

Caribbean Today

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STAR POWER



~ T&T-born actor Winston Duke, playing "M'Baku", shows off Caribbean star power in the blockbuster movie "Black Panther". Duke and Guyanese-born Letitia ("Shuri") Wright are major parts of the movie's success, [page 13](#).



After a posting of just over four years as Jamaica's consul general to the southeast United States - a jurisdiction

which includes 12 states in addition to Florida, The Bahamas and Cayman Islands - Franz Hall is winding up his tour of duty, [page 9](#).

Caribbean American teenager Zyen Jones is taking big step in professional soccer, signing with top



German club FC Schalke 04. While Jones must leave his American home behind for a while, his Jamaican roots will always be with him, [page 15](#).

DACA DODGE

~ Young "Dreamers" from the Caribbean and elsewhere can rest peacefully - for now - after the United States Supreme Court decided not to rule on a dispute involving the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals program, which keeps them in the U.S. legally, [page 2](#).



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USDA APPROVED

U.S. Supreme Court keeps Caribbean 'Dreamers' protected - for now

GORDON WILLIAMS

Young "Dreamers" from the Caribbean and elsewhere can rest peacefully - for now - after the highest court in the United States decided not to rule on a dispute involving the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which

keeps them in the U.S. legally. The Supreme Court's decision, announced on Feb. 26, was a huge blow to the administration of Donald Trump, which was not able to stop the DACA program on Mar. 5, the president's self-imposed deadline following a grace period announced last year.

Trump argued that the deadline would force the U.S. Congress to make law that addresses the status of some 700,000 undocumented immigrants or "Dreamers". Trump made the decision last year to end DACA as it currently stands, which was an executive order issued by former President Barack Obama. Under Obama's DACA, children brought into the U.S. illegally without their knowledge were allowed to stay with legal status if they met certain requirements, including getting an education and not committing crimes. They were also granted legal permission to work.

FAILURE

However, the Congress had, up to press time failed to pass legislation, which would directly address DACA recipients. If no law was passed and signed by the president by his Mar. 5 deadline, DACA could have officially ended and "Dreamers" would not have been allowed to renew their status, facing possible face deportation.

Trump's decision had earned harsh criticism from Caribbean American community. U.S. Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, whose parents are Jamaican, said the president's "decision to end DACA was legally questionable,



'Dreamers' can rest a bit easier.

unjust, and downright foolish." The matter came before the Supreme Court after federal Judge William Alsup, from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, in January blocked Trump's plan to end DACA. The judge ruled the govern-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Caribbean wins five medals at World Indoors Champs

Caribbean track and field athletes won five medals at the 2018 IAAF World Indoor Championships in England.

The region's athletes earned gold, two silver and two bronze this month at the Arena Birmingham. Cuba led the Caribbean's medal charge.



Echevarria

Juan Miguel Echevarria won gold in the men's long jump. Compatriot Yorgelis Rodriguez placed third in the

women's pentathlon to earn bronze.

Jamaica's women claimed a pair of silver. Danniell Thomas-Dodd placed second in the shot put, as did Kimberly Williams in the triple jump.



Williams

Trinidad and Tobago secured the Caribbean's other medal - bronze - through Deon Lendore. He finished fifth in the men's 400 meters final, but was promoted to the medal podium after the win-

ner and runner-up were both disqualified.

The United States topped the medal standings with 17, including six gold, nine silver and two bronze. Cuba was tied for sixth place. Jamaica finished 14th and T&T tied for 24th.



Thomas-Dodd

For more sports, turn to page 15.



ISIS terrorists finding ways to infiltrate Caribbean

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A United States-based counter-extremism expert is calling for an end to security threats from the Islamic State militant group (ISIS) in the Caribbean.

In a column published in *Newsweek* magazine last month, Dr. Muhammad Fraser-Rahim, North America's executive director for Quilliam International, noted that the T&T government is "moving in the right direction and has begun some positive efforts to address the rising threat both internally and regionally." But he said the issue of violent extremism is "a bipartisan issue on the island-nation and is a public safety issue."

Fraser-Rahim noted that last month the U.S. Southern Command, which oversees U.S. military operations in the Caribbean, "aided and advised state security forces in Trinidad to apprehend four extremists who sought to carry out an imminent terrorist attack during carnival."

He said the rumored attack "represented a broadening of the threat from the Islamic State militant group, or ISIS, which has disbanded into a network of ragtag insurgency movements after losing territory in its traditional strongholds in the Middle East."

TARGET

Fraser-Rahim said the fall of Raqqa in Syria last year, in which U.S.-backed forces



ISIS has been decimated in some areas, but still a threat.

declared that major military operations against ISIS had ended, "marked the end of ISIS's self-declared Islamic 'caliphate'." But he said "it left the broader Middle East and the international community asking: What happens next?"

Fraser-Rahim said the apparent threat appearing in the Caribbean "went some way to answering the question."

He said ISIS sympathizers, such as those found in T&T, "a small nation off the coast of Venezuela, would continue to follow the established agenda."

The counter-extremism expert said T&T appeared on the radar of Western state security services in recent years when it emerged that it had the largest per capita number of foreign fighters joining ISIS of any country in the Western Hemisphere.

"Though estimates of the true number of recruits vary from under a couple hundred

to close to 300, the exact numbers are beside the point," he said. "One individual is too many, and the greatest concern is how the fighters plan to utilize their newly-acquired skills after returning home."

ISIS's rise in other countries should give "major concern to governmental, civil society and grassroots community members in Trinidad and Tobago as the nation finds effective strategies to respond appropriately," he added.

Fraser-Rahim said he traveled late last year to T&T "to engage with local communities, civil society and governmental officials to firstly understand the complexities of the situation and the measures that could be put in place to receive individuals who were likely to return home post-ISIS." He said his organization "explored what measures were put in place within government structures to rehabilitate," and that they "needed to determine how communities at the grassroots level can aid in ensuring and encouraging the resilience against extremism."

- Edited from CMC.



Caribbean American teenager dies in Florida school shooting

At least one Caribbean American has been listed among the 17 dead following a shooting at a South Florida school last month.

Helena Ramsey, 17, had a Jamaican mother and Trinidadian father, according to Broward County police.

Ramsey was gunned down by 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland on Feb. 14. Cruz is a former student at the school. Parkland, a residential community in Broward County, is home to several Caribbean Americans.



Ramsey

In a statement issued last month, Jamaica's Foreign Affairs Minister Kamina Johnson Smith expressed condolences to

Ramsey's family. The ministry confirmed the teenager was of Jamaican heritage.

Shooting leaves Caribbean nationals wondering about the safety of their children in the United States, page 7.



Guyana P.M. has heart surgery

Prime Minister Moses Nagamootoo underwent "successful" heart surgery in the United States last month, according to his family.

In a statement, the prime minister's family said Nagamootoo, 70, "our dad is out of surgery and is in recovery."

The "surgery was successful," noted the statement, which quoted his wife Sita, who had traveled with him to the U.S.

Earlier in the month, Minister of State Joseph Harmon said Nagamootoo had recently undergone a routine medical examination where the cardiac issues were

detected.

"Prime Minister Nagamootoo was advised to seek further medical intervention and brought forward a

planned private visit to the United States," Harmon said.

The Guyana government, in a statement, noted "Prime Minister Nagamootoo is expected to make a full and complete recovery in the coming weeks before returning to Guyana."



Nagamootoo

Lawsuits claim cops target Caribbean-owned businesses in N.Y.

NEW YORK – The New York Police Department (NYPD) has been hit with lawsuits alleging officers unfairly targeted businesses that cater to Brooklyn’s Caribbean community.



Stewart

Former City Councilman Dr. Kendall Stewart and his son Omar have both filed suit against the NYPD, as well as the city, claiming their lounge Cafe Omar has been unfairly targeted by the NYPD.

Along with other nightlife business owners, the Stewarts claim that NYPD routinely tries to shut down their operations and events. This is especially true, they said, right

around the time of the West Indian Day Parade in early September.

“It seems like they are targeting all of the West Indian clubs,” Dr. Stewart, a St. Vincent and the Grenadines national, told the **New York Daily News**.

“They victimize you when

you do anything. They’ll send a squad in there.”

SHUTDOWN

Dr. Stewart said, for example, the NYPD shut down a planned event in Aug. 2016 without giving him any reason. He said that the event had been sold out and that he

had gone to the police precinct to try to work out a better way of communicating. But when he talked to the police, they told him he should refrain from scheduling anything at all around the Labor Day weekend parade.

The lawsuit alleges that the “NYPD did not want any

crimes in the jurisdiction of the 67th Precinct.”

But the NYPD said it has good reasons for coming to the Stewart’s place so often: There are plenty of noise and overcrowding complaints.

“The NYPD responds to

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

U.S. cancels Haiti visit

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A planned trip to Haiti by a top official from the United States was cancelled late last month.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan had been scheduled to visit to French Caribbean nation where he was scheduled to hold talks with Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders.



Sullivan

However, Sullivan’s trip was called off days before it was set to begin without any reason given for the change of plans.

“Deputy Secretary Sullivan’s travel to Haiti has been postponed,” the State Department noted.

The State Department had earlier indicated that Sullivan would “focus discussions on issues of mutual interest to the United States and the Caribbean, including energy diversification, regional security and economic development” during the visit.

The State Department said U.S. is an enduring partner to the Caribbean, as underscored in the Caribbean 2020 strategy, which strengthens security, diplomacy, prosperity, energy, education and health in the region.

However, U.S. President Donald Trump recently upset Caribbean leaders when he listed Haiti among countries he described as “shit hole”.



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NEWS



High court rules against bail hearing for Caribbean immigrants in U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Supreme Court has ruled that Caribbean and other nationals in immigration detention, sometimes for years, are not entitled to periodic hearings to decide whether or not they may be released on bail.

The court ruling is regarded here as mirroring the sharp divisions on immigration policy among lawmakers and members of the public.

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., writing for the majority, said the detention of Caribbean and other nationals seeking asylum or fighting deportation was needed to give immigration officials time “to determine an alien’s status without running the risk of the alien’s either absconding or engaging in criminal activity.”

However, Justice Stephen G. Breyer responded that the decision was most likely “the



The court said bail could be risky.

refused to hear an appeal over whether the Trump administration may shut down a program that shields an estimated 700,000 young, undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants from deportation, complicating

grants get a fair hearing, judges often release them based on their individual circumstances.”

VICTORY

But Richard A. Samp, a lawyer with the Washington Legal Foundation, which filed a brief for 29 members of Congress supporting a strict interpretation of the immigration laws, said the decision was a victory for public safety.

“When Congress determines that the best way to prevent aliens convicted of felonies from repeating their crimes is to lock them up until they can be deported,” he said, adding “lower courts don’t have the authority to second-guess that determination by attempting to rewrite the law.”

Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor joined Breyer’s dissent.

- Edited from CMC.



legislative efforts to address the issue.

Ahilan Arulanantham, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), who represented the immigrants in last month’s case, said he was disappointed by the decision.

“The Trump administration is trying to expand immigration detention to record-breaking levels as part of its crackdown on immigrant communities,” he said.

“We have shown through this case that when immi-

first time ever” that the U.S. Supreme Court had interpreted a U.S. federal law to allow the long-term confinement of people held in the United States and accused of misconduct without an opportunity to obtain bail.

