

COFCOR CALLS FOR UNIFIED SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

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The Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), was held virtually this month under the Chairmanship of E.P. Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade of Antigua and Barbuda. The CARICOM Secretariat, pictured, is based in Guyana.

Local News

COFCOR chairman, E. P. Chet Greene, leads group through challenging issues

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) foreign ministers have reiterated a call by regional countries for the upcoming Summit of the Americas to “be inclusive by ensuring the participation of all countries of the hemisphere”.

While Antigua and Barbuda has indicated it will not attend if Cuba and Venezuela are excluded, many other Caribbean leaders are still undecided about whether they will boycott the 6th to 10th June



Chairman of COFCOR, E. P. Chet Greene, centre, is leading the group's call for an inclusive Summit of the Americas. (File photo)

Summit of the Americas.

CARICOM's unwillingness to attend the summit stems from the fact that the host, the United States of

America, has not indicated its willingness to abandon its original plan not to invite the leaders of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua to the event in Los Angeles.

In the case of Venezuela, regional leaders almost unanimously object to the US' intention to invite Venezuelan Opposition Leader, Juan Guaidó, to lead that country's delegation instead of President Nicolas Maduro.

On Monday, the CARICOM Secretariat issued a statement following last week's 52nd meeting of the CARICOM Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR), chaired by Antigua and Barbuda's E. P. Chet Greene, in which the bloc noted that it had “agreed that the Community would use the opportunity to advocate on issues of priority to promote a sustainable recovery, in keeping with the Summit's theme “Building a Sustainable, Resilient, Equitable Future”.

“Ministers also called for the Summit to be inclusive by ensuring the participation of all countries of the hemisphere,” the statement said.

Regarding Cuba, the foreign ministers agreed on the need to bring forward the activities in preparation for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of CARICOM-Cuba relations on December 8 this year, including a special meeting of CARICOM-Cuba heads of government.

“Ministers noted the recent developments in the US policy towards Cuba, including the recent easing of some sanctions. COFCOR reiterated CARICOM's support for the termination of the long-standing United States (US) economic, financial and commercial embargo against Cuba and agreed to continue to advocate in this regard,” the communique noted.

COFCOR continued that CARICOM-US relations have been “re-invigorated” with a number of high-level meetings between the two sides, including the Leaders Dialogue with the US Vice President, Kamala Harris.

“Foreign Ministers welcomed the deepening of relations with Central America, noting that the Fourth Sum-

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Tourism Minister Fernandez lauded by Taxi Association

The Executive of the United Taxi Association has praised the country's tourism minister, Charles Fernandez, for his outstanding work in support of the organisation.

During a courtesy call on the minister on Tuesday by the new executive of the association, which represents taxi drivers operating at the V. C. Bird International Airport, Henley Daniel said in his 30 years as a service ambassador, Minister Fernandez and his team have been "the most accommodating" regarding progressive discussions concerning the management of transportation operations at the airport.

"We are really satisfied that we can meet with Minister Fernandez and his



Tourism Minister, Charles Fernandez

team at any given time to discuss the way forward for this tourism industry. I have sat with many tourism minis-

ters over the past 30 years in my profession, and I am telling you, he is the best and he has a great team working with him," Daniel stated.

In response, Fernandez said that such recognition is extremely valued, not for him in his capacity as Minister of Tourism, but for the hard work and dedication applied by his team at the ministry.

"It is absolutely important that we listen to the concerns of all tourism stakeholders and represent them where it matters", Fernandez said.

During the courtesy call, the taxi association's executive updated tourism officials on developments relating to the organisation.

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mit of Heads of State and Government of CARICOM and the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the subsequent meeting between CARICOM-SICA Foreign Ministers served to renew the partnership and enhance the bonds of friendship. Foreign Ministers further agreed to maintain the momentum for deeper cooperation and collaboration between the two sub-regions."

The CARICOM foreign ministers reiterated the importance of CARICOM's effective participation in international fora, including through the pursuit of increased CARICOM representation at the senior level in multilateral organisations.

During their deliberations, the foreign ministers "acknowledged" the signif-

icance of building on existing relations between CARICOM and its traditional partners, while simultaneously expanding the Community's outreach to other regions.

They noted the progress made in the strengthening of relations with a number of Third States, sub-regional groups and non-traditional partners.

"With respect to relations with Africa, the COFCOR underscored the importance of continuing to build on the commitments made at the First CARICOM-Africa Summit in September, 2021. In this regard, Ministers discussed ways in which they can take advantage of the presence of Member States with representation in Africa to enhance existing relations between CARICOM Member States and the Continent."

The foreign ministers also welcomed the recent developments in the relations between CARICOM and Canada, noting in particular, that the second meeting of the CARICOM-Canada Foreign Ministers' Group had mandated the establishment of a Joint Commission that

will serve as a permanent mechanism to strengthen the existing CARICOM-Canada partnership.

"Ministers expressed hope that the long-anticipated CARICOM-Canada Summit would take place later this year," according to the statement.



Discussions underway to expand Jersey programme

Due to the success of the current arrangement under which Antigua and Barbuda nationals are participating in a six-month work programme in Jersey, United Kingdom, attention has now been turned to the possible expansion of the initiative beyond the hospitality sector.

This is the word from Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner in London, Karen-Mae Hill, following a visit to Jersey on Tuesday.

"Our people are all doing very well based on my interactions with several of them during my visit. I am also holding discussions with the authorities here to look at ways to expand the programme," she told Pointe Xpress.

She added that the 48 people who are attached to several properties in



Karen-Mae Hill

Jersey have adapted well and are making an impression.

"Some who were previously unemployed are using the opportunity to make some money, while all participants will gain much experience from the attachment," she noted.

Hill emphasised that the programme is not a 'brain drain', as the participants will return to Antigua and Barbuda at the end of the six-month

attachment.

The High Commissioner also confirmed that discussions are underway to expand the programme to include cultural exchanges, the performing arts, sports and training in the financial services sector.

"Jersey has a well-developed financial sector and it would be beneficial if we were able to get training for our regulators and others in this sector, as well as cyber security," she stated.

Earlier this year, the governments of Antigua and Barbuda and Jersey signed a Memorandum of Understanding, under which nationals can take up six-month work-study training in Jersey.

The programme concludes at the end of October.



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Fire department fleet of tenders increases by one

One of two fire tenders purchased by the government has arrived in the country. Photos were released yesterday afternoon of the Freightliner FL80 Ferrara Fire Pumper Truck, which along with the second vehicle scheduled to arrive in two weeks, will significantly boost the fire department's response to emergencies.

A statement from the Ministry of Legal Affairs has quoted Fire Chief, Elvis Weaver, as saying the Freightliner Fire Pumper Truck will be stationed at St. John's Fire Station, noting



that with the recent addition, all fire stations, including All Saints, will have operating fire tenders on location ready to address any situation.

There are currently five fire engines being utilized by the fire department.

Weaver added that the government has also secured three additional fire tenders out of the UK that will arrive within the next month.

The lack of adequate resources by the fire department in responding to emer-

gencies has sparked outrage in the public space.

