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Sprint superstar Usain Bolt hopes to silence his critics and cement his track and field legacy at the 2016 Olympic Games, but first he must overcome injury, which forced him out of Jamaica's National Championships and raised doubts about the Caribbean's gold medal prospects, page 3A.



Jocelerme Privert remained Haiti's interim president after the National Assembly failed to vote on whether or not to extend his 120

days stay in office last month. Meanwhile, anxiety levels rise in the Caribbean nation with more elections scheduled that will hopefully resolve the political mess there, page 18.



~ Untold numbers of undocumented Caribbean nationals in the United States could again become targets for deportation and deprived benefits after the U.S. Supreme Court failed to approve an executive decision by President Barack Obama which sought to shield them, page 2A.

SALUTE TO JAMAICA



Garvey



Rogers



Morgan



Clarke

~ Jamaica is looking to its 54th year of Independence from Britain and so many have made positive contributions to the Caribbean nation, representing in various fields both at home and abroad. Caribbean Today's annual special feature offers a "Salute to Jamaica" pages 1B-12B.

INSIDE INSIDE INSIDE INSIDE INSIDE

News.....	2A	Food.....	13A	Eye On Haiti.....	18A
Local/FYI.....	6A	Health.....	14A	Bahamas.....	
Feature.....	7A	Classifieds.....	15A	Independence.....	19A
Viewpoint.....	9A	Sports.....	16A	Salute to Jamaica.....	1B-12B
Arts/Entertainment.....	11A	Tourism/Travel.....	17A		



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NEWS



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U.S. Supreme Court deadlock exposes Caribbean nationals to deportation

GORDON WILLIAMS

Untold numbers of undocumented Caribbean nationals in the United States could again become targets for deportation after the Supreme Court last month failed to approve an executive decision by President Barack Obama which sought to shield them.

The Supreme Court's deadlock 4-4 ruling issued on June 23 essentially left untouched a lower court ruling, which blocked Obama's Nov. 2014 decision. It also underscored that the president did not have the power to protect some undocumented immigrants from fear of deportation or make them eligible for certain privileges, including work permits and driver's licenses.

Up to four million undocumented immigrants, including thousands from the Caribbean, are now considered to be in limbo courtesy of the Supreme Court's split decision. The president expressed disap-



- File photograph

A split high court decision has increased the importance of the immigration issue in a U.S. election year.

pointment with the deadlock after he had implemented the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA), which prevented parents of legal U.S. residents from being deported.

Obama's decision was challenged by a cluster of states, which sued the federal government. A lower court judge ruled in the states' favor, issuing an injunction last year that stopped Obama's decision from going into effect. An

appeals court backed the blocking of Obama's order.

The case eventually ended up in the Supreme Court, a body usually made up of nine justices, but which has been operating one short following the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. The tie ensured the lower court ruling stood.

ELECTION ISSUE

With presidential elections due in November, the issue of immigration is once again expected to play a major role.

Democrats, led by presumptive nominee Hillary Clinton, supported Obama's executive decision. Republicans, with Donald Trump at the head of the ticket, generally opposed it.

"Now we've got a choice about what we're going to be as a country, what we're going to teach our kids, how we're going to be represented in Congress and the White House," Obama said during a press briefing following the Supreme Court's decision.

The Republicans viewed the court's deadlock as putting a brake on the powers of the president.

"The Supreme Court's ruling makes the president's executive action on immigration null and void," said House Speaker Paul Ryan. "The constitution is clear: The president is not permitted to write laws – only the Congress is. This is another major victory in our fight to restore separation of powers."

According to Obama, a clear cut Supreme Court deci-

sion would have been made if Republicans had approved his choice to replace Scalia. Now that decision will likely be left to the next U.S. president.

DEFIANT

Meanwhile, advocates for Caribbean immigrants in the U.S. appeared defiant following the Supreme Court's ruling.

"The battle must go on as the ruling now makes the November election more critical than ever," Jamaican-born Irwine Clare, founder of the New York-based Caribbean Immigrant Services (CIS), was quoted by **News Americas** as saying last month.

"It's going to be an interesting summer as it now sets these groups up who were waiting for this decision to now come together in a greater way to support the Democratic presidential nominee and Democrats as they now know what is at stake."



SVG will no longer swear allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent – A change in the Oaths by Officials Act in St. Vincent and the Grenadines will see officials now swearing allegiance and service to their country rather than their ceremonial head of state Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successor.

Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves, who presented the bill in Parliament recently, told

lawmakers that from time immemorial the Oath of Allegiance and the oath for the execution of office have been sworn, in accordance with the existing law, to Her Majesty, her heirs and successor.

"Mr. Speaker, although Her Majesty is the head of state, it doesn't necessarily follow that you have to swear the allegiance to her," Gonsalves said.

"There is no constitutional provision to that effect in our Constitution. Parliament has made the law and Parliament can change the Oaths by Officials Act."

Gonsalves cited Jamaica as an example of a country which has Her Majesty as "our sovereign lady," but do not swear allegiance or oath of execution of office to her.



Ex-Antigua diplomat dies awaiting fraud trial in U.S.

A New York medical examiner last month confirmed that John Ashe, the former president of the United Nations General Assembly died in a weightlifting accident in the United States.

In a report on June 23, Dr. Kunjlata Ashar said the 61-year-old Antiguan diplomat died when a barbell he was lifting from a bench fell on his neck. The medical examiner said the cause of death – traumatic asphyxia – was determined during an autopsy.

Ashe was awaiting trial in the U.S. on fraud charges. In Oct. 2015, he pleaded not guilty to criminal charges of filing fraudulent income tax returns and evading tax payments to the U.S. government on more than \$1.3 million he is accused of receiving in bribes dating to 2011, which the U.S. has traced.

COMPLAINT

Court records state that a complaint had been brought by the U.S. attorney for the Southern District, charging the former diplomat, who served as president of the U.N. General Assembly between 2013 and 2014, and five others, including a billionaire developer from the Chinese territory of Macau.

The complaint alleges that the five, including billionaire Ng Lap Seng, also known as David Ng, paid bribes to the former Antigua and Barbuda

diplomat in exchange for "benefits from the U.N. and the government of Antigua and Barbuda." Among the allegations are that Ashe "accepted over US\$500,000 of bribes"



Ashe

facilitated by three of the defendants - Ng, Jeff C. Yin and Francis Lorenzo - in an effort to build "a multi-billion dollar, U.N.-sponsored conference center in Macau, China."

In addition, the complaint charges, the former diplomat received more than \$800,000 in bribes from "various Chinese businessmen" and that, as part of the scheme, he "shared a portion of the bribe payments" with senior Antiguan government officials, including a former prime minister. Prime Minister Gaston Browne had said then that the incident had "serious implications" for the country and that the United States can be assured of his administration's support.

- Edited from CMC.



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BOLT BLOW: Injury puts Jamaican sprint sensation in doubt for 2016 Olympics

Perhaps the Caribbean's best chance for a gold medal at next month's Olympic Games suffered a massive setback when undisputed sprint king Usain Bolt pulled out of Jamaica's National Senior Championships with an injury.

Bolt, the two-time defending Olympic champion and world record holder in the 100 and 200 meters, completed the semi-final of the shorter dis-



Bolt

tance on July 1, the second day of the trials in Kingston, but failed to face the starter for the final later that evening. He submitted a medical certificate indicating he had suffered a hamstring muscle tear. The injury also forced him out of the 200 meters competition at the championships.

The setback has left Bolt's participation in the Olympics, to be staged in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Aug. 5-21, dangling in serious doubt. Under the rules of the Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association (JAAA), track and field's governing body in the Caribbean nation, based on past performances and current ranking in both individual sprint events, Bolt could still make the Olympic team, although he did not qualify at the trials. He will, however, have to prove his fitness and form before the Games to become eligible for inclusion.

If Bolt is unable to compete in Brazil, it would mark the end of what he has called a personal quest to cement his legendary track and field status. The member of Jamaica's world record-setting 4x100 meters relay team, which also won gold at the last two Olympics, had already stated his intention to retire from the sport next year after completing an unprecedented "triple triple". Bolt is also reigning World champion in both individual sprints and 4x100.

ANGUISH

His anguish began on June 30, the first day of the trials, when the 100 heats were run. Bolt easily qualified for the semis on July 1 but, according to a message sent out by him on social media, following his withdrawal from the meet, problems had already set in.

Bolt's message read in part: "After feeling discomfort in my hamstring after the first round last night and then again in the semi-final tonight I was examined by the Chief Doctor of the National Championships and diagnosed with a Grade 1 tear ..."

It further explained that Bolt had submitted a medical certificate "to be exempted from the 100m final and the remainder of the National Championships ...". He planned to seek treatment in Europe and "hope to show fitness at the London Anniversary Games on July 22 to earn selection for the Olympic Games in Rio," according to the message.

It is understood that Jamaica has until to July 18 to submit its entries for each individual event. Up to four names are allowed.

If Bolt fails to compete in Rio, it would put a massive dent in Jamaica and the Caribbean's gold medal hopes. At his best, Bolt is universally acknowledged as the greatest sprinter ever. His absence could also have huge impact on the attraction of Olympics

Games. Bolt is not only a track sensation, he is hugely popular, a globally recognized and respected star. He is a major drawing card for audiences and sponsors across the world and was expected to hit his peak at the Olympics, when his sport claims the spotlight once every four

years.

In another sad note for Caribbean track fans, Jamaican-born Sanya Richards-Ross, who competes for the United States but has never surrendered her Caribbean roots, failed to advance from her heat in the 400 meters at the U.S. trials,

effectively ending her hopes of competing in Rio. Richards-Ross, a former World and Olympic champion in the event, has already announced she will retire from the sport this year.

- Gordon Williams



Caribbean Today will be spotlighting local and state elections in August. Come with Caribbean Today as we introduce you to candidates who wish to earn your vote. This is a year like no other. The voting public needs to pay attention.

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Cops charge two with murder of U.S. missionaries in Jamaica

Police last month charged two men in connection with the April murders of two United States missionaries in Jamaica.

The cops said 25-year-old Dwight Henry, otherwise called "Dougie" and "Chino", was taken into custody on June 24 and, after being questioned in the presence of his attorney.

Earlier last month, Assistant Commissioner of Police Ealan Powell said

Andrew Thomas had been charged with two counts of murder after the bodies of 48-year-old Randy Hentzel was found in the community of Albion Mountain on April 30 and Harold Nichols, 53, the following day.

Police believe the motive for the murders was robbery.

Edited from CMC.



NEWS



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Ex-T&T prime minister dies



Manning

Former Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Patrick Manning has died. He was 69.

On July 1, his wife Hazel Manning, a former education minister, confirmed that her husband had been suffering from acute myeloid leukemia. He died early the next day.

Manning served as prime minister on two occasions, between 1991-2010 and in 2012. He suffered a stroke and received medical attention in the United States. He did not contest the Sept. 7, 2015 general elections.



NO WAY: Bermudians reject same-sex marriage, civil unions

HAMILTON, Bermuda – Bermudians voted overwhelmingly against same-sex marriage and same-sex civil unions in a referendum on June 23, but turnout was below 50 percent, officials said.

The results showed 69 percent of those who cast a vote in the referendum were against same-sex marriage and 63 percent against civil unions. A total of 14,192 voted against same-sex marriage, while 6,514 supported it. Those opposing same-sex civil unions numbered 13,003 with 7,626 in favor.

Turnout among the 44,367 Bermudians registered to vote in the referendum at 12 polling stations across the island was 46.89 percent, officials said. Turnout of 50 percent or more was required to make it valid, although government had said the result was non-binding.

Entertainer Tony Brannon, a campaigner for same-sex marriage, lamented the results in the island's first referendum for 21 years.

"Obviously, it's a very disappointing result - very disap-



Bermudians let their voices be heard in referendum.

pointing for equality," he said. "We tried hard."

"The people want to stay in the dark ages, that's their choice, but it's very sad."

'LOVE, SUPPORT'

As Bermudians went to the polls, the Rainbow Alliance of Bermuda acknowledged the outpouring of "love and support" for the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) community in advance of the referendum on marriage equality.

"The results of this refer-

endum are non-binding and no matter how it turns out, we will be grateful for an end to the divisive and often hurtful campaigning that this exercise has inspired," the group stated.

Although the result will be non-binding, Premier Michael Dunkley said on the eve of the poll: "Any outcome is the will of the people and will guide their elected officials accordingly."

- Edited from CMC.



Ex-soccer boss's sentencing delayed until November

NEW YORK – Disgraced former soccer boss Jeff Webb, of the Cayman Islands, has had sentencing in his corruption case delayed until November.

The 51-year-old banker, who once headed the body which governs the game in the Caribbean, North and Central America and was a former vice-president of soccer's world governing body FIFA, was due to appear in court for sentencing here last month, but Judge Raymond Dearie granted a request from Webb's lawyers for a postponement.

In a letter, Webb's lawyer Edward O'Callaghan requested that sentencing "be adjourned to November 18 at 10:00 a.m."

The reason behind the request was not immediately

clear and media reports indicate the letter did not include one.

Webb is currently under house arrest at his Atlanta residence, where he has been since last September when the courts relaxed the terms of his bail. He had been initially placed under house arrest in New York following his arraignment on multiple corruption charges last August, but his lawyers argued the arrangement had proven too expensive.

In May, the condition of Webb's bail were further



Webb

relaxed, with the courts allowing him to travel up to 50 miles from his house to help care for his infant son.

Webb was one of several current and former soccer officials arrested last May when Swiss police swooped down on a luxury Zurich hotel, where high profile administrators had gathered for a FIFA congress. He was subsequently extradited to the United States to face charges as part of the largest corruption scandal to hit the sport, and eventually pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy, three counts of wire-fraud conspiracy and three counts of money-laundering conspiracy.

- Edited from CMC.



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BRAVEHEART: Guyanese American emerges a hero after June 12 Orlando terrorist shooting

NEW YORK, N.Y. - As relatives and friends began the heart wrenching task of burying their loved ones, the public is learning of a Guyanese American marine veteran, who risked his own life to save others on June 12.

Imran Yousuf, 24, is being recognized as a hero for helping dozens of people escape the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub. The former Marine, whose parents were born in Guyana and who served in Afghanistan, was working as a bouncer at the nightclub when he heard gunfire at about 1:45 a.m.

"That was a shock," Yousuf, a New York native like killer Omar Mateen told **CBS News**. "Three or four shots go off and you could just tell it was a high caliber. Everyone froze."

As patrons raced to flee the gunfire, they packed into the back staff hallway where he was, Yousuf said. He instructed them to open a latch on a nearby door to exit the building, but they froze in a state of panic, he said.

"I'm just screaming, 'Open the door! Open the door!'" and no one's moving because they were scared," Yousuf told the news organization. "There was only one choice: Either we all stay there and we all die or I

could either take the chance and get shot and save everyone else. And I jumped over, opened that latch and we got everyone that we can out of there."

When CBS correspondent Mark Strassmann asked him



- Photograph courtesy of CBS screen grab.

how many people exited the door, Yousuf estimated between 60 and 70. Strassmann told him he saved a lot of lives.

"I wish I could save more, to be honest," he added.

SERVICE

Yousuf returned from military service in April after a serving tour of duty in Afghanistan. His paternal grandfather is Muslim, and his grandmother is Hindu. Yousuf has chosen the Hindu faith.

He graduated from

Niskayuna High School – near Schenectady, New York – in 2010 and immediately joined the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps Times reported that Yousuf served as an engineer equipment electrical systems technician in the Corps from June 2010 to May 2016. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2011.

Yousuf was last assigned to 3rd Marine Logistics Group. His military awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Korean Defense Service Medal and Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

While many are lauding him as a hero, Yousuf wrote on his Facebook page June 13: "There are a lot of people naming me a hero. As a former Marine and Afghan veteran I honestly believe I reacted by instinct."

"I have lost a few of my friends that night which I am just finding out about right now, and while it might seem that my actions are heroic I decided that the others around me needed to be saved as well and so I just reacted."

- Edited from *News Americas*.



Interpol hunts over 300 Caribbean 'most wanted'

More than 300 nationals from 16 Caribbean countries are on the "Wanted Persons List" issued by Interpol, the world's largest international police organization.

Among those being sought by law enforcement is Austin "Jack" Warner, the Trinidad and Tobago-born former vice president of soccer's governing body FIFA, **News Americas Now** staffers have found.

The majority are from the Dominican Republic, with a whopping 160, including persons wanted for crimes varying from murder to drug trafficking and bank fraud. They include: Jesus Maria Rosario Mena, 26; Lorenzo Burgos Nuñez, 59; Daniel Polanco Valdez, 28; Michael Antonio Reyes Solis, 25; Williams De La Cruz, 38; Francisco Santos Gonzalez, 49; William Restituyo Peña, 35; and Felix Aldencis Peguero Mendez, 57, who are all wanted for murder; and Jose Borbon, 47, and Ramon R. Rosario, 49, both being sought for conspiracy to distribute and



Warner

possess with intent to distribute cocaine.

