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MARCH 2021

# Caribbean Today

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Vol. 32 No. 4

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A Caribbean Woman Influencer  
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# Mia Mottley

The Caribbean's De Facto Leader?  
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(Photo Credit: BIS)

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## Regional Caribbean News Round Up

Here's a synopsis of all the major Caribbean news from the region you can use:

### REGIONAL

As the US surpassed half-a-million deaths from COVID-19, a News Americas analysis of deaths from the virus in the Caribbean region shows it is approaching 8,000.

The tally includes deaths in the Caribbean US territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as of March 2, 2021.

The Dominican Republic accounts for most of the deaths from the virus in the region, with 3,106.

Puerto Rico ranks second with 2037 deaths while Jamaica is third with 425 deaths.

Belize with 315 deaths comes in at fourth while Cuba with 324 deaths is fifth.

### REGIONAL FOOD PLAN

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders are actively working on an action plan to boost agriculture in the region. Guyana's President Irfaan Ali said at the end of the two-day 32nd Intersessional Meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government on Feb. 25, 2021. Ali said there was an extensive

discussion on agriculture in the context of food security, commercialization and mainstreaming the region's agricultural output. He said that would be done through the formulation of a national and regional policy.

The President said the action plan would address breaking down barriers affecting trade in the region. Discussions were also held on improving transportation within the region and creating an easier environment for agrobusiness, the involvement of young people, access to capital and looking at legislation to deal with dumping and anti-dumping measures.

### JAMAICA

The Jamaican government has extended the current travel restrictions and protocols for British travelers until March 15th, which means the ban on direct flights from the United Kingdom (UK) will remain in place.

All non-Jamaicans who have been in the UK within the last 14 days prior to intended arrival date in Jamaica, who may seek to enter the island through another country will not be permitted to enter Jamaica.

Additionally, Jamaicans who have been in the UK within the 14 days prior to intended arrival date, who seek to enter the island through another country will be tested and detained in state quarantine for a minimum of 48 hours until the results are returned.

If negative, they will be allowed to transfer to home quarantine to complete the 14-day mandatory quarantine period. If positive, they will remain in isolation at a location that is approved by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

The government said it is awaiting the results of genome sequence testing of samples sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to determine the possible presence of new strains of the SARS-COV2 virus in Jamaica. It said the restrictions will be reviewed again following receipt of those test results.

### BARBADOS

A National Vaccine Fund will be launched soon in Barbados to secure the next batch of COVID-19 vaccines for residents, Prime Minister Mia Mottley said as she announced that more than 29,000 people had already received the vaccine.

While the first 100,000 doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca were a gift from the Government of India, Mottley said the next shipment would come at a cost, although she did not go into details.

She, however, said the Government would not be charging people for the next round of vaccines it intends to purchase but would be appealing to people at the individual and corporate levels to help ease the "stress", by contributing to the fund when it is established.

### DOMINICA

The European Union (EU) recently added a new Caribbean country to its blacklist.

Dominica was added to the list from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Global Forum for Transparency and Exchange of Information after

The investment can include real estate, Bermuda government bonds, a contribution to the island's sinking fund for debt reduction or the Bermuda Trust Fund, as well as charity. Hayward said a US\$2,625 fee would be charged for the certificate. Holders will not be able to vote in Bermuda general elections.

### TURKS & CAICOS

The Turks & Caicos has a new government. The main opposition Progressive National Party (PNP) secured a landslide victory when the citizens of this British Overseas territory went to the polls in a general election on Friday, Feb. 19, 2021. Led by businessman Charles Washington Misick the PNP obtained a landslide 14 to 1 victory over the incumbent People's Democratic Movement (PDM).

According to the territory's



Protests have continued in Haiti with many calling President Jovenel Moise a "dictator."

the EU said the island still does not fully meet international standards.

The EU requires jurisdictions to be at least 'largely compliant' with the international standard on transparency and exchange of information on request.

There are now 12 jurisdictions considered non-cooperative jurisdictions, including Anguilla, Trinidad and Tobago and the US Virgin Islands in the Caribbean.

### BERMUDA

A UK territory is launching a new investment residency option this month. The Bermuda government is offering foreigners the chance to become long-term residents if they invest a minimum of US\$2.5 million in the island. Labor Minister Jason Hayward said the new economic investment certificate policy, which became a reality from March 1st, is being implemented due to the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic that has pushed Bermuda's national debt close to \$3 billion.

supervisor of Elections, Dudley Lewis the opposition party won nine of the 10 electoral district seats and all five of the At Large seats.

Misick, 70, is a former chief minister and the brother of former premier Michael Misick.

The PDM in a major defeat, saw their leader, Sharlene Cartwright-Robinson, who was elected the country's first female premier in 2016, losing her seat.

The only successful PDM candidate was former health minister Edwin Astwood who won the Grand Turk South.

### HAITI/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Dominican Armed Forces have deployed 7,200 troops on the border with Haiti and so far this year have intercepted and returned more than 38,000 Haitians who illegally crossed the territorial division to the neighboring country.

"If we need more soldiers, we will use them so that the country is safe in this part of the territory," the general

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

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## Mia Mottley ~ The Caribbean's De Facto Leader?

The 32nd Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) concluded on Feb. 25th with a communique that named the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, as the head of a small committee given the huge role of undertaking a resource mobilization roadshow for the Caribbean region in the COVID-19 pandemic era.

Mottley is already head honcho for the CARICOM Economic Recovery and Transformation (CERT) Programme, which includes securing immediate liquidity enhancements to begin the process of economic revitalization; debt refinancing; measures to protect the balance of payments and boost regional production.

In given this new task, the Community has essentially made Mottley the de facto leader of CARICOM, even though she is no longer formally the chair of the body.

It was Mottley, who after months of lobbying, made the United States leverage its leadership at the International Monetary Fund, (IMF), to provide \$1.7 billion in new emergency funding for Caribbean countries, as a direct response to COVID 19.

She got both US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and Secretary of Treasury, Steven Mnuchin, to officially sign a letter to support the

funding grant, and had them also promise, that if requested, the United States would support temporary access to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, for COVID-19 related assistance for the Bahamas and Barbados, the two Caribbean graduates from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

It was also Mottley who was able to secure 100,000 COVID-19 vaccines from India for her nation, and who then subsequently donated to her neighbors, including 2,000 to Trinidad and Tobago, 1,500 to Guyana, 1,000 to St Lucia and 500 to Grenada.

But it has not been just in the pandemic. Ever since leading the Barbados Labor Party (BLP) in 2018 to a historic political victory, Mottley, 55, has emerged on the world's stage as the region's premier voice and performed as one of the Caribbean's strongest and most influential leaders.

She began 2020 as the chair of the 15-member Caribbean membership organization CARICOM by expressing her no-nonsense posture as she refused to have Barbados' foreign minister joined other Caribbean leaders in a meeting with then U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo.

As chair, she immediately took on the issue of the climate crisis, urging the Caribbean

Development Bank and the public and private sectors in the region to be more proactive in collaborating to cope with the crisis.

She faced the issue of the election controversy in Guyana with strength despite tremendous criticism as she boldly stated: "The truth hurts."

Mottley has become the face of the region globally. She told the extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), the CARICOM grouping is vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19 and appealed for a truly global response to the pandemic.

She was interviewed by CNN journalist and host of "Amanpour", Christiane Amanpour in April 2020 and her celebrity has risen globally with appearances at Rihanna's Diamond Ball where she was honored and at the 2019 Global Citizen Festival: Power The Movement in Central Park, NYC.

Mottley has been consistent in ensuring she does not miss an opportunity to speak up and



PM Mia Mottley with her Legacy Award from the American Foundation for The University of the West Indies (AFUWI) on Feb. 21, 2021. (Twitter image/Mia Mottley)

speak out for the region. In May last year, she used her virtual address to the UN's high-level virtual meeting of world leaders to lay down a clear marker. "I hope that this high-level session will not simply be the record of glorious speeches but will trigger action that is needed badly," Mottley boldly said at a conference where Canada is competing for 1 of 2 non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council.

The call to action was just her latest in remarks she has made on the region's behalf

when given international platforms. And she has called for multilateralism and a global leadership initiative that brings together not just governments, but other people of influence, insisting that it is the behavior of individuals that has to change.

Mottley has in the past also called for a vulnerability index assessing how developing countries like hers are exposed to economic and public health issues like climate change.

She is also Development Committee chair for the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with Mesdames Azucena Arbeleche, minister of economy and finance of Uruguay.

But Mottley has made it clear that the "ball was in the court" of the Caribbean community to determine what they were prepared to accept within the context of the support that they were finally receiving.

As she stated last July, regional leaders now have to negotiate and see how the assistance could work in the best interest of the region, "on our terms in circumstances that allow us to be able to frame what is best for us, and how best do we restructure aspects of our economy, aspects of our debt, to be able to allow us to meet the needs of our population going forward."

It is her consistent advocate for the region versus just country that has set her apart and won her credit globally as one of the most powerful female leaders today.

Little wonder that the American Foundation for The University of the West Indies (AFUWI) on Feb. 21, 2021 presented the Legacy Award to Mottley, as many now undoubtedly recognize her as the de facto leader of the CARICOM region.

## CARICOM Heads Still Talking CSME

It's been 31-years since the official launch of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, (CSME), but CARICOM leaders on Thursday were again expressing concern about the outstanding actions still required to advance its implementation.

The "concern" was expressed in the communique issued at the conclusion of the 32nd Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), February 24-25, 2021.

Heads of Government reaffirmed the critical role of the CSME in the region's strategy for sustained economic growth, especially in the current pandemic era and to build economic resilience by developing the capacity to withstand both external and internal shocks to the Community.

They agreed to review urgently the entire consultation and decision-making processes at all levels in the effort to establish the most effective strategy for effecting increased levels of implementation.

They also agreed that an immediate step towards



achieving implementation would be led by the Lead Head of Government with responsibility for the CSME, Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

Heads of Government also on Thursday, mandated the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP) to meet urgently no later than end of March 2021, to resolve the outstanding issues and reach agreement with respect to the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA), the Regional Securities Market, the Community Investment Policy and Credit Reporting.

And they urged the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade among Member States and the

simplification of administrative procedures for free movement of people in order to boost economic output.

They also stressed the urgent need to address and resolve those critical issues that impede the benefits of the CSME being enjoyed by all, particularly the private sector on which the Region is depending to fuel the recovery of its economies and which needed to be fully engaged at both the national and regional levels.

The heads gathered also urged the Special Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)-ICT to expedite the establishment of the Single ICT Space

together with access to reduced roaming rates and enhanced access to broadband as well as to examine the feasibility of establishing a Single Regional Telecommunications Regulator for the consideration of the Forty-Second Meeting of the Conference in July 2021. This would be fundamental to advance the digital economy, they said.

### Caricom Economic Recovery And Transformation (CERT)

Meanwhile, the heads of government reiterated their call for a new allocation of Special Drawing Rights to boost global liquidity; the conversion of COVID-related debt into long-term, low-interest loans; and the use of a multi-dimensional universal vulnerability index and vulnerability criteria to determine access to concessional funding by small middle income States.

