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FLY MONTSERRAT MAKES EMERGENCY LANDING AT VCB INT'L

Story on Page 2



Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne spoke with the Prime Minister of Samoa, Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, as he hosted the Working Dinner of AOSIS in New York. *Story on page 3*

Local News



Aviator makes successful emergency landing after Fly Montserrat aircraft develops engine trouble

A pilot is today being praised for her professionalism after she safely landed a Fly Montserrat aircraft whose engine had to be shut down en route to Antigua from Montserrat yesterday morning.

The flight, piloted by Captain Jamilla Jeffrey, departed the John A. Osborne Airport at approximately 9:30am with six passengers onboard. Shortly after take-off, the right engine of the Islander aircraft malfunctioned, resulting in the pilot declaring an emergency.

Emergency services were

deployed at V. C. Bird International Airport - a standard procedure in the aviation industry when an airborne aircraft develops mechanical problems.

The Antigua and Barbuda Fire Service was among the responders who were positioned on the runway.

"The pilot, Captain Jamilla Jeffrey, reported that about three minutes into the flight, the right-side engine of the aircraft started to leak oil and consequently, the engine had to be shut down,"

Inspector Lester Bagot, the



Captain Jamilla Jeffrey
fire department's spokesman reported.

"She was able to land the aircraft safely at the V. C. Bird International Airport at Runway 7 and taxied to the apron where the passengers disembarked. The Fire Brigade wishes to compliment Captain Jamilla Jeffrey on her heroic feat of safely landing the aircraft," Inspector Bagot continued.

A senior official confirmed that the airport remained open, with no disruptions to incoming and outgoing traffic, throughout the emergency operation.

The passengers who arrived aboard the aircraft were all cleared by immigration officers before exiting the airport terminal.

According to the airline's website, Fly Montserrat is the trading name for Montserrat



Airways Ltd. which operates daily services between Antigua and Montserrat. The airline also serves Barbuda and Nevis.

The last incident involving the airline occurred in 2019 when one of its aircraft skidded off the wet runway at John A. Osborne Airport on arrival from V. C. Bird International Airport.

There were six passengers onboard. While the aircraft was damaged, no injuries were reported.



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Joint strategy session charts course for adoption of MVI



Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves and Prime Minister of Samoa Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa.



Minister Daryll Matthew speaks with attendees at the AOSIS Working Dinner

The Alliance of Small Island States, currently led by Antigua and Barbuda, is pushing for the adoption of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) at the level of the United Nations.

Key internal strategic discussions were held on Tuesday evening during a Working Dinner hosted by Prime Minister Browne, who also co-chairs the High Level Panel of the MVI set up by the UN.

Island nations have been making sustained and repeated calls for the adoption of the MVI since traditional tools have fallen short as an effective measure of their specific vulnerabilities.

Ultimately, the MVI would guarantee access to concessional support that fully and accurately takes into account the exposure of these islands to external shocks, their resilience and abilities to recover.

Joining the strategy meeting were Prime Min-

ister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves; Prime Minister of Samoa Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa and Antigua and Barbuda's Education Minister, Daryll Matthew.

Seychelles was represented by its Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ian Madeleine.

Prime Minister Browne acknowledged the hurdles that remain in the quest to see the MVI become a reality.

A number of outstanding issues prevail and AOSIS is seeking to build consensus among its membership to resolve them.

"Selection of the most appropriate indicators and their rationale, will be the single most important undertaking that will consume most of the Panel's time and energy going forward," Prime Minister Browne noted.

His position garnered support from St. Vincent's prime minister.



"In the Caribbean we are facing a debt crisis; I am sure the situation is similar in other island regions.

"We need to be more vocal on the inclusion of debt relief and restructuring as a critical use of the MVI," Prime Minister Gonsalves

said.

Based on the quantum of work, Prime Minister Browne suggested that the Panel's mandate will have to extend into 2023 to effectively complete its work.

Also lending technical expertise to the meeting were representatives from Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS) and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), who serve as the Secretariat to the Panel.

Fri 23 Day		Fri 23 Night	
86°		79°	
23% ESE 13 mph		22% E 9 mph	
Sunshine and clouds mixed. High 86F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph.		Partly cloudy early with increasing clouds overnight. Low 79F. Winds E at 5 to 10 mph.	
Humidity 74%	UV Index Extreme	Humidity 81%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 5:56 am	Sunset 6:02 pm	Moonrise 3:54 am	Moonset 4:54 pm
		● Waning Crescent	

Local News



Chet Greene chairs meeting of CARICOM Foreign Ministers

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Foreign Affairs E.P Chet Greene on Thursday chaired a meeting of CARICOM Foreign Ministers on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

The meeting, the first at a UNGA since the start of the pandemic in 2020, served to update several CARICOM positions and engage with the CARICOM Caucus of ambassadors in New York.

The foreign ministers received reports from several technocrats based at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana and delegations from member countries.

The Executive Director of the Caribbean Public

Health Agency (CARPHA), Dr. Joy St. John also updated the group on the state of the pandemic, inoculation and future pandemics in the region.

Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the UN, Dr. Walton Aubrey Webson, updated the meeting on Antigua and Barbuda's leadership of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the development of a new tool, the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) which will eventually replace the archaic, anachronistic and failed GNI index.

The ongoing social and political unrest in Haiti fueled much discussion as ministers weighed in on presentations by Ambassa-

cont'd on pg 5



Minister Greene with Cabo Verde's Foreign Minister, Francisco Andre.

Foreign Minister Greene engages in back to back UNGA meetings



Foreign Minister, E. P. Chet Greene has been involved in a hectic schedule of meetings with senior officials on the margins of the 77th United Nations General Assembly in New York.

On Tuesday, Greene attended a conference hosted by the People's Republic of China where he delivered an address that was followed by bilateral meetings with the Foreign Minister of Morocco.

During those discussions, the foreign minister focused on strengthening diplomatic ties, scholarships in technical and academic disciplines, and ac-

cessing agricultural support from the North African country's government.

Addressing a luncheon hosted by the Nordic States as chairman of the CARICOM Foreign Ministers Committee, Greene made a case for the recognition of new ways to determine a country's eligibility to access concessional financing over what he termed "the failed and inequitable Gross National Income".

Greene also made a call for multilateralism and for COP 27, which takes place this November in Egypt, to be treated with the seriousness it deserves.

Gov't moving to expand nationwide CCTV surveillance

By Shahein Fitzpatrick

To aid law enforcement's crime fighting efforts and improve public security, more Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) surveillance cameras will be installed all across Antigua and Barbuda.

The deployment of additional cameras to achieve the goal of nationwide surveillance was announced during Thursday's post-Cabinet Press Briefing by Information Minister, Melford Nicholas.

"All of the cameras within the system would have been deployed, we are providing a discrete surveillance monitoring system within the respected law enforcement agencies.

"The police would have their own at the Police Headquarters, the Army would have theirs as well as the ONDCP (Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy).

"This means that at all material times, they can

all have access to surveillance of these particular areas," Minister Nicholas explained.

He also confirmed that the CCTV systems are being implemented outside of the city.

"Customs and Excise division as well as the Antigua Port Authority in Jolly Harbor will have surveillance of the harbour so yes, it has gone very well. All of the surveillance cameras at the Jolly Harbour facility have been enhanced."

Nicholas added that the persons who will operate the camera surveillance system will need to undergo thorough training as the system will also be used at His Majesty's Prison.

"There is a slew of training that has to be done, and this is an ongoing programme to ensure that we can optimise the use of it. One of the things we are doing as well as augmenting and implementing the cameras at the St. John's prison



Information Minister, Melford Nicholas.

in relation to the whole surveillance system.

"So, of course, we are not going to stop at the levels of camera positions that we have, we are certainly going to expand and increase the level of coverage across the island to ensure that the law enforcement officials

have better surveillance that would improve the overall security," Nicholas said.

The system was initially implemented in 2014 at a cost of \$2.5 million.

One hundred and ten CCTV cameras and sensors were installed around St. John's.

cont'd from pg 4

dor Dr. Colin Granderson Assistant Secretary-General of the CARICOM Secretariat and Haitian Foreign Minister, Jean Victor Geneus.

At the close of the meeting, Minister Greene reiterated the support of CARICOM for the restoration of normalcy in Haiti. He was emphatic that any meaningful solution must be local by design, nationally respected and internationally supported.

The meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was adjourned following a presentation by Ambassador Semo Methqal of Morocco, who brought greetings from King Mohammed VI of Morocco, and an invitation to deepen his nation's functional cooperation with CARICOM.

Meanwhile, for a fourth straight day, Foreign Minister Greene continued at his duties on the margins of the UNGA when he inked an agreement

between Antigua and Barbuda and the Western African nation of Cabo Verde.

Known as the Caribbean of Africa, Cabo Verde shares much in common with Antigua and Barbuda, including a shared ancestral heritage and a development agenda incorporating UN Sustainable Goals.

