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THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



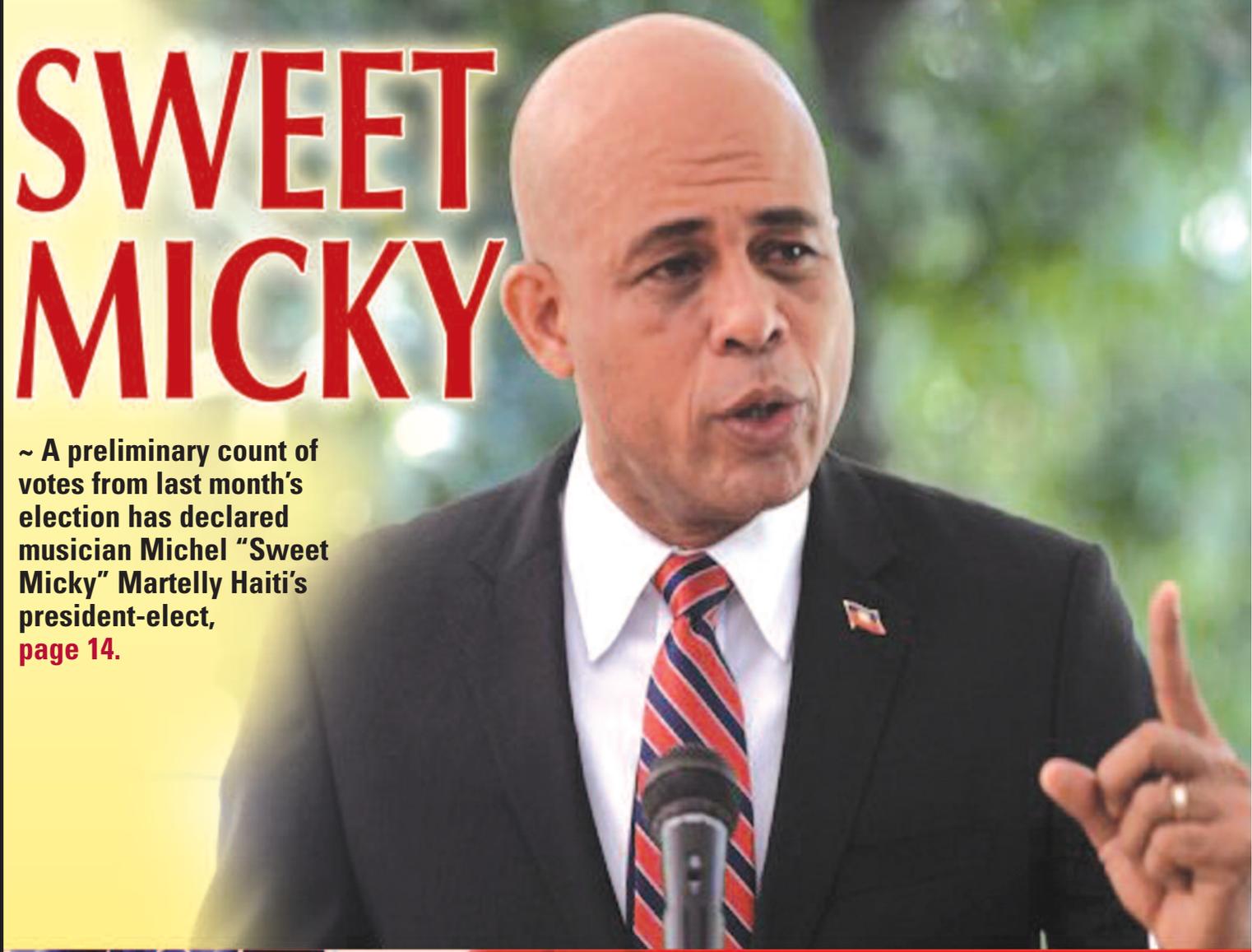
Jamaican David Smith, former head of the collapsed private investment club Olint Corporation, which reportedly listed Caribbean nationals living in the United States among its clients, pleaded guilty in a U.S. court to bilking investors of millions of dollars, page 5.



New Broward County Commissioner, Jamaican-born Dale Holness, has his work cut out for him in his District 9 constituency. But six years as a Lauderdale city commissioner, he believes, have prepared him for the work he intends to do, page 11.

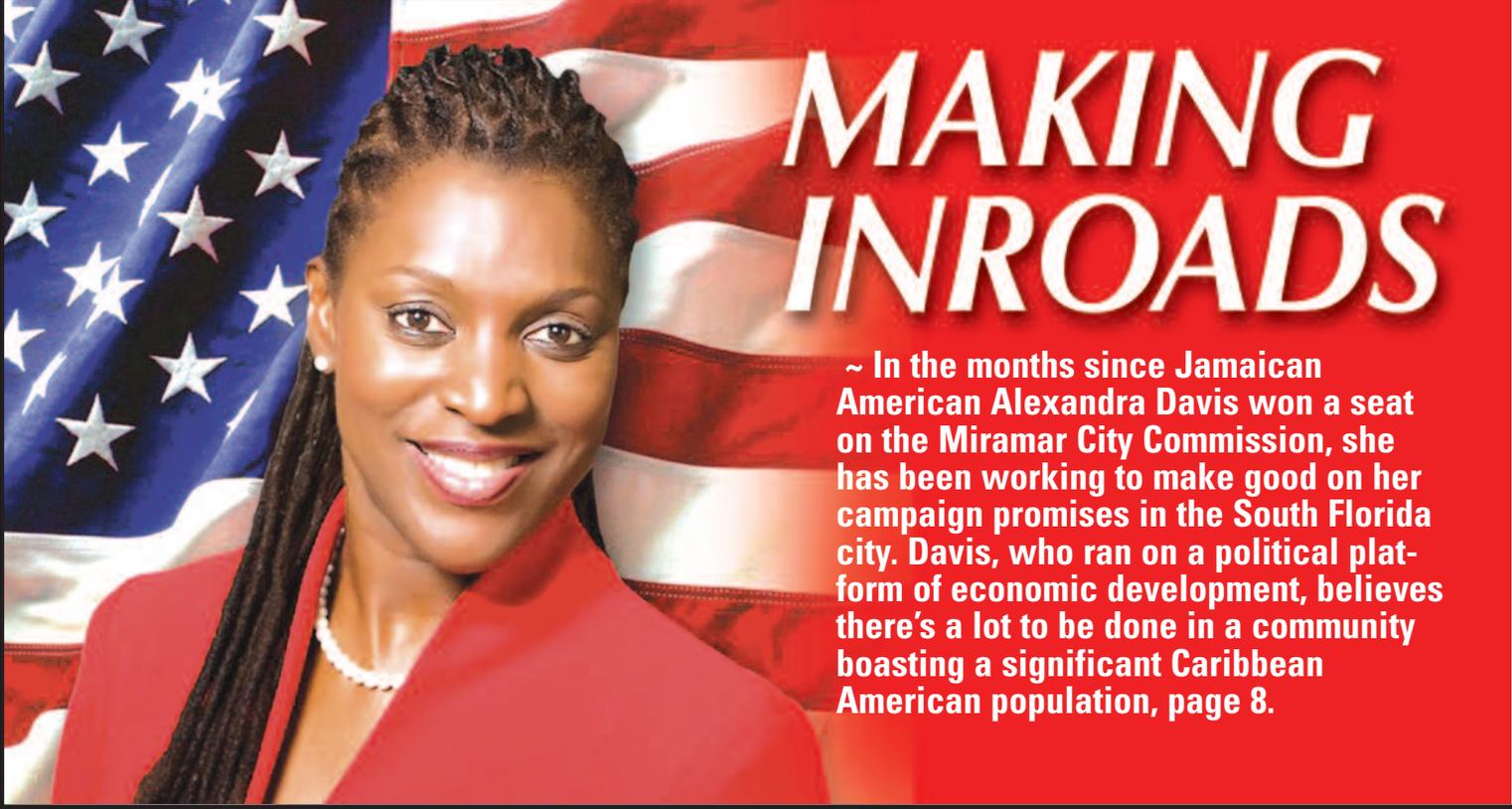


Sex isn't just for the young. Research is showing that older people are sexually active and that the sexuality that's such a big part of our teens and young adulthood has more staying power than younger people usually recognize, page 17.



## SWEET MICKY

~ A preliminary count of votes from last month's election has declared musician Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly Haiti's president-elect, page 14.



## MAKING INROADS

~ In the months since Jamaican American Alexandra Davis won a seat on the Miramar City Commission, she has been working to make good on her campaign promises in the South Florida city. Davis, who ran on a political platform of economic development, believes there's a lot to be done in a community boasting a significant Caribbean American population, page 8.

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# Jamaica's P.M. denies tipping off 'Dudus' Coke on U.S. extradition

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Prime Minister Bruce Golding emphatically denied tipping off reputed drug lord Christopher “Dudus” Coke after an extradition warrant for his arrest had been served on Jamaica by the United States authorities.

Golding, appearing on the final day of the sitting of the commission of enquiry probing the circumstances that led to the extradition of Coke last June, said that he “certainly” did not tip off Coke following the arrival of the extradition request in Aug. 2009.

“No, certainly not,” the prime minister told attorney Patrick Anderson, who is representing Jamaica’s former National Security Minister Dr. Peter Phillips.

“I have not seen or spoken to Coke for at least a year and a half before the extradition request,” the prime minister said, adding “the last time I spoke with him was during the Christmas period of 2007.”

Security forces, which raided an office Coke occupied in Tivoli Gardens, West Kingston during the May 2010 incursion, found a copy of the extradition request during a search. Golding said he did not know how the document found its way into Coke’s office.

During his cross examination on April 1, the prime minister refused to withdraw a claim he made that the conduct of Isaiah Parnell, charge



Golding

d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy here, constituted harassment. Anderson had asked the prime minister whether or not he would withdraw the charge of “telephone harassment”, which was a serious criminal offence in the U.S.

Washington has already indicated that it would be responding to claims made by witnesses, following the conclusion of the enquiry.

“Are you prepared to withdraw the comment?” Atkinson asked.

“No. We were told not to

allow diplomatic officials to parade through the government unless it is in relation to a particular matter,” the prime minister replied, arguing that that Parnell refused to follow the accepted procedures.

“You speak to the government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” the prime minister said, noting that the Minister of Justice and Attorney General Dorothy Lightbourne felt troubled by Parnell’s conduct.

“He was presumptuous enough to tell her how that authority should be exercised,” Golding said. “Jamaica couldn’t do that with the United States.”

The commission of enquiry was set up by the government last October to probe the events leading up to Coke’s extradition, including the hiring of the U.S. law firm, Manatt, Phelps and Phillips. More than 70 people were killed in fierce gun battles between gunmen loyal to Coke and members of the security forces who went into Coke’s Tivoli Gardens stronghold to arrest him last May.



# U.S. to deport 700 Haitian criminals

WASHINGTON, D.C. – United States immigration officials say about 700 Haitians with criminal records will be deported this year.

“The Department of State has been working with the Government of Haiti to ensure that the resumption of removals is conducted in a safe, humane manner with minimal disruption to ongoing rebuilding efforts,” U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) spokeswoman Barbara Gonzalez said last month.

“Repatriations to Haiti will be conducted in line with ICE’s priority of removing criminal aliens who pose the greatest threat to public safety,” she added.

U.S. immigration officials said about 31,000 Haitians have orders to leave the country.

Deportations from the U.S. to Haiti had been stayed on humanitarian grounds since the deadly earthquake on Jan. 12, 2010.

## SHOCK

But advocates and community members say they were shocked when, on Dec. 9 last year, the ICE unexpectedly announced that it was lifting the ban on deportations to Haiti for individuals with criminal records and would resume deportations in January.

On Jan. 20, the U.S. followed through with its plan by deporting 27 Haitians with criminal records.

The U.S., has, however, granted Temporary Protection Status (TPS) to Haitians who are living illegally in the country before the earthquake. TPS for Haitians is set to expire on July 22, and immigration officials have said those who were granted the special status won’t be deported.

Gonzales said more than 61,000

Haitians have applied for TPS, warning that only those who were already living in the U.S. illegally when the earthquake hit are eligible.



Gonzalez

## FALLOUT

On a visit to Montreal, Canada last month, then Haitian presidential candidate Mirlande Manigat said the U.S. resumption of criminal deportations would result in increased crimes in already beleaguered, French-speaking Caribbean country.

“Haiti is poorly-equipped to welcome these young criminals whom the U.S. prison system failed to rehabilitate, and it will lead to an increase in

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

# U.S. welcomes release of Cuban dissidents arrested in 2003 ‘Black Spring’ crackdown

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States has welcomed the release of the last of the 75 Cuban activists who were arrested during the so-called “Black Spring” crackdown in 2003.

At the same time, Washington has called for the release of “all remaining political prisoners”.

The U.S. State Department said in a statement issued last month that the release of Felix Navarro and Jose Daniel Ferrer, who had each been sentenced to 25 years in jail, was “a step in the right direction”.

However, State Department spokesman Mark C. Toner said that human rights conditions in Cuba remained poor and that the Cuban government continued to limit fundamental freedoms, including freedom of speech, the press, and peaceful assembly.

“The release of political prisoners is a step in the right direction,” Toner said. “We urge the Cuban government to release all remaining political prisoners and allow them to choose whether to remain in Cuba.”

Cuba has been freeing the 2003 dissidents gradually under an agreement reached in last July with the Roman Catholic Church in Havana. Some of the dissidents released have stayed in Cuba, serving the remainder of their sentences outside prison, while others have been forced into exile to Spain.

