

SAND: A&B'S UNTAPPED GOLD MINE

Story on Page 2



A gold mine of more than 200 billion tonnes of three distinct types of sand have been found in Antigua and Barbuda's waters. The most prolific of the three is biogenic sand - found in both the deep ocean and along shorelines - which most commonly forms beaches like this pink sand gem in Barbuda. Government officials say this sand can be used to rehabilitate shorelines damaged by hurricanes over the years.

Local News



Ocean sand mining holds vast economic potential

The ministry responsible for the Blue Economy says its research has revealed that there are over 200 billion tonnes of sand in Antigua and Barbuda's exclusive economic zone with much potential for the country's economy.

The disclosure came from Minister responsible for the Blue Economy, Dean Jonas, at a

function Monday morning during which the resident UK High Commissioner, Lindsay Thompson, handed over office equipment to the ministry.

"We recently announced that we are looking at the area of sand mining from the ocean bed in our exclusive economic zone. Our research shows that only the Bahamas has



Minister responsible for the Blue Economy, Dean Jonas, left, with Lindsay Thompson, resident UK High Commissioner.

more sand within its exclusive economic zone than Antigua and Barbuda. Our research also shows that there are three types of sand, one of which is mineral sand that can be used in construction," Minister Jonas disclosed.

According to Jonas, the ministry is now conducting more detailed research to determine where the best areas to carry out the sand mining are. He said most of the deposits are composed of biogenic sand, which is best suited for beach rehabilitation.

"We are hoping to rebuild beaches in the country that were destroyed by hurricanes.

"The research also shows that beach erosion is caused by damage to the coral reefs that form protective barriers to the nation's coastlines," Jonas

noted.

The minister suggested that mining this particular type of sand could also be exported regionally, and perhaps, even internationally.

The estimates of the sand deposits around Antigua and Barbuda were done with the help of satellite imaging, according to Jonas.

"This is a resource we can exploit to our benefit, and we intend to do so responsibly and sustainably. We do not intend to take all of it.

"I am saying that because any announcement of sand mining will be followed by expressions of concern about the destruction of beaches.

"This will not happen, as we will do this in a responsible manner," Jonas declared.

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Minister Greene seeks Norwegian scholarships for nationals

Foreign Minister, E. P. Chet Greene is hoping to deepen Antigua and Barbuda's relations with Norway through the provision of scholarships for nationals to study at Norwegian universities.

Greene made the appeal on Monday during a courtesy call by the new non-resident ambassador designate of Norway to Antigua and Barbuda, Beate Stiro.

Noting that Norway often assists developing countries through multilateral arrangements, he made a special appeal for the strengthening of bilateral ties between the two nations, particularly along their shared interest in the

ocean and its resources.

"We now have the fourth landed campus of the University of the West Indies here in Antigua, and the ocean is something we have a love for in common. Therefore, bilateral ties I am thinking about would allow for some support for the university," he stated.

The minister noted Norway's interest in the sustainable use of the ocean's resources, and added that through the UWI's exploration of the benefits of the blue economy, both the university and local students could benefit significantly.

"We are hoping to build a platform for cooperation



Foreign Minister, E. P. Chet Greene, left, with Norwegian Ambassador, Beate Stiro.

with the ocean and the blue economy with Norwegian support with research among other things," he said.

Ambassador designate Stiro noted that Norway focuses much of its attention in foreign policy on issues related to the ocean and has

taken a number of initiatives in this area. She continued that the University of Bergen in Norway recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UWI, Mona, in Jamaica, under which all the UWI's campuses will benefit.

According to Stiro, the MoU provides for research and development and the exchange of faculty and students among other benefits.

Greene welcomed the fact that the UWI Five Islands Campus will be a beneficiary under the MoU signed with the University of Bergen.

However, he made a direct appeal for Norway to provide annual academic scholarships for Antigua and Barbuda nationals to study, particularly in disciplines related to the ocean and the blue economy.

The Ambassador designate was accompanied on the courtesy call by the Honorary Consul of Norway to Antigua and Barbuda, Dahlia Francis.

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MoH offers advice on baby formula shortage

With the shortage of baby formula in the United States affecting other countries including Antigua and Barbuda, the Ministry of Health and Wellness is providing guidance to families on how to effectively manage the problem.

In a statement over the weekend, the ministry encouraged mothers to continue breastfeeding their infants for as long as possible. Usually this should occur for at least the first six months of a child's life.

Traditionally, parents opt for a specific brand of formula for various reasons, however, due to the scarcity of the product, the Ministry of Health and Wellness



has given the assurance that parents can switch to other brands once they are available and in stock at local shops and pharmacies.

Consideration can also be given to sharing or borrowing unopened cans of baby formula from close family members.

Along with these options, health officials are advising parents to be extremely careful when making substitutions, as they can have far reaching implications for the health and wellbeing of their babies.

Health experts are also warning parents against at-

tempts to make their own baby formula or diluting formula to make it last longer.

Goat, cow or plant-based milks are not recommended for use as food substitutes for babies under one year old.

Additionally, health and growth issues can develop if babies are fed formula made for toddlers.

Similar issues can arise if babies are fed cereal, tea and porridge, including those made of cornmeal and green bananas, if they are under six months old.

The ministry is also warning that using expired formula is unsafe for babies.

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Indian nationals evade immigration authorities

Just three days after the announcement that five Haitians had escaped from the Department of Immigration's detention centre in Coolidge, another group has gone missing, albeit, under different circumstances.

Immigration authorities are now searching for seven nationals of India who vanished when the time arrived for them to leave Antigua and Barbuda.

Information remains sketchy, but it is understood the Indian nationals were in transit to the British Virgin Islands, but could not continue their journey.

They were informed of the decision by immigration officials in Antigua, and arrangements were made for them to purchase new airline tickets to return to the country where their travel originated.

According to sources, prior to their arrival at the V. C. Bird International Airport, the seven people who are believed to be related, booked local accommodations as they were unable to make a same day connection to their final destination, the BVI.

After they were informed by immigration authorities their onward travel would not be allowed,



the family was permitted to stay at their booked accommodation in Antigua.

However, on the day they were expected to depart, the seven Indian nationals did not show up at the airport.

Checks were carried out at the local address they provided to authorities upon being granted entry, but they were nowhere to be found.