From Jamaica there are 50 wanted, the second largest number in the Caribbean. They include: Albert Bolt, 61, Yasser James, 22; Mervin Henry, 29, Shanrick Shavaughn Nugent, 22; Kemar Ruddock, 25; Alphonso Derrick Nelson, 26; Paul Casanova, 40; Marlon Omar Mcmillan, 30; O'Neil Ferguson, 33 and Teran Bryan, 26, all for murder. Ena Mcneish, 63, is wanted for possession of cocaine with intent to sell and criminally negligent homicide. Lawrence Moffatt, 54, is being sought in connection with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine.

CUBA

There are 30 from Cuba, including some United States-based Cuban-born nationals, who are wanted. They include Julio Bonachea, 55, for attempted murder; Roberto Crespo, 44, for child porn; Jorge Emilio Perez De Morales Sante, 52, for conspiracy to commit money laundering; Pablo Sanu-Yasell, 79; Jose Garcia Suarez, 52; Domingo

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6A)

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ELECTION WATCH: Caribbean American Chamber to host candidates forums

The Greater Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce (GCACC) in Florida is scheduled to host two candidates forums this month focusing on judicial, statewide and county election races in South Florida.

The first forum will be held from **6 p.m. to 9 p.m. July 14** at the Merrell United Methodist Church, 3900 N. State Road 7, Lauderdale Lakes.

Being contested are: Broward's County Court Judicial seats; the Broward County District 9 Commission seat; Florida state seats Districts 92 and 95; and the Broward County sheriff. The schedule includes the County Court judicial candidates at 6 p.m.; District 9 County Commission candidates at 7 p.m.; and candidates for statewide races at 7:40 p.m. Candidates for Broward

County sheriff will be at 8:30 p.m.

"GCACC thought this would be a great opportunity for the candidates to address issues that are of specific concerns to the Caribbean community," GCACC President Michael Young noted in a recent press release promoting the forum.

"The issues of our Caribbean community are sometimes unique and our community look to leaders that can offer solutions to these concerns."

AIM

According to the release, the purpose of the forums is to increase the Caribbean American community's interest and involvement in the election process and to give voters an opportunity to meet and learn about the candidates.

There are currently seven



contested Broward County Court seats, with a total of 19 candidates. All County Court candidates are invited to the forum and will be given an opportunity to discuss their background and why they desire to be elected to the judiciary. Additionally, there will be a moderated discussion, where the candidates will answer pre-screened questions

from the moderator and audience.

The forum will be moderated by representatives from the Caribbean Bar Association and the League of Women Voters. It is being presented by the GCACC, in conjunction with the Haitian Lawyers Association, Jamaica Bar Association, Barbados American Chamber of Commerce, Belize American Chamber of Commerce, Grenada Cultural Association, Guyanese American Chamber of Commerce, Jamaica USA Chamber of Commerce, Trinidad and Tobago South Florida Chamber of

Commerce, the St. Kitts and Nevis Association, Florida Panamanian Association and the Greater Caribbean American Cultural Coalition.

The GCACC has scheduled another candidates forum, which will focus on candidates for judicial, statewide and county-wide offices in Miami-Dade, for **July 21, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.**, at Holy Family Church, 18501 NW 7th Ave., Miami Gardens.

Both events are free and open to the public, but reservations are required. To confirm attendance, or for more information, contact **gcachamber@gmail.com** or call **954-634-2472**.



St. Lucia elects Chastanet, UWP to form new government

St. Lucia has a new prime minister and government.

Economist Allen Chastanet led his United Workers Party (UWP) to a resounding victory in last month's general elections and immediately signaled his intention to turn around an ailing economy, deal with a ballooning debt while keeping citizens at the heart of the new socio-economic plans for St. Lucia.

"I want to say a big thank you to the people of St. Lucia ... let them know we are not going to let them down," Chastanet said at his first news conference after the Electoral

Department preliminary figures showed that the UWP had won 11 of the 17 seats contested.

Chastanet was sworn in as the sixth prime minister of St. Lucia since the island attained political independence from Britain in 1979. He took the oath of office before Dame Perette Louisy at Government House on the outskirts of the capital. The brief ceremony was witnessed by family members,



Chastanet

including his 82-year-old father Michael and his wife and two children. Chastanet vowed to unite the country.

Chastanet described the victory as an "incredible achievement" saying the electorate had understood his party's "Five to stay Alive" strategy, reiterating that the imposition of the value added tax (VAT), high unemployment, and a 66 percent increase in the cost of piped water had impacted the nation.

- Edited from CMC.



Caribbean faces 'Brexit' fallout

BRUSSELS – Guyanese-born Dr. Patrick I. Gomes, secretary general of the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group, says the implications of Britain's decision to leave the 43-year-old European Union (E.U.) could be far-reaching on the ACP and may

give rise to many consequences for trade, services, investments and development finance assistance.

Britons last month voted by a 52-48 margin to leave the E.U. Gomes said the ACP-United Kingdom relations have been longstanding and

mutually beneficial, not only for Caribbean countries, but for the ACP Group as a whole.

"With the U.K. outside of the (E.U.) ... the ACP will lose an ally of great value," Gomes said.



Interpol hunts over 300 Caribbean 'most wanted'

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5A)

Santana, 71; Joan Noalles, 38; Alberto Bosa, 48; Rodolfo Aguila, 54; Madelin Barbara Machado, 42; Leonardo Javier Bolanos, 49; Luis Enrique Benitez, 50; Gustavo Adolfo Smith, 51; Montes Sanchez Sixto, 37, and Armando Fuentes Diaz, 44, are all wanted for health care fraud. Ricardo Ledo, 48, is wanted for conspiracy to commit access device fraud among four other charges, and Angel Ricardo Mendoza, 54, is wanted for possession/storing of stolen goods.

There are 15 wanted from Guyana and Haiti, respectively. The Guyanese include: Jamal Sadia Lewis, 25; Anthony Bhupdeo, 23, and Neon Daneyon Jemmott, 38 - all wanted for murder. Oudit Narain Seenarain, 40, is wanted

for rape, aggravated sodomy, kidnapping with bodily injury, false imprisonment and possession with intent to distribute cocaine. Sandra Angela Proffitt, 52, Sean Griffith, 45, and Garfield Christopher Parker, 53, are all wanted for international drug trafficking. Roy Anthony Garraway, 50, is wanted for drug trafficking; Lawrence Dundas, 56, is wanted for embezzlement as a public officer; Hewitt Alleyne, 38, is wanted for unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor between 14 and 16 years; and George Andrew Hercules, 61, is wanted for sexual battery on a child.

Among the Haitians wanted by Interpol are Joseph Hughes, 39, and Trezil Jean Joseph, 45 - for murder; Sandra Lorthe, 33, and Guirlande Baptistin, 25, Jean Paul Samuel

Myrthil, 61, and Jean Pierre Sainvil, 50, who are all wanted for trafficking in humans; and Yves Francois, 62, who is wanted for sexual offenses against minors.

There are 13 wanted persons from Suriname, nine from The Bahamas, seven from St. Kitts and Nevis, five from Belize, and two each from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. Warner, 73, is wanted for racketeering conspiracy, wire fraud and money laundering. The U.S. has requested his extradition.

Interpol is seeking one person from each of the following nations: Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia and Turks and Caicos Islands.

- Edited from News Americas.



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WEED TALK: Caribbean debates marijuana as 'holy herb' or illegal drug

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent – It is seen as a “holy herb” and, for those who use it, marijuana is a gift from God for the benefit of mankind.

Percival Stapleton, who was among people attending a national consultation on marijuana here last month, said he uses the drug as a “holy sacrament given to us by God, of which great men like King Solomon, even when he died, the spirit of God sent a seed and drop on his grave and it grew there.

“Weed is my best friend,” Stapleton added. “It is disgraceful to say anything about marijuana. I smoke it day and night. I drink it like tea and ah smoking it until a dead.”

But there was also a warning that marijuana is addictive, and as such users should be treated as addicts. Pharmacist Matthew Thomas, 73, said he has seen how homeless people, many of whom are marijuana users, are sleeping under galleries at one end of the capital.

“It has shown me over the 50 years the decadence of the black young men of this country mainly as a result of marijuana intoxication,” Thomas said.



- File photograph

Many in SVG agree with the sign of the times.

Former chief pharmacist Tyrone Jack warned the audience not to ignore the science about marijuana. He insisted marijuana is addictive and like any addiction must be treated as a disease.

LEGALIZATION

Last month's consultation was the first held by the Regional Commission on Marijuana, chaired by

Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, dean of the Faculty of Law at the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies, on the use of the drug for medicinal purposes. Last year, Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders agreed on the composition of the commission to examine marijuana legalization throughout the 15-member regional bloc.

Bahamas Prime Minister Perry Christie said then

that leaders had expected the commission to “look into the economic, health and legal issues surrounding the use of marijuana and to consult with stakeholders to get a view on the issue.”

The marijuana legalization debate has been on the Caribbean's agenda for more than a year. In Feb. 2015, Jamaica's Parliament agreed

to decriminalize small amounts of marijuana and establish a licensing agency to regulate a lawful medicinal marijuana industry. The legislation allows for residents can carry up to two ounces of marijuana, without it being on their criminal record, growing up to five plants where permitted.

A statement posted on the CARICOM Secretariat website noted that the main issue underpinning marijuana liberalization surrounds its classification as a drug. It said the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances, to which many - if not all - Caribbean countries are party and model their local danger-

ous drugs legislation, contains four schedules of controlled substances, ranging from most restrictive to the least restrictive.

“Marijuana is currently placed in Schedule II. This means that it is classified as a dangerous drug for which possession of any quantity becomes an offence. It is as a result of this classification that the other issues that fuel the currently marijuana debate stem.

“The main being the burden on the legal and judicial systems, arising from possession of small quantities of marijuana and the lack of its availability and accessibility for

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8A)

T&T sprinter Thompson races to catch Olympic medal form

GORDON WILLIAMS

ATLANTA, Georgia – Usain Bolt and Richard Thompson. It seems so long ago now that the two Caribbean sprinters were mentioned in the same breath, despite having so much in common in their sporting careers.

Bolt and Thompson shared the medal podium and headlines at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China. There, the Jamaican stunned everyone by shattering the 100 meters world record to take gold as the Trinidadian, who led for a good chunk of that race, and briefly entertained thoughts of winning, finished with silver.

But whatever dreams linked Thompson to a heated rivalry with Bolt in coming years became more like fleeting fantasy, a lightning strike similar to the sudden “whoosh, like a bus!” he described when the big

Jamaican rushed by him in Beijing. Bolt has since ascended to legendary status in track, collecting an impressive haul of gold medals in the sport's top competitions, breaking more world records in the process. By his own admission Thompson, T&T's national record holder in the 100 meters with 9.82 seconds, has been a flop, “embarrassed” by performances in years following '08, especially the past three.

“I'm always a fighter and I'm always very real about my performances. I'm not one to hide about where I am and how I've performed,” he admitted after winning the 100 meters title at the low key Atlanta Georgia Relays here.

“I know I haven't performed up to standard given expectations of what I did in 2008. Having come out of college and straight into my professional ranks and getting a silver medal behind Bolt, I

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8A)



- Photograph by Gordon Williams
Thompson says he's back on track.

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WEED TALK: Caribbean debates marijuana as 'holy herb' or illegal drug

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

medical, recreational and research purposes," the CARICOM Secretariat stated, noting that while there is scientific evidence that supports the medical benefits of cannabinoids, there is also evidence that confirms the adverse effects a psychotropic or mind-altering constituent found in the plant.

"In considering re-classification, the salient issue to be determined is therefore whether the benefits to be derived from removal of current restrictions will outweigh possible harms of increased use."

OBJECTIVE

The CARICOM Secretariat said the objective of the commission will be to conduct a rigorous enquiry into the social, economic, health and legal issues surrounding marijuana use in the Caribbean and to determine whether there should be a change in the current drug classification of marijuana thereby making the drug more accessible for all types of usage. The commission will also recommend if there is to be a re-classification, the legal

and administrative conditions that shall apply.

Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Colin Williams raised the economic value of the plant during the debate. He noted, for example, marijuana costs much more in neighboring countries like Barbados than in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), saying "the question is, who it is that reaps the benefits of this commodity. Quite apart from the sentimental value ... This is an economic crop. Who reaps the benefit?"

He said he believes people might be willing to pay big high prices for licenses to cultivate marijuana and that small farmers are not likely to be among those seeking to obtain the licenses.

"So, I am just saying we need to be looking at the overall financials and the economics and all that," Williams added.

Many speakers at the consultation agreed that SVG has established itself as one of the largest producers of marijuana in the region and is also renowned for the quality of its product. Longstanding activist for marijuana liberalization

Junior "Spirit" Cottle said it is important that the interest of marijuana farmers be taken into consideration. He said any discussion about changing marijuana laws must look seriously at decriminalization for medicinal use and a sacrament for Rastafarians. Cottle said he believes that changes to marijuana laws across the region would contribute to a reduction of crime and violence associated with the trade.

Many speakers at the consultation said marijuana laws have made criminals of many young people. Attorney, Joseph Delves, told the consultation that he has appeared in court representing people on drug-related charges and views the marijuana laws as "very unjust and hypocritical." He said most of the debate in SVG on marijuana centers on the plant as having a negative impact on health.

FLAW

Delves, a former sports administrator, said that that argument has a serious flaw and posited that one cannot legislate issues relating to people's personal choices about their health.

"As far as I see, this is a health issue and that is how it should be framed," he said. "But the point I want to make is this: there are lot and lots of substances that people put into their bodies on a regular basis - alcohol, cigarettes - we don't even consider if they are harmful."

Delves said two of the most harmful substances human consume daily are sugar and salt. He explained that amputation as a result of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes is widespread here, but no one would consider making sugar and salt illegal or, worst, making criminals of persons who consume sugar and salt.

Jack said it would be difficult for any pharmaceutical company to register marijuana as a drug, claiming it would be difficult to standardize and that no ethical body would legalize a product that is going to be smoked since smoking is harmful.

"It is not going to clear any registration body," Jack said, adding that he was not disputing that marijuana has health benefits.

He, however, said the research has to be on-going, as

with any drug, adding that when a drug is registered, monitoring continues for decades to see if any adverse effects have been missed and sometimes, some drugs are discontinued. Jack said doctors are bound by ethics to prescribe the most effective drug available. He said there are questions about whether marijuana is the most effective drug available to treat certain illnesses, noting that if marijuana is exposed to heat and the elements, it loses its strength, hence, as a drug, it would be difficult to register.

Jack also rebutted the argument about marijuana's origin in the Caribbean, explaining that the region was one of the last to know about marijuana. Asia was growing marijuana since the Third Century, he said, noting that marijuana came to Jamaica in the 1930s and to SVG in the 1960s.

- Edited from CMC.



T&T sprinter Thompson races to catch Olympic medal form

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7A)

think everyone expected to see a lot more consistent performances out of me, which I haven't delivered."

MOTIVATION

Still, Thompson finds inspiration in his shortcomings.

"I'm not daunted by it," he explained. "I'm not discouraged by it. As a matter of fact I'm the opposite. I'm encouraged by the fact that I haven't lived up to those expectations. I'm working even harder and even smarter to deliver on what everyone expects of me and, most importantly, what I expect from myself."

Not even the Trinidadian would hint he could have beaten Bolt at his best. But Thompson is eager to underline that, had it not been for a series of setbacks, especially a hip injury three years ago, the effects of which linger agonizingly today, the conversation over the hierarchy of the world's greatest sprinters would have been decidedly different.

"If you look at my results from 2013 you will see what a rough year it was for me," explained Thompson, who ran a personal best 100 meters in June 2014. "I rehabbed it, but now we have a recurrence of it."

A repeat of '08 glory



- Photograph by Gordon Williams

Thompson stretches post-race.

seems farfetched ... for now. The man nicknamed "Torpedo" is much different from eight years ago. He's switched coaches and locations and is now being trained by compatriot Ato Bolden, a former global sprint star, in Florida. Progress has been measured. While the likes of Bolt and American Justin Gatlin were off to lucrative European meets in May, for example, Thompson battled broiling sun and comparatively mild competition here.

Still, he appeared equally grateful and happy after winning here while staying clear of injury aggravation. The clocked stopped for Thompson at 10.08 seconds - lukewarm, especially when the world's best have been timed sub-10 seconds this season. But he saw the race as a good sign ahead of T&T's national trials and a shot to make his national team to the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil late August.

"It's not ideal," Thompson said of the result here, "but we all know that no medals are won in May and medals are won in August. So,

obviously it's a (tough) task with the top names being under 10 seconds already.

"... If it's meant to be that I'm a medalist in Rio, then that would be fantastic," he added. "But one thing you can guarantee from me is that I'll always be putting my best foot forward and I just always intend to give my best."

INSPIRATION

But Thompson is halfway there. He won the 100 meters at the T&T trials last month in

9.97, running, ironically for the "Rebirth" club. He was also second in the 200 meters.

Thompson grabs added inspiration from several quarters. He's impressed with the rise of the Caribbean, led by Jamaica's accomplishments, as a global sprint powerhouse. He's also admires St. Kitts and Nevis's Kim Collins, a former world champion, who at 40 still competes with the world's best.

"It goes to show that the only barrier really is mental," said Thompson, who turned 31 on June 7. "You know a lot of people put an age limit in terms of your performances ... But if you're smart about the way you rehab and the way you prepare, adjusting your training session, and so forth, I think it can be done, to run as fast as Kim is running at his age."