This caused government to move swiftly in acquiring the used tenders, since new ones will have to be ordered and the transaction will result in a longer delivery time.

Chief Health Inspector: COVID-19 awareness declining

The country's chief health inspector has expressed concern that people appear to be paying less attention to the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Sharon Martin believes individual responsibility has been abandoned following the removal of the government imposed public health and safety mandates.

She attributes the recent rise in cases to people being less guarded about continuing to observe health protocols in favour of a more care-free attitude.

"Persons have dropped their guards," she said. "From the time the government said they don't have to wear masks, you see them moving around the country without masks, and when you remind them that they should still wear their masks, they



Chief Health Inspector Sharon Martin

say the government says you don't have to wear it, it's optional".

Martin is emphasising the importance of personal care and responsibility in keeping COVID-19 cases

low, noting that people should continually consider their safety.

"We don't want anyone to die, unless it's a natural cause. So why use carelessness to let someone pick up the virus and they might have comorbidities? That would take them out!" she exclaimed.

"Every person in society has a role to play, even the vagrant...each of us [has] our role to play in society."

There are now 213 active COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda according to new information revealed by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment.

The dashboard released yesterday, revealed 80 new laboratory confirmed cases, the highest number since cases began increasing again.

Local News

JCI Antigua wins big at regional conference

Members of the Antigua and Barbuda chapter of JCI won four top prizes at the JCI Conference of the Americas held in Curacao last week.

A spokesman for the leadership building organisation said JCI Antigua submitted “The reclaim your power endometriosis” in

partnership with JCI Dominica and won for the project in two categories; Most Outstanding Local Project and Best International Co-operation Project.

Another project spearheaded by the chapter’s Senator, Leandra James, ‘Cancer Awareness Campaign’, received the award for Best



Local Community Impact, and the chapter’s ‘Recycle and Create Environmental Awareness Project’ won the Best Local Global Goals Project.

JCI Antigua Chairman, Latisha Browne, whose motto is ‘Aspire to Inspire’, was also shortlisted among

the top 3 Most Outstanding New Members of the Americas.

“These awards were the only awards received across the entire West Indies. This is not only a celebration for JCI Antigua, but all of JCI West Indies,” the spokesman said.



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Antigua and Barbuda Chef de Mission says Birmingham 2022 medal would be “big time”

Antigua and Barbuda's *Chef de Mission* for Birmingham 2022, believes that breaking the country's Commonwealth Games medal duck would be a “big, big thing”.

The twin island nation has never secured a medal after competing at 10 editions of the Games since its debut in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1966.

Joel Rayne is due to oversee 10 athletes in Birmingham in athletics, boxing, cycling and swimming - and like other Caribbean nations, their best hope of success perhaps comes in sprinting.

“That would be big-time,” said Rayne when asked about the possibility of reaching the Birmingham podium.

“In track and field, we have never had anybody medal at that level - the Commonwealth Games, World Championships or Olympics.

“We have had medals at the Pan American Games and junior Games, but at the senior level, at those major meets, we are yet to medal.

“So it would be a big, big thing here in Antigua and Barbuda.”

Double Olympian Cejhae Greene ran a wind assisted 10.01sec in the 100 metres in Miami in April, and boasted the world leading time at one stage last year, heading into the rearranged 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

However, he was disappointed after exiting in the heats in Japan.

“He made it as far as the semi-finals at the Rio 2016 Olympics,” said Rayne, the assistant secretary general of the Antigua and Barbuda Olympic Association.

“However, in Tokyo, given the COVID situation, his training was affected and he was dealing with some niggling injuries. He didn't perform the way he



Antigua and Barbuda's Daniel “Bakka” Bailey (front) and President of the Antigua/Barbuda Tennis Association, Cordel Williams (rear) at the opening ceremony of the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

thought he should. He's on the mend now so we're expecting great things from him.











“He won a bronze at the last Pan American Games, so we're just hoping that

will carry on.

“We've competed in 10 Commonwealth Games to date, unfortunately for us, we are yet to stand on the podium.

“So we're just hoping that an attempt comes this summer in Birmingham and we get some luck coming our way.”

Boxer Alston Ryan, who qualified for the men's lightweight competition at Tokyo 2020 outright after coming through the Americas qualifier, is another hope for Antigua and Barbuda. (Inside The Games)

Thu 26 Day		Thu 26 Night	
84°		78°	
22% ENE 14 mph		6% E 11 mph	
Cloudy skies early, followed by partial clearing. High 84F. Winds ENE at 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy. Low 78F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.	
 Humidity 67%	 UV Index 10 of 10	 Humidity 73%	 UV Index 0 of 10
 Sunrise 5:33 am	 Sunset 6:35 pm	 Moonrise 2:57 am	 Moonset 3:32 pm
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Mental Health

Overcoming the stigma of mental illness

False beliefs about mental illness can cause significant problems. Learn what you can do about stigma.

Stigma is when someone views you in a negative way because you have a distinguishing characteristic or personal trait that's thought to be, or actually is, a disadvantage (a negative stereotype). Unfortunately, negative attitudes and beliefs toward people who have a mental health condition are common.

Stigma can lead to discrimination. Discrimination may be obvious and direct, such as someone making a negative remark about your mental illness or your treatment. Or it may be unintentional or subtle, such as someone avoiding you because the person assumes you could be unstable, violent or dangerous due to your mental illness. You may even judge yourself.

Some of the harmful effects of stigma can include:

- Reluctance to seek help or treatment
- Lack of understanding by family, friends, co-workers or others
- Fewer opportunities for work, school or social activities or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your mental illness treatment

The belief that you'll never succeed at certain challenges or that you can't improve your situation

Steps to cope with stigma

Here are some ways you can deal with stigma:

Get treatment. You may be reluctant to admit you need treatment. Don't let the fear of being labelled with a mental illness prevent you from seeking help. Treatment can provide relief by identifying what's wrong and reducing symptoms that interfere with your work and personal life.



Don't let stigma create self-doubt and shame. Stigma doesn't just come from others. You may mistakenly believe that your condition is a sign of personal weakness or that you should be able to control it without help. Seeking counselling, educating yourself about your condition and connecting with others who have mental illness can help you gain self-esteem and overcome destructive self-judgement.

Don't isolate yourself. If you have a mental illness, you may be reluctant to tell anyone about it. Your family, friends, clergy or members of your community can offer you support if they know about your mental illness. Reach out to people you trust for the compassion, support and understanding you need.

Don't equate yourself with your illness. You are not an illness. So instead of saying "I'm bipolar," say "I have bipolar disorder." Instead of calling yourself "a schizophrenic," say "I have schizophrenia."

Join a support group. Some local and national groups, such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), offer local programs and internet resources that help reduce stigma by educating people who have mental illness, their families and the general public. Some

state and federal agencies and programs, such as those that focus on vocational rehabilitation and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), offer support for people with mental illness.

Get help at school. If you or your child has a mental illness that affects learning, find out what plans and programs might help. Discrimination against students because of a mental illness is against the law, and educators at primary, secondary and college levels are required to accommodate students as best they can. Talk to teachers, professors or administrators about the best approach and resources. If a teacher doesn't know about a student's disability, it can lead to discrimination, barriers to learning and poor grades.

