it's their vacation journal and have them write down three things that happen each day.
- To keep up math skills, buy books of number puzzles (found at any bookstore). Also consider investing in math-related computer games.
- Find ways to make hobbies educational. A child who loves to collect baseball cards, for instance, could practice penmanship by writing fan letters to players. He could also work on math skills by tracking players' statistics and

sharpen up on reading by taking out books on baseball from the library.



Encourage children to read during their spare time.

- If you're taking a family vacation, bring home brochures that describe the history and culture of the places you'll be visiting. Try plotting out the trip on a map with your kids.

- **Familyfun.com**



Helping children with learning disorders

If your child has learning and/or attention problems, it's important to recognize that the shift from school year to summer break (however welcome) represents a transition phase and may pose special challenges for your child.

Regardless of the summer plans you've made, you may want to ease into summer in a way that addresses your needs as well as your child's. Here are some tips to consider:

1. Revamp — but don't eliminate — your child's daily routine. A daily routine gives most kids with learning or attention problems a sense of structure and security. While

certain tasks (like doing homework) can be dropped during the summer, new ones (like packing for daily swim lessons) may be added. For fun, you might loosen up on certain chores during the summer, like designating every Friday as "Don't make the bed" day!

2. Prepare your child for her scheduled activities. If possible, visit the locations where she'll be during day camp or day care in advance. Have your child talk to counselors, caregivers, as well as other kids who have enjoyed those same situations and settings.

3. Have your child contribute

to the family calendar. Together, you can determine key dates (e.g., community pool opens for recreation swim, July Fourth barbecue) and have your child mark these on the calendar.

4. Involve your child when preparing for family trips and activities. Depending on her age, she can help you map out driving routes or make a list of the clothing and recreational gear the family will need.

5. Encourage summertime learning. Summer outings may present opportunities for your child to learn about history, geography, and nature. Look for "teachable moments" and encourage her to listen, read, take photographs, collect postcards, and keep a journal of her adventures. This type of learning can boost the self-esteem of a child who struggles in school.

- Edited from SchwabLearning.org

Caribbean man is new president of Florida Memorial

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

previously served as FMU's executive vice president and provost, where he was instrumental in increasing the university's student enrollment, upgrading faculty credentials, and overseeing the school's graduate degree accreditation process.

"From the day he stepped foot on campus, Dr. Wright has been a tireless advocate for success – and was instrumental in Florida Memorial's historic passage from college to university," said Charles George, chairman of FMU's Board of Trustees.

"Now, as president, he will oversee our continued growth while ensuring our students have the resources they need to succeed during their years on campus – and beyond."

Before joining FMU, Wright served as dean of the School of Business at South Carolina State University for seven years. Prior to that, he was assistant professor of commodity marketing and economics at North Carolina A&T State University.

Wright is active in several professional and service organizations, including the Miami-Dade County Investment Advisory Committee, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, the Beacon Council, and the 100 Black Men of Fort Lauderdale.

He has been recognized by the Kellogg Foundation as a NAFEO leadership fellow, and by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, which selected him to participate in the Millennium Presidential Leadership Fellows Initiative.

Wright earned his Ph.D. in economics at Mississippi State University, and holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Maryland at College Park. His academic interests include economic modeling and statistical forecasting.

Information collected from various sources, including newspapers and FMU releases.



Florida Memorial
College

Cricket World Cup starts in blaze of Caribbean glory

EARL MOXAM

TRELAWNY, Jamaica, CMC - Mark it down as the day a dream was fulfilled. The ICC Cricket World Cup 2007 got underway last month with a near flawless opening ceremony at the Trelawny Multi-purpose Stadium in the North Western end of the island.

The 16 participating teams, their officials and visitors from around the region and the wider world were treated to a spectacular and diverse cultural package, heavily reflective of the music, dance, and artistic flavor of the West Indies, but with a taste of South Africa and Ireland thrown in for good measure.

Then, in a poignant moment, the ninth edition of the World Cup, the first to be staged in the West Indies, was declared officially open by the iconic Sir Garfield Sobers, widely acknowledged to be the greatest all-rounder in the history of the sport.

The three-hour long ceremony got off to a prompt start at 5.15p.m. with a military display by the massed bands of the Corps of Drums of the Jamaica Defence Force. What unfolded thereafter were boundless displays of high energy from 1,500 young dancers, and the best of the region's musical stars.