"... As long as the Lord blesses me to be able to do it, I'll do it, you know. If I honestly believe that I get up and doing everything I'm supposed to and not seeing the results, then I'll pass the baton on to somebody else," he added.

"But, as it stands right now, I see myself having a bright future. I've got a good next few years ahead of me and I'm just gonna approach it with a positive mindset."



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Homegrown hate in Orlando

In the days since June 12, 2016, a lot has been said of the horrific mass shooting at the Pulse Night Club in Orlando, Florida. Just hours after the shooting, at least two United States Congress members jumped on television to report, before any FBI announcement, that the perpetrator who “shot up” the gay night club was a Muslim man who had pledged allegiance to ISIS/ISIL.

What has not been as widely reported is the fact that the perpetrator was an American who may have had gay tendencies

and who targeted, killed and injured dozens of immigrants from the Caribbean and Latin America who were gathered at “Latin Night” in this known gay club. That has been quickly brushed aside in favor of the fear mongering tactic – laying the blame on terrorists who are Muslims and ISIS and on immigrants who come to America but somehow hate it.

But Omar Mateen was born in New York City, making him a born American – not a naturalized American. His Afghanistan-born father, the immigrant who moved to America years ago, did not shoot or harm anyone; his American-born son who had actually been a patron of the Pulse Night Club did!

We still don’t know why – as the FBI continues to piece together clues from the life of this American man while interviewing his wife. But what we do know is that he decided to spend thousands of dollars to easily obtain a Sig Sauer MCX semi-automatic assault-style rifle and a pistol and kill immigrants gathered at an entertainment venue in the wee hours of a Sunday morning, to simple party and destress from a week of toil. He decided to



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

kill brown and black people gathered at this club he had been to several times. He chose to kill dozens – the majority of whom were born in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. He determined he would injure dozens of others – many of whom are both documented and undocumented, hard-working immigrants, working in service jobs to support families in the U.S. and back home while trying to achieve the American Dream.

He decided that!

REASONS

Was it because, like some say, he struggled with gay feelings and in self-hate decided to kill and injure patrons at this gay club? Or was it that he was driven by ISIS’s intolerance for homosexuality and the conservative American prejudice he has heard about all his life while growing up in America that he saw the need to target this club? Or was he, like one survivor claimed, simply exacting revenge for America’s bombing of the Islamic state?

We may never know the reason or reasons why; or whether Mateen simply latched on to the machismo of terror and ISIS on June 12th in an attempt to mask his own confusion of gender identity.

But just as expected, right wing nuts, led by their Nut-in-Chief Donald Trump, ignored the facts again and went straight to scapegoating immigrants; the entire Muslim religion and of course U.S. President Barack Obama! And here we are wondering where Mateen learned all that hate that flowed from his heart down to the fingers he used to massacre 49 immigrants and injure 53 others.

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



Does absence make the heart fonder or more fickle?

Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Who came up with that notion? It’s all relative.

If the absence is a short one, it may endure the test of time, as the anticipation of meeting again soon will quicken the pace, make the lovers yearn for each other and may even make the heart grow fonder as romantics suggest.

But there’s a cutoff point, a line of demarcation that when passed changes the entire equation. Three minutes may not seem long enough if you just met a pretty lady and building a case for romance, as you wish to spend more time with her. But those same three minutes are agonizingly long if you’re in a boxing ring and being pounded to a pulp.

It’s all relative, and so is being apart. There is a thing about being apart that often sends people into a deep depression. Just visit any airport and you’ll see the countless sad faces that droop with tears streaming down their cheeks, arms locked in a lingering embrace and sad doleful looks that would melt the heart of the toughest thug.

HURT

The promises are made to assuage the loved ones, for being apart can be a painful thing. If a young child is away from its mom for a few minutes it seems like an eternity and the crying starts. If a husband has to take a brief trip away from his new bride, she cries her eyes out. It hurts.

But it all depends on the length of the absence, and different people deal with different lengths in various ways. If it’s just a short weekend jaunt, then it’s no big thing. It’s only when the time gets longer that the equation shifts and a strain is put on the relationship. What seems longer, a week away from your lover or one day spent with an obnoxious relative?

Distance between two countries separating lovers from each other usually affects the relationship adversely. True, the parties will say, “Honey, I know it’s three years you’ll be away, but I’ll wait for you.”

Three years is a long time, but as the lyrics from the song goes, “If you can’t be with the one you love, then love the one



you’re with.” It’s a reality when it comes to prolonged absence. Ask any soldier who’s been away at war and returns to see his wife hooked up with another dude. Ask any prisoner what he comes back to after serving a lengthy sentence. Absence can be a great divider.



TONY ROBINSON

DIFFERENCE

Men seem to deal with absence differently from women, at least on the surface, for women can be as discrete as cats. When men go away they tend to promise and reassure their spouses that everything’s gonna be all right. Well, Bob Marley may have sung those words, but remember that love and seawater don’t mix.

Many men seem to take being apart to mean freedom and seize the opportunity to flash it like a cowboy. I have seen so many cases of guys marrying women shortly after they arrive in foreign lands, under the guise that it’s a business marriage. Five years and three kids later he’s still singing the same song. All caused by separation.

What’s sad is that many women back home will believe the tall tales and sit at home waiting. Separation can be a bitter elixir to swallow. Women can also use that time to their advantage too, and as soon as the man leaves the shores she’s in the arms of another. Some wait a while, then write a letter

of termination, saying that the man’s services are no longer required.

But apart from the long-term separation, there are people who use all types of absence as a license to thrill. It cuts both ways. Based on the letters to the advice columns, both men and women take advantage of being apart when they can.

All this would never happen if they weren’t apart. That’s what being apart does, it emboldens desires and diminishes guilt.

REASONS

What is it about being apart that makes people do things that they wouldn’t normally do? Is it that the idea of being far away from prying eyes makes them less fearful of being discovered?

Which beggars the question, if you were far away, say in Australia or Sweden, for a week, would you take a chance and have a fling, knowing that you’d never be discovered?

Not surprisingly, statistics show that a large percentage of people would jump at the opportunity, men and women. Many husbands and wives are harboring secrets conceived by absence that they will take to the grave.

Historical pleasures, born of being apart.

Absence does make the heart grow fonder, at times for somebody else. Is that why some couples make sure that there is never any separation in their lives? They cleave together like sticking plaster.

seido1@hotmail.com



• “Beyond development financial assistance, the area of greatest concern for Caribbean countries will be in trade in goods and services, investment and technology development and transfer with the preferen-

tial arrangements provided under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA), signed in 2000, revised in 2005 and 2010 but coming to an end in 2020” – Dr. Patrick I. Gomes, Guyanese-born secretary general of the African Caribbean and Pacific Group,



discusses the possible impact of “Brexit” on the region.

• “I repeat: this referendum will not cause same-sex marriage to become legal in The Bahamas. Marriage in The Bahamas will be legal only if it is between a man and a woman, and male and female are determined at birth” – Prime Minister Perry Christie making clear his views on the

proposed referendum to amend the constitution. A referendum was held last month. Bahamians voted to reject legislation that would have allowed greater gender equality.

• “Weed is my best friend. It is disgraceful to say anything



about marijuana ... I smoke it day and night. I drink it like tea and ah smoking it until a dead” – Percival Stapleton, who was among people who attended a national consultation on marijuana in St. Vincent last month, expresses his loyalty to the “holy herb”.

- Compiled from various sources.



VIEWPOINT



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CHANGE CHOICE: Should SVG continue to swear allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II?

DR. LAWRENCE A. JOSEPH

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada – Very recently, the Parliament of St. Vincent and the Grenadines enacted what some see as a most progressive piece of legislation.

It is the Oaths of Officials Act, which now enables officials when taking up office to swear allegiance to that country instead of to the monarch of the United Kingdom. Notwithstanding the passage of this Act, the British monarch remains the ceremonial head of state through the governor-general of that country.

An attempt by the government of Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves in 2009 to turn that country into a republic, and thus abandon the monarchical system of government, was rejected by the electorate by way of a referendum. The present action on the part of the Gonsalves government appears to be one step forward in an endeavor to break the shackles of the colonial past.

The SVG initiative has stirred up a considerable amount of interest amongst Grenadians. Some are wondering whether Grenada too could

take the cue from St. Vincent and break off from the custom of swearing an oath to her majesty and instead swear that oath to Grenada especially after 42 years of independent status. In fact, within CARICOM Jamaica, which is also a constitutional monarchy just like St. Vincent, has already taken a similar route some years before. The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Republic of Guyana and the Republic of the Commonwealth of Dominica, being republics, no longer have the British monarch as head of state.

Officials in those countries, which still remain members of the Commonwealth, swear their allegiance to their respective states.

CHANGE

It was not difficult for SVG to change course in the way they did. Their constitution does not provide the wording for how an Oath of Allegiance should be done. It merely indicates that certain officials must either swear to or affirm to the Oath of Allegiance enacted by Parliament.

Therefore there was no need for a referendum on the matter. As a consequence, Parliament enacted the Oaths

of Officials Act, which spells out the wording of the oath which states: "I do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, that I will uphold and defend the constitution and laws of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and I will conscientiously and impartially discharge my responsibilities to the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. So help me God."

On the contrary, Schedule 3 of the constitution of Grenada outlines the wording of the Oath of Allegiance which officials must swear to or affirm when taking up official duties. These officials, such as members of the House of Representatives or of the Senate, are mandated to swear to Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors, according to law.

Therefore, if any changes are to be made to the wording of the oath, then 90 days must pass after the first reading of the relevant bill in the House of Representatives before debate and passage by at least a two-thirds majority support. A simple majority support must be obtained in the Senate and two-thirds majority support must be obtained in a referendum.



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

Fortunately, provisions have been made for this to happen in the present round of constitutional review. Sections 37 and 38 of the constitution of Grenada (Caribbean Court of Justice and Other Justice Related Matters) (Amendment) Act 2016 gives Grenadians the opportunity to be able to make changes to the Oath of Allegiance. This bill is presently before the House of Representatives, together with other constitutional amendment bills at the first reading stage. It is therefore anticipated that following the processing of that bill in both Houses of Parliament, the electorate would have the opportunity to accept it or reject it when the referendum is held.

OPPORTUNITY

It is posited that having the opportunity to swear the Oath of Allegiance to our country instead of to the queen is a most significant step forward.

This is not to say that any disrespect is being shown to her majesty. She would still continue to be the ceremonial head of state, as represented by the governor-general. Grenada would still continue to remain a constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth, until such time as Grenadians express the desire to do otherwise.

Indeed, the present monarch of the U.K. has, for many years, commanded tremendous respect worldwide. However once the above-mentioned constitutional action is approved by the electorate, this would ensure that our independence is being further asserted and as a consequence our spirit of nationalism ought to be further enhanced.

Edited from CMC. Dr. Lawrence A. Joseph is an attorney and speaker of the House of Representatives in Grenada.



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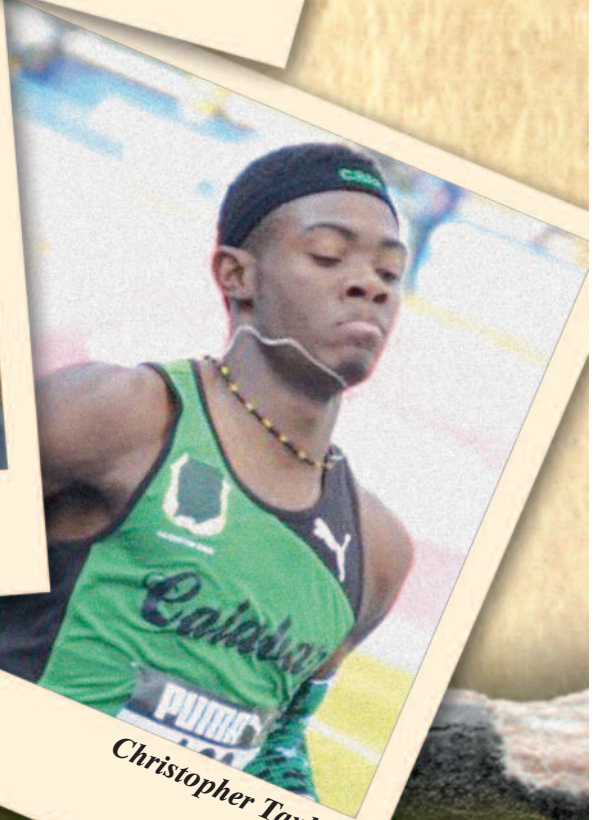
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Celebrating 54 years of Independence

Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

Congresswoman seeks presidential pardon for Marcus Garvey in U.S.



Garvey

NEW YORK – United States Congresswoman Yvette Clarke is seeking presidential pardon for Jamaican National Hero Marcus Mosiah Garvey, who was charged with U.S. mail fraud.

Clarke, the daughter of former New York Councilwoman Una Clarke, who was born in Jamaica, hopes that Garvey will be exonerated before U.S. President Barack Obama

leaves office in Jan. 2017.

In a recent address to the Jamaica diaspora here, Clarke said that two other congressmen from the Congressional Black Caucus - House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel of New York and the longest serving member of the House, Representative John Conyers of Detroit – would join her to lead the charge in ensuring ensure that Garvey received the presidential pardon and that his name is reclaimed.

IMPRISONMENT

On Jan. 12, 1922, while residing in the U.S., Garvey, founder of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), was arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and charged with mail fraud. In 1925, Garvey began serving a five-year sentence in a U.S. penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia.

After several appeals, his sentence was eventually com-

mutated by President Calvin Coolidge and he was deported to Jamaica. Observers and political and legal analysts say that while Garvey did not commit any criminal acts, “his politics were on trial.”

As a Jamaican political leader, writer, entrepreneur, orator and thinker whose philosophy supported the “Back to Africa” movement of the 1920s, Garvey advocated that members of the African diaspora return to their ancestral lands. He is remembered for his influence on black nationalism and pan-Africanism.

Over the years, several organizations and governments, including Jamaica, have lobbied the U.S. authorities to expunge Garvey’s record.

Garvey, who was born on Aug. 17, 1887, died on June 10, 1940.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaica ranks third among TripAdvisor's 'Best Islands'

Jamaica is now ranked third on TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice “World's Best Islands” list.

TripAdvisor, the travel planning and booking website, highlighted the world's top islands based on the quantity and quality of reviews and ratings for hotels, restaurants and attractions. The data was gathered over a 12-month period from destinations worldwide.

“Jamaica is both thrilled and honored to be named the number three island in the world, not to mention the number one island in the Caribbean,” Jamaica’s Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook noted in a recent press release to announce the award.

“I have no doubt that this is based on the joy that travelers feel during their trips to Jamaica. Our accommodations, culture, attractions, culinary offerings and especially our warm-hearted people, make each vacation unforgettable. Congratulations to everyone who was able to make it happen, and thank you to our visitors, who we are ready to welcome back again

and again.”

Jamaica has a large variety of accommodations for travelers looking for a vacation, including boutique hotels, all-inclusive resorts and expansive villas. Some of Jamaica’s top accommodation offerings on TripAdvisor include Geejam, The SPA Retreat Boutique Hotel, The Resort at Wilks Bay, The Caves and Jamaica Inn. Jamaica’s attractions suit vacationers who want to relax as well as those who want to explore.

The island has natural wonders, such as Dunn’s River Falls and Seven Mile Beach, to rides like Mystic Mountain’s bobsledding and zip lining experiences.

Jamaica is increasing its culinary options throughout the island. Families, couples, solo travelers and friends can enjoy meals. Some of the top restaurants on TripAdvisor include Murphy’s West End Restaurant, Devon House I-Scream and Scotchie’s, all local favorites.



Artist's 'Tar Baby versus St. Sebastian' permanently on display at N.C. museum

It’s been over 14 years since Jamaican-born artist and sculptor Michael Richards’s life was snuffed out by terrorists who

attacked the World Trade Center in New York City.

Today, a piece that appears an almost eerie fore-

telling of the artist’s death lives on at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA).

Richards’s “Tar Baby ver-

sus Saint Sebastian” 1999 has found a home in the permanent collection of the Modern and Contemporary Galleries at NCMA as a commemoration of the artist’s life and talents and a memorial, of sorts, for 9/11.

The piece represents a gold-painted airman penetrated on all sides by small airplanes, reminiscent of the arrows shot at St. Sebastian, an early Christian martyr and saint. The title of the work, with its double reference to the saint and a southern folktale of entrapment, pays tribute to the Tuskegee pilots – African Americans who made heroic contributions to World War II but had to suffer intolerance and unfairness.

MESSAGE

Richards’s piece is a body cast in resin and fiberglass, painted, and supported by steel shaft, with airplanes cast in resin and fiberglass, painted, and attached by steel bolts.

It commemorates the Tuskegee Airmen, whose heroic WWII contributions were



Tar Baby versus St. Sebastian

only recognized in the past few decades.

The piece is on loan from the estate of the artist, who during his short career frequently addressed issues of social injustice, creating sculptures that criticize oppression.

Richards’s studio was on the 92nd floor of Tower One, World Trade Center, when the 9/11 terrorist attack occurred. “Tar Baby vs. Saint Sebastian” was feared lost in the

wreckage, as it was not found in the remains of the artist’s studio or at his home. It was only revealed later to be stored in a relative’s garage outside of New York City.

