

TUESDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2022 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 244 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

GENERAL ELECTIONS ON 18TH JANUARY, 2023

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Local News



18th January, 2023 is Election Day!

Voters in Antigua and Barbuda will cast their ballots in general elections on 18th January, 2023, to select the parliamentarians who will form the new government.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne announced the date of the polls at the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party's candidate launch at the party's headquarters on Nugent Avenue on Monday night.

Browne announced that he has asked Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, to issue the writ of Elections on 20th December, 2022,

Nomination Day has been set for 28th December, 2022.

These developments follow the dissolution of



Parliament over the weekend by the governor general on the advice of the prime minister.

The public rally marked the official launch of the seventeen ABLP candidates who will contest the

elections in the hope of returning their party to power.

Based on his government's performance over the past five years, Prime Minister Browne said he is confident that the people of

Antigua and Barbuda will continue to repose their confidence in his team.

He described the ABLP team as a mixture of youth and experience, with gender parity at the forefront with four "competent females" included in its slate of candidates.

"Based on our performance since we took office back in 2014, no one can say that we did not perform as a government.

"We inherited a myriad of problems, but... we did not complain; we rolled up our sleeves and got to work. Within twelve months, much of the problems with the economy, the banking sector and the social sector were solved,"

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Bendals man charged for causing death of Grays Farm woman

As family and friends gather today to pay their final respects to 24-year-old Annik Lawrence, the court case stemming from her death has gathered pace.

Jameel Adams, 30, appeared in the St. John's Magistrates' Court on Monday where he was charged with causing death by dangerous driving in the accident that claimed the Grays Farm woman's life five days before her 25th birthday.

Adams, accompanied by his lawyer Leon Symister, was granted bail by Magis-

trate Dexter Wason.

The Bandals man's bond was set at \$50,000 with a \$5,000 cash component.

Adams was also required to present two sureties to the court, report to the police station nearest to him three days a week and surrender all his travel documents.

His driver's licence was also suspended.

The defendant's committal hearing was set for 23rd February, 2023.

On 14th November, 2022, Lawrence was a pas-



senger on a motorcycle driven by Adams who reportedly lost control of the vehicle on All Saints Road which caused the pair to fall off.

Both Lawrence and Adams were rushed to the Sir

Lester Bird Medical Centre.

Adams escaped with minor injuries, however, the mother of two was less fortunate. She lost her life shortly after arriving at the hospital.

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Browne said.

The prime minister said despite the fallout brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ABLP's experienced ministers were able to manage the crisis and ensured that the vaccine roll out took place and additional hospital beds were pro-

vided.

Browne added that Antigua and Barbuda managed the unprecedented pandemic far better than even many larger countries.

The ABLP's political leader also addressed his party's plans for the country's future and its "Next Level" development agenda.



These include the US\$80 million expansion of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, the provision of broadband services in every community, reduced internet costs, at least one more reverse osmosis plant to finally solve the water situation and the elimination of unemployment through the provision of new jobs that will be created with the start of major hotel developments, some of which will be completed by the end of 2023.

Prime Minister Browne's announcement was followed by a colourful fireworks display.

The evening ended with a massive concert headlined by reggae artiste Christopher Martin, regional soca stars Skinny Fabulous and Asa Banton, Antigua and Barbuda legends, Burning Flames, King Short Shirt and King Obstinate and local soca stars Tian Winter, Claudette Peters, and calypsonians Destroyer Senior, Young Destroyer, Gee Bee and Supa D.

Local News



Chinese embassy opens today

The People's Republic of China is opening its purpose-built embassy in Antigua and Barbuda today as a symbol of the strong ties that currently exist between both countries.

Senior government officials including Governor General Sir Rodney Williams, Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Foreign Affairs Minister E. P. Chet Greene are slated to address the opening ceremony.

The embassy is located

at an area designated as Embassy Row by the government where it hopes to encourage other foreign governments to establish their embassies and consulates.

Prime Minister Browne said the five acres of land upon which the embassy was built was sold to the Chinese at the symbolic rate of EC\$1.

The compound will house the embassy's administrative offices and accommodations for the

resident ambassador and other embassy staff.

The PRC's ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda, Her Excellency Zhang Yanling, will also address the ceremony, which will feature cultural performances and artists from Antigua and Barbuda and China.

The Antigua and Barbuda government has recognised the PRC as its most important developmental partner based on the magnitude of their sup-

port over several decades.

The two countries established diplomatic relations back in 1983.

The government says it remains committed to the "One China" policy which embraces principles of equality, equal benefit and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The People's Republic of China has offered concessionary loans to Antigua and Barbuda under which several key infrastructural projects have been completed.

These include the new terminal building at the V. C. Bird International Airport, the redeveloped St. John's Harbour, the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre and the Bridge at Big Creek.

In the health sector, the government of China has donated two polyclinics to the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda. They are located at Glanvilles and Villa.

In the fight against COVID-19, China also donated US\$100,000.00 to the health sector.

The PRC is on the verge of launching a new housing development in the Point. It is expected that after this project is completed, similar projects will be constructed in other communities where there is limited land available for the construction of single-family homes.

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Chief Health Inspector promotes food safety

With the Christmas holidays just days away, the country's Chief Health Inspector, Sharon Martin, is cautioning against poor food handling and preparation practices.

The risk of becoming stricken with foodborne illnesses heightens during holidays when people tend to become lax when handling, preparing, and storing their meals.

Martin is therefore appealing to the public to pay close attention to how they prepare their food and to be mindful that they are cooked at the correct

temperature and for the recommended length of time.

"Ham, turkey, chicken, you name it, they are potentially hazardous foods meaning that they maintain the growth of microorganisms that will make us sick.

"So, keep them away, we are not friends with those bacteria. Prepare food at the right time, serve food at the right time and we will keep illness at bay," Martin cautioned.

Martin continued that home cooks should be mindful of the temperature at which poultry and pork products, which are popular at this time of year, are cooked.

The recommendation is that they reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

"I advise cooking close to food serving time is the best thing because you won't have that food sitting down at room temperature for an extended period of time. If you do that, you'll be playing the game that bacteria with potentially hazardous food will poison us.

"We don't want no illness around this time," Martin said.

According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), more than 210,000 people suffer an episode of foodborne illness every day in the Americas and half of them are children under the age of 5.

During the holidays, the risk of these illnesses increases because of poor handling and inadequate refrigeration of foods that
















Chief Health Inspector, Sharon Martin

are prepared ahead of time and in large quantities.

In its five keys to safer food, both PAHO and the WHO recommend using safe water and ingredients,

keeping hands, utensils and surfaces clean, cooking food thoroughly, keeping food at safe temperatures and separating raw from cooked food.

Tue 20 Day		Tue 20 Night	
83° 	5%  E 14 mph	75° 	6%  E 12 mph
Mainly sunny. High 83F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.		A mostly clear sky. Low around 75F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.	
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 Sunrise 6:31 am	 Sunset 5:38 pm	 Moonrise 3:27 am	 Moonset 3:05 pm
 Waning Crescent			

Local News



Antigua and Barbuda's ambassadors engage on country's key international priorities

On the margins of the 2022 Effective Development Cooperation Summit in Geneva, Switzerland, Ambassador Walton Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in New

York, paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Boris Latour, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations Office in Geneva, and Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Observer of the Permanent

Delegation of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva.

Ambassadors Murdoch and Latour welcomed Am-

bassador Webson to Geneva and were eager to discuss key strategic priorities for Antigua and Barbuda at the multilateral organisations based in Switzerland.

Topping the country's agenda was the desire for a more active role in the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In recent years, Antigua and Barbuda's role and prominence in global matters has increased significantly.

Having served as the Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), hosting the OECS Assembly, and now preparing to host the UN's Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States in St. John's has brought Antigua and Barbuda significant global attention.

As the Ambassadors provided each other with updates on their work, Ambassador Webson emphasised Antigua and Barbuda's lofty undertaking to host the 4th SIDS Conference in 2024.

Its success will require an all-government approach and forging new partnerships.

In this regard, Ambassador Latour renewed his
cont'd on pg 7

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commitment to supporting the Permanent Mission in New York.

He further proposed greater coordination between the two offices to ensure that Antigua and Barbuda's interests are widely represented and advocated.

