In what was another closely contested municipal election in South Florida, Caribbean-born Miramar Commissioners Winston Barnes, Yvette Colbourne and Maxwell B. Chambers have been re-elected.

Please see MIRAMAR, 4

Toronto, ON: The University of the West Indies has announced leaders of Canadian and Caribbean heritage to be honoured at the eighth annual Toronto Benefit Gala, on Saturday, April 1, 2017, at The Ritz-Carlton Toronto.

Toronto Gleaner Writer

UWI to honour Canadian and Caribbean leaders at eighth annual Toronto Benefit Gala
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Local research group endorses Budget

**CHRISTOPHER SERJU**
Gleaner Reporter

THE CLAIM by Finance Minister Audley Shaw that the 2017-18 Budget will provide an enhanced social safety net for the poor and vulnerable has been endorsed by the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CPRl), which presented its in-depth analysis of the Budget at $1.57-billion tax plan for the next fiscal year on Monday, March 10.

The finance minister noted that CPRl had observed notice during his Budget presentation that there will be a review of the state-sponsored welfare programme to determine its efficiency and effectiveness, which will include an evaluation of the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) to determine its impact on school attendance as well as those participants who could be weaned off it.

Executive director of CPRl, Dr Damien King, said that the think tank had noted with interest that since 2014, there has been a significant increase in real expenditure on social services, which was noteworthy.

This is heart-warming to many of us, including at CPRl, because in the context of an IMF (International Monetary Fund) programme that has been labelled as austerity, it’s really comforting to see that we have managed to increase expenditure on social services and the social safety net throughout this entire time,” he told journalists at The Courtleigh Hotel in New Kingston.

The current Budget for 2017-2018 continues that trend with a small but real increase in spending on social services, amounting to approximately $88 billion. This includes a nearly 50 per cent increase in support to the PATH programme. So again, it’s certainly something to make a note of.”

**POOR AFFECTED DIFFERENTLY**

According to King, under the Government’s new tax reform, the poorer class would not all be affected in the same way.

“Some households will be better off because of the increase in the PATH (Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education) programme. So, there will certainly be something that’s going to make a note of,” he said at the press conference.

King said the decision to increase PATH funds was a reflection of policymaking that is based on evidence.

**Ban on corned beef imports from Brazil**

AMID FEARS of rotten processed meat being used in its products, the Government has banned the importation of corned beef from Brazil – where 99.5 per cent of the local product comes from.

The public is also being urged not to eat any corned beef until relevant tests have been done.

In a statement on Monday, March 20, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries advised of the decision over the scandal in the South American country that has been triggered by reports from Brazilian authorities that several major Brazilian meat processors have been “selling rotten beef and poultry.”

The Brazilian companies implicated supply the 99.9 per cent of corned beef imported into Jamaica, the ministry said in a statement.

Portofolio minister Karl Samuda said an emergency meeting was called Monday from which the following decisions were agreed:

1. A temporary hold will be placed on all permits for the import of corned beef from Brazil.

2. As a precautionary measure, all corned beef bribery on the shelves will be withdrawn.

3. The National Food Recall Committee will meet immediately to determine the next steps and inform when it will be safe to consume the product.

**CHEMICAL TESTS**

Starting Tuesday, Samuda said the Bureau of Standards Jamaica will conduct chemical tests to ascertain the contents of corned beef on the market.

Speaking on RJR 94FM Monday, permanent secretary in the ministry, Donovan Stanberry, said the decision was a precautionary one and that the distributors were in agreement.

Last week, the Brazilian police named BRF (the world’s largest meat producer) and JBS (the biggest poultry exporter), along with smaller companies in a two-year corruption probe, Reuters news agency reported.

The police allege that the companies paid politicians and inspectors to overlook the processing of rotten meat and exports with fraudulent documentation and even traces of salmonella.

China and the European Union have curtailed meat imports from Brazil.

Jamaica to benefit from US$40m poverty reduction project

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The report by Contractor General Denzil Brown raises questions of conflict of interest, impartiality, and impunity in the industry and in the construction of buildings by Hayles and his wife, Charles. Without comment from the Hanover Municipal Corporation.

The report was to be tabled in Parliament last week Tuesday. However, lawyers for Hayles went to court last week and obtained an order barring any “further publication of the report until further order of the court”.

Jamaica is to benefit from US$40m poverty reduction project

The £16.5m grant, awarded to the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), will be used to fund the Caribbean Poverty Reduction Project.

The project aims to help the poor and vulnerable across eight countries in the region.

The project will provide grants to improve access to quality education, water and sanitation, basic community access and drainage; livelihood enhancement and human resources development services in low-income and rural communities.

The funds will be implemented over a three-year period, starting in March 2017.

**MEETING WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL**

The Supreme Court has ordered Parliament not to table the controversial report by the Office of the Contractor General (OCG) containing allegations of improbity against Western Hanover Member of Parliament Ian Hayles until the matter is fully ventilated in May.

The order was made by Justice Glen Brown during a near three-hour-in-camera hearing Monday, March 20.

An application by Attorney General Marlene Malahoo-Forte to have House Speaker Pearnel Charles and president of the Senate, Tom Tavares-Finest, removed as interested parties in the legal challenge brought by Hayles was not heard.

“This is a matter that directly affects the functioning of the Parliament,” Malahoo-Forte told The Gleaner, explaining her presence in court.

Justice Brown indicated that he would hear the application when the case is heard on May 11.
Jamaican organisation welcomes Ontario’s anti-racism strategic plan

NEIL ARMSTRONG
Freelance Editor
Toronto, ON

THERE is an ongoing programme where the Jamaican Association Caribbean (JCA) is leading the provincial government for its three-year anti-racism strategic plan, “A Better Way Forward,” which was recently announced by Michael Coteau, minister responsible for anti-racism, and head of the Anti-Racism Directorate established in February 2016.

The JCA says the strategy is a good first step towards addressing some of the issues and systemic barriers that Black Ontarians and other racialized groups face in navigating institutions and spaces within and outside of government.

“We’re encouraged by the focus on better understanding the experiences of racialized people through data collection,” said Michael Coteau, minister responsible for anti-racism, and head of the Anti-Racism Directorate established in February 2016. This will help develop evidence over time about the challenges that we really know exist.

The commitment to developing legislation, public reporting and continued engagement with communities are all steps in the right direction with respect to accountability and partnership,” says JCA president, Adaoma Patterson.

She noted that a deeper focus is needed on some critical issues like health and mental health outcomes, given the absence of adequate supports for Black Ontarians and the emerging body of research regarding the impact of dealing with systemic racism on the health and mental health outcomes of Black people specifically, and people of colour, in general.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT MODEL

“There’s more work to be done, and the JCA Board and membership look forward to working with the government on what lies ahead.”

Regarding the matter of anti-Black racism, the Anti-Racism Directorate introduced the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan, a $47 million investment over four years, which is based on collective impact model.

This plan represents the largest single investment in the well-being of young black children in the province, said Coteau.

It will focus on mentorship for black youth, support for black parents, increased enrolment in graduations and postsecondary education, providing job training and entrepreneurship opportunities, developing skills youth need today for jobs of tomorrow.

The minister will set up a steering committee to bring community to the table to create sustainable solutions.

A diverse group of African Canadian organisations, advocates and experts has also praised the government for taking an important step in addressing systemic racism.

At the announcement on March 7, Coteau said while the strategy has been a year in the making, it has taken decades to get to this point and he believes that “it’s never too late for us to correct our course.”

The plan will see the government take concrete steps to end systemic racism in institutions through four priorities.

The working group of African Canadian organisations says it is pleased that there is a wide ranging commitment to focus on legislation, desegregated data collection, research, funding support and specific focus on addressing Islamophobia, anti-Black racism and racism experienced by Indigenous communities across the Province.

Its members are particularly interested in supporting the development of the Anti-Black Racism Strategy and providing input into the direction and unfolding of the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan.

The Province is to begin a pilot programme collecting desegregated race-based data in the ministries responsible for justice, education, child welfare and health.

“This is a promising start and needs to be part of a larger process of anti-racism planning, robust legislation, concrete action monitoring and measuring specific, targeted changes in these areas with the respective ministers being held responsible,” says Jennifer Clarke, professor, child welfare researcher and advocate.

OVER REPRESENTED

She said, “Although we represent a little more than 4% of Ontario’s population we continue to be significantly and negatively over-represented in our relationship with these sectors.”

“This continues to be deeply alarming for the African Canadian community. A good place for dialogue, reporting, accountability and ensuring adequate supports for Black Ontarians and other stakeholders from across all provincial ministries and agencies but particularly from ministers directly responsible for the priority portfolios. Attorney General Yasir Naqvi, Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education, Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and long-term Care and, Michael Coteau, who is also Minister of Children and Youth Services.”

Coteau

MIRAMAR

Continued from 1

Barnes, who is also a news reader at 1170 AM WAVS, and Chambers are Jamaicans.

Colbourne, who previously served as Vice Mayor, has Jamaican and Panamanian heritage. Sitting Mayor Wayne Messam has Jamaican heritage and Darlene Hoag in Hamilton. They complete the five-member city government.

