

Appointed to Serve Michael Browne Returns

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PM Browne begs public to accept vaccines, boosters - Pg 3
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Hon. Michael Browne receiving his Instruments of Appointment on Monday from H.E., Governor General Sir Rodney Williams

Photo Credit: Government House.

Michael Browne returns to Cabinet on Wednesday



Hon. Michael Browne

Michael Browne will return to Cabinet this week having pledged to fulfil the mandate entrusted to him by the people of Antigua and Barbuda as part of the administration of Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

In front of a small gathering at Government House on Monday, Browne took the oaths of office, allegiance and secrecy, becoming Minister of The Creative Industries and Innovation.

After receiving his instruments of

appointment, the All Saints West MP expressed gratitude for the confidence Prime Minister Browne and his Cabinet have placed in him. He added that he is now looking ahead as he prepares to continue making his contribution to national development as part of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

"I accept this responsibility, I accept this challenge and I do affirm that I will do my very best, Your Excellency, to carry out the expectations of the office," Browne assured.

He highlighted the importance of policy makers being innovative in the decision making process in order to deal with the challenges that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"...COVID presents our people, our economy with very challenging times, and for these challenging times it requires that we ourselves - both as leaders and citizens - immerse ourselves in creative ideas to ensure that our economy, our government and our people continue to move on."

In his remarks, Governor General Sir Rodney Williams told the gathering he has followed Michael Browne's career and is confident he has the talent and experience to lead what he described as an "important ministry."

"You bring to this job a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience which will guide you in directing this ministry. I think these experiences, and your education, will serve you well in this new portfolio," Sir Rodney noted.

He urged the MP to strike a balance between family, constituency and service to country, charging him with being, "...just and fair in your actions and in carrying out your job. We will expect you to do that without fear or favour, without malice or ill will to any."

Michael Browne will be welcomed tomorrow by the Cabinet at its first meeting for 2022.



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Michael Browne on new ministry: “I look forward to this; it’s very exciting!”

Minister of Creative Industries and Innovation, Michael Browne, intends to familiarise himself with the government’s policies before engaging advisors and stakeholders to chart the way forward for the new ministry.

Speaking to reporters after he was sworn into office yesterday, the All Saints West MP acknowledged that he lacks expertise in his new post and said he will be relying on those who possess the knowledge and talent required to advance the work of the Ministry of Creative Industries and Innovation.

“I’m not an expert in this field. So then having grasped the government’s policy, to sit with the stakeholders to then understand how we can best do a merging of the two. So I look forward to this, it’s very exciting,” Browne explained.

He believes his ministry, “...can be quite instrumental in doing its part to help to support the continued growth that our prime minister talks about.”

Before his resignation, Browne served as Minister of Education, Science and Technology, a post he said served him well. He is expecting to draw on the experience gained in education when unveiling his plans and programmes.



Hon. Michael Browne and Family after receiving his Instruments of Appointment on Monday from H.E., Governor General Sir Rodney Williams

“I think in my new role it does provide opportunities. Creativity calls for education, innovation calls for education but allows me to be a bit more versatile in terms

of accessing different disciplines, different sectors of the economy to create that immediate transformation effect that is needed,” Mr. Browne remarked.

PM Browne vaccination appeal: “I beg you; get vaccinated!”



PM Gaston Browne appealed to members of the public to become vaccinated during Sunday's National Service of Thanksgiving and Prayer

During the National Service of Thanksgiving and Prayer, Prime Minister Gaston Browne made an appeal to those who have not received one of the approved vaccines to do so.

In his remarks, Browne said although the nation has achieved a vaccination rate of sixty percent, efforts to provide even more people with protection from the severe effects of COVID-19 cannot be abandoned as the threat has not yet passed.

“I can't end these brief remarks without reminding all of us of our responsibility to get vaccinated. I know that there are many of you who believe that you will be protected exclusively by your faith, but the Good Book also says that God helps those who help themselves. So I believe there is an expectation for us to help

ourselves in order to surmount these challenges.