Ambassador Murdoch, meanwhile, said Antigua and Barbuda remains a prominent and influential member of the OECS and voiced the Government of Antigua and Barbuda's commitment to strengthen the voice of the subregion on critical issues at the WTO through his office in Geneva. He believes that coordination between the OECS, Capitals and International Organizations could strengthen representa-

tion in the European theatre.

Ambassador Latour was recently appointed in October 2022, as the Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations Office in Geneva. He brings a wealth of experience in renewable energy, information technology, real estate, hospitality, agriculture, and finance.

Present at the courtesy call with the ambassadors were Timothee Bauer, Deputy Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in Geneva, Joel Richards, Senior Technical Specialist, Permanent Delegation of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to the United Nations Office and other International



Organizations in Geneva, Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in New York, and Javier Spencer, Adviser, Permanent Mission of



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Local News



33 new soldiers welcomed into the ABDF ranks

Thirty-three of the forty-one people who began the Antigua Barbuda Defence Force's Basic Course 22-02 have successfully completed training and are now full-fledged soldiers.

Three recruits were dismissed for failure to meet the course's standards, while the other five were released for medical reasons.

The other recruits, however, successfully completed the twelve-week training course which began on 28th September and covered map reading and navigation, physical training, drills, signals, field craft, first aid, internal security, range work, skill at arms, minor tactics and field training.

The soldiers were also required to complete training



in Law of Armed Conflict, conflict resolution and anger management.

Chief of Defence Staff, Colonel Telbert Benajmin, gave the charge to the new soldiers as they begin their career.

"You are now fully in-

doctrinated members of the Antigua Barbuda Defence Force. You are no longer an ordinary citizen. As a member of this force, you are now, and will going forward, be judged by higher standards and by greater expectations."

2nd Lieutenant Anthony Jacobs, the course officer, provided an overview of the training programme during the new soldiers' rite of passage.

"The aim of the course is to instill the ABDF core values which are courage, integrity, loyalty, discipline and

teamwork and standard military training into civilians of various backgrounds.

The top performer in Basic Course 22-02 was Private Lyndon Arthur who was also recognised for the Best Physical.

Other outstanding recruits were Best Shot - Private Edwin Jackson; Best Drills - Private Keyon Samuels; Most Improved Recruit - Private Justice Thompson and Best Military Knowledge, Private Yanika Joseph.

Private Arthur shared the lessons he will take with him from training as he begins his military career.

"There were many lessons taught, many experiences gained, and strong bonds forged among the batch of recruits.

"The training, in my view, has helped us to become stronger, more confident, more focused, and more disciplined.

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that LAZARO FERNANDO ALEJANDRINO of St. James' Club, St Paul's Antigua is applying to the Ministry for Naturalization and that any person who knows any reason why Naturalization should not be granted should send a written and signed statement of facts to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

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Local News

CAF, CalvinAir Helicopters bring Christmas cheer to the disabled

On any other day, CalvinAir Helicopters' Chief Pilot, Steve Gray, would be wearing his uniform and preparing for takeoff, but on 15th December he dressed in a bright red Santa costume - complete with a sack of gifts - and rehearsed his Ho, Ho, Ho's in front the mirror.

His mission? To bring Christmas cheer and gifts to the children and residents of the Friends Foundation and the Care Project, all of whom he says were on his "good" list.

One of Steve's most recent altruistic missions, in relation to the Friends Foundation, involved leading the aerial search for missing autistic teen, Shamar Harrigan.

Last Thursday, he continued his acts of goodwill by volunteering his time to spread Christmas cheer to the Friends Foundation which Shamar attended for several months as part of the outreach programme.

Santa Steve arrived to the sound of cheers from the staff and children of the Friends Foundation/Developmental Center and was treated to a Nativity play, produced by the staff.

"It was fantastic," Steve said. "It was such a great opportunity and so heart-warming."

Friends Foundation Principal, Raphael Robertson, expressed heartfelt thanks to the Calvin Ayre Foun-



Left - Right: FF Principal, Raphael Robertson; Calvin Ayre Foundation Manager, Jamilla Kirwan; CalvinAir Helicopters Chief Pilot and Santa, Steve Gray; FF Friends Developmental Center Manager, Annette Carey; FF Director (Back), JoAnn Redick - FF Board Member; (Floor: Melinda Fletcher, Elf/Private Citizen Volunteer)

dation for again supporting the charity and for bringing Christmas cheer into the children's lives.

Santa's next stop was the Care Project, which is housed at the former Holberton Hospital. There he was greeted with excitement, high-fives, and smiles.

The government-managed facility provides a home and basic care for children with severe mental and physical disabilities.

Acting Matron of the

Care Project, Shellon Jones, was elated to receive the gifts on behalf of the residents and thanked the Calvin Ayre Foundation for its continued support.

Jamilla Kirwan, Media Relations Specialist for Ayre Group and Manager of the Calvin Ayre Foundation, spoke on behalf of Ambassador Calvin Ayre and his Foundation.

"As always, it gives us great pleasure at CAF to contribute positively to the

quality of life of the most vulnerable in our society," she said. "The joy on the children's faces is priceless! We will continue to play our role and make a difference in our society in the areas of Emergency Response, Social Development, Education and Sports. Next time, we hope Santa will be able to arrive in his helicopter!"

Kirwan ended by adding that the prayers of the entire Ayre Group are with Shamar's family and friends.

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Opinion

Mexico and the unbearable whiteness of advertising

By Belén Fernández

From beers to cars to supermarkets, Mexico and other postcolonial societies are grappling with a whiteness epidemic.

Scrolling through Facebook recently on my phone in Mexico, I came upon an advertisement informing me in Spanish: “The moment has arrived to renew yourself.”

A company based in the northern Mexican state of Nuevo León offered to loan me up to 250,000 pesos — more than \$12,000 — to pursue the plastic surgery of my choice. An image of a bikini-clad white woman with blond hair provided additional encouragement.

A perusal of the company’s Facebook page revealed that she was not the only white person selected to promote these surgically focused financial services. In fact, not a single non-white person had been chosen to embody “renewal”.

This in a country where the vast majority of people are not white, and where a soaring national poverty rate — nearly 44 percent at the end of 2020 — means most folks could never afford a \$12,000 loan.

And yet the Nuevo León firm is scarcely alone in its extra-white market-



The 2.5 million strong Afro-Mexican community are effectively rendered invisible in advertisements in Mexico, say experts [File: PEDRO PARDO/AFP]

ing approach. Generally speaking, the chromatic composition of Mexican advertising exists in glaring defiance of the physical diversity of Mexico’s primarily mestizo (mixed heritage) and Indigenous population.

As is the case elsewhere in Latin America and in other countries subjected to European colonial depredations, the Spanish colonial legacy in Mexico has meant that lighter skin is associated with societal superiority and economic advantage.

And what is the point of advertising if not to make people want to be something “better” than

they are?

Nowadays in Mexico, the citizen-consumer is bombarded with advertising images that blatantly illustrate the overlap of racism and classism in the social hierarchy.

From beer and car companies to department stores and supermarket chains, the whiteness of ads has become a sort of sinister elephant in the room, urging poor Mexicans to spend their way out of socioeconomic misery into an impossibly whiter future.

As social anthropologist Juris Tipa notes in a 2020 peer-reviewed paper on “colourism” in Mexi-

can advertising, the overwhelmingly dominant casting profile requested by firms for commercial advertisements is “international Latino” — which basically translates into someone with light skin, dark hair, and dark eyes, “reinforcing the imagery of a ‘Europeanised Latin Americanness’” at the expense of the average Mexican.

Meanwhile, the Afro-Mexican population — which is more than 2.5 million strong — is effectively rendered invisible by the commercial advertising landscape, as Juris observes. In contributing to the perpetuation of a

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vicious cycle of colourist discrimination, advertising firms and their clients have helped maintain a colonial “pigmentocracy” in Mexico.

Sometimes, the Mexican advertising industry gets publicly called out for its racist shenanigans — like in 2018 when an ad campaign for Indio beer featured a bunch of fair-skinned Mexicans sporting t-shirts on which the phrase “pinche indio” (“f***** Indian”, a prevalent insult in Mexico) was partially crossed out and replaced with “orgullosamente indio” or “proudly Indian”. According to the minds behind the campaign, its objective was to raise awareness of discrimination in the country — something that is clearly best achieved by having white people appropriate Indigenous identity.

