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news
8 ROYALTY VISITS CMU
11 PMAC REPORTS
12 PMAC AGM
26 RIPPLES

features
14 CURAÇAO - CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND MEGA CRUISE PIER NEARS COMPLETION
16 A PATH OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION
21 CRUISE JAMAICA – A PUSH TO INCREASE MARKET SHARE
24 CRUISE LINES ON BOARD TO PROTECT FRAGILE ECO-SYSTEMS
28 AN ANALYSIS OF PORT READINESS AND CRUISE LINE SERVICES
30 PLEASURE BOATING – A SOURCE OF PROSPERITY FOR CARIBBEAN PORTS
management

WHAT PORT MANAGERS SHOULD KNOW

32 NEW TECHNOLOGY – ACCESSIBLE BATHYMETRY WITH NO ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS
33 THE LAW – SHIPS MUST NOW MAINTAIN A BALLAST WATER RECORD BOOK
34 LEADERSHIP – LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE
36 POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE – VENEZUELA IN CRISIS

advertising

38 ADVERTISER INFORMATION CENTRE
CRUISE SHIPS IN PORT: Overcrowding – be prepared for dialogue

My friends returned from their third Caribbean cruise ship tour earlier this year. They enjoyed it immensely. They were off the ship, ashore, at only one destination. It was just more comfortable to stay on the ship, where it was now less crowded and cooler, for the air conditioning.

Too many persons ashore at the same time tend to make small ports look and feel exceedingly tiny. When several thousands of cruise passengers disembark at about the same time, whole sections of town will slow to a crawl. And this is true in Europe as it is in the Caribbean. Except, this year, following a hurricane season that caused more destruction than many can remember, those small Caribbean ports that were unaffected and left intact by the cyclones may get even more cruise traffic than was initially scheduled, thanks to re-routing and temporary re-scheduling.

Cruise ships cram ports
Jane Archer, writing for the Telegraph (UK) recently stated: “I have visited Grand Cayman (population 49,500) in the Caribbean when four ships, each with more than 2,000 passengers on board – mine had 4,000 — descended at once one morning. The main tourist attraction, Stingray City, where you can walk in the water with these Frisbee-like fish, was more like a Disney theme park in high summer. It was even worse in St Thomas earlier this year — six ships, each with capacity for well over 2,500 passengers jostling for space in the tiny capital of Charlotte Amalie.”

The fact is, no one, cruise passenger or local, likes the extreme congestion and confusion of too many persons landed in the same port at the same time. However, most accept that reality as a necessary evil. It’s good for the economy but accept it. But is it good for the economy? If cruise passengers find it increasingly more comfortable to stay on the ship while in port, how does that help the local economy and provide an income for itinerant vendors, ground transportation providers, attractions operators, restaurateurs, et al.?

If local governments and cruise destination authorities do not want to discuss overcrowding, for fear of having to discuss dislocation and local economic fallout, well, the cruise lines are apparently less shy about talking about it. CLIA Europe general secretary Tom Fecke was quoted as saying he was ready to discuss these issues with ports and destinations but that many destinations wanted to receive more cruise ships and passengers, not fewer.

Cruse lines have a responsibility to their shareholders, to make as much profit as is possible, from investments made. However, if the ecology at cruise ship destinations is not sustained, with the balances that made these idyllic ports enchanting and romantic, then all that was invested in real estate and technology would be at risk.

The cruise industry appears ready to discuss sustainability and how to manage large-scale passenger flows and overcrowding at popular destinations. Those that control or manage Caribbean cruise destinations should get prepared for this dialogue, with studied solutions for the problems of overcrowding that are already plainly visible across the region.

Mike Jarrett
Editor

“... if the ecology at cruise ship destinations is not sustained, with the balances that made these idyllic ports enchanting and romantic, then all that was invested in real estate and technology would be at risk.”
One of the events that marked the ceremonial transition of the Caribbean Maritime Institute to full university status was the installation of the first Chancellor of the Caribbean Maritime University (CMU), the Suapolor of the Shai Traditional Area of Ghana, His Royal Majesty Drolor Bosso Adamtey I.

Also installed at the historic event in Kingston, Jamaica on September 28, 2017, were Professors Fritz Pinnock as President of the CMU and Professor Ibrahim Ajagunna as Deputy President.

The CMU’s first Chancellor, King Adamtey, is also Chancellor of the University of Professional Studies (UPSA), in Accra, Ghana, a position he has held since 2014. In his capacity as Chancellor of CMU, he will also serve as Chairman of the Caribbean Maritime University Foundation. He earned three doctorate degrees and has been instrumental in developing educational and humanitarian efforts in Africa, Europe and the United States of America.

CMU was delighted to have the new Chancellor in hands-on mode when he visited the university’s advanced simulators at its Kingston Harbour location.

Caribbean Maritime University’s (CMU) Associate Vice President, Capt. Johnny Pretel presents marine epaulettes to CMU’s first Chancellor, Drolor Bosso Adamtey I, during his first official visit to the university’s main campus on September 25.

Sharing the moment are CMU President, Professor Fritz Pinnock and CMU Board Chair, Mrs. Hyacinth Bennett.
“CMU was delighted to have the new Chancellor in hands-on mode when he visited the university’s advanced simulators at its Kingston Harbour location.”
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**PMAC reports ...**

**A year of empowerment and access**

Activities to empower port managers; and, provision of access to best practices, dominated the past year of the Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC).

Working with its members and associates, through the American Association of Port Authorities and the Gulf Ports Association of the Americas, the regional port management association continued to expand its sphere of interest. All the Americas, including Canada, the USA, Central and South America and the Caribbean, were represented in Grand Cayman for the PMAC’s 20th Annual General Meeting.

In attendance were senior managers and representatives of PMAC’s member-ports and brands including Alixum, CBCL, CELBA, Lamar University, Novaport International, Caribbean Maritime University, Octopi, Saam Smit Towage and Advantum, SOGET and Stevedoring Services. Also attending the PMAC annual conference were representatives of other brands including Liebherr, Connor, Konecranes, Taylor, Ocean Dredging, Transas, VeRope, Transportation Technology Associates, Certified Slingers, Hybur and Hyde, among others.

Presenters included Hugo Van de Graaf, Director at Dutch Dredging; Krista Lucenti, Trade and Integration Economist at the Inter-American Development Bank; Bob Clarke, Director of MetalCraft Marine; Todd Mitchell, President of NAVENCO, and Jim Quinn, President and CEO of Port Saint John.

Following the success of Grand Cayman, PMAC facilitated its members’ participation in webinars on waterfront structures and on disaster threat awareness. The webinar on Waterfront Structures was conducted on Wednesday, July 12. At least 15 participants from ports in Barbados, Montserrat, St. Christopher and St. Vincent participated.

The webinar on Maintaining Focus on Threat Awareness during the Upcoming Tropical Storm and Hurricane Season was scheduled for Tuesday, August 8, just ahead of what turned out to be one of the most devastating hurricane seasons in recent history.

**JOINT TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

Lamar University Center for Advances in Port Management, the Caribbean Maritime University (CMU) and the Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC) notarized a pact for collaboration on June 22. The document, Memorandum of Understanding, was signed during the Annual General Meeting of the PMAC.

The agreement between the two academic entities, with the Port Management Association at the centre, creates a crucible for the development of synergies involving the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) (i.e. the Professional Port Manager Certification programme), Lamar University Center for Advances in Port Management and the Caribbean Maritime University.

This, says the PMAC’s Executive Secretary, Glenn Roach, could lead to the issuance of reciprocal credits and joint certification. In this regard, he noted, the Caribbean Maritime University has proposed provision of applicable credit for AAPA and PMAC participants in the AAPA webinar programme.
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Curação’s Mega Cruise Pier II, in the final stages of construction, was expecting its first ship on November 13, 2017, P&O Cruises MS Britannia. Mega Cruise Pier II is located at Otrabanda, Willemstad, west of the entrance to St. Anna Bay and adjacent to Mega Cruise Pier I. It was built at a cost of USD48 million.

Growth
In announcing the project, Curação Ports Authority (CPA) stated that, following the construction of the first mega pier, call requests had increased to the point where the CPA could no longer meet the demand. The port experienced a 30% increase in passenger arrivals over the two year period 2012 – 2014 when visitor arrivals reached 600,000.

This achievement placed the port on track to get to its target of 1,000,000 visitors a year, each spending, on average, $70 to $100. The CPA therefore moved to advance work on its master development plan for the port; ‘Rif Seaport Curação Master Plan 2014 – 2016’.

In May 2016, the Dutch company Royal BAM* Group announced that it had won the contract to design and construct a brand new mega cruise pier in Curaçao. Construction began later that year.

Capacity
The new pier will be able to receive 8,000 passengers a day and, with depth alongside of 20 metres, will be capable of accommodating Oasis-class cruise ships (currently the world’s largest cruise ships — length 360 m. / 1,181 ft. with 5,400 passengers in double occupancy.) Cargo ships, tankers and offshore service vessels will also use the facilities.

The berthing structure comprises a 200 metre jetty, a 75 metre approach trestle and four mooring dolphins. Construction works included land reclamation protected by shore revetment and improvements to Mega Cruise Pier I.

