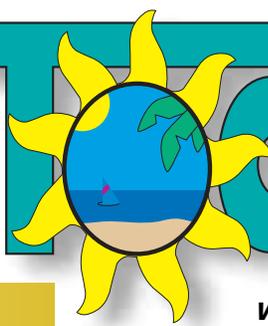


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THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



Grenadian-born Dr. Conrad Murray was sentenced to the maximum four years in prison after being found guilty for his role in the involuntary death of pop superstar Michael Jackson more than two years ago, page 2.



Dr. Susan Davis recently succeeded Marlon Hill as head of the Southern United

States Jamaican Diaspora Board. She is hoping to rally the Jamaican community in South Florida, especially the children, page 9.



Celine Dion will headline next month's three-day Jamaica Jazz and Blues festival. The Canadian-born singing sensation will be the closing act at the show, scheduled for Jan. 26-28 at The Greenfield Stadium in Trelawny, page 11.

E-DAY in JA

~ Prime Minister Andrew Holness, right, will lead the Jamaica Labour Party against Portia Simpson Miller and the People's National Party in Jamaica's general elections on Dec. 29, page 5.

~ United States authorities say that millions of dollars, tucked away by senior citizens for their retirement, are now ending up in the pockets of Jamaican crime syndicates, page 2.

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Grenadian-born doctor gets four years in prison for Michael Jackson's death

LOS ANGELES, California – Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor sentenced the Grenadian-born doctor of the late American superstar Michael Jackson to a maximum of four years in prison for the singer's involuntary death more than two years ago.

Pastor said a "series of decisions" made by Dr. Conrad Murray, who grew up in Trinidad, and "a cycle of horrible medicine" resulted in Jackson's death on June 25, 2009.

"The lies, the deceit began and continued to build up an astounding set of circumstances," said the judge, scolding Murray for audio taping Jackson in his final days.

"That tape recording was Dr. Murray's insurance policy. It was designed to record (Jackson) at that patient's

most vulnerable point," he said.

Murray refused to address the judge before he was sentenced, only letting his lawyer speak for him.

Under a new California law targeting prison overcrowding, non-violent felons, like Murray, 58, have to be sent to local lockups rather than state prison.

With Los Angeles County jails also bursting at the seams, Sheriff Lee Baca has been forced to let inmates go free after doing about 10 percent of their sentenced time, officials said. Jailers also have the option of letting Murray serve the remainder of his term under house arrest.



Murray

Murray could be released from state prison sometime in early March.

Court officials said the clock on Murray's time behind bars began ticking the moment he was convicted of involuntary manslaughter and the judge ordered him into custody with no bail.

NO 'REVENGE'

Brian Panish, a lawyer for the Jackson family, read a victim impact statement before the judge imposed the sentence.

"We're not here to seek revenge. There is nothing you can do today that will bring Michael back," he said.

Panish said the family was seeking justice and that the judge needed to impose a stiff sentence because doctors "cannot sell their service to the highest bidder and cast aside their Hippocratic oath to do harm."

Panish represents Jackson family matriarch Katherine and the pop singer's three kids



Jackson

a crime in his life.

Murray was convicted early last month after a trial in which prosecutors successfully argued that his reckless use of the surgical anesthetic propofol to help Jackson sleep, without proper monitoring equipment, led to the singer's death.

Prosecutors on Nov. 29 asked the judge for the maximum four years behind bars, and for Murray to pay Jackson's children more than \$100 million in restitution. Defense lawyers requested probation.

In a sentencing memo filed with the judge last month, prosecutors said Murray has "displayed a complete lack of remorse" about Jackson's death, and is, "even worse, failing to accept even the slightest level of responsibility."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Trinidadian faces lengthy jail sentence after N.Y. jury finds him guilty of rape, perjury

NEW YORK - A jury here last month found the Trinidadian-born, ex-boyfriend of a Guyanese-born woman guilty of more than 10 charges, including rape, perjury and conspiracy.

The jury agreed with Seemona Sumasar, 36, who said she was raped by Jerry Ramrattan, 39, who then framed her for a series of armed robberies that never took place.

Ramrattan faces more than 25 years in prison when he is sentenced on Jan. 4, prosecutors here said.

Using knowledge he gleaned partly from watching television crime dramas, prosecutors said Ramrattan, a private detective in Queens, orchestrated the most complex and diabolical frame-up in New York in recent memory.

For Sumasar, the verdict, following a day and a half of deliberation by the jury, brought vindication after a nightmarish experience that had transformed her from rape victim to criminal.

"Now that this is over, I can start my life again," she told reporters after the verdict.

"Last year, I spent

Thanksgiving inside a jail cell. Jerry told so many lies, and I was imprisoned because authorities had decided to believe him. But I am not bitter. The truth won out in the end," she added.

PLOT

Prosecutors said that Ramrattan hatched the scheme after Sumasar, a former restaurant owner and analyst with the Wall Street brokerage firm, Morgan Stanley, refused to drop rape charges against him. They said he intimidated and cajoled false witnesses into telling the authorities that she had dressed as a police officer and robbed them at gunpoint.

While jailed for seven months, until last December, Sumasar was separated from her young daughter. She lost her restaurant, and her house in Far Rockaway, Queens, went into foreclosure. Her bail was set at \$1 million, which she could not afford.

Meanwhile, Ramrattan walked free until an informer came forward and exposed his ruse, prosecutors said.

Legal experts said the case

was a cautionary tale of how tunnel vision could infect law enforcement officials, in some cases pushing them to wrongly punish the innocent. Prosecutors insisted that few could have seen Ramrattan's "sinister plot".

'COMPLEX WEB'

Frank DeGaetano, an assistant district attorney and the prosecutor in Ramrattan's case, alluded to the scale and brutality of his crimes.

"Jerry Ramrattan created a complex web to ensnare Seemona," he told jurors, adding "he is unique: who goes to such extremes to destroy a person."

But Ramrattan's lawyer Frank Kelly, whose request for a mistrial, on the grounds that prosecutors did not hand over vital documents, was refused, said he would appeal. During his summation, he accused prosecutors of relying on "a bunch of liars, thieves and manipulators" to make their case.

The nearly month-long trial offered two narratives that were difficult to reconcile. Prosecutors portrayed Sumasar as a single mother charmed by a "wily confidence man who ruined her life". But the defense presented Sumasar as a "scorned woman" who falsely accused her ex-boyfriend of rape because their relationship had soured.

Members of the jury said the guilty verdict hinged on their belief that Ramrattan had raped Sumasar, giving him a motive to set his plot in motion. They said the defense's argument had seemed to be a smoke screen.



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Jamaicans swindle millions from American seniors ~ U.S. authorities

~ Gangs battle for cash; money used to buy guns, drugs, flashy cars

NELSON A. KING

MIAMI, Florida – United States authorities say that millions of dollars, tucked away by senior citizens for their retirement, are now ending up in the pockets of Jamaican crime syndicates.

“It is a plague,” said U.S. Postal Inspector Bladimir Rojo, adding “when word-of-mouth spreads of free money, there is no way to put it out.”

Rojo told reporters here late last month that lottery frauds, based in Jamaica, have exploded in popularity, with estimates that as much as \$300 million will be bilked from U.S. residents, largely the elderly, this year alone. He said proceeds from the alleged swindles are used to buy guns, drugs and flashy cars in Jamaica, with gang members sometimes fighting and dying



U.S. clamping down on schemes to rip off American elderly.

erly, this year alone. He said proceeds from the alleged swindles are used to buy guns, drugs and flashy cars in Jamaica, with gang members sometimes fighting and dying

over the illicit cash.

Rojo said during November alone, he received separate complaints involving senior citizens in Fort Lauderdale and Aventura, who each lost more than \$50,000 to Jamaican-based lottery scams.

Authorities say victims of the frauds have lost homes, maxed out their credit cards and sometimes become targets of physical threats.

SCAM

While there are variations of the scam, the essence is always the same: Victims are informed they have won prizes or money, but to claim their winnings, they need to wire money to cover fees or taxes,

Rojo said. He said once victims send money, the telemarketers press them to send more. In extreme cases, authorities say, victims have ended up losing more than \$500,000.

Rojo said the telemarketers often disguise their phone numbers to make it look like they are calling from somewhere in the U.S. He said sometimes the fraudsters ask for the money to be wired directly to Jamaica; while, at other times, they use middlemen in the U.S., or they persuade other victims to act as intermediaries.

Complaints regarding Jamaica-based scams have more than doubled in each of the last four years, skyrocket-

ing from 1,867 in 2007 to 21,342 in 2010, according to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission.

Law enforcement officials fear the reported complaints may represent only a fraction of the true number of victims.

TASK FORCE

The U.S. immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency said it unveiled a task force in May 2009 with the Jamaican Constabulary Force, the nation's police agency, to combat the scams. Project JOLT (Jamaican Operations Linked to Telemarketing) was modeled after a similar effort

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

T&T's High Court stops extradition of two businessmen wanted in U.S.

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC – High Court Judge Ronnie Boodoosingh has stayed the extradition of businessmen Ishwar Galbaransingh and Steve Ferguson to the United States where they face a number of charges relating the multi-million dollar redevelopment of the Piarco International Airport here.

Galbaransingh faces 13 charges, among them wire fraud, conspiracy to launder money and engaging in unlawful transactions; while Ferguson faces a total of 82 charges, which include wire fraud and conspiracy to laun-

der money. The offences are alleged to have occurred in the U.S., Trinidad and Tobago, The Bahamas and elsewhere between Sept. 1, 1996 and Dec. 31, 2005.

The businessmen, financiers of the ruling United National Congress (UNC), had been fighting their extradition on the basis that the courts here were the competent authorities to hear their matters. In a 57-page ruling early last month, Justice Boodoosingh said that any move to have Galbaransingh and Ferguson extradited would be “unjust, oppressive

and unlawful.”

He said the lengthy proceedings against the businessmen have generated much public interest and comment and that in coming to a decision he took into consideration all the facts presented and the law.

Justice Boodoosingh ruled that T&T is the right forum where the two businessmen would face trial, adding that he was quashing the Oct. 9, 2010 decision of Attorney General Anand Ramlogan to sign their order of extradition.



