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Young girls at the Phagwah Parade in Queens covered in colorful powder that is often thrown in the air. See stories on pages 32, 38. Community News Group / Mike Shain

Jeffries wants Trump to come clean

By Nelson A. King

Brooklyn Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and Democrats in the US House of Representatives have introduced a resolution of inquiry that would compel the Trump administration to publicly disclose information to Congress and the American people about ties to Russia.

The resolution comes in the aftermath of what has been described as misleading information put forth by US Attorney General Jeff Sessions concerning his interaction with Russian operatives.

The resolution also follows a steady stream of what Jeffries said are “troubling revelations

related to possible collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia during last year’s presidential election.”

The bill calls on President Donald Trump and Sessions to submit to Congress any documents that could connect the Trump campaign with the Russian effort to compromise America’s democracy.

It states that they must reveal “any meeting or communication between any formal or informal advisor, affiliate, or employee of Donald Trump, his campaign or transition team, and any individual or entity representing the interests of Russia or individuals with

interests involving Russia.”

Jeffries, representative for the 8th Congressional District, which also includes parts of Queens, said Sessions either lied to Congress under oath or provided inaccurate information.

“Either way, he broke the law,” said Jeffries, a member of House Democratic Leadership and the Judiciary Committee. “The American people deserve to know why the nation’s Attorney General and all of the president’s men were in frequent contact with Russian operatives during the election.

“It’s time for House Repub-

Continued on Page 6

JURY TRIAL DEBATE

Trinidad government gets resistance on its reform bill

By Bert Wilkinson

If the administration of Prime Minister Keith Rowley in Trinidad has its way, accused persons in high court trials will soon be allowed the choice of a trial either by judge or by judge and jury as a major but highly controversial reform bill is being debated in both houses of parliament.

Attorney General Faris Al Rawi might even have been politically indelicate when he declared during debate this week that trial by a judge and jury is not an absolute right, not entrenched in any local legislation.

But as debate continues, independent senators in the upper house are opposing a move that could possibly make Trinidad the first country in the bloc of 15 Caribbean Community nations to seriously consider doing away with jury trials, at least partially.

The previous government of Kamla Persad Bissessar had also toyed with the idea of doing away with the jury system alto-

gether. Al Rawi says the latest attempt will be different and defendants will be “offered a choice” between a judge sitting alone or by judge and jury.

“The jury system is not working,” he said, quoting the words of Chief Justice Ivor Archie at a public speech earlier this year.

“There is no direct reference to a trial by jury. Not a soul has said that the bill requires a three fifths majority or in fact is unconstitutional. There is no entrenched right to a trial by jury.”

Buffeting his arguments, the attorney general said that official statistics could bear out the move by authorities to amend the system to give defendants two choices.

As of mid March, the population of convicted and remand prison population stood at 3,634 souls of which more than 2,100 are on strict remand awaiting trials.

What’s more he contended, was the point that the total could be reduced by more than

Continued on Page 6



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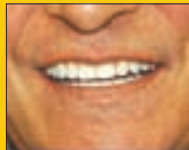
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Students pose with a 'Your School, Your Choice' guidebook created by the Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project.

Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project

Literacy group seeks better deal for immigrant students

By Alexandra Simon

A Brooklyn-based Haitian-American literacy group is urging the Department of Education to create better initiatives assisting immigrant students and parents in the high school enrollment process. The agency's registration process into city high schools is failing to properly educate immigrant families on their school options, said a representative from the Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project. After a new report showed that only 30 percent of English-language learning students were graduating, the center is launching a campaign demanding the department correct the disparity and support their mission.

The Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy project recently launched their "Your School, Your Choice" campaign, a multilingual helpful guidebook advising parents and students on enrolling. A representative from the center Darnell Benoit said immigrant families are falling between the cracks due to poor information available to them.

"We are proposing a series of things — and that is making sure that students are matched with adequate school choices when they go to the enrollment center," said Benoit, founding director at Flanbwayan. "Matching is number one because sometimes they choose low performing schools, or schools that are closing, and we need appropriate placement for families when they enter. They need to know the best school to match the student."

Schools that English language learners end up registering for lack the suitable programs to aid their educational needs, and because of the language barrier parents and students are not aware they are entitled more options and are finding themselves in undesirable schools, said Benoit.

Williams, Cumbo to honor CNN commentator Angela Rye

By Nelson A. King

Brooklyn Council Members Jumaane D. Williams and Laurie Cumbo will on Friday host the 4th Annual Shirley Chisholm Women of Distinction award ceremony at the Brooklyn Public Library's Central Branch, honoring, among others, Angela Rye, principal and chief executive officer of IMPACT Strategies, CNN political commentator.

The ceremony takes place at the library's Dweck Auditorium, Grand Army Plaza, from 6 - 8:30 pm.

Williams, Deputy Leader of the City Council, and Cumbo said they will honor the following other women from New York City, "who are blazing the trail in advocacy and public service": Officer Ronette Benjamin, NYPD Community Affairs Officer for the 63rd Precinct in Brooklyn; Lori Knipel, NYS Committee Woman District Leader; Evelyn Ortiz, chief external affairs officer for Opportunities for Better Tomorrow; Debbie Almontaser, founding and former principal of the Khalil Gibran International Academy; Joo-Hyun Kang, director of Communities United for Police Reform (CPR); and Carmen Perez, criminal justice reform activist and organizer.

There will be a spoken word performance by Assembly Member Diana Richardson and a keynote speech from Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal.

Williams said Rye has been a vocal critic of President Donald Trump's policies and advocate for disenfranchised communities in America.

Rye, a former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, has



Angela Rye, founder of Impact Strategies, poses in Washington on Friday, March 1, 2013.

Photo By Bill Clark / CQ Roll Call) (CQ Roll Call via Associated Press

made several appearances on CNN, where she discusses the intersection of race and politics in this country.

Williams said the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) has been at "the forefront in recent weeks following President Donald Trump's immigration

executive orders."

He said MOIA has worked with his office in the past few weeks to organize town halls, "where immigrants could learn about their rights, access to resources and quell rumors of indiscriminate immigration stops."

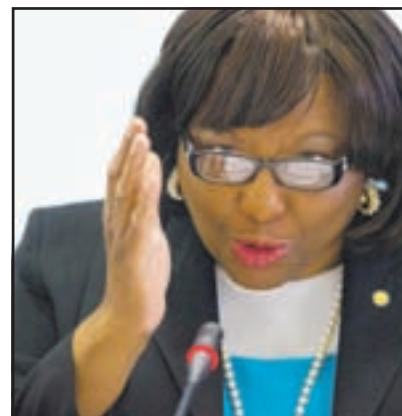
St. Lucia explores collaboration with PAHO

By Nelson A. King

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) says St. Lucia's Minister of Health and Wellness, Mary Isaac, is on a two-day visit at PAHO headquarters here to explore health collaboration and outline work on priority public health issues for her country.

"PAHO has been very instrumental in giving us necessary support after hurricane events, and we are working closely on issues, such as immunization, universal health coverage, and prevention of diabetes and other non-communicable diseases," Isaac told PAHO's Director Dr. Carissa Etienne at a meeting with key staff on Tuesday.

PAHO said St. Lucia, with 170,000 people, is developing a new strategic plan to expand health coverage to all,



Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, director, Pan America Health Organization (PAHO) at the World Health Organization (WHO).

Associated Press / Pablo Martinez Monsivais

and has rolled out electronic health records systems to 32 health centers that include syndromic surveillance and immunization records.

Cancer, heart disease and stroke are the top causes of death in St. Lucia, and rates of diabetes, including foot amputations in advanced cases, are a of great concern to the government, Isaac said.

On health achievements, Isaac underscored that that immunization coverage is 95 percent, adding that St. Lucia has eliminated measles and rubella, and mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Isaac said will continue to collaborate with PAHO on health financing and universal health coverage, operating and sustaining its two major hospitals, and looking at ways to increase health tourism as a source of financing.

Antigua

More than EC \$1million worth of marijuana was found at the deep water harbor in Antigua recently.

The Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy (ONDCP) said the drugs were in two barrels and no one had been arrested in connection with the discovery.

It said the barrels arrived from the United States to an address in Antigua and that discovery was made during a joint operation between the ONDCP, and Customs and Port Authority officers.



The marijuana weighed 252 pounds and had a street value of more than a million dollars.

Customs officials said the barrels also contained personal items.

Barbados

China has donated Bds\$10 million (US\$5million) in teaching equipment to boost the education system in Barbados.

The donation was given to the Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ronald Jones on behalf of the ministry from China's Ambassador Wang Ke.

Prime Minister Frenduel Stuart expressed gratitude for the donation.

Jones said his ministry has started the distribution of the materials, which include 3,000 desktops, large monitors, 2,000 laptops and 9,000 tablets.



The education minister disclosed that 14,000 pieces of technology would be distributed to all public schools under the Education Act, and registered as bona fide schools in Barbados.

Jones stated that nearly every institution associated with education, science, technology would receive some part of the donation, which also included 2,500 chairs and 2,500 desks.

Dominica

The Dominica government is creating a major development to reset



Preval's Memorial Service

Former first lady Elisabeth Debrosse Preval, fixes the flag that covers the body of late former Haitian president Rene Preval during a memorial service in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Friday March 10, 2017. See story on page 14. Associated Press / Dieu Nalio Chery

tle the hundreds of residents who lost their homes after Tropical Storm Erika wreaked havoc across the island more than a year and a half.

The Petite Savanne Resettlement Program, which was established with the active support and encouragement of Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, will see the construction of 368 mixed units.



Construction started a few months ago and the erection of buildings is due to start this month on the 49-acre site, to be completed in three phases.

The development is being financed by Dominica's Citizenship By Investment Program and is spearheaded by Montreal Management Consultants Establishment.

The new purpose-built modern liv-

ing community features 340 residential homes, a commercial plaza (mini-mall) of 28 retail units, a farmer's market and a community center.

The constructing phase will create 500-600 jobs for Dominica and is being handled by six contracting firms, five of which are local.

Guyana

Guyana says it could send future oil production to Trinidad and Suriname for oil to be refined.



Exxon Mobil Corp and partner companies say they have found between 800 million and 1.4 billion barrels of oil off the coast of Guyana, with production expected for 2020.

Natural Resources Minister Raphael Trotman told reporters "we recently

had some overtures made by the Trinidad and Tobago government since they are operating right now below optimum and they are importing oil from Nigeria."

He said Suriname has also indicated a willingness to do refining for Guyana because they have a refinery which is performing under par.

Guyana, which currently does not produce oil, is considering whether it would make economic sense to build its own refinery, Trotman said.

Jamaica

Amnesty International has criticized Jamaica over the rise in unlawful police killings and extra judicial executions according to a report by the country's Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM).

Continued on Page 16

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TOP DRIVER DISTRACTIONS

Using mobile phones

Leading the list of the top distractions behind the wheel are mobile phones. Phones now do more than just place calls, and drivers often cannot pull away from their phones, even when driving. According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, studies have shown that driving performance is lowered and the level of distraction is higher for drivers who are heavily engaged in cell

phone conversations. The use of a hands-free device does not lower distraction levels. The percentage of vehicle crashes and near-crashes attributed to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening.

Daydreaming

Many people will admit to daydreaming behind the wheel or looking at a person or object outside of the car for too long. Per-

haps they're checking out a house in a new neighborhood or thought they saw someone they knew on the street corner. It can be easy to veer into the direction your eyes are focused, causing an accident. In addition to trying to stay focused on the road, some drivers prefer the help of lane departure warning systems.

