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Covid-19 Cases NORTH AMERICA

	Total	Deaths	Active
North America	2,040,833	123,472	1,249,099
USA	1,816,820	105,557	1,176,025
Canada	90,190	7,073	35,014
Mexico	84,627	9,415	15,602
Dominican Republic	16,908	498	6,853
Panama	13,018	330	3,274
Honduras	4,886	199	4,159
Guatemala	4,607	90	3,869
El Salvador	2,395	44	1,325
Cuba	2,025	83	147
Haiti	1,584	35	1,527
Costa Rica	1,047	10	379
Nicaragua	759	35	354
Jamaica	575	9	277
Martinique	200	14	88
Guadeloupe	162	14	10
Cayman Islands	141	1	72
Bermuda	140	9	39
Trinidad and Tobago	116	8	0
Bahamas	102	11	43
Aruba	101	3	0
Barbados	92	7	9
Sint Maarten	77	15	2
Saint Martin	41	3	5
St. Vincent Grenadines	26		11
Antigua and Barbuda	25	3	3
Grenada	23		5
Curaçao	19	1	4
Belize	18	2	0
Saint Lucia	18		0
Dominica	16		0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	15		0
Greenland	13		2
Turks and Caicos	12	1	1
Montserrat	11	1	0
British Virgin Islands	8	1	0
Caribbean Netherlands	6		0
St. Barth	6		0
Anguilla	3		0
Saint Pierre Miquelon	1		0

Source: Worldometers.info

Bedwetting minor forced to sleep in "cage-like" shed



LINDA STRAKER

- Under-10 male minor sleeps in outside extension as punishment for bedwetting
- Investigation launched but not much done
- Child Protection Authority (CPA) and police admit to knowing about the situation

A minor in a rural community in the parish of St John has for more than a year been made to sleep in an outside "cage-like extension" of the family home as punishment for wetting his bed at night. "His stepfather doesn't like him because he is wetting the bed and so he builds the cage for him to sleep in," said a community member. "Many children wet the bed, so I cannot understand why his mother will allow that to happen," he added.

Made from metal roofing, the extension attached to the side of the

family home contained a mattress for the child to use at nights. The minor, who is male and under 10, remained in squalid living conditions for months before the situation was drawn to the attention of the relevant authorities.

An investigation was launched but not much was done to create a better environment for the family nor the child.

"The family told the police the cage extension is for family use, and with that reason, nothing else happened. However, within days, he was back again in the cage because the police seemed to forget the matter," the community member said.

Calls to several people in the community confirmed the degraded sleeping area exists, and they expressed concern about the long-term negative impact it will have on the primary school student. "This child is treated as if he is not

a human being. He is physically, emotionally and verbally abused by his mother and others," said the community member who drew the plight of the minor to this writer.

People aware of the situation explained that the minor and his family members are both vulnerable and marginalised and need social assistance. The minor once resided with his mother's parents, but had to be removed because of their health conditions and inability to care for themselves properly. "They cannot take care of themselves properly so it's not easy for them to care for him, and he ended up by his mother who from all indications agreed for him to sleep in the cage," the community member added.

As of Friday, 29 May 2020, both the Child Protection Authority (CPA) and the police admitted to knowing about the situation and were reserved when asked to confirm that a new investigation is ongoing.

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Rotary Club of Grenada's Response to Covid-19



Rotarian Nahla Hadeed

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic which has forced businesses to close temporarily, increased unemployment, and reduced household income; the Rotary Club of Grenada stepped up its outreach to low-income and vulnerable persons by providing them with food hampers during the weekend of 22 May 2020.

"Our club is committed to providing support to needy persons during this unprecedented difficult moment in the history of Grenada. I was pleased to see our members filter into communities and reaching out to families who can't afford a nutritious meal," said Judy McCutcheon, President of the Rotary Club of Grenada. She stated that "it has never been more important for us to rally together and be our brother's keeper."

During the weekend of 22

May 2020, the Rotary Club of Grenada in partnership with



other Friends of Rotary provided pre-packaged hampers to over 150 families throughout Grenada. The team lead for the hamper project, Rotarian Nahla Hadeed, said, "Society is facing its greatest threat in over a century. We have a moral obligation as Rotarians to safeguard our communities and provide support where it is most needed. Our actions this weekend is consistent with the ideals of Rotary and truly putting service

before self."

We thank all who donated funds especially during these difficult times. We anticipate an increase in persons needing more food supplies since many businesses remain closed or are operating with significantly reduced hours. Should anyone wish to contribute to supporting any future extremely important food drives, feel free to contact a Rotarian or leave us a message on Facebook.

Rotary Club of Grenada



Rotarian Kay Simon getting ready to deliver hampers



Physical distancing protocol must be adhered to

The Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF) is concerned about the increasing number of persons who in recent times are violating the emergency powers regulations.

We remind the general public that despite the easement allowed, Grenada continues to be under a State of Emergency. As such, all persons must be guided by the Covid-19 Regulations which was last updated on 27 May 2020.

The RGPF is concerned about the trend in which large groups of persons are gathering around outdoor barbecue spaces in violation of the physical distancing health protocol and sections of the emergency powers regulation.

In some instances, persons can be seen drinking and socialising in public without regard for their own safety because they are not wearing masks or any form of face covering.

Barbecue and other food vendors in public spaces are therefore encouraged to offer takeaway services so as to avoid large gathering. The 2020 Emergency Powers (Covid-19) section 9, subsection (a) clearly states: no person shall host or attend any social activity of any description.

It must also be noted that while the regulation provides for the sale of alcohol beverages, the regulation does not permit for public consumption.

