

A&B ENGAGING EU ALLIES ON CIP

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Three Antiguans are included in Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday Honours List: (from left) Lorraine Cecilia Perry, Cosmos Marcelle and Debra Gaye Hechme. Perry and Hechme were appointed to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Civil Division. Lorraine Perry, MBE: To be an Ordinary Officer of the Civil Division (OBE), for Public Service to Antigua and Barbuda. Debra Gaye Hechme: To be an Ordinary Member of the Civil Division of the said Most Excellent Order (MBE), for services to Business and Community Development. Retired Superintendent of Police, Cosmos Marcelle, M.M: Recipient of the Queen's Police Medal.

Antigua and Barbuda invites EU review of CIP

Antigua and Barbuda is willing to “open its books” for Spain or other European Union nations to review the country’s Citizenship By Investment Programme (CIP).

This offer of transparency came on Wednesday, after Antigua and Barbuda confirmed its commitment not to engage in activities that would prove detrimental to the world’s financial system.

The proposition was made by Foreign Affairs Minister, E. P. Chet Greene, when he welcomed Spain’s new Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Diego Bermejo, who was in St. John’s to present his credentials to the government.

“We want to assure you that in no way would we (Antigua and Barbuda) be willing accomplices to anything untoward that would affect the global financial system.

“Our CIP is a non-tax revenue arrangement for us, but it is a programme upon which the government re-

lies upon to keep the fabric of society together,” Greene emphasised.

He told the ambassador that EU states should not see the CIP as providing a means for applicants to engage in tax avoidance or evasion.

“We are willing any day to open our books and to share experiences and the knowledge we have gained over time to craft stronger programmes,” Greene suggested.

Acknowledging that there are times when loopholes may be identified in the CIP, Minister Greene gave the assurance that wherever they are found, the government takes immediate steps to plug them.

“Rather than labelling Antigua and Barbuda as being non-compliant, or trying to obfuscate and jeopardise the global financial architecture, we want to be seen as partners in the global financial space, and rather than blacklisting or grey listing or other punitive measures,



Foreign Affairs Minister, E. P. Chet Greene, right, welcomed Spain’s new Ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Diego Bermejo.

we prefer to be partners to find solutions to problems that may exist,” he stated.

According to the foreign minister, Antigua and Barbuda wants to discuss the programme in a “friendly” atmosphere, in order to address any shortcomings the EU may perceive, as Caribbean nations work to perfect their individual CIPs. Bilateral talks along these lines, he said, will allow the region to play a meaningful role as respected partners in

the establishment of effective and dynamic global financial architecture.

Greene also made a direct appeal to the ambassador for Spain to “be an advocate” for CIP countries in the world fora where they do not have a seat.

On the issue of delisting, Greene explained to the ambassador that action along this line against small island developing states such as those in the Caribbean, is accompanied by a host of negative consequences.

It could, for example, severely limit the country’s ability to purchase essential items such as medicine. He added that remittances are very important to Caribbean economies, therefore cutting off these sources of revenue could have a debilitating impact on the region.

Thu 02 Day 85° ☀️ Sunshine and clouds mixed. High near 85F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph.		Thu 02 Night 78° ☁️ Partly cloudy. Low 78F. Winds ESE at 5 to 10 mph.	
11% ESE 11 mph	12% ESE 9 mph	Humidity 67%	UV Index Extreme
Sunrise 5:32 am	Sunset 6:38 pm	Humidity 77%	UV Index 0 of 10
Moonrise 7:54 am		Moonset 9:31 pm	
🌑 Waxing Crescent			

Fugitive Rickardo Bassawan recaptured

Rickardo Bassawan, 27, is facing an additional charge of escaping lawful custody, after police announced his capture early Wednesday.

The Bennett Street, Villa resident escaped police custody on Tuesday in Potters Village.

Bassawan was being transported to Her Majesty's Prison from the All Saints Magistrate's Court, where he had been remanded on a charge of aggravated assault.

His escape prompted police to issue a wanted



Rickardo Bassawan

bulletin for the fugitive that same day.

Less than 24-hours after making a daring escape

from the vehicle that was transporting him, police announced Bassawan was back in their custody.

According to police, officers attached to the Special Services Unit (SSU) apprehended him around 7:30 am on Wednesday in Villa.

Bassawan's initial charge of aggravated assault stems from allegations that on 28th May, he unlawfully entered the apartment of a Jolly Harbour woman, armed with a weapon, and robbed her of an undisclosed amount of money.

Reports are, when officers attempted to apprehend him in Jolly Harbour, he fled, but was pursued and eventually detained.

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Local News



NODS finalising plans as hurricane season commences

The National Office of Disaster Services says a final list of hurricane shelters in Antigua and Barbuda will be made public shortly.

NODS revealed in a statement that ahead of the official start of the 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season, they have carried out inspections of at least 60 facilities identified as shelters.

Additionally, the disaster emergency response agency is engaged in ongoing training with district disaster volunteers and representatives of churches whose facilities will be used



as hurricane shelters.

Work has also continued to upgrade NODS' Early Warning System through the installation of radio in-

terrupt equipment as part of the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP), which sends alerts of a pending hazard.

The disaster services

office reported that "equipment has arrived on island that will be installed at a few private radio stations that will allow emergency alerts to interrupt regular programming. State owned ABS Radio and Television already has the equipment in place".

CAP is already available on smart phones and emails.

The public is being advised to adequately prepare for the hurricane season by stocking up on emergency supplies, including non-perishable food, water, medications, flashlights, first aid kits, baby and children's supplies and personal hygiene items.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is predicting that this season will produce 14 to 21 named storms with winds of 39 mph or higher, with the possibility of 6 to 10 becoming hurricanes and 3 to 6 of those becoming major hurricanes.



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AIDS Secretariat to offer PrEP

The AIDS Secretariat is finalising arrangements for the introduction of PrEP in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, are medicines taken to prevent getting HIV.