Richards was born in Jamaica and earned a master’s degree at New York University. He was an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem in 1996 and showed his work there in “Passages” in 1999. He was age 37 when he died.

- Edited from News Americas.



**The Honorable
Barbara J. Jordan**
Miami-Dade County
Commissioner
DISTRICT ONE



Congratulations on 54 Years of Independence!

The residents of Miami-Dade County join all Jamaicans, locally and abroad, as they celebrate their Independence. Let us all observe this milestone as Jamaica marks its 54th year of self-governance. Let’s take a moment to rejoice and reflect on a country that has produced world renowned music composers, legendary sports figures, great literary artists, distinguished physicians, and record-breaking aviators.

Congratulations on this special day and best wishes for continued prosperity in the years to come!

Barbara J. Jordan

Barbara J. Jordan

Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

RISE AND REPRESENT: Women take bold steps into U.S. political arena



Clarke joined Obama for a trip to Jamaica and Panama in 2015.

Jamaican women have become increasingly involved in American politics. As a salute to them, **Caribbean Today** features three ladies making their mark in the United States.

U.S. Congresswoman Yvette Clarke - She was born to Jamaican parents in Brooklyn, New York. Clarke served on the N.Y. City Council, repre-

senting the 40th District in Brooklyn.

She succeeded her mother, Jamaican-born former City Council Member Dr. Una S. T. Clarke on the N.Y. City Council in 2001 to represent the 40th District. In 2007, Clarke was successful in her bid for the same 11th Congressional seat her mother had failed to win. By 2013 the

11th district was redistricted as the ninth district covering much of central Brooklyn. Democratic Rep. Clarke, 51, is a ranking member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and Technology. Last year, she accompanied Barack Obama on his first trip to Jamaica as U.S. president.

Attorney General Kamala Devi Harris - The daughter of Jamaican American Stanford University economics Professor Donald Harris and Indian breast cancer specialist Dr. Shyamala Gopalan Harris. She made history in 2010 after being elected as first female, first African American



Harris

and first Asian American attorney general in California.

Harris, 51, was re-elected in 2014 and is currently running for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Democrat Barbara Boxer in the 2016 election. Her name was mentioned as a potential nominee to replace late Justice Antonin Scalia on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Florida State Representative Hazelle P. Rogers -

Born in Jamaica, Rogers is a Democratic member of the Florida House of Representatives, representing the 95th District, which includes North Lauderdale, Lauderdale Lakes, and Lauderdale in northern Broward County.

She has served as Florida state representative since 2012. Rogers moved to New York City in 1969, where she attended New York City Community College, graduating with an associate degree in 1976. She attended Pace University in 1980, but did not graduate. In

1982, Rogers relocated to the state of Florida, where she became secretary of the Eastgate Homeowners Association.



Rogers

She was elected to the Lauderdale Lakes City Commission in 1996, where she served until she was elected to the legislature. While serving on the City Commission, Rogers graduated from the University of Phoenix with a degree in business in 2003. In 2012, when the Florida state legislative districts were redrawn, Rogers was moved into the 95th District, which included much of the territory that she had previously represented in the 80th District. She won both the primary and general elections unopposed.

- Edited from *News Americas*.



Susan K. Reid heads Morgan Stanley's diversity thrust

NEW YORK - Caribbean immigrants may have no accurate way to count themselves on United States Census forms, but when it comes to contributions to the U.S. there is no denying they are at every strata.

At American multinational financial services corporation Morgan Stanley it is no different. Leading the charge on global diversity and inclusion is none other than a Caribbean immigrant who migrated to the U.S. in 1979.

Jamaican Susan K. Reid is currently the global head of diversity and inclusion at the company, holding responsibility for firm-wide diversity and inclusion efforts that drive the hiring, retention, development and advancement of a diverse group of employees.

Reid earned a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from New York University after moving to the U.S. and then worked her way up from assistant director of student affairs and minority stu-

dent services at NYU to more than 15 years of diversity, recruiting, and human resources functions at Marsh and McLennan Cos., RR Donnelley, Bell Atlantic, to her current position.



Reid

BACKGROUND

She joined Morgan Stanley in 2008 as a human resource business partner in the Investment Management division. Today she is also a member of the firm's Multicultural Client Strategy Committee and the Morgan Stanley Foundation Board of Directors.

Her background includes experience advising senior leaders on a broad range of talent management issues including talent acquisition, talent development, compensation and diversity. She was recently pre-

sented with **The Network Journal's 25 Influential Black Women in Business Award**, which honors top women executives whose professional achievements have significantly impacted an industry or profession, and who also have made an important contribution to their community.

Reid told the Journal that she is guided by her mother's work ethic and a personal belief system that emphasizes well-being, which she defines as being physically and mentally well, fostering resilience, and maintaining strong family ties and friendships that sustain you.

"Work is important to well-being and well-being is important to work," she was quoted as saying. "You can't trade one for the other. I saw it both as a physical goal but also as a metaphor for life; life, after all, is like a marathon."

- Edited from *News Americas*.



Paediatrician earns prestigious research award

A Jamaican medical practitioner based in Toronto has received the prestigious Paediatrics Scientific Abstract Award from the American Thoracic Society (ATS) for her research in sickle cell disease.

Dr. Anya McLaren, who hails from Kingston, received the honor at the American Thoracic Society International

conference held in San Francisco, California recently, for her research on the effects of hydroxyurea on pulmonary function decline in children with sickle cell disease.



McLaren

In her research, Dr. McLaren and her team concluded that the drug hydroxyurea improves pulmonary function in children with sickle cell disease by more than a third. Some 94 research study participants, ages six to 20 years, were followed for four years. Several of their functions, including blood

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4B)

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Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

Goldson expands family chiropractic, physical therapy centers in Florida

ANDREW TAYLOR

Rome was not built in a day, and neither was the booming chiropractic legacy that is Goldson Spine Rehabilitation Center.

The chiropractic and physical therapy center is celebrating the opening of its fourth location in South Florida.

According to owner Dr. Fidel Goldson, Jr., "the most exciting part about making it happen is that we can make it happen."

That speaks volumes to the journey of growth the Goldson family has embarked on. The journey began over 20 years ago in Plantation, Florida, where Dr. Goldson's Jamaican-born father established the first practice. Fast-forward to 2016 and Dr. Goldson is opening the doors of the latest practice in Aventura, Florida - the first of the family's practices in Miami-Dade County.

Dr. Goldson describes the principles instilled by his father as "the roots" of their practice. "The willingness to work hard. To know that you can win. To know that the qualities that we have - the God-given qualities



Goldson

that we have - are just as good as anybody on this planet," he explained.

LEGACY

His family continues to carry on his father's legacy by investing in the next generation of Caribbean leaders. Kingston-native and rehab technician Tiffany Frekelton enjoys working at Goldson's Pembroke Pines office.

"It's not just actually doing the work," Frekelton said. "It's the environment that (Dr. Goldson) has there in terms of the personalities and how everybody meshes."

In addition to her, Dr. Goldson is excited about creating opportunities for additional family members and friends, including his son Taylor, a recent graduate of FAMU.

"Myself, the practice, my family ... we are very thankful for God's many blessings," said Dr. Goldson. "We are thankful for health. We are thankful for the opportunity to work with people and to help people heal. And we are very thankful for the community that supports us."

Dr. Goldson is preparing to launch his Spine Joint and Pain Cream this summer.

Andrew Taylor is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



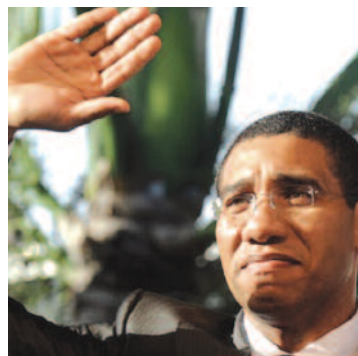
No CARICOM exit for Jamaica ~ P.M.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness says Jamaica has no intention of leaving the 15-member regional integration grouping CARICOM, even as a government-appointed CARICOM Review Commission begins its work on July 5.

"We cannot pre-empt what the commission will say, but it was never the intention to lay any groundwork or chart any path out of CARICOM," Holness said at a recent ceremony launching the Bruce Golding-chaired commission.

"This is about strengthening Jamaica's position within the regional integration process, which is absolutely important for Jamaica's economic growth and development for the next 50 years," he said.

During the budget debate in May, Holness said the commission would also review the CARICOM arrangement in light of the wider Caribbean, inclusive of the Dominican Republic and Cuba, as well as the impact of globalization. It will also assess the value of Jamaica's membership within the organization and its influence in critical international fora and assess the benefits



Holness

derived through function cooperation within the CARICOM framework.

"Our foreign policy must support our economic and development policy," he said then.

CONCERN

Golding, a former Jamaica prime minister, said that one of the areas of concern was the extent to which the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas is able to respond to changes that have taken place over the years. He said the commission would also have to consider the extent to which there are differences between the national goals of individual countries and that of CARICOM. He has promised

to move swiftly to address the successes and failures of CARICOM and how it has impacted development in Jamaica.

The commission will, among other things, evaluate the effects that Jamaica's participation in CARICOM has on its economic growth and development; analyze CARICOM's performance against the goals and objectives outlined in the revised Treaty of Chaguaramas and to identify the causes of the shortcomings; assess the value of Jamaica's membership in CARICOM on its influence in critical international fora and with third state trade and development partners; and assess whether the CARICOM dispute settlement provisions provide realistic options for settlement of disputes for Jamaica.

Apart from Golding, the other members of the Commission will come from a wide cross-section including the private sector, academia, business, finance and trade unions. It is expected to submit its report within six months.

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaican is new president of Northern Caribbean University

A Jamaican-born national and graduate of the University of the West Indies has been named president of the private liberal-arts Northern Caribbean University of Jamaica.

Lincoln Edwards, a pharmacologist and dental surgeon, was elected president of the university, Adventist Review is reporting. The Northern Caribbean University in Mandeville, Jamaica is owned and operated by the Jamaica Union Conference and the Atlantic Caribbean Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.

Edwards is currently an associate professor at the University of Texas Health

Sciences Center's School of Dentistry in the United States city of Houston. He is also an alumnus of Loma Linda University and has served as an assistant professor in the Schools of Medicine and Dentistry at Loma Linda University of California.

Edwards left Jamaica in 1993 as a lecturer in chemistry and mathematics at Northern Caribbean University to pursue a doctoral degree in pharmacology at Loma Linda University. He holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a doctor of dental surgery degree. He is a lay preacher and has served in various capacities within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Edwards also currently serves on three American Dental Association test construction committees and is secretary of the American Dental Education Association section on oral diagnosis. He will replace Trevor Gardner, who has served as president since 2012 and is retiring in late August.

"I am humbled and honored to be chosen," Edwards said. "I am excited to return to Jamaica and to serve in this capacity at NCU, which stands on the threshold of an exciting new era."

- Edited from News Americas.



Paediatrician earns prestigious research award

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3B)

count, liver, and renal functions, were measured at intervals, beginning at three months. The research found that there was significant improvement in lung function following the use of hydroxyurea.

SPECIALIST

Dr. McLaren is a pediatrician who specializes in respiratory medicine at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. The award is given to medical researchers in recognition of

exceptional contribution to paediatrics.

In accepting the award, Dr. McLaren expressed her gratitude and appreciation for the honor and for what the study will mean for the treatment of juvenile sickle cell disease in the future.

"It is tremendously meaningful for the ATS to recognize our work and I hope that this endorsement will go a long way in improving treatment of the disease for young people," she was quoted as saying.

McLaren is a graduate of St. Andrew High School for Girls in Jamaica and the University of Toronto. She is also a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians Canada. She is the daughter of Dr. Ingrid McLaren, lecturer and associate dean of the faculty of humanities and education at the University of West Indies, Mona, and Captain Louis McLaren, formerly of the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing and the Sandals Group.



Office of Commissioner Dennis C. Moss

Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners

District 9

Salute to Jamaica

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of Independence as a Sovereign Nation!!!
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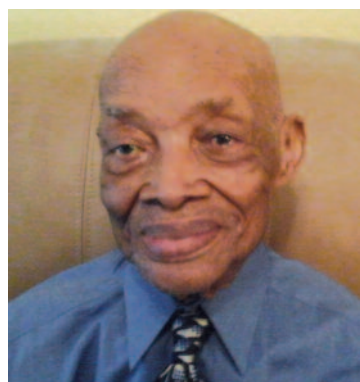
Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

100 NOT OUT: John Titus finds secret to long life in caring, staying active, sharing love

ANDREW TAYLOR

What is the secret to living a long, fulfilling life? The question has been around even before Ponce de Leon's search



Titus

for the Fountain of Youth.

It seems, however, John "Gus" Titus may have found the answer. On June 16, he celebrated his 100th birthday.

Born in Panama, Titus would earn his nickname after a mishap with documentation from his birthplace. His family relocated to the parish of

Westmoreland in Jamaica when he was a youngster and he grew up to become a cane farmer. Titus eventually landed a position as a truck driver, a job he held for almost 20 years. The job also afforded him the opportunity to work with the People's National Party (PNP), one of Jamaica's major political parties.

"I used to take them around to different meetings and to vote," he recalled recently.

That lifestyle contributed to his reputation for staying active, even to this day.

"He used to take us to the beach and do a lot of stuff with us as children," according to daughter Hyacinth.

"Hard work," said

Titus, is the key.

U.S. MOVE

The family migrated to the United States in 1960 in search of something more. Titus found fulfillment in education while working with the school board in Long Island, New York. Today he keeps his mind sharp by engaging in several hobbies, including reading and watching television.

Newscasts and game shows, such as "Jeopardy" and "The Price is Right", are among his favorites.

Titus offered one piece of advice to offer to younger generations: "Obey your parents."

Described by many as loving and generous, it was no surprise that those qualities have come back to Titus in kind. Over 150 people reportedly attended his birthday cel-

ebration, held last month at the Church of the Ascension in South Florida. Titus even received a congratulatory statement from U.S. President Barack Obama.

So, for Titus, the secret to longevity is out. Stay active, sharp and spread the love. *Andrew Taylor is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.*



Jamaica ramps up job placement in U.S., Canada



Robinson

Approximately 15,000 Jamaicans have been employed in the United States and Canada, under the Overseas Employment Program, during the fiscal year 2015-16, according to the Caribbean nation's Labor and Social Security Minister Shahine Robinson.

Robinson told legislators during her contribution to the 2016/17 Sectoral Debate last month that for this year, emphasis will be placed on strengthening, expanding and diversifying the range of job opportunities with a goal of placing 16,000 Jamaican workers in the North American market by the end of the 2017 season.

She said the Canadian authorities in 2014 restricted the entry of foreign workers into certain low-skill occupations, but noted that recent reports suggest that this situation is likely to change in the near future as Canada, in response to critical labor shortages, is contemplating relaxing some restrictions.

"The prospects and placements in the United States are also trending upwards as this market continues to rebound," Robinson said. "The growing demand for Jamaican workers in both the agricultural and hospitality sectors resulted in increases of 5.8 percent and three per cent, respectively, in 2015.

"The ministry is of the firm view that there is further scope for expansion in the United States. It is in this context that plans are afoot for me to meet with major employer groups both in the US and Canada in the coming weeks to promote the program and the quality of our

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Bringing Good Taste to Life

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B)

Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

IMF praises Jamaica's progress in economic programs, growth

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) says after several decades of low growth and ris-



ing public debt, Jamaica has made significant progress in restoring economic stability due mainly to strong policies and program ownership.

The Washington-based

financial institution said the government's reform program, supported by a four-year IMF loan approved in 2013, has been a turning point for the

"These measures will take time to bear fruit. But they can only take place in an environment of fiscal discipline and economic stability. Despite the difficult road ahead, Jamaica can rise to the challenge and seize the moment" - IMF

Jamaican economy and a case study in ownership and collaboration. It said the government took on the program to break the cycle of high debt and low growth that has

afflicted Jamaica for decades.

"Although the economic recovery continues, growth remains weak," the IMF said in a report on a survey conducted on the Caribbean island issued last month.

It said as a result the latest assessment of the Jamaican economy, it is projecting economic growth at 1.7 percent this fiscal year and that the government will therefore need to implement bold structural reforms to unleash the island's potential.

OBSTACLES

However, the IMF noted that the obstacles to Jamaica's growth and job creation are numerous and severe. It said key among them are crime, the cost and availability of credit, tax compliance costs, unreliable and expensive electricity, and a large informal economy. The large size of the public sector has also stifled private sector dynamism and places too much emphasis on government as the engine of growth and employment.

The IMF said the Andrew Holness government is working closely with it and other international partners to tackle key roadblocks to development and help expand the private sector. It said five key reform areas top the list, including increasing access to finance by increasing banking sector competition and reforming financial sector taxation; downsizing the public sector through improving efficiency and reallocating public functions back to the private sector and cutting red tape and unnecessary "gatekeeping" at all levels of government to aid the business climate and strengthen productivity and competitiveness.

It is also noting the need to implement labor market reforms that strengthen the link between pay and performance and increase labor market dynamism and reducing crime and tackling both its economic and broader social ramifications.

"These measures will take time to bear fruit," the IMF noted. "But they can only take place in an environment of fiscal discipline and economic stability. Despite the difficult road ahead, Jamaica can rise to the challenge and seize the moment."

