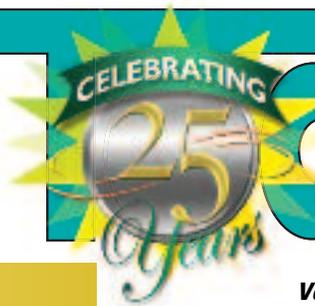


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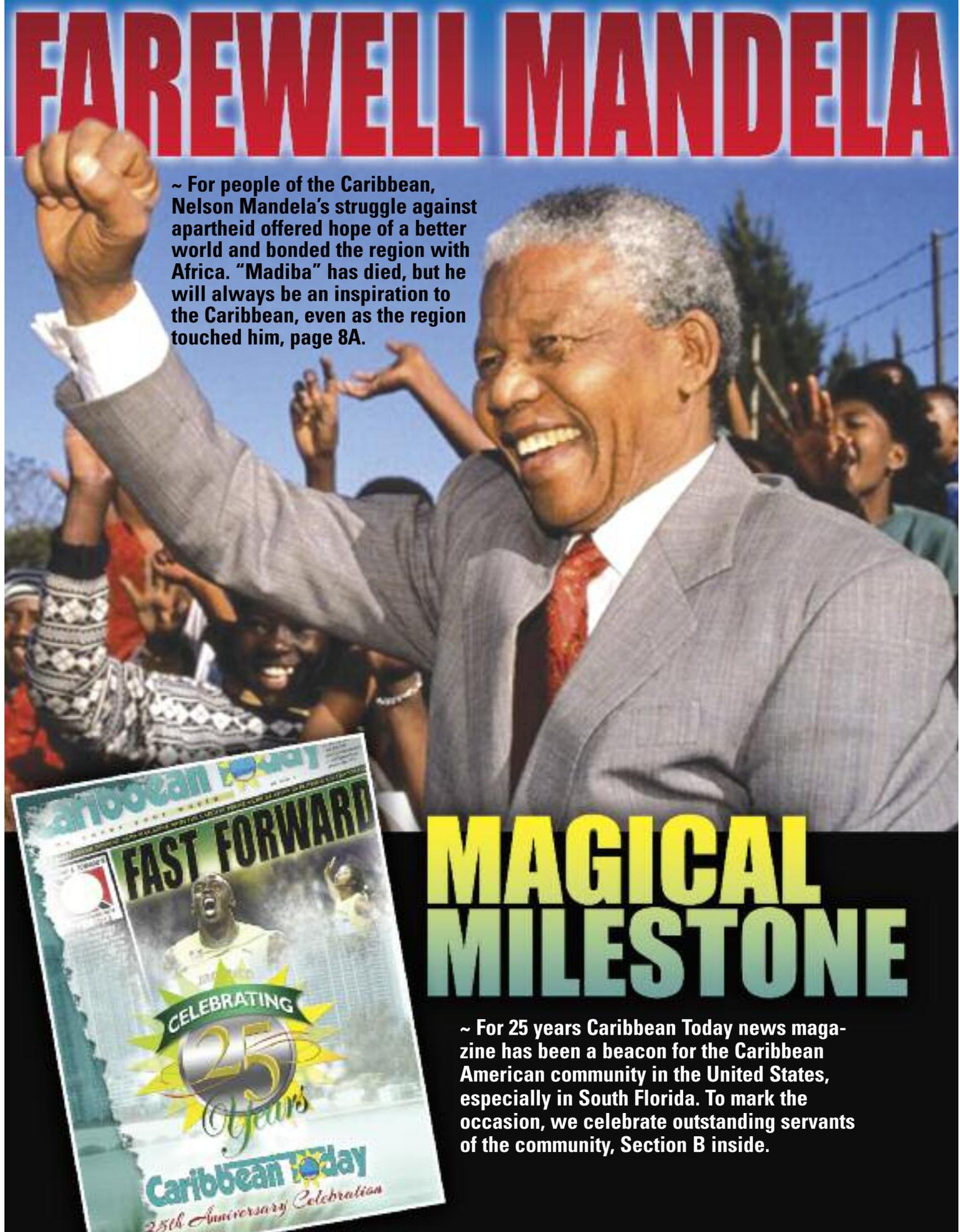
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~ For people of the Caribbean, Nelson Mandela's struggle against apartheid offered hope of a better world and bonded the region with Africa. "Madiba" has died, but he will always be an inspiration to the Caribbean, even as the region touched him, page 8A.

**MAGICAL MILESTONE**

~ For 25 years Caribbean Today news magazine has been a beacon for the Caribbean American community in the United States, especially in South Florida. To mark the occasion, we celebrate outstanding servants of the community, Section B inside.



The man Jamaicans know as "Dudus" may be locked up in humble prison surroundings in the United States, but

police in his home country claim Christopher Coke earned millions of dollars from a life of crime, page 13A.



Her life has been an open book. But now, at age 25, Rihanna has risen to the pinnacle in the music business. The Barbadian superstar was recently named an "Icon" by the American Music Awards, page 17A.



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# FINAL JUSTICE: Jury acquits Jamaican of murder after 24 years in U.S. prison

NEW YORK - A jury has acquitted a Jamaican man who had been in jail for 24 years on a charge of murder.

The jury took only nine minutes last month to finally clear Derrick Deacon, 58, who was convicted in 1989 in the shooting death of Anthony Wynn during a robbery in a Flatbush, Brooklyn apartment complex.

Deacon, who had always denied the charge, was granted a new trial in 2012 after someone cooperating with the Federal Bureau of Investigation identified a different man as the gunman. Another witness also recanted her testimony.

"There was no case," said the jury after reading the new verdict. "There was never a shred of evidence against Derrick Deacon. Why did

they try him a second time if he's been in jail for 24 years?"

**DENIAL**

Deacon, who had always insisted he was not near the scene of the crime, cried when the jury found him not guilty of the April 1989 slaying and robbery of Wynn.

Deacon was first convicted based on testimony from a single eyewitness who received \$1,000 from a Crime Stoppers hotline. But in 2001, an FBI informant spilled on an unrelated Jamaican drug gang, the Patio Crew, and mentioned that someone named "Pablo" confessed to him minutes after Wynn was shot dead, saying he killed the potential cocaine buyer in a botched robbery, according to the New York Daily News

newspaper.

It took years until that information was sent to Deacon, the paper said.

In 2009, a judge heard from the drug dealer and from a defense witness who said that she saw someone other than Deacon fleeing the scene but had given a vague testimony in the first trial after getting threatened by law enforcement. The



Deacon hugs his attorney Rebecca Freedman in the Brooklyn Supreme Court after he was acquitted.

stand or her children would be taken away.

Justice Albert Tomei still denied a request to set the verdict aside, but an Appeals Court panel reversed that decision in June 2012 and jurors heard from all three witnesses during the retrial.

"I think they firmly believed in our client's innocence," said Glenn Garber, director of the Exoneration Initiative, a legal team that had taken up Deacon's case.

"For 25 years, this man has suffered under a cloud of lies," he told jurors in closing arguments, adding "finally, please, set the record straight."

- Edited from CMC.



## Caribbean American makes Thanksgiving happy for New York's needy

NEW YORK - A Jamaican immigrant adopted the true meaning of the American holiday Thanksgiving by helping feed families in need with a holiday dinner last month.

Majorie Bibbons, born in

St. Thomas, founded the Jamaica, Queens-based Healing Hands Helping Broken Hearts Foundation eight years ago. Bibbons said her inspiration came after feeling she needed to teach

her kids that giving could bring them more joy than receiving.

This year, despite being laid off from her accounting job in 2012, she continued to serve. With small donations, including from places like Kiwanis International, New York District and several volunteers who offered service or food items, Bibbons began prepping for the eighth year of service.

**TEAMWORK**

Vauxhall High School in Jamaica teamed up with the Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church's Soup Kitchen, on Jamaica Avenue in New York City, to serve Thanksgiving dinner to some 500 in need on Nov. 28 in Jamaica and Far Rockaway, Queens. The group also distributes lightly used clothing to the needy.



Marjorie Bibbons, right, with volunteer from Healing Hands Helping Broken Hearts Foundation.

Bibbons's work has also caught the eye of national magazine "O", which featured her in its December edition.

"God will provide what I need to keep going," she told the magazine.

To donate to the Healing

Hands Helping Broken Hearts Foundation log on to [www.facebook.com/JamaicasHealingHands](http://www.facebook.com/JamaicasHealingHands)

- Edited from News Americas.



## U.S. offers reprieve to undocumented immigrants with relatives in military

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States has offered a reprieve to illegal Caribbean and other immigrants who are close relatives of active military troops and veterans by allowing them to stay in the

country and move towards becoming permanent residents.

After deliberating for over three years, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said in a memoran-

dum that the new policy seeks to appease troops who are concerned that their immigrant family members could be deported while they were deployed.

"In order to reduce the uncertainty our active-duty and retired military personnel face because of the immigration status of their family members, we have decided to clarify existing policies," Peter Boogaard, a spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security, told reporters here last month.

He said the new rules are based on existing statutes not

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6A)

## U.S. court orders trial judges to warn Caribbean defendants about deportation



and that the court's failure to inform the defendant of that consequence never impacts the voluntariness of the plea.

