NEW RULES

~ Beginning this month, the United States will implement laws requiring all travelers entering the U.S. from the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico to show passports or approved travel documents to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, page 2.

SILVER LINING

~ Everyone in the world knows about Usain Bolt. But United States-based T&T star Richard Thompson didn’t do too badly himself at the 2008 Olympic Games. Now being runner up to the Jamaican has inspired the man from Cascade, Port of Spain to set greater goals, page 7.

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Jamaican-born former city commissioner jailed in U.S.

MIAMI, Florida – A Jamaican-born, ex-commissioner for a city in southern Florida was sentenced to 30 days in jail and a year on probation after being convicted in a firearms charge.

Last month, a Broward County jury convicted Fitzroy Salesman, 52, a former Miramar commissioner, of a misdeed in firearms charge, but acquitted him of a felony count that could have sent him to prison for three years. Salesman was charged with aggravated assault with a firearm after prosecutors said he drew his gun inside a supermarket during a confrontation with another shopper in Nov. 2007. He was found guilty of the lesser offense of improperly exhibiting a firearm.

Salesman said he drew the weapon after being confronted by Lazavius Hudson, 19, during an argument over Hudson’s choice of checkout lines. He said Hudson threatened him by saying, “Let’s take it outside.”

Salesman could have been sentenced up to 364 days in the Broward County jail for the conviction.

Florida Governor Charlie Crist suspended Salesman from the Miramar City Commission when he was first charged with the felony. Salesman lost his bid for re-election since the charges were filed against him. Salesman has said he wouldn’t rule out running for elected office again some day. “It’s a calling,” he said. “But first, I have to put the pieces back together.”

Jamaican-born Miramar City Commissioner Winston Barnes discusses the fallout from Salesman’s conviction, Viewpoint, page 9.

New passport rules for travelers re-entering U.S. from Caribbean

WASHINGTON – United States authorities this month began implementing laws requiring all travelers entering the country to possess a valid passport.

The U.S. Department of State and the Homeland Security Department said the new rules were part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which mandates that “all Canadian and American citizens entering the United States from Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean must show passports or approved travel documents to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.”

Previously, a photo identification or driver’s license was required.

Caribbean countries had earlier indicated that the new measure would severely affect their tourism sectors.

Approved travel documents include a regular passport, a “trusted traveler” card or an “enhanced driver’s license” proving citizenship of every traveler over the age of 16.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said some Americans were unaware of the new requirements or may have forgotten to get the necessary documents.

“We’ll work with them at the border,” she said.

Prominent Haitian priest Jean-Juste dies in Miami

MIAMI, Florida – Roman Catholic priest, Father Gerard Jean-Juste, a prominent spiritual and political leader in the Haitian community in South Florida has died. He was 62.

Ira Kurzban, a Miami attorney who represented Jean-Juste’s Haitian Refugee Center in several lawsuits against the United States government, said some Americans were unaware of the new requirements or may have forgotten to get the necessary documents.

“They (have) lost a friend whose arms and heart were always open,” he said, adding that the death was unrelated to the leukemia that he was treated for three years ago.

Marline Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women of Miami, said Jean-Juste, a liberation theologian, was “an icon, someone who gave himself wholly, selflessly to others without any need to.”

She described him as the “greatest champion of refugees” who fought tirelessly for the rights of immigrants.

“She showed that we, as a country, could do better in the way we treat people who leave their native land to come here.”

“TERRIBLE”

Jean-Juste was an ardent supporter of ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his Fannmi Lavalas Party.

“This terrible, terrible news [is] a big loss for us,” said Maryse Narcisse, a Lavalas leader and spokeswoman for Aristide, who resides in exile.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
WASHINGTON – The United States says Cuba has agreed to resume talks with Washington on immigration and direct mail.

A senior official in U.S. President Barack Obama’s administration said on May 31 that the Cuban government had expressed interest in resuming the talks that were suspended under former President George W. Bush.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, the official told reporters in Washington that Havana “would like to resume migration talks (and) engage in talks on direct mail service. “We and the Cubans have to determine a mutually convenient place and time,” he added.

DIALOGUE

The official also indicated that Cuba would like to “explore areas of additional dialogue” on counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism, hurricane and disaster preparedness response, among others.

In May, the Obama administration proposed the resumption of migration talks between both countries that had been conducted every two years until Bush suspended them in 2003. A month earlier, Obama eased travel and money transfer restrictions on Cuban Americans with relatives in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean country. Obama has also been under enormous pressure, primarily from Caribbean and Latin American countries, to lift the decades-old economic and trade embargo against Havana.

“These talks are part of our effort to forge a new way forward on Cuba that advances the interests of the United States, the Cuban people and our entire hemi-

(continued on page 4)

NEW YORK - New York City has settled a wrongful death lawsuit with the family of a Jamaican psychiatric patient who died last summer on a hospital floor in Brooklyn for $2 million.

The settlement was signed on May 27 in Brooklyn Supreme Court before Justice Allen Hurkin-Torres. It came 11 months after Esmin Green, 49, collapsed and died at the sprawling Kings County Hospital Center.

“To anyone who saw the video clip, it was clear this was a horrible, wrongful and negligent act,” said Stanford Rubenstein, the lawyer representing Green’s Jamaican-born daughter Tecia Harrison, who had filed the lawsuit against the city for negligence.

“What remains most important to this family is the criminal culpability for those who happened and those who attempted to cover it up, which continues, after all this time, to remain under investigation by the New York City Department of Investigation,” Rubenstein added.

“In no way does this settlement affect that investigation, and the family remains adamant in its demands that anyone who committed a criminal act with regard to the death of Esmin Green or the attempt to cover it up be prosecuted criminally to the full extent of the law.”

LOSS

Alan D. Aviles, president of the Health and Hospitals Corporation that oversees 11 municipal hospitals, including Kings County Hospital Center, said the settlement “is not meant to put a value on a life and the loss of a loved one,” adding: “That remains priceless.”

Green’s death came amid mounting concern over psychiatric service at the Kings

(continued on page 4)

A Culture so Rich You Can Taste It.

With everything from spectacular celebrations of history like Carnival to the creation of world-class cuisines to achieving numerous musical, political and historical firsts, Caribbean Americans have made innumerable and valuable contributions to the culturally rich American mosaic. For hundreds of years, their influence on this country, and the world, has been priceless.

Proud to Celebrate Caribbean American Heritage Month!
N.Y. settles lawsuit in wrongful death of Jamaican hospital patient for $2M

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

County Hospital Center, the only mental health provider for many poor people in Brooklyn. In May 2007, the New York Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit alleging abuse and neglect of psychiatric patients at the hospital, and that December, the United States Department of Justice began an investigation.

