

NO: 605/19

DATA PROTECTION BILL COMING

Barbados' Data Protection Bill is expected to be passed in Parliament before the end of June.

This disclosure came from Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley on Thursday afternoon when she addressed the renaming of Nation House to the Harold Hoyte and Fred Gollop Media Complex, at Fontabelle, St. Michael.

Ms. Mottley said the legislation would allow government to continue to engage a global community that required evidence that the country was complying with the protection of people's data and respecting their privacy.

"To that extent, the Cabinet has before it now the Data Protection Bill, and I anticipate that before the end of June that legislation will be passed before both Houses of Parliament. That legislation also contemplates, in order for us to meet our international obligations, the creation of a Data Privacy Commissioner because...every time you go on a site to do anything, you are almost required to leave a digital footprint of some type," she stated.

The Prime Minister told her audience that government had a duty to enshrine in our democracy the principles that would forever guarantee public education, sensitization and consultation. She said her government had become subject to more scrutiny and would commit itself to greater consultation and transparency than, perhaps, any other previous government since Independence.

According to her, it was imperative that citizens be given the opportunity to assist in determining how this society should be developed. "We are conscious that the absence of public education and public sensitization may mean that in some instances uninformed decisions can be made.

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To that extent, my government is committed to the creation of an Information Ombudsman because it is absolutely critical that there be a source from which all forms of information can flow, without people being concerned as to the tint or colour of the information which is given to the public of Barbados.

“Indeed, I hope that as soon as our fiscal circumstances allow that we can put in place those systems,” she stated.

Ms. Mottley identified audio visual access as an area Barbados had lagged in since the state-owned CBC is a monopoly. She stressed that government was committed to removing that situation because “it is wrong”.

“My government will shortly, through a public media exercise, invite bids for those who would want to be able to hold licences. The holding of a licence within the media should not be the subjection of any privileged protection, but should be subject to adhering to open principles that are imposed on all persons,” she said.

She suggested that the success or failure of each entity must be determined, not by the government, but by the market place and the quality of the media output provided for the people of the country.

The Prime Minister said Mr. Hoyte and the late Sir Fred must be regarded as builders of Barbados, who took on the task at a time when absolute courage was required. She added that their story was an inspiration for persons who might become daunted by the challenges of the day.

She pointed out that Sir Fred and Mr. Hoyte exhibited within the journalistic sphere what the Right Excellent Errol Barrow articulated at the first address of the United Nations when he said that Barbados would be friends of all and satellites of none.

Ms. Mottley said that at an appropriate stage in the near future, the Government of Barbados would pay tribute to Mr. Hoyte for being a builder of Barbados. **(SA/BGIS)**

NO: 606/19

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAM NEXT TUESDAY

Thousands of primary school students are expected to write the Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination (BSSEE) next Tuesday, May 7.

A total of 3,382 students will sit this year's examination, also known as the 11-Plus or Common Entrance Exam. That figure is down 44 students compared to last year.

According to the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training, this number comprises 1,766 males and 1,616 females, who are registered to write the examination at 22 secondary schools across the island. This year, 14 students have requested permission to write the examination at an early age (that is at 10 years).

The ministry has also reported that 103 students have made requests to be deferred from writing the BSSEE until 2020. Of those, 84 were granted permission to defer. Forty students have also been granted exemptions from writing the examination.

Additionally, there have been 106 special requests made by parents on behalf of their children. These were mainly for extra time, enlarged print and breaks for snacks.

The BSSEE will also be taken by 142 non-nationals, who have met the immigration requirements.

As a result of the May 7 exam, the Ministry of Education has advised that there will be no classes for students who attend secondary schools on that day, as these facilities will be used as examination centres. The BSSEE will begin at 9:00 a.m. and finish at 1:00 p.m. **(MR/BGIS)**

NO: 607/19

CARIBBEAN FIRE CHIEFS TO HOST CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK

Barbados' Chief Fire Officer, Errol Maynard, will be elevated to the post of President of the Caribbean Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) when the 2019 Conference and Expo comes off next week at the Accra Beach Resort and Spa.

