

GUARDING THE GUARDS: OFFICERS ACCUSED OF BEING UPSET OVER TIGHTENED PRISON SECURITY



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As their protests entered a second day, prison officers vowed to continue demonstrating until all their grievances are addressed.

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Local News



AG Benjamin responds: HMP improvements ongoing

As correction officers continued their protests at His Majesty's Prison for a second day, Minister of Public Safety, Steadroy Benjamin, said work is being done at the detention facility to address the concerns of the officers.

While he admitted that the work may not be progressing at the speed the officers may wish, Minister Benjamin said on Tuesday that his ministry is collaborating with other government agencies to improve working conditions at the prison.

And while he did not minimise the legitimacy of the officers' concerns, he expressed his belief that their disgruntlement was really rooted in the recent security changes at the prison.

"There are conditions which need to be addressed and are being addressed at the moment. Maybe they are not being as readily as they should, but you've got to work along with the Public Works Department and the Ministry of Health,

and those issues are being addressed, but I dare say, I have been informed, and I do well believe, that all this matter springs from what's taking place with respect to security within the prison walls," said Benjamin.

He continued, while the construction of a new prison facility would be an ideal resolution to the concerns over infrastructure at the prison, this is not possible at this time, therefore, the government will continue to make strategically implemented improvements.

"I am satisfied that things are being done in the interest of the security of the prison, and I am also satisfied that things are being done to improve the conditions within the prison walls.

"More can be done, more will be done, but it's being done in a structured fashion to make sure that we deal with this matter effectively.

"We can't build a new prison at this particular point in time; the world



Minister of Public Safety, Steadroy Benjamin

economy makes that a problem. So, what we're doing is to fix what we have as best as we can to make certain that we meet the minimum standards of the international regulations and stipulations for prisons," Benjamin continued.

Meanwhile, the prison officers have said that they intend to continue their protest until a commitment is given to resolve their issues.

They are also now demanding an audience with Prime Minister Gaston Browne in which they can air their grievances.

Their list of concerns includes receiving a promised raise in pay, an immediate improvement in the overall cleanliness of the institution, including its bathroom facilities. They also have complained about how senior members of the prison's hierarchy treat them.

There also seem to be tensions between the prison officers and the police who have been called in to beef up security at the institution after an alarming increase in contraband items.

The prison officers have accused the police of being rude and difficult to work with.

In recent months, items including mobile phones, drugs, and other illegal items have been found in the possession of inmates and some corrections officers who were discovered smuggling the contraband into the 287-year-old prison.

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Humidity 70%	UV Index Extreme	Humidity 81%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 6:00 am	Sunset 5:43 pm	Moonrise --	Moonset 1:29 pm
Waning Crescent			

ECCB Governor: EC Dollar stable

Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), Timothy Antoine, has boasted of the stability of the Eastern Caribbean Dollar despite economic challenges spurred on by the effects of COVID-19 and the war between Russia and Ukraine.

At a recent church service to mark the ECCB's 39th anniversary, Antoine said the decisions made by policy makers decades ago have resulted in a stable Eastern Caribbean Dollar today.

"Many of us take this stability for granted, because all we know is \$1US, \$2.7 EC, and we've known that for years, all our lives," Antoine said.

"We forget there was a time when it was not like that, that [a] decision was made in July, 1976 and because of that decision we are enjoying stability, and until recently, relatively low inflation."

The central bank governor continued that to address the issue of high inflation, the world's major banking institutions must raise interest rates.

"We need the US Central Bank, as well as the other major central banks, to do their part, which they're trying to do, by raising interest rates to get inflation down. We feel it because we understand inflation is the hardest tax on the poor and the vul-

nerable, so for us this is a big deal," Governor Antoine stated.

"I think you would agree with me, the confidence that comes from having a stable dollar is something to cherish and to protect. When you look at other countries and other currencies in our region and elsewhere, this is something for which we can be justifiably proud and we must never take it for granted," he concluded.

The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank's primary objective is to maintain the stability of the EC currency and the integrity of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) banking system.

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Governor of the ECCB, Timothy Antoine

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Local News

Intense training ahead for port staff as tourist season approaches



Antigua Cruise Port's General Manager, Dona Regis-Prosper

The official start of the 2022-23 cruise season is just weeks away and Antigua Cruise Ports Ltd. is wasting no time in preparing as it now moves to conduct intense training of port workers and other staff who come into contact with visitors.

Antigua Cruise Port's (ACP) General Manager, Dona Regis-Prosper, said training is part of her organisation's philosophy of providing guests to Antigua and Barbuda with the best possible experience.

"We are offering port

security training for all port users including taxi operators, vendors, tour operators, security officers, restaurateurs, and retailers.

"We continue to invest in the success of the port community and industry stakeholders. We believe in authentic, open dialogue, and see it as our duty to assist everyone; from our colleagues to our tenants, to port community members to achieve success.

"Against this backdrop, we continue to offer complementary training to the port community, and thus, we have identified port security as one of the priority areas," continued Regis-Prosper.

According to the general manager, the upcoming 2022/2023 season appears promising with 182,120 passengers projected between October and December 2022.

Antigua Cruise Port is expected to welcome 354 calls and a total of 616,419 passengers by the end of the peak cruise season. The remainder of the season is also projected to produce stellar numbers as January 2023 will be the busiest month with 79 scheduled calls and 135,810 passengers.

Regis-Prosper highlighted some of the expectations for the upcoming season.

"In comparison to the modest summer months of 2022, May – September

cont'd on pg 5



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2023 will see a total of 18 cruise ship calls depicting the growth and development of Antigua's cruise industry.

"In addition, the port will engage in homeporting operations beginning with Star Clipper of Royal Clipper Cruises in December 2022 and continuing with the Arvia, Carnival's largest cruise vessel in January 2023 until March 2023," she disclosed.

An estimated 800 passengers are expected to be accommodated on each Arvia voyage, providing consistent business for a wide range of tourism stakeholders.

Commenting on the benefits that the country will derive from homeporting, Regis-Prosper said ACP has

placed great emphasis on this area of the cruise industry because of the positive ripple effects it has on the entire economy.

"Homeporting operations for the Arvia are expected to resume in November 2023, along with the start of full weekly operations from Emerald Cruises. Multiple cruise calls days will also be significant as Antigua Cruise Port will encounter several days with more than one ship in port at once.

"December 2022 will embrace 5-ship days, with January 2023 also pinpointing 5-ship days and one 6-ship day.

"February 2023 will earmark one day with 7 ships in port simultaneously, a cause for celebration," she said.

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Local News

A&B still free of monkeypox, no plans to purchase vaccine

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment has confirmed that the country is still free of monkeypox.

This is good news, as several neighbouring countries - Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, The Bahamas, Bermuda and Curaçao - have all reported cases.

Last week, the Cabinet confirmed that tests have been carried out on cases that were under suspicion, however each test returned negative for the viral disease.