U.S. reviewing Caribbean deportation cases

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Department of Homeland Security has started a review of all deportation cases before the immigration courts and a nationwide training program for enforcement agents and prosecuting lawyers.

Officials last month said the goal is to speed up deportations of convicted Caribbean and other criminals and halt those of many illegal immigrants with no criminal record.

The accelerated triage of the court docket - about 300,000 cases - is intended to allow severely overburdened immigration judges to focus on deporting foreigners who committed serious crimes or pose national security risks, Homeland Security officials said.

Taken together, the review and the training, which will instruct immigration agents on closing deportations that fall outside the department's priorities, are designed to bring sweeping changes to the immi-

gration courts and to enforcement strategies of field agents nationwide.

GUIDELINES

Homeland Security officials were expected to issue guidelines to begin the training program and the first stages of the court case-load review.

Both are efforts to put into practice a policy senior officials had announced in June, to encourage immigration agents to use prosecutorial discretion when deciding whether to pursue a deportation.

The policy, described in a June 17 memorandum by John Morton, the director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), suggested that the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama would scale back deportations



Napolitano

of illegal Caribbean and other immigrants who were young students, military service members, elderly people or close family of American citizens, among others.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Morton said they wanted agents and courts to focus on deporting the worst offenders, including national security risks, criminal convicts and those who repeatedly violate immigration laws.

Many immigration offenses, including being present in the U.S. without legal status, are civil violations. They are not crimes.

Central to the plan is giving more power to immigration agency lawyers - the equivalent of prosecutors in the federal court system - to decide which deportation cases to press, officials said.

- Edited from CMC.



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WARNING: Caribbean could become new drug route, says U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A United States government official has warned that pressure from the U.S. and Mexican law enforcement could make the Caribbean a drug trafficking hub again.

If that happens, it could repeat the interdiction problems experienced in the 1970s and 1980s, according to the official, who's with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

Speaking on condition

that he cannot be quoted by name, the official told reporters here late last month that his department and other federal law enforcement agencies are eyeing Caribbean nations - like Haiti and the Dominican Republic - as the "next logical" step for cocaine producers to use as the "middleman" to get goods into the U.S., and also to countries in Europe and western Africa.

"If history holds true, the next logical place will be the Caribbean and places like

Hispaniola (the island that comprises Haiti and the Dominican Republic)," the official said.

He referred to the prediction as the "cockroach effect" – apply enough pressure in one place, and smugglers and cartels move their operations somewhere else.

'JUMPING POINT'

Officials say since the U.S. has focused much of its enforcement efforts on Mexico, the cartels have moved their operations south

to Central America. The U.S. has followed by giving aid to Central American anti-drug operations, which they hope will squeeze the cartels out of those countries, the State Department official said.

U.S. officials say they expect cocaine exporters in countries like Colombia and Venezuela to look to the Caribbean as a "jumping off point" to transship their drugs to the U.S.

However, the State Department official said he

does not anticipate South Florida to be the gateway for most of these illegal drugs to enter the country. The official also said the U.S. is working with Caribbean governments in anticipation of the cartels making a shift and much of that effort will be "professionalizing" police forces in the region, and teaching prosecutors how to convict members of drug gangs.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaicans swindle millions from American seniors ~ U.S. authorities

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

established more than a decade ago to curb telemarketing fraud from Canada.

Carmen Pino, ICE assis-

tant special agent in charge of South Florida, said in the last three years U.S. and Jamaican authorities have launched 389 investigations, arrested 111

people in Jamaica and the U.S., and seized \$1.13 million in assets. In addition, she said \$251,000 has been returned to U.S. victims.

"This is organized crime, not just one or two people getting together," Pino said. "These are major criminal syndicates that are deeply entrenched in all sorts of criminal activity, and one of those is telemarketing."

Pino said in September U.S. and Jamaican authorities raided 12 locations and arrested 14 people in Montego Bay, the alleged hotbed for the lottery fraud in Jamaica. She also said four Jamaican men living in Pennsylvania were arrested

in October, accused of convincing a Kansas man to give them \$25,000 to secure his winnings in the "Mega Million Lottery".

Pino said a Deerfield Beach, South Florida, a man was arrested on Nov. 19 outside his apartment as he waited for a package containing \$9,000 in cash sent by an 88-year-old Kansas man who had been told he had won a \$1 million sweepstakes. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service said Trevor Charles Dolphy, 23, admitted that he was collecting the money for a friend nicknamed "Evil" from Montego Bay.

Law enforcement officials

say there is a simple rule to remember when it comes to phone calls or mailings involving lotteries.

"If someone tells you that you have won a bunch of money, and they need you to pay any money for any reason, it's a fraud," said C. Steven Baker, director of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's Midwest Region.

Baker said nearly 40 percent of reported victims of lottery scams last year were over the age of 70.



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Grenadian-born doctor gets four years in prison for Michael Jackson's death

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

But Murray's lawyers, in their sentencing memo, included a biography of Murray, describing him as "a self-made man of humble origins," who paid his own way through medical school without scholarships or family funds.

"He was raised in a home that lacked indoor plumbing or electricity, and he walked to school barefoot for his first couple years of school," the defense said.

"Dr. Murray wishes to make it un-mistakenly clear to everyone that he deeply mourns the loss of Michael Jackson's life, and he profoundly regrets any mistakes or oversights on his part that may have contributed to it," the defense said.

"Dr. Murray has been described as a changed, grief-stricken man, who walks around under a pall of sadness since the loss of his patient, Mr. Jackson," the defense added.

The defense memo included a letter from Murray's eld-

erly mother Milta Rush.

"I sympathize with Mrs. Jackson as a mother", she wrote. "I sense she was very close to her son. I really wanted to approach her personally and tell her I am sorry for the loss of her son, but I was unsure if she would be receptive, and I did not want to take the chance of violating court rules. I am sorry for all her loss".

- Edited from CMC.





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P.M. Holness names Dec. 29 date for Jamaica's general elections

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Jamaicans will go to the polls on Dec. 29 to elect a new government in the 16th general elections since the island attained Universal Adult Suffrage in 1944.

On Dec. 4 Prime Minister Andrew Holness, 39, who took over the government from Bruce Golding in late October, told supporters of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) at a rally in Mandeville Square that Nomination Day will be Dec. 12.

Political observers say Prime Minister Holness chose Mandeville to announce the date as the JLP wants to give its candidate Danville Walker, the former director of elections a boost when he goes up against the Opposition People's National Party's (PNP) General Secretary Peter Bunting in the con-

stituency of Manchester Central,

It will be the third general elections in a Caribbean community (CARICOM) country in just over a one month period following the historic votes in Guyana and St. Lucia on Nov. 28.

The polls here were not unexpected as political observers had indicated that Holness, the youngest ever person to lead a government here, would seek his own mandate.

In the 2007 general elections, the JLP won 32 out of the 60 seats with the remainder going to the PNP headed by former Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller. The PNP had been indicating it is prepared for an early poll and had been calling on Holness to name the date.

The PNP has won eight

contested elections since 1944, while the JLP has been successful in seven, including the PNP-boycotted poll of 1983.

Both major political parties will field candidates in all 63 seats.

In his address to party supporters, Holness said that the JLP government has come too far to be denied the chance to continue for a second term.

"I have never seen the party base so energized," he said, noting that the government has steered the country through troubled times.

"We managed this econo-



Holness

my in the worst economic recession and we did not lose any jobs," Holness said, adding that the JLP would be targeting the many uncommit-

ted voters in the country in order to secure a second consecutive term.



CARAH honors Caribbean Americans for service

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Eight natives of the region were singled out by the Institute of Caribbean Studies (ICS) for top honors at its 18th Annual Caribbean Heritage (CARAH) Awards held here last month.

Jamaicans Reverend Neville Callam, Janet Rollé and Garth Fagan were honored for their extraordinary contributions in the fields of religion, business and art, respectively.

Rollé, an international media strategist who is also executive vice president and chief marketing officer of CNN worldwide, received the "Trailblazer Award" for her innovative ideas and strategy in communications and marketing.

Fagan, a choreographer and dancer who founded the Rochester, New York-based Garth Fagan Dance company, received the ICS's "Marcus Garvey Lifetime Achievement Award" for outstanding achievement in dance and for choreographing the internationally acclaimed "Lion King" Broadway production.

Rev. Callam, general secretary of the World Baptist Alliance, received the "Luminary Award" for his work in media and religion.

Other Caribbean personalities honored by the ICS this year were Maryse Condé of Guadeloupe, presented with the "Award for Excellence in Literature"; Dr. Frank L. Douglas of Guyana received the "Trail Blazer Award" for

his work in medical science; Hazelle Goodman of Trinidad and Tobago accepted the "Award for Excellence in the Arts"; Dr. Arlie Petters of Belize was presented the "Award for Excellence in Science and Technology"; and Larry Quinlan, chief information officer for Deloitte LLP, who received the "Award for Outstanding Contribution to Corporate America".

In presenting Fagan his award, Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States Audrey P. Marks noted how his name had become synonymous with the highest standard and accomplishments in the arts, especially in dance.

- Edited from JIS.



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Anthony returns as St. Lucia's prime minister

ERNIE SEON

CASTRIES, St. Lucia, CMC - Leader of the victorious St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP) Dr. Kenny Anthony has been sworn in as the country's 10th prime minister following the Nov. 28 general elections in which his party won 10 of the 17 seats in Parliament.

Anthony, 60, took his oath of office on Nov. 30 at Government House before Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy and a small circle of relatives and friends, ahead of the rest of his Cabinet as the final count of voting had not yet been completed at the time of the ceremony.

An emotional Anthony thanked St. Lucians for their trust and confidence, saying "I promise to do my best to



Anthony

honor that trust and confidence which the country has placed in me."

will be capable of managing the affairs of the island alone.

Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Stephenson King congratulated the SLP for its victory and said he hoped the divisions that had emerged during the campaign would soon be a matter of the past.

On Nov. 30 the Electoral Department confirmed that while the results of only 15 of the 19 constituencies had been declared, the focus of the recount was on two constituencies,

namely Gros Islet in the north and Babonneau in the north east, where, in each case, the defeated candidate lost by less than 20 votes.