- Edited from CMC.



JA visa exemptions coming for some countries ~ minister

KINGSTON, Jamaica – In an effort to attract more visitors from Latin America and Europe, Jamaica plans to do away with visa requirements for some countries.

Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett has listed the countries to be targeted in Latin America as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Peru. He added that Poland and some other countries in Europe will also receive visa exemptions.

"The emphasis will be on these countries," said Bartlett. "The necessary work is being done to facilitate Latin American visitors coming into Jamaica and we believe that we will be able to entice even more of them by making it easier to travel."

"Of the millions of Latin Americans that took overseas trips in 2014, we find that we should be getting a bigger piece of the pie. In terms of our geographical location and the

nature of our tourism product, we should be able to effectively compete in this market."

LION'S SHARE

Bartlett noted that the lion's share of the Latin American travelers to the Caribbean go to Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba. He said a breakdown of the numbers show that, in the case of Brazil, over 24,000 Brazilians went to Aruba, while 9,300 went to The Bahamas in 2014. Only 2,925 visited Jamaica, while over 5,000 visited Barbados.

"More than 23,000 Colombians visited Aruba versus just 4,100 who came to Jamaica, while 12,000 Argentineans went to Aruba, compared to just over 4,000 that came to Jamaica. The point is that we can do better out of Latin America and we must do better," he said.

- Edited from CMC.



IDB picks Jamaican firm

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Jamaican company is the sole Caribbean entity selected from the Caribbean and Latin America to participate in an innovation and entrepreneurship event sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) later this year.

The IDB said that "Book Fusion" is among the 12 start-up companies that will participate in the 2016 edition of Demand Solutions on Oct. 4 here.

The other companies are from Brazil, Colombia,

Guatemala and Mexico.

"These 12 ventures stood out among the more than 500 entries we received from 20 countries," said Trinidad Zaldívar, chief of the IDB's Culture, Creativity and Solidarity Affairs Division.

"They're great examples of the raw talent and potential of our region in fields such as art, education, design, animation, and many others."

- Edited from CMC.



Jamaica ramps up job placement in U.S., Canada

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B)

workers with a view to securing more jobs," she added. Meanwhile, Robinson, said she will make a submission to Jamaica's Cabinet for the mandatory use of the Labor Market Information System (LMIS) to advertise all job vacancies in the public sector.

"When all public bodies use the system at any point in time, the government will be able to know all vacancies in the public sector," she explained. "I wish to use this medium to encourage employers in the private sector to register and use the system, which is free."

Robinson noted that the Labor Ministry is moving to

position the LMIS as the national portal for labor market intelligence and information to guide decisions by the various stakeholders who access the service. She said the country's current unemployment rate, which has averaged over 13 percent in the last five years, is in part a result of skills mismatch with attendant oversupply and undersupply in certain sectors.

"The ministry is working to close these gaps through provision of germane and up-to-date labor market intelligence and career development services," she said.

- Edited from CMC.



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Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

HOT LIKE FIRE: Skotch Bonnett Band brings Caribbean spice to South Florida

ANDREW TAYLOR

The melodic croons of The Skotch Bonnett Band lit up the day at the 2016 Summer Music Festival hosted by the city of Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Led by manager and keyboardist Ray Gordon, the band delivered an eclectic performance of reggae classics, such as Bob Marley's "Three Little Birds". It even added a bit of Caribbean twist to the Adele's pop chart hit "Hello".

Employing a three-part harmony reminiscent of Beres Hammond's Harmony House Singers or Marley's I-Three backup group, Skotch Bonnett provides a refreshing yet familiar sound reggae enthusiasts can enjoy.

True to its Jamaican influences, Skotch Bonnett is made up of members reflecting the country's motto "Out of many, one people". The South Florida-based band got its start after Ryan Willis, the lead male vocalist, gathered some musicians he met while working at Kaiser University. With a diverse line-up of musicians, the group's performances can be described as a turnstile of vocal talent. The band's growing cast of vocalists makes for a layered performance, with each artiste bringing a unique sound to the mix.

The band's name is a clear ode to the scotch bonnet pepper used in Caribbean cuisine. But how does that relate to its

music?



Skotch Bonnett Band

music?

"It adds flavor into everything it goes in," explained Gordon. "You can't go wrong. Jamaican music, to me, is that thing that adds that difference worldwide. No matter where it goes."

"Jamaicans are outspo-

ken, outgoing people, and that can never change," added vocalist Adorah Bennett, who has been with the band for nearly two years. "We are very vibrant. There's just a flair about us that makes us who we are. From the way we walk, talk and carry ourselves.

"We are Caribbean-favored," said Gordon, "but diverse."

Andrew Taylor is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



Fashion statements from beach to ballroom

For fashionistas who want to explore local style while traveling, Jamaica has plenty to offer.

Thanks to a number of fashion events held annually on the island, including "StyleWeek", "Caribbean Fashion Week" and "The Collection MoDA", Jamaican fashion designers are gaining acclaim throughout the Caribbean region and the world.

Among the models representing Jamaican talent are Alicia Burke, who was featured in the May 2016 issue of Vogue Paris; Gaye McDonald, who has walked runways around the world; and Orane Barrett, who entered a global partnership with Ralph Lauren.

The Collection MoDA is an organization that promotes creative industries in the Caribbean with a series of fashion and lifestyle events held in Jamaica. From runway shows and marketplaces, to seminars and networking events, it aims to support Jamaican designers and advance the fashion business on the island. The Collection MoDA also rewards budding designers with grants to continue their work, making it an unmatched resource for aspiring designers and fashion-lovers alike.

BANG!

Jamaica is home to energetic and innovative beachwear designers. Started by Jamaican model Nell Robinson in 2013, BANG! features bold colors and sassy shapes. The line is influenced by music and each bathing suit style is named after an instrument or musical term.

For more, visit www.bangswimwear.com.

PABLO PALAIR

Word is getting out fast on Pablo Palair, a Montego Bay men's fashion designer. Working out of a room with one sewing machine, Palair meets individually with clientele. To check out his designs, visit <http://pablopalairfashion.com/>.

BRIDGET SANDALS

Fashionable, affordable and perfect for the hot Jamaican weather, Bridget Sandals are a favorite. Self-taught Jamaican designer Bridget Brown has been creating handmade leather sandals for over 20 years.

Brown's sandals come in a variety of colors and styles. Learn more at <http://www.bridget-sandals.net/>.

For more information on how to plan a fashionable getaway in Jamaica, go to www.visitjamaica.com.



Bridget Sandals – comfort and style.

JTB links up with Ziggy Marley's summer tour

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) has hopped on board the North America summer tour by Grammy-winning reggae star Ziggy Marley.

The JTB has partnered with Tuff Gong Worldwide to sponsor Marley's 2016 tour, which opened late May in California. It is scheduled to continue through mid-October.

"As the birthplace of the iconic reggae music, Jamaica is one of the world's most popular music destinations, and the island's music ambassadors possess unrivaled talents," Donnie Dawson, JTB's deputy director of tourism and sales, was quoted in a recent press release announcing the



Ziggy

tour.

"Ziggy Marley's music continues to play a significant role in spreading our culture through music. We are excited to work with Ziggy once again

and look forward to another successful partnership."

The tour will feature a sweepstake, hosted by the JTB's "Island Buzz" blog (<http://islandbuzzjamaica.com/ziggy-marley/>).

Consumers will be able to visit the blog, take a quiz on Jamaica and enter for a chance to win a trip for two to Moon Palace Jamaica Grande. As part of the collaboration, Marley "Golden Tickets" will be hidden in select cities where the band is performing.

For more information on the Marley tour and his new album, visit ziggy.marley.com.



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Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

CAPTAIN MORGAN: Reggae Boy crowned English Premier League soccer champion

GORDON WILLIAMS

CHICAGO, Illinois – Prior to the start of the 2015-2016 English Premier League (EPL) soccer season, Leicester City was on few lips as a serious contender. Less likely was that their Jamaica international Wes Morgan would captain the club to win one of the most prestigious titles in the sport.

But it happened, and Morgan not only started all 38

EPL games at the heart of Leicester's defense and captained the club, but was outstanding. He was one of four Leicester City players selected to the all-EPL first team.

Morgan, 32, with excess of 600 professional club appearances dating to 2002-2003 when he started out with Kidderminster Harriers, has also earned more than 20 caps for Jamaica. The workload for club and country, has been

more pronounced over the past two seasons. Morgan played 13 times for the Reggae Boyz in 2015. That added to roughly 60 club appearances between 2015 and 2016 so far, has made him one of the most active players in the professional game.

Morgan returned from Leicester City's victory celebrations - and a vacation - to join Jamaica's squad two days before the Boyz kicked off par-

ticipation in the Copa America Centenario staged in the United States. Fitness concerns resulted in his exclusion from the starting lineup against Venezuela here, but he entered the game in the first half and put in a solid performance, despite Jamaica's 1-0 loss.

EXPLOITS

Yet, after the game, questions still focused largely on his remarkable club exploits. They cut a wide range.

What was winning the EPL championship like? What about the overwhelming adulation that followed, the lingering personal impact and the realization Morgan was a champion?

"It was a very surreal moment and everywhere you go you were constantly reminded and congratulated for the achievement we did," he explained.

"Time to time I always think back to it and the moment, especially when lifting the trophy. It was an important time and a big, big moment in many people's lives. It was an unbelievable time and (I'm) still riding the wave."

Questions even wandered off the playing field when "Captain Morgan" used his likeness to promote the rum brand.

"Yeah, they approached me and wanted to do something to commemorate the achievement and that's what we came up with," he said smiling.

MOVING ON

Yet his core job was not far from Morgan's mind. He acknowledged the 2015-16 club season was in the past and, despite the lingering effects of that success, he came to the U.S. to participate in another prestigious compe-



Jamaica's Morgan led his club Leicester City to EPL glory.

tition. The stakes, this time, was national pride.

"It's a very big tournament, you know, but it's quite different from your normal club league teams," said Morgan, who, along with Jamaica, bowed out in the group stage. "You're playing against some of the world's best opposition, you know. The best players representing their countries and you're up against them. So, you know, it's very, very tough."

Morgan also admitted that his 2015-16 club season, which was tacked onto last summer's rigorous Copa America and CONCACAF Gold Cup campaigns, made fatigue from playing continuously a critical concern.

"Yeah, it's very tough you know," said Morgan. "I try to rest as best I can when I can and with the help from the coaches and staff and fitness coaches, we try and make sure I'm well rested and prepared for games. So it's a combination of me speaking to them and giving them feedback and they coming back and talk to me. You know, it's all about preparing for the game and that's the important thing."

But it's not all business - not all the time - for the big, burly Morgan, according to his national teammate.

"He's fun to be around," said Adrian Mariappa. "Always laughing, smiling."

Tournaments like Copa are serious, however, as professional scouts flock to it seeking talent, including the Caribbean brand. Morgan's role as a Jamaican player at a successful club helps raise the region's profile.

"Yeah. Everyone is aware that I play for Jamaica and, you know, the success I've achieved with my club definitely spills into the Jamaican team, I think," Morgan explained.

"... There's a lot of people watching. I'm sure people keep an eye on Jamaican talent."



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Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

GraceKennedy's CEO is YCPN's 'Entrepreneur of the Year'

The chief executive officer of top Caribbean company GraceKennedy Group is the first Jamaican to win the Young Caribbean Professional Network's (YCPN) award as the "International Entrepreneur of the Year".

Don Wehby recently accepted the award in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for his leadership in making GraceKennedy a major player in the global marketplace, for the company's commitment to investing in downtown Kingston (Jamaica's capital) by building a headquarters there, his company's commitment to the ISSA/GraceKennedy High School Championships, its sponsorship of the Penn Relays and its 22-year commitment to Team Jamaica Bickle.

This was "demonstrative of your leadership in the community and to our young people," YCPN noted in a statement while honoring Wehby with the award.

In accepting the award, Wehby thanked the organization for the recognition, zero-



Wehby, center, receives his award in Philadelphia.

ing in on an area of focus for the GraceKennedy Group. He noted the work of the Grace and Staff Community Development Foundation, which currently assists in sending some 500 children to school, adding that the company intends to double that number to 1,000 students by 2020.

SOLUTION

"I am confident that education is the solution to our nation's challenges and this is a main area of focus for the Grace and Staff Foundation and the YCPN has also accomplished much in this regard," Wehby said.

"In Jamaica, the private

and public sectors talk a lot about the IMF, structural adjustments, fiscal management and growth through investment. But we need to speak more about education to transform our country to a knowledge-based economy. We need to invest more in education for a knowledge-based economy to ensure that we have sustainable growth and

job creation. If we do this, Jamaicans can have a better standard of living in line with vision 2030."

Wehby commended the YCPN, which raises funds for students to attend the annual Penn Relays and also provides scholarships to students in need, on its work to enrich the lives of young people across the region and wished the organization well on its fundraising efforts and a current initiative to create global market place through the creation of a job bank.

- Edited from News Americas.



Cultural, culinary festivals heat up Jamaica's summer in 2016

Travelers think of Jamaica as a winter escape, but the island has a surprising line-up of cultural and culinary festivals during the summer months.

Jamaica recently made Virtuoso's 2016 "Hot 10" list of summer destinations (based on countries that have seen the largest growth in year-over-year bookings). The summer also offers budget-friendly accommodation.

"Some of Jamaica's best festivals and events are held during the summer months," Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism noted in a recent press release highlighting the island's attractions.

"Jamaica offers much more than just sun, sea and sand – our summer festivals give visitors the chance to sample Jamaica's culture, music and cuisine alongside locals."

The following is a list of some of the 2016 summer festivals and events in Jamaica:

Little Ochie Seafood Carnival - July 10, Manchester - This is a celebration of the wide array of culinary delights available on the south coast of the island. Little Ochie restaurant is nestled on the rugged beachfront of a quaint fishing

village called Alligator Pond. Local reggae musicians are featured along with cuisine and a non-stop party. Visit www.littleochie.com.

Reggae Sumfest – July 17-23, Montego Bay - An annual reggae festival that showcases roots, rock and reggae music from Jamaican and international performers. Visit www.reggaesumfest.com.

Dream Weekend – July 28 to Aug. 1, Negril - This event takes over Negril each year with major parties featuring a variety of DJs, artistes and celebrities. Visit www.jamaicadreamweekend.com.

MoBay Jerk Festival – July 31 to Aug. 1, Montego Bay - This food festival offers jerk cuisine at the Catherine Hall Entertainment Complex and features live gospel entertainment. Visit www.montegobayjerkfestival.com.

For more information on events in Jamaica or to book a vacation, visit www.visitjamaica.com.



Tourism ministry hospitality school

KINGSTON, Jamaica – The Ministry of Tourism has announced plans to pursue the development of a fully functional craft institute and a hospitality school.

According to Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, the institutions are crucial to enhancing training and educational opportunities for current and future workers in tourism.

Bartlett told Parliament last month that the hospitality school will train persons at all levels of the tourism sector, allowing Jamaicans to benefit from the far-reaching development of the sector. He said the government has been in discussion with stakeholders, including representatives of various tertiary institutions such as the University of Technology and the University College of the Caribbean, seeking to finalize arrangements to establish the hospitality school.

"We have long identified weaknesses in training and service delivery in the tourism sector," he said. "Consequently, interventions will be made to increase training and service excellence, improving perception, attitudes and buy-in to tourism at all levels."

- Edited from CMC.



FULL FLAVOR: Sumptuous 'mackerel run dung' in coconut milk

MINNA LA FORTUNE

The coconut has undoubtedly become one of the Caribbean's super foods. The 'super nut' found in coconut is used in Caribbean cuisines and across the world.

The coconut tree is a member of the family Arecaceae. It is the only accepted species in the genus Cocos. The term coconut can refer to the entire coconut palm, seed or fruit, which, botanically, is a drupe, not a nut.

Research studies suggest that cytokinins (e.g., kinetin and trans-zeatin) in coconut water showed significant anti-aging, anti-carcinogenic, and anti-thrombotic effects. The kernel is an excellent source of minerals, such as copper, calcium, iron, manganese, magnesium and zinc.

It is also a good source of B-complex vitamins, such as folates, riboflavin, niacin, thiamin, and pyridoxine. These vitamins are essential in the sense that body requires them from external sources to replenish. Coconut meat and water contain a good amount of potassium.

Coconut is eaten as a

snack and used to cook. It is even used in body care products in the Caribbean and across the United States. The important saturated fatty acid in the coconut is lauric acid. Lauric acid increases good cholesterol levels in the blood.

The water from coconut makes a thirst quenching drink, especially on a hot day. Its mineral content and natural sugars provides the body with an instant boost of energy and hydrates it. The milk from the coconut is used in rice and peas dishes, desserts, breads, ital stews, curry sauces and porridges in Caribbean cuisine.

RICH

In Jamaica, it is also used to make "run dung", which is salted mackerel simmered in reduced coconut milk with onions, tomatoes, scotch bonnet pepper and black pepper. The coconut milk makes it rich and flavorful.

Grated coconut is also used to add flavor and texture in desserts, breads, such as puddings, blue draws, cakes, tarts and candies.

