

THURSDAY 28TH APRIL 2022

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 83

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CXC EXAMS DELAYED!

Story on Page 2



The Ministry of Sports, in partnership with the office of the High Commission to London and the Keyworth Cricket Club in Nottingham England have partnered to allow another group of young people to travel to the UK to participate in a cricket and cultural exchange programme. The 2022 beneficiaries, pictured here with Prime Minister Gaston Browne, are Michael Hariall, Chey Anne Moses, Glendon Williams, Jaylen Francis, Dahri Barrymore Hughes-Francis and, Glen Williams. The cricketers who left the country yesterday, will return home in mid-September.

Local News



A&B opposed to CXC deferral but will abide by decision

At a special joint meeting of the School Examinations Committee and the Caribbean Examinations Council yesterday, Antigua and Barbuda made known its readiness for the May/June Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) examinations to proceed.

However, the country was among several territories in the minority and must therefore abide by the decision to defer the exams by three weeks.

Written examinations were scheduled to begin next Monday, but concerns from several CXC territories and teachers' unions over the lack of preparedness of their students due to prevailing COVID-19 conditions, and the recent resumption of face-to-face learning, resulted in calls for the examinations body to postpone the examinations to give candidates adequate time to prepare.

Director of Education, Clare Browne, participated in yesterday's meeting. He maintains that Antigua and Barbuda has adequately prepared for the dates that were announced by CXC. But when the question of deferral was put to a vote, approximately 60 percent of territories opted for deferral.

"In as much as we think



regional and we think each student and no student being left behind, when we go to our CXC meetings, we have to think about our own local situation and what our principals, what our teachers have said to us that we should go to say in meetings like those.

"We would have indicated that we empathise with territories that are not quite ready, or would have found themselves in a different COVID situation than we are now...but because we are in a position and our students are ready, then we wanted our students to be able to just go and write the exam," Mr. Browne said.

While the director of education made clear his support for the CXC, he also addressed the psychological effects the delay can have on students who were mentally prepared to sit and complete their exams in a specific timeframe.

Despite these concerns,
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PM Browne hopes national republic conversation will take place soon

Prime Minister Gaston Browne discussed the hot button issue of republicanism with British media on Tuesday.

For well over a decade, PM Browne has openly expressed his hope for the people of Antigua and Barbuda to truly embrace their destiny and embrace the move to become a republic.

This is a position he restated during the visit of the Earl and Countess of Wessex to the country this week.

During the special meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, Prime Minister Browne said, "We continue to have the Queen as our head of state, even though I should say we aspire at some point to become a republic."

"But that is not currently on the cards so she will remain as head of state for some time to follow."

"We're not trying to embarrass you; we're just trying to build awareness."

A day later in an interview with Channel 4 television in the UK, Browne further expounded on the is-



During a special meeting of Cabinet on Monday, Prime Minister Gaston Browne told Prince Edward and Countess Sophie that Antigua and Barbuda should "one day become a republic"

sue of Antigua and Barbuda becoming a republic.

"I would have loved to have seen it happen yesterday! But we have to move in lockstep with the people."

"Unfortunately, it's an issue that is politically divisive, and until such time as we are able to have a national consensus on the issue, then we may not be able to move."

"So, the aspiration exists – the strong aspiration - because we see this

as closing the circle of independence, to become a republic, to have our own president," said PM Browne.

While he gave no exact timeline for renewed national discussions on the issue, Browne did indicate that this is something he hopes will happen "within a matter of a couple of years at maximum."

Antigua and Barbuda was colonised by Britain in the 17th century, before attaining independence in 1981.

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Director Browne has said Antigua and Barbuda will abide by the decision.

"We have to do everything within our powers to try to soften that psychological blow, and so we want to encourage our teachers and our parents to continue to work with their students, their children, encouraging them to use the time to prepare as best as they can prepare so that when they go into the examination, they can show off what they know."

"So, we want them to

look at it in a positive way... look at it as you've got a few extra days to even be in a better place, to get a better score, to perform better on the examination."

CXC Registrar, Dr.

Wayne Wesley, has announced that the examinations will commence on Monday, 23rd May, 2022.

Results will be released in late August or early September.

New information on the examinations will be communicated to CXC territories. Candidates will be notified of the broad topics through their local Ministries of Education.

Thu 28 Day		Thu 28 Night	
81°	☀️	74°	☁️
17% ENE 13 mph		59% ENE 10 mph	
Mostly cloudy. High 81F. Winds ENE at 10 to 15 mph.		Cloudy skies early with showers later at night. Low 74F. Winds ENE at 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 60%.	
Humidity 64%	UV Index 9 of 10	Humidity 82%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 5:43 am	Sunset 6:26 pm	Moonrise 4:20 am	Moonset 4:45 pm
		● Waning Crescent	

Local News

SLBMC completes another successful kidney transplant

The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre has reported that another successful kidney transplant operation was completed at the institution over the weekend.

No details about the patient were provided, but it is believed that this is the seventh transplant to take place at the hospital.

This week's Cabinet Notes said the success of these operations forms part of the government's strategic plan for the development of the healthcare delivery system in Antigua and Barbuda.

"The Cabinet also



The Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre

agreed to invest significant sums in healthcare. Over the weekend another successful kidney transplant operation took place at the

Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

The former Edward Ward at the old Holberton Hospital will be trans-

formed into a Renal Unit for dialysis and renal transplants," according to the official statement.

cont'd on pg 5



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APUA blames technical issues for disruption in water supply

Amidst a barrage of criticism from members of the general public, Antigua Public Utilities Authority is apologising for not honouring its water distribution schedule.

For some time, residents have voiced displeasure that despite assurances by the government that improvements are being made to resolve the water crisis being experienced, the utilities company has not been holding up its end of the bargain on the days when areas are due to receive water.

Recently, many have taken to social media to vent their anger at being further inconvenienced.

On Tuesday, APUA sought to make amends with an apology, but not many consumers have accepted it.

They explained that unforeseen technical issues caused major delays

to Tuesday's water distribution, but residents argue the issue has occurred more than once and has spun out of control.

According to APUA, a broken 20" main between the Crabbs RO Plant and Parham Booster Station was scheduled for repair yesterday. This would have impacted water distribution to some areas and halted production and distribution from that source.

The company offered consumers the assurance that repairs were expected to be completed by yesterday.

APUA has been slammed for being ineffective and for causing the water problems to be used as a "perceived political ploy".

One person went as far as to suggest that the company outsource its work as one way to bring better service to consumers.



APUA

cont'd from pg 4

The weekly report from Cabinet said the current renal unit at SLBMC will be transformed to a dedicated Cardiac Unit.

No other government has spent as much as the Gaston Browne-led administration on education, healthcare and infrastructure in any eight-year period.

Additionally, Cabinet yesterday agreed to invest US\$75 million in two years to The UWI Five Islands to make it a world class campus, serving

the OECS.

Meanwhile, Minister of Housing, Maria Browne, has assured the Cabinet that the provision of starter homes at a cost of \$110,000 - \$120,000, consisting of two (2) bedrooms and one bathroom, kitchen, dining and living area, including lighting fixtures and cabinet fixtures, are in great demand.

The Cabinet was informed that families earning around \$3,000 are eager to acquire the homes and people who own lands have expressed the desire to have them built on their

properties.

The Antigua and Barbuda Development Bank will administer the mortgages with financing provided by the government from its own resources.

The proposed starter homes will be built across the country, however, several will be constructed in St. John's City East, St. John's Rural West, St. John's Rural South, St. Mary's North and South, and St. Philip's North and South where crown lands are available.

Local News

Revenue collections at the Customs Division up \$10.6M



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Comptroller of Customs Raju Boddu

Revenue collections at the Customs and Excise Division, one of the two main revenue centres for the government are up by fifteen percent for the first three months of the year, compared with the corresponding period last year.

Comptroller of Customs, Raju Boddu, told Pointe Xpress that collections up to the end of March this year totaled \$87.23 million, compared with \$76.63 million for the same period last year.

This represents an increase of \$10.60 million, or an increase of 15.11 percent.