### CARICOM Development Fund (CDF)

They also reiterated the important role of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) to the social and economic

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



**NEWS**



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**India's Vaccine Diplomacy In The Caribbean**

India's Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government has faced questions over its democracy after trying to get farmers to back down from a campaign that has drawn support around India and abroad and the arrest of Disha Ravi, a 22-year-old climate activist, who helped the protesting farmers. Even Caribbean born star Rihanna, heaped weighed in, drawing the ire of some Indians with her support for the farmers.

But in the Caribbean, India's government is getting nothing but praise as its 'vaccine diplomacy' is in full swing. The Modi government has donated 500,000 AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines to the Caribbean as most Western countries, including the US and Canada, push a national first agenda, ignoring its neighbors.

At least 70,000 doses of the AstraZeneca will be dedicated to frontline workers. India's donation, announced shortly after news of the COVAX allocation for the sub-region, comes at a critical juncture as Caribbean countries embark on vaccination campaigns to protect public health and kickstart tourism amid a resurgence of the pandemic and tighter travel restrictions in source markets.

India donated 100,000 vaccines to Barbados. Barbados' Prime Minister, Mia Mottley, subsequently donated 2,000 to Trinidad and Tobago, 1,500 to Guyana, 1,000 to St Lucia and 500 to Grenada.

"This was a very special moment for all Barbadians and I want to thank Prime Minister Modi for his quick, decisive, and magnanimous action in allowing us to be the beneficiary of these vaccines," Barbados's PM Mia Amor Mottley tweeted.

Belizean media has also



Indians shipping their AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines to the Caribbean. (Indian Express image)

reported that Barbados pledged to donate 1,000 vaccines to Belize and that its Prime Minister John Briceño accepted the offer.

India then donated 70,000 vaccines to Dominica. Dominica then donated 5,000 to Antigua and Barbuda, 5,000 to St Vincent and the Grenadines, 2,000 to St Lucia, 2,000 to St Kitts and Nevis, and 500 to Grenada.

Prime Minister of Dominica Roosevelt Skerrit expressed his "heartfelt thanks and appreciation" to "PM Modi, his govt and citizens of India" for sending covid vaccine supplies.

"I must confess I did not imagine that the prayers of my country would have been answered so swiftly. Being the leader of a small Caribbean Island with a population of 72,000 people I did not fancy my chances of getting such a swift and positive response to my request from India's PM Narendra Modi," he added.

India also donated 40,000 vaccines to Antigua and Barbuda, a Facebook post by the Office of the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda said.

Additionally, in a radio interview, Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines Dr Ralph Gonsalves said Modi had "approved a grant" for 40,000 vaccines to be donated.

India also donated 30,000 vaccines to the Dominican Republic.

The remaining CARICOM members yet to receive from India's donation – whether directly or indirectly – include the Bahamas, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat and Suriname.

The Indian donations come as Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Director Carissa F. Etienne said while several countries have started providing COVID-19 vaccines through bilateral deals with manufacturers or small donations from other countries, "that is not enough, and it is not acceptable."

This as Barbados, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Turks and Caicos are reporting a rise in new COVID-19-infections.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



**CARICOM Heads Still Talking CSME**

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3) advancement of the Community. They noted that in the context of the dire fiscal, economic and social circumstances facing Member States arising from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDF should be positioned to provide support to

Member States' post-pandemic recovery efforts.

Heads of Government therefore agreed to a further one-year extension to the CDF's second contribution and subvention cycle to June 30, 2022.

They recognized the

potential impact of funding shortfalls and protracted payment delays on Member States' programs and the CDF's liquidity, financial sustainability and capacity to fulfil its mandate.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



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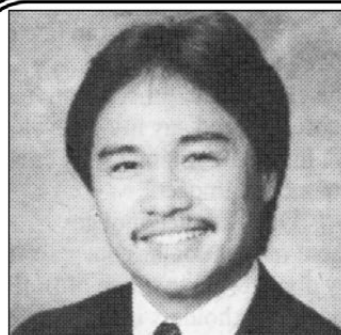
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NEWS

## US' First Black Caribbean American VP Is Top Target For Online Haters

New research shows that the US' first Black, Caribbean American and South Asian Vice President, Kamala Harris, has become the top target for online haters.

The Wilson Center and Moonshot CVE Release Landmark Study on Online Gendered Abuse and Disinformation found that Vice-President Harris was targeted with an overwhelming amount of abuse, especially during the 2020 election campaign. Some 78% of the total data collected targeted at her.

Many abusive posts also spread false, sexualized narratives about Harris according to Nina Jankowicz, the Wilson Center's Disinformation Fellow and lead author of the report.

Jankowicz led the study released last month analyzing more than 300,000 posts against 13 politicians in four English-speaking countries in the couple months before the U.S. election.

Harris, whose father was born in Jamaica and whose mother was born in India, was targeted most. It showed that many of the attacks and disinformation lobbed at Harris echoed tropes against Barack and Michelle Obama: that she is insufficiently Black or Indian because of her mixed-race heritage, that she cannot legally serve as vice president because her parents were immigrants,



The US' First Black, Caribbean American VP, Kamala Harris. (Photo: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)

that she slept her way to the top, that she has a secret plan to steal authority from Biden and, perhaps most outlandish, that she is secretly a man.

That last lie, apparently started by the QAnon cult, involves what's known as a "cheap fake," a crudely doctored image of Harris alongside a man supposedly named Kamal Aroush.

Other posts involved more direct attacks using racist and sexist language and images.

Online attacks against Harris, now that she is vice president, are monitored by the Secret Service. Her aides have declined to comment other than to say threats to her and her family are taken seriously.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Regional Caribbean News Round Up

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2) commander of the Dominican Republic Army, Julio Ernesto Florian Perez, told journalists during a tour of the border area.

Major General Florian noted that the Dominican military recently caught "some people wanted" by the Haitian justice system and "some criminals" who were handed over to the Haitian National Police in the border province of Dajabon.

### HAITI

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders have called on Haitian President Jovenel Moise to hold presidential elections in the French-speaking CARICOM country "as soon as possible" in keeping with the constitution of the country.

Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, who chaired a virtual two-day meeting of regional leaders, said that they had received a report from President Moise on the situation in the country.

Earlier in February, Haitian government authorities said they foiled an attempt to overthrow

President Moise, whom the opposition parties have said is remaining in office beyond his five-year mandate.

Justice Minister Rockefeller Vincent spoke of an attempted coup d'etat" while authorities said 23 people had been arrested, including a Supreme Court judge and senior police official.

Moise, who has been governing without any checks on his power for the past year, has insisted his term ends on February 7th next year, an interpretation of the country's constitution that has been rejected by the opposition.

Moise was voted into office in a 2015 poll later cancelled on grounds of fraud, and then elected again a year later, in 2016. But Moise was only sworn into office on February 7, 2017, and he and his supporters say that since his mandate only began on that date, it ends in 2022.

- Rewritten and Compiled From CMC, NewsAmericasNow.com and Dominican Today.



## Caribbean American AGs Urge Biden Administration To Abandon This Trump-Era Immigration Plan

Two Caribbean American US attorneys general are among 20 urging the Joe Biden administration to abandon a specific Trump-era immigration plan.

Haitian-born Attorney General Karl A. Racine of the District of Columbia, and Haitian-American Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, are co-leading a group of 20 attorneys general urging the Biden administration to abandon Trump-era plans to terminate family reunification programs impacting Haitian and Filipino immigrants.

The Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program (HFRP) and the Filipino World War II Veteran Parole Program (FWVP) were designed to provide a legal pathway for immigrants from the two countries to come to the United States to join family members already legally living here.

The Trump administration published a notice in the Federal Register indicating that it would eliminate both programs and requested public comments. The attorneys general argue in their comment letter that eliminating these programs has no legal basis because the proposal relies on rescinded Trump administration Executive Orders and directives, would violate the Administrative Procedure Act by ignoring



Haitian-born Attorney General Karl A. Racine of the District of Columbia

important evidence on the current conditions in Haiti, and harms the public, which benefits from families being together.

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established HFRP in December 2014 to provide a pathway for Haitians with approved family-based immigrant visa applications to join their family members in the United States before receiving their visas. The program gave eligible Haitians the opportunity to safely and legally immigrate on an expedited timeline while Haiti continued to recover from the devastation and destruction of a catastrophic earthquake in 2010. The goal of the program is

to promote lawful immigration and to support Haiti's long-term reconstruction and continued development. Two years after the successful implementation of HFRP, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) created FWVP to assist Filipino veterans who fought alongside the United States during World War II and later came to the United States. The program allowed family members to join these aging veterans, most of whom are in their 90s, in the United States to offer care and support.

In August 2019, the Trump administration announced their intention to eliminate both HFRP and FWVP but waited until December 2020 before acting on it. On December 28, 2020, DHS and USCIS issued a notice that they would rescind these programs and requested public comments. AG Racine and AG Raoul, both Haitian immigrants, formed a multi-state coalition of attorneys general opposing the policy in a public comment letter.

In the letter, the coalition argues that these programs should remain in place because the decision to terminate them "has no legal basis and violates the Administrative Procedure Act." (CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

## SPRING HEALTH



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DEADLINE IS MARCH 26, 2021

# A Border Wall Is Coming To This Caribbean Country

The Dominican Republic is set to build a wall on its border with Haiti.

The country's will begin President, Luis Abinader, said his government will be constructing a fence along its 376-kilometer (234 mi) border with Haiti later this year to curb unauthorized migration and illicit trade.

"In a period of two years, we want to put an end to the serious problems of illegal immigration, drug trafficking

and the movement of stolen vehicles," Abinader said in a presentation to Congress.

Construction of the border fence, whose cost has not been disclosed, will begin in the second half of 2021, Abinader said.

The barrier will include a double fence in the "most conflictive" sections, along with motion sensors, facial recognition cameras and infrared systems, he added, speaking on the 177th

anniversary of the country's independence from Haiti.

According to government estimates, about 500,000 Haitian immigrants resided in the Dominican Republic as of 2018, along with tens of thousands of their children born in the Caribbean country. A large part of the Haitian community, which makes up about 5% of the total population, does not have residency permits.

The announcement came



Luis Abinader

© Getty Images/AFP. Barria

# CARICOM National Is Among ICE Most Wanted

A CARICOM national from Belize is among over two dozen immigrants on the US ICE Most Wanted List.

Santos Moreira, whose last known location was LA, is wanted for removal as a previously removed criminal immigrant with felony convictions for manslaughter, robbery with a firearm, and possession and purchase of cocaine.

Moreira was ordered removed by an immigration judge on November 7, 1995. He has multiple previous removals and was last removed from the U.S. by ICE on October 14, 2010.



Santos Moreira is wanted by USICE (ICE.gov image)

Moreira unlawfully re-entered the U.S. at an

unknown place and date without inspection, and despite attempts by ICE to locate his whereabouts, he currently remains at-large.

He is 5'10", 215 pounds and has a scar on his left forearm.

If you have information about the whereabouts of this fugitive, immediately contact your local U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office or call the national hotline at 1-866-DHS-2-ICE as soon as possible.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



a month after the government agreed to help Haiti provide identity documents to its citizens living in Dominican

territory.

- Rewritten from Reuters



# Cocaine Laden Containers Found

Scores of packages with more than 300 pounds of cocaine were found in containers at the Kingston Freeport Terminal Limited (KFTL) this week.