“An ‘opportunity’, I might add, does not necessarily mean release, for there may be a risk of flight or harm that would justify denying bail,” he said.

DISAPPOINTMENT

The decision came a day after the Supreme Court

U.S. Supreme Court keeps Caribbean ‘Dreamers’ protected - for now

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

ment should resume accepting DACA renewal applications.

Alsup’s ruling was effective across the U.S. because, the judge wrote: “... our country has a strong interest in the uniform application of immigration law and policy ...

“The problem affects every state and territory of the United States,” he added.

RELIEF

The Trump administration then took the matter before the Supreme Court. The Feb. 26 announcement means that the case will return to the lower courts. That means it could take months, and possibly more than a year, to resolve, granting at least temporary reprieve for “Dreamers”.

With the imposing Mar. 5 deadline no longer in play, the

Congress should have more time to possibly iron out bipartisan legislation, which will address DACA.

“Now it’s up to Congress to fix it,” Clarke said.

Multiple efforts have already failed in the Senate. The House of Representatives had not, up to press time, taken up the matter.

The Trump administration expressed disappointment with the Supreme Court’s decision.

“The DACA program - which provides work permits and myriad government benefits to illegal immigrants en masse - is clearly unlawful,” White House Spokesman Raj Shah said.

“The district judge’s decision to unilaterally re-impose a program that Congress had explicitly and repeatedly rejected is a usurpation of legislative authority. The fact that

this occurs at a time when elected representatives in Congress are actively debating this policy only underscores that the district judge has unwisely intervened in the legislative process.”

But others embraced the Supreme Court’s decision, although they admitted the ruling does not permanently solve the issue of DACA.

“(The decision) does not change the fact that we need a permanent solution to preserve DACA and protect Dreamers,” Eric Schneiderman, attorney general for New York, one of 17 states challenging the president’s efforts to stop DACA, told the media.

However, for hundreds of Caribbean “Dreamers”, the Supreme Court’s ruling is good enough – for now.



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Grenada eyes Mar. 13 elections post-Independence

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada – Grenada last month celebrated its 44th anniversary of political Independence from Britain with the traditional military parade, a public holiday and Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell keeping an eye firmly on this month's general elections.



Mitchell

"On every occasion like this, we must pause, as a nation – to take stock – and to set out a new path for the future," said Mitchell. "The experiences of the first 44 years have made us even more

ready to write the next chapter."

The prime minister will lead his ruling New National Party (NNP) into the elections on Mar. 13.

CANDIDATES

Forty-five political candidates were nominated last month to contest the elections. The majority of the candidates will represent the ruling New National Party (NNP) and the main Opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC). The other candidates are from five minority parties. There are also four independent candidates.

During the Feb. 20 Nomination Day exercise, the NNP and NDC each nominat-

ed 15 candidates. From the minority parties, two were nominated to represent the Grenada Empowerment Movement (GEM); three candidates will represent The Progressive Party (TPP); four were nominated to represent The Grenada Reconnaissance party (TGR); one will represent The Liberal Party (TLP); and one will represent the Grenada Progressive Movement (TGPM).

In the 2013 general elections, the NNP won all 15 seats, defeating the NDC government of then Prime Minister Tillman Thomas.

- Edited from multiple sources.



Antigua and Barbuda P.M. calls snap polls Mar. 21

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua – Prime Minister Gaston Browne last month announced Mar. 21 as the date for fresh elections in Antigua and Barbuda, three and a half years after his ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP) won.

"We have performed and that's why we can stand here before you today and ask for your support," he told supporters at a rally here last

month dubbed "Rebuilding Together-Safer with Labour".

Browne said he wrote to Governor General Rodney Williams on Feb. 23 asking him to dissolve Parliament on Feb. 26.

REACTION

In an immediate reaction, Harold Lovell, leader of the main Opposition United Progressive Party (UPP), said

the government had failed to deliver on its 2014 promises, "deeply disappointing even the diehard supporters of the Labour Party.

In the 2014 general elections, Browne led the ABLP to a convincing 14 to three defeat of the ruling UPP.

- Edited from CMC.



T&T Muslim group blasts U.S. security officials for assisting local police in carnival crackdown

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – Umar Abdullah, head of Waajihatul Islaamiyyah, also known as The Islamic Front, has lashed out against United States security authorities who assisted Trinidad and Tobago police officers in cracking down on the persons suspected of planning to disrupt last month's carnival proceedings with violence.

Abdullah, who pushed for the release of the persons detained by the police, said the U.S. should pay more attention to its own affairs, following last month's shooting at a Florida high school that left 17 people dead.

"Instead of meddling in the affairs of other countries I strongly suggest the American security officials mind their own affairs and pay attention to what's happening within their borders," said Abdullah.

Lawsuits claim cops target Caribbean-owned businesses in N.Y.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3) locations based on community complaints, including crime complaints and 311 and 911 calls," NYPD spokesman Lieutenant John Grimpel said. "As you can see by the

history of this establishment, it's a problematic location."

But the Stewarts believe it's racism, not noise complaints, that has the NYPD on their backs.

"The defendants did not

treat white-owned businesses in the same manner as they treated the Caribbean-owned business," the lawsuit states.

- Edited from CMC.



CARICOM leaders agree on counter-terrorism plan

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti – Caribbean community (CARICOM) leaders have adopted a regional counter-terrorism strategy.

During their inter-session summit here last month, the leaders also agreed that member countries would table the legislation in their respective parliaments by July 4 to support the strategy. They also agreed that an effective monitoring and evaluation process should be put in place to determine the region's success in addressing this critical matter.

The strategy was developed by the Trinidad-based Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) which, in consultation with its stakeholders and regional and international partners, will review the document biennial-

ly to consider updating it to respond to the evolving terrorism landscape.

The summit also agreed that all member states should enact legislation related to the Advance Cargo Information System and the Advanced Passenger Information System to assist counter-terrorism efforts, among other security matters, and to share information on crime and violence among themselves in a more consistent manner.

Crime and security were among the main agenda items during the two-day summit and CARICOM leaders agreed that IMPACS will create an intra-regional task force to examine and suggest innovative regional solutions to combat terrorism regionally.



St. Lucia marks Independence

CASTRIES, St. Lucia – Prime Minister Allen Chastanet marked St. Lucia's 39th anniversary of political Independence from Great Britain on Feb. 22 by promising to assist persons living in the southern section of the island, stating that for too long they have been neglected.

"Too many have had to move to the north, too many

families have been torn apart in search of opportunity whilst others have given up entirely," Chastanet said. "Let me say to you, the people in the south: Your time has come."

St. Lucia observed Independence with a slew of activities, the highlight being a military parade held at the Vigie playing field.



U.N. denies Dominica, Suriname

UNITED NATIONS – The United Nations has identified Suriname and Dominica among seven countries that are in arrears of their dues and are, therefore, not allowed to vote in the General Assembly.

"Under Article 19 of the Charter, a Member State in arrears in the payment of its dues in an amount that equals

or exceeds the contributions due for two preceding years can lose its vote in the General Assembly," the U.N. noted.

Dominica is still trying to put the pieces together after Hurricane Maria, a Category 5 storm, ripped into the island last September.



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Caribbean American to run for Lt. Governor in N.Y.

NEW YORK - A Caribbean American legislator has declared his candidacy for lieutenant governor of New York, the second highest political post in the state.

New York City Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, son of Grenadian immigrants, made the announcement at a rally in lower Manhattan on Feb. 16.

"Today, I am proud to announce that I am running to become the lieutenant governor of the state of New York," said Williams, representative for the predominantly Caribbean 45th Council District in Brooklyn.

"The lieutenant governor position needs to be more than ribbon-cutting and rubber-stamping. I want to be the people's advocate in Albany (the state's capital), pushing the governor and the legislature to enact the progressive policies that are the promise of our state.

"I want to represent the

diverse needs of the people of our state, and by the way, our state government could use some diversity."

INTENT

Williams, a Democrat who is currently serving his third term in the New York City Council, announced in January that he would explore a run for lieutenant governor. Since then, he has visited a number of cities around the state, meeting with local activists and progressive organizations.

Williams represents a challenge to the present administration from the left. He has long been a critic of Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Several Caribbean American elected officials and others endorsed Williams's candidacy.

"I've had the privilege of working closely with Jumaane Williams for years, fighting for justice, inclusion, equity and more on behalf of the people of Brooklyn," said New York State Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte, daughter of Haitian immigrants.



'Uneven legal assistance' for undocumented Caribbean immigrants in New York ~ report

Three major groups in New York have criticized what they described as "uneven legal assistance" for Caribbean and other immigrants in New York.

A report, titled "NO SAFE HARBOR: Challenges in Obtaining Immigration Legal Services in New York State", published last month by the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC), The Legal Aid Society and The Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative (I-ARC), stated that, in addition to a lack of resources to help more people, "there are serious systemic problems preventing immigrant New Yorkers from protecting their legal rights."

The report noted that, upon consulting organizations serving undocumented people, it is worrisome to find that the City of New York's investment in legal services does not cover people who have committed serious crimes, leaving them to fend for themselves and denying them due process in an immigration court, according to the



publication **Voices of N.Y.**

"While the amount of money invested by the city – US\$48 million – is historic, legal services providers who receive municipal funding are required to comply with a new and troublesome disposition that forbids them from helping clients who have been convicted of a list of 170 crimes, an exclusion that seriously limits the provider's capabilities," the report stated.

CONCERN

On top of the \$47.5 million assigned by the city, the state added \$16,388,100. But activists have expressed concern about whether Albany is willing to renew the investment for fiscal year 2019, Voices noted.

The report stated that the state and the city doubled their investments this year. In 2017, the City Council and the administration of New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio assigned \$27.2 million, and Governor Andrew Cuomo and Albany, the state capital, disbursed US\$7,138,100.

Steven Choi, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition, said legal services providers are the first line of defense against United States President Donald J. Trump's "brutal attacks," stressing that the criminal justice system and the immigration system must remain separate.

The report revealed that 28 percent of the funds meant to offer free lawyers during fiscal year 2018 are yet to be released and added that the city needs more transparency regarding the way the money is being distributed.

- Edited from CMC.



BRIEFS

FANM annual gala Mar. 10

FANM Ayisyen Nan Miyami, Inc, Haitian Women of Miami, will hold its second annual gala this month in South Florida.

The event is scheduled for **7 p.m. Mar. 10** in the WUC Ballroom at Florida International University's North Campus, 3000 N.E. 151st St., North Miami Beach.

Scheduled keynote speaker is Jacqueline Charles, a reporter with the Miami Herald newspaper. Master of ceremonies is author Edwidge Danticat.

FANM will honor the following during the event: Carl Nicoleau, assistant superintendent; Councilman Alix Desulme; Yanick Landess; and Dr. Nahomie Mirville.

Miami Youth Fair

The Miami Dade County Fair & Exposition will hold the "Miami Youth Fair" on **Mar. 15** at 10901 S.W. 24th St., Miami, Florida.

Gates open at **3 p.m.**

For more information, visit www.fairexpo.com.

Jamaicans honored in Canada

Jamaicans Michael Lee-Chin, an entrepreneur, and Dr. Upton Allen, a pediatrician, were among 23 people scheduled to receive the Order of Ontario, the highest honor bestowed by the Canadian province.