The RGPF is, therefore, reminding persons that selling alcohol for consumption in public and failing to maintain physical distancing are in violation of the 2020 Covid-19 Regulations. Regulation 5, Sub-regulation 5 states that there shall be no consumption of alcohol in any public place.

The general public is also reminded that customers to business places must maintain physical distancing of no less than 6 feet when conducting business.

A person who contravenes or fails to comply with these regulations, or any direction for the purposes of these regulations, shall be guilty of an offence and, on summary conviction, liable to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months and to forfeiture of any goods or money in respect of which the offence has been committed.

Office of Commissioner of Police

COVER UP
SAVE YOUR LIFE. SAVE MY LIFE



Can we reduce our food import bill?

EDITORIAL

LINDA STRAKER

- EC\$350 million food importation bill in 2019
- Local food producers and processors did not benefit from panic purchasing
- With fewer imports, more money will be circulating within the country
- Farmers will become the new upper middle class with sustainable income

In 2019, according to the Ministry of Trade, Grenada had a food importation bill of EC\$350 million. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we might find ourselves having no choice but to change our taste because some of these foods may not be imminently available.

Over the years we have heard ministers of Trade, Agriculture and Health speak about the need to consume more locally-grown food. The Ministry of Trade has even embarked on a "Made in Grenada" campaign so that we as consumers can focus on consuming more of our locally grown fresh agricultural produce and those that are preserved through the various small outlets in our agro-processing industry.

There are no large scale agro-processing companies in the true sense of the word, but we do have agro-processors who produce just enough for satisfied customers. The thinking of many nowadays is the need to stabilise our food security. Should our Ministry for Agriculture in collaboration with the ministries of Trade and Health develop a long-term campaign aimed at reducing our food import bill in the next 10 years?

Our government, as well as governments in the region, took immediate action to lock down the countries to reduce and control the spread of Covid-19. Immediately we heard that there would be a food shortage. The Prime Minister in the first national address after the State of Emergency, comforted citizens by informing them that there was no food shortage because he had spoken to distributors and suppliers.

This food shortage was anticipated by the many who enjoy imported food that is shown at times on television, making them feel that not having it, is missing out on a special excitement in life. The fear of not having that special something had many engaging in panic buying since January.

Because our local food producers and processors cannot afford the same level of promotion and advertising, they did not benefit from the panic purchasing and so a lot of what they produce are still on the shelves. We, therefore, believe that this pandemic period in which the term "new normal" is the latest trend, consuming of locally produced food should become the new normal.

"When you buy Grenadian, you will build Grenada," should become a slogan of our food security campaign. Locally produced food has fewer preservatives and scientifically preservatives have been proven to be the root cause of many ailments. With fewer imports, more money will be circulating within the country and with more money, farmers will become the new upper middle class with a sustainable income.

Covid-19 brings many challenges, but it also brings many opportunities which we must see for us to make use of them. We should never miss an opportunity, to miss an opportunity.

In the USA, history has shown that during the worst of times, many companies started in a kitchen or a basement and became international conglomerates in 10 to 20 years.

Time for us as a nation to put down a food security plan that will make agriculture be our gold mine in 10 to 20 years, because no public health pandemic could stop the production of food. The ability to feed ourselves should become our new mantra. Food security is all-encompassing and Covid-19 should be seen as agriculture's resurrection.

A democracy to save

BY NORRIS MITCHELL



Parliament chamber - picturesofgrenada.com

This article was intended to put the spotlight on the 30 odd years of the NNP neocolonial governance and its record of mismanagement and underdevelopment of Grenada.

Listen to Michael Baptiste's recent exposé on WhatsApp on the Prime Minister and Anthony Boatswain also on Pastor Stanford Simon and Emmalim Pierre - when on the TV evening news broadcast on Wednesday, 15 April 2020, the Hon. Tobias Clement appeared as Leader of The Opposition, having been sworn in by the Governor-General a few days earlier in accordance with the Grenada Constitution.

In his opening remarks to the Grenadian public, he made the historic pronouncement that he has "a democracy to save". This profound statement, in my view, is a rallying call to all patriotic Grenadians to join in the rescue mission of restoring our fractured democracy. The following scenario is an attempt to provide the Opposition Leader with a TEMPLATE of the enormous and challenging task ahead, and that to remain focused is a sine qua non for success.

In most if not all democracies, governments are elected by the people in free and fair elections to represent their interests and to advocate on their behalf in a house of representatives (parliament), in achieving pertinent objectives for the wellbeing of a progressive State (country) as reflected in its policies and programmes for people's empowerment and advancement. In other words, they are the "honourable" servants of the people, not the other way around, as now obtains.

These policies and programmes find concrete expression through independent democratic institutions of the state,

such as The Public Service Commission, the Parliamentary Elections Office, the Police, the Judiciary and the Physical Planning Unit (PPU) together with other implementing ministries, for example, Health, Education, Sanitation, Public Works and Labour. In the case of Education and Labour, organisations called unions, manage their day to day operations in providing critical service to their members and the nation in protecting their human rights which complements those of the state as buttresses of democracy, (echoes of the denied 25% gratuity and pension).

When all of these organisations are working in harmony with each other, peace, stability and productivity are assured and the country prospers. Coronavirus apart, any conscientious Grenadian observer who is concerned with the state of (political) affairs in Grenada today, as experienced by the ordinary Grenadian, would come to only one conclusion: That what is being provided as governance is woefully deficient with the mismanagement and the inequitable distribution of our resources in the 3rd decade of the 21st century.