Under Greene's watch as Foreign Minister, Antigua and Barbuda in 2020 initiated a "deliberate" programme of "reconnecting with Africa".

Local News



Sports organisations urged to apply for VISAs ahead of time

By Shahein Fitzpatrick

Athletic groups are being encouraged to contact the Ministries of Sports and Foreign Affairs ahead of time to request assistance in filing for VISAs to represent Antigua and Barbuda at international events.

Yesterday, the Minister of Information, Broadcasting, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Melford Nicholas, emphasised the importance of applying for US VISAs well in advance of events due to the considerable appointment backlog being experienced by US embassies.

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association was unable to send teams to a Florida event earlier this year because of difficulties getting appointments with the US Embassy to secure VISAs for its players.

The Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation is facing similar issues as it prepared for a tournament in Puerto Rico in November.

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in partnership with the Ministry of Sports, has made these representations before, but what is required is a timely intervention.”

“If associations make a late decision to participate in any international event, it will be a challenge.”

On Wednesday, Pointe Xpress spoke with a senior official at the Ministry of Sports who stated that they were unaware of the issues being faced by local associations.

The official added that the ministry has received no requests from the associations in question for help in obtaining VISAs for the athletes.

“It would be good if they engage the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Ministry of Sports, at the earliest possible time to avoid a last-minute rush,” Nicholas said.

The difficulties individuals have while applying for new VISAs, or VISA extensions were among the concerns US Embassy representatives discussed with business representatives, trade associations, and government officials during their September visit to Antigua and Barbuda.

“Many persons utilising the online service of the US Embassy in Barbados would have indicated that they were given schedules going as far on the calendar as 2024. There is a significant backlog of applicants,” the minister indicated.

POINTE FM NEWS

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Improved data collection needed to improve childhood cancer diagnosis, treatment

Legislation is one of at least two mechanisms that must be introduced before Antigua and Barbuda can report on childhood cancers and their effects on these young members of the community.

The other is the development of a proper registry to collect data concerning these illnesses.

Head of the Paediatric Department at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre, Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, explained that within the national healthcare system, data is unavailable to support these changes.

Once measures are put in place, however, the statistics will allow medical practitioners to make informed decisions regarding diagnosis and treatment.

“So many may ask what our numbers are like in Antigua and Barbuda. We’re still trying to work on that because we need a registry. A registry will really help us to put together the numbers that are seen not only in public practice, but also in private practice,” she said.

“You can imagine that some children will be seen privately and sent directly overseas and so we really cannot report national statistics from a hospital perspective, and that does require some legal framework, so that anyone who sees and diagnoses a child with cancer has to report it so that the numbers can be reflected.”

While cancer can affect every human being, there are certain types that are more prevalent in children. Among them are leukaemia, lymphoma, brain tumours and neuroblastoma.

Medical experts are yet to deter-



mine the causes that influence the development of cancer in children. Dr. Belle-Jarvis stated while 10 percent of cancers worldwide can be linked to a genetic predisposition, there is no definitive reason why some cancers are more likely to affect children.

According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), cancer is one of the leading causes of death among children and adolescents worldwide. Approximately 280,000 children ages 0-19 are diagnosed with cancer each year.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, it is estimated that at least 29,000 children and adolescents under the age of 19 will be affected by cancer annually. Of these, about 10,000 will die.

The specialist doctor noted lower and middle-income countries account for 80 percent of the world’s cancers and of this number only 20 percent of children will survive.

In higher-income countries, there is a reversal of the statistic as they present 20 percent of the world’s can-

cers and report a survival rate of 80 percent.

In observance of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month this September, Dr. Belle-Jarvis is advising parents of the symptoms that could signal that a child may have cancer.

These include unexplained fever for more than seven days, unexplained weight loss, night sweats, unusual lumps and bumps in the region of the armpit, groin and neck, bruising, pain in the bones and fatigue.

The head of the Paediatric unit at SLBMC emphasised the importance of early detection in treating childhood cancers.

“We have a challenge here in Antigua and Barbuda where sometimes, unfortunately, we only see our children when they are either coming in for vaccinations or when they are ill. This culture needs to change! We need to see our children when they’re well so that in the early days, we can detect something that is concerning,” Dr. Belle-Jarvis declared.

Antigua and Barbuda celebrates newest centenarian

Adriana Burton-Joseph, affectionately called "Mama", was born in John Hughes in the Parish of St. Mary on 23rd September, 1922 to Matilda Daniels and Thomas Burton.

After her schooling, she married Jerry Joseph (deceased) and went on to raise eleven children as well as several of her grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Mrs. Burton-Joseph was a farmer, a homemaker and an entrepreneur.

A devout Anglican, she also worked at the Department of Public Works and the Antigua Development Bank as a cook.

Her 100th birthday will be celebrated with a thanksgiving service at the All Saints Anglican Church at 9am today.



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President Putin's actions are jeopardizing economic peace and growth: The world should say "no more"

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)

"Every bullet, every bomb, every shell that hits a target in Ukraine, hits our pockets and our economies in Africa." Those were the words of the President of Ghana, Akufo-Addo, at the UN General Assembly on September 21.

The Ghanaian President was referring to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which aggravated an already difficult worldwide economic situation, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

While he spoke as an African, Akufo-Addo could have been speaking for every developing region of the world, including the Caribbean.

Several African countries now have inflation rates, surging three to four times higher than they were just two years ago. The situation is no different in the Caribbean region.

If the world was turned upside down because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine is damaging it still fur-

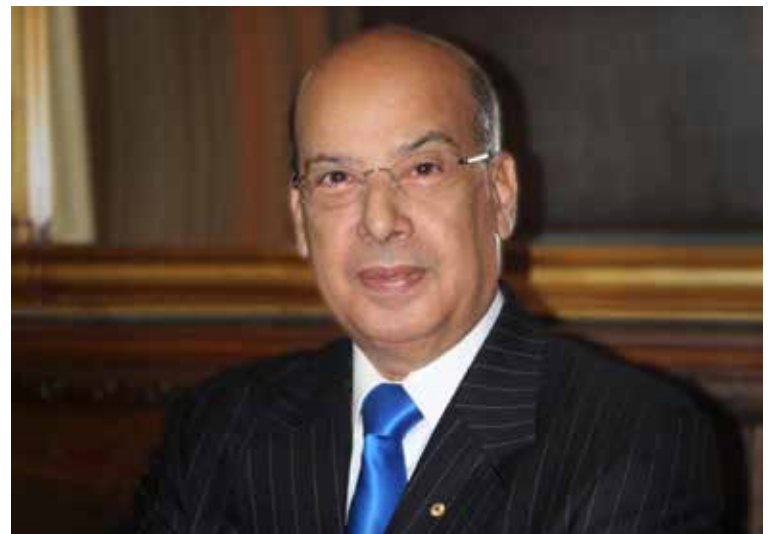
ther. And, with no end in sight.

No region of the world, or any person within regions, has escaped the consequences of Russian President Vladimir Putin's ill-advised invasion of Ukraine, clearly aimed at seizure of large tracts of Ukrainian land and strategic access to the sea and global commerce.

In July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said "global growth is projected to slow from an estimated 6.1 percent in 2021 to 3.6 percent in 2022 and 2023. This is 0.8 and 0.2 percentage points lower for 2022 and 2023 than projected in January".

The IMF emphasized that the economic costs of the Russian war against Ukraine "are expected to spread farther afield through commodity markets, trade, and—to a lesser extent—financial interlinkages. Fuel and food price rises are already having a global impact, with vulnerable populations—particularly in low-income countries—most affected".

Therefore, the troubling economic and financial situation should completely dispel the illusion, held by some in the developing world that the war has nothing to do with us. In fact, the entire world has a vested interest in encouraging its immediate end.



Sir Ronald Sanders

The leaders of the two most important developing countries, Xi Jinping of China and Narendra Modi of India recently indicated their concerns about the war. Significantly Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President of Turkey, has called for an end to the war in Ukraine "as soon as possible through diplomatic channels."

As in all unpopular wars – and this one certainly is – Russian military forces have been losing ground to the more committed Ukrainian troops. The former are soldiers, carrying out orders; the latter are men and women determined to protect their homeland with their lives. Despite the superior Russian military firepower, especially missiles launched from areas bordering Ukraine, the Ukrainians, armed with improved weaponry – gifted by sympathetic nations – and fortified by a

patriotic resoluteness, have pushed Russian troops out of Ukrainian territory that they had earlier seized.

This has caused President Putin to announce conscription of reservists and other civilians. But his plan has met resistance. More than 800 Russians were arrested in anti-war demonstrations in 37 cities, including Moscow and St. Petersburg, according to the independent Russian human rights group OVD-Info. The number of men fleeing the country has increased as has widespread protests by Russian citizens.