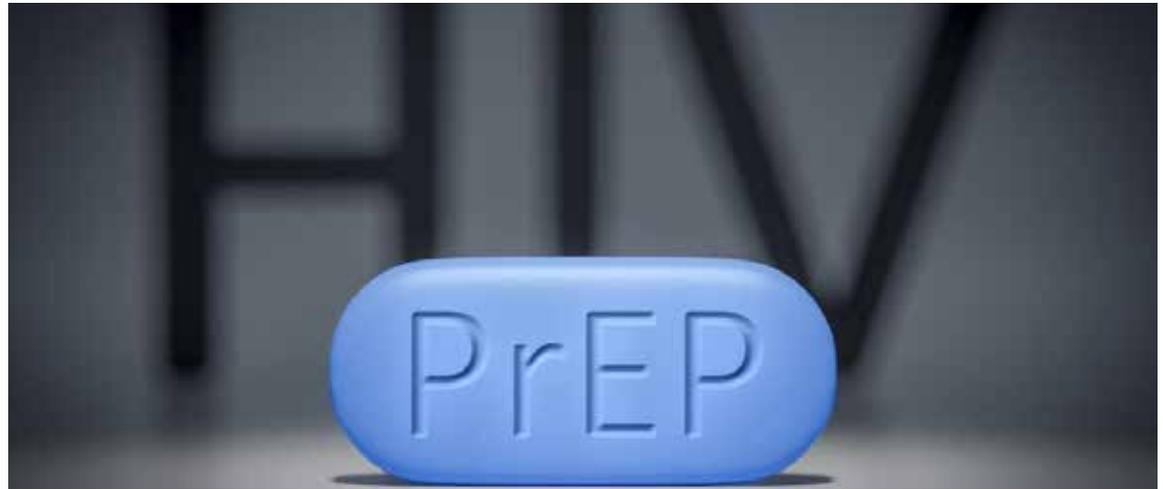
The new programme will be rolled out in conjunction with Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) that has endorsed the use of PrEP as “an effective prevention strategy that is recommended to reduce HIV infections, especially in men who have sex with men (MSM), Sex Workers and the Transgender population”.

While a date by which PrEP medicines will become available has not been announced, the AIDS Secretariat’s Programme Manager, Delcora Williams, has said the secretariat has begun making preparations for its rollout.

“Right now, our office is being trained in regards to how to take care of a client who decides to access PrEP. We have gone through a cost estimate by PANCAP, because they are the ones sponsoring the initial rollout of PrEP.

“So, we have gone through the whole costing, we have gone through a few assessments to make sure we can handle that kind of a programme in Antigua and Barbuda,” Williams noted.

The medicine will be



available, on request, the AIDS programme manager explained, however, persons will be required to complete a process before it is prescribed.

“They will go through a counselling period, they will go through taking of blood samples, because we have to make sure their kidneys are functioning well, their liver is functioning well, that it can take the ARVs [antiretrovirals],” Nurse Williams explained.

The introduction of PrEP will not be an invitation for people to drop their guard, and the AIDS Secretariat will continue to highlight the importance of condom use to guard against contracting Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

“It is not HIV alone that is out there; there are other sexually transmitted diseases that is [sic] driving the HIV, because when you contract like syphilis and gonorrhoea, it makes you more susceptible to contracting HIV,” Williams remarked.

As such, counselling is highly recommended before

a person is adequately prepared to use PrEP.

PANCAP lists Antigua and Barbuda, Belize and

Guyana as joining The Bahamas, Barbados, Haiti and Jamaica in offering PrEP services.

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Local company to spearhead revival of Antigua Brewery

Efforts to revive the operations of the former Antigua Brewery facilities at Crabbes Peninsula take a closer step towards realization with a local company agreeing to lead the way.

Reports from Wednesday's Cabinet meeting state that an agreement will be entered into shortly regarding the brewery.

"An Antiguan company has agreed to utilize its own and borrowed resources from a local bank in order to proceed with the redevelopment of the Antigua Brewery," the announcement from Cabinet said.

It said more than \$ 6.5 million will be borrowed to be repaid over fifteen (15) years. Two other investment groups will hold shares in the brewery to include NAMCO, which will hold 20% of the shares and the German ex-

perts 15%.

Operations at the Antigua Brewery came to an end several years ago when the owners transferred their business to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The company at the time produced Wadadli Beer as well as a number of non-alcoholic beverages.

Cabinet sources say the intention is to have the company back in operation producing beer by the middle of next year. There's no word yet on what would be the branded name of the beer produced by the new company.

In more Cabinet news...The Cabinet has decided to extend the Construct Antigua and Barbuda Initiative (CABI) to June 30th, 2023.

The waiver of ABST on building materials and fixtures will continue, but the value of the homes

has increased from \$350,000.00 to \$500,000.00, taking into account the higher cost of materials.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Housing, Land and Urban Renewal, Maria Browne, has reported that the first starter home is just about completed. Four other starter homes are also under construction. They cost \$125,000.00 and National Housing will commence building them almost immediately at several sites across the country.

The plan is to mix both the starter homes with homes to be built by National Housing so that there will be opportunities for upward mobility. The mortgage payments are to be restricted to \$800- \$1000.00 per month, well within the rental payments currently being made by tenants who will now become home owners.



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NYC radio station to broadcast Carnival events

Arrangements are being made to host a team from the popular New York City based radio station, VP Records Radio, during Carnival 2022, to broadcast some of the events live.

Minister of Creative Industries and Innovation (MCCI), Dr. Michael Browne, along with the ministry's Marketing Manager, Roger Perry, recently returned home following a successful visit to the United States last week.

The pair gave a seven-minute inter-

view with VP Records Radio in which they discussed several initiatives for collaboration between the radio station and the MCCI.

Coming out of those talks, it was agreed that Natasha Marcelle and her team will visit the country for Carnival 2022. During their stay, the team will visit wood oven bakeries, beaches, vegan restaurants, off-the-grid events and sites, pan yards and Carnival events.

Discussions are still underway for

both parties to collaborate on becoming involved in Antigua Day activities in New York on Labour Day, 5th September, 2022. According to the head of Antigua Day, Tyra Mason, the event is considered the largest gathering of the Antigua and Barbuda diaspora outside the Caribbean region. Originally held at the Marcus Garvey Park, it eventually outgrew the space and has since evolved into a major event that is staged at the Mount Vernon Parking Lot.



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Pinkett Smith talks hair-loss 'shame,' outcome of Oscar slap

By Lynn Elber

Jada Pinkett Smith turned her husband's Oscar-night blowup into a teachable moment about alopecia areata, the hair-loss disorder affecting her and millions of others that, in some cases, can impact a person's sense of identity.

"Considering what I've been through with my own health and what happened at the Oscars, thousands have reached out to me with their stories," Pinkett Smith said on Wednesday's episode of "Red Table Talk."

The actor said she chose to use "this moment to give our alopecia family an op-



Jada Pinkett Smith appears on an episode of her online series "Red Table Talk." The latest episode, streaming Wednesday, June 1, 2022 on Facebook Watch, addresses Alopecia. (Jordan Fisher/Red Table Talk via AP)

portunity to talk about what it's like to have this condition" and what it is. Her guests included the mother of a 12-year-old girl, Rio

Allred, who was bullied over her hair loss and died by suicide, and a physician who explained the different types of the disorder.

