

A&B POSITIONS ITSELF TO BECOME MAJOR AIRLINE HUB



On Monday, Minister of Civil Aviation, Sir Robin Yearwood signed a new airport services agreement with Acting Head of the French Mission to the OECS, Marc Mertillo which paves the way for V. C. Bird International Airport to become a major international and regional air hub. *Story on Page 2.*

Local News



V. C. Bird Int'l closer to becoming airline hub

Efforts to make V. C. Bird International Airport a regional hub for air services took another positive step on Monday with the signing of an air-services agreement with France.

Representatives of Antigua and Barbuda and France initialed the document at a brief ceremony held at the Office of the Prime Minister.

This came just days after a similar agreement was signed between Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba on Friday.

Signing these agreements forms part of the government's policy of establishing the V. C. Bird International Airport as a hub for both international and regional travel to take advantage of the country's strategic location in the Caribbean archipelago.

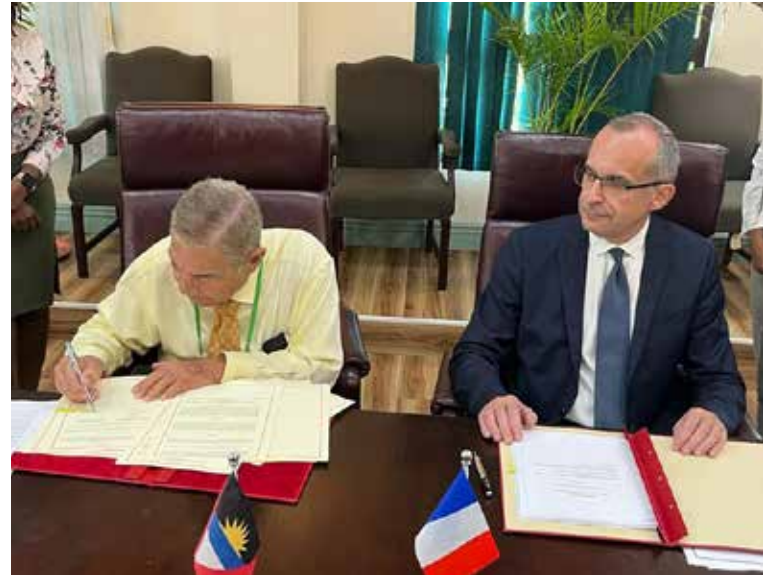
The country lies midway between the northern and southern Caribbean.

Speaking on Monday, Aviation Minister, Sir Robin Yearwood, noted that the existing air services agreement between Antigua and

Barbuda and France was signed in 1946 between France and the then colonial UK government. He said the time had come for modern arrangements to be established to facilitate and advance the development of aviation services between the two countries.

"On the economic side, the new agreement is a liberalised one, providing direct and so-called fifth freedom traffic rights for airlines from both countries to operate effectively and competitively. This is particularly important given the disruptions to air transport which have occurred in our region as a result of the devastation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic," he stated.

According to Sir Robin, based on the agreement reached in June last year, Antigua and Barbuda has designated two airlines – LIAT and Calvin Ayre Helicopters – to operate on the routes agreed with the French. The French have in turn designated four airlines – Air France, Air Antilles,



Minister of Civil Aviation, Sir Robin Yearwood signs a new airport services agreement on behalf of the government with Acting Head of the French Mission to the OECS, Marc Mertillo.

St. Barth Commuter and St. Barth Executive – to operate services on their behalf. With the exception of Air France, all of these airlines currently operate flights into Antigua and Barbuda.

The aviation minister is hopeful that the agreement will pave the way for the return of Air France to Antigua and Barbuda.

For his part, the Acting Head of the French Mission to the OECS, Marc Mertillo said the agreement defines a new bilateral legal framework, in line with

European law, including modern clauses which addresses safety, security and fair competition, as well as all operational modalities leading to the development of air services.

Chief Technical Officer in the Ministry of Aviation, Ambassador Brian Challenger, said the recent moves by the government are to put in place a legal framework that is as liberalised as possible to make V. C. Bird International Airport an attractive destination for international and regional airlines.

He added while the pandemic caused a dip in inter-regional travel, these new arrangements will make Antigua and Barbuda more attractive to airlines wanting to operate flights into V. C. Bird International Airport, a move, Challenger noted, which will also benefit LIAT.

| Tue 29 Day | | Tue 29 Night | |
|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 82° | | 74° | |
| 10% E 12 mph | | 23% ENE 10 mph | |
| Sun and a few passing clouds. High 82F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph. | | Partly cloudy. Low 74F. Winds ENE at 5 to 10 mph. | |
| Humidity 64% | UV Index Extreme | Humidity 75% | UV Index 0 of 10 |
| Sunrise 6:04 am | Sunset 6:19 pm | Moonrise 4:24 am | Moonset 4:11 pm |
| | | ● Waning Crescent | |

Senators make case for paternity leave

Two senators on either side of the aisle have proffered that the time may be right for lawmakers to consider introducing paternity leave.

Government and opposition Senators Aziza Lake and Shawn Nicholas were at the time debating the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code Amendment Bill, 2022, in the Upper House of Parliament yesterday, which increases maternity leave from 12 to 14 weeks.

During her contribution, Senator Lake suggested paternity leave should be considered to allow fathers the opportunity to have more direct involvement with their infants.

“You don’t have to be married now to have a child. So, whatever that connection is, we have to find a way to make the fathers involved. When the baby is born, the mother is feeding the child every two hours. A lot of mothers say they don’t sleep in that first couple of months, sleep is just a wish. And so, you need the father involved at home, and that’s something in the future we have to think about, what is the paternity leave we can grant to men,” Senator Lake noted.

The University of York defines Paternity Leave as “an entitlement



Senator Aziza Lake

to time off that may be taken by the biological father or mother's partner during the first year of a child's life.”

In the United Kingdom, paternity leave is extended to employees who receive 90% of their weekly wages for a period of two weeks. Except for the opinions of experts, paternity leave is yet to be implemented anywhere in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Senator Lake said she is not suggesting the government should rush the process, acknowledging such an undertaking will be costly, but she believes it is time for the dialogue to begin through consultations with stakeholders.

“We have to do something about paternity leave. We are in 2022, and so we can’t leave the men hanging so to speak. All have to be involved, and it is for the children essentially. If it is that we care about children, we say we care about the future of the nation, we have to do what we have to do to make sure that we socialise them and raise them properly.”

Opposition Senator Shawn Nicholas is also in support of paternity leave, and believes it is necessary to allow fathers bonding time with their newborns.

“Child rearing is not just for



Senator Shawn Nicholas

mothers,” she argued. “It takes both the mother and the father...when children grow up, and sometimes they grow up not being connected or bonded to the fathers, and at that point, we are saying where are the fathers? But the system does not allow them from this very early age to be bonding.”

The opposition senator expressed awareness of the questions that will arise from a discussion concerning paternity leave, including how it will be applied especially in cases where fathers have children with multiple partners.

“It’s the reality we face, we cannot cower and hide, because we live in a situation where our relationships are not monogamous. So I’m putting it on the table that I think now that our women have benefitted from this additional time for bonding with their children, let us start looking about sounding the clarion call for our men to have that time. But I would say, let’s get the stakeholders involved before we start drafting those legislation,” Nicholas told her colleague senators.

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Senator Nedd-Charles excited over Barbuda's 'economic boom'

Last Friday, Knacyntar Nedd-Charles forever made a mark in the country's history books when she was named the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party's (ABLP) candidate for Barbuda; an announcement which will make her the first woman to run on any party's ticket in a general election in that seat.

If she secures the seat for the ABLP in elections which are constitutionally due by March 2023, she will also become the first ABLP candidate to ever win the Barbuda seat, which has always narrowly evaded their capture.

Following the announcement confirming her candidacy, the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs said, "It is a most phenomenal feeling to know that you sir, (ABLP Leader, Gaston Browne) have the confidence that a young woman from Barbuda has the capabilities to help transform Barbuda into an economic powerhouse.

"I have no doubt that Barbuda is about to enter into a new season, a season that will bring about positive change to our island and people, a much-needed change that will see that all Barbudans come first, and not just a selected few.

"With God's grace, his guidance and with the support of my Barbudan people, I am humbled to be chosen for this amazing assignment."

Speaking with Pointe Xpress reporters recently, Senator Nedd-Charles expressed excitement over the economic development taking place on her home island, Barbuda.

Describing the transformational development on Barbuda as the driver of the most significant "economic boom" in the island's history, Nedd-Charles said this is serving to empower Barbudans in a meaningful way.

"Barbudans have sought employment, and a lot of Barbudans have been placed in the top positions as managers, and so forth, which gives me a great deal of pleasure to...know that Barbudans

are getting these managerial positions."

The single largest driver of economic activity on the island is the Peace, Love and Happiness (PLH) project which now employs more than 500 people, more than half of whom are Barbudan.

The incredible size of the PLH project has also resulted in the expansion of already existing businesses and a crop of new start-ups which provide an array of services to the company including transportation, housing and catering.

During a job fair staged at the Police Recreation Grounds earlier this month by the Barbuda Ocean Club, a PLH property on Barbuda, representatives indicated that by this summer, the company expects to hire an additional 250 people.

In addition to these privately run companies, there are a number of government supported initiatives now underway. These include the US\$11 million airport terminal project, the Port Development project and the Green Energy Resilience Project along the Two Foot Bay Road which will, on completion, provide affordable, renewable energy to the people of Barbuda.

The senator also corrected the misperception that Barbudans are inherently resistant to the island's development. Rather, she said Barbudans are passionate about having a voice and hands-on involvement in whatever happens on the island. This she believes is now the case, as despite lingering opposition in small quarters, there has been ongoing consultation with the people at every step of the way.

"Barbudans tend to put up a resistance when they are not involved or when they are not properly informed. So...sensitisation of the projects that are about to come is paramount to Barbudans. And as with any person living on an island, you see this major development taking place, you're not a part of it, you tend to get intimidated. So, for now,



Senator Knacyntar Nedd-Charles

sensitisation is [of major importance.]"

Addressing the remaining pockets of resistance, Nedd-Charles said the dissent is being fuelled by the unfortunate rhetoric of the members of the opposition who continue to oppose Barbuda's development out of rancour for the ABLP government and despite the fact that their opposition does not serve the best interest of the island's people.