The Court of Appeals accepted the arguments of the defendants in three cases, deciding that, with about 188,000 people deported from the U.S. annually following criminal convictions, deportation has become an "automatic consequence of a guilty plea

for most non-citizen defendants."

The Court of Appeals' ruling involved three cases in which the defendants challenged their convictions on the grounds that they were unaware that deportation was a possibility when they

pleaded guilty. The New York Immigrant Defense Project had filed an amicus brief on behalf of the defendants.

- Edited from CMC.



NEW YORK – The highest court here has ruled that trial judges must warn Caribbean and other non-citizen defendants that they may be deported before allowing them to plead guilty to felony charges.

In a 5-2 majority ruling, the New York Court of Appeals recognized the "uniquely devastating deprivation of liberty" involved when an immigrant faces deportation from the United States. The court also recognized the obligation of lower courts in ensuring that Caribbean and other immigrants were fully knowledgeable of the consequences should they be convicted.

"The trial court must provide a short, straightforward statement on the record notifying the defendant that, in sum and substance, if the defendant is not a United States citizen, he or she may be deported upon a guilty plea," wrote Justice Sheila Abdus-Salaam for the majority.

"Deportation constitutes such a substantial and unique consequence of a plea that it must be mentioned by the trial court to a defendant as a matter of fundamental fairness," she added.

The new ruling overturns a 1995 ruling that deportation is a "collateral consequence" of a guilty plea that judges need not warn immigrant defendants it might happen.

### CHANGING TIMES

Justice Abdus-Salaam said times have changed since the mid-1990s, when about 37,000 Caribbean and other non-citizens were deported after criminal convictions.

She said an immigrant can hardly be said to have made a "voluntary and intelligent choice among the alternative courses of action open to the defendant," unless he or she is informed by the court that deportation looms as a possible result of a guilty plea.

Justice Abdus-Salaam said the court was taking the "extraordinary" step in overturning in part the precedent that has long guided New York courts in this area, *People v. Ford*. That case held that deportation is a "collateral consequence" of conviction

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# NEWS



## NYC mayor-elect names Caribbean Americans to transition team

Several Caribbean Americans have been named part of New York City Mayor-elect Bill de Blasio's 60-member transition team.

They include a former New York City councilmember and a college president.

Jamaican national and former NYC City Councilwoman

Una Clarke is on the team that will advise the mayor-elect on the formation of his new administration.

Others include Dr. Marcia Keizs, president of York College, The City University of New York; Elsie Saint Louis, executive director, Haitian-Americans United for

Progress; Dr. Marta Moreno Vega, president and founder of the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, who is of Puerto Rican roots.

Clarke, mother of United States Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, served as the councilmember of Brooklyn's 40th councilmatic district from 1994 to 2002. She is currently president of Una Clarke Associates.

Dr. Keizs, also born in



Una Clarke, forefront left, and Yvette Clarke, with left, flank Mayor-elect de Blasio.

Queens.

Saint Louis, a national of Haiti, also serves on the Board of the New York Immigration Coalition, the York College President Council, and Congressman Gregory Meeks's Immigration Task Force.

Dr. Vega's institute focuses on African descendant communities' histories, legacies, arts and education.

- Edited from News Americas.



Jamaica, is the sixth president of York College in Jamaica,

## U.S. wants greater co-operation with Caribbean

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States is urging greater cooperation with the Caribbean and Latin America in strengthening democracy, investing in education and combating climate change.

Addressing a special meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) last month, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry spoke of Washington's cooperation with regional countries based on a "relationship between equals."

"This is certainly the best

place to discuss the common challenges our region faces today and in the near future," he said, rejecting the policies pursued by the U.S. in the past in Latin America and the Caribbean through the Monroe Doctrine.

"The era of the Monroe Doctrine is over. The relationship that we seek and that we have worked hard to foster is



Kerry

not about a United States declaration about how and when it will intervene in the affairs of other American states.

"It's about all of our countries viewing one another as equals, sharing responsibilities, cooperating on security issues, and adhering not to doctrine, but to the decisions that we make as partners to advance the values and the interests that we share," Kerry said, calling on regional countries to work toward the same goals, adding

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6A)

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# WATCHMAN: CIA secretly collects data on money transfers to Caribbean

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has been accused of secretly collecting bulk records of money transfers to the Caribbean and other places handled by companies like Western Union and MoneyGram.

Government officials said the transfers include transactions into and out of the United States under the same law that the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) uses for its huge database of Americans' phone records.

The **New York Times** newspaper, quoting several current and former government officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the matter is classified, said the program is authorized by provisions in the Patriot Act and overseen

by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

"The intelligence community collects bulk data in a number of different ways under multiple authorities," one intelligence official told the paper.

## OVERSIGHT

Dean Boyd, a spokesman for the CIA, declined to confirm whether such a program exists, but said that the agency conducts lawful intelligence collection aimed at foreign "not domestic" activities and that it is subject to extensive oversight.

"The CIA protects the nation and upholds the privacy rights of Americans by ensuring that its intelligence collection activities are focused on acquiring foreign intelligence and counterintelligence in accordance with US



laws," he said.

Juan Zarate, a White House and U.S. Department of Treasury official under former President George W. Bush, said that, unlike telecommunications information, there has generally been less sensitivity about the collection of financial data, in part because the government already collects information on large transactions under the Bank Secrecy Act.

Luella Chavez D'Angelo, a spokeswoman for Western Union, which operates extensively in the Caribbean, declined to directly address questions about whether the company has been ordered to turn over records in bulk to the CIA or the surveillance court. She, however, said the company complies with legal requirements to provide information.

## PRIVACY

"We collect consumer information to comply with the Bank Secrecy Act and other laws," said D'Angelo. "In doing so, we also protect our consumers' privacy and work to prevent consumer fraud."

MoneyGram issued a similar statement, saying "we value our customers' privacy and work hard to protect it, just as we work hard to pro-

tect customers and others from fraud and other crime.

"We comply with the laws of all the countries where we do business, including the laws that govern privacy, government investigations, and compliance with lawful subpoenas and court orders.

"We have reporting obligations related to suspicious transactions, money laundering and other financial crimes around the world. The laws to which we are subject generally prohibit us from discussing details," the company said.

Intelligence officials here say the CIA program is a result of terror finance-tracking programs that were established in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S.

- Edited from CMC.



# U.S. signs agreements with Cayman Islands to force tax compliance

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States has signed a number of intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with the Cayman Islands in implementing the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA).

The U.S. Department of the Treasury said that the FATCA was "rapidly becoming the global model for combating offshore tax evasion and promoting transparency".

U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Tax Affairs Robert B. Stack said the announcement marks a milestone in the effort to promote global tax transparency.

"These agreements underscore growing international cooperation in the effort to end tax evasion everywhere," Stack said.

## PROBE

FATCA, enacted in 2010, seeks to obtain information on accounts held by U.S. taxpayers in other countries, the Treasury Department said. It requires U.S. financial institutions to withhold a portion of payments made to foreign financial institutions (FFIs) that do not agree to identify and report information on U.S. account holders.

FFIs have the option of entering into agreements directly with the IRS, or through one of two alternative Model IGAs signed by their home country.

Signed on Nov. 29, the U.S. Department of Treasury said the Cayman Islands IGA is a Model 1B agreement, meaning that FFIs in the Cayman Islands will be required to report tax information about U.S. account holders directly to the Cayman

Islands Tax Information Authority, which is the sole channel in the Cayman Islands for the provision of tax-related information to other governments.

The Cayman Islands Tax Information Authority will in turn relay that information to the IRS, the Treasury Department said.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Additionally, the U.S. and the Cayman Islands also signed a new Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA), to take the place of the original TIEA signed in 2001.

"By working together to detect, deter, and discourage offshore tax abuses through increased transparency and enhanced reporting, we can

help build a stronger, more stable, and accountable global financial system," said Julie Nutter, Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S.

Embassy in London, who signed on behalf of the U.S.

"We look forward to collaborating with the Government of the Cayman

Islands to further these objectives," she added.

- Edited from CMC.





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## T&T national guilty of falsifying drug test results

MASSACHUSETTS – Annie Dookhan, the Trinidadian-born former state chemist for Massachusetts, faces up to five years in jail after she was found guilty of falsifying thousands of tests used to prosecute drug-related crimes.

The court was told that Dookhan, a single mother in her 30s, covered up her short-cuts.

She had initially denied the charges, but later pleaded guilty to 27 charges of obstruction of justice, perjury, and tampering with evidence.

The Boston-area Department of Public Health laboratory, where she had worked for 10 years, was closed in Aug. 2012 after the scandal surfaced.

Judge Carol S. Ball, who delivered Dookhan's sentence in Suffolk County Superior Court in Boston late last month, said in her ruling that "the consequences of her behavior, which she ought to have foreseen, have been nothing short of catastrophic.

"Innocent persons were

incarcerated, guilty persons have been released to further endanger the public, millions and millions of public dollars are being expended to deal with the chaos Ms. Dookhan created, and the integrity of the criminal justice system has been shaken to the core," the judge said.



Dookhan

released from prison as a result.