Eating

Those who haven't quite mastered walking and

chewing gum at the same time may want to avoid eating while driving. The majority of foods require a person's hands to be taken off of the wheel and their eyes to be diverted from the road. Reaching in the back seat to share some French fries with the kids is also distracting.

Try to eat meals before getting in the car. For those who must snack while en route, take a moment to pull over at

a rest area and spend 10 minutes snacking there before resuming the trip.

Reading

Glancing at an advertisement, updating a Facebook status or reading a book are all activities that should be avoided when driving. Even pouring over a traffic map or consulting the digital display of a GPS system can be distracting.

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Trinidad seeks legal reforms



Attorney General Faris Al-Rawi.
Faris Al-Rawi

Continued from page 1

800 if only these could make bail.

But he also presented even more startling figures saying that up to 64 percent of all cases pending in the system have been there for as long as 15 years.

"The views expressed so far, in particular coming from the judiciary and coming from eminent jurists is that if the system is not being improved, that there should be a move away from jury trial.

And the allegations that the jury system is not working are pegged on the slow pace of the criminal justice system, the time that it takes to empanel juries, move them back and forth, the cost involved in that, the cost involved in sequestration," he said.

Citing one case involving a murdered supermarket tycoon, the attorney general said that the trial had cost the state \$10M. Legal fees paid to attorneys average about \$45M annually. He also said that Trinidad could become the latest of 23 Commonwealth nations to abolish or amend the system if the bill is approved.

Additionally, valuable time now wasted would be significantly reduced as a judge working without a jury would only have to give reasons for his deci-

sion rather than wait on juries to be empaneled and to deliberate.

Meanwhile, proposals are also on the table to abolish the system of preliminary enquiries on the island.

"This is aimed at making the administration of justice increasingly effective. The abolition of the preliminary enquiry in this manner will in no uncertain terms provide accused persons speedier determination of court matters and reduce the cost of accused persons to defend their matters as it relates to the inference of legal fees. The lawyers would not like to hear that, but from a holistic perspective, this would also reduce the trauma of victims and disenchantment of witnesses, and this government wants to assure that the current dilemma of delayed justice is resolved."

Resolution of inquiry

Continued from page 1

licans to put country over party," he added. "Something stinks at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. We are determined to find out if the rot goes all the way to the top."

Rep. Ted Lieu, a co-sponsor of the resolution, said: "For the good of our Republic, there must be a full accounting of any and all ties between Russia, President Trump, his administration and his associates.

"Russia waged an unprecedented, robust, covert effort to alter the outcome of our nation's 2016 election," he said. "The importance of fully understanding if Team Trump colluded with Russia cannot be overstated.

"This resolution seeks the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth when it comes to the issue of Trump and Russia," Lieu said. "I am honored to introduce this resolution with Congressman Jefferies. The American people have an absolute right to know the truth about Trump and his team's ties to Russia now."

Jefferies said 17 different intelligence agencies have concluded that Russia interfered with the United States Presidential Election to help Donald Trump win the presidency.

"It now appears possible that Jeff Sessions, the nation's top law enforcement officer, may have been involved



Congressman Hakeem Jeffries speaks during a press conference outside police headquarters on Thursday Aug. 14, 2014 in New York.

Associated Press / Beбето Matthews

with this insidious foreign interference campaign," he said.

"The House of Representatives is the institution closest to the people by constitutional design. As such, the House must protect the integrity of our democracy," he added. "The resolution of inquiry is a meaningful step in that direction.

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Guyana scores highest in Caribbean suicides

By Azad Ali

Guyana has the highest suicide rate in the Caribbean, followed by Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

This is according to psychiatrist Gerard Hutchinson who was speaking at a media sensitization workshop held recently at the Trinidad Hilton.

He said the most common factors leading to suicide were family or relationship issues and economic hardships, while most common method was ingesting poisonous substances.

Hutchinson noted that figures related to suicide by hanging or with the use of a firearm have been increasing in recent times.

He said legislation can be put in place to ensure that people seeking to purchase pesticide poisoning have agriculture licenses or are made to have some level of responsibility.

The psychiatrist said while Trinidad and Tobago continues to record

between 140–200 suicides yearly, media practitioners are being urged to be responsible in their reporting of these cases.

Graphic or detailed reporting on suicides has been proven to lead to “copy-cat” behavior, according to Dr. Daniel Reidenberg, executive director of Suicide Awareness / Voices of Education (SAVE), a non-profit agency based in the United States.

He said the global reporting on suicides should be to provide only information that is necessary and not to provide information that other suicidal people can use to harm themselves.

Reidenberg noted that a life is lost due to suicide nearly every 40 seconds, accounting for more than 800,000 deaths worldwide.

Trinidad and Tobago is ranked 41st out of 170 countries in the world for the highest number of suicides per 100,000, he added.

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The robots are coming, your job is at risk

By Martin Khor

PENANG, March 15, 2017 (IPS) – Last year Uber started testing driver-less cars, with humans inside to make corrections in case something goes wrong. If the tests go well, Uber will presumably replace their present army of drivers with fleets of the new cars.

Some personally owned cars can already do automatic parking. Is it a matter of time before Uber, taxi and personal vehicles will all be smart enough to bring us from A to B without our having to do anything ourselves?

But in this application of “artificial intelligence,” in which machines can have human cognitive functions built into them, what will happen to jobs? It is estimated that in the US alone, 4 to 5 million drivers of trucks and taxis could be rendered unemployed.

The driver-less vehicle is just one example of the technological revolution that is going to drastically transform the world of work and living.

There is concern that the march of automation tied with digital technology will cause dislocation in many factories and offices, and eventually lead to mass unemployment.

Just a day before he left office, former US President Barack Obama warned in a farewell interview that “jobs are going away because of automation and that’s going to accelerate,” pointing to “driverless Uber” and “displacement that’s going

to take place in office buildings across the country.”

Also voicing concern about the social impact of automation, Microsoft founder Bill Gates recently proposed that governments should impose a tax on robots. Companies using robots should have to pay taxes on the incomes attributed to the use of robotics.

That proposal has caused an uproar, with mainstream economists like Lawrence Summers, a former US treasury secretary, condemning it for putting brakes on technological advancement. One critic suggested that the first company to pay taxes for causing automation should be Microsoft.

However, the tax on robots idea is one response to growing fears that the automation revolution will increase inequality as many lose their jobs while a few reap the benefits of increased productivity and profitability.

The new technologies will cause uncontrollable disruption and add to the social discontent and political upheaval in the West which had fuelled the anti-establishment votes for Brexit and Donald Trump.

Recent studies are showing that deepening use of automation will cause widespread disruption in many sectors and even whole economies. Worse, it is the developing countries that are estimated to lose the most, and this will exacerbate the already great global inequalities.

Unemployment and the Informal Economy – Key challenges for women in Latin America

By Jose Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs

LIMA, March 6, 2017 (IPS) - The participation of women in the labour market in Latin America and the Caribbean has steadily grown over the last few decades. But in 2017, as unemployment and informal work are on the rise, there is a continued need to push hard for gender equality in order to create more and better employment for the 255 million women of working age in this region.

Almost half of these women, 126 million, are already part of the labour force – a very important achievement that took many years to reach. Once more, however, it must be stressed that we cannot let down our guard.

Over the past year, as the wave of slow growth and in some cases of economic contraction which struck the region impacted on the labour market, generating a sharp rise in unemployment and also a decline in the quality of employment with respect to some indicators, it has become evident that this situation affects women to a larger extent.

The regional average unemployment rate for women shot up to levels not seen for over a decade in Latin America and the Caribbean, to 9.8 per cent – on the brink of two digits. If projections of slow economic growth for this year prove correct, the average rate could climb above 10 per cent in 2017.

The unemployment rate for women grew 1.6 percentage points, compared to 1.3 percentage points

The regional average unemployment rate for women shot up to levels not seen for over a decade in Latin America and the Caribbean

for men. Of the five million people who joined the ranks of the unemployed, 2.3 million were women. This means that about 12 million women are actively looking for work, without success.

The participation of women in the labour force has continued to expand over the last year. At a national level (rural+urban), women’s participation has gone from 49.3 per cent to 49.7 per cent. An increase is always good news. However, it still remains well below the participation of men, which is 74.6 per cent.

The downside was that the demand for labour fell from 45.2 to 44.9 per cent in the case of women. It also dropped in the case of men, although the level remains much higher, at 69.3 per cent.

The latest ILO (International Labour Organisation) Labour Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean also noted that the decline in economic activity has been reflected in a drop in the number of wage-earners, a rise in the number of self-employed workers, and a decrease in formal sector wages, all of which are signs of an increase in labour informality.

The most recent estimates available regarding informality among women indicate that almost half of the female labour force works under these conditions, which generally mean labour instability, low incomes, and a lack of protection and rights.

Several aspects to be taken into account when analysing women’s labour participation have been identified, such as the fact that about 70 per cent of women who work do so in the retail trade and services sector, often in precarious conditions, for example, without contracts.

In addition, 17 million women in the region work as domestics. Women make up 90 per cent of domestic workers. In this sector, the levels of informality are still very high, around 70 per cent.

This description of the characteristics of women’s insertion in the labour market would not be complete without pointing out a notable aspect mentioned in the regional report on “Decent work and gender equality” by several United Nations agencies presented in 2013: in this region, 53.7 per cent of female workers have more than ten years of formal education, in contrast to just 40.4 per cent of men.

Moreover, 22.8 per cent of women in the labour force have tertiary education (complete or incomplete), by comparison to 16.2 per cent of men.

However, this does not prevent the persistence of a significant wage gap. A report by ECLAC (Economic

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Caribbean Life

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are welcome from all readers. They should be addressed care of this newspaper to the Editor, Caribbean-Life Publications, 1 MetroTech Center North, Brooklyn, New York 11201, or sent via e-mail to caribbeanlife@cnglocal.com All letters, including those submitted via e-mail, MUST be signed and the individual’s verifiable address and telephone number included. Note that the address and telephone number will NOT be published and the name will be published or withheld on request. No unsigned letters can be accepted for publication. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Amigos resist ICE order to deport TT ‘bad hombre’

“I remember when we used to sit

Inna government yard in Trench Town,

Obaserving the ‘ypocrites
As they would mingle with the good people we meet.

Good friends we have, good friends we’ve lost
Along the way.

In this great future, you can’t forget your past,

So dry your tears, I say.
Everything’s gonna be all right!

No, woman, no cry.
Woman, little sister, don’t shed no tears,

No, woman, no cry.”
“No Woman No Cry” – Robert Nesta Marley

When President Donald Trump used social media to amplify an immigration policy saying “we have some bad hombres here and we’re going to get them out,” his tweet resonated with US citizens as well as with vulnerable green card holders because many comprehended that the former reality television celebrity wasn’t just referring to Mexicans that illegally cross the borders.

Amy Gottlieb, an Ameri-



Inside Life

By Vinette K. Pryce

can citizen fully understood the talking point of a campaign message that became more than rhetoric when the former Republican unlikely became triumphant after a national election and during weeks of his inauguration issued an executive order to “Make America Great Again” by signing an enforcing document that resulted with Caribbean nationals gripped with fear of being rounded up, raided and summoned to report to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

“I was so devastated on so many levels,” Gottlieb said. “I knew that this new wave of anti-immigrant sentiment and anti-immigrant policies were going to impact us directly.”