"Even if the projects are there to benefit the people of Barbuda, there is still some form of opposition. But at the end of the day, the projects are benefiting the people of Barbuda and the people of Barbuda are not just receiving the lower-level jobs. They are in managerial positions, supervisory positions, so we are not only getting employed, we are creating careers for young people especially in Barbuda," said Nedd-Charles.

Meanwhile, the senator announced late Monday the launch of the Entrepreneurial Development Programme on Barbuda.

The initiative, which takes place on 8th and 9th April, will feature one-on-one consultations and workshops that will cover areas including how to start and operate a business successfully and the professional qualities required to do so. The two-day exercise is backed by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in conjunction with Senator Nedd-Charles.

Senate votes to adjust requirements for jury trial

The Senate has voted to give effect to a further amendment to the Jury Act by placing in writing the number needed for a majority decision under the reduced jury panel approved last year.

Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Maureen Hyman-Payne, said the latest amendment, which reduced the number of persons who sit in a jury trial from twelve to nine, did not identify the number needed for a majority decision. She explained when the jury poll was for twelve persons it required twelve persons for a majority decision.

Unfortunately, when the reduction was made, there was an oversight as the amendment did not state the number now required for a majority decision.

The proposal presented was that



Leader of Government Business in the Senate, Maureen Payne-Hyman

under the nine member jury panel, a majority decision can be reached with seven persons.

The bill was passed with little debate.

The lone member who spoke in opposition was Senator Shawn Nicholas, who queried why the amendment took a full year to be returned to par-

liament to remedy the clear oversight.

The jury panel was reduced to nine because of the coronavirus pandemic which made it difficult to empanel twelve member juries.

Meanwhile, the Senate also approved an amendment to the Labour Code that adjusts the duration of maternity leave upward from twelve to fourteen weeks.

Senator Hyman-Payne said this amendment fulfilled a treaty obligation under the International Labour Organisation Convention with which Antigua and Barbuda is now in line.

Senator Nicholas, who called the amendment 'progressive' noted that previously, mothers would have to use their vacation time immediately after maternity leave to have adequate time to properly bond with their newborns.



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Local News



Largest increase in annual inflation recorded in nine years

The Statistics Division within the Ministry of Finance is reporting the largest increase of annual inflation since February 2012.

The All-Items index rose 4.5 % for the twelve months ending February 2022.

The Food index rose 8.9% over the year with all nine food group indexes increasing. The index for Fruit increased 26.3% over the last year as both the indexes for Fresh and Chilled, and the index for Frozen, Preserved, or Processed Fruits increased 26.0% and 28.0% respectively.

The index for Meat and Meat Products rose 15.1% as all of its components increased except for Lamb, Mutton, and Goat which fell 4.4%.

The index for Fish and Seafood increased by 7.8%. Other major food groups also rose over the year with increases ranging from 3.3% (Milk, Cheese, and Eggs) to 19.9% (Oils and Fats).

The index for All Items Less Food and Energy increased 4.1% over the past twelve months. The Miscellaneous Goods and Services index rose 17.1% over the last year.

The index for Com-



munication rose 10.8% resulting from increases in January 2022. The Index for Alcoholic Beverage, Tobacco, and Narcotics increased 10.1%, and the index for Housing, Furnishings, Household Equipment, and Routine Maintenance increased by 8.0.

The Energy Index remained unchanged over the past twelve months with all major components gasoline at the pump, LPG cooking, and fuel variation rate (Electricity).

Month-to-Month Price Changes

The Monthly Consumer Price Index increased by 1.2% for the month ending February 2022.

The Food index rose 1.3% in February. Seven of nine food group indexes increased over one month. The index for Bread and Cereals rose 3.2%, a further increase from 0.4%

increase in January. The index for Sugars, Jam, Honey, Chocolate, and Confectionery increased by 2.8% with the component Sugar index rising by 3.8%. The index for Fruits rose 2.6% as the index for Fresh or chilled Fruit increased 3.1%.

The index for Non-Alcoholic Beverages rose 1.7%.

The index for All Items Less Food and Energy rose 1.3% in February following a 2.3% increase the previous month.

The index for Transport rose 6.4% and was by far the biggest factor in the increase. Other increases included the indexes for Alcoholic Beverage, Tobacco and Narcotics (0.7%), Miscellaneous and Good and Services (0.2%), and Furnishings, Household Equipment, and Routine Household Maintenance (0.1%).

NOTICE

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Police Headquarters
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Antigua

To: Your Worship
St. John's Magistrate Court
Gray's Farm
St. John's
Antigua

Dear Sir/Madame,
Re Notice- Application for Tavern License

We Milton Parker and Marie Gayle-Walters of **Codrington village** Barbuda with registered business situated at Codrington Village Barbuda, Antigua and Barbuda **DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE** that it is our intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licensing Court to be held at the Magistrates Court, Gray's farm St. John's Antigua on Thursday 7th April 2022 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing pursuant to section (11) (5) of the (licensing Intoxication liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the law of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as G-Milt Restaurant and bar Barbuda situated at Codrington Village in the parish of Barbuda, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 14th day of March 2022
Respectfully Yours,
Milton Parker

.....
Marie Gayle-Walters
.....

Sandals treats nursing staff at local elderly home

Last week nurses at Charmay's Nursing Home were treated to lunch by Sandals Grande Antigua as the resort continues to recognise the efforts of healthcare professionals for the work they do for the patients trusted to their care.

In addition to treating the nurses to lunch, 100 towels were donated to residents at the home.

Owner of the nursing home Leslie-Ann Yearwood said, "I am extremely grateful and humbled that Sandals thought of this gesture of appreciation to us. The items donated to the residents will be of great help to our linen inventory and the lunches provided to my staff truly mean a lot. I know my team works extremely

hard and for them to be recognised and appreciated in this way, really inspires us to continue doing what we do for our residents at the home and their families."

Managers present at the handover shared in the excitement of seeing the happy nurses during the short presentation ceremony.

"There is nothing more satisfying than being a part of these activities and seeing the appreciation and happiness that one small gesture can have on an individual. How it can light up their day and make them feel special. Our healthcare workers have been working tirelessly, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and being here today to surprise them is heart-warming



Sandals Public Relations Manager Leon Norville with staff at Charmay's Nursing Home.

and encouraging," Assistant Weddings Manager Meria Govia added.

Sandals General Manager Matthew Cornall said, "As a company, we continue

to support our communities, and this is an opportunity to let our health care professionals know that their work has not gone unnoticed. We thank them and will continue to recognize their efforts for the important job they do- which they have done exemplarily since the start of the pandemic."

Since the start of the pandemic, Sandals and Beaches Resorts across the chain have recognised healthcare workers by offering complimentary weekend stays at any Sandals or Beaches property of their choice.

Here in Antigua and Barbuda over 20 complimentary stays were granted to medical professionals on the frontlines of the pandemic.

The medical team at Sandals was also recently recognised for their outstanding work and commitment to the profession.

6 new COVID-19 cases reported

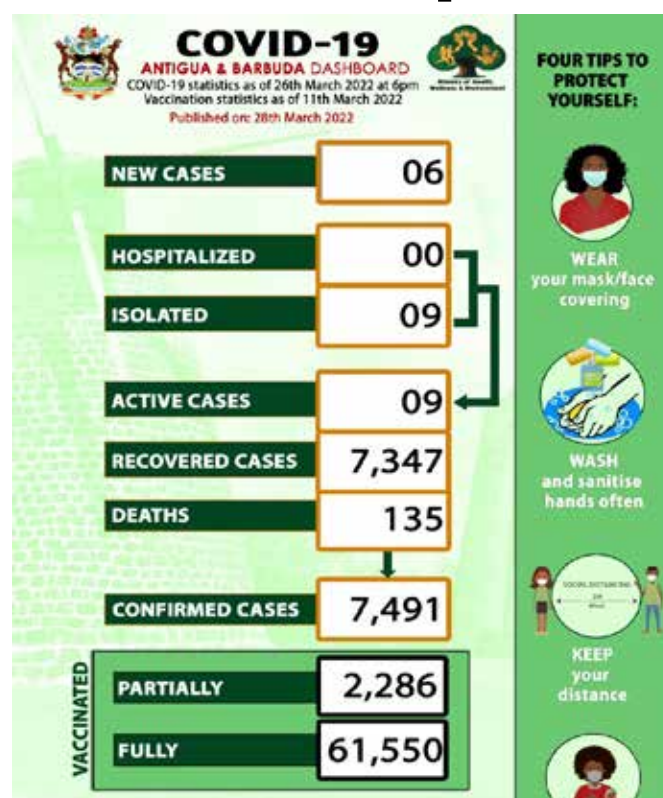
The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed six (6) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Saturday 26th March, 2022 at 6pm.

One (1) was recorded on March 25th and five (5) on March 26th.

Seventy-four (74) samples were processed.

Five (5) recovered cases were recorded.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is seven thousand four hundred and ninety-one (7,491); which is inclusive of nine (9) active cases. There are no hospitalised cases.



VACANCY

A Fresh Fruit & Produce Coordinator

Required by COCOS Hotel

Andrew Michelin, owner of COCOS Hotel, seeks one or two motivated individuals to assist him in redefining the food and beverage operations at both COCOS Hotel and Keyonna Beach Resort..... FRESH, FRESH & LOCAL. The objective is to increase our room rates by offering fresh and local Caribbean produce on our menus in both bars and restaurants and reducing to bare necessity of the need to use imported items.

With any change there will be resistance and therefore seeks individuals with tact and diplomacy in order for staff and management to buy into this initiative. Attention to detail and achieving agreed goals with a step-by-step approach.

The need for good communication with farmers and backyard producers via mobile devices in order to match the resort's need with produce. Working with the resort's media team to highlight this UPS, unique selling point.

Ensuring prompt payments, assisting in setting up bank debit card accounts, if necessary, in order to direct transfer payments. Assisting in inputs that may be required such as plant stock, seeds etc. Direct producers to the various online training providers for those wanting to improve their skills and techniques.

To assist in coordinating the information data mined from guest reviews and guest menu choice analysis so as to refine and improve our resort product.

The vision is to roll out another resort here in Antigua and similar Caribbean Boutique resorts in other islands and Guyana with same chattel styled cottages, standardizing menus and drink, offering this unique, fresh and local Caribbean experience.

Andrew Michelin cofounded other resorts on the island, Antigua Farm and Garden Supplies and establishment of a banana ripening room in Antigua.

