



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA  
**POINT EXPRESS**  
TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

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# ABLP CLAIMS VICTORY IN DISPUTE WITH ASOT MICHAEL

Story on Page 2

*Celebrating International Women's Day*



## ABLP claims victory over Asot Michael in his fight to remain on party's ticket

After a series of setbacks in the High Court in the battle between St. Peter's MP Asot Michael who turned to the court in a bid to remain ABLP's candidate in that seat, and the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party, which has staunchly defended its right to determine who runs on its ticket, a default judgement entered on Monday against Michael appears to have given the ABLP the only victory that matters in the stand-off.

A default judgement was entered against Michael after his legal team failed to enter a defence to the ABLP's submission that the determination of who is suitable to run on a party's political ticket was not a matter within the court's purview to adjudicate.

The terms of the judgement, which was handed down on 28th February and entered on 7th March, is expected to be determined by the court in the coming days.

While this is not the end of the legal manoeuvring between the ABLP and Michael, this decision has effectively

cleared the way for the ABLP to move ahead with plans to replace Michael as the party's candidate for St. Peter. One of Michael's strongest contentions was that the party had no right to exclude him from the process of becoming a candidate based on his "suitability".

The ABLP on the other hand has argued that it maintains the right to screen potential political candidates for not only their ability to win, but also on other factors determined by the party, as part of the selection process.

Asot Michael was named in a UK scandal involving a British billionaire Peter Virdee several years ago. It was alleged that UK police had obtained evidence that Michael attempted to obtain favours from the businessman in return for advancing his interests in Antigua and Barbuda and other Caribbean territories.

Michael was forced to resign as a member of the Gaston Browne Cabinet until such time as he was able to clear himself of the accusations levelled against him.

IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT  
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Submitted Date: 07/03/2022 11:17  
Filed Date: 07/03/2022 13:17  
Fees Paid: 27.00

ANUHC2021/0409

ASOT A. MICHAEL

VS

Mary-Claire Hurst In her Capacity as General Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party  
E. P. Chet Greene In his capacity as Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party  
(3) Gaston Browne in His Capacity as the Political Leader of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party

DEFENDANTS/COUNTERCLAIMANTS

CLAIMANT/DEFENDANT

**FORM OF JUDGMENT FOR AMOUNT TO BE DECIDED BY THE COURT**

Dated the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2022.  
Entered the 7<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2022.

**NO DEFENCE TO THE COUNTERCLAIM** having been filed by ASOT MICHAEL, the Claimant/ Defendant to the Counterclaim in this matter;

It is this day adjudged that Judgment in default against ASOT MICHAEL, the Claimant/ Defendant to the Counterclaim be entered, with the terms of the judgment to be determined by the court pursuant to Rules 12.10 (4) and (5) of the CPR 2000.

By the Court

To date, the matter that led to his resignation has not been resolved.

Dr. David Dorsett who represents the ABLP's leader, Gaston Browne, General Secretary, Mary-Claire Hurst and Chairman, E. P. Chet Greene in this matter, said on Monday, "We have obtained a default judgment against Mr. Michael. We can count our chickens and plan for the

victory dance."

He also explained what is likely to happen next.

"It is almost certain that Mr. Michael too will be obtaining a default judgment on the issue of the Disciplinary Tribunal. As you would know, he filed two claims on the same matter and by sleight of hand was able to have us expecting to proceed on and complete his first action but in fact he was proceeding with a second action. He was then able to get both the first and the second actions consolidated.

"Any further proceedings in current litigation involving Mr. Michael will not substantially change the decisive result that has been achieved today. I think the objective of the Leadership of the Party has been achieved."

Tue 08 | Day

81°

Generally sunny. High 81F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.

Humidity 69%    UV Index Extreme

Sunrise 6:20 am    Sunset 6:15 pm

Tue 08 | Night

74°

Mostly clear skies early. Becoming mostly cloudy with showers developing later at night. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph. Chance of rain 30%.

Humidity 81%    UV Index 0 of 10

Moonrise 10:18 am    Moonset 11:37 pm

Waxing Crescent

## Antigua & Barbuda imposes sanctions on Russia

Antigua and Barbuda has joined the rest of the Western world in imposing sanctions on Russia in the hope of cutting off the Eastern European nation from the rest of the world and, in so doing, force it to abandon its invasion of Ukraine.

On Friday, Foreign Affairs Minister, E. P. Chet Greene, gave instructions for the complete existing list of US sanctioned Russian persons and companies to be respected and followed.

That same day, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States, Sir Ronald Sanders, confirmed that the country would be instituting measures to ensure it implements international sanctions against named Russian persons and entities.

He also requested that the US

State Department provide Antigua and Barbuda with the most current list of Russian subjects for sanction.

This said, Sir Ronald made it clear that simply being a citizen of Russia did not make a person a target.

“It is important to appreciate that not all Russian persons and entities have been placed on a sanctions list.

“These lawful persons and entities continue to be entitled to benefit from services provided by Antigua and Barbuda and other countries,” Sir Ronald said.

“In this regard, the relevant agencies in Antigua and Barbuda will be required to follow the international sanctions lists,” he added.

Speaking to regional media last week, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) chairman and Prime Minister



of Belize, John Briceno, said regional leaders, during the Inter-Sessional Heads of Government summit, left the possible imposition of sanctions on Russia to individual member states.

“We discussed the issue of Russia at length,” he said, adding “CARICOM felt that that is something we should do as individual countries.

“We have to decide what kind of sanctions, if any, we can take as countries and not as CARICOM.”

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**CLAUDIA JONES**

FEMINIST AND VISIONARY  
ACTIVIST FOR INJUSTICES, DISCRIMINATION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

**TEAM ANTIGUA ISLAND GIRLS**

FIRST ALL-FEMALE ALL-BLACK CARIBBEAN TEAM TO COMPLETE THE TALISKER WHISKY ATLANTIC CHALLENGE

**DAME GEORGINA ROBINSON**

FIRST FEMALE ANTIGUAN NATIONAL HERO  
PIONEER OF EDUCATION AND FOUNDER OF TOR MEMORIAL SCHOOL

**DEFIED ALL ODDS AND BROKE SOCIETAL BARRIERS**

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

**#BreakTheBias**

## A&B suspends CIP applications from Russia, Belarus, Ukraine

Antigua and Barbuda has suspended the acceptance of Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP) applications from citizens of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine in light of the war now raging among these nations after Russia invaded Ukraine about two weeks ago.

Word of this came from Chief Executive Officer of the Citizenship by Investment Unit (CIU), Charmaine Donovan, who explained the decision was taken after consultation with international service providers and local financial stakeholders.

Donovan said the suspension is intended to align the CIU's decisions with the country's foreign policy positions in order to safeguard the viability of the CIP.



Additionally, the war in Eastern Europe has negatively impacted the CIU's ability to conduct due diligence checks on applicants from the war affected nations.

Compounding the situation, international financial sanctions on Russia have made bank transactions with this nation from the outside virtually impossible. Russia has also been excluded from the

Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication or SWIFT, which facilitates international bank-to-bank money transfers.

The exclusion of the three nations from Antigua and Barbuda's CIP will likely remain in place until there is some resolution to the present conflict.

The announcement by the CIU follows Antigua and Barbuda's vote at the United Nations General Assembly along with 140 other countries to deplore Russia's invasion of Ukraine and to call for the withdrawal of its troops.

Antigua and Barbuda has also given its commitment that it will act in accordance with international sanctions against named Russian persons and entities.



## ACP Cruise Ship

Calendar

Updated on February 25, 2022

March

Date	ETA	ETD	Cruise Ship	Cruise Line	Capacity*	Type	Assigned Berth*
06-Mar-22	8:00AM	9:00PM	Sea dream 1	SeaDream Yacht Club	110	T	Falmouth
06-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Club Med 2	Club Med	239	T	Falmouth
07-Mar-22	7:30AM	7:00PM	Mein Schiff 2	TUI	2,900	T	Heritage Quay
07-Mar-22	10:00AM	6:00PM	Norwegian Dawn	Norwegian Cruise Line	2,244	T	Heritage Quay
08-Mar-22	6:00AM	5:00PM	Star Legend	Windstar Cruises	343	T	Nevis Pier
08-Mar-22	10:00AM	6:00PM	Grandeur of the seas	RCI	1,950	T	Nevis Pier
08-Mar-22	7:00AM	5:00PM	Britannia	P&O Cruises	3,611	T	Heritage Quay
08-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Royal Clipper	Star Clippers	227	T	Falmouth
09-Mar-22	6:30AM	5:00PM	Wind Surf	Windstar Cruises	376	T	Heritage Quay
09-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Star Flyer	Star Clippers	170	T	Barbuda
09-Mar-22	8:00AM	5:00PM	Explorer Of The Seas	RCI	3,282	T	Heritage Quay
10-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Royal Clipper	Star Clippers	227	T	Barbuda
10-Mar-22	8:00AM	2:00PM	Silver Moon	Silversea Cruises	691	T	Heritage Quay
10-Mar-22	7:00AM	6:30PM	Star Flyer	Star Clippers	170	T	Falmouth
11-Mar-22	7:00AM	5:00PM	Marella Discovery	Marella Cruises	1,800	T	Heritage Quay

## Agriculture minister proposes processing plant to boost poultry production

The Ministry of Agriculture is seeking to boost its technical support to farmers, as it places emphasis on reducing the country’s food import bill.

