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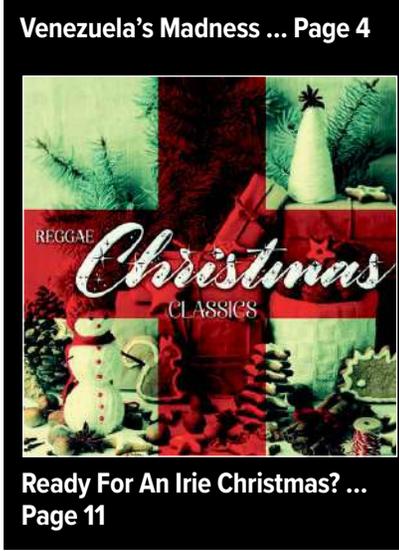


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Dr. Trisha Bailey, the Jamaican born billionaire. *(BusinessInsider.com image)*



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# REGIONAL NEWS



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## Here Are Some Of The Top Headlines Making Caribbean News This Week:

### REGIONAL

A new report is warning that several Caribbean countries including Jamaica without shoreline defenses could permanently lose five percent or more of their cities to sea-level rises by the end of the century.

“Without shoreline defenses, under a worst-case warming scenario by the end of the century, five percent or more of the following cities are projected to fall permanently below sea level, namely, Guayaquil, Ecuador, Barranquilla, Colombia, Santos, Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Kingston, Jamaica, Cotonou, Benin, Kolkata, India, Perth, Australia, Newcastle, Australia and Sydney, Australia,” said the report.

New hyper-local data released Tuesday by Human Climate Horizons, a collaboration between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Climate Impact Lab (CIL), notes that the extent of coastal flooding has increased over the past 20 years as a result of sea level rise.

It said as a result, 14 million more people worldwide now live in coastal communities with a one-in-20 annual chance of flooding with global greenhouse gas emissions (SSP2-4.5 projected by the end of the century to expand this one-in-20 floodplain to areas currently populated by nearly 73 million people.

### SURINAME

The Suriname government

has sought to clarify its position regarding the ongoing war between Israel and the terrorist group, Hamas, saying it “favors a two-state solution based on the borders proposed in 1967.”

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, adopted on November 22, 1967, was an effort to secure a just and lasting peace in the wake of the Six-Day War, fought primarily between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

The resolution included an Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the conflict, a just settlement of the refugee problem, and the termination of all claims or states of belligerency.

Speaking in the National Assembly, President Chandrikapersad “Chan” Santokhi said that a temporary ceasefire is now in place and he is hoping that a solution will be reached through peaceful means I dealing with the situation in the Gaza.

CARICOM has called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate release of all hostages and for their humane treatment at all times in compliance with international law.

### JAMAICA

The human rights group, Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ), has described as “disturbing and distressing” a video on social media showing a police officer kneeling on the chest of an 11-year-old male primary school



**US and Guyana military forces collaborated recently in Guyana as the South American CARICOM country faces a threat from neighboring Venezuela. (CMC image)**

student.

In a statement, the JFJ called on the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and Commissioner of Police, retired major general, Antony Anderson, to provide a thorough account of the encounter.

The incident is reported to have taken place after the child’s father was involved in an altercation with the police during a traffic stop.

The JFJ said the incident allegedly unfolded as the child, visibly shaken by his father’s high-stress encounter with law enforcement, reacted emotionally.

Media reports said that the student was “allegedly pepper sprayed, thrown to the ground, knelt on by an officer, and refused water to alleviate some of the pain endured due to the encounter.”

The JFJ called on the JCF to take swift and decisive action against the officers involved, ensuring they are held accountable

for their actions, saying it “emphasizes the importance of proportionate responses by law enforcement based on the specific circumstances of each situation.

It is also urging members of the public to come forward with any additional information that may aid in the investigation.

### GUYANA

Senior officials from the United States Army and the Guyana Defence Force, (GDF), recently engaged in discussions, underscoring the strength of their military partnership, according to the US Embassy.

The leadership teams from the US Army’s 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) and the GDF explored upcoming activities, including strategic planning sessions aimed at bolstering both nations’ military readiness and their ability to address security threats.

The SFAB, a specialized unit within the US Army, plays a crucial role in advising and assisting partner nations. Since 2022, it has collaborated with the GDF on numerous joint training exercises, reinforcing their tactical and operational capabilities.

SFAB advisors expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to train with the Guyana Defense Force, emphasizing their commitment to deepening this partnership in the coming weeks and months.

These discussions come at

a crucial time as Guyana faces tensions with Venezuela over the ownership of the mineral and forest-rich county of Essequibo. Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo recently announced upcoming visits by teams from the US Department of Defense, reaffirming Guyana’s commitment to maintaining peace and working with allies to address regional challenges.

### ST. KITTS

The St. Kitts-based Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) says its Monetary Council has approved the replacement of the Queen’s image on the Eastern Caribbean (EC) currency.

“The proposed replacement is an emblem which depicts the flags of ECCB member countries,” the ECCB said in a advertisement, saying “this image provides more holistic reflection of the ECCU (Eastern Caribbean Currency Union)”

The ECCB serves as the central bank for the islands of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat and Anguilla. The successor to the British West Indies dollar, it has existed since 1965.

- Compiled from CMC News



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## Jamaican-Born Billionaire Inspires With Holiday Giveaway



Dr. Trisha Bailey, the Jamaican-born billionaire.

Written by CT Staff Writer

Dr. Trisha Bailey, a Caribbean-born billionaire and the richest Jamaican-born woman, is celebrating the holiday season by giving her fans a unique opportunity. In conjunction with her inspiring book, “UNBROKEN: The Triumphant Story of a Woman’s Journey,” Bailey is hosting a contest through the National Book Club Conference, offering an all-expenses-paid trip for two to Jamaica.

This festive season, one fortunate reader will win a four-day, three-night stay in the idyllic Caribbean paradise, complete with a personal Christmas Eve phone call from Bailey herself. To participate, fans simply need to buy a copy of her motivational memoir and submit a photo with the book to Curtis Bunn, founder of the National Book Club Conference, at [bunnbooks1906@gmail.com](mailto:bunnbooks1906@gmail.com).

Bailey’s life story is a testament to overcoming adversity. From a challenging childhood marked by trauma and poverty, she has ascended to the pinnacle of success, establishing a billion-dollar business empire.

Her journey from a humble hut in Woodland, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica to becoming a notable entrepreneur and billionaire is a narrative of resilience. “I lived in a small community, there was no running water, I walked three and half miles each way to school... I developed resilience. I didn’t know I wasn’t living a normal life,” she said recently.

Bailey emigrated from Jamaica to Connecticut at the age of 13 in 1990 with her sister to live with their mother and stepfather. She grew up in East Hartford and now resides in Orlando. She attended Weaver High School in Hartford and was a track and field athlete. She was a state open 800-meter champion while at the school.

In 1996, Bailey began her career by working as a service manager at Fleet Bank, Hartford, later moving to First Union National Bank, where she served until her transition to the Stock Market in 1999.

In 1999, she also graduated from University of Connecticut College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She earned her MBA in 2005 and Ph.D. in 2010 in organizational leadership from University of Phoenix. She holds a Cardiology Certification from New York University Medical School and Pulmonary Certification from

the University of Kentucky College of Medicine.

Her turning point came after a life-threatening ordeal, leading to the foundation of Bailey Medical Equipment & Supplies and Pharmacy.

Her career path led her from being one of the youngest stockbrokers at Salomon Smith Barney to a pharmaceutical sales executive, and finally, to the CEO of 16 companies, including

interests in professional sports teams.

Bailey’s story is not just about financial success; it’s a narrative of personal healing, the joys of motherhood, and the importance of kindness and grace in achieving true fulfillment. As a mother of five, Bailey, 46, is deeply committed to giving back and inspiring others with her candid life story.

“I never considered staying

down. I have always known that God has my back. I go into everything praying praying... asking God to bring prosperity,” said Bailey.

With 285-pages filling 15 chapters titled ‘Humble Beginnings,’ ‘Coming to America,’ ‘Rise of the Empire,’ to the happy ending which find her ‘Unbroken,’ an almost provocative cover finds her racing through a bushy path. There’s food for thought and a

wealth of inspiration to a roadmap for success.

“My next journey is to teach Black and brown girls,” said Bailey. “There is so much love from me, it can’t be denied. I love, love, love people.”

Her unbroken spirit and determination are highlighted in her book and are the essence of this holiday season’s giveaway.



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**NEWS**



# Maduro's Madness - Venezuelan Voters Support Referendum That Guyana's Essequibo Is Theirs

On Sunday, Dec. 3rd, more than 95 percent of Venezuelan voters supported a claim in a referendum that the Essequibo region of Guyana belongs to Venezuela. That's almost three-fourths of the new, oil rich South American CARICOM nation, the only English speaking nation

in South America. Venezuelans who turned out to vote in the Nicolas Maduro called national referendum overwhelmingly backed Venezuela's territorial claim.

The referendum has ratcheted up tensions between the two neighbors. Critics

of the Venezuelan president say he called the non-binding referendum to whip up nationalist fervor and distract from calls for free and fair elections to be held.

Still the vote is seen as largely symbolic but it asked voters if they agreed with creating a Venezuelan state in the Essequibo region, providing its population with Venezuelan citizenship and "incorporating that state into the map of Venezuelan territory." It is unclear what steps Venezuela's government would take to enforce its claim, however.

Venezuela has long claimed the land, which it argues was within its borders during the Spanish colonial period. It dismisses an 1899 ruling by international arbitrators that set the current boundaries when Guyana was still a British colony, and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has cast the referendum in anti-imperialist sentiment on social media.

Guyana has called the move a step towards annexation and an "existential threat."

Guyanese President Irfaan Ali visited troops in Essequibo and dramatically hoisted a Guyanese flag on a mountain overlooking the border with Venezuela. Ali has affirmed Guyana's commitment to navigating the border controversy with Venezuela through a path of peace, hope, and dignity.

Addressing potential actions by the Venezuelan government, President Ali warned that ignoring international laws would cause great injustice to the



Guyana's Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar, led a patriotic march through the communities on the East Bank of Essequibo on Dec. 3, 2023. (GINA image)



President Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali led a flag-raising of the Guyana flag at the Roraima border. (GINA image)

people of Venezuela.

"It will lead in a direction in which the prosperity of the people of Venezuela will continue to be affected. That path has consequences not only for Guyana, but for all of us in the region — the movement of migrants, the issue concerning the social circumstances, and security among many countries in the region. Ultimately, it is the people who suffer," President Ali

asserted.

He also highlighted Guyana's responsibility in the midst of the controversy, noting that the nation has to lead by example during this time.

"We don't need to do what the Vice President of Venezuela and Maduro are doing. We don't need to tell lies, spread propaganda, and create mischief... That is not leadership," the Guyanese leader posited. Ali has also called on the government of Venezuela to act with dignity and in the best interest of its citizens.

The International Court of Justice, based in The Hague, ruled before the vote that "Venezuela shall refrain from taking any action which would modify the situation that currently prevails in the territory in dispute." It plans to hold a trial in the spring on the issue, following years of review and decades of failed negotiations. Venezuela does not recognize the court's jurisdiction on the issue, however.

Guyana, and British Guiana before it, have administered Essequibo for over a century.

- NewsAmericaNow.com



## ICJ Orders Venezuela To Halt Actions Amid Guyana Border Dispute

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Dec. 1st issued a significant ruling on the Guyana/Venezuela border dispute, stating that Guyana has met all the necessary requirements for provisional measures concerning Venezuela's December 3rd consultative referendum.

This referendum pertains to Venezuela's claim to the oil-rich Essequibo County of Guyana.

The Order of the Court was unanimous, with all of the sitting Judges voting in favor of it. The Order states: "Pending a final decision in the case, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela shall refrain from taking any action which

would modify the situation that currently prevails in the territory in dispute, whereby the Cooperative Republic of Guyana administers and exercises control over that area."

Both Venezuela and Guyana have been instructed to abstain from any actions that could exacerbate or prolong the ongoing dispute before the court, making it more challenging to reach a resolution. The ICJ's orders were unanimous, and Judge Joan Donoghue, the court's President, delivered the ruling.

Guyana had sought the intervention of the United Nations' top court to impose temporary restrictions,

potentially leading to the removal of certain questions from the referendum. Guyana perceives this vote as an "existential threat" that could enable Venezuela to annex Essequibo.

Earlier this year, in April, the ICJ affirmed its jurisdiction to address the border controversy between these two South American nations. However, Venezuela does not recognize the court's jurisdiction, which could potentially delay a final decision for years.