The comptroller said there are two main factors driving the increased revenue; these are increased economic activities as well as increases in the price of landed goods driven by imported inflation.

“The value of imports has increased significantly as our data has revealed that importers are paying higher prices for their goods that are landed in the country. Customs did an analysis of the increases in the landed cost of food items and have found that there is about a nine percent increase in the imported cost of food,” Boddu explained.

As an example, Boddu said that just over 14 million cases of food were imported in the first quarter last year at a value of \$77.31 million. However, for the first quarter this year, there has been an increase of 3 million cases to just over 17 million, at a cost of \$101.72 million.

According to the comptroller, based on 2021 prices, that figure should have been 93.11 mil-

cont'd on pg 7

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

April 28th is recognised annually by the International Labour Organization as World Day for Safety and Health at Work.

The day is intended to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases.

This year, it is being marked under the theme, "Let's act together to develop a positive safety and health culture."

In the local context, the Labour Department is using the occasion to bring greater attention to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), which became key across all industries with the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic.

"A strong OSH culture in the workplace is one in which both Management and Workers recognise and support the right to a safe and healthy working environment.

"COVID-19 forced many safety protocols upon



us which we should have been adopting as a matter of course. Frequent hand washing, proper cough and sneeze etiquette and the proper use of a mask, especially when ill should have already formed a part of all safe cultures," the Labour Department noted in a press statement ahead of World

Day for Safety and Health at Work.

"We also learned that it takes a combined effort to fight an enemy greater than ourselves. Government should not be seen as the only relevant partner in workplace safety. In fact, employers and workers must work together to build

a safe culture in organizations since both are affected when an injury occurs at work. Workers must be encouraged to express their concerns about potential OSH risks or hazards in the workplace, and Management must be proactive in working to identify suitable, effective, and long-term solutions," the department continued.

The Labour Department went on that they are committed to working together with its social partners to "establish a strong safety and health culture even in the face of the global health crisis and the persistent OSH threats which the crisis brings to the world of work".

cont'd from pg 6

lion. That is \$8.56 million based on 2021 prices.

"This inflationary trend is imported and we have no control over it. The price increase for oil products has increased even higher than food prices over the same period," Boddu further explained.

He expects the increases in revenue to continue for the immediate future.

Already, collections for April are on track to be approximately three million

dollars more than for the same month last year.

The comptroller credits increased vigilance at the ports of entry and tighter controls for the rise in revenue collections.

"The outlook for the year 2022 looks promising. With increased vigilance at the ports and with enhanced enforcement measures, we at Customs continue to stay focused on border security and revenue maximization with enhanced trade facilitation measures," he added.



Romain Virgo new Reggae In The Park headliner

During the virtual launch of Antigua Sailing Week (ASW) last Friday, the much-anticipated return of the 11th Reggae In the Park was announced.

At the time, ASW's Events and Marketing Manager, Rana-Jamila Lewis, revealed that the event will begin at 6pm, with gates opening an hour earlier.

This year, Reggae In The Park will be held at Nelson's Dockyard which can easily accommodate an audience of up to 5,000.

Originally, the line-up featured an all-local cast of performers, including soca star Tian Winter, however, he has seemingly been removed entirely from the show.

While no explanation was given for his removal, his inclusion as headliner on a reggae show drew criticism from some quarters as he is not known to produce reggae music.

On the other hand, the move to embrace and feature local talent in all genres on a show the magnitude of Reggae In The Park was greeted warmly by many others.

On Wednesday, ASW announced

a new headline act, Jamaican, Romain Virgo.

He will be preceded by local acts ANU Collective, Arlen Seaton, new addition to the ticket, Kenne Blessin, The Strays and The Survivor Band.

Exorcist International will provide music throughout the night.

The show will be hosted by Steve "Ibis the Livest" Freeland.

Commenting on the addition of Romain Virgo, Minister of Tourism, Charles "Max" Fernandez said, "As we have reached nearer to the event, our ability to put on all of the favourite elements of Antigua Sailing Week has become more and more possible.

"To that end, we have decided to make an addition to the line-up of Reggae in the Park, Romain Virgo, out of Jamaica."

He also hinted to the reason for the venue change to Nelson's Dockyard. It was originally scheduled to be held at Shirley's Heights.

"Because we know including an additional artist means we need a bigger venue, we have also decided to move the party back down into Nelson's Dockyard as the venue has a ca-

capacity of up to 5,000 people," he explained.

General admission tickets for Reggae In The Park are being sold at a cost of EC\$65 in advance and EC\$100 at the gate.

Experience access entry is EC\$150. The Experience option will provide access through the Copper and Lumber Hotel into the Courtyard Bar, an elevated, up close and personal viewing platform and the added side stage area giving a unique viewing aspect to the artists.

All tickets are being sold on The Ticketing App.

A park and ride and one way system will be in place for the event which takes place on 3rd May.

Reggae In The Park is one of the most prominent landside events featured during ASW.

Since its introduction in 2009, the show has featured big brand acts including Grammy Award winner Damian Marley, Tarrus Riley, Christopher Martin and Junior Kelly.

The 53rd edition of ASW 2022, begins on 30th April and ends on 6th May.

How Queen's Jubilee showed monarchy could 'go off a precipice' in Caribbean

By Jack Royston

Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee exposed the ignorance of the monarchy as successive royal tours saw Caribbean leaders call for slavery reparations and independence, a royal author told Newsweek.

Prince William and Kate Middleton led the charm offensive in March when they visited Belize, Jamaica and the Bahamas—only to trigger lively debates in all three countries about removing Elizabeth as head of state.

Now Prince Edward and Sophie, the Countess of Wessex, have been met with a similar response during a separate week-long tour, raising the long-discussed prospect of a domino effect among countries outside Britain that count the queen as head of state.

The blow was particularly striking because the publicly-stated reason for the royal visits was to celebrate the monarch's Platinum Jubilee, the 70th anniversary of her reign, which some states are now considering ending.

Clive Irving, author of *The Last Queen*, told Newsweek: "I think it is the beginning of a domino process. When the queen's reign ends they all go off the precipice, I think. They just drive off a precipice because it's only the presence of the queen."

"Once that's gone it's a completely different ball game. I think if Australian republicanism then gets traction, which I think it will, that is bound to have an effect in the Caribbean, too. They'll look at it and think if Australia can do it, we can do it too."

Until recently, there were 16 countries around the world that recognized the queen as head of state, including Britain, with those outside the U.K. known as "Commonwealth Realms."

However, in November, Barbados cut ties with the monarchy in a histor-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne told the royal couple that Antigua and Barbuda intends to become a republic in the future.

ic, though good-natured, ceremony where Prince Charles was a guest of honour.

Months later, the situation appears to have declined significantly further, starting with William and Kate's very public tour meltdown, including a famous botched photo op of them greeting children through the holes in a wire-mesh fence.

Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness told them face-to-face of his country's desire for independence, while a similar intention was communicated by a minister in the Belizean government shortly after they left.

More recent events have been equally bleak for the royals, though far less high profile because Edward and Sophie do not draw the attention that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge garner.

Things started badly when they postponed a visit to Grenada against the backdrop of a request to meet from the country's Reparations Commission, though the palace gave no public confirmation it was a factor in the

decision.

There was then an awkward photo op of the couple giving Saint Lucian Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre a signed picture of themselves, which was criticized on social media.

The tour's fate continued its descent as Gaston Browne, the prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda, told the couple the country will at some point in the future end the queen's reign, though not yet.

Quoted by *The Independent*, he said: "You can even use your, let's say, diplomatic influence to build bridges in achieving the reparatory justice that we seek here in the Caribbean."

"Because the reality is we have been left and bereft of important institutions such as universities and good medicinal facilities."

Prince Edward's response may have earned few brownie points with his hosts, however.

Nadine White, race correspondent for *The Independent*, wrote on Twitter: "In replying, Prince Edward didn't
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Opinion



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acknowledge or address the issue of slavery reparations raised by the Antigua PM.

"In fact, for some reason the Earl laughed while saying that he 'was not keeping notes' so is 'not going to give him a complete response.'"