After considering from whence we came namely, the middle passage, slavery, indentureship, crown colony, colonialism, statehood and "political" independence, the quality of which needs serious reflection and ideological analysis, as compared with 5 or 6 decades ago, when the self-governing people of the anglophone Caribbean seemed to have had a vision for a Caribbean civilisation in the blossoming of a West Indian Federation which was scuttled by Norman Manly of Jamaica and Eric Williams of Trinidad in 1962, and is now substituted by individual MASSA governments, in a take it or leave it dis-

pensation.

Grenada is a good example of MASSA governance, a creolese expression for black Caribbean neo-colonialism where "power corrupts and absolute power, corrupts absolutely". This statement by one of Britain's early parliamentarians seems to fit exactly the current Grenadian political experience: A Prime Minister for over 20 years and his government which has been in office for over 30 years, could not be more applicable; an egocentric mentality where "all man for himself" in a region where we prefer to sink individually instead of a UNITED anglophone presence (much more than Caricom) to offset the vulnerability of "smallness" on the global stage (a Mia Mottley approach).

Even before the arrival of the coronavirus, the Ministry of Health, as the record would show, is the most dysfunctional of government services: Chronic shortages of basic necessities exist, and being hospitalised has become a death sentence. Now that we have to cope with the virus, the unfolding events leave us with uncertain hope for imminent recovery, but recovery will come through our Grenadian resilience - God's willing.

Next in line, in my view, is the decay of our islandwide physical infrastructure - the Moliniere Public Road disaster crippling transportation on the western side of the island, readily comes to mind, with the rubber stamp approach by the Physical Planning Unit (PPU) of the Ministry of Finance of which Dr Mitchell is the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure and the dubious and questionable manner in granting building approvals, especially for large projects which always appear to be in conflict with the Building Laws of Grenada and consequently with the eco-system and the

environment. Silversands Hotel and the “proposed” 6 Senses Hotel in La Sagasse are salient examples. Let’s hope that the reactivated Natural and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee (NCHAC) of the Physical Planning Unit would be allowed to keep its eyes open and its recommendations heeded regarding another 3 proposed hotels (not factories) which the Egyptian “developer” intends to construct on Grenadian property bought from a so-called British developer for cheap without a black penny going into the treasury.

The failure by the Ministry of Legal Affairs and by extension the Government of Grenada to provide adequate and appropriate building accommodation for the judiciary as required by the constitution in dispensing JUSTICE, especially for the ordinary Grenadian and to the poor, the elderly and mentally challenged. This is an ongoing scenario over many decades which sad to say, does not appear to signal a satisfactory resolution in the near future. The hijacking of our independent democratic institutions such as the Public Service Commission and the Parliamentary Election process is (also) disturbing and objectionable examples of MASSA governance in a ONE PARTY visionless government intent on monopolising political power. Where is the “energised” but muted NDC in all of this?

Although not as apparent as in the above cases, the neglect of our history and cultural heritage, which are the underpinning of our identity and national persona is of major concern: The decay of our Public Library building with its invaluable historic records, in an independent and sovereign Grenada; York House, Fort George, Government House, and the disfigurement of the Market Square does not appear to be part of the NNP development strategy if there is one; while the Ministry of Culture appears to have transferred its function to the Ministry of Tourism, who is mainly concerned in selling “PURE GRENADA,” through the Grenada Tourism Authority and the selling of Grenadian passports through the CBI dysfunctional, some say corrupt, instruments.

A few weeks ago, the Prime Minister gathered his ministers and permanent secretaries to a confab, at which he bemoaned, what he described as the IMPLEMENTATION DEFICIT. This deficit in the region of about 40% completion, reflects the low rate of production due to the lack of unutilised skilled (professional) labour and commitment, and in some cases for the same reasons, the non-starter of projects – that are funded by grants or soft loans as provided in the budget.

This national embarrassment is not too difficult to explain – when the Prime Minister, not the Public Service Commission whose constitutional function is to appoint public servants on merit to appropriate positions, has been hijacked, by putting square pegs in key positions (sycophants) in order to do his biddings, which very often are inimical to the national interest, resulting in raising the “incompetence index” in the man-power provided, and is also reflected in the bidding process for building contracts which is tilted in favour of NNP operatives.

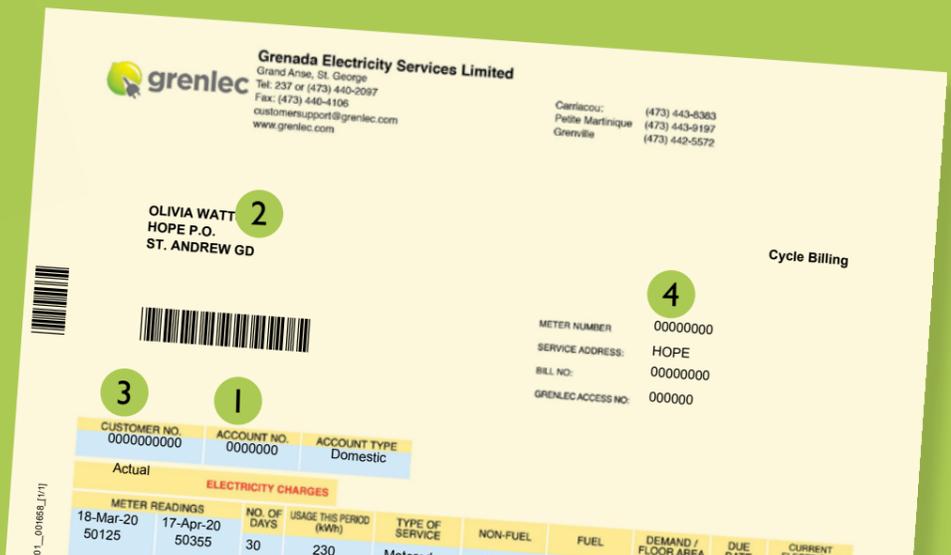
The above template which is not exhaustive gives the Leader of the Opposition an opportunity to contemplate his strategy and method of approach in neutralising or more importantly replacing an organisation which has not served the overall interest and advancement of the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique after so many years in office.