Speak out against stigma. Consider expressing your opinions at events, in letters to the editor or on the internet. It can help instil courage in others facing similar challenges and educate the public about mental illness.

Others' judgments almost always stem from a lack of understanding rather than information based on facts. Learning to accept your condition and recognize what you need to do to treat it, seeking support, and helping educate others can make a big difference.

Sneaky ways social media can sabotage your body image - and three easy tips to help you break the cycle

By Erin Heger and Mayra Mendez

With an estimated 3.6 billion users worldwide, social media is a large part of today's culture. But consistently scrolling through posts — particularly images that evoke negative feelings or elevate a certain body type — can impact how you see yourself.

Because social media is filled with people presenting themselves in their best light, it can be difficult to avoid images and messages that might make you feel negatively about your body. But there are ways you can curate your feed to make it a healthier space for you.

Here's how social media can affect body image and tips for using it in a more positive way.

How social media can negatively affect body image

Body image refers to your perspective of your body's appearance and how it compares to societal standards. A negative body image can cause unrealistic expectations of how your body should look and could lead to unhealthy behaviours, like disordered eating.

A small 2018 study found a correlation between time spent on social media, negative body image, and disordered eating. This was especially true if participants were scrolling through appearance-related content, like the account of a fitness instructor or model on Instagram.

Here are some of the sneaky ways that social media can distort how you perceive your body:

Constant comparisons

One of the ways social media can hurt your body image is by exposing you to images of "idealised" body types, causing you to compare yourself to them.



Social media can negatively affect body image by over-exposing you to "idealised" body types.

"People end up creating unrealistic ideals for themselves based on what they see and feel distressed when they aren't able to meet those ideas or self-expectations," says Neha Chaudhary, MD, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

A 2015 study found that female-identifying college students who spent more time on Facebook had poorer body image. The researchers concluded that "young women who spend more time on Facebook may feel more concerned about their body because they compare their appearance to others (especially to peers)."

These comparisons can be part of a vicious cycle.

In a 2021 study of 15 to 35-year-olds, the more they compared themselves to people they followed on social media, the more dissatisfied they became with their bodies. The researchers also pointed out that, if the subjects were already dissatisfied with their bodies, it could increase the drive to compare themselves to others on social media.

This behaviour could lead to

disordered eating or other unhealthy habits. Each type of eating disorder has different symptoms, but some signs of an eating disorder can include:

Low body weight

Frequent weight fluctuations

Hiding food or eating alone

Preoccupation with body weight or appearance

Bingeing and purging

• Important: If you think you may have an eating disorder, talk to a doctor or mental health professional who can help you get treatment and find a path to recovery.

• Photoshop and filters

• Of all the photos you see on your social media feeds, there's a good chance most of them have been edited. According to a 2017 Harris Poll, nearly two-thirds of Americans edit their photos before posting.

• Photoshop and filters that alter or edit images can also contribute to negative body image, says Jill M. Emanuele, PhD, the senior director of the Mood Disorders Center at the Child Mind Institute, a national nonprofit that

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Technology



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supports families with mental health and learning disorders.

· “Photoshop and filters present people and things in their best light,” Emanuele says. “It creates a distorted fantasy world and raises the bar on what people perceive is the best way to be.”

· Even the process of editing your own images can play a role in how you perceive your body. According to a 2022 review, research found that taking and editing selfies was more harmful than posting them, perhaps because it allows you to focus on — and try to fix — your flaws.

· Interestingly, posting images doesn't seem to

have the same effect. A 2016 study showed that posting more selfies on Instagram was associated with a higher degree of body image satisfaction. Another 2020 study of women found that posting selfies was associated with an increase in self-esteem.

· Fitspo and thinspo
· Fitspiration and thin-spiration — otherwise known as “fitspo” and “thinspo” — are terms that describe social media accounts and images that encourage users to be fit and thin.

· A large 2017 study surveyed US college women and found about 10% had created social media posts about weight, body image, exercise, or dieting over a one-month

period. Meanwhile, 27.4% commented on friends' posts about these topics.

· Researchers concluded that more time spent on Facebook leads to more frequent body and weight comparisons and more negative feelings about one's body. It also found that for women who wanted to lose weight, more time on Facebook resulted in more disordered eating symptoms.

· Negative effects for men

· While most studies on social media and body image focus on women, a 2020 study found similar effects in men.

· The study analysed 1,000 Instagram posts

uploaded by male-identifying persons and evaluated responses — in the form of likes and comments. Most of the posts depicted muscularity and leanness, and the posts displaying this body type received the highest number of likes and comments. The researchers concluded that these findings are “potentially harmful to men's body image.”

· For men, the proliferation of a lean, muscle-laden body type on social media could lead to body dissatisfaction and muscle dysmorphia. Muscle dysmorphia — a type of body dysmorphia — is when one perceives that their body is not muscular or lean enough. It can cause people to engage in unhealthy amounts of exercise and may lead to disordered eating.

· According to a 2015 report, stigmas around seeking help for mental illness and eating disorders could discourage some men from getting a diagnosis and treatment. Plus, the assumption that women are most affected by eating disorders could cause more men to go undiagnosed and less likely to receive treatment early on, when it would be most effective.

· How social media can promote body positivity

· Negative impacts of social media on body image are well documented, but social media can also have a positive effect on your body image, Chaudhary says.

· Body positive content and communities

· A 2019 Australian
cont'd on pg 11



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Saturday
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5:00PM-7:00PM (WOMEN ONLY HOURS)

Sunday
10:00AM-3:00PM

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study surveyed women between 18 and 30 after viewing body positive content on Instagram. Body positive content seeks to show appreciation and acceptance for all types of bodies. Researchers concluded that after viewing positive content, the women not only felt better about their bodies, but they were also in better moods.

“People tend to emulate what they see or adjust their expectations of themselves based on what others are doing or how they look,” Chaudhary says. “Advocates of body positivity and influential figures definitely have a unique ability to make a positive impact on how people view themselves and their bodies, especially when it comes to young people.”

Social media can also positively impact body image by connecting you with others that help build a body-accepting community, Emanuele says.

Instagram vs. reality
One trend that aims to expose social media’s ultra-curated, performative standards are “Instagram versus reality” images. These images often show an edited photo of someone at their best angle alongside a more “real” photo that shows their imperfections.

In a 2019 study, women were shown these types of posts, either in their original form or just the “reality” or “Instagram” images separately. Researchers found that women felt less dissatisfaction with their bodies after

seeing either the “reality” images or the “Instagram versus reality” images side by side.

Tips to foster a healthy relationship with social media

Social media can negatively affect your body image, mood, and overall mental health, but there are ways to counteract this. Here are three suggestions for curating a more positive feed:

1. Take a break. If you find you feel worse after scrolling, take a step back and see how you feel after disengaging. If you feel better, there’s no shame in putting your phone down for a while, whether that be a few hours,

days, or weeks. Even a week-long break can be enough to boost your mood, a 2022 study found.

