Moravian Sex Scandal Deepens

Two top leaders resign

Jamaica’s Moravians hunkered defensively this week in the face of a deepening sex scandal that has already put one of its pastors before the courts for statutory rape and caused the resignation of its two top leaders.

Please see SCANDAL, 6

Rev. Paul Gardner

Jermaine Gibson
140 civil service posts abolished

THE GOVERNMENT has abolished 140 posts from the civil service as it tries to bring wages down and continue the reform of the public sector.

This latest abolition of positions comes as the Government gets ready to undertake a series of public sector job cuts starting in August.

Under the economic reform programme with the International Monetary Fund, the Government has agreed to reduce the public sector wage bill to nine per cent of Jamaica’s gross domestic product. The deadline for that is next year.

Two previous deadlines were missed.

Mobile Justice Unit launched

THE MINISTRY of Justice through the Legal Aid Council has launched its Mobile Justice Unit geared towards improving legal representation for vulnerable persons in marginalized inner-city and deep rural communities.

The mobile unit was scheduled to begin operations on Tuesday, January 17, at Caanan Heights in Clarendon.

The following week will see the unit visiting Denham Town in Western Kingston.

Appointments can be made via the ministry or Legal Aid Council to have the unit visit a community and provide legal consultation free of cost.

The bus is to be staffed by an attorney-at-law, records and research officer and a driver.

Malaria warning as two cases reported since start of year

THE MINISTRY of Health has confirmed two imported cases of malaria since the start of the year.

The first confirmed case was reported by the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) on January 5, involving a Jamaican national who was residing in Ghana and returned to Jamaica last November.

The second reported case, recorded January 6, is related to a male Indian national who arrived in Jamaica in March 2016.

Investigation into both cases began upon confirmation and the patients were admitted to hospital.

Malaria-prevention medications are available in Jamaica.

Ilness which sickened 80 JDF recruits still not identified

THE CHIEF Medical Officer of Health Dr Winston De La Haye says it unlikely that health officials will be able yet to determine what in the environment caused the influenza-type respiratory infection which sickened 80 Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) recruits late last year.

The Pan American Health Organization was called in to assess the exact cause of the respiratory infection and samples have since been sent to the US Centers for Disease Control. However, Dr De La Haye, told The Gleaner/Powertel 106 News Centre Monday, January 10 that the cause is yet to be determined.

Sam Sharpe Square fountain to be relocated

THE PICTURESQUE water fountain in the centre of Sam Sharpe Square in Montego Bay, St James, is to be relocated to another section of the historic square as part of the short-term solution to ease traffic congestion in the western city.

The fountain, one of the city’s most distinctive landmarks, forms the intersection between St James and Market streets, which is usually congested, even during the hours of reduced traffic flow.

On Wednesday, at a meeting at the Office of the Prime Minister in Montego Bay with Dr Horace Chang, minister without portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, the Traffic Management Unit of the National Works Agency (NWA) indicated that based on its findings, the fountain was greatly contributing to the city’s traffic problem.

The NWA also recommended that the fountain be relocated to a space in front of the Montego Bay Cultural Centre. The space is normally used by the St James Municipal Corporation to mount a Christmas tree during the holiday season.
Jamaican organisation welcomes Canada’s new immigration minister

NEIL ARMSTRONG
Freelance Editor

TORONTO, Ontario: The JAMAICAN Canadian Alliance (JCA), in a release, said that they are pleased with the inclusion of Somali Canadian Ahmed Hussen as Canada’s new Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s reshuffled Cabinet on January 10.

Hussen takes over from John McCallum who has been appointed as Canada’s ambassador to China.

“Ahmed has shown he is a hard worker, very committed to his constituents as well as the larger African Canadian community,” JCA’s president Adacoma Patterson said. “I think he will bring an important perspective to the immigration file. We look forward to working with him.”

Hussen, a lawyer and social activist, is the Member of Parliament for York South-Weston in Toronto and is the first Somali Canadian elected to Parliament.

AWARE OF REALITIES
Meanwhile, Debbie Douglas, executive director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) says the organisation welcomes a minister who is aware of the ground realities – that of being radicalised and one who has gone through the refugee resettlement experience.

OCASI is the umbrella organisation for immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Ontario. A registered charity, it was founded in 1978, and has 220 member agencies across the province that provide settlement and other services for immigrants and refugees.

In a letter penned by Douglas and president, Ibrahim Asebei, OCASI congratulated Hussen on his appointment.

OCASI says it is looking to the minister’s leadership in addressing other urgent priorities recognised by the community, including addressing the challenges in the full implementation of Interim Federal Health for refugees and reducing the wait times for family sponsorship in all categories.

It also wants continued support for increasing the private sponsorship of refugees from other regions, particularly Africa, a region that is significantly under-represented in refugee selection numbers despite the tremendous need.

OCASI, in their communication, has urged the government to implement the changes promised through Bill C-6 (An Act to amend the Citizenship Act), once it is enacted.

“We look forward to engaging with you on other urgent priorities such as providing pathways to permanent residency as a way of addressing the deepening vulnerability of migrant workers in the many low-skilled streams, and finding ways and opportunities to regularise those without immigration status,” the letter says.

The organisation says it looks forward to engaging with Minister Hussen on long-term priorities for immigrant and refugee settlement and integration and building future sector capacity through sustained and stable investment.

Born and raised in Somalia, Hussen came to Canada in 1993 as a 16-year-old refugee, attended high school in Hamilton and eventually settled in Regent Park where he became active in community engagement. In 2002 he co-founded the Regent Park Community Council and was able to secure the $500 million revitalisation project of Regent Park, all while ensuring the interests of the area’s nearly 15,000 residents were protected.

Hussen served as the national president of the Canadian Somali Congress – a Somali community organisation that works with national and regional authorities to advocate on issues of importance to Canadians of Somali heritage and strengthen civic engagement and integration.

His reputation led to an invitation to join the task force for modernising income security for immigrants in Canada and as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship where he became active in community engagement.

Ahmed Hussen with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (right) and Governor General David Johnston after being sworn in as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship during a cabinet shuffle at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on January 10. AP Photo

... as immigrant rights groups lay pressing agenda

LIBERAL PARITY parliamentarian Patty Hajdu, is calling for a transformative turn towards ensuring permanency and mobility for all immigrants.

“... the largest part of the immigration system is undocumented and temporary status migrants, and their precarious status directly impacts employment and the economy,” she said.

Hussen was married to Muna Almohamad in 2002 and has one daughter, and said one of his priorities will be to address the needs of the community centres.

“We need an overhaul of the system, and not tinkering, and that begins with immediate steps to ensure permanent status for undocumented and migrant workers in the country.”

Due to ineffective immigration and employment law, all low-wage Temporary Foreign Workers in Canada are stuck working for a single employer. It is difficult, if not impossible, for workers to change jobs even if the job is dangerous, making them sick, or if they are facing abuse.

“Creating an open work permit program for temporary foreign workers should be the first order of business for the incoming minister,” says Anna Malla of the Caregivers’ Action Centre. “This will allow workers to change employers if the job is dangerous, and will help protect them from abuse.”

Canada’s new immigration minister has urged the government to create a new pathway to permanent residency for temporary foreign workers, which is one of the key demands of the Caregivers’ Action Centre.

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“Doing so will ensure that all immigrants in Canada have the same basic mobility rights, and would be a major step in the right direction towards real change.”

Undocumented and temporary status immigrants in Canada who have work experiences and community ties in Canada, many of whom do not have access to permanent residency, will be forced to eventually leave. Thus, according to the immigration group, the bill will end up reducing immigration numbers.

Permanent status for undocumented and temporary status immigrants is the smart and effective move.
Leesha Mac dedicates her music to sickle cell patients

AMITABH SHARMA Senior Copy Editor - Overseas Publications

F OR ALEISHA McIntosh, the journey of life is climbing a cliff face which requires agility, stamina, negotiating skills, and the presence of mind to find a grip to support and move up – one key word of advice, do not look down. The drop is sheer.

Diagnosed with sickle cell anemia at a young age, McIntosh is living this life – literally and figuratively. She makes frequent trips to the hospital, more than those to the playground – syringes, blood transfusions, operating theatre; cuts and incisions; she has to bear them all.

"Being in and out of hospital was normal for me," she recalls. "My school peers and others around me viewed me as being different."

"I had to be mindful of not participating in ‘normal’ activities due to the sickle cell," McIntosh said, adding that this genetic condition kept her away from the playground, swimming pool and any form of extraneous physical activity.

Being ‘different’ became a way of life for McIntosh, she had to dress in warm clothes, which shielded her from the oft unpredictable English weathers and she had to be extra cautious against contracting any form of infection.

"When I was 18 months old I suffered a mini stroke after a head injury. ‘My father was a big influence to me in music as he is a DJ/Promoter," she informed. She went on to say, "Through my adventures, I realized that my singing was my coping mechanism of dealing with sickle cell and other health related issues."

Without realising it, I had a gift for singing and was always singing from an early age," she said. "As time went by and I got older, I realised that my singing was my coping mechanism of dealing with sickle cell and other health related issues."

One needs a hint of a silver lining to shine through the dark clouds – for McIntosh it was music – which gave her a new perspective of life.

"I put pen to paper and wrote down my feelings," she said. "I also had to have extra support when I returned to school to get through classes to gain my qualifications."

In her endeavours, McIntosh has been a patient at SCAT since she was 17.

"SoCARE (Organisation for Sickle Cell/Thalassemia Relief) Birmingham and The SCAT Centre (Sickle Cell and Thalassemia team) has helped me great deal to overcome the pain," she said.

McIntosh has been a patient at SCAT since she was 17.

SILVER LINING

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Leesha Mac's life revolves around the words of Erykah Badu, who once said – "Hopefully my music is medicine, some type of an antidote for something or some kind of explanation or just to feel good."
Jamaican seeks nomination for Ontario Tories

NEIL ARMSTRONG

TORONTO, Ontario: A JAMAICAN banker hopes to be nominated the candidate of the Ontario Progressive Conservative (PC) Party for Brampton West, an area with a large concentration of Jamaicans.