Dookhan, who claimed she had a master's degree in chemistry, was removed from her laboratory duties after she was caught forging a colleague's initials in June 2011, but she continued to serve as an expert court witness until she was put on administrative leave in Feb. 2012.

In Aug. 2012, she admitted to having mishandled samples, and a subsequent investigation alleged that she had routinely tampered with criminal evidence by altering vials of substances awaiting evaluation for drug content.

Media reports said she altered them, allegedly, to cover up the practice of "dry labbing" samples, which means testing only a fraction of a group of samples before marking them all positive for illegal drugs.

- Edited from CMC.



### CRISIS

The state had spent a total of \$8.5 million responding to the drug lab crisis and another \$8.6 million was authorized to be spent in the current fiscal year, according to Alex Zaroulis, spokeswoman for the state Executive Office for Administration and Finance.

Media reports said Dookhan's actions may have distorted the results of the criminal trials of more than 40,000 individuals, and close to 350 people have already been

## U.S. wants changes to student, exchange visitor visa programs

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency is proposing changes to the requirements governing its Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) that are intended to improve management of programs affecting Caribbean and other students.

The proposed changes also increase opportunities for study by spouses and children of non-immigrant Caribbean and other students the ICE said last month.

It said the change would provide school officials more flexibility in determining the number of designated school officials (DSOs) to nominate for oversight of campuses by eliminating the limit of 10 DSOs in favor of a more flexible approach.

### INCENTIVES

Additionally, the immigra-

tion agency said the changes would allow dependents and spouses of Caribbean and other international students with F-1 or M-1 nonimmigrant status to study at a SEVP-certified school as long as it is less than full-time.

SEVP Director Louis Farrell said the proposed changes stem from recommendations suggested by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council (HSAAC) and build on a series of reforms designed to further the commitment to attracting Caribbean and other international students while maintaining national security standards.

The proposed rule was submitted for publication to the U.S. Federal Register and is open for public comment until Jan. 21, 2014.



## U.S. wants greater co-operation with Caribbean

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4A)

"in unity, there is strength."

### QUESTIONS

In this regard, Kerry raised three questions which he said were crucial to the future of the region. The first question is whether the countries of the Hemisphere are able to work together "in the promotion and protection of democracy, security and peace that all the peoples of the Americas deserve" while the second concerns

whether "we will be able to advance prosperity in the Western Hemisphere and educate our youth to lead the economies of the future."

Kerry said the third question was whether the U.S. and the region will be able to "address the threat posed by climate change." He said achieving positive responses to these questions would mark the future of the hemisphere.

"The real challenge of the 21st century in the Americas will be how we use our democratic governments to deliver development, overcome poverty, and improve social inclu-

sion," he said, recalling that, 50 years ago, then President John F. Kennedy called for a similar vision in the region, in which each country is secure, and acts independently and freely.

On the protection of democracy, Kerry said the region can be "immensely proud" and that "successful democracies depend on all citizens having a voice and on respecting those voices, and all governments having the courage and the capacity to listen to those voices."

- Edited from CMC.



## U.S. offers reprieve to undocumented immigrants with relatives in military

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A)

the creation of any new legal status that would require U.S. congressional action.

### SHIFT

The Homeland Security Department said the new rules apply to all active-duty members of the armed forces, to reserves including the National Guard, and to all veterans. Officials also said the spouses, children and parents of troops will be eligible for a "parole in place," meaning that they will be allowed to remain in the US while applying for legal residency.

The shift in U.S. policy comes as legislation to grant legal status to millions of undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants stalls in the US Congress.

Last month, Republicans

in the House of Representatives vowed not to hold any votes on immigration this year or enter into any negotiations over a broad bill that the U.S. Senate passed in June.

But while many immigrant groups welcome the new immigration policy, they also urged that it be extended to more illegal immigrants, according to the New York Times.

"The administration's action clearly shows that the president can use his power to stop the pain in our communities and grant relief to our families," Cristina Jimenez, managing director of United We Dream, a youth organization, told the paper.

- Edited from CMC.



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# 'SOUNDS': Remembering Clint O'Neil, 'godfather' of Florida's reggae radio

## I. JABULANI TAFARI

"Sounds of the Caribbean", the overnight radio program heard Tuesday to Sunday on Miami's National Public Radio (NPR) affiliate station WLRN 91.3 FM, turned 34 years old this past September.

The late broadcast DJ Clint O'Neil, dubbed the "Reggae Godfather" by his fans, hosted "Sounds" for the first 25 years. Within its first 10 years, O'Neil's Caribbean-oriented radio program became the flagship of reggae and soca/calypso shows not only in South Florida, but the entire United States.

"Clint-O" hailed from Halifax in Manchester, Jamaica. He relocated to the Bronx, New York where he completed his education in the early 1970s. Following in the footsteps of Jamaican broadcasting veterans Ken Williams, Jeff Barnes, Gil Bailey and Karl Anthony, O'Neil started a radio career on the defunct WHBI 105.9 FM in New York. He then joined the U.S. Army.

## FLORIDA START

In 1978 O'Neil arrived in

Miami to find a non-existent reggae scene. The only Caribbean people on the city's radio were veteran King Sporty on WEDR and Arnold "Trinidad" Henry on WMBM. By 1979 O'Neil was at WLRN where he became a "lifeline" to those who worked the "graveyard" (midnight) shifts, regardless.

He started his WLRN show with one night a week, Sundays from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m., in Sept. 1979. His stated goal was to provide a cultural outlet for Caribbean people living in South Florida. Bob Marley was a frequent in-studio guest in the early days of "Sounds" and in 1980 Marley voiced a one-of-a-kind radio jingle: "This is Bob Marley and when I'm in Miami I listen to Clint O'Neil."

Working for NPR meant O'Neil did not have to sell advertising to pay for airtime as did most other Caribbean DJs working on brokered radio. As



O'Neil

his program gained more listenership, from the growing Caribbean population in the metro Miami/Fort Lauderdale/West Palm Beach area, he was given more free air time.

Eventually O'Neil was heard live on "Sounds" as many as six nights a week, while logging over 30 hours weekly. No other Caribbean radio host in the U.S. had more hours a day or week than O'Neil. Soon he was the most well known music host in the overnight time period and most South Floridians knew of O'Neil. His fan base comprised Afro Caribbeans and African Americans, Anglos, Hispanics, Native Americans - everyone who worked the nightshift, including nurses, taxi and truck drivers, factory workers and police officers.

## FAR REACH

WLRN gave O'Neil a broadcast reach way beyond most of his peers on AM radio. The NPR station's powerful 100,000 watt FM stereo signal propelled "Sounds" 80 miles away to Jupiter in northern Palm Beach County; across the

ocean to The Bahamas off Florida's east coast; westward to the Miccosukee Indian Reservation and the Everglades; and far south to Homestead and the Florida Keys. The coverage area, combined with WLRN's online Internet presence, allowed the O'Neil to connect with millions of fans.

O'Neil was known throughout the music industry as a reggae/radio pioneer. Between the radio and stage, he helped publicize, promote, produce and present a spec-

trum of quality reggae, from roots and culture to dancehall. He also opened doors for others, assisting fellow radio DJs, musicians, producers and selectors. O'Neil was regarded a rare universally beloved DJ in the notoriously cut-throat world of Caribbean radio.

He often spun vintage, seldom-played, little-known music tracks, as well as songs by new unknown artistes often ignored by daytime reggae radio DJs. The WLRN studio doors were always open to guests and his

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8A)



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## Being born in Dom Rep doesn't guarantee stay

The Dominican Republic, facing international criticism over a ruling by its Constitutional Court that could render, stateless, thousands of persons of Haitian descent, has said it doesn't grant citizenship to every person born in the Spanish-speaking country.

Anibal De Castro, the Dominican Republic ambassador to the United States, responding to a recent article published in the **Trinidad Express** newspaper, wrote that unlike the U.S., his country "does not grant citizenship to all those born within its jurisdiction."



DeCastro

"... Since 1929, the Constitution of the Dominican Republic has established that the children of people in transit, a temporary legal status, are not eligible for Dominican citizenship," he wrote in response to the article entitled 'The Dirty Business of Cleansing' by columnist Dr. Sheila Rampersad.

## CRITICISM

The Caribbean community (CARICOM), as well as the Washington-based Inter-American Commission on

Human Rights (IACHR), have criticized the ruling made on Sept. 23, with the IACHR saying that it "retroactively modifies legislation that was in effect from 1929 to 2010, and thus would strip Dominican citizenship from tens of thousands of people born in the Dominican Republic".

CARICOM Secretary General Irwin La Rocque said the ruling "raises a serious question about the status of the numerous ... Dominican Republic nationals of Haitian extract." St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, in a letter to President Danilo Medina, said the court's decision was "unacceptable in any civilized community."

## 'TIME BOMB'

International human rights group Amnesty International and the Organization of American States (OAS) have also expressed concern over the ruling and the U.S.-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA) said the ruling had turned the Dominican Republic into a "ticking time bomb."

But in his statement which was posted on the newspaper's website, the Dominican Republic diplomat said, like other nations with a significant

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8A)



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# NELSON MANDELA: Inspiration by and for the Caribbean region

**KATHY BARRETT**

The world rejoiced on Feb. 11, 1990 when Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was released from prison after 27 years.