Let us hope and pray that this is the beginning of a new process in the dispensation of “a democracy to save.”

HOW TO EASILY PAY YOUR GRENLEC BILLS ONLINE



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Customer Number

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Address

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Air Transport: Connecting the Caribbean

BY TAHSEEN SAYED

Living in the time of Covid-19 has underscored how difficult it is to maintain our distance. Many of us are longing for a time when we can feel comfortable to reconnect with our family and friends and restart regular economic activity.

Here in the Caribbean, with connections and relations spread across the region, intra-island travel is frequent. Travel serves to deepen relationships, enhance trade, and leads to a deeper regional connection. Whether it's travelling to carnivals or to watch a cricket match or exploring business opportunities on another island, air travel brings the Caribbean people together.

Airports make such travel fast and

frequent and are the portal for the rest of the world to experience the Caribbean. Nearly 9.1 million tourists visited the Caribbean in 2019, and a large number of those pass through airports. No doubt, those numbers will be different for 2020 with border closures and the halt in tourism. However, while the borders are closed now, it is an opportune time to prepare for when we are travelling again. In addition to passenger travel, air transport is also essential for facilitating trade for island nations. The volume of freight attributed to air transport in the Caribbean small states increased over 50% between 2016 and 2018. While you may not see cargo moving through airports, some of what

you will be purchasing – including food – travels by air. This is not only true for imports but exports as well. Recently, the World Bank worked with the Governments of Dominica, Grenada and Saint Lucia to develop a series of projects to improve their airports and air transport sectors. US\$75 million will be used to improve safety and resilience of the air transport sector in these countries, and another \$84 million project was also approved for Haiti. Airport improvements will directly provide more safety and comfort to travellers. The new projects will help these airports comply with international safety standards and will improve connectivity in the Caribbean. Connecting the region is a priority

for the Caribbean Community (Caricom). In his final address for 2019, Caricom's Secretary General, Ambassador Irwin Larocque, said that an increase in air travel can boost growth and employment. Air travel can play an important role in stimulating economic activity throughout the region and in supporting continued regional integration and co-operation. Countries in the Eastern Caribbean are at high risk from natural disasters. The new projects will provide critical infrastructure and equipment to support increased resilience of the airports and the air transport sector. As we are learning, air travel is also vulnerable not only to climate-related disasters but also to other crises, like the current pan-

dem. When speed is essential, supplies, equipment and personnel are rapidly flown in to provide support where it is most needed.

Notwithstanding risks, airports are the gateway to opportunities. Airports can become a catalyst to regenerate economic activity as the small island states begin to reopen. Improvements in the air transportation sector will help meet the future flow of travellers, whether visiting family, coming for business, or to enjoy the sun, sea and sand of the Caribbean. Looking ahead, the Caribbean is preparing to welcome these travellers.

Tahseen Sayed is the World Bank Country Director for Caribbean countries.



The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a series of Caribbean Regional Air Transport Connectivity Projects in four countries for a total of US\$159 million, to enhance regional connectivity by improving the safety of air transport and the resilience of the airport infrastructure to natural disasters.

These projects include International Development Association (IDA) financing of US\$13 million for Dominica, US\$17 million for Grenada, US\$84 million for Haiti, and US\$45 million for Saint Lucia. These countries are reliant on the air transport sector and face common connectivity issues. The projects will enable countries to better accommodate diverted flights, emergency landings, and post-disaster relief flights, and improve regional capacity and collaboration in the sector.

World Bank Provides US\$159 Million for Regional Air Transport Connectivity in Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, and Saint Lucia

"This series of three projects aims to increase the safety and the overall resilience of key connection points in the Eastern Caribbean," said Tahseen Sayed, World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean. "The World Bank's first financing of airport projects in the Caribbean will also facilitate connectivity and support countries during the COVID-19 recovery phase."

"In Haiti, the project will modernize air transport infrastructure

World Bank provides US\$17 million for regional air transport connectivity for Grenada

MEDIA RELEASE

and support critical improvements in safety, resilience, and regulatory oversight," said Anabela Abreu, World Bank Country Director for Haiti. "The project is important to COVID-19 recovery efforts, as Haiti's economy will benefit from enhanced connectivity and resilience."

Dominica

In Dominica, the project aims to improve safety and airport resilience readiness to natural disasters, and to strengthen the capacity

of agencies handling air transportation operations and airport investment planning. Navigation and safety equipment will be improved, enabling emergency landing in case of natural disasters and increasing capacity in air traffic control, wildlife management, airport management and planning.

Grenada

The Grenada project will support increased safety and efficiency of airport operations and navigation,

make climate resilience improvements, and strengthen the country's capacity in civil aviation and airport management. This includes installation of air navigation and safety equipment at the main international airport, construction of a runway end safety area and a resilient air cargo facility, and preparation of an aviation sector strategic plan.

Haiti

In Haiti, the project aims to in-

crease operational safety, improve navigation, and enhance the resilience of infrastructure to natural disasters to ensure continuity of essential supply chains and health emergency services. Infrastructure investments include rehabilitation of the runway in Cap Haitien, construction of a taxiway in Port au Prince, installation of modern air traffic monitoring and control systems, and improvements to airfield drainage aimed at reducing the risk of flooding. Technical assistance includes skills training and measures to support women's employment in the air transport sector.

