

PM CONDEMNS CHILD PREDATORS, GOV'T TO TAKE TOUGHER STANCE

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Prime Minister Gaston Browne and his colleague CARICOM heads of government posed for a photograph between meetings during the 6th - 10th June, 2022 Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, California. While there, Prime Minister Browne was pellucid that there is no place within the group for one nation to assume the authority to exclude others from important forums such as the summit, as cooperation among the nations of the Americas is paramount to hemispheric unity in globally challenging times.

PM Browne condemns sexual predators, says not on his watch

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has again spoken out against all forms of criminal conduct and has reaffirmed that his Antigua Barbuda Labour Party will never become a safe haven for offenders under his watch.

A relative of the prime minister was recently convicted of a crime of a predatory sexual nature against a minor.

This morning, Browne took to social media to make it clear that, "The ABLP



Prime Minister Gaston Browne leadership, unlike those in the UPP, does not shield and promote rapists. Rapists and other criminals cannot advocate for or represent the ABLP. We ensure that rap-

ists and other criminals are punished."

Shortly after, in a separate post, Browne continued, "My administration is determined to bring all rapists, including the busmen who have been violating our young girls to justice.

"Let the conviction of my half-brother be a warning to all."

MP for St. Mary's South, Samantha Marshall, also weighed in in support of the prime minister's post saying, "Clearly, you have allowed

the law to run its course, despite the fact that it is a family member. For this you most certainly must be commended. I hope that the victim of this unspeakable crime will receive all the support possible to help her recover from this and to live as normal a life as possible."

Since coming to power in 2014, Prime Minister Browne made it clear that his administration, and those who form it, would lead by example.

He has held firm to this position as two members of his Cabinet resigned after being implicated in public scandals that could have threatened to bring the Browne administration into disrepute.

One of the Cabinet members was subsequently vindicated in the High Court and has been reappointed as a government minister.

The other, embattled MP Asot Michael, has not returned to Cabinet since resigning from office and is now embroiled in a legal battle with the ABLP over his suitability to contest the St. Peter's constituency on the party's ticket.

Browne has also been very critical of the United Progressive Party for its selection of some candidates on their slate who have, in the past, been embroiled in very public and deeply controversial scandals.



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Predator bus drivers: Gov't moves to address emerging problem

A disturbing situation has emerged which is casting a negative light on some bus operators who are being accused of sexually abusing children.

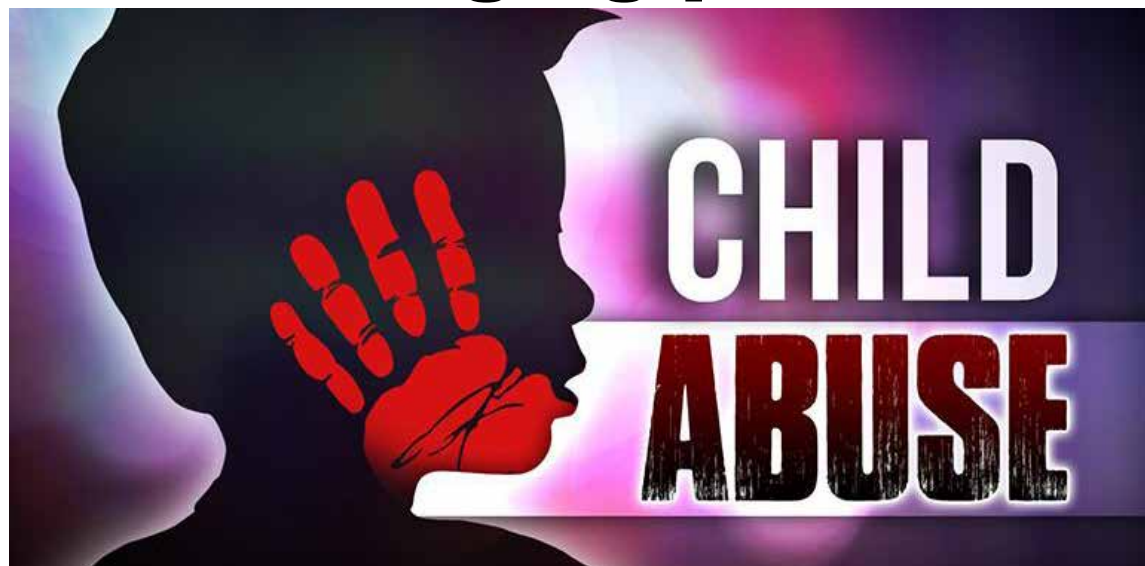
This has forced the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda to respond to the public's concerns and calls for a review of the current laws which address child abuse with the aim of strengthening them to protect vulnerable minors from sexual predators.

At yesterday's post-Cabinet press briefing, Information Minister Melford Nicholas, said the problem was raised during their meeting with the Bus Drivers' Association on Wednesday in which they also discussed additional subsidies in fuel which will allow fares to remain unchanged.

"While bus operators have custodial responsibility for transporting children to and from school and other places, it was very much drawn to our attention that there has been significant abuse - even leading to sexual molestation of these minors - and we have been notified that perhaps the potential for more of this to happen is very much present," said Nicholas.

On Tuesday, Addison Browne - a bus driver - was found guilty of rape at the end of a jury trial in the High Court.

Browne will be sen-



tenced on 15th July, 2022 for the crime which was committed against a 13-year-old girl in 2019.

Nicholas revealed that some bus drivers are suspected to be grooming minors, who instead of attending school are joyriding during the day.

The authorities are now moving swiftly to arrest the problem, with consideration being given to surveillance of bus drivers, the Cabinet spokesman disclosed.

"We have asked the Attorney General's office to look at the regulations affecting public transportation, even where this sector is serviced by private operators, and to work along with the Transport Board to come up with certain other regulations, and of course even from my own ministry, to put more surveillance at the disposal of the police and the Transport Board in the area of the bus terminals."



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PM Browne: Displeased with US policies towards Venezuela, Cuba

Prime Minister Gaston Browne openly expressed his displeasure with the policies of the United States of America concerning Cuba and Venezuela when he met President Joe Biden at last week's Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles.

Speaking at a flag-raising ceremony on Wednesday this week to mark the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Antigua and Barbuda and Venezuela, the prime minister was critical of the United States on several issues including its support for Venezuelan opposition leader, Juan Guaido, and the sanctions it has imposed on that country.

PM Browne reiterated his government's unwavering support for President Nicolas Maduro as the duly elected and legitimate head of the government in Caracas.

"Mr. Guaido, and those supporting him, are imposters. Those who support him (externally) are supporting an imposter," he declared.

He also took issue with the US' decision to exclude Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua from the Summit of the Americas.

"Fundamentally, the Americas belong to all of us. America (the US) is not exclusively 'The Americas' and that's why we were strident in our opposition



Venezuelan ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Carmen Velasquez, (far left) with Prime Minister Gaston Browne and members of the staff of the Venezuelan Embassy.

to the exclusion of these countries from the summit and will continue to do so, because ultimately we want this hemisphere to be one of peace.

"One in which our people are fully integrated, and one in which the resources of this hemisphere can be utilised collectively for the benefit of all our peoples," he emphasised.

Browne pointed out that the US' present policies regarding Venezuela were instituted by the former Donald Trump Administration and expressed surprise that President Biden has maintained them.

The prime minister said he understands that the US'

policies towards Cuba and Venezuela are widely influenced by its domestic politics, especially the desire to capture the vote of the large Cuban community in Florida. Browne maintains, however, that these policies are unconscionable as they are a source of great hardship to the ordinary people who live in both countries..

He called on President Biden to "bell that cat" and end his country's damaging policies.

"When you look at these policies in the context of COVID, fuel, food prices and climate change, I think it is important for the United States pivot and to bring some relief to the Cuban

and Venezuelan people.

"I will go further. These sanctions are so ridiculous, the United States is actually preventing Venezuela from utilising its mineral and oil resources in order to serve its people," he stated.

Calling it fundamentally wrong, the prime minister said the US should allow Venezuela to trade its oil freely which will generate the resources it needs to feed its people.

He further noted that the sanctions also prevent Antigua and Barbuda from purchasing petroleum products from Venezuela at more affordable rates than those available on the international market.

Committee set up to oversee Barbuda Land Registry

High Court Registrar Cecile Hill has been appointed to head a four-member committee that will oversee the establishment of a Land Registry in Barbuda.

The announcement came from Information Minister Melford Nicholas, who said the work of the committee is set to commence with a degree of urgency following this week's Privy Council decision that the land in Barbuda is vested in the Crown.

"We have a special projects team appointed to look into the matter of setting up a land registry for Barbuda. I have been tasked with the responsibility of pulling together the committee.

"We are already in touch with the US company that assisted us when we were setting up the Land Registry here in Antigua," Nicholas revealed.

He named Hill as the head of the team, highlighting her prior experience in helping to set up the Land Registry in Antigua.

"She is uniquely qualified to provide leadership to the team. It is a legal process as land forms a part of the legal underpinnings of any society," he stated.

Along with Hill, Sharon Simmons, Land Registrar, Vernon Bird, a senior surveyor in the Survey Department and Chad Knight Alexander, a Barbudan physical planning specialist, will serve on the committee.

The process of establishing the Land Registry involves surveying and mapping the land on Barbuda leading to a cadastre.