Irving told Newsweek: "It's not surprising that Edward is historically ignorant on this issue but what surprised me is the people who plan these tours themselves seem to be completely tone-deaf about this.

"They need to start educating the royal family on this stuff because clearly they don't know it.

"If William—and I've given up on Charles—has any ambition to look like a

modern monarch, he'd better bone up on his history.

"They shouldn't need to take notes. The whole idea of saying, 'I didn't take any notes,' is abject. What's the point of a royal tour anyway? Only to embarrass everyone."

It all makes life easier for Graham Smith, the chief executive of the anti-monarchy group Republic, who added in a statement sent to Newsweek: "This arrogant and contemptible response from Edward shows again that the royals are not cut out for diplomacy."

Now Saint Kitts and Nevis is also looking to cut ties with the monarchy, having not even been included among tour destinations by either royal couple.

Quoted by The Independent, Shawn Richards, deputy prime minister, said: "The advancement of the decades has taught us that the time has come for St Kitts and Nevis to review its monarchical system of government and to begin the dialogue to advance to a new status, just as Trinidad, Guyana, Dominica and now Barbados have done."

Irving said the crisis in royal international relations arose from an inability within the palace to see the new identities of Caribbean countries as they truly are.

He said: "Actually, I felt sorry for William and Kate and now I feel sorry for Edward and Sophie.

"They've been sent to do something, which is a

ludicrous and impossible thing, which is to visually impersonate the Crown in military uniforms and formal occasions and a kind of patronising idea of 'this is who you owe allegiance to.'

"People in the Caribbean looked at it and thought, What are these guys doing here? What are they representing?"

"I thought it was absolutely a serious misstep for the monarchy, but it doesn't happen on its own out of a context.

"The context is the monarchy's assumptions about its role."

The royals, and William and Kate in particular, have their defenders in Britain, who steadfastly maintained the Cambridge tour of the Caribbean should be considered a success despite the political opposition to monarchy.

However, strikingly, criticism has also found its way into historic bastions of Monarchism such as the Daily Mail.

Royal biographer Tom Bower told the newspaper's website: "Once again, Foreign Office officials in London and the High Commissioner in Grenada failed to anticipate the problems and protect the Wessexes from the same humiliation which cursed the Cambridges' visit to Jamaica.

"Britain's diplomats are not only incompetent but dangerously ignorant and insensitive to the realities in the countries where they are employed."

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TUESDAY TO FRIDAY
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BA 3:45 PM

SATURDAY
AB 8:00 AM
BA 3:45 PM

TYPHOON EXPRESS
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ST. JOHN'S DEPARTURE
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TUESDAY
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UPDATED SCHEDULE



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ANTIGUA SAILING WEEK 2022 SCHEDULE

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ALL ACTIVITIES AT THE ANTIGUA YACHT CLUB UNLESS INDICATED.
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THURSDAY APRIL 28

9:00 AM Committee Desk Open

FRIDAY APRIL 29

9:00 AM Registration & Committee Desk Open

3:00 PM Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

SATURDAY APRIL 30

8:00 AM Peters & May Round Antigua Race

9:00 AM Registration & Committee Desk Open

3:00 PM Bareboat Skipper Briefing @ Nelson's Dockyard

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

5:00 PM Steelpan recital from Original Steel Orchestra.
Impressions are everything, so represent your crew in your best team outfits

7:00 PM 53rd Antigua Sailing Week Welcome and Peters & May Round Antigua Race Prize Giving

SUNDAY MAY 1

8:00 AM Committee Desk Open

8:00 AM Shirley Heights Lookout Breakfast @ Shirley Heights Lookout

9:00 AM Chase the Race with Wadadli Cats @ Falmouth Harbour Marina

10:00 AM English Harbour Rum Race Day 1 Starts

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

4:00 PM English Harbour Rum Cocktail Bartender Competition

*Enter teams at Committee Desk or
www.info@sailingweek.com*

5:00 PM English Harbour Rum Race Day 1 Prize Giving

6:00 PM DJ Nez

MONDAY MAY 2

8:00 AM Committee Desk Open

10:00 AM ASW Race Day 2 Starts

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

5:00 PM ASW Race Day 2 Prize Giving

TUESDAY MAY 3

8:00 AM Committee Desk Open @ Antigua Yacht Club

9:00 AM Chase the Race with Wadadli Cats @ Falmouth Harbour Marina

10:00 AM Axxess Marine Y2K Race Day 3 Starts

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

5:00 PM Axxess Marine Y2K Race Day 3 Prize Giving

6:00 PM 11th Edition Reggae in the Park
(Gates open at 5:00PM)

Tickets available on Ticketing APP

WEDNESDAY MAY 4

10:00 AM Committee Desk Open

12:00 PM Lay Day @ Pigeon Point – Dinghy Racing,
Team & Individual Beach Game Competitions
including Tug of War!

THURSDAY MAY 5

8:00 AM Committee Desk Open

9:00 AM Chase the Race with Wadadli Cats
@ Falmouth Harbour Marina

10:00 AM Locman Italy Women's Race Day 4 Starts

3:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

5:00 PM Prize Giving Locman Italy Women's Race Day 4
Prize Giving

7:00 PM Seafood Thursday @ Nelson's Dockyard

FRIDAY MAY 6

8:00 AM Committee Desk Open

9:00 AM Chase the Race with Wadadli Cats @ Falmouth Harbour Marina

10:00 AM Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Race Day 5 Starts

2:00 PM **LAWN BARS OPEN**

4:00 PM Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Race Day 5
Prize Giving

6:00 PM Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Final Awards &
After-party @ Nelson's Dockyard. LIVE MUSIC!

SATURDAY MAY 7

12:00 PM Dockyard Day - Harper's Office Depot School Art
Competition Awards @ Nelson's Dockyard

Workplace



The unspoken weight discrimination problem at work

By Andrea Yu

Discrimination linked to weight can affect hiring, promotions and employees' mental wellbeing. Why aren't legal protections in place?

After a year working at a Canadian fashion company, Courtney noticed she was being excluded from meetings with vendors. "It was portrayed to me that being out of the office for a whole afternoon [meeting vendors] wasn't a good use of my time," she recalls.

In August 2018, 18 months after starting the job, Courtney (whose surname name is being withheld for privacy reasons) sat with her manager for a performance evaluation. He spent the first 10 minutes praising her job performance, but the following 20 minutes took Courtney by surprise.

"He told me that my looks were affecting my job. He point-blank told me that he thought I was too fat to be in the position I was in. He told me he was embarrassed having me around our vendors in meetings, and that it ruined his reputation."

Courtney's boss also told her that she needed to start going to the gym and to stop wearing any fitted clothing. He told her to buy a new wardrobe and to wear makeup every day. "I was so shell shocked," she says. "I kind of just sat there, to be perfectly honest. I felt like I was going to cry." After the meeting, Courtney says her anxieties over her appearance significantly affected her work; she felt paranoid about what her colleagues thought. "My work 100% suffered. I was so distracted."

Weight-based discrimination in the workplace is still legal in nearly all parts of the world, except for the US state of Michigan and a handful of US cities including San Francisco and Madison, Wisconsin. In many nations,



Weight discrimination not only holds back people in their careers, but can also affect mental and physical health.

characteristics including gender, race, religion and sexual orientation are officially protected under law, meaning employers can't use them to discriminate. But with a few tiny exceptions, that's not yet the case for weight.

Of course, many people know that including weight as a factor in whether to hire or advance candidates or employees isn't right. But this kind of discrimination still happens, whether openly or behind the scenes, based on people's conscious and unconscious biases. It can take a significant toll, both economically and mentally, on those who experience it. Measures to tackle it legislatively are making glacial progress; meanwhile, this insidious form of discrimination remains hard to stamp out.

Overlooked, judged

"Weight discrimination can be experienced in lots of different ways, some subtle and some more overt," explains Rebecca Puhl, a professor at the department of human development and family sciences at the University

of Connecticut, US. "We see people being discriminated against because of their weight when they're applying for jobs. They're less likely to be hired than thinner individuals with the same qualifications."

