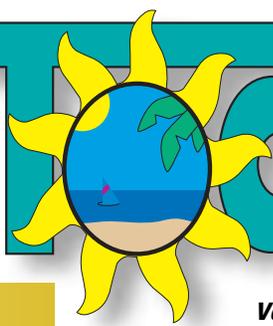


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Vol. 23 No. 2

THE MULTI AWARD-WINNING NEWS MAGAZINE



Eighteen years after the crime was committed, a court in England has finally convicted two men of murdering Stephen Lawrence, the son of Jamaican immigrants, in a racially motivated act of hate, page 2.



Politics dominated the Caribbean in 2011. General elections were held in two countries on the same date and a state of emergency imposed in another. Allegations of assassinations against two prime ministers and the surprise resignation of another marked the year, page 8.



Some of the biggest names in Caribbean athletics, including Veronica Campbell-Brown and Asafa Powell, are set to compete at this month's 2012 U.S. Open in New York, a preview of the fireworks to come in an Olympic year, page 18.



PORTIA WANTS YOU

~ Jamaica's newly elected Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller has pointed to the diaspora as an important part of the country's future plans. Jamaicans in the United States believe her willingness to embrace them offers a 'win-win' situation, page 5.

IMMIGRATION HOTLINE

~ United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement sets up hotline to protect civil rights of detained Caribbean nationals as part of what it describes as a 'broader effort' to improve its enforcement process, page 3.



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NEWS



Caribbean legislators introducing bill after N.Y. cops' 'racist' talk

NEW YORK – Caribbean and African American legislators here said last month that they intend to introduce new legislation requiring residency of police officers in the wake of what has been described as racist comments about West Indians on the social network, Facebook, by some members of the New York Police Department (NYPD).

“The vile and racist language used by police officers with respect to the West Indian Day Parade shocks the conscience and demands legislative action,” New York State Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries said, adding he planned to table the legislation in the State Assembly.

“We are not savages. We are not monkeys. We are sick and tired of officers who do not understand and respect our community.”

Last month, the New York

Times reported that officers maligned spectators at the annual West Indian American Day Carnival Parade, on Labor Day on Sept. 5, calling them “animals” and “savages,” among other names.

OFFENSIVE

The Times reported that the Facebook page's existence had been noted during a trial in Brooklyn, and that the page had disappeared from public view just days after a defense lawyer had found it, but not before he saved all the data.

The NYPD said it matched 20 “offensive” postings on Facebook about the West Indian Day Carnival Parade with names of police officers. Some officials have called for an investigation by an independent agency rather than the NYPD's own Internal Affairs Bureau.



'Racist thugs' guilty of killing son of Jamaican nationals in England, sentenced to prison terms

LONDON, England - Two white men were found guilty of the 1993 murder of teenaged architect student in south-east London, the son of Jamaican parents.

Gary Dobson, 36, and



Lawrence

David Norris, 35 were found guilty on Jan. 3 of killing Stephen Lawrence and sentenced the following day.

Dobson received 15 years and two months in prison. Norris will serve 14 years and three months. The court here said the pair was given reduced sentences due to their age at the time of the attack. Norris was 16 then, Dobson, 17.

Mr. Justice Treacy, who noted that neither killer showed “the slightest regret or remorse” following the murder and lied in court, said the attack was driven by hatred.

“A totally innocent 18-year-old youth on the threshold of a promising life was brutally cut down in the street in front of eye witnesses by a racist, thuggish gang,” the judge explained.

“You were both members of that gang. I have no doubt at all that you fully subscribed to its views and attitudes.”

The prosecution had alleged that they were among a group of white men who stabbed Lawrence in a racially motivated attack as he waited at a bus stop. The names of four suspects, including Dobson and Norris, were

brought to the attention of the police almost immediately, but no one, until now, had been prosecuted successfully for the murder.

Two other men, Neil Account and Luke Knight, were charged with Lawrence's murder in June 1993, but were never successfully prosecuted. Various attempts have foundered, mainly on account of procedural errors. The case has provoked considerable press and public controversy with the suspicion being expressed that the individual policemen may have fouled the procedures.



Dobson, left, Norris

WATERSHED

Lawrence was not the first black student to be murdered in the area, but his parents, Neville and Doreen have fought a long and high-profile campaign for justice.

His murder has become a watershed case in the development of relations between the police and the public - and the West Indian heritage public in particular. For 18 years it has remained a festering sore on the country's social conscience.

In 1999, an inquiry headed by Sir William Macpherson examined the original Metropolitan police investigation and concluded that the Police Force was “institutionally racist” and has been called “one of the most important moments in the modern history of criminal justice in Britain.” This led to the publication of the Macpherson Report 1999, which investigated institutional racism within the Metropolitan police.

Michael Mansfield, who

represented Lawrence's parents, praised the family's “huge dignity and persistence” they had shown in seeking justice.

SAD

Lawrence's mother Doreen, who wept in court when the guilty verdict was announced, said she was no longer angry, but the sadness remained.

“In the early days I would be angry, definitely, but somehow I don't feel that anger anymore,” she said in a recent interview with Sky Television News.

“The sadness is always there but the anger is not,” she said, adding that anger “eats away at you and is not a healthy thing.”

Dobson and Norris both pleaded innocent, but when the verdict was announced,

Dobson said: “You have condemned an innocent man here, I hope you can live with yourselves.”



Doreen Lawrence

During the trial, the prosecution argued that blood, hair and fibers traced to Lawrence were found on Dobson's and Norris's clothes, proving their involvement in the attack.

Norris has previously been charged with two other stabbings - in one case he was acquitted and in the other charges were dropped.

More recently, Norris and his friend Account were jailed for 18 months in 2002 over a racist attack on an off-duty black police officer.

- Compiled and edited from multiple sources.



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U.S. immigration sets up hotline to protect civil rights of detained Caribbean nationals

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As part of what it describes as a “broader effort” to improve on its immigration enforcement process, the United

“The hotline will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by ICE personnel at the Law Enforcement Support Center”, it noted,

of the detainer a copy of the detainer form and includes a notice advising the subject that ICE intends to assume custody.

According to ICE, the notice informs these individuals that ICE has requested the LEA to maintain custody beyond the time when they would have otherwise been released by the state or local law enforcement authorities, based on their criminal charges or convictions.

“It also advises individuals that if ICE does not take them into custody within the 48 hours, they should contact the LEA or entity that is holding them to inquire about their release from state or local custody”, the statement added.

Through the hotline number - 885-448-6903 – detainees can be “made aware of their rights” or be “properly notified about their potential removal from the country”, according to the release.

The hotline is available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese and Vietnamese translations.

There have been reports of U.S. citizens, including Caribbean nationals, being detained by U.S. immigration authorities. Advocates for immigration rights have lobbied for more accountability by immigration authorities who, many claim, often discriminate on the basis of physical appearance or accents used by persons they detain.

Various sources, including CMC and CNN, contributed to this story.



More rights protection for U.S. immigration detainees.

States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency announced new measures that would ensure Caribbean and other nationals are properly notified about their possible removal from the country and are also made aware of their rights.

“The new measures include a new detainer form and the launch of a toll-free hotline...that detained individuals can call if they believe they may be U.S. citizens or victims of a crime”, the ICE noted in a statement issued late last month.

‘Barefoot Bandit’ gets seven years

COUPEVILLE, Washington – A serial criminal known as the “Barefoot Bandit”, who crash-landed a plane in The Bahamas, has been jailed for seven years and three months in the United States for a string of burglaries and identity thefts carried out during a two-year crime spree.

The court here imposed the sentence on Colton Harris-Moore, 20, after he pleaded guilty to 33 state charges, including burglary and identity theft. He had eluded law enforcement for more than two years, becoming something of a folk hero, before crashing a plane on July 2010 in The Bahamas.

adding that “translation services will be available in several languages from 7 a.m. until midnight (Eastern) seven days a week.

“ICE personnel will collect information from the individual and refer it to the relevant ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Field Office for immediate action.”

UPDATES

The new form also includes a request that the law enforcement agency (LEA) provide the subject

systems that strengthened the exchange of information among law enforcement agencies in the region, improved the protection of borders and tracked persons known to be involved in illegal activity. He welcomed the establishment of a Virtual Training Institute (VTI) by the RSS, which he said is crucial to the region at this time of reduced international funding for training, an increase in transshipment of drugs to the region and the impact of the “unfortunate” U.S. policy of deporting criminals.



Thomas

Grenada urges U.S. to re-think ‘unfortunate’ deportation policy

ST. GEORGE’S, Grenada, CMC – Grenada’s Prime Minister Tillman Thomas has called on the United States to review its practice of deporting criminals of Caribbean origin back to the region.

Addressing the inaugural meeting of the Practice Education Committee of the Regional Security System (RSS) last month, Thomas urged Washington to “review this practice,” with a view to ending the policy, or to provide the requisite financial and institutional support to assist regional countries to cope.

Caribbean countries have complained in the past of the policy claiming that most of the criminals returned to the region have little or not family connections.

Thomas called for a re-engagement of the



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~ Caribbean Today's coverage of Jamaica's elections

PNP POWER: Opposition topples ruling JLP in Jamaica elections

Newly elected Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller has pledged to unite Jamaicans at home and abroad, following her party's massive victory in the Caribbean country's general elections late last month.

Simpson Miller led the Opposition People's National Party (PNP) back to power in Jamaica after a four-year absence, toppling the ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) by winning 42 of the 63 parliamentary seats contested, according to the preliminary count of votes. The JLP secured the remaining 21.

She was sworn in as prime minister on Jan. 5.

In her post-election speech at the PNP's St. Andrew headquarters on Dec. 29, Simpson Miller said "this leader with her team will be working with all Jamaicans as one Jamaican family as we shape the future together.

"We will be working with

you," she told the crowd of jubilant supporters later, "as well as Jamaicans in the diaspora."

What was widely predicted as a close race for control of the



Simpson Miller, left, cast her vote in a winning campaign, while the presence of Holness was not enough to rescue his ruling party.

government, the PNP emerged an easy winner. Simpson Miller, affectionately called "Sister P", "Mama P" and "Comrade Leader", led the way by coasting to victory in her St. Andrew South West seat.

Andrew Holness, who took over leadership of the JLP gov-

ernment two months ago as the nation's youngest prime minister at age 39, also had personal success, taking the St. Andrew West Central seat. However, the Electoral Office of Jamaica



(EOJ) confirmed that Deputy Leader Dr. Christopher Tufton joined Robert Monteague and Clive Mullings as big name JLP candidates who lost.

Holness's party suffered resounding rejection from the electorate, leaving him to ponder the JLP's way forward.

REFLECTION

"It is a time of reflection and introspection for the Jamaica Labour Party," Holness said after conceding defeat. "...It is clear to us that the people of this country have some concern about the Jamaica Labour Party."

The reported 53 percent of the popular vote which sided with the PNP made it clear where Jamaicans' confidence resided, but the 66-year-old Simpson Miller conceded the task to reward that belief would not be easy.

"We have plenty of work ahead of us," she said. "...The Jamaican people assisted us to rescue Jamaica and restore the hope..."

"You have a government now that you can trust," she added later.

Simpson Miller said her government will stress growth, investment, development and job creation. She also explained

that the country's true economic situation, which many claimed was being covered up from the country by the JLP government, will be revealed.

"We will tell you how it is," Simpson Miller said. "We will hide nothing from you."

The country of 2.8 million faces a current economic picture, which is far from rosy according to indicators, including a debt of \$18.6 billion. That is 130 percent of the gross domestic product.

RETURN

Simpson Miller, viewed a favorite of the underprivileged, returns to lead the country after being ousted from power in 2007 by the JLP. She was part of the PNP government that ruled for 18 years, and was elected by party delegates to succeed retired P.J. Patterson as prime minister and PNP president in 2006.