This would be a 3-month test assignment initially, to ensure the walk matches the talk! Salary or fees would not be an issue. RESULTS are what he is looking for.

Apply to: admin@cocoshotel.com

The unshakeable stigma of mothers who leave their children

By Maddy Savage

When mums leave their kids with family or partners, they are often viewed as deeply flawed, despite gains in gender equity. Will this ever change?

Quitting a job because she doesn't like it, leaving a city that no longer suits her needs or ending a relationship with someone she's no longer in love with – in recent decades, Western society has championed women who make these kinds of empowering choices. But what if the choice she makes is to leave her kids?

Despite improving gender equality, mothers who make the difficult decision to live apart from their children are often anything but celebrated.

"Even if both parents are doing a brilliant job of raising happy, healthy kids, [if] they happen to live away from their mum, the women are still vilified," says Melissa, who lives an hour and a half drive from her two children and administers an online support group for women in similar situations. "[These] mothers are spoken of as if they are defective, like something deep within their core is broken."

The recent Netflix production of *The Lost Daughter* has shined a light on this kind of response to mothers who live separately from their kids. The film, based on the novel of the same name by Elena Ferrante, zooms in on actress Olivia Coleman playing the role of a mother who leaves her children with her husband for three years to pursue her own career goals. Both she and others frame her decision as selfish, which contrasts with a father in the movie who has also left his children (played by Ed Harris), seemingly without much judgement.

Though in real life parents of all genders have walked away from their children for centuries, there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that mums



(Image credit: Getty Images)

leaving might be on the rise. Melissa says membership of the online support group she administers is in its hundreds and growing steadily. And therapists like Reennee Singh, a spokesperson for the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), say they are noticing a "slight shift" towards more mothers choosing to relinquish live-in parenting.

Data from the UK and the US also suggests a rise in the proportion of single-father households, though this doesn't distinguish between families where children still spend a significant portion of time with their mothers – or don't – or how such childcare arrangements were decided.

Whatever the exact figures, the issue of women – rather than men – leaving the family unit still creates a lot of debate in Western cultures. For example, one of the tensions in the film *The Lost Daughter* (hinted at in the title), is the question: has a daughter been abandoned by her mum, or, conversely, is the mum who leaves her daughters the "lost one," underlining that there continues to be deep emotional response to this behaviour. In many ways this may seem surprising, given the tidal wave of societal and media support for gender equity

in other parts of society.

"Blended families, same sex parents – we've accepted these to a greater extent than we have working mothers who are parenting at a distance," says Tom Buchanan, a professor of sociology at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Canada. "There's a cultural lag." And, say experts, this may not change anytime soon.

The reasons for leaving home

Academics and therapists following the "slight shift" towards more mothers choosing to live apart from children say there is a wide spectrum of reasons why this may be happening.

Some leave to take up jobs, assignments or study opportunities in different cities, either while remaining in a relationship with their children's father or after a separation. "Times have changed sufficiently for women to feel more comfortable and entitled to pursue their own careers, their own interests," says Singh, "even if that means living away from [the family] home."

Other women decide it's preferable for their children to reside with their father after a break-up for practical or financial reasons. "The children were

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living in a lovely home on a farm in the country and they were in good schools with lovely friends,” says Melissa. “I didn’t know how I was going to afford to house [them]”.

By leaving her kids with their father, she was able to re-establish her career as a freelancer in the media and move to a cheaper neighbourhood closer to her extended family. “I was pretty run down by what went on in the marriage, too, and needed time to recover.”

Elsewhere along the spectrum of choice there are mothers who leave home for a different kind of lifestyle or relationship.

“I just felt trapped, completely trapped in a situation,” says Katy, a teacher who left her five children with their father in 2018 and moved to a different part of Europe. “I got married when I was 22, I had my first child at 25 and

then it was ‘boom, boom, boom’ – child after child after child. And although they were what I wanted at the time; I don’t feel like I actually got to do anything that was for me.”

At the far end of the choice continuum are mothers fleeing toxic relationships. For this group, leaving their children behind may be something of a last resort to overcome serious mental health issues and move forward with their lives.

That was the case for Natalie from Australia, who became severely depressed while she was living abroad with her ex-husband. She says the dynamic between them wasn’t healthy, but that he was a great caregiver to their children, so she ended up moving back to her home country without them.

“My children had a father and extended family who loved them, routines and a home. Leaving was about

saving myself,” she says. “Once you hit rock bottom, you have to get creative.”

Singh believes rising public awareness of wellbeing is feeding into mothers’ decisions to leave the family nest, in contrast to previous generations, where women often felt they had to put up with existing domestic arrangements. For example, contemporary self-help books and podcasts about separations or self-care can offer comfort and validation to those who’ve made the difficult decision to live apart from their children.

However, Singh warns some of this literature only exists because of ongoing stereotypes about motherhood, and she’s concerned some women may feel they need to use discourses about wellbeing “to warrant or legitimise what they are doing”.

“If society was more equal and fairer, then they might not have to rely so

much on the literature to feel comfortable with the decisions that they make. I try and help women to become stronger and more grounded in their choices and, you know, think, ‘oh, well, society can say ‘whatever’, but this is what I want to do at this point’,” she argues. “Sometimes this option is the only one that presents itself to them... [so it’s] also just helping to give them permission to leave and feeling that that’s OK.”

A persistent stigma

The freedom to leave hasn’t resulted in freedom from judgement. Women – especially in the West – still tend to face negative reactions from friends, family and wider society for the unconventional decision to live apart from their children, whatever the reasons behind it.

“The common theme in the [online] group is how surprised the women were by the confines of what society [still] expected of them,” says Melissa. She says even members who live apart from their children to pursue career paths in the military or for the sake of postgraduate studies have shared experiences of being “vilified” for their choices. New acquaintances will often ask members, “what do you mean your kids don’t live with you? What sort of mother doesn’t want to be with her own children?”, she says. “Like it’s a simple choice that only the mother can possibly make. Like fathers have no input or say or responsibility

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UPDATED SCHEDULE

Parenting

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at all”.

According to Singh, this is largely because discourses and expectations about motherhood haven't shifted at the same pace as women's progress in other areas. In other words, women are still expected to play the role of a nurturer, regardless of other external circumstances. “There's still some stigma attached to women sort of abandoning their duties and responsibilities,” she says. “It's got a lot to do with history, cultural ideas and gendered relationships.”

She points out that this narrative is particularly common in Western individualistic cultures, in contrast to more collective societies. “In the Philippines or in India, it's quite common for women to go and earn money in a different country and send it back home while their children are being looked after by the extended family or by grandparents.”

For women in these Western cultures who fly the family nest to pursue a spe-

cific lifestyle or relationship, the stigma is often even more acute than for those who leave for practical or career-related reasons. Katy says many of her relatives didn't speak to her for months, even though the decision for her children to remain in the family home instead of going with her was, she says, made mutually with their father.

“A man can do this and have no contact with their child, and it's acceptable,” says Katy. “But if a woman does it – and I still have contact with my children – people do think I'm a bad mother, [that] I've abandoned them. I thought I was doing the best for them,” she says, stating that if she'd stayed, her exhaustion and unhappiness would only have escalated. “I didn't realise at the time all the consequences, all the judgements I would get.”

Four years after her move, Katy says some friends and family members still perceive her as “a bad mother” and blame any challenges her children expe-

rience on her decision to leave.

Sharing her story with new friends hasn't helped ease the burden; several people she became close to distanced themselves from her after learning about her past, so now she avoids talking about her children at all. “It's difficult because for every day you think ‘yeah, actually what I did took a lot of guts’, then somebody will make a comment, and it just puts you back down to thinking you're the worst person in the world.”

Melissa says women who admit domestic abuse was a factor in them leaving – even if they believed their former partner would not hurt their children – face “perhaps the cruellest” judgements from others. “In domestic violence, women barely get out alive, let alone with their mental health intact,” she says. Yet this cohort of mothers will still be asked by both strangers and people they know “how could you do it?” or “are the kids OK with it?”. “Very rarely

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Parenting



cont'd from pg 11

do people ask 'how are you?' 'are you ok?'," says Melissa.

Views of fatherhood contribute to mothers' burdens

Historically, fathers who leave the family home have been much more accepted in both society and in popular culture than mothers, agrees Buchanan. He cites veteran US singer Bruce Springsteen's track *Hungry Heart*, which begins with the lyrics "Got a wife and kids in Baltimore, Jack, I went out for a ride and I never went back".

Part of this acceptance is down to societal stereotyping of men as well as women: fathers have traditionally been viewed as less capable caregivers than mothers. It's also about the value that is attributed to unpaid domestic work like childcare, in comparison to salaried jobs, argues Buchanan.

This has fed the narrative that it's more acceptable for men to leave home if they're contributing financially, whereas women are seen to be abandoning their domestic duties.

"Fathers are more likely to just perceive [paid] market work as 'work'. And until that changes, I think you're going to see a lot of pressures on women," he argues. "Fathers need to embrace and address and challenge the stigma that they are only the 'breadwinners', not necessarily the 'parents'."

Buchanan believes that despite all this, today's walk-away dads are "not un-stigmatised completely" and "probably don't have a great reputation". However, he accepts there is a "different level of stigma" for women who leave their families under these sorts of circumstances. "When it happens in a mothering situation, it becomes a huge deal and it becomes gendered."

Singh adds social stigmas can even play a role in how children respond to their mother's decision to move out of the family home. She's worked with a lot of adult clients who witnessed parental infidelity growing up, and says people

tend to judge mothers who leave more harshly than fathers, and find "it's hard to forgive them, even later on in life".

Managing from afar

Natalie describes her connection with her children as "very close" and says they speak several times a week, text regularly and visit one another. "The quality time we have when we are together is magical and normal. We pack in a lot of fun, and I'm there to manage dramas and homework, too."

By contrast, Katy says she's found it challenging to maintain regular contact with some of her five children and has a particularly fragile relationship with her eldest daughter.

Yet, while the pandemic has made it trickier for her children to visit, she says she has been able to offer them the kind of quality family time that was challenging when she was juggling live-in parenting with anti-social working hours.

"We go to the beach, we go out, have picnics in the park together... things like that," says Katy. "I don't regret my decision. I did what I felt I had to do at the time. I do regret that I put the children through that because I think for them it's been hard. I would like one day for my children to grow up and look at me as in like 'well, my mum wasn't happy, but she didn't just put up with the situation. She did something about it'."

