

Kudos for Heastie, deBlasio on housing initiative

By Nelson A. King

As Chair of the City Council's Housing and Buildings Committee, Brooklyn Councilman Jumaane Williams has applauded State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie for meeting with NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio "to promise that renewing and strengthening the rent regulation laws would be his number one priority."

"As I said last month, New York state elected officials must meet the affordable housing crisis with absolute urgency before our City's rent regulations expire this spring," said Williams, who represents the 45th Council District in Brooklyn.

"In order to ensure that nearly one million New Yorkers do not see their rent go up or their protection against arbitrary evictions lost, Albany must enact stronger tenant protections to further develop the Mayor's Affordable Housing Plan, which will create and preserve 200,000 affordable housing units within the next 10 years," he added.

Williams said he was "encouraged that, under the new leadership of Speaker Heastie, Albany will share the same goal to quickly address our city's chronic housing shortage to ensure that New York becomes a place for all to thrive.

"It is my hope that Speaker Heastie work closely with Mayor de Blasio, Governor Cuomo and State Senate President Skelos to develop a plan that not only complements the mayor's but gives immediate relief to our poor and working class citizens," he said.

TIVOLI SLUM RAID PROBE



Former-Jamaica PM testifies before panel

By Bert Wilkinson

An official probe into the mid-2010 police and army operation to flush out Jamaica's most wanted criminal heard on Monday testimony from the man at the helm of government at the time saying he had cut off all ties with the area bad man because he had been officially informed about the extent and depth of a well funded criminal enterprise that he ran.

Former Prime Minister Bruce Golding, then the parliamentary representative for the West Kingston Tivoli Gardens garrison community that had traditionally supported his Jamaica Labor Party (JLP), basically said that community leader and convicted area strongman Christopher "Dudus" Coke had become a political liability and he had been forced to cut all ties with him based on intelligence from security forces.

Until heavily armed police and soldiers moved in to arrest Coke and dismantle his political

In this June 12, 2009 file photo, Jamaica's Prime Minister Bruce Golding listens to a speech during the Petrocaribe Summit, in Frigate Bay, St. Kitts. The former prime minister testified Monday, Feb. 9, 2015, that he personally knew the underworld boss Christopher "Dudus" Coke who ran a notorious slum fiefdom from his parliamentary constituency but stopped communicating with him roughly three years before the U.S. sought his extradition.

Associated Press / Brennan Linsley, File

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New York City Council member Jumaane D. Williams.

Associate Press / Robert Mecea

Calls for more minority NYPD officers

By Nelson A. King

City Council Members Jumaane D. Williams (D-Brooklyn) and Vanessa L. Gibson (D-Bronx) have called for more minority police officers in the ranks of the New York Police Department (NYPD).

Williams, deputy leader of the City Council and co-chair of the Task Force to Combat Gun Violence, and Gibson, chair of the Council's Committee on Public Safety, made public their call on Tuesday after NY1 released a report stating that, of the 891 new recruits in the NYPD, 45 percent are white men, 20 percent Hispanic men and 10 percent Asian men.

"As we struggle to navigate a path to better relations between police and communities of color, we are disturbed to learn that African-American men continue to be substantially underrepresented in the NYPD," said the Councilmembers in a statement.

"We know the department has pledged to address its issues of diversity and inclusivity - even going so far as to create a task force to explore its low recruitment of African-American men - but at a time when our administration has promised reformed is underway, we feel the urgency to address what is clearly a broken recruitment process must be accelerated," they added.

"The NYPD can provide a positive career path for many New Yorkers, but some young African-American men do not feel welcome in this role, especially in light of recent local and national events," they continued. "The council and administration must work collaboratively with the NYPD to strengthen their efforts introducing African-American males to careers in the police force."

Williams and Gibson noted that, in the 1990's, the Giuliani administration bolstered recruitment efforts by increasing marketing budgets in communities of "more color" through ethnic publications, radio and television.

Youth, police, leaders dialogue on police relations

By Tequila Minsky

In spite of the cold, snow and ice last week, Alianza Dominicana Cultural Center in Washington Heights was filled. There were more than 30 cops including two police chiefs and four commanding officers with five upper Manhattan police precincts being represented. And there were many northern Manhattan young people, too.

This was the goal when Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer joined forces with civil rights attorney Norman Siegel and invited youth, community leaders, and the cops to dialogue on issues of policing and the community. Recognizing the breakdown of trust between police and the community, Norman Siegel launched this initiative to develop a public process where all community voices could be heard.

After opening remarks by NYPD Chief of Department James P. O'Neill and Upper Manhattan Chief Kathleen O'Reilly, Norman Siegel emphasized how he and the borough president are committed to explore the issues together in a respectful dialogue, the essence of democracy.

"We need to understand the criticism, grievances, and recommendations of each side," he said. In equal numbers, youth, police and community leaders sat in 12 circular tables. He posed issues to them to be examined including failure of "broken windows" and why some have called for an independent prosecutor to address allegations of criminal police misconduct.

"We cannot deny the gulf between City Hall and the police union," he



One hundred twenty-five community members and law enforcement persons attended the forum where youth, police and community leaders looked for avenues of communication.

Photo by Tequila Minsky

acknowledged. "We must confront these issues together. Together."

Others spoke of the need for a tough, honest conversation, and core principles. "We want crime to go down, the police to be safe, and fairer treatment regardless of color of skin," said Councilman (West Harlem) Mark Levine.

"This is an important conversation for our future," said Upper Manhattan Councilman Ydandis Rodriguez, long-time community activist who has been arrested twice as part of political demonstrations and activities. Rodriguez gave examples of his confronting ethnic stereotype experiences while grow-

ing up.

The 125 attendees, in small groups facilitated by clergy, nonprofit, and other community leaders, then discussed issues of relations with the police, civil rights, and community safety, offering observations and recommendations.

During the small group discussion high school senior Nicole Saladin, 20, said, "We get stopped for things that are not that serious. There is a lot of unnecessary drama that escalates the situation."

Harlem Precinct Captain Obe spoke of the three-day training coming to all

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Solutions for Caribbean energy security: WB

By Nelson A. King

The World Bank says while there are many challenges, there are also solutions to Caribbean energy security.

The Washington-based financial institution said oil provides more than 90 percent of primary energy needs in the Caribbean, making the region highly vulnerable to price fluctuations.

A summit last month of Caribbean leaders and energy experts, convened by the U.S. State Department in Washington D.C., renewed the region's commitment to energy security, according to the World Bank.

With sustainable electricity now a key part of the development agenda, Senior Energy Specialist, Mark Lambrides, explained the challenges and the solutions for energy security in the Caribbean.

With the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, Lambrides said the Caribbean region is largely dependent on imported fossil fuels for the generation of electricity and for its transportation services.

Even with the relatively lower cost of petroleum these days, he said electricity produced from oil products - whether diesel or heavy fuel oil - remains expensive given their relative inefficiencies in terms of their electricity productivity.

Lambrides noted that many Caribbean countries have electricity tariffs between US \$0.20 and US \$0.50 per kWh, which is around 3-4 times what is paid in the U.S. or in some other developed countries.

"So, first I'd say is a high cost associated with this type of electricity generation of," he said, adding that another challenge would be social costs.

In recent years, the top World Bank

official said oil imports have drained hard currency resources and have cost the countries as much as 10 percent of their (Gross Domestic Product) GDP in expenditures and outlays for importing oil.

In addition, he noted the environmental impact of using oil products, stating that there is a high carbon footprint associated with petroleum products for power generation.

"And the Caribbean countries themselves are very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change," he said. "The Caribbean countries are certainly not responsible for the effects of climate change that we are seeing given their very low carbon emissions, but they do have an opportunity to set an example for the rest of the world of using carbon-friendly resources for power generation."

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Caribbean

The French territories in the Caribbean have begun discussions with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on their applications to become associate members of the community.

CARICOM Secretary-General, Ambassador Irwin LaRocque met recently with a team from French Guiana led by the President of the Regional Council Rodolphe Alexandre.

This followed a recent meeting with a team from Martinique and will be followed by similar discussions later this month with representatives of Guadeloupe.



The discussions with the team from French Guiana focused on the terms and conditions of associate membership of Caricom, regional co-operation in the Caribbean and the relationship between CARICOM and French Guiana.

La Rocque said that the discussions followed on a mandate from the CARICOM Heads of Government to engage the territories.

Barbados

The Trinidad-based Ansa Merchant Bank (AMB) is providing funds to the Barbados government for a multipurpose sugar factory as Bridgetown signaled its intention of becoming a major supplier of sugar to the Caribbean.

Agriculture Minister Dr. David Estwick said Cabinet had approved the financing for the project at its January 8 meeting.

Media reports indicate that AMB could provide as much as Bds\$60 million in financing to increase cane production and to satisfy the start-up operations of the proposed multi-purpose factory in time for the 2017 crop season.



The state-of-the art sugar factory is part of the US\$4250 million Cane Industry Restructuring Project, with the first phase focusing on production of high-end direct sugar consumption, sugar for export, bulk sugar for domestic consumption, high-end sugar for the rum industry and 25 megawatts of electricity for the national grid.

Dominica

The Dominican government recently announced a stay on visas for Haitian nationals as it seeks to tighten its immigration policy,

National Security and Immigration Minister Rayburn Blackmore said the move, which came into effect last month, was not a ban and that there were challenges within the immigration



Life on the margins

Antiguan resident Cynthia James said a politician once called her a dog. See story on page 14.

Inter Press Service / Desmond Brown

system that had to be addressed.

"This is a country that welcomes everybody, but our relation with other friendly countries is critical to our national security; it is critical to our development as a country," he said.

"What I have been able to do as of January is to put a stay on issuing visas for Haitian nationals, not a ban," the minister said.

Haiti belongs to the 15-member Caricom grouping, but unlike other members, its nationals require a visa to enter countries, its nationals require a visa to enter countries within the grouping.

Speaking on a radio program on the state-owned DBS radio, Blackmore said Dominica does not have a human trafficking problem, even though he had been asked by some nationals what the Roosevelt Skerrit government is doing about the situation.

He said the government intends to place greater emphasis on the trade that facilitates illegal immigration.

Grenada

Grenada Prime Minister Dr. Keith Mitchell said roaming charges pose a challenge to an integrated Caribbean platform and are too costly.

Mitchell, who is also CARICOM head of Government for the Regional Portfolio



of Science and Technology made the comment recently while delivering the feature address at the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) 25th anniversary ICT Week at Hyatt Regency Hotel, in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

The conference was themed "Celebrating Our Past: Committing To Our Future".

Both Caricom Secretary General Irwin La Roche and Jamaica's Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Phillip Paulwell, also agreed roaming charges have to be addressed.

Having assumed office in 2013, Mitchell said he and his government incurred an exorbitant phone bill due to roaming charges.

Guyana

Four people, including three children drowned recently while returning from a ritual for a woman who died last year, police said.

They said the bodies of Radika "Nadira" Narine, 12, and nine year-old Annita Persaud were recovered close to the drainage sluice near the East Bank Essequibo village at Vergenoegen.

Danwantie Persaud took her grandchildren, Annita and Billy, to the home of her sister, where they were preparing for Danwantie's mother who died on January last year.

Relatives said the quartet went to

"throw away flowers" and failed to return. All the bodies have been recovered.

Jamaica

Jamaica saw double decreases in every category of crime last year, including a 16 percent drop in homicides, the island's national security minister announced.

In a speech to Jamaica's parliament recently, Peter Bunting said the 1,005 slayings recorded last year was Jamaica's lowest annual total since 2003 and represents a 40 percent reduction over the previous years.

Aggravated assaults went down by 17 percent and rape by 23 percent.

Bunting described it as a "breakthrough year in the fight against crime".

While credit for the decline relates to a number of factors, he partly attributed the success to changing the paradigm of policing in Jamaica.

Although violent crime in Jamaica is still very high, the United Nations has listed the island as having the world's sixth worst homicide rate and about a decade ago had the highest.

Montserrat

Talks are continuing between the

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Tivoli Gardens

Continued from cover

and underworld stronghold at the behest of the US Drug Enforcement Agency in mid 2010, Coke had operated his multi-million dollar cocaine exportation, enterprise extortion and gun smuggling business with virtual impunity because of his strong and well acknowledged ties to various governments, those run by the JLP in particular.

Now out of government and the main witness in the inquiry, Golding's testimony is being closely followed by Jamaicans in part because of the strong and open links Jamaican politicians had with him. Coke has since been extradited to the U.S. and is serving more than 20 years in prison on drug smuggling and other charges.

"The security forces informed me sometime close to December 2007 that there were some men wanted by the police for serious crimes from the Stone Crusher Gang. These men were being hidden in Tivoli Gardens. The police said that if they left Tivoli Gardens, they would be easier to apprehend. It was my belief that strangers of that nature could not have been in Tivoli Gardens without his knowledge," Golding said, explaining his reasons for severing ties despite being the member of parliament for the area.

Golding was also forced to deal with allegations that police and soldiers had used excessive force in several days



In this Dec. 8, 2014 photo, market vendor Adina Derby takes an oath before testifying to a truth commission about the 2010 state of emergency when security forces conducted a raid to capture a gang kingpin that killed at least 76 civilians and one soldier, at a conference center in Kingston, Jamaica.

Associated Press / David McFadden, File

of gunfights with gangsters hiding in military-style fox holes, behind barbed wired fortifications and sniping away from rooftops at police and soldiers among other tactics.

In all more than 70 people died including a handful of policemen and soldiers. Most of the others were civilians or gunmen supporting Coke.