Agriculture Minister Samantha Marshall said the poultry industry is one area that is receiving attention.

Poultry and meats are imported into Antigua and Barbuda on a large scale and the intention, according to Minister Marshall, is to provide the tools necessary that will enable farmers to boost their production levels. While they have the ability to increase production, the machinery needed to aid that process is inadequate, causing farmers to cut back their supplies to the market.

The agriculture minister told state television the construction of a processing plant is to be discussed when Cabinet convenes its weekly meeting tomorrow.

“I’ve just received the first quotation, so we’re going to be looking at that and discussing that with the Cabinet this week,” she said.

“The reality is, we may not meet our 25 percent in every aspect, but the push is there to make sure that we do reduce the importation bill. For poultry, I would like to see that we begin by five or ten percent, and make sure that we are able to support our poultry producers.”

Recalling the challenges poultry farmers are experi-



Agriculture Minister Samantha Marshall

encing that limit their production, Minister Marshall described the proposed processing plant as a major investment on the part of the government.

“We would just have to bite the bullet and do it. The reality is, a plant like that costs millions of dollars, but it is worth the investment in the long run,” the agriculture minister assured.

No period was given by which construction of the facility is expected to begin.

Minister Samantha Marshall believes there are adequate outlets through which farmers can sell their products, but she admits they require strengthening, to include the Central Marketing Corporation, to ensure it serves the purpose for which it was established.

“Over the many years, it [CMC] has strayed from the initial purpose, which is to support our farming sector, and it really has transitioned

to ensure that there is that outlet from CMC, to ensure they support the farmers,” the minister revealed.

She also detailed that the Agricultural Development Corporation (Diamonds) is being reviewed with the aim of upgrading the facility. Minister Marshall posited that those outlets are necessary as the country boosts agricultural output that will in turn serve as a support industry to tourism.

In 2020, Prime Minister Gaston Browne reported that Antigua and Barbuda’s food import bill was more than \$ 18 million annually, which he said then was unsatisfactory and needed to change.

because of time and the level of social programmes that it does... but we also have to remember that CMC is an outlet for our local farmers, and so we are rebranding now

### Notice

TO: Her Worship  
Magistrate of District  
Magistrate’s Court  
Gray’s Farm  
St. John’s  
Antigua

TO: The Commissioner of Police  
Police Headquarters  
American Road  
St. John’s  
Antigua

From: Dirk Yearwood  
Belle Vue Estate  
St. John’s  
Antigua

3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2022

**Notice of Application for A Bottle Licence for Business Registered as DJM Mini Mart**

I, Dirk Yearwood, do hereby give notice that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the Liquor Licence Court to be held at the Magistrate’s Court, Gray’s Farm, St. John’s, Antigua on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2022, for a bottle licence in regards to the premises registered as DJM Mini Mart, which is located at Freeman’s Village Main Road, St. John’s, Antigua, pursuant to section (11) (3) of the Licensing Act Cap 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda, Revised 1992.

Dirk Yearwood  
268-732-8749

## OCS Counsellor wants more child abuse training for professionals

Ottos Comprehensive School counsellor, Karen Germain, says she hopes to see more training come on stream for professionals who work with victims of child abuse.

Germain made this observation during an appearance on Pointe FM.

Noting that there is also a need for more counsellors, Germain said continuous training for professionals like herself, teachers, sports coaches, and others who are in contact with children regularly, is key in being able to identify victims of abuse. This, she contends, is vital in ensuring early intervention can be made to protect young people who are at risk.

“[We need more counsellors] and we need more training out there bringing more awareness because persons will need to be able to identify the red flags when

a child is acting out.”

In her own experience, the OCS educator said victims of abuse almost always manifest behavioural changes in response to the trauma being experienced. In the eyes of the untrained, she continued, it may appear that the child is simply “rude” and in need of discipline. However, drastic changes in behaviour or discipline that fails to correct progressively worsening behaviour could be signals that there is an underlying problem.

“Not everything we see is always what it seems to be. Not everything we see is ‘rudeness’. We’re not saying don’t discipline – I have two children, you have to correct them – we’re just saying, you can’t fight fire with fire. You have to get to the bottom of what’s happening,” said Germain.

She was also keen to ad-



*Pastor Karen Germain*

dress the fact that there are several forms of child abuse, however the most encountered forms are physical, emotional, verbal and sexual abuse and neglect.

Germain said while the damage caused by physical and sexual abuse and neglect are well known, in Caribbean culture, the severe damage caused by verbal and emotional abuse is often ignored and underestimated.

“Sometimes we’re saying, ‘Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can’t do me any harm,’ [but] words are powerful! We can either build a child or break a child. So constantly telling them, ‘You’re no good’ or ‘You’re worthless’ and those sort of things, can impact one’s life.

She is also appealing to children to make good use of their school counsellors, which she says are attached to most schools.

“Remember to reach out to your counsellors at school. Most of the schools have ei-

ther one or two counsellors. Reach out to a trusted teacher, even the principal. Reach out to your pastor, to someone in your family who you know you could talk to. Just reach out to someone if you are going through any [form of abuse]. You are not alone. There is hope. There is help. There is healing.”

The public is encouraged to speak up and reach out for help if they suspect a child is being abused. The Ministry of Social Transformation’s Department of Family and Social Services has given the assurance that all reports are handled confidentially. Those reporting suspected cases of child abuse can do so anonymously.

If you suspect a child is in danger, the Department of Family and Social Services can be reached on telephone numbers 464-3531, their 24-hour hotline 5621508/9. From 8am – 5pm help can be reached on 774-0656. There is also a counselling hotline available at 564-8417.

### TAKE ME HOME



Coco, a chihuahua mix spayed female, is 2 years old and weighs less than 5 lbs but she is a real character and is as bold as can be. We believe she must think she is a Doberman or even a Pit Bull 😊 She is available for adoption at the Humane Society’s Animal Shelter in Bethesda. The \$100 adoption fee includes vaccination and treating for parasites. We are open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm. For further details call 461-4957.

## Draft guidelines for transportation system gathering pace

Taxi associations are forging ahead with a plan to present to Cabinet proposed regulations for its approval that will govern the transportation system.

A meeting was scheduled for last evening between key stakeholders, including the Public Transportation Union, where the document was to be examined and changes made, if necessary, before it is handed to the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board today for final preparations, ahead of its delivery to Cabinet on Wednesday.

The proposed regulations are being described as confidential for the time being, but those involved in premium transfers will also be part of the process.

Vice President of the Public Transportation Union, Ian Joseph, explained the aim is not to deprive people who are making a living, but rather to bring about order in the sector, in light of the recent developments between a driver and a medical student who was injured following a dispute.

“All we are asking the authorities to do is to come to the table, let us regularize the people, bring them into the fold.

“This is what you have to do, so that when you do that, they would be able to be identified as the persons offering this type of transportation, and those who want to become taxi drivers as well, we can see how we can

bring them in the fold.

“At the end of the day, when you have bad publicity like this, it just don’t affect the taxi drivers and we had to defend ourselves, it affects the whole country. So that’s what we’re asking for,” Joseph said.

He expressed satisfaction with the progress made.

Last month, Ian Joseph expressed concern over drivers who operate other vehicles under the guise of taxi drivers.

He argued there must be clearly defined terms on how commercial vehicles should operate; pointing out that guidelines, to include penalties and proper policing are vague and should be strengthened.

**9:00am-10:30am**

# TALK YOUR MIND

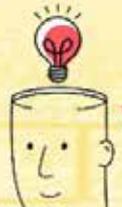




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## NODS encourages participation in Caribe Wave tsunami exercise

The National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) is encouraging participation in the “Caribe Wave” tsunami preparedness drill which is set to take place on Thursday.