"All has to be done in keeping with the law. Eventually, all the land mass in Barbuda will be demarcated

and form the Land Registry. This will then become part of the overall Land Registry for the unitary state of Antigua and Barbuda," he emphasised.

Nicholas said the process will be conducted "dispassionately" as the team works to dispel notions of the capricious sale of Barbuda's land.

He also addressed a recommendation that has been made to divide Barbuda into several districts.

"Barbuda is a unique place, and based on studies by Knight Alexander there has been a plan submitted five years ago to divide Barbuda into six distinct districts. We are also looking to develop land use policies based on the

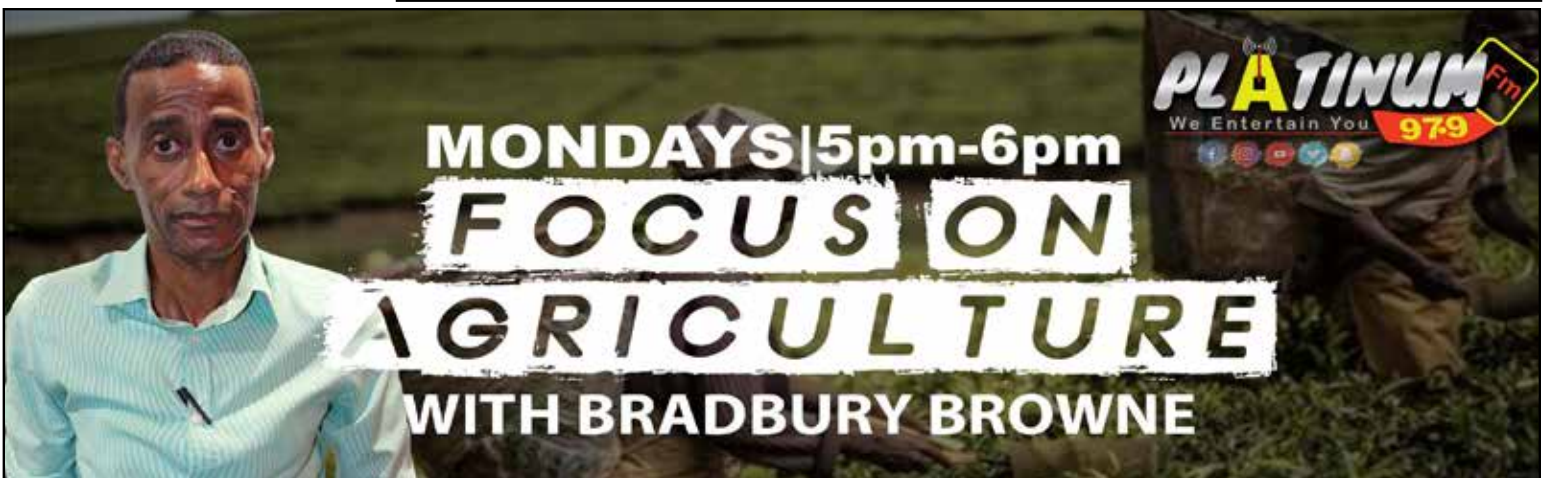
report as well. We will allocate lands for housing, agriculture, tourism and set aside lands for national parks," he further revealed.

The information minister stressed that the government is inclined to favourably adopt the recommendations.

He also reassured the people of Barbuda that the government has no intention of indiscriminately "selling off" the lands in Barbuda as some have suggested.

"Even before the Privy Council's ruling the government has always been mindful of its obligations to develop Barbuda. We are happy that the matter of the lands has finally been settled," he reiterated.

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Fuel subsidy for taxi, bus operators and fisherfolk extended



Cabinet spokesman, Melford Nicholas

Two critical sectors of the economy - transportation and fishing - will see their fuel subsidies extended even if there are further increases in fuel prices in the weeks or months ahead.

This decision followed discussions at Wednesday's Cabinet meeting where representatives from the Bus Association and the Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board (ABTB) met with the Cabinet.

Cabinet spokesman, Melford Nicholas, reported that the meeting followed further the increases in fuel prices that took effect on

Monday this week.

This latest price hike caused concern among beneficiaries of the subsidy as the ABTB awaited the go-ahead from Cabinet to extend the fuel subsidy.

"In the period when the increases were announced and Wednesday's meeting, the beneficiaries had to pay the higher costs that led to the rumblings. But the Cabinet moved quickly on Wednesday to resolve the issue," Nicholas explained.

He continued that the ABTB has been given clearance to make future adjust-

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Tourism officials pleased with airlift

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has expressed satisfaction with the increased airlift into the country.

Colin James told tourism stakeholders at a recent roundtable discussion, that flights into V. C. Bird International Airport has increased from the United States.

“In 2019 was our best year, and this year, to the end of April we have had more airlift out of the USA than we’ve had before.

“Going to the end of the year, we have American Airlines having daily services from JFK [International Airport in New York] right to the end of the year. We have our good colleagues from Frontier [Airlines], who have served us from December of last year with a weekly service from

Orlando, which is doing remarkably well,” James noted.

The Tourism Authority’s CEO hinted at future talks with Frontier Airlines which could result in additional flights from Orlando, Florida.

James revealed that for the first time in more than a decade, the UK market has surpassed the United States in monthly arrivals.

By the end of April, UK arrivals were up 14%, (33,000), when compared to 2019.

“We find the key source markets where the visitors have been coming from, we’ve been able to increase the airlift and we’ve been able to see the increase in numbers and as you can see, we are heading in the right direction,” he said.

Also, for the month of April, 13,000 Americans



Colin James arrived in the country when compared to 11,000 for the same period in 2019.

Caribbean arrivals also increased, according to the

CEO of the Tourism Authority, largely due to Caribbean Airlines, LIAT and InterCaribbean Airways.

Emerging from lockdown, James revealed that the number of visitors arriving from various destinations, including the Caribbean, is more favourable than the figures recorded in 2019.

“We are working assiduously with all our airline partners to ensure we can restore that lift into the destination. We are all in this thing together. Without planes, nobody can come here, so part of the remit of the Tourism Authority is to work with our airline partners and to try our very best to restore our lift,” James assured.

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ments as necessary to the subsidy arrangement as the government is prepared to absorb all further increases in the cost of fuel for bus and taxi operators and fishermen.

This means that the groups covered by the subsidy will continue to pay \$12.50 for a gallon of gasoline.

According to the information minister, this move is aimed at ensuring that fuel costs remain stable which will ensure that bus and taxi fares will remain untouched and to assure the cost of seafood remains stable.

Noting that fuel price increases have now become a political issue, Nicholas offered a detailed explanation of the mech-

anism behind fuel prices increases, all of which are beyond the control of the government.

“Where we have control is with the consumption tax that is placed on fuel. We have seen a situation where the government’s intake from this tax has been reducing over time as the government sought to absorb the higher prices.

“This has been reflected in lower income for the government due to a shrinking government margin on consumption tax. Based on this, it would mean that the government would have to pay West Indies Oil Company from the treasury for fuel instead of collecting the consumption tax and we cannot afford to do this,” he declared.



Drivers unharmed in Sir George Walter Highway accident

Two drivers escaped unscathed yesterday morning in an accident on Sir George Walter Highway, just outside the headquarters of the Immigration Department.

It took place in the left lane of the

highway as both cars were heading north shortly after 8am.

An eyewitness reported that both drivers approached the area at high speed just before the accident occurred.

According to the man, who wit-

nessed the collision from the compound of the Immigration Department, the white Honda Civic was in front of a red vehicle in the left lane and attempted to reduce its speed to access the entrance of the Sealey building. The appeared to have difficulty doing so and was clipped by the red car, which kept on going.

The incident caused the white Honda Civic, owned by an immigration officer who was heading to work, to flip multiple times covering several yards, before coming to a stop, upside down, at the exit of the compound. During its roll, the Civic hit a Toyota Vitz that was accessing Sir George Walter Highway.

Emergency services, including fire and medical responders, arrived on the scene shortly after the accident, but their services were not required as both drivers were unharmed.

Police also arrived to begin their own investigation into the accident, which included interviews with the drivers involved.

Speeding on newly paved roads, especially Sir George Walter Highway, has resulted in numerous accidents recently. This reckless driving has continued despite appeals from the Traffic Department for drivers to slow down and exercise due care and caution.

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Department of Environment awards Climate Change Awareness Competition winners

The Department of Environment has recognised the efforts of the winners of its 2022 Climate Change Awareness Campaign and Survey.

In a recently held awards ceremony, seven preschools were awarded with environmentally friendly, practical equipment that will help them become more resilient to climate change events including drought.

The campaign focused on raising awareness about the Technology Needs Assessment (TNA) Project and other climate change related documents such as the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Na-



tional Gender Assessment Survey 2021.

As part of the campaign, a survey was launched on climate change with respondents choosing a preschool to be awarded a

climate-smart technology device.

Receiving the most votes, the Deanery Lane Daycare and Preschool won a water tank, along with its installation and set-up.

The other schools that were awarded were:

- Beacon Light Nazarene Academy Preschool – Water Tank;
- Greenbay Preschool – Atmospheric Water Generator;
- Simon Bolivar Preschool – Solar AC Unit;
- Sir Luther Wynter Preschool – LED Lights;
- St. John’s Catholic Early Childhood Centre – Atmospheric Water Generator;
- Deanery Lane Daycare/Preschool – Water Tank and,
- Eleven Hour Sunshine Daycare and Preschool – Atmospheric Water Generator.