HIGHLIGHTS

One major highlight was the CWC 'anthem', written for the occasion and performed by Rupee, Shaggy and FayAnne Lyons.

The musical performances

were interspersed with short speeches by some of the main dignitaries on hand - host Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller, Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell of Grenada,



Simpson-Miller

who heads CARICOM's sub-committee on cricket, Chris Dehring, managing director/ chief executive officer, ICC CWC WI 2007 Inc, and Percy Sonn, ICC president.

In a rare unscripted moment, Val Banks, vice president of the West Indies Cricket Board, delivered the board's message on behalf of the president, Ken Gordon, who - it was later revealed - had a throat ailment. He appeared to capture the sentiments of many in the audience when he described the event as a defining moment in West Indian history.

The parade of the teams was one of the main highlights of the evening, the captains leading their players onto the field, whilst holding the hand of an accompanying child.

Brian Lara, captain of the West Indies, gave the players' pledge, on behalf of the participants, promising to uphold

the fine traditions of the game by abiding by the rules, while Steve Bucknor, the outstanding umpire from Jamaica, gave the pledge of the umpires and match referees.

For hours before the start, there had been a steady build-up of fans, the numbers eventually swelling to thousands, packed into the new stadium for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Beyond the highway, the glistening waters of the Caribbean Sea, kissed by the rays of the setting sun, made the perfect backdrop for the start of the evening's spectacle.

As afternoon gave way to dusk, the shadows provided the perfect canvass for the high-energy creations of the youngsters, dressed in the beautiful costumes reflective of the region's carnivals and other festivals. Members of the audience were caught up in the moment, hanging on to every musical note; every lyric belted out, while gyrating and waving fabrics of many colors, appropriate for the occasion.

MARLEY MAGIC

They were temporarily awestruck, however, when, in a moment of high tech magic, the spirit of reggae legend Bob Marley was brought to life on screen. Marley, his image outlined in bright light, emerged, acoustic guitar in hand to the strains of "Redemption Song".

The past was then merged with the present, when he was "joined" live on stage by his faithful back-up singers, the I-Three - wife Rita, Judy

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

Eight die in Haiti floods

JOSEPH GUYLER DELVA

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, CMC- At least eight people were killed by floods and mudslides triggered by heavy rains that lashed this Caribbean country late last month, an official has revealed.

Dieufort Deslorge, a spokesman for Haiti's civil protection office, said eight people were killed and one was missing and presumed dead in the western section of the island. But witnesses have reported two other deaths in the northern town of Jean-Rabel, not taken into account in the civil protection office's count.

"Those victims were

taken away by floods or killed in mudslides resulted from several days of torrential rains in some regions," Deslorge said.

He said several people were injured, several hundred houses destroyed or damaged and over 380 families left homeless.

"One hundred and ten of those 380 families have been housed in shelters set up with financial support from the government," said Deslorge.

Haiti is particularly vulnerable during rainy and hurricane seasons because of its flimsy infrastructures and its shanty towns that generally offer little resistance to the least amount of rain.

St. Vincent pushes motion for slavery reparation, apology

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent, CMC - The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Parliament has unanimously passed a motion demanding a full apology and reparation from nations which profited from the slave trade.

The motion, which was debated late last month as part of the country's commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade, also called on Parliament to pursue, in conjunction "with like-minded persons in the Caribbean and elsewhere" the demand for the apology and financial redress.

Minister of Culture Rene Baptiste, who piloted the motion through the legislature, said St. Vincent and the Grenadines fully endorsed the United Nations sanctioned one-year celebration of the bicentennial and encouraged other Caribbean countries to be involved in the celebration of the milestone. Baptiste told Vincentians that slavery was not something that they should mourn about but rather use as a tool on which they should build themselves. The minister noted that even though slavery in the Caribbean community



Baptiste

(CARICOM) had been abolished, drug traffickers and men who prostituted women had become the modern day slave masters.

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves said that the region's "painful past of slavery" had left Caribbean nationals something good. He said that the region had birthed a new people, who while diverse in culture and race, lived together in peace, love and democracy, an example to the wider world.

"Out of the crucible of our painful past, we have created a new people," he said.

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Peter A. Webley,
Publisher

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Appeal Court quashes Panday's conviction

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - An Appeal Court last month quashed the conviction of former Prime Minister Basdeo Panday, set aside his two-year jail term, and ordered a new trial.