Caribe Wave is an annual exercise that tests tsunami readiness throughout the region. It is organised by the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions associated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Member nations, and



organisations including NODS, participate in the event which is coordinated by the Barbados-based Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), which is respon-

sible for regional disaster management.

On 10th March, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii will send a mock emergency message to the local Meteorological Office at about 10:00am. This will trigger an alert to be sent to the public via the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP).

The public is being urged to download the CAP app on their mobile phones as this is one of the tools that will be used to alert the public in the event of a real emergency.

Commenting ahead of the test, Deputy Director of NODS, Sherrod James, said he hopes schools and business places will use the exercise as an opportunity to test their tsunami disaster plan which involves their ability to get to a safe area quickly. It also gives the chance to make adjustments to existing evacuation plans or to develop a plan in its

absence.

According to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Centers for Environmental Information, over 83 tsunamis have been observed in the past 500 years throughout the Caribbean and its adjacent regions, including Antigua and Barbuda.

While Antigua and Barbuda has not experienced deaths as a result of these events, approximately 4,500 people have lost their lives to tsunamis in other areas in the Caribbean.

The threat of tsunamis to the region is real and there have been significant efforts by disaster personnel to enhance tsunami preparedness in Antigua and Barbuda. Locally, a number of locations have been declared tsunami ready by UNESCO. They are St John’s City and the districts of St. John’s City South and St John’s City West.

### NOTICE

TO: The Commissioner of Police  
 Police Headquarters  
 American Road  
 St. Johns  
 Antigua.

Dear Sir/ Madame,

Re: Notice- Application for Tavern Licence

I Edwin N.Z Luke of Matthews, Tyrells, with registered business situate Matthews, Tyrells in St. Pauls, Antigua and Barbuda **DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE** that it is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate’s Court, Gray’s Farm, St. Pauls, Antigua on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2022 next ensuring for a Liquor Licensing Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 revised Edition, in respect of premises known as “Stickz Bar and Restaurant” situated at Matthews, Tyrells in the parish of St. Pauls, Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 3th day of March, 2022

.....

## Child Abuse and Neglect

*Child abuse, also known as maltreatment, is common. It is important to understand and reduce the risks of abuse for your child and be familiar with the signs of abuse and neglect.*

Across the region, hundreds of thousands of children are assaulted each year. 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys, it is estimated, will fall victim to one form of abuse or another before age 18.

Disturbingly, the highest rate of child abuse is in babies less than one year of age, and 25 percent of victims are younger than age three. The majority of cases reported involve neglect, followed by physical and sexual abuse. There is considerable overlap among children who are abused, with many suffering a combination of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect.

### Types of abuse and neglect

Physical abuse occurs when a child's body is injured as a result of hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other show of force. One study suggests that about 1 in 20 children has been physically abused in their lifetime.

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity that a child cannot understand or consent to. It includes acts such as fondling, oral-genital contact, and genital and anal intercourse. It also includes exhibitionism, voyeurism, and exposure to pornography. Studies suggest that up to one in five girls and one in 20 boys will be sexually abused before they are 18 years old. More than 90 percent of child sexual abuse victims know their abuser.

Child neglect can include physical neglect (failing to provide food, clothing, shelter, or other physical necessities), emotional neglect (not providing love, comfort, or affection), and medical or educational neglect (not providing access to needed medical care



or education), or supervisory neglect (failure to appropriately supervise). Psychological or emotional abuse results from all of the above, but also can be associated with verbal abuse, which can harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being.

### Risk factors

Most child abuse occurs within the family. Risk factors include parental depression or other mental health issues, a parental history of childhood abuse or neglect, parental substance abuse, and domestic violence.

Child neglect and other forms of maltreatment are also more common in families living in poverty and among parents who are teenagers or who abuse drugs or alcohol.

### Signs and symptoms

It is not always easy to recognise when a child has been abused. Children who have been maltreated are often afraid to tell anyone, because they think they will be blamed or that no one will believe them. Sometimes they remain quiet because the person who abused them is someone they love very much, or because of fear, or both.

Parents also tend to overlook signs and symptoms of abuse, because it is hard to believe it could happen or they fear what might happen if peo-

ple found out. However, a child who has been abused needs special support and treatment as early as possible. The longer children continue to be abused or are left to deal with the situation on their own, the harder it is for them to be able to heal and develop optimally physically and mentally.

Here are some physical signs and behavioural changes in children who may have experienced abuse or neglect:

### Physical signs

Non-mobile infant with any injury  
Bruises to the torso, ears, or neck in a child less than four years of age

Any injury (bruise, burn, fracture, abdominal or head injury) that is not consistent with the way the injury is said to have happened, that cannot be adequately explained, or that is inconsistent with the child's developmental capabilities

The child discloses abuse or neglect

Failure to gain weight (especially in infants) or sudden dramatic weight gain

Genital pain, bleeding, or discharge

A sexually transmitted disease

Behavioural and mental health

*cont'd on pg 10*

# Parenting

## *cont'd from pg 9*

changes that raise concern about possible abuse or neglect

It is important to remember that the following changes are seen in many children as a result of many different kinds of stressful situations and are not specific to child abuse and neglect. The reason for the appearance of these behaviours should always be investigated.

Fearful behaviour (nightmares, depression, unusual fears)

Unexplained abdominal pain, sudden onset of bed-wetting, or regression in toileting (especially if the child has already been toilet trained)

Attempts to run away

Extreme sexual behavior that seems developmentally inappropriate for the child's age

Sudden change in self-confidence

Headaches or stomachaches with no medical cause

School failure

Extremely passive or aggressive behavior

Desperately affectionate behavior or social withdrawal

Big appetite and stealing food

### **Long-term consequences**

In most cases, children who are abused or neglected suffer greater mental health than physical health damage. Emotional and psychological abuse, physical abuse, and neglect deny the child the tools needed to cope with stress, and to learn new skills to become resilient, strong, and successful. So a child who is maltreated or neglected may have a wide range of reactions and may even become depressed or develop suicidal, withdrawn, or violent behavior. As they get older, they may show learning difficulties, use drugs or alcohol, try to run away, refuse discipline, or abuse others. As an adult, they may develop marital and sexual difficulties, depression, or suicidal behavior.

Not all children who are abused

have severe reactions. Usually the younger the child, the longer the abuse continues. The closer the child's relationship with the abuser, the more serious the mental health effects will be. A close relationship with a very supportive adult can increase resiliency, reducing some of the impact.

### **Getting help**

If you suspect your child has been abused, get help immediately through your paediatrician or a local child protective agency. Physicians are legally obligated to report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to state authorities. Your paediatrician also will detect and treat any medical injuries or conditions, recommend a therapist, and provide necessary information to investigators. The doctor also may testify in court if needed to secure legal protection for the child or criminal prosecution of the person suspected of perpetrating the abuse or neglect.

If your child has been abused, you may be the only person who can help them. There is no good reason to delay reporting your suspicions of abuse. Denying the problem will only make the situation worse. It allows the abuse or neglect to continue unchecked and lowers your child's chance for optimal physical and mental health and well-being.

In any case of abuse or neglect, the child's safety is of primary concern. They need to be in a safe environment, free of the potential for more abuse and neglect.

### **Preventing abuse and neglect**

The major reasons for physical and psychological maltreatment of children within the family often are a parent's feelings of isolation, stress, and frustration. Parents need support and as much information as possible in order to raise their children responsibly. They need to be taught how to cope with their own feelings of frustration and anger without venting them on children. They also need the

companionship of other adults who will listen and help during times of crisis.

Support groups through local community organisations often are helpful first steps to ease some of the isolation or frustration parents may be feeling. Parents who were themselves abused as children are in particular need of support. Confronting, addressing, and healing parental mental and emotional health takes a lot of courage and insight. But this is often the best way to lower the odds of past abuse being passed on to the next generation of children

Personal supervision of and involvement in your child's activities are the best ways to prevent physical and sexual abuse outside the home. Pay careful attention to your child's reports about and reactions to his experiences at child care and school. Always investigate if your child tells you he's been maltreated or if he undergoes a sudden unexplained change in behaviour.

Although you don't want to frighten your child, you can teach some basic rules of safety in a non-threatening manner. Teach them to keep their distance from strangers, not to wander away from you in unfamiliar territory, to say "no" when someone asks them to do something they don't want to do. Tell them to always tell you if someone hurts him or makes him feel bad, even if that person is someone they know.