Facing tough questioning from attorneys for the commission, the army and police, Golding maintained that the bulk of those killed were gunmen openly engaging security forces as they moved in to arrest a man that was commonly known as the area "president."

"I'm concerned at the failure, up to now, to establish that the majority of these persons are persons who were engaging the police in gunfire," he lashed out, noting that none had had been shown to "die of cardiac arrest."

Attorneys and Golding had testy exchanges and sparred with each other several times during the hearings. In one case, Attorney Deborah Martin pointed to official reports about the economic loss to Jamaica from the days of seige in the capital, the bad publicity the tourist island received internationally and the general fall out.

The United Nations had put the figure at \$258M. Golding argued that the UN was not in a position to arrive at such a figure.

"With the greatest of respect, they wouldn't have the competence to provide that figure. They wouldn't have the competence to make that measurement."

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Police relations

Continued from page 3

the precincts and the trial run for body cameras in select precincts. She mentioned the need for modernizing buildings, equipment, and providing tablets to officers.

At the end of the conversation sessions, representatives from each group reported to all.

“Sometimes people are being arrested and they aren’t told of why,” one group reported. One community leader commented that kids are being hassled for weed (legal in some states), which is not an issue.

There should be more police accountability was another observation. It was noted also that precincts should be more community friendly, where residents felt welcomed not alienated. Along these lines were recommendations for greater access to information exchange including the use of social media to let people know about meetings in the neighborhood.

After the reports, Siegel summed up the feedback and recommendations.

Almost all the groups spoke of the need for better communication between the police and the community. Most of the groups wanted more foot patrols so police can get to know the community and the community could know their “beat cop.”

Civic classes are needed for youth to know their rights and responsibilities was another concern. Residency issues came up: police should live in New York. The implementation of body cameras was a recommendation all agreed upon. Reiterated was the need for better training to undo stereotypes, racism and other “isms.” Finally, it was pointed out how community civilian review boards need to be decentralized.

During the Manhattan Borough President’s State of the Borough address last Sunday, Gale Brewer mentioned how meaningful this Washington Heights dialogue was among youth, leaders and police.

This is the first of three such meetings in Manhattan and it is hoped that this forum format — bringing the community and police together — will be implemented in the other boroughs to generate ideas for improving relations.

World Bank

Continued from page 3

Lambrides, however, said Caribbean countries are blessed with an abundance of renewable domestic natural resources, which can be used to produce electricity, such as geothermal, solar, wind, biomass, and ocean or marine resources.

He said the costs associated with these alternative energy systems have fallen dramatically over the past decade, to the point at which they are, in many cases, the most cost effective options for power generation.

Lambrides said multiple renewable energy solutions are increasingly being deployed throughout the Caribbean.

“We are seeing numerous examples of wind farms, solar photovoltaics, solar hot water heating and other renewables,” he said.

For example, he noted that nearly half of the households in Barbados already

make use of solar hot-water heating systems, which use the sun to heat water for household and commercial applications.

Additionally, Lambrides said these are cheaper to produce — “cheaper than electric water heaters today- so companies originating in Barbados are now doing business around the region, creating jobs and of replicating opportunities throughout the Caribbean.”

Solar photovoltaics (SPV) - which produce electricity directly from the sun, as opposed to solar hot water which uses the thermal energy to heat water — have dramatically dropped in price over the last decade, to the point where the electricity produced is very competitive with the existing grid-network supply, Lambrides said.

Likewise, he said prices have fallen dramatically for wind technology, “and we are seeing more wind-farms in the region.”

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I hope to God, they preserve it!

By Dawn Plummer

In the midst of this bitter cold February month in Brooklyn, we had some warmth in our hearts to welcome the charming and endearing performing artiste, Diana Ross at the Kings Theatre, last Tuesday evening. The theatre, as we know, was an old building that had been vandalized over the years and was a shelter to many homeless people around Brooklyn. I will never forget the Friday afternoon a few years ago, when I was robbed right across from the theatre itself, as someone was always hanging out there behind the giant old drapes once used by theatre.

But in Brooklyn, last Tuesday night, one would not have known that such things once existed there. It was a new ensemble, with picturesque for a perfect setting. Diana Ross is a great songstress and she certainly did not disappoint any of her over three thousand fans who came to hear and see her. I find her propensity somewhat compelling, so I could not afford to miss the opportunity to see her when the act was right here in Brooklyn.

The stylish diva, had everyone rocking and singing through out most of her performance. She still has her game and knows how to get the crowd grooving with her. Fans knew most or all of her songs as well, so the party did not stop. Most of us were sitting down, when her splendid voice burst throughout the wide and sturdy theatre. The words, "I'm coming out" ranged profound-

ly, this had everyone jumping to their feet. She entered the stage from the front area of the isle and mounted the stage with fans behind her. "Let the show begin" and fans started rocking right to the end. Diana was awesome. Her repertoire was good and mesmerizing and I am almost certain no one left the show disappointed.

But the captivating segment of the evening was the supreme design, beautifully carved and structured red cherry oak, stencil carving, and the metal molding of the Kings Theatre. Show goers were astounded and in awe of such genuine and absolute beauty. The almost 40 years of vandalism and long winter days that have weathered the drapes, floors, windows and walls, exposed to the snow were gone and like the phoenix burned and crushed Kings Theatre rose again.

Time has its way of unfolding the truth for indeed the beauty may have fade, but the theatre was strong and firm and so as the old, ravished furniture collapsed on the inside and chairs and drapes once used by vandals for beds and night clothing to hide from the winter nights escape our memories, once again the Kings Theatre surged. Almost four decades later as the greatness of the theatre unraveled, it exposes us to a 20th century master piece. The elegantly wide staircase, the high ornamental ceiling, the long yet enshrine golden edged banister that projects such grace, with the calculat-

Continued on Page 12

It is high time for these court hearings to end

By Wellington C. Ramos

It seems as if Mr. Michael Ashcroft will not stop pursuing the people and government of Belize for this 33.5 million dollars that he claims he is owed. I have heard our Prime Minister The Right Honorable Dean Barrow said over and over again that in his opinion, the then Prime Minister Said Musa and his Attorney General Francis Fonseca now the leader of the People's United Party (PUP), acted illegally by approving the payment of the loan without the approval of the Belize's National Assembly.

Now, it is clear that the Supreme Court judge is in agreement with their line of argument. Knowing them, they will never be satisfied with this judge's ruling because they think that because they have money we in Belize must succumb

Our country cannot afford to pay this kind of money to anybody. Especially, when most of our people did not benefit from the use of Universal Health Services.

to them. Our country cannot afford to pay this kind of money to anybody. Especially, when most of our people did not benefit from the use of Universal Health Services. Even up to today, the average Belizean citizen cannot afford the cost of the healthcare this institution provides. Also, within the PUP Cabinet at the time there were ministers of government who were opposed to the government paying

this money but Said Musa and his Attorney General Francis Fonseca went ahead and paid it anyway.

Mr. Ashcroft is going to instruct his lawyers to appeal this case to the Belize Court of Appeals and then to the Caribbean Court of Justice (C.C.J.). However, what will happen if he ends up losing this case in both courts? In my opinion he could decide to just let it rest, take back the company and its assets or contemplate bringing legal action against Said Musa and Francis Fonseca his two friends for the decision they made. A business cannot just lose 33.5 million dollars like that without getting back its money. This is where this case is heading and it will cause problems between them and the PUP. According to most of the Belizean people I have spo-

Continued on Page 12

This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you

By Peter Costantini

SEATTLE, Washington, Feb. 7, 2015 (IPS) - "Enhanced interrogation": the George W. Bush administration bureaucrats who coined the term had perfect pitch. The apparatchiks of Kafka's Castle would have admired the grayness of the euphemism. But while it sounds like some new kind of focus group, it turns out it was just anodyne branding for good old-fashioned torture.

Unfortunately, the debate around it unleashed by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence report has largely missed

the point.

Certainly, the report did provide overwhelming evidence that torture did not produce useful intelligence. The CIA had concluded previously that torture is "ineffective", "counterproductive," and "will probably result in false answers."

An FBI agent wrote that one prisoner had cooperated and provided "important actionable intelligence" months before being tortured. Some CIA agents and soldiers reportedly questioned the legality of the policies and resisted carrying them out.

A Bush Justice Department lawyer acknowledged: "It is difficult to quantify with confidence and precision the effectiveness of the program." In any case, it is inherently impossible to know that any intelligence purportedly extracted by torture could not have been elicited by legal interrogation.

Fundamentally, though, whether torture "works" or not is immaterial.

The Third Geneva Convention and the U.N. Covenant Against Torture do not exempt tortures that somebody believes

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The T&T leader's 'see-through' subterfuge

There's been no shortage of comment since Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar's dramatic action a few days ago, in firing several colleagues, from both within the cabinet and elsewhere in her beleaguered government, in the wake of yet another scandal. The dilemma for many an observer of these latest palace machinations is: what rationale could there be for making a rash of changes in key government positions when the life of the government is but mere months shy of expiring. That is, unless there are plans already hatched to pull a 1955 re-do and prolong the current administration's tenure.

Central to the plot on this occasion, and not for the first time, was the now departed attorney general, Anand Ramlogan, the biggest head that rolled. Under investigation for a serious witness tampering allegation, Ramlogan had virtually no chance of surviving, given what was now engulfing him — a situation made only more dire when a fellow cabinet member, the national security minister, corroborated the allegation against him.

So Bissessar knew she had to dump Ramlogan but, like so many times previously, she had difficulty calling a spade a spade. We don't know if Bissessar has now gotten to keeping her own counsel or whether there's some guru or spin master who designs plays for her, especially when she is forced to deal from behind the eight-ball. But one is curious as to what she thought she was doing when she began her announcement about the deck shuffling by referencing her oath of office, and the integrity it demands of her. And then proceeded to demonstrate, in the very announcement, how non-existent integrity has been among her administration's players, herself included.

It seems pretty clear that Bissessar was loath to dispense with Ramlogan...at least exclude him from any formal role in government. Many believe that he was the key strategist and orchestrator for moves made by the government that registered negatively in the public arena or provoked serious questions or flat-out ignited anger and major pushback. Early in her administration's term, Bissessar seized

Viewpoint

By Les Slater

the opportunity to confer Senior Counsel status on Ramlogan and herself...which raised eyebrows but ultimately the two rode out that storm in a teacup unscathed. Even when an issue surfaced surrounding Ramlogan's ownership or questionable dealings with two high-priced luxury vehicles, the hue and cry abated with little harm done in Ramlogan's world.

But it was the PM's hands-off attitude toward Ramlogan in the notorious power abuse episode known as "Section 34" that Ramlogan, and by extension Bissessar, have had difficulty shaking. Section 34 being a bit of legislative sleight-of-hand in 2012, when the government extracted one section of a criminal justice bill and rushed it to then President Max Richards for proclamation, the nefariousness of the strange move soon exposed as a maneuver intended to benefit two party financiers facing possible jail terms. When

pressure from many quarters brought the Section 34 matter to a boil, Bissessar's posture of righteous indignation was immediately seen as fabricated once she let Ramlogan slide and forced another minister to walk the plank.

And wouldn't you know that it was repercussions from the Section 34 debacle that came back to bite Ramlogan in the rear end! Obviously seething over having no choice but ditch Ramlogan, the PM's response was apparently two-pronged. First, handing down maximum punishment (dismissal) to the individual seen as most responsible for Ramlogan's fall, National Security Minister Gary Griffith. But there's also an impending election to run and win, facing what probably are declining odds. Well aware that it's pretty much a lost cause identifying the government collectively with integrity or principle, Bissessar's offer of herself as embodying those better angels seemed the only game in town.

It begins, after a while, to wear thin, this idea that even as top dog in a yard of mean, vicious mongrels, you are ignorant of, and consequently blameless, in

the epidemic of hideous behavior relentlessly going down. This is the image of her that Bissessar insists the polity should unquestioningly accept — that the cascade of wrongdoing that has practically become her administration's imprimatur has, in every instance, unfolded outside of her awareness. Which defies logic and common sense.

We believe the prime minister saw this most recent imbroglio as her personal call to arms for the upcoming elections, requiring her to not only unload Ramlogan and cause some grief for their "turncoat" colleague, but go into overdrive on the "integrity" kick. Only a bloodbath would send the message, never mind its not making sense as far as serious governance, given the timing.

Subterfuge may well impact as intended in a less challenging diversionary mission. A different ballgame here. There have just been too many opportunities along the way for Bissessar to truly stand up for integrity in governance. Eleventh-hour "gallery" sessions to whitewash a severely blemished trail figure to be simply too transparent to do the PM much good.

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OP-EDS

Enhanced interrogation

Continued from page 10

to be "effective." The codes are based on the hard-headed calculation that by agreeing not to torture non-combatants, nations can reduce the probability of their own non-combatants being tortured.

Post-WWII trials imprisoned and executed German and Japanese officials for war crimes including torture. Nuremberg and Tokyo established the indelible principle that acting as responsible government officials, or following the orders of one, is not a defense against accusations of war crimes.

Granted, these norms have been observed as much in the breach as in practice. And on the blood-soaked canvas of the past century, the damages of torture pale beside the scope of suffering inflicted by the "legal" savageries of war. Yet if the leaders of the richest and most powerful empire in history can claim that defending it requires torturing prisoners, what other government or non-state actor will hesitate to make the same claim?

Dick Cheney, former vice president and current marketing director for the Spanish Inquisition, says: "I'd do it again in a minute." No one should doubt his sincerity.