Coconut oil has been used to cook meals of generations of Caribbean nationals. The



Mackerel Rundown

reason is because coconuts are plentiful and accessible. The oil, which is easy to make, was made in homes and sold.

Many coconut trees in the Caribbean died from diseases and "new" knowledge that coconut oil was not good for our health led to a decline in usage.

However in recent years coconut oil has become the go-to oil the world over.

One dish in which coconut milk is used is "mackerel run dung". Here is my recipe. Bon Appetite!

Ingredients

- 4 cups coconut milk
- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped

- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 whole pimento berries
- 1/2 teaspoon scotch bonnet pepper (deseeded and chopped)
- 2 pounds pickled mackerel, soaked, boiled and cut in small pieces.

Method

Bring coconut milk to a boil and allow to reduce by half.

In a separate saucepan, heat coconut oil and sauté chopped garlic, onion and tomatoes. Add black pepper, pimento berries and chopped scotch bonnet pepper.

Mix well and allow to simmer for five minutes.

Pour in the reduced coconut milk, then fold in the flaked mackerel. Stir lightly and leave to simmer for a further five minutes.

Serve with boiled banana, yam and dumplings.

Edited from News Americas. Minna LaFortune is a Caribbean caterer and president of the Society for the Advancement of the Caribbean Diaspora.



Salute to Jamaica

Celebrating 54 years of Independence

UP NEXT: Chris Taylor aims at place in nation's rich athletics legacy

GORDON WILLIAMS

ATLANTA, Georgia – Angelo Taylor used long, purposeful strides as he headed towards a tent at the Atlanta Georgia Relays here late May. The former Olympic champion from the United States was eager for information. His projected source was a wiry Jamaican with a broad grin relaxing in the shade.

As he pulled up, Taylor, now retired from competition and coaching, jokingly enquired if Christopher Taylor was related to him. Told the teenager from Calabar High School wasn't, he declared his real intention.

"I just wanted to meet this 15 year old who ran 45 seconds in the 400 meters," said the American, who won Olympic gold medals in the 400 meters hurdles and enjoyed success in the flat quarter-mile as well. "Unbelievable ... He's the 400 meters phenom."

Then he smiled and posed for a selfie with the youngster.

Angelo Taylor, who admitted tracking Christopher Taylor's progress online, especially his exploits at the Boys and Girls Championships in Jamaica, is like many avid track and field watchers thirsty for knowledge. His teenaged namesake can't shake the scrutiny. People came to the Atlanta meet just to see him run, especially after huge



- Photograph by Gordon Williams
American Angelo Taylor, left, gets to meet Christopher Taylor in Atlanta.

posters promoting the event featured his photograph. Yet he doesn't appear overwhelmed and is keen to let the future patiently play out.

"Firstly, I'm really surprised with the accomplishments that I've made because (I'm) the first 15-year-old to have run 45.27 (in the 400 meters)," he admitted. "That's unbelievable."

"So I'm pretty comfortable with where I am at right now. I'm not pushing it too

much because they say the sky is the limit and everything takes a little time."

That 45.27 was clocked last year, when he won gold at the World Youth Championships in Colombia. It's the fastest ever for the distance by a 15-year-old and just outside the world record of 45.14 for that championship set by American Obea Moore some 20 years ago. Taylor also won the event in Class II at Jamaica's "Champs" in 2015.

This year, at 16, Taylor shattered the Class II Champs records with 46.33 in the 400 and 20.80 in the 200 meters. He also anchored Calabar to victory in the 4x400 open relay, running a brilliant leg that toppled Kingston College's Akeem Bloomfield, the Class I record holder in the 400 who last year became the only Jamaican high school athlete to run below 45 seconds in the event.

It wasn't that Bloomfield was off form. He ran a stunning 44.5 seconds to close for his team. Taylor,

however, showed maturity in executing his leg which would make athletes twice his age envious. In a race which will go down as one of the most exciting ever at Champs, Taylor received the baton about 12 meters in front of Bloomfield. The big striding K.C. runner blew by him on the back-stretch, but Taylor rallied, reeling in Bloomfield then sweeping by him. He clocked 45.3.

MORE

Taylor wasn't done for the season. He won the 400 at the 2016 Carifta Games and also anchored Jamaica's winning 4x400 team. He easily won here and reached the final in the event at this month's Jamaica's Senior National Championships.

Yet, despite calls in some quarters for him to step up full time to senior competition, Taylor is targeting another global challenge more in line with his age.

"The main focus I'm going after in 2016 is to try and go to World Juniors," said Taylor. "It don't matter what place I come in the 400, I just want a medal

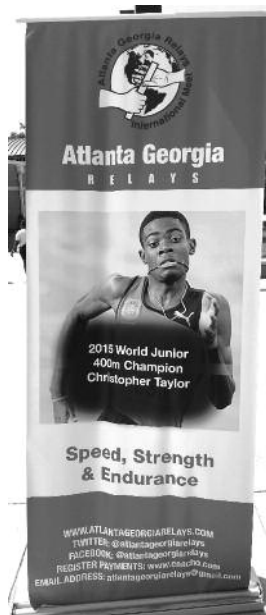
and even in the 4x400 also."

His exploits have track watchers salivating, especially those from Jamaica who believe the country is bathing in a purple patch of young 400 meter runners. He and Bloomfield are just two of several, including former high school teammate current national champion Javon Francis and current national record holder Rusheen McDonald. Not since the hey-day of Olympic champions such as George Rhoden and Calabar alumni Herb McKenley and Arthur Wint, has Jamaica's young quarter-mile talent been viewed with such optimism. Taylor understands Jamaica's legacy and is unafraid to accept the challenge of expanding it.

"Well, for sure," he explained. "I'm just following the footsteps, because, as you know they've passed it down, from Herb McKenley and coming down to the other guys now, like Javon Francis. So, when he hands it down to us we will just take that legacy and keep on making Jamaica a place for good quarter-milers."

Angelo Taylor doesn't doubt his namesake.

"He's got a big heart man," he said. "... He's still what, 16? So he's got a little time to go."



- Photograph by Gordon Williams
Taylor is becoming a poster boy for Jamaica's track.

Ricky Wade reaps success in restaurant business

ANDREW TAYLOR

If you have eaten at a McDonald's in Palm Beach County, chances are you probably dined at one of Ricky Wade's restaurants.

As the owner of 25 McDonald's franchises, Jamaican-born Wade is a testament of Caribbean success

and he does not hesitate to attribute his accomplishments to his heritage and upbringing.

After departing for the United States in the 1980s, Wade found himself in transition from being a member of the majority population to suddenly existing as a minority. Recalling that time of his life, he credited his unwavering confidence to his Caribbean culture.

"One of the things I liked about being Jamaican is that when I came here I never once felt ... that I would not be able to do something because of my color as a black man," Wade explained. "I felt that being Caribbean gave me the vision or the view to look at the landscape differently. That's my Jamaican upbringing."

VALUES

That Caribbean culture is accentuated by the values instilled in him by his mother, who Wade proudly describes as "a true Jamaican." She

bestowed on him a wise piece of advice: "It's not what you know or who you know, but who knows you."

Although he has found success as a franchisee, Wade is particularly proud of philanthropic work he does outside the restaurant business.

"It's one thing to be successful," he said. "There's another thing to showing your success by truly giving back to the community."

In addition to being the vice president of The Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida, he also serves on several boards and chambers.

"As long as I'm doing good, I'm feeling good," Wade said.

As for the future, Wade said: "The sky's the limit. I'm not about just being a person. To me it's about a legacy."

Andrew Taylor is a freelance writer for Caribbean Today.



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Salute to Jamaica

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Reggae Sumfest' set for July 17-23 in Montego Bay

Reggae and dancehall music will again be the highlight of "Reggae Sumfest" **July 17-23** in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

The festival often dubbed the "Greatest Reggae Show On Earth" will make its 24th appearance featuring parties and live performances. In addition, organizers said Sumfest will also introduce live virtual reality streaming for the public to experience the festival on mobile phones via www.reggaesumfest.com.

"Every year Reggae Sumfest attracts travelers and reggae fans from around the world," Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism, was quoted as saying in a press release to promote the event.

"Reggae music is an important part of our culture ... Reggae music has been



Beenie Man is among the headliners.

embraced globally and there's no better place to feast on the genre than in its birthplace, Jamaica."

The event is scheduled to

kick off on July 17 with a "Sumfest Beach Party" at the Aqua Sol Theme Park, followed by the "All-White Party" on July 19. The festival will have two concert nights and introduce "Sound Explosion" on July 21 at Pier 1, featuring sound systems.

Beenie Man, Assassin, Spice, Popcaan and I'Octane are scheduled to headline "Dancehall Night" on July 22 at Catherine Hall. The festival will end on July 23 with "Reggae Night", featuring performances by Barrington

Levy, Sanchez, Busy Signal and Tarrus Riley.



Thanksgiving service to mark Independence

In recognition of Jamaica's 54th anniversary of Independence, the Consulate General of Jamaica in Miami will hold the annual Service of Thanksgiving on at **4 p.m. July 31** at the Cooper City Church of God, 9191 Stirling Rd., Cooper City, Florida.

This year's sermon will be delivered by the Reverend Dr. Richard Ledgister, senior pastor of the Sierra Norwood Calvary Baptist Church in

Miami, Florida. The officiating clergy will be Pastor Dr. Clyde Bailey of the Cooper City Church of God.

The service will feature several performances, including the South Florida Caribbean Chorale, Tallawah Mento Band, Jamaica Folk Revue and the Sierra Norwood Youth Voice Ensemble.



JTB woos couples for wedding prize trip

The Jamaica Tourist Board has teamed up with **MarryCaribbean.com** and several sponsors to create the opportunity for a lucky couple to win the wedding of their dreams in Ocho Rios Jamaica, known as one of the most romantic destinations in the world.

To enter to win, couples must explain why Jamaica is the perfect destination for their wedding via video and upload to the MarryCaribbean.com Face book page. Couples can also enter by sending a paragraph of 50 words or less, along with photographs about why they deserve to go to Jamaica

to GlobalBridalGroup@gmail.com.

Deadline for receiving entries is July 18. Official contest rules can be found at <http://marrycaribbean.com/win-your-dream-wedding-in-jamaica/>.

The winning submission will be chosen by a panel of judges. The couple that uploads the best video or photos onto the page, will win the grand prize, which includes roundtrip airfare from the mainland United States, hotel accommodation, wedding ceremony at Moon Palace Jamaica Grande, wedding gown and tuxedo and entertainment.



Be 'All You Can' on a Jamaican vacation

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) has launched a new digital advertising campaign, titled "All You Can", in the United States market.

The campaign is aimed at boosting summer visitor arrivals to the Caribbean island. It highlights activities visitors can in Jamaica.

Jamaica recently made Virtuoso's 2016 "Hot 10" list of summer destinations. The list is based on countries

which have seen the largest growth in year-over-year bookings. Summer on the island is offering budget-friendly accommodation, but the following are among events planned to attract visitors:

Reggae Sumfest, Montego Bay, July 17-23 – The festival showcases talents in roots, rock and reggae music from both Jamaican and international performers.

Dream Weekend, Negril, July 28-Aug. 1 – This event offers parties featuring DJs, artistes and celebrities.

MoBay Jerk Festival, Montego Bay, July 31-Aug. 1 - This festival offers an opportunity for Jamaicans and visitors to enjoy jerk cuisine. It will be held at the Catherine Hall Entertainment Complex and feature live gospel entertainment.



BUILDING OUR LEGACY



Millennials of Jamaican descent - first and second generation - pose with Jamaican officials at the recent Diaspora Summit and Gala in Orlando, Florida. Among those who in attendance were, front row from left, Jamaica Diaspora Advisory Board Member for the Southern United States Wayne C. Golding, Sr. and Ambassador Sharon Saunders, director of Diaspora Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Kingston. From right are Jamaica's Consul General Franz Hall and Senator Kamina Johnson Smith, the keynote speaker.

Youth participants expressed their desire to be actively engaged in matters of interest in Jamaica's national development through diaspora activities. The two-day event, titled "Providing A Roadmap To Power And Influence – Recognizing Our Achievement In Diaspora ... Building On Our Legacy", was convened by Golding. It included a symposium, which reviewed protocols and mechanisms for improved partnership

between Jamaica and the diaspora.

More than 100 participated in the summit, which also included Jamaican nationals and friends of the diaspora representing the media, leaders from public and private sectors, faith-based groups, alumni and community associations. The Consulate General of Jamaica in Miami partnered with several agencies, including the Registrar General Department (RGD) and the National Land Agency (NLA), to provide assistance in consular services, passport and citizenship applications, returning residents, land/title information and birth/marriage/death registration information. Several nationals were honored at the gala for their outstanding contributions to Jamaica's development and their communities in the diaspora through professional and volunteer roles.

a culture so rich you can taste it



Some believe that Jamaica's national bird, the Doctor Bird, got its name because its long tail feathers resemble the formal tailcoats island doctors once wore. Others believe it has healing powers. But everyone agrees that it holds a very special place in this Caribbean country's history and heart.



Jamaica Celebrates 54 Years of Independence
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Both the Doctor Bird and the flowers are made from favorite island foods. The Doctor Bird: Peppers, Avocado, Coffee Beans, Coconut, Aloe, Bok Choy, Taro Root, Plantains, Okra, Green Onion and Bananas. Flowers: Eggplant Slices, Banana Bunches, Mint Leaves and Stems.

Rihanna, Nicki Minaj win BET Awards, but fail to show for event



Nicki Minaj



Rihanna

LOS ANGELES, California – Caribbean-born entertainers Rihanna and Nicki Minaj were among the winners at last month's BET Awards although both were no shows for the event held here.

Barbados star-turned-entrepreneur Rihanna won for

"Best Collaboration" for the song "Work", performed with Drake. The singer did not attend the show because she was on the overseas leg of her Anti World Tour in the United Kingdom.

Trinidadian Minaj won the title of "Best Female Hip-

Hop Artist", beating rappers Lil Kim, Missy Elliott and Remy Ma. Minaj wasn't present to accept the award, but "The Pinkprint" album creator appeared to be interested in the outcome. She posted on Twitter after the show was over, "Did I win, u guys?"

The last woman to win the BET Award for Best

Female Hip-Hop Artist besides Minaj was M.I.A. in 2009. Elliott is the only other multiple winner in the category, with five victories - 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2008.

The 2016 BET Awards was held at the Microsoft Theater. It included a politically charged celebration of black entertainment and trib-

utes to the late entertainer Prince with performances from Beyonce, rapper Kendrick Lamar, Usher, Erykah Badu, The Roots, Bilal, Stevie Wonder and Tori Kelly, Jennifer Hudson, Maxwell, Janelle Monáe and Shelia E.



Beres Hammond for July 23 show in Fort Lauderdale

Legendary Jamaican balladeer Beres Hammond is scheduled to perform in South Florida this month.

Known in some quarters as the "Otis Redding of Reggae" for his soulful vibe and smoky-sweet, bourbon-on-the-rocks vocals, Hammond returns to the Au-Rene Theater at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts on July 23. Showtime is 7:30 p.m.

Considered by many to be Jamaica's greatest practicing singer-songwriter, Hammond received Grammy Award nominations for "Music is Life" and "One Love, One Life" albums. Among his many hit singles are "Tempted to Touch", "Double Trouble", "Putting Up Resistance" and "Not Over Until It's Done".

With what he estimates to be 25 albums to his name, Hammond was awarded the



Hammond

Order of Jamaica for his contribution to the nation's music industry.

Hammond grew up listening to his father's collection of American soul legends Sam Cooke, Marvin Gaye and Redding. Born in Jamaica's garden parish St. Mary, he made regular trips to the downtown record shops in Kingston and points to the musical influences of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12A)

American rapper 50 Cent arrested in St. Kitts for 'indecent language'

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts and Nevis — American Rapper 50 Cent and a member of his entourage were detained in St. Kitts and Nevis for using "indecent language" during a performance at a music festival, local police said last month.

A police statement said 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, and a member of his entourage named Bajar Walter were arrested and charged after a



50 Cent

performance.

The rapper's representative Amanda Ruisi said in a statement that Jackson initially had been booked only to host the St. Kitts Music Festival. But then, festival organizers insisted he also perform and "there were profanities used during his performance," said Ruisi.

VOW

She said Jackson will make sure to leave the profanity in the United States during his next trip to the Caribbean country. Jackson paid a fine

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12A)

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CASHING IN: Musical about Nevisian-born 'Hamilton' puts up big numbers in New York

It's been 212 years since America's greatest immigrant, Nevisian-born Alexander Hamilton, was buried at the Trinity Church yard in Manhattan, New York. But one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, founder of the nation's financial system, the Federalist Party, the world's first voter-based political party, and founder of the U.S. Coast Guard and **The New York Post** newspaper, continues to reign supreme, raking in money for a show created to tell his story by a son of Caribbean-roots – Lin Miranda.

According to the Fast Company analysis, the following is how the Broadway hit show "Hamilton", which tells the story of Hamilton's life, is



Music director Alex Lacamoire, actor, composer Lin-Manuel Miranda and cast of "Hamilton" celebrate on stage during the show's performance at the 58th Grammy Awards in New York City.

doing by the numbers:

The show has grossed some \$60 million from ticket sales.

It sold \$32 million in advance tickets before it even hit Broadway in Aug. 2015.