According to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Dr. Allen's way of treating hospital-

borne diseases has prevented the deaths of innumerable children. He received a medical degree from the University of the West Indies and pediatric and infectious disease training at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. He also worked in the infectious diseases service at Princess Margaret Hospital in Nassau, The Bahamas.

Dr. Allen serves as a director of the Infectious Diseases Society of America and is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and the Royal College of Physicians in the United Kingdom. He has been chair of the Infectious Diseases Specialty Training Committee and is a member of the Specialty Standards Review Committee, as well as a council member of the International Pediatric Transplant Association.

Lee-Chin was honored for his entrepreneurial and philanthropic work as someone who believes in "giving back." According to the ministry's announcement, Lee-Chin's gifts to local hospitals have contributed to improving patient care, while his "historic contribution" to the Royal Ontario Museum resulted in the creation of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

Lee-Chin is known for his work as chair of the National Commercial Bank and founder and chair of Portland Holdings, Inc. He also served as executive chair of the Canadian mutual fund AIC.



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STAY OR GO: Most Americans want legal status for Caribbean 'Dreamers'

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Most Americans want legal status for Caribbean and other "Dreamers", but a few are adamant that they should be deported, according to reports here

For Pav Sterry of Columbus, Ohio, legalizing any undocumented immigrant — even those who came as children without a choice in the matter - is just plain wrong, according to reporting by the **New York Times**.

Huy Pham of St. Paul, Minnesota, believes any concessions for the so-called Dreamers will unleash another tidal wave of illegal immigration, while Daniel Cotts of Phoenix, Arizona regards "blanket amnesty" for them as unfair to foreigners who languish for years waiting to come to the United States the legal way.

The newspaper reported that polls have shown that a large majority of Americans support protection for young Caribbean and other immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children. Yet, there remains a slice of the American public for whom the idea of legalizing an undocumented immigrant has not

turned better with age, the Times noted. It said they do not dispute that most of the immigrants are eager and hardworking and did not choose their station in life. But for these voters, that is all beside the point.

"I think DACA recipients should be given a few months to get their affairs in order and return to their home countries," said Sterry, 58, a former math teacher, referring to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program first implemented by the administration of former President Barack Obama that current President Donald Trump has ended, but which could be revived or replaced in a congressional deal.

NO CHOICE

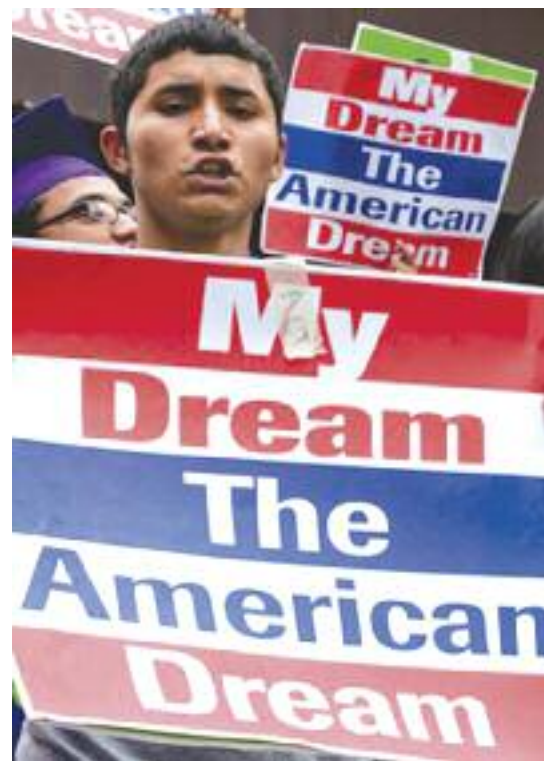
To those who contend that the young immigrants would be marooned in a country they do not remember, Sterry said: "Parents and children can all go home together."

Less than a quarter of American voters, and in some polls as few as one in 10, share Sterry's beliefs, the Times reported. But it noted that they show how the country's conflicted emotions about

undocumented Caribbean and other immigrants have stymied legislation for more than a decade, polarizing the Republican and Democratic parties and most recently leading to the short-lived government shutdown that still did not settle the issue.

Their counterparts on the liberal side are the progressives who are upset with Senate Democrats like Chuck Schumer, the minority leader, for allowing the government to re-open without a guarantee of protection for DACA recipients, known as Dreamers, the Times reported.

On the Republican side, the newspaper noted that moderates are feeling the pull of hard line members who want any legalization bill to incorporate significant changes to immigration enforcement, including measures Democrats generally oppose, such as funding for a border wall, a sharp reduction in overall migration, and a shift to merit-based admissions from a family-based system that critics call



Mixed emotions on DACA.

"chain migration."

SUPPORT

The Times reported that Trump has repeatedly expressed support for legalizing DACA recipients. On Jan. 24, he said he was open to granting them a path to citizen-

ship "at some point in the future, over a period of 10 to 12 years."

But he, too, has felt the pull from people in his administration who object to the program, which was created in 2012, the Times reported. In announcing the end of DACA last September, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions called it a "unilateral executive amnesty" that had encouraged more illegal immigration and "denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens."

Voters opposing legalization were often well-informed about some of the details of the immigration debate, such as E-Verify, an electronic worker-verification system that many

Republicans want to make mandatory for employers, and the diversity visa lottery, which admits up to 50,000 foreigners a year who must be vetted, but do not need any special skills

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

Parkland, Florida high school shooting kills 17 ... 'This is not what we want for ourselves and our children'

GORDON WILLIAMS

Many years ago, Valney Brown migrated from the Caribbean to the United States with a simple plan.

"We left Jamaica for a better way of living," the 55-year-old South Florida-based soccer coach explained on the morning of Feb. 15.

Brown's somber tone betrayed doubts he and many members of the Caribbean American community are now harboring following yet another mass shooting in the U.S. On Feb. 14, Valentine's Day, a lone gunman killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

The incident sparked heated debate in the U.S. Caribbean American Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, who praised the students' response to the shooting, which included public marches and speeches demanding school security, joined them in the call for an end to shootings.

"The outpouring of activism we are seeing from high school students across the country is truly heartening," Clarke, whose parents are Jamaican, told the media last

month. "It's inspiring to see the next generation join us in the fight to end gun violence."

WORRY

However, the latest incident has given Caribbean Americans ample reason to worry. Brown, who said he's the father of six children, had to endure one of the most emotionally turbulent episodes of his life. Seventeen-year-old Johnathan, who Brown calls his "son," is a junior and was in class at time of the shooting, which also wounded several others.

Johnathan escaped the shooting physically unharmed. Brown was left pondering the status of his original plan.

"This is not what we want for ourselves and our children," he said, sounding exasperated.

Brown admitted things appeared to be going well around 2:30 p.m. on Feb.



Brown

14. His lady Marie Jose Berard, Johnathan's mother, was in Colombia with her daughter Lizamanda, a soccer player getting a chance to play pro-



Wounded being readied for transportation to hospital.

fessionally in the South American country.

So when Berard called Brown, who said he was at their home in nearby Coral Springs "cooking some ita stew," he expected more good news. When she told him "she saw what was happening at the school on social media," Brown said he immediately turned off the stove and "bolted" from the apartment and drove to the school, which he admitted is walking distance away. There, he was met by a blockade of law enforcement vehicles and officers — local police, FBI — which barred his entry.

"Access to the school was

blocked off," said Brown, who admitted he was worried for Johnathan's safety. "We had to park at the parking lot at the soccer field, which is about four, five minutes (walk) from the school.

SCARED

According to Brown, Johnathan was supposed to be in class when Nikolas Cruz entered the compound carrying an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle and multiple magazines. Cruz opened fire, calculatingly setting off the fire alarm to ensure evacuating students would present him with more targets. Students and teachers scrambled in search of places

to hide.

Raised in the Waltham Park Road area of Kingston, Jamaica, Brown had seen violence. What was happening at his son's high school, however, wasn't the same.

"I'm not a stranger to violence," Brown explained, "but a massacre is different from a one person getting shot."

Brown linked Johnathan on his cell phone. The news scared him more.

"When I called him he said he couldn't talk much, that he had to get off the phone because he was hiding in a closet," Brown explained. "He told me the shooter was active, he couldn't talk on the phone."

According to Brown, Johnathan "never mentioned the shooter" during that call and he never heard from his son again until a couple hours later. However, the family had heard the name before. Johnathan and Cruz, now 19 but who attended the school before being expelled, had met while both were members of the school's ROTC program. One day, Brown said, Johnathan delivered some disturbing news.

"He had come home three years ago and told his mom

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

Britain makes 'politically immoral' claim over Caribbean slave trade reparations

A tweet has set off a firestorm of controversy over Britain's role in paying for the slave trade, which affected the Caribbean.

According to Sir Hilary Beckles, vice chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), a loan that was taken by the British government to pay slave owners for the abolition of slavery in 1834 was not fully repaid until 2015.

Beckles, who is also chair of the Caribbean community's (CARICOM) Reparations Commission, made the disclosure at a press conference late last month.

The press conference was held to confront claims by the British government's Treasury recently posted via a #FridayFact on its official Twitter channel. The tweet, which was shared with the HM Treasury's 318,000 followers, read: "Millions of you helped end the slave trade through your taxes".

TRIGGER

Although it was subsequently deleted, the tweet triggered reactions by various interest groups and captured the attention of the British media and the Centre for Reparation Research (CRR)

at UWI.

Beckles noted that Britain had argued against reparations, saying they could not apologize or provide compensation for slavery and the slave trade because it was not illegal at the time and it also took place a long time ago.

However, Beckles said the new discovery about the slavery loan meant that for 180 years British citizens had been repaying the slavery abolition loan, which made it a present-day issue. Of major concern was that this meant taxes from persons in the Caribbean diaspora in the United Kingdom had also been used to repay the loan.

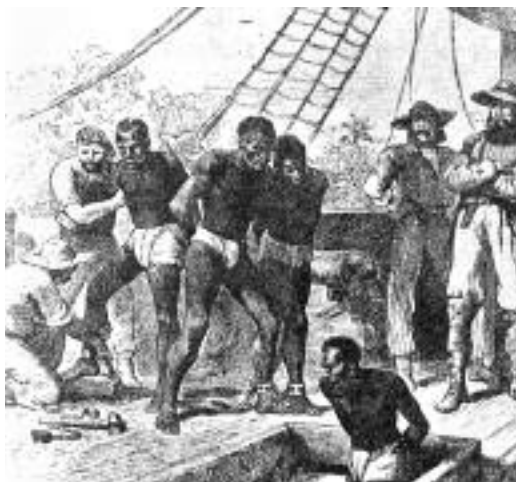
"We consider this to be an immorality," Beckles said. "... It is the greatest act of political immorality."

LINK

He also questioned whether there may have been a link between his presentation on reparations to the British Parliament in July 2014 and the timing of the repay-



Beckles



Caribbean nationals may still be paying for slavery.

ment of the loan, which subsequently happened in Feb. 2015.

Beckles also drew the audience's attention to the significance of the value of the money in today's economy. According to him, the 20 million pounds in 1835 would be valued at approximately 15 billion pounds today.