A search is now underway to find the Indians and remove them from the country.

Meantime, the five Haitians who escaped immigration detention at the former US Air Base overnight on Friday remain at large.

They were denied entry into Antigua and Barbuda after arriving from the Dominican Republic en route to Montserrat, after it was determined they were not

The Haitians were expected to be repatriated on Saturday, but escaped the facility the night before.

Persons are asked to report any sightings of the four men and one woman.

On Sunday, Chief Immigration Officer Katrina Yearwood told Pointe Xpress that only one of the group, Angener Rinjour, speaks some very limited English and suggested he may be most likely to interact with the public on behalf of the others.

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Queen Elizabeth II recognises Refica Attwood with Commonwealth Points of Light award

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, as Head of the Commonwealth, on Friday 27 May, recognised Refica Attwood, representing Antigua and Barbuda, as the 226th Commonwealth Point of Light in honour of her exceptional voluntary service creating the country's first community-managed national park.

Refica, aged 33, is the Executive Director of 'Wallings Nature Reserve', which spans 1,680 acres of rainforest. Refica hiked around Wallings in her teens and began to notice that locals were hosting large events and destroying the area with rubbish.

She started documenting the damage and put forward a business plan to government officials giving recommendations on how to save the space. In 2016, Refica successfully gained a \$50,000 grant to regenerate the area and has since led multiple refor-

estation projects, created safe trails for hiking, and built sanitary restroom facilities and outdoor events spaces.

As part of the legacy of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London 2018, Her Majesty The Queen - as Head of the Commonwealth - is thanking inspirational volunteers across the 54 Commonwealth nations for the difference they are making in their communities and beyond, by recognising one volunteer, or pair of volunteers, from each Commonwealth country every week.

By sharing these stories of service, the Commonwealth Points of Light awards celebrate acts of charity across the Commonwealth and help inspire others to make their own contribution to tackling some of the greatest social challenges of our time.

Refica said, "I am elated to have been awarded



Refica Attwood

for my hard work and dedication and making an impactful difference in those that are around me. Nothing is impossible once you decide to get it done."

Lindsay Thompson, Resident British High Commissioner in Antigua and Barbuda said, "I'd like to congratulate Refica Attwood on her well-deserved award."

Her efforts to revitalise, protect, and promote the environmental treasures around Wallings Na-

ture Reserve are an inspiration and have captured the hearts and imaginations of all those who visit the area."

The Commonwealth is a diverse community of 54 nations and 2.4 billion citizens that work together to promote prosperity, democracy and peace.

The Heads of Government meeting brought together leaders from all the 54 Member countries to reaffirm common values, address shared global challenges and agree how to work to create a better future for all citizens, especially young people.

Voluntary service is a vital part of this agenda, which is why Her Majesty The Queen has chosen to recognise outstanding volunteers across the Commonwealth in this special way.

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Healthcare system coping well with new COVID-19 cases

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed forty-four (44) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Thursday 26th May, 2022 at 6pm.

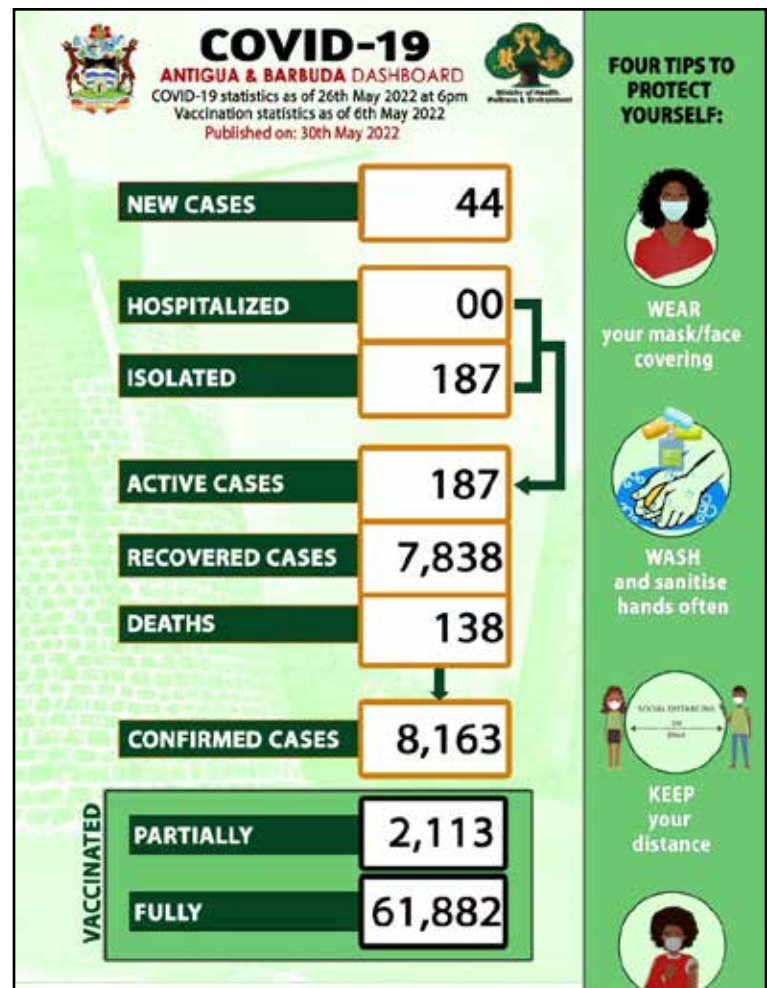
Twenty-three (23) cases were recorded on May 25th and twenty-one (21) on May 26th.

One hundred and two (102) samples were processed.

Seventy-four (74) recovered cases were recorded.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is eight thousand one hundred and sixty-three (8,163); which is inclusive of one hundred and eighty-seven (187) active cases.

There are no hospitalised cases.