Gottlieb’s husband is a Trinidad and Tobago national named Ravi Ragbir. She considers him her “closest friend and confidant” and describes their rela-

tionship as “a deep connection” in which they “have come to rely on each other for support, friendship, for advice, and companionship.” “We have created a life together,” Gottlieb said, “and the idea of living that life without my husband is devastating.”

Ragbir is executive director of the New Sanctuary Coalition of New York City. He is also associated with the Indian-Caribbean diaspora.

He legally immigrated to the United States from the twin island in 1991. Arriving on a visitor’s visa, three years later he changed his status to become a green card holder. Ragbir’s unfortunate engagement with the US immigration system began in 2000. The permanent resident was convicted for wire fraud after the mortgage company that he worked for was investigated for fraudulent loan applications. Because he maintained that he was a



Ravi Ragbir is accompanied by Councilman Jumaane Williams (left) and other supporters.

low-level employee — unlike many of his fellow workers who plead — he decided to take his case through the judicial system. That was a major setback because he lost and was found guilty. Sentenced to five years in jail, he was released from prison after serving three. The remaining two years of his time was spent in numerous

federal immigration detentions pending deportation.

Ragbir was released in 2008 under very strict conditions of supervision.

In addition to wearing an ankle monitor, the father of a 23-year-old daughter named Deborah was required to check in with immigration officials

Continued on Page 22

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Challenges for women

Continued from page 10

Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) noted that in 2016, according to available data, women earned 83.9 per cent of what men earned in similar jobs. The gap is still wider among men and women with higher educational levels.

These figures should serve as a wake-up call.

This issue is already part of the sustainable development goals set for all countries in the 2030 Agenda. Particularly, in Goal #5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", and is key for Goal #8 on economic growth and decent work. For the ILO, gender equality is a cross-cutting objective, present in all its activities.

We are facing a structural challenge, which must involve economic, social, and, as we know, cultural changes as well. It is necessary for governments as well as social actors to make the achievement of greater equality between men and women a top priority.

Formulas have to be sought to improve women's productivity, stimulating their participation in more dynamic sectors, of medium to high productivity, while at the same time identifying the causes of labour market segregation.

To continue advancing towards equality in the labour market, it is necessary to resort to a combination of actions aiming at gender equality, including: active employment policies; network and infrastructure for caregiving and new policies for services for child care and care of dependent persons; strategies to promote the division of household responsibilities; improved education and vocational training; incentives for women entrepreneurs; increased social security coverage; and determined action to prevent and combat violence against women, including in the workplace.

Equality in employment remains one of the most important challenges for achieving a better future for workers in the region.

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Haiti's ex-president buried despite calls to wait

By Evens Sanon

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Several thousand Haitians filed past the remains of former President Rene Preval on Friday ahead of a state funeral that a senator sought to delay until further tests are conducted to definitively establish the cause of death of the two-term leader.

Preval lay in an open, flag-draped casket at

a museum dedicated to heroes of the country's independence. The procession of people who came to pay their respects included dignitaries and civil society figures as well as groups of school children and other citizens. President Jovenel Moise came and expressed condolences to the family and then left without making a public statement.

A funeral was scheduled for Saturday, capping six days of mourning for a president who led the country during the devastating January 2010 earthquake and its chaotic aftermath.

Family members have said that Preval, who died March 3, had a heart attack on the way to the hospital. The 74-year-old former leader had health problems including pros-

tate cancer in the past.

Attorney General Don-ton Leger told reporters on Thursday that an autopsy did not clearly establish a cause of death and more tests would be required. He acknowledged rumors that the former president had been poisoned, though he did not cite any evidence.

Sen. Jean Renel Sen-atius, chairman of the Commission on Justice

and Security in the upper house of parliament, urged the Justice Ministry to conduct a formal investigation before the funeral.

The government has not responded and preparations were moving ahead for the funeral, which was to be conducted from a temporary stage in the Champ de Mars, a huge plaza in downtown Port-au-Prince.

Preval was the only democratically elected president to win and complete two terms in Haiti, a country that has been characterized by political upheaval throughout its history. An agronomist by training, he kept a low profile in office even in the aftermath of the earthquake, which led some to criticize him for not showing leadership at a time of crisis.

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Police officers arrive with the coffin containing the remains of former President Rene Preval, at Champ de Mars plaza, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Saturday, March 11, 2017.

Associated Press / Dieu Nalio Chery

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CARIBBEAN ROUNDUP

Continued from page 4

INDECOM has reported an alarming rise in the number of fatal police shootings in just the first two months of this year.

According to the data, 31 people were killed by law enforcers in that period, a 55 per cent increase over fatal incidents for the same period last year.



Members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force also shot and injured 11 other people.

Assistant Commissioner of INDECOM, Hamish Campbell said the rise in police killings is disturbing.

He also noted that 15 of those killed by the police were not in possession of any firearm. Only two cases involved illegal weapons.

Campbell warned that the current trend could result in an unprecedented rate which cannot augur well for Jamaica.

St. Lucia

The St. Lucia government is moving to ensure that the island improves its ranking on the World Bank's ease of doing business index.

This was disclosed during the second National Forum on Doing Business recently.

Held under the theme "Improving Efficiency in the Business Environment" the forum will help to assess the successes and challenges of the department in reforming the business environment across the island.



Commerce Minister Bradley Felix

said it will also identify the measures that will receive priority attention as it restructures the economy to become more competitive.

Having ranked number 86 in the 2016 World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business Report," the department in collaboration with the private sector continues to work assiduously to improve the business environment to make it better to do business in St. Lucia, the minister said.

Trinidad

The United States government has praised the Trinidad and Tobago government for its ongoing fight to combat the international drug trade despite facing many challenges.

This is according to the 2017 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report which was recently released by the United States State Department.



The report said robust interdiction efforts continued through 2016, though overall seizures decreased from 2015.

The State Department also noted that Trinidad and Tobago maintains a narcotic control and law enforcement agreement which allows the US to patrol T&T waters, overfly its territorial sea and detain vessels suspected of trafficking drugs.

Trinidad and Tobago also has an extradition treaty with the US.

The State Department also said Government is an active partner in the US Caribbean Basin Security Initiative programs.

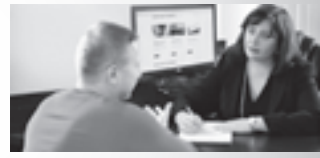
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Further shocks for Barbados

By George Alleyne

As though the news was not bad enough for Barbados, the island on Thursday suffered another downgrade of its sovereign bonds, the second drop in international financial ratings in exactly one week.

Following Standard and Poor's downgrade of Barbados' bonds from 'B-' to 'CCC+' last Friday, Barbadians woke Thursday morning to the news that Moody's had also lowered its assessment of the island's ability to repay money borrowed through bonds to 'Caa3' from its grade of 'Caa1', which it held last April.

While the S&P downgrade last week represented a further lowering of Barbados' bond issuer status within the junk category, Moody's stated in the Thursday downgrade that it expects the island to default on its loan repayments.

"The debt burden has risen in recent years and will continue to do so for the next few. Domestic and external liquidity pressures on the sovereign have increased. We assess the likelihood of a credit event [default] in the near term as very high, given lack of fis-



Barbados' Opposition Leader, Mia Mottley.

Photo by George Alleyne

cal adjustment and increasingly limited financing options," Moody's stated.

On the Saturday following S&P's downgrade Prime Minister Freundel Stuart had shrugged off the lower classification of his government's international creditworthiness by saying, "... we are not looking to borrow. We're looking to earn foreign exchange, not to borrow.

"We're trying to get away from that habit of borrowing foreign exchange to earning our way in the world."

And on Wednesday before the Moody's announcement, Stuart continued his apparent commentary on the S&P downgrade and the expressions of concern by the business community.

"It disturbs me no end that we seem now to be working ourselves back into a frame of mind where once again we want to sit exams for people outside of Barbados and wait on them to grade us and if they tell us we have passed we are supposed to feel good that we have passed, and when they tell us we have failed we are supposed to hold our heads in shame and think that we are failures," Stuart said.

This triggered Opposition Leader, Mia Mottley, to take to social media Thursday and asked the prime minister to shut up.

"I never thought that I would have to come to this country and ask Prime Minister Freundel Stuart to stop speaking," Mottley said, contending that his talking is 'more offensive' than his previous silence when the complaint was that he had not been speaking enough.

Mottley described the prime



Barbados' Prime Minister Freundel Stuart.

Photo by George Alleyne

minister's comments of the S&P down grade as 'reprehensible', and charged that he "does not understand the gravity of the problem."

Whether the leader of the country understood or not

the gravity of the continuous downgrades — this being the 19th under this current administration — the international financial community and economists were making their views known.



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Fya Empress performs at National Heroes Day.

GIPSVG, Inc.

Vincy group hosts National Heroes Day celebration

By Nelson A. King

Despite the bitterly cold weather, the Brooklyn-based Garifuna Indigenous People of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Inc. (GIPSVG, Inc.) Saturday evening held a very successful 2nd Annual National Heroes Day celebration at the Friends of Crown Heights Educational Center in Brooklyn.

Hundreds braved the conditions to participate in the grand celebration that featured local handicraft, singing, dancing, drumming and poetry, as well as indulgence in local delicacies.

Many arrived early to secure their portions of dukuna, farine, cassava bread (chokee bam bam), tri tri cake, among other local Vincentian eats, according to GIPSVG, Inc. president Marsena Ballantyne.

"The event sought not only to remember Paramount Chief Joseph Chatoyer, national hero of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but to inspire national pride, promote Vincentian heritage and provide patrons and visitors with a typical Vincentian National Heroes Day celebration," Ballantyne, a Counsellor at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Mission to the United Nations, told Caribbean Life in an exclusive interview.

"A diverse line-up of performances in a packed program of entertainment was presented," she added.

The highlights of the show included a Quadrille dance by the GIPSVG, Inc.; folklore performance by the United Vincy Cultural group of Brooklyn; Punta dance by the Budari Dance Company of Honduras; and surprise calypso ren-

dition by newly-appointed St. Vincent and the Grenadines Consul General to the United States, Howie Prince.

Other artistes bringing the show to a climax were Chanique Rogers; James Lovell; Daria Primus; and Vincentian Calypso artiste, Maxwell "Tajoe" Francis, who also co-hosted the show and entertained in song and poetry.

But it was popular Vincentian soca artiste, Fya Empress, whose real name is Lornette Nedd, who brought the house down with dynamic renditions of "True Vincy"; "Rum, Please" and "Ah Ketch it," among others.

"The show was epic," Ballantyne said. "The support that we continue to receive from the Consul General and other Vincentian associations here in New York was evident, and it's something we very much appreciate."

"The event was a celebration of a Vincentian heritage that I think many here in the Diaspora are still learning about and embracing," she added, stating that it is the intention of GIPSVG, Inc. to continue promoting it.

Meantime, the Bronx-based Garifuna Coalition, USA, Inc., a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization, said it was "proud to celebrate St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Heroes Day as part of Garifuna-American Heritage Month."

The group invites the public to attend its 9th Annual Chief Joseph Chatoyer Memorial Mass, on Sunday, March 19, at 2 pm, at St. Anthony of Padua Church, 832 East, 166 St., Bronx.

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Kids go 'Topsie Turvie' at new spa and lounge

Continued from page 11

three times per week.

It was then that he immersed himself in volunteering and community work. According to associates he displayed dedication, professionalism and was ultimately hired to lead the New Sanctuary Coalition of New York City.