According to Jamaica Observer reports, the drug was found in two of six transshipment containers that arrived in the island from Guyana en route to Haiti and China.

While searching the containers, Narcotics Police accompanied by members of the Jamaica Customs Contraband

Enforcement Team reportedly found a total of 122 packages - 110 in one and 12 in another, each with compressed white substance resembling cocaine.

The total weight of the drugs is approximately 139.4 kilograms (307 pounds) and the estimated street value is US\$6.59 million.

No one has been arrested in connection with the seizure.

- Rewritten from The Jamaica Observer



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# Caribbean American Congresswoman Welcomes The United States Citizenship Act of 2021

BY NELSON A. KING

Caribbean immigrant rights advocates have welcomed the introduction of the bicameral United States Citizenship Act of 2021 that seeks to overhaul America's immigration system.

Caribbean American Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke on Feb. 18, 2021, joined California Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez and New Jersey Senator Bob Menendez in introducing the Act.

The Act is in keeping with US President Joe Biden's "bold, inclusive and humane" plan for the future of the United States immigration system, opening up a pathway to citizenship for millions of Caribbean and other immigrants.

As the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, Clarke, who represents the predominantly Caribbean 9th Congressional District in Brooklyn, New York, said she is "uniquely familiar with the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

"As chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Immigration Task Force, I have seen the glaring inequities, blatant racism, vicious xenophobia, and civil rights violations immigrants face, particularly in immigrant communities of African descent," she said. "Our immigration system is broken, and I will not relent until our immigration system reflects a modern and equitable approach to this issue.

"Reversing the policies of the last four years is not enough," Clarke added. "We must reimagine the immigration system in a manner that is humane, just, and fair.

"This bill is the Biden-Harris administration's vision to fix our immigration system once and for all," Clarke continued. "The time has come for the values of our nation to be reflected in our immigration policies. I am proud to co-lead this paramount legislation."

The legislation would provide millions of hardworking, undocumented Caribbean and



Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, (D:NY)

other immigrants a pathway to earned citizenship, including Dreamers, Temporary Protective Status (TPS) recipients and "essential workers who have made enormous sacrifices during the pandemic."

The measure would also prioritize family reunification, keeping families together; and bolster the country's long-term economic growth.

Additionally, the legislation would also equip the country to "responsibly and effectively

manage the border with smart and effective investments"; address root causes of migration that force people to leave Central America; and restore the United States' commitment to human rights.

Clarke said the US Citizenship Act of 2021 establishes "a moral and economic imperative and a vision of immigration reform that is expansive and inclusive."

She said it creates an "earned roadmap" to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants, providing Dreamers, TPS holders and some farmworkers with "an expedited three-year path to citizenship", and giving all other undocumented immigrants who pass background checks and pay taxes with "an eight-year path to citizenship without fear of deportation."

The congresswoman added the Act reforms family-based immigration system to keep families together by recapturing visas from previous years to clear backlogs, including spouses and children of green card holders as

immediate family members, and increasing per-country caps for family-based immigration.

The Act also eliminates discrimination facing LGBTQ+ families, provides protections for orphans, widows and children, and allows immigrants with approved family-sponsorship petitions to join family in the US on a temporary basis while they wait for green cards to become available, Clarke said.

Additionally, she said the Act, among other things, "grows our economy by making changes to the employment-based immigration system, eliminating per-country caps, making it easier for STEM advanced degree holders from US universities to stay, improving access to green cards for workers in lower-wage industries, and giving dependents of H-1B holders work authorization, and preventing children of H-1B holders from aging out of the system."

- *Rewritten from CMC*



## This Caribbean American Is Now A Judge In Colorado

It's Women's History Month and there's much to celebrate this month in Colorado where a Caribbean American woman has now been appointed a US judge.

Jamaican-born Reneé Goble has been appointed as a judge to the Denver County Court in Colorado. She replaced Judge Gary Jackson, who recently retired.

Goble, a Senior Assistant City Attorney in the Denver City Attorney's Office, most recently served as the senior litigator for the Municipal Operations Section. As senior litigator of the section, Goble represented and advocated for city agencies and departments – including the departments of Parks and Recreation, Community Planning and Development, Safety and Transportation & Infrastructure – in commercial matters and ordinance violations. Since 2019, she also managed the city's opioid lawsuit in federal court, overseen Denver's



Jamaican-born Judge Reneé Goble

case as party to the multidistrict litigation in Ohio related to the opioid pandemic, and Denver's case as party to the multidistrict litigation in San Francisco related to the JUUL youth vaping lawsuit.

"I believe judges have a powerful role to create change in our society, and it's a great honor to be appointed to this position by Mayor Hancock and a dream come true for me to represent my city and my community in

this capacity," Goble said. "My experience as an immigrant black woman who moved to the United States from Jamaica when I was six years old to now as a resident of this great city of

ours has taught me to understand different perspectives and relate to people from all types of backgrounds and circumstances. That lived experience will guide me in upholding justice fairly

and appropriately on behalf of the people of Denver."

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*



## Caribbean American AGs Urge...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

The coalition argues that the December 2020 notice announcing the elimination of these programs relies upon an Executive Order and policy memorandum from the previous administration that are no longer in effect and that the notice provided no legal reasons for ending the programs.

The attorneys general also argue that these programs are just as necessary today as they were when they were first created, especially given current conditions in Haiti. Following the 2010 earthquake, Haiti experienced a cholera epidemic that killed at least 10,000 people and a 2016 hurricane that killed more than 1,300 people,

destroyed homes, and left 175,000 people displaced. The country continues to grapple with severe economic and political crises.

The United States is home to the largest Haitian and Filipino immigrant populations in the world.

Joining AGs Racine and Raoul are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

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## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH FEATURE - SPOTLIGHT ON CARIBBEAN WOMEN INFLUENCERS

## Vania Laguerre - Paying it Forward

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

Thirty-three years ago, when Haitian-born Vania Laguerre started her career in Bank of America's corporate finance and wealth management world, she had no idea how influential her role would be in helping to shape her local community.

She had no idea how much of an impact she would have on young hopefuls who look up to her as a leader.

The young, ambitious Caribbean woman spent her youth in Montreal, Canada where most of her family had emigrated, then meandered her way to South Florida to further her education.

Her leap into the world of work began as assistant to the manager at a Bank of America Miami office. Laguerre would eventually become a compliance manager with responsibilities that would take her across the United States for about 20 years.

Today, as Bank of America's Miami Market Executive, connecting companies and institutional investors and ferrying some of the bank's resources to address inequities and build stronger communities, the banking executive is paying forward the help she got on the way up.

"I have always lived with the tenet that to whom much is given, much is expected," said an impassioned Laguerre. "And, I knew early on when I looked at how the opportunities for my career mapped themselves out, it was because at some point someone was willing to give me a hand, lift me up, or to facilitate my access. So, I've made it a commitment to continue to do the same thing."

## The Caribbean Urgently Needs An Energy Revolution

BY MAURICIO TOLMASQUIM &amp; ARIEL YEPEZ

COVID-19 has hit the Caribbean hard but there is a silver lining. With the right policy mix of investments and carbon taxation, the region will not only recover but grow faster and better than before.

The economic slowdown caused by the pandemic has cut energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. However, without decisive government intervention to consolidate transition to a clean, sustainable energy future, emissions risk rebounding once the pandemic is over. For reference, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions fell 400 million tons following the financial crisis of 2009, only to soar to 1.7 billion tons in 2010, the most significant increase ever recorded, according to the International Energy



Bank of America's Miami Market Executive, Haitian immigrant, Vania Laguerre.

## TRANSPORTED

Her first assignment as compliance manager took the young banking executive to Spokane, Washington with oversight responsibility in Idaho and Montana.

"That was quite interesting for this young girl from the Caribbean, 30 years ago who got transported into a totally different part of the country where diversity was not an important factor yet," said Laguerre. "But, I've always learned to figure out how to get the best out of the experience."

Did she know early on that she wanted to be in finance? Absolutely not, the finance leader said. However, with a mother who was an accountant by trade, the expectation was that she would follow that trajectory. But Laguerre went further, choosing finance instead because of its holistic and wider reach. So, a degree in Finance and International Business from

Florida International University started her on the journey.

Laguerre sees her role as Miami Market Executive as being a good steward around the needs of the community.

"This role has allowed me to reach the perfect fusion of the skill set and the knowledge that I've accumulated over the last 30 years, as well as my central responsibility in terms of my impact on the community."

Laguerre is particularly proud of the work she and her team at Bank of America have done to increase affordable housing projects and home ownership for their Black, Caribbean and Hispanic constituencies in Miami.

She confirmed that the firm recently tripled its investment toward home ownership in the Miami communities it serves. As well, she and her team are proudly working with the Florida Housing Coalition in establishing The Center for Racial Equity.

Agency.

A strong emission rebound is not inevitable if some policies are implemented to promote new technologies. Renewable wind and solar options, and some disruptive energy storage solutions like lithium-ion batteries and green hydrogen produced by water electrolysis, are cheaper than ever and ready to be implemented on a larger scale.

The major constraint for non-conventional renewable sources' growth is no longer price since they are competitive compared to fossil fuels, but their intermittency. The existing reservoirs of hydroelectric dams are a great asset to integrate non-conventional renewable energy. Energy storage with other technologies will also be economically feasible in regions where the hydro potential is

limited, such as in Caribbean islands.

According to the IDB, if the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries invest optimally in renewable electricity generation, they could save US\$5.7 billion in generation costs from 2020 to 2040. As a result, the share of renewable generation will increase by a factor of almost four, while reducing electricity costs, oil imports, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. These options could be feasible with storage options different to hydroelectric dams. In effect, energy storage is forecasted to grow briskly, reaching 53 gigawatts deployment annually by 2030.

The good news is some countries are moving in the right direction. Leaders have ambitious renewable energy targets. For example, Dominica

and Barbados have pledged 100 per cent renewable energy target by 2030, and Guyana by 2040. In Guyana, the government has made significant investments in solar PV mini grids with battery storage in nine isolated hinterland communities. In Suriname, the electricity company has launched a tender to install 10 mini solar networks to electrify homes, schools, medical centers, water pumping stations and other facilities.

## TANGIBLE

Another tangible example of her important work is with North Miami's Sant La, a Haitian neighborhood center. The bank has donated space to the organization that allows it to move its operations into a space that will facilitate its critical community outreach.

In fact, Laguerre's focus on racial equity has always been a priority from the very beginning of her journey.

"When I relocated back to the Miami-South Florida area some 12 years ago, in our local area we established a Black Professional Employee Network, an internal network," she explained. "I was one of the co-chairs at the inception. While at Merrill Lynch, I continued to do the same work, as part of the Black African American Leadership Council by taking a leadership role as vice-chair."

A major part of that effort is mentoring youths of Caribbean Heritage, particularly through the bank's Student Leadership Program.

"It comes from my own Caribbean roots," said Laguerre. "When I look at the current environment, I want to make sure that these young professionals that are in the marketplace, if they are not able to find access, not able to be at the table, how can I share with them some insights, some tools, some structure to make sure that they are growing. How can I help facilitate their networking opportunities? These are things

that are so crucial as one looks to advance."

