

NATIONAL CYCLIST RECOVERING *...driver to be charged*

Story on Page 2



The Airwing division of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) has been responding to medical emergencies in Barbuda by flying to Antigua those in need of urgent specialised care. *Story on page 5.*

Cyclist struck by car shows signs of improvement

There is some good news from the family of Andre Simon, the cyclist who was struck by a car on Sir George Walter Highway on Sunday.

On Tuesday, Simon's brother Dwayne, posted on social media, "Andre is doing a bit better, thank you for your prayers".

He continued, "His lungs are functioning and his vitals are good. We are hoping for a gradual road of recovery. Beatrice [sister] told him a story about his son and tears came down his eyes".

Andre Simon sustained

severe injuries and is in critical condition. The three cyclists that were with him were treated and discharged from hospital. Simon was placed in a medically-induced coma in the Intensive Care Unit of Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Reports are that an overseas-based neurologist was expected to assess him yesterday.

Unconfirmed reports indicate the driver of the Red Toyota Vitz struck Simon in the vicinity of Dee's Service on Sunday and fled the scene. In the process, he struck the other three riders



National cyclist Andre Simon

and again attempted to flee, but crashed the car near Furniture Gallery on Sir George

Walter Highway. He remains in detention and will likely be charged by police.

Duo in brawl with police remanded to prison

A couple who fought with police in the parking lot at Woods Mall last weekend was remanded to prison.

Chantel Sibilst, 24 and her boyfriend, 23-year-old Jahwer Christopher of Marble Hill, were slapped with several counts of battery on police, resisting arrest, and malicious damage.

Sibilst and Christopher were refused entry into Payless shoe store last Saturday, since they were without masks. The store's policy is that masks are mandatory for anyone entering.

The decision by employees to bar the couple led to a confrontation, during which the police were summoned.

In a video captured by an onlooker and viewed close to 20,000 times, the Jamaican national and her boyfriend are seen being restrained by two men believed to be plain clothes law enforcement officers. While the



man was boisterous and demanded he be released, Chantel Sibilst began tussling with the police. The duo was subsequently restrained and taken into police custody.

Before Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh yesterday morning, Sibilst and Christopher pleaded not guilty to the charges and were remanded to Her Majesty's Prison until 15th June, when they will make their second court appearance.

Reaction to the incident has been mixed. While some have criticized the

police for using excessive force, others argue customers should comply with store policies. Another argument is that male police officers should not restrain or arrest women.

But Attorney-at-Law Jarid Hewlett, maintains, there is no law to support that position.

"Female police officers are necessary for strip searching women detainees to avoid allegations/situations of sexual assault. Any police officer can arrest any person, regardless of gender," he said.

Sir Ronald Sanders rejects “blasting” US policies

This week, several media sources, including Pointe Xpress published articles suggesting that Antiguan and Barbudan diplomat, Sir Ronald Sanders, “blasted” the United States and its policies with respect to Caribbean nations.

On Tuesday, however, Pointe Xpress was able to ascertain that this representation did not accurately reflect the ambassador’s position.

In fact, in a 16-page opinion published on 28th April, 2022, Ambassador Sanders offered an analysis of US-Caribbean relations over the first year of the Joe Biden administration. In the detailed paper, to provide context, Sanders offered comparative analysis between democrat Joe Biden and his controversial Republican predecessor, Donald Trump.

Describing the Trumpian era of US politics with respect to the Caribbean as “reactionary and indifferent”, the ambassador noted that President Biden missed the opportunity to transform US-Caribbean relations, opting rather to assume “global – nonspecific Caribbean initiatives – from which the region benefited”. However, in embracing multilateralism, a more inclusionary and non-discriminatory US domestic

policies, which provided comfort to the Caribbean region, the Biden administration missed the chance to initiate specific Caribbean policies or up to that point, engage with the region’s leaders on the crafting of such policies.

Additionally, after the disruption of progress made under the Barack Obama administration, in which Biden was Vice President, since assuming the US’ top government office, the Biden administration laser focused on certain Caribbean/Latin American nations – specifically Haiti and intervening in its spiralling decline; its failure to continue the Obama legacy of normalising US relations with Cuba; and the continuation of the Trump-era hostile stance towards Venezuela and its President Nicolas Maduro.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sir Ronald also referenced the efforts of chiefly, Antigua and Barbuda’s Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Trinidad and Tobago’s Dr. Keith Rowley to secure US support in gaining access to vaccines, in addition to attempts to engage the new US administration in respect of opportunities for greater cooperation and collaboration.

However, despite resulting talks between top US



Sir Ronald Sanders

officials including VP Kamala Harris and Barbados’ Prime Minister Mia Mottley and Jamaica’s Andrew Holness in late 2021, and most recently, in April 2022, between the US VP and CARICOM leaders, which prompted PM Browne to say he hoped it would not just be another round of fruitless talks, Sir Ronald concurred stating “no movement towards a coherent and meaningful Caribbean policy” has occurred.

Meanwhile, in respect of the coming June Summit of the Americas, which was established as a forum for discussion and collaboration by nations in the Western Hemisphere, Sir Ronald reiterated his written position that the meeting should be used as a “golden opportunity” for clearly stated policies to be established in relation to US-Caribbean

relations.

However, he was firm that any such meeting should be grounded in the fact that it will occur as a meeting between equals, in which Caribbean nations – and in particular the 15 member CARICOM grouping – will have a voice that should be acknowledged.

“If the United States insists on not inviting Cuba to this meeting, it will immediately cause 14 CARICOM countries not to attend. That means we don’t have a Summit of the Americas that is being informed.

“Secondly, if there is an insistence on Juan Guaidó being there as if he is the president of Venezuela, that will also result in a number of countries not attending,” Sir Ronald asserted in a 28th April, 2022 forum.

In support of the re-

cont’d on pg 4

Antigua/Barbuda welcomes Queen's Baton tomorrow

On Thursday, Governor General Sir Rodney Williams and Minister of Foreign Affairs, E. P. Chet Greene, will welcome the Queen's Baton to Antigua and Barbuda.

On its tour of 72 Commonwealth nations, Antigua and Barbuda will be the 59th stop in the Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay.

While here, the entourage accompanying the baton on its world tour will enjoy a full agenda featuring meet and greets with the country's premier athletes, trips to Wetherill's Estate, Devil's Bridge as well as a stop in Barbuda.

The baton's journey this year began on 7th October 2021, at Buckingham Palace. As is tradition, Queen Elizabeth II placed her message to the Commonwealth in the baton and it commenced its journey around the globe.

Its last stop before Antigua and Barbuda was Anguilla where it spent three days. From here, where it will also spend three days, the Baton will end its two-month Caribbean stay with



THE QUEEN'S BATON

visits to St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Bermuda, before moving on to Canada.

Its 294-day journey will end on 4th July, when it returns to the United Kingdom.

First introduced at the 1958 Cardiff Commonwealth Games, the Queen's Baton Relay has been a staple ahead

of the games.

The Antigua and Barbuda Queen's Baton Planning Committee, headed by Neil Cochrane, has noted that the country will have a unique opportunity to showcase its pristine beauty, while providing welcome exposure, as the nation continues its rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic.

cont'd from pg 3

region – and certainly Antigua and Barbuda's position of non-acceptance of Guaidó as the interim leader of

Venezuela, Sanders further pointed to the fact that the US sought to engage the duly elected president of Venezuela, Nicolas Madu-

ro in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war.