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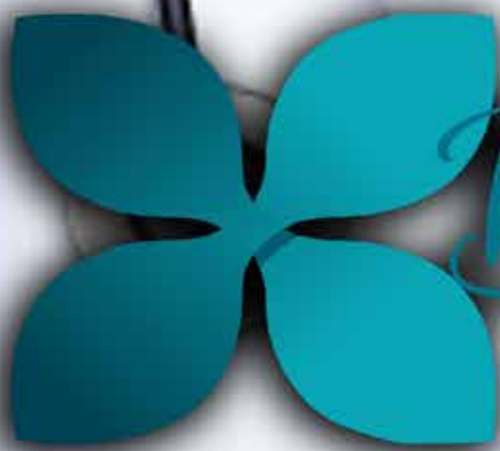
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PAHO director says Americas has 600,000 health professional shortfall

By **Santana Salmon**

The Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, says the deficit in the health workforce in the Americas, including the Caribbean, has reached 600,000 professionals; something that affects access to care, especially for those in rural and underserved areas of the region.

During the deliberations of the 2022-2030 Action Plan "Working for Health" at the 75th World Health Assembly, in Geneva, Etienne acknowledged "the enormous sacrifice and contribution of health workers in the Americas" during the COVID-19 pan-

demic.

"The unwavering resilience of our health workers is a testimony to their commitment to serve, save lives and ensure health for all," she said.

The PAHO director noted that, during the peaks of the pandemic, "task shifting and task sharing saved lives," and that "patient care delivery was facilitated by digital transformation."

In that regard, she said PAHO, through its Virtual Campus for Public Health, trained more than 900,000 health workers in the control and management of COVID-19, health services continuity and vaccine deploy-



The Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Dr. Carissa F. Etienne

ment during the pandemic.

However, she said, "we can no longer ignore long-standing deficiencies in health systems," which impact the capacity of the health workforce to provide quality, uninterrupted care.

Among the deficiencies, she cited the migration of health workers to urban centres or wealthier countries, exacerbating the gap, lack of planning between the education and labour sectors, and insufficient emphasis on interprofessional and ongoing education.

Among the effects of COVID-19, a World Health Organization (WHO) study estimated that around 115,000 health workers died between January 2020 and May 2021 worldwide.

"Investing in health systems and a fit-for-purpose health workforce constitutes a priority for the Americas," said Dr. Etienne, adding that PAHO looks forward to working with member states, partners and WHO in developing "a transformative agenda in human resources for health in the Americas."

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UN agency urges Caribbean governments to do more to help Haitians fleeing insecurity by sea

The United Nations (UN) has called on Caribbean governments to do more to help Haitian fleeing insecurity by sea, saying the number of desperate people resorting to risky sea crossings has sharply increased.

Speaking to journalists at the Palais des Nations, Shabia Mantoo, a spokesperson for the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), told journalists that many of the dangerous crossings in the Caribbean Sea take place in overloaded and unseaworthy boats.

Mantoo cited a recent example of a vessel carrying over 800 Haitians, bound for the United States, which instead arrived in Cuba after being abandoned by its captain and set adrift at sea.

“Many of those who resort to dangerous sea crossings are fleeing the political instability and socio-economic insecurity of the region, which has put severe strains on communities throughout the Caribbean.”

According to the world body, Haiti is being rocked by violent gang-related activity, internal displacement, natural disasters, and a lack of employment opportunities.

“Under such dire humanitarian and security



Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to hear of boats dangerously overloaded with Haitians trying to make their way to a better life in other countries. These escapes are fraught with danger, and very often, boats like this one capsize, killing hundreds of people each year.

conditions, the outlook for those pushed back or forced to return to the country is poor,” the UN said.

“Refugees in the Caribbean region are not solely Haitian, but there are clear signs that more migrants and asylum seekers are fleeing the troubled nation,” it added.

As of May, the US Coast Guard reported almost 3,900 interceptions of Haitian nationals, more than double the number reported a year ago.

In addition, the UN said at least 175 Haitians have been reported to the Coast Guard as missing or de-

ceased.

Mantoo said UNHCR is urging governments in the region to fulfil their maritime rescue obligations and ensure that all those in need of international protection are identified and offered “unobstructed and prompt access to fair asylum procedures.”

“Search and rescue at sea is a legal and humanitarian imperative, and those rescued include refugees and others in need of protection”, Mantoo said.

Mantoo said countries receiving refugees and migrants have the first line of responsibility in protect-

ing those who may have well-founded fears of persecution in their country of origin.

In response to the growing numbers risking their lives in perilous sea crossings, Mantoo said UNHCR is working with governments in the region to support the response and reception of arrivals at their borders, strengthen asylum systems, ensure the protection of refugees in a “fair and efficient” manner, and support international human rights and refugee law while respecting national security concerns and state sovereignty. (CMC)

Maxine Waters urges President Biden to advance financial access for the Caribbean

Democratic Congresswoman Maxine Waters has dispatched a letter to President Joe Biden urging him to leverage the forthcoming dialogue at the Summit of the Americas to incorporate a key priority for Caribbean nations – financial access and inclusion, particularly to advance solutions to the harmful phenomenon of bank de-risking.

“Most of the Caribbean region has witnessed large financial institutions, both US and foreign, scaling back or terminating their relationships with respondent banks in the region, making it significantly more difficult to do business and obtain financial services,” wrote the Chairwoman of the United States House of Representatives Financial Services Committee.

“While the de-risking issue overlaps with the broader issues of digital inclusion and financial inclusion, resolving de-risking requires focused, proactive solutions implemented collaboratively with summit nations.

“I urge you to ensure that these issues, including access to correspondent banking relationships, are raised at the summit, and are incorporated as a permanent part of the ongoing summit dialogues.”

Waters said the Unit-



Chairwoman of the United States House of Representatives Financial Services Committee Maxine Waters.

ed States, leveraging the collaborative, ongoing dialogue afforded by the June summit in Los Angeles, “should ensure that solutions, particularly to the phenomenon of bank de-risking, are advanced across the region.

“Due to an unfortunate mix of potential regulatory penalties, maturing anti-money laundering laws, lingering (and often inaccurate) negative perceptions, small populations and volumes of transactions, and low bank profits, Caribbean nations and their citizens have a diminished ability to engage in cross-border trade, to accommodate US tourists and their dollars, to receive funds from family abroad, to recover quickly

from natural disasters and to thrive economically,” the Congresswoman told Biden.

She noted that she recently led a delegation of US Congressional Members to the Caribbean, where she co-hosted the Caribbean Financial Access Roundtable with Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

Congresswoman Maxine Waters said participating in this event with the visiting members of congress were nearly a dozen Caribbean heads of state, along with financial institutions, the International Monetary Fund, the Caribbean Development Bank, the US Embassy in Bridgetown, and members of civil society.