“And those of us who are vaccinated - at least sixty percent of the population - we too have an obligation to encourage others who are unvaccinated to become vaccinated recognising the threat of COVID-19 and its variants,” said Browne.

While an official statement has not yet come from health authorities as to the presence of the highly transmissible Omicron variant among the local population, the prime minister hinted that it is in circulation. He continued that every available measure to combat the potentially deadly disease, including vaccination, must be taken advantage of to restore normalcy and ensure economic recovery.

“Even though it is not proven as

yet, at least not scientifically, we know that Omicron is here. And based on informal information we have had so far, Omicron is spreading rapidly within the society. So I say to each of you to protect yourselves.

“If you are fully vaccinated, get boosted. If you are not vaccinated, I beg you, for the sake of your family members, your children, your grandparents and even your parents, I beg you to get vaccinated, the prime minister pleaded.

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, Antigua and Barbuda has recorded 4,283 cases and 119 deaths as a result of the COVID-19 virus.

An updated COVID-19 dashboard has not been published by health authorities since the start of 2022.

ABWU secures raise for hotel workers

The Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union has secured a raise for its members who are employed by hotels that are members of the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association and signatory to the ABHTA &

ABWU collective agreements.

Effective 1st January, 2022 these hospitality workers will receive an increase of \$16.00 dollars weekly.

This increase comes as a result of negotiated collective agreements for the period of 1st January 2019 – 31st December 2021.

The \$16.00 dollar increase referred to should have taken effect 1st January 2021, however, due to the catastrophic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry, it was deferred to January 2022.

The Antigua & Barbuda Workers' Union expressed its pleasure over the fact that employees in the hotel industry will now benefit from this increase, having suffered precipitously from the lockdowns and travel restrictions of the past two years.

The ABWU also noted that negotiations for the present collective bargaining period of 1st January 2022 – 31st, December 2024 are ongoing with the ABHTA, and indicated that future announcements will be made.



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Harold Lovell gives preview of UPP’s election campaign agenda in New Year address



UPP leader, Harold Lovell

The leader of Antigua and Barbuda’s main opposition United Progressive Party (UPP), Harold Lovell, has given a telling glimpse of the political angles his party is likely to attack in general elections which could very well be held before the end of this year.

In a concise, and somewhat sombre toned, new year address to the nation, Lovell said 2022 has brought with it the uncertainty and difficulties of 2021, specifically with regard to the devastating social and economic impact the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought on the nation.

“Many families are still reeling from the loss of loved ones, while others continue to ‘catch as catch can’ without steady employment,” said the UPP’s leader.

Giving a clear sign of the issues his party intends to appeal to the

electorate on in order to garner support, he raised the issue of delayed payments to pensioners and vexing issues related to the country’s infrastructure.

The political new year address continued with the promise that his organisation will very shortly unveil its plan for, “redeeming Antigua and Barbuda and charting a course to shore up our economy; to expand the social safety net for vulnerable persons; to improve the delivery of services and to once again, put people first through new job opportunities.”

Lovell indicated that “health, education and improving the quality of life” were among the priorities of his party which has “dreams and plans”.

Mention was also made of the UPP’s “ambition” to make the twin-island nation more attractive to both foreign and local investors.

Forecast for the next 48 hours

	Monday		Tuesday				Wednesday
	Afternoon	Evening	Night	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Forecast							
Temperature	28 °C	25 °C	24 °C	24 °C	28 °C	26 °C	25 °C
	Mostly sunny.	Mostly clear.	Mostly clear.	Mostly sunny.	More sun than clouds.	A few showers. Passing clouds.	A few showers. Mostly clear.
Feels Like	30 °C	26 °C	25 °C	25 °C	30 °C	27 °C	26 °C
Wind Speed	21 km/h	18 km/h	15 km/h	17 km/h	19 km/h	23 km/h	21 km/h
Wind Direction	E ←	ENE ↙	ENE ↙	ENE ↙	ENE ↙	ENE ↙	ENE ↙
Humidity	62%	71%	77%	77%	63%	71%	67%
Dew Point	20 °C	20 °C	20 °C	20 °C	20 °C	20 °C	19 °C
Visibility	18 km	18 km	16 km	16 km	17 km	6 km	17 km
Probability of Precipitation	2%	2%	4%	1%	17%	39%	22%
Amount of Rain	-	-	-	-	-	0.8 mm	-

* Updated Monday, 3 January 2022 08:21:44 Saint John’s time - Weather by CustomWeather, © 2022

Ziggy Beazer remanded to HMP

The man charged with the murder of 64 year-old Leroy Caesar was remanded to her Majesty's Prison yesterday.