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* Koninklijke BAM Groep NV. [Bataafsche Aanneming Maatschappij van Bouw – en Betonwerken (“BAM”)]
This was not a particularly hot summer. Certainly nothing like the previous year, 2016 which, as the US Government’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported, was one of the hottest on record.

The NOAA reported that the combined average temperature over global land and ocean surfaces for August 2016 was the highest for August in the 137 years that data have been recorded. And, according to the agency, it was the sixteenth consecutive month of record warm temperatures on Earth. The August 2016 temperatures surpassed the previous record, set in 2015.

August 2016 was also the highest monthly land and ocean temperature departure since April 2016 and tied with September 2015 as the eighth highest monthly temperature departure among all (the 1,640) months on record. Fourteen of the 15 highest monthly land and ocean temperature departures in the record have occurred since February 2015, with January 2007 among the 15 highest monthly temperature departures, the NOAA reported.

The NOAA’s report about record high temperatures stood in stark contrast to the scepticism of a few, including the eventually aspirant for the White House top job, who argued that climate change (and global warming) was a hoax. But, the scientists were reading statistics that showed, in the period June to August, the Earth’s average temperature was significantly above the average for the 20th Century.

Having endured a hot summer in 2016, it was with some relief that Americans welcomed a comparatively cool summer in 2017. Cooler, perhaps, but temperatures in July this year were still above the 20th Century average (by 2.1°F). And, although cooler than 2016, July 2017 was the 10th warmest (July) in 123 years of record-keeping.
Harvey arrives
NOAA had not yet documented figures for August, indeed, August was barely half way through when a depression emerged from a tropical wave to the east of the Caribbean’s Lesser Antilles. That depression gained strength and, by August 17, it was officially declared a tropical storm and given the name Harvey. It was the eighth named storm for 2017.

Tropical storm Harvey crossed the Windward Islands on the following day, following a path just south of Barbados, thrashing St. Vincent and the Grenadines with gale-force winds, as it entered the Caribbean. In a matter of days, Harvey became the first major hurricane of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season.

The system lost energy for a while; weakened to a tropical wave by August 19; continued on a northwestern path across the Caribbean; regained strength by August 23 and in 48 hours was again a Category 4 hurricane headed for the US mainland with the state of Texas in its path. The first hurricane to hit the US mainland in 12 years, Harvey smashed southern Texas, dumping more than 50-inches of rain, enough to flood and demolish much of Houston and adjacent areas; moved back into the Gulf of Mexico; gathered more energy; and, headed for Louisiana. By the time it started to weaken and head north, Harvey had inundated hundreds of thousands of homes; displaced some 30,000 people; left at least seven dead and had ravaged towns and cities across 300 miles of coastline.

Meanwhile, as Harvey started its devastation of Texas, a tropical wave over western Africa came to the attention of the US National Hurricane Center (on August 26). That tropical wave strengthened over the next few days and by August 30, a new tropical storm, Irma was the topic of discussion by meteorologists on all television networks in the hemisphere.

Massive Irma
Irma was declared a Category 2 hurricane within 24 hours of its naming and in short order was upgraded to Category 3. It held this intensity for a few days and, on September 4, 2017, became a massive Category 5 hurricane, one of the largest weather systems the Atlantic had ever experienced and, at the time, the strongest tropical cyclone on Earth. All weather models projected a path that would bend northwards towards the Florida peninsula via the northern Caribbean.

Irma hit the north eastern end of Cuba as a ‘Cat 5’ beast, late on Friday, September 8. It ravaged about 800 Km (500 miles) of coastline including the Camaguey archipelago. Havana was flooded and Varadero and other coastal towns were hit by a storm surge which some estimates put at well over 6 metres (20 ft.). Seawater penetrated as far as 500 metres inland, in coastal districts between the Almendares River and Havana Harbour. The Malecon was submerged. Irma lost some energy in its Cuban onslaught, dropping to Category 3, leaving 10 persons dead and hundreds of thousands distressed and homeless.

True to the meteorologists’ projections, Irma, having regained strength over the warm waters between Cuba and the Florida keys, headed for Florida, its breadth wider than the peninsula. It made landfall at Cudjoe Key with maximum sustained winds of 215 Km per hour and continued across the Florida Keys northwards, the eye moving up the eastern side of the peninsula. By the time it made its second landfall, hitting Marco Island on September 9, Irma had weakened to a weakened to a Category 2 before eventually dissipating overland across several southern states.

So massive was this Category 5 hurricane, it caused catastrophic damage, to various degrees, in several countries and territories, including: Anguilla, Barbados, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Florida, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, St. Martin, the US Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands. Indeed, Barbuda’s housing stock was so damaged, inhabitants of the island had to be evacuated.

No way, Jose
Jose became the third major hurricane of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season. However, compared to the others, it left behind few horrors.

It came to attention on August 31 as a tropical wave just leaving the west coast of Africa, heading across the Atlantic. Before the end of the first week of September, it had gained respect and by September 8 it was rated Category 4.

At first meteorologists plotted a path similar to that taken by Hurricane Irma. It was expected to batter territories that had still not yet recovered from Irma’s wrath. But, Jose did not go that way. Instead, over the next two days, it lost much of its energy. On September 10 it started showing signs of disintegration and four days later lost its hurricane status. This was not for long. By September 16 Jose started on a northerly track and had intensified enough to regain hurricane status of Category 2.

Even before Hurricane Jose bundled northwards, its path taking it to the East and away from the US coastline out into the Atlantic, a new system had caught the eyes of meteorologists.

Then came Maria
It was September 13 and scientists at the National Hurricane Centre had become interested in a tropical wave that would ultimately leave 59 fatalities and horror stories aplenty on its path of death and destruction.

Named a tropical storm on September 16, this massive cyclone was, in a matter of two days, to become the seventh hurricane of the 2017 season and the second Category 5.
Hurricane Maria left behind serious damage and loss of life in a number of Caribbean territories and, particularly, in Dominica, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Martinique, Saint Kitts and Nevis; Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands; and, extensive flooding in other territories including Barbados.

On September 18, just two days after becoming a tropical storm, Maria had taken on the definition of a Category 5 hurricane and was now packing sustained winds howling at 260 km/h (160mph). It hit Dominica that night with the full force of a Category 5 hurricane, destroying infrastructure and residential housing and, in the process, taking 27 lives.

It was the worst hurricane to hit Dominica in that country’s recorded history.

The capital, Roseau was smashed. There was hardly a structure with a roof. And all but an occasional electric pole was either down or broken. The port and fishing town of Marigot, was, by one estimate, 80% damaged.

Within this same 24-hour period, as Hurricane Maria thrashed Dominica, the people of Martinique were also feeling its overwhelming force. In Martinique, it levelled almost three-quarters of the entire banana crop; knocked out electricity and water supplies to nearly half the territory’s population and had most streets in the capital town under water.

Hurricane Maria was the worst hurricane to hit Puerto Rico since 1928. It made land fall in the early hours of September 20 as a Category 4 hurricane, completely destroying the electric grid leaving 3.4 million without public supply. There were conflicting reports about the number of fatalities, some putting it at 16 dead; others, at over 20.

Flood waters were waist-high in San Juan streets as Hurricane Maria devastated the housing stock, leaving whole communities completely homeless. The territories agricultural sector was devastated. Some estimates put total damage at 80%.

Help was slow in coming from the US mainland. A week after the event, with Puerto Rico’s citizens scrounging for food and water, the Governor, Ricardo A. Rossello declared that the US territory was fast heading into a “humanitarian crisis”. He pleaded with Washington to urgently send emergency assistance, even as the death toll mounted... people dying in the aftermath of the hurricane.

The 35-metre Guajataca Dam sustained structural damage during the passage of the hurricane. It was deemed to be unsafe and that it could possibly fail. By September 23, some 70,000 residents, by some estimates, were ordered to evacuate the area that could be affected if the dam failed. As cracks developed in the dam wall, tens of thousands of people who were directly at risk were evacuated, even as water from the 90-year old dam poured through the towns of Isabela and Quebradillas.

Two weeks later, as survivors scrounged for food and clean water, most in darkness because of the destruction of electrical generating capacity, the death toll in Puerto Rico continued to rise and was estimated at 45 persons, almost three times the number initially reported.

And then Nate

By October 3, as (90%, by some crude estimates, of) the people of Puerto Rico, still without food, water or electricity, were desperately trying to stay alive, a weather system that was to become the ninth hurricane of the 2017 hurricane season, was taking shape. Unlike its forerunners that took form off the West coast of Africa, Nate, as it was ultimately named, was forming in the south west Caribbean. In less than 48 hours it gained tropical storm intensity and moved northwards, briskly. Drifting westwards along its northerly path, Nate made its first landfall along Nicaragua’s Caribbean shore.

It crossed Honduras; intensified as it travelled across the deep, warm waters of the Cayman Trench, threaded a path through the Yucatan Channel on October 7 and entered the Gulf of Mexico packing winds of 150 km/h.

Nate was not the most powerful of the 2017 season’s hurricanes; but, it certainly was the fastest moving. It was said to be the fastest moving storm ever recorded in the Gulf. It crossed the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico in about four days, racing towards the south coast of the US mainland. It made landfall at the Mississippi River delta, near to the Louisiana-Mississippi border as a Category 1 hurricane, its path bending north-eastwards as it continued overland across the state of Mississippi.