That election failure was

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

P.M. names 19-member Cabinet

Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller has named a 19-member Cabinet after being sworn in as the seventh head of government in Jamaica.

The Cabinet consists of some members who had served in the 2006-7 government when Prime Minister Simpson Miller first headed a government. The full list is as follows:

- Dr. Peter Phillips, minister of finance
- Dr. Omar Davies, minister of transport and works
- Peter Bunting, minister of national security
- Roger Clarke, minister of agriculture
- Fenton Ferguson, minister of health
- Ronnie Thwaites, minister of education

- Lisa Hannah, minister of youth and culture
- Robert Pickersgill, minister of water, land, environment and climate change
- Anthony Hylton, minister of industry and commerce
- Derrick Kellier, minister of labor and social security
- Noel Arscott, minister of local government
- Wykeham McNeil, minister of tourism
- Phillip Paulwell, minister of mining, energy and technology
- Dr. Morais Guy, minister of housing
- Horace Dalley, minister without portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister
- Mark Golding, minister of justice



Caribbean reacts to Simpson Miller's victory in Jamaica

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, CMC – The Caribbean has begun reacting to the victory of Portia Simpson Miller, who led her People's National Party (PNP) to a resounding victory in the Dec. 29 general elections in Jamaica.

Professor Norman Girvan, former secretary general of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), said the immediate challenge for the government will be the economy and more specifically, the multi-billion dollar Stand By Agreement signed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"The latest agreement has been off-track for most of the last year; the government has no choice but to re-establish it

in order to access badly needed funds," he said.

"...A fresh austerity package is a virtual certainty."

Girvan, who is also professor emeritus of the University of the West Indies, (UWI), also said that the victory of the new PNP government "will probably be welcomed in the region" as traditionally the party, unlike the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) has always been seen as a supporter of the regional integration movement. But he noted recent issues including Jamaica's huge trade deficit with Trinidad and Tobago remains a "festering sore on the body of CARICOM relations."

He said Simpson Miller has to find the political skills to take

Jamaica fully into the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) and wondered aloud as to whether "Jamaica's 50th Independence anniversary party in August 2012 find British Privy councilors still sitting in final judgment?"

'ELATED'

Meanwhile, the ruling St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP) says it is "elated about the PNP's victory and its return to office under the leadership of incoming Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller.

"Like the St. Lucian people, the Jamaican people have spoken decisively in general elections and changed government in their search for a better days ahead; and, like St. Lucians, Jamaicans have placed their trust in a party that is tried and tested and has put bread,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)



Girvan



Warner

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~ Caribbean Today's coverage of Jamaica's elections

U.S. diaspora optimistic new Jamaica government is 'win-win'

Jamaicans in the United States have expressed general optimism at the announcement by Prime Minister-elect Portia Simpson Miller of her intention to embrace them in efforts to unify the country following her triumph in last month's general elections.

In her post-elections victory speech, Simpson Miller made special mention of working with the diaspora, a tone welcomed by Jamaicans overseas.

"I'm looking forward to it,"

said Dr. Susan Davis, head of the Southern United States Jamaican Diaspora Board, after the People's National Party (PNP), led by Simpson Miller, was returned to power in Jamaica on Dec. 29.



Davis

"...(Simpson Miller) has always embraced us (in the diaspora). The support will always be there. There is an

understanding of who we are and the value we have."

Irwine Claire Sr., managing director of the Caribbean Immigrant Services Inc. in New York, who this month is expected to take up an advisory position with the diaspora board in the northeast U.S., underlined the value of Simpson Miller's recognition of Jamaicans abroad following her party's success in the elections.

"It is important that such a statement be reiterated," Claire Sr. said. "You have to pay respect to the diaspora

audience. She recognizes there are other opportunities outside Jamaica... That's a positive signal."

BENEFIT

Both Claire Sr. and Dr. Davis, who represent areas in the U.S. heavily populated by Jamaican Americans, said Jamaica can only benefit from engaging the diaspora.

"It has to be a win-win situation," Dr. Davis said.

"What we see are opportunities for partnerships with Jamaica," added Claire Sr.

While many in the diaspora have credited recent Jamaican governments with reaching out to the diaspora, they generally believe the PNP, which won last month's elections with 42 seats to the Jamaica Labour Party's (JLP) 21, has been more active in that role. It was the last PNP government, which was ousted in 2007, which pushed for the establishment of diaspora boards in the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom.

"The PNP government has the track record for reaching out to the diaspora," Claire Sr. said.

Dr. Davis said she is eager to see "what avenues are going to open up to make things smoother" in the relationship between



Claire

Jamaicans in the diaspora and Jamaica. Areas which require attention, she added, include facilitating members of the diaspora who wish to assist Jamaica, such as charitable organizations.

Prior to the elections, a meeting of the diaspora board from the U.S., Canada and U.K. had been scheduled for Jan. 24-25 in Kingston. The meeting, and Simpson Miller's government, appears to be presenting the opportunity for positives.

"At least she has opened the door," said Dr. Davis. "...It's for us (in the diaspora) to walk in."

- G. Williams

Caribbean reacts to Simpson Miller's victory in Jamaica

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

freedom and justice before fancy projects," said SLP General Secretary Leo Clarke.

Chairman of the ruling United National Congress (UNC) in Trinidad, Austin Jack Warner, told the PNP leader that "the overwhelming majority with which you were elected signals the tremendous confidence that the people of Jamaica have reposed in you and your party.

"What is even more significant is that this confidence comes at a time when many challenges

lie ahead, both in domestic and international affairs," said Warner, who is also the Works Minister in the coalition People's Partnership government in the twin island republic.

For its part, the Congress of the People (COP) party, which is also a member of the coalition government in Trinidad and Tobago, said it "welcomes (Simpson Miller) to our group of CARICOM leaders.

"Like Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar, Mrs. Simpson Miller is viewed as a positive 'agent of change' and

she now has the responsibility of leading her nation on the road to further progress and development", the COP noted.

"Jamaica has indeed turned a new page and the Congress of the People extends best wishes to all the elected Members of Parliament and offers its support to the new administration headed by Prime-Minister-elect Mrs. Portia Simpson Miller. We congratulate, as well, the people of Jamaica".

- Edited from CMC.



PNP POWER: Opposition topples ruling JLP in Jamaica elections

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

attached to the incidents such as questionable response to Hurricane Dean and accusations linking the PNP to payments received from a Dutch company.

But the JLP ran into its own problems, most notably the extradition to the United States of party stalwart Christopher "Dudus" Coke on criminal charges. The fallout left dozens dead in the West Kingston con-

stituency of then Prime Minister Bruce Golding and a commission of enquiry into the entire matter, which left more doubts about the JLP. Golding later resigned and Holness was selected to lead the government and JLP in Oct. 2011. He and the party failed dramatically on Election Day.

"This will shock us of course," Holness said of the election loss. "It will have an impact."

Among the "Labourites" swept away in the PNP landslide was Sharon Hay-Webster, a former PNP legislator who was haunted by her status as a dual citizen of Jamaica and the U.S. and later crossed the floor to represent the JLP.

Various sources contributed to this story.



Simpson Miller sworn in as P.M.

Portia Simpson Miller was sworn in as Jamaica's prime minister on Jan. 5 after leading her People's National Party (PNP) to a convincing victory in the national general elections.

The new prime minister was sworn into office by Governor General Sir Patrick Allen after he was officially notified of the Dec. 29 election results by the Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ).

PNP Campaign Director Dr. Peter Phillips also said plans were well advanced for

the transfer of power to the new administration.

It is the second occasion that Simpson Miller will serve as prime minister. In 2006, she headed the Jamaica government following the retirement from politics of then Prime Minister P.J. Patterson.

In one early fallout of the PNP's victory, Attorney General Ransford Brahm, who was sworn into office five months ago, was expected to tender his resignation.



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Jamaican jailed for assaulting immigration officer

BROWNSVILLE, Texas – A Jamaican immigration detainee has been sentenced to two years and four months in a United States federal prison for assaulting and obstructing an immigration officer, according to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency.

ICE said last month that the sentence was imposed on Kemar Ramon James, 23, by U.S. District Judge Hilda G. Tagle.

James, a former U.S. permanent resident, was sentenced on one count of assaulting and obstructing a federal officer, ICE said.

In January, James pleaded guilty to the same charge, but later withdrew his guilty plea before sentencing.

"Today's sentencing sends a strong message that there are consequences for egregious behavior," said U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson in the Southern District of Texas.

DISRUPTIVE

During sentencing, Judge Tagle noted James's behavior

while in immigration and federal custody, including other assaults and disruptive incidents.

Following his prison term, James will be on supervised release for three years with special a condition that he not illegally re-enter the U.S., ICE said.

According to court documents, in July 2010, James was in "administrative custody" at the Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC) in Texas, pending removal proceedings before an immigration court. On July 22, 2010, detention center guards and agents conducted a routine dorm search, but another detainee refused to follow agents' directions.

"When detention officers and an ICE agent attempted to escort that detainee out of the area, James approached the agent and stated that the other detainee was not going anywhere," ICE said.

"One of the detention officers shifted his attention to James and gestured for James to move back from the ICE agent and the other detainee. When the detention officer

placed his hand out, James slapped the officer's hand away," it added.

ASSAULT

"At that point, the ICE agent attempted to make James step away from the other officers and the other detainee. But James swung and punched the agent in the face, cutting the agent's face," ICE continued. "As other agents came to the injured agent's assistance to restrain James, James resisted.

"During James's transport away from the area, he bragged to a supervisory ICE agent that he had knocked down an ICE agent and later threatened to attack another agent," it said.

The agent's injury required two stitches, ICE said.

It said James has been "ordered removed" by an immigration judge and will likely be deported to his native Jamaica after he completes his prison sentence.



Caribbean migrants in U.S. not giving back enough ~ Gonsalves

NEW YORK – Camillo Gonsalves, St. Vincent and the Grenadines' ambassador to the United Nations, says most educated Caribbean migrants in the United States are not giving back enough in remittances to the region.

"The money spent in educating them is not being recouped," Gonsalves, the eldest son of Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, told an inaugural Migrants' Day Forum in the borough of Brooklyn here last month.

"We, as representatives in the U.S., have to conceptualize on how benefits can be returned to the Caribbean," he told the forum organized by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Consular Corps and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Diaspora Committee.

"We have to think of linkages with investment. There are lots of business opportunities," he said, adding "we're losing 'brains', and the 'brains' are not contributing significantly back home."

'EDUCATED'

Using statistics provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Gonsalves said an overwhelming number of Caribbean nationals with university degrees were either living in the U.S., the United

Kingdom or Canada.

He gave the following percentages of "educated" Caribbean nationals living in those countries: Antigua and Barbuda (56), the Bahamas (58), Barbados (46), Belize (62), Dominica (50), Grenada (75), Guyana (80), Haiti (80), Jamaica (78), St. Kitts and



Gonsalves

Nevis (65), St. Lucia (53), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (75), and Trinidad and Tobago (68).

The Vincentian envoy lamented that while his government is currently engaged in constructing the country's largest infrastructural project ever – an international airport – contributions from the diaspora is "minimal.

"I'm advocating finding ways to make more contributions to back home," he said.

- Edited from CMC.



Christmas Eve tragedy: Haitians die as boat sailing to U.S. sinks

At least 38 Haitian migrants died when their boat sank off Cuba on Christmas Eve.

Cuban officials said that another 87 people from the boat were rescued. Cuban television, quoting Civil Defense officials, said that the boat was spotted 100 meters off shore.

On Dec. 24, the United States Coast Guard said that it had returned almost 150 migrants to Haiti and Cuba after intercepting their boats at sea.