Ziggy Beazer appeared before Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh in St. John's Magistrates' Court.

He was not required to plead, since the charge against him is indictable, neither was he granted bail, since the lower court does not have jurisdiction so to do in such cases. Bail must be sought in the High Court.

Both Caesar and Beazer were be-



Ziggy Beazer

ing held in the same cell at St. John's Police Station on 30th December, 2021 when a fight allegedly broke out. Moments after, the 64 year-old was discovered unresponsive. He

was rushed to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center where he was pronounced dead.

Beazer spent seven years in prison for murder and was released after he was declared unfit for trial, following a schizophrenia diagnosis.

In court yesterday, the chief magistrate set committal proceedings for 23rd March, 2022.

No order was made for the accused to undergo a mental evaluation.



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Air Canada suspends flights to Antigua & Barbuda



International carrier, Air Canada, has suspended all flights to Antigua and Barbuda. The Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Board revealed the decision made by Air Canada/Air Canada Vacations which came into effect on 31st December, 2021.

Air Canada resumed flights to Antigua and Barbuda in October 2021 after more than a year's absence following the start of the pandemic. This

follows new, sweeping restrictions and international advisories issued by the Canadian government directed at its citizens and residents in the face of another surge in COVID-19 infections. In addition to travel advisories, several provinces have returned to online schooling, bans on indoor dining and restrictions on the size of gatherings.

The Canadian Federal Government

has strongly cautioned its citizens against non-essential travel. This in turn made it impossible for the airline to maintain its flight schedule to Antigua and Barbuda and other countries in the region.

This has also resulted in significant inconveniences to passengers, which the airline has acknowledged. Air Canada says it will be cancelling passenger flights according to departure date and asked for the patience and understanding of their partners, "during these difficult times which are impacting the entire travel sector."

Tens of thousands of people around the world have been suffering airline cancellations since the peak of the December holiday season. The cancellations are all the result of fears over the latest COVID-19 variant, Omicron, which has proven to be far more transmissible, though potentially less deadly, than the Delta strain.



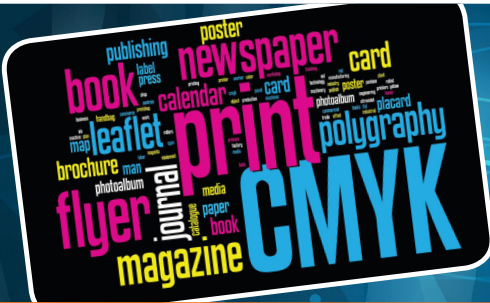
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These 5 pieces of advice can supercharge your finances in 2022



CNBC - When it comes to accomplishing your New Year's resolutions, starting the year off on the right foot can make all the difference.

The same can be said about finance: Adopting good money habits in January can literally pay off by December.

These five pieces of advice can help you prepare for a financially successful 2022:

Start by analysing your previous year's budget

Any good financial plan starts with a budget, and analysing your 2021 expenditures can help you create smart goals for the new year.

"You can look at the past year and see what you've done and what you're happy with," says Kasia Marczyk, president of West Palm Beach, Florida-based Anchor Wealth Group. "Looking at the past helps you figure out what you really want to spend going forward."

Looking at the past helps you figure out what you really want to spend going forward.

Part of that analysis should include the spending mistakes you made. But Dennis Morton, a co-founder of Allentown, Pennsylvania-based Morton Brown Family Wealth, says

it's equally important to "give yourself credit" for what you did well.