One of the "enhancements" was report-

edly an effort to fabricate a justification for invading Iraq. High Bush administration officials allegedly put heavy pressure on interrogators "to find evidence of cooperation between al-Qaeda and the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's regime," in an effort to fabricate a justification for invading Iraq, according to a former senior U.S. intelligence official and a former Army psychiatrist cited by McClatchy News. No such evidence was found.

But beyond such immediate imperatives, the torture policy meshed seamlessly with a discretionary war premised on lies and optimized for "Shock and Awe." This neat ideological package asserted the unchallengeable power of a "Unitary Executive" above constitutional checks and balances, national law and international treaties.

Echoing Richard Nixon's circular self-justification of three decades earlier, Justice Department lawyer Steven Bradbury told Congress: "The president is always right."

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to, IPS-Inter Press Service.

Edited by Kitty Stapp

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Belize is in deep trouble

Continued from page 10

ken to here in the United States and in Belize, they are against any government of Belize paying 33.5 million dollars to Mr. Ashcroft and if they pay it, they will suffer in the next General Election to be held. This was one of the issue raised in the 2008 General Elections when the U.D.P. defeated the P.U.P. by a landslide 26 to 5 seats.

Prolonging this issue could also bring back some bad memories to Belizeans from 2008 and that could impact on the political careers of Said Musa in Fort George Division and Francis Fonseca in Freetown Division. I think that this issue should be a part of their re-election campaign because it has some-

thing to do with our nation's wealth. We cannot afford to have our politicians making these major decisions on their own, without abiding by the constitution of our country. When a politician is elected, he or she must swear to an oath, that they will uphold and defend the constitution of our country. Any breach of such an oath, should be grounds for removal from office through a recall process. If this is not written in the laws of Belize, then what is the sense of having our elected representatives swearing to an oath. Again, I call on my fellow Belizeans to pay keen interest to this constitutional issue at hand. Our country is in deep trouble and it is our responsibility to save it.

Vintage of modern technology

Continued from page 10

ing support of patrons moving up and down the range.

A true reflection of its 1929 design. The glowing patina covering the walls and ceiling reveals a sense of strength that would repel any tests capable of heralding a contradicting position of the genuine work of art. New carpets clad the old staircase and walkways contradicting the aged old theatre, and

the almost 40 years since the last time its doors were opened. Several mini bars spread across the ground lounge to help patrons experience the glamour that comes along with the theatre. Kings Theatre is a vintage of modern technology. The old Lowe's King Theatre, now the Kings Theatre, is an extraordinary beauty of genuine designs. It is a valid resurfacing right there on Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. I hope to God we can preserve it.



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Antiguan shanty dwellers fear the worse



Terry-Ann Lewis fears that this drain which runs through her community could lead to catastrophe if it is unable to handle heavy storm runoff. *Inter Press Service / Desmond Brown*

By Desmond Brown

GREEN BAY, Antigua, Jan. 28, 2015 (IPS) - It was early on a Saturday morning and there was no sign of life in the community. The shacks erected on both sides of the old, narrow road that winds through the area are all surrounded by zinc sheets which rise so high, it's impossible to see what lies on the other side.

But behind those walls is a story of life on the margins: poverty and fear for women. In spite of noticeable improvements in the overall quality of life in Antigua and Barbuda, inequality and deprivation continue to challenge development, with pockets of extreme poverty in some areas.

For Cynthia James and other women living in this shoreline community on the outskirts of the capital St. John's, hope is all but lost.

"A politician came here once and called me a dog," James said as she stood outside her gate holding her one-year-old grand-

son. "The politician said all of us in here are dogs and are not used to anything good and we will always be dogs. I will never forget that. When you get hurt you never forget it."

The two main political parties here hold differing views about the level of poverty and unemployment in the country. The Antigua Labour Party (ALP) has consistently placed the poverty level at around 35 per cent but the United Progressive Party (UPP) placed the percentage of the working population living on less than EC\$10 a day at 12 per cent, the lowest in the region.

"The highest is in Haiti: 79 percent of the population, that is eight out of 10, live on approximately EC\$10 a day. Guyana, 64 percent; Suriname, 45 percent; Jamaica, 43 percent; Dominica, 33 percent; St. Vincent & the Grenadines, 33 percent; Grenada, 32 percent; St. Kitts, 31 percent; Trinidad, 21 percent; St. Lucia, 19 percent; Barbados, 14 percent; Antigua,

12 percent," said former legislator Harold Lovell, citing World Bank figures. Lovell served as a minister of finance in the former administration.

James, 53, does not care much for the numbers being debated by politicians. For year now, she and the other women living in this vulnerable area have been watching a drain which runs through the community wreak havoc on their modest dwellings whenever it rains.

James, her 78-year-old mother Gertrude and 28-year-old daughter Terry-Ann Lewis all live on the same street. Their biggest fear now is that the drain which runs through the area will one day cause their deaths.

"When I was a little girl they would always come and clean out the gutter, they would send the prisoners to clean up the area, but all of that has stopped," James told IPS. "Whenever the rain comes, it floods my mother's house, it floods my house and it floods my daugh-

ter's house."

The dozens of families here have thought about moving to safer communities but they say they are just too poor to relocate without assistance.

In 2014, the issue of poor drainage that leads to flooding in this and other communities across the country came into focus with a series of community consultations led by the Environment Division.

Senior Environment Officer Ruleta Camacho said the aim was to establish a sustainable financing mechanism and develop a climate adaptation project that could bring about significant changes to affected

communities.

"Due to the impact of climate change we are having exacerbated drought and exacerbated rainfall - we are having large amounts of rain in a short amount of time and what we need to do at this point is to make sure our waterways and drains can handle that volume of water," she said.

Terryann Lewis is anxiously awaiting the commencement of the promised project. She recalled her brush with death on Oct. 13, 2014 when Tropical Storm Gonzalo passed near Antigua, tearing roofs from people's homes and knocking down trees.

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Flushing chapter of National Congress of Black Women kicks off programs

By Madina Toure

Less than a year after the National Congress of Black Women announced plans to start a boroughwide chapter in Flushing, the nonprofit already has some programs in place and others in the works.

The chapter is focusing on personal finance and budgeting and engaging people more politically, said Pauline Murray, chairwoman of the Flushing chapter and NCBW's New York State coordinator.

The chapter expects to launch a program on banking, personal finance and budgeting around March in conjunction with Carver Federal Savings Bank.

Murray said many black people, including those who go on to become rappers or entertainers — and individuals in general — do not know how to manage their money.

"Some of them will die as paupers because in our schools, we have not emphasized personal finance," she said. "We

have emphasized mathematics ... many of them do not even know how to write a check. Many do not know the difference between net income and gross income."

The Flushing chapter currently has 12 members and is seeking to get a few more members. The group meets at the Flushing Library every fourth Sunday.

In April, the nonpartisan nonprofit announced plans to start a boroughwide chapter in Flushing. The group is working on getting the Bronx and Brooklyn chapters established. The nonprofit has more than 100 chapters throughout the country.

Since November, the chapter has been running a food cooperative program with Long Life Unity Food Buyers Collective in Brooklyn.

"It helps defray unnecessary costs for them for delivery to Queens," Murray said.

A full order, which consists of 20 different fruits and veg-

The chapter is focusing on personal finance and budgeting and engaging people more politically,

etables, costs \$35. A half order, which consists of more than 10 different fruits and vegetables, costs \$18. The order consists of fresh food. Members can also choose from a variety of fish options, including a 10-pound box of tilapia for \$33, a 10-pound box of whitey for \$35 and a 22-pound box of whole red snappers for \$92.

About 20 people currently participate in the program. Anyone can take part. The program's cycle is every two weeks.

Starting in March, members will be required to pay an annual membership fee of \$25. The fee would be waived if members participated in the budgeting and personal

finance program.

Murray said she hopes to establish a relationship with black farmers' markets and that she would like to expand the program to include non-perishables such as flour, corn meal and maple syrup.

The chapter also started working on a proposal for a recycling business in August that would employ formerly incarcerated individuals. The business would also include job readiness.

The chapter would have the individuals go through assessment phases, which would include general assessment, data collection, questions about their skill sets, their health condition and their housing status. They would also help them get accustomed to resume writing.

The nonprofit will target 15 to 30 people for the first year and then explore the possibility of growth in the future.

The chapter is also supporting Macedonia A.M.E. Church's

Healing Hearts Ministry, a Flushing support group for incarcerated individuals or family members of those who have been imprisoned or still are.

"These young men that might have gotten caught up in robbing and they'll say, 'Ms. Murray, I did it because my baby needed milk,' Murray said. "I'm not saying it was right for them to do that, by no means, but I can understand what they're saying."

For Black History Month, Murray says the congress hope to support other events and programs as opposed to creating their own in an effort to encourage unity.

"Let's come together now," she said. "Let's stop feeling our greatness is strictly about what I can do or what I have done. Let's do it as a people and work together."

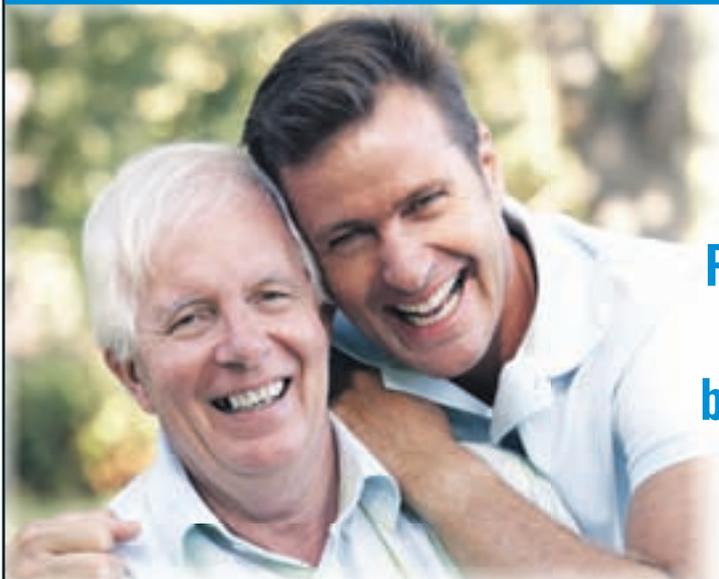
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United States congratulates Grenada on independence anniversary



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry. Associated Press / Sergei Chuzavkov

By Nelson A. King

As Grenada celebrates its 41st anniversary of political independence, the United States has congratulated the nation, saying that their common values will continue to unite them in the future.

“On behalf of President Obama and the American people, I congratulate the people of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique as you celebrate the 41st anniversary of your independence on Feb. 7,” said U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in a statement on Friday.

“I’ll never forget when our two countries were hit by Hurricane Ivan in 2004,” he added. “I watched with horror as the devastating storm enveloped your capital before descending on Florida.”

“My office immediately sent water, blankets, and first aid

kits to those affected. My wife, Teresa, traveled to New York to pack supplies and console Caribbean expats in both English and French,” he continued.

“And when the waters receded and the wind died, America stood side-by-side with Grenada,” Kerry said. Together we built tents for teachers to live and work in. We delivered kitchen utensils so that students could eat hot meals. We replanted the nutmeg trees that make your island famous. And we repaired the orange roofs of

St. George, one by one.”

The U.S. Secretary of State said while both nations “have seen tearful days and uplifting ones”, their “common values will continue to unite” them in the future – “how we celebrate diversity, advance justice and prosperity, and work each day for peace from the Windward Islands to the Gulf of Mexico.

“On this joyous occasion, I wish all people of the ‘Isle of Spice’ a happy Independence Day,” Kerry said.

Tourists spend more in Carib

By Danica Coto

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — A record 26.3 million people traveled to the Caribbean last year and spent an unprecedented amount of money in what is considered the world’s most tourism-dependent region, officials said Tuesday.

It is the fifth consecutive year that the Caribbean has reported an increase in tourists following an economic crisis that forced resorts to shut down and caused a drop in visitors and spending.

Hugh Riley, the Caribbean Tourism Organization’s secretary general, said Caribbean tourism rose by 5.3 percent, while the worldwide tourism growth rate was 4.7 percent.

Officials attributed the increase in part to improvements at airports around the region, the opening of new hotel chains and an increase in direct flights and airline seat capacity.

The Dutch Caribbean saw the most growth, with Aruba for the

first time reporting more than 1 million visitors. The Dominican Republic, Cuba and Jamaica also saw an unprecedented number of visitors. Smaller destinations including Haiti, St. Lucia and Belize reported a record number of stay-over arrivals.

A surge in visitors from Canada, the U.S. and Europe helped set those records.

“It tells us that stability is returning to the market,” said Richard Sealy, chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization.

Tourists overall spent more than \$29 billion in the Caribbean last year, an increase of more than \$1 billion over the previous year.

The region also welcomed nearly 24 million cruise ship passengers last year, an 8 percent increase, though Winfield Griffith, the organization’s research director, said he expected “another shift away from the Caribbean as the cruise lines try to diversify their product” in 2015.

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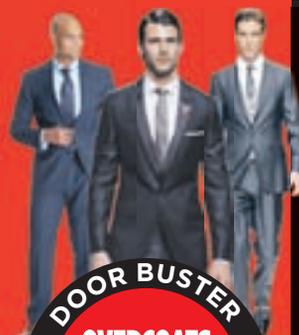
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Ellsworth 'Shake' Keane: Jazz musician, poet

By Nelson A. King

Ellsworth McGranahan "Shake" Keane, a jazz musician and poet, was born on May 30, 1927, in Kingstown, the Vincentian capital, and died on Nov. 11, 1997 in Oslo, Norway.