It mourned when he died on Dec. 5 at age 95 after struggling with illness.

However, it was his life, especially in his homeland of South Africa and beyond, that ignited an electric sense of anticipation as to what the future would hold.

For the people of the Caribbean, Mandela's struggle in the fight against apartheid offered hope of a better world and, in turn, forged a bond between the nations of the region and Africa. For decades before his release, noted Caribbean leaders, including Jamaica's Michael Manley and Guyana's Forbes Burnham, spoke out against South Africa's apartheid regime.

The histories of South Africa and Jamaica are inextricably linked, with the Caribbean state being at the forefront of the international campaign against apartheid. Jamaica and India were the

first countries to declare a trade embargo against South Africa, as early as 1957. Jamaica also supported all the United Nations resolutions aimed at the elimination of apartheid and hosted a meeting of members of the U.N. Special Committee against Apartheid.

## NOTICE

The Caribbean's involvement in the fight against apartheid did not go unnoticed by Mandela when he visited Jamaica in July 1991. In his address to Parliament, he gave thanks that he was able "to match name with face" of Manley, whose name he had heard associated with a New International Economic Order, and also with the international struggle against apartheid.

On July 4, 1998, Mandela met with leaders from the Caribbean community at a CARICOM Heads of Government Conference in Castries, St. Lucia. The South African freedom fighter highlighted the efforts of Caribbean leaders in the apartheid struggle and paid



Mandela

"special homage" to regional leaders like the late Sir John Compton of St. Lucia and Manley "for their tireless efforts in pursuit of that goal, at the head of a legion of freedom fighters, prominent personalities as well as ordinary people who played a vital role in helping rid our shores of apartheid.

"This region has, in song and verse, in political philosophy and action, long been a source for the articulation of both the lamentations and

aspirations of black people everywhere. We are bound by our common African heritage. When Africans were wrenched from their continent, they carried Africa with them and made the Caribbean a part of Africa," Mandela added.

## ICON

In recent years Mandela faced struggles of another kind - this time related to his health.

Last month, his former wife Winnie Mandela told a South African newspaper that the former anti-apartheid leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner was "quite ill and unable to speak because of tubes that are keeping his lungs clear of fluid, though he is relaxed."

Although he had not graced the world's stage in recent years, Mandela was still seen as an international icon of peace, freedom and justice. Veteran regional journalist and communications consultant Jerry George, of St. Vincent

and the Grenadines, explained that for the Caribbean Mandela's legacy is one that will encourage "servant leadership."

In a region where leaders are more inclined to sacrifice their followers than themselves, Mandela stood out as a leader who truly understood and represented servant leadership, so lacking in the Caribbean today.

Mandela is, therefore, a prime example of the leader who exemplified the type leadership that is so lacking in today's Caribbean experience. His wasn't the charismatic style so venerated today, but definitely the will and determination to struggle for what he believed was right.

From prisoner to president, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela's legacy was inevitably intertwined with the peoples of the Caribbean.

*Kathy Barrett is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*

## Being born in Dominican Republic doesn't guarantee stay

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

immigrant population, his country "has a legitimate interest in regulating immigration and having clear rules for acquisition of citizenship.

"... The Dominican Republic should not be pressured by outside actors and other countries to implement measures contrary to its own Constitution and that would be unacceptable to most other nations facing similar immigration pressures."

De Castro said that the Dominican government recognizes its obligations to the international community and the plight of the children of illegal Haitian migrants born in the country who lack identity documents.

"This does not, however, render them stateless," he explained. "As your article says, Haiti's Constitution bestows citizenship on any person born of Haitian parents anywhere in the world. This means that a person born to

foreign parents in Haiti, is not eligible for Haitian citizenship."

The diplomat disagreed with the argument put forward in the newspaper article that there has been discrimination against Haitian immigrants as far as granting nationality is concerned.

"If in fact there are inconsistent actions, they are the result of the struggle that the Dominican Republic has faced for decades to successfully implement its immigration poli-

cy, the same that has affected your very own immigration policies," he stated.

"It should be noted, moreover, that those born to at least one parent who is a legal Dominican resident is in fact a Dominican citizen.

"Therefore, the number of people who do not qualify for Dominican nationality has been grossly exaggerated."

- Edited from CMC.



## 'SOUNDS': Remembering Clint O'Neil, 'godfather' of Florida's reggae radio

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

exclusive interviews were priceless.

### POPULARITY

Over O'Neil's 20-plus years he hosted the most popular names in the reggae/soca industry or cultural scene during in-studio or telephone call-in interviews on "Sounds".

O'Neil also supported the underprivileged and was well known for his annual children's Christmas toy drive started in 1986 with the assistance of Elgeta Thompson-Martin.

In its first 20 years, "Sounds" gained the highest listener ratings on WLRN. With the addition of O'Neil's protégé Kevin "Ital-K" Smith to the program as co-host in 1996, the show further increased its

diversity and appeal.

In Jan. 1999 Smith, also known as "Englishman", began hosting the program solo more frequently as O'Neil's health deteriorated. After a long bout with cancer, O'Neil was heard on WLRN for the last time on Aug. 16, 2004. The "Reggae Godfather" of Caribbean radio in South Florida for 25 years

died early morning Oct. 10, 2004.

"Sounds" outlived its founder, but hasn't fallen silent. The show continues with David Reuter, Jeanette Drew and Richard Davis as hosts. Yet O'Neil and his trademark laugh and vintage, old school-style of hosting will never be forgotten by his legion of fans worldwide.

*Jabulani Tafari is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*



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## Time to really care, Mr. President

The following is the 54th in a series of "open letters" written to United States President Barack Obama.

Dear Mr. President, Back in 2007 you had this brave, bold idea of universal health care but then settled for what has now become the nightmare of the Affordable Health Care roll out. Now it seems you are willing to back off again – this time off of comprehensive immigration reform and accept whatever the Republicans feel like delivering!

Your recent comment at a **Wall Street Journal** forum that stated: "If they want to chop that thing up in five pieces, as long as all five pieces get done, I don't care what it looks like" is simply disconcerting.

Sure we all want immigration reform to pass the House once and for all, but to say you "don't care" what the pieces that make it through look like shows poor leadership and a willingness to cave under pressure, much like you did with the original health care vision.

What you should be saying is if Republicans in the House want to play roulette with their political future and lose the minority vote forever, then let them delay immigration reform.

What you should be saying is that while you are willing to compromise and accept immigration reform that comes in five or more bills, at the end of the day, those should not all be about border security or increasing tech, science or farm visas.

What you should say is that if a Bipartisan Policy Center and Macroeconomic Advisers analysis shows that over the course of two decades, the U.S. Senate's immigration bill (S.744) would increase economic growth by 4.8 percent, lower the federal deficit by \$1.2 trillion, increase demand for housing, increase



Obama

the size of the labor force, offset the aging of the native-born workforce, and raise wages over the long-term, then you really don't know what the holdup is?

What you should have said is that any bill that makes it to your desk must include a pathway to citizenship for the 11 plus million undocumented immigrants in this country.

### CAVED

Instead, you caved and said you "don't care what it looks like."

How can you say that to Carmen Lima, 13, whose dad has been deported under your draconian immigration policy that sees 1,100 deported daily? How can you say that to those thousands of immigrants hoping against hope for reform that is way more than border security? How can you say that to the many on the right and in corporations who still lobby on for immigration reform despite John Boehner nail in the coffin comment?

The reality is, Mr. President, is that you are the leader of this great nation. You need to stand your ground and stand up for what you believe in. Compromise yes, but make sure, as Sun Tzu says, impose your will on the enemy, and do not allow the enemy's will to be imposed on you.

Respectfully,  
Felicia Persaud

*Edited from News Americas. Felicia Persaud is CMO of Hard Beat Communications, which owns the brands NewsAmericasNow, CaribPR Wire and Invest Caribbean Now.*



## Prosperity, challenges mark Barbados Independence

KATHY BARRETT

From the sandy beaches in the east to the rugged coastline on the west, Barbados - the most easterly of all the islands in the Caribbean - is one of the more populous and prosperous nations in the region with one of the highest standards of living in the developing world.

Often referred to as "little England", Barbados was the springboard for English colonization in the Americas and, according to history, played a key role in the settlement of Jamaica and the Carolinas in the United States, often sending a constant flow of settlers to other areas throughout the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Faced with its fair share of challenges as a British dependent territory, the country declared Independence on Nov. 30, 1966, joining Haiti, Jamaica and Guyana as the independent countries in the region.

Now in 2013, as the country celebrates 47 years of Independence, Barbados, with the third oldest Parliament in the world, a population of just under 300,000 (one of the most literate in the world) has been grappling with economic challenges. In his message to mark political Independence, Prime Minister Freundel Stuart sought to remind citizens that Independence is not easy.

"We always knew that we would have to face daunting challenges and make difficult choices," Stuart explained. "But we trusted our faith and our resilience to help us to answer the summons of history when it has called on us to stand up for Barbados."

### 'CHARACTER'

Stuart encouraged Barbadians by reminding them of the strength of the "national character" that has been tested frequently over the years.