Saint Lucia

The project for Saint Lucia aims to improve operational safety and navigation and enhance the resilience of airport infrastructure to natural disasters. This will include improvements to the runway of the Hewanorra International Airport and its associated facilities, such as runway-end safety areas, airfield drainage, and crash and fire rescue facilities. Activities will also include installation of modernized air navigation systems, and institutional strengthening in air traffic control and management.

Financing for these projects comes from IDA. Haiti will receive a grant, and the three Eastern Caribbean islands will receive concessional financing with a maturity of 40 years, including a grace period of ten years.

BY CURLAN CAMPBELL

- Phased approach takes into consideration health and safety of all concerned
- Principals and school administrators return on 1 June to ensure school environment is ready to accommodate Form 5 students only
- Special arrangement for CXC exams starting 13 July

Stemming from the first emergency virtual meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), the Ministry of Education announced a phased approach for reopening schools to allow students to sit the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) examinations.

This approach takes into consideration the health and safety of all concerned especially the nation's children despite the ongoing threat of the spread of Covid-19.

The first phase, according to Minister of Education, Emmalin Pierre, will see the return of principals and school administrators on 1 June 2020, to ensure that the school environment is ready to accommodate Form 5 students only.

Phase 2 will see the return of students in CXC examination classes only, and teachers to onsite classes from 9 am to 2:30 pm. Phase 3 begins 15 June, when all teachers are expected back into the classroom and Phase 4 includes 2 weeks of personal development activity with teachers facilitated remotely by the ministry. Phases 5 and 6 will see teachers taking a vacation starting from 20 July to 31 August, when they are expected to report to work to commence a week of planning for the new school year. The ministry also outlined a special arrangement for CXC exams starting 13 July.

Based on the presentation made by CXC Registrar, Dr Wayne Wesley, the Cabinet of Grenada together with other key stakeholders including members of the Grenada Union of Teachers, principals, members of various school boards and parents, has analysed its unique situation and decided that some exams deemed important will start, while others not deemed important will be deferred.

Minister Pierre, during a press briefing with Permanent Secretary, Kevin Andall, and Chief Education Officer, Angella Finlay, updated the media on the new format for sitting of exams and protocols to be followed.

One major announcement was that Grade 6 students will not sit the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) this year, but will be allowed to advance to secondary level based on a composite score for each student to be derived from the combination of their internal CPEA assessment scores from CXC, Grade 5 minimum competency test score, and Grade 4 minimum competency test score 2018 /19. Another major decision will see the Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence (CCSLC) for Form 3 students be deferred to 2021 despite it being considered an important benchmark examination. While Cabinet has approved for the CXC CSEC exami-

Reopening of schools: Phased approach to accommodate CXC exams



Ministry of Education, Ministerial Complex, Botanical Gardens, Tanteen, St George

nation to commence in July 2020, Minister Pierre said some persons were of the view that the CSEC exams should be deferred to 2021. She explained the rationale behind Cabinet's decision.

"If the Ministry of Education takes a decision to defer the exams to 2021, the accommodation of students for classes will be a challenge for all schools, limited space and the demand it will place on their teachers are among issues of greatest concern. However, deferred arrangement for students with underlying conditions or special circumstances must be considered," she said.

The minister was unable to say whether schools can be fully open to accommodate all students for the new school year in September, and could not commit to a timeline for the placement of CPEA students who would be making their transition into secondary schools.

A late start is also predicted for

the admittance of CSEC students into the TA Marryshow Community College (TAMCC). Finlay said the college has already begun the application process for students desirous of entering the college. "Once the results are out, TAMCC will then utilise those, so the commitment by CXC is that the results for CSEC will be out sometime in September so it does indicate a late start for students who may want to enter, but TAMCC is also committed to having them get provisional entry based on the scores that are already available for those students."

The minister said there will be an alternative to replace Regarding the National School Leaving Examination, and that an official announcement will be made to explain the rationale behind the move.

Students are to adhere to 6 foot distancing in the classroom and 12 foot distancing at recess, as part of

measures for the phased reopening of schools. The ministry has developed protocols outlining specific responsibilities for principals, teachers and parents that places a priority on health and safety.

Finlay said the greatest challenge to ensure that students adhere to the social distancing protocols will occur during their break and lunchtime. "During the break time, we recommend open space for eating because the mask must come off... and at that time, the distance will go up to 12 feet. So we are encouraging outside eating with packaged meals, nothing in plates and platters," she said.

Principals hold health and safety briefings with their staff, provide teachers and students with safety information, notify the ministry of asthmatic students, develop a timetable for departure and arrival of students to reduce crowding and ensure a designated room to accommodate anyone showing

signs of Covid-19. Teachers are required to ensure that students are reminded to adhere to the social distancing protocol and to keep a daily class register to ensure contact tracing. It will be the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children are sent to school wearing masks and to provide them with hand sanitisers.

The arrival and departure times of students will be 30 minutes apart to avoid gathering. Parents are advised to pre-pack lunches for their children and principals are tasked to determine whether or not a tuckshop can operate. "Having to line up for lunches with distancing will mean a longer time before every child can be refreshed and we do not want to keep them on the school compound for any longer than necessary," Finlay said.

Parents are also asked to inform the principal of pre-existing conditions that may prevent students from returning to school.