A total of 112 Haitian migrants were returned to Cap-Haitien, Haiti, on Dec. 23, officials said.

A U.S. Coast Guard crew on the St. Petersburg, Florida-based Cutter Resolute, conducting a routine patrol in the Caribbean Sea, discovered the Haitian sail freighter west of Great Inagua, The Bahamas, on its way to the Florida coast.

'GROSSLY OVERLOADED'

The vessel was "grossly

overloaded" with 87 men, 19 women and six children, according to Coast Guard Captain Brendan McPherson of the 7th Coast Guard District chief of enforcement.

"The Coast Guard strongly advises against taking to sea in an attempt to illegally enter the United States," he said.

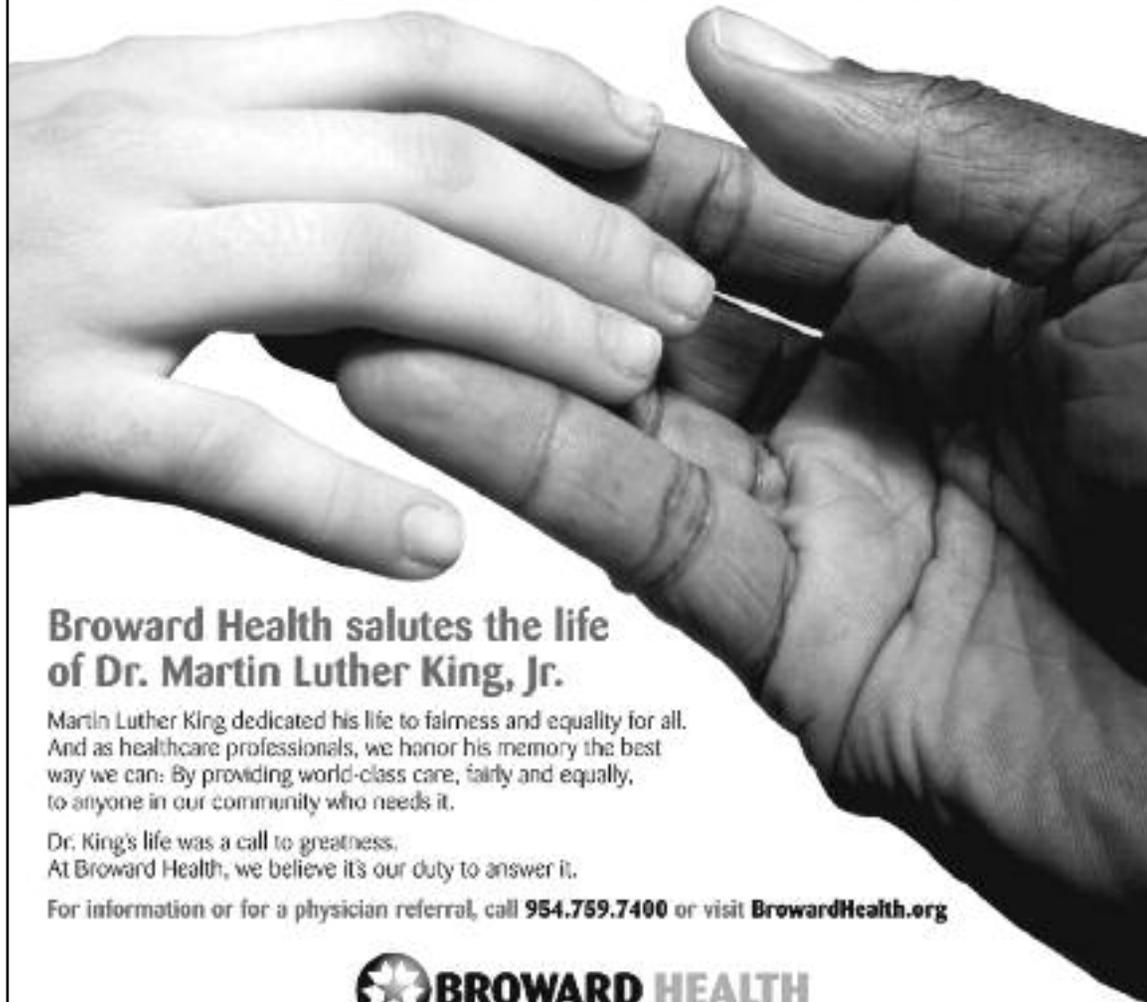
"Taking to sea in a grossly overloaded vessel with little or no safety gear needlessly places human lives at risk," he added.

"The Coast Guard will continue to rescue Haitian migrants from their peril at sea and will always do so in a professional manner that preserves the dignity of all people."

Haiti's President Michel Martelly extended condolences to the families of the victims. Martelly also advised Haitians seeking better opportunities not to venture out to sea in boats that are not seaworthy.



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New York to erect permanent memorial honoring Jamaican 9/11 victims

NEW YORK – A permanent memorial to honor Jamaican nationals who died in the terrorist attacks at New York's World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001 will be erected at the British Garden, at Hanover Square, in lower Manhattan, according to the Jamaica Consulate General here.

It said that the island joins other Commonwealth nations – Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom – in making the British Garden a permanent memorial for its 9/11 victims.

“On Memorial Day, November 11, 2011, 10 years and one month after the terrible attacks...Genevieve Brown Metzger, Jamaica's Consul General to New York, represented her country by laying a wreath in honor of all those Jamaican nationals who were lost when the two towers

crumbled,” the consulate said in a statement early this month.

Brown Metzger said the Jamaicans who perished in the attacks will “never be forgotten by their families and homeland.

“This memorial in the heart of New York City is a fitting tribute, and I am honored to be able to lead the official recognition of their sacrifice to their adopted homeland,” she said.

‘BROTHERS’

Located in lower Manhattan, The British Garden is a joint project between the British Consulate and the St. George's Society in New York. It was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 2010, and its founding was prompted by “a desire to honor and memorialize the 67

British subjects who lost their lives in the tragic attacks”, the Jamaica Consulate stated.

“Since then, the purpose of the British Garden has been expanded to also honor other Commonwealth subjects lost in the attacks”, it noted.

“The British Garden at Hanover Square is most honored and pleased to welcome its Jamaican brothers and sisters to the Garden, where they are uniting in a permanent memorial to those lost in the 9/11 terrorist attacks with nationals of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand,” said Victor E. Stewart, chairman of the garden.



Jamaica's monument will join others honoring 9/11 victims

Mixed fortunes mark Caribbean trade with U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Trinidad and Tobago has become the leading source of United States imports entering under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) tariff preferences, displacing the Dominican Republic, according to the latest report issued by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

In the “Ninth Report to Congress on the operations of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act 2011”, the U.S. imported \$2.2 billion under CBI tariff preferences from Trinidad and Tobago in 2010, an increase of 43.8 percent from 2009.

“Imports under CBI tariff preferences from Trinidad and Tobago are dominated by petroleum and methanol and 75 percent of imports of these two goods entered under CBI provisions in 2010”, the report stated.

“U.S. imports of petroleum under CBI tariff preferences increased in value in 2010 because of both higher volume and higher prices. U.S. imports of methanol increased in value mainly because of higher prices”.

The report noted that Haiti became the second leading source of U.S. imports entering under CBI tariff preferences in 2009 after Costa Rica left CBI. It stated that apparel accounts for over 90 percent of U.S. imports from Haiti and almost all imports of apparel from Haiti enter under CBTPA or the two HOPE Acts.

Imports of apparel from Haiti at preferential tariff rates increased nearly 26 percent in 2009, as utilization of

preferences under the HOPE Acts became established.

SLOWDOWN

The report noted that the Jan. 2010 earthquake in Haiti slowed the growth of imports of apparel under preferential tariffs to 0.7 percent in 2010, but such imports surged 46 percent in the Jan. 2011 to Aug. 2011 period compared to same period in 2010.

Since Costa Rica left the CBI in 2009, Haiti has become the source of virtually all imports of apparel from CBI countries.

The Bahamas replaced Jamaica as the third leading source of U.S. imports entering under CBI tariff preferences in 2010 as imports of fuel ethanol from Jamaica plummeted and imports of apparel from Jamaica declined.

“Jamaica had been the major U.S. source of fuel ethanol in past years, but market conditions in 2009 and 2010 radically changed the profitability of fuel ethanol production in Jamaica, and there were no imports of fuel ethanol from Jamaica from Mar. 2010 to June 2011”, the report noted.

It stated that after several years of decline, there were no U.S. imports of apparel from Jamaica under CBI tariff preferences in 2010.

SIGNIFICANT

The U.S. continues to have a small amount of bilateral trade with many of the Caribbean economies.

“While the overall value of imports is small, imports under CBI tariff preferences account for relatively signifi-

cant proportions of total U.S. imports from these countries. Cane sugar, non-monetary gold, orange juice, papayas, and electrical machinery were some of the leading categories of CBI- imports from the smaller Caribbean economies”, the report noted.

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said that although the CBI was initially envisioned as a program to facilitate the economic development and export diversification of the Caribbean Basin economies, U.S. export growth to the region has been a “welcome corollary benefit”. It noted that the value of total U.S. exports to CBI countries fell 38.4 percent in 2009, but rose 27.6 percent in 2010.

When only 2010 beneficiaries are considered, U.S. exports decreased 21.5 percent in 2010. Collectively, at \$18.5 billion, the CBI region ranked 16th among U.S. export destinations in 2010 and absorbed 1.7 percent of total U.S. exports to the world.

“Panama, The Bahamas, the Netherlands Antilles, and Trinidad and Tobago were the principal markets for U.S. products in 2010, accounting for 72 percent of U.S. exports to the CBI region in 2010”, the report stated, noting that the U.S. exports a broad range of products to the CBI region.

In 2010, the leading categories included refined petroleum products, aircraft, jewelry and jewelry parts, rice, and corn.

Edited from CMC.



Stanford fit for trial ~ judge

HOUSTON, Texas – A United States federal district court judge has found disgraced Texas financier

Allen Stanford mentally fit to stand trial.

Judge David Hittner ruled that Stanford will face a jury this month on

charges that he swindled investors of more than \$7 billion in a “massive” Ponzi scheme involving certificates of deposit (CDs) at his



Stanford

Antigua-based Stanford International Bank (SIB).

The trial is to begin with jury selection on Jan. 23.

Stanford's defense team argued, unsuccessfully, that their client's mental capacity was diminished by head injuries he suffered in a 2009 jailhouse assault and the effects of powerful anxiety medications prescribed in prison after the beating.

“I have found by a preponderance of the evidence that Stanford is competent to stand trial,” said Judge Hittner in his ruling late last month.



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2011 WRAP-UP: Politics dominate year in the Caribbean

For political historians, 2011 has provided lots of fresh fodder.

Never before in the history of the Caribbean have there been general elections in two countries on the same date; coupled with a state of emergency in another; allegations of assassinations against two prime ministers; the surprise resignation of a prime minister, not to mention the democratic change of government in Haiti, all within a 12-month period.

In addition, Barbados's



Gonsalves

Prime Minister Freundel Stuart warned leading members his administration that any attempt to derail his government would have "certain consequences."

At the start of the year, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves stunned Parliament with his disclosure

of an alleged assassination plot against him by criminals. This statement followed public pronouncements by Opposition Leader Arnhim Eustace that the government would fall by the end of 2011.

Nine months later, Gonsalves's counterpart in Trinidad and Tobago, Kamla Persad Bissessar, caused an even bigger stir when she announced that the police had uncovered a plot to kill her and senior government ministers, adding that the assassinations were as a direct result of the "successful" 105 day state of emergency (SOE) that had severely disrupted the activities of the criminals.

SURPRISE

Whether he was forced out of office or not, Bruce Golding surprised Jamaicans with his announcement that he was stepping down as head of the government in October, less than five years after taking the oath of office as prime minister.