The next provincial general election is not expected until June 7, 2018, but the Tories say that they are ensuring that their candidates are in place and Jermaine Chambers, 35, thinks he is ready for representational politics.

Chambers says he did not run in the last municipal elections because he did not gain his citizenship yet and thus was not eligible to run.

He says with the election of Patrick Brown as the leader of the Ontario PC Party, he observed Brown’s ability to reach out to different ethnic groups and create a space for them within the party.

“The intervention sparked my interest, then I was able to have a conversation with him. He made it clear to me that there is room in the party for individuals from different ethnic groups,” he said.

Chambers says the opportunity in Brampton West presented itself, noting that, “this constituency has a great black Canadian population, is a very multicultural constituency as well.”

“Given my political background, given my involvement in various community organisations and civic organisations, and experience that I have, I believe that it would now prepare me to take on this role to be a representative here in Brampton West at the provincial level,” Chambers said.

He has helped former Brampton city councillor, Garnett Manning, with his campaign and has spoken to Toronto city councilor, Michael Thompson, and Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services, Michael Coteau, with plans to reach out to others.

Chambers grew up in Troy. Trelawny with his mother, grand-parents, sister, two brothers and a cousin.

He attended Knox College in Clarendon and graduated in 1998, then went on to do sixth form at Manchester High School in Maidstone, graduating in 2000.

His search for work took him to Montego Bay in 2001, where he walked along the streets to familiarise himself with the businesses.

Standing in front of each, Chambers said, he wrote application letters and hand-delivered them with his resume for an entire day.

Three days later, Scotiabank invited him to an interview and made an offer: later he enrolled in the Northern Caribbean University in its evening college to do a bachelor’s degree in management studies programme.

ACHIEVEMENT

“I was able to work and send myself to school which is one of my great achievements,” he said.

Chambers graduated in 2006.

He worked in different positions in several branches of Scotiabank before migrating to Canada in August 2010 to join his wife, Nickesha. They have a son, Josiah, who is three years old.

Since living here, Chambers has worked with CIBC and has been a financial advisor with TD Canada Trust.

“Donald Trump has proven that he will use the same tools of division he employed on the campaign trail as our nation’s Commander-in-Chief,” she said.

“We need look no further than the team he is assembling to find signals that the era of Trump will be one of chaos and devestation for our communities.”

“Donald Trump has proven that his administration will normalise the most extreme fringes of the Republican Party,” the congresswoman added. “On Inauguration Day, I will not be celebrating. I will be preparing and preparing for resistance.”

On Saturday January 14, thousands of civil rights activists converged on Washington for a Martin Luther King Jr. Day march, vowing to vehemently oppose the Trump presidency.

“Donald Trump Can’t Be Moved” march, led by the Civil Rights League of Washington, D.C., kicked off a week of similar protests scheduled around Trump’s inauguration’s scheduled for Friday.

“We will march until hell freezes over, and when it does, we will march on the ice,” said Cornell William Brooks, president and chief executive of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the oldest and largest civil rights organisation in the United States.

Have a story or photo to share? Tell us of your achievements, new business initiatives, birthdays, anniversaries, church happenings, issues and problems facing you. Email: overseas@gleanernj.com

Congresswoman Yvette Clarke to boycott Trump’s inauguration

NEW YORK (GMC): CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE Clarke has joined several United States Congressional representatives in planning to boycott Donald Trump’s inauguration as US President on Friday.

Clarke, the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, who represents the 9th Congressional District in Brooklyn, New York, will be among a number of Democratic lawmakers who say they will stay away from the ceremony.

“This comes in the wake of Trump’s attack on US civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis, of Georgia.

“I will NOT attend the inauguration of @realDonaldTrump,” Clarke tweeted on Saturday “When you insult @RepJohnLewis, you insult America.”

According to the New York Daily News, Trump insulted the Georgia representative on Saturday after Lewis said he did not see Trump as a “legitimate president”, citing claims that Russia meddled in the US election in Trump’s favour.

According to Politico – a Virginia based political-journalism organisation, Congressmen Adriano Espaillat and Jerrold Nadler, of New York, are among at least 18 congressional representatives planning to stay away from Trump’s inauguration.

On Saturday, Clarke tweeted that Trump stands with Putin, while he supports Lewis.

(Ww) Cannot celebrate the inauguration of a man who has no regard for my constituents,” tweeted New York Congressman Jose Serrano on Thursday, responding to Trump’s campaign pledge to deport millions undocumented migrants.

Another New York congressional representative, Nydia Velazquez, pledged to travel to Washington in January to protest Trump’s presidency, with a massive march scheduled for the Saturday after the swearing-in ceremony.

Congresswoman Barbara Lee said she would not be celebrating or honouring an incoming president who rode racism, sexism, xenophobia and bigotry to the White House.

DIVISIVE AND PREJUDICED

“Donald Trump ran one of the most divisive and prejudiced campaigns in modern history,” she said in a statement. “He began his campaign by insulting Mexican immigrants, pledging to build a wall between the United States and Mexico and then spent a year and a half denigrating communities of colour and normalising bigotry.

“He called women ‘pigs’, stoked Islamophobia, and attacked a Gold Star family.” Lee added. “He mocked a disabled reporter and appealed to people’s worst instincts. I cannot in good conscience attend an inauguration that would celebrate this divisive approach to governance.”

After the November Presidential Election, Lee said many hoped the president-elect would turn toward unifying our country.

“Instead, he has shown us that he will use the same tools of division he employed on the campaign trail as our nation’s Commander-in-Chief,” she said.

“We need look no further than the team he is assembling to find signals that the era of Trump will be one of chaos and devestation for our communities.”

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How The Gleaner commented on the matter

Moravian leadership must engage the law

IN THEIR time of crisis, the bishops of the Moravian Church in Jamaica mustn’t rely on the example of the Roman Catholic Church in America, elsewhere in dealing with their own.

Nothing could be swept under the rug, or be perceived to be so done.

That is why the ‘independent’ internal review planned by Bishop Oman Clarke and Devon Anglin on the issues facing the church won’t be enough. They have to go further, including turning over to the police all evidence in their possession to investigate the possibility that sex crimes – other than those that have been publicly alleged and are already before the courts – have been committed by the clergy.

In Jamaica, as globally, theMoravians are a relatively small Christian denomination. Worldwide, their congregation is no more than a million. At Jamaica’s last census five years ago, there were under 19,000.

But the Moravians have a long and cherished history: with a tradition of punching above their numerical weight. Their ancestors founded the Reformation. Jan Hus was a century ahead of Luther. They have been missionaries in Jamaica for over 260 years, during which time their efforts in education and social welfare transcended their numbers.

And more than two and a half centuries, and certainly since the end of slavery, the Moravians of Jamaica are facing not only their greatest moral crisis, but, given their relatively small numbers, an existential threat.

VICTIM OF IGNORANCE

At the start of the month one of their pastors, the Reverend Rupert Clarke, 64, was arrested for the alleged statutory rape of a 15-year-old girl. Now, Rev Clarke is being investigated for an alleged second offence with another underaged girl from the same family. This has been followed by the resignations of the president of the Church in Jamaica and Grand Cayman, Paul Gardner, and his deputy, Jermaine Gibson.

Dr Gardner is a victim, in part, of his claim that he was ignorant of complaints of sexual abuse against Rev Clarke, given that an estranged minister, Camote Thompson, disputed the claim. Dr Thompson made public an email string, from 2014, between himself and Dr Gardner, in which he raised concerns about allegations relating to Rev Clarke. If all this were not bad enough, a woman, now in the late 20s or early 30s, went public, just ahead of the leadership resignations, with allegations of having been groomed from aged 12, and having sexual encounters with a pastor from age 14.

“We intend in short order to set up an independent committee mutually accepted by us, as bishops, and you to thoroughly investigate the matter and thereafter take the appropriate actions,” Bishops Clarke and Anglin told the complainant.

There is urgent need to define ‘appropriate action’. The most appropriate action in this circumstance is for a full criminal investigation, to which the leadership of the church gives its unfettered support.

Indeed, this a Roman Catholic moment for the Moravians of Jamaica. For decades, Catholic bishops in dioceses across the United States moved paedophiles from parish to parish in attempts to cover-up, rather than turning them over to face criminal justice. The church remained in denial when the matter reached the public at the start of the 2000s.

In many of those dioceses, the Catholic Church and its leaders struggle for moral authority. The Moravians of Jamaica have an opportunity to live up to their loss, reverse and re-establish their worth.

J’can man, wife die days apart

A 63-YEAR-OLD Jamaican man and his wife died days apart following an incident in which their car ran off the road and into a Pembroke Pines canal Friday afternoon.

January 13

Media reports are that Miramar resident Sandy Rose, who was driving with 61 year old Joan Rose as the front passenger when the mishap occurred.

The couple was taken to Memorial hospital, where Joan was pronounced dead with Sandy in critical condition. She died on Sunday, January 15.

Friends and family members were left in shock at news of their deaths.

“...they were like goodwill ambassadors - always willing to lend a hand. Very friendly. God fearing people, very well known to their neighbours. Sandy was near the Bordertown as a very friendly, family-oriented man, who always tried to support family events, always supported school events and good cause events.

According to one report witnesses told how they saw the vehicle go off the pavement, over several cement curbs and down an embankment and into the canal near the Broward County Southwest Regional Library at 16835 Sheridan St.

It appeared likely that the driver suffered an apparent medical condition that lost control of the vehicle while travelling through the parking lot,” Sgt Adam Feiner said in a press release.

SCANDAL

Continued from 1

Jamaica’s Moravian bunkered defensively this week in the face of a deepening sex scandal that has already put one of its pastors before the courts for statutory rape and caused the resignation of its two top leaders.

At the service on Sunday, January 15 at Covenant Moravian in Kingston, where the church’s deputy head, Jermaine Gibson, who resigned two days earlier was scheduled to preach, one of the day’s liturgist, Kevin St Hill, implied there was a move to ‘blacken’ the image of the island’s Moravian leader.

At the same time, the preacher, Penelope Morgan Owens, while acknowledging that the church had, “when w are wrong to take responsibility”, suggested that the Moravians were being “persecuted”.