The protestors have been assaulted with military force and hundreds have been detained. Journalists in Moscow, with the international news agency, Associated Press, reported that they witnessed at least a dozen arrests in the first 15 minutes of a night-time protest in

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Opinion



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the capital, with police in heavy body armour tackling demonstrators and , hauling some away as they chanted, “No to war!”

Fighting a war, which relies on reluctant conscripts, is unlikely to bring the success that Putin told the Russian people was imminent. Instead, the Ukrainians have recaptured vast swathes of Russian-occupied territory. In addition to sinking confidence in any achievement, resulting from the war, the Russia economy is also suffering.

Despite all this, and in a departure from reality, President Putin is planning to hold referenda “on joining Russia” in areas of the Ukraine that Russian troops occupy.

Referenda in the middle of a war, and with the population living under the guns of occupying forces, would hardly be credible to any nation in the

global community. However, the decision to hold them clearly shows Putin’s intention to annex the areas to Russia. Consequently, the war will escalate further, as the Ukrainians intensify their resistance.

The referenda are scheduled to start on September 23 and to continue for 5 days, after which Russia will no doubt announce that the people of the areas have voted in favour, and they have opted to join Russia. In his quest to re-establish the Soviet Union, President Putin is doing so by seizing the territory of a neighbouring state and balkanizing it. This is a grave violation of the international legal order, which Russia was party to establishing, and which has been applied by the UN Security Council since 1945.

But, in the way of powerful nations, rules and laws are discarded when it does not suit the ambitions of their governments.

Every government, at the United Nations General Assembly this month, at the General Assembly of the Organization of American States next month, and in every international meeting, should make it very clear to President Putin that the war against Ukraine is not only unpopular, but it is fast becoming a war against global economic peace and growth, which are vital conditions for economic progress in developing countries.

Developing countries, especially, small states, depend on adherence to international law; they also need global peace that facilitates travel for tourism, aid money being spent on development and not on arms, and competitive commerce that reduces high prices for food and other goods.

President Putin has jeopardized all that.

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Dominica readies itself for the return of World Creole Music Festival

By Laura Dowrich-Phillips

The Dominica World Creole Music Festival is the only festival in the region where you are guaranteed to hear almost every musical genre from the Caribbean.

From Soca, Dancehall and Reggae to Zouk, Kompa, and Bouyon, the three-day festival is a musical feast that also incorporates popular global sounds such as Afrobeats.

The 2022 edition of the festival is no different, offering the likes of dancehall stars Shenseea and Dexta Daps, soca stars Patrice Roberts and Kes the Band, Bouyon king Asa Banton, Afrobeats star Burna Boy and Zouk, French ragga and Kompa singers Jocelyne Beroard of Kassav fame, Chiré LaKay, Admiral T out of Guadeloupe, and out of Haiti K-Dilak and Bedjine and Enposib.

Having featured almost every who's who in the Caribbean, the Discover Dominica Authority, organisers of the festival, turned to the public for assistance in choosing the line-up for this, the 22nd edition of the festival.

"In May we executed on the Jazz and Creole and from that event, we were trying to gauge the mood and their sentiments on the ground via surveys about their past experience at Creole Festival and what they would like to see. When



Burna Boy is one of the major acts who will perform at the World Creole Music Festival

we looked at the survey, the vast majority of the acts we booked were what people wanted to see," said Kimberly King, Destination Marketing Manager for the DDA.

Like every festival in the region, the World Creole Music Festival is returning after a two-year hiatus thanks to pandemic restrictions.

The highlight of Creole Week on the island, the festival is usually held at the end of October and leads into the country's Independence Day celebrations on November 3.

Dominicans in the diaspora and visitors from around the Caribbean, particularly neighbouring islands such as Martinique, Guadeloupe, Sint Maarten/St Martin, Haiti, St Kitts and Nevis and St Lucia, make the trip for the three-day festival.

Marketing for the event began earlier this year in February, King revealed with Trinidad and Tobago, the largest English-speaking market for Dominica among



the major targets.

"The top three markets are the US, French West Indies and the Commonwealth Caribbean like St Lucia and Antigua but we really want to make greater inroads into Trinidad and Tobago," King said, stressing that Dominica is more than the festival and they are selling the entire experience that the Nature Isle has to offer.

In terms of transportation to Dominica, King said the island is accessible via different regional routes and there is a direct flight from Trinidad via Caribbean Airlines on Thursdays. CAL is also doing a specific return leg on October 31.

For those on the ground, particularly in the north of the island, there will be a shuttle from Portsmouth over the three days.

Beyond the main stage and the Carnival-like atmosphere usually created by the performers, the World Creole Music Festival offers visitors a true Dominican experience.

The food court in the Festival Village is chock

full of Dominican food and treats and this year, small businesses will have a place to show off their local-made items.

"You can purchase local Dominican pepper sauces, handmade soaps and your craft and souvenir items," said Samantha Letang, Festivals Events Manager.

The Festival Village also features a side stage where rising Dominican performers can get their chance to shine and, hopefully, grab the attention of producers and promoters.

Letang said these performers have an opportunity to graduate to the main stage depending on their performance, quality of music, and reach of music.

"It is a platform for growth for our music industry," she said.

A major tourism driver for Dominica, the World Creole Music Festival benefits everyone, said Letang, from hoteliers to boutiques across the island.

As such, there are a number of fringe events
cont'd on pg 12

Hundreds gather in Clarendon to remember Merciless



Entertainer remembered as the ultimate family man and one of the best lyricists of his generation

Late dancehall artiste Leonard 'Merciless' Bartley was on Saturday, September 17, remembered as a son of Jamaica whose love for family and those around him knew no bounds.

The thanksgiving service for the life of the entertainer, regarded as one of the greatest lyricists to come from Jamaica, a country with a population of 2.9 million, was held at St Gabriel's Anglican Church Hall on Church Street in May Pen, Clarendon.

Scores of people from all walks of life came out to pay their final respects.

"On July 19, 2022, his music stopped suddenly, yet, it echoes on in sweet, soulful refrains. But, for every joy that passes, something beautiful remains. His love of music, of his family, is, was, and will always be his legacy. His



Family and friends gathered in Clarendon at the thanksgiving service for the life of entertainer Leonard 'Merciless' Bartley on Saturday.

song has ended but the melody lingers on," one relative, Kiara Mitchell said while reading the eulogy.

"His generosity was extended to just about anybody who happened to cross his path. He gave without remembering, yet received without forgetting," said Mitchell.

"Leonard lived a life that mattered. He was determined and his spirit of resilience would see Lenny through more pain and tragedy than most of us will ever know.

"He lost three siblings, his wife, and experienced personal failings and setbacks

in the most public way possible. It's a string of events that would have broken a lesser man. It would have been easy for him to let himself become bitter and hardened; to surrender to self-pity and regret; to retreat from public life and live out his years in peaceful quiet. No one would have blamed him for that, but that was not Leonard," she said.

Mitchell said even as the drumming slowed and the instruments started losing their tuning, Merciless persevered.

"He never stopped doing music, even a simple dub for a friend, no matter how small the incentive was. No matter

what life threw at him, music softened the blow," the relative added.

Bartley is survived by his mother Etle Bartley, brothers Leroy and Larry, sisters Jacqueline and Claire, his four sons — Isiah, Leonard, Judah, and Jacob — three grandchildren, nieces, nephews, special friend Marsha, an immeasurable extended family, friends, and associates from the music industry, and an army of fans from all over the world.

Merciless was found dead at a motel on Beechwood Avenue in St Andrew on July 19, hours after he complained of not feeling well. He had turned 51 on July 1.

The Clarendon native was known in dancehall for his famous clashes. He made his recording debut in 1994 with 'Len' Out Mi Mercy'. (Loop)

cont'd from pg 11

leading up to the festival to hype up the local vibe.

"We will be having in October, the last four weekends from the end of September, the festival drive, where we theme each event and we bring in persons to perform

and have specials on sale. When you have the hotspots, you create avenues for persons to visit sooner rather than just for the weekend and you get them more aware and excited for the festival," she said, noting that there is a calendar of fetes leading up to the festival.

Sidney Poitier documentary shows a constant striving

By Mark Kennedy

Sidney Poitier was not expected to live. He was born two months premature to tomato farmers in the Caribbean. His father planned to use a shoe box as a makeshift coffin.

Poitier's rise from that humble origin to become an Oscar-winning box office draw and civil rights figure who remade Hollywood seems almost scripted, almost too good to be true, but such was Poitier, a life well-lived.

