



# SUPERB START FOR NEW CARICOM CAPTAIN BROWNE

LEAD STORY ON PAGES 3 - 5



**THE GLADNESS OF HOPE AND THE GRIMNESS OF REALITY** are never far from each other.

Above, Governor General Sir Rodney Williams (third from right) celebrates with participants at a recent workshop to prep and prime us for the waves of tourists that we expect to be welcoming again soon. (SEE PAGES 7-8)

But to continue attracting visitors we must preserve our coral reefs (PICTURED AT TOP) and arrest their further degradation as discussed in our **STORY ON PAGES 9-10.**



# Vaccine hesitancy and how to overcome it

*Four political science PhD students surveyed residents from six Latin American countries about their willingness to get a COVID vaccine. What they learned could help reduce vaccine hesitancy here in the United States and around the world.*

*by Oscar Pocasangre (May 07, 2021)*

Vaccines against COVID-19 have become increasingly available for the mass public in various countries. However, in many places the pace of vaccination has slowed down, likely delaying herd immunity. Part of the explanation relies on vaccine hesitant individuals, who resist vaccination for any number of reasons. Our research on the causes and potential solutions to vaccine hesitancy, done together with Professors Sarah Daly and John Marshall of Columbia's Political Science department, may help overcome this phenomenon.

In a survey conducted in January 2021 in six Latin American countries, we found that vaccine hesitancy may be a major stumbling block for vaccination campaigns. Only 59 percent of respondents said they would get vaccinated if a vaccine were available to them, far below the estimated threshold of at least 70 percent that experts say may be needed for herd immunity. Moreover, respondents said that, on average, they would wait 4.3 months before getting vaccinated, drawing out the pandemic and giving the virus more time to mutate. When asked about why they

were hesitant about getting vaccinated, respondents cited concerns about side effects, that the vaccine was developed too fast, and mistrust in the government.

What, then, can be done to reduce vaccine hesitancy?

In our survey, we tested out different messaging strategies that could mitigate vaccine hesitancy, using survey experiments to isolate the effect of each message on vaccine hesitancy. Focusing only on hesitant individuals, we provided information about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and about rates of vaccination needed for herd immunity and of how many people in their countries were willing to get vaccinated based on initial rounds of our survey. We also showed respondents messages that emphasized economic, altruistic, or social appeals: how getting vaccinated can help the economy recover, protect the vulnerable, or improve their own social standing.

Our results show that vaccine hesitancy can be reduced with basic information and with appeals to social incentives. We found that information about the safety and efficacy of vaccines persuades about 8 per-

cent of hesitant individuals to become willing to get vaccinated while reducing the time they would wait to get vaccinated by 0.4 months. That basic information can help ease concerns about vaccination suggests that there is a benefit to targeting hesitant individuals with accurate information that may otherwise get lost amid the overabundance of constantly changing vaccine news.

We also found that information about the rate of vaccine uptake can increase willingness to get vaccinated but only when it's above the estimated thresholds for herd immunity. We interpret this finding as indicating that *people may be more willing to get vaccinated when they feel that they are contributing to a successful collective effort that achieves herd immunity and that they are part of a winning team against COVID-19.* **[*Italics ours – Editor*]**

Notably, the message appealing to social esteem had a substantive impact: it persuaded 7.9 percent of hesitant respondents to agree to vaccination. ***Meanwhile, the messages appealing to economic recovery or altruism did not encourage vaccination among the hesitant.***

**[*Emphasis ours – Editor*]**

These results show social incentives to be a simple yet powerful tool for encouraging vaccination. Policy-makers could easily harness these benefits by making vaccination status more visible with stickers, bracelets, or social media filters and tags.

Vaccine hesitancy can be a major barrier to herd immunity. But our research shows that some hesitant individuals can be persuaded to get vaccinated with simple messaging interventions. For these individuals, vaccination campaigns can increase uptake by:

1. Targeting them with basic information about the safety and efficacy of vaccines;
2. Emphasizing the success of the collective vaccination effort;
3. Facilitating ways of showing off vaccination status.

*Oscar Pocasangre is a PhD candidate in the department of political science. Follow him on Twitter @oscarpocasangre.*

*Fellow political science PhD candidates Elena Barham (@elena\_barham), Julian Gerez (@julianegerez), and Pablo Argote (@pabloargote) contributed to this article.*



## CARICOM Heads reach agreement on wide range of issues

Leaders of CARICOM nations concluded two days of intense discussions at the 42nd regular meeting of the Heads of Government hosted by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. Prime Minister Gaston Browne, as chairman of the community, reported



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that broad agreement was reached on several matters of great importance to the region. Among them is a target to achieve 'herd immunity' against the COVID-19 virus within the region by the end of the year.

"The impact of the (COVID-19) pandemic and the region's responses have occupied our attention over the past two days. We are determined to achieve 80

percent 'herd immunity' in the region by year end. We agreed to redouble our efforts to acquire adequate supplies of vaccines to achieve this goal," PM Browne remarked.

According to the Prime Minister, CARICOM leaders also took note of the issue of vaccine hesitancy and that this was a concern.

"We have mandated the Secretariat to continue to collabo-

rate with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), nursing and other allied health organisations, to identify strategies and policies to address this matter," he stated.

The new CARICOM chairman also called on employees within the community to cooperate with employers in their bid to create a safe working

environment for all by taking the vaccines or to have regular tests. Regional travel and tourism generally also featured among the issues discussed as the leaders considered several proposals to revive the aviation and tourism sectors. "We recognized the need to reopen our economies while balancing health and economic livelihoods. We agreed that there is need for new pro-



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protocols for health and safety measures to manage the sanitation and related matters which are of utmost importance," he reported. Additionally, a proposal floated by Antigua and Barbuda prior to the meeting, designed to jump-start intra-regional travel, seems to have found favour with the rest of the region.

PM Browne is reporting that CAR-

ICOM leaders have agreed to reduce taxes on intra-regional travel for a six-month trial period. The leaders also agreed to consider proposals to establish a regional travel bubble on a pilot basis for six months. The region has agreed to take note of the lessons learned in setting up this travel bubble.

