

# APRIL 2024 Caribbean Today

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## HAITI'S TURMOIL

Will Haiti's Violence Influence The U.S. Presidential Race?  
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Miramar Residents Fight Against Incinerator ... Page 7  
(City of Miramar Instagram Image)



Juici Patties Now In Florida ... Page 8 (Hollywood Mayor Josh Levy/Instagram image)



Leaders from South Florida's Haitian community recently held a news conference in North Miami to talk about solutions and what they'd like to see happen in their homeland. (CBS News Miami Image)

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

## REGIONAL

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Economic Rights, Social, Cultural and Environmental (REDESCA) are calling on Caribbean countries to guarantee that educational institutions maintain efforts, as well as contribute to the fight against racial discrimination.

In a message marking the commemoration of the “International Days for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved Persons” on March 25th, the two organizations say they recognize the role of higher educational institutions in the preservation and access to the correct historical memory of people of African descent.

They said higher educational institutions in the region have implemented strategies to recognize the contributions of the African Diaspora in the Americas, through research and teaching on the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people. Universities and other institutions of higher education play a significant role in recognizing the correct memory of black communities in the Americas through research and teaching.

## JAMAICA

Jamaica Prime Minister Andrew Holness has defended the government’s fiscal strategy against the People’s National Party’s critique, emphasizing the absence of new taxes for nine consecutive budgets. Holness highlighted the

opposition’s misunderstanding or denial of the government’s achievements, such as increased employment and contributions to the tax pool from various sectors, including newly built hotels, BPOs, and SMEs. He pointed out the rise in wage levels and the formal economy’s expansion, contrasting these successes with the opposition’s narrative. His comments come as Leader of the opposition, Mark Golding, says it is time for a change in the government as Jamaicans have signaled this to the Andrew Holness-led administration based on the outcome of the recent Local Government election. The opposition leader was speaking during his contribution to the recent 2024/25 Budget Debate. He said the desire for change was evident by the significantly higher number of Jamaicans who voted in the February 26 Local Government Election when compared to the number that voted in 2016.

## GUYANA

Guyana has “strongly” condemned the killing of more than 100 people in Moscow after gunmen entered the Crocus City Hall, firing indiscriminately before setting it on fire on March 22nd. The Foreign Ministry said “we hope that the injured will quickly recover” in this “dastardly attack.”

The Islamic State (IS) group says it was behind the attack, posting an image of the four masked men they claimed were involved in the assault. Russia has not commented on the IS claim. Russian President



Former US President Bill Clinton was in Guyana late last month and underscored the importance of regional cooperation, suggesting that closer collaboration could foster progress across the Americas. (NewsGuyana image)

Vladimir Putin has said all four gunmen who carried out the attack have been arrested.

## BERMUDA

A High Court in Bermuda sentenced lawyer Tyrone Quinn, 37, to 15 years for stealing nearly \$500,000 from clients, exploiting their trust and vulnerability during difficult times.

Found guilty on three counts of theft, Quinn failed to repay his victims, prompting a confiscation inquiry for compensation. The case highlighted the profound impact of his actions on clients already suffering from severe accidents, emphasizing the ongoing pain and financial strain caused by Quinn’s betrayal.

## ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves of St. Vincent and the

Grenadines has voiced strong opposition to the World Bank’s International Development Association’s proposal for higher interest rates on loans for Caribbean nations, planning to reach out to global leaders in protest. The Washington-based financial institution suggested last week that the interest rates paid by more developed Caribbean countries move from between one and two per cent to between 3.3 and 6.8 per cent. Further, the repayment period for loans will move from 50 years to between 30 and 35 years, a move Gonsalves intends to fight against.

## BAHAMAS

The Bahamas’ Prime Minister’s Office has defended the acquisition of a US\$192,000 BMW for Prime Minister Phillip “Brave” Davis amidst public debate on its timing amid rising living costs. This electric vehicle, chosen to align with government policy towards electric transport, replaces a US\$300,000 Mercedes from 2011.

The purchase was justified by the need for vehicles that meet the Prime Minister’s rigorous schedule and security requirements. Additionally, a temporary loaner BMW is in use while a Lexus is under repair, with both to serve in the official vehicle rotation.

## GRENADA

A US citizen has been charged with manslaughter in connection to the death of a 22-year-old Indian student found in a hotel pool in the island’s south. The accused, a California-based behavioral therapist, is set to face court charges for the incident that took place on March 17th, 2024. Initial investigations suggested difficulty in swimming led to the tragedy, despite attempts at life-saving efforts. This follows a 2012 legal amendment specifying penalties for manslaughter by negligence or other causes.

## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

The Trinidad and Tobago government has introduced new

legislation that will reduce the rate of residential property tax by as much as 33 per cent. Finance Minister Colm Imbert said that the Property Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2024, told legislators that the new legislation is intended to reduce the rate of residential property tax from three to two per cent “which represents an effective reduction of property tax by 33 per cent.

## GUYANA

Former US President, Bill Clinton, advocated for greater unity within the Caribbean region during his keynote address at the United Caribbean Forum held at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre in Guyana on March 26th.

Organized by the Dominican Republic (DR) Chamber of Commerce Guyana in collaboration with the Government of Guyana, the forum saw Clinton, as guest of honor, stressing the importance of Caribbean nations uniting for collective strength.

Highlighting the potential of partnerships between nations and organizations, Clinton expressed hope that collaborations like the one between the Dominican Republic and Guyana would invigorate the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). He emphasized the power of cooperation, stating, “We are almost always stronger together... we are almost always better emphasizing things that make us feel bigger.”

While the Dominican Republic is not a member of CARICOM, Clinton underscored the importance of regional cooperation, suggesting that closer collaboration could foster progress across the Americas. He offered assistance through the Clinton Global Initiative to support efforts aimed at bridging gaps and promoting unity within the region.

President Irfaan Ali echoed Clinton’s sentiments, highlighting the potential for partnership between Guyana and the Dominican Republic to address critical areas such as technology, human resource development, tourism, and food production. He emphasized the need to leverage the DR’s expertise to narrow existing gaps and propel Guyana towards global leadership in various sectors.

The forum, attended by diplomatic representatives including the DR Ambassador to Guyana, the US Ambassador to Guyana, the European Union’s Ambassador to Guyana, and the British High Commissioner to Guyana, served as a platform for discussions on enhancing cooperation and fostering development across the Caribbean region.

- Compiled from CMC News  
And NewsAmericasNow.com



## Have You Paid Your Property Taxes?

Your home is one of your most valuable assets, which is why paying your property taxes on time is important.

Property taxes are due March 31 as taxes become delinquent April 1. To avoid additional charges and interest as well as to avoid the potential risk of losing your property, your payment must be received by the Miami-Dade Office of The Tax Collector by May 31.

If your taxes remain unpaid on June 1, your taxes will be sold as a Tax Certificate, a lien that is sold to the investor that will accept the lowest rate of interest for your taxes. Interest will be added to the amount owed.

However, if your taxes remain unpaid for two years after a Tax Certificate has been issued, your property could be sold.

To pay your current property tax bill online, visit [miamidade.gov/taxcollector](http://miamidade.gov/taxcollector).

Convenience fees may apply. For more information on ways to pay your property taxes, visit [miamidade.gov/taxcollector](http://miamidade.gov/taxcollector) and select **Real Estate Tax Payments**.

If paying in person or by mail, your payment must be received by May 31.

To pay delinquent taxes in person, you can bring a cashier’s check, certified funds, money order or cash to the Tax Collector’s Office. Credit cards are accepted.

You can pay real estate and tangible personal property taxes online until Wednesday, May 31 at 11:59 p.m. (EST) at [miamidade.gov/taxcollector](http://miamidade.gov/taxcollector) with e-checking if the funds are available for immediate withdrawal from a regular checking account; or pay using a Visa, Mastercard or Discover credit card.

For hours, location and more information, visit [miamidade.gov/taxcollector](http://miamidade.gov/taxcollector), call 305-270-4916 or email [proptax@miamidade.gov](mailto:proptax@miamidade.gov).

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# Could Violence In Haiti Impact The U.S. Presidential Race?

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

As the violence in Haiti escalates and gang members seize control over the capital of the Caribbean island, putting thousands of lives in peril, local and national Haitian-American leaders are calling on President Joe Biden's to send U.S. troops to restore law and order.

But the Biden administration has objected to U.S. military involvement and instead asked Congress to approve \$300 million to help fund a multi national security force to help Haiti. That force is set to be led by the Kenyan police force but House Republicans have yet to support the measure.

The U.S. military was, however, in Haiti recently, airlifting personnel from the U.S. Embassy and safeguarding the embassy. But they have not been ordered to deal with the rising gang violence even as the multi-national force from Kenya is yet to get off the ground.

So far, while Haiti's now resigned Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, remains in Puerto Rico, the transitional presidential council approved by CARICOM and the US has not materialized amid internal conflicts and protests, including from the gang leaders.

The ongoing violence is having ripple effects. U.S. Congresswoman Haitian-American Sheilas Cherilus-



Sunrise Airways and Global X Airlines joined together on March 25th, to bring approximately 155 passengers from Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city, to Miami. (CBS News Miami image)

McCormick, a Democrat whose district covers portions of Broward and Palm Beach counties, said the unrest could impact the 2024 presidential race for President Biden, in his rematch with former President Donald Trump.

Cherilus-McCormick, along with U.S. Reps. Yvette Clarke, (D-New York) and Ayanna Pressley, (D-Massachusetts), are co-chairs of the Haiti Caucus. She said Haiti is in urgent need of a multi-national security support mission and humanitarian assistance.

"It is crucial that all parties in Haiti urgently put aside their differences and form a transitional government that does not include Ariel Henry, criminals and/or associated organizations," Cherilus-

McCormick said.. "No one's personal ambition is worth the blood of innocent Haitian lives."

Pressley said the violence in Haiti has deteriorated and is impacting the lives of local Haitian-Americans who have family members caught in the middle of the chaos.

She said at least 80 percent of Port-au-Prince is under the control of the gangs.

"Last year alone, there were nearly 5,000 murders, 2,000 kidnappings, and more than 310,000 people who have been internally displaced," Pressley said. "Gangs are routinely using sexual violence and have threatened to start a civil war. Enough is enough."

"We urge our colleagues in Congress to join the Biden-Harris administration and the

international community in funding urgent assistance to restore security for the Haitian people," Jamaican American Congresswoman Clarke said. "Every day we wait for this critical funding, more Haitians will die. The clock is ticking."

Other local Haitian-American leaders held a news conference in North Miami recently to denounce the violence in Haiti and reiterated the lives of thousands of Haitians, especially children, are at stake if the Biden administration doesn't send in U.S. military troops to restore Democracy.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Marleine Bastien, who is also founder of Family Action Network Movement, is making another urgent plea to the Biden administration for U.S. military troops to quell the violence in Haiti.

"Ninety miles away from here Haitians are suffering," she said during the press conference. "Their cries are falling on deaf ears."

With a rematch imminent with former President Donald Trump, who all but wrapped up the GOP nomination, in November, Biden could lose some votes from Haitian-Americans throughout Florida if he fails to act on their urgent requests for U.S. military troops to end the turmoil.

Despite losing the 2020 election to Biden, Trump won Florida by a 3.4 point margin and state Democrats are hoping for a turnaround as Florida is among the key battleground states in November.

Some Haitian-Americans in Florida didn't even bother to vote in 2020 because Trump broke his campaign promise in 2016 to champion humanitarian and economic missions in Haiti, and they weren't sure where Biden stood on some of the issues, said Guithele Ruiz-

Nicolas, past president of the Haitian American Democratic Club which is based in Broward County.

In 2016, Trump won about 20 percent of the Haitian vote in Florida, according to an analysis of data from University of Florida political scientist Dan Smith.

"Mr. Trump showed his true colors when he turned his back on the Haitian community," Ruiz-Nicolas said, adding that Haitian-Americans constitute 17 percent of Broward County's population, and about 120,000 of people of Haitian descent live in Miami-Dade County, according to the 2020 U.S. Census.

Since the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moise, Haiti has drifted into a whirlpool of violence and anarchy, as gangs are responsible for hundreds of deaths and kidnappings and cutting off food and medical supplies.

Dr. Flore Lindor Latortue, former president of the Democratic Haitian Caucus of Florida and a community activist, said Haitian-Americans are split because the majority disagreed with the multi-national mission headed by Kenya.

In protest, the Haitian Diaspora along with five U.S. representatives who are Democrats, sent a string of letters to the Biden administration to reverse the decree because similar missions in Haiti failed and caused further problems for the economy, among other issues.

But to no avail.

"All parameters are not in favor of Haitian voters," said Latortue. "President Biden has been silent on the different letters of the Haitian Diaspora. That is crucial because people are threatening not to vote if they don't hear from him."