Laguerre stressed that there is an understanding across all of the core leadership at Bank of America that the work for equality cannot be done just by one institution. So, reaching out to other banking firms and industries is key. The banking executive pointed out one instance of that cooperation is the institution's involvement in the OneTen Coalition, a nationwide campaign with commitment by some of the largest US companies to hire one million black African Americans over the course of the next 10 years across corporate institutions in higher levels.

"In my work with the community and my mentees, I always look at how do we expand it a step forward?," she stated. "It all goes back to 'to whom much is given' because I do consider that I've been very blessed. It just keeps on coming, so I pay it forward."



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Vol. 32, Number 4 • MAR. 2021

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These investments will have an even more significant  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



# Beyond Citizenship For The Undocumented –The Other Facets Of The US Citizenship Act Of 2021

Right wingers like Marco Rubio, whose grandfather was once detained as an undocumented immigrant and deported back to Cuba; and Crazy Jim Jordan of Ohio, who was quick to gloss over the insurrectionists, are now hard at work calling The US Citizenship Act Of 2021 “amnesty.”

So, what else is new? Don't hold your breath looking for originality from these idiots. But enough space dedicated to Trump Derriere Kissers. The Joe Biden



**FELICIA J. PERSAUD**

US Citizenship Act Of 2021 is here, and immigrants could not be prouder and more excited.

It's been over three decades in the making and I've seen many literal tears of joy shed already that my heart is full. Of course, a lot has been made of the 8-year path to citizenship for Dreamers and undocumented immigrants who are in the US as of Jan. 1, 2021.

But there's a whole lot more to this huge 353-page Bill than just a long overdue path to citizenship for the hard-working Dreamers and the undocumented.

Here's some you should know:

The bill includes a provision to prevent presidents from issuing categorial bans on immigration.

It also recommends removing barriers to family-based immigration, including lengthy visa backlogs and employment-based green cards, which have been relatively inaccessible for workers in lower-wage industries.

It proposes a repeal of the Bill Clinton-era restrictions that prevents people who have been present in the US without authorization for more than six months from re-entering the country for a period of three to 10 years. Many of those immigrants would otherwise be eligible to apply for legal status, often through a US citizen or a spouse who holds a green card.

It proposes a strengthening of protections for immigrant workers by helping to ensure that victims of serious labor violations receive visas, protecting those who face workplace retaliation from deportation, and setting up a commission to

make improvements to the employment verification process.

The bill would allow for an unspecified increase in funding for immigration enforcement. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas would have to assess the precise dollar amount required, but that could prove controversial, given that many immigrant advocates have spent the last four years calling for lawmakers to abolish or at least defund the immigration enforcement agencies, whose budgets ballooned under Donald Trump.

Those funds would go toward improving screening technology, officer training, infrastructure at ports of entry, and border security between ports of entry, favoring alternatives to a border wall.

The bill would also establish mechanisms to address misconduct among DHS's ranks, increasing staff at the DHS Office of Professional Responsibility, which investigates such cases, and requiring the agency to create a use-of-force policy. It would be a critical first step in reforming the agency, which became politicized under Trump, at times acting as the mouthpiece of his immigration and “law and order” agenda.

The Bill has provisions to recapture all lost Green Cards numbers between 1992 through 2020. If someone with approved immigrant petition is waiting in line for over 10 years, then they are not subject to numerical cap anymore. This provision is applicable to both Family based and employment-based categories. This will be effective 60 days after the bill is passed.

It also proposes to: Change the per country limits of Family based immigration from 7% to 20%

Change the term “alien” to “non-citizen” across the board, signifying any person who is not a citizen of United States. Grow economy with changes to Employment based visa system.

And increasing the Diversity Lottery Visa limit from 55,000 to 80,000 visas.

To Rubio and Jordan and all the insurrectionist supporters, do us a favor – keep your lips peeled to Donald Trump's derriere. You've had your time and it's up. I'm here to tell you, this is our time now!

*The writer is publisher of NewsAmericasNow*



There's an old saying, be careful not to throw out the baby with the bathwater. That's because in olden times, everyone bathed in the same tub, with the infant being the last. By then the water was so dirty it was difficult to see the child before the tub was emptied.

Babies are necessary for the continuation of the species but can prove to be a bother in some people's lives. Before, mummy was carefree and happy go lucky, but now with the bawling, everlastingly hungry baby, her life has changed forever.

She wants to recapture the freedom that she once had and dismiss the baggage.

Some young mothers can't manage this infant ball and chain and pass on the ‘little bundle of joy,’ the enfant terrible, as the French say, unto the grandmother, who now has the onerous and challenging task of raising that child.

We often see young women in their twenties laden with five or six children. Yes, those mothers love their babies, but also often see them as a bother in their lives. “If I never have them, I would be better off with my life. I can't get any work because of them,” is what some often say.

Even in the best of homes where a challenging economic situation isn't the issue, babies can prove to be a millstone. There they are, a happy married couple, bent on advancing their careers or education, when suddenly the wife says, “Babes, I'm pregnant.” “Say what? But I thought we had planned to wait a few years?” Many men aren't all that pleased when they hear that their spouse is pregnant, because as far as they were concerned, the timing isn't right.

The problems occur because their lives are now turned upside down, topsy turvy, a maelstrom of misery, a barrel of bedlam. No longer can he come and go as he pleases, and for certain the mother is now tied to that baby for many years to come. Life as she knew it before is now over.

# Baby Bathwater



“I can't do a thing as the kids tie me down;” “I don't want any woman with too many children as I can't take the crosses;” are some of the reactions.



**TONY ROBINSON**

That baby must be fed, and formula can prove to be expensive. So are the Pampers that often have to be bought by the case. Now some babies are deemed good, and sleep through the night from they are three months old, sometimes earlier. But there are also some little horrors who cry incessantly at the top of their lungs, from dusk til' dawn, refusing to sleep except for an hour or two before they reprise the caterwauling.

That's why there are always signs in theatres or cinemas asking people to take their crying infants outside, so as not to disturb other patrons. Then there are the doctor visits, for even healthy babies require postnatal care which can be expensive. Not to

mention the huge expenses if the baby has any medical issues.

But even with this baby hindrance, people still keep on having them, for the species has to continue. Is there always a baby challenge? Perhaps, although that isn't necessarily a negative, but rather a situation where many people have to adjust to a new normal.

“Norman, you can't go to the bar as much as you used to now that the baby is here.” “Yes Babes, I'll gladly give that up.”

Babies can be a blessing, and even if it's unplanned, as the cliché goes, when that child is born, it can bring such joy and happiness to the family and friends. The daddies are proud, the mothers are beaming, the grandparents are ecstatic.

But whatever you do, make sure that you don't throw out the baby with the bathwater.

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



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# Can Medical Cannabis Save The Barbados Economy?

**BY FELICIA J. PERSAUD  
& DANIELLE CORBIN**

Over a year after the passage of Barbados' Medicinal Cannabis Industry Act, the Caribbean island nation officially opened for business last month, January 2021.

The launch of the sector, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, comes at a time when the local Barbados economy, and wider regional Caribbean economy – long dependent on tourism for its 'bread and butter' – are being hammered, and facing an economic crisis of major proportion.

The national debt of Barbados is now around US \$6.35 billion and the International Monetary Fund, (IMF), in a February 5th assessment, noted that the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a major impact on Barbados' economy.

The economy is estimated to have contracted by about 18 percent in 2020, as tourism arrivals remain at a fraction of normal levels. The IMF also pointed out that recent increases in COVID-19 cases in key source markets, including the US and the UK, will likely delay Barbados' economic recovery.



Adding to that is the recent outbreak of COVID-19 in Barbados, which led to an ongoing lockdown that IMF analysts predict will also further reduce economic activity in the first quarter of this year. Barbados' Prime Minister, Mia Mottley, estimated a loss in economic activity of about BDS\$150 million (US\$75 million) as a result of the extended lockdown through Feb. 28, 2021.

To say the country is in trouble is an understatement. But this is where Invest Caribbean and The Ritzury Group see a green light at the end of a very dark tunnel.

The new medical marijuana sector offers much hope – if marketed and promoted correctly. As Alejandro Werner,

director of the IMF's Western Hemisphere Department recently pointed out in his latest outlook on the Americas, the Caribbean region needs to look long-term at economic diversification.

Barbados is in prime position to do this with the medical marijuana sector, as the medical marijuana industry globally is set to achieve over 29% CAGR up to 2025, reaching USD 59 Billion, according to Global Market Insights.

Barbados, given its location to the US, Canada and Europe where the growth of the medical marijuana industry is being primarily driven by increasing requirement of medical cannabis for the treatment of various conditions, can, with the right partners, tap into this market share.

It offers Barbados a major solution to its economic woes while allowing it to diversify its economy away from the over dependence on tourism.

The key, however, is ensuring a smooth public, private sector partnership going forth and a seamless investment environment that includes local entrepreneurs and farmers, who have long been at the forefront of a snubbed and illegal industry.

Barbados needs to establish itself internationally as the leader for the Caribbean in the development of the cannabis industry. A dynamic and sophisticated one-stop solution is the newly minted 'Green Glove Bespoke Service,' being offered by ICN and The Ritzury Group – Bespoke.

It will allow all foreign investors the ease of entering this market with an expert lead ground-up project development service that will provide: Cannabis Project Design and Development, Cannabis Project – Investor Placement, Research and Development (market and feasibility studies included) and the Registration of Companies with licenses, permits and relevant applications – all under one roof.

Investors are chomping at

## The Caribbean Urgently Needs An Energy Revolution

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8) impact if coupled with reforms that remove subsidies for fossil fuels, and, at the same time, taxes to carbon emissions, a fee that a government imposes on any company that burns fossil fuels. The International Monetary

the bit for an opportunity to enter this market in Barbados, with many who have been investing in the real estate and the tourism industry, now expressing their desire to invest in solid projects in the new cannabis industry, as few see a resurgence of investment in the tourism industry for another 3 – 5 years.

Medical marijuana is the future. It offers a chance for the country to create new jobs and lower its debt burden, while increasing its tax revenues. It is time Barbados and the wider Caribbean, take their share of this huge pie.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Felicia J. Persaud is the Founder and CEO of Invest Caribbean, the US-based global private sector investment agency of the Caribbean. Danielle Corbin is the Executive Chairman of The Ritzury Group, a Barbados-based international project services company with a focus on project design and development, project operations management and investor – client relations. For more information contact ICN and Ritzury at investcaribbeanow.com or theritzurygroup.com**



be fairer and would make fuel increases more acceptable. A policy of subsidies distorts prices and is regressive. Alternatively, a social policy aimed at granting equivalent transfers directly to a target population has important



implications for consumers and taxpayers. Well-designed transfer mechanisms meet two objectives: reducing economic distortions and effectively supporting the

portion of the population at which the support is aimed. Fund (IMF) estimates that Latin America and the Caribbean earmarked around US\$213 billion in fossil fuel subsidies in 2017. Low oil prices offer a unique opportunity to correct this.

The depth of the current crisis and the breadth of recovery packages mean that the measures taken now are likely to have lasting effects on the global economy and shape societies in the coming decades, affecting the planet's emissions and climate. The Caribbean is well placed to actively participate in the much-needed energy transition.

