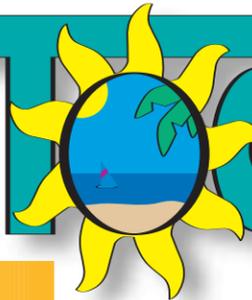


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THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



The United States will soon identify and deport Caribbean and other immigrants serving time in prisons and jails

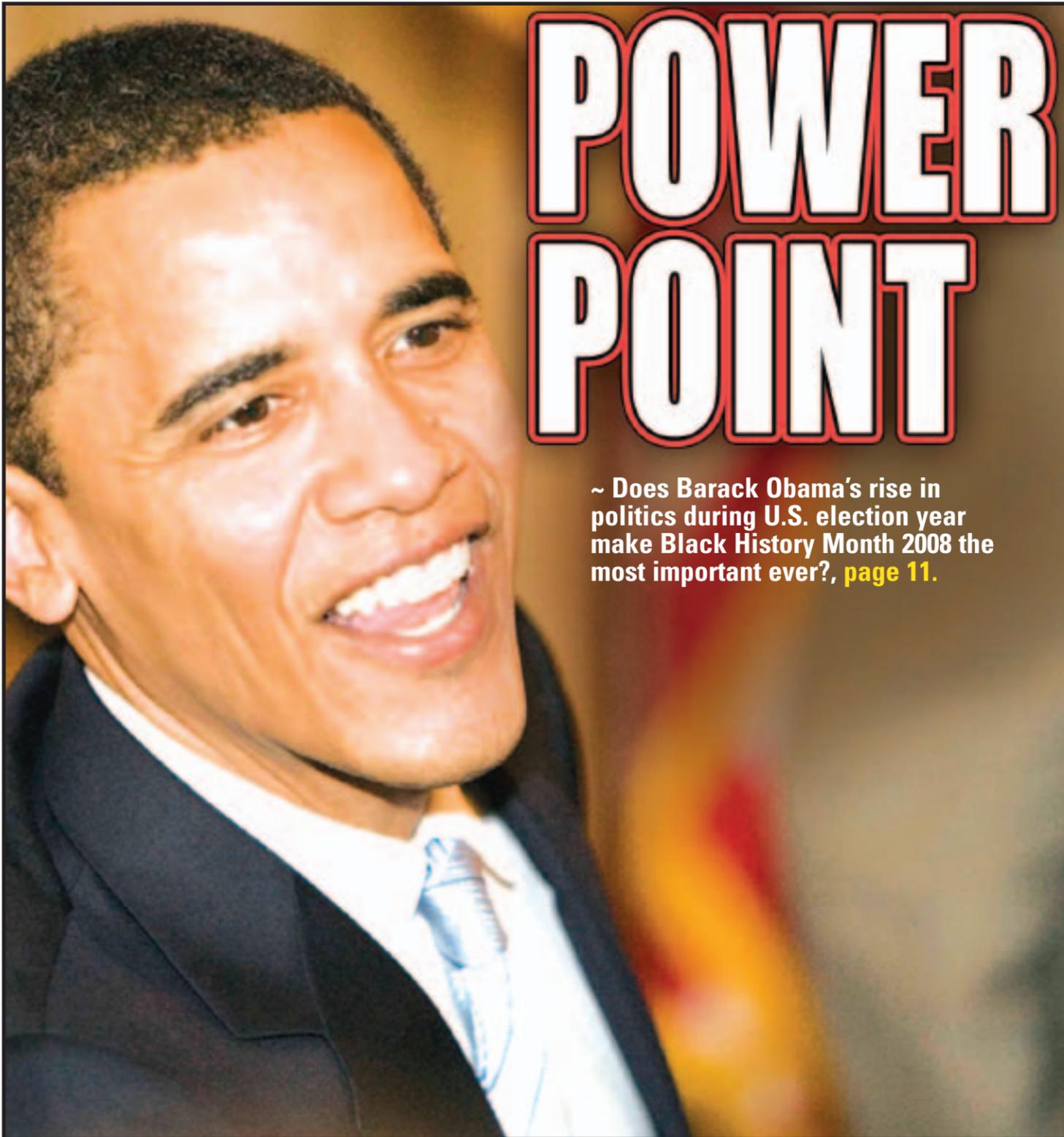
around the country, says Julie L. Myers, the country's top federal immigration enforcement official, page 2.



Owen Arthur, left, will now more than ever understand the phrase "those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it" after he and his ruling BLP were ousted from government in Barbados by David Thompson and the Opposition DLP, page 14.



A teenager who works out everyday and wants to build more muscle is curious if protein supplements and statins have adverse side effects. A doctor explains just what the body needs, page 19.



POWER POINT

~ Does Barack Obama's rise in politics during U.S. election year make Black History Month 2008 the most important ever?, page 11.

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INSIDE

News2
Local7
Environment8

Viewpoint9
Black History Month .11
Feature 14

Arts/Entertainment ...15
Sport16
Tourism/Travel17

Business18
Health19
Region21



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Caribbean nationals warned about U.S. 'sting' operation

NEW YORK – St. Vincent and the Grenadines' New York Consul General Cosmus Cozier has warned Caribbean nationals about a United States immigration "sting" operation aimed at deporting Caribbean and other nationals.

Cozier told the **Caribbean Media Corporation** late last month that he has been receiving reports of an increasing number of Caribbean nationals trapped in the operation.

"It has been brought to my attention that the immigration authorities in New York have embarked on a 'sting' operation to catch illegal immigrants working upstate and also to apprehend persons crossing the border,"

he said.

"City buses traveling from upstate New York to Brooklyn and Manhattan are now being stopped by immigration authorities in the Buffalo and Schenectady areas, and passengers are being asked to produce identification and other documents to prove residency or other legal status," he added.

"Failure to produce these documents is resulting in jail sentences and requests for deportation."

CONSEQUENCES

Cozier said while he has been aware of the "sting" operation for the past three months, it has become more

acute in recent times.

"Nationals are asked to have identification and other related documents when travelling by bus within the United States and to be aware of the consequences of being caught unawares," he warned.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents said they arrested over 35,000 illegal immigrants last year, including unauthorized workers and immigration fugitives. They said the figure more than doubles the number in 2006, and that a record 276,912 immigrants were sent back to their home countries.

Immigration officials said about three-quarters of the estimated 11.3 million illegal

immigrants in the U.S. are from Latin America and the Caribbean.

SPEEDING UP

Last month, U.S. authorities also said they will soon identify and deport a number of Caribbean and other immigrants serving time in prisons and jails. Julie L. Myers, the country's top federal immigration enforcement official, said efforts to speed up the deportation of over 200,000 jailed

immigrants are part of a campaign by ICE to help federal and state prisons reduce the costs of housing immigrants.

Myers, assistant secretary of Homeland Security, said her agency, in 2007, brought formal immigration charges against 164,000 immigrants who are behind bars nationwide for crimes committed in the U.S. She said many of those immigrants are still in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Caribbean Americans disagree over need for voting bloc in U.S. presidential elections

NEW YORK – Caribbean American officials have expressed contrasting views on the need for a Caribbean American voting bloc in future United States presidential elections.

Caribbean Americans have been debating their importance as a single category in the U.S. census, even accusing politicians of failing the communities they represent.

However,



Clarke

Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, the daughter of former New York City Council member, Jamaican Una Clarke, believes there is already Caribbean American recognition at the congressional level, but notes a lot of work needs to be done.

"There is recognition of this with my being in Congress is proving positive that there is a Caribbean American voting bloc," said Clarke, who is into her second year on Capitol Hill.

"I think that there is a lot of work that I will be doing with the Caribbean constituency so that we're positioned and recognized for our contribution to the political process."

CHALLENGES

Recent statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau have shown that there are more

than 800,000 Caribbean American registered voters, with high concentrations in the states of New York and Florida. But Clarke, who won a hard fought battle for the 11th Congressional district in Brooklyn, New York, said there are a number of challenges being faced but the recognition for Caribbean Americans is on the radar.

"I believe that some of that have to do with our voting strength, our participation in what is taking place here in Washington," she said.

But there is guarded optimism from Grenada's former United Nations Ambassador Dr. Lamuel Stanislaus, who wants broader participation from the Caribbean American community.



Stanislaus

"I won't advice that. I will like them to participate in a broader way because a Caribbean bloc by itself won't be able to do too much," he said. "I think you have to be more involved in the community."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba and the Dominican Republic dominated the top four highest numbers of dual citizens among Caribbean nationals.

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U.S. to speed up deportation of jailed Caribbean criminals

WASHINGTON – The United States says it will soon identify and deport a number of Caribbean and other immigrants serving time in prisons and jails around the country.

Julie L. Myers, the country's top federal immigration enforcement official, said last month that efforts to speed up the deportation of over 200,000 jailed immigrants are part of a campaign by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency to help federal and state prisons reduce the costs of housing immigrants.

Myers, assistant secretary of homeland security and head of the agency, said her agency, in 2007, brought formal immigration charges against 164,000 immigrants who are behind bars nationwide for crimes committed in the U.S. She said many of those immigrants are still in the U.S. and are also slated for deportation this year.



Myers

In comparison, she said the agency identified, in the previous year, 64,000 immigrants behind bars, most of whom were deported.

'BURDEN'

Myers said the increase in deportations will place "a significant burden," on ICE's detention centers and on the airplanes, mostly from the Justice Department, used by the agency to fly immigrants back to their home countries. Last year, the U.S. Congress authorized \$200 million for programs to deport immigrant criminals.

Under current U.S. law, immigrants convicted of crimes are deported only after serving their sentences in this country. Myers said foreigners behind bars include large numbers of immigrants who were legal residents, but lost their legal status as a result of being convicted of crimes.

Over the years, Caribbean governments have complained that the increased deportation of convicted felons, particularly from the U.S., has contributed significantly to the spiraling crime wave in their respective

countries.

Myers said her agency would work with U.S. states to devise parole programs, permitting immigrants imprisoned for nonviolent crimes, to reduce their prison time if they agreed to be deported immediately upon release.

After failing last year to win legislation to give legal status to illegal immigrants, Myers said the George W. Bush administration has rapidly increased enforcement, placing a "huge priority" on deporting criminal immigrants. She said, in 2007, ICE sent 276,912 immigrants to their home countries, including many who had never been arrested for crimes, but were deported for civil immigration violations. She did not specify the number of Caribbean immigrants deported.

Myers said, in the past year, immigration agents have heightened efforts to find immigrants behind bars and complete immigration proceedings, so they could be deported directly from prison without being released into the streets.



U.S. honors St. Kitts and Nevis

NEW YORK - The United States last month honored St. Kitts and Nevis by hoisting the flag of the twin-island federation alongside its own.

The event marked the birthday of Alexander Hamilton, one of America's founding fathers, who was born in Nevis.

"Alexander Hamilton is America's greatest immigrant," said Arthur Piccolo, chairman of the Bowling Green Association in New York, one of the organizers of events.



Hamilton

"I think that Americans need to remind themselves, and the Caribbean community should continue to remind itself, that America's greatest immigrant was a very poor boy born in the Caribbean, who came to America to become one of the greatest leaders of all time," he added.

The newly-renovated Museum of American Finance, in the Wall Street financial district in New York, also honored Hamilton, who

founded the Bank of New York, the United States' first bank. An entire room in the museum is dedicated to Hamilton, the first U.S. secretary of the treasury.

VISIONARY

"It's hard to imagine how the United States would look in the absence of Hamilton," said John Herzog, founder and chair of the Museum of American Finance, lauding Hamilton's "very unusual intellectual capabilities."

"He had long-term vision, and his vision of the United States turned out to be exactly right," he added.

Hamilton was born on Jan. 11, 1755 in Charleston, Nevis. He was the illegitimate son of French noblewoman Rachel Faucitt Lavien and James Hamilton, a Scottish merchant, who reportedly abandoned the family in 1765. A local clergyman raised funds to send Hamilton away to school in 1773. He entered Kings College, now known as Columbia University, in New York in 1774.

He died in 1804 from gunshot wounds.



Passport card applications open Feb. 1 for U.S. travel to Caribbean

WASHINGTON – Beginning this month, the United States Department of State says travelers to the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico can submit applications for passport cards as alternatives to passports.

The department said in a statement issued here last month that the wallet-sized cards will be available to Americans by this spring. It said the new technology card will be accepted for land and sea crossings only between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. Passengers flying must continue to use passports.

Ann Barrett, deputy assistant secretary for passport services at the State Department, said the passport card will be a "limited-use passport," pointing out that it is intended primarily for "the border population that does frequent cross-border travel." She said, like a passport, the card will be valid for 10 years for adults and five years for minors, adding that one must apply to renew it.

ID CHIP

Barrett said immigration

officers will use radio frequency identification, or RFID, scanners to "read" the chip at checkpoints, just as they do with chips on new passports. But unlike the chip on a passport, which has a range of four inches, Barrett said the chip on the new passport card will be readable from about 20 feet.

"We've addressed the privacy concerns," she said, pointing out that a protective sleeve would be issued with the passport card to block electronic skimming by unauthorized users and that, in any event, the chip contains only one number.