As it headed North along the eastern seaboard of Central America, Nate left a path of destruction and death across eight countries, including Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala Honduras, Cuba and the USA. At the time of writing, the weakest hurricane of the season had reportedly left 45 fatalities on its path rough the region.

The Caribbean peoples are used to tropical hurricanes, even ferocious ones. This is a feature of life in the summer. Tales are many about the destruction caused by previous hurricanes. However, given the extreme devastation of 2017, with whole countries having to be abandoned, this may be the year that they, like so many of their compatriots in the Gulf states, would like to forget.
Perhaps the most difficult and traumatic reality a person has to accept, other than loss of life of family and friends, is the complete destruction of home, property and items of great sentimental value and family history. But, this was the horror across much of the northern Caribbean and Central America, left in the wake of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season.

In some cases, whole populations had to be evacuated after most of the structures — residential and commercial — were destroyed. And, at the time of writing, more than 90% of Puerto Ricans were still without electricity, the governor estimating that power would not be fully restored until December. More than 15 ports were battered with eight almost completely destroyed.

Ports damaged to the extent that they had to be closed to regular traffic included (in alphabetical order):
- Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands
- Frederiksted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands
- Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands
- Gustavia, Saint Barthélemy
- Philipsburg, St. Maarten
- Roseau, Dominica
- San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Tortola, British Virgin Islands

Storm clouds linger but St. Lucia suffered no major damage from the hurricanes and Rodney Bay Marina remained safe for local yachts. [ – Kathy Francis photo.]

On the other hand, ports in The Bahamas, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, St. Kitts and in the Southern Caribbean were spared and remained open for business. Reports from various sources shortly after the hurricanes were as follows:

**Anguilla** — the port at Road Bay was hardly affected by Hurricane Irma, which passed nearby and was not expecting a cruise call before late November.

**Antigua and Barbuda** — the twin-island country was visited by Hurricane Irma but it was the smaller of the two islands, Barbuda, to the north, that took the brunt of the hit. The port at St. John’s was largely spared and Antigua remained on cruise schedules for the Fall.

**Aruba** — Oranjestad was unaffected by the hurricanes.

**Barbados** — hit by both hurricanes and substantial flooding reported but Port of Bridgetown, relatively unaffected, remained open and was receiving ships.

**Bonaire** — Kralendijk port was unaffected by the hurricanes.

**British Virgin Islands** — the BVI took a severe battering from Hurricane Irma. Images posted on the internet showed near total destruction of the Bitter End Yacht Club on Virgin Gorda and Tortola was expected to remain closed to cruise ships for an extended period. Norwegian Cruise Line cancelled all scheduled visits to Tortola of its 4,248-passerger Norwegian Escape for the rest of the year.

**Cayman Islands** — Grand Cayman was unaffected by the hurricanes.

**Cuba** — The country took a heavy beating from Hurricane Irma and Havana suffered heavy damage and extensive flooding. However, restoration of facilities was quickly underway and Havana was soon re-opened and receiving cruise ships and commercial traffic.

**Curacao** — was not affected by hurricanes this season, up to the time of writing, and the port at Willemstad remained open.

**Dominica** — the entire country of Dominica suffered major damage from Hurricane Maria and the port at Roseau, was expected to remain closed for an extended period.

**Dominican Republic** — all ports remained open and operating normally.

**Florida** — The Florida Keys got hit and was severely damaged by Hurricane Irma. However, although access by road to the Keys was closed, cruise ships began returning to Key West within days of the hurricane. Key West was not as affected as areas to the east, where the eye of the hurricane made landfall and so was ready to receive ships earlier than anticipated.

**Grenada** — St. Georges, like most cruise ports in the Southern Caribbean, was spared and remained open for business.

**Jamaica** — all cruise ports Montego Bay, Falmouth, Ocho Rios and Port Antonio, as well as the Port of Kingston, were unaffected by the hurricanes.
Martinique — flooding and power outages reported following the passing of Hurricane Maria. Port of Fort-de-France remained open.

Puerto Rico — the port of San Juan was badly hit by Hurricane Maria and, given the extensive damage to the country’s infrastructure, may take several months before resuming functions as a major cruise ship hub and destination. Both of the major lines that operate cruises out of San Juan — Royal Caribbean and Carnival — immediately cancelled sailings. USA Today reported that Carnival also cancelled sailings out of the port that were scheduled to begin in the first week of October and three Florida-based ships that were scheduled to visit San Juan were re-routed to other ports. Carnival’s terminal in San Juan sustained extensive damage from Hurricane Maria.

Saint Barthélemy — St. Barts got hit by Hurricane Irma, forcing the closure of Gustavia port. However, restoration of facilities and services started immediately and the port was soon receiving vessels.

U.S. Virgin Islands — spared serious damage by Hurricane Irma. St. Croix suffered substantial damage during the passage of Hurricane Maria. USA Today reported that several cruise lines had been planning to use Frederiksted as a substitute port for St. Thomas and St. Maarten, both of which were heavily damaged.

St. Kitts — hit by both Irma and Maria suffered no major damage; the port at Basseterre remained open and was receiving cruise ships.

St. Lucia — port of Castries was unaffected by the hurricanes.

St. Maarten — the port of Philipsburg suffered major damage with the passage of Hurricane Irma and was not expected to reopen to cruise ships for months. Royal Caribbean cancelled all of its visits to St. Maarten up to October and was reviewing the probability of extending its cancellation beyond that month. Windstar Cruises reportedly removed St. Maarten from its schedule through March 2018. St. Maarten is one of the most visited cruise ports in the Caribbean. It receives more than 1.6 million cruise passengers a year and is a destination for all three of the world’s biggest cruise ships: Harmony of the Seas, Allure of the Seas and Oasis of the Seas.

St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands — massive devastation by Hurricane Irma reported. Port of Charlotte Amalie was closed and was expected to be re-opened by late October.

The Bahamas — Freeport and Nassau did not sustain major damage and remained open for business.

Trinidad and Tobago — the country was not affected by the hurricanes.

Turks and Caicos Islands — Grand Turk suffered significant damage during Hurricane Irma and had to be closed. Plans for an early to re-opening were set back following the passage of Hurricane Maria that followed shortly after.
Jamaica is seeing exciting growth in cruise business and is expecting to receive a record number of cruise passengers during the current year, 2017 - 2018. This expectation flows from an analysis of visitor arrival statistics for the first seven months which revealed a significant 4.9% increase over the corresponding period last year.

From January 1 to the end of July 2017, Jamaica received 1,088,718 cruise passengers.

“That growth trajectory is expected to continue, especially as Jamaica evolves into a leading cruise destination in the Caribbean with the support of its newly launched Cruise Jamaica initiative,” said a source at the Jamaica Tourist Board.

Jamaica has seen tremendous growth in all aspects of its tourism sector. Indeed, Jamaica is where modern Caribbean tourism began. This is a claim that few, if any, would care to challenge. And, just as well. It could be an exercise in futility.

WHEN DID IT BEGIN?

To the claim that Jamaica is ‘ground zero’ for Caribbean tourism, Jamaicans would, perhaps, begin by mentioning the year 1948. That was when Abe Issa, regarded as ‘the father of Jamaican tourism’, opened the country’s first luxury resort, Tower Isle Hotel, near Ocho Rios. Tower Isle immediately created a buzz, attracting the attention of the rich and famous on both sides of the Atlantic. Royalty and rulers; movie stars and writers; sport personalities, players and the obscenely rich... everybody who was somebody... would be photographed basking in the newspapers on the brilliant white sand beaches of Jamaica’s north coast.

Other recollections may go further back, ten years earlier perhaps, when notables, the likes of: Sir Winston Churchill; great musicians like Louis ‘Satchmo’ Armstrong; and, some others that were difficult to categorise, like (Mr.) Walt Disney (himself), frequently flew into Kingston Harbour (even before there was an international airport) to enjoy the luxuries then offered at the now-long-demolished Myrtle Bank Hotel.

If one were to date the start of Jamaica's tourism industry, January 27, 1891 and the official opening of the Jamaican Great Exhibition of 1891 is as good a date as any. As Merrick Needham told the Kiwanis in Kingston (on January 27, 2015), 14 Caribbean territories, as well as Britain, Canada, the USA, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Greece, France, Russia, India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) had exhibits in this enormous exhibition in Kingston.
The previous year, during the planning of this massive event, it was clear that the influx of overseas visitors would create problems of accommodation in Kingston. Indeed, there were already complaints about the (lack of) availability and the (poor) quality of visitor accommodation in the city. These concerns were immediately addressed with the passage of the Jamaica Hotel Law of 1890 which offered special incentives for hotels built in Kingston in time for tourists attending the Jamaica Great Exhibition of 1891.

During the past 126 years, Jamaica has built a tourism industry that has become a major pillar in the country’s national economy. Its land-based tourism has expanded several-fold, with many major global brands providing accommodation services at every level of the industry. In seven years, from 1955 to 1962, Jamaica’s visitor arrivals increased from 86,000 tourists to 227,000, Tourist revenues (per visitor) increased 950% from £4 to £38. And, in a sea regarded as ‘the cruise capital of the world’, in which only some of Earth’s most beautiful tropical isles are able to offer only one or two safe, dedicated berth/s to cruise ships at one main cruise terminal, Jamaica has four cruise ports on its north coast — Montego Bay, Falmouth, Ocho Rios and Port Antonio, in addition to the cruise berth at Kingston.