A ticket to the musical

costs between \$65 and \$180

and it \$1,917,923 is how much the show grossed in one week ending May 29, 2016.

The cast's recorded album reached number one on the Billboard Rap Chart the week of Nov. 28, 2015 and again in

the week of April 30, 2016.

\$175,000 is the reported advance paid to Miranda to write "Hamilton". The show has won Tony and Grammy awards.

106 is the number of different jewelry designs for sale on Etsy

embossed with lyrics from the show.

\$50 is the price of a ticket

for one of two "Hamilton's New York" walking tours in Hamilton Heights.

The total plays of the "Hamilton" soundtrack on Spotify has passed 148,324,872.

The total number of views for the "Hamilton" musical on Youtube has past 4.3 million.

24 is the number of weeks Chernow's 2004 bio on Hamilton, on which the show is based, has spent on the New York Times best seller list since the show began running on Broadway.

- Edited from *News Americas*.



Caribbean stars lined up for 'DMV Summer Fest'

Some of the biggest names in Caribbean entertainment, including reggae/dancehall and soca, will be on stage at this month's "DMV Summer Fest, Concert & Food Festival" in Baltimore, Maryland.

The family-oriented event, to be held on, **July 17** at the Lake Clifton Park, will feature Caribbean music, food and culture. Gates open at 1 p.m. The show will end at 9 p.m.

Among the scheduled performers are Demarco, I-Octane, Mr. Vegas, Rupee, Skinny Banton, Half Pint and Destra.

The DMV Summer Fest, Concert & Food Festival

intends to provide a platform that unites cultures in a diverse market.

"We believe that the community wanted more events that were appealing to their likes and wants," Prezzy of PowHouse Group, organizers of the event, stated in a recent press release to promote it.

"That's why we came together. Our team represent various islands of the Caribbean and we wanted to create an event that highlighted our diversity and showcase a spectacular production."

The park is located at 2801 Harford Rd.



Beres Hammond for July 23 show in Fort Lauderdale

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11A)

Jamaican greats such as Heptones lead singer Leroy Sibbles, Ken Boothe and rock steady pioneer Alton Ellis.

After graduating from high school, Hammond joined the fusion band Zap Pow. Four years later, he went solo and released "Soul Reggae", which included the hit single

"One Step Ahead". The song held the number one spot on the Jamaican charts for three-and-a-half months and is still a fan favorite.

The Broward Center for the Performing Arts is located in the Riverwalk Arts and Entertainment District, 201 S.W. Fifth Ave.



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Haitian black rice, a rare delicacy

MINNA LA FORTUNE

One of the main reasons for the popularity of Caribbean foods is they are delicious, due to the mix of fresh aromatic herbs and spices used to marinate and cook them.

Because Caribbean foods are also so delicious, it's hard to name a favorite, but Haitian black rice is certainly among them. It is made by using black mushrooms which are native to northern Haiti.

Black mushrooms are considered a delicacy. They are not used in everyday cooking. When boiled, they release a gray-black coloring, giving this recipe and many others a distinctive aroma, flavor and color. Black rich is usually served with a meat or fish dish. Here's the recipe:

Ingredients

- 2 cups of dried black mushrooms (djon djon)
- 6 garlic cloves minced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 large onion chopped
- 2 cups long-grain rice
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 (12-ounce) frozen lima beans (or green peas)
- 1 to 2 thyme sprigs
- 1 tsp chopped Scotch bonnet pepper

Method

In a small pot, soak mush-



Haitian black rice.

rooms in four cups water overnight. Strain the mushroom water into another container for later use. Throw out the mushrooms in the strainer.

In a large pot, sauté garlic and onions on medium heat for two minutes. Add the rice and stir for three to five minutes. Add the mushroom water, salt and lima beans. Bring the water to a boil and reduce the heat, when most of the water evaporates (approximately 10 to 15 minutes).

Stir the rice and lower the flame. Add Scotch bonnet pepper and thyme. Cover the pot and steam the rice for 15 minutes until done.

Bon appetite!

Minna LaFortune is a trained Caribbean caterer and also president of the Society for the Advancement of the Caribbean Diaspora.



Caribbean cuisine approves big draw for tourists

A leading Caribbean hotelier has influenced the launch of a Caribbean Culinary Council to enhance collaboration between Caribbean and international chefs with an interest in the region.

Karolin Troubetzkoy, executive director of Anse Chastanet and Jade Mountain resorts in St. Lucia, observed that tourists increasingly rank food as a primary motivator in their travel decisions and a point of high satisfaction in

their travel experience.

"Visitors to the Caribbean are looking for unique culinary experiences and locally sourced products," said Troubetzkoy, who also serves as president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA). "Increasingly, our culinary offerings are driving destination traffic alongside established factors such as accommodation and scenery."

The council will be

charged to build on the success of the "Taste of the Caribbean" culinary showcase organized by CHTA, which was held recently in Miami and "further the development of regional culinary professionals, encourage the use of regionally sourced products, and broaden public awareness and support for Caribbean culinary offerings," Troubetzkoy added.



GOLD STANDARD 'TASTE'



Members of a culinary team from Trinidad and Tobago earned six gold medals, including the top honor of "Caribbean National Team of the Year", in the Taste of the Caribbean competition held last month in Miami, Florida. The team, which competed against chefs from 14 Caribbean nations, also earned two silver medals and was inducted into the Taste of the Caribbean Hall of Fame. T&T also earned gold medals in the following categories: Chef of the Year - Brandon Maharaj; Pastry Chef of the Year - Kimberly Jaggasar; Beef Competition - Jeremy Lovell; Seafood - Adam de Freitas; and Junior Chef - Annelca Mendoza. Clinton Ramdhan earned silver for Bartender of the Year. Jaggasar, who earned silver in the Cheesecake Competition, was also inducted in the hall of fame.

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HEALTH



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Caribbean still worries over high HIV/AIDS rate

UNITED NATIONS – The 15-member Caribbean community (CARICOM) grouping says, despite its successes in dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the region still remains second to Sub-Saharan Africa in its prevalence rate.

St. Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris, who has lead responsibility of HIV/AIDS in the grouping, told the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS, held here last month, that more than ever CARICOM member states recognize that confronting the challenges for fast-tracking the response to HIV and AIDS collectively



and in global solidarity “is our best option for ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.”

He said since the last U.N. High-Level Meeting in June 2011, the Caribbean has made great strides, demonstrated by the fact that between 2006 and 2015 the HIV prevalence rate has been halved from 2.2 percent to 1.1 percent, the estimated number of people living with HIV receiving antiretroviral therapy

has increased from under five percent to 44 percent, and deaths from AIDS-related causes declined from approximately 20,000 to 8,800.

In addition, the region also wants to be the first in the world to end mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

“These successes should not lure us into a state of complacency,” Dr. Harris explained. “The Caribbean, for all its successes, is still second to Sub-Saharan Africa in its prevalence rate.”

- Edited from CMC.



Caribbean Airlines issues yellow fever travel advisory

Based on the recent yellow fever health advisories issued by various countries, Caribbean Airlines is urging customers to ensure that they know the vaccination requirements of the country to which they are travelling.

The information can be obtained by checking with the relevant government agency/ministry of health, embassy or consulate of the country to which passengers are travelling before their travel date.

Head of Corporate Communications Dionne Ligoure, in a recent press release issued by the airline to clarify its position, stated: “To ensure an uninterrupted travel



Vaccination required for some destinations.

experience, Caribbean Airlines is recommending that all persons intending to travel, ensure that their vaccinations are up to date. Persons travelling are advised to carry their International Immunization

Card with proof” of the yellow fever and other vaccinations when travelling to:

Caribbean
Latin America
Africa, and
Asian countries

“Also, if someone’s scheduled flight is transiting a country where a particular vaccine is required for entry, although it is not their final destination, the traveller should ensure that their immunizations for the transit country is up to date,” Ligoure added.

Passengers are responsible for meeting all documentation and proof of citizenship requirements for travel.



Time for back to school immunization shots for kids

Before you know it, summer vacation will be gone and the kids will have to get ready for school again. So, it’s time for parents to start planning to get back-to-school immunizations.

The best choice is to take the kids to your family doctor to get shots. But for parents who do not – or cannot – take their children to a physician, county offices of the Florida Department of Health (DOH) are offering free immunizations over the summer.

“Vaccines have helped us wipe out diseases that used to kill our children by the thousand,” says Dr. Paula Thaqi, director of the DOH in Broward County. “Parents who want to protect their children should have them fully immunized.”

Skipping immunizations does matter. In South Florida and elsewhere in the United States, a few unvaccinated children have come down with cases of measles, chickenpox and whooping cough. Florida law says children cannot start school unless they have received all vaccinations that protect against nine contagious and potentially fatal childhood diseases. Every year, parents and school officials get headaches when children cannot be admitted on the first day of classes because of missing shots.

VULNERABLE

Back-to-school Immunizations are especially important for children entering kindergarten and seventh grade, because different requirements begin at those grade levels. Vaccinations required for school include:

Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) – Four or five doses of DTaP vaccine for babies and pre-schoolers. A booster dose, Tdap, before seventh grade.

Polio – Three to five doses of vaccine for babies and pre-schoolers.

Measles, mumps, rubella (German measles) – Two doses of MMR vaccine for babies and pre-schoolers.

Varicella (chickenpox) – Two doses of vaccine for babies and pre-schoolers. A booster dose before seventh grade.

Hepatitis B – Three doses of vaccine for babies.

Parents can also consider additional protection for the children, by giving other immunizations that are not required for school, but are recommended by federal health officials. These include

vaccines against flu (every year starting at age six months), rotavirus (three doses for babies), Haemophilus influenzae B (three to four doses for babies), pneumococcal disease (four doses for babies), hepatitis A (two doses for babies), human papilloma virus (three doses at age 11 or older) and



Prevention is better than cure.

meningococcal disease (two doses at age 11 or older).

But for back-to-school needs, DOH gives free shots provided through the federal Vaccines for Children program:

DOH-Broward – School shots at department health centers. Also, free shots from Monday, Aug. 8 through Tuesday, Aug. 23 at Lauderhill Mall, 1267 N.W. 40 Ave. Evening hours on Thursdays, family fun day/health fair on Aug. 13.

Details available at <http://broward.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/immunizations/index.html> or **954-467-4705**. At the mall, DOH-Broward will offer HPV and meningitis vaccines for adolescents.

DOH-Palm Beach – School shots at Department health centers and a mobile van. Details available at <http://palmbeach.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/immunizations/index.html> or 561-840-4568.

DOH-Miami-Dade – School shots at Department health centers and in the community. Details available at <http://miamidade.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/clinical-and-nutrition-services/immunizations/clinics/index.html> or 786-845-0550.

The above article was submitted by Bob LaMendola, Florida Department of Health in Broward County.



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SPORTS



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U.S. star backs locals to make Caribbean cricket shine in Florida

United States opening batsman Steven Taylor believes the move by Caribbean Premier League organizers to stage games for the first time in his home state of Florida will reap big dividends.

The fourth edition of the region's premier Twenty20 cricket competition bowled off last month in the region, but the Florida leg is set to be played from July 28-29 at the Central Broward Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

"As a Florida man, born and bred, I am hugely honored to be involved in this incredible departure for professional cricket in the USA," said the 22-year-old left-hander.

"There is a huge cricket audience across America who are craving for the opportunity to see some of the biggest names in world cricket, and CPL's decision to play these six games in Central Broward Stadium is huge for the sport."



Taylor

Reigning champion Trinbago Knight Riders will take on St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots the following day with the July 30-31 weekend featuring doubleheaders on both days.

Taylor, who turned out for Tridents last year, said he expected fans from across the U.S. to flock to Fort Lauderdale for the four days of cricket.

"There has been a huge take up across America, with supporters coming from as far north as New York and as far west as Texas and Los

Angeles," he said, "but it's great now for Floridians to have an outlet at the ground to buy tickets.

"Things are really building and we want to see full houses across all six matches."

- Edited from CMC.



MATCHUPS

A series of high profile match-ups will headline the Florida leg. Barbados Tridents, the 2014 CPL champion, will clash with Guyana Amazon Warriors in the opening game, in a repeat of the final from two season ago.

Pointless Haiti, Jamaica make early Copa America exit

GORDON WILLIAMS

CHICAGO, Illinois – The two Caribbean invitees to Copa America Centenario failed to impress and were booted early from the prestigious soccer tournament last month in the United States, scoring a single goal between them and failing to earn a point.

Haiti and Jamaica, which qualified for the event that featured 10 national powers from South America, a trio from Central America plus the host country, were eliminated after each lost all three games in the group stage. Both countries fell 1-0 in their opening game. Haiti lost to Peru on June 4 in Seattle, Washington. The following day here, Jamaica, riding high after defeating the world's third ranked team Chile in a friendly international just over a week before, was beaten by Venezuela. It was a match the Reggae Boyz had hoped would jump-start their Copa campaign, but were left disappointed after finishing with a player short when Rodolph Austin was sent off in the first half.

"I think we deserved at least a point," explained Jamaica's assistant coach Miguel Coley. "Tough game going down to 10 men so early ... We were looking for three points from this game."

WORSE

But it got worse. Haiti was swamped 7-1 by Brazil in Orlando, Florida on June 8. The following day Jamaica was beaten 2-0 by Mexico in California.

With elimination from the tournament assured after two losses each, Haiti and Jamaica entered their final group games playing for little more than pride. However, the French-speaking Caribbean nation was again swamped, this time 4-0 by Ecuador. Jamaica fared only slightly better, going down 3-0 to Uruguay. In six Copa America games, starting with last year's tournament in Chile, Jamaica has failed to earn a point or score a goal.

The results at Centenario once again showed that although Caribbean soccer is on the rise, getting more global recognition and placing greater number of players in professional leagues overseas, consistency at international level remains sub-standard. And the teams admitted they were not their best.

"It was not 100 percent Jamaica," head coach

Winfried Schafer told the media in summing up his team's tournament performance.

MOVING ON

Haiti and Jamaica will now turn their attention to World Cup qualifying. The two Caribbean nations are in



Giles Barnes (9) and Jamaica couldn't reach high enough at Copa.

the same group of the CONCACAF semi-final round, but after four games each Haiti, with a single point, has virtually no chance to advance to the final round of qualifiers. Jamaica, on four points, has a better opportunity to keep its World Cup qualification hopes alive, but must secure wins against Haiti and Panama. Haiti's other game is against Costa Rica.

"Now we have to find a way to win matches against Panama and Haiti in the qualification," said Schafer.

Jamaica's players understand they must shake off Copa's disappointment and focus on the bigger prize of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup. They still claim to have plenty fight left.

"Our objective, coming in September, is to continue on in this World Cup qualifying," said Devor Orgill during a press conference following the Uruguay game.

"We're not gonna give up because of what happened in the Copa America, but we're gonna use it as a stepping stone moving forward."



Fall Health

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Caribbean travelers to benefit from expansion of Mobile Passport app use in U.S.

NEW YORK – The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency says John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in New York and Newark Liberty International Airport (NLIA) in New Jersey have expanded the Mobile Passport Control (MPC) for arriving passengers from the Caribbean and other places.

On June 17, CBP said that MPC is the first authorized app to expedite a traveler's arrival into the U.S. Eligible travelers will submit their passport information and customs declaration form to CBP via a smartphone or tablet app prior to arrival. According to the CBP, Android and iPhone users can download the Mobile



Mobile Passport aims to speed up airport process.

Passport app for free from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

"CBP remains committed

to making the international arrivals experience as traveler-friendly as possible through innovation and collaboration with stakeholders while maintaining the highest security standards," said Robert E. Perez, director of field opera-

tions in New York.

COMMITMENT

With a record number of passengers traveling through the two airports, Thomas Bosco, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Aviation director, said the Port Authority is committed to enhancing its overall customer experience and investing in creative solutions to address the growing volumes of trade and travel. With 13 participating airports, CBP said Mobile Passport is helping airports enhance the travel experience as the busy summer travel season continues.

"Our terminal welcomes more than 70,000 passengers each day," said Gert-Jan de Graaff, president and chief executive officer of JFKIAT – the company which operates Terminal 4 at JFK. "Giving

these passengers the ability to submit their passport information and customs declaration prior to arrival will surely increase the efficiency of the arrival process and assist us in our mission to provide an enjoyable passenger experience for all travelers coming through Terminal 4."

Much like Automated Passport Control (APC), CBP said the app does not require pre-approval, is free to use and does not collect any new information from travelers. It said travelers opting to use the app will no longer have to complete a paper customs declaration form. As a result, CBP said travelers will experience shorter wait times, less congestion and faster processing.

- Edited from CMC.



Caribbean, U.S. seek common ground on tourism agenda

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) last month presented a paper to attendees at a Capitol Hill briefing in Washington D.C. urging the creation of a Caribbean-United States public-private sector dialogue and a framework for a Caribbean-U.S. tourism action agenda to strengthen the region's engagement with America.

Maintaining that tourism presents the Caribbean with the quickest way to create jobs, reduce public debt and stimulate new business activity, CHTA's Chief Executive Officer and Director General Frank Comito stated: "A new demand-driven public-private sector approach and resolve by the region's leadership, the United States and other major global tourism trading part-

ners is necessary for the countries throughout the region to maximize the benefits from tourism and for the United States to further benefit from a more secure, stable and prosperous Caribbean."