When I asked a middle-aged Mexican man — a descendant of Totonac people from the state of Veracruz — what he made of the faux wokeness of the whole Indio campaign, he shrugged and reckoned it was no worse than the ads from decades past for Mexico’s Superior beer brand, which had involved frolicking blond women, the US actress Farrah Fawcett, and the slogan “la rubia que todos quieren,” or “the blond that everyone wants”.

Of course, the unbearable whiteness of adver-

tising is hardly confined to Mexico. Travelling by bus years ago through Peru, I recall questioning the logic behind populating highway billboards with Scandinavian-type models in a country where the majority of humans are brown.

From soda advertisements in El Salvador to laundry detergent ads in Colombia to the “Elite” toilet paper brand found throughout Latin America, the consensus appears to be that whiteness sells — a result, in part, of the superior societal value placed on white skin.

On the other side of the world, too, colonial legacies of racist colourism die hard. In West Africa in 2017, the German company Nivea came under fire for promoting a cream that promised “visibly fairer skin”. That same year, Nivea was forced to pull a deodorant ad proclaiming “White Is Purity”. Naturally, the company is still making bank five years later. Welcome to capitalism.

Speaking of capitalism, University of Hawaii professor L Ayu Saraswati, whose essay on “shaming the colour of beauty” in Indonesia was published in 2012 in the scholarly journal *Feminist Studies*, documents how transnational corporations like Unilever and L’Oreal have “aggressively marketed their skin-whitening creams throughout Asia, Africa, Europe, and the United States”. And while this

may be business as usual in the globalised era, it also constitutes corporate complicity in the normalisation of racism.

Unilever is the parent company of Dove, the US soap brand that had its own “oops” marketing moment in 2017 with an ad that showed a Black woman turning into a white woman. It bears mentioning, though, that the US is usually exempt from the unbearable whiteness of advertising, as the industry often instead prefers a multicoloured, multiethnic approach that projects an image of harmonious egalitarianism — and that stands in stark contrast to the domestic US reality of

dog-eat-dog neoliberalism, institutionalised racism, and general non-democracy.

Call it false advertising — and a handy justification for the US’s self-declared right to impose its will on the rest of humanity.

But back to that Mexican financial services firm and the loan that can turn you into a blond white woman in a bikini. As the current US brand of racist capitalism wreaks havoc in Mexico and across the Global South — and poor people are taught to aspire to socioeconomic advancement in a system designed to keep them poor — all this whiteness looks pretty dark, indeed.

AUCTION NOTICE

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Instructed by **ACB MORTGAGE AND TRUST COMPANY LIMITED**, I shall sell by **PUBLIC AUCTION** on Wednesday the 11th day of January 2023 at 11:00am the above residential property at Piccadilly.

The property is under the ownership of **TESSA DONAWA-DANIEL**. The land is a 43,500 sq. ft. (1 acre) plot with an approximate 6,969 sq. ft., 2 storey reinforced concrete building with 4 bedrooms and 3 ½ bathrooms.

The property is in a quiet residential area with a commanding view of the surrounding area.

The Auction shall be held on site.

Details of the Auction may be obtained from **Mr. Trevor Santos, Public Auctioneer** at telephone numbers: 464-7653 and 562-7653.

Dated this the 19th day of December 2022

Trevor Santos
Licensed Auctioneer

World Cup Round Up



World Cup final: Lionel Messi leads Argentina to glory - is he now football's greatest?

By Phil McNulty

Lionel Messi strode alone into a single spotlight amid the darkness at Lusail Stadium to finally take possession of the one prize that has remained painfully out of reach throughout his silver-lined career.

The 35-year-old Argentina maestro rubbed his hands together in glorious anticipation of his crowning glory, donning the traditional Arab robe known as a bisht, before finally lifting the World Cup to the sky amid an explosion of flashlights and pyrotechnics.

Messi had achieved his dream. The gap in his glittering collection had been filled - the set complete after arguably the most spectacular World Cup final in history, a game for the ages that tore at the emotions and played havoc with the pulse rates before Argentina's icon reached his summit.

He can now add the World Cup to seven Ballons d'Or, four Champions Leagues, one Copa America, 10 La Liga titles with Barcelona and a Ligue 1 crown in France with Paris St-Germain.

This was the one. This was the trophy that Messi's millions of advocates will now use as 'Exhibit A' in their argument that he is the greatest to have played the game.

This is a trophy, almost 15 inches of solid gold, that will now have many saying Messi is the greatest - and those with a counter-argument will have an added degree of difficulty presenting their case.

Comparisons are expanded over generations, which adds a different frame to all the arguments, but no-



one can now deny Messi belongs in the same pantheon as Pele and another whose image was across many Argentina banners at Lusail Stadium on Sunday.

Inevitably, Diego Maradona, his legendary predecessor in Argentina's number 10 shirt, had a forceful case for the best. The point of difference was always his World Cup triumph in Mexico 36 years ago - a triumph Messi did not have. It has now been removed.

Messi will always be in any conversation about the greatest, and the fact he now has the biggest honour the global game has to offer makes for a more powerful discussion as to his merits.

How do you even begin to tell the tale of how Messi reached his pinnacle? How do you recount events that eventually led to Argentina's World Cup win and the climax of a tournament that will have the name Lionel Messi attached to it forever?

Messi should have known, given his history of World Cup heartache and disappointment stretching back

to 2006 and including a losing final to Germany at Rio's Maracana in 2014, that this was an honour which would not be won easily.

The fact that this spectacular night at Lusail Stadium contained so much suffering before Argentina and Messi hit the heights of their third World Cup win may make it even sweeter.

And it was all done in the face of brilliance from the 23-year-old who will, if he is not there already, join Messi in any debate about the sport's true elite in years to come: France's Kylian Mbappe.

France appeared to be rolling out the red carpet for Messi's coronation as they barely threatened for 80 minutes. Lusail was Messi's playground as he scored Argentina's opener from the penalty spot, making him the first player in World Cup history to score in the group stage, round of 16, quarter-final, semi-final and final in a single tournament.

Messi then helped to create Angel di Maria's second, the game taking a routine course with celebrations start-

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World Cup Round Up

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ed among Argentina fans until the much-anticipated battle with Mbappe was joined in stunning fashion.

Mbappe pulled one back from the spot with 10 minutes left, then fired in a brilliant volley seconds later. Messi's smile that stretched across the giant screens in each corner of the stadium was one of "not again" disbelief.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni pulled off a masterstroke of selection with the inclusion of 34-year-old Di Maria, who ran Jules Kounde ragged, but then appeared to give way to fatal conservatism by taking him off with his side on top after 64 minutes for the workmanlike Marcos Acuna.

Messi, of course, pulled Argentina round with his second in extra time but France, revived from the earlier mediocrity, were level again through Mbappe's penalty.

In an atmosphere of near hysteria, Argentina keeper Emiliano Martinez saved with his foot from Randal Kolo Muani with the World Cup at his mercy in the closing seconds, although there was still time for Lautaro Martinez to head wide of an unguarded goal at the other end.

To say extra time was highly charged would be an understatement, with some fans even tearing their gaze away from the action, such was the unbearable tension.

Magnificently stressful, it went to penalties which

Argentina won 4-2, a painful way to settle a game that will now be talked about whenever the World Cup is discussed.

When Gonzalo Montiel scored the decisive kick, Messi slumped to his knees in tears in the centre circle, arms raised to the heavens before he was buried under an avalanche of light blue and white striped shirts.

He then claimed a microphone to address Argentina's supporters amid scenes of celebratory mayhem.

Messi picked up the Golden Ball for player of the tournament, the first player to win it twice since it was introduced in 1982, after also winning the honour in 2014.

He has now been involved in 21 goals for Argentina at World Cups - 13 goals and eight assists, the most by any player for any nation. The goals in this World Cup final give him 793 in his career. He was also the first player to score in every round in the same men's World Cup tournament.

There was one statistic that mattered above all others on this night: Messi was a World Cup winner - at last.

He sat astride the figure-of-eight stage on which he had received the World Cup with his team, basking in the fact he can at last fill that one space in his trophy cabinet.

It was a stage later filled with friends and family of the Argentina squad, their

country now back on top of the football world for the first time since 1986.