An expert with accompaniment training, Rigbar schooled immigrants on how to maneuver through the minefield he had explored. He also gave insightful lessons on how to better report to ICE by enlisting friends and family members for support.

Visiting places of worship throughout the country, speaking at services about the impact of immigration policies on the community Ragbir helped to empower hundreds maybe thousands of otherwise hopeless individuals.

His reputation placed him among some of the nation's best-known advocates of Civil Rights for immigration reform.

Throughout the years he has relentlessly worked with mostly desperate immigrants while complying with immigration demands.

Six years ago, ICE officials granted him a stay of removal, exercising discretion to defer his deportation. Instead of reporting three-times weekly, they eased the burden by extending periods to biannual reports.

In addition he secured a deferment through 2018.

Pres. Barack Obama's determination was that ICE should prioritize deportations of violent criminals. During his tenure he allegedly deported 3.1 million undocumented immigrants, more than any other president.

Rigbar has said that Pres. Obama has deported more people than the population of Staten Island.

Trump's decree superseded his predecessor's guidance — demanding that anyone convicted of any crime is a priority for deportation. It also adds that anyone ICE deems to be a threat to public safety is now ripe for deportation.

"We're getting really bad dudes out of this country, and at a rate that nobody's ever seen before," Trump said on Feb. 23.

"The crackdown on illegal criminals is merely the keeping of my campaign promise," the president tweeted.

Last week Rigbar obeyed an order to check-in with (ICE).

Unsure as to whether he would be deported, the father and husband boldly faced his fear and walked into the federal building located at 26 Foley Square.

But he was not alone.

Several politicians entered the center with him.

Catch You On The Inside!

By Tangerine Clarke

When Clare Alicia Dougall, and Racquel Morgan of Caribbean heritage set out to start a business centered-around kids, the first thought was to create an environment that would be conducive to children's entertainment needs, as well as their pampering needs.

Dougall, a middle school teacher, and Moran, a professional baker, and owner of Ikonice Events, came up with the perfect business model — a day spa and lounge for children.

Last Saturday, March 4, the entrepreneurs opened Topsie Turvie Kid's Spa and Lounge, a full-service salon, located in an area where there was a niche market.

The 1982 Flatbush Avenue, Topsie Turvie Kids Spa and Lounge, will cater to clients from the age of 3 to 14, from 10 am to 5 pm, Monday to Saturday. No appointment is necessary.

The 1200 sq ft. space nestled in a row of businesses, will host spa packages catering to events such as birthday parties, graduation events, baby christenings, mommy and me, daddy and me, and other services. The little ones will be treated to desserts, and interactive entertainment.

Topsie Turvie's complete packages start at \$650.00. And depending on the number of persons in a group, or party, the cost go up to \$850.00, and include flavored manicure and pedicures, spa treatments, hair styling, facials and a variety of other services, all designed with the kids in mind.

The grand opening attracted scores of children, accompanied by their parents, who, watched on as the little girls gleefully had their nails painted, danced to deejay music, and ate lots of



Clare Alicia Dougall, left, and Racquel Morgan celebrate with the kids at the grand opening of Topsie Turvie Kids Spa and Lounge. Photo by Tangerine Clarke

cupcakes, popcorn, cotton candy, and shaved ice with multi-colored syrup.

Centrally located, Topsie Turvie has already gone on a booking frenzy at its kid friendly environmental that boasts two large flats screen televisions on the wall, a dessert station and a library to keep the kids happy and occupied during their spa experience.

Dougall, who does not plan to leave her teaching job just yet, will rely on a capable staff of style savvy young women, who will bestow the essentials needed to pamper the kids. The space is also available for personal bookings, with or without catering options.

As temperatures warm-up, the entrepreneurs expect a rush of clientele, especially during Easter break, and summer, said Morgan an airline employee, who still finds the time to bake specialty cakes and cupcakes under her Ikonice Events brand.

The cupcakes that Dougall call phenomenal will be offered with sparkling cider, and other treats as the kids are pampered.

In another few months, Topsie Turvie will unveil its \$20.00 single spa treatment of pedicure and manicure for girls, and special services for boys. A Groupon coupons package discount will also be offered.

"We will empower young girls, and let them understand, historically we were told that we are not beautiful. We are beautiful," said Dougall, who plans to use the space for tutoring and dance classes.

"We are exploring different ideas to engage community kids," said Dougall.

Information: 718-404-3631, 917-767-1783 on Facebook – topsie turvie, Instagram - topsie_turvie_bk, ikonicevents@instagram www.topsieturvie.com, TOPSIEEvents@gmail.com.



Little Trinity is being pampered with a pedicure treatment.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

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Remarkable presidency of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

“Madame President: The Extraordinary Journey of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf” by Helene Cooper
 c.2017, Simon & Schuster
 \$27.00 / \$36.00 Canada
 336 pages

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

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“This child will be great.”

Roughly translated, that's what a local prophet said about Ellen Johnson when she was born in Liberia in October, 1938. Those words were repeated in praise and in sarcasm as Johnson grew up, but no one had any idea then how right the man would be.



Author Helene Cooper. Leslie Cashen

Though illiteracy was very common in Liberia, Johnson's parents strove to educate their children in a manner befitting their upper-class status. Johnson expected to go to Europe for college but when her father fell ill, she knew that college would no longer be possible. Instead, she married Doc Sirleaf, a man several years her senior.

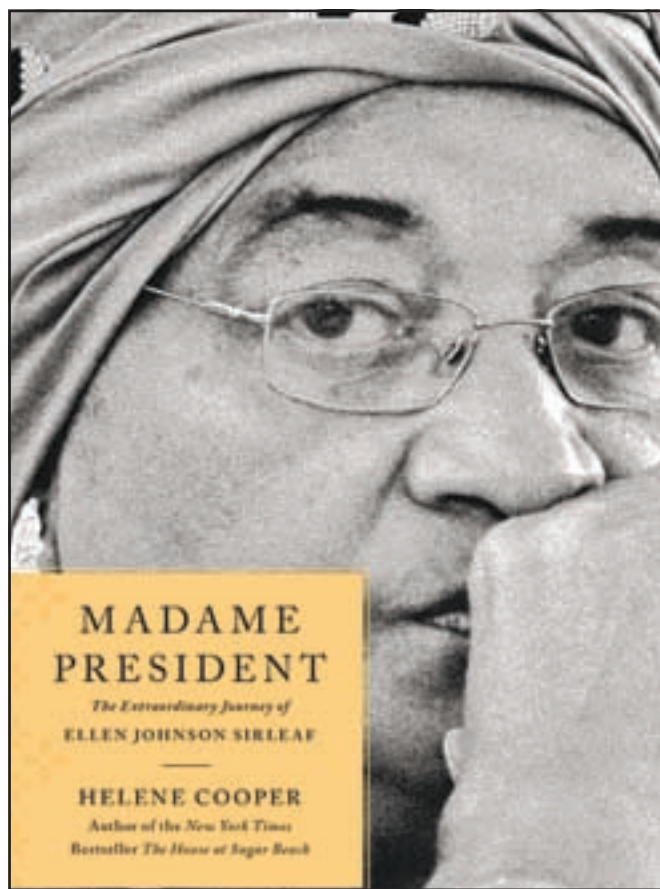
The babies started coming almost immediately; shortly

after their fourth son was born, Sirleaf and her husband seized an opportunity to go to America, to Wisconsin for college. Leaving her children was difficult for Sirleaf, but it wouldn't be the last time. It would, however, be a few years before she'd leave her abusive husband.

By then, she was working for Liberia's Treasury Department and it was obvious that there were problems. Politically and socially, things had been shaky for some time, in part because of a two-tiered society that wasn't functional anymore. Sirleaf attempted to continue working in-place but her connection to Liberia's controversial president Tolbert made her vulnerable, so she applied for a job in America with the World Bank.

It, and that she was a native Liberian, probably ultimately saved her life.

In 1980, following the government's overthrow and Tolbert's murder, Sirleaf continued being vigilant while working



Book cover of “Madame President” by Helene Cooper.

for the new president as well as for World Bank. She knew she could do more if she stayed in-country during Liberia's civil war, but her eventual outspo-

kenness was consequently perilous: for her rebellious actions, she was jailed in 1985, which outraged the country's market-women.



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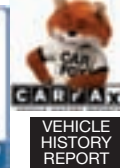
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Caribbean hotel executives appoint new leader



Stacy Cox. Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

By Nelson A. King

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) says seasoned hotel industry professional, Stacy Cox, is the new president of the Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE).

CHTA said on Monday that Cox was appointed to the leadership position during board meetings that preceded CHTA annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace event in The Bahamas.

CSHAE is an independent organization aimed at advancing professional development and strengthening networking among Caribbean hotel and tourism association executives, CHTA said.

Cox, who has served as the executive director of The Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association (TCHTA) since September 2011, is a native of the Bahamas and a citizen of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

She has amassed more than 20 years of hospitality experience in both destinations,

CHTA said.

As executive director, she represents the membership of TCHTA on matters affecting the tourism and hospitality industry, both locally and internationally, including advocacy issues and marketing initiatives, "which help build a sustainable tourism product through awareness, outreach and educational programs."

"To be elected by my counterparts throughout the Caribbean for such a role speaks volumes and I am truly honored," said Cox, who promised she will not take the role lightly.

She said she looks forward to continuing her advocacy efforts for local members, while "taking our collective voice to CHTA, with the hope of having our issues addressed at the top of the regional association's agenda."

"It is a blessing to have Stacy in this leadership role," said CHTA's director general and chief executive officer Frank Comito. "She has been a model

member of this group for several years, and we always look forward to her wise counsel and enthusiastic, solutions-driven approach to addressing challenges for our members.

"She leads by example and has done outstanding work in her role with the TCHTA," he added.

CHTA said Cox began her hospitality career as an activity coordinator in 1991 at what is now the world-famous Atlantis Paradise Island, Bahamas, and quickly moved her way up the ranks, receiving the coveted "Cacique" award prior to leaving her island home.

In 1997, she moved to the Turks and Caicos Islands, where she held general manager positions at Windsong Resort and Royal West Indies Resort.

The hospitality professional is committed to the advancement of the tourism industry and believes that education and awareness of opportunities within the sector are critical in the region, CHTA said.

"One of my first tasks as president of CSHAE is to meet with the team to determine how we can better raise the profile of the Society and to identify networking and developmental opportunities for all

Associations," she said. CHTA said Cox volunteers her time to organizations and events such as Youth Explosion, Maskanoo, TCI Shines Clean-up Campaign and TCI Little Chefs.

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The new flight attendants.

Fly Jamaica

Fly Jamaica Airways adds 20 attendants

By Tangerine Clarke

After launching flights four years ago, Fly Jamaica Airways has once again upped its aviation crew with 20 newly trained flight attendants who will join the airline's scheduled twice-weekly flights from John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) to Kingston and Georgetown, as well as Canada.

Described by customers, as a top airline that allow passengers two free pieces of checked luggage, and one carry-on, Fly Jamaica whose hub is in Kingston, conducted a seven-week flight attendant course in Guyana, to boost the airline's service and ability for continued outstanding service.

This is the fourth set of graduates from this course, said Director of Fly Jamaica, Roxanne Reece, who lauded the graduates, who passed with flying colors from the intense session, and expressed their wish to work diligently for the success of the airline.

In-flight services manager, Shirley Brown said Fly Jamaica is the most exceptional in the region and noted that this training would benefit the carrier that saw potential in the new flight attendants.