In the online support group, many women regularly share feelings of guilt, social isolation and ostracisation, says Melissa, because it's difficult to discuss what they are going through with others.

"The most common remark made by new members of our group is how incredibly lonely they have been. They say finding our group helps because they feel understood and not demonised by their circumstances."

She believes wider societal attitudes need to change, with a better understanding that "the women who leave... love their children as much as mothers who live more traditional lives."

A more accepting society?

Whether society will eventually become more accepting of mothers who live apart from their children remains a matter of debate.

Buchanan believes things will improve, but only in certain circumstances. "If it's a career-oriented move, then I think that's something that we will move past, in terms of stigmatising," he says. This, he argues, will be a side effect of a more general improvement in gender equity in the home and in the workplace, with fathers becoming increasingly involved at home and more women in leadership positions.

"Stepping away from a family just because they wanted to pursue something different – I think that's always going to be stigmatised."

"I don't think things will change very much in the future," agrees Melissa, the support-group administrator. Ten years since moving out of her family home, she says she's seen little progress in societal attitudes towards live-apart mothers like her.

Natalie, however, is more hopeful that women who leave the home for non-career related reasons will find their choices more "normalised" in future "with enough education and awareness". But for this to happen, she says society also needs to become more open to the idea of fathers being equally equipped caregivers.

This kind of shift, argues Singh, also needs to sit alongside a broader, more respectful acceptance of the full range of options open to modern working women, beyond traditional models of domesticity.

"Whether having children later in life, not having children at all, having children and then for somebody else to be the primary carer of their children, there's a lot of work for us as women to do, just to feel more comfortable with the fact that there are choices available nowadays," she argues. "It's fine to choose something a bit different... each of these choices comes with a cost."

Xenotransplantation: Are pigs the future of organ transplants?

By James Gallagher

The frontiers of organ transplantation have been pushed further than ever before. The first organs taken from genetically engineered pigs have been put into people and the recipient of the first pig heart managed to survive for two months.

So how close are we to using pigs for a limitless supply of organs to solve the global shortage?

Silence descends on the operating theatre and the tension builds until it's almost a physical presence in the room.

Surgeons have just connected a pig's kidney to a human body. The clamps have been released and human blood is now flowing into the pig organ.

"You could have heard a pin drop," says transplant surgeon Dr Jayme Locke.

Success or failure will be determined in moments and there is now just a single question on everyone's minds: "Pink or black?"

If the body unleashes a horrendous assault on the foreign organ - holes will be ripped in every cell in the pig tissue and the organ will clot from the inside out. It will go splotchy, then blue, then completely black within minutes.

If "hyperacute rejection" is avoided, the organ will blush pink with the flow of blood and oxygen.

"It turned beautiful and pink... the sense of relief, the sense of joy and hope just filled the room. We might have high-fived as well," said Dr Locke, from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, in the US.

This operation was just one of a series of medical breakthroughs that have renewed interest in the field of xenotransplantation.



Photo: [Getty Images]

Using animal organs in the human body is an old idea and has ranged from "zest for life" chimpanzee testicle implants to replacement kidneys and hearts taken from our primate relatives. The latter often ended in death soon afterwards. The problem is our immune system treats the transplanted organ like an infection and attacks.

The focus these days is on pigs, as their organs are roughly the right size, and we have centuries of experience farming them.

But the challenge of hyperacute rejection - keeping organs pink, not black - is the same. You can't just pop down to the farm, choose a pig and transplant its organs. It's taken huge advances in genetic engineering to alter pigs' DNA, so their organs are more compatible with our immune systems.

The recent kidney and heart transplants have taken organs from the specially designed "10-gene pig".

It has one genetic tweak to prevent any donated organs responding to human growth hormones and growing out of control.

Another key alteration removes a sugary molecule, called alpha-Gal, which sticks to the surface of pig cells and acts like a gigantic flashing neon sign marking the tissue as absolutely alien.

A wing of our immune system, called the complement system, is constantly patrolling the body looking for alpha-Gal. That's why organs can be rejected and killed moments after they are transplanted.

Two other "neon signs" were genetically removed and six human ones added in, acting like a camouflage net over the pig cells to help hide them from the immune system.

The resulting 10-gene pigs are then raised in sterile conditions, so they are suitable for transplant.

The kidney and the heart

The pair of pig kidneys were transplanted into the brain-dead body of Jim Parsons in September 2021.

He'd wanted to be an organ donor when he died and when his kidneys were donated, pig kidneys were put in

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Science

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their place with permission from his family.

Dr Locke describes the moment one of the kidneys started making urine as “remarkable” and feels xenotransplantation can “really change people’s lives, and to be blunt, save their lives”. She’s expecting to start clinical trials later this year.

That operation was a three-day-long experiment, but meanwhile, surgeons at the University of Maryland Medical Center were about to go one step further.

Their patient, David Bennett, 57, had severe heart failure. He was not deemed suitable for a human heart transplant and was being kept alive by an Ecmo machine, which sup-

ported his heart and lungs.

Mr Bennett described having a pig heart as a “shot in the dark”.

A 10-gene pig was driven to the hospital and on 7 January, its heart was placed inside David Bennett’s chest. The operation was tricky because Mr Bennett’s diseased heart had swollen, so connecting the blood vessels to the smaller pig-heart was a challenge.

Again, there was the nervous moment to see whether the heart would be rapidly rejected, but it was beating and stayed pink. Dr Muhammad Mohiuddin, the hospital’s director of cardiac xenotransplantation, said he did not expect to witness this “in my lifetime”.

When I spoke to him on

the one-month anniversary of the operation he said there were no signs of the organ being rejected, but Mr Bennett was still frail.

“We put a new Ferrari engine in a 1960s car. The engine is working great, but the rest of the body has to adjust,” he said.

But Mr Bennett died two months after the transplant. The cause, and therefore the implications for xenotransplantation, is still uncertain.

Mr Bennett was very frail before the operation, and it is possible that even the new heart was not enough.

No signs of organ rejection have been reported, but if detailed analysis of the heart shows signs of the immune system attacking it, the 10-gene pig may need further modifications to make its organs suitable for the human body.

Alternatively, it could come down to anatomy, and pig hearts may not be up to the job in a human body.

Our hearts have to work much harder to fight gravity than a pig’s because we walk on two legs rather than four.

Chris Denning, a professor of stem cell biology at the University of Nottingham, said overcoming hyperacute rejection meant the heart transplant would be considered “a success”.

He said if the issue was frailty, then xenotransplantation “could be successful in the future” but if it came down to anatomy then it could “be potentially a

show-stopper”.

The hospital plans to continue doing clinical trials.

Pig hearts do not have to be as good as a human heart to still save huge numbers of lives, according to Prof John Wallwork, one of the UK’s most eminent transplant surgeons. Many people die waiting for a transplant.

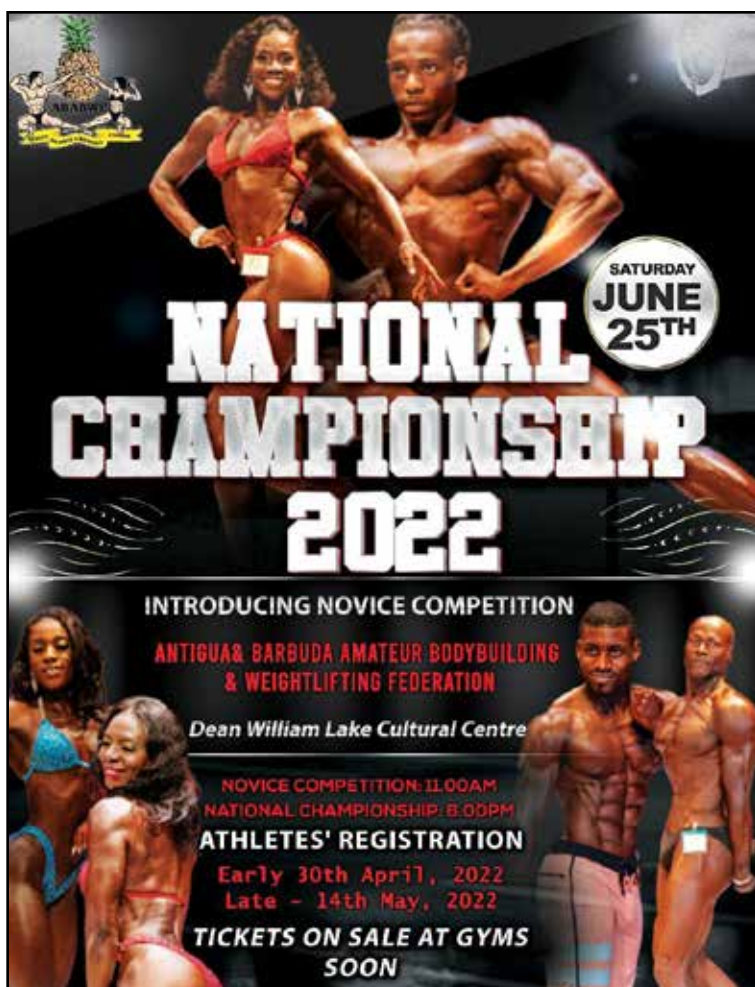
Prof Wallwork, who conducted the world’s first heart-lung-liver transplant and was an early pioneer of xenotransplantation, says it’s better to give 1,000 people a 70% chance of survival with a pig heart than 100 people an 85% chance with a human heart.

“So, if it’s not quite as good as human transplantation, then we’ve still done more good than not doing the 1,000 patients,” he said.

Xenotransplantation has always felt like the next big thing in transplant medicine. There’s no doubt a series of landmark operations have been performed, but only more research will tell us whether the field - and its grand dreams - will ever come of age.

Dr Locke added: “Our goal would be to have one 10-gene edited pig be able to save a patient with kidney failure, a patient with liver failure, a patient with heart failure and a patient with end-stage lung disease.

“That would be a remarkable accomplishment and I genuinely believe that we will be there during my lifetime.”



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Dean William Lake Cultural Centre

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Oscars 2022: Will Smith's slap aside, it was a shambles

By **Nicholas Barber**

The moment when the best actor winner hit Chris Rock on stage overshadowed the awards themselves – and symbolised everything wrong with this year's event, writes Nicholas Barber.