His successor, Andrew Holness, 39, became the youngest ever prime minister since political Independence in 1962, but also now has un-envied record of being booted out of office just after two months. Holness gambled and called



Golding

general elections on Dec. 29, but the voters decided that Portia Simpson Miller, the



Anthony

first ever woman prime minister they sent packing in 2007, was a better choice to lead the country.

Voters in Guyana and St. Lucia created history by going to the polls on the same day to elect their respective governments.

For Dr. Kenny Anthony, Nov. 28 allowed him another bite at governing St. Lucia, following his defeat in the 2006 poll. The United Workers Party (UWP) and Stephenson King were sent packing.

Donald Ramotar ensured that the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPPC) would remain at the helm of government in Guyana, even though it failed to obtain a majority in the 65-member National

Assembly. Ramotar faced a formidable challenge from the Alliance for Change (AFC) and the Opposition grouping A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) that between them controlled 33 of the seats in Parliament.

HAITI CELEBRATES

In March, Haitians also celebrated the continued renewal of their democracy by electing musician Michael "Sweet Micky" Martelly as their new head of state. Martelly received nearly 68 percent of the votes cast in the second round runoff and easily defeated former first lady and law professor Mirlande Manigat.

But Martelly had to nominate three persons before legislators agreed to his nominee for prime minister and the French-speaking CARICOM country is still coming to grips with the Jan. 2010 earthquake and a cholera outbreak.

The High Court is likely to determine the future political careers of Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit and his Education Minister Petteer St. Jean after the main Opposition United Workers Party (UWP) argued that the two ministers were illegally nominated to contest the Dec. 2009 general elections because they held dual citizenship at the time. A ruling is expected in early 2012.

In Nevis, the Opposition Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) has maintained that the July poll won by the ruling Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) was rigged and it too has gone to the courts seeking redress.

PROTEST

Despite early pronouncements, the British government failed to name a date for general elections in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) and citizens took to the streets to demand an end to being ruled by London.

Meanwhile, Anguilla's Chief Minister Hubert Hughes has called on citizens to seriously consider seeking political Independence from Britain after Alistair Harrison, governor of the 35 square mile island, refused to sign off on the 2011 budget.

"We have come far enough and fought hard enough to have an Anguillian governor or governor general, an Anguillian flag and being

identified to the world as 'Anguillians' and not 'Belongers'," Hughes said.

Reuben Meade in Montserrat upgraded his chief minister status to that of premier even while acknowledging that the new Constitution, that went into effect from September, was not a perfect document.

In the British Virgin Islands, 67-year old physician Orlando Smith was voted premier replacing Ralph T O'Neal in the general elections.

WARNING

The political upheavals in the region took place amid the problems associated with the ongoing global economic and financial crisis that continue to thwart socio-economic development to the point that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that Caribbean countries will continue to struggle and governments will have to tighten on their economic spending.

For its part, China continued its largesse in the region pumping millions of dollars in assistance to CARICOM as part of its diplomatic initiative to improve relations with the region.

The introduction of the low cost carrier REDJet is seen by its owners as an attempt to deal with the high cost of travel, but while the Barbados-based carrier appeared to be soaring, its Antigua-based competitor LIAT, was continuing to face financial as well as industrial problems.

Outgoing Caribbean community (CARICOM) Secretary General Dr. Denzil Douglas said that any reflection on the past year "will no doubt be colored by the challenges spawned by the current period of global uncertainties."

CARICOM has also sought to put its own house in order. In August, the regional grouping named Dominican Irwin La Rocque as the seventh CARICOM secretary-general. Caribbean governments also indicated that the process towards a single economy within the 15-member grouping that would have gone into effect by 2015, will now "take longer than anticipated".

Meanwhile, the ongoing crime situation continued unabated in several Caribbean countries in 2011, despite efforts by regional governments to push other options rather than resorting to murder in dealing with domestic and personal squabbles.

- Edited from CMC.



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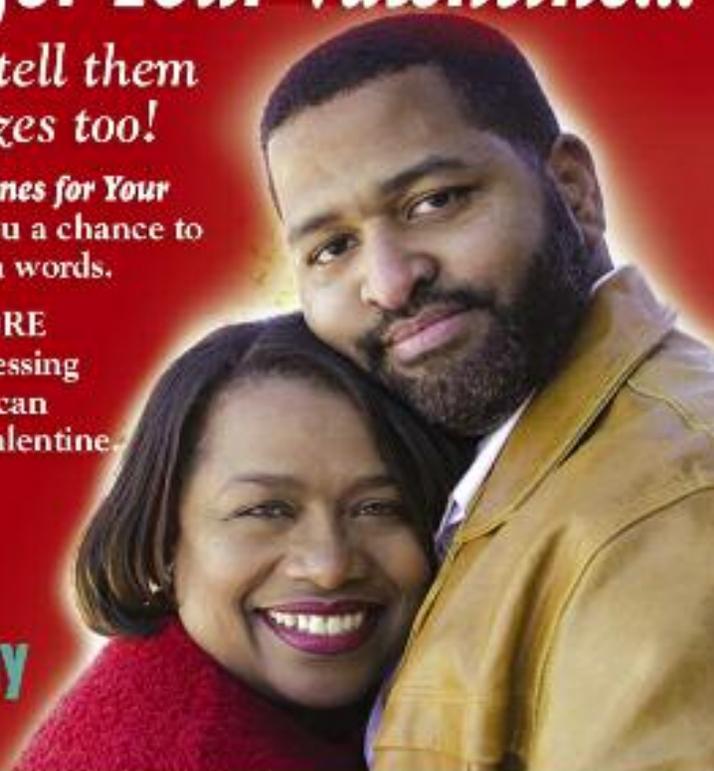
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Entries must include the writer's full name, address and telephone number. Each writer is allowed one entry. Look out for the name of the winner and the winning composition, which will be published in the **March 2012** issue of Caribbean Today.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS **FEB. 15, 2012**



The truth about immigration

While some lawmakers in conservative states, blinded by ignorance and racism around the United States, continue their move to banish undocumented immigrants from their borders, a new study is insisting that attention should be paid "to immigrants' future achievement because we will greatly depend on their human resources in coming decades".



FELICIA PERSAUD

The study, titled "Assimilation Tomorrow", from The Center for American Progress's Dowell Myers and John Pitkin, insists that whatever is done now regarding immigrants and new immigration policies, "will have a great impact on our progress going forward".

Myers and Pitkin say the coming retirement of the large generation of baby boomers is expected to create urgent labor needs among private and public employers, even as losing immigrants could mean a significant shortfall in the Social Security program.

Additionally, the report posits that the housing market also depends increasingly on immigrant households, who disproportionately own their own homes.

"Without their buying power homeowners would find it harder to sell their properties", state the authors, who add that the success of immigrants will be a vitally important contribution to the new economy.

CONTRADICTION

This is contrary to the many claims that we hear from some on the right, who believe that immigrants are not only causing a browner

and blacker America, but taking away jobs and honing in on limited state resources.

This could not be further from the truth, especially when the reality shows that "immigrants do not remain mired in their status as newcomers but surge ahead on many scores.

"Their progress has been extraordinary and it could become even greater but for the growing number of obstacles placed in the path of many immigrants", Myers and Pitkin state.

Comparisons to native-born citizens done by the report show that immigrants achieved more rapid upward progress, albeit from a lower starting point, than the native-born during the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s.

"Most impressive is the fact that the percentage of immigrants who own rather than rent their homes is projected to rise from 25.5 percent in 2000 to 72 percent in 2030. Furthermore, the percent speaking English well or very well is projected to rise from 57.5 percent to 70.3 percent and the percent living in poverty is projected to fall from 22.8 percent to 13.4 percent", states the report.

PROOF

The figures come alive in the many immigrant communities and stories all across America. Many have created their own employment despite battling a backlog in an immigration system that keeps thousands in limbo. Others are rapidly working two to three jobs to push forward in achieving their version of the American Dream, all the while paying taxes and contributing to the economy of this country.

Immigrants, whether documented or not, deserve to be recognized for their impact on the U.S. and not continue to be made scapegoats and dis-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

New Year's runnings

Well, here we are in the year of our Lord 2012, and time does march on, inexorably, creeping, crawling, nay, running, even sprinting, as the days do seem to get shorter and a month is as fleeting as the ephemeral flicker of a short candle flame.

Where did 2011 go? Did I do all that I promised myself that I would?

It's now a new year, and I shall do my endeavor best to do better this year. That is my resolution, my resolve.

But hold on a minute, even the word resolve, spun around, juggled up and down, spells the words love, lovers, loves, re-love. Wasn't that the source of our problems last year, this thing called love?

Well, I shall fix it this year.

This time we will be realistic, set the bar where we can reach it. I'll take a long hard look at myself, see my faults and correct them. Naturally, this impacts on our partner, for like it or not, our partners are a reflection of ourselves, and people do get the partners they deserve, and the government they deserve.

CHANGE

So it follows that if you treat your partner with casual indifference, you will get indifference in return. Therefore, this year you will be more caring and attentive.

Often we do sins, not by commission, but by omission, by simply being thoughtless.

"You mean to say that you



know that I was here painting the garage and you couldn't even bring me a glass of lemonade?"

"Sorry Honey, I never even thought of it."

You will make a concerted effort to put her needs first, and see to it that she is foremost in your mind, and not just there when you need something.

As for her, she too has resolutions for the new year, for it is now a proven scientific fact that men have feelings too. She will be more accommodating to his needs. He, in turn, resolves to be more sensitive



TONY ROBINSON

to her needs.

"Sometimes I will just turn off the sports and give her my full attention."

NEW LEAF

As for that mistress on the side, this year she has got to go, for he resolves that he has turned over a new leaf, and will focus more attention on his family only. He also resolves to not spend so much time working at the office, and will do more chores around the house. She in turn can never resolve to stop cheating, for women do not cheat on their men, and there is no documented record of any woman ever admitting this to her man.

But she will resolve to stop nagging him and accusing

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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End tuition discrimination now

During my 16 years in public service, I thought I had seen it all. Recently, though, I learned something shook me to my core. In Florida, students who are legal citizens are being denied in-state college tuition if they are children of undocumented immigrants.

Education is the hallmark of the American dream. As a Jamaican American, I know this well. The prom-

ise of a better way of life is inextricably tied to higher learning, and that's why so many immigrant families instill the importance of education in their children. Sadly, Florida has established a two-tiered system of citizenship that forces some U.S. citizens to pay more than three times as much as other students for their college education. Consider the case of South Florida resident Wendy Ruiz, an American citizen studying at Miami-Dade College. Because she is unable to demonstrate her parents' lawful immigration status, she cannot afford to take a full course load and will need three years to complete her two-year degree.

This flawed policy is the subject of a class-action lawsuit filed by the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of students who are denied in-state tuition due to the immigration status of their parents. Make no mistake about it: Our nation's Founding Fathers did not contemplate different levels of citizenship when they crafted the U.S. Constitution.

In response, I have formed a coalition with the Children's Services Council of Broward County and the Broward Days Immigrant Issues Team to help right this wrong. We are sup-

porting the bipartisan End Tuition Discrimination Now Act, sponsored by Senator Rene Garcia (Republican-Hialeah) and Representative Reggie Fullwood (Democrat-Jacksonville). I am a primary co-sponsor of this bill that will allow these students to pay in-state tuition if they graduate from a Florida high school and pursue a post-secondary degree. It's time to take a stand for Florida's most important resource – our children.

Hazelle Rogers
State Representative
(Democrat-Florida)

Effect positive change in society

I've thought about advertising in your paper. However, two articles in the September (2011) issue have caused me to reconsider:

- Promotion of the Ms. Black Nude Pageant in Negril (Jamaica). We visited Negril and it's a beautiful area. It doesn't need a nude pageant to attract tourists.
- Tony Robinson's hedonistic, vul-

gar predatory article, making men and women out to be solely sexual objects for pleasure.