According to the Guyana Chronicle, Minister within the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Annette Ferguson, charged the graduates to do their best to make sure safety is their top priority.

Paul Ronald Reece, chairman / chief executive officer, said on the Fly Jamaica website, (www.fly-jamaica.com) that the airline also offer charter worldwide to Tour Operations and other Travel Groups, adding that in 2016, Jamaica-born, First Officer Andre Folkes, was promoted to Captain, and successfully completed his upgraded training.

In addition, Fly Jamaica, owned by Guyanese, Paul and Roxanne Reece has trained several first officers and captains, to support the efficiency of their aviation staff, and roster.

Jamaica braces for deportees

By Azad Ali

Jamaica is bracing for an influx of deportees from the United Kingdom. So far 100 of them have been sent back home on a charter flight and another batch is expected next week.

A further 32 were deported last week making it a total of 132 so far.

The last mass deportation of 42 persons was in September 2016.

The latest deportation comes following discussion between the minister of national security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the British High Commission over concerns raised by persons who have previously deported, many of whom no longer have family ties in Jamaica, having left there as children.

A release from the National Security

Ministry sought to explain that all legal avenues of appeal in the UK have been exhausted.

The ministry said the deportees have no legal rights in the UK and that the government of Jamaica, therefore, obligated, under international law, to receive its nationals on their return.

The deportees were met upon arrival in Kingston by Jamaica Constabulary Force and an officer from the Diaspora, Protocol and Consular Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as representatives of the National Organization for Deported Migrants (NODM) to receive the Jamaican nationals, a non-governmental organization funded by the British High Commission.



Our Perspective

For Working People, Progress and Resistance

By Stuart Appelbaum, President
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFCW

Workers at three Babeland stores in New York City - a mission-driven, queer-owned sex toy boutique - have made history by ratifying their first union contract after organizing with the RWDSU last year. Workers will receive general wage increases and adjustments, as well as signing bonuses and post-probationary wage increases. Most significantly, it's the first union contract that includes added safety and security trainings and protocols to protect Babeland's predominately LGBTQ and women workforce in this highly emotionally intimate industry.

We will fight any attempts to marginalize working people.

It's a contract that shows the value of unions, and how union contracts can help workers in any industry and any workplace. Babeland workers have unique, job-specific concerns, and by winning a voice and the power that comes with it they were able to win a contract that will significantly improve their jobs and their work lives. And, it will help protect them in the workplace, which was one of the driving

reasons behind their desire to organize.

In the era of Trump, with those who have traditionally been marginalized by society

In the era of Trump, it's significant that these workers proved the power we can all win when we stand together.

facing uncertain times and an increasingly hostile environment, it's significant that these workers proved the power we can all win when we stand together. It's significant because we all deserve to be treated with dignity, justice and respect. Working men and women - regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, or immigration status - refuse to recede back into the shadows, or succumb to the fear being stoked by our current presidential leadership.

We will fight any attempts to marginalize working people. We see it in victories like those at Babeland, and we see it in the emphatic rejection of Andrew Puzder, who would have been the most anti-worker Labor Secretary we have ever known. Even in difficult times, there is power in unity. Across America, people are fighting back, and we in the labor movement are proud to be an integral part of it.



www.rwdsu.org

Queens residents celebrate Phagwah

By Tangerine Clarke

The warm friendliness of participants at the Grand 29th Annual Phagwah Parade, melted the cold weather that blanketed Richmond Hill, Queens last Sunday, March 12, as hundreds of Indo-Caribbean nationals and citizens of all religions and races, lined the streets, while others danced on colorful floats to celebrate the Hindu festival of Holi.

Kids from as young as six, braved the cold temperature, and marched the tassa drum, while onlookers wearing white attire, bathe each other with 'abrack' — multi-colored powder, during the joyous welcome spring.

Sharmaine travelled all the way from Waterbury, Connecticut for the first time after coming from Guyana 29 years ago. She wanted to celebrate the richness, and colorful spectacle of her culture.

Her 17-year American-born son, who was experiencing the music and the floats for the first time, also, expressed his love of "mettai"— a sweet treat, as well as - pholouri and curry he enjoys.



Sharmaine (right) with son and sister waving Guyana's Golden Arrowhead flags.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

"Despite the frigid temps, we are happy to be here to enjoy the music and dancing, and to take part in our culture said the group, carrying Guyana flags.

Guyanese celebrated in 20 floats, adorned with flowers, and streamers. They danced to infectious Indian music, and douse each other in colored powder.

Consul General to New York, Barbara Atherly, at her first Phagwah festival since taking office, wished celebrants a

"Happy Holi or Happy Phagwah" — especially to the Guyanese Indians.

She stated that Holi is one of the most joyful and colorful festivals in the Hindu calendar, and an opportunity to embrace each other.

She noted that although the weather was cold, there was lots of love, warmth and friendship among the participants.

"I think this is what we should use to reach out to each at all times, love, and togetherness," she said.

City Council member candidate, Richard S. David, who could very well become the first Guyanese-born to occupy a seat to represent constituents of Council District 28, in Queens, expressed excitement, being at the largest symbolic festival in New York, and indicated that he would be pushing to make sure Hindus observe Phagwah as a holiday.

"We are not second-class citizens, thousands of people came out here to celebrate Holi or Phagwah, it is amazing how people of all race, and religion come together to celebrate, the same way, it is done Guyana,



Float with colorfully dressed celebrants of Phagwah Parade.

Photo by Tangerine Clarke

in peace and love. "I will be fighting in the council for us to have a holiday in observance of Phagwah," he said.

Organizer, Herman Singh, of the Federation of Hindu Mandir Inc. and the Arya Spiritual Center said it takes the entire community of Richmond Hill to put the Phagwah Parade together, but funding is still needed to offset the various elements to make it successful.

The parade cost upwards of \$26,000, but the financial support of business made it possible for citizens to come out and celebrate, despite the cold weather.

"We want to thank the business community for making this parade a success," said Singh who also acknowledged the support of the NYPD over the years, which led the parade this year dressed in ceremonial uniform.

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NAUW's Laura Spencer (Left, back), Shaundell Agrippa (center, back) and NAUW's Candace Scott with kids at Nicky's Little Sprouts, D.C., Inc. in Laurelton, Queens.

Nicky's Little Sprouts; D.C. Inc.

University Women's group reads again to 'Little Sprouts'

By Nelson A. King

As the maxim goes, "when it's nice, you do it twice."

It was apparently nice – and greatly appreciated – as officials from the Long Island Branch of the National Association of University Women (NAUW) last Thursday took the extraordinary step in reading again to kids at a Guyanese-owned daycare center in Laurelton, Queens. Last year, the group read to the kids for the very first time.

Laura Spencer, co-chair of the Literacy Committee of NAUW's Long Is. Branch president, and Candice Scott, scholarship chair, read to the kids, whose ages range from one to six years, at Nicky's Little Sprouts D.C., Inc., owned and operated by Guyanese Shaundell Agrippa, who is also a member of NAUW's Long Island Branch.

"This was a wonderful visit," NAUW officials told Caribbean Life after the reading session. "The children are bright, energetic and interested in the story. They remembered the name of the book and the author."

Spencer and Scott said that, simultaneously, other branch members read to children at other schools on the "Read Across America Day."

They said that they celebrated the birthday of Dr. Seuss by reading from his book, "The Cat in the Hat."

Theodor Seuss Geisel (Mar. 2, 1904 – Sept. 24, 1991) was an American writer, cartoonist, animator, book publisher and artist best known for authoring children's books under the pen name Dr. Seuss.

"The annual visit to Nicky's Little Sprouts is always built around excitement for the children," said Ms. Agrippa, the center's director, who holds a

bachelor's degree in psychology from Brooklyn College. "They enjoy being read to.

"NAUW is a good organization, because they give back to the community," she added. "They help to bridge and build strong connections among various groups through education at all levels."

Ms. Agrippa said literacy is her main focus for children, who are struggling with reading.

"At NLS [Nicky's Little Sprouts], we always encourage parents to come and read to the children," she said. "Also, we take part in the Scholastic Book Club, whereby parents get the opportunity to purchase age-appropriate books to read to their children. Reading is fundamental."

All were treated to a sumptuous reception at the reading's end, Ms. Agrippa said.

In support of the National Strategic Plan, NAUW's Long Is. Branch says that it engages in initiatives that support education, health and civic activities, as well as networking and cooperating with other community organizations, to produce health fairs, forums, black history events, tutorial and reading programs.

The branch said, however, that its main thrust is in the area of education – at all levels, preschool to college.

"The Long Island Branch is very proud of the many years of committed service to our neighborhood schools and the significant monetary scholarships that have been awarded to college freshmen since its existence, as well as its contributions to the Northeast Sectional Scholarship for Master's Degree candidates," said the branch in a statement.



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Bridgetown rocked by a day of protests

By George Alleyne

The Barbados capital throbbled with two significant marches in one day as thousands of Barbadians demonstrated their frustration at female harassment, and disgust with the island's economic and political affairs.

Women and men, numbering close to 1,000, came together under the cover of the Caribbean-wide movement, 'Life in Leggings' to walk through the streets of the capital sending a message to males of Barbados and the region that catcalls and sexually-infused remarks on the roads

about a woman's body are not received as compliments but derogatory comments that produce mental injury to women.

Less than an hour later, an estimated 10,000 Barbadians assembled in response to a call by the Opposition Barbados Labour Party for a 'March of Disgust' and tramped through the city streets calling for political and economic change for a country stifling in prolonged recession, suffering frequent downgrades in international ratings to which the government of the day appears indifferent.

"I am not your sexy friend"; "I deserve respect"; "Don't stop your daughters from dancing, teach your sons to behave"; and "Permission to look, no permission to touch" read some of the placards held by 'Life In Leggings' marchers as both men and women sought to indicate to the insensitive Caribbean man that what such males believe as acceptable amorous appeals to women in fact do more harm than good.

Assistant of the Barbados chapter of 'Life in Leggings', Luci Hammans, reportedly described the



March of Disgust marchers protest high prices facing consumers.

Photos by George Alleyne

turnout for the march as heartwarming.

"It wasn't just women, it wasn't just one type of woman," she said about the placard-bearing marchers, adding, "it was all those different people who believe in this cause and believe in this purpose, and showed themselves".

"One of my favorite moments was when ... the women were chanting and saying something, and the men's voices were boosting the message of the women."

The movement in Barbados founder, Ronelle King, also reportedly explained what is absent in Caribbean society that the march was intended to

highlight.

"We don't look at the things like how we socialize men; how we socialize men to be aggressive, especially the Caribbean male.

"We have to, as a society, continue to educate our society members, to educate our children, our sons."

The thousands at the BLP-led march amounted to a record number for any political rally in Barbados, and Opposition Leader, Mia Mottley, told the crowd of supporters, business people, and other Barbadians that she will take their massive turnout as an order to make demands of social partners comprising trade unions and business

umbrella organizations in the quest to change the country's political leadership before the constitutionally due elections, some 51 weeks away.

We have to, as a society, continue to educate our society members, to educate our children, our sons.

"Having taken instructions from you the people, we are now going back to talk with the other partners in this country [and tell them] that Barbadians cannot take 51 more weeks of this.

She told the crowd assembled in Jubilee Gardens after the march how they can push things through mass appeal.

"In the same way all of us love our country let us go beyond the extra call of duty, put in that extra bit of work, talking. Talk to the people, and you get the message to us and we will go back to the social.