In February this year, the authorities issued a scathing 8-page report that found other problems, including that patients were not treated for suicidal behavior, were routinely subdued with physical restraints and drugs instead of receiving individualized psychiatric treatment, and were frequently abused by other patients. The report found that conditions at the psychiatric unit were “highly dangerous and require immediate attention.”

It also concluded that in at least three cases, including Green’s, employees falsified records to hide their neglect. Green had migrated from Jamaica in the late 1990s to earn money for her six children back home. A devout Catholic, she had worked caring for the elderly and helping at a day care center for children, before she lost her job. She suffered from depression, authorities said.

Rubenstein described the settlement as “fair and reasonable.”

Cuba, U.S. agree to resume immigration, direct mail talks

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

The OAS’ Permanent Council last month agreed to create a working group to try to find a consensus text for the re-admission of Cuba. The agreement came after the U.S., in a surprise move, said it was willing to re-admit Cuba in the Washington-based organization, a sudden reversal of its long-standing opposition.

CONSENSUS

The U.S. said it was prepared for every season regardless of the seasonal outlook. Even a near-normal season can produce land falling hurricanes, and it only takes one land falling storm to make it a bad season.

Prominent Haitian priest dies in Miami

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Prominent Haitian priest dies in Miami

in South Africa.

Jean-Juste was jailed twice in Haiti for his protest actions, demanding the return of Aristide after a 2004 violent revolution and attack on government corruption.

“He’s going to be missed a whole lot, and he’s going to be remembered in a very positive way even by some of his detractors,” said Yvon Neptune, a former prime minister under Aristide, who exchanged notes with Jean-Juste from adjacent jail cells after both were arrested by the interim government of Gerardi Latortue.

“Especially in the 1980s, he was very instrumental in having the U.S. government consider the case of the Haitian refugees,” Neptune said, adding that the former priest had been involved in social work “not only in helping the Haitians solve their legal problems but in helping them in many ways.”

FIRST PRIEST

In 1971, Jean-Juste became the first Haitian to be ordained as a priest by the Catholic Church in the U.S. He described the U.S. government’s policy towards the Haitian “boat people” as “heartless, racist, and criminal.”

In 1980, he launched The Haitian Refugee Center Inc. in Miami as an immigration agency, and in that same year, U.S. District Judge James Lawrence King ruled that Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) had systematically discriminated against Haitian refugees by issuing sweeping deportation orders.

The judge told the agency to conduct new hearings for 5,000 Haitian refugees.

Mary Ross Agosta, a spokesperson for the Miami Catholic archdiocese, called Jean-Juste “a voice of the poor, both here and in Haiti.”
MIAMI, Florida - The United States Coast Guard confirmed that nine migrants, all believed to be Haitians, were found dead in waters off South Florida last month.

The Coast Guard said 16 survivors were adrift for more than 10 hours before they were rescued in what is being described as “a smuggling operation gone wrong”.

It said the migrants were part of an apparent operation that set off from Bimini in The Bahamas in a vessel carrying 30 people, including children and one pregnant woman. The Coast Guard said the overloaded boat sank around 2 a.m. May 13, but it did not learn about the incident until 10 hours later, when a passing boater spotted three passengers in the water about 15 miles from Boynton Beach, near Miami.

RESCUE

The Coast Guard said the discovery triggered a massive and dramatic air-and-boat rescue at sea.

Chief Warrant Officer James Mullinax said three of the survivors were taken ashore after a doctor aboard the Cormorant decided they required immediate attention at a hospital. At least one person died in the hospital.

Coast Guard Captain Jim Fitton said the boat was “obviously overloaded” and that authorities believe the boat was being used to smuggle Haitians into the U.S.

UPSURGE

Coast Guard officials said there has been a recent upsurge in the number of Haitians caught at sea. Nearly 1,400 have been apprehended since last October, up from 972 during the same seven-month period a year ago, it said.

Duty Officer Sergeant Alexander Bannister of The Royal Bahamas Police Force in Nassau said his force was also investigating the incident.

Sergeant Yvonne Cacioli, of the marine unit of the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s office, said her unit was among the first to arrive after the migrants were spotted. She said people were found scattered across the water along with shards of boat debris, adding that survivors were dehydrated, exhausted and “in total shock.”

“The ones who were able to hold on, thank goodness we could get to them,” Cacioli said.

WASHINGTON - A major religious organization in the United States has launched a campaign urging President Barack Obama to grant refugee status to thousands of undocumented Haitians.

The Washington-based American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) affiliated organization, has appealed to Obama to reverse the George W. Bush administration’s position and grant temporary protection status (TPS) to Haitians.

“Given the devastating and overwhelming conditions in Haiti, TPS is the most immediate form of humanitarian assistance the United States government can provide,” said AFSC last month, noting that the U.S. government has granted TPS to nationals from other countries “that face significant hardship and suffering”.

AFSC identified among those countries Sudan, Liberia, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador and Guatemala, due to political unrest, and Honduras and Nicaragua after devastation by Hurricanes Mitch in 1998.

“The Bush administration, however, was adamant in its refusal to grant the same status to Haitians”, the group stated, adding, “one has to wonder why”.

DISASTERS

AFSC noted that storms and hurricanes in Haiti have left scores of people dead, an estimated one million families and children homeless and destroyed local crops needed for food.

It said presently 70 percent of the Haitian people are unemployed, while others still wait for relief and assistance.

“Deporting Haitians in the United States by not granting TPS aggravates the political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis”, the group stated.

Ninaj Raoul, founder and executive director of the New York-based Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, said it would be fair for the estimated 30,000 Haitians who face deportation because of their immigration status, to get TPS.

“They certainly meet the standards,” she said.

“It’s hard to know what’s going to happen with the TPS, because it seems that this administration is, above all, focused on border enforcement.”

CONSIDERATION

In April, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, en route to the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago, said in Haiti that the U.S. was considering granting TPS to illegal Haitians.

“We are looking carefully at the policy, which we inherited,” she said.

“And we are going to be considering how best (for those) who are here to continue to have those resources.”

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)
Washington, D.C. – A chorus of calls on Washington to grant Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to undocumented Haitians has increased pressure on the Obama administration to offer protection to Haitians to make the dangerous journey from the U.S. Meanwhile, Haitian advocates are waiting to hear if President Obama will extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Haitians, as they continue their campaign to prevent Haitians from being sent back to a country they fear will lead them to be crushed under the bodies of thousands of earthquake victims.