“In the midst of the crisis of oil caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine

and the sanctions that followed, the United States government sought to talk to Nicolas Maduro in Caracas; they did not seek to talk to Juan Guaidó. Juan Guaidó is incapable of delivering anything on behalf of Venezuela, and it is about time that we get rid of the myth that Juan Guaidó is the president of Venezuela and let us start to deal with the de facto government and the real problem that we have in a constructive manner.”

Wed 11 Day 84° ☁️ Cloudy skies. High 84F. Winds ESE at 15 to 25 mph.		Wed 11 Night 76° ☁️ Cloudy skies. Low 76F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.	
🌧️ Humidity 72%	🌞 UV Index 8 of 10	🌧️ Humidity 80%	🌞 UV Index 0 of 10
🌅 Sunrise 5:37 am	🌇 Sunset 6:30 pm	🌙 Moonrise 2:23 pm	🌙 Moonset 2:21 am
🌕 Waxing Gibbous			

ABDF Airwing responds to medical emergencies in Barbuda

The newly established Airwing division of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) has been responding to medical emergencies in Barbuda by flying to Antigua those in need of urgent specialised care.

Chief of Defense Staff, Colonel Telbert Benjamin, said the latest emergency was on Monday, when resident medical officer in Codrington, Dr. Jeremy Deazle, requested the intervention of the aircraft to take a teenager from Barbuda to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre for urgent care. According to Colo-

nel Benjamin, the boy was reportedly injured with a knife or another sharp instrument. He was rushed to the SLBMC after it was determined that he required a level of attention not available on Barbuda.

The young man is said to be on the road to recovery at the hospital.

A few days earlier, the Airwing was called to airlift a pregnant woman to Antigua. The call was made after she developed difficulties that could not have been dealt with at the Hannah Thomas hospital in Codrington. Both mother



and child are said to be doing well.

Colonel Telbert Benjamin revealed the Airwing division has just one air-

craft, but efforts are underway to acquire a second aircraft. He said the Prime Minister and the Cabinet

cont'd on pg 6



Caribbean Union Bank

VACANCY

BANKING SOFTWARE TECHNICIAN *ICT AND INNOVATIONS*

THE ROLE

Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) is seeking to fill the position of Banking Software Technician in its ICT and Innovations Department. The Banking Software Technician will provide first line support in a Microsoft Windows domain environment as well as for desktop and application support and troubleshooting.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- › Associate's degree in an IT related field.
- › At least two years working experience with working knowledge of:
 - Applications within a Bank's IT infrastructure
 - Network devices, printers, scanners, copiers, fax machines, telephones, Wi-Fi, mobile devices.
 - Windows Desktops, laptops and thin client operating system configuration
- › General understanding of networking
- › Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- › Working knowledge of computer programming
- › Microsoft Office applications (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc.).
- › Strong problem-solving and analytical skills
- › A track record of meeting performance targets and objectives with minimum direction.
- › Strong organizational and interpersonal skills.
- › Flexible with the ability to function well in a fast-paced environment.

APPLICATIONS

Applications can be submitted via regular mail or emailed to human.resource@cub.ag. The deadline for application is 13th May, 2022.

Antiguan pannists among top 20 in regional competition

Two Antiguan pannists are among the top twenty musicians who have earned a spot in the regional Pano-Grama virtual competition.

The preliminaries were held on three consecutive nights over the weekend, in the second staging of the competition organised by Nevin Roach of Trinidad and Tobago.

Malik Smith of Panache Steel Orchestra tied for 7th place in the competition that drew participants from the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, Belize and France. Smith performed the song 'Best part' by

H.E.R and Daniel Caesar, and his rendition earned him 79.7 points out of a possible 100 points. He tied for 7th place with Trinidadian Christopher Neale.

"The experience has been quite enjoyable so far and I am quite pleased that I have been able to secure a spot in the Top Ten. My hope is to build on that performance with the expectation that I make it into the finals to be held later this month," Smith stated.

Maurisha Potter, the captain of Panache, who is taking part in the competition for a second time,



Maurisha Potter

emerged at number 18. This is an improvement for her, as she did not make it pass the preliminaries last year. She said she is happy to have made it into the semis.

"Progressing to the semi-finals is an amazing feeling, as I went against 23 talented pannists from around the world. I am grateful for the continued opportunity to represent the nation of Antigua and Barbuda and hope that I will receive the support going forward," Potter stated. She amassed a total of 72.0 points.

Director of Culture Khan Cordice, said he is very happy that two Antiguan have earned spots in the semis, noting that the nation should be proud of their achievements. "When you consider that they are competing amongst some of the top pannists in the world, including several top pannists out of Trinidad, what they have achieved is something to celebrate," he declared.

He said intense preparation for the semis, scheduled for 29 May, will begin this weekend.



Malik Smith

cont'd from pg 5

are aware of the process and are kept informed of all developments.

He noted the addition of the air-lifting capabilities and the work that has been done helping Barbudans in need, have helped to strengthen the relations between medical personnel in Barbuda and the ABDF.

The Chief of Defense Staff also disclosed that the Airwing division has been involved with the Coast Guard in coordinated patrols of the territorial waters of Antigua and Barbuda.

"This is being done in an effort to combat smuggling of any type in the nation's waters. Currently, we are

building capacity for rescue at sea. We are exploring mechanisms to put in place for greater coordination between the Coast Guard and Airwing services," he explained.

The aircraft – Alpha One – is stationed at the V.C Bird International Airport, from where it is operated and maintained by ABDF personnel.



Career Opportunity

Regulatory Team Leader – IT Risk

The Financial Services Regulatory Commission invites applications from experienced individuals with a specialty in the area of Information Technology to fill an immediate opening in its regulatory department. The successful candidate will provide support to the Commission's cross-sector supervision of several bank and non-bank financial institutions in evaluating of these entities' risk management practices. The individual will report to the Chief Regulatory Officer.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in computer science or related field is required.
- Relevant certifications such as CISA, CRISC, CISM, and CISSP.
- Commensurate industry experience with auditing or risk management and controls required.
- Must be willing and able to travel; position requires approximately 50% travel but may vary depending on circumstances.

Experience

- Minimum five years of experience and advanced knowledge in areas such as IT, risk management, information security business resiliency, network management/architecture, vendor risk management, vulnerability management, patch management systems, and data center operations and management. Advanced knowledge of common frameworks such as COBIT, NIST, and ISO.
- Ability to evaluate an institution's cyber/information security program and provide an assessment of its ability to identify, protect, respond, and recover from business disruptions.
- Demonstrated thought leader with strong critical and analytical thinking skills to navigate complex issues and reach well supported conclusions.
- Excellent written and verbal communication ability, articulating a range of complex issues clearly and persuasively as appropriate to audience.
- Ability to complete complex assignments independently, successfully manage multiple assignments, and prioritize and delegate effectively to meet goals.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in a team environment and build collaborative relationships across teams.

Responsibilities

Lead or participate on examinations and conduct ongoing monitoring to understand the supervised entity's IT environment, determine the effectiveness of the IT risk management program, and assess emerging IT-related risks. Support conclusions and communicate results with stakeholders through supervisory reports and meetings with key members.

- Monitor and document remediation of supervisory issues and elevate issues as appropriate.
- Contribute to preparation of supervisory plans for relevant and effective risk-based supervision factoring in size and complexity of the entity.
- Proactively coordinate and collaborate with colleagues across the regulatory departments to incorporate their views into supervisory results and deliverables, including peer perspective. Build relationships with key stakeholders including the regulatory heads of departments and regulatory counterparts.
- Communicate regularly with supervised financial institutions, and brief executive management on appropriate issues.
- Contribute to the Commission's and the ECCU's effort to develop effective IT supervisory policy and guidance, supervisory activities, and IT analysis.
- Contribute to and periodically lead the Commission's or joint-authorities' workgroups; proactively initiate change by seeking opportunities to participate in priority projects.
- Support joint supervision of financial institutions periodically if schedule permits.
- Extended work hours may be required at times.