Venezuela contends that the border with Guyana, a former colony of The Netherlands

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

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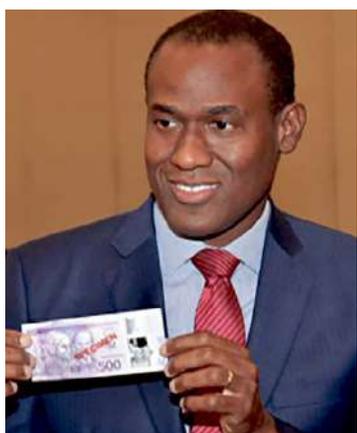
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# Jamaica Achieves Financial Milestone With Inaugural Jamaican Dollar Linked International Bond

The Jamaican government has achieved a significant financial milestone by issuing its first-ever Jamaican Dollar (J\$) linked international bond, totaling J\$46.6 billion or US\$300 million. The bond, issued on November 3, was oversubscribed 1.4 times and consists of Senior Unsecured Notes due in 2030, registered with the United States-based Securities Exchange Commission, (SEC).

This groundbreaking operation marks the Government of Jamaica's inaugural J\$-linked transaction in international capital markets and aligns with the GOJ's objective to open local currency debt issues to international investors. The move aims to reduce the GOJ's exposure to USD-denominated debt, as both interest and principal payments are linked to the value of the Jamaican dollar.

However, it's essential to note that while the bond is denominated in J\$, debt service payments to bondholders will be in US\$, determined by the



**Dr. Nigel Clarke, Jamaica's Finance and Public Service Minister, led a Jamaican delegation on an investor road show in London and New York related to the bond issuance.**

average of the prevailing J\$ exchange rate over the ten business days before each payment date. This arrangement means that international investors in this bond assume Jamaican Dollar exchange rate risk.

The bond issuance represents the second phase of a liability management operation, with the proceeds

from this Jamaican dollar-linked bond being used to repurchase outstanding US\$-denominated bonds.

Moody's, the international credit rating agency, published an Issuer's Comment, stating that the use of the J\$ linked Bond issuance proceeds to buy back outstanding USD-denominated bonds will reduce "the government's exposure to foreign-exchange risk, which is a credit positive." Over time, this reduction in exchange-rate risk is expected to address one of the sovereign's key credit challenges.

In the initial phase of the transaction, Jamaica invited offers to tender for cash, targeting its 7.625 percent Notes due 2025, 9.250 percent Notes due 2025, and 6.750 percent Notes due 2028. This offering achieved several significant milestones, marking the first J\$-linked transaction by the Jamaican government and demonstrating the success of local currency deals in

international markets.

International investor participation in the J\$ link bond reached 93.5 percent, with 6.5 percent coming from domestic investors. This represents the highest participation rate by international investors in a local currency issue in 2023 globally. The bond is also noted for having the lowest coupon and yield for a local currency-linked global bond transaction in 2023 to date, marking Jamaica's first return to the international capital markets since 2019.

Dr. Nigel Clarke, Jamaica's Finance and Public Service Minister, led a Jamaican delegation on an investor road show in London and New York related to the bond issuance. He emphasized the transaction's significance in opening new possibilities and frontiers for Jamaica, highlighting the country's improved macroeconomic fundamentals and monetary policy transparency.

Dr. Clarke stated that

tapping international investors for local currency-linked debt enhances Jamaica's funding sources, broadens financial diversity, and paves the way for more international issues in the future. The government's ability to alter the currency mix of the national debt is expected to strengthen the country's resilience and financial stability.

This landmark development represents a substantial policy dividend resulting from Jamaica's economic progress and commitment to monetary policy transparency, central bank independence, and low, stable, and predictable inflation as a monetary policy objective.

Jamaica's inaugural J\$-linked international bond marks a significant step towards financial independence and economic growth, offering new opportunities and strengthening the country's position in the international financial market.

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## Trinidad Nears Agreement With Maduro As Guyana Confronts Venezuela At World Court

In a significant development, Venezuela is on the brink of granting Shell (SHELL) and the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago a license to exploit a lucrative offshore natural gas field, Reuters reported.

This venture aims to facilitate the export of natural gas to Trinidad and Tobago, as informed by sources close to the matter.

Simultaneously, Guyana has been actively engaging with the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also known as the World Court, in a long-standing territorial dispute with Venezuela. The crux of the matter involves Venezuela's contentious plans for a December 3 referendum that could influence rights over a resource-rich territory, an issue that has fueled discord between the two neighbors for decades.

In April, the World Court affirmed its jurisdiction over this dispute, setting the stage for what might be a protracted legal battle. Guyana's

representative, Carl Greenidge, has voiced concerns that the referendum could significantly undermine Guyana's territorial integrity, potentially annexing a vast expanse of its land into Venezuelan territory.

Critics perceive Venezuela's referendum as a strategic maneuver, not only to gauge domestic political support ahead of upcoming elections but also to assert its claim over the contested border region.

Guyana's plea at the Hague, described by Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez as exaggerated and aggressive, seeks to prevent this referendum, citing potential threats to its sovereignty.

Amidst these tensions, Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Keith Rowley confirmed ongoing negotiations for the gas license. Energy Minister Stuart Young's expected visit to Caracas underscores the earnestness of these discussions.

This license could significantly benefit Trinidad's gas processing and petrochemical sectors, while offering Venezuela a vital source of revenue. The two nations, following a recent U.S. authorization, are keen to expedite cross-border energy projects.

The focus of these negotiations is the Dragon field, a gas reserve in Venezuelan waters near the maritime boundary with Trinidad, estimated to contain up to 4.2 trillion cubic feet of gas. The proposed partnership envisages Shell holding a 70 percent stake and Trinidad's NGC the remaining 30 percent.

While some details remain unresolved, the impending agreement, expected to be finalized soon, marks a potential turning point in the energy landscape of the region.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Barbados Prime Minister Joins Global Center On Adaptation Advisory Board

The Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, has joined the Advisory Board of the Global Center on Adaptation, (GCA). This significant appointment follows an invitation extended by Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations and current Chair of the GCA Board, and Professor Patrick Verkooijen, CEO of the GCA.

Prime Minister Mottley, in her acceptance of the role, emphasized the urgency of addressing climate change for vulnerable nations. "The current system is failing those increasingly impacted by climate change. I am eager to collaborate with the GCA to push governments towards more urgent action, particularly in doubling adaptation finance by 2025," she stated.

Ban Ki-moon praised Prime Minister Mottley for her efforts in reshaping the global financial system, particularly through the Bridgetown Initiative. This initiative aims to create new financial instruments and reform existing ones to finance climate resilience and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). "Prime Minister Mottley's innovative approach is vital in ensuring resilient finance reaches the most climate-vulnerable states. I am looking forward to working with her at the GCA," Ban Ki-moon

remarked.

Professor Patrick Verkooijen highlighted the dire situation of the world's poorest and most climate-vulnerable nations, which are trapped in a cycle of debt and climate disasters. He noted that the economic cost of climate disasters in developing countries could soar to \$580 billion annually by 2030. "Working with Prime Minister Mottley, we aim to break this cycle by significantly increasing investment in climate resilience. This is crucial for reducing future costs associated with climate disasters," Verkooijen stated.

The GCA, founded in 2018, is an international organization dedicated to accelerating action and supporting adaptation solutions in response to climate change. Operating from its unique floating office in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, the GCA has a global network with regional offices in Abidjan, Dhaka, Beijing, and an upcoming office in Nairobi set to open in January 2025. It partners with public and private sectors to broker solutions at both international and local levels, focusing on the most vulnerable communities affected by climate change.



## ICJ Orders Venezuela To Halt Actions Amid Guyana Border Dispute

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4) and the United Kingdom, was fraudulently imposed by the British, accusing them of a "land grab." Conversely, Guyana maintains that the border was established through arbitration on October 3, 1899, by an arbitration panel (Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899).

The Anglo-Venezuelan Arbitral Tribunal met in Paris, France, 122 years ago, giving its award that defined the border between Venezuela and then-British Guiana. For over half a century, Venezuela adhered to the 1899 Arbitral Award. However, in 1962, Venezuela asserted that the Essequibo area of Guyana was within its borders, particularly escalating after ExxonMobil discovered oil in Essequibo in 2015.

In response to this situation, Guyana initiated a case against Venezuela at the World Court in 2018, seeking confirmation that the border was established through arbitration between British Guiana and Venezuela in 1899.

Under the framework of

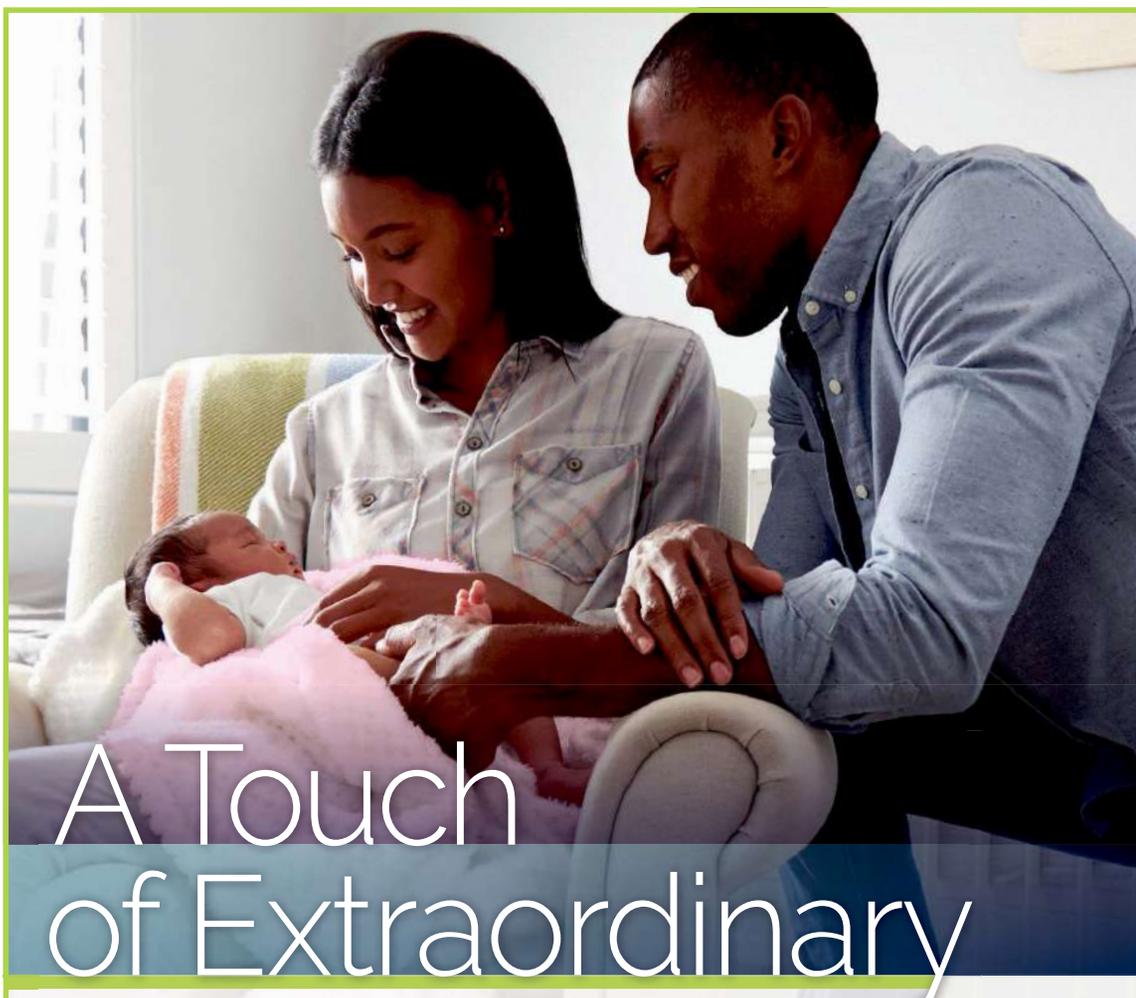
the 1966 Geneva Agreement between the two nations, the Secretary-General conducted Good Offices processes from 1990 to 2017 in an attempt to find a resolution to the border dispute.

On January 30, 2018, then-Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, following a thorough evaluation of the developments in 2017, selected the ICJ as the mechanism to address the controversy.

Essequibo constitutes nearly two-thirds of Guyana's territory, with approximately 125,000 of the nation's 800,000 inhabitants residing in this area.

In the substantive case, Guyana aims to secure a final and binding ICJ judgment, confirming the validity and binding nature of the 1899 Arbitral Award, which delineated the land boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela, and asserting Essequibo as Guyana's territory.

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## Haitian National Makes FBI Miami Top Ten Most Wanted List

The FBI Miami Field Office recently added a new name to its top ten Most Wanted List, intensifying the search for a dangerous individual.

Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey Veltri of the FBI Miami office emphasized the threat posed by the fugitive, Haitian born Vitel'Homme Innocent. "He is a menace to the island and a threat to American citizens," Veltri stated. Innocent is one of only 532 individuals to ever appear on the FBI's most wanted list.

Vitel'Homme is a Haitian national and leader of the Kraze Barye gang, which operates

in the Torcelle and Tabarre areas of Haiti and actively participates in kidnappings for ransom, extortion, and car thefts.

A substantial reward of \$2 million is being offered for information leading to Innocent's arrest and conviction, a figure significantly higher than the usual bounty for most fugitives on this list. The FBI believes Innocent was involved in the 2021 kidnapping



Vitel'Homme is a Haitian national and leader of the Kraze Barye gang, who is now on the FBI Miami's TOP 10 List.

of 16 American missionaries in Haiti, which included five

children, the youngest being just eight months old. The hostages managed to escape after 61 days in captivity.

Veltri issued a stern warning about the FBI's commitment to capturing Innocent. "The FBI's resolve will not waver. We will use our full capabilities and will not relent until he is brought to justice," he said.

Innocent is suspected to be the leader of a violent gang responsible for numerous heinous crimes, including the 2022 kidnapping of Americans Jean and Marie Odette Franklin, during which Marie was tragically killed.

The FBI's Violent Crime Chief, James Krieger, highlighted the success rate of capturing individuals on the Most Wanted List, noting that nearly 93% of those listed have been apprehended since the list's inception in 1950. He also emphasized the crucial role of public tips in these arrests, with 163 individuals being apprehended as a direct result of citizen cooperation.

The FBI encourages anyone with information about Innocent to call 1-800-CALL-FBI or submit tips online at tips.fbi.gov.



## Florida's Insurance Crisis Intensifies As Homeowners Grapple With Soaring Premiums

Frequent natural disasters are leading insurance companies to exit markets, like Florida, where large payouts for destroyed homes are becoming common. "I never thought I would see houses that are completely uninsurable," noted insurance broker Robb Lanham to Yahoo Finance recently.

The crisis is exacerbated by climate change, which is increasing the severity and frequency of hurricanes. These stronger storms are causing more damage, leading insurance companies to raise premiums to cover the costs. In Florida, for example, home insurance

premiums have skyrocketed by 300 percent in the past five years. The average cost of home insurance in the state is now over \$4,200 annually, more than double the national average.

This steep increase is reflective of Florida's vulnerability to severe storms. Since 2016, the state has consistently reported losses for property insurers, making it a challenging market for insurance companies.

However, Florida is not alone in facing these challenges. States like California are dealing with more frequent wildfires, and areas like Kentucky and

West Virginia are increasingly prone to landslides and flooding, all amplified by climate change.

The insurance crisis is a nationwide issue, with 23 weather-related disasters in 2023 alone causing over \$1 billion in damages each. The First Street Foundation estimates that 35.6 million homes across the U.S. could face more expensive or unavailable insurance policies as insurers withdraw from high-risk states.

Political responses to the crisis have been varied. In Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis, currently a presidential candidate, has been criticized

for his handling of the situation. Swanson, the new Sanibel Island resident, accuses DeSantis of neglecting both the insurance and climate change crises.

The insurance industry in Florida faces additional challenges due to the high volume of lawsuits against insurance companies, which is particularly damaging to smaller insurers. DeSantis signed a law to make suing insurance companies more difficult, but critics argue this approach doesn't address the root of the problem.

The rising costs of home insurance are just one part of the

broader housing affordability crisis in the U.S., impacting everyone from retirees to young first-time homebuyers. The situation is made worse by high levels of college debt and a challenging job market. Redfin chief economist Daryl Fairweather predicts an increasingly difficult path for Americans striving to enter the housing market.

- *Rewritten from Yahoo Finance*



## Of Rape, Hypocrisy And The GOP State Party Chair

The chairman of the Florida Republican Party has stated that he will not step down amid allegations of rape, asserting his innocence in an email to supporters. Christian Ziegler, who did not address the specifics of the accusation, emphasized that he and his wife, Bridget Ziegler, have been targeted due to their prominent roles as political figures.

In the email sent to state Republicans, Ziegler defended his decision not to resign, citing the need to continue their mission despite facing false allegations of a crime. Governor Ron DeSantis had previously suggested Ziegler's resignation to prevent any distractions for the party but Ziegler remains steadfast in his refusal to step down.

While no charges have been filed against Ziegler, an ongoing investigation by the Sarasota Police remains open. The accusation against him was made by an individual who has known him for two decades and alleges that he forced his way into her apartment and raped her, as per search warrant affidavits.

In his email, Ziegler did not address previous statements he made to detectives regarding

consensual sex with the woman nor his wife's statement about a previous instance of group sex involving the couple and the accuser.

Ziegler asserted the strength of his family and their commitment to withstand the allegations. He did not provide further comments, and calls and messages to the Zieglers for additional remarks went unanswered.

Governor DeSantis' office has not commented on Ziegler's decision to remain in office at the time of this report. The revelation of the rape accusation came after the Florida Center for Government Accountability obtained police reports and search warrant affidavits, leading to public scrutiny and allegations of hypocrisy against the Zieglers, especially regarding their association with Moms for Liberty and LGBTQ+ issues.

Bridget Ziegler, an elected member of the Sarasota County school board and an appointee to the board overseeing Walt Disney World's land development by Governor DeSantis, has been accused of hypocrisy due to her involvement with organizations opposing LGBTQ+ causes

despite her husband's rape allegation.

The accuser's identity has been redacted in documents, as is customary in cases of sexual assault. The Associated Press does not disclose the names of possible victims of sexual assault without their consent.

Text messages cited in affidavits suggest that the accuser, the Zieglers, and the alleged victim had initially planned to engage in group sex on a specific date, but the accuser withdrew her participation when Bridget Ziegler was unable to attend. Later that day, the alleged victim claims Christian Ziegler forced himself into her apartment and sexually assaulted her.

Text and phone conversations monitored by investigators indicate that Ziegler initially offered financial assistance to the woman, only to become suspicious that their conversations were being recorded.

During a November 2 interview with detectives, Ziegler maintained that the sexual encounter was consensual and admitted to recording it, deleting the video, and then later recovering it following the rape allegation.

Detectives seized Ziegler's phone during the investigation, but the contents of the phone have not been disclosed to

the public.

- *Rewritten from ABC News*



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# Nicole Landry: Embracing Jamaican Heritage And Wellness In Atlanta Through 'Journey Of Atman'

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Unlike Ontario, Alberta never had a large Caribbean population. Yet, growing up in its capital of Calgary, Nicole Landry had a sense of Jamaica, her father's homeland.

West Indian warmth flowed throughout her home, especially during Christmas which her father and paternal grandmother ensured had a West Indian flavor.

"My grandmother used to cook all of the classic dishes for the holiday. I would be waiting with excitement for when she would start making her holiday rum cakes because it was always a reminder that a day with all my favorite foods was near," Landry told Caribbean Today recently. "I remember walking into her house on Christmas and my mouth watering. Everything

from curry goat to smoked turkey would be on the table. I really miss her very much as Christmas hasn't been the same flavor since she passed."

A former nurse, Landry is now a resident of Atlanta, Georgia, where she operates 'Journey Of Atman,' a company that specializes in wellness products such as scented candles and smudge/wands made from natural sources such as eucalyptus.

Her father, Neville, is from Kingston, Jamaica's capital, while her mother is Canadian. Her father's mother, Hilda, came from rural Westmoreland parish, once the hub of Jamaica's sugar industry.

"I don't recall there being a strong sense of Jamaican-ness in Calgary at the time, but inside my home was a different story,"



Nicole Landry, the Jamaican roots founder of the candle company, Journey Of Atman.

Landry recalled. "My father's love for music ensured that all of the greats often played within our walls. Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, Beres Hammond. So many to count."

"He took great pride in exposing me to our roots and culture. Before starting school, he would often educate me on the things that most western schoolbooks leave out," she added. "The impact of Marcus Garvey, colonialism, and the timeline of Jamaica's independence. In my opinion, Jamaican-ness is a way of life and a feeling. It is everywhere you go because the feeling is so special and

the love is so strong. It's in the joy found in valuing the little things. The power in our communities. The beauty of maintaining our humility in our humanness. Gratitude for the gift of life. When I close my eyes that feeling gives me a sense of peace, and it moves me anywhere I go."

Journey Of Atman, which Landry started in 2020, has 17 scented candles in its catalog. They include Light, Love, Compassion, Abundance and Respect, all of which are available through her website, [journeyofatman.com](http://journeyofatman.com).

Landry plans to expand her healing and self-affirmation products with new scents in the spring of 2024.



## Awarding Caribbean Greatness

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

She is the sole founder of the Caribbean Global Awards, a London-based event celebrating the accomplishments, successes, and contributions of Caribbean businesses, entrepreneurs, and professionals around the world. Healthcare executive, entrepreneur, business consultant, and motivational speaker, Michaelene Holder-March, is driven by her passion to elevate Caribbean greatness.

"I am unapologetically black. I am unapologetically Caribbean," said a proud Holder-March in a chat with Caribbean Today.

"I have a grandmother from Grenada. I have a grandfather from Barbados. The other side is indentured servant Indians from India," added the London-based executive. "I was born in Trinidad and Tobago. My husband is of Jamaican parentage. So that makes me really amazing."

### AMAZING BREED

The Trinbagonian noted that other cultures are celebrated on the world stage for their contributions to humanity, so it's time for Caribbean people to be similarly recognized.

The region must be lauded, she insisted, because "we have been creating milestones. We are a lesson in learning how to thrive in the context of coming to the UK or any part of Europe and surviving. We are an amazing breed of people."

So, for two years, Holder-March took the time to figure out how she could start this initiative. And, on September 30, 2023, the inaugural Caribbean Global Awards took place in London, with a sold-out audience that



Michaelene Holder-March, the founder of the Caribbean Global Awards.

included Caribbean ministers of government, High Commission staff, community and business leaders.

Twenty-five awardees were honored across different sectors including Healthcare, Community Outreach, Music, Arts & Culture, Technology, Journalism to name a few. And importantly, the People's Choice Award for Leadership went to Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley, who was represented by High Commissioner of Barbados to London, Milton Inmiss.

Holder-March explained that judges were chosen from across a wide cross-section of sectors in which they excelled and were given tight criteria in which to make their final selections. She also added that judges will never be repeated, instead will be replaced by winners from the previous year.

"What I want to do is build a global Caribbean network of experts in different fields," said

the entrepreneur. "A network that adds value, has value, and gives back value. It's not a self-empowerment programme. It is about recognizing that historically, whether you're born here, whatever your history is, Caribbean or Africa, how can we as a collective group have a collective responsibility to our people."

### LEGACY

This is not about competition, it's about recognition that within your Caribbean country, there are people who have the breath of innovation and excellence to create a legacy, an inheritance for those to come, she added.

In that spirit, Holder-March leads by example. Her focus on equity, diversity, and collaboration is evident in the enterprises she develops and is associated with. She is the Founder of BAME, (British Aspiration Minority

Engagement), Health Collaborative, a charity organization that is changing healthcare experiences through policy innovation, research, and collaboration in a bid to protect and uphold cultural diversity in the healthcare system.

Holder-March is also Founder and CEO of MHM Business Solutions, where she brings together consultants to help businesses manage their resources, maximize operations with directed strategic plans, manage financial planning, build staffing, and training.

This Caribbean entrepreneur travels across the Caribbean and Africa training and building valuable networks. By continuing to showcase regional talent and ingenuity through the Caribbean Global Awards, she is building that legacy for the next generation.

Next year's event is scheduled to take place in London on September 28, 2024, and nominations are already coming in for exceptional awardees. New to the ceremony will be an Authors Platform where five writers selected by a panel will have the opportunity to showcase and sell their publications free of charge. Based on the impact of the first event, a smaller award ceremony will be held in The Bahamas in August 2024 with a focus on the Caribbean's sporting fraternity.

Constantly on the go, Holder-March is determined, optimistic, and unafraid of taking her rightful place and carrying others with her.

"I am proud to be born in a village. When you're born in a village you understand the basic striving for humanity and existence. The other thing about me is I've never accepted the word no," she added. "You can't

tell me as a human being that I am not capable. Trust me, I know that I am good.



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# The Number Of Undocumented Migrants In The US Tops 10 Million

As Donald Trumpeto plans a widespread expansion of his first administration’s hard-line immigration policies if elected to a second term in 2024, including rounding up undocumented immigrants already in the US and placing them in detention camps to await deportation, the Pew Research Center has released new data on the estimated number of undocumented migrants in the US.



**FELICIA J. PERSAUD**

According to Pew, there were some 10.5 million unauthorized immigrants in the US as of March 2021. This represented about 3percent of the total U.S. population and 22 percent of the foreign-born population. That was a modest increase over 2019 but nearly identical to 2017.