"Look back over the last 12 months and say, 'What did I learn?'" Mor-

ton says. "Give yourself a couple of wins here to recognize that you are capable of making positive change, and then turn around and say, 'Now, what little steps can I take toward the bigger goals?'"

Once you've built your new budget for the year, consider revisiting it once per month — especially if you're a first-time budgeter, Marczyk says. That way, you can continually make sure that everything's staying on track and, if necessary, make adjustments in real time.

"Every month is really critical," she says. "Because then you can see where you are [in your progress]."

Write down your specific financial goals

If you don't write down your goals, you'll have a harder time accomplishing them.

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Cont. from page 10

That applies to short-term goals, like saving up to buy a car or house, and long-term goals like building a retirement nest egg. And it's particularly important for couples, where communication about finances is key.

"If it's all in one person's head, it can be confusing when you start talking about big decisions," Morton says. "I think putting it down on paper makes it easier to communicate when there's more than one person involved in the financial decision making."

Putting [your goals] down on paper makes it easier to communicate when there's more than one person involved in the financial decision making.

Laurie Allen, a CFP at Long Beach, California-based LA Wealth Management, takes it a step further: Couples should intentionally brainstorm their financial goals together, she says.

"If you're married, sit down with your spouse and write down what you want to accomplish," she says. "So that you can tell your money what to do throughout the year, versus your money telling you what to do all year long."

Build a habit around saving or investing

Often, the biggest obstacle to achieving a financial goal is simple: People don't prioritise them properly.

"If you set up a savings account and say, 'OK, let me see what's left over at the end of the month, and I'll save that,' then you're usually not going to get where you need to be," Marczyk says.

Instead, when you receive your paycheck, set aside the money you want to save or invest first, and start spending once that's done. The same concept applies to any end-of-year raise or bonus you just received: That extra money can help supercharge your savings and investments, right out of the gate.

"It's the perfect time to go in and save a little bit more," says Charles Sachs, chief investment officer at Miami-based Kaufman Rossin Wealth. "Before it hits your greedy

little hands, put some of it into your investments."

Invest in your financial literacy

Sachs tells his clients that if they make a focused effort to learn about money — even if they aren't interested in financial topics — they can make informed financial decisions throughout the rest of their lives.

"Pretend your new favourite hobby is finance and learning about money and investing," he says. "Find your guru. Maybe it's some influencer on TikTok who is really good with money on saving. Maybe it's a magazine or a book. There's a lot of good information about the basic blocking and tackling out there."

Training your brain to learn about money will arguably pay more dividends than anything else you ever do.

"Training your brain to learn about money will arguably pay more dividends than anything else you ever do," Sachs says.

No matter what, get started immediately

It's easy to find excuses for why the timing isn't right. Maybe it's a down market, or you're dealing with personal issues. Either way, Morton says, you should find a way to get started immediately.

"The thing that's so frustrating sometimes to hear is when people think that there's a right time to start," Morton says. "It reminds me of that proverb: The best time to plant a tree was last year, and the next-best time is right now."

His rationale: The sooner you get started, the more time your money has to grow. And when you're planning for decades in the future, even a rough first year of saving or investing should barely be a blip on your radar.

"Once you start putting it into the context of thinking long-term, then it starts to take away some of that fear," he says. "[A month or a year is] really just too short a term of time to be concerned about."

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UWI leadership rift deepens



University of the West Indies Chancellor, Robert Bermudez

Vice Chancellor Sir Hilary Beckles is investigating the ceremonial head of The University of the West Indies (UWI) Chancellor Robert Bermudez, using a committee that reports to him, as a rift between the top two leaders enters unprecedented and “dangerous” territories.

This is the latest act in the drama unfolding at the 73-year-old institution that intensified after a damning 2020 governance report commissioned by Bermudez was released, which critics believe was aimed at tarring Beckles’ stewardship.

It is not clear when the committee started its work, but the body – chaired by Jamaican lawyer and former president of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, Milton Samuda – wrote to the chancellor on December 13, 2021, giving him 72 hours to answer 15 questions.