Additionally he said the amount paid to the slave owners represented 40 percent of Britain's national public expenditure at the time, which could be translated to be 40 percent of the current national budget. If calculated today, this would be approximately

240 billion pounds.

Beckles said the total amount that was to be paid for the abolition of slavery was actually 47 million pounds. He explained that the British Parliament paid 20 million in cash to the plantation owners and then stipulated that the enslaved should work for an additional six years for free, under the Apprenticeship

period, to pay off the balance of 27 million pounds.

This, he said, meant that the British Parliament did not in fact pay for the abolition of slavery, but instead the enslaved Africans paid the majority of the money for their freedom.

'VILE'

For these unjust provisions and the classification of the enslaved Africans as "property" and "chattel," Sir Hilary characterized the Abolition Act of 1834 as the most "vile and racist piece of legislation in the history of mankind."

He also explained that the British Parliament chose to implement an economic model for granting freedom that ensured the transfer of the wealth of the Caribbean back to Britain, using the cash liquidated from slavery.

Beckles said research into the archives of the Bank of England, HM Treasury, and the Rothschild Merchant Bank shows the British government had been refinancing the slavery abolition loan over the past 150 years to fuel economic growth in Britain, with the last refinancing done in 1927.

He said Britain owed the Caribbean a comprehensive development program and should repay the money extracted from the Caribbean which has contributed to the burden of poverty which most of our countries face. He urged the Caribbean region to take a stand on the matter.

- Edited from CMC.



Parkland, Florida high school shooting kills 17 ...

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

'this kid (Cruz) is sick.'

PROBLEMS

Cruz's social media posts showed he had problems. He posed with weapons and had even predicted he would be "... a professional school shooter."

Brown said when he eventually heard from Johnathan again, the teen, who by then had been evacuated from the school and finished talking with law enforcement officers, said he had walked home.

"I wasn't sure where he was 'cause it was still an active crime scene," Brown said. "So at that time I felt relieved."

Yet the bad news wasn't



Runcie

over. Brown later found out that a couple girls he knew primarily through soccer had been killed in the shooting.

"Kids that I interact with, that I coach, are dead," he said.

One girl, Brown said, "ever since she was a baby

I've known her. Another girl, our club West Pines U-15 girls played against (her team) Parkland U-15 girls two weeks ago and she was killed. She was a very good player."

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now Brown, like other Caribbean Americans, are wondering what's next. Sending children to school, he said, is not supposed to result in their deaths by shooting.

"It's something to have a discussion about," Brown said. "We have to find a solution. Let's take it seriously and put a clamp on guns."

Jamaican American Broward County Schools Superintendent Robert Runcie also expressed concern after the massacre.

"This is a day that you pray every day when you get up that you will never have to see," Runcie told reporters. "It is in front of us."

"Dealing with this tragedy is going to take time - and we will be here for every student, every family and every staff member," Runcie added. "Our hearts are broken."

Even with Johnathan safe, and the students returning to classes late last month, Brown doesn't believe he was left unscathed following the Valentine's Day massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

"No, I don't feel lucky," he said. "I feel blessed, but it could have gone any way."



STAY OR GO: Most Americans want legal status for Caribbean 'Dreamers'

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

or family ties to the U.S, the Times noted. It stated that proposals to eliminate the lottery have been circulating for years.

MISCONCEPTION

At the same time, a few of those interviewed held to common misconceptions about the young immigrants. Some said the immigrants should not be allowed to become legal if they had not tried to do so before

DACA was created. But it is almost impossible for people to secure "green cards" or permanent residence once they have been here illegally for several years, the paper added.

It stated that others expressed the sentiment that the immigrants' parents should have gotten "in line," though for many foreigners a legal pathway into the U.S. exists only if they have special skills or relatives in the U.S. who

are citizens.

While these voters remain in the minority, support is not absolute among the majority who want to legalize the young immigrants. In a recent CNN poll, 84 percent of those surveyed said they supported legal status for Dreamers.

But when given a choice between keeping the government open and passing DACA legislation, 56 percent of those polled said it was more impor-

tant to keep the government open and only 34 percent said a legalization bill was more important, with the rest believing they were equally important or having no opinion, the Times reported.

It noted the lack of firm support for the shutdown most likely contributed to Democrats' decision to end it.

- Edited from CMC.



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Trump's so-called 'bad hombres' are sometimes 'good hombres'

Donald Trump loves to talk about the bad immigrant hombres in the United States.

Listening to the dog whistle that was his State of the Union address, one would conclude that there are "thousands and thousands" of criminal immigrants, including MS 13 gang members, running amok, murdering and slaughtering U.S. nationals and, as such, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) needed to be vigilant in rounding up and deporting these "bad hombres".

The reality is that the U.S. ICE is rounding up and deporting thousands of non-criminal immigrants, including immigrants who would over-qualify under the Trump merit-based immigration plan and who have been living in the U.S. and making significant contributions for decades.



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

By the agency's own count, 37,734 "non-criminal" arrests in the 2017 fiscal year, more than twice the number of the previous year. Among them is Syed Ahmed Jamal, a Bangladeshi immigrant who has been living in the U.S. for 30 years and was teaching chemistry as an adjunct professor at Park University in Kansas City and conducting research at local hospitals.

ARRESTED

Jamal was arrested as he was getting ready to take his daughter to school even though the immigrant is on a temporary work permit and has graduate degrees in molecular biosciences and pharmaceutical engineering. ICE claims that while Jamal entered the country legally, he twice overstayed a visa and in 2011 violated a judge's order to leave the country.

In Kalamazoo, Michigan, Lukasz Niec, a Polish doctor who has been living in the U.S. for 40 years, was arrested and is facing deportation because of a 1992 misdemeanor arrest for property damage when he was 17.

In Tukwila, a 32-year-old immigrant from Honduras called police because someone was attempting to break into his house. Instead, when police arrived, they ran Wilson Rodriguez's name through the NCIC database and discovered he had a warrant issued by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Rodriguez was transferred to ICE officials.

In New Jersey, three Indonesian Christian immigrants were arrested while their requests to remain in the U.S. are pending. Gunawan Liem of Piscataway and Roby Sanger of Metuchen were arrested by ICE while dropping their kids off at school and Parlindungan Sinaga of Woodbridge, was arrested in October last year. All have been living in the U.S. for decades.

In Boston, Lilian Calderon, a 30-year-old mother of two from El Salvador, was detained by ICE after she went to an immigration interview while in Houston.

Andres Elias is being detained after living in the U.S. for many years with his only crime being entering the country "illegally."

In Virginia, a mother was sent back to El Salvador in June after her 11 years in the U.S. unraveled because of a traffic stop. In Connecticut, a man with an American-born wife and children and no criminal record was deported to Guatemala.

OVERSTAYED

In Fort Lauderdale, a Jamaican immigrant who had overstayed her visa and was living in the U.S. for many years, was arrested on board a Greyhound bus by U.S. Customs agents and is now facing deportation.

And in Boston, Fabiano de Oliveira was arrested while applying for a permanent residence or "green card" at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in Lawrence, Massachusetts on Jan. 9.

The list goes on daily, as ICE and customs officials, emboldened by their new powers under the Trump administration, are running amok, or as *Slate* recently screamed in a headline: "unbound".

Ironically, in a statement to the *Washington Post*, an ICE official said the agency "continues to focus its enforcement resources on individuals who pose a threat to national security, public safety and border security."

Ask yourself which of these immigrants featured above are a threat to public safety and where exactly are the "bad hombres" that ICE is working so hard to protect us from?

- Edited from *News Americas*. Felicia J. Persaud is CMO at *Hard Beat Communications, Inc.*, which owns the brands *NewsAmericasNow*, *CaribPRWire* and *InvestCaribbeanNow*.



Franz Hall ends tour as Jamaica's consul general to southeast U.S.

MIAMI, Florida – After a posting of just over four years as Jamaica's consul general to the southeast United States - a jurisdiction which includes 12 states in addition to Florida, The Bahamas and Cayman Islands - Franz Hall has been recalled to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in Kingston. Up to press time his replacement had not been named.

Hall recently sat down with *Caribbean Today's* freelance writer Patrick Smikle to talk about closing this chapter of his more than 20-year foreign service career. The interview has been edited for space considerations.

CARIBBEAN TODAY: What were your priorities in this posting?

FRANZ HALL: A consulate has very immediate demands on it. A large part of what we do here is servicing the Jamaican community that resides within the 13 states to which we're accredited. There are three primary areas. There are passport matters - issuing passports, receiving applications for passports ... Another element is providing visas for persons who need visas to travel to Jamaica.

Secondly, looking at and interacting with trade and investments interests here, trying to seek business for Jamaica.

And the third broad area is to integrate with the non-Jamaican community ...

C.T.: What do you do to facilitate trade between the U.S. and Jamaica?

F.H.: Our role is one of making connections and creating networks. We work very closely with JAMPRO, the Jamaica Promotions Corporation. For example, whenever we get any leads for investment, we refer to JAMPRO. And we also represent the position of the government in various areas ...

C.T.: What do you consider your major successes?

F.H.: ... We tried to streamline and improve the processing of documents by increasing the use of automation, trying to ensure that we have our internal systems in such a way that we can more quickly deal with the various applications.

In terms of community engagement, there is a very heavy schedule for attending various events; fundraising for philanthropy, meetings with various community groups and with community leaders. I



Hall

think it is important for us to try and have a presence at as many of these things as possible ... Have I been successful? That's not for me to assess. Have I given it my best shot? I can say that I have.

C.T.: Is there anything that you'd hoped to achieve, that you wish had worked out better?

F.H.: ... One of the things I had hoped to achieve was a better communications system to reach out as many of our people as possible ... a better communications architecture. It's a work in progress.

C.T.: People complain that (the consulate in) downtown Miami is an exceedingly difficult place to get to, and to navigate, especially for those Jamaicans who live much further north. Parking is expensive.

F.H.: We've heard the concerns. But there are a number of other considerations that would keep us in this location. We have people stretching far north. We also have people stretching far south. Miami represents a midway point in

the community. Secondly, we need to be proximate to Miami International Airport, which is the main port of call for a lot of our VIPs out of Jamaica. We're required to provide services there as well ... We do recognize the challenges, but we think that in terms of connectivity, it's best being in downtown Miami.

C.T.: How do you see this (diaspora) movement serving the interests of Jamaicans residing outside the country, as well as those in the homeland?

F.H.: Part of the policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, and indeed the government of Jamaica, is to deepen the engagement with our diaspora. The diaspora is a resource that can play a role in ensuring that our communities are strong and vibrant in the locations that they're in, which would then create a stronger platform for advocating for Jamaica's interests.

... The role of the consulate is to foster that engagement and that dialogue with the diaspora groups ... There've been criticisms, but there have been successes ... Our role is one of facilitating contact, one of ensuring that various interests both here and in Jamaica are matched, to realize the best fit and to promote collaboration and cooperation between the diaspora and Jamaica.

C.T.: There is a strong feeling ... that while they are contributing to the homeland,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE10)

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VIEWPOINT



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When 'grudgefulness', 'badmind' descend like a plague

Ungrateful, envy, red eye, jealousy, the green-eyed monster, covetousness and spite all make up the mosaic of "grudgefulness" (my word).