2. Unfollow accounts that don’t make you feel good. Pay attention to which accounts, people, and images lift you up. “I tell my patients that one of the biggest shifts they can make is to start to replace content that leaves them feeling worse with content that makes them feel better when they consume it,” Chaudhary says.

3. Find a community. Follow body positive accounts and join supportive groups that can help shift your mindset about “ideal”

body types.

Insider’s takeaway
You may think you are simply scrolling through social media to unwind, but research has found the images you see and the people you interact with can have an impact on your self-perception.

But, that doesn’t mean all social media use is bad. It just means you may need to re-evaluate how you use social media.

You can make social media a healthier environment for you, whether that means unfollowing certain accounts, finding a healthy community, or taking breaks from the daily scroll.



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Caribbean to benefit from EU-funded digital connectivity in the face of COVID-19

The European Union (EU) is providing funding for the Digital Response Connecting Citizens (DIRECCT) program aimed at strengthening the resilience of the health, education, and small business sectors in the Caribbean to cope with current and future crises.

Executive Director of the Trinidad-based Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Dr. Joy St. John, said the Caribbean region will benefit from this program through strengthened health information systems and increased capacity for early detection, response, monitoring, and reporting of public health threats and emerging diseases.

The Improving Digital Integrated Public Health Surveillance in the Caribbean initiative aims to increase capacity for real-time access of Caribbean ministries of health to public health surveillance data from a variety of sources using a digital integrated information platform.

CARPHA's 26 member states, many of which depend on tourism, will use this digital system to inform early and appropriate interventions to track and mitigate disease spread,



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and act as an evidence base for policymakers to address local environmental and social determinants of health.

Executive Director of the Barbados-based Caribbean Export Development Agency, Deodat Maharaj, welcomed the cooperation with Expertise France and praised the conception and design of the Virtual eCommerce Accelerator Program (VEAP) that the agency will be implementing.

Maharaj affirmed the agency's commitment to working with relevant stakeholders to ultimately help Caribbean businesses and entrepreneurs take advantage of digital technologies to build their resilience and sustainability.

"Under the rubric of the Virtual Ecommerce Accelerator Program, we will engage Caribbean

firms, Business Supports Organizations (BSOs) and e-commerce related private sector firms, such as website developers over six months, utilising a learning by doing approach aimed at enhancing their knowledge of e-commerce and implementation of e-commerce strategies."

The accelerator will include a maximum of two BSOs in each country with five firms assigned to each BSO for support across the 15 CARIFORUM countries. These BSOs and firms will be supervised by a team of master trainers and coaches in the areas of e-commerce website development, product development, marketing, analytics, and general e-commerce operations.

The program is being held in consultation with the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific

States (OACPS), and at a news conference coordinated by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the funding and implementing partners acknowledged the challenges to global and regional human development presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The responsibility to implement the Euro 15.4 million (One Euro=US\$1.29 cents) program is that of AFD and Enabel, the Belgian development agency.

"The ACP-DIRECCT program is fully in line with AFD's digital strategy," said Philippe La Cognata, Regional Director in the Atlantic Ocean of the French Development Agency, adding that the digital transition is one of the six priority transitions of AFD's Strategic Orientation Plan. (CMC)

SVG may revisit the 'death penalty'

SVG Times – St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has said the practical abolition of the death penalty has probably induced some persons to use violence of an ultimate kind.

In an interview on Sunday, Gonsalves said there has been a growing concern about some youngsters being unable to distinguish between some of the things they see on television and social media and the kind of violence that is often portrayed.

"It's as if they're immune to any reflection of what this thing represents. In some way, it dulls their awareness of this issue and numbs them.

But fundamentally, how we all grow up and interact in society will determine how well we handle this terrible cancer".

Gonsalves also referred to the recent decision of the Privy Council to confirm



the constitutionality of the death penalty in Trinidad and Tobago.

"There are certainly many people who feel strongly about it, and some might argue that in our situation, this is a matter which may be meritorious.

"The issue is one we will increasingly have to revisit."

Following the brutal killings of Luann Roberts and Precious Williams, Vincentians have become increasingly vocal in advocating for the death penalty as

violence against women and gun violence have been on the rise in recent months.

On Monday, 13th February, 1995, St. Vincent and the Grenadines carried out a surprise triple hanging, the country's last.

Brothers Franklin and David Thomas, and Douglas Hamlet, all condemned for murders, went to SVG's gallows with no more than a weekend's notice.

On 4th May, 2022, Assistant Superintendent of Police Elgin Richards stated that illegal firearms are a problem in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

According to Richards, by May 4, St. Vincent had recorded 14 murders, 8 of which were committed with firearms. Over 1100 Vincentian secondary school students carried out a peaceful protest on 20th May to express their disgust with the alarming rate of violence against women throughout the country.

St. Lucia moving to cushion impact of rising consumer prices

CMC – St. Lucia's Prime Minister Phillip J Pierre says his administration will remove the service charge on all price-controlled goods in a bid to cushion the impact of the cost of living.

"This week the minister of trade will announce that we have removed the service charge on all

price-controlled goods in the country. The six percent service charge has been removed from all price-controlled goods," Pierre told reporters.

He said the next shipment of price-controlled goods will result in the prices of the commodities declining by at least six

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St. Lucia's Prime Minister Phillip J Pierre

Regional News



Trinidad PM said he was almost scammed into making “substantial deposit” to a Chinese bank

CMC – Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley says he will be referring to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) as well as “all other relevant authorities” a scam, stating he and several other CARICOM leaders had received “a substantial grant” from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

In a statement posted on the official Facebook page of the Office of the Prime Minister, Rowley said that last Saturday whilst in Guyana the CARICOM chairman, John Briceño, who is also the Prime Minister of Belize “communicated with me that the Office of the Secretary-General of the UN wanted to reach me and a couple other Caricom Heads to advise us that he had received a substantial grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to be distributed among us in its ongoing poverty alleviation program”.

Rowley said he returned a call to the Secretary



Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley

General on Sunday, whose number and profile picture he has on his phone, and “thought nothing unusual of this up to this point since the Gates Foundation had made grants to Trinidad and Tobago at least twice before.

“This being so I mentioned at the press conference on Sunday that I was advised that we are to be allocated another grant as described. Today, I attempted to speak to the SG on the number I was carrying on my phone but was only

able to communicate by WhatsApp and not voice.”

Rowley said that a “person purporting to be the SG attempted to encourage me to use a foreign bank to receive this grant but there would be a significant processing fee.

“My suspicion was further aroused when the person on the other end attempted to guide me towards making a substantial deposit in a Chinese bank as a prerequisite to receiving the grant. Having requested

and not received any documentation and being contacted in a familiarity not normally associated with the Office of the SG, I was now convinced that this was a most brazen scam being run in the shocking manner as described.”

Prime Minister Keith Rowley said he subsequently checked with the CARICOM chairman “to see what was happening at his end.

“He forwarded a stream of WhatsApp messages purporting to be coming from the Secretary General attempting to reinforce the confidence trick, through the involvement of this other high office.

“Please be advised that I am satisfied that there is no grant but that there is a brazen attempt to scam countries through the use of impersonation and identity theft. I will be referring this matter to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and all other relevant authorities,” Rowley wrote.