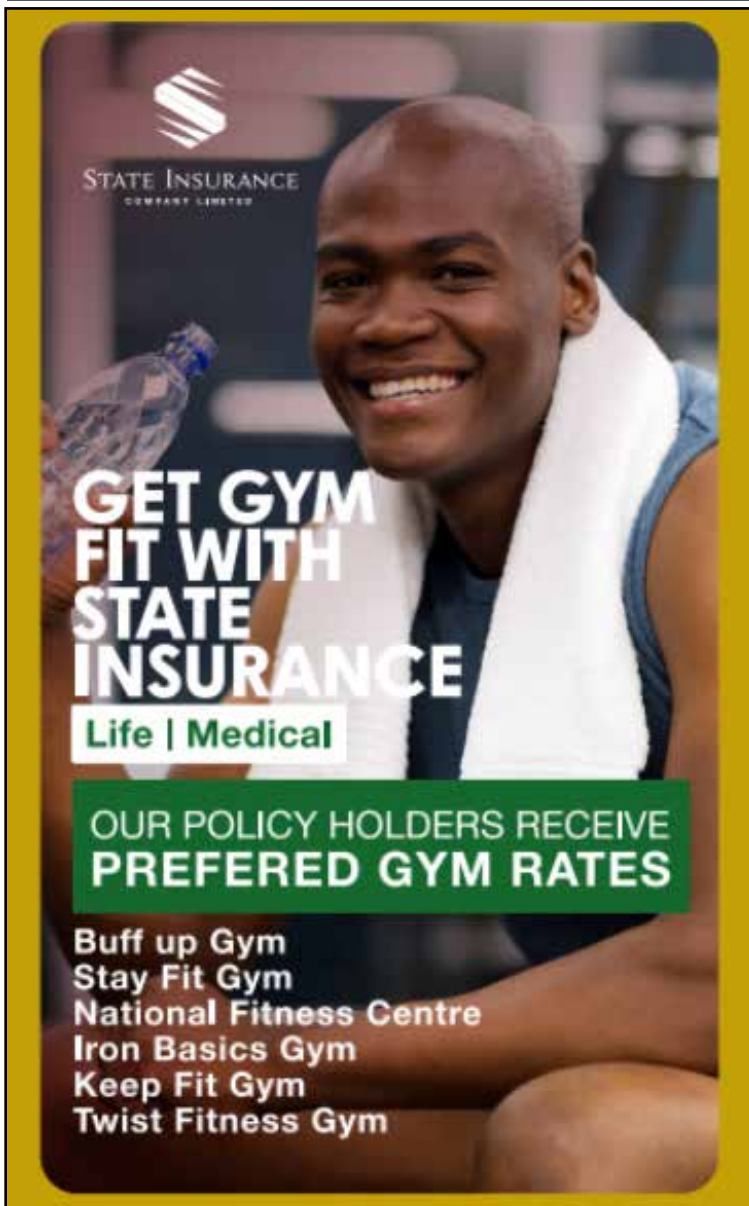
"Several suspicious patients were tested and they have all proved negative, thus far; one more test case

remains to be reported, but that too is likely to prove negative," a statement said following last week's Cabinet meeting.

Over 74,000 cases of monkeypox have been reported worldwide during the latest outbreak which began in May this year.

Meanwhile, Minister responsible for health, Sir Molwyn Joseph, asked Cabinet to approve the purchase of monkeypox vaccines to ensure the country is prepared in the eventuality of an outbreak.

The proposal, however, was not approved by Sir Molwyn's Cabinet colleagues.



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Jamaican conman targets local businesswoman

A local businesswoman who operates on All Saints Road was targeted by a conman who scammed her out of more than EC\$22,000.00.

According to information available from police sources, the Jamaican who was a guest at a well-known St. John's hotel, visited the business place where he requested to change US\$8,300.00 to Eastern Caribbean dollars.

He received a total of EC\$22,245.00.

After he left, a thorough check of the money revealed that he in fact passed over a single US\$100.00 note and fifty US\$1.00 notes.

The police were contacted and found the man in his hotel room where all the money was reportedly recovered.

While the business owner who was swindled is said to have declined pressing charges. Police, however, are reportedly pursuing their own fraud investigation and may still level charges against the suspect, who has not been named.

Several people have re-

ported falling victim to various fraud schemes in recent times.

Earlier this month, the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda cautioned the public to be on the alert for con artists who were engaged in a mobile "top-up" scheme.

Several business owners also reported being targeted to contribute to non-existent medical funds.

About a week later, the Antigua and Barbuda Customs and Excise Division also issued a warning that reports had been made of scammers impersonating its officers with the intention of getting money out of their victims.

Describing this activity as "extremely serious", the Customs and Excise Division said it was working with police to uncover those involved in the criminal activity and warned that the penalties for impersonating a Customs officer could involve a fine of up to EC\$100,000.00 and/or imprisonment of no less than two years in prison.



Antigua Cruise Port

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Parenting

Why sex education doesn't have to be awkward

By Sophia Smith Galer

In the digital age, kids need a trusted source they can turn to with questions about love and sex – and research shows how parents can get it right.

I never got the opportunity to do something that's almost a rite of passage among British teens – spend a sex education class peeling a condom out of its stiff foil packet and rolling it down a banana. It wasn't until I was 27 years old that I would finally get to do it, but in a very different capacity. I wasn't learning how to put a condom on. I was learning how I'd teach somebody else to put it on.

About 15 newly trained sex educators and I sat in front of our computers, condommed-bananas in hand. "We often use flavoured condoms," explained our teacher over Zoom, "because the smell is a bit more appealing than normal condoms." He took a moment to look at the participants' expressions, and obviously found some of them looking less passive than he'd hoped. "It's really important that you don't look or feel squeamish when you do this," he said. "That's not how you want young people to feel when you're encouraging them to use these."

Many parents may feel a similar sense of squeamishness when trying to talk to their children about physical intimacy – though attitudes



to sex education can vary widely between countries and families, research shows.

A review of research on British parents' involvement in sex education found that they often felt embarrassed, for example, and feared they lacked the skills or the knowledge to talk to their children. However, that same review also found that in countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden, parents talked openly to their children about sex from an early age, and that possibly as a result, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases were far less common than in England and Wales.

Parents who do feel awkward talking about sex can find themselves in a difficult spot. Many would like their children to know that they can come to them with questions and problems, especially in the digital age, with children coming across graphic online content at an increasingly young age. But they may struggle to decide when and how to start.

Eva Goldfarb, professor of public health at Montclair State University, co-authored a systematic literature review of the past 30 years of comprehensive sex education. While the review focuses on schools, Goldfarb says her research holds important lessons for parents, too. One basic insight is that sex education has a positive, long-term impact, such as helping young people form healthy relationships. Her advice to parents is not to skip or delay these chats.

"Start earlier than you think," she says. "Even with very young children you can talk about names of body parts and functions, body integrity and control."

This includes talking about issues that parents may not even think about as sex-related, but that are about relationships more broadly: "Nobody gets what they want all the time, it's important to treat everyone with kindness and respect."

In fact, parents tend to find it easier to talk to their

children about sex when these conversations start at a young age and come up naturally, separate research suggests. Answering young children's questions openly and honestly can set a positive pattern that makes it easier to talk about more complex issues later.

This step-by-step approach can also be beneficial for children in terms of understanding their own origins and identity. For example, research has shown that children who were conceived with the help of sperm donation, and whose parents explained this from the start with the help of books and stories, felt more positive about their origins than those who found out later.

For parents who want to broach the subject of sex but don't quite know how, research has revealed a number of ways to get started.

What was your own sex education like?

Over the past few years, I have interviewed dozens of sex educators for my book debunking sex myths and misinformation, *Losing It*. They are pretty much unanimous when it comes to Lesson One of sex education training – figuring out your own level of sex education before considering passing it on to anybody else.

Numerous studies and surveys suggest that adults

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often do not know as much about sex and the body as they would like to, and may even have completely inaccurate ideas that are grounded in myth or guesswork. For example, many people around the world erroneously believe that the state of a woman's hymen can prove whether she is a virgin – an idea that has no scientific basis.

Parents' basic level of knowledge can vary widely. Some may identify with the subjects of a study in Namibia, which found that many parents didn't talk to their children about sex because they themselves felt that their

knowledge about human sexuality, or their ability to explain it, was inadequate. But a survey of almost 2,000 parents of young children in China found that parents own sexual knowledge and sex education was generally good, though they were less knowledgeable when it came to issues around child development, which made it difficult for them to be effective educators.

Some of the Namibian respondents also avoided the topic because they viewed sex as taboo, or they thought discussing it was going to encourage young people to have sex. The idea

that talking to children about sex will encourage them to think about things that aren't age appropriate, or seek out sexual experiences, remains common around the world, including in the US. It tends to be linked to the belief that teaching abstinence from sex until marriage is the best way to protect young people's health and safety.

However, research has shown the opposite. Simply telling teenagers not to have sex has been conclusively proven not to work. The American Academy of Paediatrics calls educational programmes that only promote abstinence "ineffective",

based on a systematic review of the evidence. The review also shows that comprehensive sex education helps prevent and reduce the risks of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, echoing the findings in the Netherlands and Sweden.

In fact, when parents, and especially mothers, talk to their teenage children about sex, the teens are more likely to delay having sex for the first time, and engage in safer behaviour when they do have sex, especially in the case of girls. The study of British families suggests that it is important to involve fathers in the conversations, too, also because boys often feel sex education tends to be weighted towards the experience of girls.