Amnesty International, the London-based human rights watchdog, urged the Cuban authorities not to force activists into exile after Navarro and Ferrer were freed.

Amnesty International said 75 people were jailed in the 2003 crackdown and that most of them were charged with crimes including “acts against the independence of the state” because they allegedly received funds and/or materials from U.S.-based non-government organizations, financed by the U.S. government.



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## Bermuda politician's ex-husband jailed in U.S. for role in drugs plot

HAMILTON, Bermuda, CMC — The former husband of a Bermudian Opposition politician has been jailed in New York for three-and-a-half years for plotting to distribute \$15 million worth of marijuana destined for Bermuda.

Dennis Pamplin, an American citizen once married to United Bermuda Party (UBP) Member of Parliament Patricia Gordon-Pamplin, has been in custody since his arrest in New Jersey in July 2008.

He was detained along with another American, Brian Henry, when undercover police and special agents swooped on a warehouse after a months-long investigation conducted in collaboration with the Bermuda Police Service. According to a 2008 statement from New Jersey's Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the arrests came after a police dog sniffed out a large amount of marijuana hidden inside concrete pillars at the warehouse.

Following the arrests, Pamplin was charged with conspiring with others to distribute more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana with an estimated street value in Bermuda of \$15 million. Court papers state that the plot spanned the period 2006 to July 2008.

Pamplin pleaded guilty to the charge last December and was sentenced in Manhattan's Southern District Court late last month.

Pamplin and his wife were married in 1993 and she once credited him with kick-starting her political career. He had previously been married to another Bermudian woman. The pair were living in separate countries by the time of his arrest, which Gordon-Pamplin said she learned of through the news media. She has repeatedly declined requests to comment on the case since.



## N.Y. senator backs Trinidadian facing deportation from U.S.

NEW YORK — An influential United States legislator has come to the aid of a Trinidadian-born, U.S. Army veteran who faces deportation to his homeland.

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, a Democrat who represents New York, last month called on the U.S. Army to intervene in the case of Ramdeo Chankarsingh, 44, who was honorably discharged from the service a decade ago.

In a letter to U.S. Army Secretary John McHugh, Schumer asked that Chankarsingh be cleared of this "bureaucratic bungling."

"While he had our backs in Kosovo, the Army may not have had his back," Schumer wrote.

### DENIED

Chankarsingh said that the U.S. military accepted him in 1991 because he expected to get a "Green Card" or permanent residence under a special program. He said it didn't happen, and immigration officials have denied him citizenship.

"I'm proud to be an American soldier," said Chankarsingh, a father of two, who lives in the South Ozone Park section of Queens, New York.

"But I don't feel good about what they're doing to me

and my family," he added. "I feel like they used me."

The former medic, who works as a nurse, said last month that he will try to persuade an immigration judge to let him remain in the U.S.

Chankarsingh, who came to the U.S. illegally as a teen and worked in Florida orange fields, said he got a temporary "Green Card" through an amnesty program. After initial military training, he said he did a stint as a field medic in Kosovo's Camp Bondsteel, while based in Germany.

### LIMBO

When his temporary "Green Card" expired in 1999, Chankarsingh said he went to a military judge, who told him to file for U.S. citizenship.

But when he was called for an interview a year later, he said officials told him because he served during peacetime he needed a valid "Green Card". Chankarsingh said he has been in legal limbo ever since and spent tens of thousands of dollars suing the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. He said his latest application was passed to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which began deportation proceedings. Edward Daniels, a veterans

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

## Buju Banton to be sentenced June 23; Jamaican singer faces life in U.S. prison

TAMPA, Florida — A United States federal judge here has pushed back the sentencing date for Jamaican-born Grammy Award-winning reggae star Buju Banton to June 23.

Banton was originally scheduled to be sentenced on June 16, but federal district Judge James S. Moody Jr. said, without any explanation, that the reggae artiste will now be sentenced on the new date.

Banton, 37, whose real name is Mark Myrie, faces up to life in prison.

In February, a 12-member federal jury found him guilty of three cocaine-related charges: conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine; attempting to possess five kilograms or more of cocaine; and for "aiding and abetting others in using a communication facility in the commission of a felony."

The jury, however, did not find him guilty of "knowingly and intentionally possessing a

firearm in furtherance of and during the course of a drug-trafficking crime."

### INNOCENCE PLEA

The singer maintained his innocence throughout the trial, the second since a jury reached a deadlock late last year.



Banton faces lengthy prison term.

Banton's attorney, David Markus, argued that the artiste never became a willing participant of the cocaine conspiracy charged in the superseding indictment. He said tasting the cocaine, talking about cocaine and simply being present at the warehouse is not sufficient to

find Banton guilty of the crimes.

Banton was arrested on Dec. 10, 2009 in a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) sting operation.

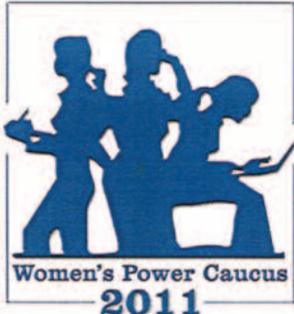
James Mack and Banton's long-time friend Ian Thomas were arrested the same day when they attempted to buy cocaine from undercover detectives in a Florida warehouse. Thomas and Mack pleaded guilty, but Banton denied the charges.

Following his trial, Banton, who is in detention awaiting sentencing, thanked his fans for their support, stating: "Our life and our destiny are sometimes pre-destined; and, no matter where this journey takes me, remember

I fought the good fight.

"It was a great man that said my head is bloody but still unbowed I love you all thank you for your support," he said. Banton reached the zenith of his singing career on Feb. 13 when his album "Before the Dawn" was awarded the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



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## Ex-FBI agent backtracks on claims he kidnapped, deported Bahamians from U.S.

NASSAU, The Bahamas, CMC – A former Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) agent who told an undercover investigator that he routinely arrested Bahamian criminal defendants in South Florida and unlawfully sent them back to their homeland on commercial flights, now says he made up the story.

“Yes, I did say it. Was it true? No. Why did I embellish? Because I brag,” retired FBI Agent Gerard “Jerry” Forrester, the FBI’s Miami liaison officer in the Caribbean in the 1990s, told a court here last month.

Forrester’s admission to arresting and unlawfully repatriating suspects surfaced during an unrelated civil court battle here between New York hedge fund billionaire Louis Bacon and Canadian fashion mogul

Peter Nygard. Both men own estates in the exclusive Lyford Cay, a private gated community located on the western tip of New Providence Island.

According to an affidavit, Forrester is heard in an audio recording saying that a Bahamian murder suspect was arrested in Miami, held briefly in jail, placed on a plane and later killed in police custody in The Bahamas.

“I kidnapped him (and sent him) back to Nassau,” Forrester said while being recorded last year by former Scotland Yard Detective Alick Morrison, who was working as a private investigator for Nygard.

“They had him for about 10 hours, and the guy wound up dead,” he added.

Forrester, a private investigator, now works with a former Bahamian police officer who was cleared in the 1998 killing of that suspect, who the retired FBI agent said he was wanted at the time on murder charges related to bank robberies.

“Oh, I kidnapped him. I did it all the time. All the time for 20 or 30 years,” Forrester was heard saying in the recording.

Morrison then said: “Well, you can’t just pack somebody up and put them on a plane.” “We did it all the time,” Forrester responded.

Under U.S. federal law, foreign nationals wanted on an arrest warrant issued in their native country have the legal right to challenge their extradition or removal in U.S. courts.



## Jamaican pastor rejects plea deal on rape charge in N.Y.

NEW YORK – A Jamaican-born pastor, charged with raping a 12-year-old female member of his congregation, has turned down a plea deal that included a three years prison term.

Michael Clare, 38, refused the offer from prosecutors, despite “almost irrefutable proof” he impregnated the child, said Bronx Supreme Court Judge Megan Tallmer. “He wasn’t interested,” Tallmer said in court late last month.

But Clare’s lawyer Paul Brenner asked the judge to consider probation instead of prison.

“I would never do that,” she snapped, citing a DNA match between Clare and the victim’s aborted fetus.

Clare, the married leader of the Harvest Worship Center in the Bronx and principal of the Associated Harvest Prep school, declined comment outside court.

Authorities learned of the alleged crimes in June, when the girl, now 15, told her parents and police that Clare had been having sex with her for

three years.

Clare, who up to press time was free on \$50,000 bond, faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted of first-degree rape at trial.

Prosecutors alleged that he may have victimized other young churchgoers as well.

### ‘SWEETHEART DEAL’

The judge said his preaching days are probably over, though, since his name would likely be added to the state sex offender registry following any plea deal.

“I don’t see how he could continue his work as a pastor,” Tallmer said.

Clare’s lawyer said the clergyman will be vindicated at trial.

“He turned down the plea deal because he’s innocent,” Brenner said.

But one prosecutor said that was a mistake.

“This was a sweetheart offer considering the evidence against him,” the prosecutor said. “It won’t get any better from here.”



## N.Y. prosecutors charge two in hospital death of Jamaican psychiatric patient

NEW YORK, CMC – New York prosecutors have charged two medical personnel in the death of a Jamaican psychiatric patient more than two years ago.

Prosecutors said a nurse and an aide at the sprawling Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn have been charged with allowing Esmin Green, 49, to die on the floor of the psychiatric ward and then covering up her death.

Green was recorded on a surveillance camera tape lying face-down in the emergency room for nearly an hour on June 19, 2008, ignored by staffers and security personnel.

Court documents said that nursing aide Easton Royal, 53,

allegedly wrote in the observation sheet that Green was doing fine at 6 a.m. - in the midst of the excruciating 57 minutes the dying woman spent on the floor.

Prosecutors said Royal was arrested last month, charged with reckless endangerment and falsifying business records, arraigned at Brooklyn Criminal Court and released without bail.

### COVER UP

Another nurse, whose name was not released, had pleaded guilty in February to similar charges, prosecutors said.

A previous report by the New York City’s Department of

Investigation mentioned that one nurse, identified only as Gonzalo, admitted to making false entries on Green’s progress notes after she died.

“All those who are in any way responsible for this wrongful death and cover-up should be brought to justice,” said Sanford Rubenstein, the lawyer who represented Green’s daughter in reaching a \$2 million settlement with the city.

The city’s Medical Examiner’s Office said the Jamaican immigrant, who waited some 24 hours in the hospital’s psychiatric waiting room, died of blood clots.



## U.S. willing to help OECS deal with criminal deportees

CASTRIES, St. Lucia, CMC - The United States says it is willing to assist St. Lucia and other Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) with programs where criminal deportees are used to help in the battle against crime.

Foreign Minister Rufus Bousquet said that during recent discussions with U.S. officials, reference was made to an on-going program in Barbados where deportees have been involved in levels of

advocacy and visiting communities discouraging persons from a life of crime.

“They have indicated their preparedness to support programs of that nature, and they have in fact been to St. Lucia as well to see what we can do in terms of rehabilitating and integrating these people into the society,” Bousquet said.

### CRITICISM

Caribbean countries have

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

## N.Y. senator backs Trinidadian facing deportation from U.S.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

advocate, said Chankarsingh should get the same rights as anyone who served in war.

“He should never have been denied,” he said.

## Buju Banton to be sentenced June 23; Jamaican singer faces life in U.S. prison

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

Grammy for best reggae album.

### MIDDLEMAN

Prosecutors charged Banton was the middleman in a cocaine transaction between Tampa dope dealers and a confidential informant working with the DEA.

Banton was caught on covert audio and videotape boasting about the “no-risk”

Up to press time McHugh’s office had declined to comment, but Schumer said: “Common sense and gratitude for his selfless decision to put his life on the line for our

country means that we should do right by Mr. Chankarsingh.”



drug deal and sampling the illicit white powder, prosecutors said.

“This is not about Buju Banton, the reggae singer. This is about Mark Myrie, the drug defendant,” Assistant United States Attorney James Preston said during his closing argument.

But Markus countered that the singer did not profit from the drug deal, stating that Banton was snared in the DEA probe because he is “a big talker” and was trying to impress

the confidential informant, who ended up with a \$50,000 commission following the bust.

Markus said he had filed a motion in the U.S. District Court, Tampa Division, asking for acquittal or a new trial, and that the reggae star be released on bail. But prosecutors said they are still seeking to squash the defense motion since the claim is “without merit.”

- CMC



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## GUILTY: Olint boss admits running 'Ponzi' scheme defrauding hundreds

Jamaican David Smith, the former head of the collapsed private investment club Olint Corporation, which reportedly listed many Caribbean nationals living in the United States as its clients, has pleaded guilty in an American court to 23 charges of bilking investors of millions of dollars.

He will be sentenced at a later date.

Smith, who had already signed a plea agreement admitting guilt to four counts of wire fraud, a count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, and 18 counts of money laundering, formally entered the plea before a judge in the Orlando Federal Court in Florida late last month.

According to the plea agreement, Smith described Olint as a private investment club, where he would pool investors' money to engage in

foreign currency trading on their collective behalf.

But Smith admitted in the plea agreement that he operated a massive 'Ponzi' scheme, in which he paid returns to investors from their own money, or funds paid by subsequent investors, rather than from any real profit.

### LAVISH LIFESTYLE

Prosecutors say Smith transferred millions of dollars invested by his company's clients to his personal bank accounts, which he used to finance a lavish lifestyle.