The 94th Academy Awards will be remembered for the wins by Coda in the best picture, best adapted screenplay, and best supporting actor categories, making it the second-best picture winner in a row to be directed by a woman, and the first to be ... oh, who am I kidding? Sunday night's Oscars ceremony could be remembered for those things. Let's hope it is. But, most of all, it will be remembered for the almost unbelievable moment when Will Smith strode onto the stage, slapped Chris Rock in the face, and bellowed, "Keep my wife's name out of your [expletive] mouth!"

Yes, that actually happened. If you weren't watching the ceremony, you might assume that the reports had been exaggerated, or that the whole thing had been set up in advance.

Even if you were watching, Smith's fury was so shocking that it was difficult to process. But it's true. Rock was on stage to present the documentary prize, he made a mean joke about Jada Pinkett Smith's short hair – which is a result of

alopecia – reminding him of Demi Moore's shaven head in *GI Jane* – and suddenly Smith reminded us all of his Muhammad Ali biopic.

Somehow, a shaken Rock carried on with the presentation, and somehow the ceremony itself kept going, but there was more surrealism to come. As was widely predicted, Smith won the best actor Oscar for his performance in *King Richard*.

And so, just a few minutes after he had been on stage assaulting someone on live television, he was back on the same stage, receiving a standing ovation, and tearfully declaring: "I want to be a vessel for love". Seriously. Who knows what he'd be like if he wanted to be a vessel for hate.

If it hadn't been for Smith's violence, some other moments might have made more headlines. It was touching when Ariana DeBose won best supporting actress for *West Side Story*, celebrating being a queer woman of colour in her speech, and when Troy Kotsur, who is deaf, won best supporting actor for *Coda*.

It was encouraging that Jane Campion, director of *The Power of the Dog*, became the third woman to win the best director prize.

It was sweet to see Billie Eilish's giddy, giggly joy when she and her brother



Will Smith, right, hits presenter Chris Rock on stage while presenting the award for best documentary feature at the Oscars on Sunday, March 27, 2022, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)

Finneas O'Connell won the best original song prize for *No Time To Die*, and to see Lady Gaga being so supportive when she was on stage with Liza Minnelli to present best picture.

But these sparkling highlights accounted for a small proportion of the ceremony's three hours and forty minutes. For the rest of the time, it was a shambles: a dispiriting jumble of botched introductions, ill-timed advert breaks, insensitive music choices, creaking comedy, and uninspired production. Smith's slap only added to the sense that the evening was out of control.

There was so much that just wasn't right. The show opened with a musical number from Beyoncé, with a whole crowd of dancers and a live band in matching tennis-ball-coloured outfits.

But rather than being in the Dolby Theatre, the number was staged on a tennis court in Compton with no audience present, so it didn't bring any energy or party atmosphere to proceedings.

After that, Regina Hall, Amy Schumer and Wanda Sykes were introduced as the hosts, only for DJ Khaled to charge on stage and introduce them again.

The Oscars hadn't had an overall host (or hosts) for the previous three years, so their appointment suggested that the Academy was getting its confidence back after last year's low-key, mid-pandemic prize-giving. It didn't seem like that for long. The women made some ill-judged gags about wanting to grope the best-looking actors in the room and how they couldn't get through to the end of

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The Power of the Dog, but they were off stage for such long stretches that you forgot all about them. Instead of bringing the ceremony together, they made it more disjointed.

The biggest problem in that regard was that eight awards were handed out before the live broadcast began, and the acceptance speeches were then edited, at odd junctures, into the ceremony.

Supposedly, this was a failed attempt to reduce the running time, but its main effect was to break up the flow of the evening. The same went for the addition of two categories which had been voted for on Twitter.

In the #OscarCheerMoment category, the winner was: The Flash enters the speed force in Zack Snyder's Justice League, never mind that this sequence wasn't even the best "Cheer Moment" in Zack Snyder's Justice League, let alone in the history of cine-

ma. The #FanFavourite film was Army of The Dead, also directed by Zack Snyder, so the two choices proved nothing except that Snyder's fan base is extremely well organised.

These time-wasting categories were an insult to the Oscar winners who had had their own hard-earned triumphs consigned to the pre-broadcast slot, not to mention those who had to hurry through their acceptance speeches as part of the live broadcast. When Drive My Car won best international film, its director, Ryusuke Hamaguchi, was literally pushed off the stage after his first few sentences.

The lack of imagination was pathetic, too. A tribute to James Bond on the series' 60th anniversary was logical enough, but why a montage of film clips introduced by three extreme sports athletes?

The 50th anniversary tribute to The Godfather was just as rudimentary. And then we had Samuel L Jack-

son, John Travolta and Uma Thurman presenting an award together to celebrate the 28th anniversary of Pulp Fiction. Are we really celebrating 28th anniversaries now?

From the second it happened, the night's big story was always going to be Smith's slap, but if everything else had been more enjoyable and professional then maybe it would have seemed like an unfortunate blip as opposed to a symbol of everything that was wrong with the event.

At the start, Schumer made a joke about the decline and fall of the Golden Globes: once an important, high-profile awards ceremony, now so mired in scandal that it was held in private this year.

Three and a half hours later, the Academy Awards couldn't afford to be so smug. If this farrago was the best the producers could come up with, then maybe next year's Oscars should be held in private, too.



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Guyana launches black belly sheep project with eye on CARICOM

CMC - Guyana has launched a black belly sheep project in the Mahaica-Berbice (Region Five), as government intensifies its agriculture programme with an eye on feeding the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) region.

“Region Five, must be the livestock of CARICOM. That is the vision, so that we have to increase our production, we have to increase our quality, we have to improve our breed, we have to use more advanced technology, we have to invest in the infrastructure and we have to work on building the partnership, all of which is ongoing,” President Dr Mohammed Irfaan Ali said at the launch on Sunday.

He said with the region being Guyana’s largest producer of livestock, it has the potential to become the livestock capital of the 15-member CARICOM grouping.

President Ali told the ceremony that the world import value on mutton and mutton products is estimated at eight billion US dollars and that CARICOM alone imports 7,900 tonnes of mutton at US\$48 million annually.

He said the four major markets in the region are the Bahamas, Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

“We have already agreed with Barbados that Guyana and Barbados would do a joint project to supply the Barbados market strictly from Guyana to start with. That is a market with a value of US\$6.8 million,” Ali said.

He said that from 2016 to 2019, the industry has grown in CARICOM from US\$36 million to close to US\$48 million and that Guyana is looking to expand local production above 7,000 tonnes at the end of a five-year period.

He said this would require a capital investment of US\$175 million and approximately 25,000 acres of land, noting however that the expected earning is estimated at US\$43 million annually.

“We have right within our arms’ reach a market that can generate a value of US\$48 million. And who supplies

CARICOM right now? Australia and New Zealand. With the cost of freight and logistics cost increases, it is becoming more and more expensive, that is why this is a low hanging fruit, CARICOM is right within our arms reach.

“I am presenting you this to show you the opportunities so that you will know in this project there are great opportunities. This is not a project by guess, this is a project that is supported by scientific research, market research and strong negotiations on the trade side,” Ali stated.

Ali said that if Guyana is to tap into the available market, there must be consistency, farmers will be given the full support of his government with machines to bring their fields up to par to support the initiative.

Already, 78 farmers have signalled their interest in the project and have signed up, making about 1,325 acres of their land available for that purpose. Support will also be given by veterinarians to provide guidance and support the sector.

“We are going to hire specifically for this project a dedicated team that will in a full-time manner, work with the farmers here in support of the sector. We are building an entire machinery to work with you,” Ali told the farmers at the ceremony.

Ali said that the black belly sheep project also falls under the government’s ‘one Guyana’ initiative, insisting that it is not only a concept that deals with social issues, but also about bringing economic prosperity to every single citizen as it has the potential to create 4,500 jobs directly and indirectly. However, the President emphasised that there is need for commitment by all involved.

“One Guyana requires all of us to work together and advance on the cause for development together. These projects can never be successful if we don’t understand that we must do it together, we have to do it together and we are not go-



Guyana's President Dr. Irfaan Ali

ing to fail by doing it separately. Every single farmer must be a support for the other farmer.

“We are not building a one-off project. The vision of this project is first to be self-sufficient locally but importantly in the short term to start supply regionally and then grow this grow it to an international product. And for that, we are bringing in the relevant players, the global players to work side by side with us.”

President Ali said that he wants the agricultural sector to be built differently and wants to see youths and women playing an integral role as there is great economic prosperity in the sector.

“For this specific project in Region Five, we want 20 per cent of those farms to be led by women and 35 per cent of the farms must have youth involvement that is young people below the age of 35.

“This is part of building the future, this is part of empowerment, these are real targets and a real approach in the involvement of people. So not only must agriculture be on food production, it must be built on erasing biases,” Ali stated.

The government in its 2022 budget has earmarked GUY\$28.7 billion to ensure the rapid growth and development of Guyana’s agriculture sector.

Regional News

Browne hits back at Guyana VP Jagdeo: Trinidad and Tobago not falling apart

News Day TT - Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Foreign and Caricom Affairs Dr Amery Browne, in a statement on Saturday, assured that Trinidad and Tobago was not falling apart, as has been recently alleged by Guyana vice-president Bharrat Jagdeo who said TT was in trouble owing to a lack of diversification away from its oil and gas sector and that Guyana would not go down that path.

Last week, Jagdeo said a lack of diversification away from its oil and gas sector had caused TT's economy to crumble.

"Trinidad is falling apart, and that's putting it mildly – falling apart! No jobs, sustained periods of negative growth and can't see the light of day for the near future."

After his statements were criticised, Jagdeo later doubled down on his position during a press conference on Friday, saying that a lot of Trinidadians agreed with him.

He said, "I have tracked what is going on TT for quite a while and what I have said is not anything new."

"This has nothing to do with just Rowley, this is the fact of the economy in TT over a long period growing to rely only on one sector."

Suggesting that Guyana would not follow TT into economic ruin by failing to diversify, he said, "We are determined in Guyana to avoid going down that path." Further, Jagdeo said, over the years, Guyanese nationals entering TT had been treated horribly and his government would not be bullied into making decisions about its economy.

He claimed TT citizens felt they had a "God-given right to displace Guyanese too, in our own country from our own resources." He said his government would not allow that to happen.

"I don't care who cuss me or what they cuss me for. We are not going to discriminate against Trinidadians, we want Trinidadian business to come here. But they have to come in partnership with our people. Their attitude has to change, we suffered a long time the indignity of this judgment of our people."