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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

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Opinion

Summit of the Americas was worth attending

By Sir Ronald Sanders

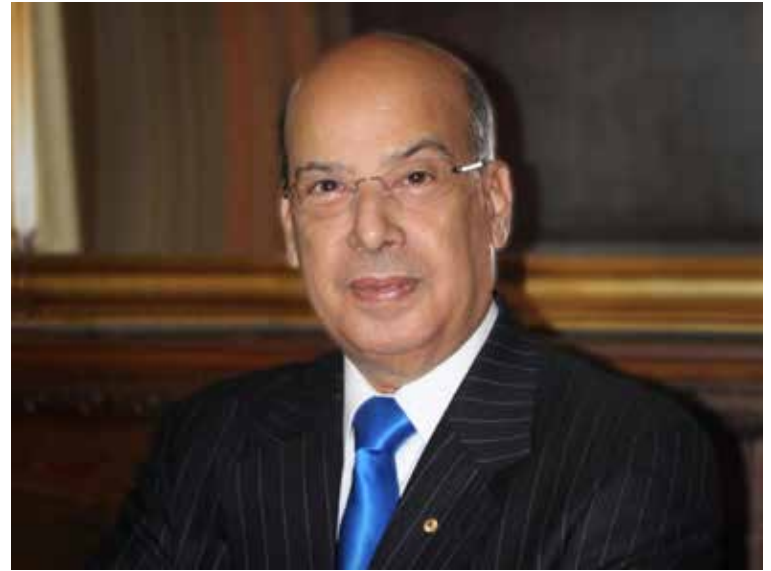
(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States of America and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London and Massey College in the University of Toronto)

As beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, so is success or failure measured by the beneficiary or the overlooked. Summits of the Americas, from the time they were initiated by the administration of the US in 1994, have overlooked the Caribbean.

Not so, the 2022 Sum-

mit held in Los Angeles from June 8 to June 10. The 14 independent CARICOM countries, except for St Vincent and the Grenadines, went into this Summit with a greater measure of confidence in themselves and determination not to be overlooked or ignored. They reaped the reward.

At a private meeting on the eve of the Summit, attended by all but 4 of their number, the CARICOM Heads of Government decided that they would not be satisfied with a scheduled meeting only with US Vice President Kamala Harris. They wanted President Biden present. They made it clear that while no disre-



Sir Ronald Sanders

spect was meant toward the Vice President, the critical issues that confronted their countries required the presence of the President himself to make the necessary decisions.

The President not only turned up, but he engaged fully with the CARICOM leaders and the President of the Dominican Republic. His engagement was so in-

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tense that the start of the first plenary session of the Summit, at which he was the first scheduled Speaker, had to be delayed while he satisfactorily concluded the discussion. Word spreading around the halls of the Los Angeles Conference Centre that the President was meeting Caribbean leaders, puzzled delegates from larger Latin American countries and created envy – the latter spoken in whispers.

What caused this unscheduled meeting to happen was a display of CARICOM unity that has only recently reignited in the Group. It was driven by the consensus on the way forward for CARICOM countries, fashioned two weeks before in Guyana at an Agricultural Investment Forum, led by Guyana's President Irfaan Ali with the strong support of Barbados' Mia Mottley, Trinidad and Tobago's Keith Rowley, Antigua and Barbuda's



Gaston Browne, Belize's Juan Briceño and Dominica's Roosevelt Skerrit.

At that Forum, the representative group of leaders had agreed on an actionable and time-bound plan regarding food and energy security, transportation of food within the region, and the removal of tariff barriers

between CARICOM countries. They also agreed that, after initial hesitation by several of them, they would attend the Summit of the Americas not only to register their dissatisfaction with the US decision not to invite the leaders of Cuba and Venezuela particularly, but

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Opinion



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to press for US support for CARICOM's action plan.

In Los Angeles they went forward with that spirit of unity, meeting President Biden not with a begging bowl but with proposals showing what CARICOM countries could and would do, and how the US could help them gain access to international financing, including from the US itself.

The exchange with Biden and Harris was courteous but candid, hard truths were exposed but with honesty and respect.

US officials in the room might have been concerned about the readiness to act that President Biden displayed, but whatever bureaucratic delays might yet



ensue, no one could doubt that action had been set in motion.

Sceptics, including persons like me, who have attended many inter-gov-

ernmental meetings where statements are made and eventually discarded, are tempted to see proof before accepting sincerity. But there was an electricity in

the Biden encounter that appeared more credible; it generated a sense that something might actually come of it.

The US President agreed with CARICOM leaders and the President of the Dominican Republic that they would establish three joint committees, which would be "focused, and time bound in order to urgently address challenges related to energy security, food security, and development/debt finance in the region".

Not five days had elapsed when, on June 14, the US government wrote to CARICOM Heads and the President of the Dominican Republic, announcing its co-chairs of the Committees *cont'd on pg 13*

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and its readiness to convene a meeting on June 20 “to discuss next steps towards achieving concrete, near-term progress on the designated topics”.

This response has to be rated among the fastest that the Caribbean has had from the US concerning any matters that were initiated by regional countries.

As I remarked in an interview, published in the Miami Herald on June 10: “This has been a breakthrough meeting for us. Biden has shown that he’s willing to move.”

Movement, however, must not be mistaken for progress which will only be achieved if CARICOM countries and the Dominican Republic participate in these Committees with unity of purpose and with solid arguments that are backed by rigorous research. The persons, nominated by the Caribbean side should also be experienced and clear-eyed negotiators.

The Caribbean urgently needs drastic change in the rules applied to access for concessionary financing by the International Financial Institutions over whose policies the US, as one of the largest and richest members, exercise influence.

The region also requires change in lending policies to match loans to needs. One of the region’s biggest needs now is transportation to move food production within the region by sea and air, reducing dependence on

foreign foods, strengthening agricultural sectors, and lowering the cost of food products.

Hanging over every CARICOM country is also huge debt incurred to cope with external events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, high oil prices and increased costs of shipping, and natural disasters – hurricanes,

floods and droughts. There is an urgency to secure debt reduction, debt forgiveness, and debt rescheduling.

The countries of the region cannot repay debt, on current terms, and yet implement the plans that will make the difference to their survival and progress.

No Summit of the Americas in the past could reason-

ably have been considered a success by the Caribbean, but at this Ninth Summit, the Caribbean by the harmony and determination of its leadership, achieved movement. Progress depends on maintaining both resolve and unity.

For responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

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CDB urges region to have endurance to deal with global challenges

The Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has urged regional countries to adopt the position of a sprinter whilst having the endurance of a marathoner amidst the lingering effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the upheavals created by the Russia-Ukraine war.

CDB President, Dr. Hyginus “Gene” Leon says the financial institution is positioning itself to assist regional countries to meet their developmental goals amidst these challenges.

Leon recalled that after he became head of the region’s premier financial institution last year, he had said then that the board of governors must move with deliberate haste.

“I also said that there can be no sustained development without resilience, and because development has to be holistic, meaning leaving no aspect behind, resilience must therefore be multi-faceted, and so we need a resilience ecosystem capable of absorbing the exogenous shocks we are exposed to,” he told the opening of the 52nd annual meeting of the CDB Board of governors.

“This year’s meeting takes place against the



CDB President, Dr. Hyginus “Gene” Leon

backdrop of the enduring aftermath of COVID-19 and now the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war. This conflict has already affected commodity and financial markets, raised energy prices, increased inflation, heightened food insecurity, and slowed global growth.”

Leon said the sharp increase in energy prices is further straining fragile fiscal positions in CDB borrowing member countries (BMCs) and threatening to derail the nascent economic recovery.

“Even as growth in the Caribbean region is expected to rebound to around six percent in 2022 — on the strength of the rebound in

tourism and the performance of Guyana — and from an average decline of around nine percent in 2020, roughly half of our internationally rated BMCs have suffered credit downgrades since the onset of the pandemic.”

Consequently, many Caribbean governments are now “challenged to walk an economic tightrope while, at the same time, trying to drive the development agenda.”

Addressing the governors directly, Leon said sustainable recovery “now hangs in the balance and the imperative to aggressively pursue resilience is even more urgent.

“With this in mind, I

take as my starting point today the words of my dear friend and brother (President of the Africa Development Bank (ADB), Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina) we must be prepared to sprint fast like Shelly-Ann Fraser Pryce of Jamaica and run long like Eliud Kipchoge of Kenya — that is to say — we must accelerate our development trajectory and we must be able to stay the course over the long haul, that is developed once started must be sustained.”

Leon said the 2030 developmental targets are not just boxes to be checked off, adding that “the path we embark on must take us beyond 2030”. *cont’d on pg 15*

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Addressing the issue of accelerating and sustaining development, Leon first reflected on the past year, saying that in his maiden presentation to the board of governors last year, he outlined an agenda that focused on “the transformative and sustainable development of our BMCs with the ultimate goal of improving the welfare of our people.”

Leon said he has been consistently promoting this approach regionally as it speaks to development that is both holistic and inclusive, with resilience and innovation as cornerstones.