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percent.

Pierre told reporters that the government is trying its best under trying circumstances and that St. Lucians should understand that cost of living increases are a result of a global problem and the matter should not be political.

“It’s a world situation where there are issues in the supply chain, issues with the price of fuel worldwide. St. Lucia is not unique and anybody who wants to pretend that St. Lucia is

unique is not being truthful.”

Countries have blamed the ongoing war in Ukraine for the increase in inflation and Prime Minister Pierre also noted that even the “great United States” is facing a shortage of baby food formula forcing President Joe Biden to activate the Defense Production Act for the first time to import the commodity.

The legislation allows Washington more control over industrial production during emergencies and will enable it to direct suppliers of

formula ingredients and prioritise delivery to manufacturers. Biden also announced ‘Operation Fly Formula’, allowing the Defense Department’s commercial planes to import formula.

But Prime Minister Pierre told reporters that St. Lucia’s options are limited, while at the same time, the government has to meet payables, including debts and salaries.

“These times are crucial,” Pierre said, urging St. Lucians to conserve, save energy and eat locally produced foods.

Seoul: N Korea fires suspected ICBM and two other missiles

AP – North Korea test-launched a suspected intercontinental ballistic missile and two shorter-range weapons toward its eastern waters Wednesday, South Korea said, hours after President Joe Biden ended a trip to Asia where he reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend its allies in the face of the North's nuclear threat.

The suspected ICBM didn't fly its full range. But if confirmed, it would still be North Korea's first test of an ICBM system in about two months amid stalled nuclear diplomacy with the United States. The launch suggests North Korea is determined to continue its efforts to modernise its arsenal despite its first COVID-19 outbreak, which has caused outside worries about a humanitarian disaster.

"North Korea's sustained provocations can only result in stronger and faster South Korea-U.S. combined deterrence and can only deepen North Korea's international isolation," the South Korean government said in a statement after an emergency security meeting.

Japanese Defence Minister Nobuo

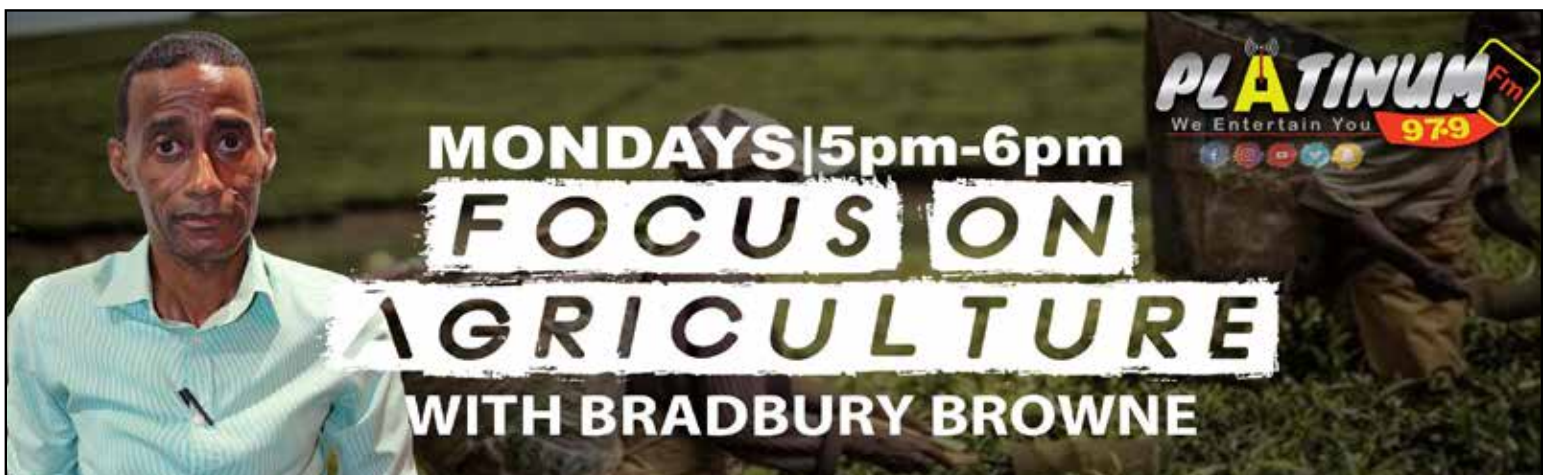


In this photo provided by South Korea Presidential Office via Yonhap News Agency, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol speaks during the National Security Council (NSC) meeting at the presidential office in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, May 25, 2022. (South Korea Presidential Office /Yonhap via AP)

Kishi called the launches "an act of provocation and absolutely impermissible."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken held separate calls with his

counterparts from South Korea and Japan during which they condemned the launches as a clear violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, the State Department said.



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UK's Johnson faulted for lockdown parties but won't quit

AP – An investigative report released Wednesday blamed British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and other senior leaders for allowing boozy government parties that broke the U.K.'s COVID-19 lockdown rules, and while Johnson said he took “full responsibility” for the breaches, he insisted he would not resign.

Revelations that Johnson and his staff repeatedly flouted restrictions they imposed on Britain in 2020 and 2021 have fuelled outrage in the country and led to calls from opponents for Johnson to step down over the scandal known as “partygate.”

Most lawmakers in Johnson's governing Conservative Party have stood by him for now, and it's not yet clear if senior civil servant Sue Gray's much-anticipated report will change that.

Gray investigated 16 gatherings attended by Johnson and his staff while U.K. residents were barred from socialising, or even from visiting sick and dying relatives, because of coronavirus restrictions.

Gray's report concluded that the “senior leadership team ... must bear responsibility” for a culture that permitted events to take place that “should not have been allowed to hap-



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson walks in Downing Street to a press conference in London, Wednesday, May 25, 2022. A report into lockdown-breaching U.K. government parties says blame for a “culture” of rule-breaking in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office must rest with those at the top. Senior civil servant Sue Gray's long-awaited report was published Wednesday. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

pen.”

She said there had been “failures of leadership and judgement in No. 10,” a reference to the prime minister's 10 Downing St. office.

“Those in the most junior positions attended gatherings at which their seniors were present, or indeed organised,” she said.

A separate police investigation resulted in fines for 83 people — including Johnson — making him the first British prime minister found to have broken the law while in office.

Speaking to lawmakers after the report was published, Johnson said he took “full responsibility for everything that took place,” adding he was sorry but insisting he did not knowingly break any rules. He said he was “humbled” and had “learned a lesson” but it was now time to “move on” and focus on Britain's battered economy and the war in Ukraine.

Critics, some of them in the Conservative Party, have said Johnson lied to Parliament about the events. Ministers who

knowingly mislead Parliament are expected to resign.

Johnson denied lying. He insisted that when he told Parliament last year no rules were broken and there were no parties, “it was what I believed to be true.”

Johnson attended several events mentioned in Gray's report, including a June 2020 birthday party for which he was fined 50 pounds (\$63). He told a news conference: “I believed that they were work events.”