In addition to providing a price signal in favor of clean energy, a carbon tax would generate resources to finance recovery packages and compensate the most impoverished populations for the increase in the price of fossil fuel-dependent activities. Part of the income collected from carbon prices could return as compensation for vulnerable people. A remuneration would provide lower-income households with a more significant profit than the loss of income caused by the carbon tax. This rate would

The depth of the current crisis and the breadth of recovery packages mean that the measures taken now are likely to have lasting effects on the global economy and shape societies in the coming decades, affecting the planet's emissions and climate. The Caribbean is well placed to actively participate in the much-needed energy transition.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Mauricio T. Tolmasquim is full professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and Ariel Yépez is the energy division chief at the Inter-American Development Bank. This article was first written for CMC.**



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## Tributes Pour In For Bunny Wailer

The last living Wailer is no more. Minutes after news broke on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 of the passing of the legendary Bunny Wailer, born Neville O'Riley Livingston, the tributes began pouring in.

Reggae fans around the world are in mourning once more with the passing of Livingston, OM.

The three-time Jamaican Grammy winner, singer, songwriter and percussionist passed away Tuesday morning at the Medical Associates Hospital in St Andrew. He was 73 and was an original member of the legendary The Wailers along with Bob Marley and Peter Tosh.

Bob Marley's estate tweeted: "Sending love to the Livingston family as Bunny Wailer makes his transition. A founding member of The Wailers and a reggae icon in his own right, he will be missed but not forgotten. Rest in power."

"My deep condolences to the family, friends and fans of legendary Reggae artiste, Neville Livingston, also known as Bunny Wailer, JahB," tweeted Prime Minister of Jamaica, Andrew Holness. "This is a great loss for Jamaica and for Reggae, undoubtedly Bunny Wailer will always be remembered for his

sterling contribution to the music industry and Jamaica's culture. May his soul Rest In Peace." Culture and Entertainment Minister, Olivia Grange, stated that while the country mourns the passing of an outstanding singer, songwriter and percussionist, Jamaicans should celebrate his life and many accomplishments.

"We remain grateful for the role that Bunny Wailer played in the development and popularity of reggae music across the world. We remember with great pride how Bunny, Bob Marley, and Peter Tosh took reggae music to the four corners of the earth," said Grange.

For his part, Opposition leader Mar Golding expressed deep sadness at the passing.

"Bunny Wailer will live on as a cultural legend and icon. He was a founding member of the Wailers, which has been the most influential contributor to the development of Jamaican popular music and, by extension, Brand Jamaica. We are proud that Jah B hailed from Trench Town in South St. Andrew," he stated.

UB 40's Ali Campbell tweeted: "Rest In Paradise Bunny Wailer. Hope you are reunited somewhere with Bob & Peter making the amazing music that



**Bunny Wailer**

has been instrumental in so many of our lives! Your legacy lives forever. Big Love."

"RIP Bunny Wailer, truly an iconic figure and music maestro whose solo career resulted in one of the most brilliant and inspiring albums in the entire Reggae lexicon... 'Blackheart Man,' tweeted reggae DJ on BBC 1Xtra host, David Rodigan. "His contribution to Jamaican music across the past 60 years is immeasurable.

Born on 20 April 10, 1947, Livingston spent his earliest years in the village of Nine Miles, where he was raised by his father, Thaddeus, who ran a grocery store.

That was where he first met Marley, and the toddlers soon became firm friends, making their first music together at Stepney Primary and Junior High School.

Following the death of Marley's father in 1955, his mother, Cedella, moved in with Livingstone's father. The boys were essentially raised as step-brothers, especially after Cedella and Thaddeus had a daughter together, Pearl.

After moving to Trenchtown in Kingston, they met Peter Tosh and formed a vocal group called The Wailing Wailers - because, Marley said: "We started out

crying."

Livingstone later remembered building his first guitar from "a bamboo staff, the fine wires from an electric cable and a large sardine can." But singer Joe Higgs, aka "the Godfather of Reggae," lived nearby and took the boys under his wing. Under

his tutelage, they refined their sound, adding vocalist Junior Braithwaite and backing singers Beverly Kelso and Cherry Green before shortening their name to The Wailers.

In December 1963, the band entered Coxsone Dodd's infamous Studio One to record Simmer Down, a song Marley had written calling for peace in the ghettos of Kingston.

Faster and harder than the music The Wailers later became known for, the song was an immediate hit, reaching number one in Jamaica. They followed it up with the original version of Duppy Conqueror, before releasing their debut album The Wailing Wailers, in 1965.

Soon after, the band went on hiatus as Marley got married and moved to the USA, and Livingstone served a year in jail for marijuana possession. But they still managed to release 28 singles between 1966 and 1970, before releasing their second album, Soul Rebels.

Their international breakthrough came three years later with Catch A Fire - the first record they made for Chris Blackwell's Island Records.

The collaboration came about almost by accident. The Wailers

had been touring the UK with Johnny Nash - who'd had a hit with a cover of Stir It Up - but found themselves unable to pay for their trip home.

Blackwell offered to sign the band to Island, paying them an advance to cover their air fares and cost of recording an album in Jamaica.

Much to the band's displeasure, some of the songs were overdubbed to make them more palatable to an international audience.

Tensions began to arise within the band, exacerbated by Island marketing their album under the name Bob Marley and The Wailers, and a touring schedule that kept Livingstone away from his family.

Livingstone left in 1973, saying the touring lifestyle clashed with his Rastafarian beliefs - citing the pressure to eat processed foods and play "freak clubs."

Free from the band, he began to work on his solo album Blackheart Man, which included classic songs like Dreamland and Burning Down Sentence, which was inspired by his stint in prison.

He went on to release several acclaimed albums, including 1981's Rock 'n' Groove and 1980s's Bunny Wailer Sings The Wailers, which saw him revisit some of the band's classic material.

In the 1990s, he won the Grammy award for best reggae album three times - with each of those records extending and preserving the legacy of Marley and the Wailers: 1991's Time Will Tell: A Tribute to Bob Marley, 1995's Crucial! Roots Classics, and the 1997's all-star Hall of Fame: A Tribute to Bob Marley's 50th Anniversary.



## Jamaican American Rapper In The Spotlight On Netflix



Netflix is airing the 'Biggie: I Got a Story to Tell,' docu.

Netflix is remembering Jamaican American rapper Christopher Wallace, who became the Notorious B.I.G., aka Biggie Smalls.

The documentary on the life of the famed rapper, born to a Jamaican mother in Brooklyn, is now streaming on Netflix, as of March 1st.

'Biggie: I Got a Story to Tell,' features rare footage and in-depth interviews that celebrates the life of the rise from hustler to rap king. It also highlights his life as the son of a Jamaican immigrant in Brooklyn, his tight ties to his neighborhood and the influence it had on his come-up, and the ground-breaking rap style he created that set the stage for one of the quickest rises in hip-hop history.

The documentary is directed by Emmett Malloy with David Koh, Wayne Barrow, William

Green, Aaron L. Ginsburg, Terry Leopard, and Daniel Pappa producing. Stanley Buchthal, Emmet Malloy, Brendan Malloy, Voletta Wallace, Mark Pitts, and Sean Combs as executive producers.

It will also feature interviews from those who knew Biggie best, including Diddy, Faith Evans, Lil Cease, Fab 5 Freddy, his mother Voletta Wallace, his grandmother Gwendolyn Wallace, his uncle Dave Wallace, his manager Mark Pitts, Mister Cee, and childhood friends Damion "D Roc" Butler, Suif "C Gutta" Jackson, Hubert Sam, and Easy Mo Bee.

Biggie's mother, Voletta Wallace, was born in Trelawny, Jamaica. She is a producer and actress, known for Notorious (2009), City of Lies (2018) and Knocked Up (2007).



Veteran reggae and dancehall toaster, Ewart 'U-Roy' Beckford, will be buried at Dovecot of St. James Memorial Park in Spanish Town, Jamaica, on March 28th.

Known to many as simply Daddy U-Roy, he passed away on February 17th. He was 78.

The artiste had been receiving treatment for diabetes and high blood pressure conditions and that he also suffered from kidney problems.

The DJ helped transform Jamaican music through an innovative vocal improvisation process known as 'toasting,' where he expanded the role of D.J. into someone who didn't just play and introduce records but added their own verve and vocal ability to the product.

## Daddy U-Roy Funeral Set



**Daddy U-roy (Dancehallmag.com image)**

Beckford's first two singles released on Duke Reid's Treasure Isle label were iconic smash hits. Those singles, Wake the Town (1970) and Wear You to the Ball (1970), dominated the airwaves and established his reputation as one of Jamaica's most popular toasters.

One of his most significant

achievements was the establishment of his own sound system which he named Stur Gav, after his sons in 1978. The sound system would then launch the careers of a younger generation of toasters and singers including Ranking Joe, Jah Screw, Charlie Chaplin and Josey Wales.

He was conferred with an Order of Distinction for his contribution to Jamaican music. U-Roy's most recent album is Pray Fi Di People which was released in 2012.

He is survived by 16 children. His funeral will be live streamed so that his fans all around the worldwide can say farewell.

- *Rewritten from Dancehall Mag*



# HEALTH NEWS



## How To Get A COVID-19 Vaccine In Florida



COVID-19 vaccine lines in Florida

Demand for the COVID-19 vaccine as you may already know, is far in excess of the supply the state has received so far.

The State of Florida has also gotten four more federally supported COVID-19 vaccination sites. The new sites open as of March 3rd are in Miami, Orlando, Tampa and Jacksonville as follows:

**MIAMI**  
Miami Dade Community College (North Campus)  
11380 NW 27th Ave.  
Miami, FL 33167

**TAMPA**  
Tampa Greyhound Track  
755 E. Waters Ave.

Tampa, FL 33604

**ORLANDO**  
Valencia College – West Campus  
1800 S. Kirkman Road  
Orlando, FL 32811

**JACKSONVILLE**  
Gateway Mall  
5200 Norwood Ave  
Jacksonville, FL 32208

The sites will operate seven days a week from **7 a.m. to 7 p.m.** Officials said each site will administer about 2,000 vaccines per day.

They also said each site will have two smaller, mobile satellite sites that will each conduct about 500 vaccinations

per day in underserved areas. The state will utilize the current preregistration system. To preregister with the statewide system, individuals can visit [myvaccine.fl.gov](http://myvaccine.fl.gov).

These sites are opening through a partnership between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Defense, the Florida Department of Health, Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida National Guard.

**OTHER SITES**

Florida has other sites that are providing COVID-19 vaccines, but supplies are limited, and appointments may not be available at many

of these sites. The state is prioritizing:

Persons 65 years of age and older

Health care personnel with direct patient contact

Residents and staff of long-term care facilities

Persons deemed to be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 by hospital providers

Please be aware that some locations are only serving very specific populations, such as frontline health care workers.

Appointments may be required and vaccine availability will vary from day to day and week to week as we work to provide vaccines to the most vulnerable first.

Floridians now also have access to COVID-19 vaccines

at 490 new pharmacy locations across 52 counties. Register through retail pharmacy websites at Publix, Walmart, Sam's Club and Winn Dixie. Appointments can be made on the pharmacy's website.