"I believe that if you stay true and do what we ask you to do that we will be able to get rid of this incompetent government before [the elections due date]."



Life in Leggings marchers protest in Bridgetown, Barbados.

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Weston has been composing music for years and has worked with the American Composers Orchestra. This will be the first time his music will be played by the orchestra.

Trevor Weston

'Flying Fish' Symphony

By Alexandra Simon

He is not Wagner but it is his flight of the flying fish.

A Barbadian-American composer's musical piece will debut at "Orchestra Underground: Past Forward" at Carnegie Hall on March 24. New Jersey-raised Trevor Weston pays homage to one of Barbados' most recognized fauna in his new symphony titled "Flying Fish," which will be played by the American Composers Orchestra during the con-

Continued on Page 36

Harlem's only escape room

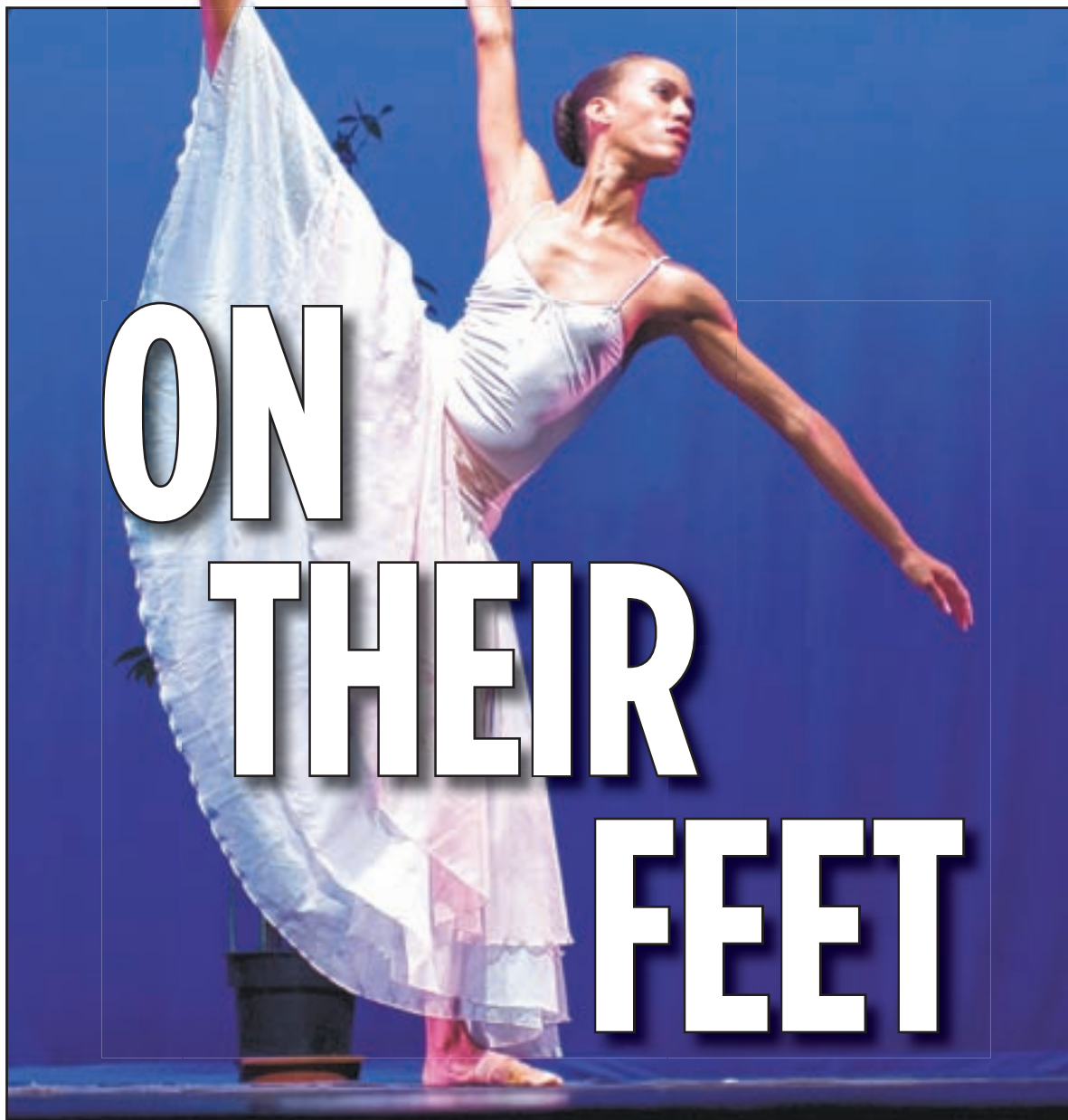
By Alexandra Simon

Harlem's premier escape room locale Hoodwinked Escape opens two new rooms for adventure seekers this month. The additional rooms are now part of the business new thrills, called "Spy Academy" and "The Experiment," which challenges guests to become spies, solve puzzles, and discover new mysteries.

In the rooms, groups of two or more are placed in a room and have one objective — find their way out in an hour using the clues. The themes for the rooms took some time to come up with but was in the works since Hoodwinked Escape opened, said the founder and creator Michelle Ware.

"Towards end of last year, I knew that within the first couple of months I wanted to open two new rooms," said

Continued on Page 36



Climb every mountain: Dancer Kerry-Ann Henry will perform a tribute to the founder of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica, titled "Mountain Climbing."

Bryan Robinson

Jamaican dance group honors its founder

By Alexandra Simon

They are playing tribute.

The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica will celebrate its 55th birthday with a pair of shows this weekend at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts. The performances on March 18 and 19 will showcase the group's history as one of the leading cultural institutions in the Caribbean, and its role in fusing traditional folklore with current events, said one of the show's choreographers.

"We are essentially celebrating our Caribbean-ness, and how that's retained in the body with movement is an exciting expression of who we are," said Walker. "It's political as well as comedic, as well as contemporary. It's almost like we're having fun at same time that we deal with serious issues — that's what dance is."

For the show, Walker choreographed a piece titled "Mountain Climbing," as a tribute to the company's founder, Rex Nettleford, incorporating many dance moves that

Nettleford originated. Performed by a solo female performer, the piece is about women who do whatever is necessary, just as the founder of the company did.

"After Professor Nettleford's passing I processed a lot of that with my family. In creating this tribute to him I'm processing my own response, and I wanted to bring that forward with women climbing mountain to advance the family, advancing the culture, and doing what it takes to

Continued on Page 36

TOP OF THE CHARTS

ON THEIR FEET

Continued from page 35

Walker.

get it done,” said Walker.

Other debuts at the show include “Into the Blue,” led by the company’s rising young star Renee McDonald, and “Homage a’Dambala” from choreographer Kevin Moore, which blends Jamaican and Haitian elements, said Walker.

“‘Homage a’Dambala’ pulls the rhythmic percussion instrument from Haitian music and Yanvalou — a traditional Haitian dance,” he said. “It’s full of live music and Kevin is exploring that cross-section, and I know that New York will love that work.”

The show will also include the historic dance “Gerrehbenta,” created by Nettleford in the early ’80s. The name is a portmanteau of “gerreh,” a celebratory dance performed after funerals, and “benta,” a stringed instrument made from bamboo. People love to see the dance in action, said

Walker. “It’s certainly a favorite and the children love it too,” he said. “The costumes are exciting, the movements are exciting, and the singing takes you on journey. People just want to get up and dance and it’s an exciting thing to see.”

The company is based in Jamaica, but all aspects of Caribbean and black culture are included in the show, said Walker, with dances inspired by folk traditions from Jamaica, Haiti, and Brazil.

“We like to think of the company as African Diasporic — not only do we create work elevating the vocabulary of other countries, but we have choreography from different countries and regions in our work,” he said. “This entire program is diverse and exciting.”

National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica at Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts [2900 Ave. H at Nostrand Avenue in Midwood, (718)



Side by side: The National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica will premiere three new dances at the Brooklyn Center for Performing Arts on March 18, a celebration of the company’s 55th anniversary.

Bryan Robinson

951-4500, www.brooklyn-center.org]. March 19 at 3 pm, \$40-\$75. March 18 at 7 pm, \$36-\$45.

TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1 **Shape Of You**
Ed Sheeran
- 2 **I Don't Wanna Live Forever**
Zayn / Taylor Swift
- 3 **Love On The Brain**
Rihanna
- 4 **I Feel It Coming**
The Weekend Feat. Daft Punk
- 5 **Scars To Your Beautiful**
Alessia Cara
- 6 **Don't Wanna Know**
Maroon 5 Feat. Kendrick Lamar
- 7 **That's What I Like**
Bruno Mars
- 8 **Mercy**
Shawn Mendes
- 9 **Paris**
The Chainsmokers
- 10 **Closer**
The Chainsmokers Feat. Halsey

TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **Divide**
Ed Sheeran
- 2 **24K Magic**
Bruno Mars
- 3 **Hardwired... To Self-Destruct**
Metallica
- 4 **Moana**
Soundtrack
- 5 **American Teen**
Khalid
- 6 **Trolls**
Soundtrack
- 7 **HNDRXX**
Future
- 8 **FUTURE**
Future
- 9 **x**
Ed Sheeran
- 10 **Hamilton: An American Musical**
Original Broadway Cast

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From finance to taking a chance: Founder and CEO of Hoodwinked Escape, Michelle Ware, talks to customers that she also calls “clue finders,” before an escape room adventure at the venue.

Hoodwinked Escape

Harlem’s only escape

Continued from page 35

Ware. “It took two weeks — I got my team together and we sat around and talked about what we can do.”

She also brainstormed and surveyed about 100 customers to specialize a theme based on her findings.

“I sit in a quiet space and begin to visualize the look of a room and experience what people might feel,” she said.

“Then I begin the process to see what is of interest to my clue finders and I narrowed it down to those two types of rooms.”

But one room in particular was especially enjoyable to create because it comes with unique tasks that require a lot

of thinking and group work, said Ware.

“The concept of the spy academy was enticing and it was really a fun process,” she said.

Hoodwinked Escape opened two years ago as Harlem’s first and only escape room venue. Escape rooms are physical adventure games where groups of people are locked in a room without phones and have to use their cognitive skills to solve a series of clues to find their way out.

The new rooms join mainstay rooms, “Spirit of Harlem” and “The Hangover II,” which transport adventurers explore into the Harlem Renaissance era to find treasure, and making their way out of a college dorm room replica.

Weston

Continued from page 35

cert.

In a joint commission by the orchestra and Carnegie Hall about identity, Weston took a page from one of his most vivid adult memories as inspiration for his 15-minute arrangement. He recalled a stormy fishing trip in Barbados and witnessing the flying fish he heard about all his life for the first time, he said.

“I just heard all of these fish whizzing and then I saw them fly up,” he said. “I grew in New Jersey and I had eaten a lot of flying fish but I grew up without seeing them — and that magic and methodology combined gave me a lot of that understanding.”

Immediately he knew that the experience would influence his work in the future, said Weston.

“Even as an adult finally seeing them — I knew at some point I was going to have to use that in a piece and write something,” he said.

Flying fish are commonly found near Barbados, and the island is even nicknamed “land of the flying fish,” due to the volume of flying fish that are found near the region. It has become a national symbol to the island and is to Barbados as the bald eagle is to the

United States, said Weston.

To interpret the flying fish and Barbados into his music Weston said he visualized instruments that reminded him of the fish and the Caribbean, brass instruments in particular as well the piano.