The Moravians, who have operated in Jamaica for over 260 years and gave a congregation of just 20,000, have been in turmoil since the start of the year when Rupert Clarke, the married pastor of a congregation in the parish of Manchester, was arrested for allegedly having sex with a 15-year girl.

The age of consent in Jamaica is 16.

Further, Rev Clarke is under investigation for an allegedly separate earlier incident involving the girls sister, who was also said to have been under-aged.

The crisis deepened last week when the church’s administrative leader, Dr Paul Gardner – who had been having a ‘on-and-off’ relationship with an estranged minister about when and what he knew about Rev Clarke – was likewise resigned.

At the same time an email from a young woman, thought to be in her late 20s or early 30s, began circulating alleging that she was sexually grooming in early adolescence by one of the church’s top pastors, who later sexually exploited her. She also claimed that another pastor, at least once, attempted to force himself on her, at a time when she was seeking help given her confusion about her sexuality.

The church’s spiritual leader is reported to have told the woman that she would establish an independent committee to review her complaint, “they said in an e-mail to the woman.

But the issue has enthralled Jamaica and the public an email string, from 2014, between himself and Dr Gardner, in which he raised concerns about allegations relating to Rev Clarke. If all this were not bad enough, a woman, now in the late 20s or early 30s, went public, just ahead of the leadership resignations, with allegations of having been groomed from aged 12, and having sexual encounters with a pastor from age 14.

“We intend in short order to set up an independent committee mutually accepted by us, as bishops, and you to thoroughly investigate the matter and thereafter take the appropriate actions,” Bishops Clarke and Anglin told the complainant.

13 year old shooting victim laid to rest

NEW YORK.

“A CHILD of promise destined for greatness” was how 13-year-old shooting victim Shamoya McKenzie, was hailed by the nearly 2000 people who packed the Macedonia Baptist Church on South 96th Avenue in Mount Vernon, for her going home service.

The 104 year old church with a seating capacity for about 2500 people played the sound of music and poems last Friday evening, as people from all walks of life, inside and outside the Mount Vernon community, came to pay tribute to the honour student and budding basketball star.

Shamoya was killed on New Year’s Eve while riding in her mother’s car. A stray bullet pierced the back windshield of the car and struck her in the head.

She was described in her obituary as a “very compassionate, caring young lady. The 13-year-old intelligent, lovable, respectful and family-oriented child whose personality so people to her like a magnet.”

Her obituary further described her as a “girl who was loved by everyone with whom she came in contact.”

“She was a very active student who maintain her academics and whose dream was to attend the University of Connecticut and to become a part of the WNBA.

“She was an achiever, a dreamer and a little star who has left her footprint on the sands of time,” noted her obituary.

The Mayor of Mount Vernon, Richard Thomas, paying tribute to Shamoya, noted that she was a credit to the city.

“The city of Mount Vernon is heartbroken at the loss of our daughter,” said Mayor Thomas. Jamaica’s consul general to New York, Trudy Deans, said Shamoya’s loss was a blow to the community as its life was cut short by the achievement of her dreams.

Deans called on her family to reflect on her life and hold dear the happy memories they have of Shamoya.

OTHER TRIBUTES

Tributes were also paid to Shamoya by Westchester Elected Members of the Mount Vernon City Council, The Superintendent of the Mount Vernon School District and several of her teachers as well as the principal of the Graham Elementary Middle School where Shamoya spent her entire school life.

The UCONN women’s basketball team, several of whom attended her funeral, has made her an honorary member.

The New York Knicks and the New York Liberty Women’s basketball teams will honour her at one of their games at Madison Square Garden during a match later this month.

Nestle has also placed a backboard on their half paint water bottle in her honour.

Funeral services for Shamoya McKenzie were held over two days. On Thursday January 12, a private service was held for her at the Bronxwood International Church of God where she was a member of the children’s choir and the public service held at the Macedonia Baptist Church in Mount Vernon on Friday.

Her body was borne to the church in a white horse drawn carriage pulled by two white horses.

Burial was at the Mount Hope Cemetery in Hastings on Hudson on Saturday morning.
Ian Boyne under fire for wanting citizens rights curtailed to fight crime

Jovan Johnson
Staff Reporter

PUBLIC DEFENDER Arlene Harrison-Henry, a defence lawyer and human rights activist, says the proposal by influential journalist Ian Boyne for Prime Minister Andrew Holness to curtail the rights of Jamaicans to address crime should be rejected for its ‘unlawful’ nature.

Boyne, in his column in The Sunday Gleaner, branded rights advocates, defence lawyers, and members of the media as elites ‘who harshly criticize the Government for not doing something now when nothing they are proposing can have any practical effect on crime now.’

“I am calling for locking down certain communities, locking away certain known crime perpetrators, going into homes without search warrants and stopping vehicles on the road. Curtail some of my civil liberties in the interest of all. You can’t have human rights if there is not a viable State,” he wrote, urging Holness to take action.

Harrison-Henry said those suggestions should be rejected.

“Mr Boyne’s aim is for the reduction of crime, and that is laudable. The methods he has prescribed, however, have already been tried, tested and proved not to work. Let us not forget that Tivoli Gardens incursion in 2010,” she argued that some of the old methods included the Suppression of Crime Act of 1974 that was repealed in 1993 after yielding little results except for the alleged abuses of citizens’ rights. Tied to that is the creation of various special police units over the years that earned the wrath of rights campaigners for their actions.

“At the risk of being regarded by Boyne as one of the human-rights fundamentalists, what we’re saying is that crime-fighting measures will not succeed if people’s rights are disregarded. Crime is a societal problem and it cannot be solved without the full cooperation of the populace,” added Levy.

Romario Scott
Gleaner Writer

PEARLIE CHARLES Jr, state minister in the Ministry of National Security, last week extended an invitation to members of the Sunla Youth Foundation and other key stakeholders to share with him the formula that resulted in the turnaround of the once notorious August Town community.

August Town, located in Eastern St Andrew, achieved a milestone in 2016 by recording zero murders when, in years gone by, it recorded an average of up to eight murders because of open gang warfare and political tension.

During a function which saw community members gathered in Bryce Hill square to understand how to preserve peace, Charles argued that August Town is a demonstration of what can occur if communities come together, understanding it requires resilience, for the greater good.

“I am hoping that we can sit down and find out exactly what the formula is that has resulted in this success so we can repeat it and extend it across our beloved Jamaica,” Charles said as he paid tribute to the groups and individuals who have helped to reduce the community from the paws of violence.

State minister wants August Town’s ‘zero murders’ secret

Member of Parliament for East Rural St Andrew Fayval Williams (left) presents a ‘zero murder’ shirt to recording artiste and long-time August Town resident Miguel ‘Sizzla’ Collins.

Horace Levy
Rights campaigner

Horace Levy said the figure is high, but the ‘nonsense’ proposed by Boyne will not do anything to address the problem.

“It simply has not worked. For decades, we’ve been trying to do this. It’s absolute rubbish! Absolute rubbish!” Levy said.

“And, we in the civil society and I’m sure the Jamaican Bar Association, will also be involved in it. We will attempt to bring back this business of barging into people’s houses without search warrants and limiting their right to bail. I am disappointed in Boyne because he usually writes good sense,” added Levy, the executive director of Jamaicans for Justice.

On the issue of searching houses without warrants, Patrick Atkinson, defence lawyer and former attorney general, said Boyne should volunteer his house first.

“I would like them to start by going in and locking down his community, stop and search his car, and going into his house without a warrant. Since he’s willing to do that, let them start there,” he said.

“It is just a recycled disaster that occurs every time there is a crime spike. When you have these spikes in crime, they call on police to stop it. They call on lawyers to be silent. They feel it necessary to dismiss lawyers by referring to them as high-priced lawyers, as if that is some kind of crime. They don’t speak about high-priced doctors or high-priced journalists. If you’re a lawyer, nobody has a clue what your fees are and that people somehow, by hiring lawyers, it facilitates them committing crime. It is all nonsense.”

“Stop crime is really not the police’s job,” said Atkinson.

His successor in the attorney general’s chambers, Marlene Malahoo-Forte, renewed the debate about rights and crime last May when she told the Parliament that fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed to Jamaicans may have to be abrogated, abridged or infringed to address crime.

Holness noted in his New Year message that legislative changes were coming, but gave no specifics. The public defender, meanwhile, said her office was prepared to fight any unlawful proposal.
National security and the Budget

The obvious takeaway from the revised Budget that Audley Shaw presented to Parliament this week is that the Government has begun to deliver on its promise to prioritise spending on citizens’ security and justice. So, Minister Shaw jacked up the Budget for the national security ministry by J$8.9 billion, or 37 per cent, to approximately J$82 billion. The largest slice of that increase is going to the military, including J$82.3 billion for the overhaul and purchase of vessels for the Jamaica Defence Force’s (JDF) Coast Guard. Additionally, the police are getting J$1.9 billion to run their shop...
Have a
great
week!

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(From left): Hugh Cunningham, John White, Samuel Granby, Renwick Sterritt, Donald Bookal (President), Albert Mingoes, Rev. Dr. Pierre Andre Duvert (Rector), Linton King and Donald Smith (seated) at The Men on a Mission of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church hosted An Oldies But Goodies Evening at The Eastwood Manor, Bronx, on Sunday, January 16.

Danielle Holden and Nick Astbury were all smiles for our lens.

Quarter-milers Javere Bell (left) and Anastasia LeRoy rock the red carpet at the RJR National Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year function held at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel on Friday, January 13.

Gail Philip (second left), network Toronto Leader of NABFEEME- National Association of Black Female Executives in Music and Entertainment, and CEO of GNote Management Inc., with (from left) Aisha Wickham, programme consultant at the Ontario Media Development Corporation, Keidi-Ann Graham, a corporate exchange trader and Karen Graham, executive assistant at Gnote Management and a practical nurse at the organisation’s Toronto Chapter gathering of Conversations & Cocktail, held at Pravda Vodka House, downtown Toronto.

Gail Philip Photo

Sophia Findlay Photo

Click! Click! Click!

It’s a PLEASURE
to be on your list today.
Jamaica projected to grow faster than Latin America in 2017

STEFAN JACOBS
Senior Business Reporter

JAMAICA WILL grow its economy at a faster rate in 2017 than the wider Latin American and Caribbean region – LAC – as a whole, according to projections in a new World Bank report released on Tuesday, January 10.