According to the prosecutors, those expenditures include a \$2 million home, a down-payment for the purchase of a Lear jet and frequent travel on the aircraft, sponsoring a jazz festival in Jamaica, expensive vehicles, vacations, jewelry, gambling and political contributions.

Prosecutors also claim

Smith had ties to a Lake Mary company, which was licensed



Smith

to deal in foreign currency trading.

Court documents said Smith was the majority capital investor in the business, with an investment of more than \$2 million.

Under the plea bargain arrangement Smith's wife, Tracy, will not be charged and escapes imprisonment.

He faces a maximum sen-

tence of 20 years in prison for each count, although federal prosecutors are recommending to the court that his sentence be lightened.

In Sept. 2010, a Turks and Caicos court sentenced Smith to six and a half years in prison after he pleaded guilty to two counts of conspiracy to money laundering and two counts of conspiracy to defraud. His wife, Tracy, was similarly spared by that jurisdiction and her right to travel was reinstated.

The Smiths had moved to the Turks and Caicos after local police raided their offices and effectively shut down the Ponzi scheme.

### HOPE

Meanwhile, Olint investors here are hoping that some, if not all of their investments will be returned. In Sept. 2010, the Association of Concerned Olint Members (ACOM) said

the U.S. Government had assured the organization that their investments would be returned to them, if Smith was convicted.

"Mr. (Bruce) Ambrose (assistant U.S. attorney) has assured ACOM that it is only in cases where there are no victims that U.S. agencies such as the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) and FBI, among others, are permitted by law to seize and keep the assets of convicted criminals," said ACOM Spokesman Godfrey McAllister.

"Mr. Ambrose extended himself to assure ACOM that in the pending case against Mr. Smith there are victims that all identified funds will go to if Mr. Smith is convicted."

ACOM claimed it represented at least 1,000 investors in the failed investment club.

## U.S. extradites Bermuda minister's son facing attempted murder charges

HAMILTON, Bermuda, CMC - The 29-year-old son of a leading Cabinet minister has appeared in a Magistrate's Court after being extradited from the United States to face two charges of attempted murder.

Jahmel Blakeney, whose father Glenn Blakeney is minister of youth, sport, families and community development, returned here on April 1, 17 months after he left Bermuda.

He is accused of shooting Shaki Minors and his pregnant girlfriend Renee Kuchler outside a popular cinema on the former U.S. military base at the island's east end on Nov. 12, 2009. Minors and Kuchler have since both recovered from their injuries.

Blakeney was not required to plead during his recent two-minute court appearance.

Prosecutor Cindy Clarke

requested a further hearing and defence lawyer Charles Richardson made no application for bail.

Blakeney was arrested along with another man, Sanchey Grant, 19, the day after the shooting. Blakeney fled to the U.S., where he has citizenship, after being released on police bail. He was charged in his absence on April 26, last year and arrested by U.S. marshals at a resi-

dence in Brooklyn last June.

Extradition proceedings against him were started by the Bermuda government, but were delayed because of various appeals launched by Blakeney in the U.S. courts.

Grant was charged a year

ago with the same charges of attempted murder. A third man, 25-year-old Kinte Smith, was also recently charged. They are expected to go on trial soon.

## Guyanese who burned, slashed girlfriend's face gets 13 year sentence in N.Y. prison

NEW YORK - A Guyanese man here who burned his girlfriend's face with a hot iron while their three children watched has been sentenced to 13 years in jail.

Before handing down the sentence on Eric Persaud, 36, Queens Supreme Court Justice Gregory Lasak described the gruesome attack as horrendous and sick.

"Your actions are some of the worst I've seen a man do to a woman," the judge told Persaud, scolding him for forcing the unidentified woman to turn up the heat on the iron so he could permanently scar her for calling the cops over an earlier attack.

"The actions that you took on that day were horrendous and sick," he added. Before his sentence, Persaud apologized to his Guyanese-born girlfriend and urged her

to be a good mother to their young children.

"My actions were cowardly, and there was no excuse for losing my cool," Persaud told

**"The actions that you took on that day were horrendous and sick"**

— judge to Guyanese man

the court.

### RAGE

Prosecutors said Persaud flew into a rage on April 30, 2009 because he was upset that his girlfriend called 911 a week before when he smashed her phone and computer. He promised to kill her if she called the cops again.

When the woman refused to burn herself with the iron, Persaud stuck a towel in her mouth and burned her on both cheeks while forcing her to turn up the heat, prosecutors said.

When that wasn't enough, he slashed her in the face with a razor blade, prosecutors said. The woman spent 11 days in the hospital.

Persaud called the woman hundreds of times from Rikers Island Correctional Facility in Queens, begging her not to testify against him.

Prosecutors said they retrieved recordings of the phone calls and planned to use them against Persaud if he'd gone to trial.

Persaud pleaded guilty to an assault charge in February.

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## N.Y. City Council passes resolution to extend TPS to Haitians in U.S.

NEW YORK – The New York City Council has unanimously passed a resolution calling on the United States to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for tens of thousands of Haitian living illegally in the country.

The resolution, tabled by Haitian Council member Dr. Mathieu Eugene, urges the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama to renew TPS for Haitians “because the situation in Haiti is still dire.

“Now, the federal government and President Obama must step in,” said Dr. Eugene, the first Haitian to be elected to city council.

“This is a fair humanitarian response,” he told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), adding that countries that have been designated to receive TPS, including Nicaragua, El Salvador and Somalia, have all been re-designated.

“We are simply asking for fairness, and Haiti deserves to be given equal treatment,” he said.

### FEAR

In the wake of last year’s massive earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. granted TPS to Haitians living illegally in the country, allowing them to live and work without fear of deportation.

But the special designation is set to expire on July 22. Many Haitians fear they would be deported if the status is not renewed.

“Let’s come together in support of this important issue and ask that the federal government extend TPS in light of the ongoing problems the country of Haiti faces,” Dr. Eugene said.

“Now is not the time to end TPS. Now is not the time to resume deportations. Now is the time to be compassionate and grant an extension of the Temporary Protected Status,” he added.

In April 2009, the New York City Council passed a resolution calling on the U.S. government to first grant TPS, in response to four tropical storms which caused severe damage to Haiti.

“While we are grateful for the federal government’s response to grant TPS, now I believe it must be extended,” Eugene said.

### WARNING

Last month, U.S.



Eugene

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Spokeswoman Barbara Gonzalez said more than 61,000 Haitians have applied for TPS, warning that only those who were already living in the US illegally when the earthquake hit are eligible.

Several civil liberties and human rights organizations last week issued a letter calling on the U.S. to suspend further deportations of Haitians as long as the current cholera epidemic is raging.

A new study, soon to be released by the University of California San Francisco and the Harvard Medical School, shows that the cholera epidemic in Haiti, which started last fall and has killed about 4,000 people so far, is likely to continue through most of this year and eventually infect up to 800,000 people.



## Rights groups renew call for U.S. to suspend deportations to Haiti

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Several civil liberties and human rights organizations backed a letter calling on the United States to suspend further deportations of Haitians as long as the current cholera epidemic is raging.

A new study, to be released by the University of California San Francisco and the Harvard Medical School in the U.S., shows that the cholera epidemic in Haiti, which started last October and has killed about 4,000 people so far, is likely to continue through most of this year and eventually infect up to 800,000 people.

In a letter addressed to U.S. President Barack Obama, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, the groups called for the U.S. to “immediately halt all deportations to Haiti; grant deferred action and/or stays of removal to all Haitians with final orders of removal”.

The letter was signed by groups including the Human Rights Clinic and the Immigration Clinic of the University of Miami Law School, the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Alternative Chance, and the Loyola University Law Clinic and Center for Social Justice. The groups also want the Obama administration to meet with them to discuss a Mar. 7, 2011 “policy; and immediately halt roundups of Haitian nationals in the United States and release those currently in custody”.

### PETITION

An emergency petition campaign, spearheaded by Harvard Law School graduate Rebecca Sharpless and five

human rights organizations, has prompted the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to urge the U.S. government to halt deportations of Haitian citizens who are seriously ill or who have family ties in the U.S.

“The U.S. government has blood on its hands,” said Sharpless, who is an assistant professor at the University of Miami School of Law and director of its Immigration Clinic, in a statement.

In its written decision, the IACHR noted that the jails and prisons in Haiti are “overcrowded, and the lack of drinking water and adequate sanitation or toilets could facilitate the transmission of cholera, tuberculosis, and other diseases”.

The IACHR urged that the suspension lasts until Haiti is “able to guarantee that detention conditions and access to medical care comply with applicable minimum stan-

dards” and puts procedures in place to review the rights of persons subjected to deportation.

Under legislation passed in 1996, the U.S. deports non-citizens legally in the U.S. if, in the past, they have been convicted of certain felonies and misdemeanors. Shortly after the Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake, Haitian-American and human rights groups persuaded the Obama administration to suspend the deportation of Haitian immigrants. But late last year this suspension was unexpectedly lifted by the Department of Homeland Security, and the deportation of Haitian citizens, with or without immigration papers, who had run afoul of U.S. criminal laws was resumed.

On Mar. 7, the Obama administration issued a new policy statement confirming that deportations would resume.



## U.S. willing to help OECS deal with criminal deportees

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

in the past criticized Washington over its deportation policy, saying that it contributes to the high levels of criminal activities in the region.

But Bousquet said that in his discussions with the U.S. officials, Washington said there is no statistical basis for that conclusion.

“The Americans would certainly say to you that from a statistical point of view the situation does not extend beyond what is considered normal,” he explained. “They claim that their own statistics according to them—and certainly we have not verified it, but equally we have no reason

to doubt them—is that the average age of the deportees is around 17 years of age.

“As a result some of the basis on which some of our requests have been made, such as the deportees having no real connection or orientation to St. Lucia or other regional states, they say statistically that is not the case,” Bousquet added.

The foreign minister said Washington is claiming that only three per cent of the persons deported back to the Caribbean had come to the U.S. under the age of two and in most cases the average age is about 17.



## U.S. to deport 700 Haitian criminals

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Haiti’s crime rate,” said Manigat, a former first lady.

She said the criminal deportations would compound an already battered Haiti, still reeling from the massive earthquake that killed about 300,000 people and left 1.5 million homeless, as well as a

cholera epidemic that has killed over 4,000 people.

### APPEAL

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has taken the rare step in urging the U.S. to cease immediately deportations to Haiti for per-

sons with serious illnesses or with U.S. family ties. The Washington-based commission made the appeal in response to an emergency petition filed in January by six human rights groups, based primarily in southern Florida.

The action follows the first reported death of a Haitian man, who was deported by the U.S. since removals resumed on Jan. 20.

In its decision, the IACHR expressed concern that “detention centers in Haiti are overcrowded, and the lack of drinking water and adequate sanitation or toilets could facilitate the transmission of cholera, tuberculosis, and other diseases.”

- Edited from CMC report.



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# Caribbean influence pushes new Miramar commish to make good on campaign promises

SONIA MORGAN

In the four months since Jamaican American Alexandra Davis won a seat on the Miramar City Commission, she has been working to make good on her campaign promises and has been making inroads in the South Florida city.

Davis, who ran on a political platform of economic development, including the revitalization of east Miramar among other issues, believes there's a lot to be done in her city, which boasts a significant Caribbean American population.

However, she said she is committed to doing the work necessary to improve the city's economy and bridge the gap between east and west Miramar.

Davis, who was born in England to Jamaican parents and educated at Wolmer's Girls High School and the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, said her Caribbean background and education influences how she operates.

"Seeing people who looked like me in leadership positions in Jamaica gave me the impetus to pursue public service and believe I can do anything I put my mind to," she told *Caribbean Today* recently.

"This helped me to build character. It prepared me for United States."

Miramar's diverse population is an inspiration to Davis. She believes "children do very well growing up in this environment because there are teachers, politicians and other professionals they can relate to," adding that "Miramar is just one big melting pot of culture and we should embrace it."

Her own background has armed her with an important tool to take on the task.

"I certainly make no apologies for being Caribbean American," said Davis. "It has greatly influenced my outlook."

Public service is nothing new to Davis. She worked in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Jamaica and in the government tax office in London. She was also an administrator for Miami-Dade County before winning the city commission seat.

"I have an understanding of how the public service works," Davis explained. "The great thing about the job that I do now is that I can have ideas

about what I want to do and have implemented...I'm able to effect change, make budgetary decisions and actually listen to the people...and find out how I can help."

## TOUR OF DUTY

Davis said after taking office, she quickly went to work in the city. First stop: A 24-hour tour of duty with the Fire Department to get a better understanding of what they do.

"I slept at the fire station, woke up on calls, and rode along with them," she said. She also dressed in full fire-fighting gear and participated in rescue operations.

"It was like the T.V. show 'Undercover Boss,'" Davis



- Contributed photograph  
Davis gets to work in full firefighter gear during her recent 24-hour tour of duty of Miramar's Fire Department.

joked.

Next stop was the Police Department, where she rode along with officers for 12 hours. She said she learned much about their jobs and has a greater appreciation for what they do.

One of the most important things Davis has done so far is reaching out to the residents of the oft times neglected east Miramar.

Former Miramar Commissioner George Pedlar, who is from Jamaica, is impressed with Davis.

"I think she has a very positive attitude to her work," said Pedlar. "She campaigned on reaching the people in the east and has opened up a satellite office there, which I thought was a very positive move."

He said she has made herself resonate with the community by being available to residents.