### **Remember**

Open, two-way communication with your child provides the best chance of knowing early when there is a problem. Make sure your child understands they will not get in trouble if they tell you about abuse or other confusing events. Instead of teaching them that they are surrounded by danger, teach them that they are strong, capable, and can count on you to keep them safe.

# How much damage will sanctions do to Russia?

**By Sergey Aleksashenko, Former Deputy Minister of Finance of Russia and first deputy chairman of the Central Bank of Russia**

*Sanctions will hurt ordinary Russians, but will not collapse the Russian economy.*

Over the past week, Western countries have ramped up sanctions against Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine. The measures are the toughest since those imposed on Iran in 2010 and North Korea in 2013.

Russia is the largest economy and the largest country globally, by population, against which such strong sanctions have ever been implemented. Western leaders know that they will not immediately stop the war, but hope that they would inflict enough damage on the Russian economy to help de-escalate the conflict.

So how tough are the sanctions? They are much tougher than those previously imposed on Russia in the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea and the start of the war in Eastern Ukraine in 2014, but I would not call them “nuclear”. That is, they could damage the Russian economy but not obliterate it, given some major loopholes purposefully left by the sanction architects.

What follows is my insight into how the current package of sanctions will and will not hurt the Russian economy and why.

## Sanctions on the Central Bank

Undoubtedly, the most powerful blow to the Russian financial system is the imposition of sanctions on the Central Bank of Russia (CBR), which plays a crucial role in the domestic foreign exchange market.

The CBR has enormous foreign exchange reserves amounting to \$640bn and it traditionally regulates the level of the rouble exchange rate.



The freezing of the CBR’s assets and accounts in the G7 countries means that it is left with gold reserves worth \$127bn held in Russia and renminbi reserves worth \$70bn. Both are useless from the point of view of maintaining stability in the domestic foreign exchange market.

From February 24 to March 2 the CBR loaned 4.4 trillion roubles (3.4 percent of GDP) to banks as part of its efforts to maintain stability in the financial system.

The sanctions against the CBR affected the domestic foreign exchange market immediately after they were announced on Sunday. By the end of that day, the selling rate of dollars in exchange offices of banks had risen by at least 45 percent compared with Friday. In the next days, the gap between selling and buying rates in the banks’ offices was between 20 and 50 percent.

Starting from Sunday night, the CBR and the government issued several new regulations imposing currency control. Exporters now have to sell 80 percent of foreign exchange earnings for roubles. Foreigners cannot sell Russian

stocks and bonds and transfer coupons and dividends to their accounts, while residents and non-residents from 43 countries (that imposed sanctions on Russia) cannot transfer funds to their accounts with banks outside Russia.

A side-effect of the sanctions on the CBR is the freezing of assets belonging to the Ministry of Finance, current accounts and funds of the National Welfare Fund. But it does not seem that this will have any effect on the current economic situation.

On the one hand, at the current level of oil prices, Russia’s budget is in surplus, and the Ministry of Finance does not need to use reserves. On the other hand, when the Ministry of Finance sells its foreign currency reserves, the buyer is the CBR; the Ministry of Finance does not need to go to the market for this.

Consequently, even if the accounts of the CBR are frozen, the Ministry of Finance will be able to receive roubles from it, if at some point it wants to sell some of its currency reserves.

However, the devaluation of the rouble  
*cont’d on pg 12*

*cont'd from pg 11*

ble will certainly affect consumer inflation, which may grow by an additional 4-5 percent for a 40-50 percent increase in the value of the dollar. By the end of February, consumer price inflation in Russia exceeded 9 percent, with food inflation exceeding 12.5 percent.

Devaluation of the rouble, potential problems with imports, and general political uncertainty may undermine a business's desire to take risks and result in lower growth in agriculture, lower supply, and even higher food inflation. In addition, disruptions in the payment system may lead to disruptions in the supply of imported goods to Russia, further accelerating inflation by reducing supply.

### SWIFT and foreign payments

The EU and the US have put on their sanctions list a number of Russian banks and major companies. This will result in Russia's larg-

est bank, Sberbank, which holds 33 percent of the banking system's assets, being unable to make its payments and those of its customers denominated in dollars. Its correspondent accounts with US banks will be blocked and the bank had to pull out of the European market. Four other banks, VTB, Otkritie, Novikombank, and Sovcombank will face the same fate.

In addition, the US blocked 13 major Russian companies and banks from accessing its capital markets and banned US investors from buying new issues of Russian government bonds in their initial public offerings and on the secondary market. The G7 countries also decided to disconnect several Russian banks from the SWIFT system. Disconnecting banks from the SWIFT system does not limit their ability to make foreign exchange payments. It only slows down payments and makes them more expensive.

So what does this mean for the Russian economy? The Russian financial system is highly integrated into the global system. Russia is one of the largest raw materials suppliers to the world market. At the same time, the Russian economy is a significant importer of consumer goods, technology and investment equipment. That is why international payments are critical.

Disconnecting the largest banks from making customer payments will disrupt the flow of goods, accumulate a consumer market deficit and accelerate inflation. Some companies whose business is in importing goods to Russia or selling imported goods in Russia may go bankrupt. The average Russian citizen will pay the price for this, as real household incomes shrink. As usual, inflation will hit harder the poor.

However, it is important to point out that Western countries have not limited

payments related to Russian energy resources, which constitute 50 percent of Russian exports. In this way, Europe guarantees that energy prices will not skyrocket and damage its own economy.

For Russia, this means that it will be able to offset the negative impact of financial sanctions with a solid current account balance due to proceeds from raw materials exports, which are not threatened. Furthermore, the scale of application of sanctions by the EU is significantly less than that of the US, which leaves the possibility of virtually unlimited payments in euros. This means, for example, that while the dollar accounts of a sanctioned Russian bank will be blocked, its euro accounts will be operational.

### Foreign debt

Another significant aspect of the Western sanctions is the ban on the access of Russian banks and companies to Western capital markets. As a result, there will be a substantial outflow of foreign investors from Russia; predictions by various experts range from \$30bn to \$50bn of investments lost in a year.

The ban will also affect banks' ability to repay foreign debt. If the official statistics are to be believed, Russia's foreign debt is not too large. As of October 1, it was \$478bn or 27 percent of GDP. However, from the point of view of its impact on the economy, it is not so much the amount of debt that matters, but the schedule for its repayment and the share of short-term debt.

*cont'd on pg 13*



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UPDATED SCHEDULE

## cont'd from pg 12

In the next 12 months, Russian banks and companies will have to repay more than \$100bn. This is a hefty schedule, and many Russian borrowers counted on refinancing old debts. Now, this opportunity will be closed for many of them.

This means that the Russian economy will have to channel substantial financial resources to repay foreign debt. The only way to do this is to use domestic savings, undermining already weak economic growth. It is too early to assess how much the Russian economy will slow down, but it is clear that the recent IMF projection of 2.8 percent growth is unrealistic.

Can Russia rely on China to provide financial resources to help prop its economy? The Russian leadership had such hopes in 2014-2016 when it was hit by Western sanctions over the annexation of Crimea. But despite numerous requests for loans from the Russian side, Beijing gave only a minimal amount of assistance and tied it to Chinese companies being allowed to access Russian production and exports. There is no reason why China's position would change today.

### Technology and aviation industry

Sanctions are also restricting Western exports of technology, equipment, and components to Russia, which could affect Russian imports of machinery, equipment, and technological goods.

These sanctions will seriously impact the technological level of the Russian economy. Russia has traditionally

been an importer of advanced technology, used in all kinds of technologically complex products, from vacuum cleaners to nuclear-powered icebreaker ships. Many military products will be impossible to produce in Russia if sanctions remain in place.

The severity of these sanctions is amplified by the boycott of Russia by global companies that do not want to take political risks. BP and Shell are withdrawing from oil and gas projects in Russia. Car companies, such as Ford, Volvo, Jaguar, Hyundai, BMW and Toyota, have announced they will stop production or stop supplying cars to Russia.

Shipping companies have stopped shipping containers to and from Russia. Banks have stopped lending to traders to buy Russian oil and insurance companies are sharply increasing their rates for transporting it by sea.

For one sector of the Russian economy, aviation, the export sanctions will have a catastrophic impact. The EU sanctions have affected the supply of aircraft and components and the provision of aircraft maintenance services.

European-made aircraft (Airbus) make up about 40 percent of the fleets of Russian airlines and they carry 41 percent of their passengers. The two largest companies, Aeroflot and S7 operate respectively 117 and 66 Airbus aircraft, which means they will be significantly hit by the sanctions.