Where is the respect for human dignity, telling us about love and sacredness, relative to the human body? It is my belief, that as long as people of influence, such as yourself, continue to promote sexual immorality and sin as good fun stuff, we will continue to have all the problems that plague society now, in 2011 and beyond.

May I suggest that you promote kindness, joy, happiness, family values and fidelity, rather than what I've seen in your paper.

I wonder if advertisers know what their advertising dollars are helping to promote.

Please help people come out of the darkness and into the light. You have a magnificent bully pulpit to effect a positive change in society today.

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Ralph F. Geronimo,
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Neighbors And Neighbors Association (NANA)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

him of infidelity. Nagging is a form of emotional abuse and has driven many men away from relationships.

The women resolve to really lose weight this year, and not just treat it like a joke business that lasts a few days into the year. She must now realize that the man chose her not only for her personality, charm and character, but also for her body, which by the way, is what he saw first.

PROGRAM

So this year, when she resolves to really get on a program to be the woman she used to be, to be the girlfriend that her man once found sexy, to apply some discipline and not just let go and be the leviathan that she is now, she means it. Naturally, he too resolves to take care of his body, after all, he can't very well insist that she lose weight and he doesn't. That little paunch that made its genesis in 2000, and has now reached the proportions of a beach ball, has got to be reduced.

But laziness and bags of excuses weigh heavier than the excess weight that they now carry. I'm not saying that they

The truth about immigration

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

missed, especially as we move into the 2012 election cycle.

The proof is in the numbers. Now it's time for the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama and the American Congress to realize

New Year's runnings

should have a six-pack like an Adonis, but goof grief, even a two pack or even a flat no pack can work. Why should a man of 35 look like a 300-pound, 60-year-old hog? And the painful part is women tell me that these men are still on the prowl seeking them.

Both partners should resolve to listen to each other more, as it's proven that most breakdowns are caused by a lack of communication. The resolve to be more understanding should also be paramount, as all opinions are important.

The resolution should be made, to not try and change your partner, for that's the way you found them, so live with it. They are not projects, but resolutions.

It does seem like an impossible, implausible, impractical, improbable ideal, all these resolutions, and that they are unattainable. Well, perhaps they are, and maybe I'm just an old fashioned sentimentalist, a romantic from another era, but if you can even achieve one resolution, it will be a start.

Remember, the person in the mirror, that's where it begins. Have a great year folks, and thank you for your

tolerance and feedback.

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Jazz and blues fest 2012 to celebrate 50 years of Jamaica's music

The dynamic genres that have made up its popular music over 50 years of Independence will receive special recognition during this year's Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival.

A journey through Jamaican music, featuring well-known Jamaican artistes, will be staged

Chris Martin, A.J. Brown, Pluto Shervington, Lloyd Parks and the We the People Band and the Dragonaires.

Additionally, the night will offer a narrative to guide the audience through the musi-

cal journey.

The Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival is set to run from **Jan. 26-28** at the Greenfield Stadium in the parish of Trelawny.



Griffiths



Shaggy

on the festival's first day, Jan. 26.

"The idea is to showcase the music from the time we gained our Independence to now," explained Junior Taylor, associate producer with Art of Music Productions, the company presenting the event.

Ska, rocksteady, reggae and dancehall will take the spotlight. Among the artistes scheduled to perform are Shaggy, Yellowman, Half Pint, Marcia Griffiths, Etana, Luciano, Mykal Rose, Freddie McGregor, John Holt, George Nooks,

West Indian Day Carnival boss resigns

NEW YORK – Yolanda Lezama-Clarke is calling it quits after 10 years as president of the West Indian American Day Carnival Association (WIADCA).

"I've formally submitted my resignation; I'm just ready to move on," said Lezama-Clarke, whose organization is responsible for the annual parade on Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway.

Lezama-Clarke's father, the late Carlos Lezama, founded the association that organizes the 44-year-old parade, the largest in North America, that attracts more than three million people on Labor Day, a public holiday in the United States.

"There are a lot of challenges in addition to issues around the carnival, but we're going into our 45th year, and I hope it will continue, and I don't know why it shouldn't," Lezama-Clarke said.

CONTROVERSY

The event made headlines this month after racial messages attributed to some members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) were posted on the social network Facebook, describing parade participants as "savages" and "ani-

mals," among other names.

Lezama-Clarke said she was "truly" disappointed, but not surprised by the racist postings.

"While these are the views of many, I am sure that does not reflect all of the administration. These are gross, irresponsible descriptions that undermine the mission and purpose of the event," she added.

The NYPD said it has matched 20 "offensive" postings on Facebook about the West Indian Day Carnival Parade with names of police officers. Tyrone Johnson, whose court case brought the Facebook conversation to light, said he was grateful to his lawyers, Benjamin Moore and Paul Lieberman, for discovering the material, which he said contributed to his acquittal.

"I'm just glad my case is over with," he said. "Whatever could be done for everybody else, that's good, too."

Lezama-Clarke said "any culture of police officers' contempt for New York's black and brown communities either real or symbolic cannot be tolerated."

'Vintage Reggae Winter Fest' in Florida

A roster of classic reggae stars has been lined up for next month's "Vintage Reggae Winter Fest" in South Florida.

The event is scheduled for **Feb. 19** at Miramar Regional Park in the city of Miramar.

Among those expected to perform are Marcia Griffiths, Freddie McGregor, Yellow Man, Leroy Sibbles,



McGregor

Charlie Chaplin, Professor Nuts and Little John.

Miramar Regional Park is located at 16801 Miramar Parkway.

For tickets and more information, visit www.aboveaverageentertainment.net or call

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Influential reggae producer 'Fattis' Burrell is dead

Influential reggae music producer Philip "Fattis" Burrell

died last month in his home country Jamaica, reportedly

from a heart attack. He was 57.

Over the course of two decades, Burrell was the force behind some of reggae's biggest names, such as Sizzla, Sanchez, Pinchers and Luciano, and promoted the music's best traditions

As one newspaper report put it: "He kept Jamaica's best musicians employed when drum machines and computers were putting them out of work. And he held his artists to a higher moral standard than most, insisting on socially responsible messages in his

music".

Burrell was born on July 23, 1954 in West Kingston's Trench Town, a poor community which produced some of Jamaica's greatest musical talent, among them Bob Marley, Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer. His family moved to England when Burrell was five, but he returned to the Caribbean island as a teenager.

Burrell founded Exterminator Records in the 1980s, later renaming it Xterminator. His label was known for producing positive songs in an era where violence



Burrell

and sexually explicit lyrics had begun to creep in.

Dominica's carnival kicks off

Carnival, the most festive season on the Caribbean Island of Dominica, is underway, and runs through February.

Among the season's attractions are the pre-Lenten festival, also known as "The Real Mas", which includes parades, Calypso Monarch and Junior Monarch competitions, Queen Show, Princess Show and Teenage Pageant.

A parade on Jan. 29 marks the official start of the celebra-

tions and the opening of Carnival City. The finale runs Feb. 20-21. Carnival events are scheduled for the capital Roseau and villages such as Portsmouth, Marigot and Grandbay.

For more information, visit www.discoverdominica.com or call Discover Dominica Authority toll-free from the United States and Canada at 1-866-522-4057.



Suriname to host CARIFESTA in 2013

PARAMARIBO, Suriname, CMC – Suriname will host the Caribbean Festival of Arts (CARIFESTA) in 2013, a decade after it hosted the region's premier cultural festival.

Dr. Hilary Brown, program manager for culture and community development at the Guyana-based Caribbean community (CARICOM) secretariat, told delegates attending a recent meeting of the Regional Cultural Committee (RCC) that Suriname had agreed to host the event. She said that the RCC would discuss with Suriname, plans for CARIFESTA XI, starting with logistic and promotional

arrangements.

The future of CARIFESTA has been uncertain since Guyana hosted the event in 2008, after The Bahamas expressed an inability to do so.

CARICOM said that while it will be the second occasion that Suriname will host the event, CARIFESTA XI will be held in accordance with the new model prescribed in the CARIFESTA strategic plan developed by the RCC in 2004.

NEW, IMPROVED

Brown said the new and improved CARIFESTA sought to address several

weaknesses in the management and promotion of the event, and to ensure that it was a more dynamic, economically viable festival that met the expectations of regional and international audiences.

Since 2006, attempts have been made to phase in critical elements of the new model, starting with CARIFESTA IX hosted by Trinidad and Tobago.

Brown said that the new approach to CARIFESTA would provide more opportunities for professional and artistic development for the region's artists.



Grenadian cultural icon 'Aunty Tek' dies

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada – Grenada has lost national icon and renowned folklorist Thelma Ermintrude Knights, better known as "Aunty Tek", who died on last month at age 85.

"The death of Aunty Tek is a monumental loss to our cultural community," said Junior Minister of Culture Arley Gill. "Aunty Tek was a genuine cultural icon, truly one of a kind, and she cannot be replaced.

"Aunty Tek has been an immeasurable treasure to culture not just in Grenada, but also in the Caribbean," added Gill, who noted that her death came less than two months after the passing of Anthony

"Jericho" Greenidge.

Greenidge's contribution to media, sports and culture evoked an outpouring of national grief.

IMMORTALIZED

Aunty Tek was among the first women to own and drive a car in Grenada. She was also a teacher and principal, as well as a leading Grenadian and Caribbean stage actor.

Aunty Tek – founder of her own junior theater company and of the now defunct Bee Wee Ballet drama group – was an undisputed master of folk tales, especially the "Ole Nancy Stories". A government statement noted

that as a raconteur "she is perhaps rivaled only by the late Jamaican folklorist, Louise "Miss Lou" Bennett –Coverley and Trinidad-born and Grenada-raised, Paul Keens-Douglas".

A graduate of the Teachers' Training College in Trinidad, Aunty Tek was honored and presented with a special award at the inaugural "Spice Word Festival" here last year. In 2011, the festival was renamed after Aunty Tek, which Gill said was intended to "immortalize" her.

- Edited from CMC.



ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

• **No more 'Sweet Micky'**
An adviser to Michel Martelly says Haiti's president will not perform as his alter ego "Sweet Micky". Martelly, who before his election in April had a long career as a singer, had said in September he would retake the stage last month to raise \$10 million for education. But presidential adviser Damian Merlo said the concert had been postponed indefinitely "due to the holiday sea-

son and the complexity of organizing such an event."

• 'Pieces of Jamaica' exhibition

The beauty and culture of one of the Caribbean's most desired destinations is the focus of a fine arts exhibition titled "Pieces of Jamaica" currently on display at the Civic Center Art Gallery in Sunrise, Florida.

The exhibition, which runs

through February, showcases the island as seen through the lens of Jamaican-born photographer David I. Muir. The "Dub Vibe" performing arts event will be held at 6 p.m. Feb. 22, which will highlight cultural aspects of the island, including music, poetry, culinary and other artistic expressions.

- Compiled from various sources.



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MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY

Broward focuses on youth, non-violence

A party, street parade and rally are among the events scheduled to mark the birth of slain American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. in Broward County, Florida this month.

A free "MLK Birthday Party", will be held from **10 a.m. to noon Jan. 14** at the African American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale. Activities will include arts and crafts, storytelling and cultural performances. A birthday cake and refreshments will also be available.

Later that day, between **1 p.m. and 4 p.m.**, The MLK Youth Committee will present the third annual "Change Yourself Before You Change Me" teen summit at the library and cultural center, which is located at 2650 Sistrunk Blvd.

PARADE

At **9 a.m. Jan. 16**, the King

Holiday Parade will start at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School at Sistrunk Boulevard (N.W. Sixth Street) and MLK Boulevard (N.W. 31st Avenue) and go east along Sistrunk to N.W. 27th Avenue.