While there's no evidence to support the idea that weight is linked to certain personality traits, stereotypes feed into these hiring decisions. Puhl points to a 2008 study which found that overweight job applicants are viewed as being "less conscientiousness, less agreeable, less emotionally stable and less extraverted than their 'normal-weight' counterparts".

Once hired into for a job, people can experience weight discrimination in a variety of ways. It can be explicit, like the exclusion and comments Courtney experienced at the fashion company. A 2021 study, co-authored by Puhl, surveyed 14,000 people across Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the UK and the US who were participating in a weight management programme. Fif-

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ty-eight percent of respondents said they had experienced weight stigma from their colleagues.

Other discrimination can be subtle. “We also see people who have been overlooked for promotions, or are being wrongfully terminated from their job because of their weight,” explains Puhl. A 2012 study of HR professionals showed they were more likely to disqualify obese people from being hired and less likely to nominate them for supervisory positions. At the fashion company, Courtney saw other people with the same job get promoted, while she remained at the same rank. “Anybody with my position was moving up within one or two years,” she explains.

Weight discrimination manifests in all kinds of workplaces, according to Brian J Farrar, an employment attorney at Sterling Employment Law, located in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. But he says it’s especially prevalent in environments with a focus on physical appearance. “You tend to see it more where employees are interacting with customers,” he explains. “In a restaurant or retail, you tend to have a higher potential incidence of weight discrimination.”

There is a gendered element: Puhl says women are more vulnerable to weight discrimination in the workplace. “[They] experience it not only at higher levels, but also at lower levels of body weight,” she says. “For men, their BMI [body mass index] has to increase quite high before the same level of weight discrimination kicks in for women.” Puhl attributes this to different societal standards around weight and attractiveness between the genders.

Farrar concurs, noting expectations of physical appearance aren’t enforced universally among male and female employees. Income can also play a role in weight discrimination, he points out, disproportionately affecting low-wage

workers. “They may be less likely to come forward and report discrimination,” he says. “That may cause their employers to take advantage of them more.”

Weight discrimination can have multiple impacts, both in terms of a worker’s career progression – which links to their earning potential – and their mental health. On the economic side, one study from 2011 showed that a one-unit increase in a woman’s BMI correlates with a 1.83% decrease in hourly wages. And a 2018 study showed while being in a lower income bracket can increase the risks of obesity, the reverse is also true — being obese decreases one’s income, impacts more pronounced among women than men.

Weight-based judgment and rude remarks can also lead to negative health behaviours, like higher sleep disturbance and alcohol use, lower physical activity and poor eating habits. For Courtney, being judged for her weight led to severe anxiety which, coupled with other life stresses, led her to take a two-year sick leave from work.

Opening the door?

Experts like Puhl and Farrar, who has represented employees in Michigan in workplace weight-discrimination cases, agree greater adoption of legislation could have an impact on this issue. In the US, bills are currently circulating in New York and Massachusetts; the new laws would be similar to the protections in Michigan, where weight is included as a protected characteristic in the state’s civil rights act. Some states in Brazil and the city of Reykjavik have also passed laws protecting people from weight discrimination.

Puhl reminds us that change is slow – she has been testifying about the legislation in Massachusetts for more than a decade. She believes that these laws aren’t being prioritised because of persistent stigmas around weight. “If society continues to place personal blame

on people for their weight, and if that blame is deemed socially acceptable, policy change is very challenging,” she says. But she believes Massachusetts “is pretty close” to passing a new law. “That’s monumental, because the Michigan law was passed in 1976. We have not had a state since then pass anything. If Massachusetts does this, that will open the door for other states to follow suit.”

Legislation isn’t the only solution, of course, because it won’t eradicate pervasive negative attitudes around weight. But similar to previous advancements protecting gender, race and sexual orientation, legislation makes a difference.

“Is it going to get rid of weight stigma? No, of course not,” says Puhl. “We still live in the same society and culture where we have messages that weight is about personal responsibility or laziness or discipline.” But legal protections are important and necessary for significant societal change to take place.

Courtney believes having weight discrimination protections in Canada wouldn’t have prevented her negative workplace experience, but says the existence of laws would have been reassuring. “I think knowing there is legislation almost feels like a validation that it’s wrong to be discriminated against for one’s weight,” she says. After returning to work from sick leave, Courtney continued to experience weight-related bullying and negative comments from supervisors. She was eventually laid off – and feels relieved to be out of a “toxic situation”.

“It has put a lot of self-doubt in my mind about my ability to do my job, about the career I want,” explains Courtney. “It’s made me rethink whether I feel like I can work within the fashion industry in general. I don’t think I could ultimately have a long-lasting career if I’m always thinking that people are judging me.”

Technology

What Musk's past tweets reveal about Twitter's next owner

By David Klepper

Three days before Elon Musk agreed to buy Twitter, the world's richest man tweeted a photo of Bill Gates and used a crude term to make fun of his belly.

Playful, aggressive and often juvenile, Musk's past tweets show how he has used social media to craft his public image as a brash billionaire unafraid to offend. They may also reveal clues as to how Musk will govern the platform he hopes to own.

"Look at the feed: It's all over the place. It's erratic. At times it's pretty extreme," said Jennifer Grygiel, a Syracuse University professor who studies social media and who recently assigned Musk's tweets as reading material for their students. "It paints him as some sort of rebel leader who will take control of the public square to save it. That is a myth he has constructed."

Musk joined Twitter in 2010 and now has more than 85 million followers — the seventh most of any account and the highest for any business leader. He had mused about buying the site before he agreed on Monday to pay \$44 billion for Twitter, which he said he hopes to turn into a haven where all speech is allowed.



The Twitter page of Elon Musk is seen on the screen of a computer in Sausalito, Calif., on Monday, April 25, 2022. On Monday, Musk reached an agreement to buy Twitter for about \$44 billion. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg)

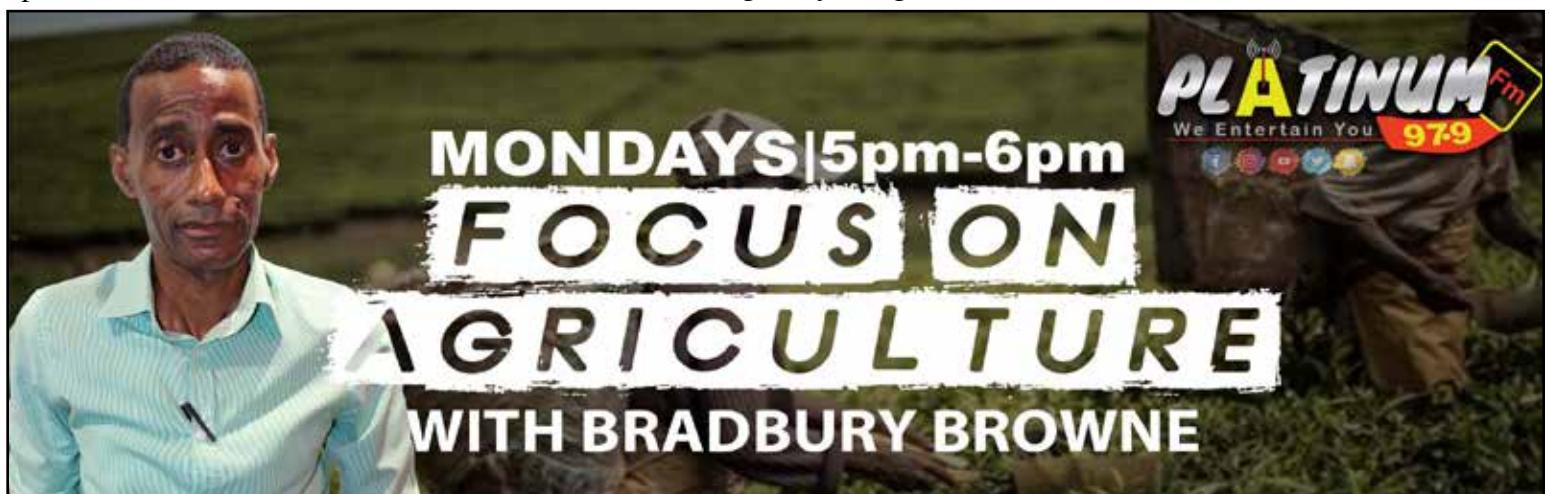
"I hope that even my worst critics remain on Twitter, because that is what free speech means," Musk wrote in a tweet.