## Haitian American Artist Wyclef Jean Suggests Bipartisan Support To Aid Haiti's Crisis

Renowned rapper and musician Wyclef Jean expressed his commitment to collaborating with both sides of the political spectrum to assist Haiti in navigating its current turmoil, driven by rampant gang violence. Speaking to Newsmax on Monday, Jean emphasized the urgency of the situation and outlined efforts to evacuate Americans and Haitian-Americans from the country, with five missions and 31 evacuees successfully completed thus far.

Highlighting the imminent threat of starvation facing over 4 million Haitians in the coming weeks, Jean underscored the dual challenge of evacuation and providing essential aid. He stressed the immediate need for stability to facilitate effective assistance efforts.

Jean emphasized the significant role of the Haitian diaspora in supporting the country's economy, noting that billions of dollars are contributed annually. He asserted that Haiti's future hinges on establishing security and stability.

Recognizing the importance of bipartisan cooperation,



Wyclef Jean affirms his commitment to leveraging his influence as a musician and entrepreneur to drive positive change in Haiti.

Jean expressed a desire to see increased Republican involvement in Haiti's recovery efforts. He emphasized the need to prioritize Haiti's welfare beyond partisan divides, advocating for a united approach to address the crisis.

While leaders in the Caribbean work to establish a transitional presidential council, Jean refrained from considering a presidential bid for Haiti, emphasizing his focus on entrepreneurship and job creation. He emphasized his belief in the power of economic

empowerment to alleviate the root causes of migration, highlighting the importance of creating opportunities for Haitians within their homeland.

Jean concluded by affirming his commitment to leveraging his influence as a musician and entrepreneur to drive positive change in Haiti, underscoring his belief in the transformative potential of economic development initiatives over political pursuits.

- Rewritten from NewsMax



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# Caribbean -Born Clergyman Backs Israel In War With Hamas

A Caribbean-born evangelical Bishop in Brooklyn, New York has come to Israel's defense, saying that it has the right to defend itself in the war against Hamas, the Arabic acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement.

"I am of the strongest opinion that every nation has a sovereign responsibility to defend itself from any force of terror and anything or anyone who will impede upon the rights and livelihood of its citizens," said Dr. Kenroy A. Cuffy, founder and bishop of Judah Worship Center Ministries, Inc., on Church Avenue in Brooklyn, told the Caribbean Media Corporation, (CMC) exclusively.

"So, let me be clear, Israel has the right to defend itself and its citizens," added the Vincentian-born bishop, who, on June 28, 1999, founded Judah Worship Center Ministries, Inc., formerly known as Abundantly Life Brooklyn Church of God. "Hamas terrorist attack on innocent Israeli citizens on Oct. 7, 2023, who were just enjoying themselves, is preposterous and evil. This provocation is extremely hard to resist."

Cuffy, who earned his doctoral degree in theology from Open Bible Theological

Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina added: "As a result, Israel has intensified its offensive strategies in retaliation for the Hamas-initiated atrocities that killed over 1,139 Israeli civilians, and seized approximately 200 civilians as hostages. However, residents of Gaza are caught in the crossfire of Israeli counterattacks on Hamas' cruelty."

"Understandably, Israel response to the attacks from Hamas is within the scope of what any sovereign nation will do," he said, noting a New York Post article that states that a child's backpack was found on October 22, 2023, filled with seven kilograms of remote-activated Hamas explosives "meant to detonate upon being picked up."

Cuffy said Israeli President Isaac Herzog confirmed that Hamas militants were found carrying out instructions to deploy cyanide-based chemical weapons. In addition, he said the United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken accused Hamas of blocking American citizens from leaving Gaza after the original attacks.

"These actions of Hamas seem to suggest a total disregard for civilians who are stuck in

Gaza," Cuffy said. "This is the extent to which this war is affecting innocent lives and the cruelty they are suffering. I am of the opinion that the escalation of the war is due to Hamas' refusal to back down and a meaningful attempt by both sides to reach a peace deal.

Cuffy pointed to reports that, since October 7, 2023, at least 31,184 Palestinians have been killed and 72,889 injured in Israeli attacks on Gaza. On the other hand, he noted that a revised death toll in Israel from the October 7, 2023 attacks stands at 1,139.

"These numbers of casualties on both sides bear witness to the fact that the consequences of this war are inhumane, heart-wrenching and painful," he said, noting that Hamas was founded in 1987 during the first Palestinian intifada, or uprising, against Israeli occupation.

It was a spinoff from Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, an Islamist religious, social and political movement, said Cuffy, adding that the rivalry between Palestine and Israel is "deeply rooted in biblical history and has never been one of genetic



St. Vincent-born Bishop Kenroy Cuffy, is supporting Israel in its war against Hamas.

differences." "This is a rivalry based in cultural and religious differences," he said. "Archaeological, biblical and genetic data support that both Jews and Palestinians came from the ancient Canaanites. Hence, these people seem to have more in common than that which divides them. They are all descendants of Abraham and should find a common ground to co-exist."

At the same time, Cuffy said Anti-Semitism is "one of the great threats against the Jewish people."

"It is my opinion that all nationalities, race, color or class must be treated with respect, decency and dignity," he said. "No one should be hostile to the Jewish people, and the Jewish people should not be hostile to anyone as well. The issue of Anti-Semitism, in my view, is one that lacks of cultural identities. An examination of cultural identities and values will showcase that societal norms and values help individuals understand a certain culture with precision.

From a broader perspective, Cuffy said culture is the characteristics and knowledge that an ethnic group possesses, such as a unique language, religion and art.

"Therefore, all people of race, color, beliefs or class need to co-exist together, so that our world can experience the vastness of our profound uniqueness and abilities," he said. "I endeavor to teach the youths and all people of my congregation the importance of embracing different cultures."

- CMC



## Guyana President Among Other Eminent Caribbean Leaders To Be Honored At Esteemed University Of The West Indies Event In NYC

The countdown is on to the 27th annual American Foundation for The University of the West Indies (AFUWI) fundraising gala, set for Thursday, April 18th, from 6:30 p.m. at the classy 583 Park Avenue venue in New York City.

This year's gala, presented under the theme, "The Legacy Continues," will build upon the history of providing hundreds of scholarships over the past decade. These scholarships have opened doors for Caribbean students from underprivileged backgrounds, allowing them to achieve their dreams of pursuing higher education.

"The AFUWI annual gala awards has been a significant funding source for the scholarship program, giving us the finances urgently needed to assist with tuition expenses for many young, talented, and ambitious Caribbean nationals who would not be able to fulfill their aspirations of a college education because of their dire financial circumstances," said Ann-Marie Grant, executive director of the American Foundation for The University of the West Indies, (AFUWI). "We are so thankful to all our donors who, by contributing to this endeavor, help to create their own impactful legacy."

### This Year's Distinguished Honorees Are:

His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, the ninth President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, and current chairman of the Caribbean Community, (CARICOM).

Mr. Don Christian, a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, with a 35-year career in technology, aerospace, defense, and more. He is also a trustee at Howard University and the McDonogh School and the founder of the Jamaica Howard University Affinity Network, (J-1 or JHUAN), which has raised over \$250,000 for Jamaican students.

Mr. Antony Mark Desnoes Hart, the executive chairman of Caribbean Producers Jamaica Ltd. and a key figure in its establishment. He previously served as CEO, and is also a founding shareholder of the company, which is currently listed on the Jamaica Stock Exchange, (JSE).

Attorney Darren Skinner, partner and co-general counsel of the Washington, D.C. office of Arnold & Porter, a law firm that provides sophisticated regulatory, litigation, and transactional representation to nearly half of the Fortune 100

and many other clients.

Ms. Michele Chow-Tai, the managing director of Business Development at Fairview Capital Partners, where she spearheads strategic planning and client strategies to enhance the firm's private equity and venture capital endeavors. Ms. Chow-Tai is also actively involved in several boards, including the National Association of Securities Professionals - New York Chapter and the Greater New Haven Chambers of Commerce.

Rev. Patrick Perrin, who from Jamaica to New York, has dedicated most of his life to guiding his congregation and youth. Rev. Perrin recently retired as a United Methodist Elder after serving St. John's United Methodist Church of Elmont in Valley Stream, New York, ending 32 years of service to the United Methodist Church.

Each ticket, table, sponsorship, or donation helps to fund education in the Caribbean and create the next generation of leaders in a region that struggles with a lack of access to capital. Get your tickets today for the AFUWI 27th annual gala at <https://www.afuwi.org/>



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# Guyana Slams Latest Moves By Venezuela

The Guyana government has said it is “gravely concerned” at the decision of the National Assembly in Venezuela to adopt a law declaring the Essequibo region to be a constituent part of Venezuela.

“This is in flagrant violation of Guyana’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and is in breach of the fundamental principles of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter,” the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation said in a statement, noting that the Essequibo makes up about two-thirds of the country and is home to 125,000 of its 800,000 citizens. “It is also

an egregious violation of the Order on provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice on December 1, 2023, and it is a violation of the Argyle Declaration of December 14, 2023 agreed to by the leaders of CARICOM and Brazil, the representative of the United Nations Secretary General and by the Presidents of Guyana and Venezuela.”

The Joint Declaration of Argyle for Dialogue and Peace between Guyana and Venezuela said that the two countries agreed that “any controversies” between them will be resolved in accordance with international law, including the Geneva



Venezuela is claiming Guyana’s Essequibo county as its own.

Agreement dated February 17, 1966.

The Joint Declaration issued following talks in Kingstown, St. Vincent last December between President Irfaan Ali and President Nicolas Maduro over the disputed Essequibo region, also indicated that the two countries agreed that “any controversies” between them will be resolved in accordance with international law, including the Geneva Agreement dated

February 17, 1966.

According to the joint declaration, the two leaders said they are committed to the pursuance of good neighborliness, peaceful coexistence, and the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean.

They noted Guyana’s assertion that it is committed to the process and procedures of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for the resolution

of the border controversy as well as noting Venezuela’s assertion of its lack of consent and lack of recognition of the ICJ and its jurisdiction in the border controversy.

In its statement, the Guyana government said it remains committed to peace on its borders and in the region. “It will not allow its sovereignty and territorial territory to be usurped. Guyana will exert all of its efforts under international law to ensure that its sovereignty and territorial integrity remain intact. Guyana calls on the international community to uphold the rule of law by rejecting Venezuela’s illegal expansionism and by insisting that Venezuela revert to the International Court of Justice which has before it the case for a full and final resolution of the controversy over the land border between the two countries,” the statement added.

Caracas has not responded to the statement by Guyana.

- CMC



# NYC Haitian Legislators Lead Delegation For Increased US Support For Haiti

Two New York City lawmakers have issued a call for increased U.S. intervention and support for Haiti amidst escalating tensions, where criminal factions are actively seeking to destabilize the government of Prime Minister Dr. Ariel Henry.

City Council Members Farah Louis and Mercedes Narcisse, alongside a delegation of influential Haitian-American and faith-based leaders, recently journeyed to Washington to rally support for addressing the political and socio-economic turmoil engulfing the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) nation.

Following their meetings with key political figures, including US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, US House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, US Senator Raphael Warnock, and members of the Congressional Black Caucus, Louis and Narcisse emphasized the urgency of the situation.

During their discussions, they advocated for measures to combat gun trafficking, enhance humanitarian aid efforts, and promote initiatives for peace in Haiti.

“As someone who hails from Haiti, I can attest to the nation’s beauty and resilience,” remarked Narcisse, representing the 46th Council District in Brooklyn. “However, the challenges facing Haiti are severe, and its people deserve better. The stability and well-being of Haiti have far-reaching



Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries with Council Member Farah Louis, 2nd from left; Council Member Mercedes Narcisse, fourth from left; and North Miami Vice Mayor Mary Estimé-Irvin. (CMC image)

implications, not only for the region but also for the United States.”

Louis, whose roots trace back to Haitian and Bahamian heritage, emphasized the importance of swift action from the United States government, particularly given the significant impact of the crisis on New York City’s sizable Haitian community.

She highlighted Haiti’s historic significance as the world’s first free Black republic and stressed the need for collective efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Haitian people and pave the way for a more stable and prosperous future.

As the international community rallies to address the crisis in Haiti, Narcisse and Louis reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to advocating for the interests of the Haitian people and advancing initiatives aimed at bringing about positive change.

- Rewritten from CMC





## Haitian Heritage Month

May is Haitian Heritage Month. Come with Caribbean Today as we celebrate this most exciting and eventful time of year, while we salute the wonderful people of Haiti. The Haitian culture is one filled with strength, beauty, and grace. Let us be the conduit for showcasing your tribute to Haitian Heritage Month in this special Issue of Caribbean Today. Have your ad message in front of over 112,000 esteemed readers eagerly awaiting this special edition.