"Anything to aid in bring-



- Contributed photograph  
Davis helps members of the Miramar Fire Department tend to a victim.

ing City Hall to the people and make it more convenient for residents to speak face-to-face with me to discuss their concerns and address those issues that are most important to them is the basis of my commitment to serve," Davis said.

Miramar resident Pauline Harrison likes the way Commissioner Davis connects with the community.

"She goes to events, church services and tries to talk to the people and find out what they need," Hall said. "Not

many elected officials do that."

## CHANGE

While west Miramar boasts pristine houses, clean neighborhoods and firm infrastructure, the older, less affluent east needs to be revitalized. This is an issue Davis believes she can work to change. With the numerous foreclosure properties and not enough code enforcement officers - eight officers to the 118,000 residents of Miramar - there are numerous things that aren't being done, she explained. So Davis said she is working with code enforcement to help bring the city up to code. And while most of the west side has home owners' associations to ensure the properties are maintained, that is lacking on the east. The revitalization is ongoing, with improvements on certain infrastructure, like updating the sewer systems.

The new commissioner

also thinks the city should "make use of the facilities we have on the eastside to ensure that there's no blight, by bringing services and allowing (the residents) to feel a part of what is happening."

Miramar's east side will be utilized for a Caribbean America History Month event in June.

## REVOLVING SEAT

Davis, whose term ends in 2013, occupies what many consider a revolving seat. Since 2005 no one has served a full term. Jamaican-born former Commissioner Fitzroy Salesman is serving time in federal prison for bribery and extortion. Before that, he was suspended twice. Neither Carl Lanke nor Barbara Sharief completed their four-year term.

Davis said she is in for the long haul. Salesman's criminal convictions, she said, have not cast a shadow on her role as commissioner.

"There are aspects of his tenure as a commissioner which have been very helpful," Davis explained. "He was a people's commissioner and that is something that I want to do as a commissioner."

"We're two different individuals - you have to be in there for the right reason and my reason simply is to serve," she added.

"There are a lot more politicians that have gone down recently and he is the only Jamaican. Personally, I haven't had anybody said anything to me. And I think, for some reason, I'm not linked with him at all and I'm not impeded from doing what I do. It's not something I have hanging over my head."

But Davis has not been functioning in a vacuum. According to her, "I have had enormous help from (Broward County) Commissioner Dale Holness (also Jamaican).

"I've watched his career over the years. He worked hard for his position. He has worked hard for people who came up after him and has helped me. Levoyd Williams, Vice Mayor of Lauderdale Lakes has helped and (U.S. Congressman) Alcee Hastings was a big help to me offering me advice and helping me with contacts and I do appreciate their kindness."

Davis has an ambitious political agenda, which includes forging partnerships with cities around to world, particularly for trade. She also wants to continue her meet and greet sessions with residents to address their issues.

"Another initiative I've embarked on is to have the city join the fight with (U.S. First Lady) Michelle Obama against childhood obesity and become a 'Let's Move City'," Davis said. "We will be having our kick off event at the town center on May 18."

*Sonia Morgan is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*

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## Someone finally gets it right on illegal immigration issue

Here's something I thought I'd never say or write in my life, but here I am writing it in 2011 so the world must be in retrograde. That is that Utah lawmakers actually got it on the hot button issue of illegal immigration.

After months of saying in my own column and on radio that the solution to the problem of the moral, law abiding undocumented worker in this country lies simply in giving them a work permit and a travel document, Utah lawmakers have surprised me by saying the same thing in a bill they've passed to deal with the issue in their state.

In what can only be called unprecedented, lawmakers included a guest worker permit provision, which would allow undocumented immigrants to live and work in Utah. The Utah Illegal Immigration Enforcement Act or House Bill 497, sponsored by Stephen E. Sandstrom, passed Utah's House and Senate recently. The immigration measure would allow undocumented immigrants to get a permit to work in Utah under a guest worker program, but also require that police check the immigration status of anyone stopped for a felony or serious misdemeanor.

It is undoubtedly a plan the administration of United States President Barack



FELICIA PERSAUD

Obama, and the federal lawmakers who claim they really want to solve the issue of illegal immigration, should adopt pronto.

### BOLD

Frank Sharry, executive director of America's Voice, a Washington, D.C.-based group supportive of a legal status for illegal immigrants, called it a bold, innovative statement and urged the Obama administration to "take notice, support the program and start a dialogue with the state."

Of course, the haters are already circling the wagon, screaming "amnesty". And despite what the ACLU of Utah is screaming, - that it is really racial profiling - this is the most rational proposal to come out of any state since the bigoted proposal from Arizona stirred many conservative states to action on the issue of illegal immigration.

It is the rational thing to do and I applaud the lawmakers for getting it right, especially given the state's history on slavery, in which the Legislature formally sanctioned slaveholdings in 1852.

The Mormon Church leadership also got it right. That's something else I never thought I would say or write. This is the same church that had no official doctrine for or against slaveholding, and whose leaders were ambivalent, except for Brigham Young, who tacitly supported slaveholding, declaring that, although Utah was not suited for slavery, the practice was ordained by God.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

## Fraud families

A house is not a home, unless there are people in it, and those people are usually family. But family, my dear friends, is often the root of all problems.

The thing is, we can choose our friends, but we are stuck with our family who are thrust upon us by dint of birth, bound by blood, tethered by genes and often times smothering us.

Family is not a bad thing and, in fact is held in extremely high esteem by many cultures. The Orientals, the Jews and Arabs, Africans and other ancient cultures place a high premium on the family, which is usually headed by a matriarch or patriarch. Almost no major decisions are made without their consultation and input, and they often decide who gets married and to whom. Even now some marriages are 'arranged' by certain cultures, as brides are flown from their mother countries to lay eyes on their intended for the first time, marry, and then expected to live happily ever after.

We used to have strong family values, but as times changed, this has dwindled somewhat and many families could be candidates for the Jerry Springer show. You name it, they have it, from jokers to jackanapes, from morons to moochers, from louts to lazy-bones, from culprit to conman, every family has one, and it's only when you exchange stories with other people that you realize that you are not alone with your fraud family.

### BURDEN

The more I talk to people is the more I see how similar most families are. The most common scenario is that of the burden always falling on one family member, even though the family is a large one.

Usually this manifests itself when the parents become old, sick and dependent. Naturally, all the offspring are suddenly too busy to cater to the needs of those who spent their lives raising them from birth, through schooling to



adulthood, leaving the onerous and demanding task to one child who luckily is blessed with a sense of honor and duty.

"Oh, I would love to give some help, but my job is so demanding, plus I have my kids to take care of, and the mortgage is high and, and...I'm just too busy."

So, one daughter or son gets saddled - or should I say, blessed - with the task of taking care of the ageing parent. I know of situations where the mother is sick and needs care, and only one daughter out of eight children, has the task of running up and down, buying medicine, paying bills and looking after her, while the other siblings whine and stay away.

"I'm just tired of asking them to help, so I just do it myself," she told me.

If and when one offers to help, they make such a big deal of it.

"Listen, I am making a big sacrifice carrying these gro-



TONY ROBINSON

ceries for mama. I took time off from work, went to the supermarket, drove all the way to Pembroke Pines to deliver them and went back to work."

Big deal, that is what the one daughter has been doing every other day with no fanfare.

I also spoke to some elderly folks who told me how their children had virtually abandoned them, or only paid a visit once a year, giving them \$20, and only if they asked for it too.

### PLAN B

Then you have the family members who assume that one member has it made, and now therefore feel that they should support them for ever - worse if that family member is a doctor, lawyer, businessman or belongs to any other high profile profession. He or she is now designated an alternative financial institution and is visited every month by other family members who come demanding their monthly largesse.

"Dem come wid long bag and story to match, expecting much and giving little."

Nothing is wrong with the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

## BRUCE L. GLASKIN, ATTY

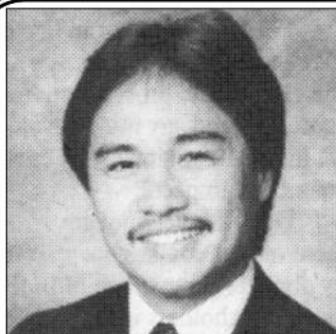
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*Comments*

• **“If you can have a 42 percent reduction, which equates to 150 murders, it just tells you the level of murders that is taking place and we still have such a far way to go...no citizen can feel safe and secure in that environment”** - Prime Minister Bruce Golding welcomes the news of reduced criminal activities in Jamaica last month, but knows the job is far from done.



• **“Whether or not this crime was motivated by anti-gay sentiment, or during the course of robbery, it is nonetheless unacceptable behavior and our destination will not tolerate it”** - The St. Lucia government lashes out at those who attacked three gay men on the Caribbean island recently.

• **“I think what had happened in this case is that the United States is not used to being questioned and so their attitude was, ‘This was done in the past so why are you asking questions?’ (They) were not taking into account that I had a duty to examine what was before me before I sign”** - Jamaica’s Justice Minister Dorothy Lightbourne questions the U.S.

role in the extradition of Christopher “Dudus” Coke during a Commission of Enquiry into the incident last month in Kingston.

• **“I’m proud to be an American soldier. But I don’t feel good about what they’re doing to me and my family. I feel like they used me”** - Trinidadian-born, United States Army veteran Ramdeo Chankarsingh, who was honorably discharged a decade ago, is facing deportation to his native land after the U.S. denied him citizenship.



• **“Haiti is poorly-equipped to welcome these young criminals whom the U.S. prison system failed to rehabilitate, and it will lead to an increase in Haiti’s crime rate”** - Mirlande Manigat last month added her voice to the vexing deportation issue, saying that the United States’ resumption of criminal deportations would result in increased crimes in the already beleaguered, French-speaking Caribbean country.

• **“We need as a people to embrace Rihanna and give her every encouragement because she represents the future, in my view, of the...creative industry of Barbados and indeed the Caribbean”** - Culture Minister Stephen Lashley calls on

Barbadians to stop criticizing Robyn Rihanna Fenty and instead embrace the island’s Grammy Awards winner.

• **“They are students and we don’t expect them to engage in sexual activities. We don’t expect them to act like adults”** - Virginia Albert-Poyotte, regional educator and coordinator in the North America Caribbean region for Education International, appeared last month to have changed her position on the controversial subject of distributing condoms in schools.

- **Compiled from CMC and other sources.**



**Someone finally gets it right on illegal immigration issue**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

In the true spirit of Christianity, a spokeswoman told the Utah press the Mormon Church continues to emphasize some guiding principles, such as compassion for neighbors and a concern for keeping families together.

Well let me say Amen to that. I could not have said it better myself.

*Felicia Persaud is founder of News AmericasNow, CaribPR Wire and Hard Beat Communications.*



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

has helping the have-nots, but some of these so called have-nots have no conscience and will camp out at the door like menacing mendicants expecting a permanent bailout. Plus the worse thing that you can do is lend some family members money as you might as well write it off, for you’ll

**Fraud families**

never see it again.

The moochers are bad enough, but there are some family members who just simply abandon the core members, especially when they go to foreign. Suddenly they have ‘arrived’ in their new found land, and they boast of their job and accomplishments, yet you will never see or hear from them after a while as their backs have been turned.

Any plea for communication or financial input will simply fall on deaf ears, as they have their own lives to live. Improbable as it may seem, some will not even show up for the funeral of the parents, so detached and disinterested are they.

As for funerals, that’s when the fraud family comes to the fore. As per usual, the arrangements and financial burden will fall on one or two of the children, while the others will try to direct and control proceedings without spending a dollar. They will determine what casket should be bought, usually opting for the most expensive one, how big a wake to have, how much liquor and food should be bought to feed the multitude, how much to spend on the gilt edged program, yet none offer even a red cent.

**FUN SIDE**

Yes, funerals do bring out the fun side of family. But for the real fun, just wait until the will is read, only then will you see true family fraud.

So many parents make the mistake of leaving everything to the eldest child, with instructions to divide up everything equally for the rest, but spend eternity turning in their graves at the fraud that ensues. As soon as that eldest child realizes that everything is in his or her name, that’s it, end of story.

“Shut your mouth and leave me alone. See deh, mama leave everything to me.”

At times you don’t even know who is your family until you strike some good fortune. Just win the lotto and see who instantly becomes your family. Sometimes family simply comes to visit and never leaves, and even if you move house, they move with you, living, eating, watching your T.V., burning your current, but contributing nothing. Ask them to even pay one bill and hear the excuses.

At times one family member will bring down shame and scandal on the entire clan as they get enslaved by drugs and walk the streets, or steal and go to jail. That can bring untold grief to the other family members.

**CHANGE**

But even with family fraud it’s not all bad. If we had a stronger and tighter family structure, many of our children would be more balanced and well behaved. I remember growing up as a child that every adult member of my family, including aunts and uncles had carte blanche to discipline us. I grew up surrounded by teachers, so you can just imagine.

Sadly, all that has changed, and the family structure is now fragmented, scattered to the four corners of the globe. Mothers leave their children as they go to seek work in far off lands, at times never to return. Fathers also flee and sons and daughters fly the coop and never look back.

Television and video games have taken the place of parents. Hey, the T.V. is perhaps the most important member of most families now.