Anthony, who held the post of prime minister here between 1996 and 2006, again warned that the country faced a difficult road ahead and that no single political party here

'Unprecedented challenges' mark B'dos's Independence

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC - Barbados celebrated 45 years of political Independence from Britain with government acknowledging the "unprecedented" global challenges in which the country now finds itself having to survive.

Prime Minister Freundel Stuart said that the Nov. 30 Independence anniversary came in a year when Barbados marks the 360th anniversary of the signing of the Charter of Barbados in 1652. He said the signing of that Charter climaxed "our first attempt to declare ourselves independent only 25 years after the English had settled this island."

According to Stuart, the world in which Barbados has to do its business continues to be "beset by challenges social,

political, and economic which are both unprecedented in scope and startling in reversion."

The prime minister said that in all of this, the most powerful country in the world, the United States continues to be be-devilled by debt, deficit and unemployment, adding "it is tempting, is it not, to ask, 'is there no good news anywhere?'"

DAUNTING

Stuart said that Barbados, with a services economy, propelled largely by tourism, international business and foreign capital inflows, have not been left unaffected by the global situation. He said faced with these daunting challenges, the pride and industry of

Barbadians have not faltered.

"Ours has always been a pride that makes no wanton boast of what it has withstood," he said.

But Stuart said that the outlook for the world economy in the year 2012 is not bright. He said as head of the government, he has accepted that his administration must set both the tone and the example in any meaningful national response.

The Independence anniversary was celebrated with several activities, including the traditional military parade. The U.S. also sent its congratulations.

- Edited from CMC.



T&T uncovers plot to assassinate P.M.

National Security adviser Gary Griffith has confirmed that local law enforcement authorities uncovered a plot to assassinate Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar and three senior government ministers.

Appearing on television, Griffith last month told viewers that the authorities uncovered the plot "based on a confirmed threat to our nation's security."

Griffith told television viewers "...that whatever plan was afoot, the law enforcement agencies are in full control of the situation."

Media reports indicated that apart from Persad Bissessar, the alleged plot also involved the assassination of Attorney General Anand Ramlogan and Foreign Affairs

and Information Minister Suruj Rambachan.

Griffith confirmed that security had been beefed up around the ministers.

Persad Bissessar said the plot to assassinate her and senior members of her Cabinet was not unexpected since the introduction of a state of emergency (SOE) on Aug. 21 had forced the criminal elements in T&T to seek reprisals.

DETAINED

Police Commissioner Wayne Gibbs said that at least a dozen people had been detained for questioning in connection with the plot. Gibbs confirmed that among those detained were former members of the protective services in T&T.

"We have put plans in place to counter what we know and we have worked again very hard to ensure the safety of everyone in Trinidad and Tobago," said Gibbs.

News of the alleged plot has received attention in the United States. Caribbean American Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke said she is "grateful" that law enforcement officials in T&T had uncovered the plot.

"I encourage security officials in Trinidad and Tobago to remain vigilant," said Clarke, who represents the 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn, New York.

- Compiled from CMC reports.



PPP/C retains power in Guyana, Ramator elected new president

GEORGETOWN, Guyana - Donald Ramotar is Guyana's new president and the incumbent People's Progressive Party/Civic has secured its fifth successive term in office.

That became clear after the final results of the country's Nov. 28 general elections were declared by Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) on Dec. 1.

Ramator, 61, was elected president after the results showed the incumbent People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) had retained power. GECOM said the PPP/C won 32 seats, APNU 26, and the AFC seven, giving the incumbent a minority government with an Opposition-controlled majority in the Parliament, a first in Guyana.

The new president, who replaces outgoing Bharrat Jagdeo, has since met with presidential candidates of the failed A



Ramator

Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and the Alliance for Change (AFC) to discuss "issues of interest to the people of Guyana", according to a joint statement issued here. Retired Brigadier David Granger, the APNU candidate, and the AFC's Khemraj Ramjattan reportedly attended the meeting.

- Compiled from CMC reports.



Controversy forces Jamaica's transport minister to resign

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - Transport and Works Minister Mike Henry has resigned with immediate effect.

In a statement issued on Nov. 29, Henry said that his resignation follows the ongoing controversy surrounding the troubled \$400 million Jamaica Development Infrastructure Programme (JDIP), which is continuing "despite the prime minister and I having acted to address the issue."

"There is nothing to hide about my stewardship of the JDIP, which is very important to the country, and I look forward to the conclusion of the ongoing investigations," Henry said.

In his statement, Henry thanked the persons who supported him over the years in which he served in the

Auditor General Pamela Monroe Ellis had tabled a special report...in which she stated that the Ministry of Transport and Works, the NWA and the Road Maintenance Fund had not executed the program in a transparent manner.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness had taken temporarily responsibilities for the JDIP, for which China has provided funding through the Export Import (EXIM) Bank of China. This funding is for a program of works to be effected island-wide, on roads and road fix-

tures, such as bridges, drains and traffic systems.

Earlier, Henry had dismissed allegations from the main Opposition People's National Party (PNP) that



Henry

important computer files relating to the JDIP had gone missing from the National Works Agency (NWA).

Auditor General Pamela Monroe Ellis had tabled a special report on the program in Parliament on Nov. 15, in which she stated that the Ministry of

Transport and Works, the NWA and the Road Maintenance Fund had not executed the program in a transparent manner. The issue was raised on Nov. 29 at Parliament's Public Accounts Committee.



DIASPORA DILEMMA: Will new leadership bring change to Jamaica?

DAWN A. DAVIS

The recent changing of the guard at the highest level of government in Jamaica – with further possible changes on the horizon as the country awaits elections – has sparked debate among Jamaicans at home and in the diaspora.

The Oct. 23 swearing in of Andrew Holness, the youngest prime minister ever in Jamaica's history is the "second" of two "firsts" for the country. Bruce Golding's resignation as the country's leader led the double billing as no prime minister had ever had to walk away from the job, especially with the political and social upheaval left in his wake.

With general elections due soon, Prime Minister Holness, in his inaugural speech, spoke about ending garrison politics, violence and corruption, among the major problems plaguing the country. The 39-year old P.M. has youth on his side, but some question his readiness for the job to lead Jamaica through needed transformation.

"I do not believe that Mr. Holness represents a change of leadership," said Jamaican-born criminal defense attorney David Rowe, who teaches Caribbean law at the University of Miami in the United States.



Rowe

"...Since his selection as prime minister, he has not given any indication of new policies. I am cautious at this point. I think he has made one good statement, which is that he wishes to dismantle the garrison constituencies. But he has not really published a methodology that he wishes to use to terminate or to somehow avoid violent hostility in certain urban political constituencies.

"...What I am worried about, there are already suggestions (Holness) is very close to a number of the power brokers in the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) who have been linked to corruption in the past...I think he needs to disconnect himself from the old party bosses."

Rowe's caution is echoed elsewhere in the Jamaican diaspora in the U.S. Doubt over whether Jamaica is primed for change under Holness's leadership has emerged.

"I think the fact that he is so young is a problem because I don't think that he has had time to formulate his own voice," said Rachel Henriques,

a Jamaican-born artist based in Fort Lauderdale.

"I think he is going to be very impressionable. Where is the change? The people didn't vote him in. He was appointed by somebody who was already in power. The people didn't have a choice.

Henriques likened the current excitement in Jamaica over Holness's ascendancy to the election of U.S. President Barack Obama. But she insists that there has been no change in the U.S., convinced Jamaica will remain the same under this new leader.

"This is just the beginning of another vicious circle of the JLP," she said. "I think Holness will be a puppet...the same bull... is going to continue."

EXPERIENCE

Many have said they do not know enough about Holness – his political experience – to make an assessment. Minister of education since 2007, he first came to politics in 1997 serving as JLP Member of Parliament for West Central Andrew. But, it may have been his first encounter with former JLP Leader Edward Seaga that inspired his higher political aspirations. According to the Government of Jamaica website, Holness worked with Seaga as his personal assistant in 1995 focusing on poverty reduction and social welfare strategy for the JLP. Hence, the notion that he was a protégé of Seaga, and indeed of other senior party members.

Holness can be said to come from modest beginnings. His father is a farmer, his mother a civil servant. With a bachelor's degree in management studies and a master's in development studies from the University of the West Indies, Holness easily made his way into the public sector. What he will do now that he is at the top of the political ladder, according to some Jamaicans like Errol Harvey, a Pembroke Pines resident and owner of a small business in Jamaica, is still unclear.

"From my research (Holness) was being nurtured by the same party that he now



Golding and Holness

leads," Harvey explained. "It raises lots of eyebrows now. He is from the same old mold. So, we have to watch and wait to see if he is going to play the same old time game."

Yet while leading a country

like Jamaica is a challenging role, Harvey is hopeful Holness will gain the necessary experience once he is thrust into the day-to-day operations. Still, he questioned the mechanism used to appoint the new prime

minister.

"What is striking is why was he selected over all the others who had more experience," said Harvey.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)



Henriques



Harvey

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DIASPORA DILEMMA: Will new leadership bring change to Jamaica?

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

"Seeing that Bruce Golding pretty much handed the mantle to him is interesting. The normal electoral procedure was bypassed and I question that."

Harvey blasted the JLP for the corruption that has plagued the JLP for so many years, yet praised Golding for making the move that could possibly help the country forward.

"I think (Golding) had to resign because he saw where his credibility had slipped so much because of the whole Dudus affair," said Harvey, "the deteriorating economy, and of course crime and violence. He did his party the greatest favor by stepping down and setting up a back door deal with the young, energetic Mr. Holness."

However, a Jamaican-born professor of Caribbean literature at a South Florida-based university, who wished to remain anonymous, does not share Harvey's optimism.

"As far as I am concerned the Golding administration had a deadly combination of arrogance coupled with ignorance," she said.

Christopher "Dudus" Coke, the infamous "Shower Posse" gang leader and informal leader - or "don" - of the Tivoli Gardens community in West Kingston was wanted by the U.S. government for drug trafficking. An extradition request for Coke in Aug. 2009 stumbled when Golding

ignored the order, stating there was insufficient evidence to hand over the wanted man, and arguing the order possibly violated Jamaica's constitution. As a result, there were allegations of links between the JLP and organized crime.