Those questions – and the committee’s remit based on the terms of reference of the so-called UWI Human Resource Management Review Committee – relate to the circumstances under which Beckles’ contract was renewed for another six years last April.

It means Beckles’ six-member committee is investigating not just Bermudez, but also the University Council, The UWI’s highest decision-making body that is chaired by

the chancellor.

Beckles, as vice chancellor, is the regional university’s executive head.

At its contentious annual meeting on April 30, the council approved the renewal of Beckles’ contract despite objections from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, two of 17 contributing Caribbean nations to whom the financially struggling but global-ranked institution is ultimately accountable.

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One killed in attempted assassination of Haitian Prime Minister

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti (CMC) – A widescale investigation has been launched following the attempted assassination of Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry on Sunday morning.

According to police reports, at least one person was killed and several others injured in the city of Gonaives as Henry and his entourage left a church service that was held to commemorate the country's 218th anniversary of political independence.

As heavily armed gangs that control the area fired in the direction of the official delegation, the Prime Minister was quickly removed from the area.

The police say that the man, whose identity has not been released, was killed in the middle of the shootout between an armed gang and the security personnel who were protecting the Prime Minister and other officials.

The mass was held despite reported threats from the armed group, which warned Henry not to come to the city.

Following the incident, the remaining events to celebrate Independence Day were cancelled.

Henry, who was installed as prime minister weeks after President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated at his home in early July, has been focusing on trying to clamp down on the increase in crime and violence across the country.



Prime Minister of Haiti, Ariel Henry



"Secure and Serve"

The public is hereby informed that the Antigua and Barbuda Customs and Excise Division will be closed at 12pm on Tuesday 4th January 2022 for the funeral service of our sister Zorina Benjamin.

Normal business operation will resume on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

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Prince Andrew accuser's 2009 deal with Jeffrey Epstein made public



Prince Andrew, Virginia Roberts and Ghislaine Maxwell in 2001

Virginia Giuffre agreed not to sue anyone connected to Jeffrey Epstein who could be described as a “potential defendant”, a 2009 damages settlement against the sex offender shows.

The document, disclosed by a New York court, reveals the financier paid her \$500,000 (£371,000) to end her claim. Ms Giuffre is suing the Duke of York in a civil case for allegedly sexually assaulting her when she was a teenager.

He has consistently denied the claims.

Ms Giuffre alleges that 20 years ago she was trafficked to the prince by Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell.

The document was released ahead of a critical hearing on Tuesday in the civil case involving Prince Andrew.

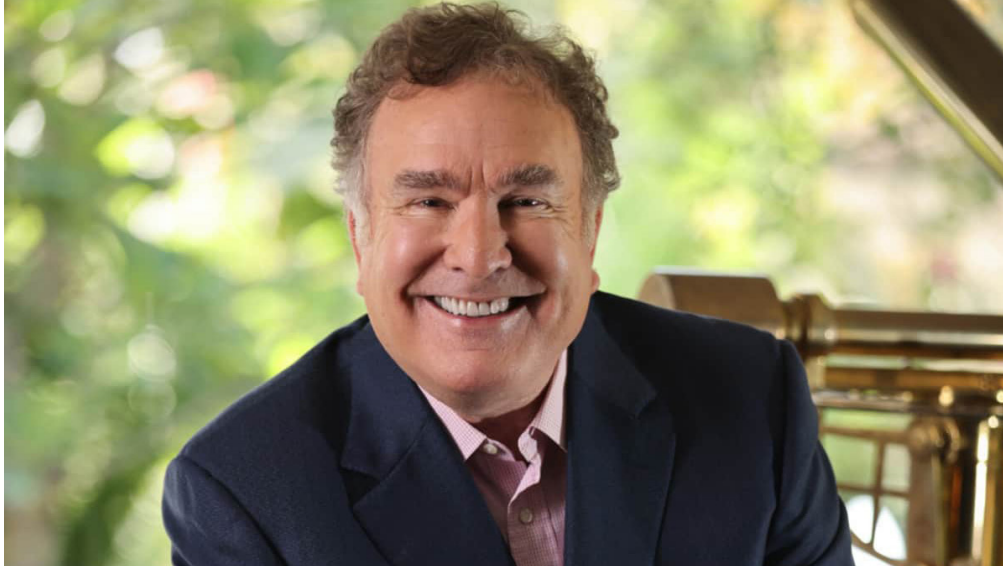
The prince's lawyers say this previously-secret 2009 deal means she cannot sue him - because she agreed to end all legal action against anyone connected to the offender who could be described as a “potential defendant”.

