

HAPPY *new year* 2023

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(Credit: Stephanie Mitchell/
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Here Are Some Of The Top Headlines Making Caribbean News This Week

REGION

Caribbean countries are being warned to prepare for prolonged effects of external economic shocks in 2023, including for high food and fuel prices and rising international interest rates. That's according to a new report from the Inter-American Development Bank, (IDB).

The Bank warned that higher interest rates could lead to economic slowdowns, or even recessions, in important source markets for exported services and goods from the Caribbean. The impact of these shocks depends on the trade structure of individual countries, as well as the external financing requirements of each country, according to the report, 'Headwinds Facing the Post-Pandemic Recovery.'

JAMAICA

The first all-female sitting of Parliament in Jamaica will be held on February 21, 2023.

Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Olivia Grange said the sitting will see the participation of young women between the ages of 18 and 25. All Members of Parliament were requested to nominate a young woman in that age range.

Members of the House approved the motion for the establishment of the caucus. The group will comprise a sessional Select Committee sitting jointly with a similarly established Committee of the Senate.

GUYANA

Oil production in Guyana and Brazil is expected to substantially increase in 2023, successfully anchoring production growth in the Latin America region, according to Hart Energy- a globally recognised provider of information on the petroleum industry.

Hart Energy, in a recent

report, detailed that Guyana and Brazil are expected to produce an additional 850,000 barrels of oil per day in 2023 from new oil ships.

"The lion's share of the production will come from developments in exploration hotspots Brazil and Guyana," the report noted.

With production underway at two developments- the Liza I and Liza II- in Guyana's prolific Stabroek Block, the country is already producing about 360,000 barrels of oil per day.

THE BAHAMAS

The Securities Commission of The Bahamas (SCB) is denying allegations that it had directed the failed crypto-exchange, FTX, to mint US\$300m tokens prior to its collapse.

"The Securities Commission of The Bahamas must once again correct material misstatements made by Mr. John J Ray III, the representative of the US FTX debtors (Chapter 11 Debtors), in both the press and court filings," the SCB said in a statement as it challenged Ray on his allegations, they had any control over the failed crypto-exchange's assets after its filing for liquidation and Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

The SCB said that on December 30, last year, the Chapter 11 Debtors publicly challenged the Commission's calculations of the digital assets which were transferred to digital wallets controlled by the Commission on November 12, 2022, for safekeeping in the exercise of its powers as regulator acting under the authority of an Order made by the Supreme Court here.

It said such public assertions by the Chapter 11 Debtors were based on incomplete information.

BELIZE

The Belize government says it is "saddened" by the death of a United States visitor to the country over the New Year's holiday weekend, saying that the killing "has rocked not only her family, but the entire peaceful community and nation."

Prime Minister John Briceno in a statement, which his office described "on the random act of terrorism" in San Pedro, said that the killing J'Bria Michelle Bowens of Louisiana, requires that "justice delivered swiftly can be the only comfort her family and community."

Two men have been arrested and charged with



J'Bria Michelle Bowens, a student from Louisiana, was killed in Belize on Dec. 30, 2022, reportedly after being caught in the line of fire between two factions. (CMC image)

murder in the killing that occurred on December 30th in San Pedro on the island of Ambergris Caye, a popular tourist destination. "The tourist was not the intended target, it just so happened she was in the line of fire between two factions," 7 News Belize reported, adding that the attackers used an assault rifle and the intended target had been a local gang leader.

HAITI

The United Nations warns that Haiti is "on the verge of abyss" as conflicts rage and international dialogue remains "the only hope" for peace" in the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country.

"It's hard to overstate the extent to which the security situation in Haiti collapsed in 2022," said the UN in its review of 2022, noting that "practically nowhere in the capital, Port-au-Prince, could be deemed safe, as rival gangs fought over territory, terrorizing increasingly desperate citizens, already struggling to survive a humanitarian catastrophe".

The UN noted that, in October, the UN Special Representative, Helen La Lime, welcomed the sanctions regime adopted by the UN Security Council, which targets gang leaders and their backers. She told the Security Council that even if a political solution could be found, it would not be sufficient to address the crisis.

NEVIS

Premier Mark Brantley has announced that the Nevis Island Administration (NIA) will embark of the drilling phase of Nevis' geothermal project in June 2023.

Brantley, who is also Minister of Public Utilities and Energy, revealed that the drilling will comprise three

production wells and two injection wells at Hamilton. He said while geothermal in Nevis has been discussed since 2004 and some attempts made to pursue it, this is the closest that they have gotten in terms of its development and harnessing.

Earlier this month, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) announced it had

approved USD\$17 million for the development of geothermal energy in Nevis – a \$16 million contingent grant for drilling and a \$1 million grant for expert support and capacity.

ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

Parliament in St. Vincent and the Grenadines will present its budget on Jan. 9th. The parliament has approved Estimates of Income and Expenditure of EC\$1.5billion (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents) for the 2023 fiscal year, an 8.8% increase over the approved budget for 2022.

The estimates were approved even as the opposition complained, for yet another year, that the capital budget is bloated by Other Receipts, representing 30% of the capital budget. Financing is expected to come from current revenue of EC\$761,431,200 and capital receipts totaling EC\$684,455,414.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

An election for a new president of the twin island republic is scheduled to be held on January 20th.

"A person shall not be a candidate for election as President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago unless nominated for election by a nomination paper which (a) is signed by the candidate and by 12 or more Members of the House of Representatives, and (b) is delivered to the Speaker at least seven days before the election," said Speaker of the House of Representatives and chairman of the Electoral College, Bridgid Annissette-George.

The current President, Paula Mae Weekes, took office on March 19, 2018.

- Compiled from CMC



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Is Apology Without Reparations Enough?

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL
EDITED BY FELICIA J. PERSAUD

If Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte believed apologizing for slavery on behalf of his country was a noble gesture, his mea culpa at The Hague on December 19, 2022, did not impress many activists and academicians throughout the Caribbean. Even though Rutte made history on Monday by becoming the first leader of a Western nation to apologize for the country's role in slavery, he still sidestepped an offer of reparations.

Sir Hilary Beckles, vice-chancellor of the University of the West Indies and chairman of the CARICOM Reparations Commission is among those across the Caribbean who expect more. After all, Dutch colonizers kidnapped men, women and children and enslaved them on plantations growing sugar, coffee and other goods that built wealth at the price of misery.

Sir Hilary says he believes Rutte's statement, in which he called slavery a "crime against humanity" that "cannot be erased, only faced up to," was not clear about his stance on reparations for the descendants of African slaves.

"We recognize ... that this development is best understood as an internal conversation within the Dutch state (but) the prime minister did not bring to the table those who are the survivors of the crimes," Sir Hilary said. "The victim communities in the Caribbean and African are not stakeholders to this statement. Historic though it is, the statement is flawed on the basis that the Prime Minister did not seek the organized input and support of the Caribbean," said Beckles.

Rutte told reporters that the government is not offering compensation to "people - grandchildren or great grandchildren of enslaved



Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has become the first leader of a Western nation to apologize for the country's role in slavery, but advocates in the Caribbean say it is not enough. (Getty image)

people" but The Netherlands will instead establish a 200-million-euro (\$212 million) fund for initiatives to help tackle the legacy of slavery in the Netherlands and its former colonies and to boost education about the issue.

The prime minister's address was a response to a report published in 2021 by a government-appointed advisory board. Its recommendations included the government's apology and recognition that the slave trade and slavery from the 17th century until abolition "that happened directly or indirectly under Dutch authority were crimes against humanity.

Professor Clinton Hutton, director of the Institute of Technological and Educational Research at Mico University College in Kingston, agrees Rutte's statement does not go far enough.

"This step forward is still enmeshed in the culture, philosophy and psychology of anti-black racism that emerged and was cultivated to justify slavery," Hutton noted. "Hence, we see Rutte apologizing and stating that slavery was a crime against humanity for which the Dutch state was responsible,

yet ruling out reparation. This position cannot be sustained." He added that Britain, France, Portugal, and others should at some point make this step but apologies alone are not sufficient.

"Indeed, they are not sustainable," added Hutton. Jamaican poet and activist, Yasus Afari, is also among those expressing skepticism about Rutte and apologetic politicians on a whole since to date, none have focused on the issue at hand for many across the CARICOM region - reparations.

Afari called on other countries who were involved in the trade to follow Rutte's lead and apologize.

"We definitely know that they all need to! The entire Europe /European Union, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and beyond. In fact, let's get the language clear and straight, it's not correct to describe it as 'slave trade' as it is colonial genocide and a crime against humanity," he stated.

Waldo Koendjibiarie, a retiree who was born in the CARICOM South American nation of Suriname but lived for years in the Netherlands, said an apology was not enough.

"It's about money. Apologies are words and with those words you can't buy anything," he told the AP.

SURINAME

In Suriname where Dutch plantation owners generated huge profits through the use of enslaved labor, activists and officials say they have not been asked for input, and that's a reflection of a Dutch colonial attitude. What's really needed, they say, is compensation. The speech came as Dutch ministers fanned out to discuss the issue in Suriname and former colonies that make up the Kingdom of the Netherlands — Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten as well as three Caribbean islands that are officially special municipalities in the Netherlands, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba.

Dutch Slavery

The Netherlands was a major player in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade which originated in 1526 and remained active for over 300 years. Eventually, the Dutch West India Company became the largest trans-Atlantic slave trader and traded in captured Africans from mainly West Africa and sold them into slavery in Argentina and later Curacao, Dutch Guiana and Suriname.

Although The Netherlands abolished slavery in the Dutch East Indies in 1860, the trade was in force until three years later, when similar action was taken in Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. In July, The Dutch Central Bank apologized for its role in the Atlantic slave trade and pledged to support initiatives that aim to reduce the repercussions of the legacy of slavery.

RUTTE & THE KING

The Dec. 19th statement was an about-turn for Rutte, who was elected Prime Minister of The

Netherlands in 2010. Two years earlier, he referred to slavery as "a thing of the past" but said he has since had "a change in thinking."

Rutte does have some support from his country's head of state, King Willem-Alexander. The King, in his Christmas Day speech, he commended his Prime Minister for taking on the "beginning of a long journey."

The monarch stressed that no one living in The Netherlands in modern society can be held responsible for slavery in their nation's former colonies. "But by viewing our joint history in an honest way and by acknowledging the crime against humanity that slavery was, we are however laying the foundations for a joint future," said the king.

CARICOM

In 2013, the Caribbean trade bloc known as Caricom, made a list of requests including that European governments formally apologize and create a repatriation program for those who wish to return to their homeland, which has not happened.

In 2016, CARICOM, advanced reparations claim against six Western European governments - inclusive of the government of the Netherlands - for reparations for the damage that Barbados and the other CARICOM nations experienced during the centuries of European orchestrated Native genocide and African enslavement.

In the following years, CARICOM extended the reparations claim to currently existing European companies and institutions that were either directly implicated in the crimes committed during those centuries of genocide and enslavement or that benefitted financially from the said crimes.



Black And White Brits Polls Apart On Reparations

Support For reparations has grown in the black community in Britain and shrunk in the whites, new data shared reported by Britain's The Voice shows.

The paper quoted exclusive data from the Independent Press Standards Organisation, (IPSO), which

In data shared exclusively with The Voice, the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) interviewed over 2,000 Britons from diverse ethnic backgrounds about the UK's role in race, colonialism and education.

The IPSO figures found that there has been a jump in support from people from black and mixed black backgrounds, while whites were still less likely to

support the movement for reparations.

Just 24% of whites said that they supported the UK government paying reparations to black people living in Britain who are the descendants of former slaves, but 61% of black people backed the move.

Black people, however, also agreed that businesses and institutions which directly profited from slavery — many of them being high-street banks — should be made to pay compensation to people whose ancestors were slaves by 66%. However, only 24% of white people showed support for the cause.



Flashback: Protestors call for reparations during the tour of Prince William and Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton, to the Caribbean in 2022.

Black people supported the quest for an apology by 61% compared to 33% of white people.

A further 18% of white people disagreed that descendants of enslaved Africans should be paid reparations, while 51% of black people supported the idea.

The IPSO data showed that 62% of Britons reported having not been taught not very much or nothing at all about Britain's colonial past in school, compared to 30% who say they were taught a great deal or fair amount.

Similarly, the research revealed a racial divide with just 8%

of white pupils reporting that they had been taught a great deal about Britain's role in colonization compared to 17% of black pupils.

Figures have also shown that 62% of respondents support teaching children in British secondary schools about Britain's colonial activities and involvement in the slave trade and their impact on the world today, with just 9% opposing teaching about Britain's hand in the slave trade and 8% opposing teaching about Britain's colonial dealings.

- *Rewritten from The Voice*



9 Journalists Killed In Haiti In 2022

The Inter-American Press Society (SIP) says 2022 was the most violent year against journalism in the Western Hemisphere with 9 journalists killed in Haiti.

The latest killing in Haiti occurred on December 18, 2022 when Francklin Tamar, 38, was shot while traveling on a motorcycle, according to local media. The journalist died on his way to the hospital and the attack near his home in the Carrefour-Feuilles sector in downtown Port-au-Prince, was the ninth



Haitian radio journalist Francklin Tamar was shot multiple times on Rue Monseigneur Guilloux street near his home in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince on December 18, 2022. (Screenshot: YouTube/Francklin Tamar)

related murder of journalists in the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country.