- **The completed application along with supporting documents must be sent no later than 27th May 2022 to The Human Resources Manager, P.O. Box 2674, St. John's, Antigua OR Via email tJanice.Thomas@fsrc.gov.ag.**
- **Only candidates who are shortlisted for the selection process will be contacted.**
- **Shortlisted candidates will be required to undertake a written assessment.**

Benefits of a Job Rotation Programme

We apologize for uttering the dreaded “C-Word” again, but consider this. There has been workplace exposure in your close-knit department of four persons, where three have contracted Covid-19. GULP!!! What do you do next? This department performs duties of a specialized nature that are essential to the company’s operations.

Temporary recruitment, even internal is not an option because the training to perform the duties would take longer than the isolation period for Covid-19. How did your organization get there? Was there no contingency planning in place? How can you as a responsible Human Resource (HR) professional prevent a recurrence?

In today’s sharing of best practices, we will discuss job rotation, what it is and how it could benefit your organization and its employees. Merriam-Webster defines job rotation as “the assigning of an employee to a variety of tasks in turn to provide diversified experience during training or to counteract boredom”.

HRPAB proposes that job rotation is a beneficial practice which offers so much more than counteracting boredom for participating employees. There are many benefits but today we will focus two of them, in the interest of brevity.

The first benefit of job rotation is a combination of succession planning and skill redundancy. Succession planning is the strategy by which companies identify and train

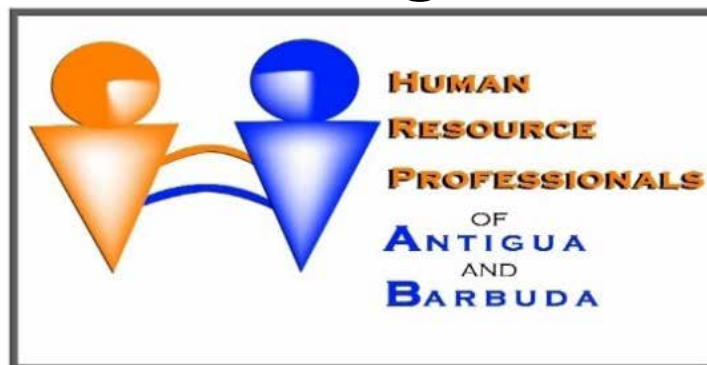
employees for leadership or key roles and usually happens in the event of a retirement. Skills redundancy ensures resource support when a short term, unplanned absence of a key employee occurs.

Both strategies mitigate against interruption to business operations when a key employee is unavailable to work. In this instance, the company benefits more by having additional highly skilled, flexible employees, who can fill more than one role in case there is a shortage of labour.

The second benefit of job rotation is improved employee engagement resulting from increases in employee motivation and job satisfaction. Job rotation is an effective tool in alleviating employee stagnation. Performing tasks of a repetitive nature can become monotonous and lead to malaise which ultimately results in errors in work output.

Job rotations help an employee understand the ‘inner workings’ of another department and helps them fit the puzzle together of how each department collaborates toward the company’s total output. Employees who understand how their efforts contribute to the company’s success are very often more committed.

Job rotation may also allow an employee to realize a new skill in a temporary role which is more compatible with their interests and abilities than their substantive roles.



We suggest the following five steps to designing a job rotation plan and urge you to solicit contributions from the relevant department heads as a crucial aspect of the design process.

WHY: Determine the purpose of the job rotation program: what are you trying to achieve?

HOW: Determine the work teams where job rotation would be effective. Bear in mind that for some highly specialized roles, training cost could be excessive and for others, if an employee is not performing the duties regularly after leaving the department, the skill may be lost.

WHAT: Determine the key aspects of the role and place your focus there. What are the functions that must continue in a disruption and which tasks can be postponed without causing harm to the operations?

WHICH: Determine the skills that must be acquired to perform the critical tasks, and design a training plan. At this stage, one must conduct an organizational skills assessment to identify the gaps among likely candidates for the job rotation program.

WOW: Determine what

success looks like. Don’t be afraid to evaluate at each stage of the process and tweak as required to improve on the job rotation programme. We assure you, it will not be perfect on the first attempt.

When effectively implemented, a properly designed job rotation programme can be mutually beneficial and provides opportunities for the professional development of a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

The Human Resource Professionals of Antigua and Barbuda (HRPAB) is a registered non-profit, professional association dedicated to the advancement of the HR profession for national development. We began informally from 2009 and legally registered in 2011. HRPAB’s growing membership represents private and public organizations as well as independent consultants specializing in one or more areas of human resource management and development. Membership is offered for three categories: professional, non-professional, and honorary. You may contact us via email at hrpro.ab@gmail.com or on Facebook and Instagram @HRPro268.



Career Opportunity

Applications are invited by the Financial Services Regulatory Commission of Antigua and Barbuda (FSRC) for the position of Accounts Officer – Receivables.

The Accounts Officer - Receivables provides financial, clerical, and administrative services to ensure the efficient, timely and accurate receipt of payments from accounts under his or her control. This role provides related accounting support and reports directly to the Financial Controller and/or Accountant.

Pre-requisites: As a pre-requisite the successful employee will be required to have the following: -

Minimum Qualifications and Experience:

1. A Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Finance, or any equivalent training,
2. Two (2) years relevant experience in accounts receivable and general accounting or its equivalent.
3. Working knowledge of QuickBooks, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Generate and dispatch invoices and customer statements.
2. Process and allocate payments received following established internal control policies, and procedures.
3. Monitor customer accounts for non-payment, delayed payments, and other irregularities. Research and resolve payment discrepancies.
4. Communicate with customers to follow up on and collect payments, investigate, and resolve customer queries.
5. Generate accounts receivable aging reports, and review to ensure compliance.
6. Maintain up to date accounts receivable customer files and records.
7. Reconcile accounts receivable.
8. Prepare bank deposits.
9. Ensure that all transactions are entered by the end of each month and prepare reports according to specific deadlines.
10. Perform other assigned tasks.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies:

1. Working knowledge of the provisions of applicable laws and regulations governing accounting for statutory bodies in Antigua & Barbuda.
2. Working knowledge of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
3. Be aware of, and apply appropriate internal control policies, procedures, and practices.
4. Good interpersonal and communication skills.
5. Commitment to ongoing personal self-development.
6. Strong time management, organizational, and customer service skills.
7. Excellent verbal, and written communication skills, problem solving, analytical and information management skills.
8. Should be attentive to detail and accuracy, possess a sense of urgency, tenacious and a team player.

- **The completed application along with supporting documents must be sent no later than 27th May 2022 to The Human Resources Manager, P.O. Box 2674, St. John's, Antigua OR Via email to Janice.Thomas@fsrc.gov.ag**
- **Only candidates who are shortlisted for the selection process will be contacted.**
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In this photo provided by Pfizer, a lab technician visually inspects COVID-19 Paxlovid tablet samples in Freiburg, Germany in December 2021 (Pfizer via AP, File)

Rare cases of COVID returning pose questions for Pfizer pill

By Matthew Perrone

As more doctors prescribe Pfizer's powerful COVID-19 pill, new questions are emerging about its performance, including why a small number of patients appear to relapse after taking the drug.