In short, teaching young people what it truly means to be ready the first time that they have sex, and what to consider when doing so, is far more likely to lead to protect them than not telling them anything. In Finland, parents prefer calling sex education "Kehotunnekasvatus" – "body emotion education".

What might be helpful, however, is reframing what exactly parents think sex education is. In Finland, researchers conducted an experiment where they changed the name of sexuality education to "Kehotunnekasvatus" – "body emotion education" – and evaluated how early childhood education professionals and parents felt about the term.

The majority preferred
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Parenting

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the new phrase as it was "more neutral, downplaying thoughts of sex". The researchers note that "one problem impeding the promotion of childhood sexuality education has been the lack of terms free from adulthood connotations", and that using child-centred words might be how many of us are able to talk more easily.

"Using different words for children's sexuality is not a repressed, evasive or euphemistic representation, but can help adults to see the difference and to overcome their rejections, misunderstandings and objections," write

the authors.

Such changes can come with a risk, though. One study in India observed that altering the name of a local programme to 'lifestyle' education ended up being counter-productive, sweeping the sex education agenda "under the carpet".

Rephrasing or hiding vocabulary around sex and sexual development when talking to young people also risks accidentally tainting the original words with shame, instead of presenting them as a normal part of a frank conversation.

Step by step

Parents who are unsure

when and how to start these conversations may find it helpful to seek out material for schools. In a UK study in 2016, parents who were shown the books used for their children's sex education classes felt that they better understood the subject – and also reported that it made them feel more confident talking to their children about sex. Eva Goldfarb says that it can also be helpful for parents to have evening meetings with their children's sex education teachers and receive information about what their children will be learning at the beginning of the school year.

International guidelines for sex education, such as a comprehensive, evidence-based guide published by Unesco, can also be a good starting point for parents looking for age-appropriate advice. The Unesco guide uses basic, clear ideas around bodies and healthy relationships as building blocks, rather than storing it all up for one big conversation. For a child aged 5-8 years, for example, one key idea is that "everyone has the right to decide who can touch their body, where, and in what way".

For teenagers, the conversations can include discussions around emotional health, such as what it means to take responsibility for oneself and others, or ways to counter peer pressure, as well as providing specific information about condoms and other contraceptives, according to the guide. Discussing pleasure can help young people practise more safe sex, have more knowledge and positive attitudes about sex - Mirela Zaneva

One factor has been found to be surprisingly powerful in sex education, but remains relatively little used: pleasure. A new systematic review into health interventions that incorporated pleasure found that explaining enjoyment around sex may encourage safer habits. Programmes that taught people about achieving sexual pleasure were found to improve condom use more than those that focused on the dangers of unprotected sex.

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"It's worth talking about the positives beyond protection, too, such as how using a condom can be fun and can help you connect with a partner," says Mirela Zaneva, one of the study's authors and a PhD candidate in experimental psychology at the University of Oxford.

Zaneva found that pleasure tends not to be mentioned much, or at all, in sex education. This means that if your child isn't hearing about pleasure from you, it's very likely they're not hearing about it from school, either. "It is likely that a lot of young people miss out on positive, empowering conversations about sex in their current school sex education," she says.

She notes that the Pleasure Project, a public health project involved in the research, offer a range of practical tips on how to incorporate pleasure into discussions with young people around sex.

"The evidence so far is that dis-

cussing pleasure can help young people practise more safe sex, have more knowledge and positive attitudes about sex, as well as have more confidence and self-efficacy."

Finding trusted sources

Parents are usually the primary source of sex education for young children, but adolescents tend to tap many sources for information, such as their peers, teachers, and popular culture. And parents may not be the only ones who can feel squeamish.

Research undertaken in Ireland found that while in the past, parents' ignorance and embarrassment were the main obstacles to open discussions of sex, nowadays, it was the young people who tended to block these talks, by claiming to already know the facts, becoming irritated or annoyed, or even leaving the room.

That does not mean parents should avoid the subject, but it does show how

important it is to frame the chats in a way that makes everyone feel comfortable.

"Let your child know ahead of time when you want to discuss something delicate, potentially embarrassing or difficult to talk about. They don't feel ambushed this way, and they are more likely to be prepared and to talk with you," says Goldfarb.

Overcoming that squeamishness may even turn out to be a freeing experience. After all, sex and healthy relationships – or as the Finnish researchers call it, "body emotions" – are important at any stage of adult life.

Young people are at the start of that journey, and have the chance to define values, habits and priorities that can benefit them over a lifetime, not just in intimate situations, but as a part of moving through the world safely and considerately. You may find that it is life-affirming, and not remotely awkward, to be part of that journey.



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Why short-sightedness is on the rise

By Jessica Mudditt

Soaring rates of short-sightedness in children are alarming parents and doctors around the world. Can we turn the tide?

In the late 1980s and 1990s, parents in Singapore began noticing a worrying change in their children. On the whole, people's lives in the small, tropical nation were improving hugely at the time. Access to education, in particular, was transforming a generation and opening the gates to prosperity. But there was a less positive trend, too: more and more children were becoming short-sighted.

Nobody was able to stop this national eyesight crisis. Rates of short-sightedness – also known as near-sightedness or myopia – continued to rise and rise. Today, Singapore has a myopia rate of around 80percent in young adults, and has been called "the myopia capital of the world".

"We've been dealing with [this] issue for 20 years, so we're almost numb to it," says Audrey Chia, an associate professor and senior consultant at the Singapore National Eye Center (SNEC). "Almost everybody in Singapore is myopic now."

What happened in Singapore now appears to be happening all over the world. Countries with seemingly completely different lifestyles are unified by a startling phenomenon: rocketing rates of short-sightedness.

In the United States, about 40percent of adults are short-sighted, up from 25percent in 1971. Rates have similarly soared in the UK. But their situation pales in comparison with that of teens and young adults in South Korea, Taiwan and mainland China, whose prevalence rates are between 84percent and 97percent. If current trends continue, half the world's population will be short-sighted by 2050. And the problem seems to be spreading at a faster rate than ever.

Myopia has risen dramatically among children in China to reach 76per-



A classroom in China, where short-sightedness has been on the rise among children and teens (Credit: Getty Images)

cent-90percent among older school children. "It has been an extremely steep rise," says Chia.

At first glance, the idea of a short-sighted world may not seem like a major problem. After all, when someone struggles to see things at a distance, we have a proven fix: glasses. But researchers warn that myopia is not a benign quirk. It is one of the leading causes of vision impairment and blindness, for example.

And in children, where it may take some time to spot the problem and correct it, it can hurt their ability to learn in school and enjoy daily life – and set them up for future eye health problems.

To make matters worse, while the typical age for a child to develop myopia is between eight and 12 years old, children are becoming myopic at a younger age. The earlier a child develops myopia, the more likely it is that they will have severe myopia in adulthood that can ultimately threaten their eyesight, by causing problems related to different parts of the eye such as glaucoma, retinal detachment, cataracts, and myopic maculopathy.

What explains this global eyesight

crisis?

Genetics play only a small part. While a family history of myopia raises the risk of a child developing it, a purely genetic case of myopia is rare, says Nee-ma Ghorbani-Mojarrad, a lecturer at the University of Bradford in the UK and a registered optometrist.

Instead, lifestyle factors are thought to be more significant, in particular, a lack of time outdoors, and focusing on close objects for an extended period through an activity like reading. These factors help explain why one otherwise thoroughly positive trend in children's lives has unintentionally worsened the spread of myopia: education.

Of course, education in itself – in the sense of discovering the world, and empowering oneself through knowledge and skills – does not cause poor eye health. In fact, education is associated with many positive, measurable health effects. But the way children obtain an education in the modern world, with the emphasis on long hours spent in classrooms, appears to be consistently hurting their eye health.

"Education has been shown to cause

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short-sightedness," says Ghorbani-Mojarrad, referring to education as measured by school years. "We don't know what it is about education – we suspect it is reading and spending more time indoors. Every year of education completed increases the expected amount of short-sightedness."