New senators receive Instruments of Appointment

BY LINDA STRAKER

- Terry Noel and Tessa St Cyr are new senators
- New senators' appointment revoke appointment of Glynis Roberts, Kerryne James and Ron Redhead

Two new senators will be taking the Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation of Office whenever the Upper House of Parliament meets in the future. The new senators are 2 of 3 who will represent recently appointed Leader of the Opposition, Tobias Clement.

As the Leader of the Opposition, Clement has the honour of recommending 3 senators to the 13-member Senate, but only 2 were presented with instruments of appointment because the third is overseas, and is waiting for external borders to reopen.

The new senators who received instruments of appointment on Wednesday from Governor-General, Dame Cecile La Grenade are Terry Noel and Tessa St Cyr. The short ceremony witnessed by Clement, was con-



New senators with Opposition Leader Tobias Clement (centre)

ducted in accordance with physical distancing protocols

and saw the new parliamentarians receiving their instru-

ments wearing face masks.

The appointment of the

new senators automatically revoked the appointment

of Glynis Roberts, Kerryne James and Ron Redhead. They were appointed by the Governor-General in the aftermath of the 2018 General Election when the ruling New National Party won all the seats in the House of Representatives leaving the post of Leader of the Opposition vacant.

James who is a student and was recommended by the main opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) became Grenada's youngest ever appointed senator.

In December 2019, Clement after having unresolved issues with the leadership of the NNP, resigned as a member of the party but decided to continue serving in his role as the member of parliament for St George's North East constituency.

In March 2020 he wrote to the Governor-General advising her of his decision to cross the parliamentary floor and to fill the vacant post of Opposition Leader. In that capacity, Clement will fulfil many ceremonial parliamentary roles as well as be the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

NDC calls on government to show compassion

MEDIA RELEASE

The stand-off between the bus associations and government should not be allowed to escalate further.

Further delay in the resumption of public transportation will result in more hardship on people who depend on public transportation as their main way of going about their daily lives. The government should consider this and show compassion, especially during this already stress-

ful time.

We are disappointed that discussions between government and representatives of the bus associations on the reopening of public transport services failed to reach an agreement, after having ample time to sort out all these matters.

The government must appreciate that like all Grenadians who have families to maintain and financial commitments to meet, the bus own-

ers, drivers and conductors have also suffered significant financial losses during the lockdown. They too must be given appropriate relief.

It is unconscionable for the government to put bus owners in a position where they are forced increase fares and then turn around and object to the increase, all in an effort pretend that they care about the people.

The NDC says that there is a very simple and straightforward solu-

tion to this problem which will not require bus owners to place any burden on the people by increasing fares. Reduce the \$5.50 per gallon petrol tax on gasoline at the pumps to \$4. That way, you put not just 50 cents into the pockets of bus owners, but a whole \$1.50 into the pockets of bus owners and everyone with a vehicle.

It is totally unreasonable and uncaring, for the government to block

the bus owners from implementing the proposed increase, while at the same time, making no effort to help ease the burden by reducing the exorbitant petrol tax. Gas price in Grenada is one of the highest in the region. Added to that, the bus owners are correct in saying that implementing the safety protocols will be an additional cost to them

Show compassion and caring, don't just talk about it.



Melville Street Bus Terminus, St George's

Recent deportee has no family in Grenada

He was born here, so that makes him a Grenadian

BY LINDA STRAKER

- One deportee is Grenadian by birth, with parents who are from other OECS territories
- Both deportees were placed in 14 days quarantine upon arrival
- After quarantine, both deportees will be release into society because they have already served time in jail

Immigration authorities have con-

firmed that one of the two deportees who returned to the island last Thursday, May 2020 from the USA does not have family on island, though he is a born Grenadian.

"Our research has shown that he is a Grenadian by birth, so we have to accept him as a Grenadian. His parents who are from other OECS territories were in Grenada at the time of his birth and shortly after, returned with him," said Leroy Joseph, Head of Immigration. "Grenada was left with no choice but

to accept the young man who is in his 30s. He was born here, so that makes him a Grenadian," he admitted.

Both deportees were placed in 14 days quarantine upon arrival as part of the new health protocol for all repatriated citizens. The other person who is in his 60s, is confirmed to be a Grenadian by birth and has family members on island. He served 17 years in jail for rape.

"After the 14 days quarantine, we will have no choice but to release them into society because

they have already served time in jail and were returned here because of US laws after serving time in prison for offences," Joseph said.

It is understood that the young man will be residing with a family friend until flights are available to the territory in which his parents reside.

The deportation of the 2 came almost 8 weeks after United States President, Donald Trump, signed an executive order mandating that any country which delays or denies acceptance of its citizens who

violate the law of the US will face sanctions.

The order said that visa sanction will be imposed if "the government of a foreign country denies or unreasonably delays the acceptance of aliens who are citizens, subjects, nationals, or residents of that country after being asked to accept those aliens, and if such denial or delay is impeding operations of the Department of Homeland Security necessary to respond to the ongoing pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2.

Almost 200,000 pounds of tobacco products imported in 2019

BY LINDA STRAKER

- 87,959 kilograms of cigarettes and or cigarette products imported for 2019
- Clear scientific evidence that tobacco use leads to cancer and cancer is leading cause of death in Grenada
- New WHO kit to alert school students to tobacco industry's tactics to hook them to addictive products

According to data from the Central Statistic Department, Grenada imported 87,959 kilograms (193,916.4) pounds of cigarettes and or cigarette products for 2019. The value of the importation was EC\$4,459,265.

"I am certain that a significant [quantity] of the imported tobacco product is resold to visitors, but we do have persons, especially young people using these products. The World Health Organisation has issued a lot of research on how tobacco product companies are continuously targeting young people. So I am very concerned," said one of Grenada's health professionals.