Keane was best known for his role as a jazz trumpeter, primarily for his work as a member of the ground-breaking Joe Harriott Quintet (1959–65).

Born into a humble family that loved books and music, Keane attended the then Kingstown Methodist School, and elementary school, and St. Vincent Grammar School, an elite secondary school in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

His father, Charles, who died when Keane was 13, taught him to play the trumpet and gave his first public recital at 6.

At 14, Keane led a musical band comprising his brothers. In the 1940s, with his mother, Dorcas, working to raise six children, the teenager joined one of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines' leading bands, Ted Lawrence and his Silvertone Orchestra.

During his early adulthood in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Keane's principal interest was literature, rather than the music for which he would become better known.

He was dubbed "Shakespeare" by his school mates, on account of his love of prose and poetry.

This nickname was subsequently shortened to "Shake," which he used throughout his adult life.

Keane published two books of poetry, *L'Oubili* (1950) and *Ixion* (1952), while still in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.



Shake Keane, St. Vincent author and national hero with his trademark beard and beloved horn.
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In 1952, he migrated to the United Kingdom, where he worked on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Radio's Caribbean Voices, reading poetry and interviewing fellow writers and

musicians.

He also started reading literature at London University by day, while playing in nightclubs in Soho by night, as well

Continued on Page 22

Dr. Matthews writes about immigrants

By Tangerine Clarke

Guyanese American author Dr. Lear Matthews gives a clear insight into Caribbean immigrants living in the United States, in his new book entitled "English-Speaking Caribbean Immigrants: Transnational Identities."

The book outlines a scope of matters that highlights the transnational experiences and identity of English-speaking Caribbean immigrants in the United States, with implications for immigrants in general.

As a professor in the Department of Community and Human Services at State University of New York, Empire State College, Dr. Matthews researched this important topic to give his readers an indelible perception of the trends, policies and events that helped to build the lives of immigrants in this country.

Dr. Matthews, a former lecturer at the University of Guyana and current member of the Editorial Board of the Caribbean Journal of Social Work, said that few students of international migration envisioned the changes in migration trends, policies and events that have shaped the immigration process at the onset of the 21st Century.

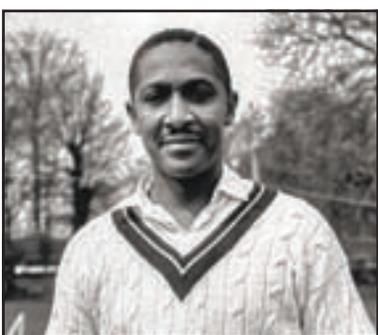
The certified clinical social worker is Chair of the Advisory Board of the Caribbean American Social Workers Association and a member of the Advisory Board the CUNY Medgar Evers Social Work Program. He stated that the book chapter contributors, informed by their role as educators, researchers and community advocates, focus on the successes and challenges that face this population as they sustain connections and identities with the home country.

"At the core of these presentations is the exploration of the lived experiences of Caribbean immigrants and the institutions through which they bridge nation-states while maintaining a transnational life style," said Dr. Matthews, who served as clinic director of the Bedford Stuyvesant Community Mental Health Center in Brooklyn for more than 10 years.

This timely and important book includes topics such as the unprecedented examination of Hometown Associations; adjustment of Caribbean immigrant students; and transnational concerns about the elderly.

"This book is a welcome addition to the literature on transnational and the immigrant experience. A must read for scholars and practitioners with an inter-

Continued on Page 22



Sir Frank Worrell.

Photo courtesy of <http://www.alloutcricket.com>

Frank Worrell, difference maker for West Indies

By Les Slater

There surely would have been some who believed that in 1957 Frank Worrell was a perfect fit for captaincy of the West Indies Test Cricket team for that year's tour of England. The lords of West Indies cricket at the time were on no such track, though, and added insult to injury by handing the captain's role to past-his-prime John Goddard of Barbados, in so doing, maintaining the tradition of whites only leading the team. The indignity was repeated for the 1958-59 tour of India, when selectors named a less experienced white Jamaican, Gerry Alexander, team captain. It was 1960-61's remarkable tour of Australia that would give Worrell the opportunity to make his landmark debut as the first black man selected to lead the West Indies for a tour.

In the British West Indies of the 1950s and prior, cricket was no different from other institutions. White domination of plum positions was a given in sports, as elsewhere in the society. In 1948 the internationally renowned George Headley of Jamaica should rightfully have been made West Indies skipper for the Test series with the visiting English team. Instead, even the compromise arrangement of having this black player lead the team for two of the Tests was so socially toxic, the flak, combined with Headley's injuries, resulted in his being captain for just one match, and the color bar essentially being considered unbroken, as succeeding years made clear.

Worrell's elevation to the captaincy in 1960 was itself no cakewalk. Strong advocacy on his behalf, most notably by C.L.R. James, couldn't be ignored by the West Indies Cricket Board. In addition to which, the winds of political reform then sweeping through the territories made stonewalling on the color question a bit tougher.

Continued on Page 22

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CARIBBEAN ROUNDUP

Continued from page 20

government of Montserrat and officials of the UK Department for International Development (DID) on the island's 2015-2016 Recurrent Budget and related issues.

The meetings, which ended recently, are reviewing DID's budget aid support to Montserrat, especially for the planning of the 2015-2016 government budget and is also assessing the performance of the existing UK-funded projects there.

The 2015-2016 Montserrat budget is due to be presented in March in the Legislative Assembly by premier and finance minister Donaldson Romeo. It will be his first budget following his People's Democratic Movement's electoral victory last September.

Romeo said he is seeking an increase in funding to meet some of the challenges his people and government face, as the small British territory continues rebuilding in the wake of a series of eruptions by its Soufriere Hills volcano between 1995 and 2012.

Its eruptions have in the past rendered more than half of Montserrat uninhabitable, destroyed the capital, Plymouth, and caused widespread evacuations.

Official figures put the UK government's volcano-related aid expenditure at around 400 million British pounds- about

1.6 million Eastern Caribbean dollars.

Trinidad

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) says recent changes in the energy markets represent a major "economic challenge" for Trinidad and Tobago whose exports are heavily linked to these markets.

An IMF delegation, headed by Elie Canetti, advisor in the IMF Western Hemisphere recently ended a one week visit to T&T

He said although it is difficult to know where the markets will settle, the drivers of energy price declines appear likely to endure.

"Therefore, we support the government's prudent decision to prepare revised budget plans based on conservative price assumptions", he added.

"For that reason, we agree with the authorities' goal of returning to the original 2014/2015 target of a fiscal deficit of 2.3 percent, which barring the emergence of further downside risks, appears feasible," Canetti said.

The IMF official said over the medium term, the fiscal recommendations issued by the Washington-based financial institution on the T&T economy remain critical to achieving long-term goals of diversification, and saving and investing for the future. — *compiled by Azad Ali*



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Matthews

Continued from page 18

est in the Caribbean, the volume offers new insights to all in the field of migration studies," said Professor Lynne M. Healy, University of Connecticut.

Dr. Matthews, who has written extensively about how immigrants adapt in North America, cultural retention and cross-cultural adult learning, is a noted scholar in his field who has championed the cause of issues related to the Afro- and Indo-Caribbean Diaspora.

His published research has dealt extensively with the psychosocial impact of natural disasters, mental health and crime in the Caribbean, adjustment of Caribbean immigrant families, and the impact of occupational change.

The works of Dr. Matthews, who is a member of the coordinating committee for the Biennial Conference of Caribbean Social Work Educators, are included in college curricula across the U.S. and the Caribbean and used in the training of human services practitioners working with immigrants and trauma victims.

An award-winning educator and community leader, Dr. Matthews received the Distinguished Caribbean Social Work Educators Award and the prestigious SUNY Jane Altes Prize for exemplary community service. Dr. Matthews, former president of the New York Tutorial Support Group and current member of the Guyana Cultural Association Media Team, continues to foster his passion for education that reaches across continents.

Students of the University of Western Cape in South Africa benefit from a col-



Dr. Lear Matthews.

laborative e-learning course in human services with students at Empire State College facilitated by Dr. Matthews.

Listed in the Who's Who of Clinical Social Workers, Dr. Matthews applies his academic training to advocate for the rights of immigrants and is known for his ability to link scholarship and community service.

Professor Percy Hintzen of the University of California, Berkeley said, "Dr. Matthews is concerned at every turn with policy, practice and solutions."

"We see a type of applied practical scholarship that is most refreshing and that is badly needed, and necessary," said Hintzen.

Activist Eusi Kwayana in turn urged: "Various agencies, organizations and activists should begin to plan a response to Professor Matthews' comments on the effects of violence in our communities."

Keane

Continued from page 18

as doing session work and recording with legends, such as the late Trinidadian calypsonian Lord Kitchener.

At London nightclubs, Keane worked in a number of styles, including cabaret, highlife, soca, mento, calypso and jazz.

From 1959, he committed more fully to jazz, spending six years as a member of pioneering alto saxophonist Jamaican Joe Harriott's band.

Harriott considered Keane the partner that he had been waiting for.

Worrell

Continued from page 18

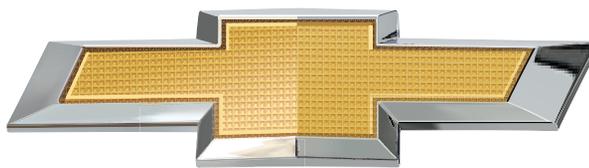
were born in Barbados Frank Worrell, Everton Weekes and Clyde Walcott who would later attain the heights of cricket greatness as the fearsome Three Ws. Worrell, eldest of the triumvirate, established early an elegance and style both in his batting and overall demeanor on and off the field, that routinely linked the term "gentleman" with his name. Upon assuming the captaincy in 1960, he proceeded to demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities as well, that saw the profile of the West Indies team immeasurably enhanced on the international cricket scene.

Worrell had made his Test debut in 1948 when the English team toured the West Indies, and was just three runs shy of a century in his first at-bat when

he got out. It was the start of a distinguished career as one of the game's premier batsmen. In a total of 51 Tests he would record nine centuries and wind up with an average of just below 50, with a highest score of 261, made during the West Indies' historic tour of England in 1950. At first-class level (he represented both Barbados and Jamaica and also was a professional in England's Lancashire League), he scored 39 centuries in 208 matches, averaging over 54, and he was twice involved in partnerships of over 500 runs. He was, to boot, no slouch as a bowler. He took a total of 69 wickets in Test matches, taking seven for 70 in one match against England. He bagged 349 wickets in first-class matches.

Impressive as those numbers obviously are and although the stats in the last phase of his career didn't match the earlier prowess, the best was indeed saved for last in the Worrell odyssey.

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British Royals test Grenadines' waters

By Vinette K. Pryce
 With much of the northern portion of the world locked in a freeze-frame, Britain's Prince William and his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge are enjoying a southern vacation on the Caribbean island of Mustique.

The famous, royal couple left their palatial home in England to soak up the sun on the small private island that is part of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and in the process spend some private time with their only child George who will be joined soon by a sibling.

The heir to the throne and the seven months pregnant former Kate Middleton are reportedly vacationing at Aurora Villa where their 18-month-old toddler is receiving swimming lessons in the private pool.

"He loves splashing about. It's the perfect place for him to



Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, left, smiles as she looks at Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge.

Associated Press / Kena Betancur, Pool

play," an unnamed source told US Weekly Magazine.

"This will be their last big trip before the baby is born in April."

Another reason for their getaway trip could have been the 60th birthday celebration of Carole Middleton, the Duchess' mother on Jan. 31.

Reportedly, along with her husband Michael, 27-year-old son, James, 31-year-old daughter

Pippa family friends Nico Jackson and Donna Air, the matriarch celebrated the milestone event at Basil's Beach Bar.

In addition to getting some tropical rays, members of the group were spotted carrying snorkeling equipment across the sandy shore of one of the secluded beaches on the luxury island.

Last year, the young couple vacationed in Australia.

Anti-Corruption Mechanism visits

By Nelson A. King

The Organization of American States (OAS) says the government of Guyana has joined with several countries in agreeing to receive on-site visits as part of the Fifth Round of the Mechanism for Follow-up on the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESICIC).

The OAS said on Friday that the United States, Peru and Uruguay have also confirmed agreement to the visit.

"The four countries notified the MESICIC Technical Secretariat of their decisions in accordance with the Methodology for Conducting On-site Visits," the OAS said. "Both also consented to and received on-site visits during the Fourth Round of Review."

For the Fifth Round, which begins in March, the OAS said the MESICIC Committee of Experts will review the implementation of the provisions in Article III, paragraphs three

and 12 of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, "which refer to the needed instruction to government personnel and the study of preventive measures that take into account the relationship between equitable compensation and probity in public service".

Moreover, the Committee will analyze the follow-up on the recommendations formulated to the States Parties in the Second Round, on topics such as public procurement, hiring of public servants, whistleblower protection and the criminalization of acts of corruption under the Convention," the OAS said.

"The affirmative answers from these four countries join those previously expressed by Chile and Mexico, who communicated their consent to receive on-site visits as part of the Fifth round of MESICIC," it added.