The new estimates, however, do not reflect the apprehensions and expulsions of migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border after March 2021, as migrant encounters at the border have reached historic highs.

The country with the greatest number of undocumented migrants in the US remains Mexico with 4.1 million or 39 percent of the nation’s unauthorized immigrants in 2021.

After Mexico, the countries of origin with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations in the U.S. in 2021 were:

- El Salvador - 800,000
- India - 725,000.
- Guatemala - 700,000 and
- Honduras - 525,000.

Three Central American countries – El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala – together represented 2.0 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. in 2021, or almost 20 percent of the total. The unauthorized

immigrant population from the Northern Triangle grew by about 250,000 from 2017 and about 700,000 from 2007.

Venezuela, meanwhile, was the country of birth for 190,000 U.S. unauthorized immigrants in 2021. This population saw particularly fast growth, from 130,000 in 2017 and 55,000 in 2007.

Among countries with the largest numbers of U.S. unauthorized immigrants, India, Brazil, Canada and former Soviet Union countries all experienced growth from 2017 to 2021.

The six states with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations in 2021 were:

- California - 1.9 million
- Texas - 1.6 million
- Florida - 900,000
- New York - 600,000
- New Jersey - 450,000 and
- Illinois - 400,000.

In 2021, these six states were home to 56 percent of the nation’s unauthorized immigrants, down from 80 percent in 1990.

Meanwhile, the share of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. workforce was slightly less than 5 percent in 2021, compared with 3 percent of the total U.S. population. Overall, about 7.8 million unauthorized immigrants were in the U.S. labor force in 2021. That was up slightly from 2019 but smaller than every year from 2007 through 2015, Pew said.

Since 2003, unauthorized immigrants have made up 4.4percent to 5.4 percent of all U.S. workers, a relatively narrow range. Fewer than 1 percent of workers in Maine, Montana, Vermont and West Virginia in 2021 were unauthorized immigrants.

Nevada, 9 percent, and Texas, 8 percent, had the highest shares of unauthorized immigrants in the workforce.

The news comes as the Mexican government recently responded to the Texas

Legislature’s passage of Senate Bill 4 - which creates a state crime for entering the state illegally from Mexico and allows state and local authorities to deport undocumented immigrants - saying it “categorically rejects” Texas’ latest proposal to arrest and deport immigrants to Mexico.

“The Government of Mexico reiterates its rejection of any measure that contemplates the

involuntary return of migrants without respect for due process,” says the statement from Mexico’s secretary of foreign relations.

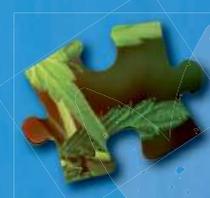
It added that Mexico “recognizes the sovereign right of any country to decide the public policies that should be implemented in its territory,” but Mexico also has a right to defend the estimated 10 million people of Mexican origin in Texas and

“establish its own immigration policies in its territory.

“The Government of Mexico categorically rejects any measure that allows state or local authorities to detain and return nationals or foreigners to Mexican territory,” the statement added.

*The writer is publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com, the Black Immigrant Daily News.*

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## Spicy Variety

We are in the Christmas season and many people will be seeking companionship. Some will fail; maybe because they put all their eggs in one basket instead of spreading them around. Much has been said about the benefits of having multiple lovers consecutively or concurrently - like a prison sentence.



**TONY ROBINSON**

For some people, being in a relationship is like serving a prison sentence. So, the same principle applies to the benefits of multiple lovers running concurrently, all at the same time. At this point I can hear the collective condemnation

of a thousand pious prudes, the simultaneous raising of the eyebrows of zealots, the hue and cry of the hypocrites, and the finger wagging of the holier than thou.

After all, I’m referring to one person having multiple lovers, and that is simply not supposed to be done. Well, it’s done, and very often too - but just not spoken about, relegated to the shadows of hypocrisy, to the chambers of perfidy, to the lair of lies.

So, although it’s not preached, it’s practiced, and based on my research, there are great benefits. Back in the day, and even now, it used to be the purview of men, who had multiple women concurrently. As long as you could afford them, you could have them.

Now, the women seem to have joined the game, and are

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



# Five Major Implications Of The Chevron-Hess \$53 Billion Acquisition In Guyana

BY ARTHUR DEAKIN

The recent merging of oil and gas companies in the U.S. indicate that energy majors see a long-term future for specific hydrocarbons in the energy transition. Chevron's announcement of their US\$53 billion all stock acquisition of Hess, and ExxonMobil's US\$59 billion merger with Pioneer Natural Resources, is likely the beginning of a wider industry consolidation in which oil majors target independent producers operating in relatively stable jurisdictions with proven light crude reserves, low breakeven costs, and flexible oil supply (i.e., shale wells that can start producing quickly when oil prices are high). Oil majors will continue to prioritize assets that generate significant free cash flows so they can continue paying large dividends to shareholders.

Financing greenfield energy assets in emerging markets has become extremely challenging with the rise of interest rates. Hydrocarbon assets, which most investors are shying away from, and low carbon technologies, some of which do not yet have proven paths to profitability, are struggling to attract investments in developing markets as the risk-return is simply unjustifiable in the current financial environment. Outright acquisitions and mergers, however, have become more appealing, and none more so than the Stabroek Block in Guyana. The biggest discovery in the last decade has an estimated 11 billion barrels of recoverable oil equivalent, with potential to grow even more in the future. This is a multi-decade production play, and it signals Chevron's commitment to a long-term hydrocarbon strategy in the Americas.

For years, Hess has known they've struck the jackpot with Guyana, reflected by the upbeat mood internally at the company. They've been seeking a large payday for quite some time—well deservedly so, as Guyana's Stabroek Block has been praised as the best oil find in recent times. In addition to its resource potential, the ExxonMobil-operated block offers highly competitive breakeven costs ranging from \$25 to \$35 per barrel across producing projects. It is located offshore, where there tends to be less direct impact on communities than onshore drilling, and it also operates under a favorable production sharing agreement with attractive fiscal terms.

## Five major implications for Guyana

The Chevron-Hess deal will have five major implications for the Guyanese economy, all of

which are likely to lead to long-term reverberations for the local oil and gas sector:

### 1. An accelerated exploration of the Stabroek block

ExxonMobil's \$63 billion dollars in free cash flow in 2022 makes it one of the most well-capitalized oil and gas companies in the world. The speed of their ramp up in Guyana has been unprecedented, both in terms of time to market and successfully drilled wells. However, with another oil major joining the Stabroek consortium, it is likely that the 10 to 12 wells planned for 2024, and the 35-well exploration campaign announced through 2028, will actually exceed the original numbers.

### 2. An increase in production estimates for existing wells

While the Stabroek consortium already has one of the most, if not the most, competent, and technical team in the oil and gas industry with ExxonMobil at the helm, there are technological advances that Chevron could bring to the table that could increase production estimates for Guyana (upwards from the 1.2mn projected for 2027). Chevron CEO Mike Wirth discussed their collaboration with AI juggernaut OpenAI noting "We've been working with OpenAI for multiple years now on technologies that could work in our industry," Wirth said. He noted oil giants generate immense datasets on geological characteristics and more. Often times, these innovative technologies are siloed inside companies, with Chevron already suggesting that they will introduce new technical capabilities to the Bakken assets owned by Hess.

### 3. A more competitive oil and gas sector

Although Exxon will still be calling the shots as the lead operator of the Stabroek consortium, the presence of another American oil major will lead to more collaborative decision making behind closed doors. Chevron will also now be part of the bid made in the recent oil tender by Exxon, Hess and CNOOC, pacifying some of the government's claims that ExxonMobil is the only game in town.

### 4. Greater Chinese influence outside of the oil & gas sector

Although the third partner in the Stabroek consortium is Chinese (CNOOC), the state-owned oil company has remained in the background during the last eight years of oil development in Guyana. Now, with the presence of two of the largest American oil majors in the consortium, CNOOC's influence is likely to diminish.

In turn, the Chinese government will increase its presence in surrounding sectors such as mining, healthcare, renewable power, and road infrastructure.

### 5. Greater pressure from the government and the people

With more resources, comes greater responsibility. The Guyanese government will likely highlight this acquisition to show that interest in Guyana remains hot, using the momentum to sign production sharing agreements that are less beneficial for oil companies in the most recent oil auction. The Guyanese people will also be more inclined to see what they can get out of a new major company coming into the country, both in terms of jobs and greater concessions. Despite the Wall Street Journal recently reporting that Guyana is booming, the reporting also raised questions on how the material improvement is flowing to ordinary Guyanese. It is expected that there will be more public pressure for improved living conditions in Guyana.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

even better at it than the men in certain areas. In their case though, it's strictly for economic benefits. As one lady proudly declared: "I need a man who is trustworthy, a man who is a provider, a man who will take me out, and a man who is a good lover. The secret is not letting these men find out about each other."

But what about the man who has multiple lovers? Surely, it's not for economic gain, so why does he do it and what are the benefits? Well, they do say that variety is the spice of life, so men will pay for that spicy variety.

They also say that monogamy is unnatural, and that people only practice it because of the strictures of a hypocritical society, fueled by the preaching of the pious.

Anyway, it's established that man is polygamous by nature, but mostly suppress his natural urge to seek pleasure from multiple sources because of social mores. So, many men have multiple lovers, the mistress, the other woman, the concubine.

There are benefits, posit the practitioners of this prurient pleasure. "My life is never dull, as I have multiple personalities to deal with." "When my wife withholds loving from me, it's no big deal, as I just go to one of my lovers for satisfaction."

The justifications are abundant, after all, even in the Bible it's recorded that many great men had multiple wives, lovers, consorts, and concubines.

This even goes outside the Bible too, for there are many religious and non-religious sects

## Chevron is bullet-proofing their portfolio against international turmoil

Although Hess' 30 percent participation in the Stabroek consortium was the main reason behind Chevron's acquisition, Hess also produces 190,000 barrels per day in the Bakken Shale Play where it owns 465,000 acres of land. The Bakken formation is both more mature and smaller than the Permian basin, signaling less room for growth, but the abundance of land means Chevron could drill new wells in new locations as old wells mature. This flexibility, during a time of geopolitical turmoil, is exactly what Chevron is looking for as it seeks to bullet-proof its portfolio against unstable regimes and international conflicts.

Chevron also announced that the Bakken asset will provide a constant level of production, and strong cash flows, for many years to come. In fact, if the number of rigs remain constant, at four, Chevron estimates that the Bakken acquisition will have at least 15

years of inventory. Although the Bakken has high half-cycle breakeven costs, at US\$58 per barrel, Chevron's resources means that it faces less pressure to stick to modest production increases like many other shale producers. Its deep pockets, and ability to keep providing returns to shareholders, means that Chevron can afford to take riskier bets.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Arthur Deakin is the Director of the Energy Practice at AMI (Americas Market Intelligence). Through market research and strategic analysis, he helps companies expand into Guyana and the wider Latin American region. In the past ten years, AMI has helped companies understand the Guyanese market, navigate Guyana's local content legislation, execute pre- and post-acquisition due diligence and conduct competitive analysis on key players in the country.**

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Spicy Variety



that endorse the practice of multiple lovers. It's all about the sects. Hush. I couldn't resist that one.

Nowadays it's frowned upon in most modern western societies, so guess what the people do? They turn that frown upside down and practice it underground, in the labyrinth of lust.

That being said about the men, there are also women who endorse the spicy variety. Not counting those women who do it strictly for economic gain, there are some women who actually enjoy this lifestyle.

The fact is, people's libido differs, and whereas a man may have a strong desire, his wife may not. The reverse is also true.

Based on my findings, even if the wife has no interest in romance and the man goes elsewhere for

satisfaction and gratification, it's problematic. The benefits of spicy variety would solve all these problems. I am not the author of this concept, but merely the harbinger of tidings. I pass no judgment!

What I will say though, is that it's practiced on a wide scale, but mostly in the shadows. Men will always have secret lovers, women will always have affairs, women will always have multiple babies for different men while men sire many offspring.

Many people are living it, while others can only wistfully dream of it.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Tony Robinson can be reached at seido1yard@gmail.com.**



## A Reggae Christmas Album With A Star-Studded Lineup



VP Records has released a new Christmas album that reimagines classic holiday tunes through a reggae lens.

In a festive blend of reggae and holiday cheer, VP Records has released a new Christmas album that reimagines classic holiday tunes through a reggae lens. The album features a diverse roster of talented artists, each bringing their unique style to beloved holiday songs.

Christopher Martin leads the charge with a reggae-infused

rendition of "This Christmas," infusing the joyous track with his signature style. Meanwhile, Shuga offers a dazzling version of Mariah Carey's hit, "All I Want For Christmas Is You," adding a fresh twist to the seasonal favorite. Mikey Spice contributes his interpretation of "The Christmas Song (Merry Christmas To You)," showcasing

his distinctive voice.