Haitian advocates say Washington is not moving fast enough. Consequently, they have increased pressure on the Obama administration to grant TPS to Haitians, with President René Préval.
Silver lining: T&T star Thompson has no regrets finishing second to Bolt

Q: Where are you now, in relation to where you want to be come August at the World Championships in Athletics? A: Well, the thing is last year at this time I was well ahead of where I am right now...I got into an accident January 1st and that set me back in my training about a month...I think I’m ahead of where a lot of people expected me to be.

Q: What was your first reaction when you heard of Bolt’s accident in Jamaica, did it bring back any memories? A: Yeah, it certainly did because I know I kinda traced back to January 1st when it happened to me. Now Usain. We’re both very fortunate to have been in a complete wreck where the car was a write-off and still able to walk out of it. I think it’s really a blessing that Usain is still here. It would have been really bad for this sport, and for him as a person...I think he still has room for improvement and, you know, taking the sport to another level. So I’m really glad to know that he’s O.K.

Q: Bolt is obviously a rival on the track... A: Right, and, you know, I think in this sport, or any sport, anyone who is very competitive who wants to win they should see themselves as being the best someday. You know, you’re being realistic about your goals, and I’m a realist. I won’t step into a competition and say ‘Hey, I’m gonna beat Bolt today or beat Bolt tomorrow’. It may not happen this year...But if he’s in any kind of shape that he was in last year, I don’t think there is anyone in the world who is capable of beating him...But who knows, by 2012 (Olympic Games in London), maybe someone else will emerge. Maybe...I will be able to beat him, especially 2012 because that’s the goal. Everyone wants the gold medal, so...I don’t think on my best day and his best day that I would be able to beat him.

Q: Coming into JII it’s announced that Bolt is not running... A: Right. Well I understand that and when you’re in a position like that it’s definitely an honor. It’s something that you work for. You want your name to be mentioned in a meet. It shows that you’ve worked hard and you’ve earned a certain level of respect from the crowd, the promoters and everybody. But at the same time, you know, you’re given that pressure and sometimes I don’t mind being the underdog. I prefer, just like last year, I was the underdog in nearly every meet I went into...I was seen as the underdog and it’s a lot less stressful.

Q: You don’t like top billing? A: No, I wouldn’t say I don’t like it. I could handle it, but I just like being the underdog, preferably.

Q: Going into the Olympic Games, the atmosphere first. Obviously you’re comfortable with where you were in terms of your preparations? A: I was very comfortable, especially with the rounds and so on, because I had been doing 200s (meters) for the entire year for LSU (his school Louisiana State University in the U.S.). So I knew that if I could handle rounds of 200s, rounds of 400s shouldn’t be nothing for me and I was in the best shape of my life. I told my parents before the meet, I

Financial experts offer grim outlook for Caribbean economies

The following is an edited version of that interview:

Q: Going into the Olympic Games, the atmosphere first. Obviously you’re comfortable with where you were in terms of your preparations?

A: I was very comfortable, especially with the rounds and so on, because I had been doing 200s (meters) for the entire year for LSU (his school Louisiana State University in the U.S.). So I knew that if I could handle rounds of 200s, rounds of 400s shouldn’t be nothing for me and I was in the best shape of my life. I told my parents before the meet, I...
Silver lining: T&T star Thompson has no regrets finishing second to Bolt

(Continued from page 7)

I told my coach, anyone who was close to me, that I wasn’t leaving Beijing without a medal.

Q: Based on the times that were being run…the medal color you were looking at was not silver?
A: Well, going into the Games I believed that I had the third fastest time in the world. Bolt, obviously, he had broken the world record. Asafa was second in line and Tyson Gay had run 9.77 in their (U.S.) trials, but then he got injured the next day in the 200. So that put me third in line. Everyone expected me to get the bronze medal. But you know, as fast as Bolt was run all year and as fast as Asafa had run all year, my mentality going into the race, was that I was going to win. You know, as I said, I’m a realistic person and being realistic you go into an Olympic final and you know… I know I was able to handle pressure because I was doing it for the entire NCAA season and I was very well prepared.

Q: You step to the line in the 100 meters final…
A: Well, anyone who knows me, knows that I don’t throw off things like that… I love things like that so it just gave me an adrenaline rush and I was excited… When they zoomed in on me to announce that I was in lane four, whatever, ‘from Trinidad and Tobago, Richard Thompson’, anyone who remembers, I was jumping around and I was smiling and so on. So I was very confident.

Q: So the gun pops. Bolt doesn’t get out as well as everybody else, but you know he is going to show up at some point.
A: That’s the problem, and I have the best start I ever had ever in my entire life. I’m in front for 30 meters. Bolt was too far behind me. I know I’m in front of everyone else. I’m executing the race perfectly. I go all the way to 30 meters and I’m driving. I come up slowly, relaxed and everything and generating power at the same time. And then just I feel Usain pull up at the side of me and within 10 meters, between 40 to 50, I could just feel him separate himself so quickly and it’s the most crazy thing I’ve ever seen in my entire life. It’s kinda like a full bus passing you (he laughs).

Q: You feel the breeze.
A: (He laughs again…) He just shot off. And at that point I wasn’t even fooling myself, I knew that race was over. I knew the gold medal was gone unless he had gotten injured or he had fallen. If he had fallen he may still have beaten us. That’s how far ahead he was...

Q: Bolt’s acceleration, the speed, have you ever seen anything like that before?
A: No. Bolt is extraordinary. It’s not everybody you see a guy 6’ 5” being able to turn his legs over so quickly. I think that’s what separates him from everyone else....

Q: Outstanding accomplishment, Olympic silver medal, especially running against someone, as you describe it, in a different class. What was your first thought coming through the finish line?
A: I didn’t believe that it had happened, even though I knew I was capable of doing it. It was surreal....

Q: Is it something that you feel? Does it pressure you?
A: No. It doesn’t pressure me. I just try to take the same approach to what got me to where I am and I believe that once I think like that everything will work out the way it’s supposed to.

Q: Usain Bolt being at a different level in the sprinting, does that make your job easier, when people don’t expect you to beat him?
A: I wouldn’t say it necessarily makes my job easier. It actually makes it harder for me and the rest of the athletes.

Q: I mean, if you lose to Bolt, in other words, people will say, ‘Ok’.
A: I understand what you’re saying now. Losing to Bolt is kinda like winning the race to everyone else. No, seriously, because really, you step on the line with Usain Bolt, everyone expects you to come nothing other than second because he’s expected to win the race. So, yeah, it makes it easier on me and the rest of the field every time we step on the line to run against Usain. He’s the one with all the pressure. Everyone expects him to win every time.

Q: Is that a blessing or a curse for you as an athlete?
A: You could see it as both. All the pressure is on him. But then it’s a curse because if you continually let him win all the time then that expectation will always be there and you will always be number two.