Defiant Pakistani ex-PM Khan urges followers to banned rally

AP — Pakistani police have fired tear gas and scuffled with stone-throwing supporters of ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan ahead of planned marches Wednesday toward central Islamabad.

The defiant former premier had called followers to rally outside Parliament to bring down the government and force early elections.

The marches have raised fears of major violence between supporters of Khan — now Pakistan's top opposition leader — and security forces. The government of Khan's successor, Shahbaz Sharif, has banned the rally and warned Khan he could face arrest if he went ahead with the demonstrations.

The country's Supreme Court ruled later Wednesday that Khan's rally could go ahead — but only at a specifically allocated public grounds and on condition the demonstrators disperse after an address by the former prime minister. The court also asked Khan's lawyer, Babar Awan, to ensure that the rally remains peaceful.

However, Khan persisted, urging supporters to head toward the square near Parliament for the rally that he planned would evolve into a sit-in there until the government re-



Police officers detain a supporter of Pakistan's key opposition as clashes broke out during a protest march toward Islamabad, in Lahore, Pakistan, Wednesday, May 25, 2022. Pakistani authorities blocked off all major roads into the capital Islamabad on Wednesday, after a defiant former Prime Minister Imran Khan said he would march with demonstrators to the city centre for a rally he hopes will bring down the government and force early elections. (AP Photo/K.M. Chaudary)

signs. By late evening, the former prime minister had not arrived in Islamabad while police were making security arrangements for an alternate location for the rally, far from the parliament building.

Earlier in the morning, riot police fired tear gas and pushed back hundreds of demonstrators who hurled stones as they tried to pass a roadblocked bridge near the city of Lahore to board buses bound for the capital, Islamabad. Dozens of Khan's followers also briefly clashed with police in Islamabad,

where the demonstrators set fire to bushes lining a main boulevard, sending smoke and flames rising into the sky.

Altercations were also reported elsewhere, including in the port city of Karachi, where demonstrators burned a police vehicle.

At least a dozen demonstrators and several policemen were injured. Ahead of Wednesday's marches, authorities used dozens of shipping containers and trucks to block off major roads into Islamabad.

Khan, a former cricket

star turned Islamist politician served as prime minister for over three and half years until last month, when he was ousted by a no-confidence vote in Parliament. Since then, he has held rallies with thousands of people across the country.

Khan says his removal from office was the result of a U.S.-organized plot and collusion with Sharif, whose government has vowed a stern response if Khan violates the ban. Washington has also denied any role in Pakistan's internal politics.

Ibrahimović out for 7-8 months after knee operation

AP – AC Milan forward Zlatan Ibrahimović had surgery on his left knee on Wednesday and faces up to eight months on the sidelines — if he decides to continue his playing career.

Ibrahimović missed large portions of Milan's title-winning campaign with injury. The 40-year-old Swede made 23 appearances in Serie A, although most of them were off the bench.

Milan said the knee operation, which was performed in France, had been scheduled for a while “to definitively resolve the joint's instability.”

The club added: “The operation was a complete success and the prognosis is estimated between seven and eight months.”

Ibrahimović will be 41 by then.

After Milan clinched its first Serie A title since 2011 on Sunday, Ibrahimović said he would only continue



AC Milan's Zlatan Ibrahimovic puffs a cigar as he celebrates after winning the Italian Serie A title at the end of a match against Sassuolo, at the Citta del Tricolore stadium, in Reggio Emilia, Italy, Sunday, May 22, 2022. (AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

playing if he felt well and added that it had been a difficult few months for him.

His contract ends this year.

Ibrahimovic's return at the start of 2020 signalled a turnaround for Milan

that saw the Rossoneri finish second last season and end their 11-year wait for the league title this season.

He also helped Milan to the last of its Serie A titles in his first spell at the club.

Sale of Chelsea by sanctioned Abramovich approved by UK govt



American businessman Todd Boehly attends the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Watford at Stamford Bridge stadium in London, Sunday, May 22, 2022. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

AP – Roman Abramovich's 19-year ownership of Chelsea is ending after the British government approved the sale of the Premier League club by the sanctioned Russian oligarch to a consortium fronted by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly.

The government had to be sure that Abramovich, who was sanctioned over his links to Russian President Vladimir Putin after the invasion of Ukraine, did not profit from the enforced sale of the club that his in-

vestment turned into one of the most successful in European football.

The reigning FIFA Club World Cup winners and 2021 European champions will be sold for 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.1 billion) — the highest price ever for a sports team — with Premier League approval already granted on Tuesday.

Chelsea has been operating under a government licence since Abramovich's assets were frozen in March and it expires on May 31.

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Naomi Osaka's mental health discussion resonates at French Open

AP — Naomi Osaka's 2022 French Open is over following a first-round loss. The players remaining in the tournament see and hear products of her frank discussion about anxiety and depression a year ago — from new “quiet rooms” and three on-call psychiatrists at Roland Garros to a broader sense that mental health is a far-less-taboo topic than it once was.

“I remember after I got back from France last year and having photographers follow me even at random places like the grocery store. It felt really odd and a bit overwhelming, until one day a woman came up to me and told me that by speaking up, I helped her son,” Osaka wrote in a recent email to The Associated Press. “In that moment, it did all feel worthwhile.”

In conversations with The AP shortly before or during the French Open, which began Sunday, several professional tennis players credited Osaka with helping bring the subject out of the shadows for their sport and, in concert with the voices



Naomi Osaka's 2022 French Open is done following a first-round loss. The players remaining in the tournament see and hear products of her frank discussion about anxiety and depression a year ago -- from new “quiet rooms” and on-call psychiatrists at Roland Garros to a broader sense that mental health is a far-less-taboo topic than it once was. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena, File)

of other athletes such as Olympic champion gymnast Simone Biles, helping foster more awareness and concern.

“I definitely think it's something that is paid attention to way more than it was, at least when I was coming up as a teenager. I don't even think I knew what it was when back then. And we're seeing people speak out and nor-

malise it a bit in a way where it's OK if you're struggling with something — it doesn't matter if it's on the court, off court, whatever,” said Jessica Pegula, a 28-year-old from New York who reached the French Open's second round Tuesday.

“In tennis, the life we kind of live is not so normal,” she said. “It can lead to a lot

of unhealthy habits.”

Osaka was not the first to broach this.

But her place of prominence, as a four-time Grand Slam champion and former No. 1-ranked player, and her decisions to withdraw from Roland Garros, to explain why and to take two mental health breaks last season resonated.

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“Given the sanctions we placed on those linked to Putin and the bloody invasion of Ukraine, the long-term future of the club can only be secured under a new owner,” British Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said.

“We are satisfied the proceeds of the sale will not benefit Roman Abramovich or other sanctioned indi-

viduals.”

There were weeks of discussions between officials from Chelsea and the government over securing the guarantee Abramovich could not gain financially.

The sale proceeds will initially go into a frozen account before going to charity.

Delays approving the sale cen-

tred on the fate of 1.6 billion pounds (\$2 billion) loaned to Chelsea by Abramovich since 2003 that provided the funding to build a men's squad that won 21 trophies during his ownership.