The Inter American Press Association (IAPA) in deploring

the murder reiterated a recent call made by seven organizations for governments to combat violence against journalists.

The other journalists murdered last year in Haiti are: Fritz Dorilas, killed on November 5; Romelo Vilsaint, October 30; Tess Garry, October 24; Frantzsen Charles and Tayson Lartigue, September 11; Maxihen Lazarre, February 23; Wilguens Louissaint and Amady

John Wesley, January 6.

“2022 has the negative connotation of being the most violent year against journalism in the Western Hemisphere of which we have any record,” said the chairman of the IAPA’s Committee on Freedom of the Press and Information, Carlos Jorner.

IAPA president, Michael Greenspon said the killings in Haiti, “again demonstrates

the risks of violence against communicators, victims of aggressions and abuses by gangs, demonstrators, and the police”.

He has called on the authorities to “investigate with a sense of urgency and responsibility” the nine cases of journalists killed in Haiti.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



Haitian PM Hopes Multinational Support Force Will Arrive This Year

Haiti’s Prime Minister Dr. Ariel Henry says he hopes the international community will agree to a request for a multinational support force to assist the Haitian National Police, (PNH), restore peace and security in the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country will come this year.

Haiti has been plunged into chaos with criminal gangs involved in kidnappings for ransom and opposition political parties staging street demonstrations calling for the government of Prime Minister Henry to step down. The opposition parties have also been calling for fresh presidential and legislative elections.

Henry, who took over the leadership of the country following the assassination of President Jovenel Moise in July 7, 2021, said he was launching a “final appeal to those who believe in democratic values, to join this national compromise which must lead us towards a transfer of power to elected officials at different levels of the State.” He urged the international community to send in troops to assist in maintaining law and order and has condemned persons whom he said want to acquire political power in the country without first seeking a



Haiti Prime Minister Dr. Ariel Henry has a New Year’s wish. (CMC image)

mandate from the population.

CANADA

Last month, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says while he does not rule out the possibility of his country being part of a military intervention, or even leading one in Haiti, he also wants European countries to join the North American country in sanctioning the elites in Haiti over alleged ties to the violent gangs.

Speaking during a year-end interview with The Canadian Press, Prime Minister Trudeau noted however that Canada would seek to avoid some of its past mistakes as it responds to a request from Haiti’s Prime Minister Henry for a foreign military intervention.

Trudeau said Canada hasn’t closed the door on being part

of a military intervention, or even leading one, adding “we haven’t taken anything off the table, but with 30 years of experience in Haiti, we know very well that there are enormous challenges when it comes to any intervention.

Meanwhile, Canada has announced sanctions against two former government ministers who were forced to resign from the government in November.

“Canada has reason to believe these individuals are using their status as high-profile elites in Haiti to protect and enable the illegal activities of armed criminal gangs, including through money laundering and other acts of corruption,” according to a statement issued by Ottawa in respect to former justice minister Berto Dorcé and the former interior minister, Liszt Quitel.

The country has already imposed sanctions against Joseph Lambert, Youri Latortue, Jimmy Chérisier, Gary Bodeau, Rony Célestin, Hervé Fourcand, Michel Martelly, Jean Henry Céant, Laurent Lamothe, Gilbert Bigio, Reynol Deeb and Sherif Abdallah.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



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Former Jamaican Ambassador Collapses And Dies



Ambassador Richard Bernal passed away suddenly on Jan. 4, 2023.

Richard L. Bernal, Jamaica’s former ambassador to the United States, reportedly collapsed and died on Wednesday evening, Jan. 4th, in Kingston, Jamaica. Reports indicate Ambassador Bernal collapsed while walking in Norbrook, St Andrew, with his wife.

Ambassador Bernal was a Jamaican economist and diplomat who served as the Jamaican Ambassador to the United States from May 1991 to August 2001, simultaneously holding the post of Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the Organization of American States.

In March 2016, Bernal took up the post of Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs at the University of the West Indies (UWI) and in 2018, he was made a Professor of Practice (PoP) in international economic policy at The UWI.

He was also a member of the Board of Directors at Laspau, Harvard University and served as Director-General of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (RNM) for eight years where he was responsible for trade

negotiations for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Cuba and the Dominican Republic.

As Principal Negotiator for the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM), Bernal participated in the negotiation of the CARIFORUM-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement and also served as CARICOM’s lead negotiator and spokesperson in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations. Between 2008 and 2016, Bernal served as a Member of the Board of the Inter-American Development Bank. In 2015, he served as a member of the World Bank’s External Advisory Panel for Diversity and Inclusion.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

Sam Bankman-Fried Trial Date Set For October Following Not-Guilty Plea

Nearly two weeks after he agreed to be extradited from The Caribbean island of The Bahamas and was released by a Manhattan judge on a \$250 million bond, attorneys for Sam Bankman-Fried, the disgraced cryptocurrency executive, entered a non-guilty plea in a New York Court on January 4, 2023.

Bankman-Fried, 30, who was ordered to stay with his parents in Palo Alto, Calif., pleaded not guilty to charges that he engaged in widespread fraud and other crimes in Federal District Court.

Judge Lewis A. Kaplan of Federal District Court, set a tentative trial date of Oct. 2. Bankman-Fried now faces a trial on charges that his fraud led to the collapse of FTX, the cryptocurrency exchange he founded, and billions of dollars in customer losses.

He is charged with two counts of wire fraud conspiracy, two counts of wire fraud, and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, each



Cryptocurrency entrepreneur Sam Bankman-Fried, second from right, at Manhattan federal court on Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023, in New York. (AP Photo/Craig Ruttle image)

of which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years. He is also charged with conspiracy to commit commodities fraud, conspiracy to commit securities fraud, and conspiracy to defraud the United States and commit campaign finance violations, each of which carries a maximum sentence of five years.

Bankman-Fried did not

speak at the hearing, and the not-guilty plea was entered on his behalf by one of his lawyers, Mark Cohen. Throughout the court session, which lasted about half an hour, Bankman-Fried, wearing a tie and jacket, sat quietly between his two lawyers, occasionally leaning over to consult with one of them.

Bankman-Fried was

arrested on Dec. 12 at his luxury apartment in The Bahamas, where FTX was based until its bankruptcy in November. After Mr. Bankman-Fried was extradited the following week to the United States, he appeared in court on Dec. 22, where he was granted bail under highly restrictive conditions.

As alleged in the indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court and court filings late last month, "Samuel Bankman-Fried was the founder and chief executive officer of FTX, an international cryptocurrency exchange. Since 2019, the defendant and his co-conspirators perpetrated a scheme to defraud customers of FTX by misappropriating billions of dollars of those customers' funds.

"As alleged, the defendant used billions of dollars of FTX customer funds for his personal use, to make investments and millions of dollars of political contributions to federal political candidates and committees, and to repay billions of dollars

in loans owed by Alameda Research, a cryptocurrency hedge fund also founded by the defendant. Bankman-Fried also allegedly defrauded lenders to Alameda Research and equity investors in FTX by concealing his misuse of customer deposits in financial information that was provided to them.

"Samuel Bankman-Fried and his co-conspirators made millions of dollars in political contributions funded by Alameda Research to federal political candidates and committees in advance of the 2022 election. To conceal the fact that those contributions were paid for using funds from a corporation and to evade contribution limits and reporting requirements, Bankman-Fried caused contributions to be reported in the names of co-conspirators rather than in the name of the true source of the funds."

- NewsAmericasNow.com




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USVI Governor Fires AG On Heels Of JPMorgan Chase Lawsuit



Little St James, the private island Jeffrey Epstein bought in 1998 and allegedly used for many of his sexual crimes

The governor of the Caribbean US territory of the Virgin Islands has fired the island's attorney general days after she slapped a lawsuit on JP Morgan Chase.

USVI Governor Albert Bryan, Jr., said he has "relieved Denise George of her duties as attorney general" on Dec. 30th without offering further details.

Bryan's spokesman told the DailyMail.com that the JPMorgan suit was not the reason for George's dismissal but did not clarify the details of her firing.

George had filed a lawsuit in New York federal court, accusing JPMorgan Chase of 'turning a

blind eye' to late convict, Jeffrey Epstein's prolific sex crimes. In the lawsuit, she accused the bank of "knowingly providing and pulling the levers through which [Epstein's] recruiters and victims were paid."

George had served as the territory's attorney general for four years and reportedly did not warn Bryan of her intent to file the lawsuit. She had been aggressive in seeking financial damages related to Epstein's crimes.

In November, George reached a settlement of more than \$105 million in a sex trafficking case against the estate

of Epstein, who owned a private island in the territory where he abused underage girls.

Assistant Attorney General Carol Thomas-Jacobs will now serve as acting attorney general.

The lawsuit against JP Morgan sought unspecified damages for violating sex-trafficking, bank-secrecy and consumer laws. It claimed that the bank concealed "wire and cash transactions that raised suspicion of a criminal enterprise whose currency was the sexual servitude" of women and girls.

JPMorgan has so far declined to comment.

EPSTEIN

Epstein was found dead in a New York jail cell in 2019 where he was being held without bail after his arrest on sex-trafficking charges. He was facing trial in Manhattan on federal crimes, having worked out a plea deal in Florida years earlier on charges of sex offences.

His former girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell, was convicted of similar charges

in December 2021. Maxwell, daughter of the British press baron Robert Maxwell, was found guilty of sex trafficking and related charges for luring girls as young as 14 into Epstein's abusive orbit. During her trial, a JPMorgan banker testified that Epstein wired her \$31m (£25m), and prosecutors suggested this was Maxwell's payment for procuring young girls for Epstein and friends.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



UN Refugee Agency, Congressional Black Caucus Voice Concern About US Plans To Limit Migrants

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the United States Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) have both expressed deep concern about plans by the Biden administration in the United States to limit migrants from the Caribbean and Latin America.

The administration recently announced that it was limiting migrants from Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Haiti who enter the country to 30,000 each month under humanitarian parole, while expelling those who attempt to cross the southwestern border.

UNHCR decried Biden's move "not in line with refugee law standards." UNHCR spokesperson Boris Cheshirkov told journalists in Geneva that while the UN agency welcomed the expanded safe and regular pathways for entry to the US for some, the new measures "must not preclude people forced to flee from exercising their fundamental human right to seek safety."

In response to the announcement, the new CBC Chair Steven Horsford, whose mother hails from Trinidad and Tobago, noted that "America is a nation of immigrants," adding that "access to asylum is, in many instances, a lifesaving right."

"While the new parole program seeks to fast-track the processing of asylum cases, the reality is that the administration's actions have the potential to threaten migrants' safety and

humanity," said Horsford, who along with Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, were elected in early December to the top CBC positions.

Horsford, who represents Nevada's 4th Congressional District, was elected chair, and Clarke, who represents New York's 9th Congressional District, was elected first vice chair.

Following the Biden administration's announcement, Horsford said members of the CBC, who collectively represent more than 18 million Black Americans, including significant immigrant populations, met with DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for "an open and honest dialogue" in which they expressed members' concerns, "particularly regarding Haitian migrants."

"Members expressed their constituents' lived experiences with migration and unease about the continuation of Title 42, while reiterating the urgency of providing fair and equitable access to asylum and other methods of migration," Horsford said.

The New York Immigration



Migrants queue near the border fence, after crossing the Rio Bravo river, to request asylum in El Paso, Texas, U.S., as seen from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico January 5, 2023. (REUTERS/Jose Luis Gonzalez)

Coalition, (NYIC), an umbrella policy and advocacy organization that represents over 200 immigrant and refugee rights groups throughout New York State, also strongly denounced plans by the Biden administration to limit migrants as did Jeremy Robbins, Executive Director, American Immigration Council. He noted that the administration is creating "a harsh, Trump-style crackdown on asylum seekers, many of whom are fleeing from regimes globally recognized as oppressive." US President Joe Biden has announced his "intention" to visit the US-Mexico border, as criticism for the Democrat president's handling of the immigration crisis grows.

- Rewritten from CMC & NewsAmericasNow.com



Former Jamaican Ambassador Collapses And Dies

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Prior to his diplomatic career, Bernal taught economics at UWI for seven years, served as CEO of a commercial bank, and worked as an economic advisor to the government of Jamaica.

Bernal studied at the University of the West Indies, The New School for Social Research (NSSR) in New York and School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. His degrees included a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), a Master of Arts (M.A.), a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and a Master of International Public Policy (M.I.P.P.).

His writings and research focused a lot on China and its influence in the Caribbean. Bernal published five books and over 100 articles on topics related to international economics and trade. His books were 'Globalisation, Trade and Economic Development. A Study of the CARIFORM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement,' 'The Influence of Small States on Superpowers: Jamaica and US Foreign Policy,' 'Dragon in the Caribbean: China's Global Re-Dimensioning - Challenges and Opportunities for the Caribbean,' 'Medical Tourism in Jamaica - The Potential of Jamaica (with

Henry Lowe);' and 'Corporate versus National Interest in US Trade Policy: Chiquita and Caribbean Bananas.'