All these words and perhaps more can be condensed, compacted, compressed and distilled to form one Jamaican word – "badmind".

Badmind sums up all those feelings and emotions, and all around us, in the workplace, personal life, business ventures, romance and friendship, badmind is alive and well.

But is badmind a bad thing and is it a positive or negative force in our society? Plus, who really suffers from it, and how does it affect those who it is inflicted on?

REAL DEAL

Badmind is real and perhaps unique to our people. Nowhere else have I seen people exhibit that kind of behavior towards others without any tangible motive except sheer spite and grudgefulness.

Sure, most people have little tinges of jealousy and even mild envy, but the level of envy that exists often goes beyond comprehension... unless you're a Jamaican, then

you'd understand.

Badmind is when people see you for what you have achieved or own and wish you ill will, simply because you have it and they don't. What you have achieved has no bearing on their lives, but just the mere fact that you have it and they don't is reason for them to exhibit envy and wish bad things to happen to you.

I remember, many years ago this elderly man who I knew, won money in the lottery. He was poor and lived in a depressed neighborhood, a community rife with envy. He thought that he was comfortable among family and friends, but grudgefulness often supersedes friendship and even family.

VENGEANCE

The people in the area, so filled with grudgefulness, instead of rejoicing and revel-



ing in the man's good fortune, turned on him with a vengeance that only vampires could match. They harassed, harangued, hated that man so much that his life became a living hell. Eventually they burned down his modest board house, forcing him to leave the community.

That's what grudgefull-



TONY ROBINSON

ness does. When they were poor and living in squalor they were all fine, but the moment someone appeared to rise above the morass, the bottom feeders, full of envy, pulled him down to destroy him. It really is true, misery does love company.

Even in sport rivalry grudgefulness exists, but it's all good harmless fun. If my team loses, I don't want your team to win either, and I'm sure you secretly wish that their star player got injured. Where it gets serious is when that feeling is taken to a hateful level and brings pain and anguish to others.

I see this trait a lot in women, where a woman will just take one look at another woman and wish evil on her, simply because she looks good.

Grudgefulness is even mentioned in the Bible, albeit by a different name - covetousness.

METHOD

There's method in the covetousness. The real bad feeling is when the person sees a man's ass, ox or wife, doesn't really want them, but feels that the man shouldn't have

them either. So he destroys them, tells lies on the man's wife and wrecks the man's house.

Grudgefulness keeps people down, for instead of relishing your neighbor's or friend's success, you feel bad that they have achieved and you haven't. So instead of trying to achieve for yourself, you wish that they lose what they have.

I saw it exhibited to a great extent when Barack Obama was elected United States president. Some commentators actually said they would prefer to see America fail than Obama succeed.

Envy is also the parent of badmind. I have this friend who's married to a much younger woman. His peers, instead of reveling in the man's good fortune, constantly harass and berate him about his young pretty wife.

I don't know where this badmind started, but it's pervasive. All I can say is, if you ever come into some good fortune move far away, for grudgefulness will descend on you like a plague.

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Franz Hall ends tour as Jamaica's consul general to southeast U.S.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

their contributions are not being matched by the extent to which they can affect what happens in the homeland. They think that Jamaicans in the diaspora should have a

more direct and tangible say in who runs the country. At the most basic level, they should be able to vote in elections. What is the attitude of the current administration to this demand?

F.H.: They have undertaken to look at options to increase the participation, politically, of the diaspora. But there is a recognition that we need to do things a little differently in terms of diaspora

engagement.

For example, a lot of people are upset by the fact that they are treated as a foreigner when they go to Jamaica with a U.S. passport. There's a recognition that we need to find a way to make those persons feel welcome, and that they are home, when they present these documents from other countries. (The government) is sensitive to these issues and is looking at how we can best facilitate our diasporans ... As to what that will look like in the long run, I don't know.

C.T.: Will that accommodation include voting?

F.H.: It is something that they're looking at as well ... They're looking at models from other countries that have systems that allow their overseas nationals to vote. I know they're looking at Israel and France. It is a work in progress.

C.T.: Another of the criticisms we hear has to do with difficulties that individuals and organizations in the diaspora encounter in navigating the bureaucracy in Jamaica when they try to move needed materials to Jamaica. Why does this happen and is anything being done to remedy this?

F.H.: A lot of people, with very good intentions of assist-

ing, go through the efforts of raising funds, raising materials and shipping them down to Jamaica. Unfortunately, sometimes we don't take the time to investigate the rules that are in place for those donations.

... While we appreciate and understand the generosity in the community, we need to ensure that what we're sending down abides by the various requirements of the various agencies ...

C.T.: There are Jamaicans living here who are undocumented ... Personnel from the consulate have been called on by these persons for assistance. How crucial a role is that?

F.H.: Part of the mandate of the consulate is to promote and protect the interests of Jamaican nationals. That extends to persons who've been incarcerated.

... It is a very important role and part of the work of the consulate in ensuring that our Jamaicans are being looked after even though they may have fallen into circumstances we would not like to have seen ... To us, it doesn't matter whatsoever whether you're undocumented. Once you're Jamaican and you're here and you're in need of our services, we will provide ...



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Walk into an effective running routine to get fit

Walking is great way to get the 150 minutes of moderate exercise we all need every week for good health. But if you want to raise the bar, consider jogging.

If you've never run before, here's how to work up to five-kilometer readiness in nine weeks, courtesy of the British National Health Service. Consult your doctor first, of course.

There are many apps and websites to help with this project. You'll do three walk/runs each week. Start each one with a brisk five minute walk. After your walk:

Week one - Do blocks of one minute of running and 1.5 minutes of walking. Total: 20 minutes each time.

Week two - Do blocks of 1.5 minutes of running and two minutes of walking. Total: 20 minutes each time.

Week three - Two repetitions of 1.5 minutes of running and 1.5 minutes of walking, then three minutes of running and three minutes of walking. Total: 23 minutes each time.

Week four - Three minutes of running, 1.5 minutes of walking, five minutes of running, 2.5 minutes of walking, three minutes of running, 1.5 minutes of walking and five minutes of running. Total: 26.5 minutes each time.

Week five - Run one: Two repetitions of five minutes of running and three minutes of



Take small steps towards good health.

walking, then five minutes of running. Total: 26 minutes.

Run two: Eight minutes of running, five minutes of walking and eight minutes of running. Total: 26 minutes.

Run three: 20 minutes of running. Total 25 minutes.

Week six - Run one: five minutes of running, three minutes of walking, eight minutes of running, three minutes of walking and five minutes of running. Total: 29 minutes.

Run two: 10 minutes of running, three minutes of walking and 10 minutes of running. Total: 28 minutes.

Run three: 25 minutes of running. Total: 30 minutes.

Week seven - 25 minutes of running. Total: 30 minutes each time.

Week eight - 28 minutes of running. Total: 33 minutes each time.

Week nine - 30 minutes of running. Total: 35 minutes each time.

The program is designed for beginners to gradually build up to run five kilometers (3.1 miles) without stopping.

Structure greatly helps motivation, so choose certain days of the week for runs and stick to them.

Be sure to have a rest day between each run to reduce your chance of injury. On the off days, you could do strength and flexibility exercises.

Some new runners may experience sore calves or shins, often caused by running on hard surfaces or wearing shoes without enough support. Don't worry if some runs don't go well. Just move on to the next one. Even a bad run is good for you.

Find a five kilometer event by visiting www.runsignup.com or www.active.com.

- Edited from an article submitted by the Florida Department of Health in Broward County.



Caribbean finds partners to tackle drug problem

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Organization of American States (OAS) have renewed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing to work together to improve Caribbean and other countries' capacities to respond to the needs of people affected by the drug problem.

An estimated one in 20 people, ages 15 to 64 – some 250 million people – consumed at least one drug (opi-

ates, cocaine, cannabis, amphetamine-type stimulants or psychoactive substances not prescribed by a physician) in 2014, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's World Drug Report 2016.

The use of psychoactive substances has been recognized as an important public health problem in the Americas, including the Caribbean, contributing significantly to the burden of premature deaths and disability,

PAHO said.

It added that the agreement lays out collaboration on policies and programs as part of a comprehensive approach to drug problems, including promotion of structured information systems, facilitation of access to integrated healthcare services, training of human resources, promotion of research, and diffusion of scientific knowledge on the subject.



Naseberry milk punch, a delightful treat

I love the tropical fruits I grew up eating in Jamaica. They include bananas, pineapple, mango, naseberry (sapodilla), June plum, star fruit, tangerine, oranges, grapefruit, makka fat, stinking toe, otaheite apple, golden apple, guinep, various plums, guava and apple banana.

When each fruit is in sea-



Naseberry milk punch

son its is usually available in such abundance that after eating your fill, other uses are explored. As a result, juices, cakes, tarts, jellies, jams and preserves are made. Recently, I was given several dozen naseberries by a friend and, after eating my fill, I decided to make a

naseberry milk punch. Below is my recipe:

Ingredients

- 3 cups of naseberry fruit

- pulp
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup vanilla ice cream
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1teaspoon nutmeg

Method

Put ingredients into a blender and purée.

Taste for sugar. Serve with ice.

- M. LaFortune. Edited from News Americas.



FACTS ABOUT FLU

Get vaccinated today

Annual vaccinations can provide protection for each flu season, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people and people with certain underlying health conditions.

Some 52 percent of reported flu outbreaks were in daycare (17 percent) or school (35 percent) settings. Almost 20 percent of Emergency Room visits in Florida are due to influenza-like illness in children less than age four.

Did you get a flu shot but still got the flu?

Flu shots can prevent life threatening effects and length of the flu. A recent Centers of Disease Control (CDC) study showed vaccination prevents deaths by half (51 percent) among children with underlying high-risk medical conditions and nearly two-thirds (65 per-



Vaccinations offer flu protection.

cent) among healthy children.

Flu vaccination also may make illness milder if a person gets sick. Another recent CDC study showed it reduces intensive care unit admissions, ICU length of stay, and overall duration of hospitalization among hospitalized flu patients.

Antiviral drugs are a second line of defense to treat the flu.

For the most current information about flu activity in Florida, please see Florida's weekly surveillance report, the Florida Flu Review.

Visit FluFreeFlorida.com for more information about the flu.

- Edited from an article submitted by The Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County.



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Antigua and Barbuda signs visa waiver with Ukraine

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Antigua and Barbuda says it now has visa-free entry to 136 countries, following last month's signing here of an abolition of visa requirements between the country and the Ukraine.

The agreement was signed at the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, D.C. by Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States Sir Ronald Sanders and his Ukrainian counterpart Ambassador Valeriy Chaly after months of negotiations.

Under the terms of the agreement, holders of Antigua and Barbuda and Ukrainian



Sanders

passports will be able to enter each other's countries on holiday or to conduct business

without the need for visas.

Sanders said Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe after Russia and has the seventh largest population at 45 million people.

"Therefore, there is a huge potential for Antigua and Barbuda to attract tourists and to explore investment," he explained, adding that "there are already chartered flights from Ukraine to Caribbean destinations, particularly the Dominican Republic."

- Edited from CMC.



Caribbean sets record for stay-over visitors

The Caribbean set a record with 30 million in stay-over arrivals for the first time in 2017, even as the region battled the effects of catastrophic hurricanes.

