

BRITISH COLONIES GET NO HELP AS UK GOVERNMENT FOCUSES ON THE CRISIS AT HOME



As Britain suffers from the heavy hit of the coronavirus pandemic, they struggle to make it through this phase as their businesses plunge, the virus spread escalates and the number of deaths increases drastically in their thousands. Economists have already warned of an impending recession in the UK if things continue like this; as the economy of the United Kingdom is set to experience a bigger hit than has ever been seen in modern history.

However, it seems that the UK may have forgotten the British colonies or oversea dependents, who are also facing this pandemic and experiencing the brunt seemingly without any form of support.

The UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, **unveiled a special budget tailored towards the alleviation of the impact of the COVID 19 for businesses in Britain on Wednesday, March 11th.**

Nine days after, on March 20th, he further announced another stimulus package targeted at the population worst hit by the coronavirus disease. In his speech, Sunak announced that the government grants will cover 80% of the salaries of retained workers in any part of the United Kingdom; that way, workers can retain their jobs and would get at least 80% of their salaries if their employers cannot afford to pay them. The funds for this could total up to 2, 500 pounds monthly.

What raised brows however was the fact that in both addresses, nothing was mentioned about Britain's overseas territories; it seemed as though they were all forgotten.

On Wednesday 25th March, the British Airways flight arrived at the airport, on the island of Providenciales, and picked up British citizens located on the Island, without leaving any relief material for the occupants of the island.

The 14 British colonies include Turks and Caicos Islands, South Georgia, Saint Helena, Falkland Islands, British Antarctica Territory, Pitcairn Island, British Indian Ocean Territory, Bermuda, Montserrat, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, the sovereign bases on Cyprus, the British Virgin Island, and Anguilla.

Michael Misick, former prime minister of the Turks and Caicos Islands said that the wellbeing of the Turks and Caicos Island is the responsibility of the British government. He called on Britain to include Turks and Caicos, as well as other colonies in their stimulus package.

The former minister also expressed worry over the State of the Cheshire Hall Medical center and the fact that only three respirators were available in the center which his government had built before he got deposed by the British government in 2009.

Misick also called on the government to financially support all citizens with a monthly living wage of at least \$1000 during the periods that they cannot work.

Amid the crisis, however, the current prime minister of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Sharlene Cartwright-Robinson is staying positive. According to her, Turks has had a while to prepare before they had the first case on Monday, March 23rd.

Regardless of their preparedness however, they only have 30 beds for a population of 50,000 according to Sharlene. It becomes important for them to practice social distancing as much as possible to prevent a spread that they cannot handle.

Speaking on the financial strength of the government, Sharlene says the government has \$200 million in cash, but the United Kingdom regulates their spending.

In parliament on Tuesday, the Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab made a speech on the coronavirus crisis and their efforts to repatriate British citizens all around the globe, but **still gave neither hint nor made mention of their plans or proposed support for the dependent territories.**

As things stand, it seems like the British colonies have indeed been forgotten; or perhaps, as events unfold, the United Kingdom will make a decisive action concerning their dependent colonies.

Date: 2020-03-30

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/british-colonies-call-for-help-news11461>