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# The Dominican Republic Says It Will Continue To Deport Haitians

The President of the Dominican Republic, Luis Abinader, has declared that his country will continue to expel Haitian nationals and will not authorize refugee camps on its territory, ignoring demands from international organizations that have asked the neighbouring country to stop expulsions and welcome Haitians fleeing violence.

Speaking in a recent interview, Abinader said that his administration will continue to develop and enforce laws related to migration.

“I think the United Nations must act more...i think the United States has wasted a lot of time helping Haiti and we have been saying for more than three years since Haiti entered chaos ...we were the first to use the word ‘somalization’ of Haiti. They cannot ask the Dominican Republic to solve the Haitian problem. We will not do it, we cannot do it...”

The president added there are many alternatives that do not include the Dominican

Republic that shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti.

“I think they have a lot of possibilities on Haitian territory and the Haitian islands. They have at least two islands, La Gonavd and La Tortue, that they can use for this. We will not authorize any refugee camps on Dominican territory .....” he said. “This is the same thing that other countries do, such as the Bahamas, Jamaica, the United States and Canada. We simply apply our laws, and we are the country that has really helped the Haitians the most, as I have already said, particularly in our health system.”

The president’s comments were made amid calls from international organizations for



DR police deporting Haitians back to Haiti. (La Prensa image)

the Dominican Republic to accommodate Haitian refugees.

His comments came as The President of the Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC), Federico Antún Batlle, said that in the wake of the crisis in neighboring Haiti, the governments of the United

States, Canada and France should open their doors to at least five million Haitians,

Batlle made the proposal as he declared that the solution to the economic, political, and social crisis that Haiti is experiencing is the responsibility of the

“great nations” which now want to try to impose on the Dominican Republic that it receive thousands of Haitians as refugees.

According to the PRSC president, this is “absolutely unacceptable because our territory is already saturated with citizens from the neighboring country.”

Based on this, he warned , France, Canada, and the United States, that the Dominican Republic can no longer bear more Haitian migration, “and therefore, that proposal from international organizations is flatly rejected by Dominican society.”

“Right now it is estimated that there are more than two million Haitians living in our territory, the vast majority of them irregularly, so we cannot admit a single Haitian more,” he added.

- CMC



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## City Of Miramar Stands Against Incinerator Plan

BY DAVID L. SNELLING

The city of Miramar has launched a petition drive to protest Miami-Dade County's plans to build a new trash and energy incinerator at the old Opa-Locka West Airport, which is just one mile away from the municipality.

Residents said the incinerator could cause health issues and impact the drinking water supply and the endangered species in the Everglades.

The county is reviewing three options for the incinerator: the Opa-locka West Airport, a landfill in Medley, and building a new at the existing location in Doral, 6990 N.W. 97th Avenue.

The Doral site was engulfed in flames for days last year, prompting the county to urge residents, especially those with upper respiratory issues, to stay indoors if possible or wear masks to avoid health problems until it was safe.

In October, Doral Mayor Christi Fraga told Miami-Dade commissioners her city has suffered enough with the incinerator for years and it's time for the county to pick a new location. "The price tag for these families is their health and quality of life," she said.

Miramar's Jamaican heritage Mayor Wayne Messam

told Caribbean Today that the Opa-locka Airport West is not a good site for the incinerator because it will impact the health of over 100,000 Broward County residents.

"Miramar is in strong opposition to the proposal of the incinerator at Opa-locka West Airport," he said. "Building of the incinerator is right in our back door."

He said the two sites in Doral and Medley are less economical, are already zoned for a trash and energy incinerator and miles away from residential neighborhoods, compared to the location near Miramar.

"The Opa-locka site could cost more to build and require mitigation studies and costs for the wetlands," he said. "It just doesn't make comprehensive sense. Doral and Medley are in a better position for the incinerator."

Messam said the county would face backlash if the incinerator was proposed in cities like Coral Gables, Aventura and Miami Beach, adding that the county proposing the site near his city shows no concern for residents' well being.

"Picking that as a preferred site within a mile of Miramar, the county doesn't have all the facts (given) the commission voted to study the three sites," Messam said. "From a political standpoint,

our fear is that Opa-locka West Airport is more politically convenient for the mayor to propose the selection for the county commission."

Messam said the petition that is circulating throughout Broward County is an effort to block the incinerator near Miramar and doesn't require a signature threshold.

The petition, which is accessible at [miramarfl.gov/2266/Mass-Burn-Facility](http://miramarfl.gov/2266/Mass-Burn-Facility), aims to show the county that residents disapprove of the location. They are also set to speak in opposition during zoning hearings and the permitting process, if Miami-Dade chooses that site.

"Before going down that road, we just hope the county does the right thing and picks a site to reach their goals of processing waste and recycling without putting in jeopardy our health risk," he said.

The county approved \$65 million to build the waste incinerator project to avoid development halt and is currently conducting air quality and environmental studies at the three sites.

Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella



The City of Miramar has launched a petition to hopefully stop the building of an incinerator nearby.

Levine Cava said it could take up to 10 years to build a new incinerator. She said the fire made the incinerator in Doral inoperable and the county must build a new one.

"The loss of the waste reduction capability from the RRF has compressed the timeline on which our landfills reach full capacity and has reduced by

approximately half our overall solid waste disposal capacity," she said. "The comprehensive development master plan requires the annual certification of a level of service with at least five years' disposal capacity as a prerequisite to issue development permits, and unlike other forms of concurrency such as transportation, concurrency requirements for solid waste are state mandated and cannot be waived due to their importance to public health."

Interestingly, the town of Medley says it would welcome the incinerator if the county decides to build it near a landfill.

"It's the most viable and cost effective location for it," Medley Town Attorney Michael Pizzi told Caribbean Today. "Medley doesn't object."



## Team Jamaica Turns The Big 3-0

Three decades ago, a group of Jamaicans in the New York Diaspora united with a singular aim: to support Jamaican school athletes attending the annual Penn Relays, ensuring their comfort during the event.

Today, what began as a simple initiative has blossomed into a multi-faceted endeavour, reaching far beyond its initial scope.

The genesis of this venture can be traced back to a dinner held for the athletes after one of the games. It was during this gathering that the late Ben Francis proposed the idea of providing food for the athletes during the competition. From this discussion emerged the concept of Team Jamaica Bickle.

Irwine Clare, OD, the founder and chairman of the organization, recently recounted to The Gleaner that the name 'Team Jamaica Bickle' was conceived by Virginia Turner, the then-editor of the overseas Gleaner based in Queens, New York.

To realize their vision, the group reached out to numerous companies and organizations both in the Diaspora and Jamaica. Their objective was clear: to furnish attending athletes with hot meals, accommodation, and transportation, thereby ensuring their well-being and levelling the playing field.

Over the past three decades, Team Jamaica Bickle has supported more than 3,500 athletes from Jamaica and other Caribbean islands. What initially began in a parking lot at Penn State University has since grown into a substantial operation, with numerous entities rallying behind the cause.

As demand for assistance surged, additional organizations lent their support. Among them were the Jamaica Tourist Board, Victoria Mutual Building Society, GraceKennedy, Union of Jamaican Alumni Associations (UJAA), National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations (NAJSO), Digicel, Dennis Shipping, Trans Continental Shipping, Lomax Foundation, and others.



Irwine Clare, founder of Team Jamaica Bickle.

The organization's core mission remains steadfast: to prioritize the welfare of the athletes. What initially centred on providing meals, transportation, and accommodation has expanded to encompass medical services and other forms of support.

Team Jamaica Bickle has even implemented a school defibrillator program, supplying defibrillators to schools in Jamaica—a vital resource that has proven invaluable in emergencies.

Additionally, the organization offers counselling services to schools, with G.C. Foster College being a significant beneficiary, receiving over US\$150,000 in support over the years. While initially focused on Jamaican athletes, Team Jamaica Bickle's services have broadened to include student athletes from other Caribbean nations attending the Penn Relays.

Moreover, the organization has evolved into a platform for promoting Jamaican culture, hosting various events attended by Caribbean and American officials.

On April 14th, Team Jamaica Bickle will hold its annual benefit gala luncheon in Long Island to raise funds for its ongoing endeavours. Tower Isle Patties will be honoured during the event for its steadfast support of Jamaican student athletes at the Penn Relays over the years.

The group returns to the annual Penn Relays to provide service to this year's athletes on April 25-27th. Donate to keep the dream alive at [teamjamaicabickle.org](http://teamjamaicabickle.org).

- Rewritten from the Jamaica Gleaner



## Five Women Leaders Honored With EmpowHER Awards

In a stirring tribute to women's achievements during International Women's History Month, Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick hosted the inaugural EmpowHER Awards event on Saturday, March 23rd, at the Mizell Community Center in Fort Lauderdale.

The event marked a significant milestone in celebrating the contributions of women across various fields.

Cherfilus-McCormick, the first Haitian American Democrat elected to the US House of Representatives, received an overwhelming 100 nominations across five categories:

Women in Arts & Culture Innovation, Women in Leadership Achievement, Women in Sports Excellence, Women in Humanitarian Service, and Women in STEM Excellence. After careful consideration, 20 outstanding individuals were selected in each category, showcasing the breadth of talent and accomplishment among women.

Among the distinguished recipients was Calibe Thompson, co-founder and board president of the nonprofit Island SPACE Caribbean Museum, and creative



Island SPACE president Calibe Thompson, I., with Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus McCormick. (Photo: David I. Muir, Island Syndicate)

director at Island Syndicate. Thompson's exceptional leadership at Island SPACE and her commitment to uplifting Caribbean art, history, and culture earned her the prestigious Women in Arts & Culture Innovation Award.

Vice President Kamala Harris expressed her support and appreciation for EmpowHER's mission in a signed letter to the awardees, in which she emphasized the importance of diversity and the role of women in creating a strong future where

everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

In her remarks at the ceremony, Thompson expressed gratitude to Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick for her efforts in promoting representation and called for greater support for Caribbean initiatives. She shared a touching anecdote about a museum visitor's journey to reconnect with her heritage, highlighting the transformative impact of cultural preservation.

Thompson's acknowledgment underscores the vital role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in empowering communities. She concluded her speech by thanking Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick for her support and recognition, affirming the importance of uplifting voices of women and minorities in leadership roles.

The EmpowHER Awards event serves as a testament to the collective achievements of women in leadership and stands as a catalyst for driving progress towards empowerment in South Florida and beyond.

Island SPACE Caribbean Museum, supported by various sponsors and community partners, continues its mission of advancing arts, culture, and educational initiatives that represent the Caribbean region.



## Juici Patties Makes US Debut

BY CONNIE AITCHESON

Juici Patties has landed in America. The company's arrival in the South Florida market was greeted with much fanfare and two days after opening its first franchise in the country, in Hollywood, Florida on Thursday, March 21st, the restaurant chain had to close its doors to restock.

Customers stood in line for hours and several shared their patty experience in videos on social media. The franchise then issued a statement on its Instagram page that said: "Thank you everyone for your extraordinary support today, and for buying 5 days worth of patties in 1 day! Unfortunately, we will be closed tomorrow (Sunday) while we restock!"

The Hollywood location will be followed by openings in Lauderhill and Sunrise at the end of this month. Leading the expansion is Daniel Chin, Director of Operations for Juici Patties in Jamaica and CEO of the US division of the company. It was his father, Jukie, who at 16-years-old, started baking patties from his mother's kitchen in 1978. Now his son and daughter, Alyssa, also a Director and attorney at the company, have spent years strategizing on their entrée into the US market.

"I'm a firm believer in measuring three times but cutting once," Chin told

Caribbean Today. "We've been working at this over the past six years. We've been working with some amazing consultants and some franchise lawyers. Just making sure that all of our ducks are in a row. So it hasn't been a recent decision."

The franchises won't have a breakfast menu but will concentrate on patties (beef, chicken, shrimp, mega, vegetable and plant based) and coco bread.

The company enters an area of Florida known for its large Jamaican and Caribbean population. According to the US Census there are 763,631 non-Hispanic West Indians in Florida. Of those, there are 96,522 Jamaicans in Broward County and 28,577 Jamaicans in Miami-Dade County.

"Florida does have a lot of Jamaicans. But South Florida is becoming a big foodie scene. So we just want to contribute to this booming scene," said Chin. "Our data suggests there's a lot of demand for Jamaican patties from persons from all background in the US even those who don't have any Jamaican ancestry. Our goal is to sell to everybody. Not just Jamaicans living in Florida."

The company will also encounter competition from a variety of restaurants. The franchise in Lauderhill is in a strip mall with five other restaurants offering sandwiches,

Mexican, Indian, tropical and Japanese foods. And within a mile of that location are three Jamaican restaurants offering Caribbean food. But Chin isn't intimidated.