All marching bands, drum and flag corps, cheerleaders, school clubs, community, civic, religious, social and cultural organizations are invited.

Between **10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**, following the parade, the Non-Violence Rally and Battle of the Bands will take place at the Otis Grey Athletic Field at Dillard High School.

For more information, to volunteer for any of the events, or to register online visit the MLKCC website at www.kingholidaycelebration.com. Or call **954-828-8945**.



Miami Gardens to host MLK events Jan. 7 and 16



The City of Miami Gardens will host its eighth annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration this month by staging several events to encourage "Unity in the Community".

The preliminary round of an oratorical contest kicks off at **11 a.m. Jan. 7** at the Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Complex Auditorium, 3000 N.W. 199th St. in Miami Gardens. The final will be staged at noon Jan.

16 at the same venue.

At **10 a.m. Jan. 16**, the break out artist contest will be staged at the recreational complex. At noon that day entries for the "Art in the Gardens Contest" will be judged at the venue.

For more information, visit www.miamigardensMLK.com.



'MLK Day of Service Project' in Miami

In celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his legacy of service, several agencies in Miami-Dade County will host a "MLK Day of Service Project" on Jan. 14.

Volunteers from the various organizations and communities will participate in various

projects between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Goulds Park, 11350 S.W. 216th St. in Miami, Florida.

Scheduled activities include painting the interior and exterior of the park office and community center; landscaping projects; building and installing planter boxes; pres-

sure cleaning the tennis courts; painting roadway bumpers, fencing and the entrance gate with reflective paint for safety.

For more information, call volunteer coordinator Angie Gomez at **305-961-2781** or e-mail angieg@miamidade.gov.



Interfaith celebration in Plantation on Jan. 15

An interfaith celebration honoring the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held this month in South Florida.

The 16th annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will be staged at **3 p.m. Jan. 15** at the Plantation United

Methodist Church, 1001 N.W. 70th Ave.

Hosted by the MLK Plantation Interfaith/Multicultural Committee, the event will feature keynote speaker Dr. Nanci Thomas, founder/director of the Oscar Thomas Foundation (OTF), a

non-profit youth organization that promotes leadership by using art to encourage freedom of self-expression, in the development of imagination and creativity.

For more information, call **954-584-7500**.



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Applications online at www.miamidade.gov/district9

There will be a mandatory information/workshop meeting explaining the application and requirements held on **Thursday, February 10, 2011, 6:00 p.m.** at the South Dade Government Center 10710 SW 211 St. Suite 203. **Please be on time!**

Completed applications will be accepted from Feb. 11, 2011 – Feb. 18, 2011, by 5:00 p.m. Return applications to District North Office 10710 SW 211 Street, Suite 206 **ONLY**. No late applications will be accepted.

Please submit 1 original, marked original and 1 copy completed application. We suggest you keep a copy also, for your records!

For additional information contact: Ms. Lawanza Finney 305-756-0605 Neighbors And Neighbors Association (NANA)

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HEALTH



Jamaica to host conference on latest diabetes treatment

JAMAICA – Scientific papers on the latest treatment regarding diabetes will be discussed at the 18th annual diabetes conference organized by the University of Technology (UTech) here.

United States Ambassador to Jamaica Pamela Bridgewater will officially open the conference, scheduled for Mar. 29 to April 1 and will be held under the theme “New Frontiers in Diabetes Management”.

Dr. Alverston Bailey, co-chairman of University Diabetes Outreach Program (UDOP) and Adjunct associate professor of Occupational

Health Service, said the three-day conference will feature three distinguished lectures and 12 scientific sessions.

He said the scientific sessions will cover a wide range of areas on diabetes including integrated medicines; spirituality and health; nutraceuticals and diabetes; hormone replacement therapy in women with diabetes; and new technologies dealing with diabetes.

UDOP said it aims to promote research and enhanced education on diabetes, through community outreach programs.



Chronic diseases weakening Caribbean ~ World Bank

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The World Bank said that chronic diseases are weakening health systems and hindering economic growth in the Caribbean.

In two new reports released here recently, the Washington-based financial institution said heart disease, cancer, strokes, obesity, diabetes, and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of death in the Caribbean and represent a “rapidly increasing share of total health expenditure for countries in the region”.

According to the reports – titled “Non-Communicable Diseases in Jamaica: Moving

from Prescription to Prevention” and “The Growing Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases in the Eastern Caribbean” – much of the rise in chronic diseases in the Caribbean can be traced to individual risk factors, such as poor diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use, and alcohol abuse.

OBESITY

According to the bank, obesity is the most prevalent NCD in the Caribbean, mainly the result of unhealthy diet, including excessive salt, fat, and sugar intake, and lack of physical activity, particularly among adult women. In addi-

tion, the bank said globalization and urbanization contribute to unhealthy eating behavior, such as eating out, eating more staple foods, less fruits and vegetables, and consuming sugar-saturated soft drinks and fast food.

It said the proportion of physically inactive adults has doubled over the last decade.

The World Bank also said tobacco use and excessive alcohol consumption are widespread across the Caribbean, stating that the early age of onset is of particular concern.

- Edited from CMC.



T&T-born ‘Mother of Medicine’, physician to New York’s political elite, dies at age 97

NEW YORK – A prominent Trinidadian physician in Harlem has died at 97.

According to her family, Dr. Muriel Petioni, who died last month in Manhattan, was prominent in Harlem the way doctors once were prominent in every small town in the country.

She was the family physician to Harlem’s political elite – among them Charles Rangel and the Percy Sutton – but treated thousands of others, too. She identified many public health issues before they hit the epidemiologists’ radar, her family said.

The family said Dr. Petioni preached against sugar, junk food and obesity in the early 1950s, when she first hung her shingle at 114 West 131st St. in Harlem (charging \$2 for an office visit and \$3 for house calls).

Her dietary warning – “You’re digging your grave with your fork” – became a trademark, as did the motherly finger-pointing that usually

accompanied it.

The heroin epidemic in the 1960s and ’70s, and the crack and AIDS epidemics of the 1980s, came early to her door – whether directly in the blood work of her patients or indirectly in the stress-related health problems she saw in patients who were grandparents raising Harlem addicts’ children, the family said.

In addition, the family said Dr. Petioni was held up by gunmen several times for cash, drugs or prescription pads, but was never harmed and never considered leaving Harlem.

Until her retirement as a physician in the late 1990s, Dr. Petioni maintained her practice on the ground floor of the house on 131st Street where she and her family had lived, and where she had grown up.

DEEP TIES

Her ties to Harlem ran deep. She was the daughter of one of Harlem’s first black physicians. She was among the first generation of black doctors given staff privileges at Harlem Hospital in the 1950s, when most hospitals in the United States still made black physicians refer their patients to white doctors before admitting the patients to the hospital.

“Harlem is the black capital of the world, and Harlem Hospital is the black hospital of the world,” she told reporters in 2001.

“I would give people as much time as they needed,” she told the *Amsterdam News* earlier this year.

“If you had your heart and mind bursting and needed to talk to someone who was a physician, not bleeding in the body but bleeding in mind and soul, I would listen. I wasn’t brilliant. I wasn’t the best physician in the world, but I was nice enough to make peo-



Petioni

ple feel good,” she added.

The *Amsterdam News* called her “the Mother of Medicine in Harlem”.

Muriel Marjorie Petioni was born on Jan. 1, 1914, in Trinidad to Charles and Rosa Petioni. Her father was a journalist whose advocacy for an end to colonial rule led to his expulsion in 1917. He arrived in New York, took pre-med classes at City College in New York while working as a porter and brought his family to join him in 1919.

After being admitted to Howard University’s medical school in Washington, he studied there full time while Muriel’s mother remained in Harlem, supporting her and another daughter.

Mr. Petioni, who was 40 when he became a doctor in 1925, settled his family and medical practice at the 131st Street house a few years later.

Muriel Petioni followed her father’s path, graduating from Howard University Medical School in 1937, the only woman in her class. In 1942, she married Mallalieu S. Woolfolk, a Tuskegee airman, who later became an influential lawyer in Harlem, serving many of its political leaders. They divorced in the 1970s.

Dr. Petioni is survived by her son, Charles Woolfolk, and two granddaughters.

- Edited from CMC.




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~ A special Caribbean Today feature

TURNING POINT: Battle for change continues in Haiti ~ President Martelly

To mark Haiti's 208th Independence this month, President Michel Martelly delivered a speech to the French-speaking Caribbean nation at Place d'Armes in Gonaïves. Below is the edited content of that speech:

The year 2011 ends and will remain for us a turning point. To those who have been disappointed, those that the life has experienced in their flesh, their souls, to those who suffer, it is to you first that I made my wishes, good and better year 2012.

To all my fellow citizens from here and elsewhere, all my young men, all my valiant women I wish you a happy New Year as well as all those away from their home, who chose to come here, bring us the change, I tell you happy New Year.

To all of the apparatus of the state who share with me the responsibility and duty to ensure that all those who

need it feel protected by the state, I renew my best wishes, to all, happy New Year and Happy Feast. Happy Feast, because all of us Haitians, we commemorate the anniversary of the proclamation of Independence of our country.

On Jan. 1, 1804, after the victory, the nation was free, independent. The war was won. Since 208 years the canons are silent, but other



Martelly

wars are to be won, other battles to fight, other objectives to be achieved.

CHANGE

I am fully aware and I am responsible to infuse this movement, this vision of a

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

Florida-based engineer helps to rebuild his birthplace

He left Haiti as a boy, but now he is returning to the French-speaking Caribbean nation to do a man's job.

Starting as a college student, Johnny Pierre, with the help of friends, created a non-profit organization – Nouvelle Generation - to help residents of Haiti and neighboring Dominican Republic.

Now an engineer with Florida Power and Light (FPL) he visits the country to help rebuilding efforts, which are especially needed today following the devastating earthquake two years ago that killed thousands and destroyed important infrastructure. The road to the cause has been worthwhile.

"Doing the right thing isn't always easy," explained Pierre in a recent press release, "but it certainly is rewarding when you know that your actions are directly helping someone."

"My family and I moved to the United States from Haiti when I was nine years old. I'm 27 now and work as an engineer for FPL. I have had many



Pierre, left, paints a school in Haiti.

wonderful opportunities during my life, and I like to extend help to my former homeland whenever possible."

IMPACT

In addition to fundraising, members of Nouvelle Generation visit Haiti to tackle projects that can have a direct impact on the local community.

"All year long we collect donations and items like shoes, clothing and school supplies, and we figure out the least expensive way to ship supplies

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

U.S. praises Haiti's proud history

The following is a message to mark Haiti's Independence Day, Jan. 1, 2012, sent by United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I am delighted to congratulate the people of Haiti as you celebrate the 208th anniversary of your independence this Jan. 1.

The story of Haitian Independence is one of courage and resilience. The victory by L'Ouverture and others was an achievement by all Haitians, and it became a



Clinton

source of inspiration and pride in the Americas and around the world.

Today, as you continue to rebuild from the earthquake

of Jan. 12, 2010 and give more Haitians the opportunity to realize their potential, we are reminded of this proud history of strength and unity. Time and again the people of Haiti have stood up against difficult odds to build a better future.

As you celebrate this special day with family, friends and loved ones, know that the United States is committed to your future as we work together to fulfill the promise of Haitian independence. Happy Independence Day and best wishes for a new year filled with peace and prosperity.

DIGGING OUT: Haitians try rural road to recovery

NELSON A. KING

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Haitian authorities say they are determined to fix the structural problems that have kept the French-speaking Caribbean country stuck in poverty and instability by reviving the desiccated, disused farmland that had long been unable to feed the country.