Panday had been previously found guilty of failing to declare a London bank account to the Integrity Commission while he served as head of the Trinidad and Tobago government.

The three-member Appeal Court agreed with the arguments put forward by Panday's defense team that the decision by Chief Magistrate Sherman McNicolls not to testify in the case against the chief justice, whom McNicolls had accused of seeking to influence his decision in the Panday trial, would have left any reasonable and fair-minded person to conclude that there was bias in the ruling against the former prime minister.

McNicolls had sentenced Panday to three two-year jail terms to run concurrently on the three charges, of failing to

declare a bank account he and his wife, Oma, held at the Natwest Bank in London for the years 1997, 1998 and 1999, when he served as prime minister.



Panday

ister.

Panday, 73, appealed that conviction and was released on TT\$300,000 (\$50,000) bail.

The Appeal Court said that it would issue a written ruling later, but said that the issue before it involved the public confidence in the judiciary.



Cricket World Cup starts in blaze of Caribbean glory

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

Mowatt and Marcia Griffiths - for a medley of his most famous songs, climaxing with the universal anthem, "One Love".

And, just when some might have thought that Bob had put a cap on the evening, on strode his contemporary Jimmy Cliff for the climax. The entire ensemble came back onto the field for one

last moment in the spotlight, as the veteran singer belted out the fitting finale, "Wonderful World; Beautiful People". And as he sang and the dancers pranced, the skies were lit up and the air reverberated to the sound of fireworks, timed to perfection.

- CMC



Pregnant J'can beauty queen keeps 'Miss Caribbean' title

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - Miss Jamaica World 2006 Sara Lawrence, who relinquished her crown last month, will not be stripped of her Miss World Caribbean title, pageant rights holders have revealed.

Following reports that 22-year-old Lawrence would be relinquishing her title due to pregnancy, Julia Morley, founder and chairman of Miss World Limited, wrote local promoters stating that Lawrence will not be stripped of the Miss World Caribbean title and urged them to allow her to keep the Miss Jamaica World title.

In her correspondence,

Morley described Lawrence as "a warm, compassionate and caring person", who should not be condemned but shown love and support during her pregnancy.

STEPPING DOWN

Last month Lawrence, who placed sixth at the Miss World competition and won the Miss World Region (Caribbean) last August, announced that she was stepping down because of her pregnancy.

"I relinquish my position as Miss Jamaica World 2006, having taken a deeply personal decision to face up to my



Lawrence

responsibilities as one who expects to become a mother later this year. I believe with all that is within me that it is

Dominica still undecided on whaling stance ~ P.M.

ROSEAU, Dominica, CMC - Just days after one of his ministers said the government would not relax its pro-whaling stance, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit said no firm decision has yet been taken on the matter.

The prime minister said the government was still contemplating what position to take when the 59th International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting gets underway in Alaska next month.

"The Cabinet has not taken a decision," Skerit said adding, "I am hoping that I can get a mandate from the Cabinet in respect to the government's position in 2007 and where the



government should vote."

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment Dr. Collin McIntyre said late last month that Dominica would continue to vote alongside Japan for the "sustainable use" of commercial whaling despite stiff opposition from

environmental groups here.

"Usually when these meetings are upcoming you tend to get a lot of controversy and strange articles in the press," McIntyre said.

'NO REAL ISSUE'

The minister defended government's pro-whaling stance saying there was "no real issue" once there was sustainable harvesting.

"Once it's something that can be harvested sustainably without creating problems then it's okay with me," he said.

Last year Skerit said that he would vote based on scientific evidence and called on opposition groups who had

my moral obligation to do what I believe to be ethically correct and follow what I believe in my heart to be right", she stated. Meanwhile Women's Advocate Margaret McCauley argued that Lawrence's role as an activist for safe sex had been compromised by her pregnancy. However, gender consultant Dr. Glenda Simms came to her defense stating that no one has the right to condemn the beauty queen for getting pregnant.

opposed government's pro-whaling position to present evidence that whaling was having a disastrous impact on the mammals. The Dominica leader reported late last month that "there continues to be information coming from both sides. We welcome additional information from those who have information in regards to scientific evidence."

He said government will now consult with experts "to advise us on the technical and scientific soundness of the information."