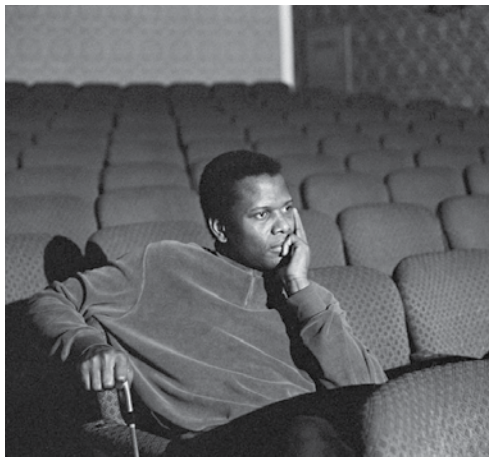
The new documentary "Sidney" respectfully traces that life, delivering a portrait of a striver hoping to improve everything he did every day. "I truly, truly try to be better tomorrow than I was today," he says to the camera.

Written by Jesse James Miller and directed by Reginald Hudlin, "Sidney" is executive produced by Oprah Winfrey — who lent several hours of her own interviews with Poitier — and members of his family. It glows with respect for a man who earned it.

Poitier became the first Black actor to win an Academy Award for best lead performance and the first to be a top box-office draw. He died this year at 94.

For much of the film, a grey-haired Poitier addresses the camera in a grey suit jacket with a pocket square and a white open-necked button-down shirt — flawlessly elegant, as always. Sometimes old interviews are added from a younger Poitier, making it seem as if he is in conversation with himself.

Highlights include the devastating confrontation with racism as a teen in Miami, the fun story of his first encounter with a subway and how a classified ad looking for actors changed his life. "I can be many things here," he thought. Tossed out of the American Negro Theater for being lousy, he took acting classes and lost his Caribbean accent by buying a radio for \$14 and learning to mimic a newsreader he ad-



This image released by Apple shows actor Sidney Poitier from the documentary "Sidney." (Bob Adelman/Apple TV via AP)

mired.

The filmmakers have a charismatic change-maker as their focus, but credit to them for also exploring when he missed his high ethical standards, as when he had a long affair with Diahann Carroll, triggering a divorce that split the family.

Poitier's moral compass was stronger than most. Early in his career, he turned down an exploitive part, an unheard of decision at the time. And then after he had made his way to the top and opened the door for other unrepresented actors, he was criticized.

Some called him out for being too accommodating in "The Defiant Ones," chained and helping a white Tony Curtis, or for loving a white woman in "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" The pioneer became passe as Black militancy grew strength. So, Poitier pivoted to directing and producing, still helping others up the ladder.

The film benefits from the candid memories of Poitier's children and ex-wife, as well as friends like Morgan Freeman, Harry Belafonte, Quincy Jones, Andrew Young, Spike Lee, Denzel Washington, Louis Gosset Jr. and Robert Redford.

Other voices are less effective, showing a star-pulling flex but with little connection to the man. Barbra Strei-

sand adds little — "He was like, wow!" Movie stars should be, 'Wow!'" — and we learn that Halle Berry wanted to marry him.

Even Oprah seems a little suspect interviewing herself but she makes it count when she recalls meeting Poitier for the first time at her 42nd birthday, a time in her life when she was being criticized by the Black community for not doing enough, just as Poitier had been.

"It's difficult when you're carrying other peoples' dreams," he told her. "And so, you have to hold on to the dream that is inside yourself and know that if you are true to that, that's all that matters."

For those unfamiliar with some of Poitier's more famous moments, news of a pivotal slap will come as a surprise. Fifty-five years before Will Smith smacked Chris Rock at the Oscars, Poitier's Detective Virgil Tibbs slapped an actor playing a white plantation owner onscreen in the film "In the Heat of the Night." It was electrifying, coming in 1967 as the civil rights movement was reaching its heights. Listening to how it profoundly affected future Black stars is powerful.

Another rich vein is revealed in the relationship between Poitier and Belafonte, which one of the former's children likens to having the dynamic of an old married couple. They bonded, they fought, they reconciled, they once even outran the KKK. There seems almost to be another film here about these two charismatic men.

But let us first celebrate Poitier, a man of impossible dignity and ethics, a man who Lenny Kravitz in the film says "came to this Earth to move it."

"Sidney," an Apple TV+ release in select theatres and on Apple TV+, is rated PG-13 for adult themes and racial slurs. Running time: 112 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Milan Fashion Week hears calls for more designer diversity

By Colleen Barry

The Milan Fashion Week that opens Wednesday is showcasing collections by perhaps its most ethnically diverse line-up of designers, including the debuts of the new creative directors of Salvatore Ferragamo and Bally and the return of Haitian-Italian designer Stella Jean after a two-year hiatus.

But Jean and other industry insiders behind a campaign to open the Italian fashion world to talent from minority backgrounds say true inclusivity remains elusive.

Jean, who debuted in Milan in 2013, pledged on the heels of Black Lives Matter protests not to return to Milan Fashion Week as long as she remained the only Black designer represented. This week, she won't be.

Maximilian Davis, a 27-year-old British fashion designer with Afro-Caribbean roots, is making his debut as the creative director for Salvatore Ferragamo.

Filipino American designer Rhuigi Villaseñor is bringing Bally back to the runway for the first time in 20 years. Tokyo James, founded by British-Nigerian designer Iniye Tokyo James, is presenting a women's-only collection.

Jean said the real shift



Haitian-Italian designer, Stella Jean, accepts applause at the end of her women's Spring/Summer 2018/19 fashion collection, presented in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017. Milan Fashion Week opening Wednesday celebrates perhaps its most diverse season ever, abuzz with new creative directors of colour at such storied houses as Salvatore Ferragamo and Bally and marking the return of Haitian-Italian designer Stella Jean after a two-year hiatus. But Jean and other industry insiders behind a two-year campaign to open the Italian fashion world to talent from minority backgrounds say true inclusivity remains elusive. (AP Photo/Alberto Pezzali)

that persuaded her to return to the Milan runway was the work of the We Are Made in Italy campaign, which she launched in 2020 with Milan-based African American designer Edward Buchanan and Afro Fashion Week Milano founder Michelle Ngono.

Jean is scheduled to headline a runway show with Buchanan and five new We Are Made in Italy designers, including a Viet-

namese apparel designer, an Italian-Indian accessory designer and an African American bag designer. It is the third WAMI group to present their collections in Milan.

"We are making ourselves felt," Jean told The Associated Press. "We invited all these young people. We created the space. There have been gains."

Among the 2-year-old campaign's successes:

Both Trussardi and Vogue Italia have used WAMI's database of fashion professionals of colour who are based in Italy, although the listings have not been employed as industry-wide as the founders hoped. One of the designers from the first WAMI class, Gisele Claudia Ntsama, has worked in the design office at Valentino.

Giorgio Armani, who
cont'd on pg 15

cont'd from pg 14

helped launch Stella Jean in 2013, pitched in with textiles for the new WAMI capsule collections to be displayed here. Conde Nast and European fashion magazines are helping to fund their production.

The three WAMI founders are covering the rest from their own pockets after the fashion council offered a venue for the show but limited funding compared with previous seasons.

Ngonmo said Italian fashion houses too often confuse diversity -- such as showcasing Black models -- with true inclusivity, which would involve employing professionals in the creative process.

"I have a feeling they don't understand at all what diversity means. They tend to confuse diversity with inclusion," she said.

Buchanan said he holds on to his optimism but acknowledged that the post-pandemic market is difficult as stores are not investing in collections by new designers.

"We knew going into this that this was going to be a slow grow," Buchanan said. "Working with the designers, we have to be transparent about what is ahead of them. ... They are not going to be Gianni Versace tomorrow."

Jean noted that the new designers for major fashion brands did not come up through the Italian system

but from abroad.

Despite the progress, she and her collaborators still see some resistance to hiring people of colour in creative roles and to the idea that "Made in Italy" can involve homegrown Black talent.

"It is more glamorous to have someone from the outside," she said.

Jean said she is also waiting for the Italian fashion council to follow

through on an invitation to create a multicultural board within its structure. She said she feels the initial industry embrace of the diversity project has cooled.