"There will be no biographical data on it."

Barrett said the new passport cards are being offered as part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. The first phase of that went into effect last year, requiring U.S. travelers returning by plane from Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean to carry a passport. That resulted in a dramatic increase in the demand for passports, with the State Department issuing over 18 million passports in fiscal year 2007, up from

about 12 million the previous year.

Barrett said the department expects to issue about 23 million to 26 million passports this year.

DELAY

But while the administration of George W. Bush is planning to begin requiring passports or passport cards for land and sea border crossings in mid-2008, the U.S. Congress is trying to force a delay on that requirement until summer 2009.

Barrett said from Jan. 31, the U.S. government began phasing out what it calls "the routine practice of accepting oral declarations alone at land and sea ports of entry." She said U.S. and Canadian citizens will now need to present at least a birth certificate or other proof of citizenship, plus a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license, to cross borders.

Barrett said the new passport card would likely be accepted for U.S. citizens making these types of border crossings.



Vincenian councilman subpoenaed in federal probe of charities in N.Y.

NEW YORK - A St. Vincent-born Democratic councilman in New York City, running in one of this year's most closely watched races, has been subpoenaed in a United States federal probe of charities linked to one of his top aides.

Councilman Kendall Stewart, who represents the predominantly Caribbean 45th Councilmanic District in Brooklyn, said last month that he has received a subpoena from the Brooklyn U.S. attorney's office, but is not a target of the probe.

Stewart, who is expected to challenge African American Kevin Parker for the 21st New York State Senatorial District in Brooklyn, said investigators appear to be looking into non-profit organizations set up by his chief of staff, Jamaican Asquith Reid, a renowned figure in Brooklyn's Caribbean American political circles.

"They're trying to find out how monies are being utilised by the CBOs (Community-Based Organizations)," Stewart said.

Stewart, who represents the Flatlands, Flatbush and Midwood section of Brooklyn, said he will tell the federal government he knows "noth-



Stewart

ing about the financial workings of the nonprofits." He identified them as the Donna Reid Memorial Education Fund, the Donna Reid Foundation and the Friends of Crown Heights.

Political observers here said the probe could entangle Stewart as he gears up to challenge Senator Parker this fall in what is expected to be a tough race. Stewart has been charged with helping to steer taxpayer money to the nonprofits now under investigation.

Up to press time Reid had not returned calls for a comment.



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NEWS

Jamaican police arrest five in lottery scam involving U.S.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Jamaican police last month said they arrested five people involved in a multi-million dollar international lottery scam which fleeced many, including American citizens, of thousands of dollars.

Members of the Organized Crime Investigation Division joined police from the western parish of St. James in carrying out the raid in the community of Mount Salem. The police said they had arrested two men and a woman during the raid

and seized an undisclosed sum of money, documents and mobile phones.

In another operation, the lawmen said they had detained two other persons and seized a number of documents.

In 2007, investigators linked several murders in the western parish and across the island to the lucrative multi-million dollar lottery scam in which many American citizens were fleeced.



Caribbean nationals warned about U.S. 'sting' operation

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

the U.S. and are also slated for deportation this year.

In comparison, she said the agency identified, in the previous year, 64,000 immigrants behind bars, most of whom were deported.

Last year, the U.S. Congress authorized \$200 million for programs to deport immigrant criminals. Under current US law, immigrants convicted of crimes are deported only after serving their sentences in this country.

Myers said foreigners behind bars include large numbers of immigrants who were legal residents, but lost their legal status as a result of being convicted of crimes. Over the years, Caribbean governments have complained that the increased deportation of convicted felons, particularly from the United States, has contributed significantly to the spiraling crime wave in their respective countries.



Grenadian man arrested in connection with disappearance of T&T-born student

NEW YORK – Police have arrested a Grenadian man in connection with the disappearance of a Trinidad-born woman who went missing while vacationing in South Florida last year.

Homicide detectives from New York and Miami arrested Kendrick Williams, 32, last month at a Brooklyn pier. He is charged with second-degree murder in the death of Stepha Henry, a John Jay College graduate.

Henry, 22, disappeared last May while on vacation in Miami with relatives and has since been missing.

"Questions still remain," said Alvaro Zabaleta, a

Miami-Dade police spokesman said last month. "Our detectives have been aggressively working this case, and they will continue to aggressively work this case. This is far from over."

TIP

Police said that Williams drove Henry to a popular reggae nightclub the night she disappeared. The accused initially told investigators that he had left the club early and



Henry

that Henry decided to stay. After months of pleas from Henry's family, friends and the Caribbean community, police received a tip in September that led them to a black Acura Integra driven by Williams. Detectives found evidence in the car that linked Williams to Henry, Zabaleta said.

Up to press time police said they could not yet reveal what type of evidence because the investigation is ongoing.

John Jay College offered a \$2,000 reward and Henry's family put up an additional \$15,000 for any information that could help crack the case.



Over 200 Haitians repatriated in January ~ U.S.

MIAMI - The United States Coast Guard said it repatriated over 200 Haitian migrants to Haiti last month.

The Coast Guard said that 243 Haitian migrants were sent back to the impoverished, French-speaking Caribbean community (CARICOM) nation after their boats were seized in the Caribbean Sea near the southern Bahamas.

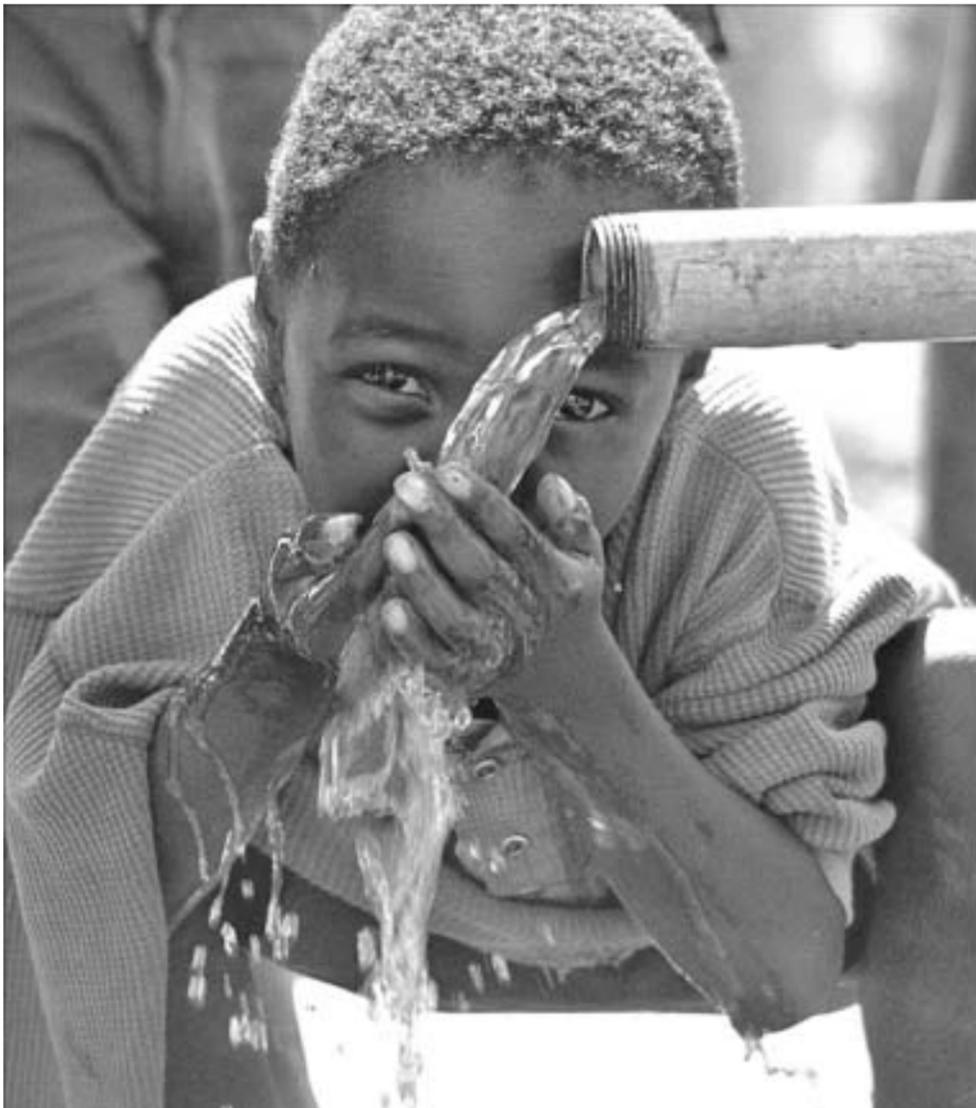
The Coast Guard said 163 passengers were discovered on a boat Jan. 20 about 45 miles southwest of Great Inagua in The Bahamas.

Spokesman Petty Officer Barry Bena said 80 other Haitians were found soon afterwards on an overloaded boat southeast of Great Inagua.

"It was not clear if the migrants were attempting to

reach the U.S. coast or another Caribbean island," Bena said, stating that the Haitians were treated to food and water, and treated for fatigue and heat exhaustion before they were returned to Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital.

The U.S. Coast Guard said over 1,500 Haitians were repatriated in 2007.



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Road projects leading Haiti out of poverty ~ World Bank

WASHINGTON – The World Bank says that a number of road projects are leading Haiti out of poverty.

In a statement issued here last month, the international lending agency said Haiti Community-Driven Development (CDD) Project allows communities to choose their own priorities.

“When rural roads fall into disrepair, they cut off access to markets and basic services for some of Haiti’s poorest communities,” said Garry Charlier, World Bank task manager for the Haiti CDD Project.

“Improving roads is essential to help end isolation and exclusion,” he added.

The World Bank said a road rehabilitation project in Dade-Duvivier, a remote community in the hills of southern Haiti, is part of the CDD Project. The project is financed by a \$38 million grant from the International Development Association, the part of the World Bank that finances the world’s poorest countries, and \$2.3 million from local, community-based organizations. The bank said the project was selected by the local community through a democratic process.

“The government of Haiti, the World Bank and the project partners all agree that rehabilitating basic rural infra-



Flood waters from Tropical Storm Jeanne caused much damage to roads in Gonaïves, Haiti in 2005. - Photograph by USAID

structure, such as roads, is a priority in the effort to improve living conditions in the country,” the statement said.

INSPIRATION

It said the rehabilitated roads have not only made transport and communication easier, they have also “inspired people to undertake positive steps such as renovating their homes.”

The World Bank said Carrefour Virgile-Bidouze, a village about 80 kilometres from Dade-Duvivier, is another community that has chosen to invest in improving roads with help from the CDD Project. It said local inhabi-

tants depend on the 12 kilometre-stretch of road that has been rehabilitated for access to shops and markets and to get to the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The bank said problems related to rural infrastructure are particularly acute in the mountainous regions of northern Haiti, where communities can become completely isolated if their feeder roads are not maintained. But it said one solution local people have found is “spot rehabilitation,” which means “fixing the worst stretches of road first so that at least people can get to their destination, even if the journey is a difficult one.”

State Dept. urges Caribbean governments to do more to prevent human trafficking

An official with the State Department in the United States has called on Caribbean governments to do more to prevent human trafficking in the region.

“We would say that human trafficking is right up there, it’s just as serious as narcotics trafficking, it’s just as serious as violent crime, so we would encourage all government to make this a top priority,” Barbara Fleck told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)**.

Fleck, who works with the department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, made her comments in Barbados while on the second leg of a three-nation Caribbean tour of the Caribbean last month. Trinidad and Tobago and The Bahamas were also part of the tour schedule.

“Many of the countries are overwhelmed with homicides and narcotics so it does seem that human trafficking at

this point tends to be a lower priority,” Fleck said.

TREATY

The U.S. official said some countries in the Caribbean have signed on to an international treaty against trafficking in persons, while others do not specifically prohibit this crime.

“One of the things that we are encouraging governments to do is to ratify this treaty and to put the mechanisms in place,” Fleck said.

The U.S. State Department official wants regional governments to do three things - prosecute human traffickers, protect victims and to take steps to prevent human trafficking.

“People that do this kind of crime, which we regard as a form of modern-day slavery, to put them into jail and to send a clear message that this crime should not be allowed, this is organized criminal activity,” Fleck said.

“Protect victims - take a victim-centered approach to

provide shelter, to provide them with protection services. Many of the victims are in a very bad shape after they’ve gone through this kind of experience and they need a lot of help to try and recover from it,” she added.

Speaking specifically about Barbados, Fleck said that she understands that there are other competing priorities. However she said “we’d like to encourage the government here to make this a higher priority.”

“Look more closely at the people that are living in exploitation here in Barbados, whether it be in brothels or strip clubs or on a construction site...take a closer look at some of the people there and try and help them to get put of their situations of exploitation because at the end of the day it’s the government, it’s the police - they are the best tools to fight human traffickers,” she said.

U.S. grants HIV-positive Trinidadian man asylum

NEW YORK - A gay, HIV-positive Trinidadian man has been granted asylum in the United States in a case brought by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency in U.S. Immigration Court.