Q: On a scale of one to 10, with 10 being very realistic and one being no chance at all, where do you see yourself in terms of beating Bolt?

Q: Representing the Caribbean, how much of the responsibility of the region do you carry into competition?
A: Every time I step on the line, whether it’s in Trinidad and Tobago or whether it’s in the Olympics in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. It’s not just one country. It’s an entire region and I understand that, you know, and it made me feel really proud to be part of history in the Olympic Games, with Bolt and I finishing one-two. And not just that. If you look at the line up for the 100 meters final, there were six Caribbean athletes in the eight men final. So, yeah, every time we step on the line we certainly represent the Caribbean… A lot of people know that the U.S. Nikwasi, is running back in the days when it came to sprinting. Now it’s the Caribbean. So it’s something that I have to live up to.

Financial experts offer grim outlook for Caribbean economies

(Continued from page 7)

I said that the global crisis had indeed exposed the region’s vulnerability to external shocks.

“Many of our economies are contracting, people are losing their jobs and poverty is on the rise,” he said, noting that some of the Caribbean countries’ plans for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015, including a significant reduction in poverty, were “now in jeopardy.”

But while he spoke later at the breakfast panel discussion, Burke was confident that the crisis provides an opportunity for the Caribbean to approach multilateral institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), for better lending practices.

“I am seeing a wonderful window of opportunity,” he said, even as he acknowledged that “we are not seeing the kind of creativity (from the region) that the situation demands. “I can’t say why,” he added.

ASSISTANCE

Britain has already indicated that it is prepared to assist the Caribbean ride the crisis as well as to deal with matters relating to climate change, which are also presenting both a financial and social burden to the small coastal countries of the region.

International Development Minister Mike Foster, who chaired the CDB meeting, said that while global economic growth would return, for the Caribbean with its own unique dynamics, strengths and vulnerabilities, recovery will come differently and it won’t be the same across the region. “If all is well I still am promising to help the Caribbean move forward in its vision for better integration and building viable areas for growth, including environmentally sustainable growth. “But despite such promises of goodwill, the CDB president has issued a warning to regional governments. With declining revenues from the various sectors including tourism, construction, remittances and a reduction in the availability of trade credit to Caribbean importers, his message was that if those trends persist, even moderately into the medium term, it would be catastrophic for everyone, more so the most vulnerable members of Caribbean society.

“it is therefore a matter of major public importance that the slide be halted and economic growth re-started.”

Bourne, one being no chance at all, where do you see yourself in terms of beating Bolt?...
Salesman has ‘purpose, service to offer’ ~ Barnes

Last month, a South Florida court sentenced Jamaican-born Fitzroy Salesman to 90 days in jail on a firearms charge. Winston Barnes, along with Salesman and fellow Jamaican George Pedlar, made history in 2005 as Caribbean Americans by comprising the majority of the elected Miramar City Commission. Pedlar no longer sits on the commission. Salesman’s conviction cost him his seat. Barnes, discussed the impact of Salesman’s fall from grace with Caribbean Today’s Managing Editor, Gordon Williams.

QUESTION:...What kind of effect do you think that Salesman’s conviction has on the Caribbean community? Is it a big letdown and do you sense that in the American community they’re looking at it as that, saying that probably Caribbean people cannot succeed or cannot handle success?

ANSWER: I want to think that they have learnt to understand the situation in a more wider scope.

Q: You mean the Americans?
A: The larger community as I like to say. At first I was sorcery off the situation, saying ‘Hey, they know it’s an individual, not a community’. But to be very honest, I got some intimation and after a while, I became extremely aware that something of a focus was on me, being the last one (Caribbean American) left in there (on the Miramar City Commission).

Q:...Are you suggesting or thinking that they are looking for you to be the next one to fall?
A: Hopefully not, because I think that the community and especially from the commission’s standpoint, I think people understand very, very clearly that I came in there with my own personas intact. I didn’t go in there and start that notoriety or fame, whichever you choose. I came to the situation with that. That’s what brought me in there, with people who listen to my radio program saying, ‘Hey, do this’. But no, as I said, when situations like that happen, my response, for example, to callers on the air is, ‘Listen, it is an individual, people can’t be judging’. But they will, they will. But I think what has happened now is that I have so distinguished myself, in whatever way, differentiated myself, if you prefer, on the commission, people are saying, ‘Whoa, O.K.’ And whether it’s misfortune or whatever has happened, where Fitzroy is concerned, something of a pattern has developed. So it can’t be said, ‘Hey, this is how Jamaicans behave’. This is how an individual behaves.

Q: You’re saying people understand, but are probably not surprised, that it has happened to Fitzroy Salesman based on what has happened in the past?
A: Not necessarily. I say that in the context of saying it does not necessarily parlay to another individual. This is how a particular individual behaves. So it cannot be said, at least I’m thinking the larger community is saying, this is how this individual behaves, not necessarily this is how Jamaicans behave.

Q: How will it impact, something like this, because it’s one thing for you to be accused on different occasions and being incarcerated? How do you think this will impact on future Caribbean American candidates, not just in Miramar, but how it’s viewed on a wider scale in the United States?
A: Not much, to be honest. I’ll tell you why: I am convinced now that Americans are smarter than that. Like a saying from an old Jamaican song was ‘All kinda people come a dance’. So different personalities...

(Continued on Page 10)

Deleting a lover with a stroke on the keyboard

How many of you have had regrets about your love life, even as you suffered through it, even as you marked time to the dull beat of a thumping heart that has lost its excitement?

You have two choices, either you endure the terror of being with someone you do not care for, or you can delete them, just as you do the “delete” button on your computer.

In the old days, gallant men would write a love letter and have it delivered to the hapless lady. Women too, would write a ‘Dear John’ letter, named after the song about this guy who went off to war and his fiancée wrote him a letter of termination. Or as Tom Jones sang, “Please release me, let me go, for I don’t love you anymore, to waste our lives, would be a sin, release me, and let me love again.”

INTERNET CUT

Those days are long gone, and people now delete lovers in the coldest, cruelest, crass, callous ways. Imagine my surprise to learn that people delete lovers via the Internet, which is a sort of letter I suppose: To John.com from Sheila.com: Message: deleted: Dear John, I don’t love you anymore, goodbye: ps: I put a block on your e-mail so don’t try to e-mail me: Message sent.

Now that’s cold, but what’s even colder is deleting your lover in a public place, for many do not go off quietly into the night. Many women swear off men after being deleted, and often seek solace in the church. Yes, non-believers or not, emotional trauma has driven more women into church than all the evangelists in the world combined.

To the man on the other hand, after being deleted, usually mistrusts women forever, lives a life playing the field, having short flings for fear of being dropped again.