President Michel Martelly has said that decentralization is a critical cornerstone in supporting his new vision for a new Haiti, adding "we want to strengthen and empower our rural communities and create new ones."

When the massive earthquake leveled the capital Port-au-Prince on Jan. 12, 2010, planners and visionaries here and abroad looked past the rubble, seeing an opportunity to revive rural Haiti.

But analysts said the vision has run up against Haitian reality: myriad economic and infrastructure deficiencies, the lack of credible opportunity in rural areas and the fading of international interest and funds.

Reviving rural Haiti would wean the country off an over-reliance on imported food while creating jobs in the countryside, helping to discourage mass migration to urban areas, like Port-au-Prince, analysts said.

Before the earthquake, nearly a quarter of the population lived in the capital, where two-thirds of the labor force had no formal jobs and overcrowding was considered a major contributor to the quake's estimated death toll of 300,000.

Tens of thousands of people fled Port-au-Prince for rural areas immediately after the earthquake, but most have since returned, American and Haitian government officials said, finding little opportunity and food scarce.

REVERSING TREND

"We need to reverse the trend of people in rural areas moving to the city," said Ari Toubo Ibrahim, the Haiti representative for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The organization said it believes that, with enough

training and support, about a tenth of the 600,000 people still in earthquake camps could ultimately move to the countryside. New factories are also part of the plan. A South Korean-run industrial park in the north, partly financed by the United States, is expected to open this year, providing at least 20,000 jobs.

But experts said agriculture is the nation's biggest need. Farming has declined to 25 percent of the economy today from 40 percent a decade ago, making Haiti more dependent on imported food, officials said. The government says 52 percent of the food Haitians eat comes from abroad, compared with 20 percent a few decades ago.

The decline in farming dates primarily to the mid-1980s, when the government encouraged urbanization, and it worsened under a trade embargo during political turmoil in the 1990s, experts say. When trade restrictions loosened, the market was flooded with cheap, foreign staples like American rice, Dominican poultry and milk, in powdered (CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

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Haiti lifts visa requirement to woo investment, tourism

Haiti, in a move seen to ramp up foreign investment and tourism in the French-speaking Caribbean country, will lift the entry visa requirements for citizens of some countries this month.

Effective Jan. 10, Dominicans, Panamanians and Colombians will no longer have to secure visas to visit, according to Haiti's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Tourism. Those citizens will, however, be required to produce other

documentation to enter Haiti.

"It is necessary that the citizens have a valid passport, a Schengen visa (visa Europe) or a U.S. visa or valid Canadian visa", a recent statement from representatives of the Foreign Affairs and Tourism ministries noted.

"... This measure will allow investors to have one less step to come and see what the country has to offer and will allow us also to increase tourism."



New army gets green light

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti, CMC – Haiti's President Michel Martelly says a government-appointed commission has recommended a new army for the impoverished, French-speaking Caribbean community (CARICOM) country.

"As I promised, the commission for the army that the government has established gave me its report, and it also recommended a new army for the country of Haiti," Martelly told an Independence anniversary rally in the coastal city of Gonaïves.

He said the army would provide help in times of natural disaster and will work "to

safeguard the territorial integrity in a continent where the threats to national security are numerous, threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism."

Martelly said he would submit the report to all three branches of government, adding that "the three powers, together with civil society and the business sector will look into it, in order to make good decisions.

"The police reform and the creation of the new army are two things that need to walk together, and we ask all friends of Haiti to help us do the things well," he said.



TURNING POINT: Battle for change continues in Haiti ~ President Martelly

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

modern state, respectful of the institutions devoted to collective welfare, strict in its management of common good, open to cooperation...

The government will continue to work to change things. Yes it is necessary that things change, so that today, I am very happy, in the city of Gonaïves to be standing next to Dessalines to continue the battle so that Haiti changes.

Yes the canons are silent, but the battle continues. Together, we must all put the hand. As I promised, the commission for the army that the government has established gave me its report, and it also recommended a new army for the country of Haiti.

ELECTIONS

But 2012 will also bring other changes. The elections that comes will involve every section. Each municipality,

each department is what will allow the people to have good representatives who will defend its interests, achieve decentralization, that the whole country is waiting, that's how democracy will be established and that the institutions will be strengthened. Only in this way; there are no other routes for the reconstruction is done, for the development of the country comes, through job creation, new businesses, development of agriculture.

These are the new challenges and struggles; the struggle for education, the environment that us all Haitians, not just myself, that us all Haitians, we must take today. I count on you, I count on you, my people, so that together, we stand up so that Haiti be more beautiful. This country is too rich to be poor. God bless you.



Haitians mark the New Year with soup

Nine years ago, on New Year's Day, David Gunther faced a mini-epidemic. He's a family doctor, and at his old job in Somerville, Massachusetts, just north of Boston, many of his patients were from Haiti.

"Ten or 12 patients all complained of pretty similar symptoms – belly pains, including some diarrhea," he says. "They weren't terribly ill, but it was clear that there was some kind of a pattern."

Gunther almost alerted the Department of Public Health to this mild gastrointestinal outbreak. But then, one of those patients explained that most likely they were all suffer-

ing from the same problem: upset stomachs related to eating too much of a holiday soup. Nothing infectious – just a squash soup overdose.

"We eat a lot of it," Marie Romelus, a Haitian who lives in Somerville, says. "In creole, they call it soup joumou."

OFF LIMITS

During France's rule of Haiti, this soup was off limits to the slaves, Romelus says.

"The soup was considered superior," she says. "The slave – they were considered as lower class. So when we get our Independence, we were free to have a soup."

Haiti gained its Independence on Jan. 1,

1804, and so Haitians now eat soup joumou every New Year's Day. It's a mix of squash, potatoes and meat. Romelus likes to add some spaghetti to hers.

She eats the soup four times on New Year's Day, but that's not as often as some. She thinks that overeating may have caused the GI outbreak at the clinic nine years ago.

"Whenever I eat it, I always think about my great-grandfather," she says. "They used to be in slavery. So I feel like I am free. And when you have the soup, you really feel full."

- Edited and reprinted from NPR.



Florida-based engineer helps to rebuild his birthplace

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

to the islands," said Pierre.

"Then we travel there once a year to personally deliver the goods to groups or individuals that we know need the help. Sure, it'd be nice to take a vacation and just relax, but for me, that wouldn't come close to matching the feeling I get from helping others in need."

During a recent trip, they visited orphanages and "bateyes", large sugar cane farming towns, to distribute supplies and also helped a woman whose school had been nearly

destroyed during the earthquake.

"For the school's impoverished students, there is no other option," he said. "There isn't a bus system to take them to another school, and they can't afford to pay for transportation. We devoted much of our visit to helping repair the facility so the kids could get back in the classroom as soon as possible."

Pierre said he and his friends "enjoy seeing the difference our organization is making" and they appreciate the

support from new volunteers and donors. He was also grateful to his employers, who he credited with assisting the needy.

"The support I have received from the people I work with here at FPL has been terrific and it has helped a lot of kids and adults who otherwise would have nothing," Pierre said.

For more information about Pierre's organization, visit <http://nouvelleg.org/NouvelleGeneration/>.



DIGGING OUT: Haitians try rural road to recovery

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

form, from as far away as Europe.

A series of storms in 2008 further wiped out farms, and riots over the soaring cost of food, owing to fluctuations in the world market, led lawmakers to oust the prime minister.

TURNAROUND

Recently, though, there have been signs of a potential turnaround, analysts say. Last month, the World Bank approved \$50 million for agriculture projects.

"When agriculture grows, gross domestic product grows," said Diego Arias, an agriculture economist who analyzes Haiti at the World Bank.

Signature Haitian products like mangoes, coffee and cocoa are getting a burst of overseas attention, and BioTek, a Florida company, said it is awaiting approval from the new government on a long-awaited public-private plan to revive Haiti's last remaining sugar mill, in Léogâne, one of the areas hit hardest by the quake.

Haitian specialty coffee is in demand in restaurants in New York, Miami and other American cities, and the Inter American Development Bank (IDB), Nestle and Colombia's National Federation of Coffee Growers have announced a \$3 million effort to help 10,000 coffee farmers re-plant trees on denuded hills and increase production for both home consumption and export.

The American grocery chain Whole Foods has been selling a variety of mango indigenous to Haiti, and Lèt Agogo, a Haitian organization whose Haitian creole name means Milk Aplenty, has stepped up a program to give cows and training to farmers and to process the milk into a sweetened drink that Haitian schoolchildren commonly consume.

Taiwanese agronomists said they have expanded a program to help rice farmers increase their yields, though imported rice, much of it from the U.S., is still far cheaper in markets than Haitian-grown rice.

Foreign aid has also slowed to a trickle, with only 43 percent of the \$4.59 billion promised has been received and disbursed, according to the U.N.

SHORTAGE

Haiti's five-year agriculture plan, developed after the quake, has received only about half of its nearly \$800 million budget. Haitian officials say the government actually needs \$1 billion to \$2 billion to carry out the plan.

The new Agriculture Minister Hébert Docteur said he hoped to carry out the program with whatever resources he has to help struggling farmers.

"Too often, they are trying with hand tools to get something from the land, but it is not nearly enough," he said.

The U.S. said it has opened several training centers that aim to instruct hundreds of farmers in rudimentary practices often taken for granted in other countries.

- Edited from CMC.



Third World, Inner Circle to perform at 'Reggae Jam' in Miami

Black History Month celebrations in the United States will reflect a distinct Caribbean flavor when legendary reggae bands Third World and Inner Circle perform at "Reggae Jam" in South Florida.

The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County will present the bands in a one-night-only 2011-2012 World Music Series concert on **Feb. 24** at the John S. and James L. Knight Concert Hall, 1300 Biscayne Blvd. in Miami.

Showtime is at 8 p.m.

"Third World and Inner Circle have become synonymous with reggae music on an international level," said M. John Richard, president and chief executive officer of the Adrienne Arsht Center.

"These longstanding, iconic bands are known for



Third World, left, and Inner Circle bands to highlight 'Reggae Jam'.

their seamless fusion of traditional Jamaican sounds and pop music, and are beloved by South Florida's rich Caribbean community and reggae music fans alike."

Third World is famous for classic anthems such as "96

Degrees in the Shade", "Now That We've Found Love", and "Cool Meditation".

Inner Circle has recorded global smash hits such as "Bad Boys" and "Sweat (A La La La La Long)".

Local South Florida reg-

gae bands Jahfe, Mixed Culture, The Resolvers, Spred The Dub, Stampede, Roots Shakedown, 4th Dimension and Skafyah – collectively known as the "Reggae Wave" – will open the show. Lance-O of Kulcha Shok Muzik will

host the evening.

For tickets and more information, call the Adrienne Arsht Center box office at **305-949-6722** or visit www.arshtcenter.org.



Miami's Overtown to host 'Rhythm & Arts Festival'

The rich history on one of Florida's earliest historically black communities will be celebrated next month in Overtown.

The second annual "Overtown Rhythm & Arts Festival" is scheduled for **Feb. 25**.

Overtown is known for hosting some of music's biggest legends, including Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday, who performed and stayed in the Miami community.

The festival is held on Overtown's main street of Northwest Third Avenue, between ninth and 11th streets. This year's event will feature local and national musical artists, as well as local church choirs and the Booker T. Washington High School Marching Band.

Food vendors will treat festival goers to barbeque, southern cooking, Caribbean cuisine, and locally grown produce.

Admission to the festival is free.

The annual festival is organized, planned and executed by volunteers from the Overtown Rhythm & Arts Festival Inc., a fiscal sponsor of The Miami Foundation, and local leaders of the Overtown community. It is made possible with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners.

For more information, visit www.overtownfestival.com.