Metro Dade

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RFP #600000088 CAMPBELL SCIENTIFIC (CR10) INSTALLATION FOR THE DISTRICT'S SURFACE-WATER NETWORK

The South Florida Water Management District will accept proposals from qualified contractors to install instrumentation and control systems and/or connecting said equipment to existing or replacement Remote Terminal Units (RTU), at various locations throughout the District's surface-water network.

Proposals shall be submitted to the Procurement Department, 2nd Floor, B-1 Building, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, Florida, 33406, on May 11, 2007, at 2:30 P.M. local time, at which time proposals will be opened and publicly read.

An **OPTIONAL PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE** will be held on April 19, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in Building B-1, 2-A Bridge Conference Room, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach Florida for all interested respondents.

All proposals must conform to the instructions in the Request for Proposals and include a properly executed Contract Compliance Disclosure Form. Solicitation documents will be available April 6, 2007, interested respondents may obtain a copy of the complete RFP (1) at the above address; (2) by downloading the solicitation from our website at www.sfwmd.gov; (3) by calling (561) 682-2715; or (4) by calling the 24-hour **BID HOTLINE (800) 472-5290**. The public is invited to attend the proposal opening. **Further information on the status of this solicitation can be obtained on our web site - www.sfwmd.gov.**

Official public meetings regarding this RFP are scheduled as follows:

1. Oral Presentations: June 14, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Building 1, Richard Rogers Conference Room.
2. Oral Presentations: June 15, 2007, at 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Building 1, Richard Rogers Conference Room.

Oral presentations are subject to cancellation in the event that the District's final ranking is based solely on the written proposal evaluation. All public meetings will be held at the dates, times, locations and conference rooms referenced above. A copy of the agenda may be obtained by writing the South Florida Water Management District, Procurement Department, P.O. Box 24680, West Palm Beach, Florida, 33416-4680. Persons with disabilities or handicaps who need assistance may contact the District Clerk, (561) 682-6297, at least two business days in advance of the meeting to make appropriate arrangements.

Should one or more members of the evaluation committee need to attend any of the meetings by means of communication media technology (CMT), the meetings will be teleconferenced at the dates, times, locations and conference rooms referenced above.

For more information, please contact Don Hill, Contract Specialist at (561) 682-2045.

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F Y I

PRESIDENT SPEAKS

United States President George W. Bush is scheduled to speak at Miami Dade



College's (MDC) 2007 graduation commencement exercises which begin at 5 p.m. April 28 at the Kendall campus, Gibson Center, 11011 S.W. 104 St.

In addition to Kendall campus's graduation, six other commencement exercises for MDC's other campuses are scheduled to take place the same day beginning at 8 a.m. and concluding at 7 p.m.

PAGEANT ENTRY

Partners for Youth Foundation is accepting applications the "Miss Jamaica Florida 2007 Pageant" to be held on June 24 at the Coral Gables Center for the Arts.

The pageant is open to Jamaican-born females or those of Jamaican parentage. The categories are "Little

Miss" (ages five to eight); "Junior Miss" (nine to 12); "Miss Teen" (13-16) and "Miss Jamaica Florida" (17-21).

The deadline to submit applications is **April 30**.

For more information, call Marcia Baker at **954-600-0334**.

PASSPORT REMINDER

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) took effect in January.

The WHTI requires all those United States citizens traveling by air to the Caribbean to have a passport.

For information about applying for a U.S. passport, visit <http://usps.com/passport> or call **800-ASK-USPS**.

PASSPORT APPLICATION

The National Passport Information Center (NPIC), the United States Department of State's single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information, is offering a toll free service and has expanded its service availability/options.

Persons with questions or need status checks on pending passport applications can call **1-877-487-2778**. Customer service representatives are available from **8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday**, excluding Federal holidays. Automated information is available 24 hours a day, seven

HAITIANS ON CALL

Black Affairs Advisory Board Chairman D.J. Fabien, second right, was among delegates who recently traveled to Haiti to emphasize the social impact that the deportation of Haitians has on families living in Miami-Dade County, United States. Prime Minister Jacques Edouard-Alexis, fourth left, was informed about the Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and its impact on Haitians living in the U.S. Others are, from left, Jean Robert Lafortune, Steve Forester, Lucie Tondreau, Yvans Morisseau, Marleine Bastien and Ronald Aubourg.

days a week.

For e-mail access, visit: npic@state.gov Website of passport and other international travel information is available at travel.state.gov

'GREEN CARD' FILING
The United States

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced that aliens must mail applications to renew or replace permanent resident cards, commonly known as "Green Cards", directly to the Los Angeles Lockbox.