At the time of his passing, Ambassador Bernal, former Ambassador of Jamaica to the United States was also Senior Associate for the Americas Program at the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Tributes flooded social media following news of Bernal's sudden death.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Antigua & Barbuda Voters Go To The Poll On Jan. 18th



Will voters in Antigua & Barbuda give incumbent Prime Minister Gaston Browne another term or choose change?

Voters in Antigua & Barbuda will go to the poll to elect a new government on Jan. 18th.

Incumbent Prime Minister

Gaston Browne and the ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party, (ABLP) will face off against the UPP (the United Progressive Party) and the Barbuda People's Movement, (BPM).

General elections were last held there on March 21, 2018, with Browne's ABLP winning 15 of the 17 seats. The main opposition United Progressive Party (UPP) and the Barbuda People's Movement (BPM) won the other two seats.

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Immigrants Will Likely Have To Shell Out More In Processing Fees

Immigrants seeking adjustment of status and other immigration services from The U.S.

Citizenship and Immigration Services, (USCIS), will likely shell out more in fees this year.

USCIS today announced the proposed fee raises. It includes a more than 30% increase for several family-based petitions, a 101% increase for removal of condition applications, and separate fees for the optional work and travel permit forms, which have long been free to file as part of the green card application.

Under the new fee structure, the costs for applying to turn a temporary visa into permanent residency — also known as a green card — would increase. Individuals who seek to adjust their status alone would pay an application fee of \$1,540, up from \$1,225, and those wanting to apply to travel and work while they wait would pay \$2,820. Currently, immigrants only pay one lump fee. The administration is trying to return to previous policy which allowed people to pay for benefits they sought, such as traveling or working while waiting for permanent residency.

New measures include a proposal to incorporate



biometrics costs into the main benefit fee and remove the separate biometric services fee; establish separate fees for each nonimmigrant classification covered by Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Workers; change the premium processing timeframe from 15 calendar days to 15 business days; and institute lower fees for certain forms filed online.

People who apply for EB-5 visas, which are available to those who invest large sums of money in the U.S., would face massive price jumps as well. Application fees for these visas would jump from \$3,675 to \$11,160, an increase the agency believes is necessary to pay for the extra time it takes to process them.

The proposed rule would not change fee waiver eligibility requirements. The projected revenues resulting from the proposed rule would allow USCIS to increase the number

of adjudicators processing applications, implement technology improvements, and increase support provided to individuals seeking information and assistance from USCIS.

USCIS says fee increases are needed “to more fully recover its operating costs, reestablish and maintain timely case processing, and prevent the accumulation of future case backlogs.”

USCIS receives approximately 96 percent of its funding from filing fees, not from congressional appropriations. If finalized, the proposed rule would decrease or minimally increase fees for more than one million low-income filers each year.

The 60-day public comment period starts following publication of the NPRM in the Federal Register. Fees will not change until the final rule goes into effect, after the public has had the opportunity to comment and USCIS finalizes the fee schedule in response to such comments. USCIS will host a public engagement session on the proposed fee rule on January 11, 2023.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Caribbean Immigrant Judge Is New Chief Justice Of Ontario

Caribbean immigrant judge of the Court of Appeal for Ontario, Michael H. Tulloch, is the new Chief Justice of Ontario and President of the Court of Appeal for Ontario.

The Jamaican national replaces George R. Strathy, who retired on August 31, 2022.

“The Honourable Michael H. Tulloch is a highly respected member of Ontario and Canada’s legal community. As he takes on his new role as Chief Justice of Ontario and President of the Court of Appeal for Ontario, I wish him continued success. I know he brings a wealth of experience to the position and will continue to serve Ontarians well,” Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said.

Tulloch was appointed by the Governor General on the advice of Cabinet and the recommendation of the Prime Minister. As Chief Justice, he will be responsible for the leadership and administration of the courts and also serves as a member of the Canadian Judicial Council which works to improve the quality of judicial services in the superior courts of Canada.

Judge Tulloch was appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Justice for Ontario in 2003. He was elevated to the Court of Appeal for Ontario in 2012, becoming the first Black Canadian to sit on any appellate court in Canada.

Prior to his appointment to the



Caribbean immigrant Chief Justice of Ontario, Michael H. Tulloch. (CMC image)

bench, he had served as an assistant Crown Attorney in Peel and Toronto from 1991 to 1995 before entering private practice, where he specialized in criminal law.

In 2016, Chief Justice Tulloch was appointed by the Ontario government to conduct important reviews which resulted in two extensive reports: the Report of the Independent Police Oversight Review (2017) and the Report of the Independent Street Checks Review (2018).

Judge Tulloch also served on the Government Response Team for the Commission on Systemic Racism while working as a Crown Attorney and was chair of a review panel on Osgoode Hall Law School’s admissions policy in 2006.

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20 Years Nurturing Greatness

Daughter Of Haitian Immigrants Now First Black President Of Harvard

The daughter of immigrants from Haiti has made history as the first black, and Caribbean American president of Harvard University as Haiti marked its 220th independence anniversary on January 1, 2023.

“With the strength of this extraordinary institution behind us, we enter a moment of possibility, one that calls for deeper collaboration across the University, across all of our remarkable Schools,” President Claudine Gay commented on her election. “There is an urgency for Harvard to be engaged with the world and to bring bold, brave, pioneering thinking to our greatest challenges.”

Gay will become the 30th president of Harvard University on July 1st. Her appointment was greeted by joyous hoots and a thundering ovation, Claudine Gay, Edgerley Family Dean of Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences, where she spoke before an ebullient crowd Thursday afternoon at Smith Campus Center for the first time as the University’s 30th president-elect.

Gay spoke of her parents, who immigrated to the U.S. from Haiti. “They came to the U.S. with very little and put themselves through college while raising our family,” she said. “My mom became a registered nurse and my dad a civil engineer, and it was the City

College of New York that made those careers possible. ... My parents believed that education opens every door.”

Gay will be the first person of color, first Haitian American, first black, and only the second woman to lead Harvard in its 386-year history. Her selection comes after current President Larry Bacow announced in June that he would step down at the close of 2022-2023 academic year after five years as president.

Adopting recommendations from the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery report will create “an opportunity for reckoning and repair” and give the University a chance to build deep connections to the scholarly communities at historically Black colleges and universities and other “minority-serving institutions,” she added.

Gay received her bachelor’s degree in 1992 from Stanford, where she majored in economics and was awarded the Anna Laura Myers Prize for best undergraduate thesis. In 1998, she received her Ph.D. in government from Harvard, where she won the Toppan Prize for best dissertation in political science. A quantitative social scientist with expertise in political behavior, Gay served as an assistant professor and then tenured associate professor at Stanford before being recruited to Harvard in 2006 as a professor



Claudine Gay, the Haitian American Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, will become Harvard University’s first Black, first Haitian American and first President of Color. (Brian Snyder/Reuters image)

of government. She was also appointed a professor of African and African American Studies in 2007. She was named the Wilbur A. Cowett Professor of Government in 2015, when she also became dean of social science at FAS.

Since 2018, Gay has served as the Edgerley Family Dean of Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), the University’s largest and most academically diverse faculty, spanning the biological and physical sciences and engineering, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts. As dean, she has guided efforts to expand student access and opportunity, spur excellence and innovation in teaching and research, enhance aspects of

academic culture, and bring new emphasis and energy to areas such as quantum science and engineering; climate change; ethnicity, indigeneity, and migration; and the humanities.

She has successfully led FAS through the COVID pandemic, consistently and effectively prioritizing the dual goals of safeguarding community health and sustaining academic continuity and progress. The disruptive effects of the crisis notwithstanding, she has also launched and led an ambitious, inclusive, and faculty-driven strategic planning process, intended to take a fresh look at fundamental aspects of academic structures, resources, and operations in FAS and to

advance academic excellence in the years ahead.

“Claudine is a remarkable leader who is profoundly devoted to sustaining and enhancing Harvard’s academic excellence, to championing both the value and the values of higher education and research, to expanding opportunity, and to strengthening Harvard as a fount of ideas and a force for good in the world,” commented Penny Pritzker, chair of the presidential search committee.

Gay is married to Dr. Christopher Afendulis, an expert in health care policy. They have a son. Founded in 1636, Harvard is based in Cambridge and Boston. A report found that “over nearly 150 years, from the university’s founding in 1636 until the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court found slavery unlawful in 1783, Harvard presidents and other leaders, as well as its faculty and staff, enslaved more than 70 individuals, some of whom labored on campus.”

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Healing Haiti In The Face Of An Increase In Sexual Violence

Claudine, not her real name, looks across a sweeping valley high above the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince. The lushness of the tropical vegetation, the cool fresh air and the low-hanging clouds are in stark contrast to the dusty, hot and suffocating backstreets of Petionville, lower down the valley, where four years ago she was the victim of sexual abuse which changed her life.

“At the time, I was 16 years old and living with my cousin and her husband,” she said. “I looked after their children, like they were my own.” Claudine should have been at school but after her mother and grandmother died had no other option but to become a domestic worker in her cousin’s house. It was there that she was sexually assaulted by her cousin’s husband.

“I didn’t know what to do but a friend did report the incident to the police, but nothing was done to find the man.”

A year after her daughter was born, Claudine was taken to a refuge for abused minors, many of whom like her were caring for new borns. The refuge, where she has lived now for three years, is run by Rapha House, an organization which is committed to ending the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.

Nahomy Augustin is a project coordinator for the international NGO in Haiti. “Many of the young women here are the victims of

extreme poverty and insecurity, to the extent that the lack of basic services and opportunities that they have access to means that they become vulnerable to abuse,” she said.

The refuge, which is located in an intentionally inconspicuous building, in a tranquil neighbourhood above Port-au-Prince, supports the young women in the recovery from their traumatic experiences. “We take a holistic approach,” said Nahomy Augustin, “and provide a range of services, including medical and psychological care, accommodation and legal advice as well as family mediation.”

The aim is to help each young woman to return to her family within a year as long as it is safe, but many like Claudine stay longer. The refuge can currently accommodate 24 young women as well as their babies, but a new centre is being built which can provide care to up to 80 people.

Geraldine Alferis is a gender-based violence expert at UNICEF. “Haiti, and especially the capital Port-au-Prince, is experiencing a surge in gang violence. Thousands



Rose Delphe cries as people displaced by gang war violence in Cite Soleil walk in Delmas after leaving Hugo Chaves square in Port-au-Prince, Haiti last November. (Photo by REUTERS/Ralph Tedy Erol)

of girls and women are being displaced, which makes them very vulnerable to abuse,” she said.

In July, the United Nations said that rival gangs in the Cite Soleil neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince were adopting the “systematic use of rape against women and girls as a weapon of war.”

“Gang rape is a particularly tragic occurrence and so we work to ensure that the survivors get the help they need,” said Geraldine Alferis.

The Spotlight Initiative in Haiti focuses on ending domestic violence, rape, incest, sexual harassment, physical and psychological violence, as well as other restrictions on the freedoms and rights of women and girls. It also aims to provide holistic care to women and girls who are

survivors of violence.

On a visit to the refuge, the UN Resident Coordinator in Haiti, Ulrika Richardson, said “it was chilling to hear the stories of these young women and girls,” adding that “I also sensed hope and recognized the importance of the services to which they have access.”

“I am proud of the Spotlight Initiative and the much-needed assistance it is providing along with our local partners, but what I heard on this visit is a stark reminder of the urgency to tackle the root causes of sexual violence.”

At the refuge above Port-au-Prince, the survivors like Claudine are able to study, taking school classes that many missed out on when they were younger. They can also take practical classes to learn skills like sewing or soap-making, which can enable them to make a small amount of money, a first important step towards building their independence.

“Going to school is very important,” said Claudine. “If you are working for a family like I did, it is not enough just to receive food and have a bed. You must be given the opportunity to study and make a life for yourself.”

- CMC/Spotlight Initiative/UN



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What Will The New Year Bring For US Immigration?

If the dropping off of another 100 poor migrants by Texas officials in front of the home of Vice President Kamala Harris on a freezing Christmas Eve is any indication of what's to come, then 2023 is going to be a horrible year for immigrants and US immigration.

Here's what my crystal ball predicts:

1: The chaotic situation at the Southern Border will only get worse in 2023 even though the Supreme Court agreed to keep Title 42. The numbers of immigrants entering without legal process will be dramatically higher than the recorded 204,155, crossing over from Mexico in November 2022 alone.

Thousands more migrants, fleeing a host of issues including climate change, food insecurity, crime, violence, and poverty and

desperate to enter the US, will continue to risk their lives crossing the southern border illegally to find a way in. This will further overwhelm border towns like El Paso and San Antonio and making it more dire in cities far away from the border, including Washington, D.C., New York, and Chicago.

Throwing money at the situation and setting up tent cities in the middle of winter is not the solution. What is needed is an urgent changing of how asylum seekers apply for asylum to enter the US, but the Republican



FELICIA J. PERSAUD

congress will be too busy playing the game of retribution and blame to bother about solutions.