The importation has not declined over the years and though it is believed that most of the imported products is sold to cruise ship visitors, health officials are concerned that despite the messages about the dangers of smoking tobacco products, persons, especially the youth population, continue to use it.

World Health Organization

The tobacco industry is targeting a new generation

Speak out. #TobaccoExposed

Not doubting the data, the health professional who prefers to remain anonymous, said that data would only reflect what was imported by the importing/distribution

companies. "Can you imagine the amount that came into the island under the label of personal use? I am talking about the 1 and 2 packs in bags and suitcases," he said.

According to the data, the largest importation was from Trinidad and Tobago which exported 84,560 kilograms, followed by Switzerland in second place which exported

2,848 kilograms to Grenada. The data also shows that tobacco products were imported from as far as China.

When data about tobacco related deaths were sought,

it was pointed out that Grenada do not have that level of breakdown because of the way the data on death is currently processed. "But if you were to trace back, there is clear scientific evidence that tobacco use leads to cancer and cancer is the leading cause of death in Grenada, so I believe there are tobacco related deaths among our cancer deaths," said Dr Shawn Charles, the current epidemiologist at the Ministry of Health.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) last Friday launched a new kit for school students aged 13-17 to alert them to the tobacco industry's tactics to hook them to addictive products. "Every year, the tobacco industry invests more than US\$9 billion to advertise its products. Increasingly, it is targeting young people with nicotine and tobacco products in a bid to replace the 8 million people that its products kill every year," said a statement from the WHO.

For 2020, the WHO's 'World No Tobacco Day' campaign focuses on protecting children and young people from exploitation by the tobacco and related industries.

Smoking suffocates the lungs and other organs, starving them of the oxygen they need to develop and function properly. "Educating youth is vital because nearly 9 out of 10 smokers start before age 18. We want to provide young people with the knowledge to speak out against tobacco industry manipulation," said Ruediger Krech, WHO Director for Health Promotion.

3 June repatriation flight from Grenada to UK closed



BY LINDA STRAKER

- **US nationals encouraged to enrol in Smart Traveller Enrollment Programme (STEP)**
- **UK Government special flights from 3 June has now closed booking**
- **Travel advice will be updated on future special flights and other options to leave Grenada**

The US is advising its nationals who are stuck in foreign lands like Grenada and cannot get back home, to enrol in its Smart Traveller Enrollment Programme (STEP). The UK government advises its nationals who are in the same condition and who have run short on money to apply for an emergency loan.

Using their Facebook pages to inform nationals in the OECS and Barbados about the initiatives, both embassies located in Barbados, used the same medium to advise about repatriation flights.

These flights have returned hundreds of nationals at different times. Most regional territories declared a state of emergency that came with curfew and lockdown of the countries, as a means of reducing the spread of Covid-19.

The STEP is a free service to allow US citizens and nationals travelling and living abroad to enrol with the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. According to information on the website, this will allow registered nationals to receive important information from the embassy about safety conditions in each destination country as well as help nationals make informed decisions about travel plans. "Help the US Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency. Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency," the website for STEP advised.

The UK government in mid-May announced repatriation flights in the first week of June for nationals in Grenada, but it closed within a short period after the announcement. "Booking for UK government special flights from 3 June has now closed. There are currently no further special flights organised from Grenada. This travel advice will be updated with further information on any future special flights and other options to leave Grenada as soon as this is available," said the Grenada information link on www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/grenada/staying-during-coronavirus.

Encouraging its nationals to sign up for travel advice email alerts and to follow the British High Commission in Bridgetown, Barbados on Facebook and Twitter, the High Commission office also advised about available financial support. "There is a range of [financial support from the government](#) that you can access while you are unable to return due to coronavirus restrictions. If you're in Grenada and have exhausted all other options to cover essential living costs while you wait to return home, you could apply for an emergency loan for your living costs from the UK government. You can only apply if you normally live in the UK and you cannot return home. This last-resort option is for those most in need, and you would need to repay the loan when you are back in the UK."

With regards to other foreign nationals, the Grenada Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommends these nationals visit <https://www.gov.gd/mofa/> or call the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to know the name of the diplomatic representative person on the island.

Charter flights may operate before full opening of airport

BY LINDA STRAKER

- **30 June 2020 as the possible date for re-opening the country's borders**
- **Hotels or groups can use a chartered option to land persons prior to 30 June**

While Grenada puts the necessary health protocols in place for the opening of external borders in late June, Prime Minister, Dr Keith Mitchell, has recommended that hotels or groups can use a charter flight option to land persons at the Maurice Bishop International Airport (MBIA).

"Charter flights will pose less of a challenge than commercial flights and may, therefore, be accommodated before the end of June, once all other recommended protocols and testing systems are in place," he told various media personnel as he engaged in live interviews via web conferencing from his office on Thursday, 28 May 2020.

He explained that the charter option can be used by hotels and by Grenadians who are stuck in foreign lands and need to return before the formal opening of the lone airport. "Now if someone

or a hotel is having a charter service to bring someone specifically to the hotel and they have the protocol already in place and the system in place for testing people when they come in, then they could come in, in June, that will be okay," he said while speaking on PowerFM.

"If you're coming with a commercial airline that is picking up passengers for any hotel in the country and having to go to any part of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, then clearly there is some additional work that must be done for the border to open," he said.

He also explained that there are a number of protocols that have to be agreed upon and instituted before the borders can reopen. "We are working collaboratively with stakeholders to determine what conditions must be in place before we allow persons to enter the country. One such condition is ensuring that all hotels have appropriate sanitisation and other systems in place. We cannot open the borders if only one or two hotels are ready. There must be uniformity of practices as we continue to safeguard public health and safety," he said.