The education paradox

Ghorbani-Mojarrad and his colleagues studied the effect of education, as measured by school years, on myopia, by investigating the impact of the UK's raising of the school leaving age from 15 to 16, in the 1970s. "There's literally a bump in the chart for the extra year of school. Now that the leaving age is 18 in the UK, I wonder whether we will find the same thing again," he says.

To understand this surprising link, it helps to parse how myopia develops in the first place. Most newborn babies begin life long-sighted. Within the first year of life, the eyes naturally develop and the long-sightedness reduces to the point of their vision becoming almost perfect. However, in some cases the eyes do not stop growing and short-sightedness develops. The eyeball is too elongated to be able to make out objects at a distance without the help of a corrective measure such as glasses.

"Everyone has a finite amount of retina, and if the eye continues to grow, it's like trying to scrape the same amount of butter on a larger piece of bread," says Ghorbani-Mojarrad. "The retina be-

comes really thin and is more prone to tearing." It appears that being indoors may worsen this problem, perhaps because of the way indoor lighting differs from natural light.

My father's generation spent a lot of time outdoors. But then urbanisation came to Singapore and there was a great push for academic excellence. It drove all the children indoors - Audrey Chia In Singapore, which has undertaken some of the longest-running research on childhood myopia, experts have reached a similar conclusion.

"My father's generation spent a lot of time outdoors

fishing and things," says Chia. "But then urbanisation came to Singapore and there was a great push for academic excellence. Parents wanted their kids to get into the best school and go to university. It drove all the children indoors for more reading, because reading was supposed to be good for you."

The paradox is, of course, that reading is good for children – measurably so. Literacy, and schooling more generally, is crucial for children's wellbeing, and missing out on them can cause lasting damage.

But pursuit of educational excellence to the exclusion

of other aspects of life, such as spending time outside, can be detrimental to eye health, says Nathan Congdon, professor of global eye health at the Centre for Public Health at Queen's University Belfast.

He points out that countries like Japan, Korea, Vietnam, China, Hong Kong and Singapore that have very high rates of myopia: "They've also got huge educational success. It is a complicated cultural phenomenon." In China, trials have been conducted in classrooms that mimic learning in the outdoors.

Continued in tomorrow's issue of Pointe Xpress



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Young Trini author invited to Montserrat's Alliouagana Festival

The 14th edition of Montserrat's Alliouagana Festival of the Word returns in November with a focus on children's literature and language as a protest and for nation-building.

Coryn Ayana Clarke of Trinidad and Tobago, who has achieved her ambitious challenge of publishing seven books by her seventh birthday later this month, will be this year's guest author.

Her first book *Chronicles of Coryn: 7 Days of Fun*, was written and published in 2020 when she was just four years old. It was named one of the most popular children's

books in the world.

"We haven't been able to host any authors on island due to the pandemic and it is a delight for us to welcome Coryn to Montserrat as our first guest author in several years," said Nerissa Golden, festival coordinator and CEO of Goldenmedia LLC, one of this year's sponsors. "Montserratian authors have a preference for poetry, but we want to encourage more long-form storytelling and we believe Coryn will inspire a new generation of writers," Golden added.

The literary festival slated for November 17 to 19, 2022



Author Coryn Anaya Clarke will be a special guest at the 14th edition of Montserrat's Alliouagana Festival. She will publish her seventh book on her seventh birthday this month.

remains a hybrid experience with some sessions streamed live on Facebook and in-person events around the island. On day one, the Ministry of Education will host the popular Book Parade for primary schools. In the evening, there will be a Movie Night showing the short comedy *The Fab 4* and the *Silent Retreat* (2022) by Director Peter Sagnia of UK/St. Maarten.

"Montserrat will also get a special advanced screening of the feature *Deep Blue* (2022), by HAMAFilms Antigua. In classic HAMAFilms style it blends romance with the reality of small island challenges such as protecting the environment or making a living. Showing this feature is in support of the Montserrat Tourism Division's Environmental Awareness Initiative of which I am proud to be the champion," Golden explained.

The Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell Memorial Lecture Series will be streamed on

Friday evening. The interactive event will feature a panel of local and regional experts discussing Language as Protest - How does preserving our dialects serve as a tool for nation-building? The final day will celebrate children and imagination with the book launch of *Chronicles of Coryn* with young Clarke and *Cassava Kids* by first-time Montserratian author Roydenn Silcott.

The works of other authors will also be for sale during the Family Fun Day at the Montserrat Cultural Centre. The Montserrat Volcano Observatory will announce the winners of its creative writing competition and children will be able to exchange old and new books at the Book Swap sponsored by the Public Library.

Returning as a key partner for the festival is the Montserrat Arts Council. The Montserrat Tourism Division is also co-sponsoring this year's event. (Loop)



Nov 17th - 19th, 2022
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Monday, November 14 - Friday, November 18
10:00 AM to 4:30 PM - Children's Book Swap - Share a children's book you have enjoyed but no longer read. On Saturday, children will have a chance to select a new book for FREE. Drop off books at the Montserrat Public Library

Thursday, November 17
10:00 AM - Opening of AFW LitFest (Online)
10:05 AM - Book Parade (Carr's Bay to Little Bay Sports Centre)
06:00 PM - Movie Night

- The Fab 4 and the Silent Retreat (Comedy) (St. Maarten)
- Special Advanced Screening of *Deep Blue* by HAMAFilms Antigua (Drama)

Friday, November 18 (Online)
6:00 PM - Meet the Authors - TBA
07:00 PM - Alphonsus "Arrow" Cassell Memorial Lecture - Language as Protest - How does preserving our dialects serve as a tool for nation building?

Saturday, November 19 (Montserrat Cultural Centre)
11:00 AM - MVO Competition Prize Giving
12:00 PM - Book Launch with Coryn Anaya Clark and Roydenn Silcott
01:00 PM - Family Fun Day (Book Swap, Readathon, Games and More)
08:00 PM - After LitFest Lime - Word & Play at Chit Chat

www.litfest.ms

Haiti calls for help at the UN as world mulls assistance

AP - The United States and Mexico said Monday they are preparing a U.N. resolution that would authorise an international mission to help improve security in Haiti, whose government issued a “distress call” for the people of the crisis-wracked nation.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield made the announcement at an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council as thousands across Haiti organised protests demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Ariel Henry. The demonstrations came on the day the country commemorated the death of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a slave who became the leader of the world’s first Black republic.

The U.S. ambassador said the proposed “non-U.N.” mission would be limited in time and scope and be led by “a partner country” that was not named “with the deep, necessary experience required for such an effort to be effective.” It would have a mandate to use military force if necessary.

She said the resolution being worked on is a “direct response” to a request on Oct. 7 by prime minister Henry and the Haitian Council of Ministers for international assistance to help restore security and alleviate the humanitarian crisis. It reflects one option in a letter from U.N. Secretary-General An-



Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry, centre, places flowers during a ceremony marking the death anniversary of revolutionary leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines at the National Pantheon Museum in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Monday, Oct. 17, 2022. (AP Photo/Odelyn Joseph)

tonio Guterres to the council on Oct. 9 that called for deployment of a rapid action force by one or several U.N. member states to help Haiti’s National Police. Both Russia and China raised questions about sending a foreign armed force to Haiti.

Haiti has been gripped by inflation, causing rising food and fuel prices, and exacerbating protests that have brought society to the breaking point. Daily life in Haiti began to spin out of control last month just hours after the prime minister said fuel subsidies would be eliminated, causing prices to double. Gangs blocked the entrance to the Varreux fuel terminal, leading to a severe shortage of fuel at a time that rising prices have put food and fuel out of reach of many Haitians, clean water is scarce, and the country is trying to deal with a cholera outbreak.

Political instability in Lat-

in America’s poorest country has simmered ever since last year’s still-unsolved assassination of Haiti’s president Jovenel Moïse, who had faced opposition protests calling for his resignation over corruption charges and claims that his five-year term had ended. Moïse had dissolved the majority of Parliament in January 2020 after failing to hold legislative elections in 2019 amid political gridlock.

Haiti’s Foreign Minister Jean Victor Geneus said he came to the Security Council with a “distress call” from the Haitian people to tell the world they “are not living — they are suffering.” Haiti urgently needs “robust support” to help the police stem the humanitarian crisis, neutralise the gangs, guarantee fuel distribution and facilitate a return to normal life, he said.