ONE COUNTRY, FIVE DESTINATIONS

Each of Jamaica’s cruise ports offers visually different and totally unique arrival experiences. Indeed the visitor, if taken from one cruise ports to another, would be pardoned for thinking they had travelled to another country.

The green, flat landscape of Montego Bay, distant mountains and turquoise waters, looks nothing like the quaint, Georgian town of Falmouth, the newest of Jamaica’s cruise ports. Port Antonio, the ideal port for boutique cruise ships and luxury yachts, lies resplendent against the lush, mountainous backdrop of Jamaica’s highest range, the Blue Mountains. The tropical rainforest of Ocho Rios, verdant from the spray of a hundred waterfalls, presents a beauty of nature rarely experienced, anywhere; its Artisan Villages providing an exquisite shopping experience. And Kingston, the birthplace of Reggae and considered the cultural capital of the Caribbean (for its history, music, art, theatre and cuisine), is visually different but interesting and unusual in many respects.

Collectively, from these five gateways, cruise passengers have access to more than 150 visitor attractions.

Jamaica has been in the tourism business for a long time. And successive governments have sought to implement robust tourism development plans to increase the number of visitor arrivals and the revenues generated by land-based and cruise tourism. With its new push to expand market share, the country has been exploring new ideas to enhance the visitor experience. In this regard, discussions regarding infrastructure improvement; new cruise terminal buildings; beautification projects; and, increasing available ground transportation have been continuous.

As Jamaica looks to increase its share of the Caribbean cruise market, recognizing the urgency of recent initiatives aimed at bringing Cuba back onto the itineraries of the major cruise lines, the Jamaican government is laying down some plans for the future. Current plans include:

• improved destination assurance with a focus on security,
• safety and seamlessness of the arrival experience,
• increased training for employees,
• new port opportunities within Jamaica; and,
• expanded regional port itineraries through collaboration with other top Caribbean destinations such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic.
Several of the safety-focused initiatives are already underway. Jamaica is heavily investing in both existing programmes and new initiatives to ensure a safe, secure and enjoyable visitor experience. This includes a District Constables Training Programme and the establishment of Destination Assurance Councils.

The District Constables Training Programme was introduced in 2016 by the Jamaican government. It is delivered through two agencies: the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo) and the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF). The initiative provides an added layer of security in resort areas, to ensure strict enforcement of the rule of law.

The Destination Assurance Councils (DACs) initiative was launched in June 2017 in six resort areas. The DACs have been given the mandate to ensure that the quality, standards and integrity of Jamaica’s tourism product are maintained. They are required to identify the needs of the industry and monitor the progress of developmental initiatives in resort areas.

CRUISE JAMAICA INITIATIVE

The Cruise Jamaica initiative was designed to showcase the attributes of the destination; and, to present Jamaica as ‘the leading cruise destination’ to the industry, the market, the travel media and travel influencers (including travel agents). To this end, the Jamaica Tourist Board has been collaborating with the Port Authority of Jamaica in designing strategies for attracting more cruise ships and passengers to Jamaican cruise ports and for expanding home porting in Jamaica.

This marketing initiative, in targeting global cruise lines, tour and attractions operators, will include: promotion of new development of infrastructure; improvement and upgrading at cruise ports; and, expanded outreach to cruise-specific media channels, so as to create new industry buzz about the Jamaican destinations.

Jamaica’s tourism infrastructure was not affected by the devastating hurricanes this past summer and, up to the time of going to press, was intact and ready to receive cruise ships, as usual.

On Wednesday, March 1, 2017 Jamaica had a record nine cruise ships calling at its four main cruise ports. Three ships entered or left Ocho Rios; three in Montego Bay; two in Falmouth; and, one in Port Antonio. Reports are that there were a total of some 20,000 cruise passengers in port on that day. The previous record, authorities reported, was seven cruise ships.
T he trail of death and destruction left behind by the super storms of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was a grim reminder of the fragility and vulnerability of the Caribbean environment.

The conclusions drawn from decades of scientific studies, still doubted and dismissed by some, were again proven correct. The environment of planet Earth is changing, largely because of human activity. The warnings have been well documented: depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, formation of super hurricanes, rising sea levels; and, the interrelationship between all four.

Scientists have been unequivocal. There are imbalances. Much of it has been the result of human interaction with the environment through ill-advised industrial practices and ill-conceived methods.

Studies began decades ago with a focus on industrialisation, discharges of effluents of production and the cumulative effects on Earth’s environment. And the smoke, mixed with fog that hung in the air over industrial cities, was of particular concern. Indeed, it was soon identified as a serious health hazard.

The term air pollution entered the global lexicon in the early period of the 20th Century, as the interrelationship between all four.

Indeed, it was found that sulphur dioxide pollution was a significant component of the “great London smog” in 1952, in which more than 4,000 persons died from respiratory ailments and which was so thick that public transport — roads, rail and airports — had to be closed.

Studies later showed that not only were sulphur oxides, collectively, a major part of the problem, but that sulphur compounds travelled great distances in the upper atmosphere and therefore caused significant problems across great distances.

Sulphur oxides are compounds of sulphur and oxygen molecules. Sulphur dioxide (SO₂), the most common, is found in the lower atmosphere. It readily dissolves in water vapour to form sulphurous acid (H₂SO₃). This ‘poisoned water’ ultimately falls to earth as ‘acid rain’.

All of these gases were found to be dangerous and harmful to life and the environment. And it became clear that about 99% of sulphur dioxide in the atmosphere was produced by activities of mankind.

FOSSIL FUELS

Acknowledging the dangers posed by the exhausts of industrial activity, scientists reached a consensus that — in order to protect Earth — mankind had to reduce total emissions generated by the combustion of fossil fuels.

For any given amount of energy produced, of the three fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas), coal produces the most carbon dioxide.

Natural gas produces the least carbon dioxide.

Two of the three, coal and oil, release sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere when burnt, causing respiratory problems for living creatures and producing a serious threat (acidification) to plant life and, as acid rain, to water ecosystems. Acid rain also causes damage to buildings and materials.

CRUISE SHIPS

Like all self-powered machines with internal combustion engines, cruise ships are powered by oil-based fuels. Their massive engines run continuously, not just on the open sea but also in ports when the ship, although stationary, is generating power to keep vast arrays of electrical, electronic and motorised systems operating. As the cruise industry expanded rapidly, with bigger ships entering the trade every year, grave concern about the role of cruise ships in polluting the pristine Caribbean environment has surfaced.

Cruise business has become a mainstay of Caribbean tourism. Dozens of cruise ships criss-cross the region daily. Most territories in the Caribbean receive cruise ships and cater to tens of thousands of cruise passengers every year. Some countries, including Jamaica and The Bahamas, have more than one cruise ship port. Others that have one cruise port have capacity to berth two or more ships in a day.

The volume of traffic is significant. In 30 days of November 2017, Jamaica expects a total of about 81 cruise calls at its north coast cruise ports (see page Fig. 1, page 25), at an average of 20 calls per week. On some days, November 15 for example, Jamaica expects to berth as many as seven cruise ships. In the same month, The Bahamas is scheduled to receive (at Nassau, Half Moon Cay and Castaway Cay) 142 cruise ships, while little Antigua, with one cruise port, will receive 30 cruise ships at St. John’s. In the month following, December, Jamaica expects 83 cruise ships, The Bahamas 150 and Antigua 57.

These three destinations, according to the published schedule, will receive a total of 253 cruise ship calls over 30 days in November and 290 calls in the 31 days of December.

These numbers should make local tourism stakeholders happy. But there are implications, other than sales and revenue.

Protecting fragile eco-systems

Cruise lines getting on board

By Mike Jarrett
SO2 being discharged into the atmosphere. Using this environment at each destination will be exposed to deadly multipliers, eight to ten hours. A simple equation, using 8 as the multiplier, i.e. [(8 hrs) X (# of ships in port)], will likely yield a conservative estimate as to how many hours the environment at each destination will be exposed to deadly SO2, being discharged into the atmosphere. Using this equation, we can estimate the equivalent of 50 days of exposure; Jamaica, 27 days; Antigua, 10 days; the Bahamas, 25 days. The formula: in a mere 30 days (in November), The Bahamas will have the equivalent of 47 (24-hour) days of exposure to sulphur dioxide discharges from cruise ships anchored in its ports; Jamaica, 27 days; and, Antigua, 10 days, providing each ship stays no more or less than eight hours per visit. In the 31 days of December, the month the tourism peak season begins, this crude assessment: The Bahamas would have the equivalent of 50 days of exposure; Jamaica, 27 days and Antigua, 19 days.

Clearly, this formula is crude. It is simplistic and speculative and therefore CANNOT be used for detailed planning. We know, for example, that some cruise ships stay overnight in port, much longer than eight hours. We know that the engines are not turned off during extended visits. And, in some cruise ports, a cruise ship visit could be significantly less than eight hours for various reasons. We also know that hurricanes this past summer will increase traffic to cruise ports that did not suffer dislocation. However, until audited, detailed industry statistics are readily available, our assessments may be faulty. However, there is no choice but to begin our assessments with information we have, even if re-calculation becomes necessary when audited data is available.