As the CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, Musk uses his Twitter account to make business announcements and promote his enterprises. He muses about technology and trade, but has also posted jokes about women's breasts and once compared Canada's prime minister to Hitler. He regularly weighs in on

global events, as he did in March 2020 when he tweeted that "The coronavirus pandemic is dumb."

On Tuesday Musk used Twitter to criticize one of the platform's top executives and an attorney, in one case in a reply to a far-right activist who promoted the discredited conspiracy theory that pizza parlours around the U.S. were being used to traffic children.

Musk's tweets were followed by
cont'd on pg 15



Technology

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cont'd from pg 14

a wave of harassment by other accounts that targeted both individuals. For Vijaya Gadde, an 11-year Twitter employee who heads up the company's legal, policy and trust divisions, the harassment included racist and misogynistic attacks, in addition to calls for Musk to fire her.

Musk has long used the megaphone of his Twitter account to punch back at critics or people he opposes, such as when he attacked a diver working to rescue boys trapped in a cave in Thailand by calling him a "pedo," short for paedophile. The diver had previously mocked Musk's proposal to use a sub to rescue the boys. Musk, who won a defamation suit filed by the diver, later said he never intended "pedo" to be interpreted as "paedophile."

A few years ago, after software engineer Cher Scarlett criticized Musk's handling of the cave incident, the tech billionaire fired back and she was soon being harassed by dozens of Musk's online fans. He later deleted the posts, but not before Scarlett had to lock down her account because she was receiving so many hateful messages.

"It's ironic to me that somebody who claims they want to buy Twitter to protect free speech has such thin skin," she said. "He's a very smart man, and when he replies to people that criticize him, he knows what he's doing. To me that's not cham-

pioning free speech, it's weaponizing free speech, and I think that's what he'll do owning this platform."

Nineteen-year-old Jack Sweeney got Musk's attention when he created an automated Twitter account that tracked the movements of Musk's jet. Musk responded by offering Sweeney \$5,000 to pull the account. When Sweeney refused, Musk blocked him on Twitter.

Sweeney said he's worried he may get kicked off the site entirely if Musk's takeover is approved. But he said he likes Musk's free speech absolutism, and hopes he sees it through.

"He'll make it more open, and I think that's a

good thing," Sweeney said.

Musk's use of Twitter has also led to problems for his own companies. In one August 2018 tweet, for instance, Musk asserted that he had the funding to take Tesla private for \$420 a share, although a court has ruled that it wasn't true. That led to an SEC investigation that Musk is still fighting.

More recently, Musk appeared to have violated SEC rules that required him to disclose that he'd acquired a 5% stake in Twitter; instead he waited until he had more than 9%. Experts say these issues aren't likely to affect his Twitter acquisition.

Last year another fed-

eral agency, the National Labor Relations Board, ordered Musk to delete a tweet that officials said illegally threatened to cut stock options for Tesla employees who joined the United Auto Workers union.

Those tweets helped cement Musk's reputation as a brash outsider, a workman's billionaire, Grygiel said. But that doesn't mean he is equipped to run a social media platform with more than 200 million users, the professor added.

"Maybe he wants to burn it down," Grygiel said. "I don't know. But I do know that it shows that no one person should have this kind of power."



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

Regional News



Belize seeking INTERPOL assistance in search for former government minister

CMC – Law enforcement authorities in Belize have sought the assistance of Paris-based International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in the search for former minister of works, Rene Montero who is accused of “major irregularities and wrongdoings” during his tenure as a government minister.

Montero is wanted in Belize on a charge of ‘wilful oppression,’ contrary to sections 284 and 309 of the Criminal Code between 2016 and 2020. He is accused of causing and allowing certain property of the Ministry of Works to be used at his property and those of family members and close associates, abusing the power of his of-

fice, a charge he has publicly denied.

The former minister left the country for medical treatment overseas and is yet to return and is now considered a fugitive, subject to arrest and extradition to his homeland.

A copy of an INTERPOL bulletin, circulated on Monday, bears a picture of the former minister, his name, address, and other particulars, and that he is wanted to face a charge of wilful oppression, an offense that carries a maximum prison term of two years.

The initial warrant for Montero’s arrest had been circulated in September last year, just after he had reportedly left the country purportedly seeking medical treatment. Since then, the



Rene Montero

police have not been able to locate the former government official.

Suriname and Guyana at odds over fishing licenses

CMC – President of the Suriname Seafood Association (SSA), Udo Karg, says he is against the government providing licenses to Guyanese fishermen amid complaints of overfishing.

Over the weekend, President Chandrikapersad Santokhi told reporters that a fisheries agreement with Guyana is soon to be realized similar to those that already exist with other countries, including Venezuela.

Karg said he is surprised at the announcement by President Santokhi, saying “if we want to conclude a fisheries agreement with Guyana, then we can prepare about 2,500 licenses for CARICOM because then we have to allow all member states to fish in our waters”.

The two Caribbean



Community (CARICOM) countries are at loggerheads over the issuance of licenses with Georgetown claiming that Paramaribo had promised 150 permits last August during President Santokhi’s working visit to Guyana.

But this has been denied by President Santokhi who said he is unaware of the 150 permits story.

Last week, Guyana President, Irfaan Ali said his

government will not relent on its promise to address the fishing licenses matter with Suriname.

Fisherfolk, plying their trade in Suriname’s waters, have been complaining about constant harassment since they are not licensed to fish in the country’s territory. Some fisherfolk said they were also renting at high costs, licenses that were issued to Surinamese.

Ali said he had spoken to his Surinamese counterpart and his Foreign Affairs Minister Albert Ramdin and was promised “some statistics” to show the number of licenses issued to Guyanese fishermen.

“Minister Ramdin claimed that a high percentage of licenses issued by the Surinamese authority was issued to Guyanese, so I am waiting for that,” Ali said, adding that the Surinamese leader has also assured that the remaining issues will be resolved soon.

“We are not wavering on our position that we must have a resolution of this issue,” Ali said, adding that Guyana has always been welcoming to investors in all sectors, specifically from neighbouring Suriname.

cont’d on pg 17

Puerto Rico launches hearings on bill to restrict abortions

AP - Puerto Rico on Tuesday held its first public hearing on a bill that aims to restrict abortions in the U.S. territory as powerful political leaders who support the measure seek to join a similar conservative push in the U.S. mainland.

If approved, the bill would ban abortions starting at 22 weeks or when a doctor determines that a foetus is viable. The only exception would be if a woman's life is in danger. Most U.S. states already have similar laws, unlike Puerto Rico, where abortions with no term limit are currently allowed.

The hearing comes amid belief that a conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court could reverse or weaken a constitutional right to abortion stemming from the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling. Currently 44 U.S. states have imposed a threshold on abortions, many at 20 to 24 weeks or at foetal viability.

Those who testified at Tuesday's hearing includ-



ed women who gave birth to premature babies several years ago and brought them to the hearing in a bid to demonstrate they were saved.

"A 22-week-old child is viable because that happened to me," said Cathy Sue Cordero as pictures of the girl she gave birth to flashed on nearby screens.

Following their testimony, the women faced sharp questions from nearly a dozen senators, the majority of

whom oppose the bill.

"I would love for all women in Puerto Rico to have the opportunity to make their own decisions regarding their body," said Sen. José Antonio Vargas Vidot, who is also a doctor.

Vargas and other senators who spoke out against the measure noted that those who testified were loving parents who wanted to have a baby and had very good health insurance, including a plan that covered an air

ambulance to save Corde-ro's baby, which she had in the U.S. mainland.

Meanwhile, Sen. Joanne Rodríguez Veve, who is one of the bill's authors, said it was the government's responsibility to protect the lives of children, especially those she argued could survive outside the womb. She also dismissed concerns raised by critics who referenced children born to parents who didn't want them or who become victims of violence.