CARICOM leaders also want a unified approach to the issue

of dealing with vaccinated persons as well as a common position on dealing with cruise passengers.

"The heads have mandated the secretariat, CARPHA and other related bodies, to convene a high-level meeting with the cruise lines to agree on minimum health and safety standards for the resumption of cruise sailing in the region," PM Browne stated.

Outgoing CARICOM secretary-general Erwin La Roque said the region has been commended for its handling of the pandemic, but he too expressed concern with the level of vaccine hesitancy in the region. Ambassador La Roque noted that this could jeopardize the gains made by the region in containing the virus over the past 16 months.

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### **Media Release: Extension of Time for Publication of Register of Electors**

July 7<sup>th</sup> 2021: The Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission wishes to advise the General Public that there has been a delay in the publication of the Register of Electors, statutorily due on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The reason for the delay in the publication of the Register of Electors as statutorily required, is due to a technical glitch in the electronic system. This requires the Solicitor General's Chambers to prepare an Order to extend the time for the publication of the Register of Electors, pursuant to Section 27 (4) of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No.17 of 2001.

The Act provides as follows:

Where anything in connection with the preparation or the publication of the register of electors, revised register of electors or register for elections under this Part omitted to be done or cannot be done at the time required under this Part or is done before or after that time or is otherwise irregularly done in matter or form, the Commission may, by order, at any time before or after the time within which the thing is required to be done, extend that time or validate anything so done before or after the time required or so irregularly done in matter or form.

The time requested in the draft Order, to extend the period for the issuance of the Register of Electors, is no later than July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. However, it is anticipated that the Register of Electors will be published well in advance of that date.

### **Media Contact**

Mrs. Elisa Graham  
Public Relations Officer  
Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission





*His Excellency the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, addressing the CHTA-EF workshop.*

# GG applauds A&B superheroes of service

The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) Education Foundation (EF), alongside its local partner, the Antigua & Barbuda Hotel & Tourism Association (ABHTA), celebrated a return to interactive island training last week as the CHTA-EF's new regional **Caribbean Safe Super-charged Service!** workshop piloted at Dutchman's Bay, Antigua.

His Excellency Sir Rodney Williams, Governor General of Antigua & Barbuda, focused on the value of each participant: "Each of you is key to providing the unique memory-bank our visitors build while in Antigua & Barbuda. Based on my years of experience in the sector, personal referrals to others directly or virtually are our nation's best advertisements.

"It is my hope that each of you who experienced this week's workshop now understand your vital role as important national influencers.

"You have explored the many new entrepreneurial ventures emerging within our green & blue economies and the value of incorporating those small, local businesses, into your creative offerings to our visitors. It is

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a reality that a unique and community-based experience will deeply enhance their overall experience of our island nation.

"It is now incumbent upon each of us to demonstrate value in every interaction with customers and guests, so that we can positively impact our Antigua and Barbuda brand.

"Your enthusiasm to supercharge your abilities and deliver better than before is vital to all of us, as our nation embraces the transition period from severely limited tourism opportunities to emerging niche markets which you will all assist us to build and benefit from."

All participants welcomed the need to build-out tourism experiences beyond the visitors' accommodations, and to encompass the rich diversity of natural offerings that have been born out of, or enhanced during, the coronavirus shut-down.

Sir Rodney commended the ABHTA for its resolve, saying: "ABHTA continues to actively support the institutions which provide quality educational and learning opportunities to its members and their teams, even in challenging times. This is no easy task. Extensive education and training are required to manage the change process so that stakeholders can be inspired to embrace the change, and knowledge gaps [are] identified and addressed".

Participant Wayne Walk-

er, Watersports Supervisor, Jumby Bay, created the motto of the week: **'Spread the tourism love all over Antigua & Barbuda'**.

The Governor General joined Patrice Simon, executive director of the Antigua & Barbuda Hotel & Tourism Association in acknowledging that **'The relationship between our twin island nation and CHTA Education Foundation, a forward-thinking organization, has been long and strong. In fact, since the commencement of this alliance some 30 years ago, the CHTA Education Foundation has delivered over 100 scholarships to our nationals to study at the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute (ABHTI) and at several overseas**

**institutions of excellence'**.

Karolin Troubetzkoy, chairwoman of the CHTA Education Foundation, joined the participants by video to celebrate their successful completion of the workshop, offer hearty congratulations, and thank them for being the first in the region.

"These workshops have been energetic, focused and interactive days of learning, providing managers, employees and entrepreneurs with the tools to assist your interface with all customers using COVID-19 safe service techniques, while delivering considerate, flexible, service solutions, ensuring delighted customers!" she stated, while also reminding participants to, "Remain energized and

sparkle in your care of everyone."

Neil Forrester, treasurer and trustee of the CHTA-EE, was present daily to assist in the certificate ceremonies.

Vernon Jeffers, executive director of ABHTA, encouraged participants not to lose their love of hospitality, their love of creating special romantic moments for visitors, and to always remember Antigua and Barbuda is the heart of the Caribbean, with space for love.

A diverse spread of businesses now boasts supercharged managers and team members, ready to sparkle as they care for everyone.







# Launch of the Elkhorn Marine Conservancy & the Coral Reef Restoration Project

The Elkhorn Marine Conservancy (EMC) is a newly established non-profit dedicated to enhancing the resilience and local stewardship of Antigua's marine ecosystems through restoration, collaborative management and conservation.

Named after the iconic elkhorn coral that once defined many of Antigua's reefs, the EMC was founded in response to growing concerns over the deteriorating health of nearshore ecosystems.

Coral reefs have suffered extensive degradation in the past several decades due to a combination of factors, including regional disease epidemics in important coral and herbivore species, pollution, coastal development and dredging, overfishing, hurricanes and climate change.

The EMC strives to bring together diverse ocean users, marine scientists, managers and educators to reduce local threats, and revive and protect marine ecosystems.

The EMC's first large-scale initiative is a coral reef restoration project which aims to enhance the health and resilience of coral reefs by increasing the abundance and diversity of stony corals, particularly branching elkhorn and staghorn corals.

These corals are the backbone of Antigua's eastern coastline, dissipating strong wave activity from the Atlantic, providing complex habitat for fish and invertebrates, and supporting the area's important coastal and marine tourism sectors.