Government assurances were needed from Abramovich, who has not condemned Russia's war in Ukraine, about writing off the debt that was linked to companies he controlled.

ABCF resumes races in solidarity with injured cyclist



President of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) St. Clair Williams. (File photo)

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) St. Clair Williams has said the organisation will resume its scheduled events in solidarity with seriously injured national cyclist, Andre Simon.

Cyclists will return to competitive action when the ABCF stages the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union Invitational Race on Sunday, 29th May.

The welcome return to competition follows the cancellation of the Southern Loop Race that was slated to take place on Sunday, 15th May.

The ABCF cancelled

the Southern Loop Race as a mark of respect for the four cyclists who were involved in a major accident after being struck by a vehicle while riding on the Sir George Walter Highway on the morning of Sunday, 8th May.

Sean Weathered of Team Terminix, Tiziano Rosignoli of Road Runners Cycling Club, Ghery Coates of Wadadli Cycling Academy and Andre Simon of Andre Simon Cycling Academy all sustained varying degrees of injuries after being struck by a car driven by Kenyatta Benjamin of Hatton.

Weathered and Rosignoli were treated at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and released from hospital the same day.

Coates' injuries required further attention and he was discharged a day later.

Simon was the most severely injured and was placed in a medically induced coma. He is still unconscious and remains a patient at the Intensive Care Unit at SLBMC.

Williams said the national programme will resume in line with Simon's vision for the continued development of cycling in Antigua and Barbuda.

The race is being held in commemoration of the 55th anniversary of its sponsor, the Antigua and Barbuda

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UPDATED SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE UPDATE

TYPHOON EXPRESS

MONDAY
(FROM ST. JOHN'S)

AB 3:45 PM

OVERNIGHT IN BARBUDA

TUESDAY

BA 6:00AM

WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
(CRABBS DEPARTURE)

AB 10:00AM
BA 3:00PM



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Sports News

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Workers Union.

"Plans are progressing. We are putting everything in place after we would have cancelled the Southern Loop Race. In as much as we are paying attention to our cyclists that were injured, we still must continue the fight and to carry on what we are doing with our cycling programme here in Antigua and Barbuda," Williams stated.

"This upcoming race is a race that has been on our calendar for the past five years. We have collaborated with the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union since they were celebrating their 50th anniversary.

"We also have some cyclists coming in from our neighbouring countries and

we are hoping they will join with our local cyclists in putting on a good display to show that cycling is still alive in Antigua and Barbuda.

"So we are going to continue doing what we are doing to make sure that what Andre had in his mind, with respect to developing cycling, is kept alive.

"Most persons within the cycling fraternity would be aware that Andre recently started a new cycling academy where he was drafting some youngsters, including his son Antwan. So, this is something that I know he would want us to continue in as much as he is unable to participate.

"So we are going to continue in solidarity because

in our mind, we should do this for him."

The overseas cyclists expected to compete on Sunday will arrive from Anguilla, Dominica and St. Maarten.

President of the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union, Kem Riley, said the union came on as a sponsor to include a sporting event as part of the organisation's anniversary celebration.

"When we turned 50, we thought about putting on some kind of sporting event and we chose the cycling association to partner with to stage a bike race on behalf of the union. Ever since, we have continued this race as our anniversary celebrations are held from the 16th to 31st May," Riley said.

"We continue to support sports and we always say that most of the people that participate in sports are either our union members or potential union members.

"We also want to show them that the union stands in solidarity, not only on work matters, but also to contribute in the sporting discipline.

"So we are always happy to support this race and me and my executive feel that we, as a union, must also look into other areas to see what other sports we could give some support."

The last race hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation took place on 10th April, with the staging of the 22.2-mile Palm Sunday Road Race.



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Sports News



Wings club to host Whit Monday relay and fitness walk

The Track & Field Unit of the Concerned Parents/Teachers Sports Association (CPTSA) Wings Sports Club will host its 29th Whit Monday 4 x 1.5 Mile Road Relay and 10 Kilometre Fitness Walk on 6th June, 2022.

The race will start at 6am from the YMCA Sports Complex, up Old Parham Road, right on Sir George Walter Highway, right on Sir Sidney Walling Highway, left on American Road, right on the All Saints Road, Camacho's Avenue, Independence Drive, back up Old Parham Road and end at the Christ the King High School.

Because of the absence of a main sponsor, this year, there will only be three categories in the male and female divisions; the Under-15, Under-30 and Over-30.

The registration fee is \$15 for Under-15 and Under-30 and \$20 for the Over-30.

Medals will be awarded in these age categories up to 3rd place. Registration forms may be collected from Food Brokerage Services on Friars Hill Road, coach Randy Allen and members of the Wings Youth Track and Field Unit and the Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association.

Registration is open up to 6th June, the morning of



Participants in a previous Whit Monday 10K Fitness Walk hosted by the CPTSA Wings Sports Club. (Photo: Wings Sports Club)

the event, before 5:30am, at the Christ the King High School.

According to the Wings Youth Track and Field Unit, 50 percent of funds raised from registration fees and the breakfast sale will be donated to the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation to defray the medical expenses of its injured cyclists.

Several cyclists have participated in the club's road race events in the past.

Meanwhile, The Wings Youth Basketball Unit will stage its annual in-house league on Sunday, 29th May.

The Wings Youth basketball players have been placed into four teams whose names will reflect that of the teams which par-

ticipated in the domestic basketball leagues in the 1960s and 70s.

They are Tradewinds, Hawks, Trotters and Together Heads.

The league will be contested on a round-robin format, with two games staged each Sunday, starting at 3:45 pm, at the YMCA.

According to the Basketball Unit, this will serve as a testing ground to see how players use the skills they have learnt in game situations.

The teams will be mixed gender. Awards will be presented to the top players at the end of the league.

The Wings Youth Basketball Unit has been engaged in several fund-raising activities to help off-set some cost of the 14-mem-

ber delegation that will attend the Youth Basketball of America (YBOA) Camp from 9th to 16th July, 2022.

One such fundraiser will be a six-mile walk-a-thon and breakfast sale from the Multipurpose Cultural Centre to the Hawksbill beach on Saturday, 11th June. The participants will leave from the Multipurpose Centre at 5:30 am.

Tickets for the event will be available from members of the club at a cost of \$15. The breakfast at Hawksbill Beach will take place from 7:30am to 10am.

Apart from raising funds for the team's travel expenses, the basketball unit is in need of items including balls, cones, nets, tables, whistles, and uniforms.

Sports News

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in this year's St Kitts Open.

"Whatever I can do from this end as the vice-president of the Royal St. Kitts Golf Club, we will try and make sure that she is here because she has been a great asset to our ladies category over the years and we will miss not having her here this year.

"I am expecting a good group from Antigua. I have some friends who have already called me to tell me they will be here...and I am looking forward to seeing my brothers and my sisters from Antigua.

"At the golf course, we have been suffering from the lack of rain, and the

COVID-19 situation, so the course is not in condition that we have come to expect. But we are trying our best to get it in as good a shape as we could for the Johnny Walker St. Kitts Open in June."

Over the years, golfers in St. Kitts and Antigua and Barbuda have developed a healthy but respectful rivalry.