2: Texas governor Greg Abbott will undoubtedly keep up his insane busing of more migrants crossing the southern border to Democratically run cities. This will further crush those cities resources and create more friction between the cities and Washington, D.C. as well as immigrant rights groups. Florida's governor, Ron DeSantis, gearing up for 2024, will likely add to the fire, much like he did with the Cape Cod flight. No communication and no solutions will be the order of the day.

3: With Republicans set to take over the U.S. Congress, the political football being played with immigrants' lives is going to reach epic proportions. Both parties will continue to kick the ball down the road, without offering any real solutions, including for DREAMERS in the U.S. or the labor crisis, which will continue to keep inflation high. Despite a labor shortage blamed on a slowdown in immigration, especially for agricultural workers, Republicans will have zero interest in any immigration reform, especially one pushed by the Biden administration.

4: The Biden administration, and especially immigration czar and US Vice President Kamala Harris, will continue the lack luster attention to the crisis at the US' southern border and the issue of immigration reform, will also only get worse in 2023. President Joe Biden will make his first trip to Mexico as president in January as thousands gather at the Mexican border, living in tents in the winter. But Biden is sure to stay away from visiting the border as his administration has few solutions on handling the crush of people seeking to enter America. He may drop his hope for reform into the State of the Union, basing the need for it on lowering inflation to please the progressive base – all the while knowing fully well that the House Republicans will do nothing. But Biden will make this move so he can later tell his base as we head into the silly season in 2024 that he tried.

5: The backlog in immigration processing, including for asylum seekers, will continue in 2023, even as the U.S. CIS tries hard to play catch up.

6: Millions of 'Dreamers,' or DACA recipients, will continue to hang on by a thread and live in limbo as the fight to stay in the US

will now rest on the U.S. Supreme Court. Many Dreamers will likely move out of the US and seek to build lives elsewhere, leading to a higher labour shortage.

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



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Single Men Joy Or Women Misery



Let's face it, there is a big difference between a bachelor and a spinster. True, they both have one thing in common, and that's the single life, but whereas the bachelor has no wife, the spinster only has strife.

But who says that the life of a bachelor is all peaches and cream, a bed of roses, let the good times roll, while the spinster has nothing but hope and unfulfilled dreams to occupy her empty life?

Most bachelors boast about what a good time they're having, which is often far from the truth. If they were having such a great time, then why do they get married eventually?

At least the spinster will admit to a life of abject loneliness, emptiness, and lack of emotional fulfillment as she wishes and hopes for an end to her despair.

The bachelor life seems most appealing at the outset. After all, the man can come and go as he pleases, spend as much time as he wants, wherever and whenever he so desires, and answers to no one.

The bachelor can pick choose and refuse from the bevy of beautiful women who are at his beck and call, and none of them will ever give him any backchat. It all seems so idyllic, so perfect, straight out of a James Bond movie where Bond just tours the world and plays the female field. Shaken not stirred, Bond has a license to thrill.



TONY ROBINSON

I guess if you're young, good looking and a man of means, then the bachelor life must seem to be a good prospect. But that is not always the case, as many bachelors, single men, are

just embracing the illusory fantasy of the playboy, but actually live a life of loneliness.

Loneliness is not to be trifled with, not to be taken lightly. It is foisted upon you like a dark cloud that descends and envelopes the soul of the afflicted. Some women get involved with men just to avoid being lonely. "I just can't survive being alone, I will take anybody,"

So, the bachelor seeks a companion, but he is conflicted, for he wants company, yes, but only on his terms, nothing permanent. He literally wants to eat his cake and have it too without having to wash the dishes afterwards.

He therefore seeks a partner for his emotional and physical gratification, but after he's satisfied, he wants her out of his space. And that's why bachelors

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

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Pele: Long Live The King!

BY ALBERT BALDEO

Pele, born Edson Arantes do Nascimento, is to football (soccer), as Muhammad Ali is to boxing, Mario Andretti to motor sports, Tom Brady to American Football, Neil Armstrong to space, Patton to WW2, Albert Einstein to physics, Michael Jordan to basketball, Gary Sobers to cricket, Tiger Woods to golf, Usain Bolt to sprinting, Serena Williams to lawn tennis, and other heroes. Or what Thomas Edison is to science, the icon he was named after. These are all worthy icons, who transcend human achievement and life, each in his own domain.

Who is an icon? An "icon" is much more known than a celebrity, and is accorded to someone who leaves an indelible mark on media's history, commanding strong significance, as well as achievement and reverence. They are persons who are unusually well known, and who people look up to, icons who, like Michel Platini, one of the greatest footballers of all time, and a player who would know, said, that "to play like Pele is to play like God." Or as Pele settled this issue as to who was a greater soccer player, with another worthy contender, Diego Maradona, "But I score with right, left and head. And you

not."

One of the greatest players of all time and accorded "the greatest" by FIFA, Pele was in the highest tier of the successful and popular sports figures of the 20th century. He is the only player to win three FIFA World Cups: 1958, 1962 and 1970.

In 1999, he was named Athlete of the Century by the International Olympic Committee and was included in the Time list of the 100 most important people of the 20th century. In 2000, he was voted World Player of the Century by the International Federation of Football History & Statistics (IFFHS) and was one of the two joint winners of the FIFA Player of the Century. His 1,279 goals in 1,363 games, which includes friendlies, is recognized as a Guinness World Record. Fittingly, Pele has a street named after him—Rua Edson Arantes do Nascimento in the city of Três Corações in Minas Gerais state in Brazil, where he was born in 1940. A statue of him is also prominently placed in a plaza near the city's downtown. "The



Pele

King of Football" (O Rei do Futebol), "The King Pelé" (O Rei Pelé) or simply "The King" (O Rei) is how he is known by. In 2014, the city of Santos inaugurated the Museu Pelé, or Pelé Museum, a display of 2,400 pieces collection of priceless Pele memorabilia, which cost approximately \$22 million and was so large it had to be housed in a 19th-century mansion.

Among his contemporaries, Dutch star Johan Cruyff, who played against him, stated, "Pele was the only footballer who surpassed the boundaries of logic." Carlos Alberto Torres

Brazil's 1970 World Cup-winning captain, reiterated, "His great secret was improvisation. Those things he did were in one moment. He had an extraordinary perception of the game," while a mesmerized Tostão, his strike partner at the 1970 World Cup echoed, "Pelé was the greatest- he was simply flawless. And off the pitch he is always smiling and upbeat. You never see him bad-tempered. He loves being Pele."

His Brazilian teammate Clodoaldo confirmed the adulation he witnessed, "In some countries they wanted to touch him, in some they wanted to kiss him. In others they even kissed the ground he walked on." Franz Beckenbauer, West Germany's 1974 World Cup-winning captain, and a great player in his own right, said, "Pele is the greatest player of all time. He reigned supreme for 20 years. There's no one to compare with him."

Pele's greatness and uniqueness lay in the fact that he was the world's first black sports icon and weaved an aura of mystique and bewilderment. After the semifinal against France in 1958, in which a teenage 17-year-old Pele scored a hat trick in a 5-2 Brazil win,

the French goalkeeper, reeling from Pele's glorious skills, lamented, "I would rather play against 10 Germans than one Brazilian (Pele)."

After all, who else but Pele could have stopped a Civil War in Nigeria for two days in 1969, so both fighting sides could watch him play, at an exhibition match? These sagas of immortality, coupled with his humble beginnings from being born in a slum, and reared on dirt fields in Brazil, playing barefoot with a soccer ball made of rags, accredits him Biblical relevance to the King and Savior of the World who was similarly born in humble beginnings, a manger.

Pele's early footballs were made of stuffing a sock with old newspapers held together with strings. Even grapefruits were used. Pele, the oldest of two children, supplemented his parents' inadequate income by working in tea shops, and cleaning shoes at the local train station, until 1956. When his youth coach took him to Santos for a tryout at age 15, his world, and soccer, changed dramatically, so much so, that, at his death, NASA marked "the passing of the legendary Pele, known to many as the king of the "beautiful game." This image of a spiral galaxy in the constellation Sculptor shows the colors of Brazil."

His greatness lay to a large extent to his adeptness at dribbling the ball as if it was attached by an invisible string to his boots, explosively striking the ball with either foot, his speed and the uncanny ability to turn, accelerate and decelerate on a dime, in addition to anticipating his opponents' movements on the field moves ahead, like a chess grandmaster. Little wonder he averaged almost a goal per game throughout his career.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

Single Men Joy Or Women Misery

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9)

who can afford it have women here, there, everywhere, with no strings attached as they build up a reputation of being a lady's man, a Lothario, a man about town.

Remember what I said, being a bachelor is for the young and well-off man, for one day the party will be over, and there will be no bevy of beauties to come and share his life, recognize his illness, dispense his medication. Maybe that's why there are no old bachelors, they all get married eventually.

The spinsters though, now that's another story. Even the word spinster has a negative connotation, a sad image, tinged with pity and is not someone who is admired. Spinster: 'an unmarried woman, typically an older woman beyond the usual

age for marriage.'

It's like a curse, a yoke that bears down on a woman's shoulders that marks her for eternity. "It's a woman's business to get married as soon as possible, and a man to keep unmarried as long as he can." George Bernard Shaw.

Spinsters don't have much time to play with and are in reality in a race against the clock. And yet it's different for the bachelor who has no statute of limitations. "He's one of the most eligible bachelors around." Are there no eligible spinsters? So, Single Men Joy or Women Misery? You choose.

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



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Jamaican Senator Remembers Riots Following Assassination Of Dr. King Ahead Of MLK Day

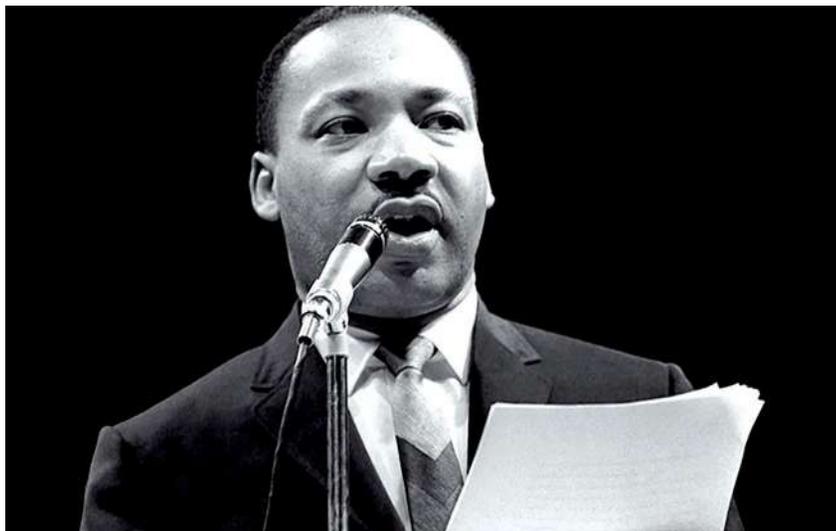
BY HOWARD CAMPBELL
EDITED BY FELICIA J. PERSAUD

A Jamaican national who currently serves in the island's senate and is one of the region's foremost attorneys, is among those reminiscing on the riots he remembers firsthand in the 1960s in America, following the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As another Martin Luther King Jr. Day rolls around on Jan. 17th, K.D. Knight, who attended Howard University in the 1960s and was Jamaica's Minister of National Security and Foreign Affairs minister during the 1990s, recently reflected on the turbulent times in D.C., following Dr. King's assassination, at his law office in Kingston, Jamaica with *Caribbean Today*.

Knight went to Howard University in September 1964 on the recommendation of high school friends who attended the university. Its Caribbean connections included Eric Williams, a former lecturer who became first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, and black power firebrand, Stokely Carmichael, another Trinidadian.

Knight admits he had "very little" knowledge



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is remembered on MLK Day on Jan. 17th, every year - a day of service and a federal holiday in the U.S.



K.D. Knight, a Jamaican senator, reminisced on the riots of 1968 following Dr. King's assassination.

about Dr. King's work prior to entering Howard as his

Pele: Long Live The King!

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10)

Pele was a unique athlete. Medical tests revealed that his heart used to beat 56 to 58 times a minute, rather than the average 90 to 95 times a minute. His aerobic capacity was such that he could repeat a 'great effort within 45 to 60 seconds' and his peripheral vision was 30 per cent greater than an average athlete.

In the early 1970s, medical experts studied Pele's body structure-the parallel feet, and the strong bones in his heels which helped his speed and acted as shock absorbers after a jump or a kick. For weeks, the New York Times added, they examined him, attached wires to his head for readings and measured his muscles before declaring: "Whatever this man might have decided to do in any physical or mental endeavor, he would have been a genius."

Brazilian soccer star Neymar said, "Pele changed everything. He turned football into art, into entertainment. He gave a voice to the poor, to black people and especially. Gave visibility to Brazil. Football and Brazil have raised their status thanks to the King! He is gone, but his magic will remain. Pele is ETERNAL!!"

Another great, Cristiano

Ronaldo, said, "A mere 'goodbye' to the eternal King Pele will never be enough to express the pain that currently embraces the entire world of football. An inspiration for so many millions, a reference from yesterday, today, forever. The affection he always showed for me was reciprocal in every moment we shared, even from a distance. He will never be forgotten, and his memory will last forever in each of us football lovers. Rest in peace, King Pele. His legacy transcends generations. And that's how he will live on. Today and always, we will celebrate you."