The album's production is a collaborative effort between Dean Fraser and Clive Hunt, spanning eleven tracks recorded at renowned studios including Mixing Lab, Penthouse Studios, and Tuff Gong Studios.

Other vocal powerhouses featured on the album include Lukie D, Ikaya, Olaf Blackwood, Nadine Sutherland, and Thriller U. Each artist lends their voice to classic Christmas songs, including renditions of "Feliz Navidad" and "It's The Most Wonderful Time Of the Year." Adding to the album's diversity, Robbie Lyn presents an instrumental version of "Someday at Christmas," produced by Clive Hunt.

Dean Fraser teams up with Ubuntu for a refreshing take on "Silver Bells," and Duane Stephenson stands out with the album's sole original track, "Golden Nights (In December)," adding a new classic to the holiday repertoire.

This new release from VP Records is set to bring a reggae twist to holiday celebrations, offering a fresh and vibrant soundtrack for the festive season.



## Beenie Man Among 2023 Reggae Grammy Nominees

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Beenie Man, who enjoyed a career resurgence in 2023, is one of five nominees for Best Reggae Album at next year's Grammy Awards, scheduled for February 4 at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, CA.

'Simma,' his first album in seven years, is nominated alongside Burning Spear's 'No Destroyer,' Buju Banton's 'Born For Greatness,' Bermudian Collie Buddz' 'Cali Roots Riddim 2023,' and Julian Marley & Antaeus' 'Colors of Royal.'

Nominations for the Grammys were announced on November 10th by the Recording Academy.

Beenie Man, 50, is looking for his second Grammy, having won in 2001 with 'Art And Life.' Buju Banton also is aiming for a second win. His first came in 2011 for 'Before The Dawn.'

The 78-year-old Burning Spear, who received his 13th nomination, goes for a hat-trick of wins. He won in 2000 for 'Calling Rastafari,' and in 2009 with 'Jah is Real.'

'Simma' was released by Beenie Man's MD Music Group in August, two years after production on the album ended. But the death of his mother, which resulted in him going through a period of depression,



Beenie Man is one of five nominees for Best Reggae Album at next year's Grammy Awards.

delayed its release.

The 20-song album contains collaborations with fellow dancehall stars Shaggy, Sean Paul and Busy Signal, as well as Stonebwoy from Ghana and Giggs from the United Kingdom. While he dabbles in Afrobeats and hip hop, Beenie Man told Billboard Magazine that 'Simma' is a dancehall project.

"We're just making music. We do Afrobeats, we do everything. Just make some music. Because people love good music and good music lasts forever. Regardless. Good music outlives you. Trust me," he said.

The Grammy nod was announced one week before the Recording Industry Association of America announced that 'Who Am I,' his 1997 hit song, was certified gold for sales of

over 500,000 units.

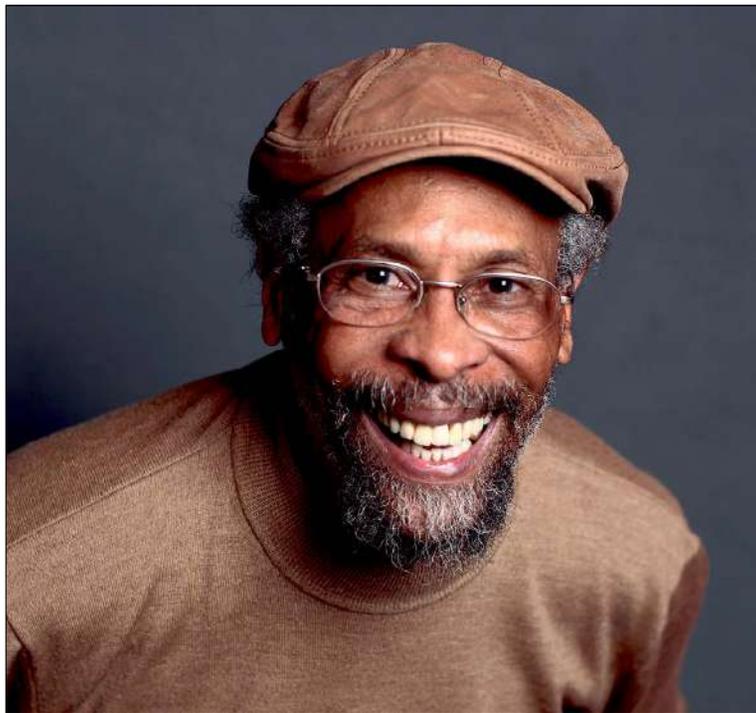
That song, from his 1997 album, 'Many Moods of Moses,' experienced a revival this year through the #SimSimmaChallenge, which featured Kim Kardashian, Ciara and Kelly Rowland, being asked questions about the deejay.

Collie Buddz gets his first Best Reggae Album call. The singer, whose best-known song is 'Come Around,' gave a creditable performance at the Grace Jamaica Jerk Festival in Miramar on November 12th.

Reggae gained Grammy status in 1985 after years of lobbying. Then known as Best Reggae Recording, it was won by Anthem, by roots trio Black Uhuru. Kabaka Pyramid won in 2023 for 'The Kalling.'



## Remembering Neville Garrick



Neville Garrick – 1950 - 2023.

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

In a 1999 interview with the Jamaica Observer newspaper, Neville Garrick recalled his first meeting with Bob Marley. It was 1974, Marley had just launched a solo career and Garrick was arts director for the left-leaning Daily News newspaper.

Garrick said the Rastafarian reggae singer made him a bold pitch.

"Him sey, 'yuh nuh waan come work fi Rasta.' And I said 'yes', and that's how everything started," he recalled.

Garrick, who designed several of Bob Marley and The Wailers' gripping album covers, died on November 14th of cancer in Los Angeles, California. He was 73 years old.

One month earlier, he was awarded the Order of Distinction, Jamaica's sixth-highest honour, but illness prevented him from traveling to Kingston to accept. Garrick last visited Jamaica in March to work as a consultant for 'Bob Marley: One Love,' the Paramount Films movie about the reggae king, scheduled for release in February, 2024.

"Our hearts are broken as we come to terms with this loss. Neville in his own words 'coloured the music' but for us, he coloured our lives. Our hope is that his work will continue to be enjoyed and celebrated around the world," read a release from his family.

The affable Garrick's first major project for Marley was 'Rastaman Vibration,' the 1976 album, that produced hit singles such as the title track, 'Roots, Rock, Reggae,' and 'Who The Cap Fit.'

In August, 'Rastaman Vibration' was recognized by Billboard Magazine as number 22 on its Best 100 Album Covers of All Time list. Other Marley albums Garrick

designed were 'Babylon By Bus,' 'Exodus,' 'Kaya,' 'Survival' and 'Confrontation.'

After Marley's death from cancer in May 1981, Garrick was appointed head of the new Bob Marley Foundation. Two of Marley's children hailed the man they knew from childhood on social media.

Ziggy Marley posted: "@nevillegarrick spent the last year with us from England to Jamaica working on his good friend @bobmarley biopic. His energy was high his affect was positive advising the director and the whole production.

"He wanted to make sure it was done right. He was the light of the production everyone loved hearing his stories and heeding his insights. Without him it could not have been done. It was a continuation of the work he did for my father and the strong friendship they had with each other."

He continued: "I've known Neville since I was a little boy and grew up with him around, to have spent these moments with him working on @onelovemovie meant more to me than can be explained at this time. Having my father's close friend around was a special experience and knowing we became good friends is the bonus. nuff love to his children and friends we can truly and happily say his legacy will live on. Thank you Garrick. JAH"

Cedella Marley, Marley's daughter, posted: "Fly away home Uncle Neville."

Jamaica Prime Minister Andrew Holness also took a moment to reflect on Garrick's legacy. In his post, he said, "... His timeless creations continue to resonate globally, a testament to his enduring legacy."

Neville Garrick is survived by three children, three grandchildren and one brother.



## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT



www.caribeantoday.com

# Inner Circle Boosts Trench Town's JaMi Studio With High-End Recording Console

BY BRIAN BONITTO

The JaMIN (Jamaica Music Institute) Recording Studio, nestled in the historical Trench Town, the same community where reggae legend Bob Marley once resided, is set to experience a significant upgrade, thanks to the Grammy-winning band Inner Circle. The studio recently received a high-end API Box 2 Summing Mixer and Recording Console, a donation aimed at elevating the facility's capabilities to international standards.

Dave "Prime Time" Green,

the studio manager, expressed his enthusiasm for the new console, stating that it will not only enhance the studio's prestige but also positively impact the surrounding community. The installation, expected to be completed at the end of November, is seen as a step towards changing the negative perceptions often associated with Trench Town.

Green, who has been with JaMIN since 2016, recounted his encounter with Inner Circle in Florida, where he shared the studio's needs with Ian Lewis, co-founder and bass player of

the band. Lewis committed to assisting and followed through on his promise, sending the console from Miami. The state-of-the-art mixing board, valued between \$25,000 and \$30,000, features eight input channels, LED metering, and 24 summing channels, positioning JaMIN as a top tier recording facility.

This upgrade is part of a broader initiative to transform Trench Town, an area marked by gang violence and urban decay, into a hub of creative and positive activity. Green, a past student of Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing

Arts and a seasoned musician who has played with several international reggae artists, sees the studio as a catalyst for change. He envisions Trench Town gaining respect and recognition similar to Elvis Presley's Graceland, noting its rich musical heritage and the respect it garners internationally.

JaMIN Recording Studio, established in 2006 as part of Dr. Henley Morgan's Agency for Inner City Renewal, offers free access to community members and has been a birthplace for notable music, including Lantz's 2017 hit "She nah Leggo."

Ian Lewis of Inner Circle is impressed with Green's efforts and the studio's role in nurturing talent and providing a positive outlet for the youth.

Inner Circle, formed in 1968 by Ian and his brother Roger Lewis, gained international acclaim with their Grammy-winning album "Bad Boys" and hits like "Sweat" (A La La La La Long). Their support for JaMIN Recording Studio marks a significant contribution to the legacy of Trench Town and the future of reggae music.



# Grammy-Nominated Reggae Star Protoje Ventures Into Children's Literature

In a surprising move, Grammy-nominated reggae artist Protoje is expanding his creative horizons with the release of his first children's book, "Here Comes The Morning," inspired by his little daughter. Co-authored with The Bookboys, 12-year-old Azibo and 9-year-old Gyasi Bookman, the book was released in November.

To celebrate the launch, Protoje and The Bookboys will host a book signing event at Busboy and Poets – Anacostia (2004 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE) in Washington D.C. The special collector's edition will be unveiled during the event, which is scheduled from 4-6 pm

ET and is open to all ages.

"Here Comes The Morning" aims to captivate young minds, answering the intriguing question inspired by Protoje's daughter, Yara: Where does the sun go after dark? Instead of merely answering, Protoje takes readers on a journey to the easternmost point of their Caribbean island to visit a lighthouse. The story, designed for 3 to 7-year-olds, encourages curiosity, exploration, and the importance of loving parental guidance.

The book is an extension of Protoje's 2022 Grammy-nominated album, "Third Time's The Charm," featuring the track "Here Comes The Morning."



Protoje is expanding his creative horizons with the release of his first children's book, "Here Comes The Morning," inspired by his little daughter, Yara.

Illustrated by Jonathan Nelson, the book is available for purchase on PROTOJE.COM

and BOOKMANEXPRESS.PUB, published by Sapling Books.

In addition to his literary venture, Protoje dropped a remix album titled "In Search Of Zion" on November 10. The album, produced by Zion I Kings, offers a fresh take on his 2020 critically acclaimed album, "In Search of Lost Time," with accompanying dub versions of each track.

Protoje's foray into children's literature marks a new chapter in his artistic journey, expanding his influence from the music world to captivate the hearts and minds of young readers.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



# South Florida's Festive Parade Of Holiday Events

Staying home and looking for something to do this holidays in South Florida? The list of festive activities is extensive, with each offering a distinct South Florida twist on holiday cheer.

One of the highlights is Santa's Enchanted Forest, touted as the "World's Largest Holiday Theme Park," now in its 40th year and a staple of Miami's Christmas celebrations. Another

standout is the NightGarden at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, where visitors can interact with a talking tree named Archie and explore a dazzling light display.

Christmas Wonderland at Tropical Park promises an array of carnival rides and holiday displays, featuring an immersive dome and a half-mile of festive exhibits. Meanwhile, Luminosa:

A Festival of Lights showcases 40 LED lantern scenes highlighting lost civilizations like the Mayans and Atlantis, offering a different kind of holiday illumination.