“Our recent event built upon an earlier discussion

I organised in 2019 where I brought together key stakeholders to build consensus around how to solve these pressing issues,” she said.

“At our roundtable, we successfully identified several concrete actions that can be taken to address de-risking,” she added, stating that they included providing technical assistance for legal and regulatory harmonisation; supporting a consortium bank pilot project for the region; creating programs to encourage small- and medium-sized banks to offer correspondent banking services; and “level-setting” US and regional examiner understanding of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) enforcement.

Others are shifting how the US Department of State reflects the effects of narcotics trafficking, especially for transit countries; formalising an annual US-Caribbean Banking Forum to discuss these issues; and creating a SWIFT-based AML audit directory.

As suggested by the Atlantic Council’s March 2022 report, ‘Financial De-Risking in the Caribbean: The US Implications and What Needs to Be Done’, she said this type of financial access is “as essential as a seaport, airport, or clean water”. (CMC)

Regional News



Trinidad & Tobago Assistant Police Commissioner charged with misconduct

CMC – The head of one of the intelligence agencies in Trinidad's police force, Assistant Commissioner Nazrudeen Pragg, has been charged with two offences of misbehaviour in public office.

Pragg, 59, was charged following reports that he told two people employed by the force as intelligence officers that they could tint their private vehicles beyond legal specifications.

When he appeared in court, Pragg, who was charged by officers assigned to the Professional Standards Bureau, was granted bail amounting to TT\$200,000.

According to a police release, Pragg is accused of "knowingly entering false and misleading information" on a form issued by the Ministry of Works and Transport to recommend a civilian and a soldier to be exempt from the legal tint laws.

Pragg is scheduled to appear be-



Trinidad and Tobago's Assistant Commissioner of Police, Nazrudeen Pragg before a Port of Spain magistrate on June 30.

Officers led by Senior Superintendent Suzette Martin consulted Director of Public Prosecutions Roger Gaspard SC after they gathered evidence on two complaints accusing the Assistant Commissioner of misconduct. The report was made on May 20 and Pragg was arrested five days later.

Between August 16 and 17, 2021, Pragg who was then assigned as head of the Specialised Support allegedly made the false recommendations.

In August 2020, the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Windscreen and Window Tint) Regulations 2020 came into effect. A vehicle's windows must have the following minimum levels of visible light transmittance: front windscreen 70 percent; windscreen's anti-glare band 35 percent; each front window (including side wing/side window) 35 percent; each rear window (including side window) and rear windscreen 20 percent. If the vehicle's tint does not meet these requirements, the motorist has committed a traffic violation and must pay a fine of \$5,000.

Under the law, the Transport Commissioner can exempt someone from complying with the tint laws based on a recommendation from a senior police officer.

Parcels of cocaine found at Georgetown wharf in Guyana

CMC – Members of Guyana's Customs Anti Narcotic Unit (CANU) on Saturday discovered 21 parcels of cocaine inside a container belonging to Demerara Shipping Limited at the Georgetown wharf.

A press release from CANU said the illegal substance weighed 54 pounds and has a street value of approximately GUY\$17 million (One Guyana dollar=US\$0.004 cents).

"However, the fact that it was discovered on the wharf, indicates that it was intended for transshipment to another overseas territory which would have increased its street value based on its destination" the release noted.

"It must be mentioned that staff

from CANU and other agencies recently participated in several maritime training courses which included container cargo operations and vessel searches.

"These courses were facilitated by the UNODC and United States government and were aimed at strengthening the capabilities of law enforcement units operating at port facilities throughout the country," CANU concluded.

CANU said an investigation is currently underway to uncover those responsible.

A recent string of high-profile interceptions targeting international
cont'd on pg 15



Dominican Republic begins construction of border fence with Haiti

CMC – Progress is being made in the construction of a border fence between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. This is according to Minister of Defence, Lieutenant General Carlos Luciano Díaz Morfa, who has been supervising the progress of the work.

Following a recent tour of the site, Díaz Morfa, said the programmed activities are proceeding at the planned pace, and the work is advancing.

“The fence will benefit both countries because it will allow more efficiency in the control of the migratory flow, in the fight against cattle theft and other illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, the illegal sale of arms, and the protection of agricultural producers, strengthening the current protection schemes of the border area,” said Díaz Morfa.



Soldiers patrol the Dominican Republic side of a completed portion of the country's border wall with Haiti

The head of the Ministry of Defence assured that houses will be built to be delivered to those who need to be displaced from their current residences to make way for the border fence.

In the supervision of the project and in the exchanges with the owners of the houses and the lands that will be declared of public utility, the minister spoke with the owners of the lands located in some

areas where construction is underway.

He also thanked them for their willingness to collaborate with the construction of the fence and assured them that the government will compensate all legitimate owners.

Earlier this year, construction started on the concrete barrier that will span nearly half of the 244-mile border between the two countries that share the island of Hispaniola.

Officials in the Dominican Republic claim the wall will reduce flows of migrants, drugs, weapons, and contraband.

“The benefit for both nations will be of great importance,” said President Luis Abinader, in a statement made earlier this year at a ground-breaking ceremony in the border town of Dajabón.

While the two countries that make up the island of Hispaniola are close geographically, their differences are stark.

The Dominican Republic, with a population of 10.8 million, is a booming tourist destination with year-round visitors to its resorts and golf courses.

On the other hand, Haiti, with a population of 11.4 million, is the western hemisphere's poorest country, riddled with crime and mired in political and economic crisis.

cont'd from pg 14

al drug trafficking operations has confirmed Guyana remains a crucial transit point for cocaine headed to the United States and across the Atlantic.

The nation's porous borders with major drug trafficking nations, including Venezuela and Brazil, make it an ideal jumping-off point for smugglers moving cocaine to the United States,

Canada, Europe, West African transit nations and the Caribbean.

The head of Guyana's Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit told InSight Crime the nation is caught in the crosshairs of drug trafficking networks operating between “supply” and “demand” countries.