“The fundamental themes around which much of my efforts have been centred are sustainable livelihoods; resilient economies; connectivity; and innovation hub,” he told the meeting, being held under the theme “Measure Better to Target Better: Adaptation and Resilience.”

The St. Lucia-born CDB president said these themes are fully aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that the region needs to pursue expeditiously “if we are to fundamentally alter the development path of the region and place our societies on a higher and more resilient sustainable welfare path in the future”.

He said the challenge is how best to navigate a safe path from legacy structural weaknesses to transformative development, while maintaining debt sustainability, enhancing macro-economic and financial stability, and building resilience against a myriad of shocks.

Among shocks, he highlighted climate change, “which if unchecked can pose an existential threat to our region.

“Governors, with the best of intentions and with access to adequate and affordable finance, our efforts will labour in producing results without a significant jolt to our implementation capacity,” he said, adding to achieve this, the CDB’s first order of business was

to revise its strategic plan to reflect the changed context and circumstances of the Caribbean development trajectory.

“Reflecting our new vision, we anchored the revised plan on five dimensions of resilience – social resilience, productive capacity resilience, environmental resilience, institutional resilience, and financial resilience.”

Then, in alignment with a key theme over the past year of measuring better to target better, the CDB recognized that it needed to become “a knowledge-enabled learning organisation — a virtual knowledge hub, a network of networks capable of accessing global information, culling experiences of and factors contributing to success, and creating value through strategies that, when implemented, can yield transformative development,” Leon said.

He said the philosophy of embracing knowledge creation — from accumulation to discovery to strategic transformation — “touches everything we do and manifests in every development challenge we face”

These range from achieving food security to compiling the genome structure of herbs for creating medicines to designing resilient roofs capable of withstanding the fury of hurricanes while providing an adequate supply of clean, renewable energy. In other words, we need to embrace the industrialization of knowledge.

“This will require improvements in current processes, organisational culture, technology, and a fearless growth-oriented mindset to underpin our knowledge management and evidence-based decision creation.”

Leon said the knowledge hub could encompass a tracker for the region’s development progress; be a platform for policy options and design based on the SDGs; promote warehoused information on feasible and development-driven investment opportunities, the regulatory environment, and doing

business conditions that could promote cross-border investments; include a database with comparable economic, social, and environmental statistics, and partial-screened project ideas that could help advance sustainable development; and provide a fertile ground for spawning innovative ideas and products.

He further said in recognition of the fact that the internal resilience capacity of CDB BMCs must be accounted for in determining their ability to recover from exogenous shocks, the CDB made steady progress with the development of the Recovery Duration Adjuster (RDA).

This builds on the UN Multidimensional Vulnerability Index by integrating vulnerability and resilience in a dynamic and forward-looking manner to better reflect the economic, social, and environmental realities of small island developing states (SIDS).

“This framework focuses on measuring the internal resilience capacity of SIDS which, because of their peculiar vulnerabilities and state of development, face the reality of a much longer recovery time from a shock compared with developed nations.”

Leon told the meeting that the framework proposes to replace gross national income which is widely recognized as an inadequate metric to determine access to concessional finance, with an internal resilience capacity metric for gauging a country’s eligibility to access adequate and affordable financing.

“We launched this framework at the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021 in the United Kingdom and have since held discussions and made presentations to several stakeholder groups including the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Alliance of Small Island States, and the United Nations High-Level Panel on the Multi-Dimensional Vulnerability Index,” Leon said.

Crime



Electronic-sniffing dog helps in paedophilia arrest in Mexico

AP - An unusual alliance of international activist groups, Mexican prosecutors and a dog trained to sniff out memory devices joined forces this month to catch a high-profile suspected paedophile in Mexico City.

First, Free a Girl, a Netherlands-based group that fights human trafficking, tipped off activists at the U.S.-based Operation Underground Railroad that Jason Maatman, a Dutch man who openly advocated sex with children, had gone to Mexico after fleeing pending court cases in the Netherlands.

Maatman apparently thought loose Mexican law enforcement would allow him to operate freely in Mexico City, a sprawling metropolis of 21 million where most crimes go unpunished.

But he didn't count on Hidu, a recent graduate of a dog academy that teaches canines to sniff out triphenylphosphine oxide, or TPPO, a chemical coating used in electronic devices like flash drives and memory cards.

"Three weeks ago, we learned that Nelson M. seemed to be active in Mexico, and was a serious danger to children," said Evelien Hölsken, the director of Free a Girl. She said the group contacted Operation Underground Railroad "and asked if they could start an investigation."

Maatman was apparently so sure of himself he talked openly about his activities on the internet. But Mexican prosecutors were ready to work with the nongovernmental organisations.

Operation Underground Railroad quickly set up a plan to lure Maatman into a trap, using the chat rooms and social media spaces he was active on.

"We were able to confirm he was in Mexico and then talking to him in just different chat rooms. He said, 'I'm in a really kind of dangerous rundown



This May 2022 handout photo released by Operation Underground Railroad shows Hidu, an electronics detection dog, trained to sniff out a certain chemical used in the manufacture of small memory devices like flash drives, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The anti-sex-trafficking group loaned Hidu to help Mexico City prosecutors search the apartment of a suspected Dutch child pornography promoter arrested in early June. Hidu sniffed out a hidden cell phone and hard drives that authorities said were filled with child porn images. (Operation Underground Railroad via AP)

area.

"I don't want to give you my address. I don't want you guys to come see me, but you can come meet me at a gas station'," said Matt Osborne, the group's director of global operations.

Mexico City prosecution detectives were waiting when Maatman showed up at a bus station — near a gas station — on the edge of the city's main park on June 5.

Prosecutor Ernestina Godoy said Maatman was found to have a pistol and several doses of cocaine in his possession.

Maatman is being held at a Mexico City prison on charges of human trafficking and drug and weapons possession. He does not have an attorney of record nor could he be reached for comment.

"Our understanding was that he was entertaining offers from other

people who wanted to go into business with him," apparently to sell or monetize a trove of sexually explicit material involving young children, Osborne said. "He was talking that he needed money."

The problem was that he has caught at a bus stop — not at his home — and nobody knew where he was living. Nobody knew where he could have stashed any child sexual abuse material, which is usually held in digital form.

City prosecutors used a network of street surveillance cameras to trace Maatman's movements back to a dingy apartment he was renting on the city's rough east side. Tall and with reddish hair, the Dutchman stood out in that area.

Once police obtained a search warrant, that is where Hidu came in;
cont'd on pg 17

cont'd from pg 16

a black lab, he had been trained by Todd Jordan at his Jordan Detection K9 academy in Indianapolis, Indiana.

TPPO is a chemical used in small, solid-state memory devices to avoid overheating. There is just enough of its distinctive odour for dogs to locate it.

Jordan started out by training "accelerant detection" dogs, to look for evidence in possible arson cases in which an accelerant — things like gasoline — may have been used to start a blaze.

But the electronics detection dogs he's trained — now 83 and counting — have come to be more in demand because criminals now use flash drives to store everything from contacts to cryptocurrencies used in drug deals.

"I think the electronics dogs have now surpassed the accelerant canines because of just the need of them, and just because of the way the world is right now," said Jordan.

"These dogs, I mean just everybody, every internet crimes task force could use one of these."

Hidu was brand new at the work; he had graduated just two weeks before and this was his first case — In fact, it was the first overseas case that any of Jordan's dogs had handled.

O.U.R. flew Hidu and his handler to Mexico City, where prosecutors were about to search the apartment.

"My understanding is there was a cell phone hidden in a laundry basket with just rancid total terrible laundry, you know, dirty clothes in one corner that no one would go into," Osborne said. "The dog found that phone."

Hidu found more child porn material taped to a wall beneath a painting, Osborne said. "The dog sniffed out

a couple of the hard drives in a few places in his apartment that were difficult for humans to find, but the dog sniffed it out."

Prosecutors said the drives and devices contained about 4 terabytes of child sexual abuse material.

Godoy, the prosecutor, credited Operation Underground Railroad and Hidu for their help in the bust.

"The message is clear for those who prey on a girl, a boy or an adolescent: In Mexico City there will be no room for impunity, and those that hurt or target them will be found, tried and sentenced," Godoy said.

But questions remained. "Why was he (Maatman) not placed on an international wanted list?" by Dutch authorities, Hölksen said.