The city of Miramar, which has a predominantly Black and African American origin population, which according to the US Census figures of 2010, stood at 45.7%, the estimated population in July 2015 was 137,132.

March 14 election results mean an unchanged city commission since 2015, when the term Carlin was won to reflect the make-up of the legislature.

“The message is clear from those who voted. They see the work we are doing and are satisfied with the checks and balances,” according to Chambers.

Chambers, elected in midterm in 2015, survived challenge from another Jamaican, Attorney Norman Hemmings, will serve a four year term as the Seat 1 representative.

“This victory should put to rest any doubt about my academic qualification versus my people skills,” Chambers, who won 56 per cent of the vote.

In Seat 9, voters had no difficulty keeping the Barnes at the helm, who got 48 percent of the votes cast. The other 32 percent was shared between challengers Dalton Jall’s Bonheur (Haiti) and James Hepburn (Bahamas).

First elected in 2005, Barnes said that he will continue working with other commissioners for the welfare of residents of Miramar.

In Seat 2, Colbourne turned back a strong challenge from Kenney Wymmetric with 49.1 percent split. In a post election statement, Colbourne said that she will turn her attention to the development and improvement of services city-wide.

“I am grateful to Miramar residents for choosing me to continue as their commission,” she said in the statement. “I am confident that our five member Caribbean Commission will continue to move Miramar forward, addressing our city’s development needs, the impact of blighting in the western parts and improving traffic flow citywide.”

“ONE MIRAMAR”

“I will continue to promote a ‘One Miramar’, a city where all cultures live, work and play and there is an equitable distribution of our services.”

According to one pollster, the results of the elections reflected the mood of voters who thought that the current administration at city hall were doing a “satisfactory” job in developing the city and working with some 130,000 residents including approximately 40 per cent Caribbean Americans.

Other Broward County municipalities holding elections included Coconut Creek, Deerfield Beach, Lighthouse Point, Hillsborough Beach and Weston. Turnout in these elections has been traditionally low, averaging just over 10 percent of voters.

However, in Miramar, over 21,000 residents voted, representing some 26.5 percent of the city’s over 81,000 registered voters.
Jamaican Canadian Association celebrates International Women's Day

EDDIE GRANT
Gleaner Writer

Toronto, ON:

IN TORONTO, on March 12, the Jamaican Canadian Association hosted an event at which four women were recognised for their outstanding contribution to the community. The event was titled “Women's Recognising Women.” Among the award recipients was Marcia Brown who received the Community Award. The other women honoured were Lourina Bennett, Allison Knibb, and Radhika Garnett.

Jamaica-born Brown, started her career as an educational assistant in 2005 with the Toronto District School Board. Since then she has been working to educate, mentor and inspire young men and women in the community. Recognising that there was a significant need in her community for a place where youth can go and feel safe and receive needed support, she went door-to-door asking parents if they would allow their children to participate in an after-school programme. Feeling comfortable with her idea, many parents decided to send their children. Initially 15 girls enrolled in the programme, hence its name, Trust 15. Brown is now executive director of Trust 15 Youth Community Support, which was founded in 2011.

Over the years Brown has been recognised in the community by government officials, and other community organisations, for her noble deeds and outstanding contribution. She was employed in various private and public organisations, most requiring direct contact with the public; situations that endeared her to those who came in contact with her.

Prior to migrating to the US, she served on the board at the University of the West Indies, coordinating events with the Jamaica Federation of Women, and played guitar for the National Dance Theatre Company (NDTC). She was always close to her family, and her sense of fashion, “She achieved a lot working for and on her passing, including Barbara Wilson, PPhoottoo bbyy EEddddiiee GGrraanntt

Fort Lauderdale, FL:

WOMEN'S HISTORY Month was celebrated at Davie Community Worship Center (DCWC), in Davie, Florida, on Sunday March 12. In a sermon delivered by senior pastor, Bishop Dr. Fedlyn Whiting, he held in the spirit of excellence, and the accomplishments of DCWC in particular, was being celebrated. Women in America and at the New Testament Church of God, located at Whiting and Poyer Way, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mattison, affectionately known as Sister P, an accomplished evangelist and community activist, died at her home in Philadelphia, PA on March 13. Those who knew her and knew of her, have since been struggling with the news of her passing, including Barbara Wilson, president of the Philadelphia Caribbean Festival.

“We can truly say she was one of a kind, always willing to help those in need, always being there for all of us. I for one am going to dearly miss her, and I am sure others will too,” said a friend.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, the youngest girl in the family, she migrated to the United States in 1977 and lived a life that can be described as eventful, and all the time giving credence to her spiritual maturity.

“She achieved a lot working for and on behalf of the Jamaican/Caribbean community in Greater Philadelphia. She will miss her song ministry, a great voice and her sense of fashion,” said businessman Donald Bailey, who served as a representative on the Jamaica Diaspora Board NE/USA.

She was employed in various private and government agencies, most requiring direct contact with the public; situations that endeared her to those who came in contact with her.

Gleaner Writer

THE HOME-GOING Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Percess Mattison will be held on Saturday March 25, at 8 a.m., at the New Testament Church of God, located at Whitby and Poyer Way, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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Photography by Eddie Grant

From left: Lourina Bennett, Radhika Garnett, Marcia Brown and Allison Knibb, who were recognised by Jamaican Canadian Association for their contribution to the community.
New advocacy group under fire

Alleged extortionists remanded in Mandeville

TAMARA BAILEY
Gleaner Writer

Mandeville, Manchester: THE FIVE persons arrested and charged in connection with an extortion ring that targeted several businesses in central Jamaica, were remanded when they appeared before the Mandeville Parish Court on Thursday, March 16.

Sheila Smith, 94, of Free Town, Teressa Salmon, 24, of Mandeville, Keeno Powell, 21, and Sandre Bogle, 20, both of Top Hill, Mandeville, are each being charged with six counts of extortion and six counts of conspiracy to extort.

Bogle and Salmon were the only ones represented by a lawyer.

Salmon’s lawyer, Joel Nelson, in applying for bail said his client has been cooperative with the police and that her arrest has affected her five-year-old son who has been unable to sleep because of the absence of his mother.

Meanwhile, Bogle’s lawyer, Howard Lettman, told the judge that his client was merely accompanying his cousin, Keeno Powell, when he was arrested. Several extortion letters were found in the BMW motor car in which the two were found.

But according to Lettman, Bogle was not aware of the contents of the letters.

All five accused were, however, remanded. They are to return to court on Thursday, March 30.

Northern Clarendon residents to get improved water supply

RITCHES, Clarendon: Mayor of May Pen Winston Maragh has engaged water resource experts from the National Water Commission (NWC), the Rural Water Supply Limited, and the Water Resources Authority to improve the domestic water supply for residents of Clarendon, particularly those living in northern section who are mostly without a reliable supply of potable water.

US$12 million for improving emergency communication systems

The JAMAICAN govt has approved a US$12 million project, which is being funded by Government of Japan, and aiming to synchronize with the existing communication system operated by the National Works Agency and the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

In approving the project, the Cabinet noted that Jamaica is currently without an effective emergency telecommunications infrastructure and platform to facilitate timely communication among government agencies and first responders during an emergency.

Senate pays tribute to McPherson, Saunders

MEMBERS OF the Upper House last week paid tribute to Joseph McPherson, a former Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) senator and trade unionist who died recently.

He served in the Senate between 1962 and 1972.

Founder and editor of the Voice of the People, he also held the position of executive director of the Jamaica Institute of Political Education.

Members of the Upper House also paid tribute to the late Fay Saunders, who died on Thursday after a long illness. She was the first woman to be appointed president of the Jamaica Teachers’ Association (JTA). She also served as a secretary-general for the association, as well as parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Education for the PNP government.

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@gleanerjm.com
Tourism group objects to move to raid fund

Janet Silvera
Senior Gleaner Writer

THE JAMAICA Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) is objecting to plans by the government to move money from the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) to the Consolidated Fund.

JHTA president Omar Robinson maintains that the TEF, established in 2004, is specifically for investment to enhance the tourism sector.

“Currently, 50 per cent of the TEF is used to market the destination, while the other 50 per cent is used to maintain and develop the tourism product,” said Robinson.

The JHTA president said the proposed move was unexpected and disappointing and called for a rethink of the government’s plans.

Minister Audley Shaw said the changes come as the Government engages the various public-sector groups in dialogue on the issue of pension reform.

“The amendments are an attempt to reduce the contribution rate of five per cent to zero. This was introduced next month,” Shaw said.

He said that the changes come as the Government engages the various public-sector groups in dialogue on the issue of pension reform.

“The amendment will allow for the contribution rate of five per cent to be phased in because it recognises the hardships that would be placed on groups if the contributions are raised to five per cent one-off,” Shaw emphasised.

“The finance minister also sought to allay fears by some public-sector workers that the legislation contained a penalty for early retirement. Shaw said the penalty has been removed, noting that the Government is encouraging early retirement and, therefore, the penalty runs counter to its policy. A sunset clause has been inserted in the legislation for the Government’s early retirement programme,” Shaw added.

Robinson said that the TEF is not being used to fund the development of tourism as intended and that it has been misused.