The local economy should see growth of 2 per cent in 2017 compared to 1.2 per cent for LAC, according to the Global Economic Prospects: Latin America and Caribbean Weak Investment in Uncertain Times report.

Growth projections for Jamaica further increase to 2.3 per cent in 2018 and 2.5 per cent in 2019. However, Jamaica will under-perform Caribbean economies as a bloc, at 2.4 per cent for the region, at an average of 3.1 per cent in 2017.

The report estimates that LAC contracted by 1.4 per cent in 2016, but would return to growth of 1.2 per cent this year and 2.3 per cent in 2018. The report warns, however, that the region remains exposed to developments in the United States.

In 2017, Jamaica is expected to grow at the 16th-fastest rate in the region among the 27 nations in LAC compared by the World Bank. This is 0.1 percentage point ahead of projections in 2014.

World growth is expected to reach 2.7 per cent in 2017, up from 2.3 per cent in 2016, which was described as the weakest in years. The World Bank attributes the rise to ‘rebounds’ in growth from Brazil and Russia. The foundation for the global growth pickup is the expectation of mildly raising commodity prices.

“After years of disappointing global growth, we are encouraged to see stronger economic prospects on the horizon,” World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim said in a statement about the report. “Now is the time to take advantage of this momentum and increase investments in infrastructure and people. This is vital to stimulating the sustainable and inclusive economic growth required to end extreme poverty.”

INVESTMENT SLOW

Investment growth in emerging countries has slowed throughout the world, led by China, with India and South Africa slated for a “lacklustre performance”.

“Thus, not the best time to invest – both public (because of lack of fiscal space) and private,” stated the report.

Slow growth investment was described as a partial correction from high pre-crisis levels, but also reflects obstacles to growth that emerging and developing economies have faced, including low oil prices (for oil exporters), slowing foreign direct investment (for commodity importers), and more broadly, private debt burdens and political risk, the report said.

“We can help governments offer the private sector more opportunities to invest with confidence that the new capital it produces can plug into the infrastructure of global connectivity,” said World Bank Chief Economist Paul Romer.

TVJ’s multimillion-dollar verdict against CVM crucial for all media

ONE OF the attorneys for Television Jamaica Limited (TVJ), which has been awarded a total of $812.975,571 in damages against its free-to-air rival CVM, welcomed the High Court’s ruling in its copyright lawsuit, said the case serves as a reminder that persons should get permission before using protected material.

The ruling has clarified the circumstances in which exclusive broadcast rights may be used by a non-rights holder. Perhaps the better approach is to make enquires of the rights holder and paying the appropriate licence fee,” said George Gibson-Henley.

The award of damages to TVJ was handed down by Supreme Court judge Justice Bryan Byev. CVM gave notice of filing an appeal and asked for a stay of payment of the award pending a hearing. Justice Sykes ordered that the appeal process gets started, pending CVM paying the US$125,975.90 to an interest-bearing account in the names of the attorneys for both parties within 40 days of the January 9 judgment.

If CVM misses the deadline without getting an extension from the court, there would be no restriction barring TVJ from collecting the award. TVJ took CVM to court in 2015 over 240 instances of footage from the World Championships, held in Beijing, China. TVJ had exclusive rights to broadcast the championships and argued that TVJ breached its broadcast licence when it used certain content in its broadcast of the programme ‘Return to the Nest’ online on social media. It also argued that it suffered losses as a result of the airing of the content by CVM. Justice Sykes heard submissions, and in August 2016, he ruled in TVJ’s favour. The matter then went for assessment of damages.

CHAIRMAN OF JAMPRO

Senator Don Wehby says that Jamaica is well poised to achieve its economic growth targets of US$2 billion in exports by 2020.

Addressing the official launch of the inaugural Jamaica International Exhibition (JIE) at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, St James, last week, Wehby added in agriculture, agri–


culture, and tourism, Jamaica has the key sectors to make the goal a reality.

“These targets are also a central part of JAMPRO’s own strategic goals over the next three years,” Wehby pointed out. “It will be achieved by increasing export-led investment, expanding export reach globally and advocating for reductions in the barriers.”

STRATEGIC PLAN

Wehby said that it is for this reason that the process of developing JAMPRO’s strategic plan late last year that emphasis was placed on identifying and focusing on key sectors in which Jamaica can position itself as a source of niche and ethnic products in addition to lifestyle products that are uniquely Jamaican.

“We sought to develop the country’s strategy with specific, achievable, measurable, and realistic (SMART) outcomes,” he said.

As we speak, the team is working on creating targeted promotional programmes that will drive investments in these areas, from both local and overseas investors, while defining the critical strategies that will get Jamaica products to markets across the globe,” he added.

Wehby, who is also the chief executive officer of the GraceKennedy Group of Companies, added that it is in this vein that JAMPRO wholeheartedly supports the JIE on its upcoming trade exhibition in June, where more than 600 buyers and suppliers from within the Caribbean, North and South America, Canada, China, the United Kingdom, and other parts of Europe have been booked in Jamaica offering business opportunities to manufacturers and other stakeholders.

The trade show will run from June 1-4 at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

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that his company was uncertain of its continued operation, as replacing products under the recall is proving costly.

The FDA issued two recalls of Oriental’s curry powder; the most recent was on December 7. However, Lue said that since the recall back in August, all of Oriental’s products have been subject to weekly testing, with no lead traces found. He said the FDA “made a big issue” of the matter by doing a second recall, which he said was based on “suspicions of contamination,” and that no lead was actually found.

Curry sold under the brands Oriental Hot Curry Powder in 50 pounds (bulk), Ocho Rios Jamaica Rice Mole Spicy Hot Curry Powder (40p) and Ocho Rios Mid Curry Powder (5lb), were recalled by the FDA in December.

“We have tested our products since the last recall, and we continued testing,” said Lue. “So far, there is no lead found in the curry powder, or what lead is found is in line with what we expect.”

The Jamaican businessman referred to the second recall as a “non-issue,” saying it was more precautionary than confirmative of lead contamination. “The US decided that they wanted to recall it because they think...”

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### FOREIGN EXCHANGE TRADING SUMMARY

Trade Date: Monday, January 16, 2017

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## 10-DAY MOVING AVERAGE RATE

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The ten mentioned COMMODITY / SPOT SALES RATES will be applicable for COMMODITY and G-C-T purposes on January 17, 2017. The spot transactions of Authorized Foreign Exchange Dealers and Banks are reported above.
Belize-born author pens Michael Manley’s biography

FRANCINE BUCHNER
Gleaner Writer

ROLL BACK the clock to 1974, a young Aston Hall made a conscious decision to get actively involved in the politics of Jamaica. This was a time when Michael Manley was emerging as a prominent political force. Hall was just 12 years old when he was inspired by Manley’s speech to “burn the diamonds.”

“Today young Godfrey Smith asked his 12-year-old daughter, ‘Why do you always say at the Michael Manley: The Biography book launch in Toronto recently, she answered, ‘I don’t know dad, I’m not interested in that book.’ And although Smith did not have a close personal relationship with Manley, like Hall did – in fact, he never met him – the impact of Manley’s politics on the teenager next door in the Central American country of Belize had him accept the offer from Rachel Brown to write the biography of his father.

“He used to describe it this way – colonialism tried to separate us, and Manley’s politics transcend borders. We’re different people, but he was saying no, no, we are the same people. We have the same experience. We have the same struggles,” said Godfrey Smith.

Smith described the book as the “soundtrack of our lives has been transcribed into words. You [Godfrey Smith] got it right.” Rachel Manley said the biography is refreshing because it does not enforce that Black people were once slaves, but tells of empowerment of a people and the politics of empowerment. “There was a large portion of the Jamaican population that was never a part of the National Project. Michael Manley wanted to include them,” said Hall, who was a part of Manley’s campaign team.

CONCERNED ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN

Manley was not just concerned with Jamaica, he was concerned about the Caribbean and that extended to poor people around the globe. “Because apartheid was alive and well,” said Hall. Manley established relationships with Fidel Castro in Cuba, Eric Williams in Trinidad and Tobago, Forbes Burnham in Guyana. The book talks about Manley’s dealings with Margaret Thatcher and Henry Kissinger.

“So you might take what I just read for granted, but the ringer of these international names, in conjunction with Michael Manley has never happened since. That does not happen easily. This is a man from a small island and he had the power to summon world leaders into his backyard for a meeting,” said Smith.

Manley is described as an internationalist, an intellectual and a complainer.


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Harbourfront Centre celebrates the 2017 edition of Kuumba in February

TORONTO, ON

HARBOURFRONT CENTRE will be hosting the 21st annual Kuumba festival, presented by TD bank Group. Harbourfront Centre celebrates the 2017 edition of Kuumba in February.

Harbourfront Centre celebrates the 2017 edition of Kuumba in February.

Kuumba’s programming engages in an important discourse on issues faced by the Black community, globally as well as locally. This year, the festival hosts a Hip Hop and Soul Showcase, Canadian composer great Kiki Mercury Clarke, and explores the 200-year-old calypso tradition in ‘The Spirit of Calypso, featuring MOKA and Shak Shak. Kuumba’s film program is also expanded this year, featuring films that celebrate Viola Davis and other civil rights heroes, including the documentaries Race and Journey to Justice.

Tickets are on sale now.

Raphaelita Walker celebrates 90th in style

EDDIE GRANT
Gleaner Writer

Raphaelita Walker celebrates 90th in style.

WINTER’S snowfall which blanketed Southern Ontario, and Toronto on December 11, did not stop the more than 200 relatives and friends from attending the 90th birthday celebration for Raphaelita Walker, who is a stalwart in the Black community.

‘Raph,’ as she is affectionately called, is a founding member of the Jamaican Canadian Association. She has always given of her time to help others, especially young people whom she.had handed out thousands of toys over the past two or more decades in her role as Santa Claus.

During those occasions, Walker was joined by her husband, Gifford, who assisted her with the handing out of toys. Many of those children who sat on her lap while receiving toys are now parents.