The Lockbox is a process-

ing facility used by USCIS to accelerate the collection of applications and petitions. The announced change allows the agency to improve the processing of Form I-90 (Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card) by electronically capturing data and images and by performing fee receipting and depositing from one central location, rather than at the local district office, service center, or application support center (ASC).

Aliens filing a Form I-90, regardless of their state of residence, must mail those applications with an application fee of \$185 and a biometrics fee of \$70 to one of the following addresses:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, P.O. Box 54870 Los Angeles, CA 90054-0870;

Or for non-USPS deliveries (e.g. private couriers):

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Attention: I-90, 16420 Valley View Ave., La Mirada, CA 90638

Applicants should not include initial evidence and supporting documentation when submitting the Form I-90 to the Los Angeles Lockbox.

Applicants will receive a notice for a biometrics processing appointment at an ASC and will submit their initial evidence during that appointment.

Applicants will receive their biometrics appointment in the mail.

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Miami, FL 33122
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Swiss clip Jamaica's Reggae Boyz in soccer

GORDON WILLIAMS

FORT LAUDERDALE - Top level international soccer with a Caribbean flavor returned to South Florida last month, but Jamaica's Reggae Boyz failed to excite their passionate U.S.-based fans, losing 2-0 to Switzerland at Lockhart Stadium here.

Jamaica, featuring talent based on the island but buoyed by winning the Lunar New Year Cup, a four-team tournament held in Hong Kong in February, were outclassed in front of 3,200-plus fans who braved windy and wet conditions.

Yet Jamaica's new technical director Bora Milutinovic, the Serb charged with guiding the Reggae Boyz to World Cup in 2010 in South Africa, seemed unperturbed by the game's final result. He insisted that Switzerland was simply the better team and that the experience gained from playing the "Nati", ranked 17th by world soccer's governing body FIFA, would serve his team well in the future.

"It is important for us if we can play against a team like Switzerland," Milutinovic told Caribbean Today after the game. "It will be perfect for us, (our) preparation to be in the real soccer, real football world. All of this (Swiss) team's players play in Europe. (They)

have so many good players."

EARLY SETBACK

Jamaica fell behind in the seventh minute when Swiss forward Marco Streller swiveled away from his marker and slotted past goalkeeper Richard McCallum. In the 12th minute Gokhan Inler doubled the lead with a good strike from the top of the penalty area. From then on the Swiss dominated play, wasting numerous chances to increase their lead as the Boyz



Milutinovic

struggled to keep pace.

"They were physically better than us," Milutinovic said. "They are athletic, real good. But this is the difference to being good, the competition, the league (they play in)."

His assistant Wendell Downswell, a former technical director of Jamaica's national team, attributed Jamaica's poor start to big game jitters.

"The first half we were a little bit tentative, a little bit of nerves," said Downswell. "But I think the second half we

came out, we made some changes, and we were far more competitive."

Jamaica, which in 1998 became the first English-speaking Caribbean team to reach the World Cup, but which has stumbled badly recently failing to make the final round of the Digicel Caribbean Cup, offered a handful of bright spots on a night when their fans' enthusiasm was drenched not only by the team's deficiencies, but intermittent showers as well. McCallum was outstanding, saving the Boyz from a more embarrassing scoreline with some fantastic saves.

Meanwhile, Milutinovic urged fans of the Caribbean team to be patient as Jamaica builds up to World Cup qualifiers starting next year.

"(That) is important, and I hope the people from Jamaica they grow to understand what is our goal," he said. "Our goal is clear, to go to the World Cup. To do this, we need to work hard, to have patience, to support our players."

In another friendly international played in South Florida late last month, Caribbean champions Haiti beat Panama 3-0 at the Orange Bowl in Miami.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



CRICKET WORLD CUP BRIEFS

The ICC Cricket World Cup 2007, the one-day game's biggest show held every four years, began in the Caribbean last month. The tournament runs through April 28, when the final will be played in Barbados. Below are some of the highlights, both on and off the field, that took place last month:

• Opening with a bang

The opening ceremony in Trelawny, Jamaica has been described as possibly the best ever since the CWC was first staged in 1975 in England. Most of the countries in the Caribbean participated in the colorful event, complete with cultural displays and music, and attended by many

international artistes and dignitaries.