In late March, a Puerto Rico Senate committee overseen by Rodríguez approved the bill in a 9-3 vote. The Senate was then expected to vote on it earlier this month but kicked it back to the committee following criticisms that no public hearings were held.

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The Federation of Surinamese Agrarians (FSA) is also against issuing fishing licenses directly to fishermen in Guyana.

In a statement, the FSA said that under Article 8 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas which governs the CARICOM Treaty, fishermen from Guyana cannot receive preferential treatment from Suriname.

It said nevertheless, Guyana is exerting pressure on Surinamese to circumvent these rules so that Guyanese fishermen can be accommodated by Paramaribo.

The FSA further states that the Surinamese Sea Fisheries Act allows foreign vessels, which are willing to undergo inspection and adhere to the conditions, to present themselves for registration in Suriname.

International

AROUND THE WORLD



Russia cuts natural gas to two NATO nations in escalation

AP – Russia cut off natural gas to NATO members Poland and Bulgaria on Wednesday and threatened to do the same to other countries, dramatically escalating its standoff with the West over the war in Ukraine. European leaders decried the move as “black-mail.”

A day after the U.S. and other Western allies vowed to speed more and heavier weapons to Ukraine, the Kremlin used its most essential export as leverage against two of Kyiv’s staunch backers. Gas prices in Europe shot up on the news.

The tactic could eventually force targeted nations to resort to gas rationing and could deal another blow to economies suffering from rising prices. At the same time, it could deprive



Ukrainian servicemen install a machine gun on the tank during the repair works after fighting against Russian forces in Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine, Wednesday, April 27, 2022. (AP Photo/Evgeniy Maloletka)

Russia of badly needed income to fund its war effort.

Western leaders and analysts por-

trayed the move by the Kremlin as a bid to both punish and divide the al-

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TUESDAYS

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LIVE

Sudan frees ex-officials in effort to end political impasse

AP – Sudanese authorities released two outspoken former government officials from prison, lawyers said Wednesday, part of trust-building measures amid efforts to end the country's political impasse.

Sudan was plunged into turmoil after an October military coup upended its short-lived transition to democracy after three decades of repressive rule by former strongman Omar al-Bashir. Al-Bashir and his Islamist-backed government were removed in a popular uprising in April 2019.

Khalid Omar, a former minister of Cabinet affairs, was released late Tuesday and Mohammed al-Faki Suliman, a former member of the ruling Sovereign Council, walked free from a prison in the capital of Khartoum on Wednesday, their defence team said.

The Criminal Court in northern Khartoum rejected prosecutors' request to renew their detention pending investigations into an array of vague charges, including



Sudanese protesters take part in a rally against military rule on the anniversary of previous popular uprisings, in Khartoum, Sudan, Wednesday, April 6, 2022. (AP Photo/Marwan Ali, File)

betrayal of the public trust, according to their lawyers.

Both Omar and Suliman had been detained along with dozens of other officials during the Oct. 25 coup and were released a month later as part of a deal between the military and Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

The premier resigned in January after failing to bridge the gap between the generals and the protest movement.

The two men were re-arrested in February amid a crackdown by the generals on anti-coup groups. Doz-

ens of activists were also detained amid relentless protests against the military's takeover.

The crackdown on protesters killed more than 90 people, mostly young men, and injured thousands, according to a Sudanese medical group.

Suliman was also deputy head of a government-run agency tasked with dismantling the legacy of former autocratic President Omar al-Bashir's regime. The agency is known as The Committee to Dismantle the Regime of June 30,

1989, in reference to the Islamist-backed military coup that brought al-Bashir to power. It was created after the uprising and for two years worked to purge al-Bashir's loyalists from government institutions.

The generals, including coup leader Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, have long criticized the work of the agency. It was dismantled after the coup and the generals appointed another committee to review its decisions. Many of the agency's decision were reversed, measures seen by critics of the military as a way to enable Islamists allied with the generals.

Other members of The Committee to Dismantle the Regime of June 30, 1989, including Wagdi Saleh, Taha Osman and Babiker Faisal were also released Wednesday, their defence team said.

Earlier this month, authorities freed over two dozen activists who were detained in recent weeks over the anti-coup protests.

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lies, undermining their united support of Ukraine.

Poland has been a major gateway for the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and confirmed this week that it is sending the country tanks. It has also been a vocal proponent of sanctions against the Kremlin.

Bulgaria, under a new liberal government that took office last fall, has

cut many of its old ties to Moscow and likewise supported punitive measures against Russia. It has also hosted Western fighter jets at a new NATO outpost on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast.

The gas cuts do not immediately put the two countries in any dire trouble. Poland, especially, has been working for many years to line up other suppliers, and the continent is heading into summer, making gas less essential

for households.

Yet the cut off and the Kremlin warning that other countries could be next sent shivers of worry through the 27-nation European Union. Germany, the largest economy on the continent, and Italy are among Europe's biggest consumers of Russian natural gas, though they have already been taking steps to reduce their dependence on Moscow.

Singapore executes Malaysian despite pleas he was disabled

AP – Singapore on Wednesday executed a Malaysian man convicted of drug smuggling after a court dismissed a last-minute challenge from his mother and international pleas to spare him on grounds he was mentally disabled.

Nagaenthran K. Dharmalingam, 34, had been on death row for over a decade after he was found guilty of trafficking about 43 grams (1.5 ounces) of heroin into Singapore. The city-state's government has said its use of the death penalty for drug crimes is made clear at the borders.

Nagaenthran's family and social activists confirmed the execution Wednesday.

"On this score may I declare that Malaysia is far more humane," his sister, Sarmila Dharmalingam, said. "Zero to Singapore on this."

Nagaenthran's supporters and lawyers said he had an IQ of 69 and was intellectually disabled, and that the execution of a mentally ill person was prohibited under international human rights law.

Singapore courts cited psychiatrists' testimony that he was not mentally disabled and had understood his actions at the time of his crime.

"Nagaenthran Dharmalingam's name will go down in history as the victim of a tragic miscarriage of justice," said Maya Foa, director of non-governmental organization Reprieve.

"Hanging an intellectually disabled, mentally unwell man because he was coerced into carrying less than three tablespoons of diamorphine is unjustifiable and a flagrant violation of international laws that Singapore has chosen to sign up to," she said.

Nagaenthran and his mother filed a motion Monday arguing that it was unconstitutional to proceed with his



Activists hold posters against the impending execution of Nagaenthran K. Dharmalingam, sentenced to death for trafficking heroin into Singapore, during a candlelight vigil gathering outside the Singaporean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Tuesday, April 26, 2022. The Singapore Court of Appeal has dismissed a last-minute legal challenge filed by the mother of a mentally disabled Malaysian man in an attempt to halt his execution for drug trafficking. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

death sentence and that he may not have been given a fair trial because the chief justice who presided over his appeals had been the attorney general when Nagaenthran was convicted in 2010, which the filing alleged could be a conflict of interest.

The court dismissed the motion, describing it as "frivolous."

His family said Nagaenthran's body will be brought to their hometown in Malaysia's northern state of Perak for a funeral.

Singapore had halted executions for two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic before resuming them with the execution of a drug trafficker in March.

Anyone found with over 15 grams (0.5 ounces) of heroin faces the death sentence in Singapore, although it can be reduced to life in prison. Attempts

to reduce Nagaenthran's sentence or obtain a presidential pardon failed.

Malaysia's leader, European Union representatives and global figures such as British business magnate Richard Branson called for Nagaenthran's life to be spared and used the case to advocate for ending capital punishment.

Human rights group Amnesty International said in a statement that Nagaenthran's hanging "highlights the deep flaws of the death penalty in Singapore and the horror of its continued use."

According to activists, another Malaysian, Datchinamurthy Kataiah, is scheduled to be executed in Singapore on Friday. He was convicted of smuggling 45 grams (1.5 ounces) of heroin from Malaysia. Singapore doesn't formally announce its hangings.