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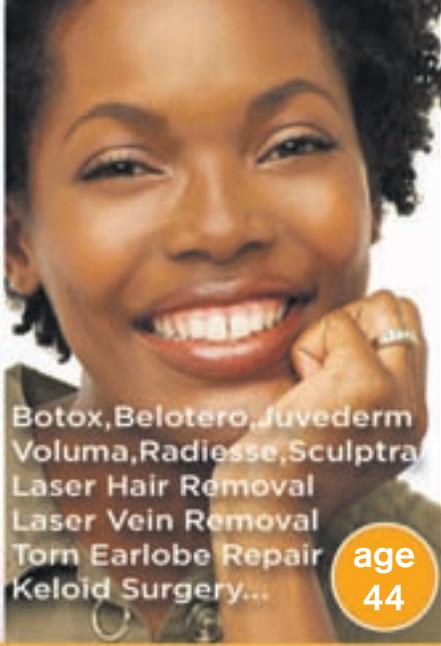


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First Officer Deon Byrne.

Photo courtesy of hemispheresmagazine.com

Jamaican 'Top Gun' takes flight

By Vinette K. Pryce

When 13-year-old Deon Byrne moved from Jamaica to live here, she aimed high.

Her mother told her that if she applied herself, the sky would be limit.

Like a great many migrant youths to New York City, the teenager wanted to make her mother proud. She aspired to be a doctor.

She studied diligently and consistently.

As a matter of fact some of her school mates resented her being too invested in her studies and isolated her from the crowd.

"I was into school and studying, and I was the outcast," Byrne told hemispheresmagazine.com United Airlines web portal.

She said because she was "from a little island, Jamaica," and now living in "the big bad city of New York," she had to find her own way and would not be influenced by peer pressure.

Her ambition to the medical profession remained foremost to studies but mostly, she was determined to succeed.

According to the ambitious immigrant, a movie which starred Tom Cruise affected her in a way she never imagined.

It was "Top Gun" a film that featured adventures of Air Force pilots. As fate would have it, soon after seeing the Hollywood presentation she met a military recruiter who tried to entice her into joining the flight branch of service.

Almost routinely, each new semester year she attended a career exhibition. Out of the blue, the opportunity of her life met her when a specialist in military aviation encouraged her to enlist.

"I was pre-med at St. John's University in New York," she explained.

"Is there any way I can be a doctor and fly?" she asked.

Although she had heard a discouraging answer each spring she returned to the job-seeking venue and each time continued to inquire about pursuing a double career.

"And they told me 'no' every time."

She studied for a semester at American University of Rome and completed college ahead of schedule.

Despite the fact she had successfully finished with medical school, there was a yearning to fly and also a longing to travel.

She took a job as a flight attendant to pay for flying school.

"The company I worked for did a lot of charters for other airlines and U.S. military," Byrne said. "Whenever there was a hot spot in the world, that carrier would either transport troops or transport refugees. I flew around the world twice by the age of 21 or 22. It was a pretty neat experience."

It seemed an ideal job.

She was seeing the world, flying and enjoying her life.

No sooner than when she earned her airline transport pilot license to fly commercial jets, she applied to both the Air National Guard and a commuter airline.

Both accepted her application.

Byrne flew for the airline while waiting for a security clearance from the Air Force.

"I believe I am the only Black female pilot to have flown in Antarctica," she stated. "While based there, I flew several missions to the South Pole. I literally have been on every continent." She spent two years on active duty.

After active duty, Byrne served in the New York Air National Guard and got hired by United Airlines.

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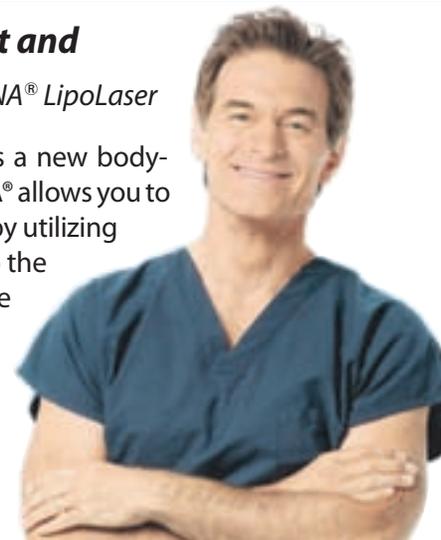
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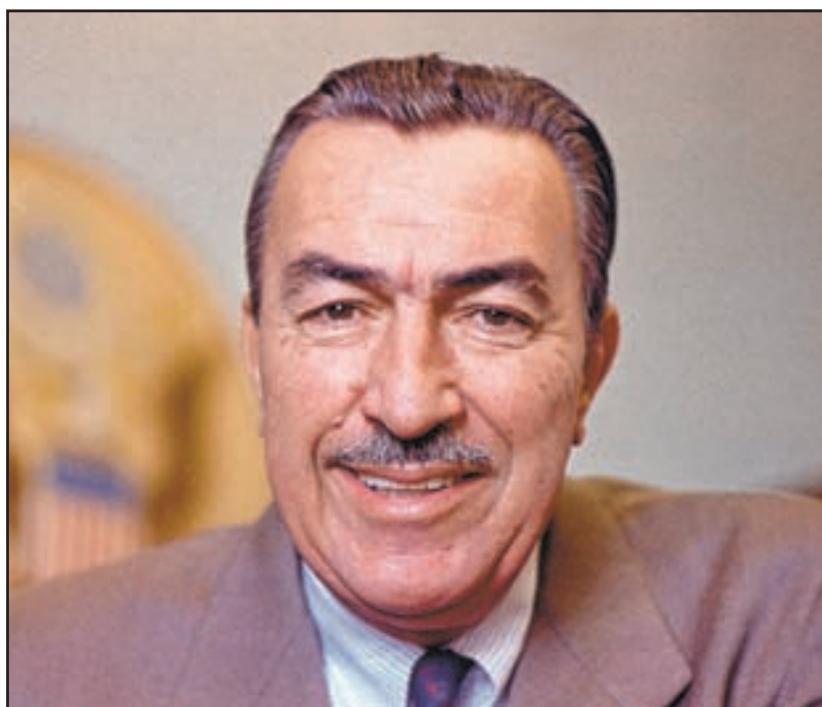
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Adam Clayton Powell, Rep. (D-NY), is pictured in Washington, DC on Jan. 21, 1970. Associated Press / stf

'Adam' spotlights Bimini, Bahamas

By Vinette K. Pryce

Few plays ever shine a spotlight on the Caribbean except to marvel at the pristine beaches, eternal sunshine and soulful music that endears carnival and revelry.

But this month, theater lovers will have an opportunity to learn about New York's first Black congressman and in the process discover the Bahamas island he frequently exiled himself in order to elude the spotlight.

"Adam," starring Timothy Simonson is a one-man presentation that unveils the triumphs and tribulations of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, the first of his race to represent Harlem in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In an encore appearance after last year's sold out performances during Black History Month, Simonson reveals the charismatic personality, his pastoral preaching at Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem and the meaningful phrases of 'burn, baby, burn' and 'keep the faith' Cong. Powell added to the American lexicon.

As if channeling the pioneering personality, Simonson returns the beloved character Harlem residents voted first to represent them in the New York City Council.

In addition to championing his political achievements, Black pride and defiance against white segregationists the production enlightens patrons to his marriage to Trinidad & Tobago born

Hazel Scott, a jazz and classical pianist and singer.

How he juggled obligations of the church by succeeding his father in 1938 to lead the congregation and representing the people of Harlem as one of only two Black Congressmen until 1955 must have been a daunting challenge.

Cong. Powell served in congress from 1945 to 1971.

However, when he retreated to the Caribbean island of Bimini in the Bahamas proved far more controversial to his opponents in politics. Harshly criticized for spending too much time there, Cong. Powell never faltered in claiming his affinity for the island.

The play slated for a performances on Feb. 15 at 3 p.m. at Harlem Hospital's Cave Auditorium, 506 Malcolm X Blvd. at 135th St. in Harlem, sets Bimini, Bahamas as a central location to portray the iconic public figure.

It was there he chose to spend his last days and when he died at age 63 in 1972, his ashes were scattered all over the island from an airplane.

Not since his passing in 1971 has the island of Bimini afforded as much attention.

Cong. Powell literally placed Bimini in a conversation that involved the entire U.S. Congress and much of America.

Some might even say "Adam put Bimini on the map."

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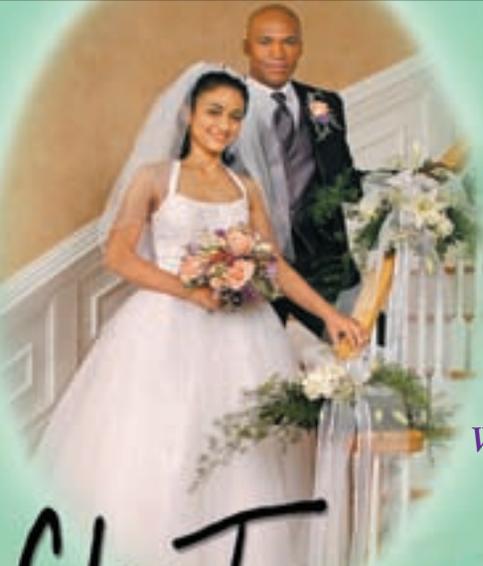
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Colorful Indian culture celebrated at the UN

By Tangerine Clarke

A colorful spectacle of the rich Indian culture, mesmerized guests on Friday, Feb. 6, at the United Nations in New York City, where music, dance and national fare were celebrated with enjoyment.

The Eighth Annual Gala Dinner Party hosted by the Society for Promotion of Indian Culture and Experience, (SPICE) — an Indian club under of the UN Staff Recreation Council — showcased extraordinary Bollywood Fusion, Kathak, Indian Classical and Hip-Hop Indian dance performances.

Hosted in the headquarters' third floor Express Bar, the evening opened with a lavish three-course meal of spicy Indian dishes, followed by a fun-filled program of exciting choreographies.

Known for their hip movement, and feet stomping elements, the female dancers who were dressed in stunning costumes embellished with jewels, some wearing Saris, and henna painted hands, twirled, pirouetted and shook their bodies to infectious music, and to loud applause.



Indian dancers at the United Nations in New York City on Friday, Feb. 6, 2015.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

The evening's presentation included choreography by Satya Pradeep and students of Nriya Saagaram Dance Academy, Sanyogita Padhye, Sanali Chandra & Team, Ajna Dance Company, Varsha Naik & Students of Navrang Dance Academy and PBA Bhangra Academy.

SPICE, which is one of the largest and most popular clubs under UNSRC that invites other cultures to explore diverse aspects of Indian culture, highlighted the beauty of Russian trained Gypsy dancer, Julia Kulakova whose Bollywood Belly Dance Fusion, Marshal Arts, and Belly Dance Drum pieces were well received.

In addition to live DJ music by Ashish Suri and Henna hand painting by Shafaw Naaz, organizers spoke of their continued hard work to strengthen their bonds that make SPICE a success at the UN.

As part of their community projects, the group also offers Ancient Yoga Breathing Technique workshops, Indian art exhibits and Bollywood Dance Nights, to name a few.

www.facebook.com/united-nationsSPICEIndianClub

A skilled group of male dancers wearing Indian regalia and towering headpieces, followed up with thrilling piece as they hopped, clapped and danced their way into the hearts of the large multicultural gathering who got on their feet and cheered.

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Haiti's housing crisis needs attention

Rikki Jai wins Chutney Soca title

By Nelson A. King

Human rights watchdog Amnesty International says the abject failure to sustainably rehouse tens of thousands of people who lost everything in the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti must be a top priority for the new Prime Minister Evans Paul.

In an open letter to Paul, the London-based group said more than 79,000 people are still living in make-shift camps "in deplorable conditions, meanwhile violent forced evictions continue."

The open-letter also calls on the prime minister, who assumed office on Jan. 16, to address a "worrying increase in the brutal repression of peaceful demonstrations, including injuries and even death meted out at the hands of the police".

"Haiti is at a cross-roads and new Prime Minister Evans Paul has an opportunity to lead the country on towards a better realization of human rights," said Erika Guevara Rosas, Americas Director Amnesty International.

"The task is not an easy one, we have seen a worrying increase in repression and violence from different security forces," she added. "However, there are concrete moves the prime minister can make to set Haiti on the right track.

"The prime minister, as a priority must implement full investigations into the cases of all forced evictions and ensure that no more evictions take



Haiti's Prime Minister Evans Paul.

Associated Press / Dieu Nalio Chery

place under his watch," Guevara Rosas continued.

She also urged Paul to ensure that no-one is arbitrarily detained for their

political activism, nor persecuted for lobbying for human rights change.

"The time has come for a fresh star," she said.

By Azad Ali

Veteran Chutney singer Rikki Jai captured two crowns at the annual Chutney Soca Monarch finals held last weekend at Skinner Park, San Fernando.

It was the first competition for the Carnival two-day celebration next week.

Ricky Jai (Samraj Jaimungal) now has a record eight crowns in the 20-year history of the competition.

Bringing his experience to the stage, he chose to collaborate with the youthful and talented Ravi B (Bissembar), a former Chutney Soca Monarch, in the two categories of this year's competition – Chutney Soca and Traditional Chutney.

The two will share winnings of TT\$2 million for the Chutney Soca Monarch and Traditional Chutney.

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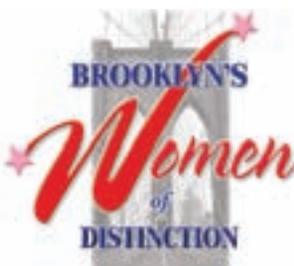
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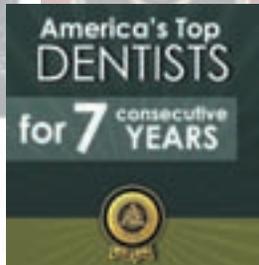
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Jamaica Black History Month AKA Reggae Month

Appreciation of Caribbean achievement is a shared cultural reason to mark Black History Month in February. In Jamaica, the shortest month of the year which is dedicated to celebrating distinctive individuals of African descent is also the one designated Reggae Month.