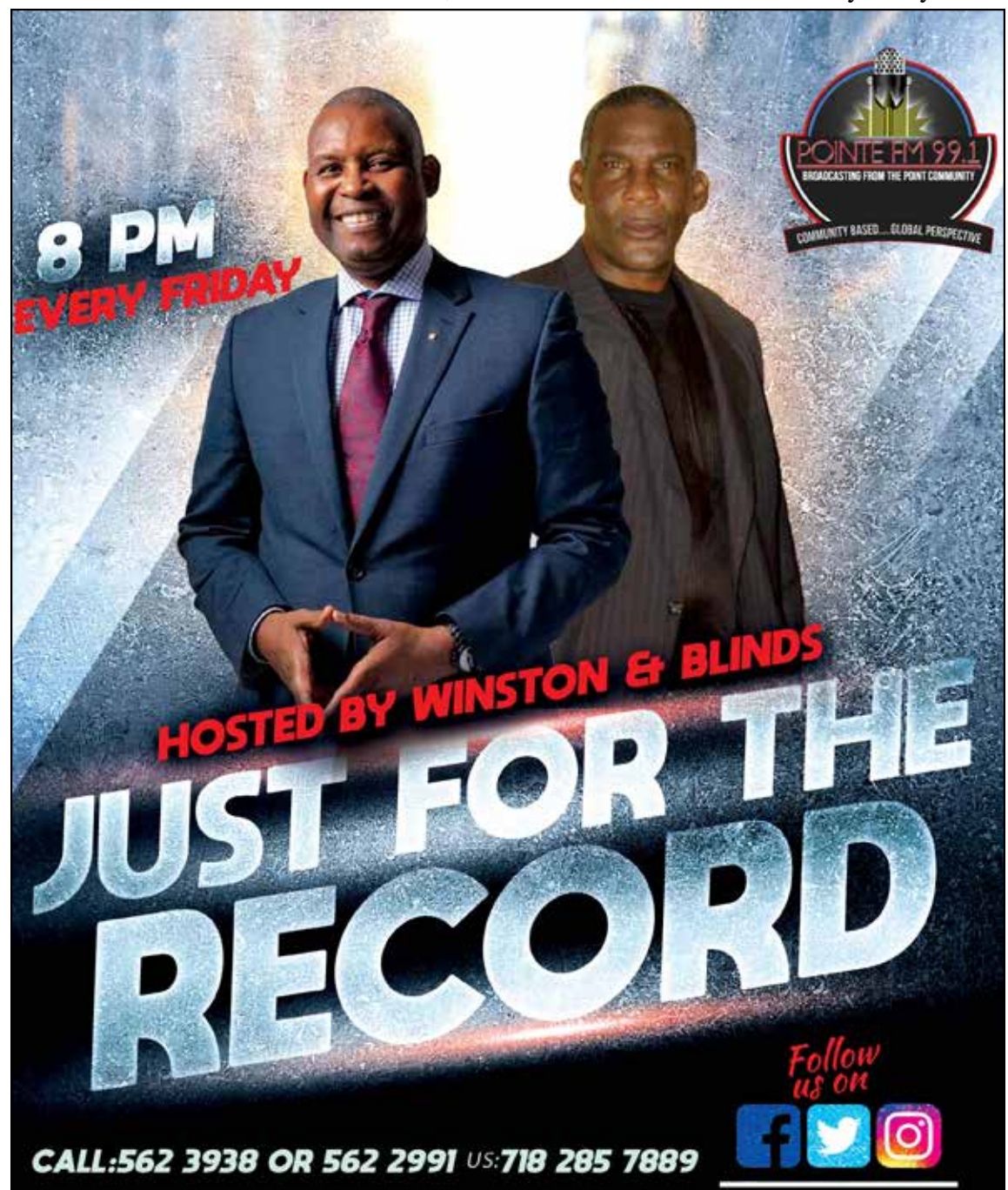
"None of us believed the totality of the promises. Now we are entering a territory that we know well, when people feel free and comfortable not to maintain promises. It is obvious," Jean said.

As for her future: "I am at a crossroads," the designer said.

"My traveling companions are outside the door that I was allowed to enter.

"For a while, being the only one in the room, you feel special.

"But when you see that many of those who are still outside the door are better than you, you understand that you were not special. You were very lucky."



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Travel



IATA warns Caribbean at risk of pricing itself out of travel market

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has warned Caribbean destinations that they are “running the risk of pricing themselves out of the global travel and tourism market where passengers have more choice than ever before”.

IATA Vice President for the Americas, Peter Cerdá told the Caribbean Aviation Day conference last Wednesday that the region “needs to remain an attractive tourist destination”, adding that often it is difficult to see the correlation between aviation fees and the service provided.

He told the conference that the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) forecasts a possible annual 6.7 per cent travel and tourism GDP increase between 2022 and 2023 if the right policies are implemented.

Cerdá said that as the world emerges from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the good news is that people want to travel and this is made very clear by the ongoing recovery.

“Global passenger air traffic has reached 74.6 per cent of pre-crisis levels,” Cerdá told the event, which is being held under the theme “Recover, Reconnect, Revive”.

“A recurring theme is also taxes and charges levied on aviation. Yes, we understand that the provision



IATA Vice President for the Americas, Peter Cerdá (CMC Photo)

of adequate infrastructure for aviation comes at a cost, but very often it is difficult to see the correlation between the level of cost and charges and the actual service provided,” Cerdá said.

To illustrate his point, Cerdá said that in some Caribbean destinations, if passengers are not arriving during “regular” local business hours, airlines are being charged significant overtime fees for each passenger to be processed by immigration and customs.

“Aviation is not a 9 to 5 business. Global connectivity is around the clock.

“This process is simply unacceptable and makes no sense as those very same passengers are the ones staying at local hotels, eating at local restaurants, and fuelling local economies, no matter what time they arrive.

“So why penalise and charge airlines extra who transport these passengers?” Cerdá said.

“Why not change the mindset and adjust customs staffing levels accordingly and attract more airlines to the market?”

He said that the taxes and fees added to airline tickets substantially increase the cost of air travel to and from the region.

“By way of comparison, at a global level taxes and charges makeup approximately 15 per cent of the ticket price and in the Caribbean the average is double this at approximately 30 per cent of the ticket price,” Cerdá said, adding that in some markets, taxes, fees and charges makeup half of the total ticket price.

He said that for flights from Barbados to Barbuda, taxes and fees represent 56 per cent of the ticket price, and 42 per cent from the Bahamas to Jamaica, the same as from St. Lucia to Trinidad and Tobago.

To fly from Port of Spain to Barbados, taxes and fees account for 40 per cent of

the ticket prices.

“In comparison, Lima, Peru to Cancun, Mexico, another beach destination, taxes and fees only represent 23 per cent,” Cerdá said.

“Today’s passengers have a choice and as the total cost of vacations increasingly becomes a decision-making factor, governments must be prudent and not price themselves out of the market,” he said.

The IATA vice president said that a flight for an eight-day vacation from London to Bridgetown in October is around US\$800. However, a flight from London to Dubai for the same time frame is US\$600.

“For a family of four, that is an \$800 difference just for the flights,” he said, noting that from Miami to Antigua, it costs around US\$900 for a round trip ticket for the same dates in October but from Miami to Cancun averages around \$310 for a round trip ticket.

“Again, for a family of four, that is a total difference of over \$2,000 just for the flights,” Cerdá said.

He said that air travel demand is close to reaching pre-pandemic levels “but to support a sustainable aviation sector as an integral part of the tourism value chain we need governments to cooperate amongst themselves and with the industry”. (CMC)

Puerto Ricans desperate for water after Fiona's rampage

AP – More than a half million people in Puerto Rico remained without water service three days after Hurricane Fiona slammed into the U.S. territory, and many spent hours in lines Wednesday to fill jugs from water trucks while others scooped water from mountain runoff.

Sweat rolled down the faces of people in a long line of cars in the northern mountain town of Caguas, where the government had sent a water truck, one of at least 18 so-called “oases” set up across the island.

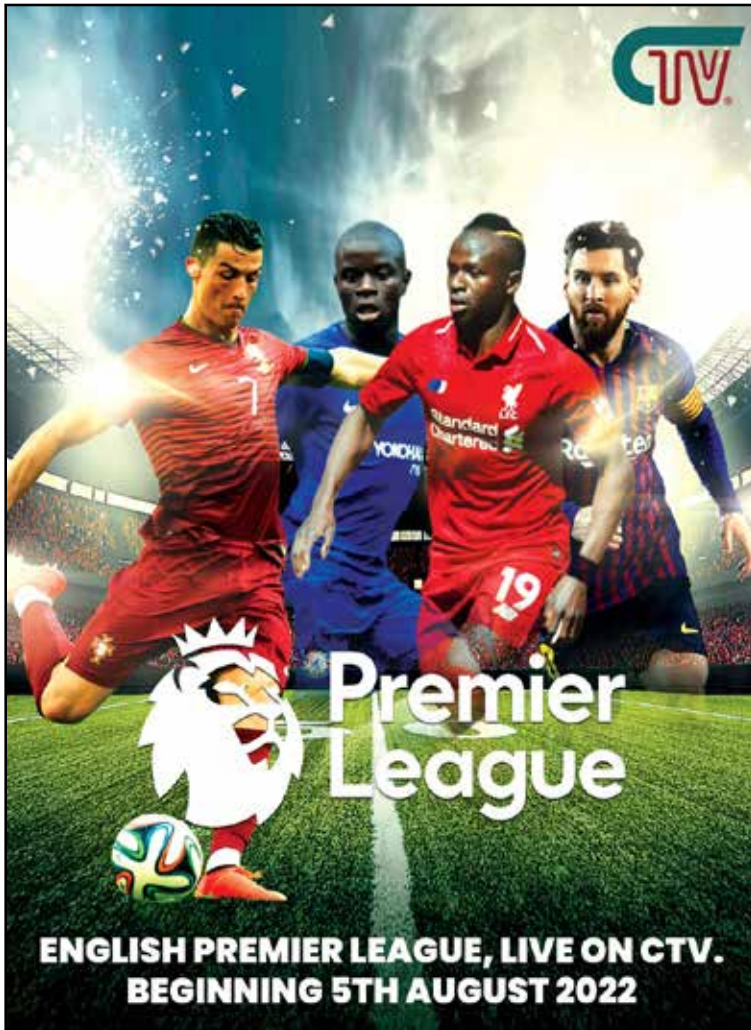
The situation was maddening for many people across an island once again left without basic services following a storm.