**Designated websites for each location include:** Publix – <https://www.publix.com/covid-vaccine/florida>; Walmart and Sam's Club – <http://www.walmart.com/COVIDvaccine> and <http://www.samsclub.com/covid> and Winn-Dixie – <https://www.winndixie.com/pharmacy/covid-vaccine>

To find a vaccine location near you, log on to <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/vaccines/vaccine-locator/> and filter by your county and city.



## Florida Surpasses 30,000 Deaths & 2 Million COVID-19 Cases

As the US closed in on the horrific milestone of half a million deaths from COVID-19, Florida also closed in on its own shocking milestone.

The state surpassed 30,000 deaths from the virus even as the number of infections closed in on the 2 million mark.

As of press time, the death toll in Florida from the dreaded disease was 30,214. The number of infections was 1.87 million. Miami-Dade and Broward

Counties continue to be the epicenter of the virus. There have been at least 77,408 resident hospitalizations attributed to the virus in the state.

Florida has also reported its first confirmed case of the P.1 COVID-19 variant that was first detected in Brazil, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There is one verified case in the state.



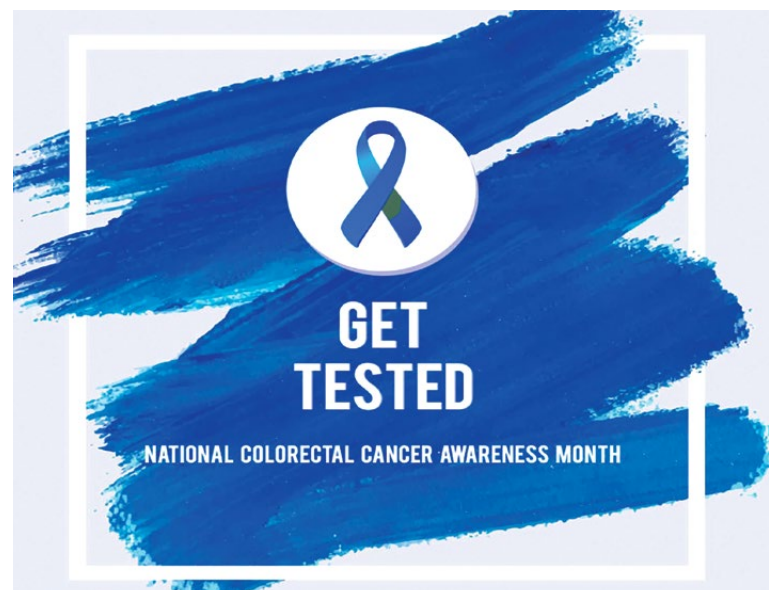
## It's National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Every March, we stop to focus on Colorectal Cancer or cancer of the colon or rectum. This year, more than 147,950 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and more than 53,000 will die of the disease. Further, 17,930 of those newly diagnosed cases

and 3,640 deaths are expected among people under 50 - or approximately 49 new cases and 10 deaths per day.

**Lifestyle Factors That May Contribute To An Increased Risk Of Colorectal Cancer Include:**

- Lack of regular physical activity.
- A diet low in fruit and vegetables and whole grains.
- A diet high in red meat (such as beef, pork or lamb) or processed meat (such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs or cold cuts).
- Are overweight or obese,



- especially for those who carry fat around their waists.
- Excessive alcohol consumption.
  - Smoking.

- Feeling tired all the time.
- Vomiting.

**What To Do**

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor. They may be caused by something other than cancer. The only way to know what is causing them is to see your doctor.

**Symptoms, May Include:**

- Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement).
- Change in bowel movements.
- Stools that are more narrow than usual.
- Stomach pain, aches, bloating or cramps that don't go away.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.


- *Rewritten from the Prevent Cancer Foundation*



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## Caribbean Recipes



**Trinidad Callaloo**

As we continue the Lenten season with many adhering to vegetarian recipes once or twice weekly, here's two Caribbean special vegan dishes that you can add to your Lenten menu.

### Trinidad Callaloo Vegan Style

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 cans (400 ml) coconut milk
- Water
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 bunch dasheen leaves or 2 pounds Spinach (baby leaves work best)
- 1 lb okra (okra)
- 1/2 onion sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 sprigs of thyme
- 1 green habanero or scotch bonnet pepper (add any pepper you like)
- 1 teaspoon vegan butter

**METHOD**

If using the dasheen leaves, separate leaves from stems.

Thoroughly wash leaves and strip the stems. Tear leaves apart with hands into smaller pieces. Chop stems into about 2 inches length.

If using Baby Spinach, wash and set aside.

Cut okra  
Chop onions and garlic and set aside.

Add all the ingredients including, whole pepper, into a medium pot over medium heat.

Bring to a boil and then allow to simmer for 20 mins or until the okra seeds turn pink. Taste and season with salt & pepper if necessary.

When the callaloo is done the leaves and okras should be tender and there should be enough liquid to blend the ingredients. If not add a little warm water to bring to a soup consistency.

Add some butter. (optional)  
Remove from heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes before blending.

Using a hand blender, blend the callaloo until all the ingredients are pureed. Serve with rice, potato salad, boiled provisions, cole slaw, pigeon peas and macaroni pie.

### Plantain Balls

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 mildly green/yellow plantains or green plantains
- ¼ Tsp. Kosher Salt
- Oil For Deep Frying

**METHOD**

Heat about 1/2-quart oil for frying. You can use vegetable oil or peanut oil.

Use a food processor to grind the mildly green/yellow plantains or the green ones if using it).

Add salt to season the plantain. Grind until finely chopped.

If using the mildly green/yellow plantains, scoop the



**Plantain Balls**

desired size in your oiled palm.

Shape into a ball and deep fry until well done – about 6-8 minutes to fully cooked.

Repeat the steps above until the entire batch is fully

cooked.

Serve as an appetizer or snack. Enjoy.

*All Recipes From NewsAmericasNow.com*



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# This AG Sues Company For Allegedly Preying On Vulnerable Caribbean Immigrants

New York Attorney General Letitia James has filed a lawsuit against a company that helps secure immigration bonds, for allegedly preying on vulnerable Caribbean and other immigrants.

In a lawsuit filed against Libre by Nexus and its parent company, Nexus Services, James, as part of a coalition that includes the United States Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the attorneys general of Massachusetts and Virginia, alleges that the company preys on Caribbean and other immigrants held in US federal detention centers by offering to pay for their immigration bonds to secure their release, while concealing or misrepresenting the true nature



NY AG Leticia James is suing Libre.

and costs of its services.

James said that Libre charges large upfront fees and hefty monthly payments, which

typically amount to thousands of dollars more than the face value of the bond.

She said Libre also markets its services to the friends and family members of detainees, who are desperate to secure their loved one's release and also pay some of the exorbitant fees.

"Libre tricked poor individuals into paying astronomical rates and illegally profited millions, while simultaneously shackling immigrants with homing devices," said the AG. "This lawsuit should send a clear message to all who seek to exploit and take advantage of our most helpless communities that we will use every tool in our arsenal to

end your unlawful activity and the suffering you inflict."

The complaint — filed in the US District Court for the Western District of Virginia — alleges that the defendants have and continue to violate several laws, including the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act's prohibition on deceptive and abusive acts and practices, as well as the states' consumer protection laws. In particular, the complaint alleges that Libre "shackles its clients with GPS devices that cannot be removed.

The complaint also charges that Libre "requires consumers to sign confusing and misleading contracts that they present to consumers only in English, even

though a vast majority of Libre's clients do not speak or read English and do not understand it."

In addition, the complaint claims that Libre "mischaracterizes its financial services as a 'program' by boasting that it offers 'wraparound services,' including free legal services.

The lawsuit also names Libre's principals - Micheal Donovan, Richard Moore and Evan Ajin — "who devised the company's business model, and currently implement it, direct its operation, and know the details of its workings."

- CMC



# Local Haitian-American Director To Debut Feature Film At Miami Film Festival 2021

Emerging Miami filmmaker Edson Jean will premiere his debut narrative feature, "Ludi," at the 38th annual Miami Film Festival as its opening night film on March 5th. Filmed entirely in South Florida with a local cast and crew, "Ludi" serves as an ideal complement to this year's festival, whose theme is celebrating Miami and its world famous "305" area code.

The film follows a hardworking Haitian immigrant nursing assistant named Ludi whose half-truths lead to a string of mishaps, and exacerbate her longing for home. "Ludi" explores a myriad of poignant themes such as the complexities of the immigrant experience, the plight of women in the workplace and the reality of the American

Dream.

The screenplay is a collaboration between Jean and co-writer Joshua Jean-Baptiste and was inspired by the experiences of Jean's mother after she emigrated from Haiti.

"Growing up I never saw the Haitian culture represented authentically on film," Jean said. "This film is a step toward reclaiming our stories and reframing the narratives around our existence. 'Ludi' is a story specific to me, yet universal in scope. Everyone has or knows a Ludi in their life."

"Ludi" is the first film to emerge from the Cinematic Arts Residency by Oolite Arts, a program that aims to help fast forward the careers of Miami filmmakers by giving them

\$50,000 to conceptualize and create a micro-budget feature film. "Ludi is a quintessentially Miami story that will resonate both here and around the country," said Dennis Scholl, president and CEO of Oolite Arts. "Oolite Arts' Cinematic Arts program is here to help locally based filmmakers bring Miami stories to the big screen,

and help them advance their careers. 'Ludi' is the perfect example of what's possible, and representative of the talent we have in our community."

Notable cast and crew members include Miami native Shein Mompremier, who displays a breakthrough performance as the titular character and is well met by supporting actor,

Alan Myles Heyman. "It's an honor to play 'Ludi' and a profound experience to do so in my mother tongue for the first time," Mompremier said. The film also introduces social media personalities Success St. Fleur Jr. and Plus Pierre in grounded roles outside of their better-known sketch comedy personas.



# Haitians Protest In Miami



Demonstrators protest outside the US Citizenship and Immigration Service office in Miami, on February 20, 2021. (Photo by CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP via Getty Images)

Several Haitian nationals in Miami took to the streets outside the US Citizenship and Immigration Service office recently to protest the deportations of many of their fellow nationals back to Haiti.

Demonstrators showed up on February 20, 2021 demanding that the administration of US President Joe Biden cease deporting Haitian immigrants back to Haiti. Bearing signs that included "Stop The Deportations Now" and "Stop Deporting

Haitians," the protestors said they are calling attention to the recent spike in deportations of many Haitians this Black History Month.

They included some who were not born in Haiti or ever been there. US Congressman Gregory Meeks, speaking on GBE Mindflight with Imotep Gary Byrd on WABI Radio, said he knows at least two deportees who were sent to Haiti who have never been there.

Other protestors carried signs that read: "Children Need Their Parents" and "Black Lives Matter." They were united in one cause – to urged the Biden administration to rein in ICE and end the deportations that have spiked under this new government.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



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 108,000 esteemed readers eagerly awaiting this special edition.

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# SPORTS



## Guyanese Set For First UFC Fight



Carlston Moçambique Harris is set to fight in his first UFC fight in May.

UFC) was offered a UFC contract in October after he impressed UFC president Dana White at a filming of "Dana White: Lookin' for a Fight" in Abu Dhabi.

Aguilera (14-7 MMA, 1-1 UFC) has split his two UFC appearances to date. Following a quick and successful promotional debut, a 59-second win over Anthony Ivy in June, Aguilera had a three-fight winning streak snapped when he was submitted by Sean Brady in August.