Before tackling the subject, Pinkett Smith addressed events at the March 27 Academy Awards. She and husband Will Smith, a best-actor nominee, were in the audience as presenter Chris Rock cracked a joke at Pinkett Smith's expense.

"Jada, I love you. 'G.I. Jane 2,' can't wait to see it," Rock said. Pinkett Smith, who has spoken publicly about her alopecia, had a closely shaved head similar to that of Demi Moore in the 1997 movie.

Smith strode from his front-row seat to the stage and slapped Rock, shocking

cont'd on pg 11

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Two systems on the radar as hurricane season begins

By Reshma Ragoonath

The 2022 Atlantic hurricane season has kicked off, with two systems being tracked intently by local and regional forecasters.

Cayman's National Weather Service, in a severe weather notification Tuesday night, addressed the first system on the radar, which is likely to form into a tropical depression by the weekend.

"The Yucatan Channel extending to the extreme northwest Caribbean has been marked by the [US] National Hurricane Center as an area of interest for potential development of a tropical disturbance over the next 5 days. Regardless of an organised disturbance being formed, severe weather conditions are likely over the next 3 to 4 days across the Cayman Is-



lands," the NWS has said.

It said it will continue to monitor developments and issue warnings as needed. It advised residents to monitor progress, as forecast conditions can change over the next few days.

Hazard Management Cayman Islands, in a post on its official Facebook page Wednesday, added that the threat level to the Cayman Islands is considered low at this time.

It also added that NWS

is advising small craft to exercise caution over open seas beginning Thursday.

"A small craft warning will go into effect for the Cayman Islands for Friday when winds are expected to increase to 20 to 25 knots," it added.

The NHC, in its Wednesday morning advisory, has said that environmental conditions appear conducive for gradual development.

"This system is likely to become a tropical depression

while it moves northeastward over the northwestern Caribbean Sea and southeastern Gulf of Mexico during the next couple of days," it said, adding that the system has an 80% chance of formation through the next five days.

Meanwhile, the NHC said, in the southwestern Atlantic, a weak surface trough located around 200 miles northeast of the central Bahamas is producing disorganised shower activity as it interacts with an upper-level trough.

However, it said, surface pressures are currently high across the area, and significant development of this system appears unlikely as it moves generally east-northeastward over the next several days away from the southeastern United States.

cont'd from pg 10

the comedian and the audience. Smith, who returned to his seat and later accepted the Oscar for "King Richard," subsequently apologised to Rock but was banned from the ceremony for 10 years by the film academy.

"Now, about Oscar night, my deepest hope is that these two intelligent, capable men have an opportunity to heal, talk this out, and reconcile," Pinkett Smith said on "Red Table Talk" in an indirect reference to Smith and Rock. "The state of the world today, we need them both, and we all actually need one another more than ever.

"Until then, Will and I are continuing to do what we have done for the last 28 years, and that's keep figuring

out this thing called life together," said Pinkett Smith, who previously had addressed the incident in a brief Instagram post that read "'This is a season for healing and I'm here for it.'"

The actor ("Girls Trip," "Matrix" films), who hosts the Facebook Watch talk show with her daughter, Willow, and Adrienne Banfield Norris, her mother, said that millions of people are living with alopecia and what she called the "shame" that surrounds it. The condition, particularly for Black women, can affect a person's perception of themselves and force them to frequently confront others' perceptions about beauty, hair and race and culture.

Rio's mother, Nicole Ball, recount-

ed the impact of the Oscar incident, which took place less than two weeks after her daughter's death.

"What is the universe doing right now? This is crazy," Ball recalled thinking. "People are going to be Googling, 'What is alopecia....What is this that we've never heard of?' It's not a joke."

According to the National Alopecia Areata Foundation, the disorder affects as many as 6.8 million people in the United States of any age, sex and ethnic group, and the symptoms can vary. "I think the part that makes it most difficult for me is that it comes and goes. You're going through a spell of something, and you got to shave your head," Pinkett Smith said.

Multilateral development bank leaders to discuss challenges affecting socio-economic development

The President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Mauricio Claver-Carone, says accelerating inclusive, sustainable growth in the Caribbean is imperative, indicating also that the Washington-based financial institution is ushering in a new 21st-century business model to boost investment in the region.

Claver-Carone will be one of four leaders of financial institutions providing assistance to the region, participating in a discussion that forms part of the activities for the annual board of governors meeting of the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) that gets underway in the Turks and Caicos Islands June 1-16.

The others who will participate in the third edition of the CDB's "President's Chat" on June 9 are Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina of the African Development Bank (ADB), President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), Dr. Werner Hoyer and CDB President, Dr. Gene Leon.

Claver-Carone said the new business model will help correct market failures and structural bottlenecks while improving entrepreneurial ecosystems that incentivize job creation.

"We have also declared 2022 to be the Year of the Caribbean and we expect to triple financing for the region to a record US\$1.3 billion this year."

He said dialogue and collaboration are at the centre of the IDB's work as multilateral development banks (MDBs) "and only by working together, alongside the private sector, can we help the Caribbean achieve its sustainable development goals and create a more prosperous region"

The leaders of the four MDBs are expected to tackle the pressing mat-



ter of securing the extensive financing required to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Adesina said the ADF has been at the forefront of mobilising financing to drive Africa's COVID response, ensure food security, promote climate resilience, and accelerate the sustainable energy transition for our countries.

Hoyer said the EIB places a strong emphasis on collaboration and it is through partnerships with MDBs and other institutions that it has been able to support adaptation investment in countries most affected by climate change.

"This discussion among MDB Heads will give us an opportunity to share with stakeholders in the Caribbean and wider international community how each institution is addressing current common challenges, so we can chart the way for even deeper collaboration going forward," he added.

The CDB said the discussions will be guided by the theme "Innovative Financing for Sustainable Develop-

ment: What Can MDBs Do" and will also explore the expanding role of the private sector in the development finance landscape.

"The discussion will examine how MDBs can create investment opportunities that will attract private financing for ventures that contribute to sustainable development outcomes.

"The dialogue will also allow the MDB heads to share success stories and lessons learned for takeaways that can shape approaches to common challenges, and issues that may be unique to particular regions," it added.

Leon said achieving the SDGs will require an innovative approach to financing and MDBs must take the lead in forging regional and international partnerships to mobilise private sector financing for ventures that drive sustainable development "for us to achieve the best future for the countries and people we serve.