Now listed as critically endangered on the International Union on the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, we risk losing these species altogether along with the important ecosystem goods and services that coral reefs provide.

To help the reef recover, the EMC will grow a diversity of locally-sourced coral fragments in an underwater nursery, and, once

they've reached a sufficient size, plant them back onto degraded reefs. Throughout this project, the EMC strives to increase environmental stewardship and reduce local impacts to the environment through collaborative management with primary stakeholders, educational programming, outreach and advocacy.

The EMC will also conduct scientific research and incorporate innovative approaches into the project's design to increase the effectiveness, scalability and cost-efficiency of restoration activities throughout the region.

The project's pilot area is limited to the eastern coast of Antigua between Nonsuch Bay and Exchange Bay.

The EMC seeks to expand the scope of their efforts in the coming years.

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# Fresh board of directors installed to mark start of new Rotaract year

On Sunday 4th July, the Rotaract Club of Antigua officially installed its new executive board for the upcoming year 2021-2022.

Immediate past president (IPP) Ti-anna Harris handed over the reins of the youth service organization to Ms. Ashlee Christian as the club's 35th president.

In her remarks, IPP Harris, who served two consecutive terms as president, thanked the members of the Rotaract Club for entrusting her with the opportunity to live up to the club's motto, "Service Above Self".

She further expressed that some of the key projects during her tenure included: the donation of water tanks to persons within the disabled community; Christmas donations to the residents at Clarendon Psychiatric Hospital; the two most recent donations of supplies to the Greenbay Primary School; and an automated external defibrillator to the Cancer Center Eastern Caribbean.

In her closing comments, Harris thanked the immediate past president of the Rotary Club of Antigua, Mr. Kevin Silston, for his support on their clubs' joint projects. She also left a special charge to the incoming president, Ms. Ashlee Christian: "Always put the members of the club first." President Christian, who is currently an inspector at the Antigua and Barbuda Social Security Board, credits the Rotaract Club of Antigua for her personal and professional growth, having been a member since 2017. Over the years, she has served in numerous capacities, including treasurer, finance and fundraising director, vice president, and her most recent position – community service director.

In her first speech as president, Christian urged members to reflect on the reasons why they joined the club, while they continue to work towards a common goal, to serve. During her upcoming year as president, she expressed, it is her full intent to lead the organization with integrity, accountability, strategy and, most importantly, teamwork.

In addition to this, the new presi-

prise the Club's new board of directors. These individuals include: Ms. Martina Lewis, vice-president; Ms. Alaina Gomes, secretary; Ms. Lynma Burton, treasurer; Ms. Ti-anna Harris, immediate past president; Dr. Namadi Belle, community service director; Mr. Yhan Roberts, international service director; Ms. Roman-cier Edwards, club service director; Ms. Nikki Laville, professional de-



*Immediate past president Ti-anna Harris (left) with new president Ashlee Christian.*

dent acknowledged that the club's main resource is its members, and, as such, over the next 12 months, it is crucial to improve the quality of the membership experience, focusing heavily on recruitment, retention, and continuity.

In her final remarks, Christian expressed sincere gratitude to IPP Ti-anna Harris for her continued motivation and the opportunity to serve on her previous board of directors.

Working alongside president Christian, for the 2021-2022 Rotaract year, is a group of dynamic and professional young adults who com-

velopment director; and Ms. Jennell Willette, public relations officer.

For the upcoming year, under the theme "Serve. Lead. Empower. Change", president Christian notes that the club will continue to focus on the membership experience, in addition to increasing fundraising programs and service projects.

She further states that some of the initiatives that the club will be embarking on in the near future include a childhood obesity project in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Antigua, mental health initiatives and food drives; and the Mommy and Me programme.



# OSEC extends deadline for free online training

**Dear Editor:** Would you kindly assist us in advertising the attached Community Notice(s) through your respective media outlets from today through Monday 12th July 2021

We at the Labour Department's **One Stop Employment Centre (OSEC)** are working diligently to assist jobseekers find employment and/or training during this pandemic and closures of many local businesses in Antigua.

One Stop Employment Centre (OSEC) is a public employment services centre of the Labour Department that offers complimentary service to the community of Antigua and Barbuda (**FREE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**), including services to both jobseekers and employers.

Some of these services include (but not limited to) free monthly workshops, computer & QuickBooks classes, career counseling, resume and cover-letter assistance – in addition to recruitment and screening services to employers.

Our Centre is a part of the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Public Safety & Labour.

Overall, OSEC offers employment and training services to jobseekers, employers, and other stakeholders – at no cost to both jobseekers and employers!

Thank you kindly ... Warm regards,

**Sandra A. Abbott**  
OSEC Manager



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# Questioning unconstitutional appointments

**Dear Editor:** The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA), through its president, released the appointments of Technical Director and Referee Coordinator on Friday 2nd July 2021. Regrettably, these were done contrary to the ABFA's Constitution. The ABFA Constitution states in Article 32 (3) that the mandate of the president, vice-president, and members of the executive committee is for four years. They may be re-elected. These appointments came after the 4-year mandated term of the executive, which ended on 22 May 2021. Further, the process itself comes under scrutiny and contravenes Articles 34 and 35 of the Constitution. The ABFA Constitution states in Article 34 (Powers of the Executive Committee):

The Executive Committee -

(a) Shall pass decisions on all cases that do not come within the sphere of responsibility of the Congress or are not reserved for other bodies by law or under these statutes.

The decision was not discussed and voted on at an Executive Meeting. It was not ratified.

The ABFA Constitution states in Article 35 (Decisions):

1. The Executive Committee shall not engage in valid debate unless 5 of its members are present.

Five of the nine Executive members learned about the appointments just like the public.

With the above information, I am requesting that the president of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association rescind the appointments.

**Barbara Coates,**

Lightfoot, St. George's Parish,

Antigua

Monday 5th July 2021

## Sir Sydney Walling Highway road closure notice

The Project Implementation Management Unit (PIMU) hereby informs the public that road work on the Sir Sydney Walling Highway (SSWH) under the Second Road Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project is progressing satisfactorily and will result in diversions and road closures this week at night.