“We thought we had a bad experience with Maria, but this was worse,” Gerardo Rodríguez said in the southern coastal town of Salinas, referring to the 2017 hurricane that caused nearly 3,000 deaths and demolished the island’s power grid.

Fiona dumped roughly two feet of rain on parts of Puerto Rico before blasting across the eastern Do-



A man collects donated water bottles for drinking after Hurricane Fiona damaged water supplies in Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022. (AP Photo/Stephanie Rojas)



minican Republic and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Swelled to Category 4 force, the storm was on a track to pass close by Bermuda late Thursday or early Friday and then hit easternmost Canada by late Friday, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Center.

The storm played havoc with Puerto Rico’s electrical grid, which had been patched but never fully rebuilt after Maria caused a blackout that lasted 11 months in some places.

As of Wednesday afternoon, roughly 70% of Puerto Rican customers lacked electricity, according to government figures.

Power company officials initially said it would

take a few days for electricity to be restored, but then appeared to backtrack Tuesday night, saying they faced numerous obstacles.

“Hurricane Fiona has severely impacted electrical infrastructure and generation facilities throughout the island.

“We want to make it very clear that efforts to restore and reenergize continue and are being affected by severe flooding, impassable roads, downed trees, deteriorating equipment, and downed lines,” said Luma, the company that operates power transmission and distribution.

Officials said crews found several substations underwater and inaccessible.

Regional News



Suriname urges world leaders to do more to deal with climate change

CMC - resident Chandrikapersad Santokhi Wednesday urged the international community to live up to its promise to effectively deal with climate change, saying “we all can conclude, that we are not ready, and have not taken all the necessary measures” to mitigate the impact of climate change.

“As leader of Suriname, a small country, one of only three, carbon-negative countries in the world, I appeal to you today, to let us uphold our firm commitment to international principles and international law by all, when addressing the global challenges and threats.

“No country is immune, to the climate crisis. Over the past months, Suriname, has been affected by excessive rainfall, resulting in floods in many parts of the country,” Santokhi told the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

He said due to the inflow of salt water, fertile agricultural land, was adversely affected, causing economic loss, and impacting food security, and rural livelihoods.

He reminded UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres that during his recent visit to Suriname, he witnessed the impact climate change has, on low-lying coastal states.

“You lauded our nature-based solutions, such as preserving mangroves,



President Chandrikapersad Santokhi. [Photo: Office of the President]

rainforest and other essential ecosystems and stated “the Caribbean is ground zero, for the global climate emergency.

“That is why it is time, to act now. We have to deliver, on the US\$100 billion commitment, in climate finance, for adaptation. As we prepare in the short to medium term, we continue to lobby the international community, to recognize the urgent need, to help Caribbean Small Island and Low-lying Coastal Developing States (SIDS), to adapt, to the perils they face, as a result of global climate change.”

Santokhi, who is also the chairman of the 15-member regional integration grouping, CARICOM, said as a result, the Caribbean is calling for support for a research agenda that will help the region understand the cost of climate change, on sectors and economies.

He is also urging what he described as “scaling up, of means of implementa-

tion, including finance, particularly adaptation finance, capacity building, and technology transfer, not technology dumping.

He also wants improved finance for adaptation and for responses to loss and damage, with prioritization for Caribbean/SIDS, to access grant and concessional finance, including through bilateral channels in particular.

“The establishment of a Loss and Damage Facility, under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) that would provide SIDS, with resources, to finance loss and damage, resulting from climate change,” Santokhi told the global forum, expressing appreciation to Guterres for his efforts, to make the Adaptation Fund, more accessible, to countries, affected by climate change, through his Adaptation Finance Initiative.

“Finance, is the backbone of sustainable devel-

opment. The time has come, and the time is now, for a real reform, of the global financial architecture. A reform that must take into consideration, the unique and inherent vulnerabilities that hamper the ability of small and vulnerable economies, to overcome economic environmental and social shocks.”

He said he was therefore welcoming the appointment of the High-level Panel, on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index “and we look forward, to finding solutions, to address the obstacles, to realizing the index, in particular the availability of reliable data”.

Santokhi said that since coming to office two years ago, his government has been making efforts, to bring the economy back on track and bring the development of the country on the right path from an extremely unsustainable position.

“While a homegrown recovery plan, a 36-month Extended Fund Facility of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and a national multi-year plan development are in implementation, my government continues, to face economic challenges and capacity constraints, due to external and unforeseen shocks.”

He said based on the impact of several crises and the measure to reform

cont'd on pg 19

US Embassy in Cuba to process full immigrant visas in 2023

AP – The Biden administration said Wednesday that the U.S. Embassy in Cuba will begin processing full immigrant visas in early 2023, making it easier for Cubans to reunite with family members in the United States.

The embassy in Havana had last processed full immigrant visas in 2017. The U.S. government will also stop requiring Cubans seeking visas in family preference categories to travel to Georgetown, Guyana, for their interviews.

Additional government personnel will staff the embassy to handle the visa requests. The added personnel are part of the commitment stemming from the resumption of the Cuban Family Reunification Parole program last month. The 2007 program enables U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to apply for their



Boys spend the afternoon jumping into the water from the sea wall or the Malecon in Havana, Cuba, Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022. (AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa)

family members in Cuba to come to the U.S. sooner than conventionally allowed.

Under accords with Cuba, the U.S. has committed to ensuring the legal migration of at least 20,000 Cubans annually, not including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens.

Attempted border crossings by Cubans have increased sharply over the past year, according to data issued Monday by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. U.S. officials stopped Cubans who were trying to enter the U.S. 19,057 times in August, a more than four-

fold increase from August 2021.

Border crossings have been fueled partly by repeat crossers because there are no legal consequences for getting expelled under a pandemic-era rule known as Title 42. That rule denies a right to seek asylum.

cont'd from pg 18

the economy the population is going through the hardships now, but that international support, in this regard, is of utmost importance.

“To avoid further hardships, and to bring some relief, to the population, we have taken a decision, to re-engage with the IMF, to consider where the program can be adjusted, to implement the programme based on the current realities in the world, and to minimize the social cost of this programme.

“We appreciate bilateral and multilateral partners, who have expressed solidarity, and have provided valuable

support, to my country and people, during these challenging times. Additionally, our goal is to attract investments, to improve productivity and capital allocation, which are critical, for growth and poverty reduction.”

In his address, Santokhi said that the political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Haiti, remains of great concern, to the region, and requires the attention of the international community.

“In my capacity, as current CARICOM Chair, I am committed, to exerting all efforts, for a dialogue, with all stakeholders in Haiti, aimed at safe-

guarding peace and security.

“It is of utmost importance, that any support, in resolving the situation in Haiti, should be on the basis, of a Haitian initiated and owned plan,” he said, acknowledging that conflicts and violence, are now on the rise globally in all regions, which are leading to hostilities and displacements.

“These hostilities and mass displacements, are causing people, to face paralyzing levels of poverty and food insecurity. We as member states, constituting the United Nations, should take up our role in maintaining international peace and security,” he added.

UN experts detail extensive war crimes amid Tigray conflict

AP – U.N.-backed investigators said Thursday they have turned up evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity by Ethiopian government forces, Tigray forces and Eritrea's military — including rape, murder and pillage — over the nearly two-year war cantering on Ethiopia's northern Tigray region.

The Commission of Inquiry on Ethiopia, which is working under a mandate from the U.N.'s Human Rights Council, attributed a litany of war crimes on all sides, but said the government forces of Ethiopia had also resorted to "starvation of civilians" as a tool of war. It also said both Ethiopian and Eritrean forces were found to be responsible for "sexual slavery" — while Tigray forces were not.

After a cease-fire ended last month "the fighting seems to be escalating, and we have received credible information that there is an escalation in drone attacks which are employing explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas," said commission chair Kaari Betty Murungi.

"The consequences of this new renewed war has potential to affect not just the stability of Ethiopia, but of the entire Horn of Africa region," she told reporters.

Murungi was presenting



Kaari Betty Murungi, Chair of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia, speaks about the presentation of the first report of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia during a press conference at the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, Thursday, Sept. 22, 2022. (Martial Trezzini/Keystone via AP)

details of an initial report based on interviews with 185 survivors, witnesses and others, as well as other sources. The team was not granted access to Ethiopia.