"We have a respect for each other. We look at each other as brothers and sisters and we are also friends.

"For me personally, Antigua is definitely my second home, and most of the players in St. Kitts always look forward to going

to Antigua and always look forward to when the Antiguanians are coming down," Percival said.

"But I think the rivalry is based more on the respect we have for each other. It's also the love that we share amongst each other and that is what we look forward to."

Percival also disclosed that other top golfers from the region will also participate in the tournament.

"It is not a team event. It is an open event so all of our top players will be taking part.

"Raymond Percival, Adrian Norford, Rock Charles Blake, Darion Fleming, Anand Harridyal

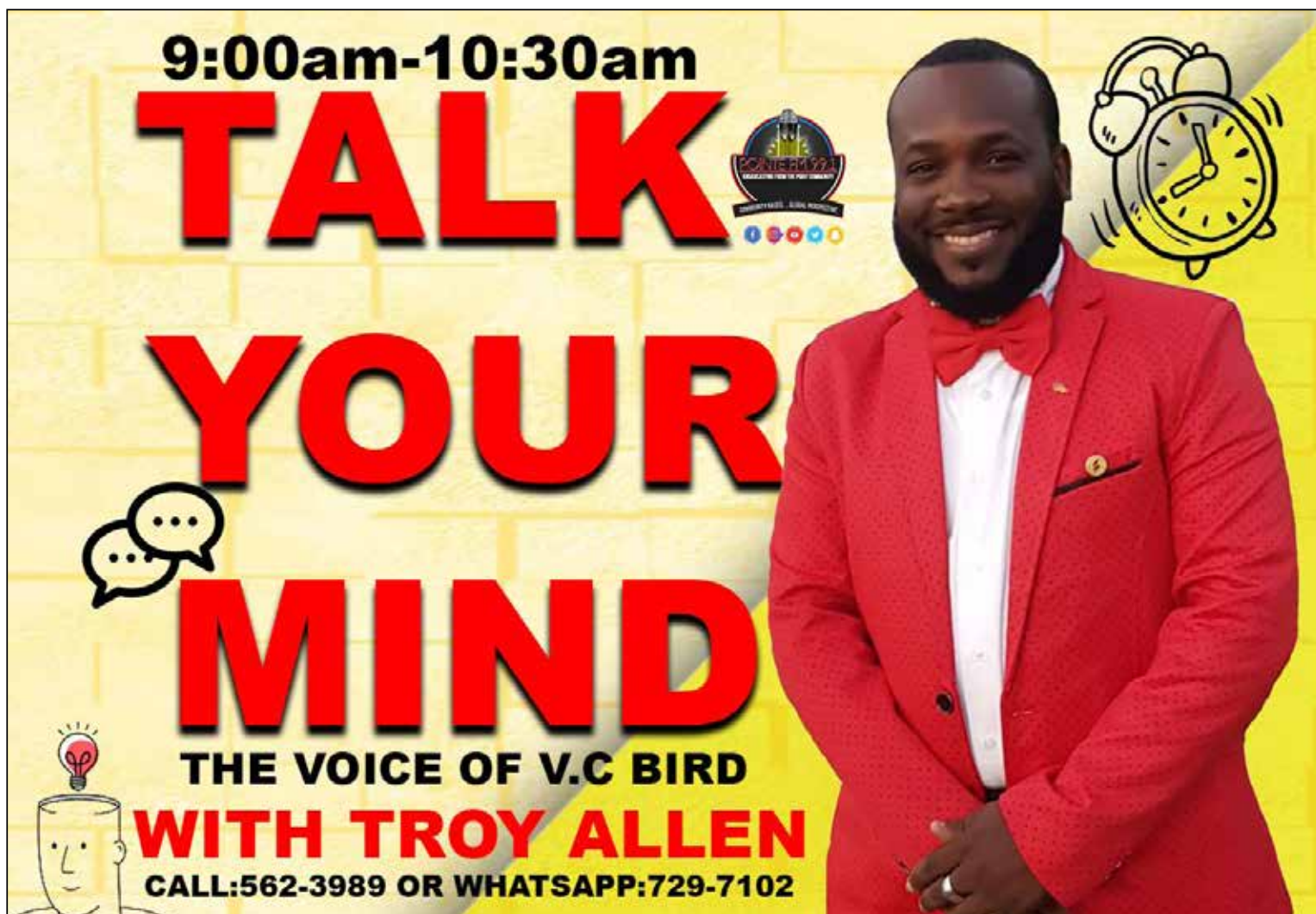
and young Clayton Harridyal, who is also playing very well.

"There is a large bunch of St Kitts golfers who will be playing," Percival said.

"The tournament is going to be good because... there are also some players coming out of Trinidad and St. Lucia and some of the other islands in the Caribbean.

"We are expecting about a total of 100 players to participate.

"I think after the lockdowns that was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; people are now looking forward to travelling somewhere to play some good golf."



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James to headline A&B contingent at St. Kitts Open

Reigning national men's champion Omorry James is expected to be a part of a large contingent of Antiguan and Barbudan golfers who will compete at the Johnny Walker St. Kitts Open Golf Championship in June.

Coach at Cedar Valley Golf Club, Marlon "Boozy" George, said a large contingent will travel to St. Kitts to compete in the golf championship at Frigate Bay from 3rd to 5th June.

George said several of Antigua and Barbuda's top golfers will compete across several categories, including championship, men's, ladies, seniors, super seniors, stableford and open divisions.

"We will have a large number of players from Antigua going down for the St. Kitts Open.

"Our national champion Omorry James is going down along with his brother Demar James, who is our number one junior player. Our number one ranked player Paul Michael is also going down and Johnathan Pigott is going down to St. Kitts," George said.

"We also have Dion

Messiah, Eldine Baptiste and Sylvester Joseph. So we have a good group of our top players who will be taking part in the St Kitts Open."

George said former national women's champion, Kimesha Anthony, and reigning champion, Ashley Francis, are also likely to participate in the St. Kitts Open.

"I spoke to Kimesha and she did say she is going down to St. Kitts. A lot of our young ladies are also trying to get to St. Kitts.

"They are doing some fundraising and I would really like to see Ashley Francis, Antigua's reigning national women's champion, getting a chance to play in this year's St. Kitts Open.

"She and a lot of our young female golfers are trying their best to raise the necessary funds to travel and compete," George said.

Zeke Percival, vice-president of the Royal St. Kitts Golf Club which organises the tournament, said he is looking forward to having Anthony participate in next month's event.

"I know for sure, the



Perennial Ladies champion, Kimesha Anthony, left, and current national champion, Omorry James, will likely be among the golfers to participate in the St. Kitts Open in June. (Photo courtesy Caribbean Golf Experience)

ladies champion for the past 10 years, right out of Antigua, Kimesha Anthony, she may be coming. I spoke with her today (Tuesday, 24th May) and she is likely to come and she will be missed if she doesn't come this year,"

Percival said.

"Kimesha has been the top player in the ladies' category for the last 10 years or so.

"I am really looking forward and hope she can make it down to compete

cont'd on pg 23