Epstein died in prison in

2019, while Maxwell was last week convicted of recruiting and trafficking young girls to be abused by the late financier. But Ms Giuffre's legal team say the terms of the Florida settlement are irrelevant to her case against the Prince - which alleges sexual abuse by the royal in New York, London and the US Virgin Islands.

In her 2009 claim against Epstein, lawyers for Ms Giuffre said she was lured into a world of sexual abuse at his Florida home when she was a teenager.

Royal Caribbean Group CEO, steps down after 33 years



Royal Caribbean Group's Richard Fain

Richard Fain, CEO of Royal Caribbean Group, the parent to Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Silversea Cruises and co-owner of TUI Cruises and Hapag-Lloyd

Cruises, stepped down at midnight on Monday after three decades in the role.

"I really feel like the stars were aligned, this was a good time to do

it," Fain told USA TODAY in a Dec. 15 interview. "I had a great person to take over as his successor, and a great management team that would keep the business doing well. So, (it) just felt right."

Fain led the company for 33 years, including through the COVID-19 pandemic that shut the industry down for more than a year and has prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to advise against cruise travel as 2022 kicks off.

Royal Caribbean announced Fain's decision to step down in November. The company's Jason Liberty, who previously served as chief financial officer, is taking his place.

Israel Omicron spike could bring herd immunity but with risks

Israel's top health adviser says the surge of Omicron cases could see the country reach Covid herd immunity.

Nachmann Ash said the country would pay a price for this and he wanted to see herd immunity achieved via vaccinations instead.

Modellers have warned that up to four million people could be infected by the end of January.

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has admitted his current policy will not prevent a big rise in infections.

On Sunday, he said a fourth Covid-19 vaccine would be offered to people over 60 as well as medical staff.

The prime minister has previously insisted the aim is to prevent a spike in serious illness while keeping the



Israel has approved a fourth vaccine dose for the immunocompromised and the elderly in care homes Photo credit: Reuters

economy open, even though he has not ruled out another lockdown.

Confirmed daily infections in Israel have quadrupled to more than 3,500 in 10 days, but the number of deaths has not seen a similar rise.

Herd immunity is a scientific term describing the point at which a population is protected from a disease, either by enough people being vaccinated or by people having developed antibodies by having the disease.

CWI will still find way to honour Gayle, insists president Skerritt



Cricket West Indies president, Ricky Skerritt

Cricket West Indies (CWI) president, Ricky Skerritt, insists the organisation will find some appropriate way to honour legendary batsman Chris Gayle after the player was left out of the team's T20 squad for Ireland and England.

Shortly after the team's unceremonious exit from the World Cup, the hard-hitting left-hander had let on that the reason that he had not announced his retirement at the World Cup was that plans were already underway for a final farewell match.

Two weeks ago CWI Chief Executive Officer Johnny Grave stated on radio that the one-off match against Ireland would represent the perfect opportunity to honour the batsman. Gayle was, however, later left out of the squad by the newly appointed

selectors. Skerritt insists the plan was never for the player to be picked for the match and that the CWI had not yet finalised plans for a farewell event.

"We're not defining what such a game (farewell) will look like. The planning has not yet commenced," Skerritt told Cricbuzz.

He insists, however, that the idea remained on the cards to honour the record T20 runs scorer.

"Gayle has been a phenomenal performer for Jamaica and the West Indies since he was a teenager. He deserves to be thanked and honoured by fans. CWI will find the right way to make that happen in a manner that Chris can enjoy.