Several individuals attending the birthday celebration paid glowingtributes to Walker for giving herself willingly, and for asking nothing in return.

Among those paying tribute were many individuals from across Ontario, and others who travelled from England, the United States and Jamaica, represented by Tommy Cowan, her carle Davis and daughter.

In her address to the gathering, Audrey Campbell, former president of the Jamaican Canadian Association, said, “With a weather like this, only Raph could get me out of my house.”

That was a sentiment shared by almost all of her guests.

Among those in attendance to show their love and respect for Walker were: Olive Steel, former president of JCA, singer Tony Anthony, Mitzie Hunter, Ontario’s Minister of Education, Archbishop Delores Seivright, and many individuals from a cross section of the Canadian-Caribbean community.

Those who were unable to attend, including Judy Silver, MP for Humber Black Creek area, sent messages of congratulations.

The main speaker at the event, chaired by Hamlin Grange, was Walker’s daughter, Olivia Babay. Grange, Jamaica’s minister of gender affairs, entertainment, and sport.

“It is a great feeling to be here celebrating my mother’s 90th birthday,” she said. “It is a great feeling for the entire family to be here. The Walkers and the Granges are all happy to be here celebrating my mother’s 90th. She had some health challenges recently and I remember her saying to me, don’t worry about me, I will be here to celebrate my 90th birthday.”

And friends here she is – my mother, Raphaelita Walker. Give her a loud cheer,” everyone in the audience gave her a rousing applause and a standing ovation.

The evening ended with performances. Tommy Cowan – the MC for the entertainment segment of the evening, also performing was his wife, Carlene Davis, Tony Anthony, Letta Allen Rowe, Bimone Banton, and a local gospel group.
Kristine Alicia album produced by Rory of Stone Love

K RISTINE ALCIA 11 new album Songs from Zion is set for release on February 16, 2017. It will be digitally released worldwide on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, YouTube, and SoundClick, among other outlets. Producer RoryStoneLove’s label, Black Dub Music, has already released two singles, Freedom Fighters and Hand Over River, along with official music videos for each. World famous reggae radio personality David Rodigan also previewed Roll It from the upcoming album on his BBC Radio 1Xtra show in December 2016. Songs from Zion comes nearly a decade since Kristine’s debut album, Get Ready. It received eight nominations at the 2009 Marlin, Alicia winning Artist of the Year and Female Reggae Vocal Performance of the Year. She says for the upcoming set “fans should expect a classic roots reggae album, rich in inspirational messaging.”

Kristine Alicia has collaborated, opened for and performed with Third World, Taurus Riley, Papa San, Ktran, Nadine Sutherland, Warrior King and Freddie McGregor. She has performed in the USA, Canada, Africa and many Caribbean countries.

The 11-track album includes the work and direction of RoryStoneLove, saxophonist Dean Frazer, trombonist Nambo Robinson and producer, Mixy Bennett, among others. The songs were all recorded with live instrumentation performed by a group of musicians Rory affectionately calls “the ‘Blackites’.”

JaRIA announces Reggae Mecca theme

THE JAMAICA Reggae Industry Association (JaRIA) is pleased to announce the theme for Reggae Month 2017. For the last two years, the association has been advancing discussions on the importance of assuming the nation’s rightful ownership of music as an indigenous Jamaican product, the 2016 theme being ‘Reggae Mecca’. With Kingston’s designation as a Creative City of Music by UNESCO in 2015, the Reggae Month Committee decided to produce Reggae Month 2017 under the theme ‘Reggae Mecca’. The activities will include the signature Reggae Wednesdays in Mandela Park, Half-Way Tree, JaRIA’s flagship Honour Awards and the growing Reggae Open University panel discussions. The month will open with an ecumenical service, to be held on January 29, 2017. Reggae Month was officially declared on January 9, 2008, by the then Governor-General of Jamaica. This was done to highlight and celebrate the musical genre’s impact on the country’s social, cultural and economic development. Additionally, the birthdays of two of Jamaica and reggae’s icons are commemorated in February: The late Dennis Brown, also known as the Crown Prince of Reggae, is celebrated on February 1, while the late Robert Nesta ‘Bob’ Marley, the renowned King of Reggae, is celebrated on February 6.

Freddie McGregor’s song in Obama film

SINGER FREDDIE McGregor had mixed feelings when he learnt that his song Bobby Blue was featured in the Netflix original Barry, a biographical film about Barack Obama as a college student at Columbia University in the early 1980s. This was long before he sought to become President of the United States of America.

The movie producers adopted the homophonic style, the film’s visuals and sound complementing each other. The movie also features two other reggae songs and all are on the Studio One record label. Freddie is elated that his song written over 40 years ago remains relevant and is featured alongside a significant black figure as President Obama. He encourages publishers and artistes to engage producers of films to consider their music, as it remains a viable medium to get songs heard.

McGregor will embark on a tour of Africa soon to promote his latest album, True to My Roots.

Sean Paul releases ‘No Lie’ music video

MULTI-PLATINUM artiste Sean Paul has released the video for No Lie, featuring English singer Dua Lipa, showing the two in various scenes from different mirroring perspectives. After debuting on the Billboard Reggae Digital Song Sales Chart at number three in the first week of its release, No Lie has maintained a presence on music charts across the world. With over 537,000 views only hours after its release, the single has sparked a #LitTonight hashtag across social media platforms, as fans favour the chorus “it’s gonna be lit tonight, no lie”, sung by Dua Lipa.

Sean Paul has released the video for ‘No Lie’, sung by Dua Lipa. The video has been previewed on popular digital music media Spotify and climbing to number five on iTunes’ listing of top reggae downloads, it is hoped the video release will push it higher on even more charts. The No Lie video can now be seen on Vevo, attracting over 35,000 views only hours after its release. The single has sparked a #LitTonight hashtag across social media platforms, as fans favour the chorus “it’s gonna be lit tonight, no lie”, sung by Dua Lipa.

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ENTERTAINMENT
Kingston’s Renfrew hotel running ahead of schedule

Currently running six weeks ahead of schedule, the Renfrew hotel construction project will deliver 32 exclusive rooms and eight 2-bedroom duplex apartments to Jamaica’s hotel room inventory and make a valuable addition to an exclusive accommodation niche in the nation’s capital. Being developed to target corporate guests with a long stay requirement, the new hotel is being targeted for an October 2017 opening. Developer, Evwill Ltd, expects the hotel “will attract frequent business travellers, who require a higher level of personal service and recognition than can be experienced at competitive properties in Kingston.”

“However, unique among the hotels in Jamaica, The Renfrew offers the investor a chance to participate in ownership by purchasing a unit of which they would have seven days per year.” Features of the Renfrew hotel will include 24-hour doorman/concierge, secure underground parking on property, 24-hour manned and electronic security including video surveillance and access control systems. Guest rooms will have deadbolt and electronic Vingcard front door locks and video/intercom lines to security.

While great emphasis has been placed on security considerations, equal attention has been paid to convenience and comfort, in anticipating the needs of a long-staying guest, said the investors. These include laundry facilities on select guest room floors and check-in/check-out at the floor which various Jamaican architects and interior designers have been retained to create unique character to each unit.

The business needs of guests will be addressed by wireless Internet access, wireless Internet access, video conferencing and adequate meeting room facilities.

Rooms’ environmental sensibility is evident in the design of solar powered public area lighting and solar heated water to guest rooms. The use of double glazed windows also serves to reduce external noise, individually controlled air conditioning and pre-wired telephone and cable TV outlets.

The business needs of guests will be addressed by wireless Internet access, video conferencing and adequate meeting room facilities.

Kingston Properties acquires first Cayman property

Steve Jackson
Business Reporter

KINGSTON PROPERTIES Limited (KPREIT) has acquired its first property in the Cayman Islands, which it says will offer the company hard-currency and tax-free earnings.

The price of the transaction was not disclosed.

The company also expects to announce the acquisition of an additional property in Jamaica shortly.

The Cayman acquisition executed on January 10, is a fully tenanted, mixed-use building located in the West Bay Beach area. “The property in Cayman was financed by debt, but we are still underleveraged,” said KPREIT Chief Executive Officer Kevin Richards. Last April, KPREIT raised some US$5 million in loans aimed at financing future acquisitions.

The company will disclose the price of the Cayman acquisition in its first-quarter 2017 earnings report, said Richards. “These results are due for release around mid-May.” The building comprises offices, retail outlets and residences along the famous Seven Mile Beach corridor.

It is in proximity to hotels, condos and trendy developments.

“Cayman is a tax-free environment with no property, income, corporate and capital gains tax. So the acquisition is part of KPREIT improving our tax efficiency.” Richards said.

“Secondly, the economy is rapidly developing since the economic crisis, and there are huge plans for the development of the country. We are not ruling out other acquisitions in Cayman.”

LEADING FINANCIAL CENTRE

Cayman Islands, with a per capita GDP of US$48,856, is described as a leading financial centre, with GDP growth for the first half of 2016 at 3.0 per cent, while unemployment stands at 3.9 per cent.

KPREIT indicated that the fundamentals in Cayman are expected to continue to improve based on the growth in the Special Economic Zone near the South Sound, the planned expansion of the Owen Roberts International Airport, construction of a new cruise ship pier in Georgetown, expansion of the highway in the general West Bay Road area, along with continued resort and condo developments along the Seven Mile Beach corridor.

KPREIT is a real estate investment trust that invests in properties locally and overseas. Its investment holdings are now valued at 82.2 billion, compared to 81.9 billion a year earlier, boosted by new acquisitions. The rise was due to acquisitions of three properties in Florida last year. For the third quarter ending September 2016, KPREIT made $14 million net profit from revenues of $35.8 million, compared with a loss of $4.5 million a year earlier. Over nine months, the company made $131 million net profit on revenues of $111.8 million, compared to a net loss of $51 million a year earlier.

What’s your view? What stories would you like to read? What issues would you like us to focus on? Email: overseas@gleanerjm.com
The donation, valued at more than $2.5 million, was acquired to boost agricultural production. Top of the line seeds and equipment valued at more than J$2.5 million was allocated to complete the road leading to the Accompong Maroon village in St. Elizabeth. An additional J$20 million was also used for the construction of a cultural centre and a road completed and a cultural centre will be allocated to complete the road leading to the Accompong Maroon village in St. Elizabeth.