"I look forward to the exchange with my fellow presidents and to continued collaboration to move beyond dialogue to action," he added. (CMC)

Trinidad government confirms negotiations with “preferred bidder” for PETROTRIN

CMC – Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Keith Rowley has confirmed that negotiations have started with a “preferred bidder” regarding the current procurement process for a prospective purchaser or lessee for the PETROTRIN oil refinery at Point-a-Pierre Trinidad.

Rowley, addressing the three-day Energy Conference of Trinidad and Tobago, told delegates that three final bids were received in April 2022 and were evaluated by Trinidad Petroleum Holdings Limited (TPHL) and the relevant ministry officials.

He said one of the bidders was selected and has entered into exclusive negotiations with TPHL and the government with the aim of negotiating definitive agreements and securing committed financing, within a specified period of time.

“We expect that the process and selection of the preferred bidder will be soon finalised. In keeping with our commitment to transparency and accountability, the relevant details of the outcome of the evaluation of the bids will be disclosed on the completion of the exercise,” Rowley said, without naming the preferred bidder.

The government closed the oil refinery in south Trinidad in 2018 after complaining that it had been losing billions of dollars (One TT dollar=US\$0.16 cents) annually.

Patriotic Energies, a company formed by the Oilfield Workers Trade Union (OWTU), had entered a bid for the refinery, but the interest collapsed in January 2021.

On Sunday, Opposition Senator Wade Mark, told a news conference that the United National Congress (UNC) understands that the US-based company, Quanten, is the preferred bidder for the refinery owned by the state-owned oil company, PETRO-



TRIN.

Mark, who valued the refinery at seven billion US dollars, said the question for shareholders and owners of Trinidad Petroleum Company Limited which was formed after PETROTRIN was shut down “is who is Quanten Inc?

“What qualifies this company to operate our seven billion US dollar asset refinery? What is this entity’s claim to fame to become the successful bidder,” he added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Rowley told the conference which is being held under the theme “Leveraging the industry’s strengths for the energy transition” that as the global energy transition leads to structural changes in energy markets and the energy mix there is a risk of diminution of oil and gas revenues, which have been the major drivers of the country’s socio-economic welfare.

He said given the uncertainty of energy transition it is difficult to define the end game, that is, which technology will emerge and what will be the final energy mix.

“Therefore, it is in our interest to

expeditiously take steps to monetize the country’s abundant oil and gas resources. The latest gas reserve audit established that at year end 2020 technically recoverable resources amounted to 23.2 trillion cubic feet (tcf) and prospective resources at 55.2 tcf. Whereas the latest oil audit established 3P reserves at 455.3 million barrels and prospective resources amounted to 3.2 billion barrels with 90 percent being in our deep-water province.

“Accordingly, we have embarked on a series of bids rounds which commenced with the deep-water bid-round in December of last year. The closing ceremony for this bid round will be held on Thursday, June 2, 2022. On offer is a large selection of deep-water acreage comprising seventeen blocks.”

Rowley said Trinidad and Tobago is not singular in the matter as several countries are actively promoting bid-rounds at this time “so we know that we are competing for exploration capital.

Rowley said Trinidad and Tobago’s series of bid rounds continues with the onshore bid round.

Caribbean countries urged to have a presence at international fora

CMC – The head of St. Vincent and the Grenadines’ disaster management agency, Michelle Forbes, says it is important for Caribbean countries to use their voices at international fora, such as the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, to outline their concerns.

“As a small island developing state and our increasing vulnerabilities and complexities, we are seeing now with the various hazards that affect the Caribbean, it’s really important for countries like St. Vincent Grenadines, to really have a voice and be able to interact with the different agencies and with the UN system,” Forbes told the

Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC).

Forbes said it is disappointing that not many countries from the English-speaking Caribbean attended the event, which ended on Friday and brought together an estimated 5,000 representatives of governments, the private sector, and civil societies from 194 countries.

She said the meeting, which takes place every three years, was an opportunity for Caribbean countries to express their views and take account of the challenge as well as the gains made towards addressing the seven targets of the Sendai Framework.

The Sendai Framework



Director of the National Emergency Management Organisation of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Michelle Forbes

for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda and provides member states with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of disaster.

“And I think we really need to have a voice here and

have persons begin here to really share their experiences and actually speak about what we are doing in the region,” Forbes told CMC on the final day of the conference.

The conference heard that only 95 countries reported having multi-hazard early warning systems that give governments, agencies, and the general public notice of an impending disaster, with particularly low coverage in Africa, Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Early warning systems were cited as a critical defence against disasters such as floods, droughts, and volcanic eruptions in the recent Global Assessment Report, which predicted 560 – or 1.5 disasters a day – by 2030 based on the current trajectory.

It comes after António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, called for the warning systems to cover every person on the planet within five years.

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St. Maarten to host regional safe schools meeting

CMC - The Third Caribbean Ministerial Forum on School Safety, which was postponed from last year because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, will be held in St. Maarten next month.

External relations officer at the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Regional Office – The Americas and the Caribbean, Saskia Carusi, said the main focus of the June 28-30 event will be on reaffirming commitments from the ministries of education to work in towards the safe schools.

“And now with the covid pandemic, it’s even more relevant because we saw how this crisis affected the education sector really significantly. So that will be for sure one of the topics of conversation,” Carusi told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which wrapped up on Friday May 27.

To date, 18 countries from the Caribbean, both from Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) member countries, CARICOM member states as well as Cuba, and the Dominican Republic have signed up the declaration as part of the Caribbean Safe Schools Initiative (CSSI).

CSSI was launched in April 2017 during the First Caribbean Ministerial Fo-



rum on School Safety and is the suggested framework to advance school safety in the Caribbean.

The initiative is the Caribbean’s contribution to the Worldwide Initiative on Safe Schools and is a partnership for advancing safe school implementation at the national level among Caribbean countries.

“And this is kind of the Caribbean commitment towards that global initiative. So, this is a specific initiative of the Caribbean,” Carusi said.

“So it takes into account very specific challenges, small island development states, the climate risk, how does it fit within the comprehensive disaster management strategy of CDEMA...”

Next month’s meeting follows up on the Regional Review on School Safety in the context of Systemic Risk: The Virtual Caribbean Safe School Initiative Pre-Ministerial Forum, held online in March 2021.

Carusi told CMC that the ministerial forum is part

of efforts to strengthen continually the relation between the ministries of education and disaster management agencies in the Caribbean, as the region is especially vulnerable to multiple threats.

“We have climate risks, which are increasing; we have tsunamis, earthquakes, and also covid.

“Then there are also technological hazards and other safety issues that can happen. “So, the Safe School agenda hasn’t been

as relevant as us today,” Carusi said.