The findings, in a recent report, shed new light on widely-chronicled moves by the federal government to deny access to basic services including telecommunications, banking and access to humanitarian aid to the population of Tigray during the fighting.

"We also made findings relating to very — really barbaric — attacks by use of rape and other acts of sexual violence that was committed by parties to the

conflict that include (Ethiopia's military forces), but also to the Tigray forces," Murungi said.

The report cited "reasonable grounds to believe" that the Ethiopian government had committed the crimes against humanity of murder, torture, rape and sexual violence, and that both it and allied regional state governments continue to commit crimes against humanity on ethnic grounds and "other inhumane acts" designed to cause suffering or injury.

The Ethiopian government has rejected the report, Murungi said, because it believed the team exceed-

ed its mandate.

Eritrean forces fought on the side of Ethiopian federal troops in Tigray when war started in November 2020, and have been implicated in some of the worst atrocities committed in the conflict — charges they deny. On Wednesday, Tigrayan authorities said Eritrea has launched a full-scale offensive along its border with northern Ethiopia, in an apparent escalation of fighting.

Tens of thousands of people are believed to have been killed and millions displaced in Ethiopia's Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions.

North Korea denies sending arms to Russia amid Ukraine war

AP – North Korea says it hasn't exported any weapons to Russia during the war in Ukraine and has no plans to do so, and said U.S. intelligence reports of weapons transfers were an attempt to tarnish North Korea's image.

In a state media report Thursday, an unnamed North Korean defines official told the U.S. to stop making "reckless remarks" and to "keep its mouth shut." Biden administration officials earlier this month confirmed a declassified U.S. intelligence assessment that Russia was in the process of purchasing arms from North Korea, including millions of artillery shells and rockets, as Moscow attempts to ease severe supply shortages in Ukraine worsened by U.S.-led export controls and sanctions.

The North Korean statement came weeks after Moscow described the U.S. intelligence finding as "fake."

North Korean arms exports to Russia would violate United Nations resolutions banning the country from importing or exporting weapons.

The North Korean official stressed that Pyongyang has never recognized the "unlawful" U.N. Security Council sanctions against the country "cooked up by the U.S. and its vassal forces."

The official said the export and import of military equipment is a "lawful right peculiar to a sovereign state," according to an English translation of the statement published by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

"But we take this opportunity to make clear one thing. We have never exported weapons or ammunition to Russia before and we will not plan to export them," said the official, who was described as a vice director general of the National Défense Minis-



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un shake hands during their meeting in Vladivostok, Russia, April 25, 2019. North Korea says it has not exported any weapons to Russia during the war in Ukraine and has no plans to do so, and said U.S. intelligence reports of weapons transfers were an attempt to tarnish North Korea's image. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko, Pool, File)

try's general equipment bureau.

"It is not sure from where the rumour originated which the U.S. is spreading, but it is aimed at tarnishing the DPRK's image," the official said, referring to the country's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Facing sanctions and export controls, Russia in August bought Iranian-made drones that U.S. officials said had technical problems.

Experts say North Korea, if willing, could become a major source of small arms, artillery and other ammunition for Russia, considering the compatibility of their defense systems based on Soviet roots.

North Korea has sought to tighten relations with Russia even as most of Europe and the West has pulled away, blaming the U.S. for the crisis and de-

crying the West's "hegemonic policy" as justifying military action by Russia in Ukraine to protect itself.

North Korea also has used the war as a window to accelerate its own arms development, testing dozens of weapons including its first long-range missiles since 2017, exploiting a divide in the U.N. Security Council, where Russia and China have blocked U.S. attempts to tighten sanctions on Pyongyang.

The North Korean government has also hinted it is interested in sending construction workers to help rebuild pro-Russia breakaway regions in Ukraine's east.

In July, North Korea became the only nation aside from Russia and Syria to recognize the independence of the territories, Donetsk and Luhansk.

Ex-Honduras first lady sentenced to prison for embezzlement

AP – A judge sentenced former Honduran First Lady Rosa Elena Bonilla de Lobo to 14 years in prison Wednesday on corruption charges, the second time Bonilla had been sentenced.

Bonilla will be allowed to appeal the sentence within 20 days, court spokesman Carlos Silva said.

The first time Bonilla was convicted and sentenced to 58 years in prison, but the conviction was tossed out due to inconsistencies in the process. She was re-tried in March and convicted of fraud and embezzlement.

She embezzled more than \$1 million in government funds between 2010 and 2014, when her husband Porfirio Lobo was president. Last year, the United States government barred former president Lobo from entering the country due to allegations of drug trafficking.



Former Honduran first lady Rosa Elena Bonilla de Lobo leaves court after her conviction on corruption charges in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Aug. 20, 2019. A judge sentenced Bonilla de Lobo to 14 years in prison Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2022, on corruption charges, the second time Bonilla had been sentenced. (AP Photo/Elmer Martinez, File)

In July, Bonilla and Lobo's 23-year-old son Said Omar Lobo Bonilla was killed along with three others

when they were ambushed by gunmen leaving a club in the capital.

Bonilla's private secretary

Saúl Escobar was also sentenced Wednesday to seven years and three months in prison for fraud.

Canada to drop vaccine mandate at border Sept. 30

AP – Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has signed off on Canada dropping the vaccine requirement for people entering the country at the end of September, an official familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Thursday.

Canada, like the United States, requires foreign nationals to be vaccinated when entering the country. No change in the mandate is expected in the U.S. in the near term.

Unvaccinated foreign travellers

who are allowed to enter Canada are currently subject to mandatory arrival tests and a 14-day quarantine.

The official said that Trudeau has agreed to let a cabinet order enforcing mandatory COVID-19 vaccination requirements at the border expire Sept. 30.

The official said earlier this week the prime minister needs to give final sign off. The official spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter.

Trudeau's Liberal government is still deciding whether to maintain the requirement for passengers to wear face masks on trains and airplanes.

Unvaccinated professional athletes like major league baseball players would be allowed to play in Toronto in the playoffs should the Blue Jays make the postseason. They currently are not allowed to cross the border into Canada.

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Sports News



Mayweather wants to fight Conor McGregor in exhibition bout



Floyd Mayweather easily beat Conor McGregor in his final fight as a professional

Floyd Mayweather says he wants to fight UFC star Conor McGregor in an exhibition bout next year.

Mayweather, 45, stopped McGregor in the 10th round of the final fight of his professional career in 2017.

Having competed in several exhibitions since retiring, Mayweather says he is in talks to fight McGregor again.

"We don't know if it's going to be an exhibition

or a real fight," he told the Daily Mail. "I would prefer an exhibition."

McGregor later posted a picture on Instagram from their previous fight with the caption "#notinterested".

Mayweather suggested Allegiant Stadium, home to the NFL's Las Vegas Raiders, as a potential venue for his rematch with McGregor.

"They already talked to me about my number that I'm going to receive," Floyd told TMZ, adding, "9 figures."


"You know we gotta start at least 100 million for Floyd Mayweather."

Mayweather competes in another exhibition fight this weekend in Japan when he faces MMA star Mikuru Asakura.

The American, who retired from boxing undefeated with a 50-0 record, has appeared in several exhibition fights, including against YouTube star Logan Paul last year.

McGregor returned to the UFC after the loss against Mayweather, but has struggled to rediscover the form that led to him becoming the UFC's first double champion.

The Irishman, 34, has lost three of his last four UFC fights and is currently recovering from a broken leg he sustained in his loss to Dustin Poirier a year ago.



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Benjamin says proper preparations key to Black Hawks success

Proper early preparation has been identified as one of the major components that is contributing to the development of players and on-field successes of cricketers of the PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks Sports Club.

Liberta has long been established as one of the major producers of top national cricketers, some of whom have gone on to represent the Leeward Islands at the regional level and the West Indies on the international scene.

During the past 40 years, the Liberta team has easily been the most dominant cricket side domestically in Antigua and Barbuda. The Black Hawks continued their dominance by playing unbeaten to win all three major competitions of the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association (ABCA) domestic programme earlier this year.

Utilizing mainly a young squad throughout the season, the Black Hawks completed their highly successful domestic campaign by pulling off a three-wicket victory over Empire Nation in the final to win the ABCA two-day crown, after also capturing the ABCA Super 40 championship and the Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion title.

Following their domestic exploits, several of their young players such as Michael Greaves, Brent Joseph, Wilden Cornwall Jr., and Tarek Charles were selected to represent the Leeward Islands in this year's Cricket West Indies Rising Stars regional youth competitions.

President of the Liberta Black Hawks Sports Club, former West Indies fast bowler Kenneth "Flipper" Benjamin, said off-season preparations, which commenced earlier this month with the players working to improve their body conditioning and fitness are essential components to being successful individually and as a team



Members of the Liberta Black Hawks participate in some warm-up drills at the Coolidge Cricket Grounds in March, 2022. (Photo courtesy ABCA)

on the cricket field.