"I'm not concerned, because as far as I know I believe we are the only patty company in the US that is importing the spices from Jamaica," said Chin. "So I don't believe any patty company has the flavour and the quality that we have here in the US."

The company has currently signed a total of 26 franchise agreements for Florida. There will be 19 restaurants in South Florida and seven in Orlando, all of which are expected to be open by 2028.

Franchise locations are strategically chosen. "We have a list of zip codes in which we allow our franchises to open," said Chin. "Zip codes that our data suggest are close to our customers."

Damion Beckford, of Sunrise, knocked on the door of the Lauderhill restaurant querying on a job application he recently submitted. Beckford, 36, lived on Juici patties



Customers stood in line to buy Juici Patties as the first franchise opened on March 21st in Hollywood.

throughout his youth in Portland.

"It was a part of my childhood growing up," says Beckford. "I remember one time when Juici Beef [it's original name] first came to Portland I was in my freshman year at Titchfield [High School]. I ran down for lunch to get a patty, long line, bit the patty – burnt my whole lip and messed up my shirt."

He prefers the patties from Juici because "the crust is succulent. The beef is juicy as the name suggest."

Beckford once operated a food truck but had to leave it after a hit and run car accident where he lost one leg. He's currently a manager at a nearby CVS but would be willing to leave for a job at Juici Patties adding: "I want to be a part of a great thing. Seeing it here, I'm excited. I have to get a job here."

## Caribbean Heritage Former Athlete Embraces Major Corporate Role At Google

Jamaican-Canadian former professional ice hockey player, Chelsea Ziadie, who retired from the sport in 2020, is embracing the challenge of her major new role with corporate giant Google. Ziadie, a Harvard graduate and daughter of former Jamaican soccer players Debbie Doyle Ziadie and the late Christopher Ziadie, was recently promoted to the position of Senior Account Manager, Google Customer Solutions.

In her new capacity, Ziadie now works on developing and executing business strategies for nearly 60 small to medium sized Google business accounts.

"I specialize in growth in the retail and commerce sectors," she says. "And in addition to my core role, I am also a Sales Inclusion Taskforce Ambassador as well as a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Pillar Lead- working with my colleagues to ensure that Google continues to prioritize and develop inclusivity and overall wellbeing for its employees across the organization."

Prior to joining Google in 2021, Ziadie was also employed at Morgan Stanley as a Financial and Wealth Advisor Associate, managing accounts worth several million dollars.

Her latest professional accomplishment is a far cry from



Former Jamaican Canadian professional athlete and rising star, Chelsea Ziadie is now at Google. (Photo Courtesy Of Anthony Legg)

her days as a rising star in the fast paced world of women's ice hockey, in which she was deeply immersed for much of her life until stepping away some four years ago. Yet according to Ziadie, "There's no doubt in my mind that my ability to transfer many of the skills that I employed in my sport- leadership, tenacity, team building and empathy- assisted me in making the transition from the locker room to the boardroom. In many ways, being part of a professional sports team is the same as being part of a business organization- everyone has a role to play in helping the team to win."

A career in professional sports- even temporarily- was perhaps always in the cards for

Ziadie, considering her unique family background.

She was born in Montreal into a family of athletes. In addition to both her parents having represented Jamaica in soccer at the international level, her uncles Nicholas and Craig Ziadie and her grandfather the late Dennis Ziadie were all national soccer players for Jamaica also. Additionally, her older brother Ryan briefly pursued a pro career in ice hockey as well.

After spending her early childhood years in Jamaica, she moved with her mother and brother back to Montreal. There, she played soccer and ice hockey, ultimately going on to the prestigious Hotchkiss School in Connecticut where she represented the institution in both sports as well as in track and field.

As a teenager, Ziadie was a part of Team Quebec and Team Canada Under 18 Women's Hockey, winning a bronze medal at the Canada Winter Games in 2011. Moving on to Harvard, she was part of the school's Varsity Ice Hockey team, became an Ivy League Champion and was awarded several accolades during her four year college sojourn, including the 2018 MVP Award- all while pursuing her BA Degree in Sociology and Economics.

It was in 2018 after

graduating from Harvard that she signed her first professional ice hockey contract with the Metropolitan Riveters in the National Women's Hockey League (NWHL) and Professional Women's Hockey Player Association (PWHPA).

She would remain with the league for two years, juggling her ice hockey career with her job at Morgan Stanley- a challenging experience but one that provided invaluable lessons in the art of multitasking.

Ultimately, she elected to retire from the sport after two years in the league when the 2020 season was cancelled due to COVID. Having played for over twenty years she decided that amidst the uncertainty, the time had come to hang up her skates. However, she is happy to note the changes that have taken place in the sport in the years since her retirement.

She remains grateful for the role that professional sports has played in enhancing her personal and professional lives, in much the same way it did for her parents.

For now, her current goal is to apply her lifelong commitment to excellence to her new role at Google.

- NewsAmericasNow.com

Each franchise is free to build out the restaurant as they see fit. They determine how many persons to employ, how many seats to install, hire general contractors and engage architects.

But Chin says the head office provides "conformity and consistency across the brand" to the franchises when it comes to the design of the establishment and that they must procure the supplies and other ingredients from the company's list of approved vendors.

In March, Juici Patties opened its 64th restaurant in Jamaica, located in Montego Bay. They're also in 10 Caribbean islands and sell the patties in select supermarkets in Canada and the United Kingdom.

As a child, Chin spent his summers working for the company he's now spearheading to broader shores. But he says "working at the company those times didn't feel like work."

Still, he doesn't think his parents ever envisioned the reach of the restaurant but knows "they're as excited as I am."



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# The Trump Immigration Plan

Like many, including Congressman Vicente Gonzalez of Texas, I was floored recently by polls claiming that Donald Trump's standing with Latino voters has grown since his defeat in 2020.

Not that I give a lot of credence to polls since the Hillary Clinton loss, but according to the New York Times, surveys "find him winning more than 40 percent of those voters - a level not seen for a Republican in two decades."

Appalling considering the xenophobia Trumpy continues to spew and the fact that many Latino immigrants have been the ones who will face the brunt of his draconian policies during his four year reign of terror and will continue to be should he - God forbid - win again.

Congressman Gonzalez's comparison of Latino support for Trump to "Jews for Hitler" highlights the irony. It prompts the question: have these voters forgotten the hardships of the Trump era, or do they prioritize their American citizenship over the plight of fellow immigrants?

From the Muslim and Africa bans, to mainly Latino family separations at the border and children in cages, to the systematic dismantling of our legal immigration and refugee systems, to the targeting of immigrants in their homes, schools, and workplaces - the Trump record on immigration still gives me nightmares.



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

Now he is running for re-election, and terrifyingly, his rhetoric and immigration agenda is even scarier than what we saw last time.

Trump has repeatedly employed Nazi language, saying immigrants are "poisoning the blood of the country." Are Latino voters really ok with this?

Trump has said he would be a "dictator" on day one to enact his extreme immigration agenda and has promised to deploy the military on US soil to conduct "the largest deportation effort in US history," which reports say will likely ensnare US citizens.

One version of Trump's plan is called "Project 2025," and the Niskanen Center described it as a "meticulously orchestrated, comprehensive plan to drive immigration levels to unprecedented lows...specifically engineered to dismantle the foundations of our immigration system."

Here's what it entails according to America's Voice:

- Launching a private "red-state army" to conduct mass deportations.
- Blocking federal financial aid to everyone in states that allow Dreamers to access in-state tuition.
- Terminating DACA status for Dreamers.
- Using backlogs to halt application intake for legal immigrants.
- Suspending updates for H-2A and H-2B temporary worker visas.
- Barring US citizens from qualifying for federal housing subsidies if they live with undocumented immigrants.
- Forcing states to share driver's license databases and other

identifying information.

Trump is also planning to bring anti-immigrant extremists and fascists, Stephen Miller and Ken Cuccinelli back to the White House in a second term, according to the Washington Post, which noted that Trump and his aides would be "more effective in operating the levers of the federal bureaucracy and less vulnerable to internal

resistance."

Can Latino voters really support this agenda or have they gone mad? I have to believe that the polls are fake news and like Trump's so called "black base," a figment of his imagination generated by AI.

Let us pray! The prospect of Trump's return is like a re-birth of Hitler and Mussolini combined. It is an outcome we

must collectively work to prevent in 2024, not just for immigrants, but for all America.

*Felicia J. Persaud is the publisher of NewsAmericasNow.com, a daily news outlet focusing on Black immigrant issues.*



## Seasonal Feelings

Spring, summer, autumn, winter are classed as the four seasons, with each having its own different characteristic. Spring is fresh, balmy and mild, when everything is new, brimming with hope and life, looking to a bright future of what's to come.



TONY ROBINSON

Then comes summer, with its searing heat, dry, sweating, hot, muggy, humid and a burning that saps the strength. This is followed by autumn, when the temperature drops, the air begins to get cool, and the leaves start to change from green to brown before they fall to the ground. Animals begin to prepare for what's to come - winter.

Yes, winter is coming, with the dreaded cold, snow and ice,

combined with a frigid wind that makes it even colder, the wind chill factor. It's not a time to be outdoors.

Just like the seasons, people also go through seasonal changes, more so people who are involved in relationships. What we experience is the seasonal changes that are thrust upon us whenever we embark on the perilous journey of a relationship.

When the relationship is new, just like spring, everything is fresh and brimming with hope. Birds are singing, the man is full of lyrics and promises and is on his best behavior as he delivers hopes and dreams of wondrous things to come.

The woman is receptive, her eyes sparkle like the stars, gleaming with anticipation, her lips are inviting, her body pulsating with ecstasy and desire. Spring is here and it's the season of hope and anticipation.

As Shakespeare put it: "Come woo me, woo me, for I

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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## Harnessing The Power Of GenZ

BY ALEXIS DUMERJEAN

The civil rights legacy of Black college students has long been a staple in the nation's fight for equality. The GenZ generation brings its unique perspectives, priorities, and potential for change in our quality of life. The Florida A & M University NAACP joined Partners in Progress Inc., by sponsoring the Student Leadership Forum, an ongoing Step Up & Vote GenZ empowerment program.

Over forty students from FAMU, Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College participated

in interactive introductory campaign methods training session. The forum launched a statewide plan to train student managers in campaign basics allowing them to craft strategies for peer-to-peer voter engagement. The training sessions will begin in earnest in April and continue through September with the goal of increasing GenZ voter turnout.

GenZ's presence in the political process is real. And while their voting record has improved dramatically, particularly in presidential election cycles, it falls short of other age groups. Ironically, their

low and inconsistent turnout negatively impacts their political interest most.

"This forum was extremely informative, I learned more as a political action chair. My main goal is to bring awareness, and importance of this upcoming election. I believe that after this workshop I can do that more effectively," according to Nia Talbott, FAMU NAACP Political Action Chair.

In addition to PIP efforts, college NAACP chapters have stepped up mobilization, voter registration drives, educational workshops, and advocacy campaigns, to empower students.

By engaging directly with their peers on college campuses, they are fostering a culture of civic responsibility and activism.

The FAMU NAACP chapter is highlighting the connection between voting and the issues that matter most to GenZ. The Student Leadership Forum brought home the importance of voting to shape policies that directly affect their lives, such as education, tuition increases, student loans, climate change, and social justice. Sydney Aitcheson the Partners and Progress liaison and recent

FAMU Grad, said, "This was a surreal moment for me. I was in these exact same seats not too long ago. To see more college students coming together and organizing is such a good feeling. Watching the next generation of college students lead is all I could ask for."

For more information, D9 undergraduate chapters, student leaders and GenZers interested in participating in the Step Up & Vote contact partnersinprogressflorida@gmail.com for more information.



## The Friendship Bench Comes To Guyana

BY ANNAN BOODRAM

I am thrilled that the Friendship Bench concept for mental health is finally introduced in Guyana. The Rotary Club of Garden City, Georgetown, must be commended for taking the lead in bring to Guyana a concept for which we at The Caribbean Voice has been lobbying for years.

Launched in Zimbabwe by psychiatrist Dixon Chibanda in 2007 in the township of Mbare, after the suicide of a patient, Erica, the focus of the

Friendship Bench concept was on developing a community-based approach to therapy that leverages the power, compassion, and accessibility - of grandmothers. It was developed over a twenty-year period from community research and today, has been replicated around the world.

In an interview with the McKinsey Health Institute in 2022, Chibanda explained the origins of concept: "I think the real tragedy about Erica's loss was that she knew she needed help; her parents knew she needed help; but they did not have the \$15 bus fare to come [from their remote village] to the hospital where I worked, some 200 miles away, for a follow-up."

"And I was hit hard by the realization that I had taken for granted that people who needed my services could find me at the hospital. That was really the beginning of a soul-searching journey to find my place in the world, as a psychiatrist but also as a human being. I realized I had to take psychiatry out of the hospital, into the community," Chibanda added.