The initiative includes a roadmap where education ministers will commit to and decide on concrete actions before each forum.

One of the achievements so far is that ministries for education have specific disaster risk reduction plans to start working.

Carusi said the forum does not capture issues relating to violence in and at school “because that has specific elements.

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International

AROUND THE WORLD



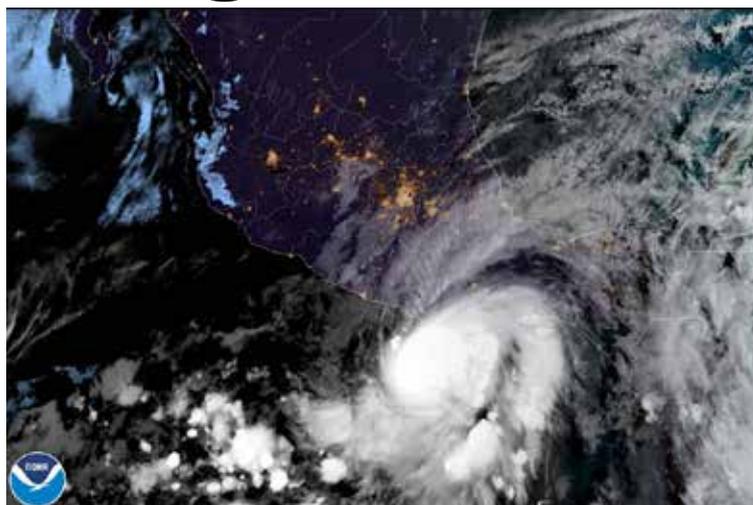
Hurricane Agatha kills 11, leaves 20 missing in south Mexico

AP – Hurricane Agatha caused flooding and mudslides that killed at least 11 people and left 20 missing, the governor of the southern state of Oaxaca said Tuesday.

Gov. Alejandro Murat said rivers overflowed their banks and swept away people in homes, while other victims were buried under mud and rocks.

“There were fundamentally two reasons” for the deaths, Murat told local media. “There were rivers that overflowed, and on the other hand, and the most serious part, were landslides.”

Murat said the deaths appeared to be concentrated in a number of small towns in the mountains, just inland



This satellite image made available by NOAA shows Hurricane Agatha off the Pacific coast of Oaxaca state, Mexico on Monday, May 30, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. EDT. (NOAA via AP)

from the coast. But he said there were also reports of three children missing near the resort of Huatulco.

Agatha made history as the strongest hurricane ever recorded to come ashore in May during the eastern Pa-

cific hurricane season.

It made landfall Monday afternoon on a sparsely populated stretch of small beach towns and fishing villages in Oaxaca.

It was a strong Category 2 hurricane, with max-

imum sustained winds of 105 mph, but it quickly lost power moving inland over the mountainous interior. Remnants of Agatha were moving northeast Tuesday into Veracruz state.

Murat said power had been restored to some communities near the coast, but that some bridges had been washed out and mudslides blocked a number of highways.

Agatha formed on Sunday and quickly gained power. It was the strongest hurricane on record to make landfall in May in the eastern Pacific, said Jeff Masters, meteorologist with Yale Climate Connections and the founder of Weather Underground.

Africans see inequity in monkeypox response elsewhere

AP – As health authorities in Europe and elsewhere roll out vaccines and drugs to stamp out the biggest monkeypox outbreak beyond Africa, some doctors acknowledge an ugly reality: The resources to slow the disease’s spread have long been available, just not to the Africans who have dealt with it for decades.

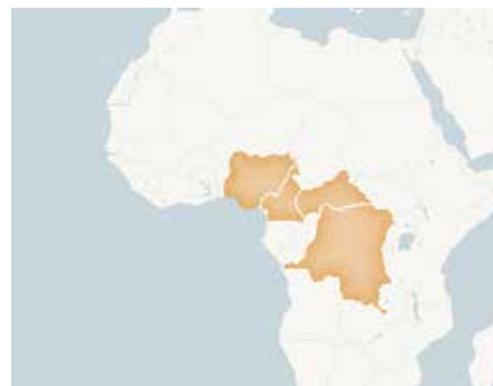
Countries including Britain, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, the United States, Israel and Australia have reported more than 500 monkeypox cases, many apparently tied to sexual activity at two recent raves in Europe. No deaths have been reported.

Authorities in numerous Europe-

an countries and the U.S. are offering to immunise people and considering the use of antivirals. On Thursday, the World Health Organization will convene a special meeting to discuss monkeypox research priorities and related issues.

Meanwhile, the African continent has reported about three times as many cases this year.

There have been more than 1,400 monkeypox cases and 63 deaths in four countries where the disease is endemic — Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo and Nigeria — according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. So far, sequencing



Source: Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

has not yet shown any direct link to the outbreak outside Africa, health officials say.

Monkeypox is in the same family of viruses as smallpox, and smallpox vac-

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West promises Ukraine more, better arms to fend off Russia

AP – The U.S. and Germany pledged to send Ukraine some of the most advanced weapons yet as Russian forces waging a grinding offensive in the east Wednesday closed in on capturing a key city.

Germany said Wednesday it will supply Ukraine with modern anti-aircraft missiles and radar systems, and the U.S. planned to unveil a new weapons package later in the day that includes high-tech, medium-range rocket systems.

The U.S. is trying to strike a balance by helping Ukraine battle ferocious Russian artillery barrages while not providing weapons that could allow Ukraine to hit targets deep inside Russia and trigger an escalation in

the war.

The Kremlin accused the U.S. of “pouring fuel on the fire.”

Western arms have been critical to Ukraine’s success in stymieing Russia’s much larger and better-equipped military, thwarting its effort to storm the capital and forcing Moscow to shift its focus to the industrial Donbas region in the east.

But as Russia bombards towns in its inching advance in the east, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has repeatedly pleaded for more and better weapons and accused the West of moving too slowly. Military analysts say Russia is hoping to overrun the Donbas before any weapons that might turn the tide arrive.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz delivers his speech during a session of the German parliament Bundestag at the Reichstag building in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, June 1, 2022. (AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

But the new arms could help Ukraine set up and hold new lines of defence in the east by hitting back at Russian artillery pieces that have been battering towns and cities and by limiting Russian airstrikes, said French retired Gen. Dominique Trinquand, a former head of France’s military mission at the Unit-

ed Nations.

“The NATO countries — the European nations and the Americans — have progressively escalated the means that they are putting at Ukraine’s disposal, and this escalation, in my opinion, has had the aim of testing Russian limits,” he said. “Each time, they measure the Russian reaction, and since there is no reaction, they keep supplying increasingly effective and sophisticated weaponry.”