Pointe Xpress Weekend Puzzle

ACROSS

- 1) "Manage" lead-in
- 6) Office note
- 10) Lightning-fast punch
- 13) Perform without preparation
- 14) Met highlight
- 15) Matador's adversary
- 16) Appetizer: What Jesus fed 5,000 with
- 19) Thought of nothing ____
- 20) Mingo portrayal Ed
- 21) Speaks with much arm-waving
- 22) Mushroom part
- 24) Child's rocker, in child-speak
- 25) Convenient money source
- 27) Repeated part of a song
- 31) Jenny of weight loss
- 33) Of the finest quality
- 34) Hold firmly
- 38) Entree: Cowpoke's staples
- 41) Gives the once-over
- 42) Active Sicilian volcano
- 43) Neglects to include
- 44) Given a hard time
- 46) Sodom fugitive
- 47) Lead-sharing actor
- 51) Change course suddenly
- 53) Computer character code
- 54) Do a secretary's job
- 57) The majority
- 60) Dessert: Birthday party treats
- 63) Standing in the military?
- 64) Electric guitar attachments
- 65) Change the hue anew
- 66) Miner's find
- 67) School administration?
- 68) Nodded answers

DOWN

- 1) Like canaries that sing
- 2) Word with "teen" or "matinee"
- 3) Fellow pupil
- 4) Hold, as attention
- 5) Award bestowed by the queen, for short
- 6) Palindromic form of address
- 7) Long-winged shore eagle
- 8) USNA students
- 9) Clumsy one
- 10) Candy and Hancock
- 11) Sharp, narrow mountain ridge
- 12) Given to ordering people about
- 15) Onetime Russian ruler
- 17) Copycat's request
- 18) Stuff to pump
- 23) "I conclude that ..."
- 24) Took off quickly
- 25) Cause for a massage
- 26) Donahue or Aikman
- 28) Purposely eschews meals
- 29) Colorful equines
- 30) Year's chronicle
- 32) Much-faked items
- 34) Diamond, pearl or sapphire
- 35) Sante Fe and Amtrak
- 36) "And lead us not ____ ..."
- 37) "Do you want to hear a secret?"
- 39) Toothed wheel
- 40) Foreshadow
- 44) Barbershop floor collection
- 45) All tied up
- 47) City on the world's longest river
- 48) "Sesame Street" grouch
- 49) Script part
- 50) Bloodsucking insect
- 52) "And now ..." sayer
- 54) Starlet's dream
- 55) Little tricksters
- 56) Farthest from first
- 58) Type of terrier
- 59) Shirts with messages
- 61) "Dig in!"
- 62) Towel off

COMBO MEALS

By Timothy E. Parker

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
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Beyoncé announces new album 'Renaissance' to drop July 29

Beyoncé has revealed the title and release date for her next studio album, with the 16-track "Renaissance" set to drop July 29.

The superstar began listing the music and products on her website Thursday and several streaming services, including Tidal and Spotify, also announced the Beyoncé release.

Beyoncé tipped off fans that something important was coming when she removed her profile photos across all her social media platforms last week.

"Renaissance" would be the fol-

low-up to 2016's "Lemonade," but the artist has been hard at work of late, featured on rapper Megan Thee Stallion's remix of "Savage" and opening the 2022 Academy Awards with a performance of her song "Be Alive," from the film "King Richard."

In 2019, she curated and produced the soundtrack album "The Lion King: The Gift," for the remake of "The Lion King."

The song "Black Parade" from the soundtrack won a Grammy in 2021 for best R&B performance, Beyoncé's 28th Grammy. (AP)



Beyoncé appears at the 63rd annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on March 14, 2021. Beyoncé has revealed the title and release date for her next album, with the 16-track "Renaissance" set to drop on July 29 (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello, File)

Kevin Spacey 'strenuously' denies sex charges, granted bail

Kevin Spacey "strenuously denies" allegations of sexual assault, his lawyer said Thursday, as the Oscar-winning actor appeared in a London court to face five charges of offenses against three men.

Photographers and television camera crews thronged Spacey, 62, as he arrived at London's Westminster Magistrates Court for the preliminary hearing, walking into court accompanied by members of his legal team and two police officers.

Spacey sat in the glass-fronted dock during the half-hour hearing, standing to give his full name — Kevin Spacey Fowler — as well as his birthdate and a London address.

He was not asked to



Actor Kevin Spacey arrives at the Westminster Magistrates court in London, Thursday, June 16, 2022. Spacey is appearing in a court in London on Thursday after he was charged with sexual offenses against three men. The 62-year-old Spacey is accused of four counts of sexual assault and one count of causing a person to engage in penetrative sexual activity without consent. (AP Photo/David Cliff)

enter a formal plea, but his lawyer, Patrick Gibbs, said: "Mr. Spacey strenuously denies any and all criminality in this case."

"He has returned to the

U.K. in order to establish his innocence," Gibbs said. "He needs to answer these charges if he is to proceed with his life."

Deputy Chief Magis-

trate Tan Ikram granted Spacey unconditional bail until his next appearance, a plea hearing scheduled for July 14 at London's Southwark Crown Court. He is free to return to the U.S. in the meantime.

The former "House of Cards" star is accused of four counts of sexual assault and one count of causing a person to engage in penetrative sexual activity without consent.

The alleged incidents took place in London between March 2005 and August 2008, and one in western England in April 2013. The victims are now in their 30s and 40s.

In a statement issued last month, Spacey said he would travel to Britain

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Nipsey Hussle's last moments detailed as murder trial opens

By Jonathan Landrum Jr.

Rapper Nipsey Hussle was gunned down outside his clothing shop in a calculated, premeditated fashion by a man upset over a discussion about snitching, a prosecutor told jurors Wednesday at the outset of a long-delayed murder trial.

Deputy District Attorney John McKinney said during his opening statement that there's "no doubt" Eric R. Holder knew in advance that he would kill Hussle.

The prosecutor described the sequence of events, including the talk about "snitching," before Hussle's shooting death three years ago in the South Los Angeles neighbourhood where both men grew up and the rapper was helping revitalise.

Two others were wounded in the shooting.

In addition to shooting Hussle at least 10 times, Holder kicked the rapper in the head before fleeing, McKinney told the jury assembled in a downtown Los Angeles courtroom.

"He clearly thought about what he was going to do before he did it," McKinney told jurors about Holder's intentions.

Holder, 32, faces one count of first degree-murder and two counts of attempted first-degree murder.

Hussle, a hip-hop artist, father of two, and widely beloved South LA local born Ermias Asghedom, was shot and killed at age 33 on March 31, 2019, in the parking lot outside his store, known as The Marathon.

McKinney said Holder and Hussle knew each other, growing up in the same neighbourhood where they were members of the same gang, the Rollin' 60s.

In his opening statement, McKinney showed jurors videos and photos of the shooting and its aftermath.

Images showed the shooting and Holder fleeing the scene, wearing a red shirt and bandana while carrying a semiautomatic gun and a revolver.

After a two-day man-



Eric Holder (left) is on trial for the 2019 murder of Grammy Award winning rapper, Nipsey Hussle (right).

hunt, Holder was arrested, and two months later he was indicted by a grand jury.

McKinney said the shooting stemmed from Hussle hearing that Holder was a snitch and needed to "clear that up."

Before the shooting, he said the rapper and his two friends were having a "cool conversation" with Holder. He said Hussle visited the store without any security.

Attorney Aaron Jansen has a formidable task in defending Holder, who could get life in prison if convicted.

ed.

Multiple eyewitnesses who knew both Holder and Hussle told police and grand jurors that Holder walked up to Hussle and gunned him down.

Jansen has said that the killing of Hussle was not premeditated, and the shooting of the other two men was not intended at all, making the first-degree murder and attempted murder charges excessive. He is also likely to make Holder's mental health an issue.

On Wednesday, Jansen said Holder was triggered and didn't have time to cool off before he gunned down Hussle saying this is a case of "heated passion."

Attorneys have spent nearly two weeks choosing a jury, and the trial is expected to last about two more weeks.

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to face the charges and was confident he would "prove my innocence."

Spacey was questioned by British police in 2019 about claims by several men that he had assaulted them. The two-time Academy Award winner ran London's Old Vic theatre between 2004 and 2015.

Spacey won a best supporting actor

Academy Award for the 1995 film "The Usual Suspects" and a lead actor Oscar for the 1999 movie "American Beauty."

But his celebrated career came to an abrupt halt in 2017 when actor Anthony Rapp accused the star of assaulting him at a party in the 1980s, when Rapp was a teenager. Spacey denies the allegations.

(AP)



High Commission of India

invites you to

8th International Day of Yoga



'Yoga for Humanity'

Venue: Government House, St. John's, Antigua.

Date: Sunday, 19th June, 2022

Time: 16:30- 18:00 hrs

RSVP: Mr. Vijay Tewani

+1 (268) 724-4940; vtewani@yahoo.com

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Entry gratis, bring your yoga mats

Cuba sugar harvest only half of expected; sector in 'crisis'

AP - Cuba, once legendary for its sugar cane, produced only about half the sugar it had hoped to this season, and authorities acknowledged that while they will cover internal demand they will not be able to meet their international commitments.

"It's not a secret, the sector is in crisis," Dionis Pérez, director of communication at Azcuba, the government agency that regulates sugar production on the island, told reporters Wednesday. "This year we have fulfilled 53% of the harvest."

Pérez did not say how much sugar had been harvested, but at the end of last year Economy Minister Alejandro Gil said the state plan was to produce 911,000 tons of this sugar harvest, which concluded in May. The percentage given by Pérez would mean that production was about 482,000 tons.

The figure is half the 800,000 tons harvested in 2020-2021 and is the lowest figure in at least 100 years. In the 1980s, Cuba produced up to 8 million tons of sugar a year.

Pérez said the reasons for this season's low pro-



Farmers use machetes to weed a sugar cane field in Madruga, Cuba, Thursday, April 29, 2021. According to local authorities, Cuba has been able to reach only half of its sugar production plan for 2022, far from the huge harvests from many decades ago, the Caribbean island nation will only be able to cover its local market and will not export any of its sugar production to foreign markets. (AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa, File)

duction include a shortage of herbicides and fertilisers, a delay in starting up sugar

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Unilever Caribbean Limited to send home more than 100 workers

CMC – The manufacturing company, Unilever Caribbean Ltd (UCL), says it will dismiss more than 100 workers as it closes its manufacturing plants in Trinidad and Tobago.