He also detailed how the concept works: "The Friendship Bench - in really simple terms - is a brief psychological therapy,

or talk therapy, that is delivered predominantly by community grandmothers who are trained in the very basics of cognitive behavioural therapy.

"After that training, which normally takes a month, they are



A Friendship Bench as seen in Zimbabwe. (friendshipbenchzimbabwe image)

allocated a wooden park bench in their communities. Our team then facilitates referrals to those benches through social media, primary healthcare facilities, schools, and police stations.

"The grandmothers then screen everyone who is referred to them using a locally validated screening tool. Selected cases go on to receive this structured therapy on the bench, and, after two to four sessions, they are invited to join a support group within the community where they begin to collectively problem solve around common challenges. (The) Friendship Bench starts off as a one-on-one therapy between a grandmother and a client, then goes on to a peer support system that can go on and on."

Now that this concept has touched the shores of Guyana, it should be replicated in throughout the Caribbean. Benches can be built by local businesses and various other organizations within each community, and located in appropriate surroundings to foster comfort, trust and open exchange of information that is necessary.

As well, various organizations can build and be responsible for one or more

benches, and community leaders and others can reach out to those in the Diaspora to sponsor benches. Local artists can decorate the benches with appropriate art work, and flowering plants can also be planted or placed in the vicinity to create a soothing ambience, and make the process a truly community one.

In his interview, Chibanda noted that "grandmothers working on Friendship Bench were a lot more resilient and less likely to have PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder] and other common mental disorders." "When you go deeper in the research, the common thread or response from the grandmothers is that it gives them a sense of purpose," he added.

Caribbean people know very well the powerfully constructive roles that grandparents play in extended families. While there would be a need for nationwide training to the benches - grandmothers, community volunteers, NGOs, Faith Based and Community Based Organizations, educators and possibly grandfathers also - for a structured system to ensure referrals and to monitor and support the process, training can be done via piggybacking and online.

Perhaps, Dr. Chibanda too can be contacted for the curriculum or Guyana or PAHO can be requested to perhaps be of assistance in making this access expansive.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Annan Boodram is founder of The Caribbean Voice, a non-profit organisation dedicated to sharing information, stats, anecdotes, data and informed views about suicide, gender-based violence as well as child abuse, sexual abuse, alcoholism, drug abuse, animal abuse and environmental abuse and to foster social activism relating to prevention and anti-violence.**



## Seasonal Feelings



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

am in holiday humor, and like enough to consent." Spring is ephemeral, short lived, and that freshness gives way to summer, the blistering heat of summer. But summer is not all bad.

*'Summertime, and the living is easy, Fish are jumping and the cotton is high, Oh your daddy's rich, and your ma is good looking, So hush little baby, don't you cry..'*

- Porgy and Bess by George Gershwin

Summer can be beautiful, and so can be relationships that have come this far, for even though the mild spring has given way to heat, passions will also rise. So much so that many weddings take place in summer. But winter is coming.

Before that though, cometh the autumn of the relationship, where ardor begins to cool. The doors begin to close as the frost emerges. It's a time of cooling down, a time when feelings slowly fade, and temperatures range from lukewarm to tepid.

It's the autumn of life, and the couple is just drifting along. They may drift from season to season without even realizing it. The changes may creep up so imperceptibly that they barely notice it, hardly see it coming or sense the change, until one day they ask: "When did we get here?"

Winter is here, the dreaded bitter cold and frost that is bone

numbing and teeth chattering. Men feel it, women endure it, for this cold can be disastrous. "This is the winter of my discontent."

"My woman just gone cold on me for years now;" or "He's become so cold, indifferent, uncaring, hardly says a word to me anymore."

### WINTER IS HERE.

Many couples are in the winter of their relationship. For some it's a mild winter, endurable; while for others it's a blizzard, a blustery biting cold. Some get used to it, the arctic wind, the glacial movement of their hopes and dreams. You may see them out in public, together, yet so far apart. Out at dinner but never touching or speaking to each other but glued to their phones. It is the winter of their discontent.

Winter must be the worst season in the cycle of relationships, for the chill is pervasive, as they both settle into the frost.

Every relationship has its four seasons, the secret is to try to hold on to spring, summer and autumn as long as you can.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Tony Robinson is an independent contributor to Caribbean Today and the views expressed here are his own. He can be reached at seidoIyard@gmail.com for feedback.**



## Vybz Kartel: Victim Or Villain?

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Victim or villain? That verdict on Vybz Kartel is still out even after the British Privy Council quashed a murder conviction against the controversial Jamaican entertainer and three co-accused on March 14th.

The four-member Privy Council cited jury tampering for its unanimous decision. It said Jamaica's Court of Appeal will decide whether the 48-year-old Kartel - real name Adidja Palmer, Shawn "Shawn Storm" Campbell, Kahira Jones and Andre St John should be granted a re-trial.

Lawyers for the men, who have been incarcerated for 12 years, argue that they are eligible for bail given that they are no longer convicts.

In an interview with the Gleaner newspaper in Jamaica, Kartel's lawyer Isat Buchanan admitted that that process may be a lengthy one, but said, "Myself, Miss (Alessandra) LaBeach, John Clarke ... his



The British Privy Council may have quashed a murder conviction against controversial Jamaican entertainer Vybz Kartel and three co-accused but a re-trial date in Jamaica is still to be set.

attorneys ... will definitely seek bail."

The quartet's lawyers doggedly took their case to the Privy Council, which remains the highest court of appeal for many countries in the British Commonwealth despite the inauguration of the Caribbean Court of Justice in 2005.

Jamaica's Director of Public Prosecutions, Paula Llewlynn, has yet to make a definitive statement on the retrial.

Kartel and his co-accused, who pleaded not guilty, were sentenced to life in prison for the 2011 murder of Clive "Lizard" Williams. During the two-month trial, his lawyers noted that cell phone texts used as evidence by the prosecution went against Jamaica's telecommunications laws.

But it was the action of a juror on the penultimate day of the trial that forced the British law lords to overturn their

murder conviction. They ruled that the presiding judge, Justice Lennox Campbell, should have taken action against him after it was discovered that he attempted to bribe the jury foreman.

The rogue juror, Livingston Caine, was sentenced to nine months in prison in March 2023, for attempting to pervert the course of justice. He had offered the foreman just over \$3,000 to return a not guilty verdict.

Following the Privy Council ruling, there were celebrations in several communities where Kartel has many fans, mainly in Waterford, a working-class neighbourhood where the gangly toaster operated his Gaza Empire.

There is talk that if granted bail, Kartel could stage a massive concert, similar to Buju Banton's Long Walk to Freedom show at Kingston's National Stadium in March 2019. Buju Banton, who served seven years in Federal prison on drug-related charges, was released in December, 2018.

Fitzroy Francis, who has worked with Black Uhuru and Jesse Jendau as an artist manager and music producer, has known Kartel since his early years growing up in the rugged Kingston community of Waterhouse. He believes such an event would also be successful.

"I am expecting that he would do so, although his situation is more controversial and complex than Buju's. As one of the most popular dancehall artists in this era, I would advise such a move, especially for his die-hard fans who are longing to see him in person," said Francis.

Vybz Kartel first endeared himself to hardcore dancehall fans since a breakthrough performance at Sting 2008. His set at that popular Boxing Day event earned him a large following, one that grew significantly with songs like 'Clarks, Jeans & Fitted,' 'Romping Shop,' (with Spice), and 'Life We Living.'



## Shaggy And Bruce Melodie Light Up NYC With 'When She's Around' TV Debut



Grammy-winning, Jamaican-born reggae legend, Shaggy, r., and East African sensation Bruce Melodie, I. (Contributed image)

Grammy-winning, Jamaican-born reggae legend, Shaggy, and East African sensation Bruce Melodie, recently took New York City by storm with their electrifying national TV debut on "Good Morning America" and "Live with Kelly & Mark," performing their hit "When She's Around (Funga Macho)."

Their appearance, which marks a significant milestone in their collaboration, has already captivated audiences worldwide, amassing over 120 million views across social media platforms. Following their TV debut, the pair engaged with the NYC radio community, sharing insights on their dynamic partnership and the success of their genre-blending hit.

This track has not only achieved streaming milestones but also signaled a broader cultural resonance, underscored

by nearly 150,000 Shazam tags. Amidst this buzz, Shaggy reflected on his journey in an intimate "Nightline" interview, adding depth to their week-long media tour.

Their collaboration, which debuted at the iHeartRadio Jingle Ball concerts, continues to draw acclaim, setting the stage for Melodie's upcoming music releases and a much-anticipated European tour. This collaboration between Shaggy, with his storied career and diamond-selling status, and Melodie, a multifaceted artist making waves across the African music scene, highlights a confluence of talent and cultural exchange that promises to redefine musical boundaries and captivate audiences worldwide.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



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# 11th Rhythms Of Africa Celebrates ‘Strength of A Woman’

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

The percussive sounds of Africa emanated from the Miramar Cultural Center on March 16-17, as the 11th Rhythms Of Africa got underway. As with previous events, bandleader Willie Stewart and his orchestra took patrons down a historic path through music from the Motherland.

This year’s shows, dubbed ‘Strength of A Woman,’ saluted Women’s History Month.

Packed houses on both nights heard the culture from the United States, (Rhythm and Blues/soul/funk), West Africa (Afrobeat), Brazil (samba), Cuba (Afro-Cuban), Eastern Caribbean (soca), and Jamaica (reggae).

Each genre was proudly represented by Stewart and his students from Miramar High School, and senior musicians including guitarist/singer Junior Jazz of The Wailers.

Etana from Jamaica and Alison Hinds from Barbados were headliners. And while

they lived up to their billing, the supporting cast of acts such as singers Ronnie Smith, Nicole Yarin, Dwisdom, Selena Serrano, Shanna Lee, Kailani Alcock and Prilly Hamilton all delivered strong performances.

Yarin also stood out on violin as did Jesse Jones on saxophone.

Stewart, the former drummer of Grammy-nominated band Third World, first staged Rhythms Of Africa in 2010. It has become a South Florida calendar event, but he is keen to introduce the show to other regions.

“We are speaking with interested parties that want to bring ‘Rhythms’ on a national tour, but nothing concrete as yet,” he told *Caribbean Today*.



Barbadian soca star Alison Hinds, was recently presented with the Key to the City of Miramar by Mayor, Wayne Messam at the Rhythms Of Africa event. (Contributed image)

Miramar mayor, Wayne Messam, a perennial attendee at the show, said it has “evolved into a highly-anticipated production full of diverse genres all connected to our Motherland, Africa.”

“Telling this story through the innocent talents of our high schoolers alongside notable artists makes the production unique, uncontested and



Jamaican born reggae singer, Etana, received a Miramar Mayoral City Hall hologram at the Rhythms Of Africa “in appreciation for her contributions to reggae music as a female artist in recognition of Women’s History Month.” (Contributed image)

revolutionary. I am thankful for the leadership of Willie Stewart for his service to our community and mentorship to the next generation of artists,” he added.

Hinds, who gave typically energetic performances on both nights, was presented with the Key to the City of

Miramar by Messam. Etana, who spent most of her formative years in Miramar, received a Mayoral City Hall hologram “in appreciation for her contributions to reggae music as a female artist in recognition of Women’s History Month.”



## Alborosie Drops Inspirational Single ‘Faith’



Alborosie has dropped a new single.

Renowned roots reggae and dub sensation, Alborosie, has released his latest single, “Faith,” featuring rising star Jaz Elise. The track serves as a highlight from his highly anticipated 9th studio album titled “Destiny.”

“Faith” delves into the significance of individual faith during life’s trials and triumphs. Crafted by Alborosie himself, the soulful bass-driven composition delivers poignant messages of resilience and self-awareness. Jaz Elise, in her collaboration, underscores the power of faith as a force capable of overcoming any obstacle, emphasizing its universal relevance.

“Faith” is available in three distinct mixes: album, extended, and dub. Fans can tune in to streaming platforms to experience the diverse interpretations of this uplifting track.

As part of his upcoming endeavors, Alborosie is slated to embark on a tour alongside F.Y.A.H. throughout April. The tour will traverse notable destinations across California, Texas, Florida, Louisiana, and Arizona.

“Destiny,” Alborosie’s forthcoming album, promises an enriching musical journey, boasting collaborations with esteemed reggae luminaries such as Kabaka Pyramid, Buju Banton, Jaz Elise, and Burro Banton. Through themes of faith, life, love, and the transformative power of music, Alborosie presents an authentic and relatable body of work, grounded in the ethos of relevance and connection to the present moment.