“Members of the JHTA are part of the TEF Board, but the organisation says they were not consulted about the proposal to move money to the Consolidated Fund,” he said.

“Once the TEF was set up, it was not promised it would be used to develop tourism. ‘IATA (International Air Transport Association) would say we have gone back on our word, they were assured that the money was going into a trust,’ she said.

She argued that the tourism sector can forget all the projects that are being done if this “happens. ‘It is the only fund in the country that allows any spending to improve and develop the destination,’ she added.

Police oversight body refuses comment on ‘death squad trial’ verdict

THE INDEPENDENT Commission of Investigations (INDECOM) has refused to comment on allegations made by one of the policemen freed of murder in the so-called death squad trial.

The policeman, Constable Collins ‘Chucky’ Brown, has charged that he is being punished by the INDECOM because of his refusal to do certain things.

Brown did not provide any details of what he claimed INDECOM asked him to do.

However, he asserted that he was arrested and charged after an exchange with the agency’s assistant commissioner Emile Campbell at the army’s Up Park Camp headquarters.

When contacted about the accusation, INDECOM said it had no comment, indicating that Brown is involved in other related matters before the court.

Brown and Corporal Roan Morrison were found not guilty of murder and wounding with intent by a seven-member jury in the Home Circuit Court, on Wednesday, March 15 after a near-five-week trial.

They were arrested and charged by the INDECOM following a shooting incident in May Pen, Clarendon on February 18, 2010 in which 20-year-old Phaebian Dinnal was killed and another man injured.

Edmond Campbell
Senior Staff Reporter

A CRUCIAL amendment has been made to the Pensions (Public Service) Act, 2016, with the Government yielding to a chorus of appeals from public-sector workers to implement the five per cent contribution on a phased basis.

President of the Jamaica Teachers’ Association, Howard Isaac, said this development is welcome by more than 20,000 public-sector teachers.

“We are happy about that. We need to get the finer details to see how it’s going to be done. For us, it is a plus and we would want to see how it unfolds in the days to come,” Isaac told The Gleaner.

The pensions’ legislation for public-sector workers is scheduled for implementation on April 1, 2017, the start of the new fiscal year.

EASE HARDSHIPS

Opening the debate on the proposed statute in Gordon House yesterday, Finance and Public Service Minister Audley Shaw said the phasing in of the pensions’ law would ease the hardships that workers would face if the full five per cent was introduced next month.

Shaw said the changes come as the Government engages the various public-sector groups in dialogue on the issue of pension reform.

“It is the only fund in the country to build the industry and maintain its competitiveness, and we cannot stand by and see this vision diluted,” said Robinson.

Minister Audley Shaw warning former Tourism Minister AlounAssamba also is against the proposal.

“The law is very clear and when the Fund was being set up, it was clear that it would never been brought into the Consolidated Fund, that was one of the objectives and ring fence,” said Assamba.

CHANGELAW

She said the government would have to change the law if the move from the TEF is to be moved to the Consolidated Fund.

According to the former tourism minister, the airlines would never have agreed to collecting this money on Jamaica’s behalf, if it was not promised it would be used to develop tourism.

“IATA (International Air Transport Association) would say we have gone back on our word, they were assured that the money was going into a trust,” she said.

She argued that the tourism sector can forget all the projects that are being done if this “happens.

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Gov’t agrees to phase in 5% public-sector pension

Edmond Campbell
Senior Staff Reporter

The finance minister also sought to allay fears by some public-sector workers that the legislation contained a penalty for early retirement. Shaw said the penalty has been removed, noting that the Government is encouraging early retirement and, therefore, the penalty runs counter to its policy.

A sunset clause has been inserted in the legislation for the Government’s early retirement programme, and public-sector workers will have a window under the law to access early retirement. Shaw said the one-year and one month window spans April 1, 2017 to April 1, 2018.

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LETTERS

Delroy Gordon stood out from the crowd

THE EDITOR, Sir: Delroy Gordon, late executive director of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC), was not a man of many words, but when he spoke, it was the very embodiment of thoughts, cultured and urbane.

He was not a man given to effusiveness but was animated when the drama unfolded in cultural expressions. He was not a man who clamoured for centre stage but he always, it seemed, had a vantage point in the wings where he discerned more than the mind’s eye can.

But more impressive was his innate sense of balance and fairness, which he never vaunted, but which was naturally felt and appreciated by many.

He was a patriarch of our culture, a gentleman of the soil, gone but not forgotten.

CHRISTOPHER L. SAMUDA
Former Vice-Chairman, JCDC

Can California really leave the Union?

THE EDITOR, Sir: With all of the separatist movements that are taking place all over the world, the BBC reported that one unlikely country may have a separatist problem of its own: the United States.

According to the BBC, hundreds of thousands of Californians are organizing themselves to get that state to leave the American federation. But can California really secede from the United States?

California is one of the largest and most powerful states in the American union. Indeed, on its own, it has one of the world’s largest economies.

All of these people are apparently convinced that the state can survive independently of the United States, and interestingly, the independence movement is gaining strength.

While the independence movement in California may be gaining ground, not all Californians want to leave the American federation. In fact, one of the main leaders in this attempt at splitting America is being viewed by many with much suspicion, as he doesn’t live in America at all, but in Russia.

The increasing strength of California’s independence movement is partly due to the seemingly new direction of the central government in Washington. As far as many of these separatists can see, America is increasingly becoming less representative of what most Californians stand for—with all of its liberalism and the lot.

Maybe these Californians are just pursuing a pipe dream. It’s really hard to see that state leaving the union. However, just a few months ago, it was really hard to see a Donald Trump in the White House; too, so one can never really tell these days!

MICHAEL A. DINGWALL
michael_a_dingwall@hotmail.com

LETTERS

Don’t become vigilante army

The Editor, Sir:

MANY HAVE criticised the recently formed Tambourine Army of moving vigilante justice into social media. They are also accused of using this same medium to defy Jamaican law enforcement.

At this point, I have no idea if the men they are accusing of predatory and abusive behaviour are guilty or innocent. But what would be the point of law enforcement repeatedly asking Jamaicans to come forth and tell what they know and avoid vigilante justice if a sector of our society simply decided that their cause entitled them to ignore the law?

I also do not know how much of the motivation behind the Tambourine Army is led by personal retaliation and how much is sincerely targeted at gender-based violence and abuse.

I would suggest that the Tambourine Army takes this time to genuinely reflect on methods and sources, as there is much proof that care come from their energies if channelled in ways that are genuine and respectful of our society’s laws.

JON READER
jonreader@gmail.com

LETTERS

Let Rodgers run

THE MAJOR victim, so far, in the squabble led by Calabar High School over the eligibility of Aryananya Rodgers for this year’s Boys and Girls’ Athletics Championships is the young man himself. If reason, balance and good sense don’t prevail, the damage could be far wider, deeper, consequential and long-lasting.

We hope the high schools, and ISSA’s executive, which includes Calabar’s principal, Albert Corcho, who compromised the matter, are possessed of good sense.

There are a few things to bear in mind: Jamaica is a global athletics powerhouse, especially in the sprints. A number of factors make this so, not least the talent of the country’s athletes. They are supported by infra-structure that includes great athletics coaches and deep tradition. Further, it is unlikely that there is anywhere in the world a school athletics competition of the longevity and quality as Jamaica’s more-than-century-old Champs. None is more competitive. In the circumstance, it would be hardly surprising if a talented and ambitious young athlete, especially one not of a First-World country with advanced facilities and economic support, would wish to be part of Jamaica’s set-up. Which we suspect to be part of the reason for Ugandan teenager Aryananya Rodgers’ transfer to Kingston College (KC).

Whatever else may be the motivation for the move to Jamaica, from KC’s perspective, it can’t be entirely without significance that Rodgers is a middle-distance runner, a discipline in which Jamaica is not traditionally at its best.

REGISTRATION PROBLEM

The problem for young Rodgers is that to participate in Champs later this month, he should normally have been registered in school by last September 30, maintained an 80 per cent attendance record, and met ISSA’s minimum academic standards. Rodgers did not enrol in person at KC until mid-October because, according to his school and ISSA, problems with transit visas twice delayed his arrival in Jamaica. ISSA, according to its president, Walton Small, was, as early as July, informed of the young man’s intention to join KC and his planned arrival in Jamaica in August. ISSA was kept informed of his travel problems when they arose, he suggested.

It was on that basis, according to Mr Small, that the association waived the registration deadline requirement at a meeting from which Calabar’s Mr Corcho was absent.

Now Calabar, the current boys’ athletics champions, are at the forefront of the criticisms of the decision. The school has hinted at boycotting the competition in the absence of a satisfactory explanation of the decision.

The contretemps may be unsettling to young Rodgers, who finds himself in the middle of a storm he didn’t bargain for. Hopefully, it hasn’t affected his academic output—which, before the controversy, was reported to be far ahead of ISSA’s minimum requirement—and, if he is allowed to run, won’t impact his performance on the track.

If what Mr Small outlined is a true representation of the facts, and there are powers of discretion in ISSA’s by-laws, the young man should be at Champs.

For there appears, on the face of it, to have been no attempt by KC to gain an unfair advantage or to deliberately flout the rules. The exigencies of the circumstance suggest that ISSA employed appropriate discretion.
Have a great week!