In a statement, the company, a subsidiary of Unilever Overseas Holdings AG, said it had given official notice of retrenchment to 118 workers.

"Before instituting this retrenchment exercise, UCL engaged in extensive consultations with the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU). These in-depth discussions were meant to reach a mutually agreeable outcome, if at all possible,



in the interest of all parties, especially the affected workers," said UCL, which sold its local operations to international company Upfield in 2018 for €6.825 billion (TT\$48,252 billion).

The local subsidiary had been operating in three segments, personal care, home care, and food. The

home care category is manufactured at its operations in Trinidad while UCL acts as a distributor for the rest of its parent company products.

UCL was incorporated in 1929, and an official of the OWTU, told a local newspaper that there is a belief that the company will

move its operations to countries in Latin America with larger land space.

"After 93 years, they are shutting down. Sooner or later all our manufacturing will become warehouses," the union official said.

UCL said it would continue to prioritise the safety of workers and equipment and that it "will abide by and operate in accordance with all legal obligations in all matters relating to this decision.

"The company wishes to express its deep appreciation for the service and contribution made by its employees over the past years," the statement added.

Barbados not rushing into new IMF agreement, welcomes Fund's new managing director

CMC – The managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Kristalina Georgieva, arrived in Barbados on Tuesday for a four-day visit with the Barbados government indicating that no decisions on a future program with the Washington-based financial institution would be made this week.

In October 2018, the IMF approved a US\$290 million agreement with Barbados under its Extended Fund Facility (EFF) that is due to end in September.

But Prime Minister Mia Mottley, commenting on the first-ever visit of an IMF managing director to the Caribbean, told reporters, no decisions on a future program would be made this week.

“We’re not making the decision this week,” she said, adding that discussions started Monday with the social partners.

“We’re going to have conversations with the Fund and we will make the decisions in the next few weeks.

“But rest assured that the same government that said to the world and the IMF that we want a balanced approach that puts people at the centre of our adjustment still is going to have the same approach whether we go back into a program or we don’t. By the same token, even if we go into a program, the time has come for Barbados to tell its story to the international capital,” she added.

On Monday, the IMF announced that Kristalina Georgieva is to participate in a panel discussion on capacity-building partnerships for a more resilient Caribbean on Thursday.

She will be joined on the panel by Prime Minister Mottley, and the Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), Timothy Antoine, who is also chairperson of the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) Steering Committee.

The discussion will be moderated by Ilan Goldfajn, the Director of the IMF



IMF Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva

Western Hemisphere Department.

According to the Washington-based financial institution, since the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Caribbean policymakers have had to respond to the immediate and enormous challenges posed by the pandemic, while continuing to implement structural transformations to make the region more prosperous, inclusive, and resilient to natural disasters, the climate crisis, and fiscal risks.

Georgieva will also participate in a one-on-one conversation with Dr. Simon Naitram, lecturer in Economics at the University

of the West Indies Cave Hill (UWI) and President of Barbados Economics Society, Thursday and the following day participate in an IMF High-Level Panel Discussion on Building Resilience and Sustainability in the Caribbean.

She will be joined during the one-hour discussion by Prime Minister Mottley, and Canada’s Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland.

The discussion will be moderated by Jamaica’s Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Nigel Clarke.

Prime Minister Mottley and Georgieva will host a joint news conference on Friday.

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mills, and even a lack of oxygen — which was hoarded by the health sector to combat COVID-19 — needed to repair breakages. He also blamed a lack of fuel and spare tires due to U.S. sanctions.

He said it was not realistic to compare current sugar production to that of the 1980s. “I had 150 (sugar) mills then, now I have 56. Fifty-four of those were active, and of those 54

only 35 contributed to the harvest.”

In 2002, authorities closed half of the island’s 150 mills, and in the subsequent years others were dismantled amid falling sugar prices.

Many of the old facilities dated from before the Cuban revolution in the 1950s. Sugar cane fields were reduced and thousands of people lost their jobs.

Pérez said higher production is not expected next year since the same

problems will exist and authorities plan to reduce the number of sugar mills used to 26.

Authorities will hold a sugar and cane derivatives conference in the coming week.

Pérez said this season’s production will cover internal demand of about 500,000 tons but not the 400,000 tons per year contracted with China.

“We will have to renegotiate,” he said.

Jamaican PM to take advantage of US multi-billion-dollar investments

CMC - The government says it is strategically positioning Jamaica as a globally competitive logistics hub and an efficient investment destination in a bid to take advantage of a new wave of US multibillion-dollar investments projected for the Caribbean region, which will create myriad opportunities for economic growth and development.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness, addressing the Eighth Annual International Conference and Exhibition (AICE), said Jamaica, by way of investments in several key sectors, is on course to capitalise on the projected investments.

“I met with most of the world leaders of this hemisphere and heard from the Inter-American Development Bank how nearshoring and friendly shoring will attract more than US\$78 billion of new investments and exports, which will create more than four million direct jobs.

“Jamaica is ideally located at the intersection of the east-west and north-south trade routes. Kingston Harbour is the seventh-largest natural harbour in the world. Our mission is to leverage these natural assets and position Jamaica as the fourth global logistics mode, comparable to Singapore, Dubai, and Rotterdam,” Holness said.

He told the conference that significant investments have been made to improve the transportation and telecommunications infrastructure.

“We have made significant investments and continue to make transformational changes in our human capital development, equipping our



Prime Minister of Jamaica, Andrew Holness

workforce for industry needs and now strategically positioning Jamaica as a globally competitive and efficient investment destination,” Holness said, citing the Kingston Logistics Park and the flagship Caymanas Special Economic Zone as key projects that will further advance Jamaica’s global competitiveness.

Prime Minister Holness told delegates attending the conference at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in Rose Hall, St James, that countries can use special economic zones (SEZs) or free zones as drivers to recover from the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and other global crises.

“There is a natural thrust towards free zones. I would say free zones are, at this point, critical to the future growth of the world economy. This is the time for free zones to work together to leverage these conditions. And this conference is about working together to take advantage of the new global developments, which are creat-

ing opportunities,” Holness said.

Representatives from 60 countries, including senior policymakers, academics, multilateral organisations, and global business leaders, are attending the conference, which ends on Friday.

SEZs are areas within a country that are created to facilitate rapid economic growth by leveraging tax incentives to attract foreign investments and technological advancement.

Holness said SEZs locally and globally are continuously being challenged to innovate and adapt in these “new times” to better serve home nations.

He said with tensions across the world, the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, and the war in Europe (Ukraine and Russia), governments and companies are recognizing the risks and challenges associated with long-distance supply chains.

As such, he pointed out that countries and entities are exploring nearshoring and reshoring options via SEZs.

EU leaders visit Ukraine after criticism, offer EU hope

Reuters – The leaders of Germany, France and Italy, all criticised in the past by Kyiv for support viewed as too cautious, visited Ukraine on Thursday and offered the hope of EU membership to a country pleading for weapons to fend off Russia's invasion.

“It’s a message of unity we’re sending to the Ukrainians,” French President Emmanuel Macron said after pulling into Kyiv on an overnight train along with Germany’s Olaf Scholz and Italy’s Mario Draghi. They were joined by Romanian President Klaus Iohannis.

Macron later said all four leaders supported the idea of granting “immediate” European Union candidate status to Ukraine, adding that France would step up arms deliveries to Kyiv.

Scholz said Germany had taken in 800,000 Ukrainian refugees who had fled the conflict and would



French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, Romanian President Klaus Iohannis and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy attend a joint news conference, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Kyiv, Ukraine June 16, 2022. REUTERS/Valentyn Ogirenko

continue to support Ukraine as long as it needs.

“Ukraine belongs to the European family,” he said, after talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the other leaders.

On the battlefield, Ukrainian officials said their troops were still holding out against massive Russian bombardment in the eastern city of Sievierodonetsk, and described new progress

in a counteroffensive in the south.

But they said battles on both main fronts depended on receiving more aid from the West, especially artillery to counter Russia’s big advantage in firepower.

Air raid sirens had blared in Kyiv as the European leaders’ visit got under way.

They toured Irpin, a town northeast of the capital

devastated early in the war, where withdrawing Russian forces left behind bodies littering the streets.

Noting graffiti on a wall that read “Make Europe, not war”, Macron said: “It’s very moving to see that. This is the right message.”

The visit had taken weeks to organise, while the three most powerful EU leaders all fended off criticism over positions described as too deferential to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Critics compared Macron and Scholz to Britain’s Boris Johnson, who visited Kyiv more than two months ago.

NATO defence ministers meeting in Brussels were also expected to promise more weapons for Kyiv. U.S. President Joe Biden pledged \$1 billion worth of new aid on Wednesday, including anti-ship rocket systems, artillery rockets and rounds for howitzers.

Protests against India’s new military recruitment system turn violent

Reuters – Police in northern India fired shots in the air on Thursday to push back stone-throwing crowds and authorities shut off mobile internet in at least one district to forestall further chaos, as protests widened against a new military recruitment system.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government this week announced an overhaul of recruitment for India’s

1.38 million-strong armed forces, looking to bring down the average age of personnel and reduce pension expenditure.

But potential recruits, military veterans, opposition leaders and even some members of Modi’s ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have raised reservations over the revamped process.