Paxlovid has become the go-to option against COVID-19 because of its at-home convenience and impressive results in heading off severe disease. The U.S. government has spent more than \$10 billion to purchase enough pills to treat 20 million people.

But experts say there is still much to be learned about the drug, which was authorized in December for adults at high risk of severe COVID-19 based on a study in which 1,000 adults received the medication.

Why do some patients seem to relapse?

Doctors have started reporting rare cases of patients whose symp-

toms return several days after completing Paxlovid's five-day regimen of pills. That's prompted questions about whether those patients are still contagious and should receive a second course of Paxlovid.

Last week, the Food and Drug Administration weighed in. It advised against a second round because there's little risk of severe disease or hospitalization among patients who relapse.

Dr. Michael Charness reported last month on a 71-year-old vaccinated patient who saw his symptoms subside but then return, along with a spike in virus levels nine days into his illness.

Charness says Paxlovid remains a highly effective drug, but he wonders if it might be less potent against the current omicron variant. The \$500 drug treatment was tested and OK'd based on its performance against the delta version of the coronavirus.

"The ability to clear the virus after it's suppressed may be different from omicron to delta, especially for vaccinated people," said Charness, who works for Boston's VA health system.

Could some people just be susceptible to a relapse? Both the FDA and Pfizer point out that 1% to 2% of people in Pfizer's original study saw their virus levels rebound after 10 days. The rate was about the same among people taking the drug or dummy pills, "so it is unclear at this point that this is related to drug treatment," the FDA stated.

Some experts point to another possibility: The Paxlovid dose isn't strong enough to fully suppress the virus. Andy Pekosz of Johns Hopkins University worries that could spur mutations that are resistant to the drug.

"We should really make sure we're dosing Paxlovid appropriate-

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ly because I would hate to lose it right now," said Pekosz, a virologist. "This is one of the essential tools we have to help us turn the corner on the pandemic."

How well does Paxlovid work in vaccinated people?

Pfizer tested Paxlovid in the highest-risk patients: unvaccinated adults with no prior COVID-19 infection and other health problems, such as heart disease and diabetes. The drug reduced their risk of hospitalization and death from 7% to 1%.

But that doesn't reflect the vast majority of Americans today, where 89% of adults have had at least one

shot. And roughly 60% of Americans have been infected with the virus at some point.

"That's the population I care about in 2022 because that's who we're seeing -- vaccinated people with COVID -- so do they benefit?" asked Dr. David Boulware, a University of Minnesota researcher and physician. There's no clear answer yet for vaccinated Americans, who already have a hospitalization rate far below 1%.

That may come from a large, ongoing Pfizer study that includes high-risk vaccinated people. No results have been published; the study is expected to wrap up in the fall.

Pfizer said last year that initial results showed Paxlovid failed to meet the study's goals of significantly resolving symptoms and reducing hospitalizations. It recently stopped enrolling anyone who's received a vaccination or booster in the past year, a change Boulware says suggests those patients aren't benefitting.

At a minimum, the preliminary data should be released to federal officials, Boulware said. "If the U.S. government is spending billions of dollars on this medicine, what's the obligation to release that data so that they can formulate a good policy?"

Can Paxlovid be used

to help prevent COVID-19 infection?

Pfizer recently reported that proactively giving Paxlovid to family members of people infected with COVID-19 didn't significantly reduce their chances of catching it. But that's not the end of the story. Pfizer is studying several other potential benefits of early use, including whether Paxlovid reduces the length and severity of COVID-19 among households.

"It's a high bar to protect against infection but I'd love to see data on how Paxlovid did against severe disease because it may be more effective there," said Pekosz.



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Earth given 50-50 chance of hitting key warming mark by 2026

By Seth Borenstein

The world is creeping closer to the warming threshold international agreements are trying to prevent, with nearly a 50-50 chance that Earth will temporarily hit that temperature mark within the next five years, teams of meteorologists across the globe predicted.

With human-made climate change continuing, there's a 48% chance that the globe will reach a yearly average of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels of the late 1800s at least once between now and 2026, a bright red signal in climate change negotiations and science, a team of 11 different forecast centres predicted for the World Meteorological Organization late Monday.

The odds are inching up along with the thermometer. Last year, the same forecasters put the odds at closer to 40% and a decade ago it was only 10%.

The team, coordinated by the United Kingdom's Meteorological Office, in their five-year general outlook said there is a 93% chance that the world will set a record for hottest year by the end of 2026.

They also said there's a 93% chance that the five years from 2022 to 2026 will be the hottest on re-



A man and a boy walk across the almost dried up bed of river Yamuna following hot weather in New Delhi, India, Monday, May 2, 2022. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup, File)

cord. Forecasters also predict the devastating fire-prone megadrought in the U.S. Southwest will keep going.

"We're going to see continued warming in line with what is expected with climate change," said UK Met Office senior scientist Leon Hermanson, who coordinated the report.

These forecasts are big picture global and regional climate predictions on a yearly and seasonal time scale based on long term averages and state of the art computer simulations. They are different

than increasingly accurate weather forecasts that predict how hot or wet a certain day will be in specific places.

But even if the world hits that mark of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial times — the globe has already warmed about 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since the late 1800s — that's not quite the same as the global threshold first set by international negotiators in the 2015 Paris agreement.

In 2018, a major United Nations science report predicted dramatic and

dangerous effects on people and the world if warming exceeds 1.5 degrees.

The global 1.5 degree threshold is about the world being that warm not for one year, but over a 20- or 30- year time period, several scientists said. This is not what the report predicts.

Meteorologists can only tell if Earth hits that average mark years, maybe a decade or two, after it is actually reached there because it is a long term average, Hermanson said.

"This is a warning of
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what will be just average in a few years,” said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, who wasn’t part of the forecast teams.

The prediction makes sense given how warm the world already is and an additional tenth of a degree Celsius (nearly two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit) is expected because of human-caused climate change in the next five years, said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth, who wasn’t part of the forecast teams.

Add to that the likelihood of a strong El Nino — the natural periodic warm-

ing of parts of the Pacific that alter world weather — which could toss another couple tenths of a degree on top temporarily and the world gets to 1.5 degrees.

The world is in the second straight year of a La Nina, the opposite of El Nino, which has a slight global cooling effect but isn’t enough to counter the overall warming of heat-trapping gases spewed by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists said.

The five-year forecast says that La Nina is likely to end late this year or in 2023.

The greenhouse effect from fossil fuels is like putting global temperatures on a rising escala-

tor. El Nino, La Nina and a handful of other natural weather variations are like taking steps up or down on that escalator, scientists said.

On a regional scale, the Arctic will still be warming during the winter at rate three times more than the globe on average. While the American Southwest and southwestern Europe are likely to be drier than normal the next five years, wetter than normal conditions are expected for Africa’s often arid Sahel region, northern Europe, northeast Brazil and Australia, the report predicted.

The global team has been making these predictions informally for a decade and formally for

about five years, with greater than 90% accuracy, Hermanson said.

NASA top climate scientist Gavin Schmidt said the figures in this report are “a little warmer” than what the U.S. NASA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration use.

He also had doubts about skill level on long-term regional predictions.

“Regardless of what is predicted here, we are very likely to exceed 1.5 degrees C in the next decade or so, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that we are committed to this in the long term — or that working to reduce further change is not worthwhile,” Schmidt said in an email.

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PM sacks six cabinet ministers; dissolves parliament

Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis Dr the Hon. Timothy Harris has sacked six cabinet members and has asked Governor-General Sir Tapley Seaton QC to dissolve the parliament in preparation for fresh elections.