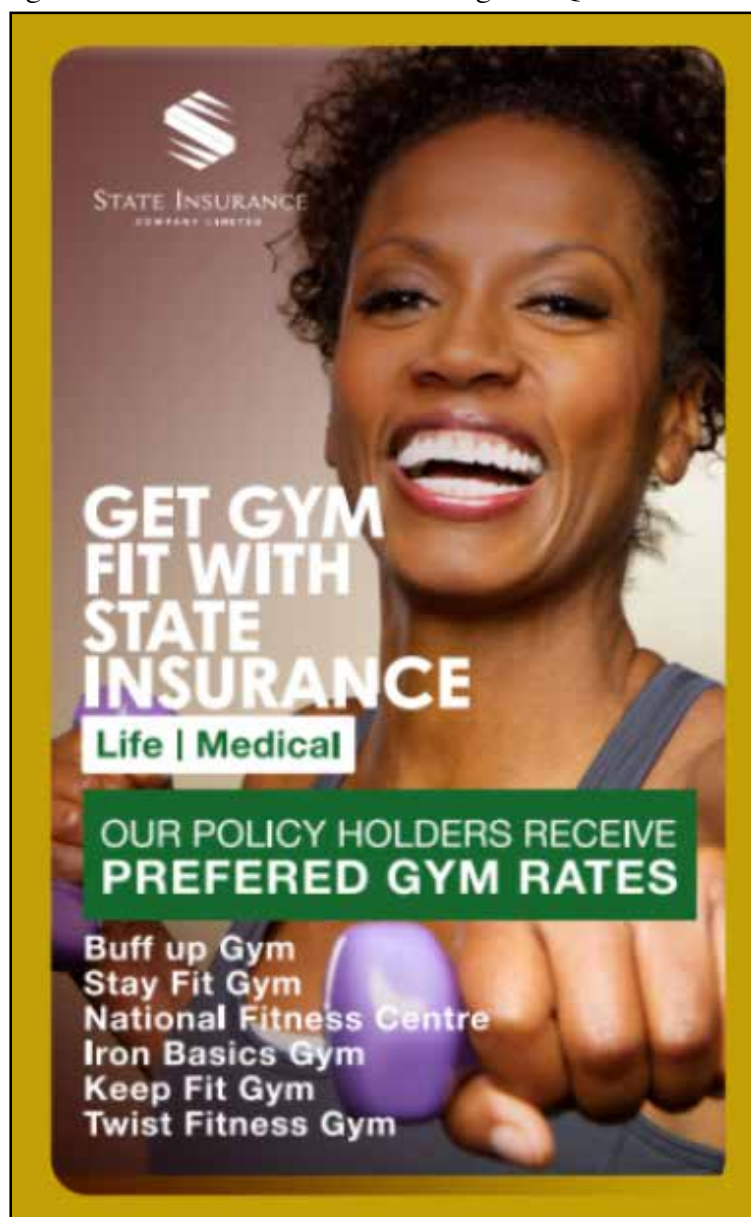
Argentina's supporters stayed in their seats for well over an hour, going through the songbook that has been the soundtrack to their World Cup campaign, paying homage to the man they counted on. The man who had delivered.

The seismic shock of that opening loss to Saudi Arabia seemed an age away. It was Messi who got Argentina's World Cup into gear with a brilliant goal against Mexico and he was

unstoppable as he carried it through to the finish.

Messi had the golden trophy in his hands. It was mission accomplished - a mission stretching back more than 16 years to when he came on as a scoring substitute in a 6-0 win over Serbia and Montenegro in Germany.

The final chapter of Messi's World Cup story was a thriller from first to last against France, with the plot taking so many twists. It delivered the perfect ending on a never to be forgotten night in Qatar.



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Elon Musk Twitter poll ends with users seeking his departure

By Matt O'brien, Kelvin Chan and Tom Krisher

Millions of Twitter users asked Elon Musk to step down as the head of Twitter in a poll the billionaire created and promised to abide by. But Monday afternoon there was no word on whether Musk would step aside or who the new leader might be.

Twitter has grown more chaotic and confusing under Musk's leadership with rapidly vacillating policies that are issued, then withdrawn or changed.

Among those in the "go" camp almost certainly were Tesla investors who have grown tired of the 24/7 Twitter chaos which they say has distracted the eccentric CEO from the electric car company, his main source of wealth.

Musk also used his shares in the company to partially fund the acquisition of Twitter.

Shares of Tesla are down 35% since Musk took over Twitter on Oct. 27, costing investors billions. Tesla's market value was over \$1.1 trillion on April 1, the last trading day before Musk disclosed he was buying up Twitter shares. The company has since lost 58% of its value, at a time when rival auto makers are cutting in on Tesla's dominant share of electric vehicle sales.

"This has been a black eye moment for Musk and been a major overhang on Tesla's stock, which continues to suffer in a brutal way since the Twitter soap opera began," Wedbush analyst Dan Ives wrote Monday.

If Musk's tenure ends, it would be a major positive for Tesla stock and a sign that Musk is "finally reading the room that has been growing frustration around this Twitter nightmare."

The billionaire Tesla CEO Musk



Elon Musk

attended the World Cup final Sunday in Qatar, where he opened the poll. Since the poll closed early Monday, Musk has been uncharacteristically silent on Twitter as he appeared to be flying back to the U.S.

More than half of the 17.5 million respondents voted "yes" in answer to Musk's Twitter poll asking whether he should step down as head of the company.

Musk has taken a number of unscientific polls on substantial issues facing the social media platform, including whether to reinstate journalists that he had suspended from Twitter, which was broadly criticized in and out of media circles.

The polls have only added to a growing sense of tumult on Twitter since Musk bought the company for \$44 billion, potentially leaving the future direction of the company in the hands of its users.

Among those users are people recently reinstated on the platform under Musk, people who had been banned for racist and toxic posts, or who had

spread misinformation.

Since buying Twitter, Musk has presided over a dizzying series of changes that have unnerved advertisers and turned off users. He's laid off half of the workforce, axed contract content moderators and disbanded a council of trust and safety advisors. He has dropped enforcement of COVID-19 misinformation rules and called for criminal charges against Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert.

Musk clashed with some users on multiple fronts and on Sunday, he asked Twitter users to decide if he should remain in charge, acknowledging he made a mistake in launching new restrictions that banned the mention of rival social media websites.

The results of the unscientific online survey regarding whether Musk should remain as top executive at Twitter, which lasted 12 hours, showed that 57.5% of those who voted wanted him to leave, while 42.5% wanted him to stay.

The poll followed just the latest
cont'd on pg 17

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significant policy change since Musk acquired Twitter in October. Twitter had announced that users will no longer be able to link to Facebook, Instagram, Mastodon and other platforms the company described as “prohibited.”

That decision generated immediate blowback, including criticism from past defenders of Twitter’s new owner. Musk then promised that he would not make any more major policy changes to Twitter without an online survey of users.

The action to block competitors was Musk’s latest attempt to crack down on certain speech after he shut down a Twitter account last week that was tracking the flights of his private jet.

The banned platforms included mainstream websites such as Facebook and Instagram, and upstart rivals Mastodon, Tribel, Nostr, Post and former President Donald Trump’s Truth Social.

A growing number of Twitter users have left the platform under Musk, or created alternative accounts on Mastodon, Tribel, Nostr or Post, and included those addresses in their Twitter profiles.

Musk has advocated for free speech on Twitter, but shut down the jet-tracking account, calling it a security risk. He used that to justify the decision last week to suspend the accounts of numerous journalists who cover Twitter and Musk, among

them reporters working for The New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, Voice of America and other publications. Many of those accounts were restored following an online poll by Musk.

The Washington Post’s Taylor Lorenz was suspended over the weekend after requesting an interview with Musk in a tweet tagged to the Twitter owner.

Sally Buzbee, The Washington Post’s executive editor, called it an “arbitrary suspension of another Post journalist” that further undermined Musk’s promise to run Twitter as a

platform dedicated to free speech.

“Again, the suspension occurred with no warning, process or explanation — this time as our reporter merely sought comment from Musk for a story,” Buzbee said. By midday Sunday, Lorenz’s account was restored, as was the tweet she thought had triggered her suspension.

Musk was questioned in court on Nov. 16 about how he splits his time among Tesla and his other companies, including SpaceX and Twitter. He had to testify in Delaware’s Court of Chancery over a shareholder’s

challenge to Musk’s potentially \$55 billion compensation plan as CEO of the electric car company.

Musk said he never wanted to be a CEO of any company, preferring to see himself as an engineer.