After months of stalemate, the U.S. efforts and the emergence of suspicion that the JLP had enlisted the services of a U.S. legal firm to lobby against the extradition, Coke was finally caught, arrested and extradited in June 2010. The resulting violence that erupted between the police and the people of Tivoli, as they fought for Coke's release, left more than 70 people dead.

Jamaica's criminal activities, perceived political connection and corruption, and the volatility of garrison (gang strongholds) areas ruled by "donmanship" came into sharp focus internationally. The Jamaican people also lost faith in the government. A Gleaner newspaper-commissioned poll in June 2010 revealed only 12 percent believed Golding was truthful in his statements to the commission set up to investigate the series of events.

Rowe also voiced concern. "I would have been more comfortable with Mr. Holness had he taken a position against Christopher Coke when he was minister of education in the JLP Cabinet under Bruce Golding," he said. "Then I would have felt that his commitment to the dismantling of

garrison politics is more genuine."

NO CHANGE

However, the relationship between the U.S. and Jamaica is unlikely to change with Holness in charge, according to U.S. Congressman Alcee Hastings.

"I see a very strong link (with the U.S.)," Hastings explained.

But the congressman is concerned about crime in Jamaica.

"You can't have good hospitality and tourism if people are afraid," said Hastings.

Murders in Jamaica have declined 25 percent this year, in addition to decreases in major crimes overall, according to the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) website. That's attributed to a 50 percent increase in "policing activities".

This positive trend was not always the case. Jamaica's political violence began in earnest just before the national elections of 1976, when bloody war between supporters of the JLP and PNP reached unprecedented levels. The PNP, led by Michael Manley, won that year. The 1980 elections, which elected Seaga as prime minister, were worse (about 800 people killed), drawing lines of demar-



Hastings

cation in communities underscoring and bolstering garrison politics.

The country has since been marred by gun-toting gangs associated with certain neighborhoods and party affiliation. Many of these communities are characterized by poverty and unemployment. The added criminal activities deepen the scars.

YOUTH EFFECT

But crime and violence have been a scourge under both PNP and JLP administrations. So, can the new prime minister reverse Jamaica's historical crime statistics and maintain it? According to Harvey and Rowe crime and garrison politics are a direct result of the high unemployment rate among the youth. Broward County Commissioner Dale Holness, a Jamaican, believes the youth could be the answer for the Caribbean island.

"There is new energy," he said. "There is a vibrancy that never existed before. More than half the people in Jamaica are under 24 years old. So, unless we tap into this vast youthful energy, we are gonna have problems, because they will feel left out and locked out. This is an opportunity for Jamaica to embrace this new energy, this new leadership."

But author and philanthropist Dr. Cornell Simms, a Jamaican based in the city of Sunrise, Florida, warned about the euphoria around the new young prime minister.



Dale Holness

"Although I believe that youth leadership can be very powerful, we need competent leadership, and I will take competence any day over mere youthfulness," he said. "...Will (Holness) have foreign policy clout? Will he be respected on the global stage? Jamaica often gets caught up in euphoric waves; now it is youth leadership. I think we have to ask the serious questions about who is representing us, what do they offer."

Omahar Stephenson, Florida ambassador of commerce for Jamaica, also questioned the new P.M.'s experience.

"I would have loved to have seen Prime Minister Holness maybe serve four or five years as deputy prime minister, get some more international experience and come back around 44 to 45 years of age," Jamaican-born Stephenson explained. "Having

said that, we are there now and it excites the general conversation in Jamaica."

It cannot be business as usual.

"If it doesn't change, it will be a short prime ministership for Prime Minister Holness," Stephenson added.

The bottom line, according to Simms, is "we need a leader who has moral integrity. We need a leader who can think beyond the scope of partisan politics."

Will Holness be prime minister after soon-to-be held elections in Jamaica, where he is up against the Portia Simpson Miller-led PNP? It's certainly not a shoo-in.

"I think that this election is going to be very close, either result is possible," said Rowe.

Change, if any, will come after that.

Dawn A. Davis is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Simms

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Jamaican diaspora gets new voice

Dr. Susan Davis, professor in the School of Education at Nova Southeastern University and a performance artiste, recently succeeded attorney Marlon Hill as head of the Southern United States Jamaican Diaspora Board. She recently discussed her mission to engage and energize the Jamaican diaspora with *Caribbean Today* freelance writer Dawn A. Davis. The following is an edited version of that interview:



Davis

Caribbean Today: What are your plans to move the Jamaican diaspora movement forward?

Susan Davis: Answering the question, who is the diaspora, that is going to be my key area of concentration. I want people to know that it is us, it is you and me. Once you bring awareness and let people know it is not an elitist club, it is not a committee, then I want to foster engagement. If people become aware they will be more engaged in what we do and begin to own it. Once I have that, the next thing is to start generating some funds. One of the reasons people don't know who we are is because we lack the funds to advertise, to market ourselves.

C.T.: Will you initiate a membership fee to help generate funds?

S.D.: No. If you start a membership fee it will feel more like a club and alienate some. I am about inclusion. I don't want anything that is going to divide. What about the person that cannot afford to pay? I want to work with the farm worker from Belle Glade to the professional in Parkland. There is room for everybody. What I want to do is collaborate with organizations like the alumni associations, the cham-

bers, and so on. If they are having an event we can collaborate with them and share in the rewards.

C.T.: Specifically, what are some of the events/initiatives you would undertake to bring the diaspora together?

S.D.: As an artiste, I would like to be able to produce cultural events while also focusing on heritage and education, especially among the young people. One of the things I am hoping to do is stage a "penny concert" just like the ones we had in Jamaica in the past. Of course, it would be a "dollar concert". But something like that would bring us together under one cultural voice.

C.T.: One of the challenges of the diaspora movement has been engaging the youth. Do have any strategies to attract and engage young people?

S.D.: I want to reach our children. I want to go into the schools that have Caribbean clubs, look at the models and introduce it to other institutions. I want to work with them culturally, educationally, professionally so that they know we are here for them. And at some point, we can look at an exchange program where young people from here and Jamaica can spend time in each other's homes and learn about the respective cultures. It would be great for the youth here to experience "Champs" in Jamaica, things like that.

C.T.: How will you dispel the feeling that the diaspora movement is an arm of the Jamaica government?

S.D.: The definition of diaspora is those that have left their homeland. So, the movement is about having representatives abroad that can bring us all together. I don't see it as a political thing. We don't answer to the government. I want to dispel that idea because it is not who we are.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

Desperate times demand desperate measures

A young lady told me recently that "women got easy and men got lazy...and it's a shame."

That's so true, for most men will tell you that it's easier to get women nowadays than in the past, and as a result, men don't try as hard.

But still, there are women who can't seem to get a man, for whatever reason...but they hope.

It's no joke for some women, as there are so many who live their lives longing and hoping for someone to share it with. When this doesn't happen and hope diminishes, that's when they become desperate. And desperate times call for desperate measures.

Usually it's when time creeps up that desperation sets in, and people deal with this in different ways. I recently read an article written by a female friend titled "Story of my Life" that piqued my interest. So much so that I had to pick up my phone and give her an urgent call.

"Sharon...your article...was it fact or fiction?"

The "Story of my Life" was really a truthful slice of her life, as she verified. The gist of the story was, she dated, albeit briefly, the guy who delivered DVDs to her home. She wrote: "It started out innocently, as these things do...I didn't hear from him all week. I tried to rise above naked disappointment; maybe the chemistry I'd imagined



TONY ROBINSON

between us was simply that, vain imagination. But love stories that intense tend to burn out quickly don't they?...After a few months the affair sort of imploded, collapsed in on itself."

When I laughed, in what some would say was a typical male chauvinistic guffaw, chiding her for going out with the DVD delivery boy less than half her age, her response was, "Well, you men do it all the time and it's O.K., plus men your age don't want women my age anyway, so where does that leave us?!"

And that's when I stopped and took a real hard look at

what she said. She was perfectly right. A man in his 40s or 50s does not look at a woman in his age bracket, but goes considerably younger...and it's acceptable. She could be a DVD delivery girl, a pizza delivery girl, an ice cream server, or even a young university student - it's no big thing, he's going to go after her.

So where does that leave the women of that age? In the realm of desperation.

So first the woman starts to do things that she would not normally do, as proven by her choices in men. I do recall hearing women in their 20s and 30s telling me that they would never date a man who was of a certain socio-economic class, doesn't have a nice car or live "somewhere". But as the years roll by and the pick-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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• “If someone tells you that you have won a bunch of money, and they need you to pay any money for any reason, it’s a fraud” - C. Steven Baker, director of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission’s Midwest Region, warns people to avoid telephone calls or mailings involving lotteries, some originating from the Caribbean.

• The cowardly plot against the people’s government serves only to strengthen my resolve and embolden my effort to eradicate this scourge from our society” – T&T’s Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar reacts to information that the police uncovered an assassination plot against her and members of her government in the wake of the recent state of emergency.



• “Like any civilized society we will never condone the manner in which a person is killed. We will never tolerate it, irrespective of who the person is, or what the person may have done, or alleged to have done” - Dominica’s Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit criticizes the manner in which Libya’s former leader Muammar Gaddafi was killed.



• “All this thing of Special Branch talking about they did know long in advance and they did warn this one and warn this other, the protective services had nothing in place” - Kala Aki Bua, a senior official of the radical Jamaat Al Muslimeen group that sought to overthrow the Trinidad and Tobago government in 1990, revealing that the T&T security forces were “caught with their pants down” by the plot.

Compiled from various sources.



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4 Eggs	1/4 tsp Benjamins Almond
1 1/2 lbs Mixed Fruits	Rum & Wine to taste
1 tsp Benjamins Cinnamon	Grated rind of lime
1/4 tsp Benjamins Mixed Spice	

Method
Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time to butter and sugar mixture, beating well after each addition. Sieve dry ingredients into the butter and cream mixture, alternatively with the wine, rum and fruits as well as the grated rind of lime. Add Benjamins Browning, Vanilla, Almond, Cinnamon, Mixed Spice and Rosewater to this mixture. Pour mixture into greased and lined baking tin and bake at 300 F for 1 hours and then at 275 F for another 1 hours.