Russia produces its narrow-body Superjet, which will not be able to replace Airbus because it is produced

in small numbers and its capacity does not exceed 98 passengers, and its maximum flight range is 4,500km. This means it cannot be used for longer flights with a larger passenger load.

A critical restriction that will substantially impact the current situation, but which is likely to be short-lived, is the closure by EU countries of their airspace to Russian aircraft, including business aviation. Flights to Europe are essential for Russian airlines because they are more profitable; they actively use transit flights from Asian countries to European countries. This restriction will affect the most affluent Russians who fly to Europe for business or leisure. Russian authorities have imposed similar bans on European airlines, which

means a real Iron Curtain 2.0 for Russian citizens.

There are also more symbolic sanctions, including those targeting specific individuals with visa bans and asset freezes, severing business ties, cancelling sports competitions and cultural events, restricting the reach of Russian state media, etc. They may not affect the economy of the country, but will increase the feeling of international isolation that the country will suffer as a result of the war.

The Russian economy is going down the ice chute, and no one knows today when this downward spiral will end. It is safe to say that the economy will slow down sharply and the standard of living will fall, but it is premature to give any quantitative estimates today.



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## Scans reveal how Covid may change the brain

By Rebecca Morelle

Scientists found significant differences in MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scans before and after infection.

Even after a mild infection, the overall size of the brain had shrunk slightly, with less grey matter in the parts related to smell and memory.

The researchers do not know whether the changes are permanent but stressed the brain could heal.

The study is published in the journal *Nature*.

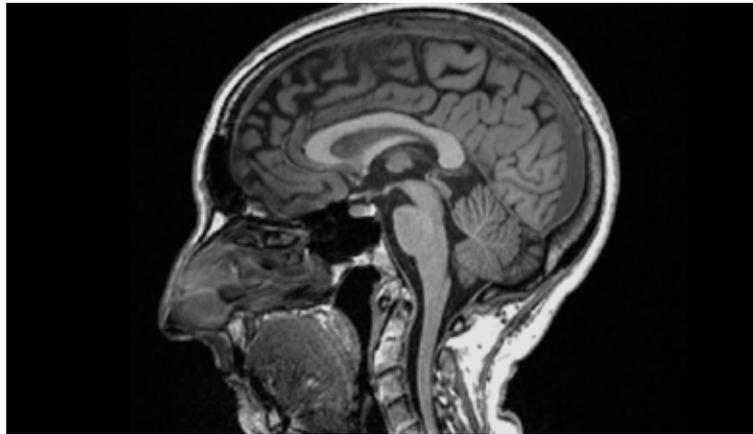
Lead author Prof Gwenaëlle Douaud, from the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging, at the University of Oxford, said: "We were looking at essentially mild infection, so to see that we could really see some differences in their brain and how much their brain had changed compared with those who had not been infected was quite a surprise."

The UK Biobank project has followed the health of 500,000 people for about 15 years and has a database of scans recorded before the pandemic so provided a unique opportunity to study the long-term health impacts of the virus.

The scientists rescanned:

401 participants 4.5 months, on average, after their infection, 96% of whom had had mild Covid

384 participants who had not had Covid



*Catching Covid may cause changes to the brain, a study suggests.*

They found:

The overall brain size in infected participants had shrunk between 0.2 and 2%

There were losses in grey matter in the olfactory areas, linked to smell, and regions linked to memory

Those who had recently recovered from Covid found it a bit harder to perform complex mental tasks

But the researchers do not know whether the changes are reversible or truly matter for health and wellbeing.

"We need to bear in mind that the brain is really plastic - by that we mean it can heal itself - so there is a really good chance that, over time, the harmful effects of infection will ease," Prof Douaud said.

The most significant loss of grey matter was in the olfactory areas - but it is unclear whether the virus directly attacks this region or cells simply die off through lack of use after people with Covid lose their sense of smell.

It is also unclear wheth-

er all variants of the virus cause this damage.

The scans were performed when the original virus and alpha variant were prevalent and loss of smell and taste a primary symptom.

But the number of people infected with the more recent Omicron variant reporting this symptom has fallen dramatically.

'Your mind is what is being exercised'

Paula Totaro lost her sense of smell when she caught Covid, in March 2020.

"When it was gone, it was like living in a bubble or a vacuum - I found it really isolating," she told BBC News.

But after contacting the charity AbScent, which supports people who have lost their ability to smell and taste, she began smell training.

"What smell training does - particularly if you do it twice a day, regularly, religiously - is it forces you to take the smell, allow it to

go back into your nose and then to think about what it is that you're smelling," she said.

"And that connection between what's in the external world and what goes into your brain and your mind is what is being exercised."

Ms Totaro has now recovered most of her sense of smell - although she still has trouble identifying what different smells are.

"It's a mix of joy that the sense has come back but still a little bit of anxiety that I'm not quite there yet," she said.

UK Biobank chief scientist Prof Naomi Allen said: "It opens up all sorts of questions that other researchers can follow up about the effect of coronavirus infection on cognitive function, on brain fog and on other areas of the brain - and to really focus research on how best to mitigate that."

Prof David Werring, from the University College London Institute of Neurology, said other health-related behaviour could have contributed to the changes seen.

"The changes in cognitive function were also subtle and of unclear relevance to day-to-day function," he said.

"And these changes are not necessarily seen in every infected individual and may not be relevant for more recent strains."

## Guyana to work alongside Guatemala to revive sugar industry

CMC - The Government of Guyana has pledged to leave no stone unturned in its efforts to revitalise the country's sugar industry.

The announcement was made by President, Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali, as he disclosed that Guyana will be working along with Guatemala to make it a reality.

Ali said Guatemala is the world's fourth-largest exporter of sugar and the second largest in Latin and Central America.

That country's sugar industry creates 80,000 di-



(Photo: iStock.com)

rect jobs and 410,000 indirect jobs, the President stated.

He was at the time updating the nation by way of a press conference on Guy-

ana's recent participation at the Thirty-Third Inter-Ses-

*cont'd on pg 16*

## SVG PM calls for thorough investigation into death of 18-year-old

CMC - Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves says he has requested that Commissioner of Police, Colin John "make sure that this matter is investigated thoroughly, like all matters" after an 18-year-old motorcyclist died at the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital following a vehicular accident last month.

The relatives of Cjea Weekes are alleging that a police vehicle had run over him as police officers were chasing him while he was riding his motorcycle on February 2. He died four days later in hospital.

A civilian took the injured teen to the hospital in a private vehicle and the police said the teenager sustained his injuries when he accidentally fell from his motorcycle.

However, Natasha Weekes, told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) that her son informed her that a police officer struck him in the chest as they attempted to stop him in Questelles, a

town close to the capital, Kingstown.

They pursued him until he got to a dirt road in Twenty Hill "and then that is when they (hit) him with their vehicle so he fall and he end up under their vehicle and wrap up," she said.

Prime Minister Gonsalves, speaking on a radio programme here, said he had been "reading statements from the police" and would be speaking with the Attorney General.

"I have spoken to the Commissioner about it already; that we need to have the Coroner's Inquest very quickly because he died in a sudden or unnatural circumstance."

Gonsalves said that the Coroner's Act requires a coroner's inquest when someone dies this way "and there are one or two others, there are a few others," in an apparent reference to pending coroner's inquiries.

"... but this one, they have all the preparation, they have things ready



Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves

from what I have seen, what I was sent."

The prime minister said that prior to leaving the island three weeks earlier he had requested that the Police Commissioner "make sure that this matter is investigated thoroughly, like all matters..."

"When a young man dies like this, you have to make sure that the investigation is thorough and every 'i' is dotted and every 't' is crossed and you get it to the coroner's court as soon as possible."

## Dominica suspends Russians and Belarusians from CBI programme

CMC - Dominica has suspended, with immediate effect, applications from nationals of Russia and Belarus seeking citizenship under the island's Citizenship by Investment Programme (CBI).

Under the CBI programme, Dominica grants citizenship to foreign investors who make a substantial investment in the socio-economic development of the island. Dominica is among a handful of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries with CBI programmes.

Dominica said its position to suspend nationals from Belarus and Russia from the CBI programme follows Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and the decision



of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to condemn Moscow for its action.

Dominica was among 141 UN member states that voted last week to condemn Russia and the coordinator of the CBI Unit, Ambassador Emmanuel Nanton said that agents of the programme have been informed of the

Dominica government's position.

"In light of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the government of Dominica is suspending the process of all new applications from Russians and Belarusians with immediate effect.

"This measure is to safeguard the Dominica community and the integrity of the

Dominica Citizenship by Investment Programme. All authorised agents are kindly requested to disseminate the information...to all parties," he added.