Contributed
Olympic Gold medalist Sherone Simpson listens keenly to students of Kingston Technical High School at the Commonwealth Presentation held on Tuesday, March 14 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Day, to commemorate Commonwealth Day. In the background are diplomatic representatives of Commonwealth countries – His Excellency David Fitzton, High Commissioner of the UK and Phillip Riley, Chargé d’Affaires for the South African High Commission.

Marcia Yolanda Ford, author of the book, ‘Searching for Love in All the Wrong Places’, thanks Lloyd Wilks, Jamaica’s Consul General to Toronto, after his keynote address at the book’s launch recently at the House of Praise Tabernacle, 800 Arrow road, Toronto. Wilks was gifted the first copy of the book.

At your Publix, there’s always someone nearby to answer your questions. Or walk you to an item on your list. You chose us, so we choose to go above and beyond for you, every time you’re here. See how we serve you at publix.com/service.
French company acquires stake in National Rums

STEVEN JACKSON
Gleaner Writer

GODDARD ENTERPRISES Limited of Barbados has exited its investment in National Rums Jamaica Limited (NRJ) under a wider deal worth nearly US$13 million that hands ownership to a French company called United Caribbean Rum Limited.

It’s the latest European spirits outfit taking a stake in a Caribbean rum operation.

Chief executive officer of National Rums Jamaica, Winston Harrison, told Gleaner Business that while the deal was announced in Barbados last week, it is not requires approval by regulators in that territory. As such, he declined to comment immediately on its implications, at least until internal discussions are completed.

A full response will be forthcoming following discussions with the potential new co-owners. We would like to complete internal discussions first before issuing a statement on the matter,” said Harrison.

Last Friday, a market filing on the Barbados Stock Exchange (BSE) indicated that Goddard Enterprises had sold its stake in West Indies Rum Distillery Limited (WIRD) to United Caribbean for over BDS$10.32 per share, and that the transaction would include its minority share of WIRD.

WIRD’s equity was priced at a 28 per cent premium, based on BSE data. It included Goddard’s share of National Rums.

Harrison said The Gleaner that prior to last week, the shareholders in NRJ comprised Goddard, 33 per cent; Demerara Distilleries of Guyana, 33 per cent, and Sugar Company Jamaica Holding, a subsidiary of the Government of Jamaica, owns the other third. Goddard, however, in its newly released 2016 annual report, put its stake in NRJ at 31 per cent. The regional conglomerate indicated that subsequent to its September 2016 year end, it signed an agreement to dispose of its shares in West Indies Rum Distillery and that the transaction would include its minority stake in NRJ.

United Caribbean Rum is a Barbados holding company and a wholly owned subsidiary of Compagnie de Bonbonnet SAS, a privately held Caribbean holding company, according to the statement on the share purchase obtained by Gleaner Business.

VAST SPIRITS BUSINESS

Bonbonnet, which owns a number of subsidiaries, including Cognac Perrand, operates a vast spirits business, which includes the sale and production of gins, vodkas, rums and cognacs.

Caribbean rum exports are forecast to grow in the medium term, in contrast to a global flattening of activity, according to joint research from Just-Drinks and The IWSR, laid out in the Global Rum Insights report.

Jamaica’s rum producers exported US$27.3 million worth of rum between January and November 2016, compared with US$23.5 million in the same period in 2015, according to Statistical Institute of Jamaica data. National Rums itself is said to have racked up sales of about $2 billion last year, which translates to around US$15 million. Its assets include distilleries in Clarendon and Long Pond, Trelawny, as well as rum brand Monymusk.

While the Caribbean and Jamaica sales are expected to grow, the rum insights report forecasts a compounded annual decline, globally of 0.5 per cent between 2016 and 2021, representing a reduction of nearly 3% million cases of rum.

King Pepper re-enters Canadian market

TAMARA GORDON
Gleaner Writer

KING PEPPER Products Limited, manufacturers of the Eaton’s line of seasoning, has re-entered the Canadian market through exports and is hoping to push sales of the product there as well as increase its regional footprint.

The company was part of a Jampro-led trade mission to Canada last summer which has lead to one container exported to a new buyer later in the year.

“We had a distributor in Canada but about two and a half years ago, he went out of business. So, I was without representation there for the Eaton’s brand for maybe about 18 months,” King Pepper’s managing director, Christine Wong, told Gleaner Business.

The mission to Toronto last summer connected the company with a new buyer later in the year.

“The plan now is to push exports for other markets and not necessarily the Eaton’s brand for maybe about two and a half years ago, but about two and a half years ago, so we’ll see,” Wong said.

Wong said King Pepper hopes “conservatively”, to ship at least three containers for the rest of the year to Canada.

TRYING TO DEEPEN FOOTPRINT

King Pepper otherwise has private label clients in Canada, as well as locally, and is anticipating that the orders should soon start rolling in.

“We are entering the busy season now, so we’ll see,” Wong said.

King Pepper is also trying to deepen its footprint in regional markets — it’s already selling sauces in Barbados and the Cayman Islands, but areas such as Trinidad have now been earmarked as growth areas.

“King Pepper is always looking for other markets and not necessarily the big markets,” Wong said.

Having modernised its operations in 2013, the company now has the capacity to meet the added demand. If needed, the company can ramp up to two shifts. “But we are not there yet,” Wong said.

“Over the years, our focus has traditionally been on modernisation of equipment and just seeing how our processes can flow more smoothly and be less costly,” she added.

NEW MACHINES ON HORIZON

“The next capital outlay will cover new machines, which the sauce maker is planning to add, hopefully, this year.”

“We are looking at different types of packing equipment to adhere to different market requirements. For instance, the United Kingdom is big on the shrink wrap trade, so we are looking at getting equipment that will allow us to shrink wrap those cardboard trays with the products in them very quickly and efficiently,” she said.

Jampro estimates that there are more than 300,000 persons of Jamaican descent living in Canada, that the Caribbean food market there is valued at US$15 million and growing five per cent annually. Canada remains a “key export market for Jamaican products”...

The agency said in a release on King Pepper’s ramped up presence there.

“Over the years, our focus has traditionally been on modernisation of equipment and just seeing how our processes can flow more smoothly and be less costly,” she added.

French company acquires stake in National Rums

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@gleanerjm.com
JAMACIANS LIVING overseas now have a new opportunity to invest in their country, while getting good returns, through JN Bank’s innovative JN Diaspora Certificate of Deposit (CD).

Maureen Hayden-Cater, managing director, said the bank’s move was being made as part of its periodic and annual reviews of the delivery of its products and services.

“We are suspending these dormant charges indefinitely,” she stressed.

Audrey Tugwell Henry, senior general manager of sales, said, “This is done through the Social Boost Initiative of the JN Enterprise Initiative (www.sebijm.com) of the JN Foundation in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (US AID). Agents of the JN Canada Representative Office can provide more advice about the JN Diaspora CD, and how investing with JN Bank will contribute to nation building, the managing director said. “They would also be facilitating national development, but need to ensure that their hard-earned funds are safe and earning solid returns.”

INTEREST RATES

Tenured from one to five years, the interest starts at 2.00%, 1.00% Canadian dollars or 2.00% United States dollars (USD). Interest at the top end of the interest rate is ten times the interest rate.

The JN Diaspora CD allows you to earn a return on your investment and contribute to the growth and development of social enterprises within the banks of Jamaica as the bank is committed to nation building, managing director Maureen Hayden-Cater stated. “This is done through the Social Boost Initiative of the JN Enterprise Initiative (www.sebijm.com) of the JN Foundation in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (US AID). Agents of the JN Canada Representative Office can provide more advice about the JN Diaspora CD, and how investing with JN Bank will contribute to nation building, the managing director said.

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Managing director of JN Bank Limited, Maureen Hayden-Cater.

NATIONAL COMMERCIAL Bank Jamaica Limited (NCB) has suspended dormant account charges.

The move was being made as part of its periodic and annual reviews of the delivery of its products and services.

“We are suspending these dormant charges indefinitely,” the bank said in a release.

“They are suspended, we will review our current processes and determine how we can best address the real costs associated with effectively maintaining and monitoring these accounts,” said Audrey Tugwell Henry, senior general manager, retail banking.

“We will, in the meantime, seek to identify solutions that meet our customers’ needs and our performance standards while remaining compliant with all regulatory requirements associated with maintaining the accounts,” she added.

NCB said a charge of $450 plus general consumption tax was previously applied to both business and personal accounts classified as dormant.

Accounts are classified as dormant if there is no customer-induced activity on them for two years, then saving accounts, and for one year for current accounts.

Under the Banking Services Act, deposit taking institutions such as NCB are required to report to the Bank of Jamaica deposits treated as unclaimed due to the absence of a transaction or request for a statement for seven years.

After a further eight years – thus, totally 15 years – the Act provides for the Minister of Finance to publish information on the unclaimed funds to begin a procedure under which the unclaimed amounts are paid over to the Government of Jamaica.