The Prime Minister was asked to respond to Jagdeo's comments during a press conference at the Diplomatic Centre, St Ann's, on Saturday.

Dr Rowley said, "There are a lot of people in Guyana, and I am not really distracted by vice-president Jagdeo's comments about us."

"A lot of people comment about us, some favourably and some not. We will not be distracted by that."

Browne, in his own statement also dated March 26, called no names but clearly referred to Jagdeo. He dismissed remarks by unnamed politicians in Guyana, as "arrogant, hostile and xenophobic." Read here

Unlike a denigrating image being painted, Browne said TT nationals were among the warmest and most generous in the world.

He said while some mistreatment and holier-than-thou attitudes exist in every society, immigrants from Guyana, Jamaica, Grenada, Barbados and St Vincent and the Grenadines had done "extremely well" in TT.

He said many Guyanese had been able to remit money back to Guyana "over the generations and many continue to do so" but said TT's warmth and generosity toward Guyana went well beyond receiving its nationals seeking a better life.

"When the nation of Guyana needed it most, they were able to benefit from the generous write-off of billions in debt owed to TT."



Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Foreign and Caricom Affairs Dr Amery Browne

He noted such a fact was ignored in recent remarks from Guyana.

Browne also noted that Rowley had gone to Guyana when it "was on the brink of bloodshed and widespread civil unrest after an elections fiasco" to help democracy and peace prevail.

He said Rowley, when he was Caricom's chairman in 2021, had also supported the Guyanese position in claims being made by neighbouring Venezuela for much of its territory.

Browne cited his own intervention when Venezuelan authorities had detained some Guyanese fishermen, he said he had personally told the Venezuelan ambassador that TT stood with the Guyanese as if they were TT nationals.

"Speaking publicly about Guyana and TT, in the manner that has been done recently, without referencing such tangible realities does great disservice to the truth and is an offence against the warmth that our people and nations have shared and must continue to share."

He said the recent remarks contrasted with Guyana President Irfan

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T&T Soca artiste Blaxx dies of COVID-19 at 59



Dexter "Blaxx" Stewart

T&T Newsday - Soca artiste Dexter "Blaxx" Stewart has died.

D'All Starz, of which he is the lead singer, issued a statement saying his family, along with the management and members of the band D'All Starz, regretted having to announce his untimely passing.

"May his voice be heard among the angels," it said.

On March 21 it was reported that Blaxx was hospitalised at the Arima General Hospital battling covid. On March 23, his manager Giselle Gellineau-Penrose confirmed he was in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

In 2020, the singer was hospitalised with lung and kidney issues. He was discharged in November of that year.

Vincentians march against proposed jetty

Scores of residents in the town of Layou, St. Vincent marched through the streets on Sunday protesting a proposed jetty at Jackson Bay.

According to public notice by the Physical Planning Department, an application has been made to the Planning Board by SVG Aggregate Inc to erect a Jetty in Layou (In Principle).

A large group carried placards with messages of objection to the proposed jetty. Protesters made a block around the town and ended their protest march at Jackson Bay.

Layou residents on 23rd March told St. Vin-

cent Times they would be united in their fight against the proposed jetty which, if accepted by the Planning Board, would be constructed on what they say is the last remaining beach in their community.

An application filed by SVG Aggregate Inc states that the jetty will extend approximately 150 ft from the shoreline.

The application further states that the jetty is required so that aggregate products from Palmiste in the Layou mountains can be loaded onto barges.

Herbie Shallow, who has been fishing since he was 16 years old, told reporters



that outside of fishing, he brings his grandchildren to the beach and wonders what will happen if the jetty is constructed.

Last week, area MP Orlando Brewster, in a call to Star Radio, said persons are incorrect in saying that the

Jetty had already been approved by the Government when it is still in the application phase. Objection to the project is still possible, he said.

A petition is already in circulation to garner names, and private letters will be submitted to the Planning Board showing residents' objection to the proposed Jetty.

Laverne Mc Kenzie, who is in charge of collecting names for the petition, says as of 23rd March, 200 persons had signed the petition.

Jackson Bay is one of the beaches in Layou located on St Vincent's west coast.

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Ali's positive comments supporting regional integration.

Browne insisted, "TT is a proud and sovereign republic. We are not 'falling apart.'"

"Like any other small-island state in our region, TT as emerging from a devastating pandemic and was working to revitalise the economy, with an outstanding private sector."

He said many economies in the region had been as dependent on tourism as TT's

had been on petrochemicals, "But that has never been the basis for us to politically disparage each other as we each and all seek to expand our economic base."

He urged respect despite differences of opinion.

"Arrogance and xenophobia have no place in the modern politics of the Caribbean Community, and any public figure in our region who seeks to nourish insularity and distil hostility within Caricom in the year 2022 has not been paying sufficient attention to the harsh lessons of the past."

Russia shifts focus to try to grind Ukraine's army in east

AP - With its aspirations for a quick victory dashed by a stiff Ukrainian resistance, Russia has increasingly focused on grinding down Ukraine's military in the east in the hope of forcing Kyiv into surrendering part of the country's territory to possibly end the war.

The bulk of the Ukrainian army is concentrated in eastern Ukraine, where it has been locked up in fighting with Moscow-backed separatists in a nearly eight-year conflict. If Russia succeeds in encircling and destroying the Ukrainian forces in the country's industrial heartland called Donbas, it could try to dictate its terms to Kyiv and, possibly, attempt to split the country in two.

The Russian military declared Friday that the "first stage of the operation" had been largely accomplished, allowing Russian troops to concentrate on their "top goal — the liberation of Donbas."

Many observers say the shift in strategy could reflect President Vladimir Putin's acknowledgment that his plan for a

blitz in Ukraine has failed, forcing him to narrow his goals and change tactics amid a disastrous war that has turned Russia into a pariah and decimated its economy.

U.S. and British officials also have noted that Moscow has increasingly focused on fighting the Ukrainian forces in the east while digging in around Kyiv and other big cities and pummeling them with rockets and artillery.

The chief of Ukrainian military intelligence, Kyrylo Budanov, said Sunday the change of focus could reflect Putin's hope to break Ukraine in two, like North and South Korea, and enforce "a line of separation between the occupied and unoccupied regions."

"He can't swallow the entire country," Budanov said, adding that Russia appears to be trying "to pull the occupied territories into a single quasi-state structure and pit it against independent Ukraine."

Putin and his generals haven't re-



A Ukrainian soldier stands atop a destroyed Russian APC after recent battle in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on March 26, 2022. (AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)

vealed specific military goals or a planned timeline, but the Kremlin clearly expected a quick victory when Russian troops rolled into Ukraine from the north, east and south on Feb. 24.

But the Russian attempts to swiftly capture the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, the country's second-largest city, Kharkiv, and other big cities in the northeast have been thwarted by well-organised Ukrainian defences and logistical challenges that stalled the Russian offensive.

N. Korea's Kim vows to develop more powerful means of attack

AP - North Korea said Monday leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to develop more powerful means of attack, days after the country's first intercontinental ballistic missile launch in more than four years.

The statement suggests North Korea might perform additional launches or even test a nuclear device soon as it pushes to modernize its arsenal and increase pressure on the Biden administration while nuclear diplomacy remains stalled. Last Thursday, the North performed its 12th round of weapons tests this year, launching the newly developed, long-range



In this photo distributed by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, centre, walks around what it says a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on the launcher, at an undisclosed location in North Korea on March 24, 2022. (Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP, File)

Hwasong-17, which analysts say was designed to reach anywhere in the U.S. mainland.

During a photo session with scientists and others in-

involved in the Hwasong-17 test, Kim expressed a resolve to build up the country's attack capability to cope with threats, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

"Only when one is equipped with the formidable striking capabilities, overwhelming military power that cannot be stopped by anyone, one can prevent a war, guarantee the security of the country and contain and put under control all threats and blackmails by the imperialists," KCNA quoted Kim as saying.

Kim said North Korea

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Gunmen kill 20 at cockfight in troubled Mexican state

Reuters – Gunmen massacred 20 people on Sunday night in a suspected gangland attack at a clandestine cockfighting venue in western Mexico, authorities said, in one of the worst mass shootings under the current government.

The killings took place in Las Tinajas in the state of Michoacan, where the powerful Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) has been fighting local gangs for control of drug routes.

“It was a massacre of one group by another,” President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador told a regular news conference, expressing his regret at the deaths.

He blamed criminal gangs in the area for the killings and said a team was on the way to investigate the crime.

Seventeen of the dead



Police officers keep watch at a scene following the killing of 19 people on Sunday night in an attack on a clandestine cockfighting venue, authorities said, in Zinapecuaro, Mexico March 28, 2022. REUTERS/Stringer

were men and three were women, and officials secured 15 vehicles as part of the investigation, Michoacan state prosecutors said in a statement.

All the victims had gunshot wounds, and the last of them died on his way to hospital, authorities said.

Four people were being treated for injuries.

Michoacan has long been one of the most lawless areas in Mexico, and last month, the United States temporarily suspended shipments of avocados from the state after U.S. inspectors received threats. The suspension was

later lifted.

Gang violence was fuelling record levels of homicides by the time President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador took office in late 2018 pledging to pacify the country, adopting a less confrontational approach to dealing with organised crime.

But widespread violence has persisted, and average annual homicide totals are on track to be the highest under any Mexican administration since modern records began.

Homicides were down nationally during the first two months of 2022 compared to the same period last year, but they were up in Michoacan, according to official government data.

Las Tinajas is in the municipality of Zinapecuaro, about 50 km (30 miles) northeast of the state capital, Morelia.

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will develop more “powerful strike means” and also expressed his conviction and expectation that his country will “more vigorously perfect the nuclear war deterrence of the country,” KCNA said.

North Korea said the Hwasong-17 flew to a maximum altitude of 6,248 kilometres (3,880 miles) and travelled 1,090 kilometres (680 miles) during a 67-minute flight before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

Outside experts said if the missile is fired on a standard trajectory, flatter than the steep test angle, it could fly as far as 15,000 kilometres (9,320 miles), enough to reach anywhere in the U.S. mainland and beyond.

Believed to be about 25 meters (82

feet) long, the Hwasong-17 is the North’s longest-range weapon and, by some estimates, the world’s biggest road-mobile ballistic missile system. Its size suggests the missile is meant to carry multiple nuclear warheads, given the North already has single-warhead ICBMs that could also hit most of the U.S.