Germany has come under particular criticism, both at home and from allies abroad, that it isn’t doing enough.

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cines are estimated to be about 85% effective against monkeypox, according to WHO.

Since identifying cases earlier this month, Britain has vaccinated more than 1,000 people at risk of contracting the virus and bought 20,000 more doses. European Union officials are in talks to buy more

smallpox vaccine from Bavarian Nordic, the maker of the only such vaccine licensed in Europe.

U.S. government officials have released about 700 doses of vaccine to states where cases were reported.

Such measures aren’t routinely employed in Africa.

Jury sides with Depp, awards \$15 million in damages



Johnny Depp

NBC - Johnny Depp won his defamation case against his ex-wife Amber Heard on Wednesday and the jury awarded him \$15 million in damages.

Depp was awarded \$10 million in compensatory damages and \$5 million in punitive damages in his defamation suit. The jury also awarded Heard \$2 million in compensatory damages.

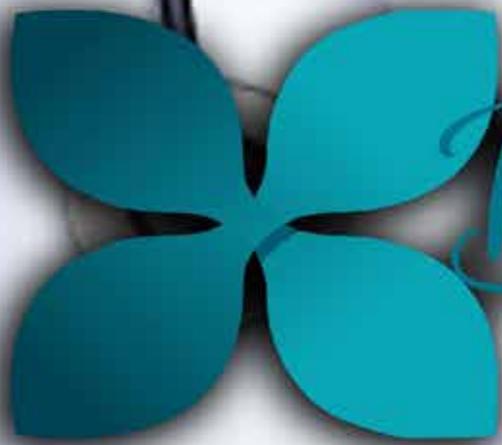
The jury in Fairfax, Virginia, began deliberating Friday.

Depp sued Heard for \$50 million after she wrote an op-ed for The Washington Post in 2018 in which she called herself a “public figure representing domestic abuse.”

Heard countersued Depp for \$100 million.



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Da Squad confident of capturing first volleyball title

Two top officials of JanServeEvents Cool & Smooth Da Squad, Head Coach Carl Williams, and founder Neil Cochrane, are confident that the team will capture their first domestic female volleyball league title this weekend.

Da Squad, which is rooted in Villa, will face reigning champions Paragons in the female division final of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local League at the indoor facility at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday.

Head Coach Williams is adamant that Da Squad, that recorded a 23-25, 25-16, 25-16, 25-18 victory over Paragons when both sides clashed in the preliminary round on 30th April, will prevail against the cup holders in the final and end their dominance, having won the previous 10 women's titles.

"Paragons have been champions for, maybe, the last 10 years, but I think that reign will come to an end at the weekend. That reign will come to an end this year," Williams stated.

"We have played them before in this tournament, and it was a good game, but I think we are playing the best so far for the entire tournament, so come Saturday, I think we should



Head coach Carl Williams, foreground, and Da Squad during a timeout in their women's division semi-final against Jets at the indoor volleyball facility at the YMCA Sports Complex on 28th May, 2022. (Photo: Elwin Francis)

take this championship."

After Paragons had secured their place in the final with an emphatic 25-23, 25-15, 25-12 victory over North Coast Hardware Starz1 in the first semi-finals, Da Squad followed suit by recording a 25-21, 25-18, 23-25, 25-15 victory over Jets in the second semi-final affair on 28th May.

Despite securing their place in the final, however, Cochrane, who is also President of Da Squad Volleyball Club, said he was unhappy with the team's display after they won the first two sets of their semi-final affair against Jets.

"It's good to be in the final, but I am not really satisfied with the semi-fi-

nals victory. There were too many errors on our part. We gave up a set that should not have happened. It's not like the other team stepped up a level, it is us who dropped a level so that is not befitting and becoming of the team in terms of what we set out to accomplish," Cochrane said.

"But, even on a bad night, what I give them, is the fact that they stuck to it and they dug out the win. So, I am happy for that. But we still have a lot to do."

Cochrane is still confident, however, that Da Squad will emerge victorious against Paragons in the final.

"We have one more game and I have no doubt that we will win the championship. We played Para-

gons before and they are a good team. They are consecutive champions for 10 years, but they are not necessarily the team they used to be," Cochrane said.

"They don't have the fire power that they used to have and they certainly have some challenges. So, we are going to capitalise on all of the weaknesses that they have.

"There is no doubt that we are taking the title this year. This is all about us restarting our mission all the way back in February 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were able to outlast the two years and change and nothing is going to stop us now, except if God doesn't want it to be."

Saturday's women's division volleyball final at 6:30pm will be followed by the men's division final between defending champions Stoneville and Michael Freeland Enforcers.

The four losers in the semi-finals will contest two third place playoff matches, which take place at the YMCA Sports Complex this evening.

North Coast Hardware Starz1 will face Jets in a women's division affair at 6:30pm, followed by a men's division encounter between Renegades and High Flyers.

Sports News



Royal St. Kitts Golf Club VP wants revival of OECS golf team

Vice President of the Royal St. Kitts Golf Club, Zeke Percival, wants to see golfers from Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis represent the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in the Caribbean Amateur Golf Championships (CAGA) once again.

Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis were never individual members of the CGA. Rather, they formed part of an OECS team that participated in the Caribbean Amateur Golf Junior and Senior championships as affiliate members.

The OECS won the Hornerman Cup Team title at the Caribbean Amateur Golf Championships in St. Kitts in 2012, the last time a team from the sub-region participated in the event.

An OECS team also participated at the Caribbean Amateur Junior Golf Championships at the Guavaberry Golf & Country Club in Juan Dolio, Dominican Republic, in July 2012.

The Caribbean Golf Association's Amateur Championships for both seniors and juniors were last held in 2019, as tournaments came to a halt due to the pandemic.

Percival has said however, that he would like to see the OECS return to the CGA tournament, which would provide opportunities for golfers in Antigua and Bar-

buda and St. Kitts and Nevis to showcase their talent against their regional counterparts.

"Recently, I had a chat with the vice president of the CGA, the Caribbean Golf Association, and he was saying to me that he wanted me to help push to bring back the OECS into the Caribbean championships, and I told him, that is one of the things that I would love to see," Percival said.

"I would love to see Antigua and St. Kitts join up as a team and go into the Caribbean championships. The OECS was always a force in that championship. Even though we didn't win often, I think we won it once or twice, the other teams always look forward to seeing the OECS.

"I think we made a great mark in the Caribbean championships over the years. I would love to see that come back because that is another thing that the kids could look to like I did and so many other players from Antigua and St. Kitts in our time did.