Thomas-Greenfield said the resolution authorising the security mission is coupled

with a resolution obtained by The Associated Press last week that would impose an arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban on influential Haitian gang leader Jimmy Cherizier, nicknamed “Barbeque.” It also would target other Haitian individuals and groups who engage in actions that threaten the peace, security or stability of the Western Hemisphere’s poorest country, according to the text obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

Some diplomats expressed hope for a vote on the sanctions resolution this week, but Russia’s deputy U.N. Ambassador Dmitry Polyansky said Moscow can’t support quickly pushing through a sanctions resolution.

“In depth analysis and detailed negotiations” are required, he said, “to make sure that the measures are aimed at restoring government control and not be perceived as is frequently the case as a way of punishing the entire country and its people.” The U.S. ambassador stressed that the United States is “keenly aware of the history of international intervention in Haiti, and specifically of concerns about the council authorising a response that could lead to an open-ended peacekeeping role.”

The Security Council and the international community

cont’d on pg 18

Regional News



Cuba replaces energy minister as hours-long blackouts stir unrest

Reuters - Cuba's communist-run government replaced its energy and mines minister with Vicente de la O Levy, head of the state-run electronics company, official media reported on Monday, as the country struggles to contain hours-long blackouts that have stirred rare protests across the island.

The newly appointed O Levy formerly served as di-

rector of the National Electric Union, the state's grid operator, and spent time in Venezuela, a close ally of Cuba, as a delegate from the island's energy sector. The government thanked the former energy minister, Nicolás Liván Arronte, for his service and said he would be assigned new responsibilities.

The announcement, on the state-run television broad-

cast, did not make clear the reason for replacing Arronte. But the decision comes as Cuba battles one of its worst-ever energy crises, made acute by the coronavirus pandemic and harsh U.S. sanctions implemented under the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump.

Those sanctions have remained largely in place under Trump's successor,

Joe Biden. The government also announced on Monday it would replace the head of the state-run grid operator. Blackouts, which now span 12 hours a day or more, touch a political nerve in Cuba. The rolling outages began earlier this year and have spread across all of the country's provinces - including, more recently, the capital, Havana.

Cuba's electric grid collapsed following Hurricane Ian in late September, prompting scattered protests across Havana. Several protests have since taken place in provincial towns and cities as the outages persist or worsen in some areas.

Cuba's Prosecutor's Office on Friday said it was investigating cases that followed the hurricane in which protesters had "perturbed public order and citizen peace," including alleged incidents of arson, blocking public roads and vandalism, and assault against law enforcement officers.

cont'd from pg 17

must seek "a different course" to respond to the security and dire humanitarian crises in Haiti, which require "targeted international assistance" that must be coupled with "support for political dialogue and backed by sustained international pressure on the actors supporting gang activity."

Reflecting opposition to foreign interference in Haiti, Marco Duvivier, a 35-year-old auto parts store manager, who joined Monday's protest in Port-au-Prince said: "The U.S. needs Haiti to make its own decisions and not interfere in Haiti's business." "Life is not going to get better with an international force," he said.

Since the gang led by "Barbeque" surrounded the fuel terminal, the distribution

of more than 10 million gallons of gasoline and fuel and more than 800,000 gallons of kerosene stored on site have been blocked. Gas stations remain shuttered, hospitals have slashed services and businesses including banks and grocery stores have cut their hours as everyone across the country runs out of fuel. The situation has worsened a recent cholera outbreak, with hundreds hospitalised and dozens dead amid a scarcity of potable water and other basic supplies.

Haiti's last cholera outbreak was a result of U.N. peacekeepers from Nepal introducing the bacteria into the country's largest river by sewage. Nearly 10,000 people died and more than 850,000 were sickened. "We don't need a foreign force. It's not going to solve anything," Jean Venel said.

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Suriname: Health authorities concerned about new addictive substance

CMC - Health authorities are warning against a new type of addictive substance they say is easily available to young people in the Dutch-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country.

The Ministry of Health in a statement said it is urging the population, especially parents, educators and teachers to be vigilant and to ensure that the nicotine-containing substance “snus” does not end up in the hands of young people.

Health authorities here have described snus, as a chewing gum-sized tablet or tea bag that is filled with tobacco and placed between the gums and upper lip. They said, as a result, the nicotine is absorbed through the blood vessels of the upper lip, after which it ends up in the bloodstream. It is also seen as a new alternative to smoking or vaping because no combustion products are released. But the ministry warns that using snus poses health risks. It said that in addition to the addictive effect, snus contains carcinogenic substances and is also associated with a number of diseases and premature death.

The health authorities warn that longer use will increase the urge for nicotine and more and more is needed to achieve the desired effect,

thereby creating an addiction.

“The addictive substance in nicotine provides an adrenaline rush. As soon as this kick has worn off after about half an hour, the body asks for the next one. Withdrawal symptoms include irritability, difficulty concentrating and sleeping, feeling hungry, which can lead to weight gain if snus is not used for extended periods,” the ministry added.



Snus (Photo: iStock)



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Suspected serial killer appears in court in South Africa

AP - South African women's rights groups and sex workers demonstrated outside a Johannesburg court on Tuesday as a 21-year-old man appeared in connection with the discovery of six decomposed bodies believed to be those of sex workers.

The man appeared in the dock with his face covered by a black cloth to hide his identity. He was arrested last week when police discovered the bodies at a car repair workshop in downtown Johannesburg while investigating the disappearance of one sex worker who was allegedly last seen with the suspect.

According to the police, some of the bodies were found with their hands tied and they had evidently been in the building for a long period of time. The man is expected to take part in an identity lineup on Friday. An initial lineup was abandoned when a police official assigned to conduct it was not available, according to prosecutors.

A group of sex workers



South African women's rights groups and sex workers demonstrate outside the magistrate court in Johannesburg, South Africa, Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2022, where a 21-year-old man appeared in connection with the discovery of six decomposed bodies believed to be those of sex workers. (AP Photo/Themba Hadebe)

attended the court case and jeered when the man entered the court, demanding that the cloth hiding his face be removed. Some of them hid their own identity as they are expected to be witnesses in the case.

National Prosecuting Authority spokesperson Phindi Mjonondwane said the victims' families were yet to be informed as DNA

tests were still being conducted. "At this stage we don't have any of the deceased persons that have been identified positively, that process is still ongoing," she said.

The demonstrators brandished placards with slogans calling for the decriminalization of sex work and the protection of sex workers. Nozipho Dlamini,

who represents the Sisterhood Foundation that deals with women issues, said areas where sex workers operate should be made safer. "As a community, we prefer that wherever they are, the streets and the properties where they stay need to be protected," said Dlamini.

The suspect is expected to appear in court again on Oct. 25.

Colombia drugs: Kingpin Don Mario sentenced to 35 years

BBC - A court in New York has sentenced an infamous Colombian paramilitary leader and drug kingpin to 35 years in jail. Daniel Rendón Herrera, better known as Don Mario, led the right-wing paramilitary group

United Self-Defence Forces (AUC).

The group, originally formed to combat left-wing guerrillas, engaged in kidnappings, killings, and extortion. Don Mario, 57, was captured in a rural hideaway in 2009. At the time, he was

the most wanted kingpin in Colombia. He was extradited to the United States in 2018 and last year pleaded guilty to trafficking more than 80 tonnes of cocaine to the US.

cont'd on pg 21

Liz Truss: This is not the time to change Conservative leader, minister argues

BBC - This is not the time to be changing leaders, Armed Forces Minister James Heappey has argued, as he defended the prime minister. Suggestions that there is a candidate to replace Liz Truss who would unite the party is "for the birds", he added.

Ms Truss has insisted she will lead the Conservatives into the next general election, despite U-turns leaving her battling to sal-

vage her authority. Labour is calling for an election regardless of Ms Truss's position. Speaking to the BBC's Political Editor Chris Mason, Ms Truss apologised for the mistakes she made over the ill-fated mini-budget.

On Monday, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt reversed almost all of the tax-cutting proposals laid out last month by former Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng.

The prime minister chaired a meeting of the cabinet on Tuesday morning, where the chancellor set out the scale of coming departmental spending cuts.