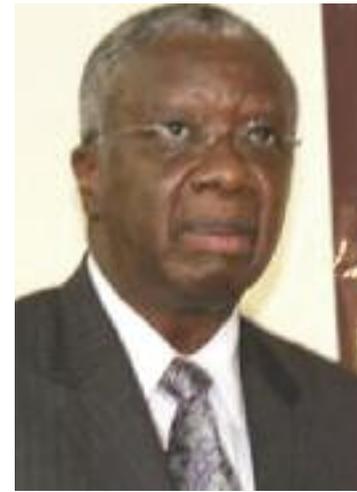
"There are many nations older than ours in which democratic procedures are still trying to find a comfortable place," he said, acknowledging that the global economic crisis has had a severe impact on the island.

"The world has not yet been able to recover from the effects of this stubborn downturn and Barbados, like most other countries, continues to be negatively affected."

Stuart noted that the economy, which depends primarily on tourism, international business and financial services and foreign direct investment for its sustenance,

is still struggling. But, like during past struggles, it will recover.

"We did not allow Barbados then to descend into



Stuart

destructive and suicidal disharmony," said Stuart. We came together as a people across partisan, racial, class, and every other kind of divide and stood up for Barbados as a nation. We prevailed.

"The present challenges require a similar response from all of us. If we try to meet our challenges individually and separately, we are foredoomed to perish together. A united response is called for in our present circumstances. No other kind of response will meet the needs of this moment," he said.

Mia Mottley, opposition leader from the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), said there were many unanswered questions.

"Are we happy about the way our island now works?" she asked. "Are our traditional values of thrift, hard work and neighborliness still relevant, appreciated or practiced? Are we satisfied with the type of service that we give to each other and to visitors to our shores?"

### CONCERN

In recent weeks, local economists have voiced concern about Barbados's stability as the U.S.-based international ratings agency Standard & Poor's (S&P) has revised - downwards - the country's long-term rating. It was the second downgrade in four months. The credit rating agency announced that it had moved the island's rating from BB+ to BB- in response to a persistent current account deficit and a high fiscal deficit.

In October, Dr. Delisle Worrell, governor of the Barbados Central Bank, downplayed predictions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that Barbados was the only Caribbean economy to remain in recession, insisting the island was hold-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10A)

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# CHRISTMAS COOL: 'Tis the season to be jolly ... and fill the trolley

**TONY ROBINSON**

This is my favorite time of year and no other holiday, not Easter, Independence or any of the other brings me so much joy.

For some reason, people are friendlier, nicer, gentler, more generous and cordial at this time. And even the non-believers will still jump on the bandwagon and take part in this festive season. Some even avoid pork during the year, but eat ham in this season.

Nobody or nothing will take this festive season away from me. 'Tis the season and, although many people have lost the true meaning of the time, or didn't even know what it originally meant, it's still gratifying to see human beings behaving with warmth and friendship towards each other.

Whatever you may think or say, Christmas is a special time of year and, whether you be Christian, Jew, Gentile,

Rasta, Agnostic or non believer, it still stirs something in you when you witness the change in people's attitude towards each other.

**DOLLARS RULE**

Even the climate changes at this time of year, as it lowers the temperature. People genuinely mean it when they say "Merry Christmas". Visiting is a must, especially old friends, bringing them some cheer by virtue of a bottle of wine or rum cream, and sharing some of their pudding with them.

Yet when you watch television and see the season's fare, that's where the money flows, as dollars run aplenty with commercials. All the stores and merchants want to maximize their visibility and sales. The merchants maximize their profits at this time. Many say over 30 percent of annual business comes from Christmas sales.



But wow, the traffic increases and parking is a challenge. Still, many folks enjoy the hustle and madness of the streets and look forward to it every year. The

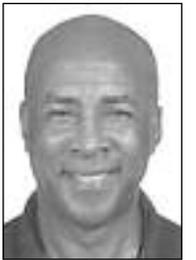
shopping gurus have a field day. They know exactly where the bargains are. And even though people bawl how they're broke, they still find money to spend, especially

those with children. Also, everyone wants to fix up their home, and that new fridge, sofa or flat screen TV is usually bought at this time.

**DOWNSIDE**

But hark, the bills of January loom large. Not to worry, it'll work out somehow. Now as in all things, there is a downside to this festive season, and that involves those who are lonely, shut in, sick, old and indigent or grieving a loss at this time. For many women, it is an exceedingly sad and difficult time, as they have

no man to share it with. This applies to men without women too, but I think that it affects women more.



**TONY ROBINSON**

So they opt to stay at home, watch TV, have a glass of rum cream and pray for the loneliness to pass.

Then let's not forget those women who are dealing with married men, for the man has to spend Christmas day with his family, so it's a sad solo day for them.

Still, 'tis the season of goodwill and giving - and not just material things. Give time and have a blessed season. Enjoy it to the fullest.

seido1@hotmail.com



## Prosperity, challenges mark Barbados Independence

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9A)

ing its own. But former Prime Minister Owen Arthur, in delivering the inaugural Independence lecture of the School of Politics and Government, warned that if remedial action was not taken, Barbados could suffer the same fate as its Caribbean community (CARICOM) partners Guyana and Jamaica.

Kathy Barrett is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



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# CARIBBEAN CREAM: Jamaicans win IAAF World Athletes of the Year

Super sprinters Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce of Jamaica have been named World Athletes of the Year by the IAAF, the sport's governing body.

Bolt, who won the award for the fifth time, and Fraser-Pryce, a first-time winner, received their trophies at last month's IAAF World Athletics Gala held in Monaco.

The awards were hosted by International Athletics Foundation (IAF) Honorary President HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco and IAAF President Lamine Diack, who presented the trophies to the male and female winners.



Fraser-Pryce, left, and Bolt after receiving their awards.

Both winners received a prize of \$100,000.

Bolt and Fraser-Pryce

became the third set of athletes from the same country to claim the World Athlete of the Year title simultaneously, following Carl Lewis and Florence Griffith-Joyner in 1988, and Britain's Colin Jackson and Sally Gunnell in 1993.

## 2013 SUCCESS

Bolt, 27, previously won the World Athlete of the Year title in 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012. This year he successfully defended both his 100 meters and 200 meters titles at the IAAF World Championships in Moscow, Russia, winning the latter final in a 2013 world-leading time of 19.66 seconds.

He concluded his World Championships by anchoring a Jamaican quartet to gold in

the 4x100 meters relay. Bolt won 10 out of his 11 100 meters races (including heats), and was unbeaten in his five races over 200 meters in 2013.

Fraser-Pryce, 26, regained her 100 meters title at the 2013 World Championships, winning in 10.71 seconds, which the fastest time of the year. After having run the fastest time of the year in the 200 meters, 22.13 at the Jamaican championships in June, she went on to win the gold medal over the distance in Moscow.

Like her compatriot Bolt, she also anchored the

Jamaican 4x100 meters team to victory, a national record and the second fastest time in history.

"I'm shocked and excited," said Fraser-Pryce, who became the second Jamaican woman to win the title after Merlene Ottey in 1990. "It's something that has been a dream of mine.

"Not all the time do things happen that we want to happen, but this did," she added.

- Edited from CMC.



## Haynes is NASL 'Coach of the Year'

Former Trinidad and Tobago player Brian Haynes was last month named "Coach of the Year" in the North American Soccer League following his first season at the Atlanta Silverbacks.

Atlanta won the league's spring season, but lost NASL Soccer Bowl 2013 to the New York Cosmos.

"Brian Haynes was just the right guy for the job, and everything I knew and had been told about him that seemingly made him a perfect fit was true," said Silverbacks Technical Director Eric Wynalda.

Haynes played more than 20 times for T&T, scoring eight times between 1987 and 1996. He attended Erskine College in the United States, earning NAIA All American honors three times. He also played professionally in the U.S. with the Atlanta Attack of the American Indoor



Haynes

Soccer Association and was league "Rookie of the Year" in 1990.

Haynes also played outdoors for Orlando Lions, Maryland Bays, Colorado Foxes and Seattle Sounders in the American Professional Soccer League. He won four APSL titles as a player.



## Bahamas 'on track' to stage first IAAF Relays

as has reassured the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) that it stands ready to stage the inaugural World Relays next year.

A delegation from the IAAF World Relays Bahamas 2014 local organizing committee (LOC), including Sport Minister Dr. Daniel Johnson, recently provided an update to the IAAF Council in Monaco.

The Bahamas will host the World Relays at the Thomas A. Robinson Stadium

in Nassau, May 24-25 and members of the LOC have been updating the governing body about the preparations.

During the meeting they also confirmed that transportation between the team hotels should be swift and smooth and the main route will incorporate a dual carriageway between the hotels and the stadium, with police escort. The LOC said that access to The Bahamas capital, Nassau will be smooth as the new wing to the local international airport has

recently been opened.

The LOC Bahamas 2014 also reiterated that plans for a junior relay meet, incorporating The Bahamas' top teams, would take place before the main competition program each day immediately before performances by the elite athletes.

The IAAF World Relays Bahamas 2014 is expected to welcome more than 700 athletes and 300 team officials, from more than 40 nations.



## MLS hunts young Caribbean soccer talent at 'combine'

Upcoming soccer prospects from the Caribbean will have a chance to impress scouts from North America's top professional league next month.