He added that robust counter-narcotics measures taken by nearby na-

tions had resulted in a “balloon effect,” pushing traffickers to establish new routes in Guyana. The US State Department's most recent International Narcotics Control Strategy report urged Guyana to “enhance its anti-corruption initiatives, increase interagency cooperation, and fully pursue prosecutions for narcotics trafficking.”

International

AROUND THE WORLD



War in Ukraine adds to food price hikes, hunger in Africa

AP – It now costs Ayan Hassan Abdirahman twice as much as it did just a few months ago to buy the wheat flour she uses to make breakfast each day for her 11 children in Somalia's capital.

Nearly all the wheat sold in Somalia comes from Ukraine and Russia, which have halted exports through the Black Sea since Moscow waged war on its neighbour on Feb. 24.

The timing could not be worse: The U.N. has warned that an estimated 13 million people were facing severe hunger in the Horn



Malian women sift wheat in a field near Segou, central Mali, Jan. 22, 2013. In 2022, Families across Africa are paying about 45% more for wheat flour as Russia's war in Ukraine blocks exports from the Black Sea. Some countries like Somalia get more than 90% of their wheat from Russia and Ukraine. (AP Photo)

of Africa region as a result of a persistent drought.

Abdirahman has been trying to make do by substituting sorghum, another more readily available

grain, in her flatbread.

Inflation, though, means the price of the cooking oil she still needs to prepare it has skyrocketed too — a jar that once cost \$16 is now selling for \$45 in the markets of Mogadishu.

"The cost of living is high nowadays, making it difficult for families even to afford flour and oil," she says.

Haji Abdi Dhiblawe, a businessman who imports wheat flour into Somalia, fears the situation will only worsen: There is also

cont'd on pg 17

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EU leaders, divided over Russia oil embargo, spy a solution

AP — European Union leaders gathered Monday in a new show of solidarity with Ukraine, but divisions over whether to target Russian oil in a new series of sanctions exposed the limits of how far the bloc can go to help the war-torn country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addressed the bloc's 27 leaders by video in a 10 minute-message and urged them to remain united and quickly adopt a new package of measures to stop the Kremlin's "war machine," according to a senior EU diplomat.

Zelenskyy has repeatedly demanded that the EU target Russia's lucrative energy sector and deprive Moscow of billions of dollars each day in supply payments.

The EU gets about 40% of its natural gas and 25% of its oil from Russia, and Ukraine says those energy imports are funding Russia's war on its neighbour.

But Hungary is leading a group of EU countries — along with Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria — that rely heavily on Russian oil and can't afford to take such steps.

Hungary gets more than 60% of its oil from Russia and 85% of its natural gas.

According to the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, Zelenskyy reminded leaders of the atrocities going on in his country, including the death of civilians and children, telling them "it is crucial that sanctions are adopted as soon as possible."

But finding an agreement on an EU oil embargo has so far proved to be a tall order.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban was adamant upon his arrival in Brussels that a deal was not in sight, while Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala suggested that delaying oil sanctions on Russia could be a solution.

"We're ready to get rid of our dependence on Russia's energy sources ... but we're not able to do it in a short term," Fiala said.



Ukrainian demonstrators demand an embargo on Russian oil during a protest in front of EU institutions prior to an extraordinary meeting of EU leaders to discuss Ukraine, energy and food security at the Europa building in Brussels, Monday, May 30, 2022. (AP Photo/Olivier Matthys)

A meeting of ambassadors just before the summit spurred some hope that a compromise could be reached.

According to several diplomats, leaders will try to reach a deal for an EU embargo on Russian seaborne oil by the end of the year that would cover more than two-third of oil imports from Russia.

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a looming shortage of shipping containers to bring food supplies in from elsewhere at the moment.

"Somalis have no place to grow wheat, and we are not even familiar with how to grow it," he says.

"Our main concern now is what will the future hold for us when we currently run out of supplies."

Another 18 million people are facing severe hunger in the Sahel, the part of Africa just below the Sahara Desert where

farmers are enduring their worst agricultural production in more than a decade.

The U.N. World Food Program says food shortages could worsen when the lean season arrives in late summer.

"Acute hunger is soaring to unprecedented levels and the global situation just keeps on getting worse. Conflict, the climate crisis, COVID-19 and surging food and fuel costs have created a perfect storm — and now we've got the war in Ukraine piling catastro-

phe on top of catastrophe," WFP Executive Director David Beasley warned earlier this month.

Even the cost of therapeutic food for malnourished children could rise 16% over the next six months because of the war in Ukraine and disruptions related to the pandemic, UNICEF says.

African countries imported 44% of their wheat from Russia and Ukraine between 2018 and 2020, according to U.N. figures.

The African Develop-

ment Bank is already reporting a 45% increase in wheat prices on the continent, making everything from couscous in Mauritania to the fried donuts sold in Congo more expensive for customers.

"Africa has no control over production or logistics chains and is totally at the mercy of the situation," said Senegalese President Macky Sall, the African Union chairperson, who has said he will travel to Russia and Ukraine to discuss the price woes.

Plane wreckage found in Nepal mountains; 21 bodies recovered

AP – Rescuers searching a mountainside in Nepal on Monday recovered the bodies of 21 of the 22 people who were on board a plane that crashed a day earlier, officials said.

The search is continuing for the remaining person, Kathmandu airport spokesman Tek Nath Sitaula said.

Recovery efforts were delayed because some bodies were pinned under the plane's wreckage. Rescuers working with their bare hands had difficulty moving the metal debris.

Aerial photos of the crash site showed aircraft parts scattered on rocks and moss on the side of a mountain gorge.

The Tara Air turboprop Twin Otter lost contact with the airport tower on Sunday while flying on a scheduled 20-minute flight in an area of deep river gorges and mountaintops.

Relatives waited most of the day at the airport for news of their loved ones.



This handout photograph released by Fishtail Air, shows the wreckage of a plane in a gorge in Sanosware in Mustang district close to the mountain town of Jomsom, west of Kathmandu, Nepal, Monday, May 30, 2022. The wreckage of a plane carrying 22 people that disappeared in Nepal's mountains was found Monday scattered on a mountainside, the army said. There was no word on survivors. (Fishtail Air via AP)

Four Indians and two Germans were on the plane, Tara Air said. The three crew members and other passengers were Nepali nationals, it said.