Still, even with all the family fraud, it’s usually better if you have one. So in spite of family fraud, it’s your family and your fraud. Cherish it.

seido1@hotmail.com



**Jamaica at 49**

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# CaribChat 'I'm in deeper waters now, so it's a little more difficult'

~ Jamaican-born Holness brings 'can do' attitude to Broward County Commission

*Broward County Commissioner, Jamaican-born Dale Holness, has his work cut out for him in his District 9 constituency. Six years as Lauderhill city commissioner, he believes, have prepared him for the work he intends to do in Broward. Caribbean Today's freelance writer Sonia Morgan caught up with Holness recently.*

**Caribbean Today: What is your Caribbean background and how has this fashioned you as a public figure?**

**Dale Holness:** I was born in Hanover, Jamaica and lived in parts of St. James and Westmoreland. I've lived mostly in western Jamaica in the County of Cornwall, which I often visit. I take a great deal of my personality from my mother. She's reasoned, shows good judgment, kind and willing to make the best of every situation. Both my maternal and paternal grandmothers also influenced me...I've created a Sister City between Lauderhill (Florida) and Falmouth (Jamaica) and we've just helped to launch the maiden voyage of the Oasis of the Seas from Fort Lauderdale to Falmouth. There's no doubt that my Jamaican heritage has helped to determine who I am, and what I am.

**C.T.: Who has been your greatest influence?**

**D.H.:** From a political standpoint, (the late Jamaican Prime Minister) Michael Manley. I met him as a youth in 1972 and was very impressed by his love for the people, his charisma, his intellectual capacity and his unbridled commitment to work towards uplifting those who

were at the bottom of the social strata...not that he didn't make mistakes...

**C.T.: How do you feel about representing the Caribbean community in South Florida and what are the expectations from your Caribbean American and non-Caribbean American constituents? Does this bring additional pressure?**

**D.H.:** I think that many Caribbean persons see me as their representative, whether or not they live in my district in Broward County, Miami-Dade or Palm Beach. The fact is that I represent not just Caribbean people, but all the people of Broward County. Trying to represent everyone is not easy and, yes, the expectations are very high...

**C.T.: Do you see yourself as a trailblazer for the Caribbean American community, especially in politics?**

**D.H.:** I don't necessarily see myself as a trailblazer. There are others who went before me...

**C.T.: What are the greatest issues affecting District 9 right now and how do you plan to solve them?**

**D.H.:** Unemployment is the most critical issue that faces District 9, followed by a high level of poverty, economic stagnation, illiteracy, crime and blight in many areas. The solution cannot come from one person. One can take a leadership role in bringing the community as a whole to resolve these issues and that is what I have set out to do...

**C.T.: What, if anything, have you accomplished to date since you have been on the Broward**



Holness

**County Commission?**

**D.H.:** I got an ordinance passed that will open opportunities for small disadvantaged and minority-owned business to get better access to be prime contractors with the county. We held a community, economic and empowerment forum that involved Fort Lauderdale International Airport, which plans to spend over 1.2 billion dollars; Broward County Small Business and Economic Development Department and Broward County Purchasing Department. We brought in small and minority-owned businesses to be given contracting opportunities with these entities. We held a major beautification effort in Collier City in Pompano, which is one of the most blighted areas in the county, where we had over 200 people participating in cleaning up and painting.

I went to Trinidad on a trade mission and we're currently having talks with

Caribbean Airlines to make Fort Lauderdale International Airport their North American hub.

**C.T.: You have the reputation of a public servant who makes things happen from your over six years of service on the Lauderhill Commission. Then, you were one of five. Now, you are one of nine. How does that affect getting things done?**

**D.H.:** I'm in deeper waters now, so it's a little more difficult to navigate, but I believe Lauderhill helped me to develop the ability to maneuver through rough waters and we're doing that, recognizing that I'm not necessarily going to win every vote. But those who know me know that I'll fight for what's in the best interest of my people.

**C.T.: You're known for championing international trade between South Florida and a number of countries around the world. What have you accomplished in that area in Broward County so far?**

**D.H.:** I believe the main thing that I've done so far is to educate my fellow commissioners and others in the importance of looking to the international marketplace for economic growth and job creation, understanding that 95 percent of the marketplace is not within America, but outside, and particularly focusing on the Caribbean and Latin America, where over 60 billion of the 72 billion dollars in trade for South Florida in 2010 came from...

**C.T.: How is serving as a county commissioner different from serving as a city commissioner?**

**D.H.:** Wow! It's a lot more work. It's intense. I have many more meetings, many more issues to deal with than as a city commissioner. My district now encompasses nine different cities and covers a population 192,000 people...

**C.T.: What is the most difficult issue to address in Broward County?**

**D.H.:** Ensuring that we have a balanced budget that is fiscally sound and, yes, responsive to the needs of the people. Additionally, to figure out how the county can help to stimulate growth and development so that people can get back to work.

**C.T.: What's the crime situation like in Broward County?**

**D.H.:** Overall, crime has been on the decrease and it is astonishing to some that with this high unemployment rate we haven't seen a spike in crime in the county.

**C.T.: Your predecessor, Josephus Eggelletion, is currently serving time in federal prison on corruption charges. Do you feel you are under more scrutiny as a result?**

**D.H.:** Everybody in elected office is under more scrutiny these days. And as such we have put in new standard of ethics, because the people have cried for it and they deserve good, honest and fair representation from their elected officials.



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## Miami Reggae Fest set for April 30

Jamaica's Luciano and the Jah Messenger Band will be among the main attractions at Miami Reggae Festival 2011 set for April 30 at Peacock Park, Coconut Grove in South Florida.

The free concert, scheduled to run from 3 p.m. to midnight, will also feature Cultura Profetica, Puerto Rico's top reggae band, Warrior King, Bonnie Casey, Spam All Stars, Connis Vanterpool, and Florida's 2010 Grammy winner Jahfe.

The festival is designed to promote the humanitarian causes of local and national organizations. It's a humanitarian effort to feed the hungry.

Patrons will be asked to contribute to a food drive to benefit Curley's House, an organization with a mission to improve the quality of life for low-to-moderate income



Luciano

individuals, families, the elderly, youth-at-risk, the abused and HIV/AIDS infected persons.

For more information, visit [www.curleyshouseinc.com](http://www.curleyshouseinc.com).



## John Legend headlines St. Lucia Jazz Festival

American multi Grammy-winning artist John Legend will headline the 20th St. Lucia Jazz Festival which begins late this month and runs through early May.

Legend has sold more than five million albums worldwide and will be joined at the festival, which runs from April 30 to May 8, by an international roster of musicians representing jazz, R&B, pop and soul from countries in North America, Europe, Africa and the Caribbean. They include:

- **Trey Songz** – The R&B singer-songwriter's debut album was "I Gotta Make It", released in 2005. He followed with "Trey Day" (2007) and "Ready" in 2009. His fourth album, "Passion, Pain & Pleasure", was released

in Sept. 2010.

- **Ledisi** – The singer-songwriter returns to the festival to share highlights from her Grammy nominated albums "Lost & Found" and "Turn Me Loose".

- **Regina Carter** – The American jazz violinist will share African folk tunes from her newest album "Reverse Thread".

- **Bad Ass Brass** – Formed in 2008, the band takes its influence from the sounds of traditional New Orleans brass bands, but adds its own twist. The group won the opportunity to play at this year's jazz festival through a Facebook contest in the United Kingdom hosted by the St. Lucia Tourist Board.

- **Maceo Parker** – The American funk and jazz saxophonist, who had a long term association with the late James Brown, will offer hits from his latest album "Roots & Grooves".

- **St. Lucian Collective** – An ensemble of the island's jazz icons will perform Caribbean beats.

The festival will feature multiple complementary daily shows of acoustic, new age, jazz, soul, reggae, and R&B sounds held in a variety of locations and venues around the island, including Jazz on the Square in Castries and Jazz in the South at locations in Vieux Fort and Laborie. Headliners will perform at the main stage at Pigeon Island National Park and Gaiety in Rodney Bay.



## Jamaica's Monty Alexander celebrates 50 years of jazz

Jamaican-born jazz great Monty Alexander will kick off the celebration of his 50th year as a professional performer this month in New York.

The piano virtuoso will

stage a five-night performance at the Birdland Jazz Club, 315 West 44th St. in Manhattan.

Alexander, declared one of the greatest jazz piano players of all time in Hal Leonard's 2005 book, and

with 60 albums under his belt, will open April 5 through April 9, with two nightly shows at 8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m.

"This engagement is the first in a series of concerts in celebration of my 50th year in

music," said Alexander.

He is also scheduled to perform in South Florida at the Reggae Jazz Fusion on May 22 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. Reggae star Maxi Priest,

and cabaret singer A.J. Brown will also be on the show, which begins at 7 p.m. The center is located at 201 S.W. Fifth Ave. in Fort Lauderdale.



Alexander

For more information, visit [www.browardcenter.org](http://www.browardcenter.org).

### SPECIAL

"It gives me a special opportunity to look back musically to 1961 and my first jobs in Kingston, Jamaica, with my first group, Monty and the Cyclones and the recordings I did for Coxsoné Dodd and Duke Reed," Alexander said of the celebration.

"I also look forward to reflecting musically on adventures I had through the years with, among others, Frank Sinatra, Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Jackson, Quincy Jones, Ray Brown and other legends of jazz."

The performances come on the heels of the release of "Uplift", a new album from Alexander and Jazz Legacy Productions that includes such pieces as "Come Fly With Me", "Sweet Georgia Brown", "Body and Soul" and "Home"



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# SWEET MICKY: Musician Michel Martelly is Haiti's president-elect

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti, CMC – Musician Michel “Sweet Micky” Martelly has won the presidential election in Haiti, according to the preliminary results.

Pierre Thibault, spokesman for the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), said Martelly received nearly 68 percent of the votes cast in the Mar. 20 second round runoff and easily defeated former first lady and law professor Mirlande Manigat.

Martelly, who was nearly not involved in the second round after having first been declared a third place winner in the Nov. 28 first round of balloting, is promising profound change for Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the western hemisphere. He is vowing to provide free education in a country where more than half the children can't afford school and to create economic opportunity amid almost universal unemployment.

Martelly thanked voters in a brief statement on his **Twitter** account, saying: “We’ll

work for all Haitians. Together we can do it.”

## CALLING

The president elect is the son of an oil company executive, who grew up in Carrefour, part of the dense urban mass that makes up the capital. He attended a prestigious Roman Catholic school in Port-au-Prince and junior colleges in the United States, though he never graduated.

But he found his calling and became a household name in the country through, kompas, the country's high-energy music.

Martelly, who has never held political office, had trailed Manigat in the first-round election in November that was marred by voter irregularities, fraud and street demonstrations. He was put



Martelly

into the second round after the candidate of the party headed by outgoing President René Prével was dropped by the CEP following a fresh recount of the ballots.

Martelly's campaign gained momentum in the second round and many voters seemed enchanted with his lack of political experience in a country where the government has failed to provide many basic services.

## CHALLENGES

Martelly will face a number of challenges in Haiti, which is still recovering from the powerful earthquake in Jan. 2010 that killed an estimated 300,000 people and left more than one million others homeless.

In addition, a cholera outbreak last October has killed more than 4,000 people. The CEP has said that the final results are due to be released April 16.



# Messam wins Miramar commish seat

SONIA MORGAN

Four Caribbean Americans vied for council and commission seats in the South Florida cities of Plantation and Miramar in local elections held in Broward County last month, but only one, Wayne Messam, a first generation American with Jamaican parents, was successful in his bid for office.

In the City of Miramar, Messam and Yvette Holt, also a Caribbean American, contested Seat 4 on the commission, along with Joe Romero and John J. Murphy on Mar. 8. Messam edged Holt with 37.62 percent of the votes to her 36.57 percent. Messam, who was sworn into office on Mar. 16, replaces Yvonne Garth.

In a post-election interview with **Caribbean Today**, Messam said he plans to immediately begin to address several issues, including improving economic development and creating more jobs. He wants to review ways to implement a local preference program to encourage local businesses to hire qualified Miramar residents and start in-house by ensuring that Miramar businesses get contracts for city and other projects.

“We can't lock out non-Miramar residents, but we want to give them (Miramar residents) preference,” the new commissioner said.

Messam's experience as a business owner who hires local residents, and his service on the city's Community Services Board and the Planning and Zoning Committee, gives him a good perspective of the landscape and the issues, he said.

“I hear complaints (from residents) and have to figure out how to improve their situa-

tion,” the commissioner explained.

## CRIME

Miramar's crime problem is another issue he wants to tackle. He said having more police presence is only one way to combat crime. He believes crime is an economic development issue.

“If there are jobs available for resi-

dents...if they are working, they won't have time for crime,” Messam said.

He is confident that crimes out of necessity will decrease when economic conditions improve.

In terms of the structural and aesthetic disparity between east and west Miramar, Messam said practical moves, like improving public works - providing functioning sewer systems and streetlights, for example - will drastically improve the east. He also believes more beautification projects will help revitalize the city's historic areas. The commissioner is encouraging communities to partner with the city, so elected officials and residents can work together to improve the east side.

“We want to capitalize on city partnerships,” said Messam. “It is impossible for us to know everything unless someone tells us. That's why we are public servants.”

*Sonia Morgan is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*



Messam

# Dominica's P.M. in dual citizenship tangle

ROSEAU, Dominica, CMC – A High Court judge has reserved judgment in the dual citizenship case involving Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit and his Education Minister Petter Saint Jean after hearing arguments.

Justice Gertel Thom is expected to make a determination whether the two ministers should be ordered to disclose their passports in answer to charges that they held dual citizenship at the time they were nominated to contest the Dec. 2009 general elections

that was won by Skerrit's Dominica Labour Party (DLP).

The main Opposition United Workers Party (UWP) had petitioned the court to overturn the election victories of Skerrit and Saint Jean on the grounds that they were citizens of France at the time of the polls.