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The above-mentioned WEIGHTED AVERAGE SPOT SALES RATES are for the following periods:

- USD: Monday, March 20, 2017
- CAN: Monday, March 20, 2017
- GBP: Monday, March 20, 2017
- EUR: Monday, March 20, 2017

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On Monday, March 13, Vincent HoSang launched his autobiography, Change of Fortune, How One Determined Immigrant Built His American Dream at the Jamaican Consulate.

The evening opened when Janice Julian, marketing and public relations director of Caribbean Food Delights introduced the Master of Ceremonies, Douglas Lindo, faculty advisor, University of the West Indies, and Former Consul General to New York, Dr. Basil Bryan, who was not able to make the trip to New York, she wrote that “Change of Fortune is a history book about her family.”

Bahyna HoSang-Jordan, the newly appointed CEO of Caribbean Food Delights (CFD) said her “Dad taught her and her siblings to be who they are.” Her sister Simone HoSang, now the COO of CFD, was there with her four year old daughter Phoebe.

Vincent HoSang launched his autobiography, Change of Fortune, How One Determined Immigrant Built His American Dream at the Jamaican Consulate.
UWI to honour Canadian, C'bean leaders at Toronto Benefit Gala

Toronto, ON: THE UNIVERSITY OF the West Indies announced leaders of Canadian and Caribbean heritage to be honoured at the eighth annual Toronto Benefit Gala, on Saturday, April 1, 2017, at The Ritz-Carlton Toronto, hosted by CBC News Anchor Dwight Drummond.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, South Africa, will receive the Luminary Award. This award is given to people of Caribbean Heritage who are outstanding achievers on an international scale in their respective fields or people who have brought prominence to the Caribbean or to issues which affect the Region. Archbishop Tutu has a strong passion for social justice, starting with his unyielding activism against Apartheid since the early 1970s, as the first Black Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa and as Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. He has received include the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, the Gandhi Peace Prize and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He will be represented at the UWI Toronto Gala by his daughter, Reverend Canon Mpilo Tutu van Puth.

Canadian Senator Murray Sinclair will receive the G. Raymond Chang Award. The G. Raymond Chang award was established to honour outstanding individuals who exemplify the leadership and ideals of G. Raymond Chang (1948-2015). Sinclair served as the Chief Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), documenting the history and legacy of Canada’s residential school system that affected the lives of more than 6,000 indigenous women and men of First Nations, Inuit and M’itis background.

The University of the West Indies Toronto Benefit Gala will also honour one Caribbean organisation and five Canadian and Caribbean leaders in the following award categories.

The Chancellor’s Award will be presented to GraceKennedy: Established in 1922 by John Grace and Fred William Kennedy, in Kingston, Jamaica, it is one of the Caribbean’s largest group of companies that began as a general mercantile, shipping and insurance business.

VICE CHANCELLOR’S AWARD

The Vice Chancellor’s Award, awarded to prominent Caribbean heritage who have made significant contributions within their organizations and communities, will be presented to the five community leaders.

Dr Renn Holness, Consultant Neurosurgeon, Kay McConney, businesswoman and Retired Diplomat, Wayne Parbo, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Dr Vivian Rambihar, Cardiologist and Community Activist Justice Michael H. Tulloch, Judge, Ontario Court of Appeal.

Former honourees include: Dr Shirley J. Thompson, Fiedl For The Poor, Stephen Ames, Wesley Hall, Dr. Paul Shemblok, Dr. Heddy Fry, Dr. Jimmy Cliff, Tessanne Chin, Roger Mooking and David Taylor, retired boxer Lennox Lewis, The Hospital for Sick Children, Mary Anne Chambers, Dr. Upton Allen, Dr. Rhodendreanauth Dooby, The University of Toronto, Malcolm Gladwell, The University Health Network, Zanana Akande, Harry Belafonte, MichelleJean, former Deputy Chief of Toronto police Keith L. Forde, Michael Lee-Chin, Joan Augustin, Justice Dr. Irving André and Dr Karl Massiah, Senator Vivienne Poy and Charles Coody.

Under the theme ‘Light, Learning and Liberty’, the University of the West Indies Toronto Benefit Gala provides funds for scholarships. Over 250 scholars have been awarded to date. Over 70 have graduated, most with first class honours. The Patron of the eighth annual Gala is Dr Raymond Chang Family (wife Donette Chin-Loy Chang, and children Andrew Chang and Brigette Chang-Addorios). Lead sponsor is Scotiabank.
Adverse possession

How trespassers can become property owners in Jamaica

ADVERSE POSSESSION commonly referred to as ‘squatting’ is merely occupying land without permission of the owners. This practice is common in Jamaica and many people leave their properties behind without being aware of the risks. There have been countless instances where unoccupied plots are taken over by persons who build homes on them, live for years, and refuse to move upon the return of the owner. Often, police and the courts have to get involved to begin the daunting process of repossessing the property.

Adverse Possession is a legal principle which states that if a squatter occupies a property or land long enough, he may become the owner. In other words, land ownership is a vested privilege the owner. In other words, land ownership is a vested privilege of the owner. If someone has been squatting on your property for at least 12 years, there is a good chance you can legally claim ownership. However, it is important to act quickly and appropriately to ensure that your new property is yours.

The requirements to acquire ownership of adversely possessed property in Jamaica are not extensive. Squatters simply have to have title to the land and fulfill certain conditions to become owners. They include:

- Personal details of at least two persons who are aware of the squatter’s residence on the land for a given period.
- A certificate of copy of the title or information that will allow it to be easily obtained.
- Information on attempts made to locate the registered owner.
- Certification of the Surveyor’s identification report.
- Local valuation information and the Surveyor’s identification report.
- The crucial ingredient for adverse possession is the time element. This means that if you own property on the island and have not granted permission for anyone to occupy it, you can legally claim ownership if you have done so for a given period of time.

In Jamaica, the squatter must have taken over a property or land that is not his, live for years, and refuse to move upon the return of the owner. Often, police and the courts have to get involved to begin the daunting process of repossessing the property.

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NO EXCUSE

A recent Privy Council decision has reinforced squatters’ rights. The court held in Recreational Holdings 1 (Jamaica) Ltd v Lazarus [2016] UKPC 22 that an owner whose title has been extinguished through adverse possession will be unable to sell his property because he cannot pass a ‘good title’ to a potential purchaser, also, being unaware that your property has been adversely possessed is no excuse, it still cannot negate the squatter’s title.

This means that even if someone living on land that is not his does not seek to legally possess it, the rights of the registered owner can still be terminated.

The crucial ingredient for adverse possession is the time element. This means that if you own property on the island and have not granted permission for anyone to occupy it, you have to ensure that it is properly secure by erecting fences or gates around your land and posting “no trespassing” signs. This is a good way to deter trespassers but after some time, persons may realise that no one is occupying the land so there is no guarantee that it will prevent adverse occupation or allow you to claim against the trespasser. In such circumstances it may be warrant-ed to enter into a lease with the occupier at a nominal rent as the status of the occupier will become one of tenant and this will break the legal period required to establish adverse possession.

If someone has been squatting on your property for at least 12 years, such as fencing or bushing, and you “sleep” on that right you forfeit ownership. In Jamaica, the squatter must have lived on the property for at least 12 years, however in special circumstances it may be extended to 30 years.

This can be a complex process and it is recommended to consult a lawyer to ensure that you meet all the required conditions to claim ownership of the property.

The property conglomerate PanJam Investment’s bottom line hotel in New Kingston racked up nearly $1 billion in revenues, in its first year of operation, and provided a small boost to PanJam Investment’s bottom line.

PanJam, which is in the business of real estate and investments, built the hotel as a joint-venture project with Costa Rican partners, through Caribe Hospitality Jamaica Limited. That associated company earned $833 million in net profit at year end December 2016, which wiped out a $25.8 million loss a year earlier. Revenues generated by the hotel totalled $997 million.

“We are pleased with the performances which did exceed budgetary expectations,” said PanJam chief financial officer Stephen Phillibert via email.

PanJam holds a 33 per cent stake in the venture. The 129-room hotel opened its doors officially on December 1, 2015. It also holds other hotel developments in downtown Kingston, Canada and the United States. It categorises these investments as Downing Street Fund II, V and VII.

Fund II made net profit of $18.3 million, while Fund V made a loss of $903,000 for 2016. Both are based in Canada. As for Fund VII, which is yet to report revenues, PanJam contributed capital expenditure of $390 million to that project.

RECORD PROFIT

The property conglomerate also continues upgrades to the former Oceana Hotel on the Kingston waterfront, which it acquired in 2014 from the Urban Development Corporation.

Overall, PanJam increased its annual net profit by a third to $4.35 billion, from $3.25 billion the year prior.

“It is in fact the fifth straight year of record profit,” Phillibert said.

Revenue from operations, at $1.7 billion, dipped slightly from $1.8 billion a year earlier. Core property revenue also declined to $1.36 billion from $1.48 billion due, in part, to vacancies and depreciation of the local currency. However, net profit is up due to a $3.6-billion infusion from its share of returns from associated companies, up 14 per cent from $3.2 billion the year prior.

The returns came mostly from its investments in other companies – mainly its near one-third interest in Baggo Group Jamaica which generated revenues of $597.7 billion and operating profit of 114.4 billion in 2016 – but PanJam also booked a gain of $651 million interest in its investment in Mavis Bank Coffee Factory and Hardware & Lumber Limited.