In northern Haryana state’s Pal-

wal district, some 50 km (31 miles) south of the capital New Delhi, crowds hurled stones at a government official’s house and police protecting the building fired shots to keep the mob at bay, according to video footage from Reuters partner ANI.

“Yes, we have fired a few shots to control the crowd,” a local police official said, declining to be named.

cont’d on pg 25

As Rwanda hosts Commonwealth summit, bloc's role questioned

AP – With fresh coats of paint and streets swept clean, Rwanda's capital is preparing for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit, which will bring leaders of the 54-nation group of mostly former British colonies whose relevance is sometimes questioned.

President Paul Kagame will host scores of world leaders in a glittering summit, which takes place between June 20 and 25, that he hopes will promote this East African country's standing.

The summit is an opportunity to highlight Rwanda's stability and relative prosperity under Kagame's rule. It also will



Britain's then Prime Minister Theresa May, centre, chairs the first executive session of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit at Lancaster House in London, on April 19, 2018. Expectations are high in Rwanda as the East African nation prepares to host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit in June 2022. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth, File)

focus attention on Rwanda's widely criticised deal

with Britain to deport asylum-seekers from the U.K.

to Rwanda. Legal challenges **cont'd on pg 26**

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There was no immediate information on casualties.

Mobile internet was temporarily suspended in Palwal district for the next 24 hours, Haryana's information department said.

Protesters in eastern India's Bihar state set a BJP office on fire in Nawada city, attacked railway infrastructure and blocked roads, as demonstrations spread across several parts of the country.

Protesters also attacked railway property across Bihar, settling alight coaches in at least two locations, damaging train tracks and vandalising a station, according to officials and a railways statement.

The new recruitment system, called Agnipath or "path of fire" in Hindi, will bring in men and wom-



Demonstrators perform push-ups as they protest against "Agnipath scheme" for recruiting personnel for armed forces, in Munger, Bihar, India June 16, 2022 in this still image obtained from a handout video. ANI/Handout via REUTERS

en between the ages of 17-and-a-half and 21 for a four-year tenure at non-officer ranks, with only a quarter retained for longer periods.

Previously, soldiers were recruit-

ed by the army, navy and air force separately and typically entered service for up to 17 years for the lowest ranks. The shorter tenure has caused concern among potential recruits.

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enges stopped a flight that would have brought the first group just days before the summit.

The Commonwealth is a bloc of many developing nations but includes richer ones such as Singapore and Australia. Members range from established democracies such as Canada to more authoritarian ones like Rwanda itself.

Homeless people and sex workers have recently been removed from Kigali's streets as the government detained them ahead of the summit, according to Human Rights Watch.

What do the Commonwealth's countries have in common aside from their colonial past? Where is the bloc's voice in international affairs? And how does Africa, a continent of 1.3 billion people, benefit?

Climate change, and how to rebuild the global economy facing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, will be high on the summit's agenda, organisers say. The event also will discuss business, civil society, youth and gender issues.

Rwanda, a former Belgian colony now ruled by an Anglophile leader, seeks to show how the country of 13 million people has progressed since the genocide in 1994. It is the sixth African country to host the Commonwealth's biennial summit since 1971. Neighbouring Uganda hosted the summit in 2007.

Commonwealth summits in Africa have been noteworthy. The 1979 gathering in Zambia helped to bring an end to white minority rule in Rhodesia, which became majority-ruled Zimbabwe in 1980.

The 1991 summit in Zimbabwe saw the Commonwealth increase international pressure to bring an end to South Africa's racist system of apartheid.

"The Commonwealth is rele-

vant, but the question is to whom? Do governments get political capital out of it? You profile your country, you profile your name," said Mwambutsya Ndebesa, a political historian at Uganda's Makerere University. "You can derive political legitimacy out of hosting such an event."

That rare opportunity is why countries such as Rwanda appear eager to "spend their meagre resources" to host the summit, he said.

Rwandan authorities said they would spend roughly \$10 million improving infrastructure ahead of the summit, which was initially scheduled to happen in 2020 but was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hotels and restaurants are fully booked, ensuring the summit's popularity among some Rwandans.

"The bottom line is to showcase what products we Africans have, and visitors will always come back to buy or invest," said teacher Agnes Nadin. "This is the beauty as CHOGM attracts a big gathering."

But others who spoke to The Associated Press were less enthusiastic, asking what the Commonwealth means for Africans.

"The former master's underlying motivation is not good governance in Africa or improvement on the human rights platform but influence-seeking," said Dias Nyesiga, a business consultant in Kigali.

The Commonwealth should establish a peer-review mechanism of steps each member should take to achieve the bloc's values, including good governance and the protection of human rights, he said.

The Commonwealth would be more influential if it worked boldly to address global challenges such as "the consequences of pandemics," said Eric Ndushabandi, a professor of political science at the University of Rwanda.

Representing 2.5 billion people, the Commonwealth notably monitors elections among member countries and makes recommendations in its reports.

The bloc has suspended member states in response to events deemed to be in violation of its values. Nigeria was suspended for years after a harsh military government executed environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others in 1995.

Zimbabwe left the bloc in 2003 as President Robert Mugabe's government faced criticism over disputed elections and seizures of farms owned by white people. Zimbabwe's current government now seeks readmission, and analysts say President Emmerson Mnangagwa is pushing for greater international legitimacy after taking power from Mugabe in 2017. Zimbabwe remains under international sanctions.

"Mnangagwa sees it as politically expedient to be added back into the Commonwealth because in as much he has been described as 'worse than Mugabe,' he wishes to be seen as a good global citizen," said Zimbabwean political analyst David Chikwaza. "The Commonwealth's association is something he believes will cement his mantra of reengagement."

The Commonwealth undermines its influence by appearing to be more of a nostalgic political group rather than a trading bloc, Chikwaza said.

Commonwealth leaders at a summit in 2018 pledged to boost trade within the bloc to \$2 trillion by 2030.

But trade between Britain and Commonwealth countries was so low by 2020 that the bloc accounted for only about 9% of the U.K.'s total trade, with the value of exports to the Commonwealth falling by 16% between 2019 and 2020, according to the U.K.'s Office for National Statistics.



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Women's CPL teams drafted

The local players have been drafted ahead of the historic first running of the inaugural Women's Caribbean Premier League with the tournament set to get underway on 30 August.

The three teams will be captained by Hayley Matthews (Barbados Royals), Stafanie Taylor (Guyana Amazon Warriors) and Deandra Dottin (Trinbago Knight Riders).

With Matthews and Taylor rated in the top 10 T20 all-rounders in the world and Dottin one of the most destructive batters in the women's game, all three players have shown their quality for the West Indies and in domestic competitions around the globe.

The teams have been drafted from a pool of players that was put together by Cricket West Indies' selection committee and the 33 cricketers picked represent the best talent from across the region with the squads full of experienced internationals as well as the next generation of female players.

Each team will also sign three exciting overseas players bringing the total squad size to 14 and further bolstering the quality of cricketers on show in this exciting new event. These overseas signings will be announced in the coming weeks.

Ricky Skerritt, Cricket West Indies President, said: "This inaugural Women's version of the CPL represents a huge upward step for West Indies cricket. I am grateful to all those in CPL and CWI who made it happen, especially the three pioneering franchises who have so willingly got on board."

Jake Lush McCrum, CEO, Barbados Royals and Rajasthan Royals, said: "The Caribbean and particularly Barbados is a destination which has always been so deeply invested in cricket, and to have a team in the region which will serve as a pillar of growth for the women's game in and around



WOMEN'S CPL SQUADS

BARBADOS ROYALS	GUYANA AMAZON WARRIORS	TRINBAGO KNIGHT RIDERS
HAYLEY MATTHEWS (C)	STAFANIE TAYLOR (C)	DEANDRA DOTTIN (C)
SHAKERA SELMAN	SHEMAINE CAMPBELLE	ANISA MOHAMMED
RENIECE BOYCE	RASHADA WILLIAMS	LEE ANN KIRBY
MANDY MANGRU	RACHAEL VINCENT	KYSHONA KNIGHT
BRITNEY COOPER	KAYSIA SCHULTZ	KYCIA KNIGHT
AALIYAH ALLEYNE	CHEDEAN NATION	NATASHA McLEAN
SHANIKA BRUCE	CHERRY-ANN FRASER	SHENETA GRIMMOND
AFY FLETCHER	SHAMILIA CONNELL	CANEISHA ISAAC
QIANA JOSEPH	KARISHMA RAMHARACK	JANNILLEA GLASGOW
JAPHINA JOSEPH	SHABIKA GAJNABI	STEFFIE SOOGRIM
CHINELLE HENRY	ZAIDA JAMES	SHAWNISHA HECTOR

11 HERO CPL T20 | CRICKET PLAYER LOCKER | CPLT20.COM | #CPL22

the island nation, was such an exciting opportunity for us at the Barbados Royals. Having attracted huge popularity, not just in the Caribbean, but also in cricket-playing nations around the world, the CPL has been able to realise its value and also the impact it can create on grassroots development. With this new competition for women, it gives us the opportunity to accelerate the growth and development of female players and coaches, while attracting the next generation of talent to the sport."

Dr. Bobby Ramroop, owner of the Guyana Amazon Warriors, said, "We are thrilled to be a part of the inaugural Women's CPL and we would like to thank CPL and CWI for making this happen.