With the addition, the UFC Fight Night lineup for May 8 includes:

- Christian Aguilera vs. Carlston Harris
- Donald Cerrone vs. Diego Sanchez
- Zarrukh Adashev vs. Ryan Benoit
- Holly Holm vs. Julianna Pena
- Marcos Rogerio de Lima vs. Maurice Greene.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



A Guyanese national could make history in May as the first fighter from the CARICOM South American nation to compete in the UFC.

Carlston Moçambique Harris, 33, is scheduled to fight on May 8 in his first UFC assignment and promotional debut against Christian Aguilera. The fight is pending bout finalization from both sides, though they have verbally agreed, and contracts are expected to be signed soon.

Harris (15-4 MMA, 0-0

## West Indies Winning Streak Continues

The West Indies cricket team's winning streak continued Wednesday.

The Windies defeated Sri Lanka by four wickets in the opening Twenty20 International at Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua on Wednesday, Mar. 3, 2021.

Captain Kieron Pollard smashed six sixes in an over for only the third time in Twenty20 Internationals to counter leg-spinner Akila Dananjaya's sensational hat-trick, as West Indies held their nerve in a chaotic run chase to beat Sri Lanka by four wickets.

Chasing a modest 132 for victory in the opening match at Coolidge Cricket Ground, West Indies raced to 52 off the first 19 deliveries courtesy of some awesome power-hitting from openers Evin Lewis (28) and Lendl Simmons (26).

However, the drama unfolded when Dananjaya (3-62) removed Lewis, Chris Gayle (0) and Nicholas Pooran (0) in quick succession in the fourth over to claim his hat-trick. Pollard responded almost immediately, arriving at the crease to punish Dananjaya with six



Kieron Pollard takes a bow as Jason Holder looks on after hitting six sixes in one over against Sri Lanka on Wednesday night, March 3, 2021. (Photo: CWI Media/Philip Spooner/CMC)

massive sixes in the sixth over, en route to an 11-ball 38 which helped West Indies regain their balance.

Even more drama erupted in the next over when Pollard was one of two wickets to fall off consecutive deliveries to leave leg-spinner Hasaranga de Silva (3-12) on a hat-trick, and West Indies stuttering again on 101 for six.

That was not the end of the tumult either as Jason Holder (29 not out) was then dropped in the deep on nine off Dananjaya and Dwayne Bravo (four not out) missed by the bowler a couple deliveries later, before West Indies gathered themselves to win comfortably in the 14th over.

"It was a bizarre game," a relieved Pollard said afterwards.

### Final Scores:

**SRI LANKA** 131 for nine off 20 overs (Pathum Nissanka 39, Niroshan Dickwella 33; Obed McCoy 2-25)

**WEST INDIES** 134 for six off 13.1 overs (Kieron Pollard 38, Jason Holder 29 not out, Evin Lewis 28, Lendl Simmons 26; Hasaranga de Silva 3-12, Akila Dananjaya 3-62).

- Rewritten from CMC and NewsAmericasNow.com



## Haitian Skier Finishes At The FIS World Ski Championships

A young Haitian took the flag of Haiti all the way to Italy, making his country and nationals proud after finishing in the 46th FIS World Ski Championships in Cortina d'Ampezzo.

Eighteen-year-old Richardson Viano competed in the men's giant slalom event

under the proud gaze of Hans Larsen, President of the Haitian Olympic Committee.

Viano finished 93rd overall after completing his 2nd run of the FIS World Ski Championships Men's Giant Slalom. But the run completed in 1:01.34 was good enough to now

rank him at 44th overall.

The Men's slalom competition was held on Sunday, Feb. 21, 2021. Haiti was the only Caribbean nation to participate in the Championships.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



## Jamaica's Reggae Boyz To Face USA Again

Get ready for Jamaica versus The US again!

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz will face the U.S. Men's National Team this month in Austria. The two sides will clash on March 25th at Stadion Wiener Neustadt in Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

The staging of the camp and the match will be played without fans in the stadium.

Kickoff in the rematch of the 2019 Concacaf Gold Cup Semi-final is set for 1 p.m. ET, and the match will be broadcast live on ESPN2, UniMás and TUDN.

Both sides continue preparations for a significant year that includes the Concacaf Nations League Final Four in June, the Gold Cup in July and the start of 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifying action.

Since the series began in 1988, the teams have met 26



Jamaica's Reggae Boyz will again face Team USA, this time in Austria.

win in the semifinal of the 2019 Gold Cup.

This will be an official FIFA window giving head coach Theodore Tappa Whitmore the opportunity to call up players based domestically and abroad.

Jamaica Football Federation (JFF), President, Michael Ricketts, says the venue was selected specifically by the us because of the low COVID numbers in Austria. Meanwhile there are reports that the JFF administration and

the players could be heading for the now familiar showdown over match fee and bonuses. Ricketts says he is hopeful that the JFF and the players will strike a balance in short order.

- Rewritten From NewsAmericasNow & IrieFM



## Miramar Mayor Hosts Annual Health & Fitness 5-K

City of Miramar's Mayor Wayne Messam's Third Annual Health & Fitness event will be held on Saturday, April 3, 2021, starting at 7 a.m. There will be with a 5K-timed run, free walk and yoga for all levels of participation. All events will take place at Miramar Town Center, 2300 Civic Center Place, Miramar 33025.

The cost for the timed 5K is \$25. 5K Run Participants can register online. Packet pick-ups are encouraged in advance of the race.

"Regular exercise reduces

the prevalence of heart disease, obesity, depression and many other medical conditions," said Mayor Messam, who makes health and wellness a personal mission and created this event to encourage local residents to be more active.

For additional information, please call 954.602.3198 or email elaroch@miramarfl.gov. Due to COVID-19, the event will follow all of Broward County's strict safety and social distance guidelines.



## A Win In New Orleans For This Jamaican Jockey

Jamaican jockey Shaun Bridgmohan is continuing to push his winnings over the US\$1 million mark.

Bridgmohan recently won two races in New Orleans, LA. He first won aboard favorite Code Duello before returning to win with another favorite, More Than Unusual.

Bridgmohan has now ridden 30 winners from 192 mounts and tallied US\$1.7 million in winnings for the winter season which got underway on November 26, 2020 and wraps up on March 28th 2021.



Jamaican jockey Shaun Bridgmohan

He lies eighth in the standings led by James Graham on 74 with Adam Beschizza seven behind in second.

- Rewritten from CMC





## Interior Design That Speaks A Tropical Language

BY DAWN A. DAVIS

'Designing Paradise' is not just about beautiful interiors, it's about knowing 'paradise,' feeling its spirit,

and celebrating it. And Juan Montoya's interiors epitomizes all those elements.

The Colombian-born designer speaks the language of tropical design and it is

so poignantly displayed in his new book, 'Designing Paradise: Tropical Interiors' by Juan Montoya.

This 9.5" x 12" 256-page hardcover tome is jam-packed

with 200 high resolution color images that truly puts Montoya's interiors in stunning perspective. Indeed, his spirit resides in the tropics and it shows in his designs.

He takes cues from the sun-kissed islands of the Caribbean, palm trees gently curved by the ever-present sea breeze, the subtle hues of sandy beaches, the inviting blues of gentle waves.

Wendy Goodman, who wrote the foreword, touches on a key element of design that Montoya captures so brilliantly - that the aesthetic of interior spaces should serve to calm and bring balance. This is especially true of our time as we battle COVID-19. So, this book is timely, opening to the reader an environment that beckons one to meditative tropical spaces, even just in pictures. But what beautiful images!

### IN-BORN CREATIVITY

Showcasing some of the designer's most celebrated work in locales such as Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Miami Beach, Montoya has designed each project, incorporating local cultural and environmental sensibilities through his use of indigenous material, coral, stone, bamboo and provincial talent. His seemingly in-born creativity for tropical design is remarkably evident in the relaxed functional feel of his projects, yet they still exhibit a sense of luxury.

For example, a residential property in Casa De Campo, Dominican Republic, pictured on the cover, exudes a monied lifestyle but its space is also designed to bring families and friends together in a relaxed indoor-outdoor space. The fabric swivel chairs mimic the lazy waves of the sea beyond, while the thatched roof and locally woven baskets bring indigenous heritage to life. This is design at its best.

Going through this book is like wandering the halls of a never-ending design showcase. Each turn reveals something surprising, even seductive. Montoya's affinity

for sinuous motion, designs that capture calm, or walls that seem to embrace, gives an air of unexpected intimacy.

Color also plays an important part in Montoya's interiors. Seen in the shimmering shades mimicking the flickering sun on the Caribbean Sea, or the orangey shades of the falling sun behind lush green landscapes, the images in this book paint these stunning views. This play of tropical 'dance' can be seen in many of the designer's Florida interiors. And as we all know, Florida 'dreams' of being Caribbean, as it reaches out to the azure blue sea that names the region.

These magnificent spaces invite natural light in to illuminate artwork, curved archways, elegant columns, making for inviting visual retreats. So, come in and take a look. Dive into Designing Paradise and escape the trappings of today's world for a few hours, as you take a visual walk through 'paradise.'

**BOOK TITLE:** Designing Paradise: Tropical Interiors by Juan Montoya

**AUTHOR:** Jorge S. Arango

**PUBLISHER:** Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.

**RELEASE DATE:** March 2021

(Photo Courtesy of Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.)



## Another Nigeria To Jamaica Flight Set For This Month



Air Peace on its inaugural 11-hour flight to Jamaica in Dec. 2020

Another flight from Lagos, Nigeria, to Montego Bay, Jamaica, is set for March 30, 2021, despite the pandemic.

According to Elizabeth Agboola, the CEO and founder of Nigerians Travel Too, a travel firm, the March 30th Air Peace flight will originate in Lagos, then make a stop in Ghana to take on more passengers before flying to Jamaica.

The flight's passengers are expected to stay in Jamaica for 11 days and 10 nights. The plane will then depart Jamaica on March 31, 2021, for a round trip to Africa, stopping in Ghana and Nigeria before returning to Jamaica on April 8, 2021.

It will depart Jamaica for Ghana and Nigeria to the last time on April 9, 2021. This expanded flight schedule will provide Jamaicans with the chance to make direct round trips to Africa.

It follows the success of the first 11-hour direct flight from Lagos, Nigeria, to Montego Bay, Jamaica, on December 21, 2020.

Agboola said that many people had asked for an outbound flight from Jamaica to Africa, as the only available flight was a one-way trip. Passengers who bought one-way tickets to Nigeria on the flight that left Jamaica on December 28, 2020, had to chart their own

route to Jamaica for their return.

Her company believes that the trip from Jamaica to Africa will have considerable support from Jamaicans and others in the Caribbean. The one-way flight to Africa had included Grenadians while people from St. Kitts and Nevis and the Dominican Republic had expressed an interest in the trip.

The inaugural Air Peace flight was initiated to commemorate 50 years of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Jamaica.

*Rewritten from Jamaicans.com*



## Jamaicans Will Now Need A Negative COVID-19 Test At Check-In

As of today, March 4, 2021, Jamaicans in Florida and all abroad who want to return home will need a negative COVID-19 test at check-in for their flights, just as is currently required of non-nationals flying into the island.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced on Sunday that the requirement of a negative PCR test, taken within 72 hours prior to travel, will apply to all persons entering the country.