The chancellor is insisting all departments find savings, which could leave cabinet ministers unhappy to see their budgets slashed. For some, it could even be a resigning issue. The prime minister is expected to hold talks later with the Europe-

an Research Group of Tory MPs, who are on the right of the party. And Ms Truss has been holding meetings with her cabinet ministers and backbench MPs as she tries to reassure her party.

But there is deep unrest in the Conservative Party and active debate about whether and when to try and get rid of the prime minister, with some MPs believing it is urgent and she should be

cont'd on pg 22

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Daniel Rendón Herrera and his brother Freddy, known as El Alemán (The German) for his love of imposing strict discipline on his men, were key players in the AUC. As part of that paramilitary group, they led thousands of fighters who attacked and killed anyone they deemed a sympathiser of Colombia's left-wing rebel groups. In order to finance itself, the AUC imposed taxes on cocaine smuggled through territories it controlled and also engaged in drug trafficking.

AUC members were behind some of Colombia's most gruesome massacres. Tens of thousands of Colombians were displaced by the group's violence. Many of the group's members, including Freddy Rendón Herrera, demobilised under a 2003 peace deal. But unlike his brother, Don Mario refused to lay down arms and instead co-founded the Gulf Clan criminal gang. Under his leadership, the Gulf Clan became the most feared gang in Colombia, trafficking tonnes of cocaine to the US and killing anyone who stood in its



Daniel Rendón Herrera, alias Don Mario, was Colombia's most wanted drugs kingpin at the time of his capture

way.

As police stepped up their hunt for Don Mario in 2009, he offered a \$1,000 reward to anyone who killed a police officer. After a nine-month search, he was tracked down in Antioquia province. The defence minister at the time, Juan Manuel Santos, said he had been found in his underwear, eating rice from a plate "like a dog".

US Drug Enforcement Administration agents described him as "one

of the most prolific drug traffickers to ever operate in Colombia". The man who succeeded him at the helm of the Gulf Clan, Dairo Antonio Úsuga was captured last year and extradited to the US in May.

Don Mario's brother, Freddy Rendón Herrera, was freed from prison in 2017 and has asked for forgiveness for recruiting hundreds of children into the ranks of the AUC during his time as a leader of the group.

International

AROUND THE WORLD



removed as soon as possible. One former cabinet minister said: "Whatever happens, it has to happen soon."

Other MPs believe the prime minister has bought herself some time with the appointment of Mr Hunt and the dumping of the growth plan, and are waiting to see what further measures the chancellor outlines in a further economic statement on 31 October.

Mr Heappey said the public "will not indulge the Conservative Party tearing itself apart" with another change of leadership. "We have seen over the past two or three weeks what the economic price of political instability has been," Mr Heappey added.

Speaking to BBC Breakfast, he admitted the mini-budget was "unhelpful".

He said "dozens" of his Tory MP colleagues are "gravely concerned" but "they like me recognise this is not the time to be changing leader again". And speaking to Sky News, Mr Heappey also said that "given how skittish our politics are" at the moment "I don't think there's the opportunity to make any more mistakes".

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer has called for Ms Truss to stand down, and for the government to call an election.

"The real risk now is carrying on with this lot rather than having a general election and bringing in a Labour government and



Speaking to BBC Breakfast Mr Heappey admitted that "dozens" of his colleagues are "gravely concerned" about the current leadership.

securing the economy," Sir Keir said. "We can't go on like this shutting the public out." A YouGov poll on Tuesday has found that Ms Truss's favourability rating has fallen to -70. Just one in 10 Britons have a favourable opinion of the prime minister, according to the poll.

On Monday, Mr Hunt announced that nearly all the tax cuts announced at last month's mini-budget would be scrapped. And he said the government's energy support package - a policy repeatedly championed by Ms Truss in defence of her premiership - will be reduced from April.

Former cabinet minister Andrew Mitchell said Conservative MPs should recognise "the best possible answer for good government" is to make sure leadership under Ms Truss and Mr Hunt works. "They are now working together in tandem and I think that

arrangement has got to be given the chance to work" he said. "If it's not a success and it doesn't work then the Conservative parliamentary party will have to think again."

Five Conservative MPs have publicly called for her to resign. Some Tory MPs are talking privately about how Ms Truss could be ejected from office, despite party rules preventing a formal leadership challenge for a year. At a meeting of the centrist One Nation Tories, several MPs called for a cabinet reshuffle.

Following the meeting, MP Simon Hoare said: "If there was a seriousness about a resetting and a recalibration then there would have to be a reshuffle." One MP described Ms Truss's meeting as "the first time I have heard a corpse deliver its own eulogy".

An unknown number of MPs have sent in letters to the 1922 Committee, which

represents backbenchers and which controls the rules surrounding Tory leadership contests. Some hope that if more than half of MPs told committee chair Sir Graham Brady they want the prime minister to go, he would make it clear to her.

One person who backed Ms Truss for leadership agreed she was unlikely to lead the party into the next election, but said: "You're often defined by what your opponents can't do", meaning that if the plotters can't agree, the PM will stay in place.

There appears to be little agreement over who should take over from Ms Truss if she was removed. Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has quashed rumours that he could replace Ms Truss should she resign. Speaking to the Times, he said he will be holding on to his current job and accused Tory MPs of playing "political parlour games".

Elnaz Rekabi: Iranian climber 'says hijab fell off accidentally' at competition

BBC - A female Iranian climber who competed with her hair uncovered did so because her hijab fell off "inadvertently", a post on her Instagram account says.

Elnaz Rekabi, 33, was praised by those protesting against Iran's dress code after video showed her violating it at the Asian Championships in South Korea.

BBC Persian reported on Monday that friends had been unable to contact her.

On Tuesday, the Instagram post apologised for "getting everybody worried" and said she was flying home. "Due to bad timing, and the unanticipated call for me to climb the wall, my head covering inadvertently came off," it explained. The post added that she was on her way back to Iran "alongside the team based on the pre-arranged schedule".

BBC Persian's Rana Rahimpour says that to many people the language used in this post looks like it has been written under duress.

Other Iranian women who have competed abroad without wearing a headscarf in the past have said they came under pressure from Iranian authorities to issue similar apologies, she adds. Some of them decided not to go back to Iran.

Women in the country are required to cover their hair with a hijab and their arms and legs with loose clothing. Female athletes



Elnaz Rekabi wore a hijab at the indoor world championships in Paris in 2016

must also abide by the dress code when they are officially representing Iran in competitions abroad.

Earlier, the Iranian embassy in South Korea said Ms Rekabi had left Seoul for Iran on Tuesday morning. It also strongly denied what it called "all fake news, lies and false information" about her. The International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) said it had been in contact with Ms Rekabi and the Iranian Climbing Federation, and that it was "trying to establish the facts". "It is important to stress that athletes' safety is paramount for us and we support any efforts to keep a valued member of our community safe in this situation," it added. "The IFSC fully support the rights of athletes, their choices, and expression of free speech."

A source told BBC Persian on Monday that Ms Rekabi's passport and mobile phone were confiscated, and that she left her hotel in Seoul two days before her scheduled departure date. Her family and friends lost contact with her after she said she was with an Iranian official.

Two years ago, an Iranian international chess referee said she had received death threats after a photo circulated that appeared to show her without a hijab at the Women's World Chess Championship in Shanghai.

Shohreh Bayat insisted that she had been wearing a headscarf loosely over her hair at the time, but she subsequently stopped covering her hair and claimed asylum in the UK after being warned that she could face arrest in Iran.

"I had to choose my side because I was asked to write an apology on Instagram and to apologise publicly," Ms Bayat told BBC World News on Tuesday. "I was given a list of things to do. I knew that if I just followed those things that I did not believe in, if I apologised for not wearing a headscarf, then I could not forgive myself."

Asked what she thought about Elnaz Rekabi's Instagram post, she said: "I think actions speak louder than words. And she made a very powerful statement in not wearing a headscarf."

Ms Bayat has called on the international community to act over the violent crack-down by Iranian authorities in response to nationwide protests against the compulsory hijab laws and the clerical establishment.