In its petition, the



Skerrit

Opposition party stated that their nominations and subsequent election should be declared “void and of no legal effect.”

## 'FISHING EXPEDITION'

Senior Counsel Anthony Astaphan told the court on April 1 that his clients had no obligation to submit their passports since the onus was on the UWP to prove its case against the two elected officials. Astaphan described the UWP team as being on a “fishing expedition” in search of evidence.

But Trinidad-born Senior Counsel Douglas Mendes, who is representing the UWP, argued otherwise, urging that there should be disclosure of the passports of Skerrit and Saint Jean. He said a fair trial would require that both sides be given the opportunity to see all documents relevant to the proceedings.



# BRIEFS

## • M.P. resigns over dual citizenship

Everald Warmington, last month resigned as a Member of Parliament in Jamaica amid ongoing controversy over his dual citizenship with the United States. Warmington is a member of the ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) who represented the South West St. Catherine constituency.

## • Britain defends TCI election postponement

Britain has defended its decision to postpone “free and fair” elections in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) saying that the move is for a limited period “until the principles of good governance have been resorted”.

London in Aug. 2009 resumed daily administration of the affairs of the British Overseas Territory, disbanded the locally elected government and suspended the legislature after a commission of inquiry said it found widespread corruption under the administration of former Premier Michael Misick.

- Compiled from CMC



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## U.N. honors legacy of slave trade victims

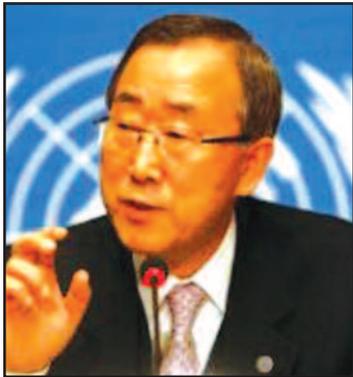
UNITED NATIONS – The United Nations last month honored the memory of the millions of innocent victims who suffered over four centuries due to the transatlantic slave trade.

“The living legacy of 30 million untold stories” was the theme of this year’s International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which is observed annually on Mar. 25.

“By studying slavery, we help to guard against humanity’s most vile impulses,” said U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in a message marking the occasion.

“By examining the prevailing assumptions and beliefs that allowed the practice to flourish, we raise awareness about the continued dangers of racism and hatred.

“And by honoring slavery’s victims – as we do with this International Day, with a permanent memorial that will be established at the U.N. Headquarters complex in New York, and with the observance of 2011 as the International Year for People of African Descent – we restore some measure of dignity to those who had been so mercilessly



Ban Ki-moon

stripped of it,” he added.

### CHALLENGE

Ban also addressed a special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly to mark the day, at which he said the challenge today is to remember slavery then, and continue the fight against its contemporary versions now, including debt bondage, domestic servitude, forced marriages and trafficking in children.

“This International Day forces us to confront human beings at their worst,” he said. “But, in those who opposed slavery then and now, we also celebrate people at their best...”



## Slave trade stories must be told ~ CARICOM

UNITED NATIONS – The Caribbean community (CARICOM) says the stories of slavery and the slave trade must be told.

As the United Nations concluded activities honoring the memory of the millions of innocent victims who suffered over four centuries due to the

for the hopes of generations to come,” he told the U.N. General Assembly during the “International Day of Remembrance” celebrations on Mar. 25.

Wolfe said the theme “begs for poignant reflection on the vast reservoir of voices that have been silenced, from a

parts of the world today.”

### ‘TURNING POINT’

The Jamaican envoy noted that the Caribbean region has “given birth to Haiti, the first country to triumph over slavery and the architects of that brutal institution,” stating that the Haitian revolution has



Monument to the slave trade.

transatlantic slave trade last month, Jamaica’s U.N. Ambassador Raymond O. Wolfe, speaking on behalf of the 15-member regional grouping, said the debate on the nefarious acts should not be silenced “because lessons of our past inform the present, and, most certainly, our future.

“Those countries are seeking to counter the legacy of slavery by inculcating new values and attitudes in the youth

people whose expressions and contributions have been muted or suppressed for generations under a brutal system of trade in humans from Africa.”

He said the CARICOM delegation rejects the theory that slavery was “an issue of the past that we don’t need to debate, particularly because the dark legacy of the slave system - its hatred, its prejudice and its racial discrimination - still lives on in many

been a “turning point in world history.”

He said it took another 100 years for the remainder of CARICOM states to “free themselves from the vestiges of the slave trade.”

Wolfe said the “International Day of Remembrance” was merely one facet of the “collective commitment to addressing the issue.”



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~ A Caribbean Today special feature

## Jamaica's HIV/AIDS cases rise

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Jamaica has recorded a 21 percent increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS over a 10-year period, according to a recent statement issued by the Ministry of Health.

It noted that in 1999, the number of reported cases was 1,436 compared to 1,738 in 2009.

“This situation is exacerbated by (a) high incidence of multiple partnerships and low condom usage. Persons continue to engage in risky behavior and thereby risk their lives and those of their loved ones,” Health Minister Rudyard Spencer said.

The figures released by the Ministry of Health show that in 2009, there were 378 AIDS related deaths, a 31 percent decline on the 1999 figure when 549 people died of the disease for which there is no cure.

In February, Jamaica observed “Safer Sex Week” under the theme “Protect your love, use a glove”.

The Ministry of Health said that the theme serves as an urgent call for persons to discontinue risky sexual behavior by using condoms each time they have sex and sticking to one partner.



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## MAN, MEDICINE AND MACHINE



Baptist Health South Florida is offering robot-assisted procedures for Caribbean patients. Home to the da Vinci robot, Baptist Health is bringing minimally invasive treatments to patients suffering from illnesses that are usually difficult to treat or are associated with painful treatment options. Among them are robot-assisted hysterectomy and gynecologic surgery and robot-assisted tongue and throat surgery. These two treatments are critically important to Caribbean communities as many people in the region often need advanced treatment, but do not know about treatment options such as the da Vinci. Dr. Ricardo Estape, left, and Dr. Nicholas C. Lambrou are among the Baptist Health physicians who perform surgery using the da Vinci robot.

## Prostate cancer treatment lures 'medical tourists' to Bermuda

HAMILTON, Bermuda, CMC - New prostate cancer treatment unavailable in the United States has brought 200 “medical tourists” as well as their families and doctors to Bermuda.

The new treatment was made available here nine months ago and officials say the visits have generated a total of 1,000 bed nights for local hotels.

But complaints are now being made that local residents are being pushed side to accommodate the visitors flying in for the High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) treatment at the main King Edward VII Memorial Hospital. The controversial treatment is yet to be endorsed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

One medical practitioner, who did not want to be named, said that local patients need to brace themselves for longer waiting times for surgery to make room for foreigners seeking treatment on the island.

The doctor said he knew of at least one surgery being cancelled and another delayed because of HIFU.

### BEGINNING

Shadow Health Minister Louise Jackson believes this is just “the tip of the iceberg” as

hundreds of patients head to the island for the treatment in the hospital's small number of operating rooms.

Details about the delayed and cancelled operations were published in the Royal Gazette newspaper just days after Jackson asked Health Minister Zane DeSilva in the House of Assembly whether any surgeries had been delayed or cancelled due to HIFU. DeSilva said categorically that the answer was no and the minister and the Bermuda Hospitals Board reiterated that no surgeries had been rearranged as “surgical time is allocated to HIFU weeks in advance”.

But the medical practitioner told the Gazette that on Jan. 14 an emergency C-Section was delayed and another hernia surgery was cancelled “while HIFU went on uninhibited.”

“My case was cancelled completely because of the delay associated with HIFU patients being operated and later it was discovered that there were no hospital beds. It is being denied, but this is happening.”

However a hospital spokeswoman said: surgeries were not being cancelled, “especially not emergency surgeries.”



## REBECCA WOKE UP ONE MORNING AND COULDN'T HEAR.



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~ A Caribbean Today special feature

# Fear of detainment drives HIV/AIDS victims underground in The Bahamas

NASSAU, Bahamas, CMC – Health Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis has told a regional HIV/AIDS seminar that fear of detainment is among the factors hindering local efforts to expand programs to curb the spread of the deadly virus in The Bahamas.

But Dr. Minnis said one of the mechanisms that have made The Bahamas' National HIV/AIDS Program so successful since its establishment 23 years ago, is its focus on "oversight, planning, training, and coordination and evaluation of the national response to HIV/AIDS."

"Our focus has always

been on prevention of transmission of HIV and the comprehensive care of the individuals infected with HIV, so access to healthcare, regardless of immigration status, is a tenet of the Ministry of Health," Dr. Minnis told delegates attending the recent Caribbean Regional HIV Prevention Summit on the Most At-Risk Persons and Other Vulnerable Populations (OVP).

### REACHING OUT

He said that The Bahamas had implemented a number of policies and practices over the years aimed at reaching most

at-risk persons and other vulnerable populations. He said one such policy is the provision of medical care for persons with need, regardless of their ability to pay.



Minnis

"Antenatal care, including the provision of anti-retroviral therapy, is provided free of charge to all public patients," Dr. Minnis said. "This has also been extended to all registered HIV-positive patients in both the public and private healthcare sectors."

However, Dr. Minnis said the lack of immigration status, language barriers, stigmatization, economic power and the lack of recognition of the negative impact of risky behaviors, also contributed to the issue. He said as a result, healthcare providers in The Bahamas still face "significant" challenges in the treatment of OVPs who are at greatest risk of inequitable access to health services due to the aforementioned forces. These groups include adolescents and young adults, undocumented immigrants, men who have sex with men (MSMs), commercial sex

workers (CSWs) and persons above the age of 50 years.

Dr. Minnis said the Caribbean, as a whole, is the "second-most" HIV affected region in the world as AIDS continues to be the leading cause of death among adult Caribbean males and females between the ages of 25 to 44 years.

Under the PEPFAR Agreement, The Bahamas will receive more than five million United States dollars in assistance to fight HIV/AIDS over the next five years.



## STAYING POWER: Sex in the second half of life on the rise

Sex isn't just for the young. Research is showing that older people are sexually active.

The sexuality that's such a big part of our teens and young adulthood has more staying power than younger people usually recognize and can continue to spice things up well into old age.

Results from a University of Chicago survey published in 2007 suggested that over half of Americans continue to engage in sexual activities well into their 70s. Now another batch of findings from a sur-

vey conducted by researchers at Indiana University suggests that 20 percent to 30 percent of long-lived Americans are sexually active into their 80s.

There's reason to believe that sexuality is assuming a larger role in American old age. Millions of men are now taking erectile dysfunction drugs like sildenafil (Viagra) or tadalafil (Cialis). Growing numbers of Americans are enjoying relatively good health in their 60s, 70s and 80s, and, not surprisingly, the University of Chicago study found a close association between good health and sexual activity among older people.

Consider also who is getting old these days - the baby boomers, a generation that came of age in the 1960s and 1970s when sexual mores were changing, and a demographic group that hangs on to its youthful ways.

But the "frisky seniors" story line can be overdone. Sexual activity does subside with age. Biological factors tug in that direction, as do social arrangements: older people, especially women, often end up single when a spouse or partner dies. The Indiana University researchers found that sexual activity with a partner is common among those in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, dips significantly for both men and women in their 50s and 60s, and then drops further once people enter their 70s.

A statistical picture of the sexuality of older Americans begins to emerge from that article and the University of Chicago survey results. Here are some of the main points:

- **Sexual activity tapers off with age** - Surveys show a decline in sexual activity with age, although the drop-off isn't as steep as one might expect, and a significant minority (especially men) defies the trend. In one study, 35 percent of the men age 80 and older reported that they had intercourse with a woman a few times or more in the past year. In the University of Chicago study, 38.5 percent of the men ages 75 to 85 reported having sexual activity with a partner in the previous year.
- **Older women are less sexually active than older men** - Both studies show that older women - even the "young old" in their 60s - are less sexually active than men of the same age. The gender gap widens as people get older. Differences

in the amount of sexual activity that occurs outside of a relationship contribute to the overall gender disparity.

- **Partnered sex gets high marks** - In the Indiana study, over three-quarters (78 percent) of the men ages 50 and over rated their most recent sexual experience with a partner as either extremely or "quite a bit" pleasurable. About two-thirds (68.2 percent) of the women in that age group rated their most recent experience with a partner that highly.

- **Masturbation is common** - Most men (63 percent) and almost half of women (47 percent) in the 50 and over age group reported masturbating in the past year, according to the Indiana survey.

- **Good health matters** - The University of Chicago researchers found a strong association between good health and sexual activity, particularly among men. Diabetes

seems to have a greater negative effect than either arthritis or high blood pressure on both genders, but especially on women.

- **Sexual problems are common** - Half of those who participated in the University of Chicago study reported

having at least one bothersome sexual problem. Among men, the problems included difficulty achieving and maintaining an erection (37 percent), lack of interest in sex (28 percent), anxiety about

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)



- File photograph

Age is just a number when it comes to sex.

vey conducted by researchers at Indiana University suggests that 20 percent to 30 percent of long-lived Americans are sexually active into their 80s.

There's reason to believe that sexuality is assuming a larger role in American old age. Millions of men are now taking erectile dysfunction drugs like sildenafil (Viagra) or tadalafil (Cialis). Growing numbers of Americans are enjoying relatively good health in their 60s, 70s and 80s, and, not surprisingly, the University of Chicago study found a close association between good health and sexual activity among older people.