On 1 June, 2022, Pelé published an open letter to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin on his Instagram account, in which he made a public plea to stop the "evil" and "unjustified" 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, an act that raises his profile even higher.

Pele sparked the growth of interest and participation in soccer in the United States by playing for the New York Cosmos in the North American Soccer League late in his career and must be credited for the popularity and development of the sport in the USA. His legacy extends to the entire world, who

grasp of racial issues was limited to Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican Pan African who had been a pillar of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s.

But Knight says because he drove a cab to make extra money, he saw firsthand the racial disparity in 'DC,' particularly when it came to housing. In terms of the Caribbean student population, the attitude towards Civil Rights, however, said Knight, was ambiguous.

"We were itinerants, we didn't go to the United States with the intention of familiarizing. We would go, understand, empathize and leave," he stated.

But Knight said as he attended Howard, he became

treasure human endeavor and excellence in whatever form.

These stars will fade away into legend and myth, but never die. And someday people will speak of these humans and their accomplishments and be met with skepticism for who would believe that such men and women really existed. RIP, and Thank You for the memories, King Pele. Rest assured that, because you will never be forgotten, your immortality will reign supreme in your field, and you are never really gone.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Hon. Albert Baldeo is the District Leader of Richmond Hill, NY, USA, President of the Richmond Hill Democratic Club, Asian American Labor Alliance, Chairman of the Liberty Justice Center and Baldeo Foundation, a community organization dedicated to the fight for community improvement, justice, equal rights, public safety, dignity and inclusion in the decision-making process. He can be reached at (718) 529-2300.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



aware of Dr. King's speeches and later, after his assassination on April 4, 1968, he says he feared the worst. Still, he raced toward the capital of Washington, D.C., where he came face to face with the chaos and fear as riots spread there.

Given the charismatic Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s international profile, the Jamaican says he knew things were about to get ugly. "It was terribly frightening! Terribly frightening!

Shortly thereafter, the place exploded," Knight recalled. "People were getting cut and shot and tear gassed. It was terrifying!"

As president of the Caribbean Association, Knight says he addressed students at a campus rally and was followed by a passionate Stokely Carmichael.

"When Stokely came up on the platform, he took out a 38 (handgun) from his pocket and said, 'If you don't have one of these, keep off the streets tonight!'" was Knight's recollection.

One year later, K. D. Knight graduated from Howard University. He left for Canada to study law, but eventually did so in the United Kingdom, and returned to Jamaica in 1972, where he began practicing.

He became a senior member of the People's National Party government, led by Prime Minister P.J. Patterson. In 2019, he returned to Washington, D.C. for an event celebrating the 50th anniversary of Howard University's Caribbean Association.

Although Carmichael graduated from Howard in Knight's freshman year, he maintained a looming presence on the campus. Knight remembers a fairly dormant student body that gradually became militant through the Civil Rights marches, the emergence of the Black Panther Party and speeches by visiting African leaders like Leopold Senghor of Senegal.

Stokely Carmichael, who changed his name to Kwame Ture, died in Guinea in 1998 at age 57.



YMCA of South Florida To Mark MLK Day

The YMCA of South Florida's 19th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Inspirational Weekend, which honors Dr. King and his legacy through activities that bring communities together in celebration and service to others, gets underway on Friday, Jan. 13th through Monday, Jan. 16th. It will include a breakfast, luncheon, Teen Town Hall and Day of Service projects throughout South Florida.

The weekend, themed, 'Stand For Something,' begins on Friday, Jan. 13th, with a breakfast in Broward County beginning at 7:30 a.m. at First Baptist Fort Lauderdale, 301 East Broward Blvd., and luncheon in Miami-Dade County beginning at 11:45 a.m. at Intercontinental Miami, 100 Chopin Plaza.

More than 1,000 business and civic community leaders are expected to attend both the MLK, Jr. Inspirational Breakfast and Luncheon to support the YMCA of South Florida's "I Have a Dream" Youth Scholarship Fund. The Y offers a variety of youth programs which include preschool, after school, employment opportunities, teen groups and college tours and readiness.

During the breakfast and luncheon, the YMCA of South Florida will present two awards

in each county. The Dave W. Cash Youth Leadership Award is presented annually to a student in Broward and in Miami-Dade County that has embodied the ideals of Dr. King in advocating for social change in the community. Both recipients are awarded a \$2,000 college scholarship supporting their continued education.

The Spirit of Community Award recognizes a community advocate in both Broward and Miami-Dade County who exemplifies the social activism, advocacy, nonviolence, civic engagement and diversity ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Among the past winners are the Children's Trust, Trail Blazers of Broward County, Derek T. Davis, Valencia Gunder, The Mizell Family, Honorable Darrin P. Gayles, Dr. Robert B. Hayling, Willie E. Gary, Officer Lerue Sarvis and Jason Taylor.

Tickets to the 19th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast or Luncheon are \$150 per person or \$2,500 per table. To purchase tickets and for more information, visit ymcasouthflorida.org/event/martin-luther-king-jr-inspirational-weekend-2023/.

Rewritten from communitynewspapers.com



NEWS



Guyana First Artificial Island To Become Operational This Year



The new artificial island off of Guyana's coast. (VESHII Photo via CMC)

Guyana's first artificial island, which is part of the reclaimed land that will be transformed into the estimated 44-acre mega-project to create the shore base facility, is being created in the Demerara River.

"The project managers have warned that the site remains an active construction zone and landing on the island is prohibited. The island structure, while visible, is not yet a fully stable formation. The team is therefore urging all to remain clear of the construction zone and to adhere to the previously issued notices," said the company behind the project, Vreed-en-Hoop Shore Base Inc (VESHII).

It said phase one of the project is meant to be the special purpose vehicle to serve as a SURF (Subsea Umbilicals, Riser and Flowlines) Shorebase for Esso Exploration and Production Guyana Limited (EEPGL) projects.

"The project is currently in the sand key reclamation phase. During this phase, the dredger,

M.V Galileo Galilei, will continue the process of adding reclaimed material for the creation of the artificial island on which the construction of the new terminal will be situated."

Vreed-en-Hoop Shorebase Inc. is a joint venture between NRG Holdings Inc.—a 100 percent Guyanese-owned consortium that is the majority shareholder—and Jan De Nul, an international maritime infrastructure company headquartered in Luxembourg. It said the project started the first step in June, which entailed the dredging of the access channel in the Demerara River including the deepening/widening of the existing nautical channel, berth pockets, and turning basin.

"This phase has been hailed a success by the project managers and the upgraded channel has been handed over to the Maritime Administration Department (MARAD)

VESHII is currently the largest Guyanese private sector investment in the oil and gas sector and is expected to cost over US\$300 million.

According to the project directors, the support and encouragement given by the government of Guyana have been reassuring and augur well for additional investment and the future of Guyana. The project is expected to become operational in 2023.

- CMC

Jamaica's Honorary Consul In Philadelphia Elected CCAP President

Jamaica's Honorary Consul in Philadelphia, Christopher Chaplin, has been elected President of the Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia, (CCAP).

Mr. Chaplin was elected at the CCAP meeting of consular representatives on December 14, 2022, in Philadelphia. He officially took up the post on January 1, 2023.

Mr. Chaplin succeeds Mr. Peter Longstreth, Honorary Consul of Uruguay, who served the Association with distinction. In commenting on his election to the position, Mr. Chaplin said: "Peter has been a great mentor to me over the past two years and I look forward to serving my fellow diplomats with distinction."



Jamaica's Honorary Consul in Philadelphia, Christopher Chaplin. (ICN image)

Mr. Chaplin is a career banker and has worked at financial institutions in both Jamaica and the United States. He was appointed Jamaica's Honorary Consul in Philadelphia by Jamaica's Minister of Foreign

Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator Kamina Johnson Smith in April of 2019.

The Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia (CCAP) is the oldest consular organization in the United States and its members represent 63 countries around the world. As a 501(c)(3), non-profit corporation, CCAP is governed by a four-member Executive Committee elected each year by its members and is funded by dues, contributions and sponsorships. Like any association, CCAP's fundamental responsibility is to assist its members in maximizing their individual effectiveness.

- NewsAmericasNow.com



Miramar To Host Gun Buy Back

The Miramar Police Department is ready to buy your guns.

The Miramar PD will stage another Guns for Funds buyback drive on **Saturday, January 14, 2023, from 10 a.m. -2 p.m.** at St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic Church located at 2000 South State Road 7, Miramar, FL 33022 to get more firearms off the streets.

It is 100 percent anonymous and allows for individuals to safely dispose of their guns and receive gift cards of up to \$100 for each

handgun surrendered; up to \$150 for each semi-automatic rifle or shotgun and up to \$200 for each rifle turned in.

All guns brought to the event must be unloaded and placed in the trunk of a vehicle. There is no limit to the number of guns dropped off and no identification is necessary. Free gunlocks will also be provided at the event.

"Anything we can do to remove unwanted guns that could get into the wrong hands is what

we will continually strive for" stated Commissioner Alexandra P. Davis who launched The Guns for Funds buyback program. "After overspending during the holiday, January is an opportune time for residents to turn in their unwanted guns for funds."

To learn more about the Guns for Funds buyback program, call **954-602-4000** or visit MiramarPD.org/gunsforfunds.



NEW Community Associations Registry

Miami-Dade County now requires all condominium associations, cooperative associations, and homeowners' associations (HOAs) to register annually with the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources (RER), Consumer Protection Division, by **February 1** of each year.

Associations must submit information such as the legal description of the residence governed by the association, emergency contact information, and a list of the association's officers and directors, among others.

Join one of our upcoming virtual meetings to obtain details on these requirements and instructions on how to submit your documents online.

JANUARY 12

5:30 p.m.

JANUARY 26

2:00 p.m.



REGISTER TO ATTEND



QUESTIONS?

Contact the Consumer Protection Division at CPRreg@miamidade.gov.

To obtain this information in accessible format, please call 305-372-6779

Department of **REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES** | miamidade.gov/economy



No Funeral Date Announced For Jo Mersa Marley

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

A funeral date for Joseph “Jo Mersa” Marley, the eldest child of singer/songwriter Stephen Marley and grandson of reggae legend Bob Marley, has not yet been revealed following his sudden passing on Dec. 27, 2022, at age 31.

The singer, who made his recording debut 12 years ago, was found unresponsive in a vehicle in Florida. So far, no cause of death has been disclosed but Mersa was reportedly asthmatic.

Stephen Marley has yet to publicly break his silence following the passing of his eldest son but the label he and his brothers created, Ghetto Youths International, has issued a statement thanking fans of the late reggae singer for the overwhelming love they’ve shown the Marley family over the past couple of days.

The young Marley’s death has drawn wide global reaction with major entertainment



A funeral date for Joseph “Jo Mersa” Marley, the eldest child of singer/songwriter Stephen Marley and grandson of reggae legend Bob Marley, has not yet been revealed following his sudden passing. (Photo: Instagram, @jomersamarley)

and political figures sending condolences.

“My heart is truly aching... Jo was such a solid, loyal and direct individual. An incredible and dedicated father, a friend u could always count on, and a lion who a govern him jungle,” singer

Jesse Royal wrote on Instagram.

“Cyah believe young soldier. RIP G @jomersamarley, condolences 2 #stephenmarley an(d) the entire Marley fam. All his friends an fanz,” Sean Paul posted on Instagram.

Shaggy also expressed grief

on Instagram: “So saddened by the news of the passing of this young king @jomersamarley. Sending prayers and condolences to the Marley family.”

“This is really sad news; Send strength to the Marley family at this time,” Jamaica’s Prime Minister Andrew Holness wrote on Twitter.

“I’ve always sought the ‘why?’ to things in life, but some things are bigger than my comprehension,” Kabaka Pyramid wrote. “Jo’s passing has left me in a state of dismay, so much that i can’t even imagine what Ragga and entire family is going through... My brother, your duties will continue in the higher realms, and we’ll pray that you travel swiftly and bravely to your heavenly soul group where you can peacefully watch over your earthly loved without regret and knowing somehow that all is in divine timing.”

His son’s death is another personal loss for 50-year-old Stephen Marley, an eight-time

Grammy winner. In July, Chris Meredith, his close friend and bass guitarist for over 30 years, died in South Florida.

Jo Mersa was born in Kingston, Jamaica’s capital, but like most of his siblings and cousins, was raised in South Florida. That is where his career began in 2010 with the song, ‘My Girl,’ a collaboration with his cousin, Daniel Bambaata Marley, son of his uncle Ziggy Marley.

He also shared the mic with his father on ‘Revelation Party,’ a song from ‘Revelation Pt. II: The Fruit of Life,’ Stephen Marley’s 2016 album. Mersa released two EPs — ‘Comfortable,’ in 2014 and ‘Eternal,’ which came out seven years later.

Jo Mersa was among the new generation of Marley artists. Others included his brother, Hymn, and sister, Mystic, who are also singers; and cousin, Skip, son of Stephen’s older sister Cedella.