Sports News



Sri Lanka rallies with a big win; Netherlands beats Namibia

AP - Former champion Sri Lanka rebounded from an upset opening loss by thrashing the United Arab Emirates and boosting its hopes of advancing at the Twenty20 World Cup on Tuesday.

The Sri Lankans still face uncertainty over reaching the Super 12 stage. There's rain in the forecast for Thursday when they're scheduled to play surprising group leader the Netherlands, which added a five-wicket, last-over win over Namibia on Tuesday to its last-ball win over the UAE on the weekend.

The top two teams in each preliminary group progress to the Super 12, which starts this weekend. Sri Lanka lost to Namibia but the teams are tied on competition points. If the Sri Lankans beat the Netherlands and Namibia beats the UAE in their last group games, three teams would be tied on points and net run rate would come into the equation to determine who advances.

Sri Lanka got off to a good start against the UAE, reaching 92-1 in 11 overs. But leg spinner Karthik Meiyappan produced UAE's first ever hat trick — and just the fifth in T20 World Cups — and soon Sri Lanka was in trouble at 120-6.

"I bowled a googly to (captain Dasun) Shanaka and it seems he was expect-



Netherlands' Bas de Leede dives to avoid an attempted run out by UAE during their T20 World Cup Cricket match in Geelong, Australia, Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022. (AP Photo/Asanka Brendon Ratnayake)

ing the leg break," Meiyappan said. "Extremely delighted to get the first hat trick for UAE. It's a proud moment."

Opening batter Pathum Nissanka bailed his team out of trouble with 74 runs from 60 deliveries. There was some improvisation by Nissanka, who hit six fours and two sixes.

"It was a special knock by Pathum," Sri Lanka coach Chris Silverwood said. "Glad he batted through the innings, and the improvisations that he came up with were superb. The bowlers were superb tonight and it's a crucial win for us."

Sri Lanka targeted 140 until the struggle in the middle overs. It was relieved to set a target of 153, which proved too much for UAE,

which was bowled out for 73 in 17.1 overs. Dushantha Chameera generated extreme pace with the new ball and claimed early wickets as the UAE slumped to 19-3.

Wanindu Hasaranga ran through the middle order and returned 3-8 from four overs, the leg spinner unlucky not to get a fourth wicket as substitute fielder Jeffrey Vandersay put down a catch in the deep.

There was some concern toward the end of the UAE innings as Chameera limped off the field without completing his last over with what appeared to be a calf muscle strain. He has just returned from an injury that kept him out of Sri Lanka's run to the title at the Asia Cup. In the earlier

game at Geelong, allrounder Bas de Leede hit the winning runs in a run-a-ball 30 as the Netherlands chased down the target of 122 with three balls to spare.

He earlier took two important wickets to remove Jan Frylinck (43) and Gerhard Erasmus (16) as Namibia was restricted to 121-6 after winning the toss and opting to bat.

The Dutch are the lowest-ranked squad in the tournament at No. 18 but have produced some big upsets in the past including two wins over England.

"I don't know if we want to be known as the team that takes it down to the last few balls, but obviously stoked to have the two wins on the board," Netherlands captain

cont'd on pg 25

Indonesia to demolish Malang stadium where stampede killed 133

AlJazeera - Indonesian President Joko Widodo says his government will demolish and rebuild a football stadium where 133 people died in a stampede this month in one of the world's deadliest sporting disasters.

The president, popularly known as Jokowi, was speaking on Tuesday to reporters at the state palace in Jakarta after meeting Gianni Infantino, head of world football governing body FIFA. "Kanjuruhan Stadium in Malang ... we will demolish it and rebuild according to FIFA standards," Jokowi said. "We agreed to thoroughly transform Indonesian soccer," he added, using another term to describe football.

On October 1, fans were caught in a deadly crush as they attempted to exit Kanjuruhan Stadium in East Java province's Malang city after the defeat of the home side Arema FC by Persebaya Surabaya. Many, including more than 40 minors, died of asphyxiation.

Following an investigation, officials concluded in a report published last week that the leading cause behind the incident was the police's use of tear gas in the stadium – a crowd control measure banned by FIFA. The clouds of choking gas triggered the stampede as panicked spectators rushed to exit gates, which several witnesses said were either locked or blocked by police.



Indonesian President Joko Widodo, right, shakes hands with FIFA boss Gianni Infantino during their meeting in Jakarta [Hafidz Mubarak A/Antara Foto/via Reuters]

The report also identified other contributing factors, including the stadium being filled beyond capacity, locked exit doors and a push by league officials to hold the game at night to secure better ratings for a local broadcaster, despite a request by police to hold a match between the fierce rivals during the daytime. Jokowi said he had agreed with Infantino on significant changes to how the sport was managed in Indonesia.

The meeting between the two came after Indonesia and FIFA agreed to form a joint task force in the wake of the stadium tragedy, and as the country prepares to host the Under-20

World Cup next year.

Speaking alongside Jokowi, Infantino said FIFA's first priority was to ensure the safety of both players and fans in the country. "This is a football country, a country where football is a passion for over 100 million people," he said. "We owe it to them that when they see a match they are safe and secure."

Infantino, who presented Jokowi with a red FIFA jersey with his name on it, said the body would work closely with the government to ensure all stadiums met safety requirements, and that 2023's Under-20 World Cup ran smoothly.

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Scott Edwards said. "It was a little bit closer than we wanted."

Edwards said joining the top eight ranked teams in the next round is "well and truly in our hands."

Max O'Dowd shared a 59-run opening stand with

Vikramjit Singh (39) and scored a run-a-ball 35 in two solid partnerships at the top of the order to get the Dutch run chase underway before he was run out by a direct hit at the non-striker's end, triggering the middle-order collapse.

The Netherlands lost

four wickets for 10 runs — including three wickets for a run — to slip from 92-1 to 102-5. But De Leede, who went in at No. 3, remained composed to guide his team to 122-5. "I could take a bit of experience from two days ago. It's nice to back it up again," De Leede said of the

back-to-back narrow wins. For the Netherlands, advancing may still depend on a win over Sri Lanka in the last group game on Friday. "The self-belief has always been there," de Leede said of their wins. "It opens up a bit more freedom for the boys."

Sports News

Cricket: India will not travel to Pakistan for Asia Cup next year

AlJazeera - The Indian cricket team will not travel to Pakistan for the Asia Cup next year, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) president has said.

Jay Shah, who is also secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said on Tuesday that the tournament will be held at a neutral venue.

"The Asia Cup 2023 will be held at a neutral venue," Shah told the media after a BCCI annual general meeting. "It's the government which decides over the permission of our team visiting Pakistan so we won't comment on that but for the 2023 Asia Cup, it is decided that the tournament will be held at a neutral venue."

"I am saying this as ACC President. We [India] can't go there [to Pakistan], they can't come here. In the past also, Asia Cup has been played at a neutral venue." There has been no official announcement from the ACC. Pakistan and India have not played a bilateral series since 2012. Pakistan last visited India in 2016 for



Pakistan and India have not played a bilateral series since 2012-13 [Paul Childs/Reuters]

the T20 World Cup while India's last tour of Pakistan was for the Asia Cup in 2008.

The last time they faced off in a Test series was 2007. Pakistan and India last played each other in this year's Asia Cup that took place in the United Arab Emirates. The teams are

also set to play their T20 World Cup opener in Melbourne on October 23.

Matches between the two ignite great fervour but have also defused military tensions between the two nations, which have fought four wars since independence from British rule in 1947.

Wet conditions cause postponement of School League matches

Heavy rains across Antigua and Barbuda on Monday afternoon forced organizers to postpone all scheduled matches in the Ministry of Sports Secondary Schools' Under-14 Boys' Football League.

The matches will be rescheduled after Monday's heavy downpours left the playing fields at Radio Range and Princess Margaret School water-logged, forcing organizers to post-

pone the games until a date yet to be decided.

Weather permitting, the Secondary Schools' Football League will resume with matches in the Under-20 Girls' Division at four venues across the island today Wednesday, 19th October, at 3 pm. Defending champions Ottos Comprehensive will take on Jennings Secondary at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

Princess Margaret

School will face All Saints Secondary at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.

Clare Hall Secondary will meet St Anthony's Secondary School at St. Anthony's School playing field and Antigua Girls' High School will tackle Antigua State College at the Princess Margaret School playing field.