Few things are worse for a man than being dumped by a woman. The first thing that he’s going to think is, is that’s because of another man. But some women simply want to move on, and a future of uncertainty, Possibly loneliness, is a far better prospect than staying with him. Sadly, many men cannot cope with this emotional trauma, and succumbing to their bruised egos and pride, they do something drastic, like murder/suicide.

INVESTMENT LOSS

If the woman doesn’t want you and says so, why not just walk and don’t look back? But I guess everyone’s different, and some men view being dumped as a loss of investment...

Some women may not go the murder/suicide route, but might just do a half of the tragi-comedy and commit suicide alone, as the emotional pain is simply too hard to take.

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Dealing with the keyboard

(Continued from page 9)

bear. But low self-esteem plays a major role in these actions. Sometimes the person doing the deleting is also unwracked with guilt and makes matters worse by prolonging the agony, dragging out the inevitable, remaining friends with the victim when she wants more than mere friendship.

People should not take being deleted as being the end of the world, but instead treat it as a new beginning, and a chance to meet new people and cultivate new friendships. But whoa, not so fast, as some ladies told me that their biological clocks play a huge role in the after effects of being dropped. “When I was a teenager and was dropped, it was a thing, but my man dropped me at age 52, where am I going to find another lover at my age?”

Well, she might have a valid point, but does she really have to acquire another lover? Can’t she survive and live off her memories? Apparently it’s not so easy for women, and just recently one told me that what she misses most now, is being in love and having someone love her. That’s the downside of being deleted, it erodes your self esteem and also leaves you feeling lonely and empty.

Bear in mind that there is a distinction between being left and being deleted. If you cheat on your lover and he leaves you, that’s not being dropped, but if things are going fine from your end, you play by all his rules, do everything for her, and she still leaves you, then that’s being deleted.

But listen, you shouldn’t have to rely on someone else to make you happy or feel loved. So what if he deleted you? Life sucks, get over it, be happy. So what if he deleted you? Life sucks, get over it, be happy.

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**Art’s reflection of ‘barrel life’ renews Caribbean connection**

**DAWN A. DAVIS**

"Barrel children". The term elicits a myriad of emotions among Caribbean people. It is a label borne out of disrupted family relationships as one parent or the other (traditionally, the mother) leaves the island for "fahrin" to make a better way for those left behind. Once overseas, the barrel, filled with day-to-day necessities, trinkets and toys, becomes the one tangible connection these children have with the parent. That connection - or the lack of it - is explored in an exhibition dubbed "Reflections of the Barrel Child: Symbols of Caribbean Family Life" at Fort Lauderdale’s Sailboat Bend Artists Lofts’ 13/10 Gallery. As part of a larger exhibition (“Signs of Oneness”) that examines symbolism and the human spirit, “Barrel Child” nudges the viewer to question his or her concept of family and relationships.

"We have left our people and our families for decades in search of a better life," says Nerissa Street, exhibition host and the architect of this Caribbean focused piece. "What they remember of us, while we stay in ‘fahrin’ are the things we send back. What they want is us."

**Dancehall star Ninja Man, son denied bail on murder charge**

**KINGSTON, Jamaica, CMC -** A court here has denied bail to popular dancehall artiste Desmond Ballentine (aka Ninja Man), who is accused of murder. The court has also denied bail on murder charge to the singer’s son Janeil Johnson who was pronounced dead upon arrival at hospital. The singer later surrendered to the police, while the other two accused were captured in a police operation in the northern parish of St. Ann.

**Patriarchal Ideas**

The symbolism in Jamaican-born artist Simone de Bernard Mas’s work questions the Caribbean’s male dominated society and the role of women. Bernard Mas uses the female form in all her work - her jewelry, her paintings, her sculpture. She explains that this specific form of art is her way of looking at women’s self image and how it is formed. It is also a bold statement about the controlled existence of women.

"As I observed the women of my culture attempting to live up to the patriarchal ideals, I became more aware of the necessity to break free of the enforced mold," she explains. "Bound", the beautifully sculpted bronze-like vagina trapped in a rusting clamp speaks volumes about the controlled existence of women. Bernard Mas uses the female form in all her work - her jewelry, her paintings, her sculpture.

**Hot summer for Caribbean music festivals**

Among the artists scheduled to perform are Jamaican dancehall star Mavado and American soul singer Regina Belle.

Next month, Jamaica will draw the spotlight with the 17th staging of “Reggae on the Rocks” and the 13th annual “St. Kitts Music Festival”. The weeklong festival, billed as “the world’s greatest showcase of reggae music”, will be staged from July 19-25 in Montego Bay. It will kick off with a beach party. Live performances, beginning with “Dancehall Night” on July 23, are among the highlights.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**
Art's reflection of 'barrel life' renews Caribbean connection

(continued from page 11)

landscapes. Disturbing landscapes also took shape in Louis Davis's photo art. A social activist through his work, muted watermark images of a homeless man, a swastika, a swinging noose, a Christian cross, all splattered with blood, brings home messages of racism, hypocrisy, depravity. Davis's work often leaves the viewer questioning his role in humanity.

That is why "Signs of Oneness", or the search for the common thread that connects all humanity, is about self-determination, says Street. And, the artists in this show demonstrate that the images and symbols we create are signs of society exploring and evolving.

Sailboat Bend Artist Lofts is a community of artists living in one space. The three-storey downtown Fort Lauderdale building of one, two and three-bedroom apartments serve as living and studio space for visual artists, writers, and performers who feed off each creatively. Each month the residents put on an exhibition featuring their work and that of guest artists. "Signs of Oneness" continues through June 13 and will also showcase films, performances and a book signing.

Dawn A. Davis is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.
Florida’s kids to gain from ‘Caribbean Heritage Summer Institute’

Obama praises Caribbean contribution
Holder returns to Barbadian roots

ike his boss, President Barack Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder Jr., has scored a first in United States politics. Obama is the first African American to lead the most powerful nation in the world, while Holder, 58, has become the country’s first black attorney general.

Both have intriguing and similar family backgrounds. Obama’s father was born in Kenya, while his mother was an American. In Holder’s case his father, Eric Holder, moved to the U.S. from Barbados when he was 11 years old and even though his mother, Miriam, was born in New Jersey, her family roots are in St. Philip, the earliest Barbados parish.

A highlight of his three-day visit at the invitation of the Barbados government last month was the official opening of Tamarind Hall Municipal Complex in Horse Hill, St. Joseph. This complex was be renamed in Holder’s honor. Prior to the re-naming ceremony, Holder held bilateral talks with the Prime Minister David Thompson. Holder, who grew up in Queens, New York, is the 82nd attorney general of the U.S. He previously served as a judge of the Superior Court of the District of Colombia and deputy attorney general. He was a senior legal advisor to then Senator Obama during the presidential campaign and was one of three members of Obama’s vice-presidential selection committee.