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# Jamaican Founder Of Phuse Cream Unveils Second Florida Location

Jamaican-born Joel Franklin is not just a serial entrepreneur; he's a visionary who draws inspiration from the joys of fatherhood and the sweet moments in life. His entrepreneurial path is decorated with a diverse portfolio of ventures, ranging from the nightlife of clubs and restaurants to the vibrant energy of smoke shops and large-scale event planning, from pool parties to food festivals. Each business venture reflects a chapter in Joel's journey, showcasing his versatility and innovative spirit.

However, the heart of Joel's entrepreneurial narrative beats strongest at Phuse Cream, a dessert shop that marks a significant turning point in his career. Inspired by his daughter, Nala Franklin, Joel envisioned Phuse Cream as a business and a legacy. As a new father, he wanted his next venture to mirror his evolution, embodying the joy and responsibility of parenthood. With Nala as his muse, Franklin designed Phuse Cream with Nala in mind, envisioning it as a future inheritance filled with love and sweet memories.



Phuse Cream founder, Jamaican Joel Franklin.

Franklin opened his second Phuse Cream location, the acclaimed fusion ice cream shop known for its innovative dessert creations at 2806 N. University Drive, Sunrise, FL, 33322 on March 21st.

The store is now open from Monday -Sunday, from noon-midnight. Building upon the success of its Plantation flagship store, Phuse Cream continues to redefine the ice cream experience

with its unique blend of flavors and culinary techniques.

Phuse Cream is a testament to Joel's commitment to fusion and innovation. Specializing in macaron ice cream sandwiches, the shop combines the delicate European macaron with ice cream flavors inspired by cultures worldwide, creating a unique dessert experience. This concept has captivated customers and earned Phuse Cream the

People's Choice award at Dessert Wars 2023 and #8 in the national competition. The name 'Phuse' embodies the essence of Joel's vision - a fusion of flavors and traditions that unite people in their love for ice cream. Each visit to Phuse Cream is an opportunity to escape into a world of whimsy and delight, where the universal language of ice cream brings people together.

At Phuse Cream, patrons are invited to indulge in a whimsical journey where diverse culinary cultures converge to create extraordinary desserts. The shop's signature offering, the macaron ice cream sandwich, has garnered widespread acclaim, earning the prestigious 2023 Dessert Wars People's Choice Award. This delightful treat seamlessly merges macarons' elegance with ice cream's creamy delight, embodying Phuse Cream's commitment to

innovation and quality.

The opening of the second Phuse Cream location marks a significant milestone in Franklin's entrepreneurial journey, reflecting his unwavering dedication to innovation and commitment to creating lasting memories through sweet treats.

"Phuse Cream is a testament to our commitment to fusion and innovation," said Franklin. "With our second location, we aim to spread the joy of our unique dessert experience to even more people, inviting them to join us on a journey of sweet indulgence and community."

For more information, visit phusecream.com or follow Phuse Cream @phusecream on IG and TIK TOK for updates and announcements.



## Two Caribbean Immigrant Chefs And Entrepreneurs Make Their Mark In Stockholm

From the Caribbean twin-island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Stockholm, Sweden. That's the journey in a nutshell of two dynamic Caribbean immigrant entrepreneurs and chefs, David Amann and Kennis Commissiong.

From humble beginnings in Tobago and Trinidad, respectively, the universe conspired to bring the two together in the Nordic European capital as chefs. That meeting evolved into them becoming business partners over the pandemic and today, owners of Island Hoppers, a Caribbean fine dining restaurant in Stockholm.

After more than 10 years in the party fixing and restaurant industry, including from Fåfångan and Mosebacke, the two Caribbean chefs have created an oasis for those who like food – especially Caribbean food. The restaurant was previously called Burgeria, but in 2022 has changed its name



Chefs David Amann and Kennis Commissiong of Island Hoppers in Stockholm, Sweden.

to "Island Hoppers" and refined the concept with an even greater focus on Caribbean food. Amann and Commissiong describe it as a fusion between African and Indian cooking with elements of Spanish flavors, and above all it consists of many spices inspired by Caribbean cuisine.

Both share their inspirational journey on the #HardToBeat podcast episode of "Island Innovators Unleashed,"

with host Felicia J. Persaud. Listen on Apple and wherever you get your podcasts, as they open up about the trials and triumphs of entrepreneurship, the cultural challenges they faced, and the perseverance required to bring a taste of the Caribbean to Scandinavia.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Here's a delicious and easy recipe to thrill guests and family alike this spring.

### ITY'S SHRIMP FRIED RICE

#### INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PERSONS

- 1 pound shrimp, cleaned, de-veined
- 1/4 cup Vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon Black Pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup Vegetable Oil
- 2 stalks scallion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon scotch bonnet pepper, deseed, chopped
- 1 pound rice, cooked
- 1/2 pound string beans, sliced, blanched
- 1 large carrots, julienne, blanched
- 1 can Whole Kernel Corn, drained
- 2 tablespoon(s) soy sauce

#### METHOD

1. Clean shrimp and then wash in a solution of vinegar and water.
2. Season shrimp with Black



3. Pepper and salt.
3. Heat Vegetable Oil in a large saucepan, then sauté scallion and garlic for one minute.
4. Add scotch bonnet pepper and then the shrimp and continue sauteing until the shrimp is pink in color.
5. Stir in the rice, string beans, carrots, Corn and soy sauce.
6. Mix until ingredients are evenly distributed.
7. Serve hot with a salad.

- GraceFoods



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# TRAVEL NEWS



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## Royal Caribbean Suspends Visits To Haitian Resort

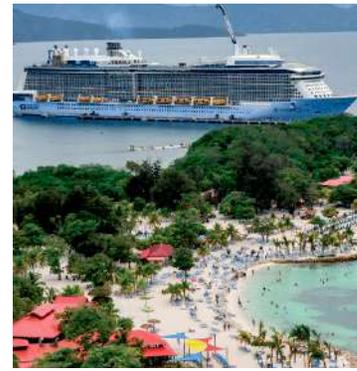
In response to heightened violence and unrest in the region, Royal Caribbean has halted visits to Labadee, its private resort on Haiti's northern coast. The decision comes following a travel advisory issued by the U.S. State Department, urging individuals to avoid travel to Haiti and ranking the country at a Level Four advisory, aligning it with nations

like Russia, Syria, and Burkina Faso.

In a statement reported by Cruiseindustrynews.com, Royal Caribbean announced the temporary suspension of visits to Labadee across its entire fleet, citing an abundance of caution amidst the evolving situation in Haiti. The company emphasized its ongoing monitoring and

assessment of the situation in collaboration with its Global Security & Intelligence Team. Notably, Royal Caribbean clarified that neither passengers nor crew members have encountered violence or threats during previous visits to Labadee.

With several ships scheduled to visit Labadee in the upcoming days, Royal Caribbean has opted for alternative arrangements. Instead of docking at Labadee, ships will either spend an additional day at sea or extend their stay at other destinations, such as Falmouth, Jamaica, Nassau in the Bahamas, or Perfect Day at CocoCay, another resort owned by the company. Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, which itself is under a Level 2 travel advisory, urging



Royal Caribbean has halted visits to Labadee, its private resort on Haiti's northern coast.

visitors to exercise increased caution.

The decision to suspend visits to Labadee follows previous travel advisories issued for Haiti, including a do-not-travel alert in July 2023. The State Department cited concerns over kidnapping,

crime, civil unrest, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure. Subsequently, in the same month, the U.S. government ordered the evacuation of family members of U.S. government employees and non-emergency personnel from Haiti. Restrictions were also imposed on the movement of American government personnel within the country, limiting their activities to confined areas around the Embassy and imposing curfews and travel restrictions.

Royal Caribbean's suspension of visits to Labadee underscores the challenges posed by escalating violence and instability in the region, prompting adjustments to ensure the safety and security of its passengers and crew.

- NewsAmericasNow.com

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## Caribbean Tourism Hits New Heights

The Barbados-based Caribbean Tourism Organization, (CTO), says the regional tourism sector recorded increased visitor arrivals last year with an estimated 14.3 per cent international visitors coming to the Caribbean, continuing the positive recovery trend of the sector.

CTO Secretary General, Dona Regis-Prosper, attributed the outcome to sustained demand

for outbound travel from the United States, the Caribbean's main source market and enhanced tourism-related infrastructure within the destinations. She said the improvement was also due to the fulfilment of strategic marketing initiatives and augmented airlift capacity between the region and its source markets, albeit unevenly distributed among the destinations.

Tourist visits were approximately 32.2 million, about four million more than in 2022, said Regis-Prosper, noting that the data showed that each month's arrivals exceeded those of 2022 thus establishing a continuous growth trend over the past 33 months as tourism steadily rebounded toward pre-pandemic levels.

The CTO said that arrival levels amongst Caribbean destinations either significantly recovered or moderately exceeded the benchmark numbers of 2019, with 11 destinations, Anguilla, Aruba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten,

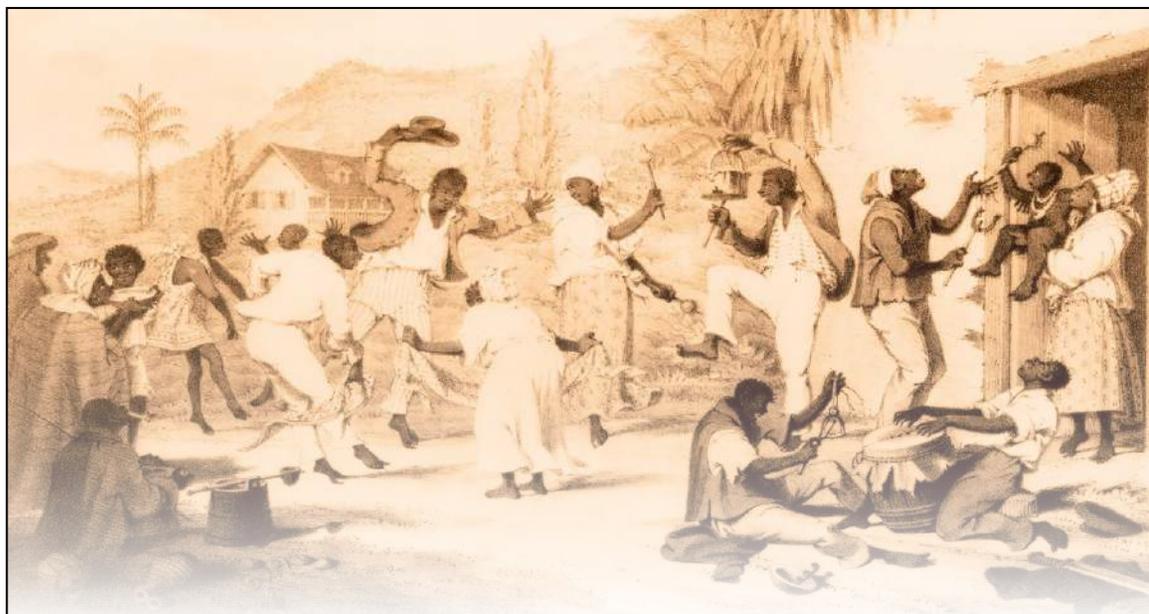


Turks & Caicos Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands performing better than in 2019.

The majority of those recovered greater than 50 per cent of their 2019 arrivals. In addition, multiple destinations registered new record levels for tourist arrivals in a single year.

The CTO said for the Caribbean, only the US market has fully recovered, while the recovery rates of arrivals from Europe and Canada reached 88.2 and 88.1 per cent, respectively. An estimated 16.3 million stay-over arrivals to the region came from the United States, representing an annual growth rate of 12.7 per cent.

- Rewritten from CMC



## Caribbean History Month

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## German Airline To Re-Start Services To Antigua And Barbuda

The German airline, Condor, is to resume operations to Antigua and Barbuda in November, tourism officials have confirmed.

"We are excited about the resumption of the direct service from Condor next winter season. The German speaking market is our second most important European market, with the flight acting as a major gateway creating access from central Europe to Antigua," said Colin C. James, the chief executive officer of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, (ABTA).

James, who is leading a delegation to the International Tourism Exchange, (ITB Berlin), regarded as the world's largest travel and tourism trade fair, said the weekly service would begin November 5, 2024 until May 6, 2025 from Frankfurt.

Antigua tourism official say they expect that this new longer flight schedule which now covers Sailing Week will ensure more German participation in the signature yachting event.

Condor is expected to use the new A330-900 aircraft that can accommodate 310 passengers with 30 business class seats and 64 premium economy seats.

The ABTA said that it would be planning immediate robust sales and marketing activities to further build awareness of the new service and that a workshop will take place on March 19 for on-island partners on how they can capitalise on the service. It said tickets for the Condor flights go on sale from March 7.

- Rewritten from CMC

# Canada Gears Up For US Matches, Including In Lauderhill

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

When Canada plays the United States in five T20 cricket matches this month, it will be a dress rehearsal for their historic International Cricket Council T20 World Cup opener on June 2nd at Grand Prairie Stadium in Dallas, Texas.