Matches in the East Zone of the Under-20 Boys' Division League will continue at 3 pm tomorrow Thursday,

20th October.

Pares Secondary will challenge the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) at Police Recreation Grounds.

Irene B. Williams Secondary will oppose Glanvilles Secondary School at the Swetes playing field and All Saints Secondary School will clash with Clare Hall Secondary at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.

Business League Basketball enters knockout phase

The Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Cool and Smooth Business League will enter its play-offs or knockout stage from this evening, Wednesday, 19th October.

With the top-eight teams at the end of the preliminaries, which ended on Sunday, 16th October, advancing to the playoffs, the knockout will commence with the first two games at the JSC Sports Complex this evening.

Favourites for this year's title, Eye Mobile Antigua Vision Care, who are the only unbeaten team in the competition, will enter the playoffs as the top seed by virtue of winning all 13 games in the preliminaries.

Antigua Vision Care will tip-off the knockout stage when they face the eighth seeded team, Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre in today's opening game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex at 7 pm.

Second seed Anjo Wholesale will clash with seventh seed Fitzroy Rewinding in the second encounter at 8 pm.

The other two first-round playoff games will be contested at the same venue tomorrow Thursday, 20th October.

Third seeded Sandals Antigua will take on sixth

seed Pointe FM at 7 pm and defending champion Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board, who are the fourth seed, will challenge fifth seed Graphic Impact Shooters at 8 pm.

All the losers of the first-round games will go home, while the winners will advance to the semi-finals, which will be the best of three encounters.

The two semi-finals winners will also clash in a best of three finals to decide the 2022 ABBA Cool and Smooth Business League Champions.

Meanwhile, players of all 14 teams that participated in this year's competition will converge at the JSC Sports Complex on Saturday, 22nd October for the ABBA Cool and

Smooth Business League All Star Night.

The night of fun, competition and entertainment will feature an All-Star Game, Slam Dunks, Three-Points Shootouts, Skills Challenge Relay and Two-Man Shootout.

Saturday's all-star night will commence at 7 pm and the entrance fee is EC\$10.



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Sports News



TG Welding among winners at start of MPL's Business Softball League

TG Welding were among the early winners in the Mandy Premier League's Cool and Smooth, Sherma Jackson Business Softball Cricket League.

They trounced AFBAHLUR by 56 runs in one of three opening-round matches in the 10-over-aside competition at the Potters playing field on Sunday, 16th October.

Batting first, TG Welding made 97 for four off their 10 overs with Visal Gobin getting 26. Minique Titus claimed two wickets for 15 runs and Albert Bartley picked up one wicket for nine runs.

Chasing a victory target of 98 runs, AFBAHLUR could only muster 41

for nine off their allotted overs, with Richie Thomas making 15. Gobin grabbed three wickets for 13 runs and Andra Samuel snapped up two wickets for two runs.

Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) and Antigua Grammar School (AGS) Living Styles also recorded comfortable wins in their opening encounters at the same venue.

Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force defeated Time of Victory by 47 runs. Saurad Ambrose struck 48 and Michael Marcellin made 34 to lift ABDF to 114 for four off their 10 overs in which Stanley Farrel picked up one wicket for eight runs.

Time of Victory were then re-

stricted to 67 for seven off their 10 overs, with Marcellin capturing two wickets for 14 runs. Essan Warner top scored with 14 runs and Demari Benta chipped in with 10 runs.

Antigua Grammar School Living Styles romped to a 40-run victory over PEL Desi Boys. Inspired by Amos Bruney's knock of 45 and Shamar Pereira's 34, AGS's Living Styles made 107 for four off their 10 overs. Dupaul Rambrich claimed one wicket for six runs.

In reply, PEL Desi Boys were limited to 67 for five off their 10 overs, with Reifer taking one wicket for two runs. Andranil Mukherjl and Ashmaq Ahmad each made 10 runs.



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ECAB to seek second win in Business Volleyball League

The Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank (ECAB) will go in search of their second win when the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Business League continues at the indoor facility at the YMCA Sports Complex today, Wednesday, 19th October.

ECAB will face the Treasury Department in the first game of a double header at 6:30 pm.

The Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT) will face Police in the second encounter at 7:30 pm.

ECAB made a winning start to their league campaign by pulling off a 25-19, 25-13 victory against the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) at the YMCA Sports Complex on Thursday, 13th October.

Sandals also kicked off their campaign with a 25-19, 25-23 victory over ABIIT on the same evening.

Cupholders APUA Inet made a winning start in de-



The ECAB team in discussion with their coach during a break in their opening encounter in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's Business League at the indoor facility at the YMCA Sports Complex on Thursday, 13th October, 2022. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

fense of their title by coasting to a comfortable 25-5, 25-11 victory against the Treasury Department in the second game of a double-header on Saturday, 15th October.

The Media also got off

to a winning start, pulling off a tough 2-1 victory over 77 Bus Service in last Saturday's opening encounter. The Media won the game 25-14, 24-26, 15-5.

The ABAVA Business League will continue with

another double header at the YMCA Sports Complex tomorrow (Thursday).

MEDSO will be seeking to rebound from a 25-7, 25-21 opening game loss to Nate's Photography when they take on Zammine Shipping at 6:30 pm.

Zammine Shipping will also be looking to grab their first win after suffering a 25-14, 25-19 loss against ICONS in their opening affair the previous week.

The Media will clash with Friends & Families of Island Academy (FFIA) in tomorrow's second game at 7:30 pm.

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tournament as they cruised to a comfortable 58-26 victory over St. Lucia, who were also beaten for the third time in as many outings.

Jamaica's Sunshine Girls defeated Team USA 70-16 in their second game at the tournament on Monday night. Amanda Pickney led the scoring for the Sunshine Girls, dropping in 22 goals from 24 attempts.

Pickney was well supported by Gezelle Allison, who scored 23 goals. There were also contributions from Kelsey Jones (12) and captain Jhaniele Fowler, who scored 13 goals in the first and only quarter she played.

The Jamaicans, who will face Antigua and Barbuda today (Wednesday), are using the qualifiers as preparation for the Netball World Cup in Cape Town, South Africa, in August, 2023.

Antigua & Barbuda suffers third loss at Americas Netball Qualifiers

Antigua and Barbuda were beaten for the third time in as many outings at the Americas Netball World Cup Qualifiers at the National Indoor Sports Centre in Kingston, Jamaica, on Monday, 17th October.

After losing to Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America, Antigua and Barbuda were beaten 62-29 by Grenada's Spice Girls in the first of four games held on Monday.

It was the third win in as many games for Grenada's Spice Girls, who were powered to Monday's victory by Cecile Howell with 27 goals, along with contributions from Lottysha Cato (26) and Carlene Alexander (8).

With another strong attacking display, Grenada's head coach Althea McCollin said that the team's chemistry has been key to their strong start to the qualifiers.

"This team has bonded nicely. The preparations were awesome and you see that. They are like a family. They know one another so they can execute and they talk and support each other and also they believe. Just as any other team, they have a chance and they are going



The Antigua and Barbuda senior national team lost for the third consecutive time at the Americas Netball Qualifiers for the 2023 World Cup in South Africa at the National Indoor Sports Centre in Kingston, Jamaica, on Monday, 17th October, 2022. (Photo courtesy ABNA)

forward," McCollin said.

It is the third time Grenada has scored more than 50 points in a game and Grenada captain Shakira Collymore described the utility aspect of their squad with the ability of players like Alexander to provide another scoring option for the team and maintain their intensity.

"I am so happy for them. Our players are able to adjust so it doesn't look like

we made a change. And I applaud our players for stepping in there even as substitutes and fitting in perfectly," Collymore said.

With tougher opposition awaiting them, McCollin said that consistency will be key to giving themselves the best chance of claiming one of the final two spots to next summer's tournament in South Africa.

"We have a dynamic brand of attack but our

main focus will be defence, fitness and patience. Once they can pull that off, I think we can come away with a win," McCollin said.

Trinidad and Tobago defeated St. Vincent and the Grenadines 49-42 in a tightly contested game on Monday night to record their third win in as many matches.

Barbados also notched up their second win in the

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