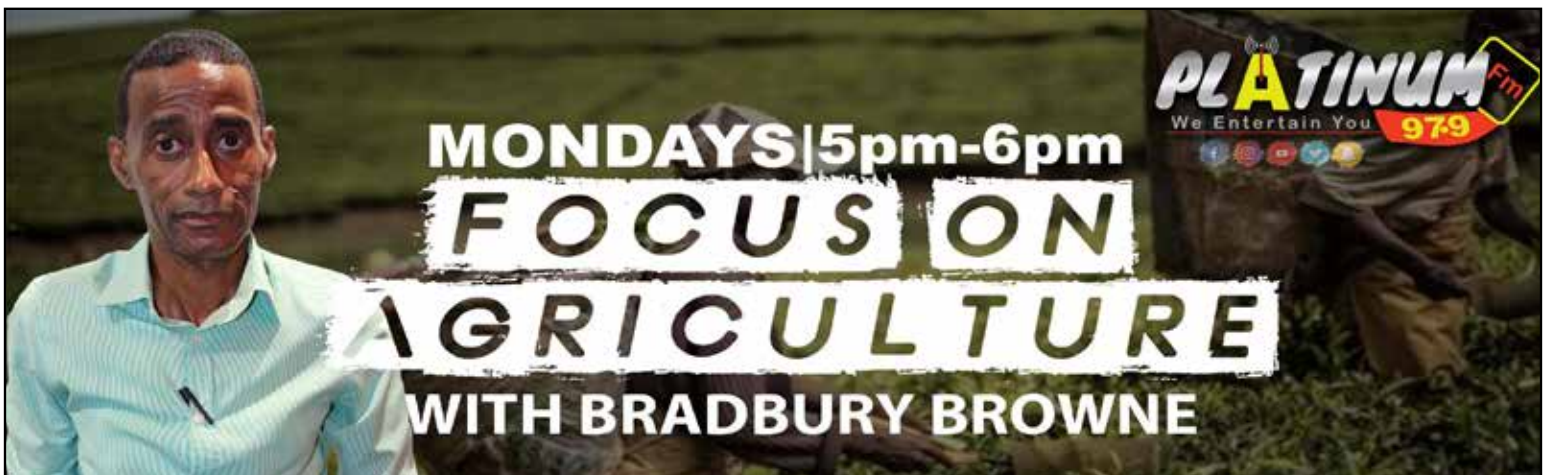
German news agency dpa reported that the two Germans were a man and

a woman from the western state of Hesse.

“Unfortunately, we have to assume at this point that the two people are no longer alive,” dpa quoted a spokesperson for the Hesse state interior ministry as saying. “On the part of the

Hessian police, relatives have already been informed and care measures initiated.”

Local news reports said the passengers included two Nepali families, one with four members and the other with seven.



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Abramovich completes \$3.2 billion sale of EPL team Chelsea



American businessman Todd Boehly applauds during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Wolverhampton at Stamford Bridge stadium, in London, Saturday, May 7, 2022. The Premier League has approved the proposed sale of Chelsea to a consortium fronted by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly, although the U.K. government still needs to sign off on the deal before it can be completed. (AP Photo/Frank Augstein, File)

AP – The fast-tracked purchase of English soccer club Chelsea for 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.2 billion) — the highest price ever paid for a sports team — was completed Monday by a consortium fronted by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly.

It marked the end of the trophy-filled, 19-year tenure of Roman Abramovich, the Russian oligarch who was forced to sell the club in March after being sanctioned by the British government for what it called his enabling of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "brutal and barbaric invasion" of

Ukraine.

The government said the proceeds of the sale will be used for humanitarian purposes in Ukraine.

"We are honoured to become the new custodians of Chelsea Football Club," said Boehly, who attended some of the team's games in recent weeks. "We're all in — 100% — every minute of every match."

Chelsea has been operating under a government licence since Abramovich's assets were frozen in March. The Boehly and Clearlake Capital consortium was one of around 250 initial pro-

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France blames ticket fraud for Champions League final chaos

AP – French authorities defended police on Monday for indiscriminately firing tear gas and pepper spray at Liverpool supporters at the Champions League final, while blaming industrial levels of fraud that saw 30,000 to 40,000 people try to enter the Stade de France with fake tickets or none at all.

After a meeting into Saturday's chaos, the ministers of the sport and the interior shifted responsibility onto the Liverpool fans while not providing details on how they were sure so many fake tickets were in circulation. People with legitimate tickets through Liverpool and UEFA reported struggling to access the stadium.

"There was massive fraud at an industrial level and an organisation of fake tickets because of the pre-filtering by the Stade de France and the French Football Federation, 70% of the tickets were fake tickets coming into the Stade de France," Interior minister Gérald Darmanin said. "Fifteen percent of fake tickets also were after the first filtering ... more than 2,600 tickets were confirmed by UEFA as non-validated tickets even though they'd gone through the first filtering.

"A massive presence of these fake tickets of course was the issue why there were delays, three times the beginning of the match was delayed."



Sports Minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra, left, and French Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin attend a press conference following a meeting on security after incidents during the Champions League final at the Stade de France stadium, Monday, May 30, 2022 in Paris. The British government says it's deeply concerned over the treatment of Liverpool supporters by French authorities, who blamed fans for unrest at the Champions League final amid overcrowding outside the Stade de France. (AP Photo/Jean-François Badias)

The final, which Liverpool lost 1-0 to Real Madrid, kicked off 37 minutes late. Tear gas and pepper spray was targeted at Liverpool fans, impacting children — a tactic defended by Darmanin to prevent deaths.

"I'd like to thank the forces of law and order, also those who worked in the stadium because they were very calm and they were able to avoid drama and so thank you for organising the pre-filtering but lifting it when there was too

much pressure to avoid a drama," Darmanin said. "That was a decision made by the prefecture to avoid any kind of deaths or seriously injured."

French Sports minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra blamed fans arriving at the stadium late for the crowd control issues, but did not say when they should have arrived at the stadium on the outskirts of Paris.

There was no apology for the conduct by authorities.

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posed buyers, the club said, and that was narrowed down to 12 credible bids and then a shortlist of three final bidders.

"Many described the proposed transaction as 'unprecedented,' and it was," Chelsea said. "A transaction such as this would normally

take nine months to a year to complete; we did it in less than three months."