Mr. Maynard currently holds the position of Vice President of the CAFC, and will take over the post from outgoing President Reginald Burchall.

The handing over of the instruments of office will signal a new chapter in the life of the association, as it continues to build on the solid foundation laid by past presidents and founders.

This all takes place during the opening ceremony on Monday, May 6, at the Accra Beach Resort and Spa, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Minister of Home Affairs, Edmund Hinkson, will also address the opening ceremony.

During the week, the fire chiefs will host a range of meetings, including one with the Pan-American Health Organization. In addition, emergency medical technicians and firemen will also undergo training through the Junior Officers Leadership Academy, the Senior Officers Leadership Academy and the EMS Track programmes.

However, they have also sought to include members of the public through a firefighter challenge - EMS & Extrication Challenge at the Arch Hall Fire Station, Arch Hall, St. Thomas, on Friday, May 10.

There will also be an exhibition of fire safety products from overseas vendors during the conference.

The conference will culminate with a dinner and awards closing ceremony on Saturday, May 11, at the Accra Beach Resort and Spa, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The CAFC is a regional organization comprising Caribbean Fire Service administrators, chiefs and senior fire officers from Caribbean countries.

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ADD: CARIBBEAN FIRE CHIEFS TO HOST CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK - 1

Its primary objective is to prevent and minimize the loss of life, personal injury, damage to property and the environment, by improving and promoting the best quality of firefighting, rescue, fire protection and fire prevention. The body also provides expert professional advice, leadership research, informed comments and other services to the CAFC member organizations and other entities, upon request.

(JRB/BGIS)

NO: 608/19

PORT TO HAVE A NEW SCANNER IN COMING WEEKS

Security at the Bridgetown Port is expected to get a boost with the arrival of the first of two new scanners within a number of weeks.

This will be followed by the arrival of a second scanner by yearend, bringing the complement at the Bridgetown Port to three.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Dale Marshall, made this disclosure as he addressed the opening ceremony of the seventh meeting of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) at the Radisson Aquatica, on Thursday.

He explained that the \$40 million investment was made to ensure that a greater percentage of container traffic coming into Barbados was scanned. "As of today, we have a single scanner functioning in the Bridgetown Port; for the last few years we had a single scanner functioning at the Bridgetown Port.

"My administration recognized that it is untenable for a mere six per cent of the containers that are coming into Barbados to be scanned," he said.

Noting that at least 12 of the 22 murders this year were committed using a firearm, the minister stressed that it was "considered" that a large quantity of the firearms entering Barbados illegally were coming in on containers.

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ADD: PORT TO HAVE A NEW SCANNER IN COMING WEEKS - 1

However, he pointed out that the instability being seen in Barbados was also being seen by other countries throughout the region.

“We have recognized that it is important for us given the interconnected nature of Caribbean states to look at the matter of security,” Mr. Marshall said, noting that the situation was further complicated by the instability in Venezuela, which had the potential to spill over into Trinidad.

In this regard, the attorney general said it was a “solid backdrop” for the CBSI and the work of the organization.

Stating that it was the first time a CBSI meeting was held in Barbados, Mr. Marshall disclosed that there was also a distinct possibility Barbados would be one of the pilot locations for the implementation of the new Advanced Cargo Information System.

This, he said, would complement work presently being done on the Advanced Passenger Information System, through which government was trying to completely automate the business of travel for passengers arriving here.

“We have set up kiosks so that passengers coming in would be able to have that computerized process without having to go through the usual immigration system,” he said.

During his address, Mr. Marshall also commended the CBSI for its work, and welcomed the regional security stakeholders to the island. **(JRB/BGIS)**

NO: 609/19

CHANGE TO FIRST COURT MARTIAL DATE

The Barbados Defence Force has advised that its first court martial, scheduled for the period May 7 to 10, has been rescheduled to May 8 to 10, and May 13.