U.S.-led diplomacy aimed at convincing North Korea to denuclearize in return for economic and political benefits largely has stalled since 2019. The Biden administration has urged North Korea to return to talks without any preconditions, but Pyongyang has responded Washington must drop its hostility first and has taken steps to expand his weapons arsenals.

Some experts say Kim could soon conduct another ICBM launch, a launch of a satellite-carrying rocket or a test of a

nuclear device as he works to perfect his weapons technology, dial up pressure on the United States and secure stronger internal royalty.

On Monday, South Korea reiterated a previous assessment that there are signs that North Korea is restoring previously demolished tunnels at its underground nuclear testing site. Lee Jong-joo, a spokesperson at Seoul’s Unification Ministry, said that a nuclear test by North Korea would pose “a serious threat” to international security and that the North must halt any related acts immediately and return to talks.

The Hwasong-17 lift off was the North’s most serious weapons launch since it tested a previously developed ICBM in November 2017. Its last nuclear test, its sixth overall, was in September 2017.

Australia to say farewell to lovable rogue Warne

Reuters – More than three weeks after Shane Warne's death at a Thai-land villa, his statue at the Melbourne Cricket Ground remains decorated with flowers, cigarettes and beer cans left by fans mourning the loss of one of cricket's most authentic characters.

Australians will remember Warne at a televised memorial service at his home stadium on Wednesday, with nearly 50,000 people to attend the venue where the spin bowling great captured his 700th test wicket against Ashes foes England.

Many will be seated in the southern grandstand, re-named the S.K. Warne Stand in the wake of his death at age 52.

"He made mistakes and had a few hiccups, but he was genuine about stuff," said Bill Patterson of Melbourne, sharing a drink with friends by Warne's statue.

"He was just a normal person as well as being amazing from a crick-eting point of view. He was a bit of a rogue, but a good fellow and people recognise that."

Australia loves sporting heroes like few other countries. The captaincy of the test team has long been dubbed "the second most important office" after that of the Prime Minister.

But deeper affections are often reserved for athletes with a mischievous streak, who rise from humble beginnings, thumb their nose at convention and own their flaws and shine with talent.

A lifelong smoker and a dietician's nightmare, Warne ticked all of those boxes through a career of brilliance and scandal.

"Not everyone follows cricket in Australia, but everyone knows Shane Warne and it's kind of taken the wind



People pay their respects to the late cricketer Shane Warne at his statue outside the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) in Melbourne, Australia, March 5, 2022. REUTERS/Sandra Sanders

out of many of us," said Inkie Bissell, a radio broadcaster from northern Queensland state.

High-profile athletes, politicians and celebrities will attend the memorial on Wednesday, underscoring Warne's appeal as a sporting showman.

Ordinary Australians have paid their respects in simpler ways, leaving cricket bats in their front gardens scrawled with "R.I.P. Warney".

Much of Warne's life resonates for Australians, most of whom would identify with his suburban upbringing and his determination to live life to the fullest.

The son of aspirational, working-class parents, Warne grew up in a sleepy Melbourne suburb laden with sporting fields and a short bike ride to a beach.

By his own admission, he was "no academic" but his talent in both cricket and Australian Rules football, his first sporting love, earned him a scholarship

to a private school.

In an era when corporal punishment was still in vogue, he was regularly given "the cane" by the principal, his backside whacked for breaking school rules or giving cheek to teachers.

He passed his school exams but was devastated to miss out on a professional contract with the local Aussie Rules football team, St Kilda.

Among a slew of odd jobs, he delivered pizzas while trying to forge a career in cricket as a teenager but admitted in his autobiography he had trouble saving money because he kept eating the product.

A few years later, he could afford to dine at the world's finest restaurants but his love for junk food never dimmed.

It came as little surprise to Australians that his final meal before his death was the country's quintessential snack of Vegemite on toast - the brown, salty spread laid on buttery bread that most

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ECA, UEFA joint venture better for European clubs than Super League, says Al-Khelaifi

Reuters – European clubs have heightened influence and affluence thanks to the joint venture between UEFA and the European Club Association, ECA chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi said in an address to its General Assembly in Vienna on Monday.

Al-Khelaifi said that the collaboration between the two bodies, which aimed to identify marketing partners to sell commercial rights for European club competitions in the 2024-27 cycle, had led to an increase in projected value for the tournaments.

In February, UEFA, along with the ECA, appointed TEAM Marketing and Relevant Sports Group as sales partners for men's club competitions.

Al-Khelaifi suggested that the partnership had proved to be more lucrative for European football than the proposed European Super League would have been.

Last April, twelve big



Paris St Germain President Nasser Al-Khelaifi [Photo: Reuters]

European clubs announced plans to form a breakaway league, but the project imploded within days following the withdrawal of the six English clubs involved. Subsequently Atletico Madrid, AC Milan and Inter Milan also pulled out.

"For the first time ever, UEFA and ECA have worked jointly to conduct an open and competitive tender to manage the sales process for men's European club competitions," Al-Khelaifi said.

"We have seen an amazing 39% increase in the forecasted commercial value of the men's UEFA club competitions for the post-

2024 cycle. This deal also proves that the doubters of the European football model were wrong.

"More influence and more affluence for clubs, more progressive governance and more European togetherness -- I remember some people trying to tear down the system for a fraction of these things last year."

Al-Khelaifi also said that the ECA would make available 1 million euros (\$1.10 million) in aid to Ukrainian people affected by Russia's invasion of the country.

"We are living through troubling times. We have all

grieved to see the violent attacks on the Ukrainian people, and we call for peace," the Paris Saint-Germain president said.

"I am in touch with the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) so that ECA can help both the Ukrainian people, and the refugees being cared for in the neighbouring countries.

"ECA will make available an initial 1 million euro financial contribution in supporting our members' efforts in assisting the Ukrainian people, while many of our clubs have also offered to find a safe place for Ukrainian youth academy players."

Russia calls its actions a "special military operation".

The ECA's General Assembly is set to discuss a number of wide-ranging issues in football over the next two days, including Financial Fair Play, the format of European club competitions after 2024 and inclusivity in the sport.

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foreigners find inedible.

After quitting cricket, he continued the touring life as a respected commentator but always returned to his homes in Melbourne's bay-side region, where he once tore around in beaten-up cars as a teenager.

The members at East Sandringham Cricket Club, where Warne competed in his boyhood, took his death hard.

They fondly remember the Satur-

day afternoon in 2015 when Warne, four years retired from professional cricket, returned to play in a club match for the senior side to limber up for an exhibition game in the United States.

Some 700 people turned up to the suburban clash, which would normally draw a few dozen.

Warne took a couple of wickets on the synthetic pitch, slogged some 40 runs and signed dozens of autographs.

He also arranged 10 cases of beer

to be delivered and lingered for hours after the game for drinks in the club rooms, Kim Pitt, a former president of East Sandringham and a friend of the Warne family, told Reuters.

"No matter what people's views were of Shane, very quickly they would be won over by him when they met him in person," said Pitt. "He made a few blues (mistakes) over the journey, but he never ran away from them. People love him for that."

Sports News



Weathered claims second cycling title this season

Shawn Weathered recorded his second victory this season when he prevailed in the Elite Male Class of the Avalanche Road Race staged by the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) on Sunday.

Weathered completed the 10-lap race in 1 hour, 51 minutes and 14.05 seconds, just 0.04th of a second faster than his Team Terminix colleague Emmanuel Gayral, who finished second in 1 hour, 51 minutes, 14.09 seconds.

Conroy Thomas captured third place to ensure Team Terminix made a clean sweep of the podium places for the Elite Male class.

Weathered had won the first race of the 2022 ABCF's domestic season, an Individual Time Trial on 20th February.

Team Terminix also took another top spot on the winner's podium last Sunday



Team Terminix cyclists Shawn Weathered, centre, Emmanuel Gayral, left, and Conroy Thomas, right, made a clean sweep of the top three positions in the Elite Male Class of the Avalanche Race on Sunday. (Photo: ABCF)

when Delvin Peters captured the Masters Class. Peters finished the 8-lap race in 1 hour, 37 minutes and 07.05 seconds.

Patrick Peters and Vaughn Gomes of Team Independent secured second and third places respectively in the Masters Class.

Road Runners Cycling Club dominated the Sports Class to capture the top three

positions. Newell Mack won the Sports Class by completing the 6-lap race in 1 hour, 7 minutes and 29.78 seconds.

Team mates Jason Adams finished second ahead of fellow colleague Micah Gore.

Road Runners Cycling Club recorded more success on Sunday when Lindsay Duffy claimed the Elite Female Class by finishing the

six-lap course in 1 hour, 29 minutes and 52.37 seconds.

Duffy's lone competitor Zhanna Prikhodko failed to complete the race having fallen out after completing only two laps of the course.

Eastside Raiders claimed the top two places in the Cadets 14-17age group class. Dejaun Francis won the six-lap race in 1 hour, 10 minutes and 53.30 seconds ahead of teammate Curtis Soanes.

Aden Murray-Watkins of Wadadli Cycling Academy took third place in the class, which was contested by just the three cyclists.

Arusa Murray-Watkins of Wadadli Cycling Academy won the Cadets 11-13 age group class. Murray-Watkins completed the two-lap course in 30 minutes and 52.97 seconds to beat her only competitor, Antoine Simon of the Andre Simon Cycling Academy.

Shouldn't have played today, Azarenka says after quitting in Miami

Reuters - Victoria Azarenka said her personal life had been "extremely stressful" in recent weeks and that she should not have played at the Miami Open on Sunday after the former world number one retired against 16-year-old Czech Linda Fruhvirtova.

Wildcard Fruhvirtova was leading 6-2 3-0 when the 32-year-old Azarenka informed the chair umpire that she was done and left the court.

"I shouldn't have gone on the court today," Azarenka later said in a statement. The last few weeks have been extremely stressful in my personal life. Last match took so much out of me, but I wanted to play in front of a great audience as they helped me pull through my first match. I wanted to go out there and try but it was a mistake."

Azarenka, who won the Australia Open, *cont'd on pg 25*



Victoria Azarenka. (Photo Credit: Jayne Kamin-Oncea-USA TODAY Sports)

Villa wins again, Golden Grove make good start in Primary School Cup

Villa maintained their successful start in the Primary School Cup league competition with a 3-1 victory over Pigotts Primary in their Group C encounter at the T. N. Kirnon playing field on Friday.