Dr Harris in a National Address on Tuesday disclosed that Deputy Prime Minister Richards has not attended cabinet for 91 days while none of the CCM rep-

resentatives and only one of the PAM representatives have attended any meeting of the cabinet in recent weeks.

“While others neglected their duty, and fail to attend cabinet meetings I must commend the members of the cabinet who continue to show great respect for the institution of the Cabinet and for giving yeoman service to their country. We have been focused on deliv-



Dr the Hon. Timothy Harris
ering for you.”

Dr Harris said he had listened to the citizens and residents lament about this “irresponsible and flagrant disregard for their sworn duty to the Cabinet and by extension our people.”

“The current situation cannot continue... Throughout this process, I have been reasonable but resolute in my commitment to ensuring that the government was delivering for you. It is for this reason that I have taken the difficult but necessary step to remove from their position those who have shown a disinterest in their duties.

“I have asked his excellency to reassign their portfolios to members who are willing and able to deliver for you.”

Dr Harris said he asked the Governor-General to remove Richards as Deputy Prime Minister and appoint Eugene Hamilton to the office.

“The Honourable Hamilton has been steadfast and responsible in discharging his duties as a minister of

the Prortfolios assigned to him.

“I have asked his excellency to revoke the appointments of other Ministers who have thought it fit to disrespect the sacred trust the People of St Kitts and Nevis placed in the government following the successful election of 2020.”

He added that Mark Brantley, Jonel Powell, Alexis Jeffers, Eric Evelyn, and Lindsay Grant have been stripped as ministers of government.

“Government must continue to function in the interest of the people.”

The Prime Minister said he also asked the GG to release the portfolios of these members that have been removed.

Wendy Phipps will assume the responsibility for tourism and transport including port. AG Byron will assume the responsibility for foreign affairs and aviation, education youth and sports. Akilah Byron Nisbett will have added the

cont'd on pg 16



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UN says gang clashes force hundreds to flee homes in Haiti

CMC – The United Nations says clashes in Haiti between rival gangs in the capital, Port-au-Prince, have forced hundreds of people to flee their homes in the French-speaking country.

UN deputy spokesperson, Farhan Haq quoting the UN Humanitarian Affairs Office (OCHA) in Haiti, said unrest has been growing between gang members in the neighbourhoods of the commune of Croix-des-Bouquets, Cité Soleil, Bas Delmas and Martissant.

“According to our humanitarian colleagues, violence in the commune of Croix-des-Bouquets has displaced more than 1,200 people. At least 26 civilians have been killed and 22 injured, although these figures are probably higher.”

At the same time, he said dozens of houses have been burned; schools, medical centres, and markets have had to close; and a hospital in Marin was looted.

“Displaced people need access to clean water, food, sanitation kits, children’s



Resumed gang fighting in Haiti kills 26; hundreds flee homes [Photo: Richard Pierrin/AFP]

kits, kitchen kits, mattresses, blankets, and clothing. The UN is ready to provide hot meals and additional assistance in coordination with national authorities,” Hag said.

The UN said while it is working on a plan to relocate families being housed at temporary sites, the UN said it has been collaborating with its humanitarian partners in supporting the Mayor’s Office of Tabarre and the Civil Protection Agency in distributing hot

meals and food, as well as essential items.

Since the assassination, last July of President Jovenel Moïse, violent crime has been on the rise, according to reports.

The UN noted that, last month, thousands took to the streets, demanding that the late president’s successor, Ariel Henry, do more to combat Haiti’s powerful criminal gangs, “which have taken control of parts of the capital.”

Haiti’s Civil Protection General Directorate-led national coordination committee, comprising UN agencies and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners, has activated an early warning system known as the Displacement Tracking Matrix, OCHA said.

The UN said local NGOs are providing psy-

chosocial activities for children at temporary sites, including recreational events, child-friendly learning spaces, and counselling.

Meanwhile, as the Haitian police struggle to contain the gang violence, kidnappings of foreigners and others by criminal gangs, demanding large ransoms, have been on the rise, according to reports.

According to Haiti’s Centre for Analysis and Research on Human Rights, in 2021, more than 1,200 people were kidnapped – only 81 of whom were foreign nationals.

Ten percent were so-called “collective abductions,” where gang members abducted a group of people, sometimes by storming church services and kidnapping clergy in the middle of mass, the UN said.

cont’d from pg 15

portfolio for culture. Agriculture, fisheries, marine resources and the environment will be now part of the Ministry of sustainable development.

“I am confident that the government will continue to deliver for our country

as well as we have delivered over the past seven years.”

He added that he also asked the GG to dissolve Parliament effective May 10 2022

“I will advise you when general elections will be held.”

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is calling on the United Kingdom to “retreat” from stated political calls to “subvert and subordinate the sovereignty of the people of the British Virgin Islands (BVI).

“This is the second occasion in recent weeks in which we have called for respect of the national rights of a community; having done so following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We are committed to the decolonization of the Caribbean and deplore the persistence of colonial rule of the people in the region,” UWI Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles said in a statement.

The noted Caribbean economic historian said the regional UWI insists, therefore, that its member community, the Virgin Islands, be given the full opportunity and autonomy to resolve its immediate domestic challenges.

“We are confident that it will do so within an enabling Caribbean framework without injurious imperial aggression emanating from London,” said Sir Hilary, supporting the statement made by Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders on the issue.

The 15-member CARICOM grouping said it is “deeply concerned” at the recommendations by a one-man Commission of Inquiry

that called for the BVI government to cease to exist in its current format for at least two years.

In a statement, CARICOM said it has taken “note of the release on April 29, 2022, of the Report of the British Virgin Islands Commission of Inquiry (COI) with its far-reaching recommendations” adding that the BVI, a British Overseas Territory, has been an Associate Member of the grouping since July 1991.

“CARICOM supports the decision of the duly elected Government of the BVI to welcome the recommendations for improving governance and their commitment to work with the United Kingdom to address the weaknesses identified in the COI report.

Earlier this month, BVI Governor John Rankin said the Commissioner, Sir Gary Hickinbottom, had recommended “a return to Ministerial Government and an elected House of Assembly as soon as practicable, with the Governor taking regular advice from the Advisory Council and others on the earliest practicable date on which such government can resume.

The Governor said the COI made 45 specific recommendations on how to address each of the areas of concern that his report identifies.

But the UWI Vice Chan-



UWI Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles

cellor said ‘all the people of the region have fought with all means available to craft a democratic culture in the face of fierce opposition from Britain.

“They have been murdered, imprisoned, and racially denigrated in the quest for freedom, justice, and democracy. Britain has no authority, moral or otherwise, to teach democracy lessons in the Caribbean, insisting as it does on dominating the people who are seeking reparatory justice

for centuries of colonial brutality and continuing imperial rule.

“The region is proud of the initiative by the ruling party and opposition to come together to form a national consensus government. This is the spirit that forms the core of the independence sensibility now rooted in the region.

“It is precisely this consciousness that will enable the community to resolve whatever governance chal-

cont’d on pg 18

OECS welcomes financing initiative for sustainable marine conservation in the Caribbean

CMC – The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is welcoming initiatives aimed at providing adequate financing to implement effective marine management strategies.

The St. Lucia-based OECS Commission said regional implementing partners, the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) and the MPACoast network, are collaborating to promote investment in Caribbean marine conservation through capacity building for the mobilization of resources from conservation trust funds.

It said the Caribbean marine environment faces ever-increasing pressures including a new set of emerging issues and as governments and civil societies across the region work towards sustainable development, the key limiting factor is typically adequate financing to implement effective marine management strategies.