In 2020, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit told Parliament that the CBI had earned Dominica EC\$1.2 billion (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents) over the last three years and that for the fiscal period 2017-2020, a total of 5,814 applications had been approved.

In March last year, Skerrit said that his administration had been utilising the CBI funds to pay off debts, to meet current expenditure, and to sustain the ongoing projects in the public sector.

*cont'd from pg 15*

sional Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government in Belize during a press conference at State House.

The President pointed out that Guatemala has 11 sugar mills with a cultivation area of 251,000 hectares yielding 10.7 metric tonnes per hectare, with an export earning of over US\$1 billion. This is compared to Guyana's 49,000 hectares available for sugar yielding about five tonnes per hectare.

"We are going to look at the best practices in Guatemala and Guyana and twin our operations from the management side, the operation side, the investment side, but more importantly, the end result of this is sustainability, job creation, economic expansion and viability of the industry," Ali stated.

The government in its commitment to keep the sugar industry alive, allotted \$6 billion in budget 2022 to the Guyana Sugar Corporation (GuySuCo) to turn around the industry's field and factory operations. The money allotted will be plugged into the Albion, Blairmont, and Uitvlugt factories, and will ensure the industry produces more value-added products for the domestic and international market.

Guyana and Guatemala recently held discussions on the sidelines of the Fourth CARICOM-SICA Summit in Belize.

In a joint statement last week, the two countries' Presidents shared their aspirations to develop broad and effective cooperation for mutual benefit, including in the areas of security, climate change, agriculture and food

security.

Ali said the two countries are finalising a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) adding that in a matter of two weeks Guyana will be finalising an exchange visit and action agenda with Guatemala.

The President further pointed out that during the Inter-Sessional Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government discussions were held on high-value commodities that have the potential to be developed in the region. These include palm oil, coconut, spices, cocoa, coffee and hemp.

He said CARICOM spent about US\$142 million in 2020 importing palm oil, US\$48.5 million in cocoa, and US\$9.5 million importing coffee. He said these are markets Guyana could tap into by developing its productive capacity.

## Macron keeps an open line to Putin as war in Ukraine rages

AP - While most of the world is shunning President Vladimir Putin over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, one of the few leaders keeping an open line of communication is French President Emmanuel Macron.

Macron's diplomatic efforts to prevent the war failed, but he's not giving up: the two men have spoken four times since Russian forces attacked Ukraine on Feb. 24, and 11 times over the past month.

The French leader, whose country holds the European Union's rotating presidency, is now one of the few outsiders with a view into Putin's mindset at the time of the largest military invasion in Europe since World War II. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is also becoming a mediator, meeting Putin on a surprise visit to Moscow on Saturday and speaking with him again by phone on Sunday.

Macron's relentless push for dialogue reflects France's post-World War II tradition of carving out its own geopolitical path and its refusal to blindly follow the United States.

After Russian troops pushed deep into Ukraine, Macron's resolve to maintain communication channels with Putin is providing Western allies with insight into the Russian leader's state of mind, his intentions on the



*French President Emmanuel Macron, right, shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin after their meeting at the fort of Bregancon in Bormes-les-Mimosas, southern France, on Aug. 19, 2019. While most of the world is shunning Vladimir Putin, one world leader notably isn't.*

battlefield and at home in Russia as the Kremlin cracks down on opponents.

"He is keeping a diplomatic channel open for the West in case Putin might want to de-escalate and look for a way out of this crisis," said Benjamin Haddad, a senior director for Europe at the Atlantic Council in Paris and a member of Macron's party.

The two leaders address each other through interpreters with the familiar French word for "you" — "tu" — rather than the formal "vous," an Elysee presidential palace official said after one phone call.

Macron has also spoken to Putin on behalf of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Haddad said, trying to extract some mercy from Putin: local cease-fires, safe passage for trapped civilians and access to humanitarian aid.

Instead of mercy, the French president on Monday denounced Moscow's "cynicism" after a new pledge for humanitarian corridors from some under-fire Ukrainian cities — with most of the routes leading toward Russia or its ally Belarus, which served as a launching ground for the invasion.

Saying that "we are going to protect people by bringing them to Russia" is "hypocritical," Macron said in an interview on LCI television.

During their most recent call on Sunday that came at Macron's request, the French leader and Putin focused for nearly two hours on the safety of Ukraine's nuclear plants.

Putin said he doesn't intend to attack them and agreed on the principle of "dialogue" between the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ukraine and Russia

on the issue, according to a French official who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with the French presidency's practices.

There is "absolutely no illusion at the Elysee that Putin will keep his word on anything he promises," Haddad said, or that Putin will change his mind about the invasion. But Haddad said that it's important that Macron keeps trying to engage Putin even as the West punishes Russia and strengthens Ukraine's defences.

And breaking with the diplomatic norm of keeping such conversations secret, the French presidency has widely shared the content of Macron's talks with Putin. Macron's advisers and the president himself detailed the excruciating efforts to prevent the war and then laid bare Putin's broken promises of peace.

That helped Macron galvanise support for the toughest sanctions against Russia, uniting the notoriously divided 27-member EU and revive NATO's geopolitical role.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will go to Paris on Tuesday to hear from Macron directly about his latest conversations with Putin. But U.S. officials remain unconvinced that Macron's efforts — or any other leader's — have had any significant impact on Putin's decision-making process.

# China lashes Washington over Quad, North Korea

AP - China's top diplomat on Monday accused Washington of trying to create an Asian version of the U.S.-European NATO military alliance and said it is up to the Biden administration to improve relations with North Korea.

U.S. policy toward East Asia and the Indian Ocean and efforts to strengthen military ties with Japan, Australia and India are a "disaster that disrupts regional peace and stability," Wang Yi said at a news conference.

The comments reflected the ruling Communist Party's ambitions to be Asia's undisputed power and its frustration with resistance from neighbours to its territorial claims in the South China Sea and the Himalayas.

They also reflect Beijing's stance toward Russia's invasion of Ukraine. China has sought to distance itself from the war by calling for dialogue and respect for national sovereignty. It also has said Washington is to blame for the conflict for failing to take Russia's security concerns into consideration.

"The United States is playing geopolitical games under the pretext of promoting regional cooperation," Wang said. He said this "runs counter" to regional desires for cooperation and "is doomed to have no future."

Wang complained Washington is organising U.S. allies to "suppress China."

Beijing is irritated by growing military ties among the Quad nations of the United States, Japan, Australia and India. China criticised a U.S. decision last year to supply technology for Australia to field its first nuclear-powered submarines.

"The real purpose of the 'Indo-Pacific strategy' is to create an Indo-Pacific version of NATO," he said. The West-



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi speaks during a remote video press conference held on the sidelines of the annual meeting of China's National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, Monday, March 7, 2022. (AP Photo/Sam McNeil)

ern alliance's expansion was cited by Russian President Vladimir Putin as one reason behind his invasion of Ukraine.

Beijing's assertive foreign policy and claims to disputed territories in the South China Sea and the Himalayas have antagonised Japan, India and other neighbours. China

Wang called on the Biden administration to revive the spirit of the 1970s agreements that opened U.S. relations with the communist Beijing government.

"The United States still spares no effort to carry out intense competition with China, constantly attacking and provoking trouble on issues regarding China's core interests," Wang said.

Washington should "return to the right track of rationality and pragmatism," he said.

Wang called on Washington to take initiative to improve relations with North Korea. He accused the Biden administration of failing to respond to "positive measures" by leader Kim Jong Un's government "aimed at promoting dialogue."

"Where to go next depends largely

on what the American side does: will it really take concrete actions to solve the problem, or will it continue to use the (Korean) peninsula issue as a strategic bargaining chip?" Wang said.

Wang called on Washington to take steps to address the North's "legitimate security concerns" and establish trust but gave no details.

"China is willing to continue to play a constructive role and make efforts to this end," he said.

Turning to the disputed South China Sea, Wang complained outsiders were interfering with efforts to develop a "code of conduct" and said Beijing and Southeast Asian governments should be left alone to negotiate.

The United States and other governments have sent warships through sections of the sea claimed by Beijing to assert the right of vessels from all countries to use the waters.

Outsiders "do not want the South China Sea to be calm, because this will make them lose the pretext to intervene for personal gain," Wang said. "External interference cannot stop the pace of regional cooperation."

## Tunisian president appoints members of new top judicial council

Reuters – Tunisia’s president on Monday appointed a temporary replacement for the country’s top judicial council, a body he dissolved last month in what his opponents called a move to consolidate his power.