PanJam’s other investments include a 20 per cent stake in Chukka Caribbean Adventures Limited, a 25 per cent stake in Walkerswood and Busha Brown’s through New Castle Company Limited, and a 50 per cent interest in Kingchurch Property Holdings Limited, through which the former Oceana Hotel is being redeveloped.

Last year, PanJam hired a consultant to help the company in deciding a name for the hotel. But to date, “no decision has been taken” as yet as to brand-ing, Phillibert said.
Darliston, geared to low and middle income

Kingston
Commonwealth Day function
MONDAY March 13 was celebrated as Commonwealth Day with a function at King’s House where school children gave cultural performances and the governor general read the Queen’s message.

Westmoreland
PM breaks ground for housing scheme
PRIME Minister Andrew Holness on Friday March 10 broke ground for a J$95 million National Housing Trust scheme at Darlington, geared to low and middle income earners. The project should be completed by next August.

Islandwide
Police Youth Club expansion in schools
AGAINST THE background of incidents of violence at schools, The Community Safety and Security Branch of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCP) has introduced 50 police youth clubs in schools since the start of this school year. The police reported recently at an International Day Women’s Day Commemorative church service in Kingston.

Clarendon
Unattached youth to receive skill training
SOME 250 unattached youth from Mocho are short to receive skill training in areas such as practical nursing, hospitality, commercial food preparation under an initiative by Heart Trust and the councillor for the area, Romaine Morris.

St Mary
Skill sensitisation session held
ASPIRING entrepreneurs and students participated in the Social Development Commission Creative Arts and Skilles Festival (CASCRESI) at the Claude Stuart Park Port Maria on Friday March 10 where workshops, competitions and skillset presentations were featured.

Portland
Accident prompts pedestrian crossing
TWO RESIDENTS painted a pedestrian crossing near the Port Antonio Primary School after a student was hit, recently (not fatally) by a motor vehicle while crossing the road.

St Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon
Health Personnel awarded for service
SOME 23 drivers and maintenance employees of the Southern Regional Health Authority which covers the parishes of St. Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon, were awarded recently at a banquet for their services to health care.

Manchester
Forestry department organises trek
THE FORESTRY Department in an effort to raise awareness about the plight of forests while underscoring their value for the International Day of Forests on March 21, organised a trek to the Gourie forest management area in the parish. The outing is billed as a “wonderful, educational and health-benefiting” experience.

St Catherine
Spanish Town Hospital receives air conditioning unit
THF MATERNITY ward at the Spanish Town Hospital got a donation of an air conditioning unit by the Church of God of Prophecy on Nugent Street.

Trinidad and Tobago
government hints at more borrowing from Stabilisation Fund
PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, CMC—THF TRINIDAD and Tobago government has hinted at the possibility of drawing down more money from the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund (HSF) even as opposition legislators questioned how the Keith Rowley administration is managing the finances of the oil-rich twin island republic.

Uruguay
pulling troops out of UN mission in Haiti
MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (AP)—URUGUAY’S PRESIDENT says his country is pulling its soldiers out of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti, where they have served since 2004. Tabare Vazquez says the Uruguay mission will end this month and the roughly 250 Uruguays will return home in early April. The South American country had as many as 1,000 forces deployed in Haiti at the height of the mission.

Cayman Islands
Parliament to be dissolved ahead of May 24 poll
GEORGE TOWN, Cayman Islands, CMC—Candidate contesting the May 24 general elections in the Cayman Islands are expected to sign the necessary documents allowing them to do so early next week.
Will they take my money?

Deidre S. Powell

CANADA

Dear Mrs Powell,
I recently got an invitation to apply for permanent residence in Canada. When I applied for express entry, I put my application that I have CDN$80,000 to bring to Canada. This was based on the fact that I plan to sell my house after I get to Canada and check out the place. Now I have to provide the proof of the cash and I don’t have that amount of money in my bank account! I don’t want to sell my assets yet, as I don’t know what the future will bring. What if I go there and decide I don’t want to live there? Is there a way around this? What will they do with the funds anyway? Will I need to present the funds when I am entering Canada? Can I bor-row the money?

-A.A.

Dear A.A.,
When you submit an application under the express entry system, you are asked specific questions to determine your eligibility to come to Canada as an economic immigrant and to integrate into the Canadian society. Part of the evaluation process is ensuring that you have the funds to ensure that you and your family are able to settle into Canada and not need financial assistance from the government. It is expected that you will be able to contribute to the growth and development of the country. To evaluate this key factor, you will be asked specific questions that require specific truthful answers. The questions are:

How much money (in Canadian dollars) will you bring to Canada to support yourself and your family? When you apply for permanent residence, you are asked to estimate the amount of funds you have and any money you will bring to Canada. When you apply for permanent residence and to theStatus of the US citizen, you must have the funds to ensure that you and your family can settle into Canada and not need financial assistance from the government.

PUREOSE OF THE FUNDS
The Canadian government will not take the funds from you. However, if you apply for permanent residence, you will be asked about the amount of funds that you have and require to declare any funds over CDN$100,000.

HICC specifically states that “You cannot borrow this money from another person. You must be able to use this money to pay the costs of living for your family (even if they are not coming with you).”

You will be required to provide a list of all assets and liabilities. Acceptable proof is a letter from all of your bankers confirming your checking and savings accounts, investment accounts, the account numbers, dates each account was opened and the balance of each account over the past six months. You should also submit a list of all outstanding debts, such as credit cards and loans. This letter must be printed on the letterhead of the financial institution, including their address, telephone number and email address.

Deidre S. Powell is an immigration lawyer, mediator, and notary public. Submit your questions and comments to: info@deidrepowell.com / subjectline Immigration.

Haitian Senate passes resolution condemning arrest and extradition of colleague

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti (CMC) THE HAITIAN Senate has approved a resolution strongly condemning the arrest and extradition of Guy Philippe to the United States in January on drug trafficking charges.

At least 19 of the 34 Senators voted on the resolution during a sitting earlier this week that also demanded the return of Philippe and all those who are illegally detained in the United States under the agreement of 17 October 1997.

Philips, 48, who is in a US federal jail in Miami, had been elected as a Senator late November to represent the Grand Anse region, in southwestern Haiti.

He has pleaded not guilty to the charges of cocaine trafficking and money laundering from 1997 to 2005. If convicted, he could face up to life in prison.

The US Attorney’s Office said it is also seeking to recover US$1.5 million in drug profits from Philips, a former member of the now disbanded Haitian army and a former police commissioner.

He rose to international prominence 13 years ago after leading a caravan of heavily armed militiamen into Port-au-Prince amid a bloody coup that removed then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from power on February 29, 2004.

The resolution also urges the lawmakers to assist Philippe and the members of his family.

Philippe is due back in a US court during the week of April 3.

The Senators have also said they want to impeach the outgoing Justice Minister Camille Roudard Jr in order that he be tried before the Supreme Court of Justice for a crime of high treason.

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A seed of verse in Portland

Seed Fi Seeds Exchange makes gains at Dis Poem Festival

Mel Cooke
Gleaner Writer

WITH THIS name Dis Poem Wordz and Agro Festival, naturally, words are central to the Portland event, which started in 2011. For the 2017 staging, though, the event’s founder, poet Ras Takura, is placing special emphasis on the Agro Festival element.

And he is especially adamant about the Seed Fi Seeds Exchange, which facilitates the transfer of organic seeds among persons who attend the event on Sunday, April 30, at the Neville Antonio Park in Port Antonio.

“Seed Fi Seeds Exchange is the practice of exchanging natural ital organic seeds that are certified non-GMO,” Ras Takura said.

GMO stands for genetically modified organisms, so the seeds have been permanently altered from their natural state.

The call is for third-generation natural seeds, which means they should be the product of three consecutive crops being reaped from the same original stock. Takura said that assures that the seeds are organic as even if GMO seeds reproduce after the first crop, the seeds will not and will produce a third generation of plants. So persons taking seeds to Dis Poem Words and Agro Festival 2017 are advised by the organizers to collect only seeds that are mature, free from the use of chemical pesticides, GM contaminated seeds, and those of third generation seeds and older.

FOUR CATEGORIES

There will be four categories. Dry seeds normally grow in pods and include peas, corn, cotton, peanuts, and rice. Wet seeds are those in the flesh of fruits such as melon, pumpkin, tomato, mango, or beans, such as those that include bananas, plantain, okra, eggplant, sugar cane, white yam, sweet-potato, dasheen, coco, and ginger are among the tubers. The exchange began in 2014, and Ras Takura is especially encouraged by last year’s response. Now, he expects that farmers of organic plants, persons who save seeds from those plants, and organic seed breeders to be involved in the exchange.

Among the seeds he is expecting are the 32833 variety Jamaican Red corn, as well as Jamaican red peas.

“I was very excited last year, out of all the times we had people carrying seeds and participating in the exchange. There will be a booth space with a table and chairs for people to collect the seeds, repack-age them, and distribute,” he said.

People who do not carry any seeds to the festival can still participate in the exchange.