MODERN TECHNOLOGIES
Cruise ship lines, with multi-billion dollar investments in state-of-the-art ships, cutting edge technology and in reception facilities at various destinations across the region, have a vested interest in keeping the Caribbean environment in pristine condition. And, increasingly, they have been proactive in protecting the environment. Old attitudes have been replaced by enlightened self-interest. A concern to protect long-term capital investments and the interests of shareholders by employing modern technologies to reduce the negative impact of the industry on the environment is now, increasingly, evident.

Fig. 1: CRUISE CALLS

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
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<th>DECEMBER</th>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>The Bahamas</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>253</td>
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THE BAHAMAS (breakdown)

|           |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Nassau    | 12 | 19 | 21 | 28 | 15 | 95     | 18 | 16 | 26 | 22 | 3  |  | 92     |
| Half Moon Cay | 3 | 5  | 8  | 6  | 27 | 6     | 7  | 5  | 8  | 5  | 0  |  | 31     |
| Castaway Cay/Disney | 4 | 4  | 3  | 5  | 4  | 20     | 4  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 1  |  | 27     |
| TOTAL     | 19 | 28 | 32 | 38 | 25 | 142    | 17 | 30 | 26 | 40 | 33 | 4  | 150    |

The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), which represents the major lines, recently stated that USD1 billion was being invested in environmental technology (including technologies pioneered by the cruise industry). The initiatives in this regard were accelerated on September 6, 2017 when the keel of the AIDAnova was laid at Meyer Werft in Germany. With the ceremonies surrounding that event, Carnival Corporation marked the start of construction of seven cruise ships that will be fully powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG). The ship will be delivered to AIDA late next year (2018).

The seven LNG ships (for cruise brands Carnival Cruise Lines, Costa Cruises, Carnival UK, and AIDA Cruises) will be built by Meyer Werft in Papenburg (Germany) and Turku (Finland) and commissioned between 2018 and 2022.

“The cruise industry recognizes the importance of investing in innovative ship technology to preserve our environment and provide an eco-friendly travel experience. . . . And, with each new build, CLIA cruise line members raise the bar for developing environmentally friendly ships,” Cindy D’Aoust, President and CEO of the CLIA told Globe Newswire in August last.

According to the CLIA, cruise lines will continue to reduce emissions into the atmosphere. Exhaust gas-cleaning systems (EGCS) offer an alternative to the use of low sulphur fuels, reducing the level of sulphur oxides in a ship’s exhaust by as much as 98 percent.

With the use of AWTS (i.e. advanced water treatment systems), CLIA ocean-going cruise line members have committed to protecting the world’s oceans by not discharging untreated sewage anywhere, a practice of which some have been accused in the past. Many cruise lines reportedly operate AWTS to treat waste water beyond the requirements of most waste treatment facilities of coastal cities, according to the CLIA.

The Association said that, in order to improve fuel efficiency and to incorporate as many eco-friendly systems as possible, some lines are using solar energy to power some equipment and lighting.

Moves to significantly reduce energy consumption for heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC) are also being reported. In this regard, the CLIA stated that newer ships are designed to pump only the amount of chilled water actually required for cooling. However, perhaps the most significant of the recent initiatives and innovations is the expanded use of LNG and the much-publicised announcement by Carnival Corporation in September at the keel-laying of the AIDAnova.

Every initiative to eliminate soot particles and reduce CO2 emissions is good news. The move to expand use of LNG makes economic sense to cruise lines. Savings of up to 30% in fuel costs are expected. However, those savings are nothing when compared with the overall economic benefits of a pristine Caribbean environment.

Expansion of LNG use in cruise ships is indeed good news. Caribbean peoples depend on extremely fragile eco-systems for their very survival let alone development.
Demand for cruises to Cuba has prompted Scenic Luxury Cruises and Tours (accent on ‘luxury’) to add a new departure date in 2018 (October 5) for its 14-day ‘Cuba In Depth’ product. For just under USD12,000 for an all-inclusive experience, 228 guests will spend two-weeks aboard the (now under construction) m/s Scenic Eclipse, referred to as ‘the world’s first discovery yacht, soaking up the sights and culture of the Caribbean country.

The ship sails out of Miami and makes calls in Havana (day 2), Isla de la Juventud (day 4), Cienfuegos (day 5), Casilda (day 7), Santiago de Cuba (day 9), Antilla (day 10) and overnights in Havana (day 12 and 13) for a second visit before returning to Miami. Only Cuban ports are on the itinerary, except, of course, Miami. The trip is designed to offer cruisers memories for a lifetime. This 6-star luxury yacht launches in the Mediterranean on 31 August 2018.

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**BRASIL: MOVE TO EXPAND CRUISE BUSINESS**

Brazil is expanding its cruise industry so as to recover lost ground and to make the country a year-round destination for cruise ships. Brazil’s cruise business has declined over the past 10 years. Plans include development of additional infrastructure, including new cruise terminals and the dredging of a number of berths in the country.

Cruise terminals, built for the 2014 World Cup of Soccer, are to be run by private sector companies following a bidding process. Cruise Lines will be allowed to use international labour standards for when hiring Brazilian crew and the government will be negotiating with marine pilots in order to reduce pilotage fees which are as much as four times that charged in ports elsewhere.

MSC Cruises is boosting its capacity in South America for the 2018-2019 cruise season. The new MSC Seaview, will homeport in Santos, replacing the smaller Preziosa. Another, the MSC Magnifica, will homeport in Santos. The MSC Fantasia will replace the smaller Sinfonia in Rio. The MSC Orchestra will be sailing out of Buenos Aires.

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**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: NEW BERTH FOR CAUCEDO**

DP World has announced its intention to build a 400-metre berth at Caucedo and to expand its logistics centre at that port. This will increase the company’s USD400 million investment in DP World Caucedo. As a result of its investments in the Dominican Republic, DP World has been pivotal in building trade between that country and Dubai, reported at almost $13 million in the first six months of this year. DP World Caucedo is one of some 65 terminals operated by the 12-year old global giant, with new development projects in India, Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

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**USA: FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY**

Royal Caribbean plans to eliminate queues for boarding using facial recognition technology. As early as next year, cruise passengers will not have to stand in line to board their ship. Using the company’s new mobile application (app), cruise passengers will upload a ‘selfie’ in creating their on-board account, before arriving at the terminal for embarkation. The technology will then utilise various digital systems (facial recognition, bar codes and beacons) to make boarding “fast and frictionless,” stated Royal Caribbean. The new check-in system will be in place for the maiden voyage of MS Symphony of the Seas.

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**USA: LARGEST CRUISE SHIP EVER BUILT ENTERS CARIBBEAN SERVICE IN 2018**

The MS Symphony of the Seas is expected to make its maiden voyage on April 21, 2018. With home port in Miami, she will enter the Caribbean service in the 2018-2019 season with a November 9 departure to Cozumel.

The largest passenger ship ever built, as measured by gross tonnage (230,000 GT), she is 362 metres long (1,188 ft.) and was built at a cost of USD1.35 billion. Construction began in St. Nazaire, France, on October 29, 2015. She was launched on June 9, 2017.

Symphony has 2,775 staterooms; capacity for 6,870 guests (or 5,535 guests in double occupancy mode); and, will carry a crew of over 2,100.
JAMAICA: KINGSTON HARBOUR UPGRADES

Dredging of the shipping channel in Kingston was completed in September, ahead of schedule. Dredging was required so as to allow the port to receive New Panamax container ships. Work began in January 2017 and was completed more than a month ahead of the 9-month completion date. Final verification surveys and replacement of navigational aids were scheduled to be completed by the end of October. Two ship-shore cranes are to be added to bring the total to 16 by the end of 2017. Another two are to be added in 2018.

CARNIVAL: CRUISE SHIPS FULLY LNG POWERED

Carnival Corporation has moved started construction of seven cruise ships that will be fully powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG). The seven ships will be delivered to the cruise brands Carnival Cruise Lines, Carnival UK, Costa Cruises and AIDA Cruises. They will be built by Meyer Werft in Papenburg (Germany) and Turku (Finland) and will be commissioned between 2018 and 2022. The first of these, the AIDAnova, the keel for which was laid on September 6, 2017, will be the first cruise ship to operate in port and at sea with low-emission LNG, this made possible by its four dual-fuel engines. It is expected to go into service in December 2018 with trips around the Canary Islands. “Using LNG prevents almost completely particulate matter and sulphur dioxide emission completely, while sustainably reducing nitric oxide and CO2 emissions,” Carnival stated. (See also page 24).

ORDER BOOK: RECORD NUMBER OF CRUISE SHIPS

Cruise ships on order reached a record in 2017. Some 90 cruise ships are currently on order. In September alone, four new ships were ordered, according to the global cruise ship order book. Those four include contracts from Coral, Saga, Cunard and Silversea. Cruise Industry News reports that the 90 ships on order average 106,259 tons. Average passenger capacity is 2,681. It is expected that of these vessels, 23 will be delivered in 2019, making it a record year for berth introductions.