MATCH SCHEDULE

MONDAY, APRIL 25 - SATURDAY, MAY 7

COOLIDGE CRICKET GROUNDS

GROUP 1

1. LIBERTA BLACKHAWKS
2. NEW WINTHORPES LIONS
3. BETHESDA GOLDEN EAGLES
4. PIGOTTS CRUSHERS

GROUP 2

1. EMPIRE NATION
2. RISING SUN SPARTANS
3. ALL SAINTS PYTHONS
4. JENNINGS TIGERS

MONDAY, APRIL 25

- 4 PM** BETHESDA GOLDEN EAGLES
VS. PIGOTTS CRUSHERS
- 7 PM** LIBERTA BLACKHAWK
VS. NEW WINTHORPES LIONS

TUESDAY, APRIL 26

- 4 PM** ALL SAINTS PYTHONS
VS. JENNINGS TIGERS
- 7 PM** EMPIRE NATION
VS. RISING SUN SPARTANS

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

- 4 PM** NEW WINTHORPES LIONS
VS. BETHESDA GOLDEN EAGLES
- 7 PM** PIGOTTS CRUSHERS
VS. LIBERTA BLACKHAWKS

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

- 4 PM** RISING SUN SPARTANS
VS. ALL SAINTS PYTHONS
- 7 PM** JENNINGS TIGERS
VS. EMPIRE NATION

TUESDAY, MAY 3

- 4 PM** NEW WINTHORPES LIONS
VS. PIGOTTS CRUSHERS
- 7 PM** LIBERTA BLACKHAWKS
VS. BETHESDA GOLDEN EAGLES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

- 4 PM** RISING SUN SPARTANS
VS. JENNINGS TIGERS
- 7 PM** EMPIRE NATION
VS. ALL SAINTS PYTHONS

FRIDAY, MAY 6

- 4 PM** SEMI-FINAL 1
- 7 PM** SEMI-FINAL 2

SATURDAY, MAY 7

- 4 PM** THIRD PLACE MATCH
- 7 PM** FINALS

Sports News



Phil Simmons “saddened” by Kieron Pollard’s retirement

As tributes poured in from around the world for the now-retired West Indies Men’s white-ball captain, Kieron Pollard, there was still one tribute fans were eagerly waiting to hear. It was that of West Indies Head Coach, Phil Simmons. But on Sunday, the wait was over as Coach Phil broke his silence when he took to Facebook to pay homage to his compatriot.

Since taking on the captaincy in 2019, “Polly” - as his teammates and fans fondly called him - led the West Indies for 24 ODIs and 39 T20Is. For 63 matches, not to mention countless practice days and team meetings, Kieron and Coach Phil worked closely together to lead the West Indies white ball teams to a resurgence in the shorter formats. Far from a walk



Kieron Pollard, left, and Phil Simmons

in the park, they were met with turbulences of bubbles, strict restrictions and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. But, these unprecedented times

only served to cement their pre-existing bond and build a stronger tower of trust between the former two West Indies all-rounders.

That’s why it’s unsurprising that Coach Phil expressed sadness in response to Pollard retiring “from the Maroon shirt so early”.

The passionate and charismatic leadership style that Pollard brought to the team saw a spirited performance from a team of youngsters that he started moulding since taking over the captaincy.

“Your ability to give players your backing and trust to deliver... your passion for pushing players to build on skills and knowledge of the game and more. Your unwillingness to settle for mediocrity was a pleasure to work with.” Simmons re-

counted.

Simmons ended his tribute to Pollard by pledging his continued support,

“Although I am saddened by your decision I totally respect it and I will continue to back you through the next challenge...”

Pollard hangs up his Maroon jersey after 224 matches for the West Indies which includes an ICC T20 World Cup title in 2012. And recently in 2021, he etched his name in history when he became the first West Indian and fourth player to hit six 6s in an over in international cricket.

West Indies is scheduled to travel to The Netherlands next for a three-match One Day International series starting on May 31 in Amstelveen.

Noble to retire even if West Ham makes the Champions League

AP – West Ham great Mark Noble will stick to his decision to retire at the end of the season, even if the team qualifies for the Champions League for the first time.

Noble, who has played for West Ham since 2004, announced in March last year that this season would be his last with the London club.

The club captain has helped West Ham reach the semi-finals of the Europa League, with the winner of the competition qualifying automatically for the Champions League.

That, though, wouldn't tempt Noble to delay his retirement for a year.

"Winning the Europa League and lifting the trophy — would I come back? No," the 34-year-old Noble said Wednesday. "And that's my honest answer. To



Chelsea's N'Golo Kante, left vies for the ball with West Ham's Mark Noble during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and West Ham United at Stamford Bridge in London, Sunday, April 24, 2022. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

end on that would be pretty special.

"I was joking with the lads the other day, saying if that did happen, I'd happily come watch the Champions League games with the Europa League trophy on the next chair. But that is way down the line."

Noble is no longer a

regular in West Ham's team, with Tomas Soucek and Declan Rice the central-midfield partnership under David Moyes.

Still, he is enjoying his farewell tour at the club he joined as a 16-year-old player, with West Ham going deep in Europe for the first time in a generation.

Knocking out Sevilla, a serial winner of the Europa League, in the last 16 will go down as one of the great occasions in West Ham's recent history.

Having dispatched Lyon in the quarterfinals, West Ham faces Eintracht Frankfurt over two legs in the semi-finals starting Thursday with the first game at the Olympic Stadium.

"Did I imagine it? Yes. Did I think this would happen? Probably no," Noble said of West Ham's run to the last four.

"This season for me, after announcing that this would be my last, has been special. It's not over yet. We've got an incredible game here and probably a bigger game in a week's time. To be able to enjoy that with the West Ham fans, with the players and staff, is an incredible achievement.

Top-ranked Swiatek withdraws from Madrid Open with sore arm

AP – Top-ranked Iga Swiatek withdrew from the Madrid Open on Wednesday because of a sore arm.

Swiatek, who has won four straight titles, was going to be the top-seeded player in the women's draw for this week's clay-court tournament.

"It's time to take care of my arm that has been fatigued since the Miami Open and I haven't had a chance to handle it properly," the 20-year-old Polish player wrote on Twitter. "I need a break from playing so intensively in

order to treat my arm well."

Swiatek won the Stuttgart Open on Sunday to add to titles in Doha, Indian Wells and Miami. Her winning run is at 23 matches.

"My body needs rest," she said. "I'm going to take some time to prepare for Rome and Paris. Hopefully, I will play in Madrid many times in the future."

The second-seeded player in Madrid before Swiatek withdrew was Paula Badosa.



Poland's Iga Swiatek celebrates after beating Aryna Sabalenka from Belarus to win the Stuttgart Open tennis tournament in Stuttgart, Germany, Sunday April 24, 2022, (Tom Weller/DPA via AP)

Sports News



AGS, All Saints and Jennings win in schools' cricket

Antigua Grammar, All Saints, and Jennings Secondary schools all recorded wins in the latest round of matches in the Ministry of Sports Schools' Cricket Competition on Tuesday.

Jewel Andrew continued his fine batting form with a century to inspire Antigua Grammar School to a crushing 146-run victory over Princess Margaret School at the Rising Sun Grounds.

Andrew hammered 104, Xanden Hobson made 20 not out and Ronaldo Antigua contributed an unbeaten 19 to propel Antigua Gram-

mar to 190 for 2.

Malinga Bruney had 1 for 20 and Williams claimed 1 for 42.

In reply, Princess Margaret crashed to 44 all out with Phillip getting a top score of 10. Anthony Pierre grabbed 3 wickets for 8 runs in his 3 overs, while Paul Fairweather snatched 3 wickets for 17 runs in his 3 overs.

All Saints Secondary trounced Sir Novelle Richards Academy by 69 runs at the Mock Pond playing field in All Saints.

Led by Tarek Charles,

who struck 60, All Saints made 136 for 4 off 10 overs. Sir Novelle Richards Academy were then restricted to 67 for 3 off their allotted overs with Jarod Jno Baptiste getting 40 not out.