Accompong Maroon village to get road completed and a cultural centre

St. Elizabeth: AN ADDITIONAL J$20 million will be allocated to complete the road leading to the Accompong Maroon village in St. Elizabeth and a cultural centre is to be built to enhance talent. Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett announced on Monday, January 9 as he addressed the annual Accompong Maroon celebrations. Last September, the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) financed a road rehabilitation project in the area to make travel easier for farmers, commuters and students as well as visitors to tourist attractions.

Top of the line seeds and equipment acquired to boost agricultural production

St. Catherine: THE GOVERNMENT has acquired high-quality seeds for agricultural production as well as equipment and supplies valued at more than J$2.5 million. The items, which include a seed extractor, germination chamber, forceps and Petri dishes, were handed over by the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), during a ceremony at the Hope Gardens offices of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, in St. Andrew on Wednesday January 11. Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry, J.C. Hutchinson, said the donation will assist with the Ministry’s clean seed programme, which provides disease-free planting material for farmers. The acquisitions will be used to bolster the Seed Production Facility of the Bodles Research Station in St. Catherine.

Health minister supports Sigma run

Kingston and St Andrew: MINISTER OF Health, Dr. Christopher Tufton, has endorsed the Sigmacor Sigma Corporate Run as an event that passes on crucial health messages which, if heeded, can prevent lifestyle illnesses. Now in its 19th year, the Sigma run has, so far, donated $200 million to health- and children-related charities. Addressing the launch of the event at the Spanish Court Hotel, in New Kingston, Wednesday January 10, the Minister said the exercise, which is scheduled for Sunday February 19, in the Corporate Area, is geared at raising some J$660 million for the public health system. ‘It enhances our ability to manage our risk profile, and encourages some of the things that are more preventative in nature,’ Dr. Tufton said. The Spanish Town Hospital, the Mandeville Regional Hospital, and the Bethlehem Home, operated by Missionaries of the Poor, will be the main beneficiaries from this year’s run of 5.5 kilometres.

Business process outsourcing company to double operations by year end

St. James: BUSINESSES PROCESS Outsourcing company ItelBPO Smart Solutions is looking to double its staff and operations by year end as the country continues to attract outsourcing businesses. The company currently has a staff of just over 700. Intel BPO Smart Solutions operates two facilities in Montego Bay in addition to another in Kingston and one in The Bahamas. The expansion of its operations is planned for Montego Bay and Kingston. Yoni Epstein, operator of the business told The Gleaner recently.
Sean Paul defends work
Says comments questioning his ‘Jamaicanness’ are hurtful

Sherita Grizzle
Gleaner Writer

“I NEVER felt a pressure. What I do feel is a sense of responsibility to keep it Jamaican, even if people think that I don’t do songs that sound Jamaican. My sense of responsibility/p pride is Jamaican and I want to keep it that way,” Sean Paul told The Gleaner.

The Grammy-winning entertainer has faced huge success on the international stage and is adamant that despite what many may think, his success is not as a result of him ‘selling out’, as he prides himself on representing the ‘black, green, and gold’ to the best of his ability.

The entertainer has faced tremendous backlash over the years as several individuals (some part of the music industry) have called out the artiste for not staying a part of the music industry for several years as several individuals (some of his ability.

“On my mom side, yes (got a bit Jamaican). I mean, if you walk out a road and you have on you top dress and you know you look your best, and yuh walk outta road and people criticise it to your face and tell that don’t look good, you must feel a way. But, personally, in life, I try to let people think of me bother me.”

Sean Paul revealed that the former Nassau variant was one of the main reasons his mother was not initially supportive of his decision to pursue music as a career.

Sean Paul told The Gleaner that her mother was one of the main reasons he was often hurt by the many comments questioning his ‘Jamaicanness’ and his loyalty to the island.

“I must care what people thing of me,” he said. “It does feel a way (when people say he’s not Jamaican). I mean, if you walk out a road and you have on you top dress and you know you look your best, and yuh walk outta road and people criticise it to your face and tell that don’t look good, you must feel a way. But, personally, in life, I try to let people think of me bother me.”

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The Gleaner Writer

The Gleaner

Bacchanal patrons held spellbound at New Year’s launch

CURTIS CAMPBELL
Gleaner Writer

BACCHANAL 2017 is off to a strong start with the recent New Year’s launch pulling a huge audience to Max Camp, even with stiff competition from Magnum Live, which was held at Sabina Park the same night.

From as early as 11 p.m., security personnel at the venue had their hands full as motorists competed for the few parking spaces which were left unoccupied in the venue, while others opted to park on the outside of the stadium property.

The theme for this Year’s carnival season is ‘Spellbound’ and by 12:30 a.m., patrons appeared to have been struck by the Bacchanal spell as they gave their full attention to the main stage while the models who showcased this Year’s costumes gyrated their bodies to the pulsating soca beat.

MESMERIZING
Jodi Henriques, one of this Year’s costume designers, told The Gleaner that her design, titled Bewitched, is mesmerizing. She also said she is not competing with other designers to make the best costume, but, instead, to make her clients happy and satisfied.

“Is it a matter of competition to me? It’s like this. Do you like the colour? Do you like the design?”

Do you think it will suit your body? There are so many beautiful options here at Bacchanal, so it’s a matter of which one you like. When I was in the fabric store, I saw this snakeskin velvet and it really spoke to me, because what is more sexy than velvet? So I added a body chain, and that, in the sunlight at this Year’s road march, is going to be a spectacle. Also, what is special is that after carnival, ladies can wear that body chain with a simple black dress: it can be worn forever.”

Popular media personality Yaniique ‘Curvy Diva’ Barrett, was among this Year’s models, and she had the audience’s full attention as she danced and showed off her upper body in awkward positions to show the durability of her costume.

Speaking with The Gleaner, she revealed that the costume is called ‘Maleficient’ and was inspired by the fantasy queen from popular Disney film Maleficient.

Barrett, who will be jumping with Unleashed Jamaica this year, expressed that Bacchanal 2017 will definitely feel her presence.

“I will be unleashed on the road. I jump every year, but this year is extremely special … I am going above and beyond, and I am so happy to be a part of Unleashed. so you know it is going to be crazy, because they always do it big. They always do amazing and over-the-top costumes with creativity, so I just can’t wait … my costume this year, you need to be...
What’s the fastest route?

Deidre S. Powell

What information do I need?

Dahlia Walker-Huntington

United States

Dear Mrs. Walker-Huntington,

My husband is a United States citizen. We have been married for five years. I am 36 years old and he is 56. He is planning that as soon as he reaches retirement age he will return home to Jamaica to live. Therefore, he does not plan on filing for me to go to America. He visits Jamaica two or three times per year to see me.

I own and operate a registered business and own my own home. I would love to travel to the United States to spend time with my husband and my family. I am planning, in the next few weeks, to apply for a visitor’s visa. Is there any information that I am required to know or bring to the embassy to enhance my chance of getting the visa?

– F.P.W.

Dear F.P.W.,

Every applicant for a non-immigrant (visitor’s) visa has to demonstrate to the US consular officer at the US Embassy that they have significant ties to their home country and that they do not intend to migrate to the USA.

In reviewing the ties, the consular officer looks to see that the person has family, personal and business/work connections in their home country that would compel them to return after traveling to America. For example, is the person married? Do they have minor children? Are they employed? Do they own their own business? Do they own a house, car? Do they have other financial obligations?

Some officers require documentary evidence of the ties and others make a decision just based on the application. An applicant for a non-immigrant visa should always take the proof of the ties to their home country to their interview:

- Some persons manufacture evidence to prove ties and find themselves in serious trouble for committing immigration fraud. When a person commits immigration fraud, it never goes away – time does not cure the fraud. Some of the manufactured evidence also amounts to a crime in Jamaica for which the applicant can be arrested.

In your case, it is unconventional that you and your husband do not have any immediate plans to live together and would have to be explained to the consular officer. If you go to the US Embassy to apply for a visa, you must tell the truth – that you are married to a US citizen. The fact that you have a US citizen husband will indicate an intention to migrate and lessen your chances of receiving a non-immigrant visa. However, if the consular officer is convinced that you will only visit and return to Jamaica, he or she could issue a visa.

Dahlia A. Walker-Huntington is a Jamaican-American attorney who practises immigration law in the United States and family and personal injury law in Florida. She is a mediator, arbitrator and special magistrate in Broward County, Florida.

If your application is returned due to missing information or otherwise, you will be required to resubmit your application using the new forms and new checklists.

To help you make the decision about the best option to follow, consider the information below:

The new application process for sponsorship of family members is considered to be simpler than the previous one. There is one straightforward application guide and the number of forms to be completed has been reduced significantly.

There is no need to do an upfront assessment of the applications and the certificates until later in the process. You have 30 days in which to do your medical examination and obtain your police certificate from all the countries where your husband has spent most of his adult life, since the age of 18. If this country is different from the country where he is living, you should also note that there are currently no country-specific questions for Jamaica.

Permanent Conditional Residence

Another important factor to consider is that if you and your spouse have been in a relationship of two years or less and do not have children in common at the time of submission of the sponsorship application, your spouse will be granted permanent conditional residence.

That means that you and your sponsored spouse must continue to maintain a legitimate relationship for two years from the date on which he receives his permanent resident status in Canada. If he does not remain in the relationship, the permanent resident status could be revoked. There are however certain exceptions to this rule.

It is therefore, very important not to delay and to ensure to provide all the necessary documents to the US consular officer so that you understand what constitutes a legitimate relationship. The key is to submit documentation that would provide evidence of joint ownership of property, joint leases/agreement, utilities’ bills, photographer’s wedding ceremony and of your joint activities, documents showing the same address and other proof that your relationship is recognised by your friends, family and other people.

There is no need to do an upfront document checking. There are other documents that we will be required to submit to the US Consular Office. The express entry system was designed to work in tandem with Canada’s economic immigration programs. These economic programs are designed for individuals who qualify under Federal Skilled Worker Programme, Federal Skilled Trades Programme, Canadian Experience Class and a portion of the Provincial Nominee Programme.