The figures were released last month by the Barbados-based Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO).

According to the CTO's acting Director of Research Ryan Skeete, the visitors contributed \$37 billion to Caribbean economies during the 12-month period, up 2.6 percent over 2016.

Skeete explained that stay-over arrivals were on track for a strong performance during the first half of 2017, growing by an estimated 4.8 percent. However, growth was curtailed in the second half of the year by the storms, which were largely responsible for a 1.7 percent drop between July and December.

GROWTH

Skeete explained that strong economic performance in the main markets helped spur the region's performance, with some destinations recording strong double-digit growth, although the hurricane-affected countries were down between seven percent and 18 percent.

The United States continued to be the primary market, growing by about 0.5 percent to reach an estimated 14.9 million visits to the region due mainly to solid economic growth, low unemployment and high consumer confidence. The Canadian market rebounded



Visitors find the region attractive.

strongly, recording a 4.3 percent increase in arrivals, compared to a decline of 3.1 percent in 2016.

However, it was the European market that recorded the strongest growth rate, increasing by 6.2 percent to 5.8 million visitors, with the United Kingdom up by 2.9 percent to 1.3 million.

The increase in arrivals was not reflected in hotel occupancy, which fell by 1.2 percent, according to STR (formerly Smith Travel Research), a U.S. company that tracks supply and demand data for the hotel industry. However, both average daily rate and revenue per available room recorded increases, though slightly.

The cruise sector also set a new record of 27 million passengers, 2.4 percent higher than 2016, despite the hurricanes.

The CTO said the economic conditions are expected to be favorable for further growth in 2018. Therefore, it is predicting growth of two percent to three percent in both stay-over and cruise arrivals.

- Edited from CMC.



Breezes to host 'Wellness Week' in The Bahamas

Breezes resort in The Bahamas will be transformed into a wellness retreat next month.

The all-inclusive hotel chain is teaming up with Crunch Fitness and Dr. Rachel to host a "Wellness Week" April 23-27.

The event is expected to offer a program of daily group exercises, culinary workshops, discussions about mindfulness

and making healthy life choices, healthy behavior challenges and games.

Featured classes are scheduled to include beach yoga, Caribbean rhythms dancing, and zumba, plus pilates and trapeze conditioning.

A "healthy eating" break, featuring fruits and snacks will follow each session. Between sessions, retreat-goers will be

able to attend cooking demonstrations led by Breezes Executive Chef Nigel Clarke.

The property will also offer smoothie stations, chilled eucalyptus towels in the lobby and mini massages provided by Blue Mahoe Spa.

For more information, visit www.breezes.com.



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BVI opens new application process for entry permits

TORTOLA, British Virgin Islands – The government of the British Virgin Islands is in the process of testing a new online application process for entry permits.

Premier Dr. Orlando Smith, in a recent announcement, said while the online platform is being created, employers are now able to send work permit applications directly to immigration.

"As of Monday, February 19, any company can have their work permits processed for the employees by having all the documents for the employees sent from the company directly to the Immigration Department. This would also apply for the owners or managers of companies," Smith said last month.

"We expect this to be up and running within the next few weeks ... This will add to

the efficiency of the application process at the Immigration Department," he said.

VOLUNTEERS

Meanwhile, the premier said organizations or persons responsible for volunteers are now required to submit volunteer applications to the facility based in the capital of Road Town.

Persons must write to the chief immigration officer indicating the name of the parent organization when persons are expected to arrive in the territory, and how long they plan to stay, the premier said.

"This request will then be facilitated by the Immigration Department," he added.

The changes are being rolled out to improve the immigration process, which has been described as chronically cumbersome.



BLACK PANTHER: T&T actor shines as M'Baku in blockbuster movie

One of the most captivating characters in the blockbuster movie "Black Panther" – "a scene stealer" fans are calling him - has credited his Caribbean roots for the positive influence on his acting career.

Winston Duke, who was born in Trinidad and Tobago, plays M'Baku in the Marvel adventure thriller. In his role as the leader of Jabari, a separatist tribe in Wakanda, the 31-year-old cuts a physically intimidating figure. But it's his down-to-earth upbringing in Tobago that cleared the path to stardom.

"I actually grew up in Tobago on the beach, just running around, playing, watching really creative people, and being exposed to really deep, rich stories from a young age," Duke told **Entertainment Weekly**.

That connection on the island – especially its cultural diversity - piqued his interest, shaping his thoughts early on what he wanted to do in the future.

"I was really into storytelling and loved when my sister and mother, and older people in the community, would tell me all these stories,"



Duke, right, with co-star Lupita Nyong'o.

Duke added. "We lived in this multicultural society where I think, 40 percent of our country is from India, East India. Bollywood films are a big staple of the culture. I grew up watching these big song-and-dance films, and action-packed movies. I'm doing these karate moves and diving over things, doing my own stunts as a six-, seven-, eight-year-old kid."

MOVE

His mother moved the

family to Brooklyn, New York in the United States when he was about nine or 10, Duke told Entertainment Weekly, and later they moved to Rochester, New York. He attended college, but life wasn't always easy.

"My mother did a lot of odd jobs just to keep us afloat, and my sister ... We came here (to the U.S.) because my sister wanted to be a doctor," Duke told E.W. "My sister wanted to be a doctor and my mother said, 'You can definitely do that. You're brilliant,

but we can't do it on this island (Tobago).'"

However, Duke credited his mother for encouraging her children to pursue their dreams. She also committed her own prospects to their cause to help them along.

"(Mother) ... sold everything she had," Duke recalled. "She sold her restaurant, and home, and everything she owned. My father was not in the picture. That's about that. She was a single parent."

He's returned her loyalty.

"I take her everywhere with me," Duke said of his mother. "She's a very supportive parent. She loves being there and giving emotional support."

COMPARISON

Duke compared his mother to "Ramonda", Angela Bassett's character in "Black Panther". Ramonda is highly protective of her own son "T'Challa", played by Chadwick Boseman. While M'Baku looks fierce and becomes an early antagonist

for fans when he battles T'Challa for the right to rule Wakanda, he later turns into a key figure in saving the kingdom.

At the beginning of his quest to become an actor Duke said his mother was a bit skeptical, but eventually became his biggest backer.

"She wanted me to do something more stable," he told E.W. "Once I got over the hump, I mean, I went to Yale School of Drama and she didn't miss one play. Not one student production. She was at every single thing over three years. She came to everything, she's always been my No. 1 fan."

Fans seem to believe in him too. "Black Panther" topped the box office on release and by the end of last month had earned over \$700 million. In the U.S. it has secured highly positive reviews, especially for using a predominantly Afro American cast.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

'Best of the Best' music fest set for May 27 in Miami

Multiple acts from across the Caribbean are scheduled to perform at this year's "Best of the Best" musical festival in South Florida.

The 12th annual staging of the event will be held on **May 27** at Bayfront Park in downtown Miami.

Among the scheduled performers are Aidonia, Bunji Garlin, Capleton, Ding Dong,

Ghost, Fayann Lyons, Mavado, Richie Stephens, Kerwin Dubois, Hood Celebrity, Romain Virgo and Shenseea.

"Best of the Best" is billed as a celebration of dancehall and reggae music. For more information, visit www.bestofthebestconcert.com



Spring Health

The April issue of Caribbean Today will feature a comprehensive examination of how the healthcare industry serves the Caribbean community.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JUMP UP: T&T crowns new Calypso Monarch during carnival

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – A 24-year-old virtual unknown won the Calypso Monarch competition here last month, dethroning nine time winner Dr. Hollis “Chalkdust” Liverpool, who placed last in the competition that formed part of the highlight of the 2018 Carnival celebrations here.

Helon Francis won the crown with his tune “Changes”, a social commentary about T&T’s need for introspection and revolution of thought to address corruption and crime.

His victory completely overshadowed Aaron “The Voice” St. Louis, winner of the International Soca Monarch earlier in the month, who had been the crowd favorite to win the Calypso Monarch.

St. Louis placed second with his tune “Year For Love” in which he warned murderers that “fire go burn you,” while Rondell Donawa placed third with her tune “De Problem”.

LAWSUIT

Former Calypso Monarch Duane O’Connor, who was only allowed to enter the com-

petition one hour after a High Court judge ruled in his lawsuit against the Trinidad Unified Calypsonians’ Organization (TUCO), placed seventh.

Justice Ricky Rahim ruled in favor of O’Connor, the 2012 winner, after he claimed that points had been deleted from him when he sang his tune “No Front Page” during the semi-finals.

Chalkdust was among six former monarchs in the final, where 17 singers were seeking honors. He received 393 points for his song “In the Latrine”, with former monarchs Michael “Sugar Aloes” Osouna, with his tune “Finally” that paid homage to the late singer Kitchener, coming 15th, eight points behind former monarch Sandra singing “Sandra De Vignes”.

Meanwhile, BpTT Renegades ended a 21-year drought when it won the Panorma competition playing



- File photograph

St. Louis’s tune “Year for Love”. The band from “behind the bridge” in Port of Spain won ahead of Skiffle. Third place was Desperadoes. Defending champion Massy Trinidad All Stars was fourth.

VIOLENCE

However, T&T’s carnival celebrations were marred by violence. According to police, at least three people, including a 17-year-old schoolboy, were killed during celebrations.

Police said they also ended the J’Ouvert celebrations in the southern town of San Fernando a few hours

early, after an unidentified man was stabbed to death and another injured. Police also reported that another man was shot and critically wounded.

In the other incident, police said a 77-year-old man from Florida, United States



- File photograph

St. Louis

died “when he got caught under the wheels of a music truck in the vicinity of Victoria Square” in the capital. Up to press time the police had not disclosed the name of the visitor.

A 30-year-old unidentified woman was also hospitalized after falling off a music truck

in the capital.

T&T officials were also placed on high alert after eight men were detained amid reports of a terrorist plot to disrupt carnival celebrations.

The U.S. Department of State’s Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 has named T&T the country with the highest per capita rate of ISIS recruitment in the Western Hemisphere. According to the report, more than 70 nationals are believed to be fighting with ISIS in Syria.

In other selected results, Roxanne Omalo was named “Queen of Carnival” and Earl Thompson “King of Carnival” 2018. Ronnie and Caro ... the Mass Band won the large band competition.

- Edited from multiple sources.



WRITER’S PINNACLE



Jamaican-born novelist Marlon James, left, receives the Pinnacle Literacy Award from Jamaica’s Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett at the American Foundation for The University of the West Indies (UWI) 21st annual awards gala last month in New York. James is writer in residence and associate professor of English at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He also won The Pelican Award, the UWI’s alumni award. In 2015 James became the first Jamaican to win the United Kingdom’s most prestigious literary honor, the Man Booker Prize, for his novel “A Brief History of Seven Killings”.

Grenada political party chooses more gospel, less calypso during general elections campaign

ST. GEORGE’S, Grenada – The ruling New National Party (NNP) says it will not use calypso music during the campaign leading up to the Mar. 13 general elections because of the Christian Lenten season.

Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell, who is leading the NNP into the elections, told a rally last month that the party, which is seeking to regain all 15-seats in the elections, had agreed to change its format for the campaign.

“... In recognizing our Christian society and what it does to our society, we will not be having any calypso activity in our national activities ... but will be having a lot of gospel

music,” he said.