“We know that it is not everyone who wants seeds will have some to carry with them,” he said. There is no charge for the seed exchange, although there will be an admission fee to the festival. Ras Takura addresses food matters on his Food War album with tracks such as Jamaican Food and Put Down the Gun, the latter proposing farming as an alternative. He has also performed in the USA at events against GMO seeds, including a March Against Mosato in New York and Washington, DC, in 2013, as well as the San Diego Seed Swap in California in 2016.

For the agricultural part of the festival, Takura is expecting to have castor oil, cane juice, natural drinks, and cannabis-related products, among other produce. The confirmed performers at the 2017 Dis Poem Words and Agro Festival so far are Cherry Natural, Pat Clarke, Charlie Bubbs, Michael Abrahams, No-Madre, Cue Kirk, Mutabaruka, Ras Maleko, DVD, Ginosu, and Neto Meeks.
EVENTS

CANADA

JN Group Expo 2017 will be held on Saturday, March 25, 10am-7pm at Pearson Convention Centre, 2638 Steeles Ave. East, Brampton.

United Achievers’ Club – Brampton presents its 20th annual Celebrity Chef Men Who Cook 2017 event on Saturday, March 25, 6pm at Century Gardens Recreation Centre Auditorium, 340 Vodden St. East, (at Rutherford), Brampton.

In celebration of Shouter Baptists’ 100th anniversary & 66 Years of Liberation, there will be a celebration by the Shouters on Sunday, March 26, 11am-2pm at 63 Mack Ave., Unit # 9&10, Scarborough. Call 416-686-1433.

nesbf@shouterbaptist.org

GRASS ROOTS CHILDHOOD CANCER FUNDRAISER:

A Family Fun Day is being planned by the Grass Roots Childhood Cancer Fundraiser on April 29th at the Northwest Rec Centre on Pulaski Avenue. The event will feature food, music, games and a raffle. For more information, contact John Gambino at john@grassrootsfundraiser.com or call 387-8080.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENT FOR NEWCOMERS AND IMMIGRANTS:

A Community Information Event for newcomers and immigrants on Sunday, March 26, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Darul Arqam Islamic Centre, 585 Trethewey Drive, Toronto. Call 416-253-2729. Email s.gris@jobstartworks.org

Do you want your events to be published in the Events Listing section, then send them to normadelle.rose@gleanerna.net (USA) or neil.armstrong@gleanerna.net (CAN)

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HALF SIDE OF HOUSE FOR RENT $45,000.00 MONTHLY, GREENEADLE ST. CATHERINE.
1 BEDROOM, LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN AND BATHROOM, LARGE VERANDAH, SPACIOUS FRONT, AND BACKYARD, KILOMETER FROM THE REGISTRATION OF UNDER THE TITLES LAW OFFICE OF KINGSTON.

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**St Hugh’s alum (Florida) host tea party**

**JANET SILVERA**
Senior Gleaner Writer

HATS FITTING for tea with the Queen or for turning heads as you walk up the church aisle and others that were more of an acquired taste flooded the St Hugh’s Alumnae Association of South Florida (SHAAFL) Scavenging Tea Party recently.

The ladies of St Hugh’s took control of the auditorium at the Walter C. Young Middle School in Pembroke Pines and made their presence felt.

While celebrating the launch of one of their sister, Karen Smith’s new album Rush, they were there to make money for their little sisters, and did so by encouraging camaraderie and fellowship.

It was obvious they had plans to outpace previous fundraisers with their returns, having firsthand knowledge of how far the US$65,000 donated over the last five years had gone.

“We fund a hot breakfast, lunch, transportation, school and exam fees for those students whose families cannot provide support,” said SHAAFL president, Karen Lee Murphy.

The SHAAFL president also recognized the work of Karen Smith, who said found the time each year to perform at their fundraiser.

Smith delivered a scintillating performance, booking an automatic return in 2018.

She had the audience on its feet as she pulled from an impressive compilation that included mento, soul and reggae.

SHAAFL has been in existence for 27 years, and their tea parties have always hit the spot, making it a must-attend calendar event.

**Tasting the Apple—yard style!**

New York: NYAMMINGS, ONE of Jamaica’s top food-tasting TV shows visited the Big Apple for a taste of what’s cooking NY-style.

Tomlinson, the delightful and charming host, brought her yard style twist to see how much of the recipe has left yard.

Nyammings, currently on break, airs on CINTV channel ‘73 and Pipe channel 26 on Sundays at 5:30 p.m. throughout the 5 Boroughs of New York.

Moving across the Boroughs, Krystal and her crew’s first stop was in the heart of Brooklyn, East Flatbush where they met with Kayia Reece, a Guatemalan native living in Jamaica. Kayia, also the Marketing Director of Fly Jamaica, prepared her grandmother’s favorite dish, roti and bungalow shrimp. “Marvelous! Simply marvelous!” said Krystal as she bit into the roti. “This has such a mesmerizing, rich, smooth zest. It’s well worth the trip,” she said nodding.

Pushing through the snow, they headed to the original Golden Krust Restaurant on Gunhill Road, Bronx, and met with the Golden Krust team led by Jamaican chef, Alden Beckford, who brought his boyhood passion of cooking with friends to the Golden Krust franchise.

Jamaican Celebrity Chef, Patrick Simpson’s signature “Jar Tar Chicken” a yard style deep seasonings, spicy herbs and slow fire cooked style which led host Krystal to say, “You still have yuh country style wood fire cooking.”

From the costumer’s delight of rice and peas and oxtail, to curry goat or chicken, Chef Alden’s succulent lunchtime delivery had Krystal and the patrons in awe. “Great food,” explained Joan with Spanish-Jamaican burre. “The best,” explained her friend as they posed for a picture in the food line.

Moving south to the heart of the Apple, the crew stopped by BB King Blues Club and Grill in Times Square where they met with the Executive Chef, Patrick Wenford Simpson and his staff. The Jamaican-born celebrity chef displayed his colorful layout of herbs, spices, seasonings, fruits, vegetables and utensils, as he outlined his passion for cooking as child back home as “running a boat or stirring a pot” for his sister.

With some quick cooking tips for his guest, Chef Patrick then wets his guest, Chef Patrick then wets Krystal’s appetite with his flavorful some cuisine of Tar-Tar Chicken. “Authentically tropical”, she marveled, turning her head to the ceiling. “De jerk peppa (spice) jus creep up on you.”

Continuing with his skills, Chef Patrick indulged the host in one of his unique specialized dish of Jona Claws (large shrimps) in Coconut Curry.

While the aroma tantalized the Nyammings crew, Chef Patrick emphasized that cooking should be fun.

Krystal’s mouth salivated to the colorful simmering of chef’s Nyammings Crew, Chef Patrick’s unique specialty dish of Jona Claws (large shrimps).

In the end the trendy critic left for abroad, certain things they can’t leave back a yard.”

**Photos by Ashley Anguin**

From left: Ena Collimore-Woodstock (99-Year Old retired Judge) poses with Kaye Chong & Cicely Mondeva-Smith (85-Year old past St Hugh’s Teacher)

From left: Bridget Smith-Newman (Assistant Treasurer) poses with Karen Lee-Murphy (President)

From left: Fiolina Lovell-Burnett poses with Karleen Young-Foster and Carroll Simpson-White.

Queenie Arthurs, winner of the Unique hat category, basks in her victory.
ISSA boss defends Rodgers move

THE ABSENCE of Calabar High School representative-athletes was conspicuous at last week's launch of the 2017 Inter-secondary Schools Sports Association (ISSA)/Grace-Kennedy Boys and Girls Athletic Championships at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston as the defending champions' protest over the school sports governing body's decision to allow Ugandan 800 metres runner Aryamanya Kallimani to compete for Kingston College at this year's event threatened to overshadow all.

ISSA President Dr Walton Small moved quickly to address ques- tions over ISSA's decision despite rules stating that athletes must be registered for their respective schools by September 30 and have at least 80 per cent attendance record to compete at Champs.

Small explained that ISSA had received all documentation from Kingston College as early as July 18, 2016 and was scheduled to arrive in Kingston on August 24.

However, he said, adding that ISSA had been forced to issue a clarification, that Hodson had received the airport boarding ticket on the day and that the student came on the bus to the airport in the Ugandan capital at Kampala, he was refused boarding for Germany as it was determined he needed a German visa to travel. This was communicated to KC authorities and Jamaican embassy officials who moved to address the issue.

TICKET CANCELS

Rodgers' airline ticket was can- celled and a second ticket pur- chased for him to arrive in Kingston on September 24, 2016, via Kenya. However, he was once again refused boarding.

Eventually Rodgers received clearance, and he travelled to Kingston on October 16 and began school at KC on Tuesday, October 18, 2016.

“We waived the attendance and deadline registration because we were convinced that enough effort was put on the part of the young man to represent Jamaica,” said Small.

The vote by those present was one absentee, one against, and the remaining members voted in favour.

He noted that not all 15 mem- bers of the executive were present. Among those absent was Calabar Principal Albert Corcho, whom Dr Small said learnt of ISSA's decision on the day it was made.

“This is a democratic society, and if the committee decide that the young man should participate, then that was the result, and that was sent off to Kingston College.”