"The Guyana Amazon Warriors (GAW) family is excited to be at the forefront of advancing Women's cricket, both in the region and worldwide, and we are hopeful that this newest format will provide a platform for empowering female athletes, as well as highlighting inspiring role models for young girls. The dynamic GAW Women's team, led by the impressive Stafanie Taylor, is a welcome and power-

ful addition to the CPL."

Venky Mysore, Director, Trinbago Knight Riders, said, "We are proud to announce our first women's team under the Knight Riders banner, and are eagerly looking forward to watching the ladies represent TKR in the inaugural Women's T20 competition in this year's Caribbean Premier League. We are always most supportive of such initiatives and are on a continuous lookout to expand the sport across the globe and across demographics. We are therefore particularly thrilled to support the launch of women's T20 in the Caribbean and would like to congratulate and thank CWI and CPL for taking the initiative to launch the Women's editions this year."

Pete Russell, Hero CPL's CEO, said: "A Women's CPL is the next logical step as we grow the brand, and we are very pleased that we have been able to make this a reality in 2022. We are grateful to the CWI, the Barbados Royals, the Guyana Amazon Warriors and the Trinbago Knight Riders for working with us on this ground breaking tournament and we look forward to showcasing the tremendous skills of all these talented players."

ABCF to stage two major races this month

The Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) is gearing up to stage two major races later this month.

The ABCF hold the Inet Nationals Individual Time Trial on Saturday, 25th June, and the following day, the Top Ranking Nationals Individual Road Race.

The Inet National Individual Time Trials, which is also being supported by Gatorade and Paradiso Water, will commence at the Police Recreation Grounds at 9am.

The cyclists will proceed eastward on the Sir Sydney Walling Highway, through Gunthorpes and travel eastward past the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

The cyclists will continue their eastward path past Parham corner, Vermont and the Mount Joy Service Station.

They will move onto the Pares Village Main Road, past Lyon Hill Road and into Pares Village where they will continue eastward past Collins Road onto Glanvilles Main Road.

The cyclists will pass through Glanvilles then continue on Willikies Main Road at the end of which they will turn around follow the route to the finish line in reverse to the finish line at the Police Recreation Grounds.

The Top Ranking Nationals Road Race, support-



Local cyclists will contest two road races across Antigua and Barbuda later this month. (File photo)

ed by Subway, Gatorade and Paradiso Water, will start in front the Top Ranking Store on Old Parham Road on 26th June at 2pm.

The cyclists will proceed eastward to the intersection at Dee's Service Station, the Sir George Walter Highway and the Pigotts Main Road.

They will make a left turn onto the Sir George Walter Highway and ride through Coolidge to the intersection of Jabberwock Road and Hospitality Drive.

They will make a left turn onto the Jabberwock Road, passing the American University of Antigua and Jabberwock Beach, and move through Hodges Bay into Cedar Grove.

They will then make a left turn onto the Friar's Hill Road traveling southward along Friar's Hill Road past the St John's Public Ceme-

tery.

The cyclists will proceed to the intersection of Old Parham Road near the YMCA Sports Complex where they will travel on Old Parham Road in an easterly direction to the finish point at the Top

Ranking Store.

Cyclists from all the major clubs affiliated to the ABCF are expected to compete in several categories, including elite male, women, cadets, sports and masters class.



Sports News



Veteran US Coach to facilitate Wings Basketball Camp

American, John Spezia, will be the main facilitator of the Concerned Parents Teachers Sports Associations (CPTSA) Wings Sports Club's Annual Basketball Summer Camp later this month.

Spezia is a FIBA licensed coach and will share his expertise with the participants at the Summer Camp at the YMCA Sports Complex from 28th June to 30th July from 9am to 2pm on Monday to Saturday.

Spezia gained his experience in coaching, administration and team management while working as the Head Men's Basketball Coach and Athletic Director at Danville Area Community College in Illinois from 1982-2007.

He's also worked with several other teams and colleges across the United States.

He won a US Junior College National Championship in 1991 and his teams appeared in five other US national tournaments.

Spezia was inducted into the NJCAA Hall of Fame in 2007.

He is no stranger to Antigua and Barbuda, having made multiple visits to the country in the 1990s and the early 2000s to conduct basketball clinics as part of his relationship with the former Director of the Community Development

Sports and Games Department, the late Fitzroy Brann, and the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association (ABBA).

During that period, he made a tremendous impact on the basketball landscape in Antigua and Barbuda.

He was instrumental in helping several local basketballers to attain athletic scholarships to US Division 2 or junior colleges.

He also joined with other US college coaches to facilitate workshops for local players and coaches.

Basketball referees in the country also benefitted from referee training workshops he has organised with fellow US certified referee, Daryl Lamps.

Spezia capped his association with the twin-island state when on 4th December, 2017, he was named head coach of the Antigua and Barbuda senior men's national team, the Wadadli Bulldogs.

Under Spezia's guidance, the Wadadli Bulldogs went on to finish second to champions Guyana in the 2018 Caribbean Basketball Confederation (CBC) Men's Championships in Suriname from 25th to 29th June.

Guyana defeated Antigua and Barbuda 83-70 in the CBC Men's Championship final.

Spezia has also con-



Experienced American basketball coach John Spezia. (Photo courtesy John Spezia)

ducted basketball camps in the Turks & Caicos Islands, St. Kitts, Trinidad and Tobago and Montserrat.

Persons who wish to have their children participate in the Wings basketball summer camp, should register early as only 36 boys and girls, aged 10 to 18 years old will be accepted.

The registration fee is \$350 for non-members of the Wings Club and \$300

for members.

Wings Sports Club can be contacted at telephone numbers 788-8783, 786-2881, 771-6582 or 773-0886 for more information.

The participants will receive refreshments, camp T-shirts and will be involved in games, guest talks, skills and drills and competitions, at the end of which, awards and prizes will be presented to outstanding performers.

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playing schedule, as they are owned and run by its members.

For well over a decade, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has received, and is still receiving the lion's share of revenue generated and distributed by the ICC to its full members and associate members.

With a total disbursement of US\$405 million from the current cycle eight-year cycle from 2016 to 2023, the BCCI is the top receiver of ICC revenue.

In 2015, ICC implemented this new revenue model for the next 8-year period effective from 2016. ICC revenues for this rights cycle are estimated to at between US\$2.5 billion and US\$2.7 billion.

According to the new financial revenue model, the BCCI's pay out of US\$405 million, their revenue share represents a 22.8 percent profit share. However, this is still \$165 million less than they received during the previous cycle.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) gets the second highest share at US\$139 million. The cricketing governing bodies of Australia, Bangladesh, South Africa, West Indies, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand will receive US\$128 million.

Zimbabwe isn't part of the Test Championship, therefore Zimbabwe receives US\$94 million.

The organisation's 94

associate nations, along with Afghanistan and Ireland, will receive collective funding of US\$240 million.

PM Browne said Antigua and Barbuda is prepared to take the lead in placing pressure on the ICC to change its current revenue distribution structure.

"I mean, we need to push the ICC to change that formula and Antigua and Barbuda is prepared to be at the forefront of that fight to help you to get your fair share so that we will have more funds for cricket development, especially at the grassroots level," PM Browne stated.

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PM Browne: CWI may need political help to secure more revenue from ICC

Antigua and Barbuda's Prime Minister Gaston Browne has said Cricket West Indies (CWI) may need help politically to get more revenue from the International Cricket Council (ICC) as a full member of the world's governing body for cricket.

Browne made the remark while addressing a delegation comprising CWI officials and West Indies players who made a courtesy call on the Cabinet on Monday, 13th June.

The meeting took place just days before the start of the two-match Test series between the West Indies and Bangladesh which got underway with the opening Test at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium yesterday.

The Test series has been named after the Padma Bridge in order to pay tribute to the dream project of the 160 million people of Bangladesh.

Tech giant Walton is sponsoring the Test series which has been officially named "Padma Bridge Dream Fulfilled Friendship Test Series Presented by



From left to right, West Indies squad members Devon Thomas, Captain Kraigg Brathwaite, holding the Padma Bridge Friendship Test Series Trophy with Prime Minister Gaston Browne, wicket-keeper Joshua Da Silva and CWI Director and President of the Leeward Islands Cricket Association, Enoch Lewis. (Photo: Office of the Prime Minister)

Walton."

During Monday's meeting, PM Browne said, "You must see cricket as an export product and an opportunity for us to earn foreign exchange. As I speak about the issue of earnings too, I think we may have to help Cricket West Indies politically to address the issue of earning, because I find the way in which they share the earnings from cricket, it is definitely inequitable.

"I mean, they are getting the lion's share and other

teams are getting well paid, while the West Indies are not getting their fair share.

"I mean, they are looking at it from the standpoint, perhaps the small size of our market, but they have to find some other methodology in order to ensure that the cricketing spoils are shared more equitably, because ultimately, to develop the game, you need money."

The ICC earns money from its Global tournaments. Its major revenue is

generated from the gate receipts of these tournaments.

The ICC also earns revenue by selling media, sponsorship, and licensing rights.

The various national boards also pay the ICC.

However, ICC has no income streams from bilateral international cricket matches (Test matches, One Day Internationals, and Twenty20 Internationals). It accounts for the great majority of the international

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