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Desperate times demand desperate measures

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

ings become slim, anxiety turns to desperation, and all men become fair game. Still, there is the danger of going too young and having to deal with an adolescent male, as my friend points out in her article.

“That’s the thing about 23 year old boys, they think that every older woman they meet is waiting to tumble down on top of them. They have to be disabused of that notion very quickly.”

Many women have expressed this same sentiment.

DANGERS

Ironically it doesn’t work the other way around, and men who squire young girls are not seen as being desperate. They are lauded. But in many cases the older man has met his demise because of his young nymphet.

To add to this is the twist of these young girls chasing the older men, or in some cases nowadays, the cougar women who prey on hapless young boys.

The common denominator is cash. No money no love, they say. So instead of going it alone, many people opt to borrow, rent, lease or buy love. And it doesn’t come cheap. Prostitution comes in forms,

most times thinly disguised.

Because of desperation, many women will lower their standards and settle for almost any man and fiercely defend their stance. I know lawyers, lecturers, senior managers and bankers who have some little jingbang-wutless-no-ambition-no-job boy as their lovers, all because of desperate times.

REALIZATION

Even women who swear that they’d rather be alone than scrape the bottom of the barrel, succumb to desperate times when a man, any man, pays her any attention. But does it last? That’s the thing about desperate times, one day you may simply wake up and realize that there is no need to be desperate after all.

If I had written about dating a girl less than half my age who delivered DVDs to my door, it wouldn’t raise any eyebrows or solicit a phone call. If a similar article, the “Story of my Life”, chances are I’d be tarred and feathered and run out of town. But at least it wouldn’t be classed as me experiencing desperate times.

seido1@hotmail.com



Jamaican diaspora gets new voice

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

C.T.: Going forward and looking at all the issues that concern the Jamaicans in the diaspora, what do you see as your biggest challenge?

S.D.: I am not trying to win over people. Instead, I would like them to see my vision, I would like them to trust and support me. Jamaican people are a loyal people, a loving people, but we are a very difficult people. That in itself is going to be a challenge, but I just trust that they will get on board. I am not the typical that one would expect to be at the

helm of something like this. And I am sure I will be in for a fight with people making assumptions. It’s not going to be easy, but it can be done.

C.T.: What skills do you bring to this role?

S.D.: Outside of my passion for Jamaica and its people, my organizational skills, my interpersonal skills. For things to happen, I think relationship skills are very important. I also bring my confidence, my faith, and my love of culture.



Celine Dion to headline Jamaica Jazz & Blues fest in January

Celine Dion will headline next month's three-day Jamaica Jazz and Blues festival.

Art of Music Productions (AMP), the new producers of the annual event, last month announced that the Canadian-born singer will be the closing act at the festival, scheduled for Jan. 26-28 at The Greenfield Stadium, Trelawny.

"Bringing an act the magnitude of a Celine Dion is something I have dreamt since the day I started the jazz festival 16 years ago," said Walter Elmore, the festival's chairman.



Dion

"...We wanted a name that was versatile and spoke to the product we currently offer," he added.

Dion has recorded many hit songs, including "The Power of Love", "I'm Alive", "It's All Coming Back to Me Now", "All By Myself" and "My Heart Will Go On". She has sold more than 200 million albums.

Other overseas-based performers scheduled for the festival include R&B singer Kelly Rowland,

Jamaican Canadian Jully Black and jazz artiste Nicole Henry.

In recognition of Jamaica's 50th year of Independence in 2012, AMP also announced a list of

Jamaican entertainers to perform at the festival, including Toots Hibbert, Marcia Griffiths, Yellowman, Shaggy, John Holt and Half Pint.



Films showing Rastafarian history to premier in Fort Lauderdale Dec. 9

Two documentaries filmed recently in Jamaica will premier Dec. 9 in South Florida at the Broward Coronation Film Festival's "Tribute to the Patriarchs".

The titles of the documentaries filmed in Jamaica are "The First Rasta" and "Bad Friday".

The double-bill will be shown at the Joseph C. Carter Park, 1450 W. Sunrise Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale.

"First Rasta", which aims to give an authentic and comprehensive account of the little known historical origins of the Rastafari movement, will start at 7 p.m.

It is produced by French music journalist Hélène Lee and traces the exceptional journey of Leonard Percival Howell, also known as "Gong", a Jamaican revolutionary/religious figure. Howell established a Rasta community of 4,500 members at Pinnacle in the hills of St. Catherine, Jamaica, where the Rastafari philosophy and way of life was formalized, along the first agro-industrial enterprise devoted to

producing marijuana among other produce.

VIOLENCE

"Bad Friday: Rastafari After Coral Gardens" will start at 9 p.m. The film chronicles the history of state violence against Rastafari in Jamaica during the infamous "Coral Gardens Incident" of Easter 1963. The "Coral Gardens Incident", which came after Jamaica's Independence from Britain, involved the reported shooting and killing of Rastafarians by the Jamaican police. Other Rastas were reportedly, jailed and tortured.

"Bad Friday: Rastafari After Coral Gardens" is directed by Deborah A. Thomas and John L. Jackson, Jr. and the late Rasta activist Junior "Ista J" Manning.

Admission to the Broward Coronation Film Festival is \$10 at the door. Children under age 12 will be admitted free.

The "Tribute to the Patriarchs" will be

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

Jamaica honors Dennis Brown 12 years after singer's death

Reggae's crown prince was remembered recently with the Order of Distinction by the Jamaican government

Dennis Brown was honored some 12 years following his death for his contributions to reggae, which has played a huge role in Jamaica's culture and economy at the National Honors and Awards ceremony in Kingston, Jamaica.

Also honored were living singers Millie Small and Ralph "Dobby" Dobson.

Brown died at the age of 42 of respiratory ailments. He released more than 50 albums and a long string of hits, beginning with "No Man is an Island", which he recorded in 1969 at age 12. Other hits included "Here I Come", and "Revolution".



Brown

- Edited from News Americas.



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Caribbean women grab big Grammy nominations

Female stars Rihanna of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago's Nicky Minaj lead the Caribbean's

Brown, Lil Wayne and Busta Rhymes; "Otis", featuring Jay-Z and Kanye West; "The Show Goes On" with Lupe

for "Album of the Year" against Adele's "21", "Wasting Light" by Foo Fighters, Lady Gaga's "Born This Way" and "Doo-Wops & Hooligans" by Bruno Mars.

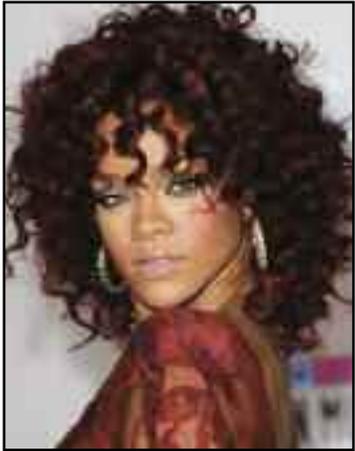
Her collaboration with West, Kid Cudi and Fergie on "All of the Lights" earned her a "Song of the Year" nomination, where she will rival "The Cave" by Mumford & Sons; "Grenade" by Bruno Mars; Bon Iver's "Holocene"; and "Rolling In The Deep" by Adele.

Rihanna's two nominations in the "Best Ra/Sung Collaboration" category are "What's My Name" with Drake and "All of the Lights". She faces competition from "Party" by Beyoncé and Andre 3000; "I'm On One", featuring DJ Khaled, Drake, Rick Ross and Lil Wayne; Dr. Dre, Eminem and Skylar Grey's "I Need a Doctor"; and "Motivation" by Kelly Rowland and Lil Wayne.

The winners of the 54th Grammy awards will be announced on CBS television Feb. 12.



Minaj



Rihanna

bid for 2012 Grammy awards with seven nominations between them in what are often referred to as the main categories.

Minaj was nominated for "Best New Artist", where she will compete against The Band Perry, Bon Iver, J. Cole and Skrillex.

She is in line to win "Best Rap Performance" for "Moment 4 Life" with Drake. Other nominees in that category are "Look at Me Now", a collaboration of Chris

Fiasco; and Wiz Khalifa's "Black and Yellow".

Minaj's "Pink Friday" is also up for "Best Rap Album", alongside "Watch the Throne", featuring Jay-Z and Kanye West; "Tha Carter IV" by Lil Wayne; Lupe Fiasco's "Lasers" and West's "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy".

FOUR IN THREE

Rihanna, meanwhile, has four total nominations in three categories. "Loud" is up

Wyclef Jean defends Haiti charity actions

NEW YORK – Popular Haitian-born hip hop star Wyclef Jean has blasted as "misleading, deceptive and incomplete," reports questioning how his charity Yele Haiti spent millions of dollars in aid for victims of the Jan. 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

"The (New York) **Post** conveniently fails to acknowledge that the decisions that Yele made were a response to one of the world's most catastrophic natural disasters in modern history and required an immediate humanitarian response," said Jean in a statement issued here late last month.

"We made decisions that enabled us to provide emergency assistance in the midst of chaos and we stand by those decisions," he added.

Jean said he arrived in Haiti with his wife and cousin, Jerry Duplessis, on Jan. 13, 2010, less than 24 hours after

the earthquake hit Haiti, and that his charity almost immediately began raising money.

'PITTANCE'

But according to the **Post**, the charity "spent a pittance of the" \$16 million it collected in 2010. It claimed that less than a third went to emergency efforts and \$1 million went to Amisphere Farm Labor Inc., which failed to complete the necessary paperwork to be incorporated in Florida.

This is not the first time Jean's charity has been scrutinized for its finances or spending. Last year, the **New York Times** reported that Yele paid \$250,000 in advance for celebrity videos and airtime to a television station Jean owns. Prior reports accused Yele of paying Jean for performances and noted that the group was several years behind on reporting its taxes.



Jean

Legendary Jamaican pianist Monty Alexander closes 2011 with shows in N.Y., Washington

Master pianist Monty Alexander will continue his celebration of 50 years as a performing artiste by paying tribute to music from several genres and generations this month in New York.