ANTIGUA: HURRICANES BRING WINDBALL

Perhaps more than any other cruise destination, Antigua stands to benefit from the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season. Extensive hurricane damage to port facilities in neighbouring countries forced cruise lines to adjust their routes and to look for alternative destinations. Antigua’s windfall began on September 12 when Royal Caribbean’s Celebrity Equinox had to bypass the badly damaged port at Sint Maarten and head to St. John’s with 3,000 passengers and crew members. At the same time, St. John’s was making plans to receive, three days later, on September 15, the Carnival Fascination; and, Royal Caribbean’s Serenade of the Seas which was expected to arrive on Monday, September 25. Other calls not on Antigua’s 2017 schedule were expected during the remaining months of 2017 and early in 2018.

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS: 120 SHIPS IN 12 WEEKS

Cruise Industry News reported that St. Kitts and Nevis will be receiving 120 cruise ship calls in the 12-week period, October 7 to December 31. On October 8, the Adventure of the Seas (maximum capacity 3,840) visited St. Kitts. On October 11, two cruise ships were in port at the same time. Oceania Cruises’ MS Sirena was making its inaugural visit to that country, bringing more than 600 visitors with the Caribbean Princess (maximum capacity 3,840) also in port. Two other Royal Caribbean cruise ships, the Oasis and Harmony of the Seas, have been calling at St. Kitts during the just ended summer season.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: PORT OF SPAIN BEGINS CRUISE SEASON WITH CARIBBEAN PRINCESS

Trinidad’s tourism ministry marked the beginning of the 2017-2018 cruise season with a ceremony to mark the arrival of Princess Cruises Caribbean Princess. The cruise ship docked at Port of Spain and passengers were treated to a cultural show and a mini-carnival parade in which some were enticed to participate. The country’s Minister of Tourism, Shamfa Cudjoe, was on hand to add officialdom to the occasion. The ship, with the largest passenger capacity in the Princess fleet, will be calling at Port of Spain throughout the 2017-2018 (winter) cruise season.
Cruising is, by far, the fastest growing sub-sector of the global tourism industry. However — unlike accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, attractions — it is one of the few sub-sectors where there has been a concentration of power in the hands of a few.

The Caribbean has been the most popular cruise tourism destination since the demise of the transatlantic passenger industry. And today, the Caribbean remains the world's leading destination for cruising. This is due largely to its proximity to the United States of America, the world's largest source market for cruise passengers.

It is important to know that the cruise industry competes directly with land-based resort vacation products. Unlike land-based holiday products, which are demand-driven, cruise tourism is supply-driven. The diagram in this article illustrates some fundamental issues about cruise tourism as compared to merchant shipping. The diagram suggests that both the cruise lines and ports of destination require a great synergy and partnership, as the industry is demand-driven. This suggests that both the cruise lines and destination ports require a great amount of investment to keep the passengers coming.

From the cruise lines side of the business, the (ship construction) order book (through 2017) is showing a remarkable increase in the number of new builds of ocean-going vessels, with over 45,600 berths in anticipation. This is because new destinations are emerging especially in the Mediterranean, Europe and Asia and in the Caribbean (to include Barbados, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines); ports are expanding their facilities to accommodate more and bigger ships; while, at the same time, new ports are expected to be built so as to accommodate the additional business.

Based on these facts, it is important to ask if Caribbean ports are ready to accommodate mega ships when extreme events, such as hurricanes, occur. A recent example of such extreme events is the devastation in St. Maarten...
by hurricane Irma. The answer to this would be partnership and cooperation between and amongst the countries of the Caribbean for immediate emergency response and mitigation and to work with cruise lines for modification of itineraries and to provide relief efforts.

An extreme event, such as a hurricane, is usually characterised by the following results and expectations:

- visitor-arrivals contract by some 30-40% immediately after the event;
- it takes up to four days for arrivals (in the case of land-based tourism) to return to normal levels; while, it may take longer for cruise ships, depending on the degree of damage to infrastructure;
- up to 3% of room stock will need repair; and,
- advertising expenditure will increase up to 3% above normal.

Extreme events have continued to produce widespread damage in the tourism sector. And, over the last 35 years, the intensity of hurricanes has been increasing. For example, in Jamaica, in 2004, Hurricane Ivan had an impact costing US$23.7m (excluding indirect impact). Hurricane Dean, in 2007, did damage of US$43.7m, of which US$30m was in the accommodation sub-sector.

The continuing rise in sea levels is also cause for concern. Some 70% of the country's population resides in coastal areas. Likewise, most of major resort areas, including Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios; and, much the south coast, including Kingston, are located in low-lying coastal areas. A storm surge or even a two metre increase in the sea level would have a major impact on population, tourist resorts, infrastructure, i.e. roads, airports and port facilities; and, the possible loss of land in Kingston, Portland and Negril.

A common phenomenon is that climate change is having an impact on weather patterns, coral reefs and beaches, all of which are critical to the tourism industry. Also, trends in weather pattern and extreme events suggest that the effects of climate change on tourism are expected to be negative. Changes in rainfall and temperature patterns can ultimately affect the attractiveness of a destination and cruise ports. Weather, like climate, has a significant impact on tourism choices.

There can be no denying the positive impacts of cruise travel for both passengers and those who provide destination services. Economically, the influx of ships and people injects a total of USD56.4 billions directly into Caribbean national economies, by way of wages and purchases. The dependency of many Caribbean countries on tourism has spurred massive development of ports so as to accommodate the mega-ships and the subsequent increase in visitor numbers. The question, however, is whether these ports were designed to withstand extreme events. Drawing wisdom from the recent examples of hurricanes Irma and Maria, during which an entire country was wiped out and many others severely damaged, Caribbean countries need to be wary of the fact that extreme events will continue to have adverse effects on port facilities, infrastructure and superstructures- and, in turn, the cruise business.

Ships are getting bigger. There is continuous impact of scale. Focus has shifted. The cruise vessel is no longer a mode of transportation, taking people from home port to destination and back. The ship is now the destination, supported by ports of call. Inability by Caribbean countries to respond and meet the requirements of cruise vessels immediately after an extreme event would create a further shift of value and net earnings away from the Caribbean countries to the shipping lines.

Cruising offers both quality and quantity itineraries where a variety of marquee and new ports are presented. The more ports of call on the itinerary, the greater the demand. In addition, the facilities in a destination determine whether the ship can be docked alongside or be held at anchorage, with a tender to transfer passengers to land. This could have major cost implications in a case of extreme event. Usually, when a vessel is at anchorage, the crew is at work for the entire time the ship is in port, because of the need to simultaneously operate the tender, passenger safety and the on-going tasks of monitoring the ship.
Pleasure boats are and have been a toy for many Caribbean residents, including notables, like Ernest Hemmingway with his fishing boat in Havana.

In most Caribbean territories, pleasure boat marinas are tight, gunwale to gunwale, with various types of craft — single hulls, catamarans and the occasional trimaran, sail boats and motor boats of all types and sizes. But, generally, pleasure boats can be separated into two classes: (a) those that can be towed by cars and need just a slip to get into the water; and, (b) those that need proper harbour facilities.

Boats and their interior have changed over the years. And today, many large boats have the same facilities as motor homes — kitchen facilities, bathrooms and showers. Smaller boats, because of size limitations, may still just have seating and limited storage facilities.
The development of the boat market has put pressure on port facilities, with demands for electricity, supply of potable water and facilities for handling toilet waste. Many private boats may just be used for a few hours a week, whereas larger boats may have, more or less, permanent staff in addition to the amenities described above.

Some pleasure boat owners, because of the size of their craft, may prefer mooring facilities in sections of the ports where wave action does not create too much motion so as to make staying on board uncomfortable.

Most port facilities for pleasure boats are partly paid by the users, but may also be paid by the ports and even the municipalities. Smaller boats may not contribute much to the local economy, except for simpler repair and sales of boat equipment. This is in contrast to the larger sailing ships and larger yachts, where permanent staff requires access to shopping facilities.

Tourism in the Mediterranean, based on boating activities, has seen substantial growth during the last 10 years. Increasingly, tourists take their holiday on larger sail boats or motor boats, cruising between ports on the Croatian coast or in the Greek archipelago. The growth in this type of boating activity has put pressure on the ports to provide adequate facilities for pleasure craft, with access to water, sanitation and electricity. This is paid for by the boating companies and again by the tourists.

Tourists seeking this type of holiday are, typically, wealthy people who can afford to be on board a sailing ship for a week or longer. In contrast to traditional cruise tourism, individual, non-mass cruising tourists are often seeking special adventures, like diving trips; access to small secluded beaches; luxury restaurants along the shore; and, other types of activities that are not shared with the mass-cruise tourist.

In terms of numbers, the private tourists are a minority; a fraction of the mass market. But, they may provide good business for local boat rental companies and may also provide good job possibilities for local crews.

Private tourists will often look for seclusion in less crowded ports. Local municipalities must therefore consider whether they want to invest in port facilities; or, on a smaller scale, mooring buoys in areas where the boats can anchor and where there may be access to diving and other water sport.

Using the increase in private sail boats and motor craft in the Mediterranean Sea as evidence, this tourism activity could also produce growth in the Caribbean where, in some territories, it is already a growing business.