In public banter with Twitter followers Sunday, Musk expressed pessimism about the prospects for a new CEO, saying that person “must like pain a lot” to run a company that “has been in the fast lane to bankruptcy.”

“No one wants the job who can actually keep Twitter alive. There is no successor,” Musk tweeted.



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Guyana, EU, sign agreement to counter illegal timber trade

CMC - Guyana and the European Union EU recently signed a legally binding trade agreement to promote the sustainable trade of legal timber from Guyana to the European bloc and counter illegal logging in Guyana.

According to a release from the Delegation of the EU to Guyana, the European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevičius and Guyana's Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat inked the agreement at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

The COP 15 is being hosted in Montreal, Canada.

The deputy minister of the Environment of the Czech Republic and special envoy of the Czech Government, on behalf of Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU, Jan Dusík co-signed the agreement.

The release noted that the agreement will give EU-based timber buyers assurance that timber products from Guyana are legal. It is also expected to help improve forest governance, tackle illegal logging and promote trade in verified legal timber products.

The release also noted that Guyana is the first



Guyana's Vickram Bharrat (left) and European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius

country in the Amazon region to sign the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT) with the EU.

The country has, for the last ten years, been engaging the EU on this VPA.

Through the VPA, Guyana will tackle trade in timber that has been illegally harvested, transported or processed. The country will improve market access for law-abiding businesses, as well as modernise its forestry sector, create jobs, promote sustainable development and protect the rights of indigenous peoples.

Under the VPA, Guyana also commits to developing

a timber legality assurance system to assess that timber products -for all stages of the supply chain- have been produced in accordance with national legislation.

When this system is operational, Guyana can issue verified legal timber products with FLEGT licences. The licence certifies that the timber or timber products exported under that licence are legal.

The VPA will ensure this is duly enforced, guaranteeing the sustainable management of the country's enormous forest area and thus protecting biodiversity. It will also help to improve the competitiveness of Guyana's timber in-

dustry by modernising timber operations.

This, in turn, will create jobs and ensure that forestry brings employment in the formal economy, while expanding trade opportunities as Guyana moves to exporting guaranteed legal timber products.

Outside of these efforts, however, the EU release acknowledged that Guyana has a robust national legislation on forests, including a Forest Code.

Guyana has one of the oldest, most diverse and largest tropical ecosystems worldwide that houses an array of diverse flora and fauna, the forests are home to more than 9000 species.

Five-member cabinet to lead Nevis

LOOP - The new Nevis Island Administration (NIA) government was sworn in yesterday.

Mark Brantley will lead the five-member team as Premier and Minister of Finance, Statistics, Economic Planning, Human Resources, Industry, Trade and Consumer Affairs, Tourism, Public Utilities and Energy, Foreign Investments, Government Information and Nevis Television.

Eric Evelyn, member-elect for St George, was sworn in as Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Natural Resources, Fisheries, Cooperatives, Culture, and Housing.

Spencer Brand is Minister of Communications,



New Cabinet of Ministers for the Concerned Citizens Movement-led Nevis Island Administration- (l-r) Elected Members- Hon. Spencer Brand; Deputy Premier, Hon. Eric Evelyn; Premier Hon. Mark Brantley; and Nominated Members- Hon. Senator Jahnel Nisbett; and Hon. Senator Troy Liburd at the inauguration ceremony held at the Elquemedo T. Willett Park in Charlestown, Nevis on December 18, 2022

Works, Water Services, Environment, Posts, Labour, and Physical Planning and Environmental Disaster.

Troy Liburd will have ministerial responsibility for Education, Information Technology, Library Services, Youth, and Sports. He will also be made a senator in the assembly.

Jahnel Nisbett is the Minister of Health, Gender Affairs, Community Affairs, and Social Services.

In an address before taking the oaths of office, Brantley called on Nevians to unite with the aim of building a stronger and more resilient island.

“The people have spoken and they have done so eloquently and loudly. They have chosen hope over fear, purpose over discord, stability over chaos...I proclaim an end to the electioneering, rancour and petty politicking. Elections are behind us.

cont'd on pg 21

UPDATED SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE UPDATE

TYPHOON EXPRESS

MONDAY
(FROM ST. JOHN'S)

AB 3:45 PM

OVERNIGHT IN BARBUDA

TUESDAY

BA 6:00AM

WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
(CRABBS DEPARTURE)

AB 10:00AM
BA 3:00PM



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Cayman: Campaign launched to protect rights of disabled community

LOOP - The government of this British overseas territory and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) have launched a grassroots public education and awareness campaign to promote equal rights and legal protection for those with disabilities, especially access to parking or 'blue spots'.

The "Save my spot, nah!" campaign has been developed to encourage compassion and advocacy for members of the community with visible and invisible disabilities who rely on the spots.

It also aims to rally the community to protect accessible parking areas and better understand the rules of use.

In commenting on the matter, NCPD Chairperson Magda Embury called on the public to not judge appearances or make assumptions about people they see using accessible parking but to be alert to vehicles that park in these spots without



the approved permits or licence plates.

"Often, well-meaning onlookers may shame individuals for using the blue spots without knowing that they suffer from an invisible condition, and they are qualified to use the designated spaces for a better quality of life," she said.

"It is also important to remember that the additional space next to the blue spots, known as the 'cross-hatch area', is not an extra parking space, but rather an essential exit-entry space needed for motorists with

disabilities who use wheelchairs or other devices. Unfortunately, sometimes these crosshatched spaces are often occupied or partially blocked by able-bodied drivers."

Disabilities are defined as any physical, mental or neurological condition that may affect an individual's movements or senses, regardless of outward appearances. Someone may legally have a disability-parking permit or licence plate without having a visible mobility assistance device, like a wheelchair, scooter or cane.

Invisible conditions, such as chronic fatigue syndrome, heart conditions, asthma, epilepsy and multiple sclerosis may qualify someone to park in a blue spot.

According to the World Health Organisation, nearly one in every seven people lives with a disability that impacts major life activities. As people age, the proportion with disabilities increases, and of those with chronic illness, 80 per cent are considered to have an invisible or hidden disability.

Acting Cabinet Secretary Jason Webster said, "It is our goal to always protect the most vulnerable in our society and to inspire a new wave of advocates to further the goal of protecting 'blue spots' for those that really need them. As we have entered the busy holiday season, we encourage the community to be 'Blue Spot Heroes' and leave the blue accessible parking spots for those who need them."

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Now we must get down to the task of governing. It is time for us to work together, aspire together and prosper together. It is time for us now to build Nevis together," he stated.

Brantley's Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) retained leadership of the island with a one-seat majority. He said his opponent and their supporters have nothing to fear and would not be discriminated against.

"While the election may have given me a mandate to lead, it was not a mandate for arrogance, conceit, self-indulgence, or self-aggrandisement.

"I want to assure all Nevisians, especially those who voted for my opponents, that their views, opinions, advice and criticisms will be welcomed and will always be given due consideration. I am the Premier not only for those who voted for me, but for all who call Nevis their home," he added.

Dutch leader pledges 'meaningful' response to slavery report

Loop - Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte is delivering a speech Monday in response to a report on the country's historical role in the global slave trade, prompting reports he may offer a formal government apology.

Rutte has said only that his speech at the National Archive in The Hague will be a "meaningful moment."

News of a possible apology upset some activist groups in the Netherlands and its former colonies that think it should be offered next year on the July 1 anniversary of the abolition of slavery 160 years ago.

Activists consider next year the 150th anniversary because many enslaved people were forced to continue working in plantations for a decade after abolition.

"Why the rush?" asked Baryl Biekman, chair of the Netherlands-based National Platform for Slavery Past.

The Dutch government previously expressed deep regret for the nation's historical role in slavery but stopped short of a formal apology, with Rutte once saying such a declaration could polarize society. However, a majority in parliament now supports an apology.

Rutte's speech comes at a time when many nations' brutal colonial histories have received critical scrutiny because of the Black Lives Matter movement and the police killing of George Floyd, a Black man, in the U.S. city of Minneapolis on May 25, 2020.

The prime minister's speech is a response to a report published last year by a government-appointed advisory board. Its recommendations included the government's apology and recognition that the slave trade



Netherlands' Prime Minister Mark Rutte speaks with the media as he arrives for an EU summit in Brussels, Thursday, December 15, 2022. (AP Photo/Virginia Mayo)

and slavery from the 17th century until abolition "that happened directly or indirectly under Dutch authority were crimes against humanity."