Alexander, whose recent album "Uplift" has held the top spot on the Jazz World Radio charts for 14 straight weeks, will honor his musical heroes - Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole - as part of the

"Singers over Manhattan Series" on Dec. 9 and 10 at the Allen Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Manhattan.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., respectively. The club is located at 33 W. 60th St.

It was Sinatra and pal Jilly Rizzo who first brought Alexander to New York when the Jamaican-born pianist was in his late teens. He went on to play at their New York night club Jilly's, where

Alexander accompanied Mr. Sinatra when he sang.

INFLUENCE

Growing up in Jamaica, Alexander became fascinated by Cole's music after seeing him perform at a 1956 concert in his hometown of Kingston at age 12. Thirty-four years later, Natalie Cole, the daughter of the great American singer, invited Alexander to assist her on her album, "Unforgettable", which is a tribute to her father.

Alexander will be joined in the Allen Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center by guitarist Russell Malone and saxophonist Houston Person. Vocalist James De Frances, a 21-year-old, and veteran Allan Harris, will perform the respective roles of Sinatra and Cole.

Alexander will also play the legendary Blues Alley in Washington D.C., to wrap up the year and ring in another, from Dec. 28-31.

For ticket information, visit https://tickets.jalc.org/ticket/show_events_list.asp.



Alexander

Films showing Rasta history to premier in Fort Lauderdale

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

the climax of a month-long celebration of the 81st Anniversary of the royal coronation Emperor Haile Selassie I and Empress Waizero Menen of Ethiopia. The film festival tribute is presented by the Rootz Foundation Inc., in

association with the City of Fort Lauderdale Parks & Recreation Department.

For more information, call Rootz Foundation at 954-981-1176 or Carter Park at 954-828-5411.





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OMG! In college and can't cook: Time to learn the basics

~ Mom offers tips to help students in the kitchen

College is supposed to be a place of higher learning that prepares young people for the challenges of taking on a greater role as an adult in a civilized society.

But there is a striking complaint about it all.

"How can you consider yourself educated and sophisticated if you don't know how to cook a decent meal?" asked Hollis Ledbetter, author of "OMG! I'm In College and I Never Learned to Cook (www.omgcookbooks.com)".

Ledbetter, a mother of four children (one still in col-

lege), sensed the irony of colleges teaching students to become engineers, lawyers and doctors who – without mom's help – are still likely to burn down the kitchen while trying to boil water.

"Kids need to learn how to cook and parents need to know how to teach them," she said.

TIPS

Her tips for parents include:

- Just teach the basics – You don't have to teach your children how to make eggs

benedict and how to mix the hollandaise sauce from scratch. Boiling water, broiling meats, making pasta that doesn't stick to the pot like bathroom caulk – these are the basics. Everything else, they should learn on their own.

- Don't coddle them – You'll save money and they'll eat better if you encourage them to buy groceries, instead of eating fast food. Hold the line on the food budget you give them and they'll hold the line on a good diet.

Her tips for kids include:

- Definition of cooking –

Microwaving a Hot Pocket is not cooking. Cooking involves taking actual vegetables, fruits and meats, and preparing them – either by cooking or mixing – to form a snack or a meal. If all you can do is make pre-packaged macaroni and cheese, and nuke a burrito, that's not cooking.

- Safety – There is a reason why some foods are refrigerated and why some are not. Learn the difference between the two.

- Healthy foods – If you buy groceries instead of eating out all of the time, you'll not

only eat better, but you will save tons of money. Overall, in a nine-month period, it is easy for a single person to save between \$1,000 and \$2,400 simply by not eating out.

"If you can help encourage your kids to prepare their own meals, they'll eat healthier and be happy in the kitchen for the rest of their lives," said Ledbetter. "And, I think that's a more valuable lesson than they'll ever learn in school."

- Hollis Ledbetter writes cookbooks.



Butter rum ham, Caribbean style



Butter rum ham

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons rum extract
- 1/2 peeled/cored pineapple

Method

Preheat two-sided tabletop grill. Cut four half-inch thick slices from ham (reserve any remaining ham for another use).

Place butter, brown sugar and rum extract in small microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 30 to 45 seconds or until butter melts.

Brush one side of ham with glaze and place on grill with glazed side down. Brush glaze on top of ham slices. Close grill lid, pressing down firmly to sear ham.

Grill four to five minutes, brushing once with remaining glaze, until internal temperature reaches 140°F. Remove ham from grill and cover to keep warm.

Cut pineapple into four half-to-one-inch thick slices and place on grill; close lid. Grill one to two minutes until

warm. Serve with ham.

Caribbean salad

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cilantro herb paste
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 (10-ounce) bag shredded cabbage
- 1 cup matchstick carrots

Method

Whisk together in medium bowl, water, brown sugar, vinegar, oil, herb paste, salt and pepper.

Stir in cabbage and carrots; mix well. Serve or chill until ready to serve. Stir before serving.

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No major change in Caribbean people living with HIV virus

NASSAU, Bahamas, CMC – The number of people living with the HIV virus in the Caribbean reached 260,000 amid continuing concerns from health and other officials that the rate of increase has varied little since the late 1990s.

“I think the prevention programs in many countries are not reaching the right people,” Michel de Groulards, regional program adviser, UNAIDS Caribbean Regional Support Team, told the **Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC)** ahead of the 2011 Caribbean HIV Conference here last month.

“What we are looking at is that new infections are not

going down or going down enough,” he said, adding “we still have too many people who are infected.”

De Groulards believes also that one factor may be that after 25 years of providing treatment, some countries may have reached a plateau and in others cases people considered to be at risk, including men having sex with men, are not targeted.

DECLINE

The conference carried the theme “Strengthening Evidence to Achieve Sustainable Action”. Figures released by UNAIDS show that adult HIV prevalence in the Caribbean is about one

percent higher than in any other world region outside the sub-Saharan Africa and that there has been a slight decline in new HIV infections in the region, from 20,000 in 2001 to 17,000 in 2009.

The figures also show that AIDS related deaths in the Caribbean fell from an estimated 19,000 in 2001 to 12,000

in 2009 and that the “HIV burden varies considerably between and within countries in the Caribbean”.

Cuba, for example, has a very low HIV prevalence of 0.1 per cent while The Bahamas has the highest HIV adult prevalence in the region at 3.1 percent.

De Groulards told CMC

that what has also changed in the region is the fact that now 48 percent of the people infected were now receiving anti retroviral drugs and in some countries it is as high as 80 percent.

- Edited from CMC.



Pancreatic cancer: Deadly danger for African Americans

Pancreatic cancer kills thousands yearly.

While you can find a lump at the doctor for breast cancer, pancreatic cancer goes undetected for years.

The pancreas is approximately six inches and located behind the stomach at the rear of the abdomen. The enzymes from the pancreas aids the digestive system along with helping to keep blood sugar level balanced.

Pancreatic cancer affects every race, but is higher in African Americans. Often, by the time African Americans are diagnosed, it is so bad that not even surgery can help.

Actor Patrick Swayze died from pancreatic cancer. The “Queen of Soul” Aretha Franklin was recently diagnosed with the same disease.

RISK

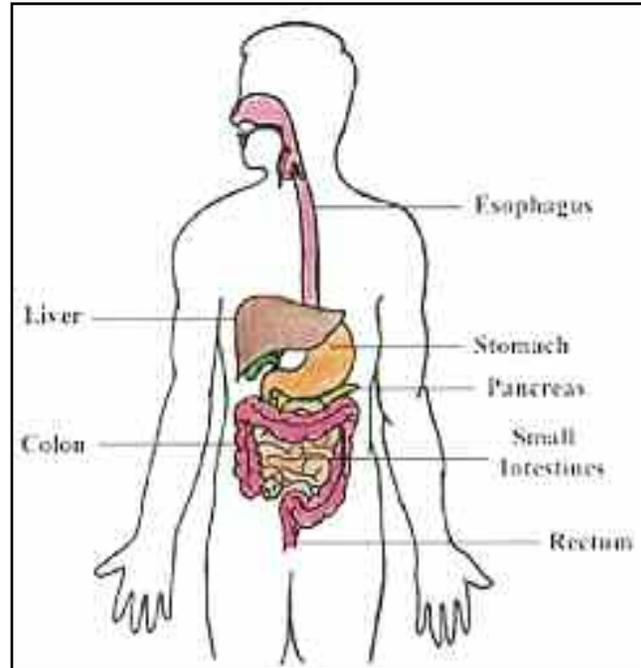
According to Dr. Otis W. Brawley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer

Society, “African Americans face inequalities in income, educa-

tion and standard of living, as well as barriers to accessing high-quality health care.”

While you can find a lump at the doctor for breast cancer, pancreatic cancer goes undetected for years.

week, you double your risk of getting Pancreatic Cancer”, according to Dr. Oz



Pancreatic Risk Factor. Second, smoking is responsible for up to 30 percent of pancreatic cancer and “20 percent may be associated with dietary factors. Only five to 10 percent are hereditary in nature,” according to Dr. Tomislav Dragovich.

If you don't want to be part of the statistic, then quit smoking, lose weight, and eat lots of fruits, vegetables, and reduce fat in your diet by avoiding things like processed meats, in that bacon and bologna.

SYMPTOMS/ TREATMENT

Pancreatic cancer symptoms may include pain in the upper part of your abdomen that may be felt in your back, jaundice and losing weight. There are other conditions that may cause the above symptoms so the best thing to do is to see your doctor.

Possible treatments for pancreatic cancer include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, targeted drug therapy, alternative medicine/treatment and clinical trials.



tion and standard of living, as well as barriers to accessing high-quality health care.”

You are at an increased risk of getting pancreatic cancer if you smoke, are diabetic, maintain an unhealthy diet, obese, have liver problems, and/or have a family history.

First, fast food restaurants are everywhere on every corner. But African Americans need to cut back on fast food and get more exercise.

“A study showed that if you drank over two sodas per

Taking control of diabetes

Out of the 25.8 million people in the United States affected by diabetes, seven million are undiagnosed.

An estimated 79 million American adults have pre-diabetes – elevated glucose levels that border on diabetic prognosis. Diabetics are at twice the risk of dying than those without.

Type 2 diabetes is a genetic disease that can be triggered by certain factors, such as being overweight.