For snow activities, Snow Carnival at Aventura Mall brings 350 tons of real snow, allowing visitors to build snowmen, slide down snow tubing hills, and enjoy snowball fights in a controlled temperature.

Historic Holiday Décor at Deering Estate this year is themed "Holidays in Wonderland," inspired by Lewis Carroll's works. Zoo Miami's Zoo Lights features over a million lights, with themed nights and holiday photo spots, while the Let it Snow Experience at Dania Pointe promises brief snowfalls perfect for festive videos and photos.

The towering Delray Beach Christmas Tree in Holiday Village and the sand-made "Sandi" at West Palm Beach's Holiday in Paradise add unique twists to traditional Christmas tree displays. The Miami Beach Festival of Lights offers a projection-mapping light and music show on iconic buildings, while Pinecrest Gardens' Nights of Lights presents a fairy-tale forest and diverse holiday performances.

This holiday season, the Miami City Ballet brings a touch of wintry magic to South Florida with its performance of George

Balanchine's The Nutcracker. Featuring over 100 dancers and a live orchestra, the show will tour across the region. Performances are scheduled from December 8-10 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, December 15-24 at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts in Miami, and December 28-30 at the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach. Ticket prices range from \$39 to \$265.

In Fort Lauderdale, the Historic Stranahan House Museum offers Victorian Christmas Tours, providing a glimpse into Christmas traditions of the past. These tours, complete with Victorian-style holiday decor and guides in period attire, will be available on select nights in December. Tickets for this nostalgic journey into Christmas history are priced at \$30.

For a more active celebration, the Jingle Bell Jog invites participants to dash through the streets of South Florida dressed as Santas. This festive run, complete with provided Santa suits and



Santa's Enchanted Forest is a Miami Christmas institution.

jingling bells for shoes, will take place in Miami, Key Biscayne, Delray Beach, and Fort Lauderdale. There's also a special Kids Elf Dash for younger participants. The races are scheduled for December 16 in Miami, December 17 in Key Biscayne, December 23 in Delray Beach, and December 24 in Fort Lauderdale. Registration fees range from \$30 to \$45 for the 5K race and \$20 for the Kids Elf Dash.

Lastly, the Winterfest Boat Parade, a major event drawing around a million spectators, features a 12-mile parade of festively decorated boats, yachts, and showboats, with Boyz II Men as the grand marshals this year.

- Rewritten from the Miami Times



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# Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival Celebrates 21st Year With Record Attendance And Star Performances

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Twenty-one is generally considered the year when a person comes of age. The Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival reached that milestone on November 12th, and there were over 8,000 persons who helped organizers celebrate at Miramar Regional Park.

Patrons had many booths serving jerked cuisine and other popular Jamaican dishes to choose from. There were also live performances from Collie Buddz, Ding Dong and his Ravers dancers and Grammy winners Morgan Heritage who closed the show.

Eddy Edwards, who co-founded 'Jerk Fest' in 2001, said, "Overall we are pleased with the



A performer at the 2023 Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival.

outcome of this year's festival." He estimates that the turnout topped the 2022 show by over 1,000 and pointed to his team's re-focus on the show's culinary aspect for that increased support.

Edwards noted that there is still room for improvement.

"Hindsight is 20/20 and from a production standpoint, there are a few things we could do differently, and will make

adjustments in those areas for next time," he told Caribbean Today. "We will work on getting cars into the venue much faster and reduce the wait time for entry to the event. Maintenance of the restrooms during the event needs better management as well and adding refreshment in the Kid's Fun Zone are items that come to mind now. The team will debrief and analyze as we plan for next year's event."

Making his 'Jerk Fest' debut, Bermudian singjay Collie Buddz gave a workmanlike performance. The 2024 Grammy nominee for Best Reggae Album set the pace for Morgan Heritage who gave a spirited, albeit rush set due to time constraints. The Celebrity Chef Challenge, another staple of the event, was

retained for a second year by NBC-6's Cherney Amhara, over WPLG's Alexis Frazier. Edwards, who is from Kingston, has become the face of jerk festivals in the Jamaican Diaspora. In addition to the South Florida flagship event, he has spearheaded similar shows in Queens, New York and Washington DC.

The Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival debuted in the early 2000s when jerked food was becoming popular with the American mainstream. It has attracted major sponsorship from companies such as GraceKennedy Limited in Jamaica, and Publix supermarket, the largest of its kind in Florida.



## Caribshopper Launches Exclusive Caribbean Liquor Range For The Holiday Season

In a significant expansion of its product line, Caribshopper, the leading online marketplace for Caribbean goods, has announced the introduction of a premium selection of authentic Caribbean liquors. This new offering arrives just in time for the holiday season, promising to add an exotic and vibrant touch to festive celebrations across the United States.

As the holiday season beckons, Caribshopper proudly unveils an array of Caribbean liquors, set to elevate festive gatherings, celebrations, and gift-giving occasions. Renowned for its unique and diverse liquor, the Caribbean offers an array of beverages deeply rooted in local traditions and centuries-old recipes.

This curated collection by Caribshopper includes an assortment of Caribbean liquors, providing customers a taste of the region's unique flavors and rich culture. The selection features smooth and flavorful beers from Jamaica, like Red Stripe, aromatic spiced rums from Trinidad and Tobago, including offerings from House of Angostura, and tropical fruit-infused spirits such as Shandy Carib and Red Stripe Sorrel Beer.



Caribshopper, the leading online marketplace for Caribbean goods, has announced the introduction of a premium selection of authentic Caribbean liquors.

Kadion Preston, CEO and Founder of Caribshopper, shared his enthusiasm about the launch. "Our mission is to open a gateway to the vibrant culture and products of the Caribbean. Introducing these authentic liquors during the holiday season lets our customers experience the islands' richness and traditions. It's like delivering the gift of the Caribbean right to their doorstep," he stated.

With this expansion, Caribshopper reaffirms its commitment to providing an unparalleled shopping experience, now enhanced by the addition of Caribbean liquors

to its catalog. These products are available for immediate purchase, ensuring customers can enjoy these exceptional offerings in time for their holiday festivities.

The Caribshopper website invites customers to explore and purchase from a wide range of Caribbean liquors and other authentic products, with convenient delivery options to the US. With the holiday season around the corner, it's the perfect opportunity to immerse in the essence of the Caribbean through these top-quality spirits.

Caribshopper is the foremost online marketplace connecting customers in the United States and Canada with the vibrant culture and products of the Caribbean. Offering an extensive selection of authentic Caribbean items, including food, beverages, clothing, and more, Caribshopper serves as a bridge for Caribbean residents and aficionados to the tastes, traditions, and goods of the islands they cherish.

For more details on Caribshopper's latest Caribbean liquor range and to view their complete product catalog, visit [caribshopper.com](http://caribshopper.com).



Black Cake is a favorite in many Caribbean countries, including in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, especially at Christmas. A few weeks ago, we brought you the recipe for setting your fruits for this delicious cake. Here's how you can now bake the cake using the already set fruits.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs. brown sugar
- 1 lb. butter
- 12 eggs, beaten
- 1 lb. flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 teaspoon mixed spices
- ¼ pound mixed peel
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Red Wine

### METHOD

- Make a caramel by adding about one pound of the brown sugar to a pot and heating until it begins to melt.

## A Black Cake Recipe For The Holidays

- Add at least a cup on wine and simmer until a dark color is obtained.
- Grease and double line an 8-inch bake pan.
- Cream the rest of the sugar and butter until smooth or add to an electric mixer and let it do the work for you.
- Add eggs one at a time (beaten or unbeaten) and mix.
- Add in the set fruit and nuts and stir well.
- Add enough caramel to make it as dark as desired.
- Sift flour, baking powder and spice together.
- Add a little at a time and fold in.
- Mix into a soft dropping consistency by adding a little more of the wine or rum.
- Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and bake in a slow oven at 300 degrees F, for 2 hours on the middle shelf.
- Pour some of the remaining wine or rum over immediately after cake it is baked.
- Repeat 3 or 4 times.
- Serve at room temperature.
- Cake can be kept and preserved all year round by reading rum.

Bon Appetite

- NewsAmericasNow.com



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Peter A. Webley  
Publisher

## Short Of Breath? It Could Be Interstitial Lung Disease

It is estimated that about 250,000 Americans are living with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and scleroderma associated ILD, two types of interstitial lung disease (ILD) that can make breathing difficult.

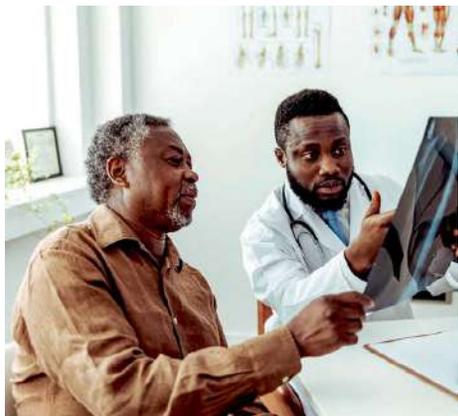
The American Lung Association, with support from Boehringer Ingelheim, is providing support and resources to those impacted by ILD. As part of the educational campaign, they are sharing these important facts and insights:

### What is ILD?

Interstitial lung disease is an umbrella term used for a large group of diseases that cause scarring (fibrosis) of the lungs. The scarring causes stiffness that makes it difficult to breathe and get oxygen to the bloodstream. Lung damage from ILDs is often irreversible and gets worse over time, however treatment is available to help relieve symptoms.

### Who Is At Risk?

While anyone can get interstitial lung disease, many things can increase the risk of ILD or even cause it, including genetics and certain medications or medical treatments, like radiation or chemotherapy. Smoking can not only cause ILDs, but can make the condition much worse, which is why anyone diagnosed is strongly



encouraged to quit. Additionally, people with autoimmune diseases such as scleroderma -- also called systemic sclerosis -- are at an increased risk of developing an ILD. Unfortunately, in the case of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, the cause is unknown.

### What are the symptoms of ILD?

The most common symptom of all ILDs is shortness of breath. This is often accompanied by a dry cough, chest discomfort, fatigue and occasionally, weight loss.

### How Is ILD Diagnosed?

Healthcare providers test for ILD through a chest X-ray or CT scan. A lung function test may be used to measure total lung capacity, which may have deteriorated due to the ILD. In more serious cases, and to diagnose a specific type of ILD, more invasive procedures may be needed, such as a lung biopsy or bronchoscopy, which employs a

small camera located at the end of a flexible tube that takes photos and collects tissue samples of the air passages.

### How Can ILD Be Managed?

It is recommended that patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis stay active and eat well. They may also be encouraged to use oxygen therapy as prescribed to help manage their condition. In some cases, the condition can be slowed by certain medications, and occasionally, people with IPF will be recommended for lung transplant.

## Study To Explore Exercise's Impact On Aging Brains And Dementia

Physical activity is known to benefit brain health in aging individuals, yet the specifics of its impact, particularly in preventing diseases like Alzheimer's, remain under investigation. Kirk Erickson, a renowned researcher in the field of exercise and dementia, is spearheading an extensive follow-up study at AdventHealth Neuroscience Institute in Orlando to delve deeper into these questions.

This study, named FLAME (Follow-up Longitudinal Analysis of Moderate-intensity Exercise), will re-evaluate over 600 older adults across three cities who previously

### Where Can Patients Find Support?

Two new educational webcasts -- "Newly Diagnosed with ILD" and "Living with ILD" -- will provide education, resources and support to patients and their loved ones. Both webcasts will feature a healthcare provider and patient, and will be made available on-demand after the live showing. Critical resources can also be found through the American Lung Association's Patient & Caregiver Network, a nationwide patient-centric community that connects people living with lung diseases like ILD with critical support,

education and access to emerging research like clinical trials. Join for free at Lung.org/pcn. To learn more, call the Lung HelpLine at 800-LUNGUSA or visit Lung.org.

Understanding ILD and getting support is critical in helping patients breathe easier. Not only is diagnosis essential to disease treatment and management, connecting with others walking in the same shoes can be an invaluable source of support and practical help.

### - StatePoint



participated in the IGNITE study. This earlier trial examined the effects of exercise on brain health, but its results have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funded by an \$11 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, FLAME aims to conduct a comprehensive reassessment of these individuals. "We want to reevaluate them thoroughly -- from their physical activity levels to memory tests and MRI scans -- to plot the trajectory of change and predict future changes," Erickson explained. The ultimate goal of the study is to enable doctors to provide

more personalized exercise recommendations for seniors, enhancing their cognitive health. Erickson emphasizes the established link between exercise and brain health, and through FLAME, he hopes to make a more definitive statement about how exercise behaviours can reduce age-related cognitive impairments.

The research, set to begin early next year, involves multiple institutions, including the University of Pittsburgh, Northeastern University, and the University of Kansas Medical Center, in addition to AdventHealth.