Organized by Caribbean-Central American Action and the Inter-American Development Bank, attendees included representatives from the U.S. Congress and the country's administration, private sector leaders, diplomatic community and representatives from Washington's multilateral institutions.

Two days prior to the briefing, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation to strengthen U.S. engagement with Caribbean countries.



Princess Cruises add to Caribbean routes from Florida

Princess Cruises will offer several Caribbean vacation packages in 2017-2018 and is scheduled to launch a new 14-day Circle Caribbean itinerary out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The itinerary will include stops in Trinidad and other Caribbean islands, in addition to a stop at the cruise line's private beach resort Princess Cays. Princess Cruises will also be returning its seven-day Caribbean routes with visits to both the eastern and western Caribbean regions on Regal

Princess, while Crown Princess will alternate eight-day eastern and southern Caribbean itineraries and five-day getaways to the eastern and western Caribbean.

Pacific Princess will also launch a 14-day "Caribbean Connoisseur" voyage with stopovers in Tobago, St. Croix, Nevis, Guadeloupe and Virgin Gorda.

"As the amount of visiting ships grow in number, so too are the variety of on-shore activities and tours available for cruise passengers on both

islands," Keith Chin, chief executive officer at the Tourism Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago, said in a recent press release announcing the itinerary.

"Cruise ship passengers disembarking on our unique islands can enjoy live local entertainment, a variety of island and community tour options, and free Wi-Fi, all in a safe and secure environment."



T&T wooing Sandals to build hotels in Tobago

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – The Trinidad and Tobago government said it had established a committee, headed by a former Finance Minister Wendell Mottley, to negotiate with the Sandals Resort International (SRI) to build two hotels in Tobago.

Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley told reporters that he is certain that Trinidad and Tobago tourism product would benefit significantly from the investment to be made by Sandals as had been the case of other Caribbean islands, like Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Barbados and St. Lucia, where the SRI has a presence.

"We have virtually by invi-

tation asked the Sandals Group to bring their label to Tobago because we are confident that a Caribbean label of international standard with worldwide acceptance which exists as a major part of the tourism thrust in The Bahamas, in Antigua, in Barbados in Jamaica, in St. Lucia and Grenada, that that label could bring significant benefits to our tourism potential in Tobago," he said.

Rowley said that Cabinet had received presentations "as to what is possible after certain site selection exercises were done."

- Edited from CMC.



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EYE ON HAITI



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~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

Big candidate slate for presidential race

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti – Over two dozen people signed up late last month to enter the race for Haiti's presidency, including the four leading candidates from an earlier election aborted after a commission found widespread fraud.

However, the number of presidential candidates will be about half those who contested the last ballot in the French speaking Caribbean community member state and fewer candidates could make the election – due on Oct. 9 – easier to organize. Several politicians in this race were in the last election, in which they pledged support for Jude Celestin, who came second then.

"This joint effort is a choice for stability and democracy, against corruption and fraudulent election,"



Celestin told reporters.

Jovenel Moise, who came first last time, again registered to run, as did Jean-Charles Moise and Maryse Narcisse who came third and fourth last time.

UNCERTAINTY

The registration of Moise removes uncertainty over whether his PHTK party would take part in the new elections. The party's position had been that irregularities in the first round were not large

enough to alter the outcome and that it would be better to hold a run-off vote between Celestin and Moise, a position supported by Washington and other donors.

"There is no question of abandoning the election process because we believe in democracy and the only way to access power in a democracy is through election," Rudy Heriveaux, a spokesman for Moise's PHTK party, said.

Haiti's last elected president left office without an elected successor, paving the way for a interim government led by President Jocelerme Privert. He failed to organize elections by May in a timeline set in a multi-party deal.

- Edited from CMC.



Privert stays interim president as Parliament fails to vote

Jocelerme Privert remained Haiti's interim president late last month after the National Assembly failed to vote on whether or not to extend his 120 days stay in office that ended on June 14.

Parliament met June 21, but the lawmakers who are divided on the issue did not put the matter to a vote, allowing for Privert to continue to head the interim government that was established after President Michel Martelly left office on Feb. 7.

The lawmakers had in February elected Privert to be a short-term head of state, pending the outcome of new presidential and legislative elections that should have ushered in a new president on June 14. Privert was due to serve as interim president for 120 days and an election scheduled for April 24, following an agreement between Haitian stakeholders to preserve institutional continuity and further the electoral process.



Privert

But the election has not taken place and is now most likely to be held on Oct. 9 and, if a candidate does not receive the necessary amount of votes to prevent a second round, then that will take place on Jan. 8, 2017 and the final election results will be published Jan. 30. The October elections would also include voting for one-third of the Senate.

- Edited from CMC.



Haiti's political crisis concerns North American leaders

ONTARIO, Canada – Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, United States President Barack Obama and Mexico President Enrique Pena Nieto have expressed concern about the political crisis in Haiti.

The leaders, while attending the North American Leaders' Summit here last month, issued a joint statement.

"Canada, the United States and Mexico are deeply preoccupied by the decision to rerun presidential elections in Haiti and will work closely on the file to ensure that this election and others take place peacefully so that all Haitians can have their voices heard, their votes respected and can



From right, Obama, Trudeau and Nieto.

United States call on Haiti to hold peaceful, transparent and credible elections without further delays so as to return Haiti to constitutional order," it added.

"Recognizing that Haitians are facing enormous economic and humanitarian challenges and that the Haitian people need to be able to rely on leaders who are elected and accountable, we underscore that the Haitian people deserve to have their voices heard through a democratically-elected President."



be governed by democratically elected leader," the statement noted.

REGRET

In the statement, the leaders also regretted the absence of a democratically elected president in Haiti since Feb. 7.

"Canada, Mexico and the

OVERDUE SALUTE: New York City Council passes resolutions for Haitian Day in U.S.

NEW YORK – The New York City Council has unanimously passed resolutions calling on New York State and the United States to recognize the contributions Haitians have made by establishing a Haitian Day.

Resolution 687, tabled by Haitian-born Council Member Dr. Mathieu Eugene, establishes Oct. 9 – which signifies the Battle of Savannah, when Haitian soldiers fought for freedom with the U.S. – annually as "New York City Haitian Day", in recognition of the historic contributions of the Haitian diaspora to the city.

The resolution also calls on the U.S. Congress and the New York State Legislature to pass – and the president of the U.S. and governor of New

York to sign – legislation to establish Oct. 9 annually as Haitian Day in recognition of the historic contributions of Haitians to the U.S.

CONTRIBUTION

"The character of New York has been shaped by so many different cultures and, since the beginning of American history, Haiti has helped shape this great nation," said Eugene, who represents the largely Caribbean 40th Council District in Brooklyn.

"My resolutions illustrate how the contributions of Haitians have made an impact



Eugene



A statue of du Sable in Chicago recognizes the Haitian founder of the city.

- Photograph by Gordon Williams

in New York City, as well as the United States," he added.

Eugene, the first Haitian to be elected to New York City Council said, notably, Haitian soldiers helped the U.S. fight for its freedom at the Battle of Savannah in 1779. He said Chicago was founded by Haitian Jean Baptiste Point du Sable; and the Louisiana Purchase, which nearly doubled the amount of land owned by the U.S., was only made possible because of the revolution in Haiti, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture.

"Haiti is a country that has always stood for freedom," said Eugene, noting that in 1804 Haiti became the first black republic to abolish slavery.



~ A CARIBBEAN TODAY SPECIAL FEATURE

REFERENDUM: Bahamians reject constitution change allowing greater gender equality

SSAU, The Bahamas – Bahamians last month voted to reject legislation that would have allowed greater gender equality.

A spokesman for the main Opposition Free National Movement (FNM) then called on Prime Minister Perry Christie to step down or face the prospect of a no-confidence vote in his administration.

Several United Nations organizations had urged support for the referendum, saying that by voting for the four bills The Bahamas would serve as a positive example to the international community “and its actions will help to encourage reform in countries worldwide which have yet to

afford their citizens equal nationality rights”.

When he launched the referendum campaign in April, Christie said amendments would not allow for same sex marriages to become legal in The Bahamas.

In a statement, the ruling People's Liberal Party (PLP) acknowledged that the “will of the Bahamian people was expressed unfettered in the historic June 7 gender equality referendum as Bahamians went to the polls and respectfully and peacefully exercised their voting franchise.

“The Bahamian people spoke loud and clear by voting no in the majority on the four referendum questions placed before them ... The govern-



Christie lost the fight.

ment respects and will abide by the will of the people pursuant to the constitution,” the PLP said in a statement.

REALITY

It reminded citizens of the statement by Christie that

“sometimes democracy may not manifest itself in the manner we would like, but it is still democracy none the less and we respect that reality.”

The PLP said the vigorous and sometimes emotive public debate for and against the constitutional changes enlightened Bahamians, “deepened our democracy and our country is more mature and better for this exercise.”

The party said the referendum was “a giant step on an ever evolving journey to a more perfect democratic Commonwealth as the fight for freedom, social justice and equality continues.

“The will of the Bahamian people was expressed unfettered in the

historic June 7 gender equality referendum as Bahamians went to the polls and respectfully and peacefully exercised their voting franchise.

Andre Rollins, shadow minister of national security, said Christie's government cannot escape blame for the outcome of this referendum exercise.

“It is unacceptable for the government to reportedly spend six million U.S. dollars on these last two failed referendum exercises without holding the prime minister and his Cabinet directly responsible and accountable for their overwhelming failures,” said Rollins.



Gov't, Opposition disagree on threat of U.S. downgrade

THE BAHAMAS – The government and the main Opposition here were at odds over a recent decision by the United States-based credit rating agency, Moody's Investors Services, that it has placed the Baa2 bond and issuer ratings of The Bahamas government on review for downgrade.

While the Perry Christie government has said it appreciates the Caribbean region is being negatively impacted by lower commodity prices, and external investment uncertainty through the loss of correspondent banks services, the main Opposition Free National Movement (FNM) insists that its policies have failed.

The government has said that while the country has “not been completely exempt from any of these phenomena” it is “confident that this review will reveal that medium term economic prospects for The Bahamas are good ...”

But FNM Leader Dr. Hubert Minnis asked “what does it take for this govern-

ment to act in the best interest of the Bahamian people and to start telling them the truth about our precarious financial situation?

“With Moody's Investors Services placing The Bahamas on review for potential further downgrade to junk status the time to act is now,” he said, noting that the time for the government's “empty rhetoric and broken promises is over.

“A further downgrade would hurt our country tremendously, adversely impacting our ability to fund capital projects in the future,” Minnis added, noting that this is not the first time that the international rating agencies have warned the government “that its reckless spending would push the country's financial situation over the proverbial fiscal cliff.”

Recently, Moody's said its decision was prompted by the continuing rise in risks to The Bahamas' medium-term economic prospects and its fiscal strength, “notwithstanding the government's ongoing fiscal consolidation program.”

- Edited from CMC.



Minnis

Rise of a nation, the story behind The Bahamas

The Bahamas, officially the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, is an archipelagic state of the Lucayan Archipelago consisting of more than 700 islands, cays and islets in the Atlantic Ocean.

It's north of Cuba and Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic); northwest of the Turks and Caicos Islands; southeast of Florida and east of the Florida Keys.

Nassau is the capital. It's located on the island of New Providence. The Bahamas territory encompasses 180,000 square miles of ocean space.

The Bahamas was the site of Christopher Columbus's first landfall in the New World in 1492, when the islands were inhabited by the Lucayan, a branch of the Arawakan-

speaking Taino people. The Spanish never colonized The Bahamas, but they shipped the natives to slavery in Hispaniola.

In 1648, English colonists from Bermuda settled on the island of Eleuthera. The Bahamas became a British Crown colony in 1718. After the American War of Independence, the Crown resettled thousands of American Loyalists in The Bahamas. They brought slaves and established plantations on land grants. Africans constituted the majority of the population from this period.

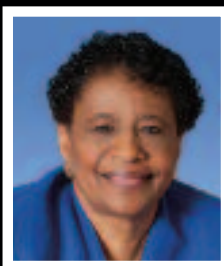
Slavery in The Bahamas was abolished in 1834. Today the descendants of slaves and free Africans make up nearly 90 percent of the population.

The Bahamas became an

Independent Commonwealth realm in 1973, retaining Queen Elizabeth II as its monarch. Bahamian Independence Day is celebrated on July 10.

The Bahamas is one of the richest countries in the Americas (following the U.S. and Canada). Its economy is based on tourism and finance.

- Edited from Wikipedia. For more information on The Bahamas, including upcoming Independence celebration events, call 1-800-224-2627 or visit www.bahamas.com or call the Consulate General of The Bahamas in Miami, Florida, 305-373-6295.



The Honorable
Barbara J. Jordan
Miami-Dade County
Commissioner
DISTRICT ONE



Celebrating 43 years of Independence

As the Bahamas observes its Independence Day, Bahamians locally and abroad will commemorate this historic occasion. The residents of Miami-Dade County join in celebrating this milestone and we all will reflect on the many contributions of Bahamian people.

Congratulations on this special day, and best wishes for prosperity in years to come!

Barbara J. Jordan

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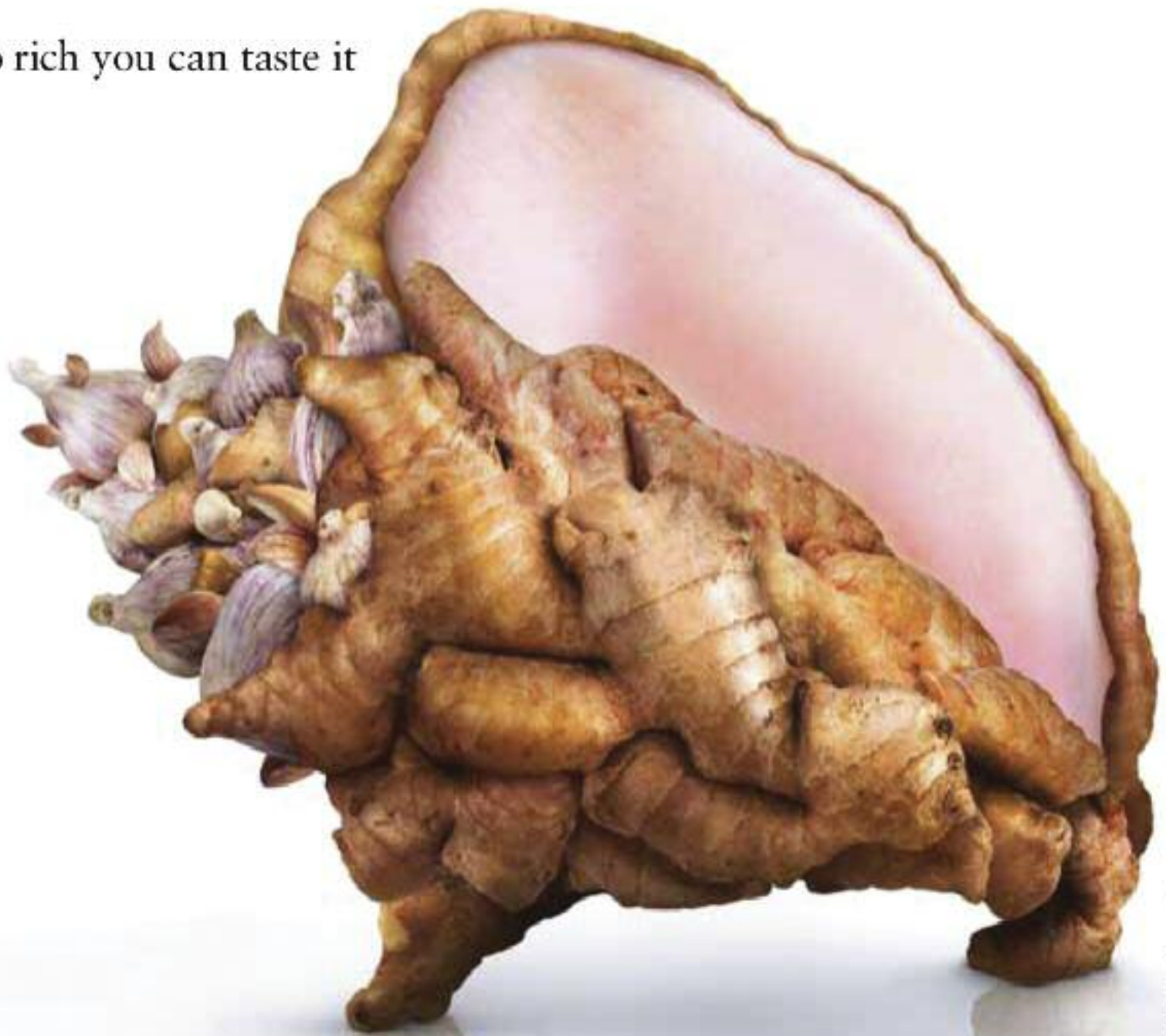
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As the unofficial reigning symbol of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, the Queen Conch is perhaps one of the most recognized Caribbean marine animals. A popular island delicacy as well as decoration, the Queen Conch has always held a special place in Bahamian cuisine and culture.



Happy Independence Day, Bahamas. 7 • 10 • 16

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