The Prime Minister said that government has identified 30 June 2020 as the possible date for reopening the country's borders. That will be a little more than 2 months since the decision was taken to lock down the country as part of the strategy to reduce the spread of Covid-19. Grenada's first imported case was announced in mid-March. That person was someone from the United Kingdom. Grenada presently has 23 positive laboratory-confirmed cases.

A news release issued on Friday by the Government Information Service (GIS) said that the National Covid-19 Committee and the Tourism Sub-Committee of the Task Force for Rebuilding the Grenadian Economy are currently working with stakeholders in the tourism industry in preparation for the reopening.

During appearances on various media platforms this week, Dr Mitchell said 30 June is being considered as a practical option, but the actual date will depend on all the necessary protocols being in place. The Prime Minister repeatedly stated that while economic activity must resume, public health and safety are also of paramount importance.

No LIAT service before 30 June 2020

BY LINDA STRAKER

- **Most of LIAT's network remain closed to commercial passenger traffic.**
- **LIAT's commercial passenger services will remain suspended until 30 June**
- **Airline has maintained strict protocols for aircraft cleaning and sanitisation**

Grenada and other territories within Caricom which use LIAT's services will not have LIAT connecting the islands if they reopen airports for commercial passenger flights before 30 June 2020.

LIAT's commercial passenger services will remain suspended until 30 June, due to the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Chief Executive Officer, Julie Reifer-Jones, reported that most of LIAT's network remain closed to commercial passenger traffic.

"While some territories have announced a reopening date, there are still many protocols to be implemented, such as testing and mandatory quarantine periods, which will allow for the safe movement of passengers," said a release from LIAT. Reifer-Jones noted that the airline is closely monitoring the situation across the LIAT net-



work and will resume flights when it is safe to do so for passengers.

"Passengers booked during the extended period of suspension will automatically have their bookings cancelled and will receive full airline credit for future travel. Passengers will be able to rebook as soon as the airline announces the resumption of passenger services," the release promised.

Reifer-Jones reassured the public that the airline was continuing its planning for the resumption of operations. She noted however, that there was still a great deal of uncertainty about the date of reopening of most borders. The airline has maintained strict protocols for aircraft cleaning and sanitisation to ensure the health and safety of its passengers and staff.

Prime Minister, Dr Keith Mitchell, disclosed during several media interviews last week that Grenada is targeting 30 June as the date to reopen its international airport for commercial passenger traffic. "There are a number of protocols that have to be agreed upon and instituted before the borders can reopen. We are working collaboratively with stakeholders to determine what conditions must be in place before we allow persons to enter the country," he said.

Other territories within the OECS have already announced dates in early June for reopening of external border and airports. Tourism with its many added products is the biggest provider of employment for persons in the Caribbean.

St George's University reaffirms commitment to Grenada

MEDIA RELEASE



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Assuming a safe return is possible, SGU will provide some students with the choice of attending classes on campus. Students attending virtually may remain online for the entire term, through December 2020.

St George's University reaffirms commitment to Grenada by announcing start dates for distance learning in Fall term and working towards safe re-entry to campus.

St George's University (SGU) announced that it will provide students with the option to attend the August 2020 term via online distance learning.

This allows students enrolled for the August term to participate in SGU's virtual education programme launched in March due to the global pandemic. The virtual programme offers students small group study, personalised academic support and interactive online courses, such as attending live-streamed lectures as they would on campus.

With the planned re-opening of Grenada's borders in the next 2 months, SGU is collaborating closely with the Government of Grenada to establish the conditions that will permit students to safely return to cam-

pus this Fall. Assuming a safe return is possible, SGU will provide some students with the choice of attending classes on campus. Students attending virtually may remain online for the entire term, through December 2020. The university plans to determine by early July whether the appropriate conditions are in place to facilitate on-campus academic activities in the August term. Students will be surveyed in early June to determine interest in returning to campus for August, should conditions permit.

If it is determined that some students may return to campus, that return will occur after 1 August. Any return to campus will include appropriate physical distancing measures in classrooms, labs, dormitories, and other common areas, as well as other best practices for limiting the risk for spread of the disease, including testing for Covid-19.

Dr Richard Liebowitz, Vice Chancellor of St George's University, stated,

“While we are eager to return our students to campus as soon as possible, we want to reduce any risks of infection. We believe providing the option of online courses this August, will allow us to prepare thoroughly for an eventual full return of our community to Grenada. The need for new physicians has never been greater, as this unprecedented public health crisis shows. At St George's, we're proud to be the top provider of new doctors to the US healthcare system. This August, we look forward to empowering our newest class of aspiring physicians to pursue their dreams of practicing medicine whether that be through online learning or on the True Blue campus.”

SGU is represented on the government's Task Force for Rebuilding the Grenadian Economy committee for re-opening Grenada and all final decisions on onsite operations will comply with the health and safety protocols outlined by the Government of

Grenada.

Dr Charles Modica, Chancellor of St George's University, stated, “We look forward to welcoming our students back to campus from all the schools as soon as we are able to do so. The university remains committed to the country and people of Grenada in this long-term partnership, and we look forward to returning as an active and vital member of the community.”

The university's leadership remain humbled by the remarks made by the Prime Minister, Dr The Right Honorable Keith Mitchell, recognising the collaboration with SGU during his last address to the nation. Grenada and other Caribbean countries have been applauded for their decisive response to the pandemic, which should help expedite the eventual return of students. SGU remains committed to helping the Grenadian community navigate the challenges of this global health crisis and the return to economic stability.



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