Governments and their port operators should study this business and consider whether they want to exploit the opportunities presented by pleasure boating; or stay exclusively in the mass-cruise tourism market. If they want to engage in the private boating tourism, they have to assess whether their port facilities can accommodate pleasure boats in such a manner that this activity does not disturb the business of running a commercial port. If pleasure boat marinas are the choice, they will get tourists, who can be much more demanding and direct, as opposed to the mass-cruise tourists. And this means that the port facilities offered must meet the requirements and demands of the pleasure boater.

Port operators cannot make this decision without discussion and consensus with the host municipalities. If the approach is careful and thorough, this tourism sub-sector can provide lucrative additional growth for the national economies of Caribbean states.

“GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR PORT OPERATORS SHOULD STUDY THIS BUSINESS AND CONSIDER WHETHER THEY WANT TO EXPLOIT THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY PLEASURE BOATING; OR IF PREFER TO STAY EXCLUSIVELY IN THE MASS-CRUISE TOURISM MARKET.”
Imagine that a port manager, within days and at low cost, is able to get access to an updated bathymetry map of the port and access channels for overview or for planning port development.

New technology provides this possibility. In light of growing numbers of tourists, ships and ship activities in the Caribbean region, the need for up-to-date, accurate and spatially dense environmental data becomes increasingly important.

Traditionally, getting bathymetric data for environmental assessments and coastal management required either large budgets or was entirely outside the scope of the projects because of high mobilization cost, rent of vessels and equipment and the number of people involved. It also exposed employees to health and safety risks. Furthermore, such surveys also have a negative environmental impact on aquatic fauna.

The technology facilitates an updated bathymetry for areas where only historical and outdated information exists. This is particularly true for shallow water areas that have changed significantly due to impacts from the hurricanes in the Caribbean region through 2017.

DH\ has developed an approach for deriving shallow-water bathymetric data based on satellite data. By using state-of-the-art satellites and advanced physically based data-processing techniques, accurate bathymetric data can be produced at a fraction of the cost as compared to traditional boat-based survey data. The approach requires little or no calibration data. This reduces, significantly, the mobilization cost and turn-around time. There is no environmental impact on the survey areas.

**FLEXIBLE PRODUCT**

The approach is based on an accurate physical model for deriving bathymetry data from a variety of satellite systems. This provides a range of options for point spacing and spatial coverage: from local detailed mappings with a two metre point spacing; to regional/national mappings with a 10 metre to 30 metre spacing.

This approach allows provision of reliable and consistent data in shallow waters, from the shore outwards, resulting in a dataset that has proven to be of immense help to environmental studies. Under ideal conditions, reliable results, down to 30 metre depth, are provided.

Previously, satellite derived bathymetry has been produced as a bespoke product, on an ad hoc basis. DH\ and partners, TCarta Marine & DigitalGlobe, launched a portal where pre-produced satellite derived bathymetry will be readily available for purchase and download of even smaller areas.

The low entry cost opens up the possibility for the data to be used by individual consultants, for ports checking the bathymetry in their access channels and for coastal development project done by the authorities. The team behind the data portal is currently expanding coverage, to include strategic areas in the Caribbean and would like to hear which areas to cover. Get in touch with them at bathymetrics.shop.

**ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY**

By relying on satellite based methodologies for mapping, the negative environmental impact associated with traditional surveys is removed. This is of utmost importance in vulnerable habitats, such as coral reefs and sea grass patches, which are already under pressure from increasing acidity in the oceans; larger storms; and, more diving-related tourism.

Methods similar to the ones used for deriving bathymetry from satellite imagery can also be used for marine habitat mapping. A satellite-based marine habitat map is a unique data layer as it provides a synoptic snapshot of the conditions of a larger area at the time of satellite overpass. Furthermore, based on historical imagery, it is possible to go back in time and examine possible trends over time, in habitat conditions and distribution. Such overview of the habitats can provide port managers with a very valuable tool, when it comes to developing the ports. The advantage is that port managers can have the habitat and bathymetry maps in hand at the early planning stages.

Combining satellite-based marine habitat maps and satellite-derived bathymetry unlocks new possibilities for environmental impact assessments. Detailed information can now be made available, at relatively low cost, at the proposal stage of project. This allows for developments to be designed with the spatial environment as a central consideration from the beginning of the process, instead of being brought in late in the process once most of the planning has already been done.

The satellite-derived bathymetry methodology, the resulting data and its uses will be presented in detail during the workshop PMAC—Portside Port Management Workshop, planned for Panama in January 2018.

**Authors:** Mikkel L. Rasmussen, Lars Boye Hansen, Rasmus E. Borgstrom, Jesper Goodley Dannisøe* of DH\, Associate Member of the PMAC.
Ships must now maintain a ballast water record book

By Deniece M. Aiken*

Despite the ultimate and expectant benefits from the BWM Convention, it is evident that the said convention imparts duties and responsibilities on Caribbean states which may prove difficult to execute, particularly in the immediate future.

Protection of the marine environment continues to be a priority mandate of the global maritime community, and with approximately 90% of world trade being facilitated by more than 50,000 merchant ships, the potential environmental and social risks are grave. It is therefore evident that solid and strategic measures to counter such risks are required.

A key element in ship safety is stability and control of the vessel. Stability is achieved usually by adding weight to the bottom of the vessel. This weight, could be rocks or seawater, and in maritime terminology, is referred to as ballast.

Ballast water often contains non-native species that can cause extensive ecological and economic damage to local aquatic ecosystems. It is reported that approximately 10-12 billion tonnes of ballast water are drained into harbours around the world every year. And, as reported, about 4,500 species of marine organisms, including plants; animals and bacteria, are being transported aboard ships every day. This has created grave problems in coastal states where the economy and society rely heavily on fisheries.

The Caribbean region is one such region. The region comprises of small island-states that are strongly supported by fisheries and the marine environment and accommodates a heavy volume of maritime traffic which is expected to increase with the expansion of existing canals, and the introduction of new shipping lanes, marine routes and pathways in the neighbouring environs. As such, these countries are considered high risk as ballast water is constantly being transported into the Caribbean Sea. This reality exposes the marine environment, economic sectors and human health to potential harm.

Guidelines for prevention

In an effort to address the issues and threats related to this common practice in shipping, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted in 1991 the Guidelines for Preventing the Introduction of Unwanted Organisms and Pathogens from Ships’ Ballast Waters and Sediment Discharges and, in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development requested that the IMO adopt appropriate legally binding rules on ballast water discharges aimed at preventing the spread of non-indigenous organisms. The result is the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast and Sediments (“BWM Convention”) 2004, which became effective on September 8, 2017.

The convention applies to all ships in international traffic and, among other things, outlines ship design and operational requirements regarding ballast water management for vessels. Ships are now required to manage their ballast water and sediments to certain standards, according to a ship-specific ballast water management plan that is approved by the state in which the ship is registered (i.e. the flag state). Ships must now therefore maintain a ballast water record book in which to document ballast exchanges, treatment and circulation and any other related operations, as required.

Port state responsibilities

In addition to the requirements and standards placed on vessel operations, the BWM Convention also imparts responsibilities on port states. These responsibilities support the role of the IMO and national regulatory bodies in ensuring that ships are compliant with the provisions of the convention.

The port state is required to carry out a four-stage inspection procedure, consisting of:

1. an initial inspection focussed on documentation and enforcement of a proper structure in the ballast water management procedure;
2. a more detailed inspection, in which the operations are observed and checked alongside the ballast water management plan for the vessel;
3. sampling of the ballast water, to ensure that the vessel meets the required performance standards; and,
4. detailed analysis to verify compliance with the standards within the convention.

Additionally, since September last, port states now carry the additional role of ensuring that following the inspection, the master of the vessel is provided with a report outlining the results of the inspection.

BWM Convention and the Caribbean

The vulnerabilities of the Caribbean region were acknowledged by the international maritime community. In 2008, the Caribbean was designated one of the top priority regions during the second phase of the 5-year (2008-2012) GloBallast Project. (a joint programme between the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IMO). Despite the ultimate and expectant benefits from the BWM Convention, it is evident that this convention places on Caribbean states, duties and responsibilities, which may prove difficult to execute, particularly in the immediate future.

These include the provisions for discharge facilities for ships, ship reception facilities, timely and sufficient inspections and, ballast water sampling and testing.

The four-stage port state procedure also requires careful thought and organization so as to avoid resultant delays and other issues that may arise; and, an extensive and tailored training programme is required to build capacity within these areas to fully support the objectives of the convention.

It is clear, there is work to be done and the time is now. The requirements of the newly effective convention may prove difficult to attain for some states. However, a fair balance between the interests of the sector and the current situations faced by states, particularly developing states with very limited resources must be achieved.

Due to their inherent vulnerability, it is important that Caribbean states take all necessary precautions to ensure they are protecting their marine environment, which, by extension, results in the protection of their economies, their sustainability and the livelihood of the ir population.

*Deniece M. Aiken, BSc, LLB, MSc is Vice President, Legal & International Affairs at the Caribbean Maritime University.
Your success as a leader is directly related to how well you lead and connect with your employees.

All businesses, whether academic institution or retail business, need a range of skills to enable it to survive and grow. As the manager of a business, it is likely that, out of necessity, you will be called upon to perform several roles. You will probably find that you are better at some roles than others. However, in order to facilitate growth of the business, you will eventually find it necessary improve and expand the skills within the organization.