The Caribbean Football Union (CFU) and Major League Soccer (MLS) last month agreed to hold a MLS Caribbean Player Combine in Antigua.

The announcement was made in St. John's, Antigua during an event attended by



Derrick, center, flanked by Gonsalves, left, and Mondelo at last month's announcement.

CFU President Gordon Derrick, Antigua and Barbuda Football Association President Everton Gonsalves, and MLS Technical Director Alfonso Mondelo.

## TRIAL

The Jan. 2-5 Caribbean combine, to be held at the Antigua Recreation Ground, will feature players ages 18 to 22 from the region participat-

ing in training sessions and games.

Those selected by scouts from the clubs will be offered the chance to try out at the annual adidas MLS Player Combine in Fort Lauderdale, Florida next month where

primarily college-leavers in the United States compete.

"Quite a few players have played, continue to play in the MLS and have done so successfully," said Mondelo at last month's announcement.

"Now we are looking forward to the next generation of players who will be coming in."



## Cayman, T&T, Jamaica aim for spot in U-20 World Cup

Three countries from the Caribbean will have a chance to make it to the under-20 soccer World Cup for women in 2014 when they kick off the CONCACAF round of qualifiers next month.

Trinidad and Tobago have been drawn in Group B along with host and seeded team Cayman Islands, Honduras and Mexico for the Jan. 9-19 tournament in Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands.

The tournament, for countries in the Caribbean, North and Central America will also feature Jamaica, Costa Rica, Guatemala and the United States in Group A.

The two groups of four teams will participate in round-robin play at the end of

which the top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals on Jan. 17. The semi-final winners will contest the final, as well as qualify directly for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup. The winner of the third-place match also earns a ticket to the event, which will be held in Canada.

The fourth-place finisher also have a chance to qualify, but will face a play-off against the third-ranked team from South America.

The U.S. has won three of the tournament's four editions, including the inaugural competition in 2006 and the last in 2012. Canada was crowned champion in 2008.



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**REGION/POLITICS**



# MAKING UP: T&T, Jamaica smooth tensions after trade war threat



Foreign ministers Nicholson, left, and Dookeran sign an agreement following talks.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC - Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have signed an agreement outlining a path to improve free trade and free movement between the two countries.

"I think we have ... created a platform for addressing

not only the issues which brought this meeting together, but for a wider set of considerations, both in our bilateral relations, and in the relations within the wider CARICOM (Caribbean Community)," Trinidad and Tobago's Foreign Minister Winston Dookeran

said in a statement.

He said he had also extended an invitation to his counterpart, Arnold J. Nicholson to visit Port of Spain by the end of the first quarter of 2014 for further consultations, having recognized the need to follow up on agreements coming out of these last two days.

**TALKS**

Dookeran had been invited to Kingston for talks by Nicholson after Port of Spain had refused entry to 13 Jamaican nationals last month that had escalated into a threat of a trade war between the two CARICOM member states.

Jamaica had been critical of the decision and the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a warning to nationals travelling to Trinidad and Tobago saying it was also concerned at this development and was continuing to interface with the relevant authorities in Trinidad and Tobago on the matter particularly in light of the Shanique Myrie ruling by the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ).

"Given the paradigm shift in immigration law and procedures in relation to the treatment of CARICOM nationals entering countries of the region, both our countries recognized the need for a common approach and interpretation of the law," Nicholson told reporters at the end of the talks on Dec. 3.



## T&T judge named to International Criminal Court

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - Justice Geoffrey Henderson has been elected as a judge of the International Criminal Court, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here.

It noted that Henderson, a former director of public prosecution with 24 years

experience in the criminal justice system, was the island's candidate at the ICC's 12th session of the assembly of States Parties to the Rome



Henderson

Statute.

"Mr. Justice Henderson's candidacy was approved by the Assembly of States Parties in the first and only round of voting, and he secured 98 votes out of a maximum 99 votes (with 1 abstention), easily surpassing the two-thirds

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 13A)

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# RICH 'DUDUS': Jamaican crime boss's assets valued at \$3M ~ cops

Assets of Christopher "Dudus" Coke, the Jamaican drug lord serving 23 years in a United States federal prison, is worth roughly \$3 million, according to the Caribbean island's police.

Coke was extradited to the U.S. on June 24, 2010 after a bloody standoff between his supporters and police that lasted nearly a month. Dozens of people lost their lives as a result, and the

government set up a commission of inquiry to probe the circumstances surrounding the extradition after it had become public that the then ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government had sought to prevent the extradition.

The U.S. court also ordered Coke to pay \$1.5 million in forfeiture.

Coke's assets value is estimated by the police at J\$300 million (one Jamaica dollar =

US\$0.01 cents).

## MASKING

Speaking at the received Jamaica Observer Monday Exchange program, Police Commissioner Owen Ellington said Coke had been careful in masking his ownership of several properties, cash and other physical assets.

"We have made moves to take some of that wealth from him, but one thing that must be said about people like Coke, they skillfully conceal their wealth," Ellington told the senior journalists of the newspaper.

He said Coke listed ownership of some of his lavish assets in the names of relatives and associates.

"We found houses, expensive motor vehicles in the names of persons who were not able to work and appeared to be unconnected to the day-to-day activities of the criminal enterprise. But they were holders of substantial assets," the commissioner said.



Coke

"But it is not unique to Coke. We will find many of the significant crime actors using this method of concealing their ill-gotten gains."

## SEIZED

The police said they are working with the Financial Investigation Division of the

Ministry of Finance and recently seized millions in cash and assets. "In recent times, we have taken hundreds of millions from convicted criminals through the Proceeds of Crimes Act - houses, expensive vehicles, and pleasure craft," Ellington said, even as he acknowledged

the lengthy periods it takes for these assets to be disposed of and the financial gain used to bolster law enforcement efforts.

- Edited from CMC.



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## Barbados among least corrupt nations in the world

BERLIN, Germany, CMC – Barbados is among the least corrupt countries in the world, according to the latest figures released by the German-based Transparency International (TI).

According to TI, Barbados heads the Caribbean community (CARICOM) countries on the Corruption Perception Index that ranks countries based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be.

TI has ranked Barbados 15th out of 173 countries with a score of 75, down one place from the 2012 figure of 76.

The Bahamas and St. Lucia are ranked 22nd, the second best for regional countries with a score of 71, the same as in 2012.

While Transparency

International did not provide figures for St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda and Belize, it said that St. Vincent and the Grenadines had a score of 62, the same as in 2012 with a ranking of 33.

## SLIP

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago both had a ranking of 38. But while Kingston's score remained at 38 as it had been in 2012, Port of Spain slipped one point down.

Dominica placed 41st on the rankings with a score of 58, the same as in 2012, followed by Suriname (94) with a score of 36, one less than the previous year, Guyana (136) with a drop of one from the 2012 figure of 28, while Haiti rounded up the CARICOM countries with the same score

of 2012 to place 163rd.

TI said that a country's score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of zero to 100, where zero means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 100 means it is perceived as very clean. A country's rank indicates its position relative to the other countries and territories included in the index. This year's index includes 177 countries and territories.

Denmark, as it did last year, topped the ranking with a score of 91, up from the score of 90, while North Korea, Somalia and Afghanistan were in the cellar position with a score of eight, the same as they had in 2012.



## T&T judge named to International Criminal Court

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12A) majority required for election whilst drawing support from all regions of the world," the statement declared.

## SUPPORT

The statement said that his candidacy was supported by Caribbean community (CARICOM) member states of Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia and Suriname. It said that

Uruguay had withdrawn its candidate last month.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that apart from his impeccable credentials the election of Justice Henderson "... is ample indication of the deserved esteem in which Trinidad and Tobago is held by the international community."

Henderson's term of office will expire on Mar. 10, 2021.



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## 'Obamacare' enrollment forum Dec. 11 in Miramar

A public forum to explain the Affordable Health Care Act in the United States and offer enrollment information will be held from **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Dec. 11** at Sunset Lakes Community Center, 2801 S.W. 186th Ave. in Miramar, Florida.

The forum will be hosted by the city's Vice Mayor Alexandra Davis.

"This legislation can have

a dramatic impact on the quality of life for our residents," Davis said in a recent press release. "We must make sure that they are provided information that will help them make an informed decision for their health and the health of their families."

Scheduled speakers include: Anna Maria Studley, from the Gehring Group; Rosalyn Frazier, Broward

Community & Family Health Centers, Inc.; Rhianna Hurt, Enroll America; Jerson Dulis, HC Network; and Andrew Behrman from Florida Association of Community Health Centers Inc. (FACHC).

Staff members from Community Access Center will also be present to assist.



## Exonerate Garvey campaign gathers momentum with 10,000 in South Florida

The Coalition for the Exoneration of Marcus Garvey last month said it delivered more than 10,000 petitions to the South Florida office of United States Congresswoman Frederica

Wilson, calling for the exoneration of the late Jamaica National Hero in the U.S.