Jamaican Dancehall Star Mr. Vegas Earns Degree In Sociology

Jamaican dancehall artist Mr. Vegas is now a college graduate as well.

Mr. Vegas, 47, who was born Clifford Smith in Kingston in 1974, recently graduated from Florida International University, (FIU), with a degree in Sociology/Anthropology and a minor in Hospitality Management. During his studies, he maintained a GPA of 3.9. He announced his achievement on Instagram with a post that included a photo of him in his FIU gown.

The dancehall star accompanied the announcement with the story of his journey, which began in 2019 when he decided to re-educate himself and obtained a General Education Diploma, a high school equivalency diploma that he received after taking the General Educational Development Test. Mr. Vegas had not graduated from high school in his youth as he dropped out of school in the ninth grade. He then attended Broward College and earned a degree in Mass Communication in 2021.

He went on to tell his



Mr. Vegas with his graduation gown.

170,000-plus followers on Instagram that “getting a taste” of college life increased his desire to do more, so he applied and was accepted to FIU. He changed his major to Sociology/Anthropology with a minor in Hospitality Management. The challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and difficult school assignments threatened his achievement, but he kept studying and eventually earned his degree with a 3.9 GPA.

- Rewritten from Jamaicans.com



Prince Harry Reveals Music Of This Caribbean Artiste Helped Him Through Family Drama



Prince Harry reportedly revealed in his tell-all book that Shenseea’s music helped him through some of his darker days while fighting to extricate himself from the monarchy.

Prince Harry is telling all in his new book ‘Spare,’ which while set to drop on January 10th publicly, has already been released in Spain in Spanish and is making global headlines for

many shocking revelations.

While an alleged physical assault, a frost bitten todger; his first sexual encounter and his claim of killing 25 Taliban fighters have all grabbed tabloid headlines, the Duke of Sussex also revealed that he is a big



Jamaican dancehall artist Shenseea.

fan on Jamaican dancehall star Shenseea.

He revealed in his tell-all

book that the Caribbean artist’s music helped him through some of his darker days while fighting to extricate himself from the monarchy.

The 38-year-old father of two claimed reportedly that he related to lyrics from Shenseea’s songs to help him deal with exiting the royal family and beginning a new life in California with his wife.

“In the times I felt alone and separated from my family, I always took time to myself to sit back and listen to Shenseea. Her lyrics resonated with me and got me through a lot,” the Duke reportedly said.

When Shenseea learned that Harry gave her a mention, she fired off a tweet. “I know Rebel is his song! That intro is it.” Harry reportedly received \$25m from Penguin for the rights to ‘Spare.’

- Rewritten from Urban Islandz



Can We Talk?

Most of us try to attract other people by the friends we keep and the way we carry ourselves. If you are going to a party or a formal function, don't you dress well? We all want to promote a favorable impression of ourselves to other people we meet and talk to. If we agree on that, then think of this. Why should it be any different for your business? If you want to project a favorable image of your company, in order to win customers, you should keep your company with good friends and...dress your company well in...

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Peter A. Webley
Publisher

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



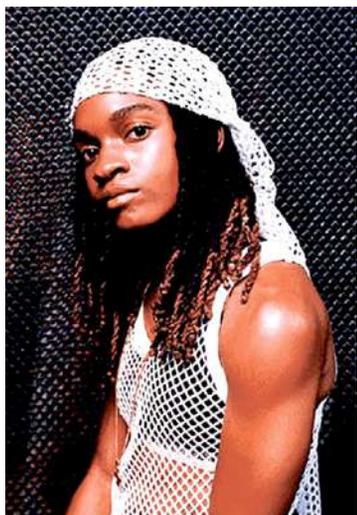
www.caribbeantoday.com

Koffee Is Coming To Miramar

Grammy-winning Jamaican reggae star, Koffee, is coming to Miramar, Florida next month. The singer is part of the line-up for the 3rd Annual Afro-Carib Festival (ACF), from The City of Miramar, set for Saturday, February 25, 2023, 5-11p.m. ET at the Miramar Regional Park Amphitheater, 16801 Miramar Parkway, Miramar, FL 33025.

The Afro-Carib festival, presented by Visit Lauderdale, is where Black History Month meets Reggae Month, and will celebrate the blended cultures that evolved through a shared bond rooted in African origins. These powerful bonds have manifested to create a people rich in music, culture, and cuisine.

“Part of who we are as a people, descendants from African and Caribbean roots, are reflected in the music, instruments and dance which make up our rich culture and heritage,” said City of Miramar Commissioner, Jamaican roots Alexandra P. Davis “When you listen to the lyrics of these



Koffee is set to perform in Miramar next month.

artistes and feel the rhythm of the Afro-Reggae – inspired beat, it resonates deep within the soul, and it is what we want to bring to this celebration of our multi diverse community in Miramar.”

Koffee’s ground-breaking, positive approach to reggae makes her one of the most exciting, forward thinking, globally focused teenage talents to emerge in decades.

Her bold message of peace and love captivated the world with its joyous expression of gratitude. Boasting 122M views, Koffee is most known for her runaway hit “Toast,” a mind-blowing feat for a newcomer. At 18, she was the youngest and first female reggae artist to win a GRAMMY for the coveted Best Reggae Album. Her infectious Jamaican “patois” laden lyrics resonate with audiences of various ages, cultures and backgrounds the world over.

Koffee is a featured performance on the upcoming Sam Smith album, “Gloria.”

General admission tickets to next month’s Miramar concert start at \$25 with VIP tickets costing \$125. Tickets are on sale now at TICKETMASTER. Parking is \$10 cash. For more info, visit afriocaribfestmiramar.com or call 954-602-3178.

- *Rewritten from SouthFloridaCaribbeannews*



Jamaican Sports Icon Chris Gayle Featured On Album With Lauryn Hill

Jamaican and West Indies cricketer Chris Gayle is now also a singer. Gayle will headline an album with Ms. Lauryn Hill. The highly anticipated song “Perfect Match,” recorded with Kali Ranks at the Battery Studio in New York will appear on the Billboard album series “Tropical House Cruises to Jamaica, The Asian Edition.”

The single was Remixed in 2021 as a dancehall track after being recorded 22 years ago. The star-studded album is now on pre-order and will be available on December 23, 2022. The album is being marketed in the United States as well as the Asian markets of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.

Gayle, known as the ‘Universe Boss,’ has reiterated his call for Jamaican music

lovers and members of the Dancehall fraternity to embrace him and his compatriot Usain Bolt and show respect for their musical endeavours.

“The music needs people like Usain Bolt and myself. We taking your music to different parts of the world. They should appreciate dat and they should love dat,” he said during a recent interview with Television Jamaica’s Anthony Miller after the veteran journalist. “So they need to accept dat and put some respect on our name. Simple as dat. Put some respect on our name. Usain Bolt, Chris Gayle – put some respect on our name and give us our credits when due.”

- *Rewritten from Jamaicans.com and Dancehallmag.com*



Jamaican Born ‘Creator Of Philadelphia Soul’ Dead At 79

BY HOWARD CAMPBELL

Thom Bell, the Jamaican immigrant record producer, singer, arranger, pianist, and composer, who was famous for helping to craft the Philadelphia soul sound with groups like The Delfonics and The Stylistics, passed away on Dec. 22nd in Washington state. He was 79.

Bell, who was born in Kingston, Jamaica, migrated to the City of Brotherly Love with his family at age three. His work with songwriters Linda Creed, Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff made Philadelphia a hub for soul music during the 1970s.



The late Thom Bell speaking onstage during the Grammy Salute to Music Legends at Beacon Theatre on July 11, 2017, in New York City. (Photo by Michael Kovac/Getty Images for NARAS)

In the mid-1980s, he worked with The I Three, Bob Marley’s harmony trio that comprised his widow Rita, Marcia Griffiths and Judy Mowatt. Bell guided them on ‘Beginning,’ a 10-song album released by EMI America that contains ‘Neighbor,’ a cover of ‘The Sweet Inspirations’ That’s How Strong (My Love Is)’ and ‘He’s A Legend,’

a tribute to Marley who died in 1981.

Drummer/producer Grub Cooper of The Fabulous Five band was part of the recording sessions which took place at Compass Point in The Bahamas and Kingston at the Marley family’s Tuff Gong studio.

“He came down (to Kingston) to listen to them and how he would arrange their vocals which was his strong point,” Cooper recalled.

He added that Bell stayed “a couple of days” in the capital where he was born. Although he was not known for reggae, Cooper said Bell had no plans to change The I Three sound that helped define Bob

Marley’s revolutionary music.

“I think he just wanted to broaden their scope,” Cooper stated.

Cooper was a big fan of Bell, who made his name producing songs like ‘La La Means I Love You,’ ‘Didn’t I Blow Your Mind (This Time),’ and ‘Ready or Not (Here I Come),’ for The Delfonics. He also had success as a producer/co-writer with The Stylistics on ‘Betcha by Golly Wow,’ ‘Stop, Look, Listen to Your Heart),’ and The Spinners ‘Mighty Love, Then Came You.

Bell is survived by his wife and six children.



Caribbean American Percussionist Dead At 94

A Caribbean American percussionist who was not only a rare woman among the orchestral percussionists of her time but also helped lead a generation of Black musicians in confronting racism in the classical music industry has passed away at 94.

Elayne Viola Jones, who was born to Caribbean immigrants from Barbados in Harlem, died from dementia at her home in Walnut Creek, California on Dec. 17, 2022, according to her daughter Cheryl Stanley and the New York Times.

Jones was born on Jan. 30, 1928, in Harlem, the only child of Cecil Jones, a porter and then a subway conductor and Ometa Jones who dreamed



The late Elayne Viola Jones was the first Black principal player in a major American orchestra. She was the daughter of Barbadian immigrants.

of becoming a professional pianist.

Jones was the first Black principal player in a

major American orchestra when she joined the San Francisco Symphony in 1972, and who mounted a legal battle over racial and sexual discrimination when she was denied tenure two years later, died Saturday at her home in Walnut Creek, Calif.

Her daughter Cheryl Stanley said the cause was dementia. In addition to her daughter Cheryl Stanley, she is survived by her son, Stephen Kaufman, a violinist and performance artist also known as Thoth; another daughter, Harriet Kaufman Douglas; and three grandchildren.

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*



Grant Opportunity: Parenting and Family Strengthening

New 5-Year Funding Cycle

Do you provide high-quality group, individual, or home visiting parenting programming?

The Children’s Trust will be looking for applicants for a new 5-year funding cycle that will start in October.

The Parenting and Family Strengthening request for proposals (RFP) is scheduled to be released in February.

More information at:
TheChildrensTrust.org/Grants



Start The New Year Right With These Healthy Recipes

It's the New Year and that means time to put those resolutions into action and ensure you eat your way to better health. Here are a few recipes to include in your weekly routine.

Herb-Pesto Salmon With Quinoa-Kale Salad



Herb-Pesto Salmon With Quinoa-Kale Salad (Publix Apron image)

Herb-Pesto Salmon

INGREDIENTS

- Nonstick aluminium foil
- 1 lemon, for juice
- 3 tablespoons basil-pesto sauce
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 4 salmon fillets (1 ½ lb), skin removed
- ½ teaspoon pink (or kosher) salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Prep

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line baking sheet with foil. Squeeze lemon for juice (1 teaspoon).

Check fish for bones.

Steps

- Preheat oven to 375°F. Line baking sheet with foil. Squeeze lemon for juice (1 teaspoon).
- Combine pesto, Dijon mustard, and lemon juice. Season fish

with salt and pepper; place on baking sheet (wash hands).

- Top each fillet evenly with pesto mixture; bake 14–16 minutes and until opaque and separates easily.
- Always check fish for bones and cook to an internal temperature of 145°F.
- Set aside.

Quinoa-Kale Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 ¼ cups chicken stock (or broth)
- 5 cups fresh kale, finely chopped
- ½ cup Caesar dressing, divided
- ¼ teaspoon pink (or kosher) salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese

METHOD

- Place stock and quinoa in large stockpot; bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to low; simmer 15 minutes. Meanwhile, remove stems from kale, then chop leaves.
- Stir kale into quinoa and cover; cook 8 more minutes. Transfer mixture to large serving bowl; fluff with a fork and let stand to cool slightly.
- Stir in ¼ cup dressing, salt, and pepper. Drizzle remaining ¼ cup dressing over top; sprinkle with cheese.
- Serve with Salmon.

Island Shrimp with Calypso Rice and Heart of Florida Salad

Island Shrimp with Calypso Rice

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (8-oz) packages frozen island



Island Shrimp with Calypso Rice and Heart of Florida Salad (Publix Apron image)

lime shrimp

- 1 cup frozen petite peas
- ¼ cup pre-diced red onions
- 2 tablespoons Sofrito (Spanish cooking sauce)
- 2 (8.8-oz) pouches precooked yellow rice

METHOD

- Wash shrimp with vinegar and lime.
- Place shrimp in large sauté pan on medium. Cook 10–12 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until shrimp are pink and sauce is slightly thickened.
- Meanwhile, combine peas, onions, and sofrito in microwave-safe bowl. Cover and microwave on HIGH for 4 minutes or until hot. Stir in rice and microwave on HIGH for 2–3 more minutes or until rice is thoroughly heated. Stir rice; spoon shrimp mixture over rice and serve.
- Note: Sofrito is a cooking sauce made from tomatoes, garlic, peppers, and spices. It is used as a flavouring ingredient in many Caribbean recipes.