Officially declared on Jan. 24, 2008 by Sir Kenneth Hall, former governor general of Jamaica, the month features music appreciation, lectures, films, concerts, dance programs and a myriad of events to laud the genre.

This year's activities include a fully-loaded calendar with 29 events scheduled during the 28-day period.

Lisa Hanna, minister of culture there along with Jamaica Reggae Industry Association (JaRIA) members announced an abundance of activities that seemingly will not only foster racial pride but also sing praises to a beat created, nourished and exported from the island.

During the kick-off in Kingston where music industry professionals, politicians and tour-



Inside Life

By Vinette K. Pryce

ists gathered to hear the official program, JaRIA chairman Ibo Cooper unveiled a full calendar of activities which began Feb. 1 with an ecumenical service.

A Trench Town Festival promised a full line-up of vintage and current talents in the ghetto hamlet alleged to be the birthplace of the genre.

In that west Kingston community ordinary citizens honed their skills to create reggae royalty the world reveres as — a king of reggae, crown prince, queen, high priestess, a duke, duchess, emperor and the first Third World superstar.

Already, on the Feb. 6 birthdate of some of the island's most legendary singers — Derrick Harriott, the acclaimed 'crown prince of reggae' Dennis Brown, former Third World lead singer, William 'Bunny Rugs' Clarke and reggae icon Bob Marley — numerous con-

certs lauded the beat.

Recently, the genre scored another gain with David "Ziggy" Marley claiming his third solo Grammy win for his "Fly Rasta" CD.

Some had speculated that SOJA, an American band would make history this year by becoming the first non-Jamaican group to win the Best Reggae Album category. Instead the eldest son of the king of reggae added to the largest treasure trove of any recording family in the genre by winning a miniature gramophone for the year's best reggae recording during a ceremony in Los Angeles, California.

Marley brothers — Kymani and Julian reportedly performed at their father's 56 Hope Road residence and also at the Redemption Live Bob Marley 70th birthday concert on the Kingston Waterfront where



Ibo Cooper, chairman JaRIA.

Photo by Steve James

Rohan and Damian joined the revelry.

The Marley recognition also adds sports to the lineup with an annual "One Love" charity soccer match scheduled for Feb. 18. Olympic sprinters Usain Bolt and Asafa Powell will test their ball skills in honor of the reggae legend.

While many of the free events will be held at Reggae Village, the Kingston venue formerly known as The Ranny Williams Entertainment Center, other venues will host a myriad of events.

For further details check JARIAJAMAICA.com.

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Corrine Jennings has been exhibiting in the East Village art by African-Americans for more than 40 years.

Photo by Tequila Minsky

Robert Blackburn's 'Passages'

By Tequila Minsky

"We show Black History all the time," said Corrine Jennings director of Wilmer Jennings Gallery. Through March, selections from the master printmaker "Robert (Bob) Blackburn: Passages" is on exhibition at the Wilmer Jennings Gallery, 219 E. 2nd St., a satellite space of Kenkeleba House.

"I don't think the Caribbean world knows that Blackburn is one of Jamai-

Continued on Page 40

Griffith tells her story in 'Demerara Gold'

By Tangerine Clarke

Fresh off a successful performance in Georgetown, Guyana, Ingrid Griffith's phenomenal one-woman satirical drama - "Demerara Gold" will give an audience a belly-full of laughs when she comes to Brooklyn's St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church at 331 Hawthorne St., on Feb. 21. Show time is 3:00 p.m.

Literary writer, Lorraine Hansberry, of "Raisin in the Sun" fame, influenced the gifted artist who has thrilled audiences around the U.S. with her drama about her

Continued on Page 40



The Cuban dance troupe Havana Rakatan makes its debut in the U.S.

Photo by Johannes Granseth

LATIN DANCE FEST

Dancers from Cuba, Argentina and Spain

New York City Center will present "A Bailar: Dance at the Center," a three-week Latin dance festival featuring three acclaimed dance companies from Cuba, Argentina and Spain, running Feb. 18 - March 7, 2015. The festival kicks off with the U.S. debut of Havana Rakatan, a celebration of Cuban dance and music, and continues with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's milonga, which captures the sultry world of Buenos Aires tango. Voces, Suite Flamenca, a new work from flamenco superstar Sara Baras,

closes A Bailar. The festival's many free pre-show events include dance lessons and discussion panels that will explore Latin culture through a variety of lenses.

Havana Rakatan

Feb. 18 - 22, 2015

Performing for the first time in the United States, Havana Rakatan explores the roots of Cuban music and dance, a unique fusion of Spanish culture and African spiritual beliefs, accompanied by the son

band Turquino. Flamenco, Yoruba and Afro-Haitian rhythms, as well as jazz, mambo, and son, give way to the modern forms of salsa that originated in the early twentieth-century salon dances. Havana Rakatan made its hugely successful debut in 2007 at the Peacock Theatre in London and has since toured all over the world.

Cuban choreographer Nilda Guerra directs a talented and versatile company of dancers, most of whom are graduates of the renowned

Continued on Page 40

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A scene from the movie, "The Rewrite." Photo courtesy of www.rottentomatoes.com

Independent & Foreign Films

Crazy Bitches (Unrated) Horror comedy about seven sorority sisters whose weekend getaway with a gay pal (Andy Gala) to a remote cabin in the woods is ruined by the arrival of a bloodthirsty psychopath who proceeds to pick them off one-by-one. Co-starring Samantha Colburn, Cathy DeBuono, Liz McGeever, Victoria Profeta, Guinevere Turner, Nayo Wallace and Mary Jane Wells.

Da Sweet Blood of Jesus (Unrated) Spike Lee directed this horror flick ostensibly inspired by Ganja & Hess, the 1973 horror flick revolving around a doctor (Stephen Tyrone Williams) who becomes consumed by a thirst for blood after handling an ancient African artifact. Ensemble includes Zaraqah Abrahams, Rami Malek, Joie Lee, Felicia "Snoop" Pearson and Elvis Nolasco.

Gett: The Trial of Viviane Amsalem (Unrated) Ronit Elkabetz portrays the title character in this Israeli drama as a miserably-married woman dependent upon a rabbi's approval for a divorce from her reluctant spouse (Simon Abkarian). With Menashe Noy, Sasson Gabai and Rami Danon. (In Hebrew, Arabic and French with subtitles)

Girl House (Unrated) Slasher flick featuring a college coed (Ali Cobrin) who starts stripping online for an X-rated website to pay her tuition only to find herself being stalked by a deranged fan. Cast includes Adam DiMarco, Alyson Bath and Alice Hunter.

The Last Five Years (PG-13 for sexuality, brief profanity and a drug image) Screen adaptation of Jason Robert Brown's Off-Broadway musical of the same name deconstructing the failed marriage of a

promising novelist (Jeremy Jordan) and a struggling actress (Anna Kendrick). With Meg Hudson, Natalie Knepp, Cat Lynch and Ashley Spencer.

Old Fashioned (PG-13 for mature themes) Faith-based romance drama revolving around a reformed party animal (Rik Swartwelder) willing to remain celibate while dating his impatient new neighbor (Elizabeth Roberts) who might be Ms. Right. Cast includes LeJon Woods, Tyler Hollinger, Dorothy Silver and Nini Hadjis.

The Rewrite (Unrated) Romantic comedy revolving around an Oscar-winning scriptwriter (Hugh Grant) who, after a divorce and a series of flops, abandons Hollywood to teach college in upstate New York where he falls in love with one of his students (Marisa Tomei), a single-mom trying to make her own fresh start. Ensemble includes J.K. Simmons, Allison Janney and Chris Elliott.

What We Do in the Shadows (Unrated) Horror comedy, set in New Zealand, revolving around the trials and tribulations of four vampires (Taika Waititi, Jemaine Clement, Jonathan Brugh and Ben Fransham) sharing a flat in a city inhospitable to the undead. With Cori Gonzalez-Macuer, Jackie van Beek and Stuart Rutherford. (In English and German with subtitles)

The Worst Year of My Life (Unrated) Romantic dramedy about a down-on-his-luck, just-dumped, depressed dude (Trevor St. John David) whose road to recovery involves online dating and living in his car. Cast includes Brandi Posey, Nicholas Tucci and Amy Vorpahl.



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Colin Firth shines as suave spy in nostalgic movie

“Kingsman: The Secret Service”
Excellent (4 stars)
Rated R for profanity, sexuality and graphic violence
In English and Swedish with subtitles
Running time: 129 minutes
Distributor: 20th Century Fox



In this photo released by Twentieth Century Fox, Taron Egerton, left, Eggsy, meets Michael Caine as Arthur, the head of the Kingsman spy agency, in the film, “Kingsman: The Secret Service.”
Associated Press / Twentieth Century Fox Film, Jaap Buitendijk

By Kam Williams

Harry Hart (Colin Firth) is such an unassuming, buttoned-down bloke that no one in his right mind would suspect him to be a highly-skilled secret agent capable of killing at the drop of a derby. But as a Kingsman, he belongs to an exclusive fraternity of nattily-attired spies who abide by the motto “Manners Maketh Man.” Members of this covert organization consider themselves modern-day knights, and they see their suits as body armor.

Despite an otherwise distinguished service record, Harry still regrets the mistake he

made during a 1997 operation in the Middle East that cost a colleague his life. Today, Harry hopes to make it up to his dearly departed partner by taking on his orphaned son, Eggsy (Taron Egerton), as a protégé. This will be easier said than done since, besides completing

the requisite Navy SEAL-like training program, the young apprentice has a lot of rough edges that need smoothing, including a grating cockney accent. For, the lad grew up on the wrong side of the tracks, so he could use a few lessons in etiquette, ala My Fair Lady’s

Eliza Doolittle.

Meanwhile, a matter of more pressing concern comes to Harry’s attention, namely, a plot being hatched by a proverbial diabolical villain bent on world domination. That would be Richmond Valentine (Samuel L. Jackson), a twisted

tech mogul who’s in the midst of giving away billions of free SIM cards ensuring free phone calls and free internet access for everyone, forever. All over the planet, people are standing in long lines for the freebies, oblivious of an apocalyptic app they’re about to simultaneously download into their cells.

Adapted from the comic book series “The Secret Service, Kingsman” is an adrenaline-fueled satire of the espionage genre which, at every turn, will have you harking back to the early James Bond adventures starring Sean Connery. The picture was directed by Matthew Vaughn who co-wrote the script with Jane Goldman, the same collaborator on the equally-inspired “Kick-Ass” (2010).

Colin Firth is delightfully debonair, here, whether turning on the charm or dispatching bad guys. Samuel L. Jackson is just as amusing cast against type as his worthy adversary with a flamboyant persona complete with lisp. A nostalgic homage to 007 that’s also the most mesmerizing movie of the year thus far.

PHOTO BY WHIT LANE AND MARYLENE MEY

jazz

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TOP OF THE CHARTS

TOP 10 SINGLES



- 1 **Uptown Funk!**
Mark Ronson
- 2 **Blank Space**
Taylor Swift
- 3 **Thinking Out Loud**
Ed Sheeran
- 4 **Take Me To Church**
Hozier
- 5 **I'm Not The Only One**
Sam Smith
- 6 **Jealous**
Nick Jonas
- 7 **Lips Are Movin**
Meghan Trainor
- 8 **Love Me Harder**
Ariana Grande & The Weeknd
- 9 **I Don't Mind**
Usher Feat. Juicy J
- 10 **Time of Our Lives**
Pitbull & Ne-Yo

TOP 10 ALBUMS



- 1 **1989**
Taylor Swift
- 2 **We Will Not Be Shaken**
Bethel Music
- 3 **Non-Fiction**
Ne-Yo
- 4 **American Beauty...**
Fall Out Boy
- 5 **x**
Ed Sheeran
- 6 **F.E.A.R.**
Papa Roach
- 7 **Title**
Meghan Trainor
- 8 **In The Lonely Hour**
Sam Smith
- 9 **Wanted On Voyage**
JGeorge Ezra
- 10 **2014 Forest Hills Drive**
J. Cole



Dance

Continued from page 37

Escuela Nacional de Arte de la Habana, which combines contemporary dance training with Cuban dance and Latin styles. Havana Rakatan also features the eight-piece Cuban band Turquino, which performs live onstage.

Havana Rakatan is presented by New York City Center in association with Sadler's Wells and Congas Productions.

milonga

Feb. 26 – March 1, 2015

Deeply rooted in Argentinean culture, tango has fascinated and captivated the world with its sensuality, power and beauty. In mjlonga, celebrated contemporary choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui takes the mjlonga—a social dance evening held in Buenos Aires' intimate late-night bars—as a starting point and adds a contemporary twist. The production features ten tango dancers, two contemporary dancers, and an Argentinean tango band of five musicians.

New York City Center presents Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's mjlonga, a Sadler's Wells production.



A scene from Milonga at Theatre Jorat, Switzerland. Directed by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Produced by Sadler's Wells. Photo by Tristram Kenton

Ballet Flamenco Sara Baras: Voces, Suite Flamenca

March 4 – 7, 2015

Ballet Flamenco Sara Baras' Voces, Suite Flamenca captures the emotion, drama and passion of traditional flamenco with a vibrant contemporary edge. Celebrated for her brilliant footwork and captivating stage presence, Baras has become internationally famous in a career that has spanned more than 20 years and earned her dozens of prestigious dance

awards. Baras is joined onstage by her company of 15 dancers, including guest artist José Serrano, and eight flamenco musicians.