San Juan to host ‘Taste of the Caribbean’

Food and beverages will be the toast of San Juan, Puerto Rico when the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) presents “Taste of the Caribbean” June 12-14.

The three-day event, billed by its promoters as the largest and most important culinary event in the region, will feature educational seminars, workshops and demonstrations for hoteliers, restaurateurs and food and beverage professionals. “Taste” is being held in conjunction with the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association and Puerto Rico Tourism Company. Sponsors include Bahama Breeze, Albert Uster Imports, Inc., Certified Angus Beef®, Downman Design, Foster Wine, U.S. Dairy Export Council and U.S. Meat Export Federation.

It will begin at the Caribe Hilton in San Juan on June 12, with two days of workshops, tastings and demonstrations on June 13 and 14.

With global competition reaching a critical mass during one of the most difficult tourism markets we’ve ever faced, it is increasingly important to distinguish ourselves as a region through culinary excellence and creativity in our food and beverage offerings,” said Enrique De Marchena Kaliche, president of CHTA.

For more information, call CHTA at 305-443-3040 or visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com/taste.php

‘Caribbean Expressions’ come to Miramar, Florida

South Florida will welcome 1992 Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott as part of its literary fest during “Caribbean Expressions” this month in Miramar.

The four-day Caribbean American book and art fair, set June 18-21 to mark Caribbean Heritage Month, will be staged at the Miramar Cultural Arts Park.

The Caribbean-born writer is scheduled to be the main attraction during “The Night of the Nobel Laureate: A Celebration of the Work of Derek Walcott” on June 19. “Caribbean Expressions” will also feature literary panels, readings by authors, artist presentations, film screening, poetry and spoken words presentations, and Caribbean music and culinary arts.

An awards night, recognizing Caribbean women of excellence, is slated for June 18.

During those days of celebrations Walcott and Jamaica’s Professor Sir Arthur Lewis will also receive recognition for their accomplishments at the event, which features literary panels, readings by authors, artist presentations, film screening, poetry and spoken words presentations, and Caribbean music and culinary arts.

“With global competition reaching a critical mass during one of the most difficult tourism markets we’ve ever faced, it is increasingly important to distinguish ourselves as a region through culinary excellence and creativity in our food and beverage offerings,” said Enrique De Marchena Kaliche, president of CHTA.

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N.Y. hosts ‘Caribbean Week’ June 8-12


The following is a list of activities:

June 8-12: Celebrity Chef Program: Chefs will prepare distinctive Caribbean dishes at prestigious events held all over the city to showcase a taste of the region to consumers, travel industry professionals and media.

June 11: Caribbean Media Awards Luncheon at the New Yorker Hotel, 12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.;

• Workshop for Travel Agents at New Yorker Hotel, 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The workshop will offer niche market presentations on “Weddings and Honeymoons” to a select group of travel agents invited by CTO, its chapters and member countries.

• Caribbean Media Marketplace at New Yorker Hotel, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.;

• Caribbean Travel Trade Food, Rum & Rhythm at Manhattan Center, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.: A celebration of the Caribbean region’s award-winning rums, including sampling of premium rums and rum cocktails, celebrity chef demonstrations and musical performances.

• June 12: Caribbean Marketing Conference at New Yorker Hotel, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.;

“With global competition reaching a critical mass during one of the most difficult tourism markets we’ve ever faced, it is increasingly important to distinguish ourselves as a region through culinary excellence and creativity in our food and beverage offerings,” said Enrique De Marchena Kaliche, president of CHTA.

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Obama praises Caribbean contribution

Can meet the common challenges we face.

Now, therefore, I, Barack Obama, president of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2009 as National Caribbean American Heritage Month. I urge all Americans to commemorate this month by learning more about the history and culture of Caribbean Americans.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.”

~ A Caribbean Today special feature

www.caribbeantoday.com
Rhyme and reason: Haitian American eyes big time on field, in classroom

DAWN A. DAVIS

Seventeen-year-old Frankie Telfort is among the elite in high school American football. Even before he reached his final year, the 5’11”, 200-pound linebacker with strong Caribbean roots was being courted by top universities in the United States.

And, with more than 35 colleges vying for his attention, making a decision proved challenging. But, Telfort has made his choice.

“I chose the University of Southern California (USC) because they have a great coaching staff and the school excels in preparing athletes for their careers,” the soft-spoken star linebacker told Caribbean Today.

The young man is serious about his future, and it goes way beyond football.

“I plan on pursuing a double major, pre-med and writing,” said Telfort. “Medicine is my career choice, but I also want to focus on my writing.”

The son of a Haitian father and American mother, Telfort has been writing poetry and short stories for several years. Shakespearean-style sonnets is a large part of his poetic repertoire. One of Telfort’s poems is slated to be published soon in a literary magazine.

“I was reading Hamlet and I figured I would try writing a sonnet, and it came out pretty well,” said the native of Miami, Florida.

TOP RANKING

The multi-talented teen also stands out on the football field. He helped carry his high school team, Miami-based Gulliver Prep Raiders, to the 2A state championships this past season.

Continued success will result in a title challenge,” added Edouard, who holds a number 14 ranking with the World Boxing Council (WBC).

Edouard boasts a solid ring record of 21 wins (12 knockouts) against two losses and two draws and is expected to have little trouble disposing of Welliver, who has 18 wins (six knockouts) against 18 losses and one draw.

Welliver has lost 12 of his last 16 fights including a points defeat to Barbadian Christopher Henry when the two clashed in November 2003 for the vacant International Boxing Union (IBU) light middleweight title.

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC – Trinidad and Tobago striker Cornell Glen is making a return to United States Major League Soccer (MLS) after signing with San Jose Earthquakes, the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation (TFFF) Media has reported.

The Earthquakes signed Glen until the end of the season with the option to extend for the next season after the 28-year-old impressed coach Frank Yallop at trials last month.

Glen had MLS appearances between 2004 and 2006 with stints at New York, Dallas, Columbus, Colorado and Los Angeles, where an injury sidelined him for the last half of the 2006 season.

“It’s great to finally get a chance to come back out with an overseas club,” Glen told TFFF Media.

“If I’ve been working very hard towards this and coming here I felt this was the chance I had to grab.”

“It’s good for me because I have the experience of playing in the MLS before and hopefully now I can establish myself again and help the club go on to greater things. They are an ambitious club and I hope to play a part in helping them achieve success,” Glen added.