The New York-based Metropolitan Corporate Counsel said in a statement last month that two attorneys, Elizabeth Koniers Brown and Fanny A. Flikshtein, working pro bono for Jesse Hanes, a pseudonym used to protect the defendant’s privacy, won his asylum.

“Mr. Hanes was granted asylum in his most recent hearing because, as a gay, HIV-positive man, he is a member of a particular social group, and because he established past persecution in Trinidad based upon his sexual orientation”, the statement said.

“Although Mr. Hanes had been in the United States for approximately 22 years before seeking asylum, the immigra-

tion judge found the delay reasonable in light of extraordinary and changed circumstances - Mr. Hanes’s HIV status and documented psychiatric conditions.

“ICE waived appeal in the case, making the decision final”.

As a result, Hanes is permitted to remain in the U.S. indefinitely, and he can apply for legal permanent residence after one year, the statement added.

In 2004, Hanes was detained by ICE in Miami, while visiting a friend, and was ordered removed by an immigration judge. Hanes appealed to the Bureau of Immigration Appeals (BIA), which reversed and remanded the case, finding that the immigration judge hadn’t properly advised Hanes of the relief available to him”, the Metropolitan Corporate Counsel said.

A change of venue to New York was also granted.

U.S. deports top member of Jamaican gang ~ ICE

MIAMI - United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials have deported an alleged top lieutenant of the Clansman gang in Jamaica who is wanted for the murder of two police officers.

ICE officials said that Raymond Jackson, also known as Renard Harrison, 31, was transported on a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine airplane to Jamaica late last month.

“Criminals who think that they can use the United States as a safe haven are sorely mistaken,” said Michael Rozos, ICE field office director for detention and removal in Florida.

“This man will now have to account for his actions before the Jamaican authorities.”

Rozos said the deportation of criminals is part of the second phase of the Secure Border Initiative, a comprehensive multiyear plan launched by the Department of Homeland Security to “secure America’s borders and reduce illegal immigration.”

Authorities said Jackson first entered the U.S. on April 26, 2006, and was ordered removed on May 4, 2006. He was deported on May 22, 2006.

Jackson then re-entered the country illegally, was arrested by the Lauderhill Police Department in Florida on Jan. 16, 2007, and was convicted on April 17, 2007. He was sentenced to time served, ICE officials said.

Team investigates Caribbean reef crisis

WASHINGTON – In the wake of a recent report that warmer seas and a record hurricane season in 2005 devastated more than half of the coral reefs in the Caribbean, a United States-sponsored expedition is investigating shallow and deep coral ecosystems in the region.

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said late last month that multiple underwater robots and divers are surveying coral reefs off Bonaire “to learn why they remain relatively healthy while many in the Caribbean and around the world are threatened”.

The NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, said in a state-

ment that the mission is the first in the “International Year of the Reef 2008”.

“The International Year of the Reef is a year-long, worldwide campaign to highlight the importance of coral reef ecosystems, and to motivate people to protect them,” said Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator.

“NOAA supports this campaign with leadership and coordination, and by sponsoring scientific study of reef systems, such as those off Bonaire.”

Follow Caribbean Today’s coverage of the environment on page 8.

IMMIGRATION KORNER

QUESTION: I applied over six months ago for my United States citizenship, but to date I have heard nothing. Is there a reason, and does this mean I should reapply?

ANSWER: No, says Irwine Clare of the Caribbean Immigrant Services in

Backlog delays U.S. citizenship approvals

American Immigration Lawyers Association claims that some 3.5 million applications had been sent into the agency over a two-month period.

Emilio Gonzalez, director of Citizenship and Immigration Services, has told the **Associated Press** the agency was caught off guard by the onslaught of applications. But he claims he's ordered his staff to give priority to the applica-

on an annual basis by the U.S. Department of State and provides a maximum of up to 55,000 diversity visas each fiscal year to be made available to persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the U.S.

A computer-generated random lottery drawing chooses selectees for diversity visas. The visas, however, are distributed among six geographic regions with a greater

UWI American Foundation honors Belafonte, scholars, professionals

NEW YORK – The American Foundation for the University of the West Indies (AFUWI) has honored several distinguished scholars and professionals.

The foundation last month recognized renowned entertainer and human rights activist Harry Belafonte, who is of Jamaican parentage.

It also bestowed special awards on University of the West Indies, Mona lecturers Professor Anthony Chen, Dr. John Agard and Dr. Leonard Nurse, plus members of the Inter-Governmental Panel for Climate Change who shared in the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former Vice President of the United States Al Gore.

The foundation gave its Luminary Award, reserved for Caribbean nationals who have made outstanding contributions in their respective fields, to Managing Director-designate of RBTT Jamaica Limited Minna Israel; Chief Executive Officer of TCL Group of Companies Dr. Rollin Bertrand; Chief Financial Officer of UWI Winston Bayley; and Managing Director of Altman Real Estate Paul Altman.

Other Luminary Award recipients include founder/CEO of Caribbean Food Delights/Royal Caribbean Bakery Vincent HoSang; and Vice President for Caribbean and Central America at the Bank of Nova Scotia Stephen Cozier.

'RISING STARS'

Persons of Caribbean heritage, who are considered "rising stars" in their corporate and community organizations were slated to receive the Vice Chancellor's Achievement Award. They include: President/CEO of the National Urban League Marc Morial; First Vice President of HSBC Banking Corp Reggie Canal; Senior Vice President of Moët Hennessy Noel Hankin; Executive Vice President of

Black Entertainment Television Ray Goldbourne; Chief Administrative Officer of Merrill Lynch Colbert Narcisse; and Founder/President of the Caribbean American Chamber



Belafonte

of Commerce & Industry Inc. Roy Hastick.

Also receiving honors were Kenneth DeGhetto, retired chairman of Foster Wheeler Incorporated and former chairman of the AFUWI, for services to the foundation and the university. Denis O'Brien, founder and chief executive officer of telecommunications company Digicel received special recognition.



The heavy backlog has prevented many from being sworn in as U.S. citizens like these people in New York.

Queens, New York. The fact that you have heard nothing yet may be due to the huge backlog being experienced by the processing agency, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The backlog seems largely due to the rush by many immigrants to beat the fee increase that became effective on July 30, 2007. The

tions as, "I really want to target the elections. I really want to get as many people out there to vote as possible" in 2008.

So as of right now, you'll have to simply wait, says Clare.

IMMIGRATION LOTTERY

The congressionally mandated Diversity Immigrant Visa Program is administered

number of visas going to regions with lower rates of immigration, and with no visas going to nationals of countries sending more than 50,000 immigrants to the U.S. over the period of the past five years.

- Felicia Persaud. Answers provided here are for information purposes only, and do not create an attorney-client relationship; nor are they a substitute for "legal advice", which can only be given by a competent attorney after reviewing all the facts of the case.



Dominican doctor appointed to top post at WHO

Dominican medical doctor Carissa Etienne has been appointed assistant director general of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit said Dr. Etienne is the "first Caribbean person ever to reach such a commanding position in this world body."

"The rest of the region can be justly proud of this signal advancement and it speaks volumes for us as a small nation in the international arena," Skerrit told a health summit last month.

"I say power to women and of course our congratulations to Dr. Etienne and her family and we all celebrate in her most distinguished

achievement."

Dr. Etienne has held other top posts internationally, including assistant director at the Pan American Health Organization. A former official in the Ministry of Health



Etienne

of her native Dominica, she helped develop major Caribbean initiatives in disaster preparedness, HIV/AIDS, health services organization,

essential drugs, health promotion and regional cooperation in health.



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Dr. Wentworth Jarrett

Climate change, over-fishing killing Caribbean reefs ~ new study

WASHINGTON - A new study has found that climate change and over-fishing, rather than pollution, were responsible for destroying coral reefs in the Caribbean.

The paper, by researchers from the Washington-based

United States Wildlife Conservation Society, Columbia University and the University of Maryland, examined the effects of two of the most common pollutants: phosphorus and nitrogen. They concluded that nitrogen is the more damaging of the two, but its effects are mostly felt after a reef is dead or dying,

"because it stimulates the growth of microscopic green algae that break down the calcium carbonate skeleton of the coral".

The team concluded that the massive die-offs of Caribbean corals in recent decades "stemmed mostly

from warming ocean temperatures and declines in fish and invertebrates that protect reefs by feeding on the algae".

STRUGGLING

Tim McClanahan, a senior conservation zoologist with



The Caribbean coral reefs may be in danger.

the Wildlife Conservation Society, said the study helps explain why coral reefs were struggling across the globe.

"Pollution has been seen as one of the major culprits in the loss of coral reefs around the world," said McClanahan, the lead author of the study.

"But our study indicates that it cannot explain the wide-spread changes we are seeing, which leave climate change and over-fishing as the major culprits.

"This helps us further pinpoint the causes of coral loss.

But neither climate change nor fishing are easy problems to solve."

McClanahan said, however, that pollution still matters, because, once global warming or over-fishing damages corals, "their skeleton will erode away faster in the presence of pollution."

Meantime, another study released last month

by Dr. Amilo Mora, a marine ecologist at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada, found that humans have caused profound changes in Caribbean coral reefs.

"The continuing degradation of coral reefs may be soon beyond repair, if threats are not identified and rapidly

controlled," Mora said, noting that his study moves from the traditional localized study of threats to a region-wide scale, while, simultaneously, analyzing contrasting socioeconomic and environmental variables.

The study monitored coral reefs, including corals, fishes and macro-algae, in 322 sites across 13 countries throughout the Caribbean.

The study was complemented with a comprehensive set of socioeconomic databases on human population density, coastal development, agricultural land use and environmental and ecological databases, which included temperature, hurricanes, productivity, coral diseases and richness of corals.

RISKS

"The human expansion in coastal areas inevitably poses severe risks to the maintenance of complex ecosystems such as coral reefs," Mora said.

"The future of coral reefs in the Caribbean and the services they provide to a growing human population depend on how soon countries in the region become seriously committed to regulating human

threats.

"Although coral reefs will experience benefits of controlling fishing, agricultural expansion, sewage or ocean warming, it is clear that underlying all these threats is the human population."

Mora said the expected increase of the world's human population, from six billion to nine billion by 2050, suggests that coral reefs are "likely to witness a significant ecological crisis in the coming half century, if effective conservation strategies, including policies on population planning, are not implemented soon."

In December, a U.S. study said Caribbean coral reefs could be among the first casualties of increasingly acidic oceans.

Global warming may reduce hurricanes in Caribbean ~ study

MIAMI - A new study says rising ocean temperatures linked to global warming could decrease the number of hurricanes making landfall in the Caribbean.

The study, published in **Geophysical Research Letters**, a publication of the American Geophysical Union, challenges recent research that suggests global warming could be contributing to an increase in the frequency and the intensity of Atlantic hurricanes. It reaffirmed earlier views that warmer sea waters might result in atmospheric instabilities that could prevent tropical storms from forming.

The new study suggests that warmer seas, caused by greenhouse gases blamed for a rise in global temperatures, are linked to an increase in vertical wind shear, a difference in wind speeds at different altitudes that can tear apart nascent cyclones.

DECLINE

The study - conducted by oceanographer Chunzai Wang of the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Sang-Ki Lee, a scientist at the University of Miami - examined 150 years of hurricane records, finding a small decline

in hurricanes making landfall.

"The attribution of the recent increase in Atlantic hurricane activity to global warming is premature," the researchers wrote. "Global warming may decrease the likelihood of hurricanes making landfall in the United States."

Wang said the number of those hurricanes actually hitting the U.S. is a much better indicator.

"We believe U.S. landings for hurricanes are most reliable measurements over the long term," she said, pointing out that warming of the tropical Pacific and Indian oceans increases Atlantic wind shear, while rising sea temperatures in the tropical North Atlantic decrease shear.

The study came in the wake of another report by the Switzerland-based World Conservation Union (IUCN), stating that warmer seas and a record hurricane season in 2005 have devastated more than half of the coral reefs in the Caribbean. The IUCN warned in its report that this severe damage to reefs would probably become a regular event, given current predictions of rising global temperatures due to climate change.

Region to benefit from global climate fund

BALI, CMC - Caribbean states are among 43 vulnerable islands around the world which stand to benefit from an international fund set up to assist them to adapt to climate change.

Countries attending the conference on Climate Change in Bali, Indonesia recently agreed on the mechanism through which the islands will be able to access grants from the long dormant Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund, officials said.

The Adaptation Fund has been accumulating money for several years, but has not yet been activated because countries could not agree on what body would administer it.

Caribbean and other developing countries had been opposed to the idea of the Global Environment Facility, a multilateral environmental funding agency based in Washington D.C., United States, being the body to administer the fund, and argued that the potential size of the fund meant that it should have its own board and governance system.

The countries have now decided that the GEF will temporarily act as the Adaptation Fund's secretariat, but that it will sit under the authority of the Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, which is

based in Bonn, Germany, rather than being based in Washington D.C.

VICTORY

Amjad Abdullah, lead negotiator for the Maldives and chair of the Least Developing Countries negotiating block, which represents 49 nations, described the decision on the fund as a major victory for the small island developing states.