Jennings Secondary prevailed by 22 runs against Pares Secondary at the Factory Grounds.

Batting first, Jennings made 159 from their 15 overs with Tavis Austin smashing 44 not out, Tanez Francis hitting 41 and Michael Cornelius getting 29. T. Tonge captured 1 for 17 and K. Tonge claimed 1 for



Antigua Grammar School batsman Jewel Andrew (Photo: Cricket268)

26.

Pares Secondary were restricted to 137 for 3, with Bailey getting 55 not out and Joseph scoring 31. Micah McKenzie captured 2 for 22 and Francis claimed 1 for 27.

Bianca Williams search: Met Police officers to face gross-misconduct hearings

BBC – Five Metropolitan Police officers will face a gross-misconduct hearing over the stop-and-search of Team GB athlete Bianca Williams, following an investigation by the police watchdog.

The British sprinter, 28, and her partner, were stopped in their car, in west London, in July 2020.

The couple were handcuffed, searched for weapons and drugs and separated from their three-month-old son.

An independent panel will now determine whether to uphold the allegations.

The Metropolitan Police referred itself to the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) after footage of the stop-and-search was posted online by former Olympic champion sprinter Linford Christie, who trains Ms Williams and her partner, Portuguese



Bianca Williams believes she was racially profiled [Photo: Jonathan Brady]

sprinter Ricardo dos Santos.

The couple believe they were racially profiled and stopped because they are black.

Ms Williams, a Commonwealth Games gold medallist, said the decision to hold a hearing “opens the door for the Met to start being more honest and reflective about the culture of racism which is undoubtedly still a reality

within the organisation”.

Publishing the findings of the IOPC investigation, on Wednesday, regional director Sal Naseem said all five officers - an acting sergeant and four constables - would face allegations they had breached police standards of professional behaviour for duties and responsibilities and for equality and diversity.

Four officers also face allegations they breached the standards for use of force and for authority, respect and courtesy.

Three of the constables will face allegations they breached the standards for honesty and integrity and one will face an allegation they breached the police standards of professional behaviour for orders and instructions.

A sixth officer will attend a misconduct meeting related to the stop-and-search.

Rising Sun, Jennings make winning start to T20 campaign

Rising Sun Spartans and Jennings Tigers both pulled off surprising wins in the Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion competition at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds on Tuesday night.

Spartans pulled off a shocking 45-run win over favourites Empire Nation, while Tigers stunned All Saints Pythons by completing a 20-run victory over their opponents in their opening matches in the competition.

Junior Henry slammed 48 off 24 balls with 3 sixes and 3 fours to lift Rising Sun Spartans to 159 for eight off their 20 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Shadrach Descarte and Shaquan Hewlett each contributed 22 off 13 balls. Descarte hit 2 sixes and a 4 in his knock, while Hewlett struck 4 boundaries in his innings.

Openers Gian Benjamin and Shane Burton each made 19 off 18 and 14 balls respectively. Benjamin hit 4 boundaries while Burton struck 3 fours and a 6 in



Matthew Miller of Jennings Tigers claimed the man of the match award against All Saints Pythons in the Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion competition at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds on Tuesday night. (Photo: Cool & Smooth T20)

their time at the crease. Damian Lowenfield captured 3 for 27 in his 4 overs.

Dean Williams then grabbed 3 for 16 in 4 overs as Empire made 114 all out in 18.5 overs.

Dario Hodge snapped up 2 wickets for 2 runs in his only over and Descarte claimed 2 for 19 in 3.5 overs.

23 extras were the main contributor to Empire's total, with captain Justin Athanaze and Rasheed Henry each getting 22 and opener Nathan Edwards chipping in with 19.

Jennings Tigers made 167 for six off their 20 over after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Overseas player, George Munsey of Scotland, top scored with 47 off 35 balls. He struck 8 fours and a 6.

Orlando Peters made 31 off 30 balls with 3 fours and a six, Adrian Barron, 24 off 15 balls, Cameron Miller, 19 off 11 balls and Jedidiah Martin 19 not out off 12 balls.

Off-spinner Larry Joseph captured 2 for 34 off four overs and Owen Graham claimed 2 for 45 in his

4 overs.

In reply, All Saints made 147 all out off their 20 overs. Overseas player Keacy Carty of St. Martin top scored with 65 off 44 balls with eight boundaries (4X4 and 4x6).

Opener Michael Dover made 20 off 15 balls with 2 sixes and a 4, while Owen Graham with 14 off 15 deliveries was the only other All Saints batsman to reach double figures.

Peters captured 3 for 24 in his 4 overs. Thirteen-year-old Matthew Miller picked up 2 wickets for 9 runs off 3 overs to claim the man of the match award.

Kenroy Browne bagged two for 20 and Jedidiah Martin took two for 47.

The T20 Explosion will continue with two matches at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds this evening.

New Winthropes Lions will face Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at 4 pm and Pigotts Crushers will clash with cup holders PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks at 7 pm.

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Once the facility reopened to the public in early March this year as COVID-19 numbers fell, a large number of players returned to the court at YMCA to play volleyball.

"We were closed for two years because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and...I was close to being crucified because the people want to play.

"They were right, because we opened up the place in early March and the place was filled up with people coming to play volleyball," Harrigan said.

"During the COVID-19 when we had severe restrictions, I used that opportunity to refurbish the stadium. We have our new scoreboard that is up and we also refurbished all of the

bathroom facilities."

Meanwhile, Harrigan also disclosed plans for regional tournaments later this year.

"We will host our ECVA men's tournament in early July and then in August we will travel to St. Lucia for a beach volleyball tournament and then the women will go over to St. Martin in October for a tournament.

Harrigan predicts beach volleyball will rival traditional version

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Volleyball Association (ABVA), Wilbur Harrigan, believes it is inevitable that beach volleyball will rival and eventually exceed hard court volleyball in popularity.

Harrigan said the national volleyball fraternity has continued to promote the sport with matches at Fort James Beach on Sunday afternoons.

"I would love to host sometime in 2023 a major regional beach volleyball tournament. This is good stuff and right now, we are on the beach every Sunday afternoon by Millers by the Sea on Fort James Beach just playing and advertising the product," Harrigan said.

"Antigua is not known as a beach volleyball country, but we are known as an indoor volleyball country. We love to play indoors, but we are getting more and more involved in playing beach volleyball on a regular basis.

"Whether it is me as the president, or someone else, the die has already been cast, not even me could stop it. Beach volleyball is going to move the sport forward. It is inevitable."

Beach volleyball was a demonstration sport at the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992 and made its official Summer Olympic debut in the men's and women's categories in the 1996 Atlanta, USA games.

Beach volleyball was introduced at the 1999 Pan American Games in Canada, three years after its Summer Olympics debut.

It was later introduced at the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast,



Players compete in a mixed-team Beach Volleyball Competition staged by the ABVA at Fort James in December 2021. (Photo: ABVA)

Australia in 2018, where Australia's men and Canada's women claimed the event's first-ever beach volleyball medals.

With beach volleyball now an Olympic sport, Harrigan said it is also more feasible for small countries such as Antigua and Barbuda to be represented at major international events.

He said Antigua and Barbuda was able to capitalise on the opportunities when two beach volleyballers represented the nation at the 2021 Junior Pan American Games in Cali, Colombia from 25th November to 5th December.

Harrigan said Antigua and Barbuda will also likely be represented at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, England, from 28th July to 8th August.

"We sent two young persons to the Pan Am Games last year and the people there were very surprised that

it was their first outing. Now, we have the Commonwealth Games coming up. The chances are, with a little luck, we will be represented," Harrigan said.

"The numbers go like this. It takes two persons to make a beach volleyball team. For indoors, it takes ten persons to make a team, plus two officials. That is twelve persons. So the money to send twelve persons and the money for two. There is a big difference there.

"It means it will be less costly to send a beach volleyball team to these international games than it is for the indoor team. That is a huge financial difference that can be used to our benefit in beach volleyball."

Harrigan said, however, hard court volleyball is still attracting great interests.

He continued he is often bombarded with requests to use the indoor volleyball facility at the YMCA.

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