Voces, Suite Flamenca is presented by New York City Center and Flamenco Festival.

Havana Rakatan will play seven performances, Feb. 18-22, as follows: Wednesday, Feb. 18 and Thursday, Feb. 19 at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 20 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 21 at 2 and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 22 at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

mjlonga will play four performances, Feb. 26 – March 22, as follows: Thursday, Feb. 26, Friday, Feb. 27, and Saturday, Feb. 28, at 8:00 p.m., and Sunday, March 1, at 2:00 p.m. Feb. 26 – 28 at Saturday at 8:00 p.m., Sunday, March 1 at 2:00 p.m.

Ballet Flamenco Sara Baras will play four performances, March 4-7, as follows: Wednesday, March 4 and Thursday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m., and Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 at 8:00 p.m.

Griffith

Continued from page 37

life - growing up in her homeland, and the United States.

Griffith relished the role she played as Ruth Young -the wife in "Raisin in the Sun", that she said evoked family dynamics, dreams and disappointment - essential element of drama and conflict.

She then thought -"What if I write a play about an Afro Guyanese family."

Today, Griffith, an award-winning actress and playwright, who was also moved by Anna Deavere Smith's first solo-show "Fires In the Mirror," is enjoying her time in the spotlight.

"Deavere Smith helped me realize what could be done with a bare stage," said the actress, whose work was showcased in Essence Magazine, Source and New Jersey's Star Ledger.

With a Master's Degree in Creative Writing and stirring roles as Mrs. Muller, in "Doubt" by John Shanley, and characters in the Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler, Griffith said it was important to showcase her autobiographical act that mir-



Ingrid Griffith.

rors plays like a "View From the Bridge," and "American Wedding" that emulate how Chinese, Polish, Iranian and Italian immigrants arrived and adapted in America.

"I thought about the many Guyanese who emigrated to this country, and yet most people I meet don't know that there is an English speaking country in South America called Guyana, and that Guyanese have left their homeland in search of the American dream, like many other nationalities, that "make up this country's melting pot."

A talent to be reckoned with, Griffith, says she hopes her story connects with those who are going through things that are hard to talk about.

Blackburn's art

Continued from page 37

ca's (ancestry) most important artists," says Jennings. Continuing, "Particularly for the opportunities he afforded others by creating a printmaking workshop, (first in 1947) in his apartment, opening it to others."

It's always Black History Month for Jennings and her collaborator husband artist Joe Overstreet whose Kenkeleba House, an East Village fixture for over 40 years is dedicated to the exhibition of artworks by African-American and Native American artists.

On Feb. 14 at 3:00 p.m. there will be a gallery tour and on March 14 at 3:00 p.m. a panel discussion.

Blackburn, whose parents were from Jamaica, grew up in Harlem in the 1930s taking printmaking classes as a young teen at the Harlem Community Arts Center conducted by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This was also the time of the Harlem Renaissance's cultural fomenting

when creativity and production flourished in Harlem. After DeWitt High School, he attended the Art Students League on a scholarship.

Jennings explained that the artist was devoted and known for his Chelsea-located Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, which moved to a larger W. 17th St. space in 1948.

"He often gave scholarships. He really wanted to expand and encourage young people and their relationship with paper." It eventually became an artists' cooperative and then a non-profit. After his death, the workshop was incorporated into the programs of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts offering cooperative printmaking workspace, access to skilled staff and studio space.

She added, "He helped so many adults, black and white."

In 1992 at age 70, Blackburn received the MacArthur (genius) Award. "He gave most of that money to help other artists," Jennings said.



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- 12:30 p.m. Tribute to Langston Hughes Grace Drums
- 2:00 p.m. *Harlem Renaissance* 1 Act Play Xoregos Theatre
- 3:30 p.m. The Rod Rodgers Dance Company
- 5:00 p.m. "An Evening with Langston Hughes" Mitchell Entertainment Group, LLC
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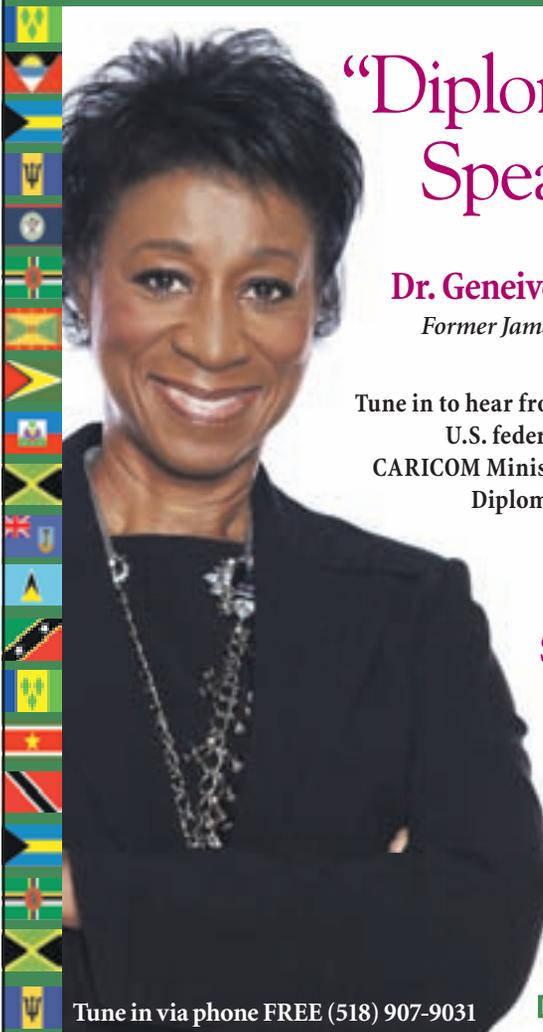
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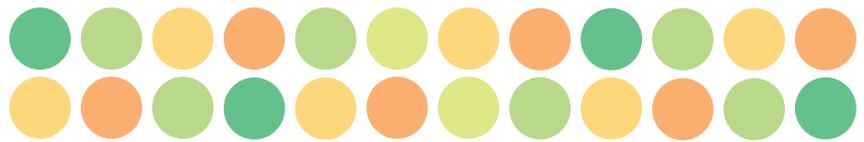
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SUN KULCHA COMMUNITY EVENTS



SAT, FEB. 14

MUSIC: Shaggy, Maxi Priest, Sanchez will be at the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, www.bam.org. \$79. 7:00 p.m.

BILINGUAL ACA ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE:

New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation and MetroPlus Health Plan are providing health insurance counselors to help New Yorkers access affordable health insurance before the Feb. 15 Affordable Care Act (ACA) deadline. Translators include: Spanish, Chinese, French Creole, Russian, Hindi and Bengali. Visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hhc/html/metroplus/metroplus-dates.shtml> for the all the locations and times. Free. 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Kings County Hospital, 451 Clarkson Ave., E Building Lobby Brooklyn, NY.

SUN, FEB. 15

BILINGUAL ACA ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE:

New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation and MetroPlus Health Plan are providing health insurance counselors to help New Yorkers access affordable health insurance before the February 15 Affordable Care Act (ACA)

deadline. Translators include: Spanish, Chinese, French Creole, Russian, Hindi and Bengali. Visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hhc/html/metroplus/metroplus-dates.shtml> for the all the locations and times. Free. 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Jacobi Medical Center, 1400 Pelham Pkwy., Building 8 Dept. of Pediatrics, Floor 1st Bronx, NY.

MON, FEB. 16

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TUES, FEB. 17

YOGA: This Vinyasa yoga class teaches us to create a union between our mind and our body, allowing our mind to focus on what our body is experiencing during yoga practice. This union can relieve

stress, promote mental clarity and help to create balance in our lives. Yoga can help increase flexibility, lower blood pressure and improve circulation and respiration, plus reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Please wear comfortable loose-fitting clothing and plan to arrive 10 minutes early to settle in. Be sure to let your doctor know that you will be taking part in a yoga class. Free. 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 pm. Emblemhealth Neighborhood Care, 206-20 Linden Blvd. in Cambria Heights, (866) 539-0999, www.ehnc.com/Locations/Cambria-Heights.aspx.

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The first step toward homeownership begins with education. Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) is having a free homebuyer seminar. Learn about grants, affordable mortgages, closing cost assistance and building your homeownership team and more. Free. 6:00 p.m. Crown Heights Public Library, 560 New York Ave. between Maple Street and Lincoln Road in Crown Heights, (718) 773-1180, www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org.

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SAT, FEB. 21

TAX PREPARATION: The first step toward homeownership begins with education. Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) is having a free homebuyer seminar. Learn about grants, affordable mortgages, closing cost assistance and building your homeownership team and more. 9:45 a.m. – 4:00 pm. Ridgewood Bank, 4101 White Plains Road, 229th Street in Bedford Stuyvesant, (718) 882-0440.

If you have an event that you would like to post in Sun Kulcha, please email your submission to Caribbeanlife@cnglocal.com. All submissions are subject to review by the editor.

— compiled by Natalie Y. Henry



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SPORTS

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Vaughn College romps easily

By Robert Elkin

Basketball is a sport followed by all types of athletes whether they be by the young or old. The fans, competitors, and/or the staff personnel whether they reside in the met tri- state area or in various parts of the United States, Caribbean, Canada or even overseas compete in this activity in it on some level.

The way the professionals play the game-except at times by the Knicks and/or the Nets- excite the fan with their moves on the court. Injuries to key personnel at times keep their respective teams out of contention for a championship or maybe even a contender for top honors.

On the local side forget about the National Basketball Association, for now; there's the college or high school game, led by St. John's, Iona, St. Francis of Brooklyn, and Seton Hall, that draws spectators out to cheer them on. And then there's Lincoln and Boys and Girls of

Continued on Page 44

Sunil Narine opts out

By Azad Ali

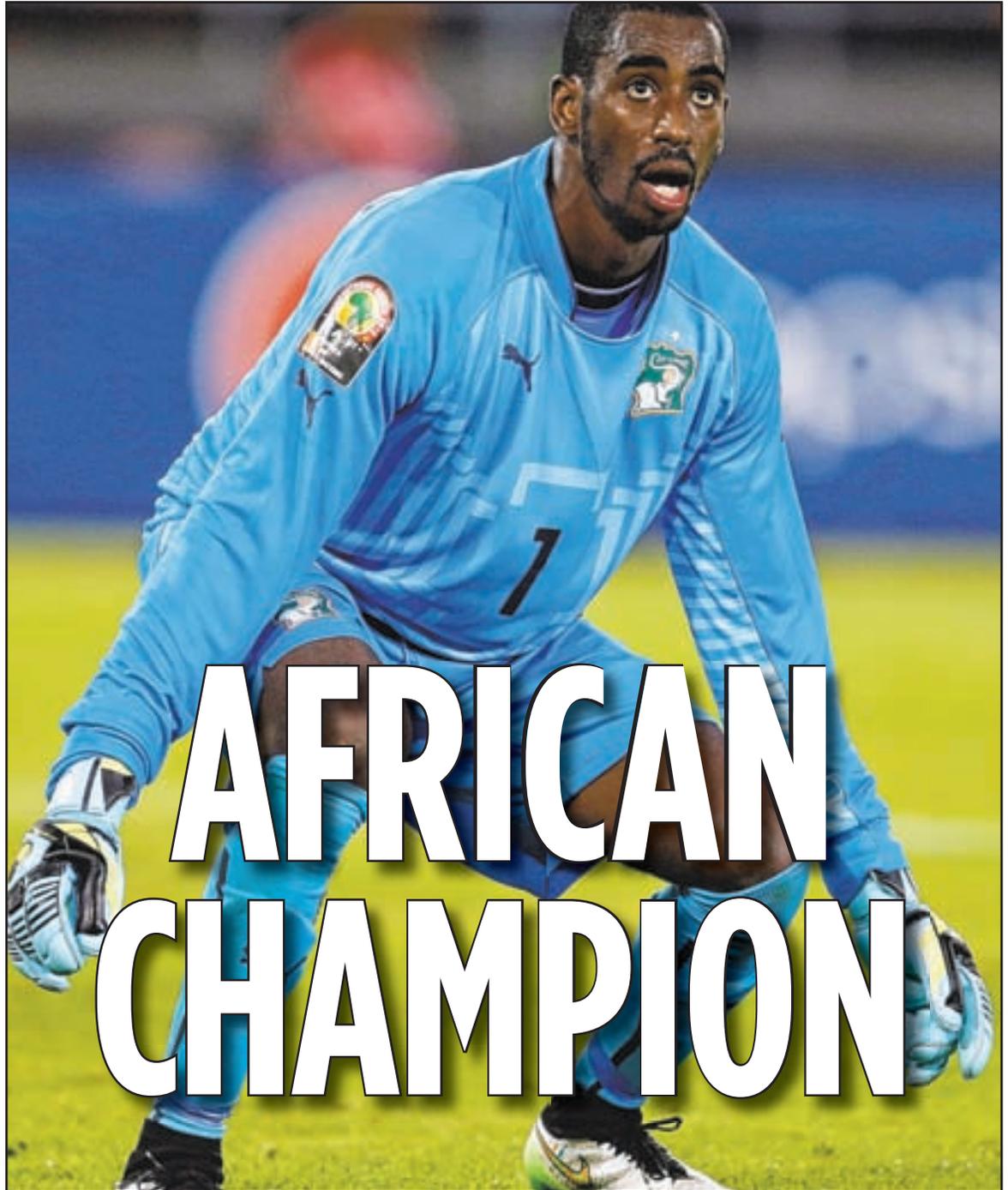
West Indies mystery-off spinner Sunil Narine has opted out of the upcoming World Cup in New Zealand and Australia.