The express entry system is highly competitive and individuals are selected based on the Comprehensive Ranking Scores. Scores are given based on factors such as age, educational level, language ability, education, work experience, provincial nomination and qualifying job offer.

Deidre S. Powell is a lawyer, mediator and notary public. Send your questions or comments to info@deidepowell.com. Find her on Facebook.com/jamaicanlawyer

Mayor proposes letting non-citizen immigrants vote

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The mayor of Maine’s largest city wants to allow non-citizen immigrants to vote in municipal elections.

The Portland Press Herald reports Mayor Ethan Strimling is proposing the change as part of a series of progressive policy initiatives. The City Council meets Jan. 23 and will need to give the green light for the plan to move forward. It may also need legislative approval.

Immigration advocates are backing the change. Sue Frey, one of the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project says, "it can take years for legal immigrants to receive citizenship but that people with legal status deserve a say in their local elections.

Portland voters rejected allowing non-citizen immigrants to vote in a 2010 ballot measure.
First time movie location tour begins in Montego Bay

Jamaica Land of Film is the first guided movie location tour to appear on the attractions scene in Jamaica, bringing fresh life to the tourism product. Commercial Services, a Cayman-based organization, has partnered with local destination management company, Management Services, to escort visitors through film production in Jamaica. The tour will showcase movie locations throughout Jamaica highlighting some iconic films with interesting behind-the-scenes stories.

Vanessa Polack of Commercial Services stated that their signature tours will feature movie locations that showcase some of the most famous movies and stars connected to Jamaica. “The tour is directed at cruise ship passengers and overnight visitors seeking an alternative experience in Jamaica outside of the adventure and nature attractions. Jamaica Land of Film will be an enduring tribute to a long history of successful film production of many famous movies in Jamaica,” she said.

There are also plans to establish a multimedia operation locally and internationally as well as a documentary to be submitted to film festivals.

Location stops include Falmouth, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios, with icons and location knowledge. Tours, including Papillion, Live and Let Die, Cool Runnings and How Stella Got Her Groove Back.

Excited about the prospects, Caribic Vacations’ chief executive officer, Roy Page of Caribic described the partnership as a milestone for his organisation and Jamaica. “What we are offering is a new and compelling historical and cultural tour that will draw visitors not only on the island, but the large number of film fans interested in past and present movies with a connection to the ultimate film production destination, Jamaica,”

Information on Jamaica Land of film visit www.jamaicalandoffilm.com and to book tour contact Caribic Vacations at info@caribicvacations.com or 963-9895.

New York Times names Kingston a ‘must-visit’

New York Times has named Kingston among the top 52 best places to go in 2017.

New York Times listed Jamaica’s capital at #24. This ranking was the culmination of the first anniversary of Kingston being named a UNESCO Creative City of Music.

In highlighting the attributes of Kingston, the New York Times article cited the city’s cultural offerings such as the One World Rocksteady Music Festival, the newly opened Peter Tosh Museum and the dub club music parties. It named local spots Usain Bolt’s Tracks & Records and Chateau 7 Gourmet Jerk Centre as must-go places to eat, while Courtyard by Marriott and Spanish Court hotels were recognised as ideal places to stay.

Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook was elated at the news, “I am beaming with pride that Kingston was angulated out by such a respected publication. This highlights the new additions being made in the city as well as Kingston’s cultural offerings and exciting nightlife,” he said.

Kingston’s added appeal as a preferred destination is further cemented by its proximity to the north coast via the new North/South Highway that allows visitors to enjoy the best of both worlds – the pulsating energy of city life and the relaxation of a beach vacation.

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ASTROLOGY/ENTERTAINMENT

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PSYCHICS • ASTROLOGERS • SPIRITUALISTS • READERS
Raging Fyah supports local school band competition

Reggae band to provide incentives and trophies

ADRIAN FRATER
News Editor

GRAMMY NOMINEE Raging Fyah is on board with the organisers of the annual Jamaica’s Best School band (JBSB) competition for this year’s fourth staging of the event, and the organisers of the event are quite elated.

“Raging Fyah is now attracting global attention on account of their Grammy nominations so to have them on board supporting the JBSB is both a big honour and a major boost for us,” said Raven Amani, the founder CEO of the JBSB. “Raging Fyah is a group of dynamic young musicians and in joining our efforts, they will be helping to uncover other promising young musicians.”

According to Armani, when contact was made with Raging Fyah to play a role in this year’s staging of the JBSB, she said it did not take much to convince the musicians because they were only too happy to play a role in the development of the musical talents that will be on show in the upcoming competition.

“They really like the concept behind the JBSB and they were quite enthusiastic about throwing in their support,” said Amani. “They have signed on as a sponsor and will be providing incentives, including trophies for the top bands and top music teachers. Was recently nominated for the next February’s Grammy for their album, Everlasting.

DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC

“What I particularly like about Raging Fyah’s decision to come on board is the fact that, despite the increased attention with their Grammy nomination, they have nonetheless decided to make the time required to give back to the development of the music,” said Amani. “They are true musicians at heart.”

Plans for the 2017 staging of the JBSB competition are now in high gear and according to the organiser, a number of new schools are among the schools that have already submitted entry forms.

“Among the entries received are entries from newcomers Holy Trinity High, Christiana High School and Happy Grove High School,” said Amani. “We have also received entries from Cross Keys High and Belair High, who are both returning after a one-year break, and the defending champions Alpha Institute. The closing date for entries is Friday, January 27, 2017.”

At last year’s staging, Alpha Institute and St Andrew Technical and Herbert Morrison Technical, who tied for second place; walked away with all of the 15 professional quality musical instruments, which were donated Paul Miles, a musician based in Philadelphia in the United States.

From left: Raging Fyah members – Courtland White, Anthony Watson, Kumar Bent, Delroy Hamilton, Mahlon Moving, and Demar Gayle.
Nightclub co-owner killed on Christmas Day to be buried this weekend

LESTER HINDS
Gleaner Writer

NEW YORK: Jamaican O'Neil Bandoo, co-owner of the Mansion nightclub in the city of Mount Vernon, Westchester, who was shot and killed at the club in the early hours of Christmas morning, will be buried this weekend.

Viewing and funeral service will be held on Friday and Saturday, with services to be held Friday afternoon from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Macedonia Baptist Church. A memorial service was scheduled for Saturday morning, January 4.

Bandoo died in a hail of gunshot when a disgruntled patron who had earlier been evicted from the club returned and opened fire. Bandoo died on the spot with other patrons suffering gunshot wounds.

In a report from his gun, 39-year-old Errol Hillary of the nearby Bronx, has been indicted on four counts of murder and attempted murder.

He was arrested at the scene of the shooting before he could escape. Hillary, who was on probation, is an admitted murder changer committed earlier in the Bronx, has been charged with the murder on Bandoo, as well as five counts of attempted murder.

Mayor of Mount Vernon, Mr. Richard Thomas, called the shooting “an act of domestic terror.”

Reports are that 36-year-old Bandoo was on the second floor of the club when he heard the shots. He went down stairs to investigate and was shot and killed in the lobby of the club.

The Mansion nightclub has had a troubled past.

The Mount Vernon police department sought to have it closed some years ago when seven people were stabbed and wounded on the dance floor of the club. The Police Department testified before the Liquor Authority to have the club’s liquor license revoked and closed the nightclub for a time.

It later reopened as the Mansion, catering to the masses such as baby showers, wedding receptions and the staging of live shows.

Police closing in on Shamoya’s killer

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Making the best from nature’s goodness

Lincoln Gordon

CLARENDON is home to world-famous deposits of bauxite and is a local reservoir of significant yields in pineapple, sugar cane and ginger. But few have really taken note of the wealth of possibilities that exist in the parish. Lincoln Gordon, through his Lincoln’s brand of products, is a notable exception. Emerging from a small jerk centre that sold chicken and pork to visitors and locals alike, the business was anchored by a complementary sauce that was created to generate sales. It worked, as persons traveling to and from Chapelton in Clarendon relished his ability to capture the real essence and taste of brand Jamaica.

For Lincoln, a 58-year-old returned resident, husband and father of six, brand Jamaica means something different. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is exceptionally large and completes a number of alteration to natural properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties.

“Lincoln’s was born out of a long love affair with cooking and experimenting. As I played with ingredients and created tastes, I found the courage to move ahead, equip myself by my own means, as much as I could, until circumstances changed,” he shared.

These traits have served him well, taking him steps closer to becoming a profitable enterprise. The producer of all natural and strictly Jamaican products is moving full speed ahead towards branding that is synonymous with delicious and affordable sauces and seasonings.

Members of the Summerfield community, where Gordon resides, and customers who have tasted items in the Lincoln’s suite of products have taken a strong liking. “Customers adore my products. They trust it and have come to depend on me for useful, healthy products,” he expressed.

But that is not the only impact that this businessman wishes to have. Gordon employs local labour, sources ingredients from small farmers, and has organised a work-experience programme to target high school-aged males.

Gordon is confident that his dedication to selling what is best about Jamaica will propel the producer of all natural and all natural, colouring-free, without preservatives and, most important, tastes that are made at home, using things their grandparents have told them about, with the least possible alteration to natural properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties. It helps when it is especially tasty and the mix of ingredients and properties.

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MBU focus on youth to drive success

LIVINGSTON SCOTT  
Gleaner Writer

I N 2011, when Seba United and was rebranded, the former two-time  
Western Conference Super League title winners, renamed Montego Bay United  
Football Club (MBU), it started what is now an avalanche of success.  
They have gone on to win a Western Conference Super League title (2011), added two Red  
Stripe Premier League crowns (2014, 2016), and can boast of a third-place finish at the 2015  
Caribbean Football Union Club Championship.  

Key to this is the club’s policy of utilizing talented young players as the fulcrum to drive their aspirations  
for titles and club and community development.  
It, therefore, comes as no surprise that at the start of the January transfer window, they have doubled down on this policy by snapping up five super talented  
former high-school players, including the 2016 Golden Boot winner in the DaCosta Cup, Jourdaine  
Fletcher.  