Simmons looking for energy, enthusiasm from new-look Windies



West Indies head coach, Phil Simmons

West Indies head coach Phil Simmons is expecting more energy and enthusiasm from a new-look squad as the team bowls off the year with series against Ireland and England.

The Caribbean team has endured a disappointing few months on the back of a disastrous showing at the T20 World Cup, followed by defeats in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

A few of the team's most experienced players have retired following a lacklustre showing at the World Cup and the team did not select a few other regulars for the tour of Pakistan. Despite a 3-0 T20 series loss in Pakistan, Simmons was encouraged by the team's fervour.

"The way we started in Pakistan is the way we want to play now, have a lot more energy, more enthusiasm," Simmons told members of the media earlier this week.

"It's a young group of guys and we are trying to mould them and get them into a winning frame of mind. We want to win, and we want to do everything that it takes to win," he added.

The team will see the likes of Brandon King and Odean Smith returning a potential debut for Justin Greaves and spinner Gudakesh Motie set to earn a second cap.

Former Pakistan captain Hafeez retires from international cricket



Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Hafeez has retired from international cricket

Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Hafeez has retired from international cricket.

The all-rounder played in 392 matches for his country in all formats, including 55 Tests, with his final appearance coming in the semi-final defeat to Australia at the Cricket World Cup.

Hafeez, who was captain for 32 international matches, scored 12,780 runs and took 253 wickets in an 18-year Pakistan career that began against Zimbabwe in Sharjah on April

3, 2003.

Ranked the number-one Twenty20 all-rounder by the ICC in 2014, Hafeez was described by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja as “a wholehearted cricketer who worked tirelessly at his game to have a long and fruitful career.”

Hafeez said, “Today I say goodbye to international cricket with pride and satisfaction. In fact, I have earned and accomplished more than I had initially envisaged and for that, I am thankful to all my fellow cricketers,

captains, support staff and the Pakistan Cricket Board who helped me out during my career.

“And, of course, my family who made big sacrifices to ensure I achieved my aspirations of representing Pakistan at a global stage.

“I am extremely fortunate, lucky and proud to have been considered worthy of donning the national kit with Pakistan emblem for 18 years. My country and my team have always been at my forefront and therefore, every time I stepped on to the field, I tried to raise their profile and image by playing hard and tough but within the rich traditions of spirit of cricket.

“When you have a professional career as long as mine, you’re bound to have your share of highs and lows, and I was no different. Results apart, I can say with conviction that I had more highs as I had the privilege of playing with and against some of the finest exponents of the bat and the ball of my era.

“While cricket has been a great learning school for me, this great sport has provided me opportunities to visit various countries, explore their cultures and make friends. These are lifelong memories, which I will cherish every day. I want to thank my fans and supporters for believing in my abilities and backing me throughout my career.”

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James captures back to back speed walking titles



Azeba James, left, accepts his monetary prize for winning the men's category of the Clash of the Titans speed walking competition on Sunday. (Photos courtesy Patrick Spencer)

Azeba James has captured back to back titles in the national speed walking competitions.

After winning a previous event last August, James walked away from the field of 16 competitors to claim the men's category in the latest speed walking contest on Sunday, dubbed Clash of the Titans.

James covered the 10.2-mile distance in a time of one hour and 53 minutes and 42 seconds to take home the top cash prize in the event, which was organized by Team 5AM and Just 5 groups.

Sheradie McFoster, who is almost 60 years old, finished second in one hour and 55 minutes.

Kiendelle Williams, who was also named most improved walker, captured third place in two hours and 13 seconds.

Williams, who was competing in his third successive walking competition, had finished in 14th place and 12th position respectively in his two previous outings.

Gilda Williams won the women's category by clocking a time of two hours, 14 minutes and 35 seconds from amongst a field of 12 competi-



Gilda Williams, left, accepts her prize for winning the women's category of the Clash of the Titans speed walking contest on Sunday

tors.

Leslie Henry crossed the finishing line in two hours, 26 minutes and 32 seconds to claim the runner-up position.

Julie Plant secured third place by covering the distance in a time of two hours, 26 minutes and 32 seconds.