Jamaican reggae artiste Romain Virgo was the main act for the entertainment last month and Mitchell told supporters “enjoy yourself because there will not be any more.”

SOLEMN

Lent is a solemn religious observance in the Christian liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends approximately six weeks later, before Easter Sunday. NNP Campaign Manager Roland Bhola said the ban would not cover all calypso songs, but those considered to be offensive and promoting unaccept-

able behavior during the Lenten season.

“There are songs with words or language that are just not in keeping with the spirit of the religious period and those who will not allow,” said Bhola, who also confirmed that calypso artistes who have produced work for the NNP for the election campaign will be providing entertainment at the various upcoming community meetings and national rallies.

The main Opposition National Democratic Congress has not yet indicated if it will follow the NNP’s strategy.



‘Feast with the Beasts’ at Zoo Miami

MIAMI, Florida – Dishes created by some of South Florida’s most renowned food establishments, including Caribbean, will be offered at this month’s “Feast with the Beasts” event at Zoo Miami in South Florida.

Zoo Miami Foundation and Zoo Miami are hosting

the event from 8 p.m. to midnight Mar. 16 to celebrate wildlife and food. It is aimed supporting the Zoo Miami Foundation wildlife education and conservation programs on behalf of Zoo Miami.

“Feast with the Beasts”, now in its 23rd year, is expected to feature more than 30

local restaurants and caterers, open bars, wild animal encounters and live entertainment.

The event is only for adults 21 and over. Visit www.fwtb.org or call 305-255-5551 for more information, .



BLACK PANTHER: T&T actor shines as M’Baku in blockbuster movie

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

In the Caribbean, the film is a hit. Multiple Caribbean

nationals have also been part of the movie’s production, including Guyanese-born actress Letitia Wright, who

plays “Shuri” the tech genius and sister of T’Challa.

Meanwhile, the 6’4” T&T native is moving on to other

projects, with the upcoming movie “Avengers: Infinity War”.

M’Baku, it appears, has

other kingdoms to conquer.

- G. Williams



ZYEN RISING: Caribbean American teen takes big step in pro soccer

GORDON WILLIAMS

A Caribbean American youngster is about to take a massive step into one of Europe's top professional soccer leagues.

Zyen Jones, 17, who was born in the United States, but whose roots run deep into Jamaica, last month confirmed an agreement with FC Schalke 04, which plays in the Bundesliga, Germany's top competition.

Jones, whose fast, attacking style has been compared to rising Jamaican-born Bundesliga star Leon Bailey and former FC Schalke 04 standout Leroy Sane, now with Manchester City of the English Premier League, is expected to report to his new club this summer.

The Texas-born, Georgia-based teenager, whose father Kevin played at the high school and club level in

Jamaica before migrating first to Canada then the U.S., has represented the U.S. at various age group levels. He was also a member of the youth academy at Atlanta United F.C., which plays in North America's, Major League Soccer. But his ambition was always to play with a big club in Europe.

"It means everything," said Jones who, under the rules of soccer's governing body FIFA will have to wait until he turns 18 in late August to officially sign his contract and play for Schalke. "It's a dream come true. It's what I've desired as a kid."

OPTIONS

According to his agent, Jamaican American Cory Gibbs, who played professionally in Germany and also represented the U.S., Jones trained with three Bundesliga teams in Germany late last



Jones

year. Schalke, Hertha Berlin and Hannover 96 vied for his services. However, Gibbs said Jones chose Schalke, which agreed to a three-year guaranteed full professional deal.

Gibbs said Jones will be assigned to the club's Under-19 team first, but he expects him to compete for a senior first team place soon after.

"Once Zyen understands the game a little bit better tac-

tically, which he will do at Schalke ... he will be a key (for the club)," the agent said.

Gibbs said Jones already has the physical tools to compete with top professionals. He describes his play as "explosive." However, the teenager must add more maturity. He already has a head start.

"He's a kid, growing into his body," Gibbs explained. "But I think he has a couple things in his advantage, including being part of the U.S. national team ... He'll have good support behind him and his maturity level is higher than most (his age)."

ADVANCED

According to his father, Zyen always appeared ahead of his age group after starting to play competitively early.

"He was doing things better than his age at age four," Jones Sr. explained. "He was doing things an eight-year-old would do. That's when I knew he was special. He always cried to play with the bigger guys in the Caribbean community."

Jones has no doubt Zyen is prepped for the next step.

"Very much," he said. "He's ready. He just has to be committed and work hard."

However, the father shared some worry for his young son.

"As a parent you have concerns, like how he will perform being away from home," dad said. "But he's taking it simply. In a sense he expected it. He's humble about it. I tell him it's just the beginning."

CONFIDENCE

The son has no such doubts. Between now and the time pre-season training begins this summer, Zyen is expected to make multiple trips to Germany. He's enrolled in classes to learn German and knows he must focus.

"Everything is different now," explained the teenager, who cites Lionel Messi as his favorite player but doesn't pattern game after the Argentine superstar. "There's always eyes on me. I have to make sure I'm on point."

That means representing the U.S. and Jamaica. Zyen doesn't hide his love for his

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

Windward Islands Volcanoes wins Caribbean cricket title

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua – Youth World Cup star Alick Athanaze rode his luck and held his nerve as he lifted Windward Islands Volcanoes to a dramatic three-wicket victory over Barbados Pride in the Regional Super50 cricket final here late last month.

In pursuit of 233 for victory, Volcanoes slumped to 205 for seven in the 44th over before the left-handed Athanaze arrived to stroke an unbeaten run-a-ball 23 and see his side home with three balls remaining in the day/night affair at Coolidge Cricket Ground.

Volcanoes was never in control of the run chase and the match was in danger of slipping away when Kyle Mayers missed a heave at part-time off-spinner Kraigg Braithwaite and was bowled for 32 at 205 for seven in the 45th over.

With 28 still required



Hodge's score help Volcanoes win.

from 33 deliveries, the 19-year-old Athanaze – the leading run-scorer at the recent ICC Under-19 World Cup in New Zealand with 418 runs – held his nerves in a vital unbroken 31-run eighth wicket stand with captain Shane Shillingford (seven not out) to see Volcanoes to the team's first domestic 50-overs title in five years.



SPORTS BRIEFS

Caribbean 'keeper gets new MLS deal

Jamaican Andre Blake, the outstanding goalkeeper for Philadelphia Union in Major League Soccer, recently signed a new four-year contract with the United States-based club.

In 2016 Blake was voted best goalkeeper in MLS. He also had an outstanding year in 2017. Before his new deal, Blake was not among the top 10 highest paid MLS 'keepers.

Bangladesh names Walsh coach

Legendary former West Indies fast bowler Courtney Walsh has been named Bangladesh's interim head cricket coach for the Tri-Nation Series in Sri Lanka starting this month.

The Jamaican has served as the team's bowling coach for the last two years.

- Compiled from various sources.



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SPORTS



Jamaican women lead Caribbean charge at 2018 Winter Olympics



Russell, left, and Fenlator-Victorian perform at the Olympics.

with a team of Carrie Russell and Jazmine Fenlator-Victorian.

The duo weren't the only ones carrying the Caribbean flag in Pyeongchang. Anthony Watson competed for Jamaica in the men's skeleton. Charles Flaherty represented Puerto Rico in the men's giant slalom skiing and Tucker Murphy competed in the men's 15 kilometer freestyle cross country skiing.

CONTROVERSY

None of those three drew the attention the Jamaican women did. And not just for their performance on the track.

Brakeswoman Russell and pilot Fenlator-Victorian had to negotiate a slippery slope of controversy, which threatened to derail their Olympic

dream before it even started. Days before their competition, Sandra Kiriasis left the team after news surfaced she had been asked to step down as driving coach to become a performance analyst.

"Sandra Kiriasis has elected not to continue her position with Jamaica Bobsleigh," the Jamaican Bobsled Federation (JBSF) wrote at the time. "We are deeply disappointed in her decision to leave the program."

In response on the social media platform Facebook, Kiriasis said she didn't understand "the reasons behind the decision of Jamaican

Bobsleigh Federation and certainly will not allow herself to be used as a puppet on a string."

Kiriasis took the team's sled with her, which she said he had rented from a company in Germany.

However, the Jamaican women, rooted on by new fans from around the globe, were able to secure another sled and finished 19th out of 20 teams with a time of three minutes 25.94 seconds.

Germany won the event in 3:22.45.



Jamaica survived a blizzard of controversy to make history at last month's Winter Olympic Games in South Korea.

Represented for the first time by women at the Games

some 30 years after a male team from the Caribbean island debuted, prompting the making of the movie "Cool Runnings", Jamaica participated in the bobsled event

Soca monarch sues ex-T&T soccer star over unpaid loan

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – Former Trinidad and Tobago and Manchester United soccer star Dwight Yorke is being sued by reigning Soca Monarch Neval Chatelal for the non-payment of a loan.



Yorke

Yorke, 46, was reportedly loaned TT\$250,000 (one TT dollar = US\$0.16 cents) in Mar. 2017 to assist in a financial bind.

In court documents filed last month, Chatelal claimed Yorke approached him for the loan relating to his "Island Vibe" fete, which was held on Mar. 4, 2017. The court documents state that the former national player was unable to secure a lender for the fete and, as a result, was in a bind as he needed to pay those who provided services for the event.

Yorke allegedly said that he could not approach the bank as the time for

approval would place him in an embarrassing situation.

AGREEMENT

Chatelal subsequently agreed to loan Yorke TT\$250,000, with a TT\$50,000 interest to be paid after two months. He reportedly deposited the money into the Dwight Yorke Foundation account on Mar. 7, 2017 following the agreement.

Two months following the deposit, Chatelal contacted Yorke, who in Dec. 2017 paid him TT\$50,000. In January, a pre-action protocol letter was sent to Yorke where he was "invited to amicably settle the matter." There was reportedly no response and, on Feb. 12, the legal proceeding was filed.

In 2016, Machel Montano sued Yorke for falsely using his name to promote a party that year.

He later dropped the lawsuit, but had obtained an injunction to stop Yorke from using his name.

- Edited from CMC.