“Marine protected ar-



ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

areas (MPAs) in particular are an important tool in marine conservation, supporting fisheries management and tourism in the region. Yet Caribbean MPA managers tell us that raising reliable, long-term financing for their operations is their most pressing management need,” said Emma Doyle, coordinator of the MPACoast Network.

There are various mechanisms through which marine conservation can be financed.

Some mechanisms are well known and relatively easily understood, such as visitor entrance fees for marine parks or immigration fees at airports and ports, and philanthropic donations or concessions for on-site

businesses. Other financing mechanisms are newer and more innovative, but also more complex to understand and to access, such as trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, and impact investment.

“A meaningful MPA sustainable financing plan requires a mix of several financing mechanisms. One of the mechanisms in this mix, and one that is highly anticipated by MPA managers, is the conservation trust fund,” said Doyle.

The Commission said the formation of conservation trust funds has greatly increased in the Caribbean region and these legally independent institutions are expected to play a growing role in marine conservation

financing in the coming years, especially in support of nature-based solutions to climate change and as the blue economy grows.

It said in the Eastern Caribbean, a series of National Conservation Trust Funds is being established through the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund.

GIZ and the Trinidad-based Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) are assisting in marrying the National Conservation Trust Funds with capacity building for MPA management and operations through the Sustainable Marine Finance Project.

The Commission said four OECS member countries, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada will be the principal focus of this work.

“The perspective of the wider OECS will also be considered within the ongoing work and at a later stage, the scope will include other CARICOM states.

cont'd from pg 17

Challenges are arising from the tragic, debilitating, recent events.

“It is also true that it is persistent British colonial rule of the community that distorts quality indigenous development and constitutes the framework in which international financial malfeasance seeks haven in these is-

lands. Britain has created this wicket on which the game being played is not West Indian cricket.”

Beckles said the UWI stands ready to facilitate the national strategy of the British Virgin Islands, its stakeholder, “to maintain and enhance its sovereignty.

“It also stands ready to assist Brit-

ain in curing itself from the persistent impulse and cultural addiction to dominate the people of this region by imperial edict.”

Last week, Premier Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley said his newly sworn-in National Unity government is fully committed to reform in the Overseas British Territory.

Russia pounds Ukraine's vital port of Odesa, Mariupol plant

Russian forces pounded away at the vital port of Odesa, Ukrainian officials said Tuesday, as part of an apparent effort to disrupt supply lines and weapons shipments. On the other end of the southern coast, they hammered a steel plant where Ukrainian fighters are denying Moscow full control of another critical port.

Days after the dramatic rescue of what some officials said were the last civilians trapped at the plant in Mariupol, authorities said about 100 were still believed to be in the network of underground tunnels under bombardment. The strikes come as the grisly toll of the war continued to take shape, with the Ukrainians saying they found the bodies of 44 civilians in the rubble of a building in the northeast that was destroyed weeks ago.

The Ukrainian military said Tuesday that Russian forces fired seven missiles a day earlier from the air at the crucial Black Sea port of Odesa, hitting a shopping centre and a warehouse. One person was killed and five were wounded, the military said.

Ukraine alleged at least some of the munitions used dated back to the Soviet era, making them unreliable in targeting. But the Center for Defense Strategies, a Ukrainian think tank



An Ukrainian firefighter works near a destroyed building on the outskirts of Odesa, Ukraine, Tuesday, May 10, 2022. The Ukrainian military said Russian forces fired seven missiles a day earlier from the air at the crucial Black Sea port of Odesa, hitting a shopping centre and a warehouse. (AP Photo/Max Pshybyshesky)

tracking the war, said Moscow did use some precision weapons against Odesa: Kinzhal, or "Dagger," hypersonic air-to-surface missiles.

Ukrainian, British and American officials warn Russia is rapidly using up its stock of precision weapons and may not be able to quickly build more, raising the risk of more imprecise rockets being used as the conflict grinds on.

Ever since President Vladimir Pu-

tin's forces failed to take Kyiv in the early days of the war, he has said his focus is the country's eastern industrial heartland of the Donbas — but one general has suggested Moscow's aims also include cutting Ukraine off from its entire Black Sea coast.

That would give it a swath of territory that would link Russia to both the Crimean Peninsula, which it seized in 2014, and Transnistria, a pro-Russian breakaway region of Moldova.

Army evacuates former Sri Lankan PM from besieged residence

AlJazeera — Heavily armed troops have evacuated outgoing Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa from his official residence after thousands of protesters breached the main gate amid the worst

violence in weeks of protests over an unprecedented economic crisis.

Protesters who forced their way into the prime minister's official Temple Trees residence in Colombo then attempted to storm

the main two-storey building on Tuesday where Rajapaksa was holed up with his immediate family.

"After a pre-dawn operation, the former PM and his family were evacuated to safety by the army," a

top security official told AFP news agency.

"At least 10 petrol bombs were thrown into the compound."

The embattled 76-year-old leader was forced to *cont'd on pg 20*

Abortion protests: Security tightened around court justices

BBC – US law enforcement agencies are beefing up security for Supreme Court justices after a leak suggested they may overturn legalised abortion.

The US Marshals Service said on Monday it was helping the agencies normally tasked with the judges' protection.

A protest was held on Monday night at Justice Samuel Alito's house in Alexandria, Virginia. Activists chanted: "Abort the court!"

Rallies were held outside the homes of two other justices this weekend.

On Saturday night, a group of about 100 people marched from the home of Justice Brett Kavanaugh to Chief Justice John Roberts' house nearby in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Shut Down DC, the left-wing group behind Monday's demonstration outside Justice Alito's house, said the plan was to "hold a moment of silence for the rights we know are ours".

Separately, an anti-abortion centre suffered an arson attack on Sunday.

The White House said earlier on



Protesters outside the home of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito on Monday night [Reuters]

Monday that demonstrations should never include "violence, threats or vandalism".

"[President Biden] strongly believes in the constitutional right to protest," said a statement from his press secretary Jen Psaki.

"But that should never include violence, threats, or vandalism. Judges perform an incredibly important function in our society, and they must be able to do their jobs without concern for their personal safety."

On Monday, the US Marshals

Service announced it was helping the police agencies normally tasked with the security of the Supreme Court's nine justices.

The US Marshals Service said the decision to back up the justices' security detail came "in response to increased security concerns stemming from the unauthorised release of the draft opinion".

A draft opinion leaked last week suggests a majority of the Supreme Court would overturn US women's federally protected right to abortion.



Police stand guard outside the president's office amid worsening violence in Sri Lanka after weeks of anti-government protests [Ishara S Kodikara/AFP]

cont'd from pg 19

resign on Monday after weeks of protests over the worst economic crisis the island nation is facing since its independence in 1948.

The resignation marked a sudden fall from grace for the patriarch of the all-powerful Rajapaksa clan that has dominated Sri Lankan politics for nearly 20 years.

Rajapaksa's evacuation

to an undisclosed location followed a day of violent protests in which at least five people, including a member of parliament, were killed and nearly 200 wounded.

The security official said police kept up a barrage of tear gas and fired warning shots in the air to hold back protesters at all three entrances to the colonial-era building, a key symbol of state power.

Caribbean Games set for Guadeloupe 2022

CANOC Executive Committee members represented by President Brian Lewis and Secretary-General Keith Joseph completed a successful visit to Guadeloupe May 1st -5th. They attended a series of critical meetings with the Local Organising Committee, local government officials, and commercial enterprises. During these meetings, the numerous challenges that continue to confront the organising committee and, by extension, CANOC, the owner of the Games, were shared. Despite this, the people of Guadeloupe want the Games and CANOC will continue on the path of realising the Games, "Against all odds." CANOC has scheduled a special meeting of its membership via Zoom to discuss the challenges still confronting the Games preparation exercise.