A section of SSWH will be closed

to All Through Traffic from the eastern end of Pares Village to Collins Road from 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday 7th July 2021 to 5:00 a.m. Thursday 8th July 2021.

Vehicular traffic traveling westward on SSWH, intending to get to Pares Village and/or continue westwards on SSWH, can divert left onto Collins Road, and then

right onto the Potworks Dam road and continue to the Potworks junction on SSWH.

Vehicular traffic going eastward on SSWH, intending to continue past Pares Village, shall divert right at the Potworks junction, continue past Potworks Dam, and turn left on Collins Road and continue to the junction with SSWH.



# The Big Break

*by Risa V*

If you have not discovered this already, listen carefully: the best opportunities come unexpectedly and have the smallest window of execution, so it is you who always need to be prepared.

Learn to capitalize on another party's single decision; turning one man's trash into your treasure when the pros outweigh the cons by far and at the best price.

The pandemic, without a doubt, has already presented some of these, as large companies and organizations (even the government) cut unnecessary costs or shift around assets to free up revenue and limit expenditure.

Yes, you heard correctly, but I am not speaking of the layoffs and business closures that resulted in unemployment. I am speaking of assets made available through sales when companies decide to forego certain

operating costs, maintenance of particular assets, or selling just to acquire more cash on hand. Other opportunities affecting demand – especially those consumer-related – have to be created. But the extra effort needed, with consistency, will definitely pay off. Opportunities like these have been presenting themselves long before the pandemic. In thriving times, for instance, second-hand became the new NEW. With upgrades happening so fast in every sector and industry, the desire to keep up enabled all classes of society to indulge and experience the best at a resale price.

Whether it's the opportunity to not have to incur any travel cost to obtain your Canadian visa, or West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) prioritizing the sale of shares to civil servants, be prepared to capitalize.

Then again, too, it is not all about capitalizing, but also getting the most for your

money; and this requires you to be prepared as well. For example, you will need to go to Barbados to get your US visa eventually. You have never seen the country before and an unexpected opportunity to get free accommodation to stay a few days has presented itself. However, you have in no way begun to accumulate the funds.

I feel the need to highlight this to my fellow citizens because it makes all the difference in the world. You can hustle hard every day, but it is that swift opportunity that can change your life. Regardless, you have to be prepared.

Know what you want from life and prioritize accumulating funds and other resources necessary to achieve them. It is never too early and, even when there seems to be nothing in sight, prepare the setup for the big takedown, because it has to come – even during COVID-19!

# US State Department links Jamaican cops to human trafficking

**Jamaica Observer** – The United States' (US) Department of State has expressed concern that some members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) could be involved in human trafficking.

In its 2021 Trafficking in Person Report, released late last week, the State Department said, "Some police allegedly facilitated or participated in sex trafficking."

The US has kept Jamaica in Tier 2 ranking which indicates that the Jamaican government does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.

"As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Jamaica, and traffickers exploit victims from Jamaica abroad.

"Sex trafficking of Jamaican women and children, including boys, reportedly occurs on streets and in nightclubs, bars, massage parlours, hotels, and private homes, including in resort towns," said the US State Department.

It noted that observers believe sex trafficking operations in Jamaica have become more clandestine as a result of the pandemic.

"Traffickers increasing-

ly use social media platforms and false job offers to recruit victims. Communities vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced labour include young women and children from poor households, child victims of sexual abuse, homeless LGBTQI+ youth, residents of Jamaica's poverty-stricken areas effectively controlled by criminal 'dons', migrant workers and workers in the informal sector, particularly on family farms and in markets and shops.

"Traffickers subject children and adults to forced begging, and women and children to domestic servitude. Girls, sometimes coerced by family members, are subjected to sex trafficking by men who provide monetary or material payment to the girls or their families in exchange for sex acts. Local observers report this form of child sex trafficking may be widespread in some communities," said the report.

It pointed out that children from rural Jamaica and possibly from other Caribbean countries who are sent to live with more affluent family members or acquaintances, sometimes become exploited in forced labour in private households, markets, or

shops. "Gang members may exploit children in forced begging or in forced criminal activity, including as lookouts, armed gunmen, or couriers of weapons and drugs. There were reports that criminal organisations exploited children in forced criminal activity in lotto-scamming.

"Pandemic mitigation measures exacerbated existing trafficking risks and increased the number of individuals vulnerable to trafficking, particularly among children who were not able to leave their homes or attend school for much of the year, and economically vulnerable households that relied on income from international tourism."

The report noted that many children are reported missing in Jamaica and charged that traffickers exploit some of these children in forced labour or sex trafficking.

"Traffickers have exploited Jamaican citizens in sex trafficking and forced labour abroad, including in other Caribbean countries, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Jamaican women have reported being charged high recruitment fees, being misled about their terms of employment, and compelled through threats to continue working in the United States' hospitality industry," said the report.





# Nevis to go into full 24-hour lock down for one week

**BVI News** - All employees of the police force, customs and immigration departments, prison officers, sea and air port authorities, members of residential institutions, among others, are now expected to be tested for COVID-19 "at least once per fortnight" following the latest upsurge in positive cases.

These – in addition to a re-implemented nighttime curfew from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. – are among a raft of new directives that health minister Carvin Malone announced Monday night to help bring the high transmission rate of the virus under control.

The health minister also noted that all vaccinated persons coming to the BVI will now be subjected to a rapid test upon arrival. This takes effect July 12 and will cost travellers \$50.

In explaining the process that went into these latest decisions, Malone said the Health Emergency Operations Centre met with members of the government and parliamentary opposition at the weekend and updated them on the escalating situation.

He said Cabinet then convened an emergency meeting to consider measures to address the upsurge. According to the Health Minister, vis-



***BVI minister of health and social development, Carvin Malone.***

its to Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) are now to be restricted for up to 14 days in the first instance, except for emergency cases.

He advised that residential establishments, including the Adina Donovan Home for the elderly, the Virgin Gorda Elderly Home, Rainbow Children's Home and Safe Haven Transitional Centre, among others, are also expected to restrict visitors for the next 14 days. Private and public schools, pre-schools, child care centres, summer programmes, as well as extra-curricular activities, are now mandated to cease all in-person activities with immediate effect.