Although the countries first played each other in 1844, they are still minnows in the modern game. Canada won that historic three-day match at St. George's Cricket Club in Manhattan by 23 runs. Over the years, both countries have fielded cricket teams heavy on expatriates from British Commonwealth countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the West Indies. It is no different for the June 1st-29th tournament which will be played for the first time in the US and West Indies.

Canada plays India on June 15th in their final opening

round game at Central Broward Park & Broward County Stadium in Lauderhill, South Florida. On June 7th and 11th, they play Ireland and Pakistan, respectively, at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York.

The Canadian head coach is Pubudu Dassanayake, who has an interesting history. Born in Sri Lanka, he represented his home country in Tests and One Day Internationals before migrating to Canada which he also played for.

Dassanayake is in his second stint as Canadian coach, a position he held with the US from 2016 to 2019. With the game way behind baseball, basketball and football in both countries, he gave the ICC the thumbs-up for expanding the



Canada plays India on June 15th in their final opening round game at Central Broward Park & Broward County Stadium in Lauderhill, South Florida. (Facebook image)

number of teams in the ninth Cricket T20 World Cup.

"I'm very emotional to see that both these countries are playing each other in a World Cup opener. North American cricket will have the attention of the world and I'm so happy for that," Dassanayake told Canada's CBC Sports in January, three months after they won the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Americas Region Final.

Most of the players in Canada's cricket team play in the Ontario league which has the most teams. That region also contributed most of the country's players to the 1979

Cricket World Cup in the United Kingdom, in which it lost all three matches.

Dassanayake insists Canada has shown enough improvement to prevent another blowout at the T20 World Cup. "The ICC has given us a great opportunity - playing the U.S. in the World Cup opener. [It's] going to be a game changer for Canada. I think it's a great opportunity for Canada to showcase to the world what we have," he told CBC Sports.



## Edwin Allen High Celebrates Historic 10th Girls' Title At ISSA/Gracekennedy Championships



Edwin Allen High athletes and coach celebrate its 10th girls' title at the 2024 ISSA/GraceKennedy Boys and Girls Championships.

The grounds of Edwin Allen High School in Frankfield, Clarendon, were ablaze with joyous celebration recently, as the school triumphed in securing its 10th girls' title at the 2024 ISSA/GraceKennedy Boys and Girls Championships. A decade of dominance in Jamaican high school track and field was honored amidst an electrifying atmosphere, with students, teachers, and staff coming together to revel in the remarkable achievement.

This year's victory held significant importance for Edwin Allen, facing formidable competition from defending champions, Hydel High School. The battle for supremacy intensified, reaching its climax in the final event of the meet, the 4x400m relay, with Hydel pushing Edwin Allen to their limits. Despite Hydel's spirited effort to clinch victory, Edwin Allen's second-place finish sealed their 10th consecutive title, securing a total of 335.5 points, narrowly surpassing Hydel's 326 points.

Addressing the jubilant crowd gathered in the school's

quadrangle, winning coach Michael Dyke expressed heartfelt pride and congratulations to his team for their exceptional achievement. He highlighted individual medalists and relay teams for their stellar performances throughout the championship, lauding their unwavering dedication and resolve in bringing glory back to Edwin Allen.

Coach Dyke singled out standout athletes including Kemoya Campbell, Denique Palmer, Kevongaye Fowler, Shandre Brown, Theianna-Lee Terrelonge, Dionjah Shaw, Sushana Johnson, Kellyann Carr, Horecia Love, Tonyann Beckford, Natasha Fox, Rickeisha Simms, Rasheeda Samuels, Alliah Gittens, Daijanae Bruce, Jounee Armstrong, and Monique Stewart, recognizing their invaluable contributions to the team's success. Each mention was met with exuberant cheers and the resounding echoes of vuvuzelas.

- Rewritten from SportsMax



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## Your well-being is our priority

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# How To Experience The Thrill And Majesty Of Kentucky Horse Racing



Horse racing and the Kentucky Derby are so ingrained in Kentucky culture that the first Saturday in May, or Derby Day.

There are few words more synonymous with Kentucky than horses. In fact, just saying the words together evokes images of thoroughbreds and jockeys adorned in vibrant colours, as they thunder into the homestretch at Churchill Downs - all competing for the dream of winning the Kentucky Derby.

Horse racing and the Kentucky Derby are so ingrained in Kentucky culture that the first Saturday in May, or Derby Day, as Kentuckians call it, is akin to a state holiday. More than 150,000 people travel to Louisville every year to witness the most exciting two minutes in sports. Millions more, particularly those in the Bluegrass State, throw Derby Parties and tune in at home. Since 1935, the city of Louisville begins celebrating a full two weeks early with elegant balls, a marathon, concerts, and community events during the aptly named, Kentucky Derby Festival.

This year will be particularly special because it's the 150th

“Run for the Roses,” making it the oldest continuous American sporting event. Over the last one and a half centuries, the size and scope of the venerated race, and horse racing culture, have grown exponentially.

As massive as the Derby is in the world's consciousness, it's just the beginning when it comes to Kentucky horseracing. Here's what to know, about all of Kentucky's thoroughbred racetracks, whether you are a horse enthusiast or just looking for a fun way to spend your afternoon:

## CHURCHILL DOWNS

With approximately 70 days of live thoroughbred racing a year, Churchill Downs is a busy place. Every year, the mile-long course and the barns next to it house, train and race more than 1,400 horses and welcome more than a quarter of a million visitors. Meets at the “Twin Spires” include the Spring Meet, which begins after Derby Day, the September Meet, and the Fall Meet. If you find

yourself at Churchill Downs on a day without races, check out the Kentucky Derby Museum next to the track, where you can also book racetrack and barn tours to get an insiders' look at what makes Churchill Downs so special.

Keeneland Race Course Keeneland in Lexington has been a horseracing hub since its first races in the late 1930s. With a Spring Meet in April and a Fall Meet in October, Keeneland features around 30 days of racing annually, and each year, its four thoroughbred auctions result in more than \$500 million in sales. Keeneland, a National Historic Landmark, offers year-round tours of its grounds and training facilities as well as the opportunity to watch horses conduct morning workouts.

## TURFWAY PARK

A few miles from the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport, Turfway Park holds two meets each year: The Holiday Meet in December and the Winter/Spring Meet from January to late March. Turfway originally opened in 1959 as Latonia Race Track and has featured several prestigious races over the years, including the Jeff Ruby Steaks and the John Battaglia Memorial, both of which are included on the “Road to the Kentucky Derby.” Due to its winter and early spring races, Turfway's track is made of synthetic material that makes racing safer during bad weather.

## KENTUCKY DOWNS

Located just north of the Kentucky-Tennessee border in

Franklin, the all-turf flat racetrack at Kentucky Downs is beautiful, and the only European-style track in North America. Kentucky Downs only holds one meet a year during late summer, making it one of the most exclusive racing events around. During these seven race days, Kentucky Downs offers experiences ranging from VIP treatment at the finish line to free tailgating and general admission on the final turn and stretch.

## ELLIS PARK

Positioned just north of the Ohio River and just south of the Kentucky-Indiana border in Henderson, Ellis Park Race Course holds meets from July

to September. Designed after the Saratoga Race Course in New York, the 1.125-mile dirt track features a 60,000-person grandstand offering amazing views of the racing action.

To learn more about Kentucky horse racing and to plan your trip, visit kentuckytourism.com.

No matter the time of year, experiencing the thrill and majesty of thoroughbred horseracing is always an option when you are looking for an unforgettable Kentucky experience.

- StatePoint



## Jamaica's Reggae Boyz Set For Copa America

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz is now set to face Mexico, Ecuador, and Venezuela in the opening round of the Copa America.

This comes as they secured third Place in the CONCACAF Nations League Finals at AT&T Stadium on March 24th, in Arlington, Texas. The Boyz defeated Panama 1-0 in the consolation play-offs, thanks to Dexter Lembikisa's impressive first-half goal. The win marked their highest finish in the tournament, bouncing back from a previous defeat against the USA.

Lembikisa, on loan from



The Boyz defeated Panama 1-0, in the CONCACAF Nations League Finals at AT&T Stadium on March 24th, in Arlington, Texas.

Wolverhampton Wanderers to Heart of Midlothian, delivered the decisive goal.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## T&T Prevents Jamaica From Sweeping Sprint Relays At CARIFTA

Trinidad and Tobago stunned Jamaica to prevent them making a clean sweep of the sprint relays, when they captured the boys Under-20 finale in an electrifying finish on day two of the 51st CARIFTA Games at the Kirani James Athletic Stadium on Sunday, March 31st.

Dylan Woodruffe produced an exhilarating final leg for the Trinidadians, holding off a fierce challenge from Jamaican rival Johan-Ramaldo Smythe, to cross the line first in 40.45 seconds.

Team Jamaica, which had swept the prior three relays, finished second in a time of 40.55 while Samuel Green hauled hosts Grenada over the line for bronze in 40.71.

“I knew my team had put in the effort and had put in the work – they've been training this whole year,” said Woodruffe, whose grandfather Wendell Mottley secured 400m silver and 4x400m bronze at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. “So I just knew once I got the stick, all I had to do was kept us in front and keep us for the win and that's what I did. I would say our chemistry [has been great]. We've been passing that stick [and] practicing, practicing,

practicing and that's what we did and it worked. That was our main objective to get that stick fully around with no problems and it happened so you see what happened? We came first.”

Jamaica, in lane four, appeared strong bets to complete the clean sweep especially after Javorne Dunkley provided them with a strong start before handing over to Raheem Pinnock.

However, things fell apart quickly for the Caribbean powerhouses with a couple of dicey hand-overs and it allowed Woodruffe, running out of lane seven, to collect the baton from Hakeem Chinapoo slightly ahead of Smythe on the final leg.

The two engaged in a heated battle in the stretch with Woodruffe storming to victory, much to the delight of a vociferous Trinidad contingent.

“This team is a dream. Last year I missed out but this year I made sure I came back ... and made sure I made our team proud and made Trinidad



Trinidadian Dylan Woodruffe celebrates with the Trinidadian fans after taking his team to victory in the boy's Under-20 sprint relay. (CMC image)

and Tobago proud,” Woodruffe continued.

Jamaica had earlier captured gold in the boy's Under-17 event in a time of 41.30 seconds, with T&T second in 41.53 and the Bahamas clinching bronze in 42.30.

Kaeden Herbert actually had the advantage for T&T on the final change-over but Malike Nugent easily reeled him in to win comfortably.

“We knew we were going to win today. We were very confident,” Nugent said. Jamaica's girls took gold in the equivalent, clocking 45.36 to finish ahead of the Bahamas (46.28) and Trinidad & Tobago

(47.49) while the Under-20 girls followed suit, Shanoya Douglas taking them over the line in 43.63.

“The coach's instruction was just to go out there and execute it. We've been training, we've been practicing, and we just came out here and gave it our best,” said Habiba Harris who ran the first leg for the Under-20s.

“It feels wonderful [to win gold] because being able to come out here and represent our country as juniors is a very huge opportunity and we're very thankful for it.”

Like in the relays, Jamaica found their attempts at a clean sweep of the 400 metres hurdles thwarted, Michelle Smith of the US Virgin Islands proving the stumbling block when she captured the girls Under-20 race in 56.28 seconds.

Jamaican Kelly Ann Carr was relegated to silver in 57.02 with teammate Aaliyah Mullings taking bronze in 59.80.

Jamaica dominated in the other three races, however. Nastassia Fletcher won the girls Under-17s in one minute, 0.10 seconds while Robert Miller smashed a 14-year-old record to

win the boys Under-17s in 52.19 and Shamer Blake took the boys Under-20s in 51.21.

Another long-standing record fell in the boy's Under-17 shot put when Javontae Smith of Jamaica captured gold with a throw of 18.80 metres, eclipsing the 13-year-old mark of 17.42.

In the boys Under-20 javelin, Bahamian Kaden Cartwright repeated as champion when he measured 67.34 to beat Grenada's Rayvoyn Telesford (65.57) and Dominica's Addison Alickson James (65.50).

“I am very happy. I wanted a little bit more but that's what God allowed me to do, so I'm content with that,” said Cartwright. “This is my second gold medal in a row from last year so I'm pretty proud of myself and I give thanks to God.”

Jamaica top standings as of press time was 49 medals, comprising 24 gold, 15 silver and 10 bronze while the Bahamas lie second on 25, with seven gold, nine silver and nine bronze.

- Edited from CMC



# A Type Of Intermittent Fasting Linked To Higher Cardiovascular Risk, New Study Finds

New research presented by the American Heart Association (AHA) this week suggests that individuals engaging in a particular form of intermittent fasting, known as time-restricted eating (TRE), may face an elevated risk of cardiovascular death. The study, while not definitively establishing causation, highlights a concerning association between restricted eating hours and cardiovascular health.