“Because their whizzing is high pitched and the fish themselves are silvery — I thought of steel instruments and steel drums, and the triangle, cymbals, and bells,” said Weston. “And we don’t think about it but the piano also has metallic sounds.”

Inputting together the orchestration Weston says he looked for more inspiration by playing back some popular Caribbean tunes and finding a commonality for an authentic sound.

“The way I approach coming up with music is by listening to music examples, and I wrote down the common rhythms, and listened to some recordings of steel pan ensembles of Trinidad,” he said.

To get a precise sound for his score, he encompassed both the sounds of the islands and the flying fish.

“I used those rhythms not the exact same way but making sounds that emulated flight and leaping,” said Weston. “I reflect the buzzing with the bell, cymbals, and the triangle, and some there are scales that sound like leaping and sounds that are connected to Caribbean music.”

Revisiting President Obama's defining moments

"The Obama Years: The Power of Words"
Excellent (4 stars)
Unrated
Running time: 60 minutes
Distributor: The Smithsonian

By Kam Williams

How many immortal speeches have been delivered by U.S. presidents and other American icons? Lincoln's "Four score and seven years ago" Gettysburg Address, FDR's "We have nothing to fear but fear itself," Eisenhower's beware of the "Military-Industrial Complex" farewell address, JFK's "Ask not what your country can do for you" inaugural address, Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, and Reagan's "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall," are among the handful which have stood the test of time.

Barack Obama has ostensibly left behind not just one but a cornucopia of historic orations likely to be remembered for generations to come. That is the contention of *The Obama Years: The Power of Words*, a riveting documentary which discusses, in non-partisan fashion, a plethora of his addresses for the ages.



U.S. President Barack Obama answers a question during a joint news conference with Poland's President Bronislaw Komorowski at Belweder Palace in Warsaw, Poland, Tuesday, June 3, 2014.
Associated Press /Charles Dharapak

Narrated by Jessie Williams of *Grey's Anatomy*, the movie features a mix of archival footage from speeches and in-depth analysis by experts. Among the luminaries sharing insights are Pulitzer Prize-winner Doris Kearns-Goodwin, Rice Univer-

sity Professor Douglas Brinkley and former Obama strategists David Axelrod and Jon Favreau.

The reverential biopic unfolds chronologically, starting with the keynote speech at the 2004 Democratic Conven-

tion which instantly turned a little-known State Senator from Illinois into an overnight sensation. Obama's next remarkable highlight arrived in March 2008 when he salvaged a floundering presidential campaign with a unifying reflection on

race delivered at Philadelphia's Constitution Center.

Later that year in Denver, he was widely lauded for his stirring acceptance of the Democratic nomination on August 28th, the 45th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" March on Washington speech. Obama subsequently spoke very emotionally about the Trayvon Martin shooting, the Sandy Hook elementary school and Charleston church massacres, bring the grieving Emanuel A.M.E. congregation to tears with an a capella rendition of *Amazing Grace* at the end of the eulogy.

Just as moving was the President's touchstone commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March, uttered on location at the Edmund Pettus bridge, site of the infamous Bloody Sunday attack of protesters simply attempting to register to vote. For folks interested in lighter fare, there's Barack's stand-up routine at the 2011 White House Correspondents' Association dinner, where he roasted a red-faced Donald Trump about everything from hosting *The Apprentice* to spearheading the Birther movement.

A riveting retrospective revisiting an array of Barack Obama's defining moments!

Independent & Foreign Films

All Nighter (R for sexuality, brief nudity, drug use and pervasive profanity) Unlikely-buddies comedy about a hard-boiled businessman (J.K. Simmons) who grudgingly joins forces with his missing daughter's (Analeigh Tipton) slacker ex-boyfriend (Emile Hirsch) after she mysteriously disappears. With Taran Killam, Shannon Woodward and Kristen Schaal.

Betting on Zero (Unrated) Incendiary Wall Street documentary chronicling billionaire, hedge fund manager Bill Ackman's crusade exposing Herbalife as the biggest pyramid scheme in history. Featuring appearances by corporate raider Carl Icahn, grass roots organizer Julie Contreras and Herbalife CEO Michael Johnson.

Burn Your Maps (PG-13 for sexual material, mature themes and brief profanity) Adaptation of the Robyn Joy Leff short story of the same name about an eight-year-old trans-ethnic (Jacob Tremblay), born white in America, who comes out to his parents (Vera Farmiga



Kam's Kapsules

By Kam Williams

and Martin Csokas) as a Mongolian goat herder before embarking on a trip to Asia in search of his roots. With Suraj Sharma, Virginia Madsen and Ramon Rodriguez.

The Devil's Candy (Unrated) Haunted house horror flick about an artist (Ethan Embry) who becomes possessed by demonic forces soon after moving into his dream home with his wife (Shiri Appleby) and teen daughter (Kiara Glasco). Featuring Craig Nigh, Pruitt Taylor Vince and Oryan West.

Frantz (PG-13 for mature themes and brief violence) Bittersweet romance drama, set in the wake of World War I, about the grief-stricken fiancée (Paula Beer) of a late German soldier (Anton von Lucke) who forges a friendship with the mysterious Frenchman (Pierre Niney) she finds placing flowers on his grave. Cast includes Marie Gruber,

Johann von Bulow and Ernst Stotzner. (In French and German with subtitles)

Mean Dreams (R for violence and profanity) Coming-of-age drama about a fed-up 15-year-old girl (Sophie Nélisse) who runs away from home with her protective new boyfriend (Josh Wiggins) to escape being beaten by her corrupt cop father (the late Bill Paxton). With Colm Feore, Ryan Blakely and Joe Cobden.

Song to Song (R for profanity, sexuality, nudity and drug use) Tawdry tale of seduction and betrayal, set in Austin, revolving around the love triangles which develop when a couple of struggling songwriters (Ryan Gosling and Rooney Mara) enlist the assistance of a music mogul (Michael Fassbender) with a trophy waitress girlfriend (Natalie Portman). Cast includes Cate Blanchett, Benicio del Toro, Val Kilmer and Holly Hunter with cameos by Patti Smith, Iggy Pop and Flea.

Big Budget Films

Beauty and the Beast (PG for action, peril, violence and frightening images) Emma Watson and Dan Stevens co-star as the title characters in this musi-

cal adaptation of the French fairy tale about a young woman taken prisoner by a monstrous, young prince. Supporting cast includes Luke Evans, Kevin Kline, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Stanley Tucci, Audra McDonald, Ian McKellen, Josh Gad and Emma Thompson.

The Belko Experiment (R for profanity, sexual references, drug use and pervasive gory violence) High-body count thriller set inside a locked corporate office in Bogotá, Columbia where 60 American employees are directed via intercom by an anonymous voice to participate in a grisly game of kill or be killed. Ensemble cast includes Melonie Diaz, John C. McGinley, Tony Goldwyn and Adria Arjona.

T2: Trainspotting (R for violence, drug use, graphic sexuality, frontal nudity and pervasive profanity) Oscar-winning director Danny Boyle (for *Slumdog Millionaire*) reassembled his principal cast for this gritty sequel, set in Edinburgh 20 years later, which finds the gang resuming their shocking, anti-social antics. Co-starring Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner, Johnny Lee Miller, Robert Carlyle and Kelly Macdonald.

Rainbow colors at Phagwah Parade

By Alexandra Simon

The colorful parade also saw the colors of the rainbow.

The 29th annual Phagwah parade lit up Liberty Avenue and 125th Street in Richmond Hill with more than the colors of the Holi festival on March 12. For the second year in a row, the Caribbean Equality Project, a Queens-based queer advocacy group, marched alongside revelers waving the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) rainbow flag.

Last year the parade made history by inviting members of the Caribbean LGBT community to the notoriously religious parade. Members of the Caribbean Equality Project lauded the parade organizers for their inclusive move and highlighting the growth of queer Hindu Caribbean community.

“It sends a powerful message to our community knowing that that flag not only represents you being who you are, but that LGBTQ voices are also included in religious settings,” said Mohamed Q. Amin, founder of the Caribbean Equality Project. “This parade for us this year was not just about marching and representing, but it’s also political and educational.”

This year the group was welcomed to march again and the lively celebration represents many of the core values the queer community believes in, said Amin.

“For us, this is what celebrating Holi



Members of the Caribbean Equality Project, a Queens-based queer advocacy group, one of the leading parade goers at the 29th annual Phagwah Parade in Richmond Hill on March 12. Community News Group / Mike Shain

is, this is the best way we know to represent and we want the LGBTQ community to feel safe and feel included,” he said.

“We just want to represent our right to march in this parade.”

Phagwah, also called Holi, is a religious Hindu celebration of colors, that honors unity, life and welcomes the beginning of the spring season. The ancient holiday is celebrated in some

parts of the Caribbean and although religious, Amin said the LGBTQ community should not be excluded.

“The colors represent love, happiness unity and the vibrance of it, these are all things that are promoted and shared by CEP and to be included it echoes and amplifies who we are and what we represent as an organization and as a community, and the LGBT is at the front line with everyone else, marching as

equals in the Phagwah parade.”

And Amin said his organization, as well as the city’s queer community, will continue to be a part of the parade.

“We will be there as long as organizers organized the parade,” he said. “As long as the Phagwah Parade is in Richmond Hill, the Caribbean Equality Project will be present marching with our rainbow flags representing our community.”



Parade goes on floats don colorful clothing honoring the welcoming of the spring season.



Many come out in celebration of the parade wearing traditional garb.



Phagwah, also called Holi, is one of the largest religious Hindu celebrations in the world.

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West Indies' Jonathan Carter hits a four from the bowling of England's Ben Stokes during their 3rd One Day International cricket match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Thursday, March 9, 2017.

Associated Press / Ricardo Mazalan

England crushes West Indies

By Azad Ali

West Indies suffered their heaviest defeat in the three One-Day International (ODI) series to England in the final of the three-match tournament at the Kensington Oval Barbados on Wednesday, March 8, 2017.

The regional team suffered a white-wash when they crashed to a 186-run loss in a one-sided series finale.