President Kais Saied seized executive authority last year and last month broke up the top supreme judicial council which had guaranteed judicial independence.

The judges who made up the new temporary body took the oath at the president’s palace on Monday.

Saied told them: “We



President Kais Saied

are fighting together against the corruption, against those who want to bring down the state. We are in a national liberation battle.”

The president has said his broader actions are temporary and needed to save Tunisia from what he sees as a corrupt, self-serving

elite.

Saied, a former constitutional lawyer whose wife is a judge, had accused the former judicial council of acting for political interests.

The judiciary was seen as the last remaining institutional check on Saied’s actions after he suspended parliament last year and said he could rule by decree.

Under a decree that set up the temporary council last month, Saied has the right to object to the promotion or nomination of any judges and is responsible for proposing judicial reforms. The new council has no fixed term.

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## Daniel Antonio among power lifting winners

Daniel Antonio was one of the top performers among a number of heavy lifters who produced fine displays during the Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation's (ABBWF) power lifting competition at Buff-Up Fitness Gym on Saturday night. Antonio prevailed over four other competitors to win the Juniors' Division title before an appreciative crowd who showed up to witness the intense competitions in squats, bench press and dead lift categories.

18-year old Antonio impressively squatted 206 kilograms, bench pressed 153 kilograms and dead lifted 225 kilograms to amass an overall total of 584 kilograms with

his three best lifts to win his division.

Hanley Josiah recorded a total of 490 kilograms to claim second place in the Juniors Division while Tariq Kienesberger secured third place with 485 kilograms.

Also giving an outstanding performance was Zhane Potter, who won the Women's Division title from a field of five competitors by accumulating 344 kilograms from her three best lifts in each category. Potter squatted 116 kilograms, bench pressed 62 kilograms and dead lifted 166 kilograms.

Phillise Stevens recorded a total of 321 kilograms to secure second place ahead of third place finisher Leesha



Daniel Antonio won the Juniors Division title at the Antigua and Barbuda Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation's Powerlifting Competition at Buff-Up Fitness Gym on 5th March, 2022.

Marcellin, who lifted a combined total of 302 kilograms.

Nelson Audray won the Masters' Division over the only other competitor in this class, Kevin Daley. Audray recorded 380 kilograms while Daley accumulated 260 kilograms. Glenroy Goodwin amassed a total of 608 kilograms to capture the Senior Heavyweight Division against his lone competitor Kareem Garnette.

Goodwin squatted 203 kilograms, bench pressed 145 kilograms and dead lifted 260 kilograms. Garnette recorded

570 kilograms.

Sharife Sergeant captured the senior Super Heavyweight Division, which was contested by two other power lifters. Sergeant squatted 100 kilograms, bench pressed 145 kilograms and dead lifted 235 kilograms to amass a total of 480 kilograms.

Cephus Joseph came second with a total of 460 kilograms, while Sedale Pelle finished with a total of 435 kilograms. A total of 17 power lifters participated in the competitions, which were last held by the ABBWF in 2017.



Zhane Potter, centre, captured the women's division title against second place finisher Phillise Stevens, right, and third place Leesha Marcellin, left, during the ABBWF's Powerlifting Competition on 5th March, 2022. (Photos: ABBWF)

## Roach taking the English tour seriously

West Indies fast bowler Kemar Roach is aiming to protect the Caribbean side's proud home record against England in the three Test Series starting here today.

The West Indies have lost just one Test series in the last 50 years against England despite their declining fortunes in the longest format in recent decades.

"We have a very good record only

losing one series in a very long time," Roach noted.

The Barbadian said, "I take English coming to the Caribbean very seriously. It would be great to win the series and take that tradition and that record further and further.

"I would like to keep the record intact, the onus is on us as players to have that at the back of our minds and go out

there and play the best cricket you can on the day. It would be fantastic, winning some more series at home, hopefully we can hold the record for a hundred years.

The Apex Test Series features three Test matches: the first at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, the second at Kensington Oval, Barbados from March 16-20, with the third at the Grenada National Stadium, Grenada from March 24-28.

## Russian gymnast investigated for wearing pro-war symbol next to Ukrainian

Russian gymnast Ivan Kuliak is being investigated after wearing a national war symbol on his leotard as he stood next to a Ukrainian rival on the podium in Qatar on Saturday.

The International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) said it had opened disciplinary proceedings against Kuliak for his “shocking behaviour” at the Apparatus World Cup in Doha.

Kuliak earned bronze in the parallel bars final and displayed a letter ‘Z’ taped



Russian gymnast Ivan Kuliak

to his chest as he stood next to gold medal winner Illia Kovtun of Ukraine.

The letter Z has become symbolic with Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and has been

seen painted on the side of tanks and military vehicles, as well as being worn by pro-war politicians in Russia.

This weekend was the final opportunity for Russian and Belarusian gymnasts to compete after their countries were sanctioned by the FIG as a result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

From Monday, Russian and Belarusian athletes, officials and judges will not be allowed to take part in FIG competitions or FIG-sanctioned competitions.

## Shane Warne: Australian cricket legend died from natural causes - police

Australian cricket legend Shane Warne’s death in Thailand on Friday was from natural causes, police have confirmed.

A senior Thai police official said the post mortem exam showed no signs of foul play in the 52-year-old’s death.

Warne, who is considered to be one of the greatest cricketers of all time, died of a suspected heart attack on Koh Samui island, where he was holidaying.

The Australian government is bringing his body back to Australia where he will be given a state funeral.

Warne was a larger-than-life figure whose fame transcended sport and he inspired generations of fans.

He was found unresponsive at the Thai villa where he was staying with friends. Attempts to revive him in hospital were unsuccessful.

The post mortem exam showed Warne died of a “congenital disease”, Songyot Chayaninporamet, deputy di-



Shane Warne’s body is being transported from Thailand back to Australia

rector of Samui Hospital, told a news conference, Reuters news agency reported.

“There is no Covid-19 infection and no sign of assault or murder.”

Thailand’s deputy police spokesman Krissana Pattanacharoen said in a statement: “Investigators received an

autopsy report today in which a forensic doctor concludes the death was due to natural causes.”

He said the player’s family had been informed and accepted the findings. Warne is survived by his three children with former wife Simone Calahan.

## CAF Advanced Academy trials extended

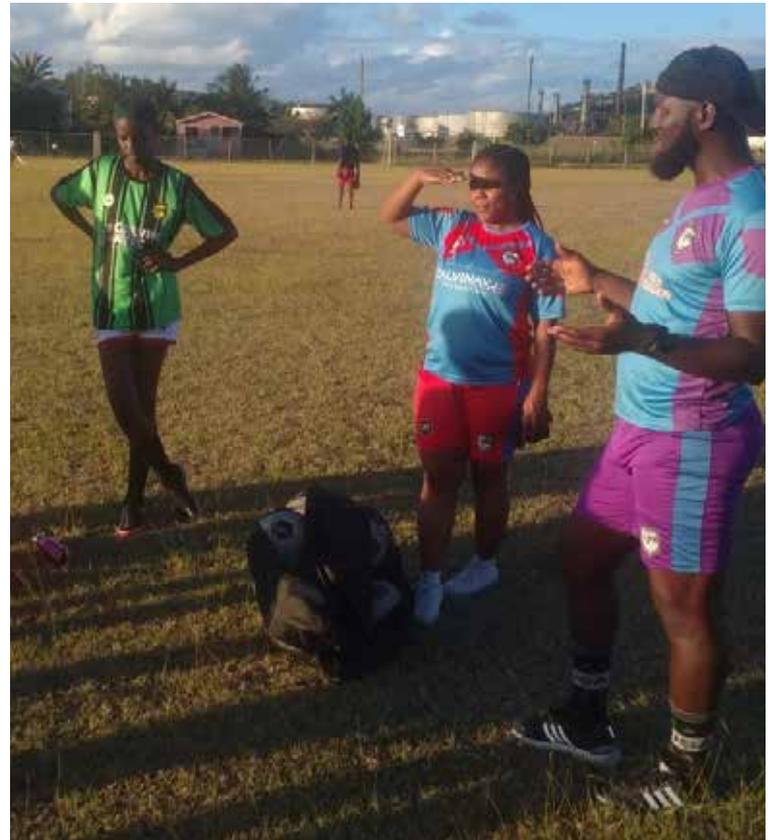
The trials being held during the third Calvin Ayre Foundation (CAF) Generation Next Football Club's (GNFC) Advance Academy were extended until today at the Fort Road playing field.