According to a press release from the organization, the petition states: "We, the undersigned, are requesting

the assistance of our representatives in reintroducing the resolution with the following change in the wording: 'Expressing the sense of the Congress that the President should exonerate Marcus Mosiah Garvey to clear his name and affirm his innocence of crimes for which he was unjustly prosecuted and convicted.' We urge Congress to take action and reintroduce H.Con. Res. 24 to exonerate Marcus Mosiah Garvey".

Garvey, founder of the UNIA, was arrested in the U.S. on Jan. 12, 1922 and charged with mail fraud. His sentence was eventually commuted by U.S. President Calvin Coolidge and he was deported to Jamaica.



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## FASTEST FINISHERS



Photograph by David I. Muir

Jamaica's multiple World and Olympic sprint champion Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, left, checks out a copy of Caribbean Today focusing on her accomplishments, and those of others from the region, with the news magazine's publisher Peter Webley during last month's 5K run in South Florida.

## Check in with Social Security before traveling outside U.S.

Caribbean Americans are visiting places around the globe — often for vacations and sometimes to relocate in another country.

If you are one of these people and receive Social Security benefits, there is a special website: "Social Security Payments Outside

the United States." There you can find answers to such questions as "will my Social Security payments be affected? Do I have to let Social Security know I'm out of the country? When should I do it? What happens if I need to contact Social Security while I am out of the country?"

The answers are at [www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html). The website features a "Payments Abroad Screening Tool", which asks questions to determine if your payments can continue.

### LINKS

The page also offers links to publications, such as "Your Payments While You Are Outside The United States", which explains how benefits may be affected and other important information you need to know about receiving Social Security benefits while

outside the country.

Also, if you receive Social Security benefits as a dependent or survivor, there are additional U.S. residency requirements that may affect your benefit payments while you are outside the U.S.

There are different provisions for anyone receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. Once you have been outside the U.S. for 30 or more days in a row, your SSI cannot start again until you have been back in the country for at least 30 consecutive days. There are special rules for dependent children of military personnel who leave the U.S. and exceptions for students studying abroad.

So if you receive Social Security or SSI benefits and are planning to travel or live outside the U.S., pay a visit to [www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments.html).



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**HIGH FIVE**



Jamaican Tessanne Chin advanced to the semi-final round of "The Voice" earlier this month. Chin survived yet another elimination round in the NBC television network show to reach the top five in the singing competition. Jacquie Lee, Cole Vossbury, Will Champlin and James Wolpert are the others. The winner will be decided this month.

**SHUTTER STORY: Photo exhibit focuses on Haiti's rituals**

An exhibition of photographs focusing on French-speaking Caribbean country Haiti opens this month at Miami Dade Colleges Museum of Art + Design.

"Rituales en Haiti", featuring the work of Spanish-born photographer Cristina García Rodero, is organized in partnership with Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the Consulate General of Spain in Miami and Centro Cultural Español.

The museum will host special public hours for the



Rodero's lens capture life in Haiti.

exhibition, from noon until 7 p.m., during Miami Art Week, Dec. 4-8. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Rodero's graphic series "Rituales en Haiti" debuted at the 2001 Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy. She traveled to

**Jamaican reggae singer Junior Murvin dies**

KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC – Jamaican reggae singer Junior Murvin Smith has died. He was 64.

Media reports said that Murvin, best known for his song "Police and Thieves" in 1976, was suffering from an advance stage of diabetes. He also performed with "Jah Postles", one of Jamaica's

leading bands in the 1990s.

He toured extensively, visiting several countries in Europe, including Germany, England and France, while



Murvin

blazing a trail in vintage reggae music.

Murvin also produced a number of hits, including "Miss Kushie", "Cool Out Son", "I'm In Love", "Bad Man Posse" and "Muggers in the Street".



**DJ Ninja Man's murder trial next year**

The murder trial of Jamaican dancehall entertainer "Ninja Man" and his son has been postponed to April 7 next year because his attorney Valrie Nieta Robinson is engaged in another matter in the Gun Court.

The trial of Ninja Man, whose real name is Desmond Ballentine, was due to begin in October. He is accused of the murder of Richard Johnson, who was killed on

March 16, 2009. Ninja Man is jointly charged with his son Janiel and another man, Dennis Clayton.

When the matter was last mentioned in May the court was informed that the fourth accused, Seymour Samuels,



Ninja Man

had since died.

When he appeared in Court in May, Ninja Man, who began his career in the 1980s, was given leave to travel throughout the Caribbean. He is said to be negotiating a European tour, as part of a developing partnership with a Polish agent Downsound Records and Contractor's Marketing.



**Sizzla denied visa to enter U.S.**

Jamaican entertainer Sizzla has reportedly been denied entry into the United States, according to a booking agency.

Stephen Brush, of International Artists Agency,

was last month quoted in the **Jamaica Observer** newspaper that Sizzla, real name Miguel Collins, was denied a visa, causing the agency to cancel a U.S. tour which should have featured dates in November

and this month, at venues in Washington D.C., Colorado, New York and Virginia.

- Edited from *News Americas*.



**Madonna joins Sean Penn for charity trip to Haiti**

NEW YORK - Multiple Grammy singer and actress Madonna took to Instagram to chronicle her recent trip to Haiti.

Madonna was in Haiti at the invitation of her ex-husband Sean Penn, whose J/P Haitian Relief Organization in the Caribbean country has been focused on housing and relocating thousands of people from impromptu settlements that formed after the disaster.

Penn, 53 has served as an ambassador-at-large for Haiti since early 2012, after founding his humanitarian group in the aftermath of the earthquake in 2010.

**PHOTOS**

Madonna and Penn were joined by her son Rocco, 13, for the charity trip to Haiti. She posted many photographs of Haitian children on her Instagram account, including several of girls with a note that "They have style." A photo with hospital staffers at

the hospital Paul Farmer built in Mirebalais was also posted.

Penn revealed that he had invited his ex-wife, who has previously donated \$250,000 to the relief effort, and that they have "maintained a great



Instagram image  
Madonna at the hospital Paul Farmer built in Mirebalais, Haiti.

friendship over the years.

"She's here, she's seeing, she's made the effort to come here, and I'm thrilled by that," said Penn. "... She has a unique platform, and wherever she chooses to bring that to, it's very well."

- Edited from *News Americas*.





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## Rihanna chosen 'Icon' at American Music Awards

LOS ANGELES, California - Pristine in a sexy black floor length open front gown, a diamond choker and an old Hollywood glam wrap over hairstyle complete with diamante hairpins, Barbadian singer Rihanna looked very much the role as she collected the first Icon Award from the American Music Awards last month.

The singer, introduced by comedian Bill Maher, who called her "the voice of our generation," first thrilled fans with her performance of "Diamonds" before walking over to Maher for the award, which opened with a video introduction by rapper and business mogul Jay Z.

She was then presented with the award by her Guyanese-born mother Monica Braithwaite who began her remarks by giving "praise and honor" to "God Almighty" before lauding her daughter.

"Rihanna, I'm so proud of you tonight. I know the journey and your career has not always been an easy one, but

tonight I applaud and admire you for being so strong and so positive and so humble and so focused. And I mean, it's amazing how you always manage to take good from all your



Rihanna is flanked by comedian Bill Maher, left, and her mother Monica backstage at the AMA.

experiences. I'm so pleased to be a part of this historic moment and I just want to say I'm proud to present to you the first ever AMA Icon Award." she said before handing over the award to a visibly emotional "RiRi".

### GRATITUDE

Rihanna thanked her fam-

ily, friends and "glam team", while adding she was "terrible at giving speeches."

She then gave those gathered and those watching a background to her road to the award, beginning with what she called her "husky man voice," that she used to sing out loud much to the annoyance of her mother and the neighbors on Westbury Road in Barbados.

She also thanked Jay Z and L.A. Reid, before adding her fans, the Rihanna Army.

"You keep me driven, you keep this special," she said of the fans. "I can't believe that

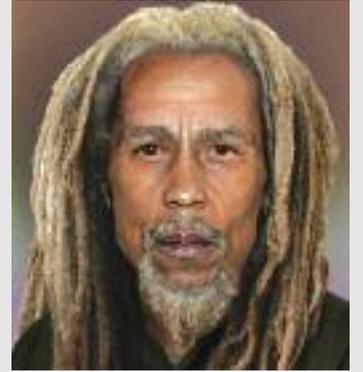
at 25 years old, I'm holding an Icon Award."

Rihanna also won the award for "Favorite Female Artist - Soul/R&B"

- Edited from News Americas.



## A LEGEND LIVES



He died in 1981 at age 36, so it's impossible to tell what Jamaican reggae icon Bob Marley would have looked like today. Or is it? The Sachs Media Group decided to find out, creating images of several late celebrities, including Marley, many years after their death. At left is what Marley looked like back in the day. The image at right is Sachs Media Group's impression of what the international legend would have looked like more than 30 years later.

## Bahamas film fest Dec. 5-13

More than 100 films from 32 countries, including four premieres, will highlight this month's Bahamas International Film Festival (BIFF).

The 10th anniversary of the event will feature the following competition categories: spirit of freedom: narrative; documentary; new visions; short film; panorama narrative; documentary and short films out of competition. Special sections will include the youth film workshop films made by five schools, as well

as a world cinema showcase spotlighting Chinese films provided by the Chinese Embassy in The Bahamas.