Here are some tips to help control diabetes:

• **Love yourself** - Lowering the risk for heart problems is the main reason why people with diabetes are

living longer than ever.

• **Greece your diet** – Study suggests that a Mediterranean diet, based on fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, legumes, nuts and spices, provides substantial protection against diabetes.

• **Siesta time** - A study concluded that people who do not get the recommended six to eight hours of sleep may be more likely to get diabetes.

• **Walk it out** - A person with pre-diabetes who reduces their body weight by at least five percent by adopting better eating habits or walking just 25 minutes a day reduces his or her risk of developing diabetes by 58 percent.



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Jamaican gets U.S. commendation

ATLANTA, Georgia – Jamaican-born Patricia Baccas-Bowen, founder, chief executive officer, host and producer of Future Movement Radio, was recently honored with a state commendation from Casey Cagle, lieutenant governor for the state of Georgia.

“I feel a glowing sense of pride to be the first Caribbean national in the state to be recognized by the lieutenant governor for outstanding community service since I moved to Atlanta four years ago,” said Baccas-Bowen after accepting the award.

Since receiving the commendation, Baccas-Bowen has been conferred with other awards and recognition, including a Georgia State Senate Resolution, which was presented to her by senators Steve Henson, Gloria Butler and Ronald Ramsey; a proclamation from Dekalb County District 4 Commissioner Sharon Barnes Sutton; a certificate of community service from Mayor Greg Zarus of the City of Pine Lake, Georgia; and proclamations from the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners, Georgia State Representative Billy Mitchell and Georgia’s Secretary of State Brian P. Kemp.

Among Baccas-Bowen’s accomplishments are creating



Baccas poses with the commendation.

and implementing a media awareness campaign for the United States Census in 2010 and working with to encourage Caribbean and South American nationals in the state to be counted. She has conducted voter registration drives and highlighted the importance of getting involved in the electoral process. Baccas-Bowen has also informed permanent residents of the benefits of obtaining U.S. citizenship.



Quick and easy: Apply online for Social Security benefits

MICHAEL W. GROCHOWSKI

Now may be a good time to take a look at your retirement plans.

The best starting point is to visit Social Security’s Retirement Estimator at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator, where you can get an instant, personalized estimate of future retirement benefits.

The program uses your actual earnings history to compute a benefit estimate. However, for privacy purposes, earnings are not displayed. You can enter a variety of scenarios, such as different earnings amounts and retirement dates, to find out how they will change your benefit amount.

If the picture looks better than you anticipated, you might decide it’s time to punch your last time card and leave the labor force for retirement

sooner than you expected. If that’s the case, the easiest way to apply for retirement is online. Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline to find out everything you need to know about applying online for retirement benefits. Filing the application online can be done in as little as 15 minutes.

In most cases, once you submit your online application electronically, that’s it. There are no additional forms to sign or paperwork to complete. In rare cases where we need additional information, a representative will contact you.

Learn more about Social Security at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Edited from an article written by Michael W. Grochowski is the Social Security regional commissioner in Atlanta, Georgia.



Nomination invitations open for ‘Honor Roll of Jamaicans in Florida’

The Government of Jamaica, through the office of its consul general, will be recognizing 50 Jamaicans in Florida for service to their country and community, as part of its celebration of the nation’s 50th Independence anniversary in 2012.

In issuing the call for nominations for the “Honor Roll of Jamaicans in Florida”, Sandra Grant-Griffiths, Jamaican consulate general in Miami, said “the recognition would be integral to a program of celebrations in the



Grant-Griffiths

Florida community, which is currently being planned to commemorate this milestone.”

She also explained out

that activities scheduled for Aug. 2012 include a church service and a flag raising ceremony, to be held simultaneously with the ceremony at the grand gala in Kingston, Jamaica.

Grand-Griffiths encouraged Jamaicans in Florida to register on the Consulate General’s website to receive updates and information about the 2012 celebrations. For more information, contact Jamaica’s Consul General in Miami.



Americans get lesson on Jamaican Jewish history in New York

Geneive Brown Metzger, Jamaica’s consul general to New York, recently partnered with the America Jewish Committee (AJC) Westchester Chapter for “An Evening celebrating the History and Culture of Jamaica’s Jewry”.

The event sought to bring attention to the rich and historical significance of the Jamaican Jewish community.

The idea was conceived approximately a year ago, when the consul general met with the AJC’s Diplomatic Outreach Team to draw attention to the Jamaican-Jewish community and interest in seeing Jamaica as a destination of choice for their vacations.

The event drew about 100 members from the American Jewish Community who ate from a kosher/Jamaican menu, which including jerked chicken, cocktail patties, rum punch and tropical fruits.

Making presentations at the event were Jane Gerber, history professor and director of the Institute of Sephardic Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). She



Ainsley Henriques, left, honorary consul of Israel and head of the Jewish community in Jamaica, poses with Alice Kulick, center, Jewish American philanthropist, and Geneive Brown Metzger, Jamaica’s consul general.

discussed “The Silent Beginnings of the Jews of Jamaica”, while Eli Faber, professor emeritus of history at John Jay College of Criminal Justice CUNY elaborated on the early Jews of Jamaica 1665 to 1830s.

Stanley Mervis a doctoral candidate at the Graduate Center of CUNY specializing

in Jewish history, spoke on the limits of Jewish communal identity in early 20th century Jamaica.

Special guest was Jamaica’s Ainsley Henriques who updated the participants on “Contemporary Jewish Society in Jamaica”.



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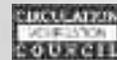
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YOUTH & EDUCATION



www.caribbeantoday.com

South Florida teens come together to 'Think Dream Succeed'

DAWN A. DAVIS

Preparing for life after high school can be a daunting task, especially for immigrant children who must adjust to a new culture and whose native language may not be English.

The Genesis Center for Growth and Development (GCGD), a non-profit organization under the auspices of South Florida-based Genesis Christian Center, is giving native-born and immigrant children a fighting chance to live their dream of attending college.

By providing services such as college and scholarship search, SAT and ACT preparation, career assessment, test-taking strategies, after school

tutoring, and counseling for children and parents, GCGD has made a mark in the community.

The center recently held a teen conference, dubbed "Think Dream Succeed", that brought together more than 100 aspiring teens and their parents to participate in a series of workshops around college entrance, IT careers, the value of social media and anti-bullying tactics.

The audience of mainly second generation Caribbean, Hispanic and Brazilian children listened attentively as the Christian Center's Pastor Owen Facey spoke of the services and potential one can



Speaking Hands Choir performs.

achieve through the center.

"It doesn't matter what socio-economic background you come from, you will be able to have the same opportunities as those who can afford the Ivy League schools because we believe education is the most important way to open up the field before you," Facey said.

"That's why we developed the Growth and Development Center."

He added that the center's social intervention program is key to students' success as it allows teachers, administrators, parents and teachers to interact on the same level while collaborating on setting educational goals and objectives.

SPEAKING HANDS

Apart from the education-

al components and activities, the youth were entertained by their peers through dance, step and music. Perhaps the most stimulating and moving, based on the teens' response, was a group called Speaking Hands, which offered Christian praises through music and sign language.

An energetic step group also wowed the young people through their demonstration of coordination, creativity and dance.

But, the day's events and activities came down to challenging stereotypical attitudes and proving that income, race

or culture are not obstacles to success. Five new high school students signed up for the free GCGD services.

Encouraging and congratulating the students was State Representative Franklin Sands, who witnessed the day's events.

"As a Democrat I have a tremendous interest in the education of children," said Sands.

"I certainly have an interest in the education of minority children, because, if truth be told, many people are starting from a different point than others, and they need the encouragement and a little bit more help.

"What I saw here today was exactly that," he added. "...I saw teachers and other adults coming out on a Saturday to give kids not a hand out, but a hand up, and that's what we need in Broward (County, Florida) and throughout the state."



Sands

Dawn A. Davis is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Huge 'Net gain for Caribbean people

NEW YORK - More and more nationals in the Caribbean, South America and Central America are becoming Internet users, new data shows.

Internet World Statistics (IWS) accessed by News Americas recently showed there has been growth in users logging on to the web by over 1,000 percent in just a decade.

The Caribbean led the way as of Mar. 2011, with a 1,763.7 percent growth between the years 2000 and 2011, while Central America

was behind with 1,228.2 percent. South America registered a 1,039 percent growth. This as North America's growth slowed to 151.7 in the same period.

In the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic led the way with over four million users, while Jamaica was second with 1.5 million.

LAGGING

However, while the penetration of the Internet among North America's 347 million plus residents is over 78 percent, the Caribbean, Central

America and South America lagged way behind. The Caribbean only has more than 10 million online, or just over 25 percent, while out of 155 million Central American nationals, over 42 million or 27 percent are on the web.

In South America, out of a population of over 400 million, only some 163 million are online, or just over 40 percent.

- Edited from News Americas.



Regional teachers win U.S. scholarships

As part of its continuing global education efforts, Walden University's Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership in the United States has awarded four \$5,000 scholarships to teachers who are members of a member unit of the Caribbean Union of Teachers.

The scholarship program was created to recognize exceptional teachers in the region who seek to make a difference in their schools and communities.

Scholarships were awarded based on each recipient's essay describing how their education will help them reach personal goals and effect positive social change. The recipients of the Caribbean Union of Teachers scholarships are:

- **Shenile Daniel** - English teacher at Boca Secondary School in Grenada and member of the Grenada Union of Teachers.

- **Andrew Haynes** - Sciences information technology coordinator at St.

Ambrose Primary School in Barbados and member of the Barbados Union of Teachers.

- **Kenny James** - Vice principal at St. Rose Modern Secondary School in Grenada and member of the Grenada Union of Teachers.

- **Ezra Jonah Fostin-Greene** - Principal at Clare Hall Secondary School in Antigua and member of the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers.



Caribbean Today January 2012 CALENDAR



1 Martin Luther King Birthday



2 Haitian Independence



3 Black History Month Preview



4 Spring Education



5 Carnival Preview

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Barbados defends departure tax

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – The Barbados government has defended the \$31.50 departure tax at the Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA), saying it still among the lowest when compared to the fees charged by other Caribbean countries.