Heart of Florida Salad

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup mojo marinade

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 medium tomatoes (rinsed)
- 1 seedless cucumber (rinsed)
- 1 (14-oz) can cut hearts of palm (drained)
- 2 tablespoons sliced black olives

METHOD

- Combine mojo, olive oil, and honey in salad bowl.
- Cut tomatoes and one-half cucumber into bite-size pieces; add with remaining ingredients to dressing. Stir until well coated.
- Chill until ready to serve.
- Serve with Shrimp and rice or before.

Creamy Coconut Chicken With Black Bean and Corn Salad



Creamy Coconut Chicken With Black Bean and Corn Salad (Publix Apron image)

Creamy Coconut Chicken

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb boneless chicken cutlets
- 1 teaspoon adobo seasoning
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ cup pre-sliced green onions
- 1 lime (for juice, rinsed)
- ¾ cup coconut milk
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

METHOD

- Preheat large sauté pan on medium-high 2-3 minutes.
- Wash chicken with vinegar and lime.
- Season both sides of chicken with adobo and pepper (wash hands).
- Place butter in pan; swirl to coat. Add chicken (wash hands); cook 2-3 minutes on each side or until browned and internal temperature reaches 165°F. Use a meat thermometer to accurately ensure doneness. Remove chicken from pan.
- Place garlic, cumin, and green onions in same pan; cook 1 minute. Squeeze juice of one-half lime into pan (reserve other half for another use); stir in coconut milk and salt. Cook 1-2 minutes or until sauce begins to boil.
- Return chicken to pan; turning to coat. Serve sauce over chicken with black bean and corn salad.

Black Bean and Corn Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 12-16 sprigs fresh cilantro (rinsed)
- 2 (15.25-ounce) cans black beans (drained)
- 1 (11-ounce) can Mexican-style corn (drained)
- 1 cup pre-diced fresh tomatoes
- ½ cup pre-sliced green onions
- ¾ cup red wine vinaigrette
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

METHOD

- Chop cilantro coarsely; place in medium bowl. Rinse black beans and drain thoroughly; add to bowl.
- Stir in remaining ingredients until well blended; cover and chill 15 minutes or more.
- Serve with Creamy Chicken. (Makes 6 servings.)

- Publix Apron recipes



Get Ready For The Nassau Paradise Island Wine & Food Festival

The count-down is on to the inaugural Nassau Paradise Island Wine & Food Festival. Presented by Atlantis, the five-day festival is set for Wednesday, March 15 – Sunday, March 19, 2023.

The festival will highlight the Bahamas as a growing culinary and entertainment hub while generating awareness for Atlantis Blue Project Foundation, a non-profit, 501(c)(3), founded in 2005 with the mission to protect and preserve marine wildlife and its endangered habitats throughout the Bahamas and Caribbean seas.

Events include:

Taste of Paradise – The festival's key tasting event with JJ Johnson, Alon Shaya, Andrew Zimmern and other celebrity chefs.

Celebrity Chef Wine

Lunches and Dinners – Alex Guarnaschelli, Aarón Sánchez, Michael White and Andrew Zimmern will each host a



The count-down is on to the inaugural Nassau Paradise Island Wine & Food Festival.

memorable in-restaurant dining experience featuring their recipes paired with signature wines.

Ice Cream Social – A family-friendly, sweets-filled afternoon with Duff Goldman and the resort's resident pastry and dessert chefs.

Jerk Jam – A signature event celebrating Jerk, the iconic Caribbean flavor, hosted by Alex Guarnaschelli and JJ Johnson with a special performance by Grammy® Award-winning

and Golden Globe-nominated rapper Wyclef Jean.

Sparkles At Sunset – An elegant Champagne tasting in the famous Bridge Suite of The Royal Tower.

Sugar & Spice – A late-night event at The Cove Pool hosted by pastry chef Duff Goldman with over-the-top desserts and music from DJ Kim Lee (from Netflix's *Bling Empire*).

Tacos and Cocktails – A taco and tequila fiesta with Aarón Sánchez and festival mixologist Tony Abou-Ganim.

The complete line-up of festival events, live entertainment and appearances can be found online at npwff.org or atlantisbahamas.com. Tickets are available for purchase now.



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HEALTH



10 Health Resolutions Doctors Encourage You to Make Today

The New Year represents a fresh start and is the perfect time to invest in your health. However, you may be unsure what resolutions will have the biggest impact. Doctors say that the easy, tangible actions you take are some of the most important. “Many people kick off the start of each new year with big-picture health resolutions,” says Jack Resneck, Jr., M.D., president of the American Medical Association (AMA). “The good news is that small, positive health choices made right now can have long-lasting effects.”

Want to get started today? Here are the 10 resolutions the AMA recommends top your list this year:

1. Exercise is essential for your physical and mental health, so get moving today. A good rule of thumb for adults is at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity.

activity.

2. Vaccination is the best protection against a number of serious illnesses.

To protect yourself and your family, get up to date on your vaccines, including the annual flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 6 months and older. Your doctor can let you know if you're due for a COVID booster. If you have questions, speak with your physician and review trusted resources, including getvaccineanswers.org.

3. Get screened.

Estimates based on statistical models show that since April 2020, millions of screenings for breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer diagnoses may have been missed due to pandemic-related care disruptions. Check in with



your physician. If you're due for preventive care, tests or screenings, make an appointment. These measures are designed to keep you healthy and help your doctor spot certain conditions before they become more serious.

4. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, can increase your risk of heart attack or stroke, and it affects millions of Americans. Visit ManageYourBP.org to understand what your blood pressure numbers mean and what you can do to get your blood pressure under control.

5. One in 3 American adults has

prediabetes, a condition that can lead to type 2 diabetes if left unmanaged.

However, there are steps you can take that can help delay or even prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. Learn your risk by taking a simple 2-minute self-screening test at DoIHavePrediabetes.org. This resource also features helpful lifestyle tips that can help you reverse prediabetes.

6. Whenever possible, drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages and replace processed foods -- especially those with added sodium and sugar -- with nutritious, whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, herbs and spices.

7. If consuming alcohol, drink only in moderation. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans defines that as up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men, and only by adults of legal drinking age.

8. Speak with your doctor or health care professional about quitting tobacco and nicotine use. Declare your home and car smokefree to eliminate second-hand smoke exposure.

9. Follow your doctor's instructions when taking prescription drugs -- especially opioids.

Always store and dispose of these medications safely to prevent misuse. Whenever prescribed antibiotics, take them exactly as directed. Not taking the full course can lead to antibiotic resistance, a serious public health problem, and will not make you feel better if you have a virus, such as a cold or flu.

10. Invest in your mental health by managing stress, getting sufficient sleep, exercising and seeking help from a mental health professional when you need it.

If you don't have health insurance, the AMA encourages you to sign up for coverage at healthcare.gov, which has new, affordable options. The enrollment deadline for 2023 coverage is Jan. 15, 2023. Find more health resources at ama-assn.org. For a healthy 2023 and beyond, invest in your wellness with these doctor-recommended New Year's resolutions.

- StatePoint



Final Expense Insurance

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Florida Medical Marijuana Rules For New Businesses Released

After the better part of a decade, the Florida Department of Health's rules on how businesses can enter the state's medical marijuana industry are finally here.

The Department of Health, which regulates the state's multibillion-dollar medical marijuana industry, released two emergency rules on Monday that indicate, in broad strokes, the application process for companies seeking a medical marijuana treatment center license, which permits them to cultivate, process and dispense medical marijuana.

One of the rules released recently says the state will hand out the licenses by "batching" them — meaning not all of the new licenses will be available at once. But the new rule did not specify when the application window will open or exactly how many licenses will be up for grabs with each batch. It's also not clear how far apart the batches will open.

The Department of Health said the new rules also incorporate the "citrus preference," which gives preference to applicants who own at least one facility used to process citrus and who will use that facility to process marijuana.

Because of protracted litigation and regulatory inaction on the part of the state, just 22 companies are currently licensed to operate in Florida's medical marijuana industry. Just 19



medical marijuana providers have set up a store.

State law requires regulators to create four new treatment center licenses for every 100,000 new patients that enter the market. But the state has awarded just one new license through the application process since 2015. With the state reporting more than 776,000 patients as of last week, the state is required to bring 22 additional operators online.

The state awarded a license earlier this year to Gwinn Brothers Medicinals as a part of the state's application process for Black farmers. A 2017 bill passed by the Legislature required the state to set aside one license for Black farmers who alleged in class-action lawsuits known as the "Pigford" cases that they were discriminated against by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

But like seemingly every other marijuana license awarded by Florida, that decision has already been subject to litigation. The business that scored the highest on the application,

Hatchett Creek Farms, was not awarded the license because its majority stakeholder died in the middle of the application process, a lawsuit alleges. Now the man's family is suing, arguing they should have been awarded the so-called "Pigford" license.

Sally Kent Peebles, a cannabis law attorney, said the state's "batching" of licenses may be an attempt to avoid the heavy litigation that came with the application cycles of years past.

For applicants who spent thousands of dollars putting together a team and carefully curating an application only to be denied, the new rules could assuage them to know they have another opportunity, Peebles said.

Most applications, even if they are resubmitted, will require a non-refundable \$146,000 fee. (This is not the case for the businesses who were denied the "Pigford" license.) Once awarded, medical marijuana licenses can be resold for tens of millions of dollars.

The second newly published rule makes it more expensive for marijuana businesses to renew licenses every two years, raising the cost from about \$60,000 to more than \$1 million.

- Rewritten from the Tampa Bay Times



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FEATURE

How To Maximize The Value And Timeliness Of Your Tax Return

Research shows that if you're dreading tax season, you're not alone.

According to the Pew Research Center, 47% of Americans say they are bothered a lot by the complexity of the federal tax system. Other taxpayers stress out over getting the details right. In a Credello survey, 22% of respondents say not maximizing their refund is their biggest fear around doing taxes, while another 22% said their biggest fear is making a mistake.

"Many Americans rely on their tax refund to make ends meet. Accessing those funds should be fast and easy," says Chad Prashad, president and CEO of World Finance.

To help you get a handle on your taxes, World Finance is drawing on its 26 years of filing expertise to offer these timely tips:

• Get Ready Early

As soon as your employer provides your W2, you can file your taxes. Having all other documentation and receipts ready

to go will help expedite the process, which means you will get your tax return faster, too. Collect the necessary materials in one place before filing.

• Consider Significant Life Changes

Did you move in 2022? Have a baby? Get married? Change jobs? Each of these monumental life events can have an impact on your taxes, so be sure to disclose these factors when filing or to the professional filing on your behalf.

• Know What's New

Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) to learn about any changes to tax filings that are applicable to you. A tax services professional can also help you identify relevant updates. World Finance tax pros have year-round training to stay on top of the latest tax filing requirements and are ready to tailor tax services to each tax customer's financial situation.

• Review And Adjust

Once you know what your return is going to be this year, make any necessary adjustments

to your W2 to make sure you're withholding enough during the year.

If this is your first year working with a professional tax service, have them review your previous years' filings as well. You may be able to recover additional refunds if anything was missed. World Finance offers this service for no additional charge.

• Consider A Tax Refund Loan

After filing, you can potentially take out a loan for the amount of your expected refund. This is known as a tax refund loan and an option to consider if you need your refund as soon as possible.

• Work With A Professional

Filing your taxes with a software program is a low-cost option, but only if you have time to dedicate to the task, and the know-how to get your biggest possible tax return. Working with a reliable, trusted tax preparation service can help ensure your taxes are filed correctly, and your return is as substantial as it can be. Look for a service that offers transparent pricing, flexible filing options and same-day Tax Advance Loans, such as World Finance. For more information, visit loansbyworld.com/taxes.

Tax season doesn't need to create

headaches, fears, or anxieties. By gathering important tax documents in advance and understanding your filing and refund options, you can have confidence that you've

maximized the value and timeliness of your tax return.

- StatePoint



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HIT & RUN FATALITY



VICTIM/PEDESTRIAN

Rupert Webley
B/M, 68 years old

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

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

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

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

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

ISSUE DATE: 5/11/2021 RN SUPERVISOR: Sgt. Francisco Armerendariz MDPD C/N PD210502138114

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

What To Do If Your Mortgage Application Is Denied

If you dream of homeownership, having your mortgage application denied can be devastating. If this does happen to you, it's important to remember that you're not alone. Thirteen percent of all purchase mortgage applications - a total of nearly 650,000 - were denied in 2020, according to federal government data.

Before quickly reapplying for a loan, it's important to first understand the reasons your loan was denied. The lender is required to disclose that information to you within 30 days of its decision. You can also call your lender for further explanation. Having this knowledge will help you work toward building your eligibility for a mortgage.