A press conference was held on Wednesday 4th,



Mathias Da Silva Santos, Account Manager of Coca-Cola, signing partnership agreements with CROS Guadeloupe President Alain Soreze.

May, at the headquarters of Crédit Agricole Mutuel in Guadeloupe, the official bank of the games.

The Local Organizing Committee shared updates on the progress of the inaugural Caribbean Games with the large press contingent. The conference was also an opportunity to announce key partnerships for the Caribbean Games, including Air Antillies, Jumbo Car Guadeloupe, and Coca-Cola.

During discussions held with the Local National Federations of the Sports of the Games, President Brian

Lewis expressed CANOC's appreciation to the people of Guadeloupe for hosting the Inaugural Caribbean Games.

Lewis further stated that "CANOC continues its own struggle for Guadeloupe and other territories of the region to be associate members of Panam Sports as we successfully did with Centro Caribe Sports (CCS). Gua-

deloupe must seize the moment of hosting the Games in the presence of the leadership of Panam Sports in June/July, to strengthen the case for Associate Membership of the organisation. There is no better opportunity to make the case so effectively and strongly."

President of Netball Suzanne Pierre-Louis thanked CANOC leadership for their presence in Guadeloupe. She stated that " Although Netball is only now being introduced, the country feels excited about confronting the challenges that emerge as the team prepares. Netball Guadeloupe will expand to all of the French Caribbean and, ultimately, France. No turning back."



Ernest Daninthe, President of Guadeloupe track and field federation gave the assurance that challenges regarding accessing an appropriate stadium are being confronted with a view to speedy resolution and confirmed that equipment has been procured and enroute to Guadeloupe for the Games.

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US PGA Championship: Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods named in 156-man field

BBC – Defending champion Phil Mickelson and 15-time major winner Tiger Woods have been named in the 156-man field for the US PGA Championship in Oklahoma.

Woods returned to competitive golf at the Masters in April, 14 months after suffering life-threatening injuries in a car crash.

Mickelson, who has been on a break from golf after criticising Saudi Arabia's regime, last played in February. Golf's second major of the year takes place from 19-22 May.

Mickelson, 51, became golf's oldest major champion when he won at Kiawah Island's Ocean Course in 2021.

However, he lost multiple sponsors and saw his reputation tarnished after he sought to use involvement with a Saudi Arabian-backed golf super league to gain leverage over the PGA Tour.

The fallout saw him miss the Masters for the first time in 28 years.

Mickelson's participation would



Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods have won 21 major championships between them [Getty Images]

see him face the media for the first time in months and, while he has been named as a provisional starter, he could still pull out at the last minute.

Woods, 46, who nearly lost his right leg in the 2021 car crash, made the cut at Augusta after opening with a round of 71 and eventually finished 47th. Woods has already outlined plans to play The Open at St Andrews

in July and, while his participation in Oklahoma will be dependent on his physical shape, he has recently played a practice round on the course.

World number one Scottie Scheffler, who won the Masters last month, and former US PGA champions Rory McIlroy, Justin Thomas, Brooks Koepka and Collin Morikawa are also among those set to compete.

Cricket South Africa drop disciplinary charges against Mark Boucher



Mark Boucher was appointed South Africa men's head coach in December 2019 [Getty Images]

BBC – Cricket South Africa (CSA) have withdrawn disciplinary charges against men's head coach Mark Boucher.

Former wicketkeeper Boucher had been charged by the governing body following "tentative findings" made by the Social Justice and Nation Building (SJN) ombudsman last year.

Boucher previously apologised for joining teammates in singing songs and using nicknames that caused

offence.

Ex-captain Graeme Smith was cleared of racism allegations in April.

Former left-arm spinner Paul Adams told the SJN commission that a racial slur about him was used in a team song in the late 1990s.

Boucher, who played 147 Tests and 295 ODIs between 1997 and 2012, subsequently apologised in a written submission to the commission.

cont'd on pg 25

Principal happy with AGS' T20 title victory

Principal Samuel Roberts has expressed joy and satisfaction that the Antigua Grammar School (AGS) was able to continue its strong cricket tradition by winning this year's Ministry of Sports Schools' T20 championship.

AGS overcame their toughest challenge of the season, in which they went undefeated, by pulling off a 26-run victory over Clare Hall Secondary in the final, to capture the T20 title at the Rising Sun playing field on 5th May.

Set a victory target of 112, Clare Hall were put on course for a famous win by Malique Walsh who hit a top score of 43. But when Walsh was removed by captain and off-spinner Sharmar Pereira, it effectively ended Clare Hall's challenge as they were dismissed for 85.

Pereira captured 5 wickets for 15 runs in his 4 overs and Matthew Millar claimed 4 wickets for 15 runs.

Roberts, who witnessed the final at the Rising Sun playing field, said he was happy with the way the AGS responded to overcome their most difficult challenge this season.

"Throughout the season it has been wonderful. We have remained unbeaten for the entire season. I am extremely elated with this performance because it was our toughest game to date, which is what a final should be," Roberts stated.

"We have never been put in positions where we were on our back-foot for most of the game and I am really proud of how they have responded."

Roberts said cricket and football remain the two strongest sporting disciplines that the students at Antigua Grammar School continue to excel in.

"Cricket remains one of our strongest areas along with football. So cricket and football have traditionally been strength areas for the Antigua Grammar School and it has remained so to this day," Roberts said.

"We have been for the last four years, prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we have been winning the schools' Under-19 two-day cricket competition. Periodically, we have won the T20 competition as well.

"But cricket has always been a very strong area at the Antigua Grammar School and it is showing in this crop of boys and I am extremely pleased that they have come out of Covid and managed to string performances like this together."

With all inter-schools sporting contests curtailed in 2020 and 2021 by the COVID-19 pandemic, Roberts said he was also glad for the return of competitive school sports.

"I am just thrilled and over the moon that schools' sports are back



Principal of the Antigua Grammar School, Samuel Roberts, holds a trophy after his team beat Clare Hall to win the T20 title at the Rising Sun playing field on 5th May, 2022. (Photo: Elwin Francis)

and I will tell you why. I participated when I was in school, both as a spectator and at the Antigua State College as a player, and I remembered just how much fun it was and the lifelong friendships we developed by playing against and with other people," he remarked.

"It is an important part of your development as a student. If it was so great for me, I just want that for the people that are now in my charge and for the students of today."

cont'd from pg 24

Adams declined to testify in the upcoming hearing against Boucher, saying the concerns he spoke about during the SJN process were about overall team culture and not any particular player.

Boucher was also accused of side-lining former assistant coach Enoch Nkwe, which he denied. Nkwe declined to testify against Boucher. CSA said in a statement there was "no basis to sustain any of the disciplinary charges".

ABBA to target schools to recruit more table officials

The Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association (ABBA) is looking to schools as a source for new recruits to undergo training in becoming table officials who will help with live game administration.

Executive floor member, Bryan 'Hollywood' Matthew, said ABBA hopes to increase the current number of table officials with persons from within schools to help with the administration and management of games in its national programme.

"We have earmarked getting into the schools to recruit persons to train to assist with the game administration because our current crop of table officials is limited," Matthew said.

"Those officials have been there for a while and the workload is a lot, especially with these expanding tournaments et cetera.

"So going forward, we are planning to embark on a lot of educational programmes and also go into the schools to get persons interested in becoming statisticians and officials, because there is a lot to be had from that aspect in the game.