Getting the right mix of people to complement and reinforce your business is essential. And, having an effective management team helps you to create a more efficient and capable business.

The change vision and strategy for the Caribbean Maritime University, for example, gave the institution and its employees a picture of what the future would look like after the change was implemented. The change vision gave individuals a rationale for: letting go of the past; sacrifice and hard work in the present; and, for following senior leadership into the future. The change vision created a sensible and appealing picture of the future and provided guidance for the university’s decision-making.

At the beginning, managers and employees wanted to know that the proposed change was both feasible and desirable. If either was missing, change would not have been embraced.

**IMPORTANT**

It is important for senior leadership to recognize that it will not be in the interests of employees to make necessary sacrifices for a future that they perceive as likely to be worse than the present. Senior leadership must therefore develop a compelling message that will tell managers and employees that the future is desirable.

Robert Tanner’ points out that a critical responsibility for leadership is setting the direction for an organization for the future. For this reason, senior leadership must retain some of the responsibility for creating a high-level description of the change vision and strategy and, very often, it is best for a single senior leader or a small group of senior leaders to make a first draft of the change requirements.

It is important that senior leadership understand that creating a change vision and strategy is not sufficient. The vision and strategy must also be communicated effectively. This promotes organizational understanding and thus establishes the foundation for a commitment from employees and managers, to embrace the new direction. By so doing, the organization’s leadership effectively captures the minds and hearts of the...
employees, managers and other stakeholders. This level of support is necessary for positive change.

Through effective communication, employees, as important stakeholders, not only understand the reasons for the change but they also align with it and become committed to making it happen successfully. So, although experts have argued that organizational change can sometimes be difficult, it is possible to gain the full support of employees and managers.

GETTING COMMITMENT
Senior leadership is more likely to get commitment for change from employees and managers, when they:
• communicate the change vision and strategy with simplicity; and, repetition;
• engage employees and managers in two-way communication;
• use multiple forums to get the message across; and,
• address obvious inconsistencies in behaviour.

The vision for the transformation of the Caribbean Maritime Institute to the Caribbean Maritime University started about five years before that objective was achieved in 2017. Although there were many detractors along the way, senior leadership was steadfast in achieving the vision of not just attaining university status; but, establishing a university with a different approach and outlook to delivering relevant quality education and training. With this vision in mind, each employee had a specific job and a specific role within the corporate culture of the university. In addition, the leadership allowed each employee an opportunity to be a self-motivated internal entrepreneur. From that level of motivation flowed ambitious new ideas and creative problem-solving methods that made the vision a reality.

While a salary increase is a great way to show employees that their work and contributions are valued, unfortunately, this cannot be done every day and, often, not when deserved. A thought leader in the workplace needs more rewards in his toolbox than just financial compensation. Senior leadership at the university was therefore always thinking about new ways to show staff appreciation and to celebrate their successes. This was done through staff meetings by highlighting triumphs and awarding additional responsibilities and leadership roles to staff members who demonstrated that they are capable. It was also important to explain the reason/s behind the action.

Words are powerful, and praise can make a big difference in an employee’s sense of self-worth.

According to experts, a workplace leader could learn a thing or two from William Wallace, who pointed out that “… like a warrior on the front lines of the battlefield, all eyes are on you, and your actions and attitude will determine how hard your army will fight for you. Disillusionment or a lack of motivation in an employee is a minor setback; in a workplace leader, it’s a game-changing problem”.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT
Effective management of a high-functioning staff starts with self. Manage your attitude as well as your actions. If you want your team to start each day excited to face new challenges head-on, you need to do the same.

An individual manager rarely has the combination of skills of a management team. Each member of a management team can concentrate on their own area of expertise. In this case, the business benefits from having its overall direction and goals viewed from different perspectives as opposed to a single leader who knows it all. The rapport within a team is very important and can add further value beyond the individual talents and skills of each member.

Teams, whose members relate well to each other, contribute significantly to the overall success of their organization. A disjointed management team could well put off anyone involved with the organization. This could, ultimately, lead to corporate failure. A strong management team is important for a business to grow and develop. As a business grows, the management team becomes increasingly important in spreading leadership responsibility. It is crucial if your business operates in more than one location as a result of expansion; if you are in more than one type of business; and, if your business absorbs different types of cultures.

“Effective management of a high-functioning staff starts with self. Manage your attitude as well as your actions. If you want your team to start each day excited to face new challenges head-on, you need to do the same.”

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Robert Tanner (2017) Leading Change (Step 3) – Develop a Change Vision and Strategy
Nick Nanton and JW Dicks (2015). Five steps to keeping your employees and yourself motivated.

1 2
Venezuela’s deepening political and economic crisis has made a mockery of the unity of policy and action that is supposed to be the strength of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The disjointed statements and the acrimony that have emanated from regional efforts to discuss developments in Venezuela suggest that, as a community, the CARICOM members are deeply divided. This says nothing for the community’s efforts to deliver a common foreign policy that is to be expected in these situations.

Venezuela — in many ways — is not far removed from the Caribbean. The country has 2,800km of Caribbean and Atlantic coastline. It has a long history of economic and political relations with several Caribbean countries. The economic ties have deepened in the past ten years with many Caribbean countries becoming signatories of the preferential oil programme PetroCaribe. The ties have been deepened recently, with some countries, such as Trinidad and Tobago, hoping to ease a deficit of natural gas over the next three years with supplies from Venezuela.

However, Venezuela is in crisis. Recent actions by President Nicolas Maduro have left little room for dissenting voices. Leaders of the political opposition have been placed under house arrest, or have fled the country. Clashes between government supporters and the opposition have taken more than 100 lives since early April 2017.

Those opposed to the regime are demanding early elections as well as freedom for jailed activists and have attacked the government’s organisation of an election that has created a constituent assembly that has bypassed the opposition-controlled legislature. Maduro has blamed foreign countries — particularly the USA — for the mounting dissent.
NEGATIVE IMPACT
Venezuela has the world’s largest oil reserves. The oil sector is the main pillar of the economy but, it has been suffering from lower production. Reduced foreign income (and mismanagement, say Maduro’s critics) has led to shortages of basic goods, ranging from sugar to toilet paper.

The crisis is already having another negative impact on CARICOM. Some governments fear that the trickle of refugees from Venezuela could become a flood. Already, Trinidad and Tobago is playing host to Venezuelans seeking to escape the deteriorating economic and political situation.

Given Venezuela’s geographical proximity and the long standing ties, it was inevitable that the developments in that country would have drawn a reaction from CARICOM. But, with some CARICOM countries being beneficiaries of the PetroCaribe oil preferences, the group failed to get over, together, the first hurdle — an April 26 meeting of the Organisation of American States (OAS), to discuss a resolution to convene a meeting to consider the situation in Venezuela.

Saying this would be interference in Venezuela’s affairs, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Haiti, St Kitts-Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname opposed the resolution. However, it was supported by the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana and St Lucia. Belize and Trinidad and Tobago abstained.

The next effort, by CARICOM, to seek a common position on Venezuela also failed. Foreign ministers of the group ended a May 19 meeting with seeming agreement that “the deeply entrenched positions in Venezuela needed to be softened so that trust could be built on both sides in order to facilitate dialogue so that the people of Venezuela could peacefully overcome their crisis.”

CARICOM DIVIDED
This diplomatic and inoffensive conclusion and the efforts of some countries in the hemisphere to take a hard line on Venezuela, was attacked by St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister, Ralph Gonsalves.

“There is clearly a calculated strategy in place by a group of nations, to achieve regime change in Venezuela by using the OAS as a weapon of destruction,” he said, after the foreign ministers’ meeting.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a signatory to the PetroCaribe facility but, another major beneficiary appeared to break ranks with Caracas.

“The OAS’s authority comes from member-states and is the appropriate forum for deliberations when member-states do not adhere to the essential elements of democracy, such as the separation of powers; periodic, free and fair elections; access to and exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law,” Jamaica’s Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, said.

Trinidad and Tobago’s trade minister, Paula Gopee-Scoon, said: “Every country has its good times and bad times. We stand by our neighbour and look forward to a better relationship. We have a lot of work to do in terms of trade. We look forward to all of the gas arrangements bearing fruit and I continue to be very positive about the relationship. I see a great future in terms of trade in energy and goods.”

CARICOM made a third attempt at finding a united approach to the Venezuelan crisis at the group’s annual summit in Grenada in early July. The leaders agreed they would ask Venezuela’s government and opposition to “engage in dialogue and negotiations leading to a political agreement with established timetables.” But, being aware of the sharp differences among members, the leaders appeared to reduce the value of their plan to mediate by saying the effort was not intended to interfere in Venezuela’s internal affairs.

“CARICOM is motivated by its principles of adherence to the rule of law, respect for human rights and democracy and, non-intervention in the internal affairs of states,” it said.

Beyond this statement, there was no indication of any concrete and unified action by CARICOM to address the Venezuelan tragedy.

* Canute James, PhD, Adjunct Senior Lecturer and former Director of the Caribbean School of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), Mona Campus, University of the West Indies, was a reporter for the Financial Times of London and radio reporter, presenter and producer in London, England for the BBC.
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