"The African countries, small island states and least developed countries stuck together and fought for a dedicated secretariat with a representative governance board that has special places for the most vulnerable nations," he said.

Clifford Mahlung, who was part of Jamaica's negotiating team at the conference, said while the fund will probably not be finalized until the next 12 to 18 months, his country already had an idea of where it could employ the resources.

"We have a proposal for funding for adaptation in Jamaica, which among other things would see us getting money to deal with our extremely vulnerable airport road," Mahlung said.

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V I E W P O I N T

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Will the American Dream turn American nightmare?

GORDON WILLIAMS

I got a call from Florida recently. A longtime resident of the U.S. state was thinking about buying a new house.

The mortgage on the comfortable Miami house she currently lives in has long been paid off. Her children are long grown and gone. She owes nothing.

Yet she seemed very interested in acquiring an upgraded home in one of the more popular South Florida suburbs. Why? The prices, she said, "were ridiculously low!"

It was ironic – or not – that the property she was eyeing is in a suburb long known for its huge Caribbean population. Caribbean people have so much influence in that city. Several who were born in the region have been elected to political posts there.

Yet it seemed that the current economic downturn in the United States has reached out its claws to grab them too. Many residents, unable to cope with escalating interest rates, are fleeing – freely or forcibly – their homes, unable to pay the rising bills. Foreclosure signs are going up everywhere. And it's not just in Florida. Many U.S. cities popular with Caribbean nationals are feeling the sharp pinch too.

NOT FAIR

Somehow, it does not seem fair. Most Caribbean nationals leave their homeland in the region for a better life in the U.S. They see real benefits for hard work, which they could not fathom at home. Now, the American Dream seems to be slipping away for some.

Yet so-called wiser heads would say it is their fault that they fell into the predicament. They caution that if, in search of the Dream, Caribbean Americans did not bite off

more than they could chew, they would have easily avoided the problems they are now facing. Why, they ask, strain to pay the mortgage on a \$350,000 house when you can still be comfortable in one worth \$170,000?

Some wiser heads would say it is the Caribbean style to live up to the "Joneses". In other words, if you left the region for a better life, you should show everyone that you have found that better life.

But now we see that the quest for that so-called better life may have been a big mistake. Instead of the big, giant steps, a better approach would have been to creep before you walk.

SAFE BET

Yet if I was a betting man, I would still bank on Caribbean people affected by the current economic crisis in the U.S. to bounce back quickly.

Caribbean people are nothing, if not resourceful. If the crisis caused them to go "kotch" with a relative or friend, don't expect that situation to last too long. Too much pride is at stake. Plus returning to the region is definitely out of the question for most Caribbean Americans. No matter how bad it gets in the U.S., they claim publicly, it is still better than where they are coming from.

So the American Dream may have stepped into the background for many Caribbean Americans...for a while. But it is certainly not gone. So, in the same way that the caller looked at the foreclosures as an opportunity to get a house at cheaper value, others are thinking the same way.

It may become desperate, but Caribbean people will overcome.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



The female clock goes tic toc

We always hear women talking about how their body clock is

ticking and time is running out and how worried they are. By "X" time they must get married, then have a baby, all because their biological clock is tick tocking.

They really have a hard time, and, as they grow older, it often gets harder, as sometimes time and age are not too kind to them.

Just a few weeks ago I encountered a lady who I hadn't seen in a very long time. This was a lady who used to make heads turn, and in fact had my head doing 360 degrees quite a few times. My friends and I would find any excuse to visit her, just so that we could look at her. She was a stunner. Well, that was then and this is now. When I saw her a few weeks ago I was more saddened rather than stunned at how she looked.

Now everybody ages, it's a natural process, hair gets gray, a few pounds pile on, but when you see someone who used to look like Halle Berry now looking like some old granny belly, it makes you shudder. I could not believe that the lady had let herself go like that, even as she had friends older than her who still looked good. Listen, I know women in their 60s who still look great, so there's no excuse.

There are few things as lovely as a woman's body, its form, its curves, its lines, its sensuality, its sexuality. Proof of this is the millions of places around the world where men go to ogle nude and semi nude women wining up themselves and call-



TONY ROBINSON



ing it dancing. Poets have written about the female form. But this beauty, this object of desire and joy to men, can also be the downfall of many women as they age. Because they are born with this ability to attract men and in the process have this power, if and when they lose it,

their lives may grind to a halt. Say what you will, but it's a shallow world, and a woman of great beauty will always have the edge.

"No boss is going to put any ugly woman on the front

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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CARIB Comments

• **“The U.N. is the best place for the voices of the poor to collectively demand change to the current iniquitous global economic systems”** – Camillo

Gonsalves, newly appointed St. Vincent and the Grenadines' United Nations ambassador, outlining his plans to focus on critical issues to effectively represent his country and the region at the global body.

• **“I love what I am doing. I want to say I do not have a desire to leave what I am**

doing, at the same time I do not want to be here and betray those whom I love” - St.

Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves saying last month he is prepared to walk away from the political arena if civil



servants send him a clear message that they feel he has betrayed them.

• **“I think it's just silly. You can't do that”** – Clive Lloyd, former West Indies cricket captain and the team's current manager, last month chiding a decision by the International Cricket Council to replace Jamaican Steve Bucknor as

umpire for a Test between Australia and India following controversy surrounding his performance in an earlier match.



Compiled from CMC and other sources.



The female clock goes tic toc

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

page to answer phone and greet customers,” said one man to me, and it's true.

BALANCING ACT

As the female clock ticks, they reflect on their early years, those years when they were young, fresh, pretty and could choose from any number of men who pursued them. But even so, they had to be careful, for they couldn't do what the guys did and still be a lady. It's a balancing act that if she doesn't play right, might just leave her out in the cold with nobody.

As the clock ticks, they have such a narrow window of opportunity, unlike men who can play way up into their years. If the woman touches 35 or say 38 and never been taken, that's usually it for her. There are a few exceptions of course, but for the vast majori-

ty the only man in their lives is Jesus. My brethren constantly confess to me that if he meets a woman in that age group, never married or involved, then he views her with great suspicion and skepticism.

Recently I met a lady friend of mine who's up in her 40s, never married and with no man. So I asked her what her story was. Her sad reply was, “I gave up looking now, and all like me, no man wants me now at my age, and furthermore man is crosses anyway, I have peace of mind now.”

That last part she just added as self-comfort, solace to herself. But it's very sad for, as the female clock ticks, they sit on the shelf of loneliness and are never picked up by the wandering eyes of the men who are either shopping or window shopping. When I try to play cupid and mention my

ageing single female friends to my male colleagues, I either get a blank, “You've got to be kidding,” stare, or a verbal, “You must be out of your mind, me must pick up dat, mid-40s, no man, never married, is me yu want drop cross-pon nuh?!”

GAIN IS LOSS

Such is the fate of many women as their clocks tick. As the female clock ticks, many of them gain weight. Now men gain weight too, but usually it's in the form of a paunch. Ironically it suits some men, as a slight paunch may even look cute. But lord, when some women pack on the pounds, they really pack on the pounds.

As the clock ticks, many women stop caring. For those who still care, God bless you.

But let's back it up a bit,

back to the window of opportunity and the stress that it puts women under as they age. In some parts of society, if she touches 15 and doesn't have a child, it's stress. In other areas, if she touches 35 and is not married it's stress. Then if she gets married and doesn't have a child within two years, it's more stress. Then when she does have kids, gains weight, hubby loses interest and strays, it's even more stress, sometimes. I say sometimes, as in spite of what the experts say, many women have confessed to me that as they age, they, “Can't bother with the hackling anymore. It's a well kept secret, but not so secret to the many husbands who have to live with sexless wives who still sleep in the same bed beside them every night, but have locked shop many years ago. Some have really become bored with

men, and have told me so. “Last time I had sex with him? About five years ago.”

As the clock ticks, so many things happen, they grow hair where hair should not grow and lose it where it should. Their bodies go through changes, physical and hormonal and hot flashes are the order of the day. Many try to retain or regain the elusive flower of youth, but it's a process that can only be slowed down, never stopped.

As my friend said to me recently, “As women age they don't handle it too well eh, they freak out!”

As for men, as they age, they just look for something younger. “No, that's not his daughter, guess again.” They try to turn back their clock, with a younger timepiece. Tic toc.

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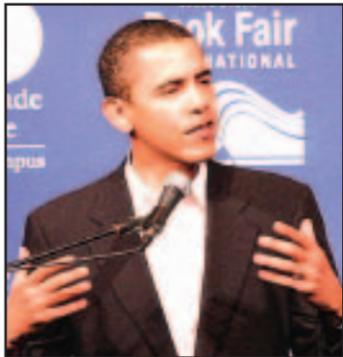
BLACK HISTORY MONTHwww.caribbeantoday.com

~ A Caribbean Today feature

Obama's political run adds edge to Black History Month 2008

GORDON WILLIAMS

The surge in national popularity of Democratic candidate Barack Obama may have added meaning to Caribbean Americans during the celebration of "Black History Month"



Obama

2008, especially with United States presidential elections due in November.

According to some U.S. residents with Caribbean heritage, this month's celebration may take on heightened significance as, for the first time in the country's history, an African American is among the frontrunners for the nomination of a majority political organization.

In the case of the Democratic Party, that would

mean Obama is in line to possibly become America's next president.

"I'd say it's the most important in a long time," said Irwine Claire, managing director of Caribbean Immigration Services in New York.

"Barack Obama is not a fringe candidate who's just representing black people. He's a legitimate candidate who happens to be black.

"It bodes well for the African American community, especially during Black History Month," explained Claire, a 46-year-old Jamaican-born registered Democrat who said he supports Obama's campaign.

"When you put it in relation to the politics of the time, yes it is the most important in my lifetime to date."

"It (Obama's accomplishment) is certainly another rung on the ladder that we can build on, providing we hold the African American candidate accountable to us as blacks and Caribbean Americans," said Trinidad and Tobago-born Glenn Joseph, a Florida resident who is a current advisory board member of the Greater Caribbean Chamber of Commerce.

RACE FACTOR

Obama, born to a white

mother and black father, has often called for the removal of race as a criteria considered in selecting a candidate. He wants candidates to be judged by their abilities to do the job, not the color of their skin. However, his heritage has been the focus of many heated discussions during the current campaign, including recent fallout with supporters of main rival Hillary Clinton's campaign.

In the meantime, it is accepted that the huge majority of Caribbean immigrants to the U.S. are non-white and many have observed Black History Month as a celebration of accomplishments by people of color.

Also of significance is that "Super Tuesday", which is on Feb. 5, also falls within Black History Month 2008. Many of the remaining Democratic primaries will be held on that date, which could prove significant in deciding the party's eventual presidential nominee. In January Obama won a couple



Claire

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

NSU offers films, art, lectures, health screenings in February

FLORIDA - Nova Southeastern University (NSU) will celebrate Black History Month 2008 with a variety of events, including art, dance performances, special film viewings, lectures and discussions, and health screenings for the public in February.

New this year to the month-long salute to black history is a blog site to encourage ongoing discussion around the various NSU Black History Month events. The blog address is <http://blogs.library.nova.edu/blackhistory>.

Below is a selected listing of events. Unless otherwise noted, all will be held on NSU's main campus, 3301 College Ave., Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Feb. 8

7 p.m. to 10 p.m. - Strengths of Black Families Film Festival, highlights the strengths of black families. "Akeelah and the Bee", will be featured in the Carl DeSantis Building, Knight Auditorium. Contact Dr. Debra Nixon, **954-262-3008** or nixond@nova.edu.

Feb. 9, 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. - NSU Diversity Summit: "Diversity and Organizations" Contact Marci Washington, mwashing@nova.edu.

Feb. 10, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. -

"Cultural Explosion - Celebrating Black History Month through the Arts".

A cultural explosion on the Flight Deck in the University Center where hip hop meets jazz, R&B meets rap and the spoken word is more than just a poem. Contact Cherise James, jcherise@nova.edu, or LeThesha Harris, lethesha@nova.edu.

Feb. 11, noon to 1 p.m. - Dr. Cyril Blavo, a native of Ghana and NSU professor, discusses "The Tradition of Kente Cloth" in the Alvin Sherman Library. Contact Kenny McCallum, **954-262-1289** or odoo@nsu.nova.edu.

Feb. 12, noon to 1:30 p.m. - Dr. Stephen Campbell, a professor at NSU's Center for Psychological Studies, discuss "HIV/AIDS Reduction in Southern Africa" in the Carl DeSantis building. Contact Dr. Sarah Valley-Gray, valleygr@nova.edu.

Feb. 13, noon to 12:30 p.m. - "Body & Movement" presented by Corpo e Movimento Capoeira Academy, in the University Center Flight Deck. Contact Kenny McCallum.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

Atlanta's Civil Rights Walk of Fame inducts late Jamaica P.M.

Former Jamaica prime minister, the late Michael Manley, has been inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta, Georgia.

A sidewalk plaque, bearing a likeness of Manley's footprints, was unveiled by his widow Glynne last month at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site on Auburn Avenue in downtown Atlanta.