USVI supports African Americans

Former National Basketball Association (NBA) player Avery Johnson and Amsterdam News publisher Elinor Tatum were joined by United States Virgin Islands (USVI) vacation recipient Reginald Van Lee, executive vice president of Booz Allen Hamilton in New York, at a recent awards dinner hosted by Weeksville Heritage Center in New York.

The USVI continued to strengthen its relationship with the African American market in the U.S. with its support of the 10th annual

dinner.

The Weeksville Heritage Center is a national historic site which aims to preserve the entrepreneurial spirit of the independent African American community that thrived during the 19th Century in Brooklyn, New York.

Tatum and Johnson, the newly appointed coach of the New Jersey Nets basketball team, along with the construction management firm Hill International, were honored for community work.



PBS offers new features celebrating black history

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) has announced an expansive slate of television programs profiling the rich history, culture and contributions of African

Americans. It is scheduled to air as part of the television station's celebration of Black History Month.

The schedule provides an in-depth look at a variety of historical events from the post-Emancipation era to the rise of the black power movement.

"Daisy Bates: The First Lady of Little Rock", will pre-



Daisy Bates

mier at **10 p.m. Feb. 2**. The film tells the story of Bates's life and her public support of nine black students who registered to attend the all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

BLACK POWER

Premiering at **10 p.m. Feb. 9** is a compilation of interviews from leading African American artists, activists, musicians and scholars in "Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975". In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Swedish television journalists came to the United States to document the burgeoning black power movement. The recordings, combined with contemporary interviews to create a mosaic chronicling the movement's evolution, features interviews

with seminal black power leaders, including Stokely Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver, as well as author/activist Angela Davis.

In "More Than a Month", which premieres at **10 p.m. Feb. 16**, Tilghman, an African American filmmaker, is on a cross-country campaign to end Black History Month. Through this tongue-in-cheek journey, "More Than a Month" investigates what the treatment of history tells about race and equality in a "post-racial" America.

For more information, visit <http://www.pbs.org/about/news/archive/2011/black-history-month>.

- Edited from *Black PR Wire*



CAN WE TALK?



Peter A. Webley,
Publisher

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Caribbean sprint stars for U.S. Open in N.Y.

Top Jamaican sprinters Asafa Powell and Veronica Campbell-Brown will be among the headliners at this month's 2012 U.S. Open in the United States.

The meet is scheduled for Jan. 28, at New York's Madison Square Garden.

"No U.S. city is more international than New York," USATF Interim CEO Mike McNeas said in a recent press release. "Having Veronica and Asafa at the Garden will help spotlight the international importance of the Olympic year, with the U.S. Open as the first round of the 2012 USA-Jamaica rivalry."

Powell, the man with the most sub 10-second 100 meters races in a career and a former world record holder in the event, will make his New York indoor track debut, USA Track & Field announced.

He held the title of world's fastest human for three years, from 2005 until Usain Bolt broke it in New York in 2008. Powell was part of the Jamaican 4x100 meters relay team that currently

holds the world record.

VCB RETURNS

Returning to the site of her 2011 NYC indoor victory



Powell

in 2011, world and Olympic champion Campbell-Brown will join her Jamaican countryman in the short sprints.

Among the most consistent and decorated sprinters of her generation, Campbell-Brown is a two-time defending Olympic 200 meters gold medalist; defending World Indoor 60 meters champion; 2011 World Outdoor champion at 200 meters; 2007 World Outdoor

champion in the 100 meters.

The kick-off event of USATF's Visa Championship Series, the U.S. Open will be the first track meet to be held in the newly renovated Madison Square Garden, and will be the first major professional meet in the U.S. as the 2012 Olympic year gets under way.

For information on the Visa Championship Series,



Campbell-Brown

including the U.S. Open and television information, visit www.visachampionshipseries.com.



Jamaica's Bolt, Blake up for Laureus awards

LONDON, England – Jamaican Usain Bolt and training partner, compatriot Yohan Blake have been nominated for two the Laureus World Sports Awards.

Megastar sprinter Bolt has been nominated for the World Sportsman-of-the-Year with tennis star Novak Djokovic, Barcelona soccer player Lionel Messi, Dallas Mavericks' Germany-born basketball player Dirk Nowitzki, Red Bull Formula 1 car driver Sebastian Vettel, and Tour de France winner, cyclist Cadel Evans.

"After the year I had and ended undefeated, this nomination is even more special to me," said Bolt. "This award is a prestigious one and I am honored to be among the best."

Bolt won two gold medals in the men's 200 meters and 4x100 meters relay at the



Blake, left, and Bolt, celebrate success at last year's World Championships.

World Championships in Athletics last August in Daegu, South Korea, following his stunning false start in the marquee 100 meters won by Blake.

On the occasions when he got his start right, which was every other race for the season, Bolt, the world record holder in the 100 and 200, also raced undefeated.

Bolt is a two-time winner of the World Sportsman-of-the-Year award, in 2008 and 2009. In those years he rewrote the record books.

BREAKTHROUGH

The 21-year-old Blake grabbed a nomination for the Breakthrough-of-the-Year

award alongside double amputee quarter-miler Oscar Pistorius of South Africa, British runner Mo Farah, Northern Irish golfer Rory McIlroy, and tennis players Li Na and Petra Kvitova. After winning the World 100 meters title following Bolt's disqualification, he was virtually unstoppable in the later stages of the season. At the IAAF Diamond League meet in Zurich, Blake beat compatriot Asafa Powell in the 100 meters with a personal best of 9.82 seconds.

The following week in Brussels, he set a 2011 world leading time in the 200 meters with a personal best of 19.26 seconds, the second fastest time of all-time in the event.

The Laureus World Sports Awards recognizes sporting achievement during the calendar year and are the premier honors on the international sporting calendar.

The winners, as voted by the Laureus World Sports Academy, made up of 47 of the greatest sportsmen and sportswomen of all time, will be unveiled at a televised awards ceremony staged here on Feb. 6.



T&T's Cato signs with U.S. Major League Soccer team

Trinidad and Tobago Under-20 front-man Cordell Cato was floored after learning that he had impressed Major League Soccer (MLS) outfit Seattle Sounders to earn himself a one-year contract.

The 19-year-old Cato is the latest Soca Warrior to sign a professional contract to play in MLS, North America's top league.

"I'm really looking forward to joining the club and I'm very excited to take on this next chapter in my career," he told T&T Football Federation Media.

"I never played in the T&T Pro League. I've trained with T&T Defence Force and now to get this opportunity is the best thing to happen to me in my life so far."

He added: "Seattle are a club with a lot of ambitions and great facilities and I think this can be an excellent opportunity to develop as a player and play a part in their attempts to be victorious in the MLS."

DEAL

Cato was on trial at the club earlier this year and Sounders placed him on their discovery list before eventual-

ly offering the deal, which is a one-year contract with the option for an additional two years.

"Right now, we're just working on some final documents before he comes back over to join the Seattle team," said Cato's agent Evans Wise. "He has to be here in time to get things started with them by Jan. 15."

"He will also complete a medical when he returns and the club will then unveil him."

Wise said: "It's a great opportunity for him and I'm happy for Cordell because he's one of the players who worked very hard."

"He hasn't been on the national team in recent times, but that doesn't deny talent when it comes to taking opportunities."

The Sounders, an expansion fran-

chise and the league's 15th team, began play two years ago and is based in the city of Seattle in the northwestern state of Washington.

The Sounders' home matches are played at CenturyLink Field.

- Edited from CMC.



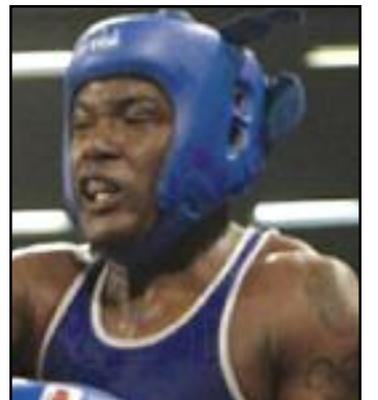
Barbadian champion boxer faces criminal charges Jan. 17

Barbados amateur heavyweight boxing champion Emmanuel is due to return to court on Jan. 17 where he will answer to charges of theft.

Emmanuel has been accused of stealing jewelry worth \$7,500, plus \$1,500 in cash last July.

The Commonwealth, Central American and Caribbean Games, and Pan Am Games medalist was jailed last month, but later granted bail at \$10,000 to spend the Christmas holidays with his family.

Anthony Jones, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of Barbados, stood as surety for the boxer. Emmanuel had to surrender his passport and was also



Emmanuel

required to report to a police station three times a week as a condition of his bail.

He has declared that he is "innocent of this charge."

- Edited from CMC.



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CHILL CHALLENGE: Warm up with some Caribbean split pea soup this winter



Split pea soup

- 48 oz reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 well ripened plantains
- 3/4 lb medium shrimp, peeled/deveined (thawed)

Method

Cut carrots into bite-size pieces.

Combine all ingredients (except shrimp and plantains) in large saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil on medium.

Reduce heat to simmer (soup should still lightly bubble); cook 20 to 25 minutes or until peas are tender. Cut ends off plantain; slice through peel lengthwise for easy removal. Cut plantain into bite-size pieces.

Stir plantains and shrimp into soup (wash hands). Cook and stir two to four minutes or just until shrimp begin to turn pink and opaque. Serve. Makes six servings.

It's early in the new year and times can be a bit cool. What better way to stay warm than to have some soup?

Caribbean Today offers this recipe of split pea soup and watercress with mustard dressing, courtesy of

Publix Apron's Simple Meals.

Caribbean split pea soup

Ingredients

- 3 small carrots
- 1 (14-oz) bag dried yellow split peas
- 8 oz fresh pre-diced onions
- 6 oz fresh pre-diced celery

Watercress with mustard dressing

Ingredients

- 4 oz watercress leaves (or 2 bunches)
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced
- 1 avocado, cut into bite-size pieces
- 4 slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon spicy brown mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon dried mint

Method

Cut watercress into large, bite-size pieces; place in salad bowl. Slice radishes and cut avocado; add both to salad.

Cut bacon into small pieces (wash hands). Preheat large sauté pan on medium-high two to three minutes. Place bacon in pan; cook until crisp. Remove bacon from pan and place on paper towels to drain and cool. Reserve three tablespoons of the bacon fat in pan; set aside to cool slightly.

Whisk vinegar, mustard, and mint into bacon fat. Add bacon and dressing to salad; toss and serve.



Caribbean broccoli chicken salad



Caribbean broccoli

Ingredients

- 3 to 4 deli chicken tenders (.75 lb)
- 1 mango
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 head Bibb (or iceberg) lettuce
- 3 tablespoons mango chutney
- 2 tablespoons peach preserves
- 3 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- 2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
- 1 (12-oz) bag broccoli slaw
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds

Method

Cut chicken tenders into thin slices. Peel and slice mango (1 1/2 cups). Squeeze lime for juice (1 tablespoon). Remove lettuce core; separate individual leaves.

Prepare dressing in medi-

um bowl by whisking chutney, preserves, and lime juice until smooth. Stir in yogurt and mayonnaise until blended.

Add slaw, chicken, mango, and raisins; toss to coat.

Arrange lettuce leaves on serving plates and top with salad; sprinkle with sunflower seeds. Serve.

Golden fruit bread

Ingredients

- 2 naan or flat breads (regular or whole grain)
- 1/4 cup peach preserves, divided
- 1/4 cup golden raisins, divided
- Cooking spray

Method

Preheat large nonstick sauté pan on medium two to three minutes. Place two tablespoons peach preserves and two tablespoons raisins on one-half of each bread; fold over.

Coat bread with cooking spray and place in pan; cover and cook two to three minutes each side or until golden. Let stand three to five minutes to cool. Cut in half and serve.

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