His replacement is Barbadian Carlos Braithwaite, who was recently in South Africa with the West Indies quad.

The replacement was approved by the International Cricket Council (ICC) since all countries taking part in the tournament have already named their 15 players and Narine dropped out of the tournament, stating that he was not ready to return to international cricket, after re-working on his bowling action.

The right-arm off-spinner was called for a suspect bowling action during the 2014 Champions League tournament in India and has missed international ply

Continued on Page 44



Ivory Coast's goalkeeper Boubacar Barry reacts during their African Cup of Nations final soccer match against Ghana in Bata, Equatorial Guinea, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2015. Associated Press / Themba Hadebe

Ivory Coast recaptures title

By Patrick Horne

It is said that the elephant has exceptional memory, and The Elephants of the Ivory Coast reminded us of this last Sunday in Equatorial Guinea. After winning their last African Nations Cup title against the Black Stars of Ghana 23 years

ago, The Elephants conjured the old memory and beat Ghana's Black Stars again on penalties, this time 9-8, to win the 2015 African Nations Cup Championship, their first since 1992.

It was the goalkeepers who decided the game! After a scoreless full

time match and 30 minutes of overtime, all 10 field players on each side had taken their penalties and left the shootout tied at eight goals apiece; it was now the goalkeepers turn to kick at each other. When the Black Stars' goalie Razak Braimah

Continued on Page 44

Continued from page 43

Brooklyn, Christ The King of Queens, and Cardinal Hayes of The Bronx.

One can't forget, an NCAA Division III college Vaughn College of Queens who uses the ElmCor Center in nearby Queens, as their home court.

The way Vaughn played against The New School of Manhattan, the former could produce a College All-American out of Division III and maybe even a player in the National Basketball Association in due time during their hoop career. As a team, Vaughn is averaging about 80 points a game.

While everything seemed to go wrong with the New School both on offense as well as on defense, Vaughn opened the start of the game by scoring 10 straight points, capitalized on their opponent's turn overs, and ran up the margin to eventually a half time score of 56-26 and the final count of 99-54. Scoring high is nothing new for Vaughn.

"The work that we put in off the court, the discipline, of staying focused with the game plan, and our defense and the guards get us going have been the reasons for our success," said assistant coach Omari Wright, "If we box out and rebound, we'd be able to beat any body. If we step out and rebound, we'll be able to beat anybody on way given on any day."

"As of late, we found our identity," added Wright. "We're a team of great guards. Our guards really get us going. If we hold opponents on the end on the defensive, I think that we'll be a pretty good team."

Vaughn's defense proved to be strong all season. and held opponents down to 50 points a game. These are some of the highlights of the season and made Vaughn a successful team.

"Playing at ElmCor is a great facility and the officials of ElmCor welcome Vaughn to its site for the home games and having a season.

Vaughn College held one home game at the Barclays Center, home of the Brooklyn Nets of the NBA.

"It was a great experience playing at the Barclays Center," said Coach Wright. "It's a once in a lifetime experience that the kids (players) will definitely remember."



Ghana's goalkeeper Razak Braimah dives as he fails to save the winning penalty from Ivory Coast's goalkeeper Boubacar Barry, during their African Cup of Nations final soccer match in Bata, Equatorial Guinea, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2015.

Associated Press / Themba Hadebe

Ivory Coast new champs

Continued from page 43

kicked first, Ghanaians heads dropped as The Elephants' keeper, Boubacar Barry, came up with a big save that sent the Ivory Coast fans in a frenzy, but the ruckus was a match for what was to come. The stadium in Guinea went silent, almost dead quiet, as Barry stepped up to kick after he had been down with a pulled muscle, caused by his nerve-racking save; as he stepped to the ball, he placed his shot to the left of Braimah and into the back of the net and the celebrations began and continued back home.

Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara declared Monday a national holiday in honor of the win, and he greeted the players at the airport and joined the victory parade with The Elephants as they headed straight for the national stadium in the Ivory Coast capital

of Abidjan. The stadium was filled to capacity with over 35,000 plus frenzied fans and many in neighborhoods in the area and throughout the country; Ivorians celebrated on a day dedicated to the victory - victory that had been in The Elephants memory the past 23 years.

"When we flew over the city we saw the amazing crowds. It was really moving," said striker Wilfried Bony, who was taken aback by the popular outpouring.

"You can tell Ivory Coast is a nation that loves football," quipped striker Salomon Kalou.

U. S. teams split

It was a weekend of mixed results for U.S. soccer last Sunday. On the day, the U.S. women's national team lost for the first time in 17 games against host France, 2-0, in Lorient in an interna-

tional friendly. The women are on a two-game European tour to prepare for the FIFA World Cup in Canada next summer. Later in the day, the U.S. men's national team got its first win of the year and its first in six games dating back to early Sept. 2014, as it beat Panama, 2-0, in another friendly, at StubHub Center in Carson, CA.

The U.S. women came up against a very strong French team that was full of confidence and coming off recent wins over formidable opponents such as Brazil, Sweden and Japan. Ranked No. 3 in the world and with a capacity crowd of 15,663 at Mousoir Stadium serving as the 12th man, France was off to a positive start. Immediately, the French attacked the Americans goal as the USA returned the favor; it was a very well-played game with good technical skills and tactical play from the outset.

Braithwaite selected

Continued from page 43

since then.

He has been working on his action and although he starred for the T&T Red Force, claiming six wickets for nine runs in the finals of the Nagico Cup, he explained that he was not up to full confidence.

West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) Operations Manager Ronald Holder said the West Indies will not go into the tournaments with a player short.

Meanwhile, West Indies will go into the World Cup later this month stuck at number eight in the International Cricket Council (ICC) one-day rankings.

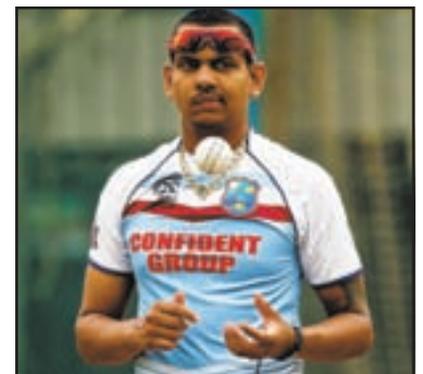
In the latest rankings released last week, the Caribbean side was still lying in the bottom end of the standings on 94 ratings points but just two behind Pakistan.

Their position comes on the backs of a heavy 4-1 hammering at the hands

of South Africa in the recent one-day series in South Africa.

Their last one-day series prior to South Africa tour was the ill-fated campaign in India which was abandoned after four matches, after players quit because of unresolved contracts dispute with their union, WIPA. They were trailing 2-1 in that five match series.

West Indies will start their campaign on Feb. 16 against Ireland in Group B, which comprises the likes of defending champions India, South Africa, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and United Arab Emirates. The tournament runs from Feb. 14 to March 28.



West Indies' Sunil Narine.

Associated Press / Aijaz Rahi

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Eyes on Cricket

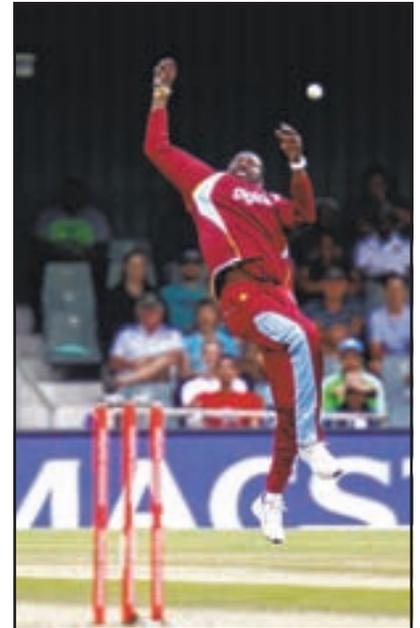
By George H. Whyte

Benn's selection a bad choice

Left-arm spinner Sulieman Benn should never have been selected for the World Cup in Australia starting this February. Instead, Jermaine Blackwood should have been in the squad to enhance the batting. Blackwood is a brilliant fielder and a prolific athlete. His batting style carries a great combination of defense and attack and exposing Blackwood in Australia would have been good for the right-hander to develop his cricket.

West Indies all-rounders have to perform to the top of their game for the West Indies to proceed into the final round. These 11 players are about the best the selectors can choose presently to represent the West Indies:

Chris Gayle, Dwayne Smith, Andre Russell, Marlon Samuels, Jermaine Blackwood, Sunil Narine, Darren Sammy, Lendl Simmons, Jason Holder, Jerome Taylor and Sheldon Cottrell.



West Indies, Sulieman Benn, catches a ball at the wicket during their One-Day international cricket match against South Africa in East London, South Africa, Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2015. Associated Press / Michael Sheehan

HOLDER'S CAPTAINCY UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Jason Holder's captaincy will be closely monitored when the World Cup begins in February. He needs to take charge and develop a better field setting. He must also put more pressure on any new batsman that comes to the wicket by moving bowlers around and bringing new bowlers into the attack. The pressure on bowlers being over worked. West Indies have many bowlers that participated in One-Day international games and that experience must be utilized proficiently.

WEST INDIES MUST FOCUS MORE ON LAST 20 OVERS

West Indies World Cup strategy should be to avoid losing too many wickets, too early in their innings and

score heavily from the last 20 overs. Dwayne Smith can easily slide down the order and bring Denesh Ramdin to start with Chris Gayle followed by Darren Bravo and possibly Andre Russell. Having Smith, Marlon Samuels and Darren Sammy in the middle order, should create enough fireworks to light up the West Indies innings. Changes must be made and brave intelligent decisions are needed in order for the team be successful.

NOTE: West Indies batsmen need to show much more dedication to their tasks.

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ARIES: Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, expect to scramble at the last minute when you have to get something finished. It may elevate your blood pressure, but you'll feel good when the task is completed.

TAURUS: Apr 21/May 21
You have to take a stand on a highly contested matter, Taurus. There's no way to avoid the situation, so it's best if you just meet it head on. Others will appreciate your direct approach.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21
Gemini, say goodbye to a bad situation, as a better one is on the horizon. It is about time you make things work in your favor and enjoy some R&R.

CANCER: Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, you have grown in many ways and people are trying to get used to your new persona. They see you as a new person, and that will require an adjustment period.

LEO: Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, paying off a large debt may empty out your bank account, but you have to look at the benefits of the situation. No more interest payments mean more savings.

VIRGO: Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, expect to be caught off guard this week. Allow everything to run its course, and things will be back to normal before you know it.

LIBRA: Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, be resourceful and economical this week. Frivolous spending will only leave you with a hole in your pocket and not much to show for it.

SCORPIO: Oct 24/Nov 22
This could be a time of profound changes in an important relationship, Scorpio. If you keep an open mind, there is no limit to the benefits that await.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, after a few bumpy spells, you may be on the road to a financial recovery. Monitor your spending and continue to maintain your financial discipline.

CAPRICORN: Dec 22/Jan 20
Real estate values have been rebounding, Capricorn. If you are in the market to sell your home, now may be your chance to do so, but make sure you accept a good offer.

AQUARIUS: Jan 21/Feb 18
Your responsibilities are at an all-time high, Aquarius. If you speak up, plenty of people will be willing to lend a hand. You just have to accept their offers to help.

PISCES: Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, start visualizing positive outcomes and you can produce winning results. A negative attitude will only prevent success.

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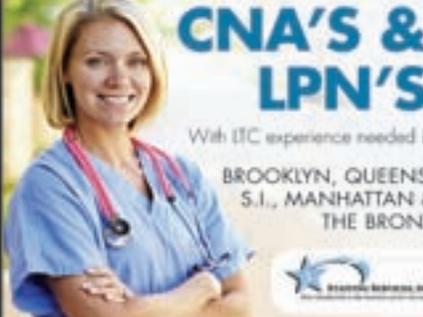
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SCHEDULE A Thomas v. Thomas FM-12-369-15X The Defendant, Lalen R. Dingle Thomas, shall serve upon the attorney for the Plaintiff, George Thomas, 17 Evelyn Terrace, South Amboy, NJ 08879, either (1) a written appearance in accordance with R. 5:4-3(a), or (2) an answer to the complaint, on or before the 23rd of February, 2015; and that if the Defendant fails to answer or

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file a written appearance in accordance with R. 5:4-3(a), judgment by default may be rendered against the defendant for the relief demanded in the complaint; and further that if the Defendant is unable to obtain an attorney that the Defendant may communicate with the New Jersey State Bar Association by calling toll free 800-792-8315; and further that the defendant may contact the Lawyer

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Referral Service of the County of Middlesex by calling 732-828-0053; and further that if the Defendant cannot afford an attorney, the Defendant may communicate with the Legal Services Office of the County of Middlesex by calling 732-249-7600; and further that the Defendant shall promptly file the answer or written appearance and proof of service thereof in duplicate

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with the Clerk of the Superior Court, Middlesex County Family Court-house, 120 New Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903-2691, in accordance with the rules of civil practice and procedure.

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as Indenture Trustee for New Century Alternative Mortgage Loan Trust 2006-ALT1, Plaintiff, against Showkat Ara Rahman, et al., Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated 7/15/2014 I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction in Room 224 of the Kings County Supreme Court, 360 Adams Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201 on 03/05/2015 at

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will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index# 6101/09. Stephen V. Barbaro, Esq., Referee FRENKEL LAMBERT WEISS WEISMAN & GORDON, LLP Attorney for Plaintiff, 53 Gibson Street, Bay Shore, NY 11706 1127165 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 02/20/2015

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