The research, presented at the AHA's "Epidemiology and Prevention/Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Scientific

Sessions 2024" in Chicago, drew on data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys spanning 2003 to 2018. Researchers examined the eating patterns of over 20,000 participants, comparing those who restricted eating to less than eight hours per day to those with a more extended eating window of 12 to 16 hours.

According to the findings, individuals practicing time-restricted eating with an eating window of fewer than eight hours faced a staggering 91 percent higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease

compared to those with longer eating windows. While the study underscores an association rather than a direct causal link, it urges caution, particularly for individuals with pre-existing health conditions such as heart disease or diabetes, or those undergoing cancer treatments.

Dr. Victor Wenzel Zhong, senior author of the study, emphasized the need for personalized dietary recommendations aligned with an individual's health status and the latest scientific evidence. The study's findings suggest a more nuanced approach to intermittent fasting practices, urging awareness of potential cardiovascular implications, especially for vulnerable populations.

However, experts caution against drawing sweeping conclusions solely based on this study. Dr. Adedapo Iluyomade, a preventive cardiologist at Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute, noted several limitations, including the observational nature of the study and the need for peer review and publication in scientific journals for comprehensive assessment.

While intermittent fasting,



particularly time-restricted eating, has gained popularity for its purported health benefits, including weight loss and improved heart health, this study underscores the importance of careful consideration, especially regarding cardiovascular risks.

As the scientific community continues to explore the relationship between dietary patterns and health outcomes, ongoing research will be essential to provide clearer

guidance on the potential risks and benefits of intermittent fasting practices.

In light of these findings, individuals considering intermittent fasting, especially those with underlying health concerns, are advised to consult with healthcare professionals to make informed decisions tailored to their unique health needs.



## Looking To Feel Better? Consider Adding An Iron Supplement

Anyone looking to dramatically and easily improve their overall health and wellness would be wise to consider adding an iron supplement to their diet.

### A COMMON PROBLEM

Although few people ever think about their iron intake, assuming eating enough leafy greens or taking a multivitamin will suffice, iron deficiency is the most common nutritional shortfall globally, including in the United States, where it is estimated that 1 in 5 people need more iron to function properly. This holds true across all age ranges and physical conditions, from senior citizens to infants to performance athletes, but most notably this is the case for women of childbearing age.

### WHY YOUR IRON LEVELS MATTER

Without sufficient iron, the body cannot produce enough haemoglobin – the substance in red blood cells that enables them to carry oxygen to tissues and organs, which can impact nearly every system in the body, even leading to death in the cases of extreme anaemia. Iron deficiency can also exacerbate many health conditions, especially cardiac, pulmonary and circulatory problems, and it plays a critical role in conditions like restless leg syndrome, ADD/ADHD, celiac disease, and Crohn's disease.

That said, the symptoms of less severe iron deficiency can be harder to pinpoint.

They include:

- Tiredness or lethargy
- Weakness
- Irregular heartbeat or shortness of breath
- Headache, dizziness, light-headedness
- Unusual food cravings and appetite changes

- Appearance issues like thinning hair, pallor, dark circles, or brittle nails
- Behavioural issues like excitability, inability to focus, or irritability, especially in children

### CHOOSE WISELY

Adding an iron supplement is an easy way to address a host of pressing issues, but buyer beware – not all iron supplements are created equal. Even those who know they need iron may not take supplements because they are notoriously bad-tasting and can cause significant gastrointestinal distress, essentially trading one problem for another. The supplement market is also largely unregulated, resulting in many companies producing inferior products or making unsubstantiated claims about the effectiveness of their products.

So how can you find the best supplement for you and your family? The short answer is to ignore the marketing hype and trust medicine. Follow your doctors' advice and look for an iron supplement that has been clinically proven to be safe, effective and well-tolerated in all age groups.

One such product is NovaFerrum, which offers a range of iron supplements for all age groups. Founded by a father whose preemie daughter refused to take the supplement she needed, NovaFerrum features a distinct chemical composition formulated to nearly eliminate the gastrointestinal side effects common in other iron supplements, a patented taste-masking technology and great-tasting flavors made from natural ingredients, like raspberries and monk fruit.

- StatePoint



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## Book Review - The Caribbean Through A Different Lens

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

**TITLE:** *Challenged Sovereignty: The Impact of Drugs, Crime, Terrorism, and Cyber Threats in the Caribbean*

**AUTHOR:** Dr. Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith

**PUBLISHER:** University of Illinois Press

‘Challenged Sovereignty’ will certainly force the average reader to look at the Caribbean through a different lens. The typical visitor to the region views this part of the world through stereotypical rose-tinted glasses seeing only sand, sea, and sun.

Guyanese author Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith gives us another perspective, the one hidden from view behind the walls of the sprawling all-inclusive resorts that dot the islands.

Most tomes like this are intimidating, replete with academic-speak that is difficult to decipher, but not this one. ‘Challenged Sovereignty’ is a scholarly work, yet it is easy to read and accessible to those curious about the topic. It follows the approach used in most academic work - stating the problem then sign-posting each chapter with hints of what’s to come in later sections.

Griffith defines challenged sovereignty as: “A condition where the state’s vulnerability is exacerbated by internal and external developments that compromise the ability of the supreme authority of the state to promulgate and execute domestic and foreign policy in its own deliberate judgement and on its own terms... it is a circumstance that develops over time.”

### PROBLEMS WITHOUT PASSPORTS

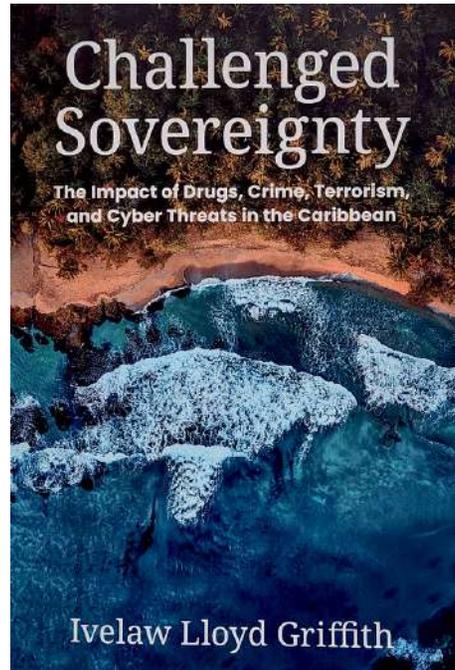
The underlying focus of this book is, Problems Without Passports, (PWP), which Griffith probes from a fresh viewpoint. PWPs are activities such as drug trafficking, crime, terrorism, and cyber threats that undermine the sovereignty of any state. In this case, the author analyzes how the Caribbean became a magnet for these problems based on globalization, geography, geopolitical importance, loose borders, political and economic factors.

So, which Caribbean islands are affected? The simple answer is, all. What distinguishes them is the gravity of these negative factors, says Griffith. With charts, concrete examples, and references, the author gives readers detailed descriptions and statistics to support his claims.

Looking at drug trafficking, what he calls the Geo-narcotics framework, Griffith utilizes a chart which clearly shows the four factors that push the drug trade: narcotics, geography, power, and politics. These in turn stimulate four main problems: drug production, consumption-trafficking, and money laundering (19 Caribbean nations are among the major money laundering jurisdictions worldwide). Importantly, he stresses that the proximity of the Caribbean to South America (a major drug supplier) and North America (the largest drug-consuming nation) contributes to the region’s risk. These factors work together to threaten the security and sovereignty of the state.

Another pillar of his study, crime, is dissected and shared in bite-sized chunks for ease of understanding. Griffith gives readers the overall picture of the crime statistics and its relationship to drugs noting that the region’s countries with high crime profiles, particularly homicide, are the same ones noted for high drug activity. Among them: Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, the Bahamas, St. Kitts and Nevis. Charts for some of these counties highlight the troubling rates over a decade.

Criminality is contextualized with a focus on the social and economic costs to the particular country. He looks at Jamaica’s high murder rate for example and the importation of mainly US-sourced illegal firearms into the country. Of course, Jamaica is not the only country affected by the surge of illegal guns; the Bahamas, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the



**Challenged Sovereignty: The Impact of Drugs, Crime, Terrorism, and Cyber Threats in the Caribbean by Dr. Ivelaw Griffith.**

their concern for the region. He analyzes the region’s resource/material wealth that must be protected - Guyana’s oil reserves and gold, Suriname’s uranium, Cuba’s silver are examples. In the same context, he also discusses the region’s most important strategic waterway, the Panama Canal. Of course, the Caribbean’s major source of revenue, tourism, also comes into play as a valuable asset that must be protected from terrorism.

Because we live in a globalized world, cyber security has become a huge concern. Thus, the Caribbean IS also prone to cyber attacks, says Griffith. He explains that regional governments, military, educational, and medical organizations collect and store masses of personal and highly classified documents which must be secure from such attacks. He discusses specific cases that affected some Caribbean countries and how they were dealt with. Unfortunate, says Griffith, the region is low on the scale of cyber security.

So what’s the answer to Problems Without Passports? How do we secure Caribbean sovereignty? The answer is certainly not clear cut, says Griffith. The region has partnered with non-Caribbean states to help them tackle the problems; those who are motivated by geopolitical interests - The United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, the European Union.

Griffith’s advice?: “Caribbean security elites and practitioners should embrace proactive national and regional engagement in order to better cope with extant security challenges, lest the science of muddling through, which is practiced in some places, becomes the regional norm and undermines the security and sovereignty of nations in the region.”





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Grenadines are examples of other states. How does the state control or police these activities? Action plans created by CARICOM leaders are discussed.

Interestingly, Griffith brings into focus two high profile cases that demonstrate the far-reaching effects of crime, violence, and drugs on citizens. The 2010 Dudas Affair in Jamaica and the 2011 State of Emergency in Trinidad and Tobago are detailed and analyzed with a fine tooth comb. Linkages between crime, politics, and power become evident.

### TERRORISM AND CYBERSECURITY

Although the threat of terrorism is low in the Caribbean, with less than 20 incidents recorded in the region between 1967 and 1995, Griffiths provides a chart that details these occurrences. It is interesting reading for those who had no clue about these kinds of events, including this writer.

The author defines the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack as “a defining moment”, a time when CARICOM leaders put out a statement voicing

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# Film Producer Donates \$100K And Commits To Film Production Program At UWI Five Islands Campus

Esteemed film producer Andrea Iervolino, known for his work on projects such as “Ferrari,” is forging a profitable relationship with the University of the West Indies (UWI) Five Islands Campus. In a groundbreaking move, Iervolino has pledged a generous donation of USD\$100,000 to support the establishment of a film production course at the university.

The collaboration between Iervolino and UWI Five Islands Campus aims to provide budding filmmakers with invaluable opportunities to hone their craft and gain practical experience in the dynamic world of cinema.

During discussions with Justin Robinson, Chancellor of UWI Five Islands, Iervolino expressed his enthusiasm for the project and outlined his vision for the program. He emphasized the importance of hands-on experience and pledged to personally engage with students interested in pursuing careers in filmmaking.

As part of his commitment, Iervolino offered select students the chance to travel to Italy for immersive filmmaking experiences, providing them with invaluable insights into the industry.



Esteemed film producer Andrea Iervolino, has pledged a generous donation of USD\$100,000 to support the establishment of a film production course at the university. (Contributed image)

“The possibilities are endless,” remarked Iervolino. “We must teach students to produce a movie from scratch, to be part of a crew, and gain firsthand experience on set. This is how you teach people.”

The initiative comes at a pivotal time for UWI, as the university seeks to bolster its offerings and become a leading institution for film studies in the Caribbean region.

Antigua & Barbuda Education Minister Daryll Matthew expressed his excitement about the venture, recognizing its potential to cater to students interested in the film sector and contribute to the national development of Antigua and Barbuda.

“I believe this partnership can only reap benefits for UWIFIC and Antigua and Barbuda,” stated Minister

Matthew.

Iervolino’s introduction to Antigua and Barbuda was facilitated by the esteemed Ambassador to Spain in the Principality of Monaco and the Principality of Liechtenstein, Dr. Dario Item. Dr. Item played a pivotal role in motivating Iervolino’s contribution to UWIFIC and expressed his eagerness to collaborate on this noble cause.

The initiative has garnered support from various quarters, with Ambassador Johann Hesse

of Antigua and Barbuda to the African Union offering valuable insights towards its success.

In addition to his philanthropic endeavors, Iervolino is set to embark on a film project in Antigua and Barbuda, showcasing both his talent and the beauty of the island. He also plans to involve local talent in the production, providing aspiring actors and actresses with a platform to shine on the international stage.



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