A total of 28 walkers participated in the event which has been jointly hosted for the third time by Team 5AM and Just 5.

The organisers expressed their sincere gratitude to several sponsors and supporters of Sunday's event.

They include Kenneth A Gomez and Sons, Crabbe Hole Liquor Store, Spencer's Service Centre, PIC Insurance, Gunthropes Spring water, Ted and Heather Daley, the traffic department of the Royal Antigua and Barbuda Police Force and the media fraternity in Antigua.

The organisers are hoping to stage their next event during Easter this year.

Joao Moutinho celebrates after his goal against Manchester United



Red Devils downed by Moutinho

Joao Moutinho's late strike downed an insipid Manchester United as Wolves recorded a 1-0 win in the Premier League yesterday.

Wolves had not played since December 19 due to COVID-19 issues but dominated the opening proceedings at Old Trafford, United only holding on thanks to David de Gea repeatedly thwarting Bruno Lage's side.

Substitute Bruno Fernandes and Roman Saiss traded second-half strikes against the woodwork, either side of Cristiano Ronaldo – stand-in captain in the absence of Harry Maguire – seeing a goal ruled out for offside.

Moutinho then struck with eight minutes remaining to condemn Ralf Rangnick to his first defeat in charge

of the Red Devils, who sit seventh in the league – four points behind fourth-placed Arsenal.

Wolves had not scored in their last 13 league games against United, dating back to 2004, but pinned back Rangnick's languid side for much of the first half.

Daniel Podence twice forced smart stops from De Gea, while the Spain international produced an expert save to tip over Ruben Neves' thunderous volley as Lage's side headed in at the break with nothing to show for their efforts.

United picked up the pace after the interval, Fernandes slamming onto the crossbar following Nemanja Matic's cross before teeing up Ronal-

do's header past Jose Sa, which was disallowed for offside.

Saiss curled a free-kick against the woodwork, with Moutinho then delivering the decisive strike as he fired into the bottom-left corner.

Sa kept out Fernandes' stoppage-time free-kick as Lage's side played out an eighth straight league game with less than one goal scored in it.

United face an FA Cup clash with Aston Villa, who are also Rangnick's next league opponents, next Monday

Wolves host Sheffield United in their third-round clash in the same cup on Sunday.



National TD praises ABFA's performance during pandemic



President of the ABFA, Sowerby Gomes

By Elwin Francis

Antigua & Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Technical Director, Sowerby Gomes, has reported that the local governing body stood tall amongst its regional counterparts in its administration of the sport during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Gomes, a former national defender, said while the COVID-19 pandemic forced many countries in the region to curtail their domestic leagues and other development programmes, Antigua and Barbuda was able to achieve some significant accomplishments.

"There has been a lot of dialogue between technical directors across the region, and I can tell you for a fact that Antigua has been way ahead of the pack in terms of what we have been doing," Gomes said.

"We were able to maintain our training in preparation for our college combine and we were able to keep

our Under-20 men's team training.

"So whereas around the region that has been on a very down low, we were still able to conduct a CONCACAF 'B' license training workshop for our coaches during this downtime, and we were able to do so with our senior FIFA coach educator.

"The FIFA coach educator was in Trinidad but he was able to conduct the exercise through zoom sessions. As a result of that we were able to do these things with our coaches in a classroom and we did sessions with players on the field.

"So we were able to do all these sessions through technology during the downtime while everything was on a down low across the region. So we have been ahead in terms of that."

Gomes added that the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association will em-

bark on a drive to ensure all players are vaccinated before they resume competitions in the nation's domestic leagues.

"In terms of getting games back up to speed, it will have a lot to do with vaccination. We need to get all of our players vaccinated so as soon as we get the greenlight, games can start to get rolling. We are looking forward to that," Gomes stated.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ABFA declared the 2019/20 domestic competition null and void and made a decision to increase the number of teams in the premier division from 10 to 16.

The top six teams from the First Division at that time were promoted to the Premier Division while the top three teams in each of the two zones in the Second Division were advanced to the First Division.