The trials, which are sponsored by the Calvin Ayre Foundation, began on 22nd February. It was slated to involve four sessions over four days in a two-week period for players in the Under-13, Under-16 and Under-19 boys, females and goalkeepers' categories. But according to President of CAF GNFC, Ambassador Ricky Santos, the final session was added for the Under-19 and Under-16 boys to give coaches a final opportunity to evaluate the players during the try outs before making their selections for the Advanced Academy.

Ambassador Santos said national Under-20 head coach, Desmond "Zeco" Bleau - who is also head of coaching at CAF GNFC and coach of the Under-19s at the Advanced Academy - and Under-16 coach Johnathan Throughgood requested the extra day of trials before deciding on the final squad of 20 players they will each select for this year's CAF Advanced Academy.

Ambassador Santos noted, however, that the squads for the Under-13 boys and females for the CAF Advanced Academy have already been selected.

"We have made the selections of the Under-13 boys and the females for the Calvin Ayre Foundation's Advanced Academy and the parents of the youngsters have been notified.



Coaches Ken Pennyfeather, right, and Akeilah Hillhouse, centre, address some female players at the trials of the Calvin Ayre Foundation Generation Next Football Club's Advance Academy at the Fort Road playing field.

"Now for the Boys Under-16s and Boys Under-19s, that's a little more challenging because the group is huge, so the coaches need an extra week to see how the selection process is going," Ambassador Santos said.

The Under-13 players selected for the Advanced Academy are: Jahkin Benjamin, Henderson Blake, Samuel Brazier, Ethan Comacho, Kyle Edwards, Jayden Goodman, Manarlie Gordon, Joshua Henriques, Brandon Hipplewith, Robert Jeffrey, Kharique Joseph, Ryan Kelsick, Tafari Looby, Marlon Peters, Elijah Richards, Joshua Roache, Bran-

don Satchell and Shumba Thomas.

The Female players selected are: Nicola Augustine, Emma Belizaire, Janique Blackstock, Maria Donaldson, Mia Gardner, Zadaiah Gordon, Keyonna Hamilton, Jewel Harve, Nadisha Jardine, Kimana Joseph, Safiya Joseph, Diamond Looby, Ajahna Martin, Jessica Powell, Oniyah Prince, Donesha Samuel, Shenna Wallace and Salonge Wynter.

Ambassador Santos said this year's turnout was so large that organisers had to cap the number of players they could accommodate.

*cont'd on pg 24*

**ICC WOMEN'S CWC 2022**

**WEST INDIES SCHEDULE**

3 MARCH	vs	BAY OVAL
8 MARCH	vs	UNIVERSITY OVAL
11 MARCH	vs	SEDDON PARK
14 MARCH	vs	BASIN RESERVE
17 MARCH	vs	BAY OVAL
20 MARCH	vs	SEDDON PARK
23 MARCH	vs	BASIN RESERVE

# Sports News



President of the Calvin Ayre Foundation Generation Next Football Club, Ambassador Ricky Santos.

*cont'd from pg 23*

In total, just over 230 participants tried out for the opportunity to participate in the CAF Advance Academy where they will receive specialised football training for several weeks and receive free SAT college exam preparatory lessons.

“I actually have to thank Arnold ‘Keegan’ James of the Fort Road Football Club for affording us the use of their playing field.

“We wanted to use a facility that was central so that as many players as possible could participate in the trials for the Advanced Academy.

“We had 168 players at-

tending the first two days of the trials.

“However, in what should have been the final two days of trials, that number had increased to over 230. Unfortunately, we had to put a cut on it so no new player can come to the remaining trials on Tuesday,” Ambassador Santos explained.

“What is really good about that, to be honest, is Desmond Bleau is the head coach for the Under-20s and he saw some players there that he didn’t know existed.

“So Bleau is now saying that he must get some of these players in the national Under-20 set-up for which he is also the head coach.

“So I said, ‘that is what the Advanced Academy is all about.’ So we try to encourage as many as possible to come.

“Unfortunately, not all of them are going to make it because we are limited in terms of how many we could train at any one time. So, only 20 selections will be made from each division.

“We [are asking] those who have not made the selections not to give up on their dreams for football, continue training and hopefully, in the ensuing years, you’ll be able to come through.

“This is one time I am glad that I am not a coach because I am finding it extremely difficult not to select all, but unfortunately, the nature of the sport is that it is an Advanced Academy, so you have to select the best of the best.”

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## Second place finishes for A&B cyclists in Aruba

The two Antigua/Barbuda cyclists, representing Wadadli Cycling Academy (WCA), captured second place finishes at a three-stage road race in Aruba last weekend.

Tahje Browne came second in the Pre-Junior Category while Ghere Coates emerged in the same spot in the Elite Class at the 8th Edition Warm-up Race 2022, which was hosted by the Velocity Cycling Team Association from March 4th to 6th.

Browne recorded a third place finish in the criterium race before capturing second positions in both the Individual Time Trial and Road Race to finish with an overall total of 66 points.

The Pre-Junior Category was won by Jurvin Gonzales of host Velocity Cycling Team. Gonzales recovered from a second place finish in the criterium race to win the Individual Time Trial and the Road Race. He completed the events with a table-topping 77 points.

Coates finished second best in his class, which was won by Tribike Club's Paul Cremers, who was the only other competitor in the Elite Men Division.

Coates amassed a total of 69 points behind of Cremers who won all three stages of the race to claim



Cyclists Tahje Browne, second right, and Ghere Coates, second left, pose with manager/coach St. Clair Williams, right, and former president of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation Cliff Williams, left, at the end of the 8th Edition Warm-up Race 2022, which was hosted by the Velocity Cycling Team Association in Aruba from March 4th to 6th. (Photo: ABCF)

the Elite Men category with a total of 80 points.

The Sub-23 Class was won by Joshua Krozendijk of Velocity Cycling Team while Sean Walle of Velocity Cycling Team captured the Junior Men division title.

Kevin Lee of Team FX claimed the Master Men A class while teammate Victor Vrolijk took the Master Men B division and Lucien Dirksz of Team ACT captured the Master Men C category.

Sidney Croes of Team CTD won the Beginners category and teammate, Indioma Gonzales, captured the Beginners Youth division class.

The Elite Women category was captured by Jennifer Snijder of Team ACT while the Junior Women division was won by Victoria Uribe of Tribike Club.

Cheryl Adamus of Team ACT won the Master Women category while the Women Beginners' class was captured by Tiffany

Muffat-Muridol of Tribike Club.

The Antigua and Barbuda cyclists were accompanied by their manager and coach, St. Clair Williams, who is also the President of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF).

Former president of the ABCF and present General Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee, Cliff Williams, also attended the event in Aruba.

## Sir Vivian Richards and Lord Ian Botham unveil Richards-Botham trophy

Sir Vivian Richards and Lord Ian Botham unveiled the new Richards-Botham trophy which will be won by the victors of the Test Series between West Indies and England Men's Team.

The trophy pays tribute to the two all-time greats whose rivalry and friendship embody the close relationship and mutual respect between the two sides.

The unveiling ceremony was held on Sunday evening at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium ahead of the first Apex Test match which starts today.

The new trophy symbolises "Courage. Friendship. Respect" – values that represent the Test cricketing rivalry between West Indies and England, and the legends who best define them – Sir Vivian Richards and Lord Ian Botham.

It has an ultra-modern design and consists of an upside-down cup, based on a Georgian rummer, with the joining sphere a cricket ball. One end is a rummer for drinking rum and the other a wine/ale goblet. The rummer has palm fronds and the ale cup has willow leaves. The ceremonial idea is that the winning team holding the trophy would have the



Sir Vivian Richards, left, and Lord Ian Botham

rummer that represents their team face upward while they held it and it would be ceremoniously turned over when the other team wins.

Test matches between the cricket rivals date back to 1928 when West Indies made their first Test tour to England.

Fast forward to 2022, the teams, under captaincy of Kraigg Brathwaite and Joe Root, will renew the rivalry with the Apex Test

Series.

Sir Viv said: "It's a truly special feeling to have the fantastic trophy named in honour of my friend Ian and myself. We played a lot together and built a great friendship on and off the cricket field. As I said earlier, I am truly delighted to know that the game that I have shown my love for is naming such a prestigious award in recognition of what I managed to achieve.

It's a beautiful trophy and I want to again thank everyone who came up with this idea and contributed to its creation."

Lord Botham said: "It's a great idea and a truly lovely trophy. It really stands out and I'm honoured to have my name on the trophy alongside my friend Sir Viv. The captain who picks up the trophy at the end of the upcoming series will be a happy man."