In some instances, the situation involves a quick fix, such as providing missing or incomplete documentation. However, if the reasons cited for your application denial involve down payment cost, a low credit score, an adverse credit history or a high debt-to-income ratio, here are six steps you can take toward recovery:

1. Consult a Housing Counselor

Consider speaking to a community-based credit counselor or a HUD-certified housing counselor. They can help you create a plan to increase your savings, decrease your debt, improve your credit, access down payment assistance or take advantage of first-time homebuyer programs.

2. Improve Your Credit

In a 2022 Freddie Mac survey of consumers denied a mortgage application in the past four years, three in five cited debt or credit issues as reasons given for their initial denial. If this describes you, take time to improve your credit profile before applying for another loan. Good credit demonstrates responsible money management and gives you more purchasing power, opening doors to better loan terms and products. Visit creditsmart.freddie.com to access Freddie

Mac's CreditSmart suite of free financial education resources that can help you understand the fundamentals of credit and prepare you for homeownership.

3. Pay Down Debt

In the application process, lenders will look at your recurring monthly debts, such as car payments, student loans and credit card loans. By lowering or paying down monthly debts, you can build a positive credit history and lower your debt-to-income ratio. Not sure where to start? Tackle your debt with the highest interest rate first.

4. Obtain Gift Funds

If you're short on money for your down payment, you may be able to use gift funds from a family member to decrease the amount you need to borrow.

5. Find a Co-Signer

A co-signer applies for the loan with you, agreeing to take responsibility for the loan should you default. The co-signer's credit, income and debts will be evaluated to make sure they can assume payments if necessary. In addition to ensuring your co-signer has good credit, you should make sure they are aware of this responsibility and have sufficient income to cover the payment.

6. Look for a Lower-Cost Home

Remember, you should only borrow an amount you feel comfortable repaying. You may need to look for a lower-cost home than you're financially prepared to purchase and maintain.

If your home loan application is denied, don't panic. There are ways to build your eligibility so that next time, your mortgage application is more likely to be approved.

For more information and additional resources, visit myhome.freddie.com.

- StatePoint



Women in Business



In March, Caribbean Today will spotlight Successful Women In Business. Join Caribbean Today as we showcase these hard-working women who have left their mark on the business community in South Florida. If you would like to nominate someone, please send your nominees to peter.webley@caribbeantoday.com or editor@caribbeantoday.com

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The 5 Best Caribbean Islands To Visit In 2023



St. Croix, where President Biden just rang in the New Year, is a great place to visit in 2023.

We've curated a list of tiny beach-filled islands, spirited culinary destinations, burgeoning beach towns and adventure hotspots across the region, from The Bahamas to the north to Bonaire to the south. Here are the 5 best Caribbean islands and destinations to visit in 2023:

The Caribbean has returned to its place as the world's premier warm-weather destination, and we have returned with our annual guide to our preferred travel destinations for 2023.

St. Kitts

You can feel it hiking in the foothills of the Mount Liamuiga volcano, or cruising the curves

of the Southeastern Peninsula, or rum punch hopping on Cockleshell Bay. This is just a cool place.

Barbuda

Barbuda is writing a new story just a half-decade since Irma, once that's all about low-density, high-quality tourism and the marriage between jet-set cool and barefoot warmth.

St. Croix

It was no surprise that US President Joe Biden spent his end-of-year vacation here — the Commander in Chief has been vacationing in St Croix for

years. Now, he's being joined by a new generation of travelers drawn to the island's dynamic culinary scene, its seemingly endless beaches and the full-fledged renaissance of historic Christiansted.

San Salvador, The Bahamas

Christopher Columbus' first landfall in the Americas was right on Long Bay Beach in San Salvador, a stretch of sand where, let's just say, not much has changed since 1492. And that's the vibe across this untouched, warm, beach-filled getaway.

Antigua

Antigua is there a lovelier collection of hotels on an island anywhere in the Caribbean than Antigua? Name your pick: luxury resort, adults-only retreat, historic inn, honeymoon spot. But it's not just the hotels: this is just a lovely place to visit: superb restaurants (crowned by the bucket-list Sheer Rocks), uncrowded, dazzling beaches, myriad wellness options.

- *Rewritten from CaribJournal.com*



Travel Within The Caribbean In Crisis

BY SIR RON SANDERS

The closure of LIAT in 2020, without establishing air transport to fill the vacuum, has led to chaos in regional transportation, gravely affecting the movement of people and goods throughout the Caribbean region.

Anyone, who has tried to travel from one country to another in the Caribbean, can attest to the nightmare it has become. Whereas in the heyday of LIAT, there were at least 2 daily flights from which to choose, allowing for transfers through the airline's main hubs in

Antigua and Barbados, flights are now few and far between.

Additionally, connectivity from one Caribbean island to another, which physically neighbor each other, often requires travel to Miami or some other country with overnight stays, lengthening journeys and increasing costs.

Gone are the days when businesspersons, consultants, marketing agents and others could get on a plane in the morning, conduct business in another country, and return to their home base by the evening. Tourists on multi-destination holidays, and



The closure of LIAT in 2020, without establishing air transport to fill the vacuum, has led to chaos in Caribbean inter-regional travel. (CMC Image)

even those who would like to make a day trip to another island that they can see on the horizon, cannot now even contemplate such a prospect. The connectivity simply does not exist.

Caribbean Airlines does not have enough planes or frequency of travel to fill the travel needs; additionally, it only flies to some Caribbean destinations from its base in Trinidad and Tobago. Attempts by two other small airlines to ply some of the routes are also too infrequent and, regrettably, undependable.

The owners and management have good intentions, but lack of adequate capital has restricted their ability to invest in aircraft, staff and other costs that would serve the region's needs.

Two vital things have resulted from all this. First, the objective of achieving the social and economic

integration of the Caribbean Community, (CARICOM), is being eroded. People to people contact – and therefore familiarity and cohesion – has been set back. Second, the realization of the long-vaunted Caribbean Single Market and Economy, (CSME), is being retarded. The marketing of goods and services between CARICOM countries, which is one of the fundamental requirements of a Single Market, has effectively been paused.

Other current objectives, such as establishing the means for food security and making the CARICOM area more self-sufficient and less dependent on goods and services imported from outside the region, are also being adversely impacted.

While no one can discount the anxiety of governments, in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, when costs escalated and revenues declined, causing some owner-governments to want to shed the increasing expenses associated with LIAT, the decision to collapse it with nothing to replace it – at least substantially – has led to the present difficulties.

It is also understandable that, at a time when governments were confronting decreased revenues and increased expenditure to support the poor and vulnerable as well as escalated costs to fight

the Coronavirus and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, cuts in expenses had to be made. LIAT looked then as an opportunity to be rid of what might have been regarded as an unending hemorrhaging of taxpayers' money that was needed for pressing domestic priorities.

In this regard, LIAT workers, who continuously demanded, increased wages and greater compensation packages, might reflect on whether they could have acted in ways that would have helped to maintain the viability of the airline in everyone's interest, including their own. Had LIAT continued to operate in conditions of cooperation, all might have continued to reap the benefits it delivered.

All parties should learn a lesson from the LIAT experience, including the unemployment of its workers. If no lesson has been learned about how cooperation can help to maintain jobs, then that history will repeat itself.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Sir Ronald Sanders is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States.

- *Edited from CMC*





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Will Brazil And Every Country Name A Stadium After The Great Pelé?

Brazilian football great Pelé was laid to rest on January 3, 2023, following a mammoth funeral at the Vila Belmiro stadium in Santos, Brazil. Now the question is whether that stadium will soon bear the name of the late soccer king and whether every country will follow that move?



Brazilian soccer legend Pelé is seen in his casket, on the pitch of his former club Santos' Vila Belmiro stadium on Jan. 3, 2023. (PHOTO/REUTERS)

Gianni Infantino, president of FIFA, football's governing body, wants Brazil and every country to name a stadium after late Brazilian football great Pelé. The FIFA president told reporters in Sao Paulo: "We're going to ask every country in the world to name one of their football stadiums with the name of Pelé."

"I am here with a lot of emotion, sadness, but also with a smile because he gave us so many smiles. As FIFA, we will pay a tribute to the 'King' and we ask the whole world to observe a minute of silence," Infantino also said as thousands of mourners gathered at Pelé's former club, Santos where the Brazilian legend was lying in state at the start of three days of

national mourning.

"Pelé is eternal. He's a global icon of football," Infantino added.

In April 2021, plans to honor Pelé, whose real name was Edson Arantes do Nascimento, by naming Rio de Janeiro's Maracana Stadium after him, were vetoed by the state governor at the time.

Pelé, one of the greatest footballers of all time, died on December 29, 2022, at the age of 82 after battling with colon cancer since September 2021. Pelé won three FIFA World Cups – the only player to ever do so – and scored over 1,000 goals throughout his career.

- *Rewritten from CMC*



West Indies To Face Zimbabwe

The West Indies Men's team will start their 2023 international year with two Test matches against Zimbabwe next month, five years after the two sides last met in a series in the long format of the game.

Cricket West Indies, (CWI), said in a statement that Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) confirmed the schedule with the first Test slated for February 4-8th and the second set for February 12-16th at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Ahead of the two-Test, rubber West Indies will have a four-day warm-up match against a local side set from January 28th to 31st at Bulawayo Athletic Club.

"The tour to Zimbabwe early in 2023 will be an important part



West Indies faces Zimbabwe next month.

of our 2023 Test programme, which also includes series against South Africa and India," said CWI's Director of Cricket Jimmy Adams. "Having produced some good results early in 2022, the team will be eager to begin the year with strong performances in Zimbabwe."

CWI is yet to announce a

replacement for head coach Phil Simmons who resigned after the West Indies crashed out of the ICC T20 Cricket World Cup in Australia.

Zimbabwe's last Test match was way in July 2021 against Bangladesh in Harare and, according to ZC Director of Cricket Hamilton Masakadza, they will be eager to make the most of the upcoming series. The last Test Series between Zimbabwe and the West Indies was played at Queens Sports Club in October 2017.

West Indies clinched that two-match series having won the first game by 117 runs while the second match ended in a draw.

- *CMC*



Haitian Teen Inks Deal With US Soccer Club

The US' FC Tulsa soccer team has signed a Haitian teen soccer star for their new United Soccer League Championship season.

Haiti Under-20 international Watz Leazard has signed with FC Tulsa for the season, which gets underway in March. The 19-year-old forward was a standout at the CONCACAF Under-20 Championship last July, grabbing the attention of Tulsa's scouts with a goal and two assists

Leazard, who lives in the port city of Cap Haïtien on Haiti's north coast, currently plays for his native Real Hope Football Academy in the country's topflight but will now join the based in Tulsa, Oklahoma club pending league approval.

"I'm very happy to join FC Tulsa. It's a new step in my career and my development," Leazard said. "Haiti is complicated because of

the political situation, so it was my dream to be able to leave and play in a new championship abroad. I want to accomplish a lot and dream of winning a trophy with Tulsa while scoring lots of goals and lots of assists to help the team."

Leazard's signing is the fifth addition to Tulsa's strike force ahead of the new season which runs from March 11 to October 14. The club, which campaigns in the Eastern Conference, missed out on the playoffs last season after winning only 12 of their 34 games to finish eighth in the standings.

"International tournaments provide an opportunity to see young players breaking through the scene, and Watz is one of those guys," said FC Tulsa head coach Blair Gavin. "He's got incredible size, soft feet for a winger, and has an incredible ability on the ball to



The US' FC Tulsa soccer team has signed Haitian teen soccer star Watz Leazard. (CMC image)

break down defenders that isn't ordinary for other guys."

At FC Tulsa, Leazard will play alongside Jamaica Under-20 international Christopher Pearson, a mid-fielder who signed for the outfit last summer.

- *NewsAmericasNow.com*



Caribbean Roots French Player Targeted With Online Racial Abuse Following Team's Loss



Kingsley Junior Coman, a French player with Caribbean roots, was the victim of online racism after the French team's loss to Argentina.

While the French soccer team failed to repeat history and claim another World Cup title on Sunday, Dec. 18th, losing by penalty kicks to South American soccer giant Argentina, a Caribbean roots French player who missed a penalty kick was forced to deal with online racism because of his

miss.

Kingsley Junior Coman, a forward who was born in Paris to parents from Guadeloupe, was targeted with horrific racist abuse since missing his penalty in France's World Cup final shoot-out defeat against Argentina in Qatar.

Coman along with Aurelien Tchouameni and Randal Kolo Muani, who all featured in the final, were subjected to vile messages on their accounts, as reported by The Athletic. Coman and Tchouameni missed penalties in the shootout, while Kolo Muani missed a chance to win the game in extra-time.

The trio received messages that included banana and monkey emojis on their Instagram

accounts just moments after the loss. Tchouameni reportedly disabled his Instagram account for a brief time following the racist comments.

Meta, which owns Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp, condemned the abusive posts and said the messages had been removed.

FC Bayern, the club Coman plays for, strongly condemned the racist comments noting on Twitter: "The FC Bayern family is behind you, King. Racism has no place in sport or our society."

The abuse received by the French players is similar to what occurred following England's loss to Italy on penalties in the

final of Euro 2020 last year. After that game Bukayo Saka, Caribbean roots Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho, who all missed penalties, received racist abuse online.

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