"We looked forward to making the OECS team and going and play representing the OECS. Now, I would like to see that come back for our young kids, especially those in Antigua and St. Kitts, so they could go off and represent the OECS. I am hoping that we jump on it real soon."



Vice President of the Royal St. Kitts Golf Club, Zeke Percival. (Photo: Royal St. Kitts Golf Club)

Percival said he has contacted President of the Antigua and Barbuda Golf Association (ABGA), Avery Jonas, to explore the possibility of re-establishing the OECS team with a view to participating in CGA championships.

"Some time ago, I actually reached out to the president of the golf association in Antigua (Avery Jonas) and told him that we need to talk about it. I wanted for us to put our heads together to see how we can go about it and get it back on board," Percival said.

"Also, I think the OECS body dropped the ball because there were some issues with the Eastern Caribbean Golf Association that we had, rightfully so, but I think that we could bounce back together and put our heads together and create

an OECS golf association, even with just Antigua and St. Kitts.

"I can tell you, as Vice President of the Royal St. Kitts Golf Club, every meeting we have, we talk about our need to get an OECS team back into the Caribbean Golf Association, so our kids can participate in the junior championships.

"Most of the current players would come from Antigua, and we in St. Kitts see Antigua as part of us, and so we are willing to go back into it and get the kids out playing so that we can give them something to look forward to.

"This could be another incentive for the young golfers to aim for, knowing that if they can make the OECS team, they will be given the opportunity to travel to other

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ABCF allocates bikes for female cyclists

President St. Clair Williams says the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) still has two bikes available for distribution to females who are interested in becoming competitive cyclists.

In March this year, the ABCF began distributing ten bikes it attained through the Solidarity Programme of the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), the world governing body for sports cycling.

The UCI Solidarity Programme allows cyclists from less fortunate areas of the world to train in professional facilities using high-quality bicycles and accessories.

The bike distributions are part of the ABCF's plan to initiate a junior programme in its effort to facilitate the development of young cyclists.

While the ABCF has already distributed eight bikes, two of the ten were reserved specifically for



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

women who are interested in becoming part of the national cycling programme.

"We still have two more bikes. The majority of persons requesting the bikes have been males. I am saying, if we want to grow the female aspect of the sport,

we must have some of the bikes dedicated for the females," Williams stated.

"So, I have held back two of those bikes, and those are for any female who wants to come on board and is having a problem with getting a bike, or buying a bike, to

come and compete.

"You can get in touch with the National Cycling Federation, either via our Facebook page, or contact our vice president, Derrick Sutherland, at 770-8533, or myself at 727-8102, or call any one of our executive members and we will work something out."

Williams said females desirous of applying to the ABCF for the bikes must be of school age and be a registered member of a club affiliated with the National Cycling Federation.

"Anyone interested can be given a bike, but you must be a part of a club, you have to be registered and you will have to go through the normal process and then we would hand it over," Williams said.

"This is done to ensure that the person will get to understand how to take care of the bike and get to know how to do their training so they can get up to speed for racing level."

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countries to compete.

"This would also result in a lot more kids playing golf, so we definitely need to not just talk about it, but we also now need to do something about it."

In the past, Percival said OECS teams often had to overcome contentious issues pertaining to fund raising ahead of CGA championships.

He said if the OECS is to return to the CGA championships, each territory on the team must commit to raising the funds necessary to ensure the teams'

participation.

"For it to happen, I must say first it will take a lot of work because we have to raise the funds. We need committees who are willing to do the work to raise the funds to get the kids and the players out," Percival stated.

"When we used to participate in it before, that was one of the problems, where some of the OECS territories wanted to be a part of the team, but don't want to help raise the funds so that the OECS team can participate.

"So, if we are going to do it, each territory has to be willing to help raise

the funds so that our golfers can go off and play."

Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, Barbados, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Montserrat, St. Croix, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Maarten and St. Thomas are members of the Eastern Caribbean Golf Association, which was formed in 1975. The members of the Caribbean Golf Association are The Bahamas, Barbados, the Cayman Islands, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, the Turks & Caicos Islands and the US Virgin Islands.

Pogba leaving United for free after joining for record fee

AP — Paul Pogba joined Manchester United for a world-record fee. He'll leave the English club for nothing.

United said Wednesday the France midfielder would be departing Old Trafford at the end of the month when his contract expires. Another midfielder, Jesse Lingard, will also be leaving when his latest contract runs out on June 30, United said.

"We wish him all the best for the next steps on a remarkable journey," the club said about Pogba in a long statement that detailed all the successes in his career.

Pogba's second stint at United has been under-

whelming, however.

He made his return in 2016, when Jose Mourinho was manager, for a fee of around 105 million euros (\$116 million) and to much fanfare amid a series of glitzy videos. He came from Juventus, where he had moved from United in 2012 having joined the English team's academy at the age of 16.

Pogba made 226 appearances, scoring 39 goals, in six injury-affected years in his second spell at United. During that time, he won the World Cup with France in 2018 but his performances for United never quite matched those for his national team, with United



Manchester United's Paul Pogba plays with a ball during warm up before the Premier League soccer match between Everton and Manchester United at Goodison Park, in Liverpool, England, April 9, 2022. (AP Photo/Rui Vieira, File)

managers unable to find his best role.

He won two trophies — the League Cup and the Europa League — both in his first season back at United.

Amelie Mauresmo: Women's tennis has less 'appeal' than men's

AP — Amelie Mauresmo, a former No. 1 player who is in her first year as the French Open's first female tournament director, said Wednesday that nine of the 10 night sessions at Roland Garros involved men's matches because women's tennis currently has less "appeal."

Speaking at the traditional second-week news conference to recap the clay-court Grand Slam tournament, Mauresmo said she tried on a daily basis to find a women's pairing that had the star power or a matchup worthy of being highlighted in the separate session that began at 8:45 p.m. local time in Court Philippe Chatrier.

"I admit it was tough," said



Director of Roland-Garros former tennis player Amelie Mauresmo attends the draw of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, Thursday, May 19, 2022. The French Open tennis tournament starts Sunday May 22. (AP Photo/Michel Euler)

Mauresmo, a 42-year-old from France who first topped the WTA rankings in 2004 and returned to that spot af-

ter winning the Australian Open and Wimbledon in 2006.

Her last major tournament was the 2009 U.S. Open. After retiring as a player, Mauresmo moved into coaching and worked with Andy Murray, Lucas Pouille and Marion Bartoli, among others, and was France's captain for the team competition now called the Billie Jean King Cup.