Manley is the first Jamaican leader to be inducted into the Walk of Fame, where he joins American civil rights icons as poet Maya Angelou, singer-dancer Sammy Davis, Jr., activist Benjamin Hooks, radio host Tom Joyner, and King's attorney Clarence B. Jones.

In presenting Manley to be inducted at the ceremony held on Jan. 12 at the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, Trumpet Awards Foundation's Executive Director Xernona Clayton said: "Today is a very special day for the

International Civil Rights Walk of Fame, as we induct an outstanding son of Jamaica, whose legacy will live on."

She explained that the former prime minister was selected for induction into the Walk of Fame based not only on the outstanding contribution he made during his life, but also because of his powerful enduring legacy in civil rights, sharing in some of the dreams and struggles of legendary American civil rights leader King.

HONOR

Manley's widow thanked the Foundation for the honor bestowed upon her late husband, and explained that it also goes to the citizens of Jamaica. She said that Manley always maintained that justice must be universal, in domestic or international economic relations, or power equations between races. Those who knew Manley, she said, understood that the most persistent impulse that motivated him was his passion for equality



A group of Jamaicans flank Glynne Manley while she stoops in front of a plaque bearing the footsteps of her late husband, former Jamaica Prime Minister Michael Manley, who was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta last month.

and justice.

Danny Roberts, chairman of the Michael Manley Foundation, who accompa-

nied Mrs. Manley, called the former prime minister's induction momentous, adding that he did not know that he had

so much impact on the international stage.

"To have him honored in
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13)

Who's coming for dinner?
At my house: **Community.**

Dinner at my house is about sharing great food and even better conversation. My new neighbor Amisi is from Cairo, but we have so much in common! She loves bowling, yoga and my great uncle's **Curry Chicken**, too. She says it tastes like home. Amazing how basically the same blend of spices that have been used in Caribbean dishes for generations can be found the world over. Just like friends. It's nice to have someone who appreciates my African American history the way I do.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH www.caribbeantoday.com

~ A Caribbean Today feature

Heritage bus tours in Miami

Miami-Dade Transit's (MDT) Black History Tours will return for its 15th year this month to highlight the rich cultural heritage of the South Florida city's African American community.

The free tours depart every Saturday in February beginning at 9 a.m. from the Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 N.W. First St. in downtown Miami.

This year's tour includes an excursion to Virginia Key Beach, which once served as Miami's blacks-only beach in the days of segregation. Other stops include Overtown's historic Lyric Theatre and the Dorsey House, home to Miami's first black millionaire; the E.W. F. Stirrup house and

Charlotte Jane Cemetery in Coconut Grove; and Georgette's Tea Room in Brownsville, a respite for black celebrities in the 1940s and 1950s, and where singer Billie Holiday kept a permanent residence.

Trained MDT bus operators narrate the approximately three and half hours tour aboard air-conditioned Miami-Dade Transit buses.

For reservations, which are required, call **786-469-5028, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** For more information. Additional information on the tours is available at <http://www.miamidade.gov/transit/blackhis.asp>.



Atlanta's Civil Rights Walk of Fame ...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

this way 10 years after his death, endorses his philosophy and ideas that he has always expounded," Roberts said.

During the ceremony, Mrs. Manley was presented with the International Civil Rights Medal by Sylvia Ashley, vice president of GoodWorks International. A pair of Michael Manley's

shoes is on display and forms part of the historical International Civil Rights Walk of Fame exhibition, which will be mounted internationally.

Information and photograph for this article provided by Derrick A. Scott.



Obama's political run adds edge...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

of primaries, including a landslide victory in South Carolina, which offered some indication of his widening appeal as that state is in the U.S. south where black candidates do not traditionally enjoy overwhelming cross-the-board support.

VOTE

It is still to be seen if that attraction extends to the sizeable Caribbean American population in the U.S. Recent U.S. Census Bureau reports indicate that more than 800,000 people from the Caribbean are currently U.S. citizens and therefore eligible to vote in November. Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica make up the majority of Caribbean Americans in the U.S., with a large percentage of their numbers concentrated in the states of New York and Florida.

But don't expect Caribbean Americans to form a voting bloc with the presidential elections in mind. A recent report indicated that there are differing views about a bloc. Also, Caribbean Americans have often made it clear they will vote for whoever they think is the best candidate.

Meanwhile, according to Claire, Caribbean Americans

are gradually becoming closer to African Americans, which could lead to added willingness to share views and celebrate the contribution each group has made in the U.S.

"It is important because we are black first," said Joseph, a U.S. resident since 1970 and a registered Democrat, "then we are Caribbean or American."

"As a black man walking down the street (in the U.S.), no one knows if he is Caribbean or not," Claire added. "Plus Caribbean people have played important roles in advancement of African Americans.

"In time, you'll find that the line becomes blurrier and blurrier between Caribbean people and African Americans in the U.S."

That, Claire said, will be of added importance for both groups during this year's Black History Month.

"It is a very significant time for Caribbean Americans," he said. "Caribbean nationals should look at it as a good time to be in the U.S...One (Obama) from the ranks is moving forth."

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



The history of Black History Month

ELISSA HANEY

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month".

Black history had barely begun to be studied-or even documented-when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books.

We owe the celebration of "Black History Month", and more importantly the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age

20. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population. When blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

ATTENTION

Woodson, always one to act on his ambitions, decided to take on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. He estab-



Woodson

lished the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched "Negro History Week" as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.

Woodson chose the second week of February for "Negro History Week" because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Edited and reprinted from www.infoplease.com



BRIEFS

• Miami-Dade events

The Miami-Dade Public Library has scheduled a variety of events in February to coincide with Black History Month.

The programs will feature authors, music, dance, workshops and art exhibitions.

For details, visit www.mdpls.org or call **305-375-2665**.

• BBEO honors Caribbean Americans

Pilot Barrington Irving and issues advocate Marleine Bastien will be the two Caribbean-born honorees at a function hosted by the Broward Black Elected Officials at **7 p.m. Feb. 9**.

The theme of the event is "The Gala II: Building Our Community". It will be held at the Westin Diplomat Resort in Hollywood, Florida.

• Discussion on Claudia Jones

Dr. Carole Boyce Davies will sign copies and discuss her new book,

"Left of Karl Marx", which focuses on the activism, writing and legacy of Claudia Jones, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Feb. 16 at the Broward Main Library Auditorium, 100 South Andrews Ave. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

In the book Davies describes how Jones expanded the understanding of African diaspora thought and practices in dealing with questions of race, class, gender and cultural identity in political criticism and activism.

For reservations, call **954-357-7348**.

• "Be a Winner" campaign on track

Tri-Rail in Florida has partnered with fast food giant McDonald's in a marketing effort targeting the African American and Caribbean communities in the state.

The "Be a Winner" campaign, is offering incentives for consumers to explore the benefits of riding Tri-Rail.

The campaign kicks off with

the help of more than 200 McDonald's locations throughout the tri-county area. When consumers visit these locations, tray liners and brochures will direct them to log onto www.tri-rail.com to receive a complimentary Tri-Rail ticket. Contest entrants will then be automatically registered for the chance to win a vacation for two in Barbados with a four-night stay at Intimate Hotels and air travel on Air Jamaica, compliments of Caribbean National Weekly.

For more information call **1-800-TRI-RAIL**.

• National Black AIDS/HIV Awareness Day is Feb. 7

Some of the biggest African American names in the United States are expected to come together in support of "National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day" (NBHAAD) on **Feb. 7**.



NSU offers films, art, lectures, health screenings in February

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

Feb. 15, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. -

Strengths of Black Families Film Festival, in the Carl DeSantis Building, Knight Auditorium. Festival continues with viewing and discussion of "Why Did I Get Married?" Contact Dr. Debra Nixon.

Feb. 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. -

Minority Law Day hosted by NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center. Contact Beth Hall, **954-262-6121** or hallb@nsu.law.nova.edu.

Feb. 23, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. -

NSU Volunteers at the Sistrunk Historical Festival and Parade on Sistrunk

Boulevard. The College of Allied Health and Nursing will provide health screenings at the oldest African-American Festival in Broward County, named in honor of Dr. James Sistrunk, one of the county's first black physicians. Contact Dr. Bini Litwin, **954-262-1662** or blitwin@nova.edu.

Feb. 24 - Step Afrika Master Class and Performance.

Master Class - **noon to 2 p.m.**, in the University Center. To register, contact Dr. Chetachi Egwu at **954-262-8073** or egwu@nova.edu. Performance - Step Afrika performs at 6:30 p.m. in the Miniaci Performing Arts Center.

Admission, \$15; free for NSU students with identification. Contact Dr. Egwu.

Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m. - Carrie P. Meek Outstanding Education Leadership Achievement Awards in the Miniaci Performing Arts Center. Guest speaker is Dr. Bobby Jones, ambassador and NSU visiting professor. Contact Dr. Delores M. Smiley, **954-262-8443** or smiley@nsu.nova.edu.

Feb. 29, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Strengths of Black Families Dialogue. Contact Dr. Debra Nixon.



History did not favor Arthur in Barbados's general elections

PETER RICHARDS

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Owen Arthur will now more than ever understand the phrase “those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it”.

The 58-year-old economist had sought to defy the odds by winning a fourth consecutive term as prime minister of this small eastern Caribbean state, but in the end, the electorate not only condemned his Barbados Labour Party (BLP) to the Opposition benches, but it also possibly signaled his end in elective politics in Barbados.

Insisting that he was not about to engage himself in any “instant judgment” regarding his future, Arthur, who led the government since 1994 for “13 exhilarating years,” said he would still want to ensure the 69-year-old party “remains one of the premier political institutions in the region.

“I have not left a party that is politically bankrupt. The party can cope beyond me is the assurance that I give the party. It has people in it who can qualify to be leaders in any institution in the world,” he added.

Arthur had entered last month's general elections hoping to achieve a feat that had been beyond many prominent politicians here, including Errol Barrow, who brought the island into political Independence from Britain in 1966 and considered the “Father of the Nation”.

Like Arthur, in 1976, Barrow was seeking to become the first leader here to win a fourth consecutive term, but his Democratic Labour Party (DLP) was then trounced by the BLP, led by JMGM “Tom” Adams, the only son of Sir Grantley Adams, who headed the government in the failed West Indian Federation.

‘CHANGE’

Arthur believed that his BLP had conducted a “good campaign” for control of the

30-seat Parliament, but acknowledged also that the desire for change was the main factor in the election, that resulted in the DLP reversing a 24-6 BLP majority in the last



Owen

Parliament to a 20-10 in its favor.

“Change is a natural human instinct and I fully respect it. I want to merely say that I thank the people of Barbados for the opportunity to be prime minister. I tried my very best for the country and I leave office with no rancor,” he said.

Arthur said his administration's policies had broadened the entrepreneurial base and that a cadre of new small business operators had emerged to create jobs and add consider-

“Change is a natural human instinct and I fully respect it”
– Owen Arthur

able value to the economy. Foreign reserves stood at \$2.2 billion and Arthur said that direct foreign investment had been impressive.

The 2007 Human Development Report issued by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) supported Arthur's statement, a position he did not shy away from during the brief two-week campaign for the elections, as he tried to prevent the DLP onslaught that drove his administration out of office.

The UNDP had ranked the island, which is mainly dependent on tourism and international business services for its revenue, at number 31 out of 177 countries with respect to its human development index “which looks beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to a broader definition of well-being”. In fact, the U.N. body ranked Barbados at the very top among 108 developing countries regarding human poverty index that focused on the proportion of people below a threshold level in the same dimensions of human development including “living a long and healthy life, having access to education and a decent standard of living”.

The UNDP gave Barbados a score of 3.0.

While Arthur and the BLP campaigned on the theme of wanting “only the best for Barbados” and urged the population not to take chances and shift from his administration's successful program, the DLP on the other hand said that there was need for “change” and it was also necessary to transform “the nation to meet the real needs of the people”.

“My vision of Barbados is centered on the idea of our people enjoying a significant improvement in living standards,” said David Thompson, the 49-year-old prime minister elect, who was successful on his third attempt at winning the government.

“I have a vision of Barbados in which our arts, architecture, industrial policy, economic policy and social policy promote the concept of island living that is socially empowering, highly productive and allows us to meet both our internal and external obligations,” he added.

CHINA QUESTION

The change of government is not expected to result in a drastic change in the island's foreign relation policy, although political observers

and analysts will watch with interest whether Arthur's allegation that Taiwan had funded the Opposition's campaign in return for a switch in allegiance away from China.

Bridgetown and Beijing had established diplomatic relations dating back to back to 30 years; and while Thompson and Taipei publicly rebuked Arthur's claims, the outgoing prime minister reminded citizens that a similar strategy had been followed in the case of St. Lucia where the ruling United Workers Party (UWP) had severed ties with Beijing in favor of Taiwan after a 10-year period.

In its manifesto for the election, the DLP said that Barbados would “continue its long standing policy to be friends of all and satellites of none.