"It is something that we need, and I am sure there are interested persons. So, if we can go into the schools and get even two, three or four persons just to expand the pool that we have now,

it will go a long way and I think that is one of our main focus as well."

Matthew is part of a new nine-member executive that was elected to serve a four-year term by ABBA's membership, during its Annual General Meeting on 22nd March.

President Michael Free-land said there was a smooth handover from the outgoing executive that was led by ABBA's first female president, former national player Kebra Nanton.

Although the arrival of the pandemic severely restricted Nanton's tenure that commenced on 23rd October, 2018, her executive oversaw the resurfacing of the concrete basketball court at the JSC Sports Complex with a new polymer surface.

Matthew, who has represented the senior national team for over 15 years, and who played in 2019 during the last competition, said the resurfacing of JSC has significantly reduced the stress on players' bodies.

Matthew said the current ABBA executive will make further improvements at the JSC Sports Complex.

"I think the resurfacing of JSC is one of the better things that has happened for the sport of basketball in Antigua for a while.

"We have always complained about the impact the cement structure had and to



ABBA executive floor member and former national small forward Bryan 'Hollywood' Matthew. (Photo courtesy ABBA)

just had the polymer court laid out, it preserved a lot of legs," Matthew said.

"It not only preserved my legs, but a lot of the other players and you saw that they could have gone on longer, the game got better, even with the younger athletes going forward.

"This is something that we as a new executive is planning to develop the surface even further. We are in the initial phase of speaking with a company out of Boston in the United States.

"That company is run by

a former college teammate of mine and that's their expertise.

"They have expressed their willingness to come to Antigua and see where they can help because he knows about Antigua and he knows we play on these hard surfaces and he has expressed the willingness to come and help.

"So that is part of our mandate going forward and it is to get better playing surfaces, not just for JSC, but for other courts across Antigua and Barbuda."

Former NBA, Michigan State star Adreian Payne shot, killed

AP - Adreian Payne, a former Michigan State basketball standout and NBA player, has died in a shooting. He was 31.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office said deputies responded to a shooting at 1:34 a.m. Monday when Payne was identified and taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Lawrence Dority, 29, was present at the scene, according to the sheriff's office. He was arrested on a first-degree murder warrant after homicide detectives interviewed him.

"I'm in shock at the tragic news," Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said. "Our prayers are with his family, teammates and loved ones. Adreian was loved by his teammates and coaches, who respected his

development as a player and a person. He came to Michigan State with a ton of raw talent and put in the work to reach his goal of becoming an NBA player. Beyond that, he will long be remembered by Spartan fans for his kind heart, as his friendship and genuine bond with Lacey Holsworth touched the nation."

Izzo said that after Payne graduated he regularly returned to the school and developed relationships with players from all eras.

Payne played in 107 NBA games, averaging four points and three rebounds, over four seasons with Atlanta, Minnesota and Orlando.

The Hawks drafted him No. 15 overall in 2014, traded him to the Timberwolves, and he averaged 6.7 points



Minnesota Timberwolves forward Adreian Payne (33) drives with the ball during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Feb. 27, 2016, in New Orleans. (AP Photo/Jonathan Bachman)

and 5.1 rebounds as a potentially promising rookie.

The Magic waived the 6-foot-10 forward in January 2018, after he was part of an ESPN report that detailed sexual assault allegations against former basketball and football players at the school.

Payne played profes-

sionally earlier this year for Juventus in Lithuania. He also played in Turkey, France, Greece and China.

A native of Dayton, Ohio, Payne started in 94 of 138 games over four seasons for Izzo and averaged 16.4 points and 7.3 rebounds as a senior during the 2013-14 season.

cont'd from pg 26

ceived and accepted scholarship offers via the Free Kick Foundation on July 29, 2019.

The other recipients are Jaylaun Benjamin and Janlany Jarvis who both attended Union County College in New Jersey; Rokeba Cordice, Akeem Issac, Sheldon Christian, Mya Kirwan and Tatiana Drew all attended Bethany College in West Virginia and Janiqua Lewis and Nia Coates who both attended North East Texas College.

The Free Kick Foundation Inc. is a registered corporation in the state of Georgia, in the United States of America, and became a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization in 2015.

The foundation's mission is to inspire, educate and empower youth, from economically depressed communities, through football, by helping to develop positive thinking, while helping to eradicate social plagues, such as illiteracy, poverty and crime.

Its vision is to provide equal opportunity for children from economically depressed areas in the Caribbean.

The Free Kick Foundation's founder, Aaron King, conceived the idea as a vehicle to assist children to realize their dreams, initially from his home island of St Lucia, West Indies.

The urge to help quickly spread to other islands throughout the region and the free kick foundation are now

firmly established in St Lucia, Antigua, Dominica, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago.

Through the Free Kick Foundation, numerous opportunities have been afforded to young aspiring male and female footballers to harness their skills and get an education at colleges in the United States.

Thus far, approximately 90 young male and female footballers from the five Caribbean countries have benefited from the initiative.

The data estimates that 65 per cent of the scholarship recipients are male and 35 percent are females. However, 52 percent of all recipients have been St Lucians.

Antigua's first Free Kick Foundation scholarship recipient graduates

Zhane Dennie, the first of four Antiguan students to receive partial scholarships through the US registered non-profit organization, Free Kick Foundation, graduated from the Talladega College in Alabama on Saturday 7th May, 2022, at its 147th commencement ceremony involving 160 students.

Dennie was the only Antiguan among five Free Kick Foundation recruits, the other four being St Lucians, to graduate with Bachelor's Degrees from Taladega College in Georgia, USA, in various fields. Including Computer Science and Business Management.

Dennie graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science. The other Free Kick Foundation scholarship recipients to graduate with the Antiguan include Thai Fowell, who graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, concentration in Finance & Banking. She also graduated with Magna Cum Laude Alpha Chi, Presidential and Society honours.

The others are Vionce Weekes, Marva Herman and Skye Gerald. Weekes graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Management.

Herman graduated with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting. She also graduated with Presidential Honours, Division Distinction, Summa Cum Laude, Alpha Chi State Honours and Class of 2022 Salutatorian, and was one of the top



Administrator of the Free Kick Foundation's programme in Antigua, Barbara Coates, left, celebrates with Zhane Dennie, after the footballer graduated from the Talladega College in Alabama on Saturday 7th May, 2022. (Photo courtesy Barbara Coates)

five students of her graduating class.

Gerald graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science.

Administrator of the Free Kick Foundation's programme in Antigua, Barbara Coates, travelled to Alabama to celebrate with Dennie.

Coates said, "This is the first graduation of many to come for our Free Kick Foundation scholarship recipients. Congratulations Zhane and to her entire support team. You have crossed this journey with much hard work and commitment.

Coates adds, "Zhane's graduation is important for us as it signifies that the Free Kick Foundation scholarship programme is a viable option. It is authentic and many more students are there to come through this programme."

Dennie, sisters Jahira and Nadasta James and Trichet Ann Grant were the

four young Antiguan female footballers who were awarded partial scholarships to attend the Talladega College in Alabama in 2018.

Grant was subsequently recruited to Texas A&M and the James sisters went on to Florida National University.

Coates said 22 students from Antigua and Barbuda have so far received partial scholarships to play football, and more importantly, get an education via the Free Kick Foundation.

She said some of those students have previously graduated from two-year colleges in the programme. Among them are Malique Jarvis, who graduated from Union County College in New Jersey and Kameely Jackson from Northeast Texas in 2021.

Both Jarvis and Jackson were part of a batch of 12 Antiguan who re-

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