• Untimely death

Bob Woolmer, coach of the Pakistan team, was found unconscious in his Jamaica hotel room on Mar. 18. He was taken to the University Hospital of the West Indies where he was pronounced dead. Police investigations revealed it was murder by strangulation. Pakistan lost to Ireland the day before the incident and was eliminated from the tournament.

• Sixes for days

South African batsman Herschelle Gibbs created a new world record for one-day cricket when he blasted six sixes against the Netherlands at

Warner Park in St. Kitts. Two other batsmen, Sir Garfield Sobers of the West Indies and India's Ravi Shastri, had managed the feat in first class games, but no one had, before Gibbs, done it in a one-day international.

• Runs galore

A week into CWC 2007, India amassed 413 runs in their group match against Bermuda in Trinidad. It was the highest score in the history of the tournament, eclipsing Sri Lanka's 398 versus Kenya in 1996.

Compiled from CMC and other sources.



KEEPING IT CARIBBEAN



Guadeloupe-born Jean-Marc Mormeck raises the world cruiserweight title belt he won last month by defeating another boxer from the Caribbean, Jamaican O'Neil Bell. Mormeck, who now resides in France, won a unanimous decision against the United States-based Bell in Paris to regain the World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association titles the Jamaican took from him by knocking him out in New York last year. At left is U.S. boxing promoter Don King.

PWarner re-elected regional soccer boss

Trinidad and Tobago's Austin "Jack" Warner was last month re-elected president of CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football), the highest-ranking soccer body in the region.

Warner will serve another four-year term, which will run through 2011.

He retained his seat after the nomination deadline, for a challenge to his position, passed without anyone else stepping forward to contest the

post. The new term will mark his fifth as CONCACAF boss. Warner received multiple nominations from every sector of CONCACAF's membership of 40 nations.

Warner was first elected as CONCACAF president in 1990 and he has been re-elected on every occasion since then (1994, 1998, 2002 and now, 2007). He is also the longest continuously serving member of the Executive Committee of FIFA, world soccer's governing body, having first taken his seat there in 1983.

T&T woman to defend world boxing title soon

SAN FERNANDO, Trinidad, CMC - Trinidad and Tobago's women's world light middleweight boxing champion Jizelle Salandy is to defend her title next against American Dakota Stone.

Her manager Boxu Potts says his 20-year-old charge has been mandated by the World Boxing Council (WBC) to defend her title against Stone, the number one contender, probably late this month or early May.

"The WBC has mandated Stone as their number one contender and the WIBA has also

mandated her as their top contender," Potts said.

"...No middleweight in the world can beat Jizelle Salandy right now," Potts added.

Salandy improved her ring record last month to 14-0 with six knockouts when she beat American Yvonne Reis to retain her plethora of world and international titles - World Boxing Council (WBC), World Boxing Association (WBA), IWBF, IFBA, NABC, WBE and IWBA.

Stone, 38, has a record of eight victories, four defeats and five draws.



Broward Community College

Call for Bids or Proposals

For a listing of available Broward Community College (BCC) open procurement solicitations visit:

www.broward.edu/purchasing/bids

or contact

954-201-7455

BCC strongly encourages participation by minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE firms)

REQUEST FOR BID

RFB 60000087

LEASED UNIFORM SERVICES AND UNIFORM PURCHASES

The South Florida Water Management District will accept bids from qualified firms to provide a full service uniform contract that includes furnishing, laundering, repair and delivery of uniforms to approximately 460 District Operations staff. This solicitation shall also be used to establish a price agreement for the furnishing of the same services, as well as the purchase of uniforms, by other District units.

Bids shall be submitted to the Procurement Department, 2nd Floor, B-1 Building, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, Florida, 33406, on April 13, 2007, at 2:30 P.M. local time, at which time bids will be opened and publicly read.

All bids must conform to the instructions in the Request for Bids and include a properly executed Contract Compliance Disclosure Form.

Solicitation documents will be available March 16, 2007 in the SFWMD Procurement Department at the above address, by downloading a copy from the District's website at www.sfwmd.gov, or by calling (561) 687-6391. Interested bidders may also call the 24-hour BID HOTLINE 800-472-5290. The public is invited to attend the RFB opening. Information on the status of this solicitation can be obtained at our web site - www.sfwmd.gov.

For more information, please contact Don Hill, Contract Specialist at (561) 682-2045.



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