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# Antiguan Singer Causion Releases 'Caribbean Vacation'

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Antiguans love to boast about their cricketing prowess and a tourism industry bolstered by 365 beaches! On 'Caribbean Vacation,' Causion projects his country's hospitable attributes.

The singer, who lives in South Florida, co-wrote, and co-produced the song with Maurice Gregory, his long-time collaborator. Featuring veteran Jamaican deejay Red Fox, it was released on November 10th and is a joint venture with Elite Island Resorts, a company that operates luxury hotels in Antigua.

Causion reckons he has visited as many as 14 Caribbean countries, but he has a bias when it comes to his favorite.

"Each island has its own



Causion as seen in the music video 'Caribbean Vacation.'

unique thing, but a Antigua me come from. Antigua just do it for me every time," he told Caribbean Today recently.

'Antigua Me Come From' is actually the name of Causion's first promotional song, with tourism interests in that country. It was released in June as part of

'Mission in Progress,' his EP.

That project also contains 'Come on Baby,' another song he recorded with Red Fox, a stalwart of the tri-state area's dancehall scene.

A video for 'Caribbean Vacation' has also been released. Song and visuals have been

given the thumbs-up from Elite Island Resorts.

"This incredible new song was inspired by Antigua's people, natural beauty, and popularity as a world-class holiday destination," said a press statement. "The video was filmed on location at some of Antigua's most picturesque resorts and beaches and features both international and local models. The song and video also include a special appearance and vocal performance by popular Jamaican reggae artist, Red Fox. Caribbean Vacation invites the world to discover the warmth and wonder of an unforgettable holiday in Antigua."

Causion, whose real name is Gregory Bailey, is from the town of St. Paul's. He grew up there during the 1970s when cricket

and the ubiquitous Bird family were buzz words in Antigua.

Vivian Richards, Andy Roberts, Richie Richardson and Curtly Ambrose are just some of the cricketers who helped put Antigua on the international map. Its tourism product was enhanced during the 1980s by the construction of high-end hotels, which attracts A-listers like Oprah Winfrey and Eric Clapton who own homes there.

This year, Causion made his acting debut in 'Deep Blue,' a movie produced and directed by the Antiguan husband-and-wife team of Howard and Mitzi Allen.

See the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bECqQn8H0ys>



## Caribbean Tourism Thrives Post-Pandemic



BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Coming out of the recent World Travel Market, (WTM) conference, held in London this past November, Caribbean travel and tourism professionals are optimistic about the prospects for the global tourism industry based on impressive 2023 statistics.

In fact, the WTM Global Travel Market Report in association with Tourism Economics, a travel data company, estimates that world international trips should exceed 1.26 billion in 2023, with 60 percent of that coming from leisure trips.

The Caribbean market is certainly benefiting from these trends and is especially buoyant as numbers continue to tick up post-pandemic. In fact, the Caribbean Tourism Organization, (CTO), representing 25 English, French, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean territories recorded growth for most of its member states in its October 2023 statistical report, as it welcomed its new Secretary-General and CEO, Dona Regis-Prosper, who took the reins in September.

CTO statistics for the period January-September 2023

highlights that out of the 23 member territories that reported international arrivals 22 recorded growth over the same period in 2022, with Aruba at 12.4 percent and British Virgin Islands at a whopping 60.5 percent being examples.

Jamaica and St. Vincent & the Grenadines registered gains in tourist arrivals of 26.8 percent and 43.9 percent, respectively, for the first six months of the year. Part of Jamaica's growth stemmed from its UK visitors last year, recorded at 229,000, becoming the number one destination for British visitors for 2023. The island's Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, wants to surpass this number and has set a target of 250,000 visitors out of the UK and Ireland by 2025.

### ROBUST PACE OF RECOVERY

All of this bodes well for a strong regional finish to 2023 as indicated by CTO's Chairman, Kenneth Bryan in a press conference earlier this year.

"It is clearly apparent that even in the face of the devastating blows delivered by the pandemic, as a region we have responded with hope, strength, and the determination

to prevail. Great strides have been made and many of our jurisdictions ended 2022 registering higher than predicted visitor arrivals. That is a clear indication that the sector is bouncing back and hopes are high that the robust pace of recovery will continue

from the United States for the January to September 2023 period increased significantly. Specifically, Curacao recorded a massive 62.5 percent gain in US visitors while Trinidad & Tobago, Belize, and Aruba reported 42.8 percent, 11.9 percent, and 9.9 percent



CTO Chairman, Kenneth Bryan.

into 2023 and beyond," said Bryan.

Tourist arrivals by market is certainly pointing in the right direction according to the CTO statistics, which reports visitors

growth, respectively.

Canadian visitors to the Caribbean also painted healthy numbers for the same four territories mentioned above. Trinidad & Tobago,

at 56.7 percent and Belize at 51.3 percent saw gains from European visitors for January-September 2023. Growth in cruise arrivals was also reported for the 23 reporting destinations. Cruise visitors are expected to continue based on comments by Josh Weinstein, President and Chief Climate Officer at Carnival Corporation. At the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association's annual conference in November Weinstein said Carnival's portfolio of cruise brands will expand their Caribbean presence to more than 5,000 calls.

These tourism statistics and forecasts indicate that overall, the Caribbean has recovered from its pandemic-era downturn, but there is still work to be done. The region must continue to push its unique destinations with a focus on sustainability by promoting its natural, cultural, human, and social resources that are so crucial to the people and economies of all the states in the region.





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# BOOK REVIEW



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## A Memoir About Grace Under Fire

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

**TITLE:** *Sufferah: The Memoir of a Brixton Reggae-head*  
**AUTHOR:** Alex Wheatle  
**PUBLISHER:** Akashic Books

Just as he was born ‘out of place,’ Alex Wheatle always felt like an outsider. But it is precisely this non-conformist maverick status that saved him.

Abandoned by his birth mother as a baby and placed in the British foster care system, Wheatle suffered physical and mental abuse which molded him into a ‘rebel with a cause,’ fighting against the established racist norm in the society he was born in. Unfortunately, this is not a unique story. Many children become trapped in foster care only to come out

scarred by their experiences. But while raw and honest, Wheatle tells his story with sensitivity.

The product of Jamaican parents, neither of whom could take care of him, Wheatle would find solace in Reggae music, rhythms of the ‘Sufferah.’ Indeed, that’s how he saw himself throughout his formative years, being flung from one foster home to

another - a victim suffering under Babylon system.

But that would all change as he matured and absorbed the true message of the music: ‘Don’t be defined by injustice, fight against it.’ This was reinforced by mentors like Simeon, his Rastafari ‘teacher’ who taught him to rise above the system and “make the invisible, visible.”

Baptized in the sounds of this hypnotic reggae resistance, Wheatle was now a reggae-head living through the music that would help shape his literary career.

Listening to music by some of his favorite artists like Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, Max Romeo, Bob Marley, Marcia Griffiths, Mighty Diamonds, and reggae toasters U-Roy, I-Roy and Dennis Alcapone, the author would come out on the other side.

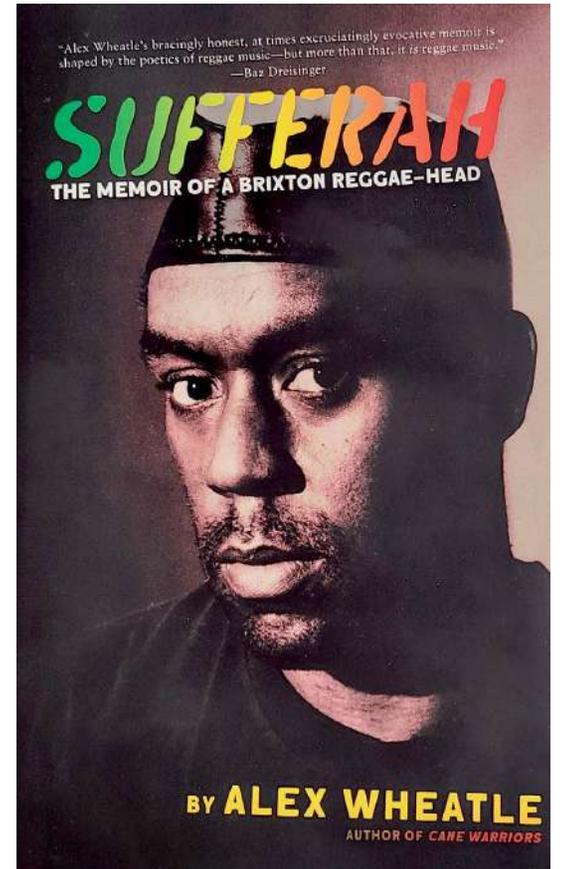
He grew up in Brixton, South London’s Caribbean enclave, never knowing his mother, who returned to Jamaica, and with only brief encounters with his father. At just three years of age Wheatle was placed in social care where his physical and mental assault began. His reggae awakening would begin ten years later. This musical journey would sustain him into what would become some of Britain’s darkest and bloodiest periods in the struggle for racial justice.

### STAIN

The New Cross Fire is a stain on British history that Wheatle recounts for his readers. On March 2, 1981, a mysterious fire started at a birthday party for a black teenage girl in the New Cross area of London. Thirteen young black people between 14 and 22 were killed. No one was charged, but many suspected foul play.

Wheatle’s account of the aftermath is searing, taking readers on the road with him as he and many others in black neighborhoods such as Brixton, took to the streets having had enough of police brutality, systemic racism and indiscriminate killing of young black men.

Our breath quickens as he runs from chasing policemen,



The cover of Alex Wheatle’s ‘Sufferah: The Memoir of a Brixton Reggae-head.’

after throwing bricks at them from behind a hastily put-together barricade. Smoke from burning cars and storefronts stab the air, making it hard to breathe. He jumps a fence; he hides in a huge rubbish bin and we smell the stench of the garbage around him. And we cheer him on.

Raw and gritty at times, yet hopeful because of the fight in him, Wheatle obviously survived to tell his story. Yes, he learned lessons - he had to. Taking such punishment from an early age did indeed leave him angry, scared, impulsive, explosive, and lonely. But with encouragement from those who nurtured him, including St. Giles School for pupils with physical, medical, and learning difficulties, Wheatle learned to forgive.

It is this new-found peace that opened a whole new world to him. The reggae lyrics he wrote as a youth, the poems that helped release him from loneliness, all became fodder for a budding literary career. His young adult novels have garnered him prestigious awards and best-selling recognition. His life story has been memorialized as part of filmmaker Steve McQueen’s series ‘Small Axe.’ For his contribution to British literature, Wheatle was awarded Member of the Order of the British Empire, (MBE) for his invaluable services to the industry.

Indeed, this Sufferah’s tale is made visible. It is an inspiring narrative about grace under fire and why negativity should never define us.



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# West Indies Give Fans Hope With Win Over England



West Indies captain Shai Hope goes on the attack during his 16th ODI hundred on Sunday, December 3, 2023. (Photo courtesy CWI Media)

The West Indies men's cricket team, led by Skipper Shai Hope, gave fans new hope this holiday season as they defeated England by four wickets in the opening One-Day International of the three-match series at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground in Antigua on Dec. 3rd.

The Bajan-born skipper led his side with an awe-inspiring performance and his 16th One-Day International century. Facing a challenging target of 326, the Windies team pulled off an incredible win with seven balls to spare. This remarkable achievement marked the Windies' highest successful run chase in the Caribbean and the second-highest ever.

The unshakeable Hope was the star of the show, crafting a breathtaking unbeaten 109 from just 83 deliveries – his fastest century in ODI cricket! He powered his way to this milestone with four fours and seven sixes, including three consecutive sixes in the penultimate over bowled by Sam Curran.

Hope's innings was complemented by Alick Athanaze's dazzling 66, Romario Shepherd's explosive 48, and valuable contributions from Brandon King (35) and Shimron Hetmyer (32).

Hope, who now stands just one century away from Desmond Haynes and three away from

Brian Lara on the all-time West Indies list, emphasized that his primary goal is to win games for the team.

On the other side, England set a competitive target of 325 all out, with Harry Brook's 71 and Zak Crawley's 48 being the standout performances.

The West Indies bowlers, led by Gudakesh Motie, Oshane Thomas, and Romario Shepherd, played a crucial role in limiting England's progress.

In the end, it was a thrilling and unforgettable encounter, highlighted by Hope's brilliant century and Shepherd's late heroics.