This will be subject to review after seven days, the health minister said.

Provisions have been made for external and regional examinations to continue at public and private schools with approval from the health ministry, Malone stated.

With the exception of getting approval from the health ministry, all businesses are also to restrict their capacity to 65 persons at a time. This, however, is subject to all social distancing protocols being in place.

He also said all social gatherings, including weddings, funerals and faith-based gatherings, are to be limited to 25 persons

at a time, with immediate effect.

All ferries, Malone added, are to be limited to 65 persons at a time, subject to adequate social distancing protocols being maintained for the next 14 days in the first instance.

Hairdressers, barbers, gyms, bars, clubs and entertainment establishments are also expected to be closed for the next 14 days.

The Health Minister further stated that restaurants offering in-house dining are expected to now only house a maximum of 25 persons at a time – or one person per 36 square feet, inclusive of staff and patrons.

Malone further said that Britain will now aid the territory's vaccine rollout after the governor made an appeal to the UK government for more vaccines. This comes ahead of the impending July 31 expiration date of the BVI's current stock of vaccines. He said the government will do everything within its power to secure new vaccines if persons are willing to take the jabs.

Importantly, Malone stated that any new UK donations of vaccines would depend in large part on the number of persons receiving their first jab between now and July 31.



*Newly appointed prime minister of Haiti, Ariel Henry.*

# Haiti names new prime minister

**CMC** – President Jovenel Moïse has named his seventh prime minister since coming to office in 2017.

“I have appointed citizen Ariel Henry to the post of prime minister. He will have to form a government of openness, including the vital forces of the nation, solve the glaring problem of insecurity, and support the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) for the realization of the general elections and the referendum,” President Moïse said.

Henry replaces Claude Joseph who was appointed in April this year, two months after Moïse began ruling by executive order after the terms of most members of Parliament expired.

Moïse had unsuccessfully spent a year trying to get two different prime ministers through Parliament after the Lower Chamber of Deputies fired prime minister Jean-Henry Céant on March 18, 2020.

Haiti is facing a constitutional crisis with many Haitians saying they no longer recognize Moïse because they believe his term expired on February 7 under the current Constitution.

In a statement, Henry said that in his political life, “Loyalty, fidelity, respect for those who have anchored currents of thought in history, have been a compass for me, just like the meaning of the State.”

Outgoing prime minister Joseph said he wanted to congratulate Henry for having obtained the confidence of the president of the republic.

“His sense of the State and his love of the country will undoubtedly guide him in his efforts to create a government of consensus that will address the issues of the day, in particular security and elections.

“I thank the president of the republic for the confidence he has placed in me to lead the government ad interim over the past few

months. I am grateful to the entire government for everyone’s collaboration and support,” said Joseph.

In 2015, Henry had been named as the new minister of the interior and territorial communities (MICT), representing the opposition political party, INITE.

Late last month, the provisional electoral council (CEP) announced plans to stage the constitutional referendum as well as the legislative elections for the senate and deputy on Sunday, September 26.

Haiti had earlier announced the postponement of the constitutional referendum that was originally scheduled for June 27.

The referendum has been criticised by the opposition parties that claimed it had been unilaterally proposed by Moïse, with the head of state indicating that the referendum was necessary as the government moves to reform the constitution.



*Prime Minister of Saint Lucia,  
Allen Chastanet.*

# Saint Lucians head to the polls on July 26

**St. Lucia Times** – Prime Minister Allen Chastanet announced on Monday night that Saint Lucians will go to the polls on Monday July 26th 2021.

Nomination day will be on July 16th, the Prime Minister said in an address to the nation.

He said that, in keeping with the requirements of the Constitution, he on Monday advised the Governor General to dissolve parliament and issue the writ of elections.

“The circumstances of life, as we know it, now will mark this as one of the most important elections that any of us alive is likely to face in our lifetime,”

Chastanet asserted. “We truly are at a crossroad,” he said.

According to Chastanet, it was important that people listen and evaluate the plans and programmes being put forward by the political parties.

“This is an election for the ages,” the PM told his audience. “While the Labour Party has been beating pans, we have been busy making plans and these plans are for your future, plans which are designed to help hardworking Saint Lucians and to develop our country by moving it forward,” he declared.

“As we head into elections, I wish to advise you all that both

political parties have agreed to abide by protocols established by the Chief Medical Officer and the Police Commissioner with a view to keeping us all safe and healthy,” Chastanet said.

“During the campaign, let us treat each other with respect and kindness,” he urged.

The opposition Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) responded to the announcement of the election date with a post on its official Facebook page. “Saint Lucia, we are ready to serve. Finally, July 26, 2021. We are ready,” the party, which has been clamouring for Chastanet to ‘ring the bell’, declared.



# Iran begins process of making enriched uranium metal; US, others dismayed

**(Reuters)** – Iran has begun the process of producing enriched uranium metal, the UN atomic watchdog said on Tuesday, a move that could help it develop a nuclear weapon and which three European powers said threatened talks to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Iran's steps, which were disclosed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and which Tehran said were aimed at developing fuel for a research reactor, also drew criticism from the United States, which called them an "unfortunate step backwards".

US and European officials made clear that Iran's decision would complicate, and potentially torpedo, indirect US-Iranian talks seeking to bring both nations back into compliance with the 2015 deal which

was abandoned by former US President Donald Trump.

The deal imposed curbs on Iran's nuclear programme to make it harder for Tehran to develop fissile material for nuclear weapons in return for the lifting of economic sanctions. After Trump withdrew, Iran began violating many of its restrictions.

Tehran has already produced a small amount of uranium metal this year that was not enriched. That is a breach of the deal, which bans all work on uranium metal since it can be used to make the core of a nuclear bomb.

"Today, Iran informed the Agency that UO<sub>2</sub> (uranium oxide) enriched up to 20% U-235 would be shipped to the R&D laboratory at the Fuel Fabrication Plant in Esfahan, where it would be con-

verted to UF<sub>4</sub> (uranium tetrafluoride) and then to uranium metal enriched to 20% U-235, before using it to manufacture the fuel," an IAEA statement said.