Benjamin said, as part of their early preparations, each player must utilize the Strava App, which is an American internet service for tracking physical exercise that incorporates social network features. It is mostly used for cycling and running, using Global Positioning System data.

"We have already started our off-season programme and I think that is very important. Some of the guys, they have started going to the gym, and what I am saying here is, we are not hiding, because we want other clubs to emulate and even improve on what we are doing.

"All the players, and this is mandatory, they have to download the Strava App and they start with cardio and then move into physicals. About six or seven of the guys started gym on Monday (12th September, 2022), and we have set out a schedule where they have to do a certain amount of running during the week, and that Strava App records it," Benjamin said.

"Two of the players monitor that and then we do a spreadsheet at the end of the week to make sure that everybody is making their quota of running

the miles that they are supposed to be running and improve on the times as the weeks go on."

Benjamin said the Black Hawks had implemented their off-season preparation programme several years ago.

"So I think that is very critical and we have been doing that over the years. Since we were down in Falmouth, we started doing our preparation for January in September. I think that is one of the things that has made a positive difference in the development of the players at Liberta," Benjamin said.

He said players are also given a curriculum to work on improving their skill sets.

"We also have a curriculum for the players where they have to do certain skills development. We identify the weaknesses and some of the strengths from the last season and we look at those and create a programme for the individual players," Benjamin said.

"So they know what skills to work on and they know what areas of their game that they need to work on because we are hoping that next year, they are better players.

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Sports News



Transport Board continues strong defense of business league title

Defending champions Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board have maintained their impressive start in defense of their title in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Cool and Smooth Business League.

Transport Board notched up their third win in as many matches on Wednesday night as they surged to an emphatic 79-44 victory over the Board of Education at the JSC Sports Complex.

Kareem Edwards and the veteran Marlon "Buju" Charles each produced 14

points, Russell Daley converted 12 points and Kelvin Simon chipped in with 10 points for Transport Board. Bruce Whyte had nine points for the Board of Education.

After narrowly losing their first two matches, Pointe FM continued their resurgence by prevailing 53-46 against Fitzroy Rewinding on Wednesday night to record their second win in four matches.

Danny Perez scored 16 points, Josue Hernandez sank 13 points and Daniel Perez contributed 10 points for Pointe FM, while Eric

Joseph produced 11 points for Fitzroy Rewinding.

After suffering a two-point loss against Anjo's Wholesale in their previous game, Sandals Antigua returned to winning ways by producing a 76-65 victory over Vendors in Wednesday night's other encounter.

Selassie Braithwaite scored 16 points and Devorn Benjamin contributed 12 points to lead Sandals Antigua to their third win in four matches.

Adrian Carnegie shot a game-high 26 points and Craig Massiah scored 15 points for the Vendors.

No games are scheduled for today (Friday), but the

competition will continue with three more matches at the JSC Sports Complex tomorrow (Saturday).

Fitzroy Rewinding will tackle Fearless Crew at 6:30 pm, Mill Reef will meet the Board of Education at 7:30 pm and Anjo's Wholesale will challenge Sledge O'Ballers at 8:30 pm.

In another triple-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday, Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre will face Galley Bay Resort at 6:30 pm, Graphic Impact Shooters will tackle Pointe FM at 7:30 pm and Sandals Antigua will clash with Eye Mobile Antigua Vision Care at 8:30 pm.

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"If by January we don't see a high percentage of players improving in their skills, then I think it is not what we would really want. I think that is one of the reasons why we keep getting the players to come out and be consistently performing well because we actually put in some work during the off-season."

Benjamin also stressed that it is the quality of the preparation that will make the difference and not the fact that they are involved in some form of preparations.

"One of the things that I want to say, and it may sound a little bit controversial. As we get more and more into science and technology, I sort of moved away from the notion that preparation is key.

"It is the quality of the preparation that is very important because we can probably prepare for a shorter period, but the quality of the preparation is such that there are benefits and gains," Benjamin stated.

"Sometimes people practice for a long period of time, but the quality of the preparation is not really what is required, so they spend a lot of time really doing nothing.

"So I really want to be specific, that yes, preparation is important, but it is how do you prepare and what are you doing preparing."



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ABNA cancels fund-raising event slated for Sunday

The Antigua and Barbuda Netball Association (ABNA) has cancelled its fund-raising tea and table talk, which was re-scheduled for Sunday, 25th September.

According to a release, the ABNA has taken the decision to cancel the event because the venue, the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium, is no longer available.

Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Grounds is currently hosting an eight-match cricket series between the West Indies and New Zealand Women's cricket teams.

The series, which comprised three One-Day Internationals and five T20 Internationals, is being played from Monday, 19th September to Thursday, 6th October at the venue.

The third and final One-Day International of the current series is slated to take place on Sunday, 25th September, the same date the ABNA was planning to utilize the presidential suite at the stadium in hosting its tea and table talk fund-raiser.

The ABNA said it sincerely apologizes for any inconveniences that this might have caused. However, the association said it intends to host the event in the new year and will still be anticipating as much support as possible from the general public.

This is the second time

the ABNA has postponed the event, which was initially slated to take place at the same venue on Sunday, 4th September.

The ABNA said it had decided to postpone the Tea & Table Talk on 4th September, mainly due to the forecast tropical disturbance that could have affected the twin-island state during that time.

The Tea & Table Talk was being planned as part of the fund-raising venture being undertaken by the local governing body for the sports in its effort to acquire EC \$80,000 to facilitate the Antigua and Barbuda national team's participation in

the Americas Netball World Cup Qualifier in Jamaica from 16th to 21st October.

The ABNA is planning another fund raiser in the form of an inter-schools' talent competition on 8th October.

The ABNA currently has a squad of players in training for the Americas Netball World Cup Qualifier in Jamaica.

The training is being conducted by British coach Lisa Smith, who is volunteering her services to the ABNA.

Smith is currently serving as head coach for the Antigua and Barbuda national squad and will be

taking charge of the team at the tournament in Jamaica, which is a qualifier for the 2023 Netball World Cup in Cape Town, South Africa.

Jamaica has already qualified by virtue of its number four world ranking. Antigua and Barbuda will be among 10 teams from the Americas region that will be playing in the qualifier for the two remaining places in the World Cup.

Antigua and Barbuda will be competing against teams from Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad, Barbados, Cayman Islands, USA, Ireland and host Jamaica.

Matches in schools' knockout contest kick-off today

The knockout competition to kick-off the 2022 /23 inter-schools' football programme will commence with two boys' division matches today (Friday).

Antigua Grammar School will face Jennings Secondary School in the first match of a double-header at the Police Recreation Grounds at 2 pm.

Clare Hall Secondary will take on Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) at 3:50 pm.

Three matches will be played on Monday, 26th September. Sir Novelle Richards Academy (SNRA) will face St. Mary's Secondary School in a boys' division affair at 3 pm.

Princess Margaret School (PMS) will clash with All Saints Secondary School in a girls' division encounter at 2:30 pm in

the first match of a double header at the PMS playing field.

Irene B. Williams Secondary School will tackle PMS in a boys' division match at the same venue at 3:50 pm.

Three matches are also scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 27th September. All Saints Secondary will oppose St. Joseph's Academy in a boys' division affair at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints at 3 pm. Ottos Comprehensive School will meet Jennings Secondary School in a girls' division encounter in the first match of a double-header at the Radio Range football field at 2:30 pm.

Jennings Secondary and Ottos Comprehensive schools will also clash in a boys' division affair at the same venue at 3:50 pm.

Bath United to visit Antigua & Barbuda on goodwill tour



Bath United players celebrate after winning a competition in Nevis in 2020. (Photo courtesy Bath United)

Bath United of Nevis are expected to arrive in Antigua today (Friday) on a goodwill tour of the twin-island state this weekend.

The team was slated to visit Antigua and Barbuda last weekend to participate in the Warriors Cup football tournament.

However, due to the passage of Tropical Storm Fiona through the Leeward

Islands last weekend, Bath United postponed their trip to Antigua and Barbuda.

President of the Young Warriors Football Club, Colin "Tin Tin" James, said Bath United will no longer be able to participate in the Warriors Cup, which is currently in progress at the Mack Pond Playing Field in All Saints.

He said the team from

Nevis will, however, still play a few friendly matches while here.

Meanwhile, Attacking Saints and All Saints United will be contesting the final of the Warriors Cup on a date to be announced.

Attacking Saints booked their spot in the final by pulling off a 2-0 victory over Young Warriors, thanks to goals by Malone Joseph and

Kerron McKenzie.

All Saints United secured their place in the final by romping to a 4-0 victory over Young Lions with Shafique Joseph scoring a hat-trick.

Empire had beaten Young Warriors 3-0 in the opening game of the Warriors Cup on 15th of September, with Rakeem Joseph also scoring a hat-trick.