ADDED PLAYERS  
Fletcher, who scored 30 goals to  
lead Cornwall College to an unbeaten  
run in winning the DaCosta Cup crown last year, is joined at the Red Stripe Premier League champions  
by forward Deshae Beckford and Randal Thomson (Rusea’s).  
Big central defender Pajgel  
Brown and midfielder Michael  
Heaven (also of Cornwall College)  
were also added to the mix.  
Fletcher is celebrated as the best forward at the youth level, locally, and  
the striker underlined that assessment by scoring MBU’s winning goal on debut in their come- 
from-behind 2-1 victory over Waterhouse FC in their Premier League match on Sunday in front  
of a big crowd at their Waterhouse  
Park facility.  
His audacious left-footed volley, which gave MBU three points against Waterhouse, is already  
being spoken of as a contender for goal of the season.  

“We continue to invest in the talent of these youngsters in western Jamaica, not only to benefit the club, but also to help them transition  
to the senior ranks, and, hopefully, to the international stage,” MBU’s assistant coach  
Dillon Thelwell said.  

“This is a club that attracts good talent, and Fletcher, as he showed,  
is one of many we have on our books. Going forward, you will see that we are serious about building for the future, and these young players will get us there,” added Thelwell, who gave Fletcher an entire half of Sunday’s game to  
make his mark.  
The champions are noted for  
vecting the right way, and when  
they brought in Kevon Lambert  
two seasons ago to help shore up  
the defence, MBU looked to have  
hit the jackpot.  
Lambert is now in his second season with the club and is seen by  
the coaches, club officials, and most importantly, the fans, as the  
best player on the team, notwithstanding the standing of players such as Allan Ottey, Dino Williams, Jermaine Woessencroft, Ladale Richie, and John Barrett, among others.  
The former Glenmuir High  
School central defender is relishing  
his role so far, drawing plaudits  
from supporters, who have likened  
him to the style of play to that of former Seba standout Allan ‘Fly’ Latty.  

YOUNGEST SQUAD  
The average age at MBU is 23 years old, making it the youngest squad in the Premier League, and  
Thelwell believes that this fact has contributed to them dominating opponents.  

“That we are leading in the standings halfway the season is certainly because we have some of the best players in the country and because the squad is young and  
teachable,” reasoned Thelwell.  

“MBU will always be interested in talents such as Fletcher’s and the others because it’s our policy.  
Clubs at the international level have shown that it’s the way to go.  
We are a big club in a little country, but we aim for huge international competitions, and our pool of young players will be the engine that gets us there,” Thelwell said.

Former Boyz opposed on FIFA plans

LIVINGSTON SCOTT  
Gleaner Writer

THE REGGAE BOYZ’ 1998 World Cup captain Warren Barrett and his goalkeeping counterpart  
Aaron ‘Wildboy’ Lawrence, have contrasting views on the proposal by FIFA to expand the tournament  
from 32 to 48 teams.  
Barrett says that many would welcome the change, but he does not see the reason to increase the numbers: “I think that is watering it down a bit. It should not be watered down to accommodate or commercialise the sport. I would rather it stayed at 32,” he said.  

“If they are increasing it and the format remains the same, maybe I would support it. If you are going to have that knockout stage, I  
won’t agree with that. If teams are going to play one game and get knocked out and go home, it makes no sense,” he added.  
Barrett’s number two during the 98 campaign, Lawrence, holds a contrasting opinion as he believes that it would be good for developing  
football countries and aspiring players from those countries.  

“I would be for it. I don’t think it will water it down because you would give more countries a chance to showcase themselves.  
Opportunities. You have countries with good talent and ability, and they never got a chance based on how difficult it is in their region. So you will see more football, and more countries  
will get an opportunity to show their skills on the big stage,” he said.  
However, both agree that merging the CONCACAF and CONMEBOL confederations’ World Cup qualifiers would be detrimental to Caribbean teams.  

“It will be more challenging for the Caribbean teams. Teams like Costa Rica and United States may not get as much as before, but for smaller nations like us, Trinidad and Tobago, and the top teams in the Caribbean, will find it a lot of the World Cup. I certainly wouldn’t welcome that change,” he added.  

While Lawrence stated: “I am not for that (merging the qualifiers), the (regional tournament) we will have more chances of going through, and they (CONMEBOL) will probably have more teams from that side than our side, so I am not supporting that one.”

Eight youngsters get senior call-up

MARC STAMP  
STAR Writer

THE JAMAICA Football Federation (JFF) has given eight local footballers their first call-up to the senior men’s national team in preparation for two upcoming international games next month in the Concacaf and Concacaf Caribbean region.  
Jamaica will play against CON-  
CACAF giant USA on February 13 and then Honduras on February 16.  
The newcomers are Roberto Johnson of Portmore United, Tevin Shaw (Tivoli Gardens), Shamar Nicholson (Boys’ Town), Rodave Murray (Waterhouse), Javon East (Portmore), Jamiel Hardware (Boys’ Town), Kareem Manning (Portmore), and Romaine Braceknridge (Tivoli).  
They will join other local-based players such as Jacomeno Barrett (Montego Bay United), Shavee Saul (Portmore), Nicholas Campbell (Maverley-Hughenden), Dico Williams (Arnett Gardens), Ladale Ritchie (Montego Bay), Damano Solomon (Portmore), Rosario Harriott (Harbour View), Jamie Robinson (UWI FC), Ewan Graham (Trinity), Andrew Vanzie (Humble Lion), Dwayne Ambuyter (Montego Bay), Owayne Gordon (Montego Bay), Allan Ottey (Montego Bay), and Dino Williams (Montego Bay).

TRAINING CAMP  
The 23 players were called to a training camp at the Stadium East.  
Manager of the Reggae Boys, Roy Simpson says that this augurs well for the development of the local-based players.  

“This is a good opportunity for each player to impress, real genuine opposition for local players,” Simpson said.

The newcomers are Roberto Johnson of Portmore United, Tevin Shaw (Tivoli Gardens), Shamar Nicholson (Boys’ Town), Rodave Murray (Waterhouse), Javon East (Portmore), Jamiel Hardware (Boys’ Town), Kareem Manning (Portmore), and Romaine Braceknridge (Tivoli).
ISSA hits back at coaches

DANIA BOGLE
Senior Gleaner Reporter

PRESIDENT of the Inter-Secondary Schools Sports Association (ISSA), Dr Walton Small, has hit back at high-school athletics coaches, saying, that proposed changes for the High School Boys and Girls Athletics Championships were based on their own complaints about watering down the event.

Small has also said that ISSA governs school sports, and that the issue of recruitment, as it relates to academics, is the purview of the Ministry of Education.

ISSA's Technical Committee will vote on Friday, January 20 on several changes to the regulations, including restricting 16 and under athletes to two individual events, as well as two relays.

The proposals have been met with opposition from the Jamaica Track and Field Coaches Association (JATAFCA).

JATAFCA President David Riley told The Gleaner.

Small said coaches were instrumental in those changes.

“When I hear that, I wonder if they have memory lapses, because we made those changes because of their suggestions... from the coaches and other experts in the field that what we were doing was bringing student athletes to Champs that did not merit the quality of the meet, that we should be displaying the best of the best. It was because of that suggestion why we increased the standards, and if we increase the standard for qualification, you are going to automatically get fewer people,” Small said.

Phase one of the changes were made because the quality had improved, thereby weeding out athletes who were not up to scratch.

Almost a month of contention for Riley that the practice of recruiting student athletes needed to be re-looked at.

Small, however, said ISSA has rules governing how recruited athletes can participate, but that he could not stop the schools.

“We are not into the business of regulating where students go. That is the business of the Ministry of Education. However, so as not to have wanton movement, we have put in rules. Yes, there are the pros and cons of transfer, (but) not all good athletes move from their school,” Small said.

A number of student athletes, with and without Jamaican familial connections, have participated at Champs, and while the argument was made that they are being developed at the expense of Jamaican students.

Small said he had no control over their movements.

“If a child comes to Jamaica, we cannot stop them. Once you are a student you have a right to participate in ISSA sports,” he noted.

Small said a clearing house system had been instituted with the intent of regulating how students are recruited.

The clearing, he said, prevents one school from recruiting a student without the knowledge of his or her current school administration. A registration system also identifies any student moving from one school to the next.

JFF to go on massive recruitment drive

MARC STAMP
Gleaner Writer

THE JAMAICA Football Federation (JFF) is looking to add to its pool of referees and will begin its search through a recruitment drive with students along with military and police personnel being targeted.

This exercise, it hopes, will improve the standard of refereeing in local football.

Chairman of the JFF’s referees committee, Michael Ricketts, does not, in fact, believe that the standard of officiating among the island’s officials is bad but believes there is a need to get more persons involved.

“I don’t think the state of refereeing is that terrible. We have some good referees in Jamaica,” Ricketts told The Gleaner.

INTENSIVE DRIVE

“We are looking to start a serious recruitment drive soon. We are having dialogue with ISSA (Inter-Secondary Schools Sports Association) in order to get at least one student from [as many] high schools to start training,” he disclosed.

The committee is also looking to get into tertiary institutions, as well as the police force and the Jamaica Defence Force for persons,” Ricketts, who is also a JFF board member, added.

Before that, however, the JFF will conduct a course for new match commissioners, which is set to start on January 28, and is also looking to add new match commissioners to the programme.

“We currently have 16 assessors, who are all former referees, but we need more personnel to be a part of that pool,” Ricketts pointed out.

Former FIFA referee Peter Prendergast also believes there is no need to panic with regards to the standard of local refereeing.

“I think we have some refs that should make better judgement. I’m not saying that they are incompetent,” said Prendergast, who officiated at the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

Olympic 100m bronze medalist Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce made a statement in this red pantsuit.
MULTIPLE OLYMPIC gold medallists Usain Bolt and Elaine Thompson, as expected, were recognised as Jamaica’s top athletes in 2016 after being named the RJR Sport Foundation Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year on Friday, January 13.

The glitzy ceremony at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston saw members of Jamaica’s sporting fraternity including athletes and administrators turning out in large numbers to witness the nation’s finest sportsmen and women receive due praise for their hard work representing the country in 2016.


McLeod, Atkinson finish as runners-up

Please see AWARDS, 23