Andrew Melby and Reggie Henderson's drama "Bahamian Son" has been selected as this year's opening night film, kicking off the festival on Dec. 5, while Travolta Cooper's documentary "The Black Moses" will close the festival on Dec. 13.

For more information about the festival, visit [www.bintlilmfest.com](http://www.bintlilmfest.com).



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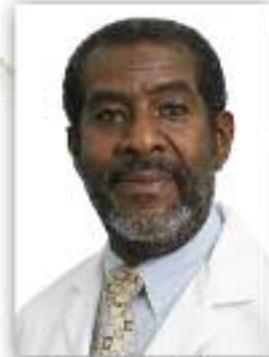
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## FESTIVE JAMAICA: Destination promises memorable holiday experiences

As the festive season approaches, fraught with frigid temperatures in North America and Europe, Jamaica is offering a winter getaway.

This season, the island is parading a variety of festivals, events and cuisine visitors of all ages can enjoy while sharing the holiday cheer.

Among Jamaica's best-known celebrations of Christmas are "Grand Market" and "Jonkonnu".

The Grand Market is a community fair that features food, street dancing, crafts and music. Markets all over the island are set up with vendor stalls selling toys, clothes, balloons and sweets of all kinds, including pinda (an African word for peanut) cakes, grater cakes and peppermint sticks.

Traditionally, on Christmas Eve, some markets are decorated with streamers, balloons and large accordion-style bells.

This fun event draws residents to town for a celebration and music that continues day and night.

"Jonkonnu" is a traditional Christmas celebration where revelers parade through the streets dressed in masquerade, continuing a custom by enslaved Africans who were transplanted to Jamaica.

"Jonkonnu" bands include a mix of traditional and modern characters. They include: Cow Head or Horse Head, King, Queen (wearing a veil), Devil, Pitchy-Patchy, Red Indians, Belly Woman (a character dressed to look enormously pregnant) and Policeman, a mock officer of



Jonkonnu

the law to keep the crowd in check.

Dining in Jamaica over the holidays is a festive experience, filled with delights. A traditional dinner is likely to include the following special-

ties:

- Baked ham, roast beef, chicken, oxtail or curried goat, accompanied by a sweet yam called yampi and Gungo (pigeon) rice and peas.

- Jamaican fruitcake, made with fruits that are soaked for months in rum or port, with a final dousing at the Christmas table.

- Sorrel wine, created from the red fruit of the sorrel plant fermented to a sweetened, red-colored drink spiced with ginger, cloves and pimento, and laced with white rum.

Information obtained from the Jamaica Tourist Board.



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## Sports travel can boost Caribbean development ~ PASO

TORONTO, Canada – A regional sport administrator wants Caribbean governments to facilitate greater intra-regional travel and allowing for sport to be an avenue for development.

Vice President of Pan American Sports Organization (PASO) Keith Joseph, of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, is warning that the high costs of travel within the region is hindering the development of sport.

Joseph, who was among Caribbean delegates attending the General Assembly of PASO here recently, said that in many cases, the people who are given the responsibility for sport at the governmental level are not competent and

lack the understanding of its importance.

"Yes governments own LIAT (regional airline) and while we are not asking them for a free ride certainly they could facilitate greater intra-regional travel to allow for sport to be an avenue for development," said Joseph, who is also the Secretary-General of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Olympic Committee.

### SUCCESS STORY

"I think within the sub-region the persons who have been put with responsibility for sport at the governmental level have little by way of understanding the dynamics of sport have little by way of

understanding what sport can do for the development of their respective countries and indeed for the promotion and development of the region."

Joseph made reference to the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) and its attempts over the years to run a successful Twenty20 tournament.

"Suddenly a franchise comes in and look at the difference," he said. "Even the crowds have responded because the crowds know when we're marketing a quality product. They know when we're delivering the goods."

- Edited from CMC.



## U.S. seeks to end Cuba consular service suspension

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States said it is "actively" assisting the Cuban diplomatic mission here in finding a new bank willing to handle its accounts so it can resume issuing passports and visas to visitors to the Spanish-speaking Caribbean country.

"We would like to see the Cuban missions return to full operations," said the U.S. Department of State in a statement late last month.

On Nov. 26, the Cuban Interests Section here said it was suspending immediately consular services because its bank, M&T Bank, no longer wished to provide financial services to foreign missions. The Interests Section said it was informed by M&T Bank on July 12 of the impending decision.

### BLAME

The statement blamed the half century-old U.S. economic and trade embargo against



Cuba for not being able to find another bank.

"Due to the existing restrictions stemming from the policy of economic, commercial and financial blockade by the North American government against Cuba, it has been impossible for the Interests Section to find until now a U.S. bank or any other bank based in the United States willing to take over the

bank accounts of Cuban diplomatic missions," the statement said.

"The Interests Section regrets the impact this situation will cause to Cuban and North American citizens, given the inability of the consular section to continue

issuing passports, visas and document processing," it added.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Interest Section in Havana, Cuba said the shutdown of consular operations here "has no impact" on its operations.

"All visa appointments will take place as scheduled," it declared in a statement.



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# IN THE MIX: Jamaican spreads island's sweet taste from London

## MARIE GREGORY

Prize winning baker Marnie Searchwell has managed to provide a taste of Jamaica while carving out a much needed niche market in London, England.

Jamaican-born Searchwell was first trained in England as a graphic designer and then worked in book publishing for some 20 years. But when her second son was born she became a self-taught baker, producing Jamaican cakes using the traditional method of soaking fruits in rum for many months before including them in the mixture. A market stall owner she shopped from suggested she sell her cakes at that spot. The response to her organic Christmas cakes was enthusiastic. So Searchwell developed a web site to advertise.

Coincidentally, around this time, her husband was diagnosed as gluten intolerant. So Searchwell sought alternatives to products containing wheat and gluten, using a special blend of gluten-free flour in her cakes.

The business really took off in 2006, following the web-site. Since then, she has also had orders from France, Trinidad and the United States. Many requests from the U.S. are for Searchwell to mail cakes to friends and relatives in England for birthdays or special occasions.

In London, Searchwell is usually able to deliver the cakes at weekends, with occasional help from her younger son. But she is mainly a one-woman production team, baking cakes in a small kitchen, packaging them and designing labels. At Christmas, however, when she is inundated by orders, Searchwell occasionally co-opts a couple of close friends to assist.

## AWARDS

The Jamaican Christmas cake has probably been her most successful product. It won a 2-Star Great Taste award in 2011. The cake was entered in the normal cake class despite being gluten and dairy free.

"All the fruit is organically grown," explained Searchwell. "I pick over each batch carefully then chop each batch finely in a food processor and add a mixture of rum and sherry."

Jamaican chauvinism shows.

"This isn't just a tablespoon of cheap rum," Searchwell said. "I use the finest Jamaican rum - Appleton Special. There is no need to add sugar because the soaking

brings out the fruit's flavor."

She described the finished product "silky and smooth," not "tasting like cardboard" as some believe gluten free products must be. Recalling that in

cherries and sultanas steeped in Appleton. Perhaps most unusual is her Sri Lankan Love Cake made with cashews, organic lime, cardamom and nutmeg, with a splash of rosewater.

This gluten-free cake is her version of a 16th century Portuguese recipe.

One of Searchwell's successful ideas is her Gourmet Cake Club. Members are delivered a different cake each month. Seasonal fruits are used, so that Ruby Red Cake in January features organic beetroot and cranberries,

April sees Rhubarb Shortcake, July offers Lemon and Pistachio Cake, and October Spiced Apple Cake.

Searchwell also produces Spiced Boozy Prunes. Apple butter, marmalades and various chutneys and jams are available, especially the Allotment Raspberry Jam using her own fruit.

In the past Searchwell has used nutmeg and allspice grown in her father's Highgate garden. Recently her brother arrived from Jamaica with a large bag of Jamaican ginger. Now real Jamaican ginger cake is added to her list of products.

Searchwell is thinking of introducing a new cake next



Searchwell

Jamaica Christmas cake is sliced thinly, without icing and served with sorrel, Searchwell uses it in London instead of Christmas pudding for dessert on Christmas Day.

## BEST SELLERS

Other best sellers include the Reine de Saba, winner of a gold star at the Great Taste Awards of 2013. This cake, named after the Queen of Sheba, is deliciously moist, dark "chocolatey" but not too sweet.

Searchwell's Tunisian Orange and Almond Cake and her Marzipan Fruit cake also won awards, the latter using organic dried pears,

## CELEBRITY CHEF



Chef Irie, right, raises the arm of "Publix Celebrity Chef Quick Fire Competition" winner Brian Lumley, who beat Gason Nelson during last month's Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival. More than 16,300 patrons reportedly attended the event at Markham Park in Sunrise, Florida. Chef Jimmie Jackson won the "Jerk Cook-off" to earn the coveted Dutch Pot Trophy.

year with Blue Mountain Coffee and a chocolate cake made with cocoa nibs in the mixture. Her mother used to produce a similar cake in Highgate.

"Everyone should be able to enjoy a sweet treat, no matter what their dietary issues,"

said Searchwell.

She also caters for most intolerances, including dairy and lactose-free, nut-free, egg-free, sugar free and vegan.

*Marie Gregory is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*



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