A confidential IAEA report seen by Reuters said the agency had confirmed that Iran had taken the second of the four steps described, making clear it has begun the process.

Britain, France and Germany said on Tuesday they had "grave concern" about Iran's decision, which violates the nuclear deal formally named the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Iran has no credible civilian need for uranium metal R&D and production, which are a key step in the development of a nuclear weapon," they said in a joint statement issued by Britain's foreign ministry.

"With its latest steps, Iran is threatening a successful outcome to the Vienna talks, despite the progress achieved in six rounds of negotiations," they said, and urged Iran to return to the talks, which began in April and adjourned on June 20. No date has been set for a next round.

US State Department spokesman Ned Price said Washington was not setting a deadline for the talks but noted that, "As time proceeds, Iran's nuclear advances will have a bearing on our view of returning to the JCPOA."

Price said the United States found it "worrying" that Iran was continuing to violate the agreement "especially with experiments that have value for nuclear weapons research."

"It's another unfortunate step backwards for Iran," he said.



# Notre-Dame fire, lead pollution endangered life, lawsuit claims



*An estimated 400 tonnes of lead were burnt in the cathedral's roof during the blaze.*

**BBC** - Parisian authorities are facing legal action over the health threat from toxic lead particles released during the fire at the Notre-Dame Cathed-

ral. Hundreds of tonnes of lead within the cathedral's roof melted during the blaze in 2019.

It released toxic particles into the air, which settled in the local area.

A lawsuit accuses authorities of "gross negligence" for allowing people living in the city to be exposed to the harmful substance.

Lawyers for two local families whose children were allegedly exposed to lead dust at their homes and schools, along with a health association and a trade union, say authorities endangered life by not reacting to the risk of lead poisoning.

"Despite the scale of the fire and knowledge about the risk of pollution and contamination ... no precaution in particular was taken by the authorities involved for more than three months after the fire," their legal complaint says, according to AFP news agency.

A total of 400 tonnes of lead were reportedly dispersed over the French capital during the fire on 15 April 2019.

"Children (in creches and schools), neighbours and workers, have clearly been exposed to the risk of lead exposure," the complaint reads.

"These facts amount to

the crime of endangering the lives of others."

A simulation carried out in 2019 reportedly found particles had spread up to 50km (31 miles) from the cathedral.

The square in front of the cathedral, which is being rebuilt, was closed again to the public in May this year after tests revealed high concentrations of toxic lead particles.

Several months after the fire, city authorities ordered a deep-clean of schools in areas close to the cathedral, while children and pregnant women living nearby were urged to have blood tests.

The complaint says the city, run by socialist mayor Anne Hidalgo, withheld information from school directors and failed to act quickly enough. The mayor's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

It also targets the city's police department, the culture ministry, and regional health authorities.

This is the second legal action against the authorities over lead levels.

French President Emmanuel Macron has vowed to rebuild the cathedral by 2024.

# Spain says non-consensual sex is rape, toughens sexual violence laws



*Women in Madrid protest against sexual violence on May 25, 2021.*

**CNN** - The Spanish government approved a law on Tuesday to define all non-consensual sex as rape, part of a legislative overhaul that toughens penalties for sexual harassment and mandates more support systems for victims.

It approved the bill five years after what became known as the 'wolf pack' case in which five men gang-raped an 18-year old woman at Pamplona's bull-running festival, causing public outrage and prompting calls to reform laws on sexual violence.

The draft still requires parliamentary approval, which is expected by the end of the year.

Based around a "yes means yes" model, which qualifies any non-consenting sex as rape, the law will bring Spain into line with 11 other European countries, including Sweden, Portugal and Britain, that use similar legal definitions.

"What the new law does is put the victim at the center of the public response," government spokesperson Maria Jesus Montero told a news conference. "Silence or passivity does not mean consent."

Under existing legislation, a perpetrator must have used physical violence or intimidation for an assault to be classified as rape.

Stalking and street harassment, considered misdemeanors under current legislation, will become crimes, as will female genital mutilation.

Gang rape will be considered an aggravating factor entailing prison sentences of up to 15 years to deter gang crimes similar to others that have shocked Spaniards. In parallel, the measures call for the creation of a 24-hour sexual assault helpline and specialized children's homes for underage victims.

Spain has long sought to position itself at the forefront of sexual politics and counter prevailing macho attitudes. It legalized gay marriage in 2007

and introduced a pioneering gender violence law in 2004.

Last week the cabinet passed a draft law to allow anyone over 14 to legally change their gender without a medical diagnosis or hormone therapy.

Protests erupted across Spain on Monday night in response to the killing of a gay man who was beaten to death in what appeared to be a homophobic attack in the northern city of La Coruna at the weekend.

Police in Madrid charged protesters with batons, prompting the government to open an investigation into their conduct.



# US Republican Rep Greene says 'no one cares' about Delta variant

**Aljazeera** - A controversial rising star in the United States Republican Party, Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, has tweeted comments dismissive of the threat from the Delta variant of COVID-19 as President Joe Biden, a Democrat, pushes for greater acceptance of vaccines in the US amid a newly rising death toll in some areas.

"No one cares about the Delta variant or any other variant," Representative Greene, a newly elected member of Congress from Georgia, said in a string of tweets she called a "message from America to the Swamp" unleashed on July 5.

"They are over COVID & there is no amount of fear-based screaming from the media that will ever force Americans to shut down again," Greene said.

Prompting a backlash on Twitter, Greene's comments are another sign of how the response to the coronavirus pandemic in the US has been politicised as the nation misses a goal set by President Biden for a 70 percent adult vaccination rate by July 4.

Fewer than 60 percent of the US adult population has been fully vaccinated, according to the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

More than 605,000 Americans have died and 33.7 million have been infected by COVID-19, according to a tally by the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

US COVID-19 infections, hospitalisations and deaths have declined nationwide but are increasing in some areas of the country as the more infectious Delta variant spreads.

Heavily Republican states like Idaho, Wyoming, Louisiana and Mississippi have only reached a 40

percent vaccination threshold, according to US data.

Biden was meeting at the White House on Tuesday with his team of COVID-19 advisers and announced plans to renew the US government's push to get more Americans vaccinated.