“The facilities in the various airports across the region have to be maintained and managed. That is a cost we have to pass on to persons using the airport facilities,” said International Business and International Transport Minister George Hutson.

“The charges that we (Barbados) have for passen-

gers transiting Barbados, in and out of the Grantley Adams International Airport, are some of the lowest within the Caribbean region,” he added.



Hutson

Figures released here show that St. Croix ranks the lowest, with a charge of \$9.50, while St. Lucia ranks as the most expensive with a charge of \$70.19.



New inter-island ferry possible by mid-2012

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada, CMC - Grenada is among four Caribbean islands that are discussing the possibility of introducing a new inter-island ferry service.

Trade Minister Joseph Gilbert said the issue was discussed on the sidelines of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) meeting in Guyana last month.

The inter-island ferry could service Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Barbados with the possibility of serving all other Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries at a later date.

Gilbert said the proposed travel itinerary of the ferry allows for over-night stay in Barbados before making the “island-hopping” return trip to

Trinidad. He said his Trinidad counterpart Stephen Cadiz, who updated the other islands’ representatives on the project, was “very optimistic that the Trinidad-based ferry service could come on stream as early as the middle of next year.”

“Request for proposals regarding the procurement of the specific type and design of the ferry required has already been issued by the investor,” Cadiz is reported as saying.

The proposed ferry service would be privately-operated and Gilbert said the Grenada government would not be required to ensure its viability and sustainability. It would have a capacity for about 300 passengers and the Grenada-Trinidad journey will take just over two hours.



U.S. revives tariff on Caribbean travelers

OTTAWA, Canada – Caribbean, Canadian and Mexican travelers will now have to pay a \$5.50 tax if they enter the United States by air or sea.

A U.S.-Colombia free trade deal, passed recently in the U.S. Congress, includes a clause that removes an exemption from the tariff for travelers from the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico.

Those countries had been exempt from the fee since 1997 under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but Canadian offi-



Fast

cials here said American legislators, needing fresh cash for

government coffers, have resurrected it.

International Trade Minister Ed Fast said the Canadian government is disappointed with the new measure.

“Raising taxes at the border just raises costs on consumers,” he said in a statement.

He said Canadian officials have raised concerns about the removal of this

exemption at the “highest level.”

“We will continue to raise Canada’s concerns with U.S. lawmakers,” Fast said.



U.S.-Cuba charter air service takes off from Ft. Lauderdale

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida – An American charter flight arrived in Havana, Cuba recently from Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport in Florida, one of the first under a relaxed travel policy by the administration of United States President Barack Obama.

The flight was the first of a weekly non-stop service between Fort Lauderdale and the Cuban capital, the Miami-based Airline Brokers Company said.

Using aircraft leased from the carrier JetBlue the Airline Brokers charter will depart Florida every Saturday.

The charter is the first regular service from Fort Lauderdale under the Obama administration’s policy to free-up travel to Cuba. Fort Lauderdale joined a dozen

airports, including Miami, New York and Los Angeles earlier this year as locations authorized to handle Cuba charters from the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Tampa in eastern Florida and San Juan were the first airports to initiate new services.

Fort Lauderdale had been out of the Cuba passenger loop for 24 years, although there have been occasional flights carrying medical relief supplies to Cuba in the intervening years.

The Broward County airport has been seeking permission to handle flights to and from Cuba at least since 1999, when it made a request during the Clinton administration’s relaxed trade restrictions on Cuba.



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TRIPLE CHAMPIONS



The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) won three awards at Flight Center USA's Annual Partner Pride Reception held recently. Anthony King, right, JTB's regional director, accepted awards for “Best Tourism Marketing”, “Best Customer Service to the Trade” and “Best Supplier Training” from Dean Smith, left, president of Flight Center USA. Also present were Karen Kent, left, and Karen Bontemps of Flight Center USA.

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Peter A. Webley,
Publisher

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MLS champion Galaxy trades Reggae Boy Ricketts

Jamaica's national goalkeeper Donovan Ricketts will likely be with a new team at the start of the next Major League Soccer (MLS) season in North America in 2012.

Ricketts was traded by the United States-based Los Angeles Galaxy to the expansion club Montreal Impact of Canada for allocation money late last month.

The Reggae Boy, a veteran of Jamaica's squad for the Caribbean country's only berth in the World Cup in 1998, joined the Galaxy in Dec. 2008. He was voted "Goalkeeper of the Year" for the 2010 season, but lost his starting position to Josh Saunders this year after missing playing time at the club through injury and international duty. The Galaxy won all its post-season games, including the MLS Cup title last month, with the 34-year-old Ricketts on the bench.



Ricketts

Ricketts reportedly earned a salary of \$170,000 at the Galaxy (\$195,000 in average guaranteed compensation). The club did not disclose how much allocation money it

received for the trade. In all, Ricketts made 77 league appearances for the Galaxy, recording 27 shutouts.



Bolt is 'World Athlete of the Year', James emerges as track's 'Rising Star'

MONTE CARLO – Jamaican sprint sensation Usain Bolt won the "World Athlete of the Year" award for the third time while emerging superstar, Grenadian Kirani James, also walked away with the "Rising Star" award, at the World Athletics Gala last month.

Bolt, the world record holder in the 100 and 200 meters, claimed the award following the successful defense of his 200 meters title at the IAAF World Championships in Athletics (WCA) held in

Daegu, South Korea in September. He clocked 19.40 seconds, the year's fastest time, in dominating the half-lap event.

Bolt was disqualified in the 100 meters final for false starting, but rounded off the WCA by anchoring Jamaica to a world record 37.04 seconds in the 4x100 meters relay.

"This season was a really trying season for me, I really had to work hard and stand up my game," said Bolt, who won the award in 2008 and 2009.

"There were some close races this season, I really had to push myself. So this (award) really means a whole lot to me. Because I really came out there hard this year, and all the hard work I put in paid off."

YOUNGEST

James, meanwhile, was



Bolt tops them all.

crowned the youngest ever 400 meters world champion at age 18 when he stormed to victory in Daegu in a personal best 44.60 seconds. The World Youth and Junior champion, James had only weeks earlier turned pro by winning at the London Aviva Grand Prix.

Jamaican Yohan Blake, who won the 100 meters following Bolt's disqualification, copped the award for "Performance of the Year" when he clocked 19.26 seconds, the second fastest 200 meters time in history at the Memorial van Damme in Brussels.

Other award winners were Australian sprint hurdler Sally Pearson, who took the women's "Athlete of the Year" honor. She won the world title in Daegu and captured 10 of her 11 outings.



Four Caribbean nations still in hunt for World Cup spot

Four Caribbean teams - Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana and Cuba - will continue their quest for places in soccer's 2014 World Cup when they begin play in third round CONCACAF qualifiers next year.

Jamaica and Antigua and Barbuda will play in Group A, alongside the United States and Guatemala. In Group B, Guyana will tackle Mexico, El Salvador and Costa Rica, while Group C features Cuba against Canada, Honduras and Panama.

The best two teams from each group will play in the final round of CONCACAF qualifiers, from which the top three countries will advance to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and the fourth place team will contest a play-off with a country from another region for a chance to play in the game's biggest showcase.

Below is the schedule of matches in 2012 (home team listed first) involving Caribbean countries:

• June 8

Group A - U.S. vs. Antigua and Barbuda; Jamaica vs. Guatemala.
Group B - Mexico vs. Guyana; Costa Rica vs. El Salvador.
Group C - Honduras vs. Panama; Cuba vs. Canada.

• June 12

Group A - Guatemala vs. U.S.; Antigua and Barbuda vs.

Jamaica.

Group B - El Salvador vs. Mexico; Guyana vs. Costa Rica.

Group C - Canada vs. Honduras; Panama vs. Cuba

• Sept. 7

Group A - Jamaica vs. U.S.; Guatemala vs. Antigua and Barbuda.

Group B - Costa Rica vs. Mexico; El Salvador vs. Guyana.
Group C - Cuba vs. Honduras; Canada vs. Panama.

• Sept. 11

Group A - U.S. vs. Jamaica; Antigua and Barbuda vs. Guatemala.

Group B - Mexico vs. Costa Rica; Guyana vs. El Salvador.
Group C - Honduras vs. Cuba; Panama vs. Canada.

• Oct. 12

Group A - Guatemala vs. Jamaica; Antigua and Barbuda vs. U.S.

Group B - El Salvador vs. Costa Rica; Guyana vs. Mexico.
Group C - Canada vs. Cuba; Panama vs. Honduras.

• Oct. 16

Group A - U.S. vs. Guatemala; Jamaica vs. Antigua & Barbuda.
Group B - Mexico vs. El Salvador; Costa Rica vs. Guyana.
Group C - Honduras vs. Canada; Cuba vs. Panama.

Venus Williams to play 'Pon De Rock' tennis exhibition series in Barbados

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – American Venus Williams is expected to headline a group of four international stars at the Tennis Pon De Rock exhibition series here this month.

The elder of the two famous Williams sisters will follow in the footsteps of her younger sister Serena and make an appearance in the series on Dec. 10 and 11.

Former national player Kodi Lewis, one of the principal organizers of the series, brushed aside concerns about Williams's health, after she missed the United States Open in September with an autoimmune disease, Sjögren's syndrome, which affects the production of tears and saliva.

"She will be fit," said

Lewis at a recent media conference.

Women's world number three ranked player Victoria Azarenka, as well as men's

world number nine Gael Monfils and U.S. Open quarter-finalist John Isner are set to join Williams for the series.

The four players are expected to play in doubles and mixed doubles matches at the Sugar Hill Tennis Resort on the Barbadian west

coast on Dec. 10 before returning to the Willey Gymnasium on the outskirts of the capital of Bridgetown for two singles matches the next day.



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BW024	MIA 1:10pm	KIN 2:50pm
<i>From 09 Jan - 30 Jan 2012</i>	<i>Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat</i>	
BW021	KIN 9:45am	MIA 11:25am
BW024	MIA 1:10pm	KIN 2:50pm
<i>From 01 Feb, 2012</i>	<i>Daily</i>	
BW021	KIN 9:45am	MIA 11:25am
BW024	MIA 1:10pm	KIN 2:50pm

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