ZYEN RISING: Caribbean American teen takes big step in pro soccer

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

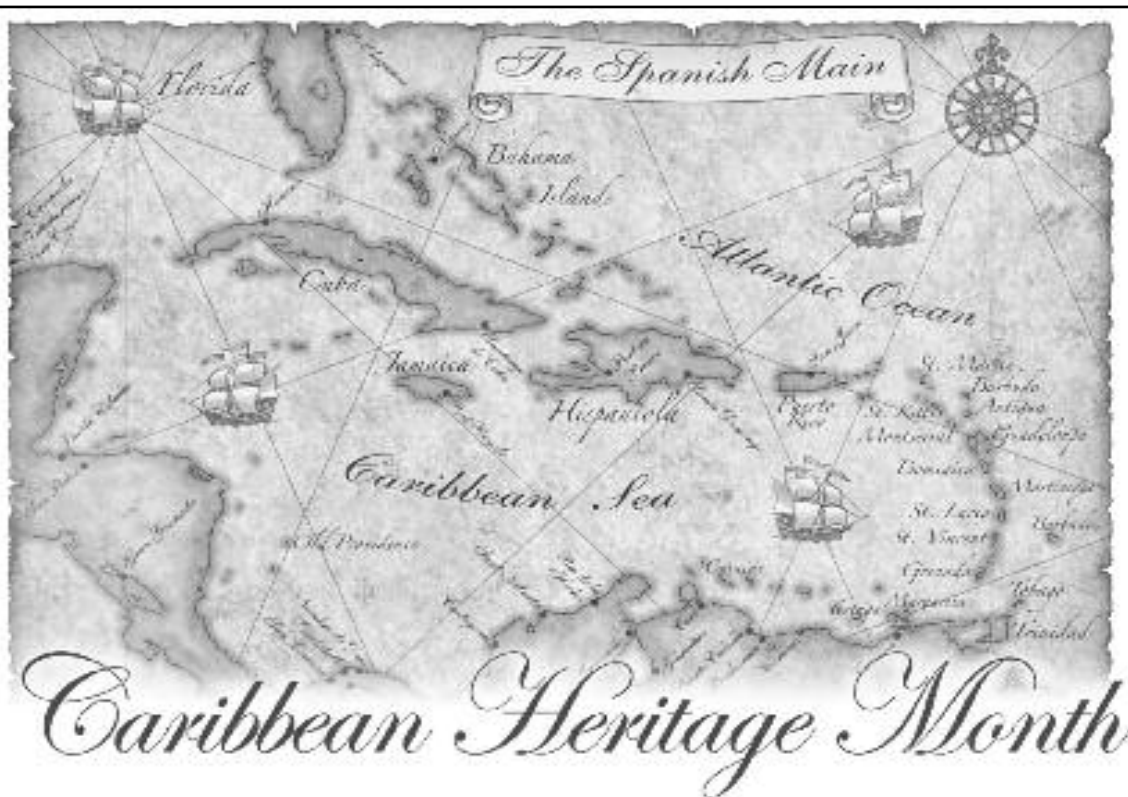
father's homeland. He said it's likely he will continue to represent the U.S. on the field, but his Jamaican connection remains strong. The island's culture - such as his favorite music from artistes like Vybz Kartel and Popcaan - and food - including ackee and saltfish, oxtail and rice and peas - are embedded in Zyen's genes. He has no plans to ditch them.

"The U.S. gave me my first opportunity (to play internationally)," he said.

"But Jamaica means the world to me."

For now, his mind is on Germany. Zyen said his experiences with U.S. youth teams have prepared him to be "pretty good at living on my own." Schalke, he knows, is investing heavily in him. It is up to him to repay the club's confidence.

"Knowing they believe in me is an honor," Zyen said. "It's still sinking in, but the hard work starts now."



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SPRING CLEANING: 8 tips for maximizing garage storage space

Most people are pressed for garage space, regardless of the size of their house, from DIYers overwhelmed with tools to moms searching for places to store holiday decorations.

Toter, which manufactures carts, cans and containers for use in a wide range of home and work waste management and storage solutions, is offering the following tips for making more of precious garage space.

• **Keep trash in its place** - To keep trash and odors contained, select a mobile trash cart with a tight-fitting lid that's compatible with your haulers' pickup requirements and comes with a warranty. Some manufacturers also offer cart and can liners and deodorizers to keep your garage smelling fresh.

• **Invest in a multi-purpose job box** - Most people tend to have the wrong size toolbox for their needs. Consider the shape, capacity and compartments needed for your tools.

Rolling options are great for work done only at home, while a job box may be better



Finding room is tough.

for those who do work elsewhere. If portability is important, look at lighter-weight options.

New plastic job boxes combine the strength, durability and security of a large metal box with enhanced maneuverability.

• **Build up, not out** - Ceiling storage racks are an excellent way to use what would otherwise be dead space. Many racks are designed to fit directly above

the area where an automatic door goes up and down. Peg boards for tools and stackable totes are also good choices.

• **Choose multipurpose storage** - Needs can change over time, so invest in storage that can be used for a variety of items in multiple ways. For example, large, durable totes can hold lawn gear, tools or camping equipment.

• **Think mobility** - Being able to move containers within the garage is important.

However, the ability to move them into your vehicle and hit the road quickly also makes life a lot easier.

"Heavy metal containers are difficult to move, and cheap plastic bins are often too flimsy to stand up to long-term or outdoor use," said Jeniffer Coates, director of product development and warranty for Toter.

"Consumers will get the most mileage from durable, impact-resistant plastic containers."

These can cost a bit more upfront, but will stand the test of time.

• **Protect items** - Moisture and pests cause problems in even the cleanest garage. Look for durable storage containers with tight-fitting, crit-

ter-resistant lids.

• **Categorize** - Assign and color-code dedicated areas for each type of item - tools, decorations, lawn equipment, etc. - to avoid the hassle of searching.

• **Allow room to grow** - While it can be tempting to stuff every square inch, try to leave room for future additions. To ensure everything deserves the space it's occupying, do a yearly purge of unneeded or unused items.

Keeping the garage in order is a necessary evil, but with a solid game plan and the right equipment, it's easier than you think.

- Edited from StatePoint



PORT OF CALL



Jamaica's Consul General Franz Hall, right, goes along with Gerard Philippeaux on a tour of PortMiami's facilities last month in South Florida. Philippeaux is manager for strategic initiatives at the port.

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Bahamas approves plans for oil refinery, storage facility

NASSAU, Bahamas – Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis says his government has approved Oban Energies to commence an oil refinery and oil storage facility in Grand Bahama.

The project is expected to create 600 direct jobs, 1,000 indirect jobs during construc-

tion and an estimated project cost of over \$4 billion.

“My government has recently completed negotiating the heads of agreement which paves the way for the commencement of this important project,” said Minnis in Parliament last month. “This heads of agreement articulates

how this development can proceed.”

The prime minister said additional heads of agreements will also be signed.

REVITALIZE

“We are on the road to revitalizing both Grand Bahama and the entire

Bahamas,” said Minnis.

“I am advised that Oban Energies Management team has been involved in large energy infrastructure projects around the world and brings over 30 years of large, complex construction experience. Oban Energies has further advised that the first



Minnis

phase of the project will consist of four million barrels of fuel storage, a harbor and deep-sea loading docks to service large vessels; and the construction of a 50,000 barrels per day refinery.

“In addition, Oban will build (an) up to 20 million barrel liquid bulk storage facility and a 250,000 barrel per day refinery.”

- Edited from CMC.



Guyana increases rice exports to several countries

GEORGETOWN, Guyana – Guyana says it is now supplying rice to 34 countries and has been able to overcome the loss of the Venezuelan market a few years ago.

“We are now on a pretty good path of development for rice because we have secured new markets for rice and we need to get expansion in our rice cultivation area (to satisfy the demands of those markets),” Agriculture Minister Noel Holder told farmers and other stakeholders recently.

Guyana had been exporting rice to Caracas in exchange for petroleum products, but the arrangement came to an end in 2015 at the height of the border dispute between the two countries.

Holder told the meeting

that “between the millers and the rice board and the government, we haven’t done badly at all because now we supply rice to 34 countries and indeed over the last two and a half years we have secured, I think, five new markets.”

Nizam Hassan, general manager of the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB), told the meeting that there has been a marked increase in the exports of rice and rice products from Guyana in 2017.

“In 2017, there was an



Guyana has stepped up production.

all-time high of rice and rice products exports out of Guyana,” said Hassan. “Close to 540,000 tons of rice was exported for 2017.

“The previous all-time high was in 2015 (when) 535,000 plus thousand pounds ... For 2017, it’s close to 540,000 tons valued at US\$201M.”

He said in addition there has been a steady export of rice and rice products to the Caribbean and Europe.

- Edited from CMC.



Seaborne being sold to U.S. carrier Silver Airways



Seaborne Airlines

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Puerto Rico-based Seaborne Airlines is being sold to United States carrier Silver Airways.

Seaborne, which operates flights across the eastern Caribbean, is being sold because of financial strain caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria.

The airline says most of the countries serviced, including Puerto Rico, the British and United States Virgin Islands, Dominica and St. Maarten, were significantly impacted by the category five hurricanes.

“While the company’s business has enjoyed a remarkable recovery since the 2017 hurricanes, the financial stress caused during the recovery period coupled with legacy

liabilities have made it necessary to seek reorganization protection,” Ben Munson, acting chief executive officer of Seaborne Airlines, said recently.

Seaborne said the airline’s day-to-day operations will “continue as normal” and will not be disrupted by the sale. The company said it will also maintain its “code share” partnerships that facilitate easy connections with other partner airlines.

Although financial stress from the hurricanes encouraged the airline to sell, Seaborne had entered into negotiations with Silver Airways months ago. It is said the sale will result in the two airlines combining fleets.



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Three reasons to consider refinancing your auto loan

Most people know they can refinance their mortgage, but less than half are aware that they can also refinance their auto loan, according to a study by Harris Poll for Ally Financial.

It's a simple task that could reduce your car payments by about \$1,300 a year.

The following considerations can help you determine whether refinancing your auto loan is the right step for you:

• **Interest rates** - Can you reduce your monthly costs by lowering your rate?

Compare your current interest rate to those advertised. Keep in mind that there are several aspects of your financial history that may have impacted your interest rate for a loan, including credit score and credit history.

If your credit score has significantly increased since you financed your vehicle, it may be time to refinance to a lower interest rate.

• **Tight monthly budgets** - If you need to make some room in your budget due to changing life circumstances or simply have a desire to sock more money away into savings, refinancing your auto



- Photograph © pathdoc/stock.Adobe.com

A cheaper rate on your car means more savings.

loan is a move that may have a substantial impact on your finances.

• **Reducing the term** - Another reason many choose to refinance is to reduce the number of payments they will have to make, with the goal of reducing the total amount of interest paid over the course of the loan.

This may appeal to you if you can now afford a higher monthly payment than when you purchased your vehicle,

thanks to a raise or new stream of income.

If you choose to refinance, be sure to review your loan agreement and terms to make sure you understand your current loan. You should also be aware of any costs that could be incurred by refinancing or changing the terms of your loan.

- Edited from StatePoint.



Five ways to improve your financial strategy

Getting out of your current financial rut can feel daunting without the right habits and tools. Here are five ways to improve your financial plan now:

1. Set goals - What do your plans include? A car or house? Long-term retirement savings or a college fund for your children?

Start by identifying your goals clearly. Then, figure out how to get there.

2. Plan smarter, not harder - The right tools on hand can make the business of financial planning easier. Consider such tools as a multi-functional desktop printing calculator.

3. Follow the money - Take a deep look into your spending habits. Think of all the money that can be put towards savings by making small changes to everyday habits. For example, pick one or two days a week to enjoy a lunch out with friends, but bring your own lunch the other days of the week.

4. Analyze your expenses - New apps and websites that connect to all your finances, including bank accounts, savings, credit cards, student loans and more, can help you track



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Plan smarter, not harder.

your expenses and create and manage budgets.

Graphs and charts help you understand all facets of your finances, so you can be more in tune with where your money is going, helping you navigate a plan to use it more wisely.

5. Make a change - Want to put your money to good, long-term use in a way that won't put a strain on your wallet? A selection of apps automatically round-up the leftover change from purchases made by you with your debit cards, and puts that change towards something else - like student loans or investments.

- Edited from StatePoint.



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