"The best thing you can do to

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the US's top government infectious disease expert, said on July 4 in a US television interview that more than 99 percent of people who have died in the US in the past month from COVID-19 were not vaccinated.

"If you look at the number of deaths, about 99.2 percent of them



*US Republican politician Marjorie Taylor Greene is dismissing the threat of the Delta variant of COVID-19. She led chants of 'Fire Fauci' at a Trump rally on June 26.*

protect yourself and your family and the people you care about the most, is get vaccinated," Biden said, urging Americans to get the vaccine as a "patriotic" act.

The US government is winding down mass vaccination centres and placing new emphasis on door-to-door community outreach and getting the vaccine into the hands of doctors and local health care providers.

Biden said the US would deploy COVID-19 "surge response teams" comprised of personnel from the CDC, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other agencies to help states and localities confront new outbreaks expected in communities with large numbers of unvaccinated people.

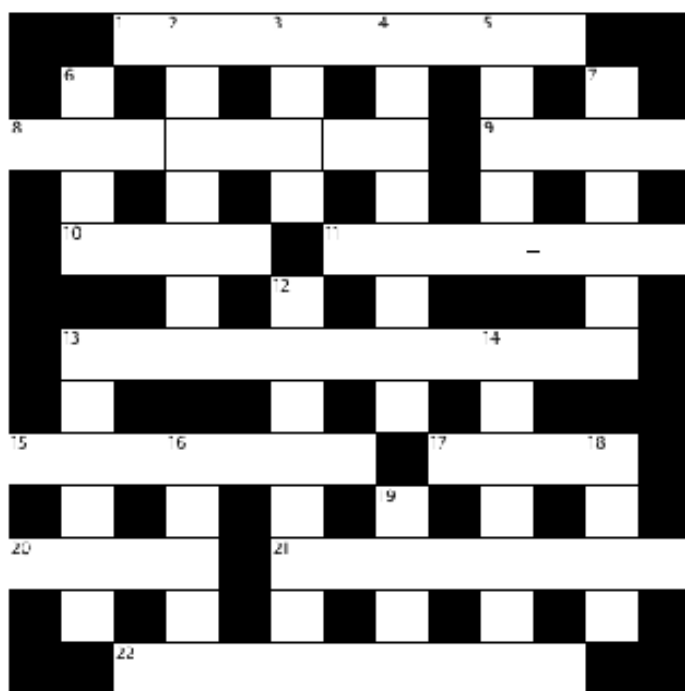
are unvaccinated," Fauci told NBC's Meet the Press.

The Delta variant is surging worldwide and prompting renewed mask requirements and distancing in other nations even as the US seeks to move past the deadly pandemic that has killed more than 600,000 people in the country. The Delta variant is now the dominant strain in California, the US's largest state.

Greene, a supporter of the conspiracy theorist group QAnon before her 2020 run for office, has made a name for herself in the House of Representatives with controversial and combative comments.

## QUICK CROSSWORD

Speedy crossword No 1,335



## ACROSS

- 1 Symbol for the word "and" (9)  
 8 Intermittently (3,3,2)  
 9 Quote (4)  
 10 Freshwater fish (4)  
 11 Panacea (4-3)  
 13 Streamlined (11)  
 15 White of an egg (7)  
 17 Off-straight (4)  
 20 Killer whale (4)  
 21 Moment of revelation (8)  
 22 Anyhow (9)

## DOWN

- 2 Wander at random (7)  
 3 Whirlpool (4)  
 4 Positive, optimistic (8)  
 5 Suitable position (5)  
 6 Some way away (4)  
 7 Letter in sloping script (6)  
 12 Indolence (8)  
 13 Attraction, fascination (6)  
 14 Strike while the iron is hot (4,3)  
 16 Edict, decree (5)  
 18 Become weaker (4)  
 19 Prospect; opinion (4)

## YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

## ♈ ARIES | Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Some people might think you're brash, but if you go out of your way to be sociable, you can win them over. You could easily work at cross purposes with someone who is more ambitious and less warmhearted than you are.

## ♉ TAURUS | Apr. 20-May 20

When you love someone, you want them to have the best that money can buy. Don't spend carelessly or buy something based on an attractive wrapper. Investigate before you invest in something.

## ♊ GEMINI | May 21-June 20

Although your heartstrings are plucked, it may be wishful thinking that makes you believe you hear the song of true love. For some reason, a romantic spark may refuse to catch fire. It's probably best to stay in the friend zone.

## ♋ CANCER | June 21-July 22

Apply everyday organizational methods to stay on track with your budget. For instance, you could add some reminders to your calendar to be sure that bills are paid on time. Focus on achieving joint goals with a partner.

## ♌ LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

You may be motivated to place duty ahead of pleasure. You can do well with any task that requires quick thinking and organizational skills. It might appear that a partner is too negative and holds you back from doing what you think is best.

## ♍ VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Use your powers of persuasion and a friendly demeanor to arrive at a compromise that pleases everyone. You may encounter more thorns than roses while performing a tiresome job, but you'll be well compensated.

## ♎ LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22

Never lose sight of what's truly essential to your happiness. Endless wishing without concrete efforts can't make your fantasies come true, so take action to get what you want. A friend may challenge you to think logically.

## ♏ SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Unwavering faith in a fulfilling future can reveal limitless possibilities. You could be empowered by a passing opportunity if you have the foresight to accept it. Maintain a positive attitude about anything important in your life.

## ♐ SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

that glitters is not gold, and not all things that attract your attention are worth pursuing. This isn't an ideal time to begin a new romantic relationship because you might project your idealistic fantasies onto others.

## ♑ CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You may be consumed by ambition and focused on making headway toward material success. You could miss out on opportunities if you take too much time to prepare for business projects or meetings.

## ♒ AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

When you're too wrapped up in your own ambitions, you might inadvertently push away those who admire you the most. You could underestimate someone's skills and talents. Do your best to handle obligations as promised.

## ♓ PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Being vague or keeping your intentions private may be the technique you think will help avoid criticism. However, this may leave some people mystified. Be more straightforward to overcome someone's concerns.