Glen joins Jamaican Ryan Johnson as Caribbean players on the San Jose roster.

GRAND RONDE, Oregon, CMC – World-rated Haitian middleweight boxer Daniel Edouard is booked for his first appearance this year when he fights American Dumont Welliver this month.

Square Ring Promotions announced last month that Edouard, ranked number nine by the World Boxing Association (WBA), will face Welliver in the main event of a June 12 card at the Spring Mountain Casino.

The bout will be televised on ESPN2.

“It’s exciting to be back on Friday Night Fights,” Edouard said in a Fightsnews website story.

“I feel that winning produces results and I have positioned myself on the edge of contention and hope that continued success will result in a title challenge,” added Edouard, who holds a number 14 ranking with the World Boxing Council (WBC).

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Rhyme and reason: Haitian American eyes big time on field, in classroom

Jamaica’s Reggae Boyz draw twice on U.S. soccer tours

Reigning Caribbean soccer champions Jamaica failed to secure a win in two friendly internationals played in the United States late last month, but the Reggae Boyz showed improvement in their build-up for the CONCACAF Gold Cup tournament scheduled for July in the U.S.

Jamaica, playing a man short for all of the second half, came from behind to snatch a late 2-2 draw against fellow Caribbean team and Gold Cup participants Haiti on May 23 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The following weekend, the Reggae Boyz played to a goalless draw with El Salvador, a Central American team still in the hunt for a place in the 2010 World Cup.

Against Haiti, ranked 122nd in the world by the game’s governing body FIFA, Jamaica (70th) were unimpressive early, but took the lead at Lockhart Stadium when striker Nicholas Adderley pounced on his own blocked shot in the 29th minute to score in the on his senior international debut. Ten minutes later Haiti drew level when substitute Jean Robbens Jerome redirected a cross inside the far post.

SETBACK
But the Boyz suffered a major setback right before half time when captain Claude Davis was cautioned for the second time and sent off. Playing a man short, Jamaica fell behind in the 66th minute. Goal scorer Jerome turned provider when his cross was slotted in by teammate Lesly Fellinga.

The team did not play well as a whole,” Jamaica’s coach John Barnes admitted after the game. “I expected a hard match and I got that.”

Haiti did a great job,” he said. “They did well and scored a very good goal, which was a little lucky.”

Both teams missed some scoring opportunities as well. But the game was highlighted by a fine performance from Jamaica’s Jermaine Johnson.

“I’m the senior player on the team so I just tried to do my thing,” Johnson said. “I tried to make the other players base off me.”

Johnson and the Boyz were scheduled to host Panama in another friendly international on June 7 in Kingston.

Gordon Williams is Caribbean Today’s managing editor.

Jamaica’s Jermaine Johnson dribbles away from El Salvador opponents Julio Martinez, left, and Victor Tucios during last month’s game. Simpson Miller

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South Florida launches summer job program for young people

In an attempt to mitigate the impact of youth unemployment, the South Florida Workforce Investment Board (SFWIB) recently launched its Summer Youth Employment Program to assist youth between the ages of 14 and 24 gain an understanding about careers, the workplace and appropriate employment skills by linking them to employers for work experience and career exploration.

The program is a public/private partnership between the South Florida Workforce Investment Board, the businesses community, and the public sector. The initiative is being supported pursuant to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The program’s concept is to encourage local employers (both public and private) to provide career exploration opportunities to young people within their organizations during the summer months. The SFWIB will cover the youth participant’s wages for the hours worked.

According to Rick Beasley, executive director of South Florida Workforce, “the Summer Youth Employment Program is a great opportunity for local employers to make a contribution to their community and help create a summative economic impact on the local economy; at the same time providing career exposures to our future workforce. I encourage anyone who is in a position to provide a placement opportunity to contact us for information about the program.

It’s a great investment in our youth. For more information about the SFWIB’s Summer Employment Program, visit the agency’s website at www.southfloridaworkforce.com.

Put some summer job money in stock market

STEVE ROSEN

It can be painful watching your young worker fritter away a summer’s worth of lawn-moving or babysitting income on video games, music downloads and frequent fill-ups of gas.

Might I suggest an alternative to summer spending? Invest the money in the stock market. Terrible timing? Hardly. Despite the stock market’s choppy waters, socking away the money in the stock market offers educational materials geared to novice investors.

Also, Vanguard, Fidelity, T. Rowe Price and other large fund companies have choices suitable for small investors. Plus, they offer a heavy dose of online investment-education tools. Another way for beginners to invest small amounts in stocks is through ShareBuilder.com, an online brokerage firm. Choose from three low-cost pricing plans that allow you to buy shares for as little as $4 a week through automatic purchase plans in more than 7,000 companies, exchange-traded funds and mutual funds.

Similarly, MyStockDirect.com allows small investors to bypass brokers and buy from companies’ direct stock purchase plans. Dividends are automatically reinvested.

Remember, young workers can contribute up to $5,000 annually in earned income in a Roth individual retirement account. Though contributions are taxable, the money can be withdrawn decades from now tax-free. Finally, if you’ll be shipping off a new high school graduate to college in a couple of months, an investment in a couple of hours’ worth of time with a financial planner may have a longer shelf life than the latest video game or iTunes download.

The City of Miami’s Department of Community Development “Foreclosure Prevention Program” has announced the availability of money to assist eligible, low-income homeowners, within city limits, who are facing foreclosure.

According to information released last month by the city, the program offers eligible homeowners up to $7,500 in assistance towards late fees and delinquent payments associated with their home loan.

To be eligible, the homeowner must meet the following qualifications: have received a foreclosure notice from their mortgage lender; be 80 percent average median income or below as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; the property must be located in Miami, be single-family, and owner-occupied (have a homestead exemption); the property’s maximum tax assessed market value cannot exceed $300,000; the homeowner must prove that delinquency on their home loan was due to a significant loss of household income, such as loss of employment, sudden medical illness, death in the family, predatory lending practices, etc.; and the homeowner must demonstrate their ability to make future mortgage payments after the assistance is received and provide a revised monthly budget.

Applications are available at the Department of Community Development, 444 S.W. Second Ave., 2nd Floor, Miami, FL 33130; and on the web for downloading at www.miamigov.com/communitydevelopment. Applications will be accepted at the department.

Assistance will be provided on a first-come, first-ready, first-served basis. For more information, call 305-416-2016 or 311.

Program offers help for Miami’s homeowners

Most of us try to attract other people by the friends we keep and the way we carry ourselves. If you are going to a party or a formal function, don’t you dress well? We all want to promote a favorable impression of ourselves to other people we meet and talk to.