The report said that what it called institutional racism in the Netherlands "cannot be seen separately from centuries of slavery and colonialism and the ideas that have arisen in this context."

The government has said that the year starting July 1, 2023, will be a slavery memorial year in which the country "will pause to reflect on this painful history. And on how this history still plays a negative role in the lives of many today."

That was underscored earlier this month when an independent investigation found widespread racism at the Dutch foreign ministry and its diplomatic outposts around the world.

In Suriname, the small South American nation where Dutch plantation owners generated huge profits through the use of enslaved labour, activists and officials say they have not been asked for input, and that's

a reflection of a Dutch colonial attitude. What's really needed, they say, is compensation.

The Dutch first became involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in the late 1500s and became a major trader in the mid-1600s.

Eventually, the Dutch West India Company became the largest trans-Atlantic slave trader, said Karwan Fatah-Black, an expert in Dutch colonial history and an assistant professor at Leiden University.

Dutch cities, including the capital, Amsterdam, and port city Rotterdam already have issued apologies for the historic role of city fathers in the slave trade.

In 2018, Denmark apologised to Ghana, which it colonised from the mid-17th century to the mid-19th century. In June, King Philippe of Belgium expressed "deepest regrets" for abuses in Congo.

In 1992, Pope John Paul II apologized for the church's role in slavery. Americans have had emotionally charged fights over taking down statues of slaveholders in the South.

Pakistani Taliban overpower guards, seize police centre

AP — Several Pakistani Taliban detainees overpowered their guards at a counter-terrorism center in north-western Pakistan overnight, snatching police weapons, taking hostages and seizing control of the facility, officials said Monday.

The incident erupted late Sunday and quickly evolved into a standoff. Pakistani officials later confirmed that one counter-terrorism officer was killed during the takeover at the detention center in Bannu, a district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and part of a former tribal region.

Police and the military scrambled to deploy troops and special forces to the area but by midday Monday, some 12 hours later, the hostage crisis was still ongoing. According to officials, at least 30 Taliban fighters were involved in the takeover and there were possibly as many as 10 hostages.

The brazen action reflected the government's inability to exercise control over the remote region along the border with Afghanistan. The Pakistani Taliban are a separate group but also allied with the Afghan Taliban, who seized power in the neighbouring country last year as U.S. and NATO troops were in the final stages of their pullout from Afghanistan.



Security officials stand guard on a blocked road leading to a counter-terrorism center where several Pakistani Taliban detainees have taken police officers and others hostage inside the compound, in Bannu, a district in the Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Monday, Dec. 19, 2022. Several Pakistani Taliban detainees have managed to overpower their guards at the counter-terrorism center, snatching police weapons and taking control of the facility, officials said Monday. (AP Photo/Muhammad Hasib)

Few other details emerged about the takeover, which apparently happened while police were interrogating the Taliban detainees, according to Mohammad Ali Saif, a spokesman for the provincial government.

Saif said the place was surrounded and that officials were trying to negotiate with the hostage-takers. He said an operation was underway but did not elaborate.

Authorities enlisted the help of several relatives of the Taliban insurgents in the negotiations, several security officials told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity

because they were not authorised to talk to reporters.

The officials said some soldiers were also among the hostages. There were concerns that the military could storm the facility if negotiations fail. In a video message circulating on social media, the hostage-takers threatened to kill the officers if their safe passage was not arranged.

Mohammad Khurasani, a spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban — also known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan or TTP — said some of the hostage-takers were TTP members who had been detained for years in Bannu.

Khurasani said the TTP

fighters were demanding safe passage to North or South Waziristan, areas that were a Taliban stronghold until a wave of military offensives over the past years declared the region cleared of insurgents.

Since then, TTP's top leaders and fighters have been hiding in neighbouring Afghanistan though the militants still have relatively free reign in patches of the province.

Initially, the hostage-takers demanded in a video message posted on social media that they be airlifted to Afghanistan but Khurasani said that demand

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Malaysia PM Anwar Ibrahim wins motion of confidence in parliament

AlJazeera - The win is a vital backing for Anwar's premiership after an election last month returned an unprecedented hung parliament.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's motion of confidence has been passed in parliament, winning vital backing for his premiership after an election last month returned an unprecedented hung parliament.

Anwar had convened parliament on Monday to prove his majority, after rival and former premier Muhyiddin Yassin cast doubt on his support.

The confidence motion was passed by a simple voice vote – with legislators voicing their support – after the opposition argued against it because Anwar has already been officially sworn in as prime minister by the monarch.

"The ayes have it ... We have a sufficient majority, and it is two-thirds," communications and digital minister Fahmi Fadzil said.

"The unity government in Malaysia stands strong with solid support, and we will focus on the people's welfare," he added.

The opposition bloc continued to question the number of legislators in the 222-seat parliament who supported Anwar and said they were ready to take over as ruling government "when the time comes".

"It can be any time; tomorrow,



Malaysia's PM Anwar Ibrahim leaves the lower house of parliament after receiving a vote of confidence, in capital Kuala Lumpur [Hasnoor Hussain/Reuters]

next week or next election," said opposition leader Hamzah Zainudin.

Anwar, 75, who is also finance minister, took steps to cement his support last week by signing a cooperation pact with smaller political parties.

The parties agreed to ensure political stability after years of turmoil, spur the economy, foster good governance, and uphold the rights of the country's majority Malay community and maintain Islam as its official religion.

Anwar – who has spent more than two decades as an opposition figure – had previously been denied the pre-

iership despite getting within striking distance of it.

In between, he spent nearly a decade in jail for sodomy and corruption in what he says were politically motivated charges.

In the closely contested polls last month, Anwar's bloc did not win a simple majority. But he was appointed by Malaysia's king and proceeded to form a coalition government with the help of other political blocs.

His new government includes the previous ruling coalition Barisan Nasional, which he spent much of his political career seeking to overthrow.

cont'd from pg 23

had been made by mistake, since the TTP fighters were not aware — due to their prolonged detention — that the group now "enjoys control in some" parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, near the Afghan border.

The Pakistani Taliban

have stepped up attacks on security forces since last month, when they unilaterally ended a monthslong cease-fire with the Pakistani government.

The violence has strained relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan's Taliban rulers, who had bro-

kered the cease-fire in May.

The TTP has waged an insurgency in Pakistan over the past 15 years, fighting for stricter enforcement of Islamic laws in the country, the release of their members who are in government custody and a reduction of Pakistani military presence in

the country's former tribal regions.

Also Monday, a roadside bombing targeted a security convoy in restive North Waziristan, killing at least two passersby, police said. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing.

World Cup 2022: Five trends from Qatar - upsets, injury time & penalties

BBC - After 64 games and a record 172 goals, Argentina were crowned World champions for a third time with their dramatic penalty shoot-out victory over France.

Data analysts Nielsen's Gracenote examined the trends from the 2022 competition after the conclusion of the first World Cup to be held in the winter, and in the Middle East.

1. Most upsets for 64 years

Qatar was a tournament for the underdogs with 15 matches ending in an upset.

That started with Saudi Arabia's 2-1 win over eventual winners Argentina on the third day of the tournament - one of 12 shocks in the group stages, which is a record for the competition.

Morocco's eliminations of both Spain and Portugal in the last-16 and quarter-finals respectively, and Croatia's quarter-final win over Brazil, meant 24% of games ended in what Nielsen's Gracenote classes as an upset.

That is the highest percentage of shocks since Sweden 1958 (26%).

According to Nielsen's Gracenote's methodolo-



Lionel Messi, 35, was one of a record 23 'veteran' players (aged 35 or over) to make a combined total of 83 starts - a World Cup record

gy, an upset occurs if "the winning team had less than 33.3% chance of winning over 90 minutes in the group phase or a maximum of 47% chance of eliminating their opponents in the knockout phase."

2. Fewer shots...more goals

There were 'only' 1,458 shots at this year's tournament, which was the lowest amount since Nielsen's Gracenote started recording data on the statistic in 2002, down from a high of 1661 in 2014.

Indeed, the average

number of shots taken during a match in Qatar was 22.8.

But that did not stop the goals raining in, with a record 172 goals scored - the highest since the tournament was expanded to 32 teams in 1998, with 171 scored at both France 1998 and Brazil 2014.