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~ A Caribbean Today special feature

## P.M. warns diseases could bring Dominica's economy to 'grinding halt'

ROSEAU, Dominica, CMC – Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has warned that the local economy could come to a "grinding halt" within the next 20 years if Dominica is not able to adequately deal with the increase in chronic non-communicable (CNC) diseases.

"If we do not control the prevalence of CNCs in Dominica, I have said and this

is my own guesstimation our economy will come to a grinding halt in the next 20 years, because our productive people will be suffering from these diseases and they will be unable to work or function properly," Skerrit told a town hall meeting here last month.

The prime minister said he had seen over the years the number of people who had become

sick as a result of CNC's, adding "we have to launch an offensive against it (CNC)."

### CARE

He said parents should also exercise greater care in providing meals for children going to schools warning that CNC is a "major concern to us."

Dominica and other Caribbean community (CARI-

COM) countries have been able to get the United Nations to agree to a high level meeting on the prevention and control of chronic non-communicable diseases in Sept. 2011. The meeting came as a result of much lobby efforts which led to a resolution introduced by CARICOM member states at the U.N. in May 2010.

The resolution, which was

co-sponsored by more than 100 member states, included a call for a high level meeting of the U.N. General Assembly (UNGASS) to address the pressing health problem of CNC, which is the leading cause of death worldwide; and to address the burden of these diseases on the economies of developing countries.

## Health issues to top agenda at Caribbean scientists conference

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC – Caribbean researchers and scientists will present

papers ranging from the HIV/AIDS pandemic to the effects of flooding on respira-

tory illnesses at a major health conference here this month.

The Caribbean Health Research Council's (CHRC) 56th Annual Research Conference will take place from April 14-16 and CHRC Director Dr. Donald Simeon said it provides an opportunity to share research findings with persons who can actually use research.

"The CHRC is about the promotion of evidence to guide policy makers, program managers and care providers in terms of best practices," he told reporters, adding that papers from about 14 different countries will be presented

and discussed at the three-day conference.

He said the papers would look at issues on pediatric cancers, diabetic foot ulcers, glaucoma, psychiatry and gastroenteritis as well as HIV/AIDS, family health, clinical medicine and chronic diseases.

### PARTNERSHIP

"The meeting is about partnership as well in that you can identify who are the persons throughout the Caribbean who have similar interests as you have and can perhaps work with you in the conducting of research," Dr. Simeon said.

Another highlight of the three-day conference will be an awards banquet where Vice Chancellor of the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Jamaica, Professor Nigel Harris and Professor of Public Health, Epidemiology and HIV/AIDS Peter Figueroa will be honored.

The CHRC is the regional health institution with the mandate to promote and coordinate health research in the Caribbean and serves the CARICOM members by providing advice to their health ministries and other stakeholders.



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## STAYING POWER: Sex in the second half of life on the rise

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

performance (27 percent) and inability to climax (20 percent).

Among women, the common problems were lack of interest in sex (43 percent), difficulty with lubrication (39 percent), inability to climax (34 percent), lack of pleasure from sex (23 percent), and pain during sex (17 percent).

In the Indiana survey, 30 percent of the women ages 50 and over said they experienced some level of pain during their most recent sexual experience with a partner.

The University of Chicago researchers also asked people whether they were bothered by their sexual problems. Men tended to be bothered by them more than women, although when it came to lack of interest in sex, the percentages were about the same.

• **Sexual activity outside of a relationship is common** - A sizable minority of the men (43 percent) and women (36 percent) in the Indiana study reported that their most recent partnered sexual activity was with someone other than a spouse or long-time partner. This "non-relationship" partner category included casual or new acquaintances, friends, and "transactional" partners - people who engaged in sex in exchange for something, often but not always money. Women whose last sexual partner was with a non-relationship partner reported higher arousal, less lubrication difficulty, and a higher rate of orgasm than women whose last partnered sexual activity was with a spouse or a long-time partner.

• **Many men take some-**

thing to improve sexual function - In the Indiana survey, 17 percent of men ages 50 and older took an erectile dysfunction drug in connection with their most recent sexual experience with a partner. In the University of Chicago study, 14 percent of the men and one percent of the women reported taking medications or supplements to improve sexual function during the past year. So it's pretty clear: old age doesn't preclude sexual activity, although it also doesn't make it any easier.

But age and experience may also hold some advantages. For example, some research suggests that women become more comfortable asserting themselves sexually as they get older. Some men gain greater control over ejaculation. It's also easier now to overcome some of the physiological hurdles that occur with age. Men have the erectile dysfunction drugs. Women can use any number of vaginal creams and gels.

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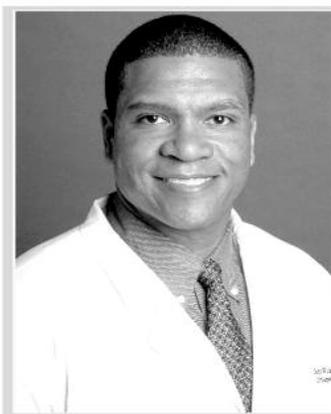
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## Bolt vs. Powell in sprint showdown on May 26

Two of the world's fastest men, Usain Bolt and Asafa Powell, will clash in the 100 meters on May 26 in Italy.

Powell recently signed to face his Jamaican compatriot in the third leg of the Diamond League at the Olympic Stadium in Rome.

Organizers late last month confirmed Powell's participa-

tion after Bolt had confirmed in January.

Bolt vs. Powell will be an early season match-up between the two, as they build-up to the IAAF World Championships from Aug. 27 to Sept. 4 in Daegu, Korea. In nine head-to-head clashes, Bolt has beaten Powell eight times, with Powell's only victory a close 9.88 seconds to

9.89 seconds win in Stockholm three years ago.

Bolt holds the world record of 9.58 seconds over the distance set at the 2009 World Championships in Berlin.

*CMC contributed to this story.*



## Jamaica, Grenada to clash in Gold Cup soccer 2011

NEW YORK, United States – Digicel Caribbean Cup (DCC) champions Jamaica will open their CONCACAF Gold Cup campaign in June with a clash against regional neighbors Grenada.

Both countries were drawn in Group B when the groupings and fixtures for the June 5-25 tournament were announced last month by CONCACAF, the continental governing body for football in North, Central America and the Caribbean.

The two Caribbean Football Union (CFU) countries will meet in a June 6 clash at the Home Depot Center in Carson, California in what will be the third game of the tournament set to be played across 13 U.S. cities.

Central American teams Honduras and Guatemala will line up alongside the two Caribbean countries in Group B.

"We are extremely excited for this year's Gold Cup and are completely confident that it will be the best ever," CONCACAF General Secretary Chuck Blazer said.

"We are bringing our fans the region's best football in fantastic venues – with a lot on the line. It is truly a can't-miss event."

CONCACAF giants Mexico, installed in Group A, will play the feature match on the opening night of the tournament when they meet El Salvador at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas. CFU side Cuba and Costa Rica will also do battle in Group A and will raise the curtain on the tournament in the first game of the doubleheader in Arlington.

Losing DCC finalists Guadeloupe, the fourth CFU side in the Gold Cup, will play in Group C with hosts U.S., Canada and Panama.



## Woeful Windies knocked out early at Cricket World Cup

DHAKA, Bangladesh, CMC – West Indies exited the Cricket World Cup without so much as a whimper, suffering an appalling batting collapse and plunging to an embarrassing 10-wicket defeat to Pakistan in a lopsided quarter-final contest here last month.

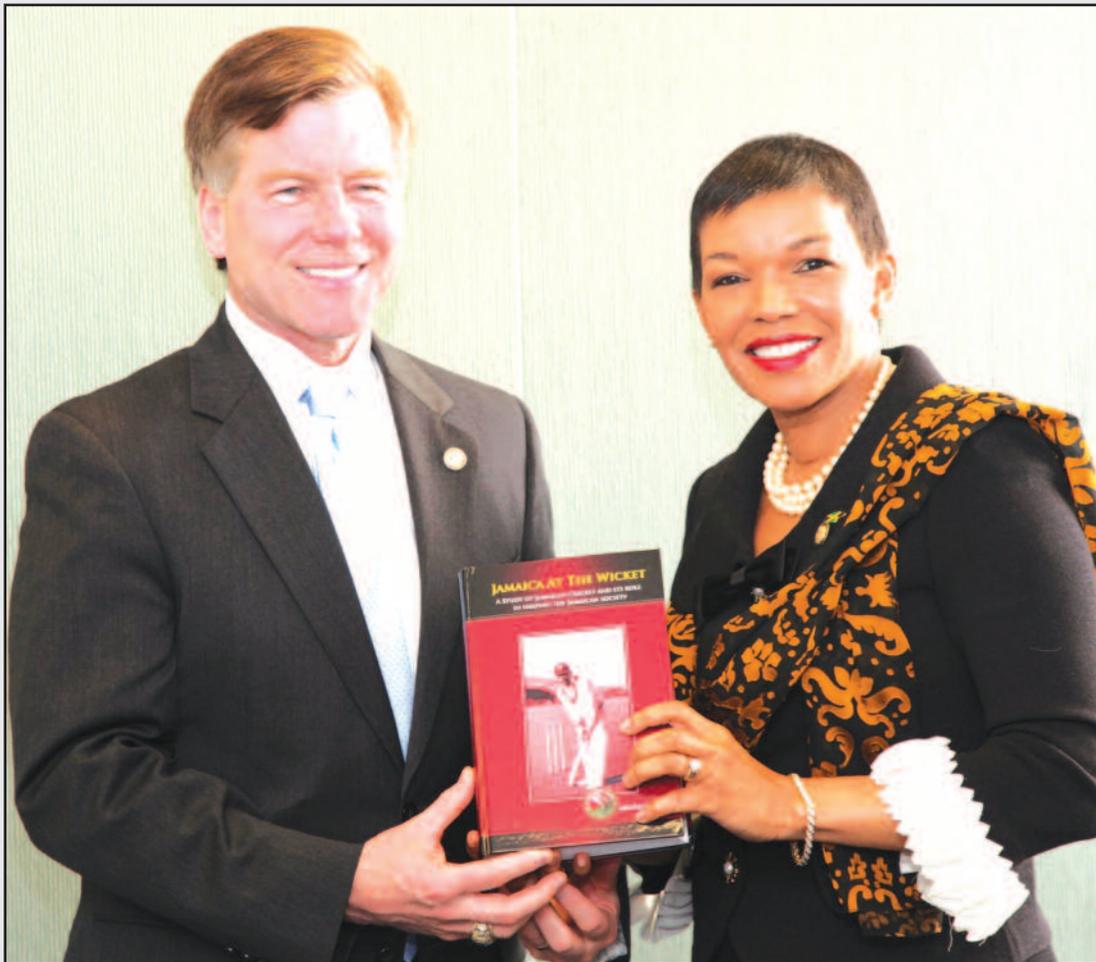
Winning the toss and batting first at the Shere Bangla National Stadium, the Windies made 112 runs from 43.3 of the allotted 50 overs – the Caribbean team's third lowest score in a World Cup – after failing to recover from a difficult 16 for three in the sixth over.

Proving there were no devils in the pitch, Pakistan's openers Mohammad Hafeez (61) and Kamran Akmal (47) then cruised to their target off just 20.5 overs.

West Indies had been plagued by weak batting throughout the tournament and the script proved no different in the first match of the elimination round. Only veteran left-hander Shivnarine Chanderpaul, with an unbeaten 44 from 106 balls, offered any resistance as the Pakistani spinners ripped through the Windies' batting.



### 'JAMAICA AT THE WICKET'



Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Audrey Marks, presents Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell with a book about Jamaica's cricket titled "Jamaica at the Wicket" written by Jamaican Arnold Bertram. The presentation was made last month when Marks and McDonnell discussed ways in which Jamaica and Virginia could strengthen ties.

## BRIEFS

### • J.C., Holmwood win Jamaica's 'Champs'

Jamaica College won the boys' section and Holmwood Technical took top honors in the girls' at the 2011 ISSA Boys and Girls Track and Field Championships in Jamaica.

The meet, which has gained worldwide recognition for producing outstanding Caribbean athletes, was keenly contested over four days. Jamaica College finished with 280 points, 11 ahead of rivals Kingston College. Holmwood, in winning its ninth consecutive title, totaled 326 points, six in front of Edwin Allen Comprehensive.

### • Maq T20 cricket final in Lauderhill

The final of the 10th Annual Lauderhill Maq T20 International Night Cricket Tournament will be

played at 5 p.m. on April 9 at the Lauderhill Sports Park in South Florida.

The Lauderhill Sports Park is located at 7500 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

For more information, call Cricket Council USA (CCUSA) at 561-361-1700 or visit [www.cricketcouncilusa.com](http://www.cricketcouncilusa.com).

### • Jamaica booted from U-20 soccer

Jamaica lost 2-1 to Honduras and was sent tumbling from the CONCACAF Under-20 soccer championship late last month.

The loss was Jamaica's second following a 2-0 defeat to Guatemala in the Young Reggae Boyz opening match a few days earlier. It eliminated Jamaica from the U-20 World Cup later this year. CARICOM neighbors Trinidad and

Tobago and Suriname were also eliminated.

*Compiled from various sources.*



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~ A Caribbean Today special feature

## Caribbean veterinary medicine school earns U.S. accreditation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A veterinary medical school in St. Kitts has become the first of several Caribbean-based veterinary programs to receive United States accreditation.

The Council on Education (COE), the accrediting arm of the American Veterinary Medical Association, made the decision after conducting a comprehensive site visit of Ross University Veterinary School.