If we agree on that, then think of this. Why should it be any different for your business? If you want to project a favorable image of your company, in order to win customers, you should keep your company with good friends and... dress your company well in...

CAN WE TALK?

Peter A. Webley, Publisher

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June 2009

SERVICE SPECIAL

STEVE ROSEN

It can be painful watching your young worker fritter away a summer’s worth of lawn-moving or babysitting income on video games, music downloads and frequent fill-ups of gas.

Might I suggest an alternative to summer spending? Invest the money in the stock market. Terrible timing? Hardly. Despite the stock market’s choppy waters, socking away the money in the stock market offers educational materials geared to novice investors.

Also, Vanguard, Fidelity, T. Rowe Price and other large fund companies have choices suitable for small investors. Plus, they offer a heavy dose of online investment-education tools. Another way for beginners to invest small amounts in stocks is through ShareBuilder.com, an online brokerage firm. Choose from three low-cost pricing plans that allow you to buy shares for as little as $4 a week through automatic purchase plans in more than 7,000 companies, exchange-traded funds and mutual funds.

Similarly, MyStockDirect.com allows small investors to bypass brokers and buy from companies’ direct stock purchase plans. Dividends are automatically reinvested.

Remember, young workers can contribute up to $5,000 annually in earned income in a Roth individual retirement account. Though contributions are taxable, the money can be withdrawn decades from now tax-free. Finally, if you’ll be shipping off a new high school graduate to college in a couple of months, an investment in a couple of hours’ worth of time with a financial planner may have a longer shelf life than the latest video game or iTunes download.
Fish with buttery yucca serves up Caribbean lovers’ delight

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC - The Trinidad-based Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) has confirmed that three Caribbean countries have reported positive cases of the deadly Influenza A (H1N1), which is commonly referred to as “swine flu”.

“A total of four confirmed cases have been reported - two from Jamaica, one from Bahamas and one from Bermuda. All four cases had a recent travel history to affected areas in the USA,” CAREC noted in a statement on its official website.

CAREC warned that with an increase in travel between affected areas and the Caribbean, particularly during the school vacation period “countries should continue enhanced surveillance for fever and respiratory illness”.

The center stated that several affected countries were “now only testing severe cases and as such reported numbers are no longer a complete description of burden of disease”.

VISITOR

The Ministry of Health in The Bahamas said that the reported case occurred in a young adult visitor who came from New York to that country on May 25 and returned home the next day to recover. “Due to heightened surveillance activities by the Department of Public Health necessary tests were done that same day. The results were received on the evening of May 29. All necessary precautions were taken at the facilities where the visitor stayed for the brief period and there are on-going surveillance activities at other contact sites”, the ministry stated.

The Bahamas said that as there continues to be widespread global occurrence of the virus it would continue to monitor the influenza trends, “which at present do not indicate any increase in cases at this time”.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said that as of June 1, 62 countries officially reported 17,410 cases of influenza A (H1N1) infection, including 115 deaths.

No harm done from a very fishy diet

Question: Dr. Bruce Bistrian, I read in an earlier issue that one of the nutrition experts eats five servings of fish a week. Why so much? And isn’t there a risk from the contaminants?

Answer: I believe research has shown that eating fish has a variety of benefits, but for me, the science came much later than my love of fish did.

Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), the two omega-3 fats found in fish, have been shown to reduce the risk of death from coronary artery disease by about 35 percent when consumed in modest amounts. Modest means a daily average of about 500 milligrams (mg) of EPA and DHA together (not each), which you can get by eating two servings of fish a week — provided, of course, it’s only fish.

Two servings provide from 3.0 to 4.5 grams EPA and DHA, and because much of it is stored, that’s equivalent to ingesting about 500 mg daily. There’s a definitive evidence from epidemiologic studies that omega-3 fats in that amount will reduce risk of such widely disparate disorders as depression, metabolic syndrome, Alzheimer’s disease, and some kinds of cancer. The American Heart Association recommends a daily average of 500 mg for prevention of coronary artery disease, and twice that much — a gram a day — for people with established heart disease.

In even greater amounts — three grams a day — fish oil can significantly lower elevated triglyceride levels, another risk factor for coronary artery disease. If you’re taking prescription-strength fish oil — Lovaza is a brand name — for triglyceride lowering, then physician monitored. Intake at the multi-gram level has shown promise as a treatment for inflammatory disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease. And research I’ve been involved in shows that it helps people who are critically ill from conditions like adult respiratory distress syndrome or because they’re recovering from major surgery.

CONCERN

As for contaminants, methyl mercury and toxic organic compounds such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxin are the ones that cause the most concern. (Meat and dairy products also contain methyl mercury and toxic organic compounds.)

In 2006, Harvard researchers Darshil Mozaffarian and Eric Rimm wrote a comprehensive review about the risks and benefits of eating fish that was published in The Journal of the American Medical Association, and some of the following information is taken from their review.

Methyl mercury is found in highest concentrations in four types of fish: swordfish, shark, king mackerel, and tilefish (sometimes called golden bass). Because methyl mercury can impair neurologic development and function, these species should be avoided by pregnant women, those who are breast-feeding, and infants.

However, it’s still important for the people in these groups to consume two servings of fish per week with high EPA and DHA content because DHA is an essential nutrient for optimal brain development, which occurs during gestation and early infancy. The dangers of methyl mercury aren’t an issue for adults unless they eat more than five servings of fish a week. Even then, the risk can be managed by limiting intake of the four species with high mercury levels.

The risks of PCBs and dioxin are essentially below the level of detection when consuming store-bought fish, and because these compounds are also found in similar amounts in meat and dairy products, there doesn’t seem to be any disadvantage from swapping one good protein source for another. However, there may be advisories about contamination of freshwater fish in certain areas, and these local recommendations should be heeded.
WASHINGTON - The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has approved the creation of a multi-donor fund to support initiatives geared towards tackling gender and diversity issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The new fund will provide grants for initiatives that advance gender equality, reduce discrimination and support equitable development in the IDB's 26 borrowing member countries. Women and men affected by gender-based inequalities, indigenous peoples, and Afro-descendant communities are the three main target populations to be served by the fund.

The IDB said that up to $10 million from its ordinary capital will help finance the fund's operations, including an initial $4 million allocation approved for 2009.

"The fund's long-term objective for these resources is the integration of gender and diversity perspectives in the development plans of bank member countries throughout the region," the IDB stated. This will be an important opportunity for the bank to establish itself as a leader in gender and diversity issues in Latin America and the Caribbean," said Kei Kawabata, manager of the IDB Social Sector, in charge of the program's activities.

"It enhances our role as a partner for this region and it improves our capacity to promote equitable development," Kawabata added.

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