# Preview: NBA Finals



## **Phoenix Suns versus Milwaukee Bucks**

When the Milwaukee Bucks eliminated the Atlanta Hawks, it meant that they were on their way to the NBA Finals for the third time in franchise history. Interestingly, it is also the Phoenix Suns' third trip to the NBA Finals, although Phoenix have been more recently – in 1993 while the Bucks last appeared in the NBA Finals in 1974 – before all of its team

members were born. The Milwaukee Bucks have one NBA Championship (1971), while the Phoenix Suns have never won an NBA Championship. They were on the losing side on each of their two previous appearances in 1976 and 1993. The Suns lost in seven games to the Boston Celtics in 1976, while they lost to the Chicago Bulls – then two time defending champions in 1993.

The Suns have the advantage, having won

both of their two regular season games against the Bucks. In addition, they have been resting and preparing for the Bucks, as they wrapped up their series with the Clippers a week ago. The Suns cannot afford for Devin Booker or Chris Paul to struggle as they often did against the Clippers, even without Kawhi Leonard, or else it will be a short series. The Bucks, on the other hand, have shown that they have a good supporting cast to take up

the slack from the Greek Freak, who suffered a hyperextended knee during Game 4 against the Atlanta Hawks.

The Bucks will be hoping for a healthy Giannis Antetokounmpo as they have the most to lose in the NBA Finals. Giannis has those pair of MVP awards and no rings. Milwaukee is the better defensive team, brings the best player, and the individual matchups are mainly in the Bucks' favor.



# England forced to select complete new team against Pakistan

**CARDIFF, Wales** - England have been forced to select a new team for the Pakistan ODI series after seven positive COVID-19 tests pushed the entire squad into isolation.

Three England players and four backroom staff have tested positive for COVID-19, with the rest of the squad deemed close contacts.

The first ODI is on Thursday in Cardiff, and will still go ahead. Ben Stokes will return to the England side as captain after several weeks out with a fractured finger, despite Eoin Morgan initially saying it would be too soon for the all-rounder to be considered.

Chris Silverwood was not in charge of the ODI series against Sri Lanka as he was taking a break and will be available to return as head coach. "We have been mindful that the emer-

gence of the Delta variant, along with our move away from the stringent enforcement of bio secure environments, could increase the chances of an outbreak," said Tom Harrison, chief executive at the ECB. "We made a strategic choice to try to adapt protocols, in order to support the overall wellbeing of our players and management staff who have spent much of the last 14 months living in very restricted conditions.

"Overnight we have worked swiftly to identify a new squad, and we are grateful to Ben Stokes who will return to England duties to captain.

"We also recognize the impact this news will have on our first-class counties and their men's playing squads and thank them, along with our partners Sky and Royal London, for their ongoing support in dealing with this pan-

demic." Former England captain Nasser Hussain praised the ECB for the way they have handled the COVID bubble, but says the latest outbreak will cause "absolute chaos".

"It shows how well England and the ECB have done over the last 15 months during COVID times to keep it out of the bubble, whether it was the completely tight bubble, something that has been eased slightly, and I think they had to ease that bubble slightly," he said.

"Cricketers have been going around the world in bubbles and, just for the sake of their mental health, when they turn up to the ground and see normal society out there and being relaxed slightly, then that's what they have to do with their players.

"It's now got in the camp and now they will have to react."



# West Indies Make Clean Sweep against Pakistan Women



Stefanie Taylor

Stafanie Taylor gave one of the greatest performances in the history of women's Twenty20 cricket as she piloted West Indies Women to a huge victory over Pakistan Women in the third CG Insurance T20I on Sunday.

The inspirational captain was sensational with the ball, taking a hat-trick in the final over to end with 4 for 17 as Pakistan made 102. She then top-scored with 43 not out as the home team strolled to 106 for 4 off 19.1 overs to make it three wins in a row and a clean sweep of the series.

Taylor became the second West Indian woman to take a hat-trick at international level when she removed Fatima Sana, Diana Baig, and Anam Amin. The previous hat-trick for West Indies Women was by Anisa Mohammed against South Africa in

2018. Mohammed also bowled well to end with impressive figures of 3 for 24 off her four overs.

When the West Indies batted, Taylor added 41 for the fourth wicket with Chadean Nation (20) and then an unbroken fifth-wicket stand of 48 with left-hander Kycia Knight, who ended on 24 not out.

Speaking to CWI Media after the match, Taylor said: "I wasn't thinking wicket (after second consecutive wicket) to be honest ... We know runs were more on the forefront and trying to restrict them not getting to 115, because I knew that the wickets coming down would be kind of hard to bat on. (Going out to bat) I wouldn't say panic but I knew that today was the day that I had to step up ... I just thought that the wicket today was try to

get yourself in and once you're in, you know that you can go big and I think that was my plan ..."

West Indies Women's head coach Courtney Walsh was overall pleased with the showing and is looking forward to developing this side into the future superstars of West Indies Women's Cricket.

Coach Walsh told CWI Media, "The experience and exposure would have done them a world of good. It was good to get them ... playing and I'm expecting a better performances in the 50-over series. It's good to get the A-team girls playing and for women's cricket it's tremendous ... So getting a chance now and to expose so many girls is fantastic for us because we can see what they're like in competition."

## Football: ABFA Appoints Technical Director



**EVERTON GONSALVES**  
ABFA PRESIDENT

**KELESHA ANTOINE**  
REFEREE  
COORDINATOR

**SOWERBY GOMES**  
ABFA  
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

**ROHAN HECTOR**  
ABFA  
GENERAL SECRETARY

## Breaking News!!!



Former national football captain and Aston Villa player Sowerby Gomes has been appointed the new Technical Director of Football by the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA).

Gomes is the technical director of the Villa Lions Academy where he is responsible for the development of many national players

while providing a pathway to university education for several talented players.

Gomes was the recipient of a similar scholarship that enabled him to complete university studies in the field of accounting.

Gomes, who is replacing the late Rolston 'Debu' Williams, is nationally admired for his love, passion

and dedication to young athletes. Gomes is also nationally loved by football enthusiasts.

Meanwhile, the ABFA has also announced the appointment of Kelesha Antoine as its Referee Coordinator.

**DEWS**