This year's French Open began on May 22 and will end on Sunday. The last of the 10 night sessions was scheduled for Wednesday, and the only women's match that got the prime-time treatment — part of a deal with a streaming service — was France's Alizé Cornet's victory over Jelena Ostapenko in the second round.

Dustin Johnson defies PGA Tour and joins Saudi-funded series

AP – Three months after declaring he was “fully committed” to the PGA Tour, Dustin Johnson is among 42 players in the field for next week’s LIV Golf Invitational, which offers a \$25 million in prize money that’s backed by Saudi Arabia’s sovereign wealth fund.

Phil Mickelson was missing from the list that was released Tuesday night. It was his damaging remarks in February that led Johnson and other top players to say they would stay on the PGA Tour.

The LIV Golf Invitational is scheduled for June 9-11 at Centurion Club outside of London. The PGA Tour and European tour denied releases for players, meaning they risk punishment — possibly a loss of tour membership — by competing.

“Dustin has been contemplating the opportunity off and on for the past cou-



Dustin Johnson tosses his towel to his caddie on the 10th hole during the second round of the PGA Championship golf tournament at Southern Hills Country Club, Friday, May 20, 2022, in Tulsa, Okla. (AP Photo/Matt York)

ple of years. Ultimately, he decided it was in his and his family’s best interest to pursue it,” David Winkler, Johnson’s manager at Hambric Sports, told The Associated Press in a text message.

“Dustin has never had any issue with the PGA Tour and is grateful for all it has given him but in the end felt this was too compelling to pass up.”

That was a turnaround from his comments in Feb-

ruary when Johnson issued a statement that he was committed to the PGA Tour and that he was “grateful for the opportunity to play on the best tour in the world and for all it has provided me and my family.”

Johnson, whose last victory was the Saudi International in 2021, is No. 13 in the world, the highest-ranked player in the field. He had held the No. 1 spot in the world longer

than any player since Tiger Woods.

Greg Norman, in his second try to create an alternative circuit to the PGA Tour, had made a strong push for Johnson. Still to be determined is how much Johnson is being paid to join the Saudi venture.

Other players in the 48-man field were not a surprise; Lee Westwood and Sergio Garcia had indicated they would be playing, along with Ian Poulter and Louis Oosthuizen.

The field features four of the top 50 in the world ranking and 16 of the top 100. LIV Golf said the other six spots would be filled by invitations and from the Asian Tour’s International Series tournament this week in England.

That means Mickelson, who has not played since the Saudi International in early February, could still be part of the field.

cont’d from pg 24

Grave added, “The upcoming summer is expected to feature 30 days of top-quality entertainment for our fans as we look ahead to hosting three teams of differing styles in all three formats, which will sure to whet the appetite. We are mindful that COVID-19 is still present, and we again want to thank the various Governments and other stakeholders who have worked with us to ensure the matches will be played in a safe environment.”

Tickets will go on sale available from Thursday June 3 via the new

WINDIES TICKETS service, presented by Mastercard at <https://www.windiescricket.com/tickets/>.

The Test matches against Bangladesh will be on sale initially with the white ball matches against Bangladesh, India and New Zealand being added in coming weeks. Tickets are available from just US\$6.00 for the Test matches against Bangladesh and from US\$10 for matches against New Zealand with a range of options from grounds admission to premium seats.

For the games against India in the Caribbean, tickets will start from

US\$20 for grounds admission. Ticket categories and prices for the games in Florida will be announced later in June.

In addition to being able to choose and pay for your seats in advance, the service allows fans to save their purchased tickets to their device for ticket scanning at the venue, avoiding the need for queues and travel to the box offices. Fans registered for the WI Insider fan mail and on the WINDIES TICKETS service will receive promotional discounts across the games in the Caribbean.

CWI brings the hottest “Summer of Cricket” with visits by Bangladesh, India and New Zealand

Cricket West Indies (CWI) on Wednesday confirmed the full match schedule for the West Indies Senior Men’s team from June 16 to August 21. This will see visits to the region by Bangladesh, India and New Zealand featuring all three formats of cricket.

The list of fixtures features 30 days of men’s international cricket comprising two Tests, nine CG United One-Day Internationals and 11 T20 Internationals at 10 world-class venues. This promises to be a bumper “summer of cricket” for fans across the Caribbean as well as for the West Indies diaspora in the United States of America, when West Indies and India make a return to the Broward County Cricket Stadium in Lauderhill, Florida for two T20Is against India.

Bangladesh will tour the Caribbean from June 16 to July 16 and will face West Indies in two Test matches in Antigua and St Lucia as part of the ICC World Test Championship. The two Tests will be followed by three T20Is and three CG United ODIs in Dominica

and Guyana. The first two T20Is will see a return to international cricket at the fully refurbished Windsor Park, where international cricket is being hosted for the first time since the hurricane damage of 2017. The Bangladesh home series will conclude with the third T20I and then three CG United ODIs at the Guyana National Stadium.

India’s white-ball tour will commence on July 22 in Trinidad and Tobago with three CG United ODIs from July 22 to 27 at Queen’s Park Oval, Port of Spain, followed by five T20Is in three separate venues. The first T20I on Friday, July 29 will be historic as the first ever Men’s T20I to be played at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in the south of Trinidad. The venue for the back-to-back second and third T20I matches is Warner Park, St Kitts, coinciding with Emancipation Day and Culturama holiday celebrations there. The eight-match India white ball tour concludes with an exciting weekend of back-to-back T20I fixtures at the Broward County Cricket



Stadium in Lauderhill, Florida from August 6 and 7.

West Indies’ summer of cricket climaxes with New Zealand’s white-ball tour of the Caribbean, which has been rescheduled from 2020 following the COVID-19 pandemic. The BLACKCAPS will arrive in Jamaica to play three T20Is from Wednesday, August 10 to Sunday, August 14 before moving to Barbados for three day/night CG United ODIs. All nine CG United ODIs are part of the ICC ODI Super League with the West Indies aiming to qualify directly for the ICC World Cup in 2023.

“We are delighted to announce the match schedule for the men’s international calendar at home for the rest

of the year. We know our supporters will be delighted with the news that the matches are being played all across the region as well as those living in the USA will be able to see their favourite players in action,” said Johnny Grave, CEO of CWI.

“This is the busiest year of cricket ever in the West Indies. In January we hosted Ireland and England in white ball formats, and also successfully staged the ICC Under 19 Men’s Cricket World Cup 2022, which featured 16 teams traversing the region. We also witnessed the Apex Test Series, against England, which West Indies won in great style and with real fight.”

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