Meanwhile, Small said that he had received a letter addressed to the “Chairman of ISSA”, dated March 10, on Wednesday (March 15) from Corcho, demand- ing the results of the case be published in the media within seven days of the decision.

Bolt statue to be erected in time for independence celebrations

THE STATUE commissioned by the government to honour track and field legend, Usain Bolt, is expected to be completed in time for the country’s 55th Independence celebrations in August.

This was informed by Sports Minister Olivia Grange, who says the eight-foot sculpture will be mounted in the Statue Park at the National Stadium in Kingston.

The statue is being designed and created by Jamaican sculptor Basil Watson.

Grange says the statue will serve as a lasting tribute to the global sprint star, whose world record breaking performances in the 100 and 200-metre sprints have left the world in awe.

Bolt has announced that he plans to retire after the World Championships in London later this year and Grange says the unveiling of the statue will coincide with his departure from international competition.

Statues of three other outstanding Jamaican athletes Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Asafa Powell and Veronica Campbell-Brown, are also slated to be mounted at Statue Park as part of the development of the National Stadium complex.

Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Olivia Grange (right), in discussion with track and field legend, Usain Bolt.

Grange was speaking at the recent media launch of the JN Racers Grand Prix, which will be Bolt’s final competitive race in Jamaica.

J$1m prize to top Champs schools

What’s your view? What stories would you like to read? What issues would you like us to focus on? Email: overseas@gleanerjm.com

DANA BOGLE
Senior Gleaner Writer

It won’t be only a trophy at stake but J$1,000,000 prize for the winning schools at this year’s Inter- secondary Schools Sports Association (ISSA)-Grace-Kennedy Boys and Girls’ Athletic Championships scheduled for Tuesday, March 28 to Saturday, April 1.

ISSA president Dr Walton Small made the announcement at an event launch at the Spanish Court Hotel in Kingston.

“We felt that for all sports at ISSA we must give a prize money that can reflect to some extent to recoup the cost of some of the things that they do,” said Dr Small.

The runners-up will receive J$500,000 with J$400,000 to third place. The remaining schools will split J$700,000.

PRIZE MONEY

“Go all schools will be getting prize money different from the referees and support to go to Penn. Relays and so on,” Dr Small added.

Meanwhile, Champs committee chairman and Wolmer’s High School for Girls principal, Colleen Montague, announced that due to inflation among other things, ISSA had been “forced” to increase ticket prices for the event by five per cent.

Tickets will go on sale on the opening day of the event with the ticket office being open at 7 a.m. each day.

Saturday grandstand tickets will cost J$8500, with J$8350 for Friday’s opening day event will be free. Children will pay J$8100 for Wednesday and Thursday, while adults will pay J$8500. Students in uniform will pay J$8350 on Friday.

Event sponsors GraceKennedy said they had committed J$110 million towards the event which will feature 114 girls’ schools and 114 boys’ schools.

Four Champs Ambassadors will be honoured this year including former athletes Everald Samuel and Julie Campbell of St Andrew Technical and St Jago High school, respectively; coach Claude Grant of Herbert Technical High School and Champs official Georgina Francis.

Streaming of ISSA/Grace Kennedy Boys and Girls’ Championships 2017

THE ISSA/GRACEKENNEDY Boys and Girls’ Championships 2017, the Jamaican high school athletic spectacle that has produced global icons like Usain Bolt, Shelly-Ann Fraser Pryce, Yohan Blake, Elaine Thompson, Asafa Powell and Merlene Ottey, will be streamed live from Kingston as a Pay Per View on www.1spotmedia.com.

The two-week long event will be avail- able globally on www.1spotmedia.com.

Live and continuous coverage of the greatest high school track and field meet in the world will be available globally on www.1spotmedia.com.

There are thousands of hours of video on demand content and live streaming of four television brands and five radio brands with credible content.

Contact: 876-733-2600 for more information.

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Tallawahs want Sabina CPL final

**SHAYNE FAIRMAN**
Gleaner Writer

**IN CONSIDERING** the Hero Caribbean Premier League (CPL) tournament mutually beneficial to regional economies, Jamaica’s Tallawahs Managing Director Ron Parikh is of the view that Jamaica’s Sabina Park would be the perfect venue for this year’s final.

The CPL, the domestic Twenty20 cricket league, that“We like it,” is to be played among seven countries – Trinidad and Tobago, St Kitts and Nevis, Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, St Lucia, and the United States, which hosted last season’s final in the state of Florida.

**HOPEs OF A HOME FINALE**

This year, Parikh, whose team will be defending the title, wants the grand finale at home.

“We would love to see the finals in Jamaica with the support of our partners and government, and hope to see it in Sabina Park,” he said.

He was quick to point out that the CPL is economically beneficial to each country and should be backed by their respective governments.

“The key is that not only the CPL, but also each team gets continued support from their respective local government, as it’s mutually benefitting to promote this economically and financially viable sporting event in the Caribbean,” Parikh told The Gleaner.

CPL is dubbed the biggest party in sports, and according to Tallawahs director, it grows bigger and better, each year.

“Tallawahs’ brand continues to grow; every year we try to thrive year along with the popularity of CPL, not only in the Caribbean, but also the US front,” he reasoned.

**TALLAWAHS BRAND**

He has made it clear that the Tallawahs brand would grow in size and popularity again this season. It will bow off in June.

“We look forward to build a bigger fan base and continue to support our local Tallawahs fan base,” he outlined.

“We have some great local partners that have supported us in the past, and we hope to receive continued support from our partners to build up the momentum coming to the home games at Sabina Park,” continued Parikh.

The Jamaica Tallawahs owners will be looking to rev up even more support at their Sabina Park home, and across the island.

The managing director was clear that the two-time champions will be going all out for a third title this year.

“We have a strong team for our 2017 championship chase, and all the team members have equally qualified and talented to represent the Tallawahs and go through the hard road it is to win an unprecedented third championship,” he underscored.

Defending their title will be hard, but Parikh remains confident they will have a strong support and will be going all out for a third title this year.

**NEW ducks and geese:**

It was a challenging pitch,

Miller blames pitch for Scorpions loss

**JERMAINE LANNAMAN**
Gleaner Writer

**CAPTAIN NIKITA Miller has pointed to pitch and playing conditions, as well as poor preparation, as the main reasons as to why the Jamaica Scorpions fell to a 34-runs defeat to the Leeward Islands Hurricanes on the weekend at Sabina Park.**

The contest, the first day-night first-class fixture to be played at the venue, saw the Leewards scoring 71 and 193 and Jamaica replying with a record-low 56 and 114.

The pitch was also contested over two days, with the first day abandoned due to rain and a waterlogged outfield and the fourth and final day not coming into play.

“It was a challenging pitch, which was not at the standard it should have been playing a day-night high,” Miller said.

“But, having said that, I think the weather played a factor in the preparation of the pitch as it had been raining days leading up to the start of the game.”

“It’s quite to say; therefore, the pitch did get not to dry out properly, and it played a role in both teams bowled out cheaply, especially in the first innings.

**SECOND DAY**

Beginning on the second day, the game saw fast bowlers Jerome Taylor and Marquino Mindley making brilliant use of the conditions.

The experienced Miller, who was recently recalled to the West Indies Twenty20 team, and Mindley playing in his third game of the season, got the ball to swing appreciably in and out, and it played a role in both teams bowled out cheaply, especially in the first innings.

**TALLAWAHS BRAND**

Miller added that they would also be expanding the seating capacity at the courts, which is located at the National Stadium in Kingston.

“What you had before was approximately 400 seated, but we are taking it to close to 1,000, and so we will have seats at both ends of the court,” Wilks said.

“This will help basketball tremendously because where we are taking it to, where it is coming from, it is like from night to day,” he said.

“It really was in bad state. Everything was battered because the synthetic surface was in a deplorable state, and so it was all in shambles,” Wilks said.

Meanwhile, president of the Jamaica Basketball Association Dr Mark Broomfield said that the refurbishing of the courts would help to lift the profile of basketball in Jamaica.

“I am very grateful that there is upgrading work,” said Broomfield.

“Repairing of the courts is always going to be a big boost for the Jamaica Basketball Association because it will improve the level of hosting that we are going to be playing,” he said.

Broomfield added that his association was hoping to forge a strong partnership with the SDF as they look to increase their fan base around the country.

“We want to have some arrangements where we can have access to the courts because you can’t have a national association and we don’t have access to the courts, meaning that we want to be holding the keys...
Eleven athletes confirmed for May Meet

Eleven international stars have been confirmed to compete at this year’s 14th staging of the Jamaica International Invitational Meet at the National Stadium on May 20. The meet, which is normally held on the first Saturday in May, has been shifted to May 20, this year, with the organisers noting that they did not wish to go head-to-head with the IAAF Diamond League meet in Doha, which locks up the first Saturday in the month.

Meet director and athlete liaison, Donald Quarrie at the press launch said that the landmark event is

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BOLT STATUE TO BE ERECTED IN TIME FOR INDEPENDENCE

LaShawn Merritt

Mike Rodgers

BOLT STATUE TO BE ERECTED IN TIME FOR INDEPENDENCE

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