“It will continue to defend

I have a vision of Barbados in which our arts, architecture, industrial policy, economic policy and social policy promote the concept of island living that is socially empowering, highly productive and allows us to meet both our internal and external obligations”

– David Thompson

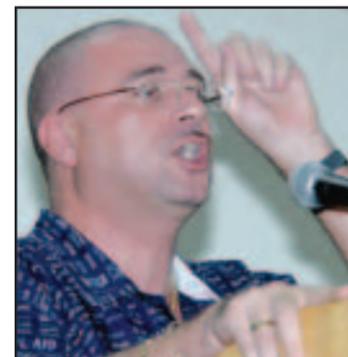
the interests of its citizens at home and abroad. We will respect those treaties entered into by predecessor governments and seek new alliances conducive to the achievement of our goals”, it stated.

CSME CLASS

As lead prime minister within the Caribbean community (CARICOM), Arthur had played a high profile role in the quest by regional states to fully establish a CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) by 2015 whose main characteristics included the free movement of goods, skills, labor and services across the

region.

But while it has said that it would “work towards the realization” of the CSME, Thompson has already signaled



Thompson

that a new DLP administration would also embark on a major public education program to sensitize Barbadians to the “challenges and opportunities that free movement of labor, goods and services will bring.

“It will then prepare Barbadians for taking a leading role in the development of the wider Caribbean community”, the DLP stated.

Another concern for the new administration will be the recently negotiated Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that Caribbean countries reached with Europe at the end of last year. The full details of the accord has not been published in the region despite numerous calls from civil and other organizations, even as they say that the regional leaders are preparing to affix their signatures to the accord on Mar. 15.

DLP General Secretary Christopher Sinckler, the executive director of the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), had been critical of the accord and now, as a front line member of the new government, could be in a position to agitate much more successfully for a review of the agreement.

- CMC



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Marley brothers to headline 'Smile Jamaica-Africa Unite' on Feb. 23

The sons of reggae legend Bob Marley are scheduled to assemble for a historic concert in Jamaica this month.

Ziggy, Stephen, Julian, Ky-Mani and Damian Marley will get together for the first time on the same night on a Jamaican stage during the "Smile Jamaica - Africa Unite Concert" set for Feb. 23 at James Bond Beach.

For Ziggy, the eldest of the sons, it has been five years since his last stage appearance in Jamaica. Stephen was recently nominated for a Grammy Award with his first solo project "Mind Control".

Damian rocked the industry with back to back Grammy Award-winning albums - "Half Way Tree" and "Welcome to Jamrock".

In Dec. 1976 Bob Marley performed at the Smile

Jamaica show at the National Heroes Park in Kingston, despite being shot the night before. He promised to do one song, but ended up working the stage for 90 minutes.

The first ever Africa Unite concert was staged in Ethiopia in 2005. The Rita Marley Foundation, directed by Bob's widow, was instrumental in making that a reality.

The "Smile Jamaica - Africa Unite" show is the result of collaboration between Ghetto Youths International, headed by Stephen Marley, with the Rita Marley Foundation.

Other performers expected on stage include: The



Marley brothers, from left, Julian, Damian, Ziggy and Stephen.

Melody Makers, including the Marley sisters Cedella and Sharon; The I-Three, with Rita Marley, Marcia Griffiths and Judy Mowatt; Black Uhuru, Capleton, Taurus Riley,

Richie Spice, Spragga Benz, Lutan Fyah, Coco Tea and Alborosie, Etana and Queen Ifrica, musicians Dean Fraser and Ernie Ranglin, newcomer Javaughn and sound systems

Stone Love and Gully Bank. Barbadian-born singer Rihanna and dub poet Mutabaruka have also been announced as performers.



A bittersweet taste of love, politics and turmoil in Haiti

• **TITLE: VOODOO LOVE**
• **AUTHOR: JHO FELIX**
• **REVIEWED BY: GORDON WILLIAMS**

It would be easy to run through a copy of "Voodoo Love" then file it away next to a bunch of romantic novels which offer similar stories of love, jealousy, rage and out-right evil.

The book's base is all too familiar. But Haitian-born author Jho Felix taps into much more. He offers a peek into the culture of one of the Caribbean's most interesting nations - Haiti.

A bit of French is mixed into the writing with gives it a pleasant flavor without weighing it down. The heavy stuff is saved for the plot.

Laura Penier is a lover scorned. Her passion to win back the affections of her ex-boyfriend begins with a few harassing phone calls then escalates into a frightening world of obsessive evil. She is described as a beautiful mulatto from so-called lofty social standing. Yet her actions plunge her beyond determined seductress to a scheming psychopath.

Her perceived adversary Natalie Riché, "the wife" and woman who Laura believes stole her husband, offers a more complex character. She too is beautiful and highly educated. The source and target of Laura's anger is a fiercely independent black woman, however, who has made an impres-

sive leap from a lower social order into the realm of the wealthy.

At the center of these women's tug-o-war is Jean-Pierre Riché, who, as his name suggests, is a wealthy - and handsome - Haitian businessman. He is Laura's former lover and Natalie's husband and carries the tag of a pouting playboy.

BATTLES

The book stages several mini-battles at once, all fought in Haiti, stretching from poor urban and rural towns to the exclusive mansions. It's Laura vs. Jean-Pierre. Laura vs. Natalie. Jean-Pierre vs. Natalie. Haitian politics vs. its own history. Blacks vs. mulattos.

Yet the biggest battle, the one that forms the foundation of "Voodoo Love", is between good and evil. A major weapon of choice by both sides is supernatural power - "voodoo". It is made clear that voodoo, black magic to some, did not originate in evil but was exploited by some seeking financial gain. In other words, not all the spirits are bad.

As the battles rage, readers get a glimpse of Haiti's deep cultural roots and its history, which features the continuous turmoil that has plagued the grand dame of democracy in this hemisphere. Even as the household jealousies rage, the nation becomes - once again - ripe for political change. Violence erupts. People die. The nation's long, complicated history is rolled into a modern

day tale.

BELIEF

Yet the details of the voodoo ceremonies sample a world that is very real to many, but which outsiders often brush off as movie fiction. Disappearing snakes, mambos, zombies, nightmares and spine tingling rituals. Felix ensures that the tension hardly subsides even if its source is out of view. It's a case of leaving the reader

to decide what to believe.

"Voodoo Love" also draws attention to racial and political conflicts in Haiti. It highlights racial tension between blacks and mulattos, which is often ignored by other nations, but spills into almost every aspect of the country's life - even on the soccer field.

"...the outside world would never believe that the issue of color and race could've paralyzed Haiti...a

country known as a black nation," says Jean-Pierre.

It is also a warm story of friendship and love; of isolation and forgiveness. There's nothing sinister about that.

PUBLISHER: iUNIVERSE, INC.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



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Entries must include the writer's full name, address and telephone number. Each writer is allowed one entry. Look out for the name of the winner and the winning composition, which will be published in the **March 2008** issue of **Caribbean Today**.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS FEB. 15, 2008

Caribbean sprint aces make Florida their new home

GORDON WILLIAMS

A pair of Caribbean sprint aces have shifted their training base to Florida to prepare for this year's Olympic Games in China.



Brown

World and Olympic champion Veronica Campbell-Brown and her husband Omar Brown, a Commonwealth gold medalist, recently moved to Clermont, near Orlando, from the state of Arkansas where they linked up with longtime American coach Lance

Brauman. So far, the Jamaican couple appears to be enjoying the transition, with familiar items easier to find than when they lived in the Midwest of the United States.

"(It's) not really an adjustment," Campbell-Brown told *Caribbean Today* last month. "I can get stuff from Jamaica like food, yam...jerk seasoning."

WEATHER PERK

The weather has also been conducive to their preparations for the Olympics. With Florida's mild winter, the couple has been able to practice more outdoors. So far it appears they like it.

"Training has been going great," said the gold medalist in the women's 100 meters at last year's World Championships of Athletics in Japan and winner of the 200 metres at the last Olympics four years ago in Greece.

"I'm enjoying training outdoor in the warm weather."

The two said they had no immediate plans for moving from the southern state.

"We'll be staying here for a long time," Campbell-Brown said.

But the gentler climate has not made practice easier. According to Campbell-

Brown, in Florida "the weather is nicer, but it's harder." It has also suited her husband, who is trying to rebound from an injury-plagued 2007.

"2008 I'm looking forward to competing, stay healthy and run fast," said Brown, who won the 200 meters gold medal at the 2006 Commonwealth Games, but plans to run the 400 meters this year.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today's managing editor.



Campbell-Brown

ESPN, Stanford Twenty20 agree on broadband cricket coverage

NELSON KING

NEW YORK – The United States-based ESPN360.com and the Stanford Twenty20 cricket tournament say they have reached an agreement for exclusive U.S. broadband coverage of all matches of the 2008 and 2009 tournaments.

ESPN ESPN360.com said last month that the agreement will offer U.S. cricket fans complete live coverage of all 19 matches from the second annual tournament. It said in a statement that each match will also be available for on-demand replay for a period after its completion.

"We're very excited about bringing this high-quality Twenty20 cricket to ESPN360.com," said John Lasker, director, programming and acquisitions, ESPN digital

media. "Cricket is one of the most popular sports in the world, the West Indies are an international powerhouse.

The Stanford Twenty20 Tournament, created by U.S. billionaire Sir Allen Stanford, is a single-elimination knockout cricket competition, featuring teams from multiple Caribbean territories. The winning team takes home a purse of \$1 million and the runner-gets \$500,000.

The inaugural tournament took place last year, with Guyana emerging as the champions.

The teams which will compete in the 2008 tournament include: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Stanford

Cubans return to top in Caribbean soccer

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC – Cuba recaptured the number one spot in the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) rankings last month.

FIFA's January ratings showed the Cubans retaining their Coca-Cola world ranking of 71st while Haiti dipped four places to 73rd in the world, losing the CFU pinnacle position they held in November and December last year.

Cuba, semi-finalists in the 2006-2007 Digicel Caribbean Cup a year ago, last held the CFU top spot in October last year.

Eight-time Caribbean Cup champions Trinidad and Tobago retained third in the region, and the label as highest rated English-speaking Caribbean side, while climbing three places to 78th on FIFA's list.

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz, who sank to an all-time low 103rd three months ago, are

98th in the world and stay fourth in the CFU, while Guyana displaced St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) at number five. The Guyanese are 129th on FIFA's list, while SVG plunged 29 places - the biggest drop on FIFA's world list for January - and are now sixth in the CFU.

Barbados, seventh in the CFU, slid 14 places to 142nd in the world.

The CFU's Top 10 is completed by Bermuda, which is 147th in the world and eighth in the region, followed by St. Kitts and Nevis (151st) and Suriname (152nd). St Kitts and Nevis jumped nine places up the FIFA ladder and re-entered the CFU's top 10 at the expense of Antigua and Barbuda, which dropped five places in the world to 110th. The country is now 11th in the region.



BOOTING WITH BARNES



Jamaican-born former England international soccer star John Barnes, left, demonstrates aspects of the game to a Haitian national player and coaches during Haiti Digicel Kick Start Clinic in the Caribbean country last month. Barnes, the head coach of Digicel Clinics which staged similar sessions throughout the Caribbean, has been impressed by the talent in the region. "I have seen a high level of (soccer) in Haiti," he said. "If the quality I've seen here is everywhere in the Caribbean, then Caribbean (soccer) is in a healthy state."

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U.S. passport rules inspire more Americans to visit the Caribbean

TEXAS - A poll conducted by a major United States travel publication has found that the new U.S. passport rules have inspired more Americans to visit the Caribbean.

The poll, conducted by the Texas-based Travelocity,



found that 66 percent of Americans, who got their passports for the first time in 2007, visited the Caribbean, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda – countries affected by the new passport rules. Travelocity also found that 30 percent of Americans traveled beyond those countries.

The U.S. State Department said 10.3 million new passports were issued in

the first eight months in 2007, an increase of 37 percent over the corresponding period in 2006.

INCREASE

Amy Ziff, Travelocity's editor-at-large, said she expected significant increase in new U.S. passports in 2008.

"Not only is this likely to result in more passports being issued in 2008, but it will open even more options to vacationing Americans looking to stretch their dollar abroad," she said.

"The up-tick in international travel may continue as a whole new group of consumers begins to explore beyond domestic vacations."

The State Department has announced that a new passport card equipped with technology for travelers to the Caribbean, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda will be ready by April.

NEED

But unlike a passport, Ann Barrett, deputy assistant secretary for passport services

at the State Department, stressed that the passport card would be accepted only for land and sea crossings into the US from those countries, stating that air travelers will not be able to use it.

"They need a passport," she said.

Barrett said the State

Department is ready to meet the increased demand for passport cards and passports in 2008.

"We certainly have ramped up," she said, disclosing that the department has hired hundreds of passport specialists.

In 2008, Barrett said the

department expects to issue about 23 million to 26 million passports. By the end of last month the U.S. government was expected to begin phasing out "the routine practice of accepting oral declarations alone at land and sea ports of entry," she added.



Caribbean cruises will be most popular for 2008 ~ international travel expert



More cruise ship passengers from North America are expected in the Caribbean this year.

MINNESOTA - A survey conducted by a leading travel agency has found that a Caribbean cruise will be the most popular international destination for 2008.