### ODI SERIES

- The West Indies next face England on Dec. 6th, also in Antigua. (5.30pm start)
- 3rd ODI, December 9 at Kensington Oval, Barbados (5.30pm start)

### T20 series

- 1st T20I: December 12 at Kensington Oval, Barbados (10pm start)
- 2nd T20I: December 14 at National Cricket Stadium, Grenada (5.30pm start)
- 3rd T20I: December 16 at National Cricket Stadium, Grenada (5.30pm start)
- 4th T20I: December 19 at Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad and Tobago (8pm start)

- start)
- 5th T20I: December 21 at Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad and Tobago (8pm start)

### Scores:

ENGLAND: 325 all out off 50 overs (Harry Brook 71, Zak Crawley 48, Phil Salt 45, Sam Curran 38, Brydon Carse 31

not out; Gudakesh Motie 2-49, Oshane Thomas 2-57, Romario Shepherd 2-77)

WEST INDIES: 326 for six off 48.5 overs (Shai Hope 109 not out, Alick Athanaze 66, Romario Shepherd 48, Brandon King 35, Shimron Hetmyer 32; Rehan Ahmed 2-40, Gus Atkinson 2-62)



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## HIT & RUN FATALITY

**VICTIM/PEDESTRIAN**  
Rupert Webley  
B/M, 68 years old

On Sunday, May 2, 2021, at approximately 9:25 p.m., the above-pictured victim/pedestrian began crossing at SW 184 Street and SW 112 Avenue, Miami, Florida, when the subject vehicle, a Hyundai silver in color, struck and killed him. The driver of the subject vehicle fled the scene without rendering aid and/or reporting the crash.

SUBJECT VEHICLE DESCRIPTION: HYUNDAI SILVER IN COLOR. NO OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

Anyone with information on the above HIT & RUN FATALITY, the whereabouts of the subject vehicle and/or its driver is requested to contact Miami-Dade Police Department Traffic Homicide Detective J. Childers at (305) 471-2425. If you wish to remain anonymous, then contact Miami-Dade County Crime Stoppers at the following:

- (305) 471-TIPS (8477) or 1 (866) 471-8477
- Visit [www.CrimeStoppers305.com](http://www.CrimeStoppers305.com) and select "Submit a Tip"
- Visit [www.facebook.com/crimestoppers305](https://www.facebook.com/crimestoppers305) - "Contact Us"
- Visit the App Store - Get P3 and sign into Miami for Tips

If the tip leads to the arrest of the subject(s), the tipster may be eligible for a reward **UP TO THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000.00**. All calls are kept strictly anonymous.

ISSUE DATE: 9/11/2021 RN SUPERVISOR: Sgt. Francisco Armendariz MDPD C/N PD210502138114

If this flyer aids in your investigation in any way, please advise Deborah Simons, I.A., of the South Florida Homicide Clearinghouse at 305-471-2400.

# Reggae Boyz Looks Forward To Bright New Year



Jamaica's Bobby De Cordova-Reid, top left, celebrates with goalkeeper Andre Blake after the team's win over Canada in the second leg of a Concacaf Nations League quarterfinal in Toronto on Tuesday, Nov. 21, 2023. (Chris Young/The Canadian Press via AP).

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz historic victory in Toronto in November has set the stage for a bright New Year for the team.

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz achieved a historic first-ever victory on Canadian soil, defeating Canada 3-2 in the second leg of their League A quarterfinal of the 2023-24 CONCACAF Nations League at BMO Field in Toronto.

The significant win for Jamaica resulted in a 4-4 draw on aggregate, with the Reggae Boyz securing advancement due to the away goal tiebreaker. This victory not only propels Jamaica

into the 2023-24 CONCACAF Nations League semi-finals set for March but also earns them a spot in the prestigious CONMEBOL Copa America 2024.

This triumph marks a significant milestone in Jamaica's football history, showcasing their ability to compete on the international stage and setting the stage for their participation in next year's COPA America, where they will join other top teams from the region.



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# SPORTS NEWS



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## Prestigious Golden Jubilee Independence Award Presented to Bahamian Olympic 400-m Champion

In honor of his outstanding contributions to Bahamian sports history, Steven Gardiner, the Tokyo Olympic gold medallist, was bestowed with The Golden Jubilee Independence Award of Supreme Honor by the Government of The Bahamas recently. This

prestigious accolade pays tribute to Gardiner's remarkable accomplishments on the track, cementing his status as a pioneering figure for the nation.

The Special Golden Jubilee of Independence Award recognizes individuals who have made exceptional



Steven Gardiner, 2nd from r., the Tokyo Olympic gold medallist, was recently bestowed with The Golden Jubilee Independence Award of Supreme Honor by the Government of The Bahamas.

contributions to The Bahamas across various fields of human endeavor, spanning both the pre-Independence and post-Independence eras of Bahamian history.

Gardiner's victory in the 400m event at the Tokyo Olympics not only secured his title as the 2021 Olympic champion but also engraved his name in Bahamian sports history as the first Bahamian man to claim Olympic gold in any sport.

The 28-year-old sprinter, also the 2019 World Champion, has had a stellar career, boasting Olympic bronze and World Championship silver medals.

Gardiner holds the national records for the 400m and 200m in The Bahamas, posting impressive times of 43.48 and 19.75, respectively. Indoors, he has demonstrated his prowess with a national best performance of 31.56 over 300m, setting an area best and world-best

performance.

Despite setbacks due to injuries that sidelined him during the 2022 and 2023 World Championships in Oregon and Budapest, Gardiner maintains optimism for a triumphant comeback at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Expressing his gratitude for this prestigious award, Gardiner acknowledged the unwavering support from God, family, friends, and supporters. In an Instagram post, he shared his anticipation for the upcoming track season and the opportunities to showcase his talent, stating, "I look forward to this upcoming track season and the opportunities to showcase my talent and make my country proud."

Gardiner's achievements further enrich The Bahamas' proud legacy in track and field, joining the ranks of distinguished athletes like contemporaries Shaunae Miller-Uibo and Tonique Williams.

- *Rewritten from SportsMax*



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## UWI Honor For Shelly-Ann



Jamaican Olympian Shelly-Ann Fraser Pryce with her UWI award.

Three-time Olympic gold medalist and sprinting icon Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce was recently honored with

the Alumni Exemplar Sports Award at the University of the West Indies' 75th anniversary celebration. Fraser-Pryce, a

five-time world 100m champion, expressed her gratitude for this recognition from the university where she briefly studied years ago.

Announcing the honor on her Instagram, Fraser-Pryce shared her pride in receiving the award, highlighting her lifelong commitment to both sports and education. "As I enter another year, I remain dedicated to my work with the @sfppocketrocketfoundation, focusing on preparing students for success," she stated.

Fraser-Pryce, who was previously conferred an honorary

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

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# Darren Bravo Takes Break From Cricket Following Omission From West Indies ODI Team

Darren Bravo, expressing dissatisfaction over his exclusion from the West Indies One-Day International team, announced his decision to take a temporary break from cricket. In a heartfelt Instagram post, the 34-year-old reflected on his future with West Indies cricket, stating that while he isn't quitting, a hiatus seemed necessary for his career.

Bravo, who has struggled to maintain motivation due to repeated selection disappointments, did not specify the duration of his break. He mentioned the challenges of staying energized and committed in the face of ongoing selection issues.

"I find it increasingly challenging to continue

summoning the energy, passion, commitment, and discipline required to perform optimally and vie for a return to international cricket," Bravo stated.

Despite being one of the region's top players, Bravo was not included in the 15-man squad for the upcoming ODIs against England, despite leading the Super50 Cup with 416 runs at an average of 83. His last appearance for the West Indies was 22 months ago, and he was also



Left-hander Darren Bravo is taking a break from cricket. (CMC image)

overlooked after averaging 48 in last year's Super50 Cup.

Bravo expressed feeling overlooked and in a "very dark place," given his absence from any of the three West Indies teams currently playing. He felt this signaled a clear message from the selectors.

"With no direct communication, I've been left to interpret my continuous non-selection as an indication that my time may be up. Despite my performance in regional tournaments, not being included in any of the 40-45 player teams suggests a clear message," he added.

Bravo concluded his statement by saying he might step aside to make way for younger talent, although he's not giving up on his dreams.

He ended with a positive note, wishing everyone the best and affirming that "age is just a number."

In response to Bravo's form and subsequent exclusion, chief selector Desmond Haynes explained that the focus was on younger players in preparation for the 2027 World Cup. Haynes acknowledged Bravo's consistent performance but emphasized the investment in younger players like Alick Athanaze and Keacy Carty, seeing the upcoming matches against England as an opportunity for these players.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



# Kingston Set To Host Electrifying Wray & Nephew Fight Night Finale



Get ready for Kingston's Fight Night. (CMC image)

On December 16, Kingston's vibrant downtown area will once again buzz with excitement as it hosts the grand finale of the Wray & Nephew Fight Nights, a highly-anticipated boxing event that has captivated Jamaicans throughout the year. Set against the scenic backdrop of the city's seaside, this event promises an unforgettable end to the year's boxing calendar.

Jermaine "Breezy" Richards, an undefeated professional boxer, is gearing up for his third fight of the season at Breezy Castle, where he has consistently demonstrated his prowess in the ring. The event is also set to introduce a new wave

of female boxers, each aiming to dominate the sport.

Adding to the night's excitement, Ian Darby will make his much-awaited return to the ring, following his memorable fight against Fabian "Truck" Tucker earlier in October.

Stephen Jones, President of the Jamaica Boxing Board, is optimistic about the series' impact and its role in promoting local talent. "The Fight Night series has exceeded our expectations, attracting significant attention to Jamaica as a boxing hub. The upcoming fights, featuring crowd favorites Jermaine Richards and Ian Darby against tough Colombian

opponents, are shaping up to be our most thrilling event yet," he shared.

Pavel Smith, Marketing Manager at Wray & Nephew, echoed this sentiment, highlighting the series' success in reigniting passion for boxing in Jamaica. "The overwhelming

support for local boxing is evident. We're thrilled to see fans and athletes equally excited, and we invite everyone to join us at Breezy Castle for a spectacular culmination of the Wray & Nephew boxing series," Smith commented.

The Wray & Nephew Fight

Nights, sponsored by notable brands including Television Jamaica, Pepsi Jamaica, and others, began in July and is set to continue enthralling boxing enthusiasts into 2024.

- *Rewritten from SportsMax*



## UWI Honor For Shelly-Ann

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

doctorate of laws degree from both the University of the West Indies in 2016 and the University of Technology, continues to be a beacon of excellence in athletics. Her academic journey includes graduating with honors from the University of Technology in 2012, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Child and Adolescent Development.

Off the track, Fraser-Pryce shines as a champion for youth development. Through her Pocket Rocket Foundation, she

provides vital financial support to promising student-athletes, blending her passion for sports and education.

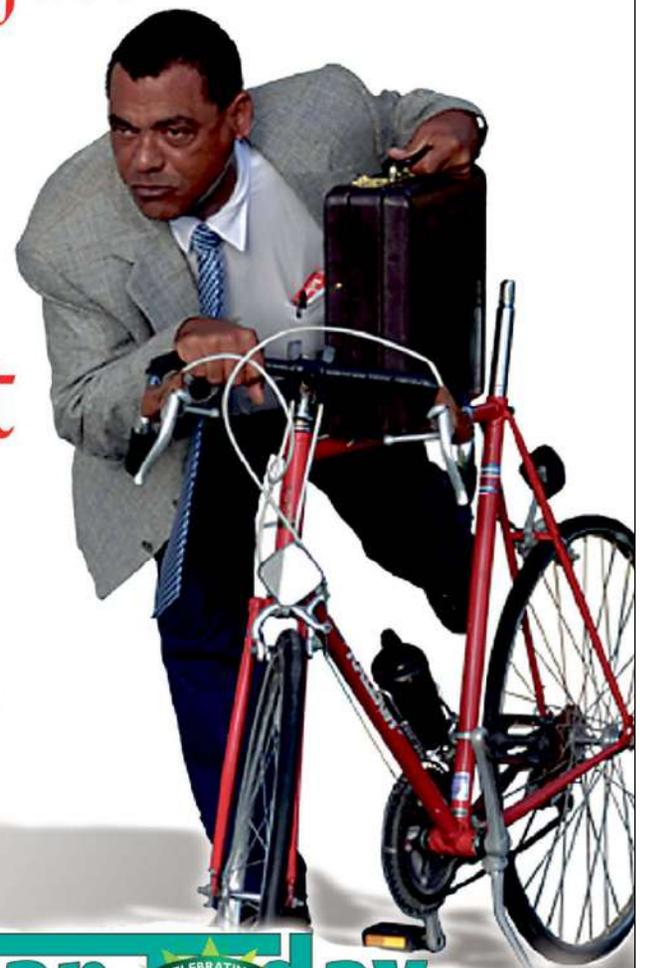
As Fraser-Pryce looks ahead to the Paris 2024 Olympics, aiming for her third Olympic 100m gold medal, this accolade serves as a testament to her remarkable influence both as an athlete and an advocate for education.

- *Rewritten from SportsMax*



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