He said Jamaicans are now included in this measure given the recent spike in COVID-19 positive cases in the country, which has seen the number of active cases surpass 9,000.

"We had great faith that our Jamaicans coming home

would have this very high sense of patriotism and understand the pressure that our system would be under, if they were to behave in deviant ways from what we recommend as socially responsible in the pandemic. It has not always been the case that our travelling Jamaicans do this - certainly in the maintenance of the quarantine and it is having an impact on the numbers," the prime minister said.

Holness pointed that when the Government first began its controlled re-entry program for non-Jamaicans where pre-testing was required, it had been contemplated at that time to also test Jamaicans, but they had been exempted due to certain considerations.

Prime Minister Holness

noted, however, that "given where we are, where it is now a threat to lives... with this new spike... we think it is now justified in these circumstances to require Jamaicans coming home to present a negative COVID-19 test."

Turning to business travelers who were always required to present a COVID-negative test, then tested again upon arrival in Jamaica, the prime minister said they will now be required to pay for that test.

In the meantime, the Jamaica government is continuing to restrict flights coming directly from the United Kingdom, at least until March 22nd.



# Will Marcus Garvey Be Finally Exonerated?

The call to exonerate the honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey has been years old but could it finally become a reality in 2021?

Jamaican American Democratic Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke hopes so. On Feb. 24, 2021, she introduced a resolution the United States House of Representatives calling for the exoneration of Jamaica's first national hero and human rights activist.

Clarke, the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, who represents the largely Caribbean 9th Congressional District in Brooklyn, New York highlighted Garvey's accomplishments, identifying him as a champion for the liberation of people of African descent.

The resolution, H. Res. 148, hails Garvey as a human rights activist and seeks to preserve his legacy by exonerating him of unfounded charges brought against him by the US Government.

The resolution also called on

newly elected US President Joe Biden to exonerate him.

"Marcus Garvey is an iconic figure and champion for the liberation of people of African descent worldwide," Clarke said. "As an inspirational teacher, he became the critical link in the fight for Black freedom and justice due to his vast accomplishments as an advocate for human rights."

"I call for the President to exonerate Mr. Garvey on the grounds that the case against him was politically motivated, unsubstantiated, and unjust," she added.

Garvey was a Jamaican-born Black nationalist and leader of the Pan-Africanism movement, which sought to unify and connect people of African descent worldwide. In the United States, he was a noted civil rights activist who founded the Negro World newspaper, a shipping company called Black Star Line, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association.



**The Late Marcus Mosiah Garvey**

Because of his outspoken activism and Black nationalism, Clarke said Garvey became a target of J. Edgar Hoover at the Bureau of Investigation (BOI), a precursor to the FBI.

The BOI began investigating Garvey on unfounded charges of mail fraud. Hoover, referred to Garvey as a "notorious negro

agitator," even hired the first Black FBI agent in 1919 to spy on Garvey.

In January 2017, Clarke, who had taken the lead, with 17 other members of the US House of Representatives, in calling on then outgoing President Barack Obama to posthumously pardon Garvey, had expressed

disappointment with Obama's non-action.

On his last day in office, Obama granted commutation of sentence to 330 individuals, however, Garvey – who was convicted for mail fraud in the US in 1923, was not among them.

In their letter to Obama, in 2017, the 17 congressional representatives noted that Garvey, who was born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, had "inspired generations of leaders, from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to President Nelson Mandela.

"His efforts to organize the African Diaspora across nations in support of freedom and self-determination were critical to the movements for independence in Africa and the Caribbean and to the Civil Rights Movement here in the United States," the letter said.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



# Google Puts The Spotlight On This Caribbean American Poet

A Caribbean American female poet was recently given the Google Doodle treatment as the search giant spotlighted on her on what would have been her 87th birthday.

Audra Lorde, born in New York City to Caribbean immigrants from Barbados and the Grenadian island of Carriacou, was a Google Doodle

for a day on Feb. 18, 2021.

Lorde would go on to become a celebrated poet, feminist, professor and civil rights champion. Google's homepage features artwork from guest artist Monica Ahanonu. The Doodle shows some of Lorde's published prose alongside additional artwork.

"There is no such thing as



*Google's tribute to Caribbean American writer Audra Lorde.*

a single-issue struggle, because we do not lead single-issue lives. Our struggles are particular, but we are not alone. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future with the particular strength of our individual identities," the prose reads.

Google also released a behind-the-scenes video detailing Lorde's life and the creation of

the Doodle.

Lorde, a self-described "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet," confronted homophobia and racism in her first collection of poems, 1968's 'The First Cities.' Her work often explored identity, sexuality and social and racial justice.

She taught poetry at the Free University in Berlin, Germany,

where she helped spark the Afro-German movement of the 1980s. She released a collection of essays in 1984 titled Sister Outsider.

Lorde was awarded the American Book Award in 1989 and was honored as the poet laureate of New York State through the Walt Whitman Citation of Merit in 1991.

Lorde died on November 17, 1992 in Christiansted, U.S. Virgin Islands. She had two children – Elizabeth Lorde-Rollins, Jonathan Rollins from her marriage to Edwin Rollins between 1962–1970.

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*





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# Cuba, Jamaica Face Worst COVID-19 Outbreaks Yet

BY KATE CHAPPELL AND SARAH MARSH

In Jamaica, which won praise for containing its coronavirus outbreak last year, patients now overflow into corridors on chairs and stretchers in some hospitals, prompting the Caribbean nation to open three emergency field hospitals.

While global new infections start to decline, a handful of countries across the Caribbean, including the larger islands of Jamaica and Cuba, are suffering their worst outbreaks since the start of the pandemic following social gatherings over year-end, quarantine violations by visitors and growing complacency.

The number of total confirmed cases has almost doubled in the first two months of the year in Jamaica. It has risen around fourfold in Cuba, eightfold in Barbados and around tenfold in St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, according to Oxford University's Our World in Data database.

In one of the most tourism-dependent regions of the world, authorities have had to reimpose lockdowns and curfews, while reducing flights and hiking quarantine restrictions, further delaying a revival of their fragile economies.

Some Caribbean nations have started inoculating citizens – thanks, in particular, to an Indian donation of the AstraZeneca vaccine – yet broad coverage still looks far off. Cuba is launching late phase trials of two of its own vaccine candidates this month.

“Once the capacity of the health system becomes threatened, we could see a spike not only in the numbers infected but also in those dying from the disease,” Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness warned in a broadcast address to the nation on Sunday.

The effect of COVID-19 in Caribbean countries has been

mixed. In Jamaica, deaths have risen 1.4 times since the end of the year and now stand at 422. Cuba's death toll of 324 is well under the world average per capital – a statistic the government largely puts down to a good healthcare system and experimental treatments – but the number of deaths has doubled there so far in 2021.

Tiny St Vincent and Grenadines registered its first COVID-19 death this year and has now had eight fatal victims.

While most of the Caribbean islands still have adequate hospital capacity to deal with the crisis, in Jamaica, all beds dedicated to COVID-19 isolation were full as of Feb. 26, according to the health ministry.

Holness announced more capacity was being added and lockdown restrictions tightened, including a new stay-at-home order for those aged 60 and above and a ban on access to beaches.

“We are not coping. We are physically and emotionally drained,” said a nurse who did not want to be named for fear of losing her job.

## SLOW VACCINE ROLLOUT

Caribbean leaders have complained about difficulty accessing vaccines and hoarding by rich nations amid a slow rollout of vaccines by the United Nations-backed COVAX alliance created to ensure poor countries across the world are not left behind.

Jamaica, which has nearly 3 million inhabitants, will receive a donation from India of 50,000 vaccine doses on or before Thursday, Health minister Christopher Tufton said on



Cuba is battling an upsurge in COVID-19 cases. (Credit: Alexandre Meneghini/Reuters)

Sunday at the briefing alongside Holness.

The island nation should also start receiving its 124,800 doses via the COVAX facility this month, and 1.8 million via the African Medical Supply Platform from April.

But depending on which vaccine is secured, Jamaica still needed to source up to an extra 1.5 million doses to fulfill its aim of inoculating at least 65 % of the population by March 2022, Tufton said.

The prospects for an immediate economic recovery in the face of a slow vaccine roll-out are dim, said Therese Turner-Jones, general manager of the Caribbean Country Department for the Inter-American Development Bank.

“It's going to be another difficult two years ahead,” Turner-Jones said. “Absent a healthy environment, there is not much you are going to do that will get back to business as usual.”

The Caribbean Development Bank said last Thursday it projected growth of 3.8% in its 19 borrowing member countries this year after a contraction of

12.8% last year, with vaccine availability one risk to that forecast.

## Prince Harry, Meghan Markle's Foundation Helps Bring "Relief" To Dominica



The new "Community Relief Center" in Dominica. (WCK Image)

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex's Archewell Foundation has helped bring some much needed "relief" to one area of Dominica.

Through their partnership with World Central Kitchen, a non-profit founded by chef José Andrés that helps feed communities worldwide, primarily in the aftermath of natural disasters, a "Community Relief Center" was completed in Dominica thanks to Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

Dominica suffered serious damage from Hurricane Erika in 2015 and Hurricane Irma in 2017; Hurricane Maria, which struck weeks after Irma, "destroyed over 90% of the island's infrastructure."

World Central Kitchen said the new community relief center, developed in collaboration with non-profit the Resilient Soufriere, Dominica Project and the Ministry of Education, is located inside the reconstructed Soufriere Primary School, which was seriously damaged by Maria.

Still, Cuba could hold a ray of light. It already came through for the Caribbean in terms of sending doctors to neighboring islands throughout the pandemic. Now, the regional biotech heavyweight says it is already mass producing two of its four vaccine candidates in order to launch late phase trials in March. Should its vaccine candidates' triumph – becoming the first Latin American homegrown COVID vaccines to be approved – then its neighbors and regional allies could benefit.

(\*Thompson Reuters Foundation - Reporting by Kate Chappell in Kingston Additional Reporting by Sarah Marsh in Chester, UK, and Rob Edison Sandiford in Bridgetown Editing by Alistair Bell)



## Private Schools To Stop Face-To-Face Classes In Jamaica

Private schools in Jamaica have now been included in the no face-to-face rule that has been put in place for public educational institutions, as the Government further tightens measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), which has seen a spike in cases in recent weeks.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness said that under the rule, which was first announced last week and now applies to private institutions, only students preparing for exit examinations are to be engaged in face-to-face teaching.

These include grade-six

students, who are preparing for the Primary Exit Profile (PEP), and students from grades 11 to 13, who will be sitting the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) this year.

“We made an exception to allow face-to-face for private schools. Because of the stage that we are at now and the threat that we face, the same rules that we are applying to the public schools will be applied to the private schools,” the Prime Minister said.

He pointed out that it is only the pre-approved institutions

that can carry out, if they choose to, face-to-face teaching for the specified grades.

“Otherwise, the entire education system – public or private – should move to online or other modalities,” Holness said.

In addition, students with special needs are also allowed to engage in face-to-face instruction.

The new measures, which took effect on Monday, March 1st, will be in place until March 22.

- CMC



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