The British government approved the sale last week after ensuring that Abramovich could not profit from it. The proceeds will be transferred to a frozen account and then used "to support the relief and rebuilding effort

in Ukraine as soon as possible," the government said. "Today's change of ownership marks a new chapter for Chelsea," the government added, "in the best interests of its fans, the club and the wider football community."

Boehly's group has pledged to invest an additional 1.75 billion pounds

(\$2.2 billion) in Chelsea's men's, women's and academy teams and on infrastructure, such as the redevelopment of Stamford Bridge.

The consortium also features Dodgers principal owner Mark Walter, Swiss billionaire Hansjorg Wyss, and funding from private equity firm Clearlake.

The Finals matchup: Celtics vs. Warriors for NBA title

AP—Somewhere, Gregg Popovich must be pleased.

Ime Udoka and Steve Kerr played for Popovich of the San Antonio Spurs, both served as assistant coaches under him, and neither makes any effort to hide the affinity they have for the NBA's career victory leader.

And now, Udoka and Kerr are about to go head-to-head — in the NBA Finals.

The title matchup is set: It'll be Udoka and the Eastern Conference champion Boston Celtics facing Kerr and the Western Conference champion Golden State Warriors, a series that begins Thursday night in San Francisco. The teams split their two regular-season meetings, each winning on the other's home floor.

The Warriors have been waiting for an opponent since this past Thursday after needing only five games to beat Dallas for the West title. The Celtics got there the hard way, winning Game 7 in Miami on Sunday night to capture the East.

"We stayed with it. We believed in each other. We made a commitment on the defensive end," said Celtics forward Al Horford, who, after 141 playoff games, is headed to the NBA Finals for the first time. "That was the biggest thing, defending."

For the Celtics, it's a chance at an 18th NBA

championship — which would break the tie with the Los Angeles Lakers for the most in league history. For the Warriors, it's a chance at a seventh crown — which would break a tie with the Chicago Bulls for third-most in league history.

It's also a rematch of the 1964 finals, when Bill Russell and the Celtics topped the Warriors in five games.

"I've said it many times: You go to the finals, it's almost a two-month journey filled with stress and fatigue and everything else," said



Boston Celtics head coach Ime Udoka gestures during the first half of Game 7 of the NBA basketball Eastern Conference finals playoff series against the Miami Heat, Sunday, May 29, 2022, in Miami. (AP Photo/Lynne Sladky)

Kerr, who gave his team Friday and Saturday off before bringing them back to work Sunday. "So, if you can get a little bit of a break, it's very

meaningful. Hopefully, we can get healthy and have a few days of really good prep and be ready to go on Thursday."



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Sports News



Bolans Blasters secure second consecutive win

After losing their first three encounters, Bolans Blasters recorded wins in their next two matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) two-day competition.

Following their nine-wicket win over Jennings Tigers the previous week, Bolans Blasters secured their second win in the competition by beating defending champions Pigotts Crushers by four wickets at Pigotts over the weekend.

Set 166 to win, Bolans Blasters achieved their victory for the loss of six wickets in 38.2 overs.

Ex-Leeward Islands cricketer, Earle Waldron, and captain, Taiem Tonge, shared an unbroken 52-run, seventh wicket partnership to guide Bolans to victory on Sunday.

Waldron hit an unbeaten 48 off 50 balls, and Tonge was not out on 26.

Teenage allrounder Shamar Pereira contributed 31.

Pigotts made 160 in 46.2 overs in their first inning after the home side won the toss and opted to bat. Malique Walsh struck 57, while Hughon Tonge captured 3 for 16. Pereira, Tonge and Martin Caesar each picked up two wickets.

The Pigotts men took a 35-run first inning lead by dismissing Bolans for 125 in 42.4 overs, with opener Hughon Tonge getting 40.

Captain Elroy Francis Jr. bagged 3 for 27 and Vincent Shadrach Jr. claimed 3 for 35.

Pigotts then declared their second innings at 130 for 9 in 31.1 overs to set Bolans a victory target of 166 runs.

Walsh was not out on 52 and Gurshum Phillip made 35 off 21 balls with 6 fours and a six.

Taiem Tonge picked up 3 for 15, while Pereira and Caesar each claimed two wickets.

New Winthorpes Lions recorded their first win of the competition by pulling off a five-wicket win over Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at New Winthorpes on Sunday.

Bethesda crashed 92 all out in 23.4 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat, with captain Gavin Tonge getting 30 off 31 balls.

Shavar Moore grabbed 4 for 22, Asher Murray-Cornelius captured 3 for 32 and off-spinner Ian Eusebe snapped up 2 wickets for 4 runs in 3 overs.

New Winthorpes then fell for 107 in 34.3 overs to take a slender 15 run lead in the first innings, with opener Murray-Cornelius making 68 off 107 balls.

Pacer Timmo Thomas bagged 4 for 39, Tonge took 3 for 29 and Kemari Clarke captured 2 for 13.

Bethesda were dismissed for 139 in 46.5 overs in their second innings to set New Winthorpes a target of 125 runs for victory.

Opener Shacoy Floyd struck 52 and Tonge made 47.

Orandel Boston bagged 5 for 48 in 17 overs and Moore picked up 3 for 34 in 9.5 overs.

New Winthorpes achieved victory, reaching 126 for 5 in 25.3 overs.

Eusebe made 36, while Tonge claimed 3 for 14 and Floyd took 2 for 27.

PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks failed to achieve an outright win for the first time in this season when they were held to a draw by Empire Nation in their fifth-round encounter at King George V.

Liberta, who won their previous four matches, made 176 in 48.4 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat first.



Former Leeward Islands and national off-spinner, Justin Athanaze, claimed 11 for 62 for Empire Nation in a drawn ABCA two-day match against Liberta Black Hawks at King George V Ground over the weekend. (File photo)

Openers Uri Smith and Tarek Charles both hit half centuries that led to an opening stand of exactly 100 runs.

Smith struck 57 off 84 balls, while Charles made 54 off 59 deliveries.

Former Leeward Islands off-spinner Justin Athanaze captured 8 wickets for 23 runs in 15.4 overs.