The Minnesota, United States-based Carlson Wagonlit Travel Associates said the survey was conducted among leading travel experts. It said a Caribbean cruise was followed closely by one to Cancún or the Riviera Maya in Mexico.

The Eastern Caribbean and Montego Bay in Jamaica

were among the top 10 destinations.

"Internationally, Caribbean cruising and Cancún, Mexico, deliver the one-two punch for the second straight year among the most popular international 'destinations,'" Carlson Wagonlit Travel Associates said.

"In fact, Caribbean cruising has been named as the top international 'destination' for five straight years."



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If your income was less than \$39,000 last year, you may qualify to get your federal tax return prepared for free. Miami-Dade County is offering tax filing assistance to help low-to-moderate income residents. The following groups are also eligible:

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MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY

Finding relief after bankruptcy

JOSE H. CARABALLO

Bankruptcy is an uncomfortable subject for a variety of reasons. The most obvious is the potential havoc it can wreak on your finances.

Running a close second is the negative stigma, which is often attached to the process. This negativity is important to mention because strong emotions can sometimes lead to unsound financial decisions with devastating results.

Bankruptcy becomes a viable option for someone who is "upside down" in terms of cash flow. In other words, when a person has more money going out each month than coming in, bankruptcy should be considered if no reversal of this negative cash flow is within sight. The longer someone waits to explore the various options available, the more serious his or her situation may become.

For many homeowners in the midst of this upside down cash flow, speaking to a qualified mortgage professional is a great option. An experienced loan officer can objectively look at your finances and help you determine if restructuring your mortgage would not only help, but possibly even alleviate any need for bankruptcy.

If bankruptcy is the only option, seek out a reputable bankruptcy attorney and credit counselor. A qualified mortgage specialist can provide references for you as well, as he or she works with these professionals

on a regular basis. Reliable references are essential in this case because experienced professionals greatly increase the odds of a successful bankruptcy experience. It's that simple.

HELP STEPS

Here are some additional steps you can take to make the bankruptcy process as painless as possible:

- Save all paperwork regarding your bankruptcy, and keep it organized. This will prove beneficial after your bankruptcy as you now have all of the perti-



Being broke is not the end of the world.

nent information in one place. Also, be sure to write down your discharge date. It's surprising how many people forget to do this.

- Establish a household budget. This can be accomplished in many ways, but there are several inexpensive computer programs available which do an excellent job.

- Throughout the bankruptcy, do your best to not only live below your means, but to save as much cash as possible. You

never know what you may need it for once the process is completed.

- Be prepared for a barrage of junk mail. There will be sharks on the loose who are hoping to capitalize on your need for credit.

REBUILDING CREDIT

The following are tips to help you rebuild your credit:

- If you must buy a car, focus on transportation as opposed to style. Buy an inexpensive, used car, and try to get a loan for it. It's a good idea to figure out what your budget allows in terms of a dollar amount first. This means obtaining financing prior to looking for a car.

- Get a secured credit card. Secured credit cards allow for the cardholder to deposit a said amount of money into an account, thus establishing the spending limit of the card. Some of these cards will reward responsible borrowers by upping the limit without an additional deposit. Some will even convert the account into a traditional credit card. (Be wary of offers of "easy credit" or any card which asks you to call a 900 number. (You will be charged for the call.)

- Meet with a reputable credit repair specialist. Not only can they help you clean up the damage to your credit report, they can advise you on specific ways to rebuild the credit you lost as well.

While it does take time, there is definitely life (and credit) after bankruptcy. Some mortgage lenders will even lend to you within a year or so after a bankruptcy. If done correctly the rates on these loans can be quite decent. So, if you're in serious financial trouble, the trick is to get the help and advice you need from professionals you trust as soon as possible. Because a reputable mortgage consultant deals with issues like these all the time, they can be a very good source for you on your road back from bankruptcy.

Jose H. Caraballo is the branch manager for the Coral Gables office of Source One Mortgage in Florida, United States, and president-elect of the Mortgage Bankers Association of Greater Miami. For a free copy of a Consumer Credit Scoring Booklet, contact him at 305-968-1257.



U.S. recession will affect Caribbean trade ~ T&T

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC – Central Bank Governor Ewart Williams says trade in the Caribbean will be affected by the economic recession now plaguing the United States.

"The current recession affects the demand which there is for goods and services. If there is less demand for our goods internationally then our economy will feel the impact. One can never say there will be no impact on us," he told reporters after the launch of the secondary market for government bonds late last month.

Delivering the State of the Union address on Jan. 28, President George W. Bush acknowledged that the U.S. economy was undergoing "a period of uncertainty."

Williams said that if the global price for oil drops as a result of the recession and economic situation in the U.S., then Trinidad and

Tobago's development plans would be severely affected.

"One can never say there's going to be no impact, there is going to be an impact and if the price of oil falls we are going to be affected in a serious way given the fact that government's revenue for oil impacts government's expenditure and that is what drives the non-energy sector," he explained.

The new secondary market for government bonds trading is one item from a list of initiatives which the Central Bank has implemented over the last few years in hopes of improving the market set up for the trading of government securities.

Williams said for some time the development of the country's capital market has been seen as critically important to the stock market development and the country's economic growth.



Reggae giant VP Records to acquire Greensleeves

London – VP Records has announced that it has made an offer to purchase Greensleeves Records & Publishing from Zest Group plc, subject to the approval of Zest's shareholders.

If the deal goes through, VP Records will inherit a catalogue comprised of some of the most notable albums of the reg-

gae genre, from Elephant Man to Yellowman, and hit songs recorded by such acts as Rihanna, Sean Paul and Shaggy.



Sean Paul

According to a press release issued by the company late last month, Chris Chin and Randy Chin, chief executive officer and president of VP Records, respectively, explained:

"Although Greensleeves has historically been our competitor, we have always had the utmost respect for what Greensleeves stood for. The label and its founders had a longterm commitment to reggae music and no

PRESENCE

Olivier Chastan, vice president of VP Records, concluded: "The addition of Greensleeves to our catalog will ensure that the genre remains an important category in music. I am incredibly excited about the accumulation of classic works such as Wayne Smith's 'Sleng Teng' and Yellowman's 'Mr. Yellowman'.

Greensleeves Publishing is just as rich, with a large catalog that includes major recent hits like Sean Paul's 'Get Busy' and Wayne Wonder's 'Bounce Along' both written by Steven Marsden (p/k/a

Lenky) and Donovan Bennett's 'Pon De River, Pon De Bank' written for Elephant Man among other compositions. Furthermore, Greensleeves's unique English roots will allow VP Records to consolidate its presence in Europe".



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H E A L T H

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Do protein supplements, statins

DR. HOWARD LEWINE

Question: I am a 17-year-old male. I work out every day and want to build more muscle. Are there serious side effects from taking protein supplements?

Answer: A male of average size needs no more than 100 grams of protein per day, even if he is a vigorous bodybuilder. Unless you're a vegetarian or eat poorly, you likely get at least this amount of protein and probably much more in your daily diet.

Taking extra amino acids and proteins will not enhance strength or performance. Whether athletes gain an advantage by eating certain specific amino acids is debated.

I have some concern about protein supplements, primarily because of non-protein ingredients that are added to some of the products. The protein itself is probably safe unless you're taking an extreme amount. Too much

protein and amino acids can have adverse consequences, such as dehydration, gout, kidney stones, and higher risk of osteoporosis.

If people wish to have a portion of their daily protein requirement be in the form of a protein shake, then a mixture of whey and casein is a reasonable choice. Whey is absorbed by the intestine relatively quickly. Casein requires more digestive action, so it is absorbed more slowly.

Popular protein supplements often have individual amino acids, such as creatine. Creatine is the one amino acid that may have some athletic benefit. It contributes to rapid energy production and may enhance power or speed bursts requiring short periods of anaerobic activity. It does not build muscle or increase endurance. Creatine can result in water retention. Long-term effects are unknown.

Q: I'm a 38-year-old male with moderately elevated chole-

sterol (LDL 155-170). I have high muscle mass that has been gained through many years of weightlifting. My physician has just started me on a 10-mg dose of simvastatin (Zocor), which could be increased to 20 mg depending on results. Will simvastatin, at either of these doses, begin to reduce my muscle mass/strength, or prevent me from further weightlifting gains?

A: We don't have good medical evidence to answer this question definitively. It is possible that simvastatin (Zocor) or any other statin drug could diminish strength and muscle mass over time. From my reading and experience, I believe it is unlikely to be an important issue in resistance training in an otherwise healthy adult.

All the statins can be toxic to the muscles. You can decrease the risk of muscle



toxicity from statins by making sure that any new medication or supplement you take does not have an adverse interaction with the statin and limiting alcohol to no more than two drinks per day. Ideally, I suggest avoiding alcohol completely on the day before your strength-training sessions.

If you get a cold or flu with body aches, I would recommend not taking the statin or reducing the dose until the symptoms resolve. It is proba-

bly best to keep your workouts very light or perhaps skip the gym for a few days.

A 10- or 20-milligram dose of Zocor is considered low dose, and poses less risk than higher doses.

If at any time you develop new muscle aches or weakness that is different from what you normally experience with your training, hold the next dose of the statin drug until you contact your doctor's office. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

Dr. Howard LeWine is a member of the Harvard Medical School faculty and practicing internist with Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates and Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts.

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Don't stop asthma medicines during pregnancy

DR. DIANA POST

QUESTION: Can I continue to take my asthma medication if I'm pregnant?



It is better to take medication for asthma attacks while pregnant.

ANSWER: It is important to keep your asthma under control during pregnancy, even if it means taking multiple medications.

Most asthma medicines are thought to be safe to use. It is safer to take your asthma medicines than to have asthma symptoms during pregnancy. Untreated asthma can put you and your baby at risk. If you have bad asthma symptoms, the baby might not get enough oxygen. You could also have a smaller baby or deliver prematurely. Taking your medication can protect you and your baby.

Which medicines are safe

during pregnancy? - Most doctors think that inhaled asthma medicines are safer than pills because they have fewer side effects. If you use an inhaler, most of the medicine goes directly to your lungs. It is not likely to harm your baby.

Quick-relief inhaled medicines like albuterol (Ventolin, Proventil) are considered safe. The inhaled long-acting bronchodilators such as salmeterol (Serevent) appear to be safe as well. And cromolyn (Intal) is a very safe maintenance medicine for chronic asthma.

Inhaled corticosteroids are very effective for long-term control. Studies suggest these are safe to use during pregnancy.

SHORT DOSE

If a bad asthma flare occurs, you may need to take corticosteroid pills such as prednisone. Taken for a short period of time, corticosteroid pills are almost as safe for the baby as inhaled steroids. Not controlling the asthma puts the baby at much more risk.

There has not been much experience with Singulair and Accolate. For now, they probably should be avoided during pregnancy. Theophylline should not be used, as there are safer and better medicines available.

Don't stop your asthma medicines when you're pregnant. This could be much more harmful to the baby than taking the medications. The best thing to do is to talk with your doctor about all the medicines you take to make sure you're on the best and safest ones during your pregnancy.

Dr. Diana Post is an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and a member of the Department of Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Mass. In the United States.

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R E G I O N

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Thousands deported to Trinidad over the last six years ~ minister

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC- The Trinidad and Tobago government said that 2,000 persons had been deported from the United States over the past six years.

National Security Minister Martin Joseph told senators last month that there had been a progressive increase in the number of persons deported from 220 in 2002 to 350 last year.

Joseph said that at least 156 of them had also been

arrested on criminal activities since their deportation, even while he did not disclose to the Upper House the measures being used by the authorities to monitor the deportees.

Trinidad and Tobago and other regional countries have



Joseph

in the past blamed the influx of deportees from the U.S., Britain and other countries for the increased level of criminal activities in the region.

During his presentation, Joseph told legislators that 104 people were killed over the last six years by police and the army officials in the line of duty. He said the police were responsible for 102 of those killings.

2008 will be defining year for Caribbean ~ Carrington

GEORGETOWN, Guyana - The integration movement in the Caribbean has made great strides in recent years, but 2008 will be a "defining year for the region," according to CARICOM Secretary General Dr. Edwin Carrington.

"It signals a thrust of greater inter-sectoral planning," Carrington told last month's opening session of the Second Joint Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) and the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) in Guyana.

He said the first joint COHSOD/COTED meeting, which was held in 2001 a few months before the Sept. 11 attack in the United States, transformed the regional and global trading arrangements. Nevertheless, the secretary general said despite several challenges in the intervening years, initiatives which were "in the embryonic stages then

have come to fruition."

DREAMS

He listed some of the major regional dreams accomplished in the last seven years as the inauguration of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ); revision of Treaty of Basseterre making possible the economic union of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS); establishment of the CARICOM Single Market (CSM) in 2006, and last month's establishment of the Caribbean Competition Commission in Suriname.

"All of this was achieved in the context of dramatic global changes especially in the social and cultural and arenas," Carrington said.

Meanwhile, Antigua and



Carrington

Barbuda Education Minister Bertrand Joseph, speaking at the joint meeting, hailed the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) as a unifying strategy to maintain balance between national and regional interests.