Goals by Shumba Thomas, Chevon Porter and Elijah Richards gave Villa their second win in as many matches after trouncing Parham Primary 4-0 in their opening encounter the previous week.

Adrien Fenton scored a consolation goal for Pigotts Primary in their second defeat in as many matches, having lost 5-0 to TN Kirnon in their first encounter.

Leon Cork scored four goals to spur T. N. Kirnon to a 7-1 victory over Parham. Ajay Barthley, Delroy Francis and Elliot Samuel were also on target for T. N. Kirnon which gave them their second win in as many matches.

Tevian Monroe scored a consolation goal for Parham.

Golden Grove made an impressive start to their



The Villa team and coaches after their Primary School Cup match against Pigotts at the T. N. Kirnon playing field on 25th March. (Photo: Elwin Francis)

Primary School Cup campaign by hammering Urlings 11-1 in Group A action at the Golden Grove playing field.

Deilin Pina scored four goals, Mekhi Nathan and Jahneen Jacobs each scored hat-tricks while Joshua Sanquintin converted the other goal for the victors who did not play during the opening week of matches.

Yuclean Mason recorded a hat-trick to take

his season tally to five as Bendals primary continued their winning form by romping to a 5-0 victory over Jennings primary.

Isaiah Harvey and Mickyle Samuels were also on target for Bendals which recorded a 7-0 win against Urlings the previous week.

J. T. Ambrose prevailed 2-1 over Greenbay to record their first win of the competition. J. T. Ambrose lost 5-2 against Five

Islands in their opening Group B encounter.

It was the first loss for Greenbay after they beat Potters 4-1 in their first game of the competition.

Five Islands made it two wins from two matches by securing a 6-3 victory against Potters primary.

Allister Nibbs and Rashan Samuel scored two goals each while Shamoy Chiddick and Nazeek Williamson each converted once for five Islands.

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lian Open in 2012 and 2013, had a year-long maternity break in 2016-17.

A split with her partner and a custody battle over son Leo that was not settled until 2018 also hampered her career.

The Belarusian, who playing on

Tour without the name or flag of her country following sanctions relating to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, broke down in tears during her defeat to Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina at Indian Wells this month.

She defeated Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova in a final set tiebreak in

her previous round at the WTA 1000 event in Miami.

"I hope to take a break and be able to come back," Azarenka added.

"I always look forward to the challenge and pressure of competition but today it was too much. I have to and will learn from this."

West Indies White Ball Camp to be held in Antigua

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has named 16 players for a white ball camp to be held at the Coolidge Cricket Ground from Thursday, March 31 to Wednesday, April 13.

There are two uncapped players – all-rounder Nyeem Young and Keacy Carty, the middle-order batsman. Young was a member of the West Indies Rising Stars squad at the 2020 ICC U19 World Cup and has also played for Barbados Royals in the Caribbean Premier League. Carty has been a consistent member of the Leeward Islands Hurricanes squad for the last five years. He was Player of the Match in the final of the 2016 ICC U19 World Cup won by the West Indies.

Head Coach Phil Simmons outlined that the camp will focus on improving skill sets as the West Indies look ahead to two major global events over the next two years – the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Australia later this year and the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup to be played in India.

Simmons said: "The camp will be a chance for us to do some work with players in the white-ball formats, players who might have a chance to play in the coming white-ball teams later this year. The most important thing is that we will



be doing things in the camp that we have not been doing well, such as rotating strike, sweeping, and playing spin better.

"It's about working on things that we're not 100 percent at yet. We have several players at IPL who will be working at their games as well, so we're working with the players here to make sure they keep up the standard and improve."

Simmons added: "Keacy Carty was a reserve for the team which toured India in February. If there was any reason why players couldn't go he was the next batsman in line. He is one of the players we have looked at before. Nyeem Young is one of the potentially good young allrounders we have around the Caribbean, so we just want to bring them in and get them to understand

what we expect of them if they get to that level."

The camp will be held at Coolidge Cricket Ground, the new home of Cricket West Indies in Antigua. It will also help prepare for West Indies 2022 schedule with home and away tours all featuring white-ball cricket.

In late May, the West Indies travel to The Netherlands for the first-ever three-match One Day International Series between the two teams, to be followed by the rescheduled three-match ODI Series against Pakistan which was postponed in December.

These fixtures form part of the ICC ODI Super League, where teams will have the opportunity to secure points to try and secure one of the top seven places, excluding hosts India, to

gain automatic qualification for the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

West Indies will then be hosting tours by Bangladesh, India, and New Zealand with all three series featuring white-ball matches. Details of these tours will be announced in the coming weeks.

LIST OF PLAYERS

Nkrumah Bonner
 Darren Bravo
 Shamarh Brooks
 Keacy Carty
 Roston Chase
 Justin Greaves
 Chandrapaul Hemraj
 Shai Hope
 Brandon King
 Kjorn Ottley
 Keemo Paul
 Anderson Phillip
 Raymon Reifer
 Nial Smith
 Devon Thomas
 Nyeem Young

Sports News

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cricket can be played internationally here in Antigua and Barbuda.”

Enoch Lewis, a former president of ABCA, expressed satisfaction with the role played by cricket's governing body in ensuring the sport thrives locally.

“I am pleased that the board of directors in the ABCA are doing a fantastic job in ensuring that cricket is being played across the island. Let me also take time to say thank you in a big way to the sponsors of the teams, the sponsor of the tournament, to the CCG owners for making the facility available,” Lewis said.

I also want to say congratulations to the Pigotts cricket team for coming this far; Pigotts came up against a team that has international bowlers in its midst. And so, competing against that should only make them better going forward.

“Of course, I have to say congratulations to the champions. I think they were favourites coming in and they played like favourites and they won the tournament for yet another year. Congratulations are in order to the Liberta Blackhawks.

“I want to say special congratulations to the ABCA for playing the games at this facility. These players aspire to play at the international level and when it comes to a final, you need to have international facilities available because that is exactly what they should play on.”

Set a challenging 234 to

win the final, Crushers tumbled to 150 all out in 37.3 overs with Kofi James grabbing three for 11. Demari Benta led the Crushers batting with a top score of 52 off 66 balls, including eight fours and a six. Opener Kadeem Henry chipped in with a quick-fire 25 and Malique Walsh contributed 18.

Allrounder Kadeem Phillip and middle-order batsman Amahl Nathaniel struck half centuries in Liberta's total of 233 for nine off their allotted 40 overs after they were sent in to bat.

The pair shared in an 81-run sixth wicket stand after the Blackhawks were reduced to 130 for 5. Phillip hammered 53 off 27 balls, with 4 sixes

and 2 fours, while Nathaniel cracked 51.

Avier Christian with 42 and Uri Smith with 35 also shared in a 64-run second wicket partnership after the Blackhawks lost their first wicket with the score on 3.

Benta captured 3 for 48, Vincent Shadrach Jr. claimed 2 for 32 and Elroy Francis Jr. picked up 2 for 33.

Twenty-four hours earlier, All Saints Pythons secured third place in the competition by coasting to a comfortable six-wicket victory over Empire Nation at the same venue.

Set 188 to win, All Saints achieved victory by scoring 189 for 4 with 3.3 overs to spare. Opener Michael Do-

ver hammered 72 and was involved in a 91-run opening stand with Teran Payne who struck 35.

Dimitri Lucas chipped in with 28 while captain Kerry Mentore made an unbeaten 18 at the end. Former national leg-spinner Lynton Africa captured two for 36.

Earlier, a six-wicket stand of 77 runs by all-rounder Justin Athanaze and Garry Duberry was largely responsible for Empire's total of 187 for eight off their 40 overs.

The pair came together with Empire tottering on 97 for 5 and were able to revive the innings with Athanaze hitting 60 and Duberry getting 20. Malique Marcellin bagged three for 41.



Twist Fitness's Opening Hours

Monday- Friday
5:30AM-8:30PM

Saturday
9:00AM-5:00PM
5:00PM-7:00PM (WOMENS ONLY HOURS)

Sunday
10:00AM-3:00PM



Member of Parliament for St Paul's Constituency, E. P. Chet Green, centre, holds the trophy with PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks' captain Karima Gore after the ABCA Super-40 Final at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds on 27th March, 2022. (Photo: ABCA)

Greene praises Liberta for reclaiming Super-40 title

Member of Parliament for the Constituency of St. Paul's, E. P. Chet Greene, has lavished praise on the PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks for winning their 13th Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super-40 championship in the last 15 competitions.

The Blackhawks regained the Super-40 championship title, formerly the State Insurance Limited Overs Competition, with an emphatic 83-run victory over Pigotts Crushers in the final at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds (CCG) on Sunday.

During the presentation ceremony following the final, Greene commended the Liberta Blackhawks for maintaining their dominance of domestic cricket in Antigua and Barbuda.

"Today is not a day for speeches, but a day to allow Liberta and Libertans to celebrate amongst each other. You can all understand that today is Liberta day.

"To the PIC Blackhawks I say congratulations. You have maintained your tradition; a rich tradition of the Liberta community of winning. And so, congratulations are in order to you; players, coaching staff and management staff. Once again, we have proved our dominance in local cricket," Greene said.

"I want to set the record straight; we are the winningest team in cricket in Antigua and Barbuda and we will continue to win under the watch of Kenneth Benjamin our coach and a cadre of players who make my community proud. God bless Liberta!"

Greene also joined the President of the Leeward Islands Cricket Board Enoch Lewis in commending the ABCA for hosting the semi-finals and final of the limited overs contest at the CCG, the home of Cricket West Indies (CWI).

Greene took a parting shot at ABCA's President Leon "Kuma" Rodney

over the Government of Antigua and Barbuda's investments in the sport, and its partnership with CWI in purchasing the CCG after the fall of disgraced investor Allen Stanford.

"Let me also commend the ABCA on this particular competition - the COVID conditions, the country recovering, rebounding - cricket is like a religion in our country, it is being used as a path in recovery. The president of the Leeward Islands board made a comment which I identify with, in that our players must be exposed to the use of our top-notch facilities when we have finals of cricket, and I dare say, any sport in this country," Greene said.

"Unlike the president of the ABCA's view that nothing has been done by any of the governments, I want to remind him that the government of Antigua did invest in this facility to make sure that

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