Only USA 1994's 2.71 goals per match beats Qatar 2022's 2.69.

There were 117 different goalscorers in the tournament - five shy of the World Cup set in Russia four years ago.

More goals were also scored from inside the penalty area than any of the four previous competitions at which data was collected on the statistic.

92.9% of goals were scored from inside the penalty area, with a record 62.7% of shots inside the box.

3. 'Cleanest' World Cup this century and more stoppage time

Referees handed out 227 yellow cards - the most since 2010, which Nielsen's Gracenote say *cont'd on pg 26*

Sports News



NBA: Nikola Jokic sets career high for rebounds in Denver Nuggets win

BBC - Nikola Jokic set a career high of 27 rebounds in his fifth triple-double of the season as the Denver Nuggets beat the Charlotte Hornets 119-115.

His rebounds, plus 40 points and 10 assists, make him only the second player in NBA history to record at least 37 points, 27 rebounds and 10 assists in a game.

Basketball great Wilt Chamberlain was the first in 1968.

Jokic's 20 rebounds in one half tie him for second in NBA history.

His team-mate Aaron Gordon added 19 points and 10 rebounds as the Nuggets consigned the Hornets to an eighth straight defeat.

Elsewhere on Sunday, LeBron James recorded 33 points, nine assists and seven rebounds - topping 30 points for the fourth



Serbia's Nikola Jokic is a two-time NBA most valuable player MVP

successive game - in the Los Angeles Lakers' 119-117 win over the Washington Wizards.

Thomas Bryant scored the Lakers' winning basket with 7.4 seconds left on the clock.

The Brooklyn Nets extended their winning run to

six games with a 124-121 victory over the Detroit Pistons, with Kevin Durant scoring 43 points and Kyrie Irving 38.

Jordan Poole recorded a career-best 43 points in the Golden State Warriors' 126-110 win against the Toronto Raptors, while the

Minnesota Timberwolves set a franchise record for points as they beat the Chicago Bulls 150-126.

The Orlando Magic ran out 95-92 winners against the Boston Celtics, and the New York Knicks edged the Indiana Pacers 109-106.

cont'd from pg 25

is down to stricter refereeing, while only four red cards were shown - the same as in Russia.

But the number of fouls declined for the fourth successive tournament to its lowest level this century at 1,599 - perhaps a reflection of referees being encouraged to let play flow.

A total of 23 penalties were awarded at an average of 0.36 per match - including three in the final - but that was actually down on the 2018 World Cup in Russia, the first with Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology.

The amount of stoppage time was a big talking point earlier in the tournament and matches lasted an average 11 additional minutes - up from six minutes in 2018 - due to Fifa's stricter rules on time-wasting.

4. Young guns

The 2022 competition saw the most teenagers starting than at any other World Cup.

10 teenagers made 20 starts including 19-year-old England midfielder Jude Bellingham, 19-year-old Germany midfielder Jamal Musiala and 18-year-old Spain midfielder Gavi.

France forward Kylian Mbappe,

now 23, still holds the record for most starts as a teenager with six to his name at the 2018 edition.

5. Ageing stars

It was not just a year for the young players as it also saw the most veteran players, competitors aged 35 and over, starting World Cup matches.

A combined 27 veteran players made 83 starts at the 2022 tournament, 32 more starts than the previous record set at the 2002 World Cup. Messi, 35, and Croatia's Luka Modric, 37, made the most starts of any veteran player in Qatar with seven each.

Venus Williams given Australian Open wildcard

BBC - Venus Williams has been awarded a wildcard to compete in January's Australian Open at the age of 42.

The American will be back in Melbourne 25 years after her debut in the tournament, which begins on 16 January.

Williams won just three matches in 13 tournaments last season but is yet to show any inclination to follow her sister Serena into retirement.

A seven-time Grand Slam champion in singles, she was beaten in the Australian Open final in 2003 and 2017.



Venus Williams will compete in her 22nd Australian Open in January

"I am very excited to be returning to Melbourne. It will be an honour to play for the fans again," said Williams, who has won five doubles titles in Melbourne.

"I've been competing in

the country for over 20 years now and the Australian community has always supported me wholeheartedly.

"I'm looking forward to making more memories at the tournament this year."

Williams is ranked 1,007th in the world and her last competitive singles match was a first-round defeat at the US Open in August, having played just four tournaments in 2022.

The Grand Slam in New York was the last for Williams' sister Serena, who announced she was "evolving away" from tennis before the tournament.

Nine-time champion Novak Djokovic is also set to compete in Melbourne - a year after being deported from Australia because of his Covid-19 vaccination status.

Kenya doping: Three athletes banned for breaking anti-doping rules

BBC - Three Kenyan athletes have been banned for a collective period of eight years after breaking anti-doping rules.

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) has banned marathon runners Alice Jepkemoi Kimutai and Johnstone Kibet Maiyo for three years, and sprinter Mark Otieno for two.

Otieno, 29, tested positive for the banned anabolic steroid Methasterone moments before the 100m heats at the Tokyo Olympic Games.

It meant he was not allowed to compete.

Otieno, a three-time na-

tional 100m champion, will have his ban backdated from the Games and end in July 2023.

The suspension for November's Porto marathon winner Kimutai - who tested positive for the male hormone testosterone - began on 16 November.

Maiyo's ban started on 20 July for returning a positive test for erythropoietin (EPO).

Last month the east African country avoided a sanction by governing body World Athletics - despite having 55 athletes serving suspensions - after committing to spend \$25m over the next five years to combat



Sprinter Mark Otieno is one of the three Kenyan athletes to receive a ban from the Athletics Integrity Unit

doping.

Kenya's sports minister Ababu Namwamba then announced they intended to

criminalise doping in athletics in an attempt to bring an end to a string of cases in the sport.

Sports News

All Saints United, SAP and Empire enjoy goal fest in Premier League

All Saints United, SAP and Empire all celebrated big margins of victories in a goal fest during the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League at the Technical Centre at Paynters on Sunday, 18th December.

Striker Nazir McBurnette scored a hat-trick as All Saints United secured their third win in four matches by romping to a 6-3 victory over Ottos Rangers in the feature game of Sunday's premier league triple header.

Striker Junior Benjamin, who scored in the first minute to give Ottos Rangers an early 1-0 lead, also recorded a hat-trick in a losing effort.

McBurnette then scored his first goal in the 5th minute to secure the equalizer for All Saints United, who then benefited from a mix-up between two Ottos Rangers defenders that resulted in an own goal being scored by Jervez Lee in the 14th minute to take a fortuitous 2-1 lead.

McBurnette converted his second goal in the 22nd minute to extend All Saints United's lead. Kendukar Challenger then got in on the action by scoring in the 30th minute to increase his team's advantage.

McBurnette then scored for the third time in the 39th minute to complete his hat-



All Saints United's striker Nazir McBurnette, left, scored a hat-trick to lead his team to victory against Ottos Rangers in the Premier Division league at the ABFA's Technical Centre at Paynters on Sunday, 18th December, 2022. (Photo courtesy the ABFA)

trick which gave All Saints United a 5-1 halftime lead.

Shortly after the interval, Benjamin scored his second goal for Ottos Rangers in the 53rd minute to reduce his team's deficit. But Randolph "Etty" Burton restored All Saints United's four-goal lead with a 61st minute conversion.

However, there was still time for Benjamin to complete his hat-trick which he achieved by scoring Ottos Rangers' third and final goal in the 76th minute.

The result propelled All Saints United to the top of the league on goal difference with nine points, but left Ottos Rangers languishing in mid-table of the 16-team competition with two

wins and two losses from their four matches.

After making a dismal start to their premier league campaign in which they lost their first three matches, Empire recorded their first win and points by surging to a 4-1 victory over Parham in the opening game of Sunday's triple header.

Kamali Looby scored a brace by converting two late goals for Empire, but it was Parham who scored first when they took a 1-0 lead via an Alexander Moody-Stuart 9th minute conversion.

Parham's lead was short-lived as Empire drew level two minutes later, courtesy of a goal scored by Shemar Scott. Striker Ra-

keem Joseph scored in the 35th minute to give Empire a 2-1 halftime lead.

Looby then scored in the 79th and 82nd minutes to wrap-up Empire's first win in this season's premier league, while their third loss in four matches left Parham still seeking their first victory in the competition.