The COE said the 200 or so students who graduate annually from the school will now sit for the same national and state board examinations posed to graduates of US-based veterinary medical programs.

Previously, Ross students had to pass one of two foreign graduate equivalency examinations as a first step toward attaining licensure in the U.S. About 95 percent of all Ross veterinary students are American.

“Most of our students come from the United States and go back there to practice,” said Jodi Peeler, spokeswoman for the program at Ross.

“Accreditation gives our students a sense of pride to know that they’re going through a great educational

program,” she added.

### OVERFLOW

Ross, along with other Caribbean-based veterinary medical programs - American University of Antigua, St. George’s University in Grenada and St. Matthew’s University in Grand Cayman - are widely believed to catch the overflow of U.S. veterinary school applicants who fail to secure a seat in one of the country’s 28 veterinary medical programs. Tuition for veterinary students at Ross is \$45,000 annually.

The veterinary programs at St. Matthew’s and St. George’s are not U.S. accredited, although officials at the latter school said they are actively seeking the distinction.

Ross veterinary school partners with 22 of the 28 U.S. veterinary programs to provide students with clinical training. Students at Ross attend classes in St. Kitts for 28 months before spending a little more than a year rotating through a veterinary teaching hospital in the U.S. Ross opened its veterinary school in 1982.



## MDC to unveil ‘Zometool’ math sculpture on April 15

The InterAmerican Campus (IAC) at Miami Dade College (MDC) plans to build the largest free-standing mathematics sculpture ever.

Participants hope to create a 10-foot-diameter Zometool structure. The finished structure will be unveiled at noon April 15 at the campus flag courtyard. It will remain on display through the end of the spring semester. Students, faculty and staff will construct the likeness of a complex four-dimensional object, called an omni-truncated 600-cell polyhedron, between April 8 and April 11. Assembling the model will involve piecing together more than 31,000 parts and will produce endless hours of dedication, fun and camaraderie.

The goal of this event is to heighten mathematics awareness and to allow students to explore the subject in

a fun and creative way.

“The 2011 Student Leadership Academy group has been implementing a variety of innovative events to help make math more approachable and exciting for our students,” said Dr. Gina Cortes-Suarez, president of MDC’s InterAmerican Campus, in a recent press release.

The project is taking place under the auspices of the Student Leadership Academy group led by mathematics professor Dr. Rosany Alvarez.

For more information, or to participate, call Dr. Alvarez at 305-237-6057 or visit [Rosany.Alvarez@mdc.edu](mailto:Rosany.Alvarez@mdc.edu). For more information about the structure, visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Zometool/130294201808#!/pages/Zometool/130294201808>.



## ‘DREAM’ SCHOLARSHIP



Miami Dade College President Dr. Eduardo Padrón, right, discusses the advantages of MDC’s recently announced American Dream Scholarship with guests attending the scholarship’s launch recently. The scholarship is aimed at expanding college access for students annually. The scholarship covers in-state tuition for two years for all Miami-Dade County high school graduates who qualify. It picks up where other aid and scholarships leave off, ensuring that qualified students have the means to continue their education. More information is available at [www.mdc.edu/main/americandream](http://www.mdc.edu/main/americandream).

Also pictured here, M-DCPS Superintendent Alberto Carvalho, City of Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado and MDC Board of Trustees member Marialena Villamil.

## Regional educator backtracks on condom in schools

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - Virginia Albert-Poyotte, regional educator and coordinator in the North America Caribbean region for Education International, appears to have changed her position on the controversial subject of distributing condoms in schools.

Following a teachers’ workshop in St. Lucia in January, Albert-Poyotte had said that the issue must be tackled since advocating that students exercise safe sex or abstinence could not be considered a guarantee.

“We are promoting abstinence for students as best as we can, but given the situation with our young people it is one thing to preach, but another thing to practice, and therefore we have to give them the alternative which is the use of

condoms,” she said then.

But in an interview published in the Nation Newspaper last month, Albert-Poyotte said she is against the distribution of condoms in schools.

“We want students to focus on their studies and their future and delay sexual activity until they are mature,” she said. “We strongly advocated abstinence among students. They are students and we don’t expect them to engage in sexual activities. We don’t expect them to act like adults.”

### BOLD, BRAZEN

However, Albert Poyotte said she is not under any misguided notions that all young people were abstaining. She said that there were some bold and brazen young people

who “let you know up front and to your face” that they are having sex.

She said that for these adventurous teens, the talk of the use of condoms as a preventative measure from contracting HIV/AIDS, guarding from sexually transmitted diseases, and teenage pregnancies must be broached.

“We as educators give the best knowledge,” she said. “I am fully aware that many of the youth may choose to be adventurous and may not decide to abstain from sexual activity. In discussions with students some say they do have sex. We can’t pretend it doesn’t happen.”

Albert-Poyotte has been a teacher for the last 32 years and is a past president of the St. Lucia Teachers’ Union.



## Obama to address graduates April 29 in Miami

MIAMI, Florida - More than 3,000 Miami Dade College (MDC) graduates are expected hear from the 44th president of the United States on April 29 when Barack Obama delivers the commencement address at the James L. Knight Center here.

The U.S. commander-in-chief is scheduled to speak at one of eight graduation ceremonies representing MDC’s eight campuses that weekend.

“We are extremely pleased

to have President Obama address our graduates as he has made college access and completion a central focus of his administration,” said MDC’s President Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón, in a recent press release.

Miami Dade College is the nation’s largest institution of higher education with an enrollment of more than 170,000 students. Some 1.7 million people have attended the college since it opened its

doors in 1960.

MDC enrolls students from 182 countries, many of them from the Caribbean. It also graduates more Hispanics and African Americans than any other higher education institution in the U.S.

The James L. Knight Center is located at 400 S.E. Second Ave. in downtown Miami.



~ A Caribbean Today special feature

## Miami Dade students chosen for first Youth Commission

Twenty-six students, joined by friends and family members, visited the Miami-Dade County Hall last month, but it was no ordinary field trip.

These high school students, ranging from ages 15 to 18, will be the new faces at Miami-Dade County Hall. Local leaders officially welcomed the group to the county's first Youth Commission.

The commission, conceived by Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, was developed to provide youngsters an opportunity to learn and participate in county government by articulating the issues and needs of youth in the community. In their new position, members of the Youth Commission will advise the mayor and commissioners on matters and programs affecting the youth and teen population. The Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department, under the umbrella of the County's Violence Intervention Project (VIP), has also been behind the initiative's implementation.

"The Youth Commission's insight will give us an insider's perspective on violence and

other issues our children face every day," said Commissioner Jordan.

"Miami-Dade has always provided programs we feel are in the best interests of local youth, but who better to comment on or tweak these programs and legislation than the students themselves?"

Each commissioner appointed a student representing each of the secondary schools in his or her district. The appointments were made based on nominations by Miami-Dade County Public Schools and an orientation process.

To be qualified, students had to be in the 10th, 11th or 12th grade, have a minimum 2.0 grade point average, demonstrate a sincere interest and motivation to work for the community, and have a background in community-based activities.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Youth Commission will include fostering increased youth involvement in county government, holding forums on issues concerning local youth, recommending community programs beneficial to



Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, center, with Marica Daniels, left, and Joy Ruby Fowler, Youth Commission members from her district.

youths, commenting on proposed legislation impacting youths, and submitting an annual report of activities to the County Commission and mayor.

Additionally, each member will meet with the official

## FYI

businesses showcasing products and services.

For more information, call 954-292-6848 or 954-435-4717.

### NEW VMBS CHAIRMAN

Michael McMorris has been named the new chairman of the Victoria Mutual



McMorris

Building Society's (VMBS) Board of Directors.

The former deputy chairman of the board succeeds Roy Hutchinson, who served as chairman for the past seven years.

McMorris is the principal of the business management firm KRONOS Ltd. He specializes in new venture development and corporate management. He has served

who appointed them each quarter to discuss teen and community issues. The Youth Commission will meet at the call of the chairperson or at the request of the majority of the membership, but no less than once a month.

The group will be subjected to the Government in the Sunshine and Public Records requirements. Members will serve one year terms, and can only serve two terms at most.



### HONORING SHAGGY

Jamaican entertainer Shaggy will be honored as the 2011 International Humanitarian by the American Friends of Jamaica, Inc. during the organization's Seventh Annual Peacock Soiree scheduled for **April 9** at Jungle Island in South Florida.

### AMBASSADOR'S VISIT

Audrey P. Marks is scheduled to make her first official visit to Florida as Jamaica's ambassador to the United States this month.

The Broward County Commission will welcome the ambassador at **10 a.m. April 12** in Room 422 of the Commission Chambers, 115 S. Andrews Ave. in Fort Lauderdale

### ENTREPRENEURIAL WORKSHOP

Potential business owners in Miami Dade County, Florida can take advantage of a free entrepreneurial workshop being organized by Miami Dade Small Business Education 2011 this month. The workshop will be given in English and Spanish from **5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. April 13** at Miami Dade College West in Doral.

For more information and registration, visit

[www.mdc.edu/smallbusiness](http://www.mdc.edu/smallbusiness) or contact call **305-237-8139**.

### TAX FILING HELP

Miami Dade College (MDC) is offering low-income, elderly, and non-English-speaking United States residents help to complete their 2010 taxes with the free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

The VITA program is administered and staffed by faculty and MDC business students who volunteer their time to help the public in preparing their tax forms.

Federal income tax returns must be in the mail and postmarked no later than April 18, 2011 (April 15 is a holiday in the District of Columbia).

To identify a South Florida location suitable to you, visit MDC's website at [www.mdc.edu](http://www.mdc.edu) and click on "News and Events".

### CARIBBEAN EXPRESSIONS

Unique Creations by Liz Inc will present the annual "Expressions of the Caribbean" from **3 p.m. to 9 p.m. April 27** at the Signature Grand hotel in Davie, Florida.

The exhibition will feature local and international

together established and emerging female leaders, achievers and women of action for events, workshops, panels, achievement awards, fashion and networking.

For more information, call **954-966-1233** or e-mail [woodielmg@gmail.com](mailto:woodielmg@gmail.com).

### JAMAICA EXPO

Products from the Caribbean will be on display at the "Jamaican Business Expo" scheduled for May 20-21 at the Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel in South Florida.

The expo will feature keynote speaker Joe Matalon, chairman of the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica.

For more information, call **877-528-7222** or **305-576-7888**.

### DIASPORA CONFAB

Jamaican nationals are being invited to return to the Caribbean island for the Jamaica Diaspora Conference **June 15 to 17** in Ocho Rios.

The theme for the conference is "One Nation: Jamaica and its Diaspora in Partnership".

For more information, call Jamaica Diaspora Advisory Board Member Marlon A. Hill at **786-349-2584**.



### WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The annual Women's Power Caucus (WPC) Leadership Conference and Marketplace Expo will be held **May 13-14** at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 Resort in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The WPC aims to bring

~ A Caribbean Today special feature

## Guyana launches new television station focusing on education

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC - Guyana has launched a dedicated educational television channel to expand access to academic and public education material.

President Bharrat Jagdeo, speaking recently at the launch of the Educational Television Broadcasting Service (ETBS), said that there would be no politics on the new channel that would produce local programming and acquire others from the Caribbean.

"We need at least one channel with a break from politics in this country and there will be absolutely no politics on this channel, none whatsoever," he said.

Officials intend to use ETBS to supplement class-

**"We don't want to import content with values that are alien to our culture. There are some universal values, before people get me wrong, but there are some in our Caribbean thinking, our Caribbean ethos that are unique to us and we want to maintain this" - Jagdeo**

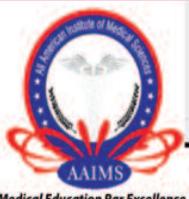
room teaching as well as cultures, phenomena and experiences in other countries without eroding the Guyanese and Caribbean identities.

"We don't want to import content with values that are alien to our culture," Jagdeo said. "There are some universal values, before people get me wrong, but there are some in our Caribbean thinking, our Caribbean ethos that are unique to us and we want to maintain this."

### TRAINING



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Government expects that ETBS will spawn a new creative industry that will see education content creators being paid for their works so that they can be broadcast.

The ETBS will help train thousands of poor and disadvantaged Guyanese in using the 90,000 laptops that will be distributed by government. With hundreds of trained and experienced teachers migrating each year to the Caribbean, North America and the United Kingdom, Jagdeo said ETBS would

allow unformed access to the best teaching regardless.

"The one leveling factor is what we are launching today here," he said. "It's not perfect but it will help to narrow that gap."

He said that ETBS would help bridge the gap between the elite schools and those in rural areas and south Georgetown. All three phases of the ETBS are expected to be rolled out by the end of July.



## U.S. founder of Caribbean medical institutions dies

NEW YORK – Robert Ross, the founder of Ross University and two other medical schools in the Caribbean, has died. He was 92.

Family members said Ross succumbed to cancer last month.

In 1978, Ross founded Ross University medical school in Dominica and sold it in 2000 to DeVry, Inc.

He also established the International University of Nursing and the University of Medicine and Health Sciences in St. Kitts.

Last month Ross's veterinary medical school in St. Kitts became the first of several Caribbean-based veterinary programs to receive United States accreditation.

Ross, along with other Caribbean-based veterinary medical programs - American University of Antigua, St. George's University in Grenada and St. Matthew's



Ross

University in Grand Cayman - are widely believed to catch the overflow of U.S. veterinary school applicants who fail to secure a seat in one of the country's 28 veterinary medical programs.



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