CHALLENGES

He said regional participants face enormous challenges in attempting "to forge new vistas in regional policy; break through new barriers in the arrangements for executing these policies and maintain the balance between regional and national priorities.

"Fortunately, I am convinced that we are all guided by the same light by the end of this long tunnel, namely the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME). It is this quest that makes this meeting so special," Joseph said.

Suriname tightens security after murders in Guyana

IVAN CAIRO

PARAMARIBO, Suriname, CMC - Suriname has put its security forces on alert following last month's gruesome murders in neighboring Guyana.

Both the police and the national army have increased patrols in Nickerie, along the border with Guyana, police spokesman Humphrey Naarden told reporters.

Naarden said police stations in these areas had been beefed up and patrols on the Corantyne River, as well as the so-called backtrack route on the Nickerie River, had been increased.

Up to press time Guyana police were still searching for the killers of 11 people, including five children, in the East Coast Demerara village of Lusignan on Jan. 26. The police have linked the murders to a group of heavily armed men that the authorities say include the country's most wanted criminal Rondel "Fine Man" Rawlins.

WARNING

Rawlins is reported to have warned law enforcement authorities that there would be mayhem in the country if his reputed pregnant common law wife was not released by abductors. The police have offered a G\$30 million (\$150,000) reward for Rawlins's capture. He is wanted for several murders, including the April 2006 assassination of Agriculture Minister Satyadeow "Sash" Sawh and several of his relatives.

Suriname authorities have also stepped up their inspection of persons using the "backtrack route" and police say there is no indication that the perpetrators of the attacks have crossed the border.

"In close cooperation with the National Army we

"All vehicles including busses carrying passengers from Suriname are being checked and illegal passengers risk a fine and several weeks in jail"

- Surinamese gov't

are keeping a close eye on the developments in Guyana and its possible outfall," said police Chief Inspector Kenneth Bruining.

CAUTION

Meanwhile the Surinamese embassy in Georgetown is appealing to Surinamese nationals traveling to Guyana to be very cautious.

"Especially on the East Coast Demerara (where) the situation was very explosive the past days," Charlo Doedel, counselor at the embassy, said.

He said that persons traveling to Guyana should use the legal points of entry since Guyana police are checking vehicles traveling along the East Coast.

"All vehicles including busses carrying passengers from Suriname are being checked and illegal passengers risk a fine and several weeks in jail," said Doedel.



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Applications will be available starting on Monday, February 11, 2008 between 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday at two locations:

District North Office: 10710 SW 211 Street, Suite 206, (305) 234-4938
or
District South Office: 1634 NW 6 Avenue, Florida City, (305) 245-4420

Application is also available online at:
www.miamidade.gov/district9

Additional information will be provided by Mr. Leroy Jones of Neighbors And Neighbors Association (NANA) during a special question and answer meeting for all Mom and Pop Applicants on Wednesday, February 20, 2008, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the South Dade Government Center, 10710 SW 211 Street, Room 203

The application deadline is Friday, February 29, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

NO EXCEPTIONS

CELEBRATING HAITI



On Jan. 23 Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez hosted the Haitian Independence Day Celebration at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center. Festivities included a performance by the Alva Dance Company. An exhibit of Haitian history from the 1400s to the present was displayed in the center's lobby last month.

HOUSING ADVICE

The Miami Community Relations Board (Miami CRB) and Little Haiti NET Enhancement Team (NET) will be offering free homeowners counseling assistance to residents of the city from **9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 5 and 12** at the Little Haiti (NET), 6421 N.E. 2nd Ave., Miami, Florida.

No appointment is necessary. For more information, including documents needed for the counseling session, call the Office of Community Relations at **305-416-1035** or the Little Haiti NET at **305-960-4660**.

FREE TAX SERVICE

Miami is offering a free tax preparation program for residents of the South Florida city. The city also kicked off its "2008 Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)" campaign last month.

Some 30 locations will offer the free tax preparation service to eligible residents who file their tax returns there. Residents will also be able to learn if they qualify for a federal income tax refund of up to \$4,700 via the EITC and up to an additional \$1,000 per child via the Child Tax Credit.

The locations will also offer access to federal and state benefits, such as food stamps, cash assistance and

Medicaid.

For more information, call the City of Miami's Communications office, **305-416-1440**.

MIAMI HOTLINE

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust has added a 24-hour hotline.

The number is **786-314-9560**.

CARIBBEAN ESSAY CONTEST

Transforming America Through Interaction (TATI), Inc. has joined the Greater Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce to partner the Institute of Caribbean Studies' National Commemorative Committee in organizing the fourth annual "National Caribbean American Heritage Month Youth Essay Competition".

This competition is geared toward students at the 11th and 12th grade levels who reside in Miami-Dade or Broward counties in Florida, United States.

This year's essay theme is: "If you were running for President of the United States, what are the top three issues that you would put on your agenda?"

The winning entry for each regional/local competition will be judged in the

national level competition and the grand winner will receive tickets for two to a Caribbean

destination.

Closing date for entries is **May 9**. Winners will be

announced on June 1.

For more information, contact the student affairs director, TATI, Inc., **954-802-4291**.

OAS, UWI SIGN MEMO

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the University of the West Indies Open Campus (UWIOC) have signed a memorandum of understanding to help educators in the English-speaking Caribbean promote democratic values and practices in their classrooms, schools and communities.

Under the agreement - signed concurrently last month at the OAS in Washington D.C., United States and at the UWI Mona campus in Jamaica - a sustainable distance education course will be developed to implement the program. Course content will be informed by the principles embodied in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, to which Caribbean Member States are signatories.

Initial seed funding for this three-year pilot project has been provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and participating member states are expected to identify supplemental funding and provide modest counterpart resources.



WORKING FOR WORKERS



Photograph by Derrick A. Scott, JIS Washington
Jamaica's Minister of Local Government and Social Security Pernel Charles, center, is welcomed to Atlanta, United States by Vin Martin, Jamaica's honorary consul to that United States city during a meeting to discuss the expansion of the Jamaica overseas worker program with representatives from the Jamaican embassy in Washington, D.C, consuls general and honorary consuls at the Renaissance Concourse Hotel last month. At right is Ricardo Allicock, consul general to Miami, Florida who also attended the meeting. Charles, has enlisted the assistance of the embassy, the consul generals to identify areas where Jamaican workers with skills in farming, hospitality and other viable fields can be employed.

Caribbean political scientist backs Obama in U.S. presidential race

NEW YORK – A leading Caribbean political scientist here has thrown his support behind black United States Democratic presidential contender Barack Obama.

Dr. Basil Wilson, the Jamaican-born, former provost of John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, said last month that Obama, a freshman Illinois senator, represents a break with America's "unsavory past."

"As the months unfold, the American people will get the opportunity to reject the politics of divisiveness and vindictiveness and, perhaps, change the course of American history and America's role in the world," he said.

"Obama has become the embodiment of this movement for American renewal," he added.

NO BAGGAGE

Wilson said Obama, who was narrowly beaten by Senator Hillary Clinton by two percentage points in the New Hampshire Democratic Primary last month, is "not identified with partisan past in the same way that Hillary Clinton is inextricably linked with this vitriolic interlude in American politics." He said the irony is that Obama, the son of a Kenya father and white American mother, possesses the "political magnetism of Bill Clinton but without the baggage."

He said Obama has had a "meteoric rise" since his speech in 2004 at the Democratic Party convention. But Wilson said the question surrounding Obama is whether America has

arrived at a juncture "where a presidential candidate would be judged not by his or her pigmentation but by his or her leadership qualities."

He said Obama has, on the campaign trail, articulated a message of national unity and the need to go beyond the "division of red states (Republicans) versus blue



Obama

states (Democrats) and to forge a sense of national purpose.

"Obama does not fixate on the race question," Wilson said.

"He does not even focus on the class question," he added. "Obama will make reference to the civil rights struggle and to the struggles of the working class."

'BACKLASH'?

Despite his relative success to date in the Democratic presidential race, the political scientist feared a "white backlash" against Obama's candidacy, noting that "the nature of this beast was also evident with the non-stop barrage against the two terms of Bill

Clinton's presidency.

"As the campaign has unfolded, the senator from Illinois has grown in stature and appears to be capturing the imagination of a new generation of Americans who are excited about a candidate who can take America beyond the morass of torture," Wilson said.

Since the New Hampshire primary, Clinton and Obama have become embroiled in racially tinged disputes as large numbers of black voters prepare to get their first say in the Democratic presidential campaign. But, speaking last month to black and Hispanic New Yorkers, Senator Clinton tried to quell the controversy over race by praising the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the slain U.S. civil rights leader, describing him as a trailblazer for both herself and Obama.

Last month, Clinton said former U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson had been the shepherd of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, enacting a priority of Dr. King — a comment that Obama supporters and some other people viewed as minimizing Dr. King's work. Clinton quickly said she had meant no slight, issuing a statement proposing a truce.

Obama, meanwhile, said Clinton had always been "on the right side" of civil rights issues but, in television interviews, he also accused the Clinton campaign of playing up the race issue as "strategy" and of being "silly." But he later urged Democrats to call a truce to avoid dividing the party.



Belizeans vote on Feb. 7

BELMOPAN, Belize, CMC - Belizeans will go to the polls on Feb. 7 to elect a new government.

Prime Minister Said Musa told religious leaders during a prayer event last month that he asked Governor General Sir Colville Young to dissolve Parliament effective Jan. 7. Jan. 21 was Nomination Day.

Musa revealed that the date had initially been set for Feb. 6, but after church leaders expressed concern that polling day would fall on Ash Wednesday, he reconsidered.

Musa indicated that Belizeans would also have to cast their vote on a separate issue – whether or not there



should be an elected Senate. The People's United Party (PUP) leader said having both votes on the same day would cut the cost of holding a referendum separate and suggested that the process should not be confusing for the electorate.



Maroons seek autonomy in Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - The Maroons, one of the indigenous peoples of Jamaica, say they want to establish an autonomous state within that Caribbean country.

The Maroons, descendants of runaway slaves, celebrated their 270th anniversary of freedom from British rule last month. They said they want the community of Accompong in the south central parish of St. Elizabeth to be an autonomous state. Head of the maroons Colonel Sidney Peddie said the group is working on formalizing the idea to be sent to the United Nations for its consideration.

"I have a vision and if I can get us to be declared an autonomous nation that would ensure international recognition (of Accompong) as a sovereign nation," Peddie said.

"With that strength we could secure treaties or agreements with other nations to guarantee the protection of our democratic freedom.

"It would also give us a strong hand to petition governments for help and we would utilize it to assist in establishing and building our community."

In 1738, a peace treaty was signed between and Maroons and the British in which the Maroons were given 1,500 acres of land spanning the Cockpit Country, the rugged inaccessible area of inland Jamaica. The Maroons are still benefiting from the treaty, which frees them from paying land taxes and allows them the privilege of internal self-government.



Regional colleagues failed on food talks ~ St. Lucian minister

CASTRIES, St. Lucia, CMC - Trade and Industry Minister Guy Mayers has criticized regional countries for their failure to come up with solutions to deal with the rising cost of living in the Caribbean.

Mayers, who attended last month's Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) meeting in Guyana, where the issue was discussed, said representatives were supposed to have presented a list of goods that would have been placed under price control, but not everyone came prepared for that meeting.

"When we met in Guyana in December along with the heads of government it was felt that this was a matter that ought to be given urgent consideration and attention and

everyone was urged to deal with the issue expeditiously," Mayers explained.

"So I was dumfounded and really angry that we came to a meeting last (month) in Guyana and there were governments that were still not ready, giving excuses that they were having difficulty acquiring information from their respective departments."

He said that it was the feeling of many delegates that regional governments should have pulled out all the stops to ensure that the matter was dealt with urgently allowing for some resolution at the meeting in Guyana.

Mayers said that another meeting has been scheduled for February where hopefully a solution would be discussed.



Barbados's P.M. names 18-member Cabinet

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - Prime Minister David Thompson announced an 18-member Cabinet days after his Democratic Labour Party defeated the Owen Arthur-led Barbados Labour Party in the country's general elections last month.

The Cabinet members include:

- Thompson and Attorney General Freundel Stuart, who were appointed a day after the elections.

Following is the list:

- Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Development, Labour, Civil Service and Energy – David Thompson;
- Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs – Freundel Stuart;
- Minister of Foreign Affairs,

- Foreign Trade and International Business – Christopher Sinckler;
- Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business – Donville Inniss;
- Minister of Health, National Insurance and Social Security – Dr. David Estwick;
- Minister of Education and Human Resource Development – Ronald Jones;
- Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban Development – Dr. Dennis Lowe;
- Minister of State, Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban Development – Patrick Todd;
- Minister of Tourism – Richard Sealy;
- Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development –

- Haynesley Benn (to be appointed to the Senate);
- Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce – George Hutson;
- Minister of Housing and Lands – Michael Lashley;
- Minister of Family, Youth Affairs, Sport and Environment - Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo;
- Minister of Community Development and Culture – Steven Blackett;
- Minister of Transport, Works and International Transport – John Boyce;

- Leader of Government Business in the Senate and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office – Maxine McClean (to be appointed to the Senate);



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