Continued on Page 40

CPL heads to Florida

By Azad Ali

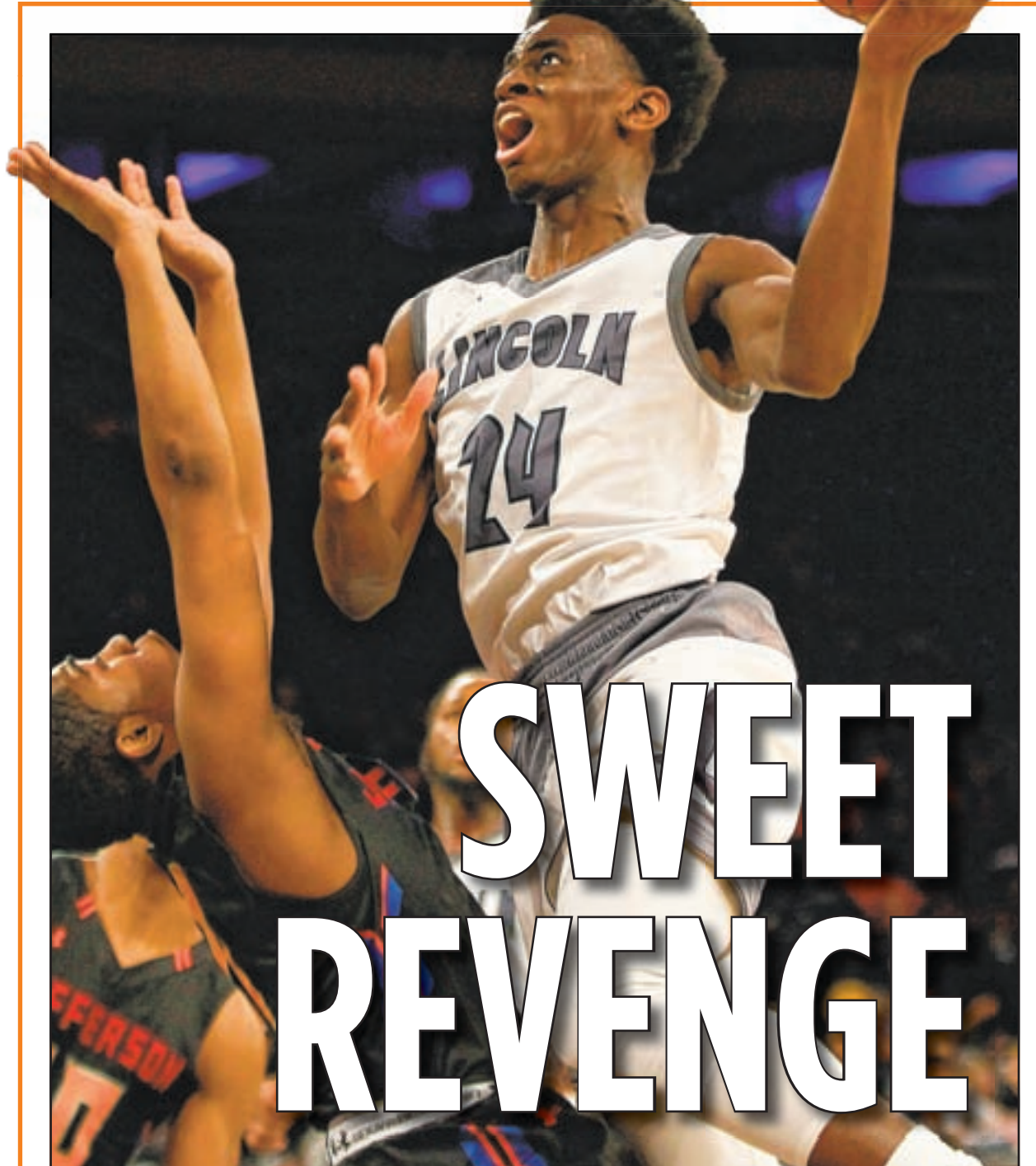
The Caribbean Premier League (CPL) is making plans to play another round of matches at the Central Broward Regional Park in Lauderhill, Florida for the 2017 season.

CPL officials have requested two sets of weeklong time frames to be blocked off for possible use by the CPL in the month of August.

The CPL made its Florida debut in 2016, playing six matches to end the league phase from July 28 to 31.

The games were the first revenue-generating cricket to come to Lauderhill ground in four years,

West Indies and India played two Twenty20s there in August last year.



SWEET REVENGE

Knockout Klay: Lincoln senior Klay Ferguon Brown was named the championship MVP, racking up a game-high 22 points and 10 rebounds.

Photo by Robert Cole

Railsplitters get revenge on Jeff in city final

By Laura Amato

This revenge was particularly sweet.

The top-seeded Lincoln boys basketball team defeated No. 11 Jefferson 82-64 in the Public Schools Athletic League "AA" title game at Madison Square Garden March 11,

avenging last season's championship loss to the Orange Wave. It's the first city title for the Railsplitters since 2013.

"Going out on top as seniors is a great feeling," said Lincoln point guard Donald Cannon Flores. "Last year we didn't finish the way we

wanted, getting to the championship game and losing by over 20 points. This year we wanted to come out strong and get this win."

The game was close in the first quarter, but the Railsplitters went on an 18-point run and outscored Jef-

Continued on Page 40

SWEET REVENGE

Continued from page 39

erson 25–7 in the second.

“I kept these guys loose,” said Lincoln coach Dwayne “Tiny” Morton. “These guys understand. There’s no point in changing your strategy, just stay loose.”

The key for the Railsplitters, as it’s been all season, was defense and pressure. Lincoln forced 15 Jefferson turnovers in the first half and racked up 18 points off the miscues. The Railsplitters also controlled the game on the block, notching 46 points in the paint throughout the title tilt.

“The defense was awesome,” said Lincoln junior Curtis Gordon, who scored 21 points. “We locked them down and they couldn’t score. We talked on the court and we just followed our coach’s orders.”

Lincoln continued to control the game in the second half, but that momentum skidded to a halt as foul trouble plagued both squads down the stretch.

The Railsplitters and the Orange Wave combined for just nine free throw attempts in the first half, but shot 31 times from the foul line in the final 16 minutes as both squads struggled to maintain a rhythm amid near-constant whistles.

“We just listened to coach,” said game MVP Klay Ferguson Brown, who finished with a game-high 22 points. “It was important that we had to get this win.”



Surprise standout: Lincoln junior Curtis Gordon made a name for himself in the city final, notching 21 points, nine rebounds, and nine steals as the Railsplitters defeated Thomas Jefferson at Madison Square Garden.

Photo by Robert Cole

The whistles, however, didn’t stop Lincoln’s offense from hitting its late-game shots — or its free throws. The Railsplitters went 14-of-27 from the floor in the second half and shot 75 percent from the line.

Jefferson did its best to get back into the game, cutting the deficit to 18 points with just over seven minutes left, but couldn’t quite turn the tide. Emotions reached a boil with 1:32 left after Jefferson coach Lawrence “Bud” Pollard was ejected

following his second technical foul, but Lincoln kept its focus down the stretch.

“We went undefeated in the city and it was our fourth time playing Jefferson,” said senior Michael Reid. “So we just came out and wanted to pound them. We wanted to kill them by, like, 50.”

Lincoln put nine players in the box score, including four who scored double digits in points.

The victory advanced the Railsplit-

ters to the state Federation Tournament in Glens Falls later this month, where the team will take on Catholic League champion Cardinal Hayes. Now that they’ve conquered their public schools adversaries, Lincoln’s players are determined to return to Coney Island with another state title. Revenge tastes good, but winning, they say, tastes even better.

“We’re getting back in the gym and get ready for states,” Reid said. “That’s pretty much it.”



England’s Ben Stokes successfully appeals for the wicket of West Indies’ Carlos Brathwaite, right, during their 3rd One Day International cricket match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, Thursday, March 9, 2017.

Associated Press / Ricardo Mazalan

England makes clean sweep

Continued from page 39

England won the first two matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

They pulled off their first-ever clean sweep of an ODI series in the Caribbean.

Sent in to bat, England equaled their highest-ever total against the West Indies at the historic venue scoring 328 off their allotted 50 overs.

Opener Alex Hales and John Root scored 110 and 101 respectively.

The pair pulled their side from early trouble when Jason Roy was out for 17 in the sixth over with just 27 runs on the board.

Having previously chased a total in excess of 300 to win an ODI, West Indies collapsed for 142 all out off 39.2 overs — narrowly avoiding their lowest-ever venue total of 141, 23 years ago.

College basketball's best descend on Barclays Center

By Laura Amato

To some, it was a curious move; to others, it was a brilliant one.

For the first time ever, the Atlantic Coast Conference — one of the premier college basketball leagues in the country, boasting the perennial talents of North Carolina, Duke and the University of Virginia — last week held its annual conference tournament in, of all places, Brooklyn, at the Barclays Center.

The league has just one team from New York state — former Big East power Syracuse — and the conference offices are based in North Carolina, but the postseason move to Atlantic Avenue was about more than simply flaunting recent on-court success. The conference has history in New York and last week was a return to that.

“It’s the first time we’ve been in New York City, in Brooklyn, in one of the great arenas, not only in the country, but the world,” said conference



Putting on a show: Notre Dame’s Bonzie Colson was one of a handful of explosive college hoops players who took the court at Barclays Center last week, as the Atlantic Coast Conference made its city debut.

Photo by Robert Cole

commissioner John Swofford. “[There was a] great deal of excitement about it from fans at various schools and our players. New York City is such a hotbed of basketball.”

The Atlantic Coast Conference has long tapped a pipeline of New York City talent; coach Frank McGuire led North Carolina team to an undefeated record and a national championship in 1957. Former Georgia Tech stars Kenny Anderson and Bobby Cremins fine-tuned their skills at New York-area high schools, and Williamsburg native Jose Alvarado will also suit up with the Yellow Jackets next season.

Big crowds filled seats at Barclays Center throughout the week, and the championship game between Duke and Notre Dame on March 11 was jam-packed with fans rooting, and jeering, for both sides.

The move to Brooklyn was not controversy-free, however; Syracuse coach Jim Boenheim drew national headlines — and a few social media responses — after he criticized even the idea of returning to the conference tournament former home in Greensboro, North Carolina.

“There’s no value in playing



Fan favorite: The Atlantic Coast semifinals, which saw Notre Dame defeat Virginia in the second game, drew the largest college basketball crowd in Barclays Center history.

Photo by Robert Cole

in Greensboro, none,” Boenheim said after the Orange’s second-round loss. “Why do you think the Big Ten is coming into New York? It’s business, good business sense. They all say it’s a business. Well, then, let’s start acting like it’s a business.”

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski, however, had nothing but praise for the former tournament site — which happens

to be less than an hour’s drive away from his Blue Devils’ home court.

“There’s been great value having it in Greensboro because this is the tournament that everyone copied,” he said. “So if the powers to be want it to eventually go back...stay in Greensboro or visit or whatever, so be it. I think they deserve that.”

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ARIES: Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, you will likely experience a week of thoughtfulness and reflection. It can be a very "zen" experience for you, as you're not typically used to slowing down.

TAURUS: Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, keep your cool in the week ahead, which might be more tumultuous than you're accustomed to. Don't take things personally, and rest assured things will blow over soon.

GEMINI: May 22/Jun 21
Old stories from your past may resurface, Gemini. These could be humorous, so approach them with a positive attitude and enjoy the fun-filled trip down Memory Lane.

CANCER: Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, this week you may feel as if your energy doesn't go as far as it once did. Speak up if you find yourself battling exhaustion. Others can help.

LEO: Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, others see you as witty and a good storyteller, so you might be called on to make a speech or emcee an important event. Make it your own.

VIRGO: Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, you may have to play the role of peacekeeper this week when bickering between others gets out of hand. Step in and negotiate a truce.

LIBRA: Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, be your own person, even when someone else tries to guide you into his or her line of thinking. Don't fall for any subterfuge or get carried away.

SCORPIO: Oct 24/Nov 22
Cooperation instead of competition may be the way to get ahead this week, Scorpio. Take a look at what others are doing and see if you can combine your efforts.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, meeting new people is often exciting and you could have the opportunity for new introductions this week. Just remember that first impressions last.

CAPRICORN: Dec 22/Jan 20
Simple pleasures will offer you the greatest rewards over the next few days, Capricorn. You don't require a lot of fanfare or extravagance. Relish in creature comforts.

AQUARIUS: Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, you are becoming more attuned with how others may be able to help you advance your career. Don't hesitate to seek advice. The time for change could be upon you.

PISCES: Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, make an effort to communicate more with those around you. Life can feel isolated without a good foundation of friends.

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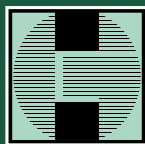


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