In reply, Empire were dismissed for 147 in 38.2 overs, with Juari Edwards getting a top score of 63 off just 35 balls, smashing 10 fours and 3 sixes. Smith snapped up five for 31 in 8.2 overs, while off-spinner Kadeem Phillip picked up 2 for 28.

Liberta then declared their second innings closed at 182 for nine in 55.3 overs when the match ended. Captain Michael Greaves struck 56, Smith made 43 and Wilden Cornwall Jr chipped in with 35 off 31 balls.

Captain Kenrick Scott captured four for 49 in 10 overs and Athanaze captured three for 39 in 18.3 overs to end with a match haul of 11 wickets

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Up and Over FC maintain lead in Over-40 League

Up and Over FC maintained their winning run on Sunday to consolidate their position at the top of the standings in the Antigua Over-40 Premier League.

A 20th minute conversion by Micah Daniel gave Up and Over FC a 1-0 victory over Legacy FC during the fifth round of matches at the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Technical Training Centre at Paynters.

The win ensured Up and Over FC remained at the top of the standings in the eight-team round robin competition with the maximum 15 points.

Up and Over FC's position was confirmed by the competition's organisers, who overturned a decision after the Pigotts men were beaten 1-0 by Dun Bar Crew in a top of the table clash the previous weekend.

The organisers, 40Football268, took the decision to award full points to Up and Over FC, after they filed a protest against Dun Bar Crew, claiming they broke the tournament's rules by allowing more than the maximum three players between the ages of 35 and 39 on the



Legacy FC is among the teams participating in the Antigua Over-40 Premier League. (Photo: 40Football268)

field at the same time during a match.

Dun Bar Crew also consolidated their position in second place by engineering a comeback 3-1 win over bottom team Golden Grove FC.

Pierre Cooke gave Golden Grove a surprising 1-0 lead with a 4th minute conversion. But a brace by striker Tamarley "Ziggy" Thomas with goals in the 13th and 27th minutes, and a 48th minute conversion by Keith Kelly, positioned Dun Bar Crew to overturn the deficit and stroll to an emphatic victory.

The result was that the Hoppers men remained in second place with 12 points

from five outings, while Golden Grove's fifth loss in five encounters left them without a win and firmly rooted in the cellar position.

Tun and Bang FC recorded their second win of the competition by coasting to a 4-1 victory over Extraordinary Men.

Striker Peter "Big Pete" Byers shot Tun and Bang FC into the lead with a 6th minute strike before forward Rowan "Three Fives" Isaac scored an equaliser for Extraordinary Men in the 15th minute.

A 27th minute conversion by Janiel Simon restored Tun and Bang's advantage, giving them a 2-1 halftime lead.

Tun and Ban pressed home their advantage with Byers scoring his second goal of the match in the 44th minute and Robin Toussaint converting in the 54th minute to seal the victory.

Albert Bartley scored a late equaliser in the 78th minute, which guaranteed West Ham FC a 1-1 draw against Turf Masters in Sunday's other encounter.

Striker Donavan Pearth gave Turf Masters a 1-0 halftime lead with a 12th minute conversion.

Pearth was able to capitalise on the rebound, which he tapped home, after his initial penalty shot was deflected by West Ham's goalkeeper Hollis Simon.

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for 62 runs.

All Saints Pythons and Jennings Tigers also played to a draw in their ABCA encounter at Mack Pond in All Saints over the weekend.

After winning the toss and deciding to bat, All Saints made 232 in 68 overs in their first innings. Michael

Marcellin cracked 59, Andrew Blackman made 50 and Michael Joseph scored 35.

Omarie Joseph claimed three for 31 and Morton Browne took three for 55.

In reply, Jennings crashed to 131 all out in 44.3 overs, with Orlando Peters getting 37. Marcellin grabbed 6

wickets for 35 runs in 13.3 overs.

Asked to follow 101 runs behind, Jennings were 158 for 8 off 44 overs in their second innings when the match ended.

Opener Cameron Miller struck 51 off 41 balls with 8 fours, while Ka-deem Josiah took 3 for 20 and Marcellin picked up 2 for 56.

Kothan Baron wins ABWU invitational road race

Kothan Baron of Team Terminix captured the overall title of the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) Anniversary Invitational Road Race on Sunday, 29th May, 2022.

Baron claimed the overall title by virtue of clocking the fastest time in the Elite Men Class in the event organised by the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) to coincide with the 55th anniversary of the ABWU.

Baron completed the 55-mile race in a time of 2 hours, 27 minutes and 44.80 seconds to capture the Elite Men class.

National cyclist Robert "Ochie" Marsh of East Side Riders secured second place by clocking 2 hours, 29 minutes and 03.38 seconds, with Shawn Weathered of Team Terminix finishing third in 2 hours, 37 minutes and 01.41 seconds.

Delroy Carty of Anguilla and Kevon Boyd of Dominica, finished in fourth and fifth places from a field of eight Elite Men Class competitors.

Tahje Browne of Wadadli Cycling Academy captured the junior division title, which was contested over 55 kilometres (34.17 miles).

Browne clocked 1 hour, 59 minutes and 10.42 seconds to win the Cadet 14 to 17 age group category.

Lindsay Duffy of Road Runners Cycling Club overcame a spirited challenge from Telesha Choy of Team Independent to win the female division.



Tahje Browne of Wadadli Cycling Academy captured the junior division title of the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union Anniversary Invitational Road Race on Sunday, 29th May, 2022. (File photo)

Duffy sped across the finishing line first in a time of 2 hours, 32 minutes and 26.70 seconds, while Choy clocked 2 hours, 34 minutes and 35.45 seconds.

Abbiel Flemming finished ahead of his Road Runners Cycling Club teammate Ken Jackson, to claim the Masters category title.

Flemming completed the distance in a time of 2 hours, 47 minutes and 47.38 seconds, while Jackson crossed the finish line in second place in 2 hours, 48 minutes and 59.92 seconds.

Delvin Peters of Team Terminix seized third place in 2 hours, 52 minutes and 19.86 seconds.

Akheem Tomlinson of Andre Simon Cycling Academy won the Sports Class in 2 hours and 05.68 seconds. Jason Adams and Micah Gore of Road Runners Cycling Club finished in second and third places, respectively.

Adams completed the race in 2 hours and 05.70 seconds, with Gore crossing the finish line in 2 hours and 35.11 seconds.