All other court martials, to date, remain as scheduled. **(BDF/BGIS)**

ATTENTION NEWS EDITOR:

WORLD HAND HYGIENE DAY WILL BE OBSERVED INTERNATIONALLY ON SUNDAY, MAY 5. ON MONDAY, MAY 6, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS WILL HOST A HAND HYGIENE EXHIBITION AND DEMONSTRATION IN NATIONAL HEROES SQUARE, BRIDGETOWN, FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THIS EVENT.

NO: 610/19

ADULT ONSET ASTHMA SUBJECT OF MEN'S HEALTH GROUP MEETING

When the Glebe Polyclinic's Men's Health Group meets on Thursday, May 9, the topic of discussion will be **Adult Onset Asthma**.

All interested persons are invited to attend the meeting, which takes place at the polyclinic, Glebe Land, St. George, beginning at 6:30 p.m. **(JS/BGIS)**

NO: 611/19

ALLEYNEDALE PUMPING STATION IMPACTED BY OFFLINE OCCURRENCE

The Barbados Water Authority (BWA) wishes to advise residents and businesses in St. Lucy that they may experience low pressure or water outages.

On Thursday, May 2, the authority's Pumping Station at Alleynedale, St. Lucy, went offline for an extended period. The station was restarted, but the stoppage affected reservoir levels at Half Acre. As a result, some areas may experience low pressure or water outages.

They include: Benthams, Colleton, Colleton Gardens, Shermans, Clinketts, Half Moon Fort, Sutherland, Checker Hall, Maycocks, Brownfield, Husbands, Content, Crab Hill, Grape Hall, Greenidges, Connell Town, Northumberland, Hope Road, River Bay, Spring Hall, Chance Hall, Bishops, Rockfield, St. Clements, Pie Corner and surrounding districts.

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**ADD: ALLEYNEDALE PUMPING STATION IMPACTED BY OFFLINE
OCCURRENCE - 1**

BWA crews have been dispatched to assist customers via water tankers, as a temporary measure.

Persons who experience an outage or a problem are reminded that they may call Customer Service at 434-4292, between 8:30 a.m. and midnight every day.

The BWA sincerely apologizes for the disruption in service and thanks customers for their patience. **(BWA/BGIS)**

ATTENTION NEWS EDITOR:

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE (NCSA) WILL HOST ITS “GIVE BACK” PRESENTATION AT THE SPRINGER MEMORIAL SECONDARY SCHOOL, GOVERNMENT HILL, ST. MICHAEL, ON MONDAY, MAY 6, BEGINNING AT 8:30 A.M.

THE NCSA’S DEPUTY BOARD CHAIRMAN, MANAGER AND DEPUTY MANAGER ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN ATTENDANCE.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THIS EVENT.

NO: 612/19

GOVERNOR GENERAL’S DIARY

Monday, May 6

11:00 a.m.

His Excellency the Acting Governor-General Sir Kenneth Hewitt will receive Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Barbados, His Excellency Mr. Holger Michael, at a farewell call.

NO: 613/19

MINISTERS' DIARY

Monday, May 6

9:00 a.m.

Minister of Home Affairs, Edmund Hinkson, will deliver remarks during the opening ceremony of the Association of Fire Chiefs Conference at the Accra Beach Resort and Spa, Rockley, Christ Church.

10:00 a.m.

Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs, Cynthia Forde, will hold a press conference on the National Senior Games in the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Warrens Office Complex, Warrens, St. Michael.

Wednesday, May 8

11:00 a.m.

Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Wilfred Abrahams, will deliver remarks at the commissioning of a solar PV system at the St. Mark's Resource Centre, Blades Hill, St. Michael.

4:00 p.m.

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Dale Marshall, will address the 143rd Passing Out Parade at the Regional Police Training School, Seawell, Christ Church.

MINISTERS' DIARY CONT'D**Friday, May 10****2:00 p.m.**

Minister of Labour and Social Partnership Relations, Colin Jordan, will host a press conference on the Employment Rights Tribunal to sensitize the media/public about its role and function, at the Ministry of Labour, Warrens Office Complex, Warrens, St. Michael.