Veteran striker Peter "Big Pete" Byers also recorded a hat-trick as SAP coasted to a 5-1 drubbing of Greenbay Hoppers in Sunday's second game to claim their first win of their premier league campaign.

Byers opened his team's scoring with a 6th minute conversion and Taiem Tonge scored in the 26th

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AFBAHLUR win MPL's Business Softball League title

AFBAHLUR United (Agriculture) are the champions of the Mandy Premier League's (MPL) Cool and Smooth Sherma Jackson Business Softball Cricket League.

They captured the title by coasting to a six-wicket win against Time of Victory in the final at the Potters playing field on Sunday, 18th December.

Time of Victory batted first and were restricted to 109 for five off their 10 overs. Male player of the final Essan Warner, top scored with 78

and Michael Greaves chipped in with 15.

Female player of the final Monique Titus picked up two wickets for 23 runs.

AFBAHLUR United then achieved victory by scoring 115 for the loss of five wickets with five balls to spare.

Rodney Williams got 21, Vincey Bowen scored 19, while Melique Jacobs and Shaquan Hewlett each contributed 16 runs. Stanley Farrel captured two wickets

for 17 runs.

The Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force claimed third place by default after TG Welding failed to show up for the third-place play-off match that was slated to precede Sunday's final.

The competition ended with a closing ceremony in which several players were presented with awards for outstanding individual performances during the tournament.

Essan Warner captured the Most Valuable Male Player award, while

Monique Titus claimed the Most Valuable Female Player Award. Taj Liburd took home the Most Valuable Youth Player Award.

Warner also took home the awards for the Highest Individual Score by a Male (112) and the Most Runs by a Male (373).

Kimberly Anthony's 65 earned her the award for the Highest Female Score, while Monique Titus' 13 scalps secured her the prize for the Most Wickets by a Female.



The AFBAHLUR team celebrate with their championship trophy after winning the title by beating Time of Victory in the final at the Potters playing field on Sunday, 18th December. (Photo courtesy Mandy Weatherhead)

Visal Gobin with 9 scalps captured the award for the Most Wickets by a Male.

In addition to winning the championship, AFBAHLUR also claimed the award for the team with the Best Uniform.

TG Welding finished in first place in the preliminaries with Time of Victory in second place and the Antigua Barbuda Defense force in third place.

The organizers are expressing their gratitude to

Cool and Smooth; the Potters Softball Club, especially Gale and Carla; Umpires Arthur, Julian and Candice; Scorers Barbie and Menova with special mention to Shermina, Kimberly and Andra.

They are also expressing their sincere thanks to groundsman Conrad, Fitzroy Rewinding, Richard Dyer, Kenroy "Bingo" Frederick, Tolang, Dicky Bird along with all the participating teams and their crew.

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minute to double Sap's lead. Byers scored his second goal of the match in the 40th minute to give SAP a 3-0 halftime advantage.

Tyrique Tonge then scored in the 72nd minute to make it 4-0 before Rodney Lawrence scored a consolation goal for Hoppers in the 78th minute.

Byers completed his hat-trick when he scored in the 82nd minute to seal SAP's first victory in four matches, having lost twice and drawing once in their three previous encounters.

The ABFA's domestic season will continue at the technical centre with a first division encounter today, Tuesday, 20th December. JSC Progressors will tackle Police at 5 pm.

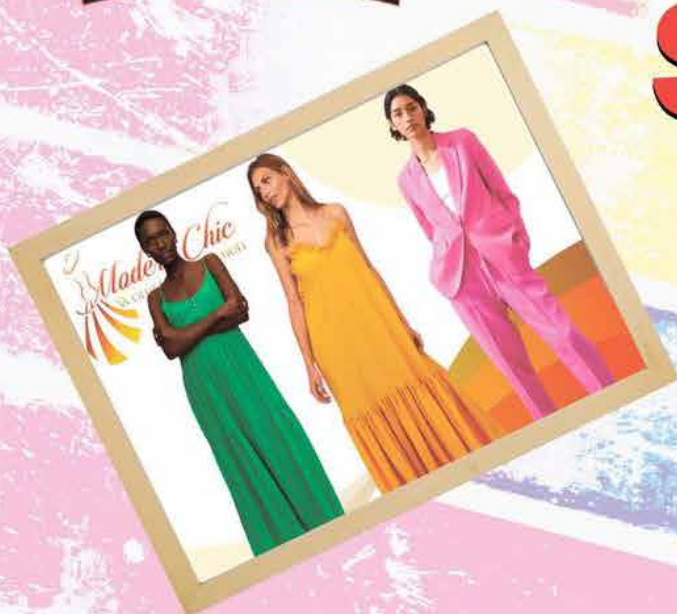
Three matches in the second division are also slated to take place at 4:30 pm today.

Real Blizzard will host English Harbour at New Winthorpes, Young Warriors will entertain Jennings United at the Buckleys School Playing Field and ABAYA will meet Attacking Saints at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.



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Sports News

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with an 89-84 victory over the team from the BVI, which was their first loss in the competition.

The Wadadli Elites then avenged their preliminary-round loss against the team from St. Kitts and Nevis, snatching a 79-78 victory over the Sugar Boys in the first semi-final to book their place in the final against the Skillful Ballers, who prevailed 72-63 over the Montserrat Shamrocks in the other semi-final affair.

Andrew said the Wadadli Elites who were the youngest team in the competition, eventually got it together and performed incredibly well.

"So, we looked at our

team, we knew that they could do it and we said 'with great obstacles present great opportunities to do greatness' and these guys were locked in," Andrew stated.

"But the guys really performed well and we had the youngest team in the entire competition and so the guys performed really good."

The final was preceded by the third-place play-off, which was won by the Sugar Boys who defeated the Montserrat Shamrocks 89-84 to claim the bronze medals.

Andrew wants to see similar tournaments being held on a more regular basis.

"Overall, we are very happy as to how we per-

formed and we hope that events like these will become a regular thing. This is the first invitational tournament by Montserrat and with the success of it, they are planning to do it again

and again," Andrew stated.

"So overall the tournament was a resounding success and even after the tournament, we started getting invitations already to come to additional tournaments."

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Andrew praises Wadadli Elites on winning inaugural tournament

Chief Executive Officer and Assistant Coach Brian Andrew is commending the Wadadli Elites on their performance after winning the inaugural Montserrat Under-26 Invitational Basketball Tournament, which took place in the Emerald Isle from 11th to 15th December.

Following a poor start to the tournament in which they lost their first two games, the Wadadli Elites rebounded to pull off a string of victories to eventually capture the title in the tournament that was also contested by the Montserrat Shamrocks, the Skillful Ballers of the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and St. Kitts and Nevis Sugar Boys.

Andrew said his team was not fully prepared for their opening encounter against home team Montserrat Shamrocks, who scored at the buzzer with the final shot of the game to snatch a 78-77 victory over the Wadadli Elites in the four-team round-robin tournament.

He said his team's poor display carried over into their second game in which the Wadadli Elites suffered a 43-69 blowout loss to the Sugar Boys of St. Kitts and Nevis.



The players of the Wadadli Elite team are presented with the championship trophy by Miss Montserrat Nia St. Claire during the awards and closing ceremony at the Montserrat Under-26 Invitational Basketball Tournament at the Little Bay Multipurpose Stadium on Thursday, 15th December, 2022. (Photo courtesy Wadadli Elites)

“Wadadli Elites really outdid themselves at this tournament. The standard was very high. Our preparations, I would say, was not the best for what we wanted to do,” Andrew said.

“A couple of the guys who were here and a couple of the guys who were overseas did not really get a match practice in Antigua so the first game was our first match together as a team.

“We went to a final last second shot by Montserrat who upset us. Montserrat

won that game. The second game was against St. Kitts and we got embarrassed. So, they beat us by about 27 points and so we started zero and two.”

However, Wadadli Elites were able to recover from their poor start and went on to win the championship after the final against the Skillful Ballers of the BVI ended prematurely.

Wadadli Elites, who led for the duration of the game, were ahead 59-39 in the third quarter when the

BVI decided to abandon the game after one of the Skillful Ballers' players received a double technical.

The Skillful Ballers' decision to discontinue the game resulted in them forfeiting the final, giving an automatic win to the Wadadli Elites.

It was the second time the Wadadli Elites had prevailed over the Skillful Ballers in the tournament. Wadadli Elites recorded their first win of the tournament

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