

THURSDAY 19TH JANUARY 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 13 | [WWW.POINTVILLE.AG](http://WWW.POINTVILLE.AG)

# THE ABLP RETURNS TO POWER!



# Local News



## ABLP narrowly retains the government with 9 seats

In a result that shocked many, including seasoned political observers, the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party only narrowly retained its grasp on government.

A number of shocking losses and victories punctuated the night which had the nation on edge well into the wee hours of Thursday morning.

For the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party, political leader Gaston Browne was successful in his bid to retain his St. John's City West seat and the prime ministership of the country.

Joining Browne to form his new government will be E. P. Chet Greene, Maria Browne, Daryll Matthew, Steadroy Benjamin, Sir Molwyn Joseph and Sir Robin Yearwood, Melford Nicholas and Charles Fernandez.

Asot Michael upended all political pundits and pollsters who projected that it would have been impossi-



ble for him to retain his St. Peter's seat as historically, Antiguan and Barbudans vote along party lines.

In this instance however, Michael has not only made history as the first independent candidate on Antigua to be victorious in general elections, but also as the first person to run against the Labour Party and win the seat which has been held by the ABLP since the 1950s.

He is also the first independent to win an election in the Caribbean region since

the early 1970s who did not rely on the support of a mainstream political party.

Elsewhere, The Barbuda People's Movement's Trevor Walker convincingly defeated the ABLP's Knacyn-tar Nedd in Barbuda.

The main opposition United Progressive Party, recorded some significant victories punctuated by equally significant losses.

Sherfield Bowen trounced Lennox Weston in St. Phillip's South while Kelvin Simon defeated

Samantha Marshall in St. Mary's South.

In one of the biggest upsets of the night, radio host turned politician, Algernon "Serpent" Watts secured the most votes in the election, 2146, to defeat the ABLP incumbent in St. George, Dean Jonas.

St. George is the largest constituency in Antigua and Barbuda.

Jonas, with 2005 votes, received the third most votes this election behind independent Asot Michael who received 2137 votes.

Jamale Pringle retained his All Saints East and St. Luke's seat, defeating Colin James' third bid to take the seat for the ABLP.

First timer Anthony Smith took an early lead in All Saints West to unseat Dr. Michael Browne after two terms as MP.

Richard Lewis also reversed St. John's Rural West  
*cont'd on pg 3*





## E.P. Chet Greene: Campaign departed from honoured traditions

The Chairman of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party has said the standard of the campaign held in the months and weeks leading up to yesterday's general elections has never been witnessed before.

E.P. Chet Greene maintains that attempts by desperate people to depart from time honoured traditions has left a dark cloud hanging over the period of electioneering.

"The usual courtesy which each contender always afforded the other as space to talk with voters, has been abandoned. Tactics of confrontation and harassment have been introduced into political culture for the very first time. We should, we must deplore them," Greene insisted.

The ABLP chairman warns that



*E.P. Chet Greene*

such behaviour must be stamped out, otherwise he predicts dark days ahead for the country every time general elections are called and campaigning commences.

"For if they are to take roots, we

would have started down the slippery slope of intolerance and results in lawlessness, such as we're now seeing in Brazil and which was evident on January 6th 2021, when Capitol Hill in the US was stormed by political agitators."

Mr. Greene continued, "Democracy and the rule of law are pillars of our democracy here in Antigua and Barbuda. It is adherence to those principles and values that has kept our country peaceful and our people safe".

The election campaign was overshadowed with acts of vandalism and character assassination, as political parties attempted to convince the electorate that they were the preferred choice to manage the affairs of the country.

### *cont'd from pg 2*

from red to blue as he defeated Gail Christian who made her third try at winning that seat for the ABLP.

UPP leader Harold Lovell's loss to Melford Nicholas represents his third loss in a general election and his eighth loss in ten elections in his political career.

There is widely held consensus that Lovell's insistence on leading his party into this election may have cost the UPP the election.

Lovell has not enjoyed huge popularity nationally and even within his own party, he is a less popular leader than his predecessor Baldwin Spencer.

In fact, while he was successfully elected to the leadership of the UPP, his ascension signalled the de-

cline of the party as a irreparable rift developed between himself and his challenger for the leadership at the time, Joanne Massiah, who eventually broke away and formed her own party, the Democratic National Alliance.

The UPP has not recovered since this split.



# Local News



## Slow morning turnout, numbers increased as polls neared close

Voters across Antigua and Barbuda turned out in slow but steady numbers across the country to participate in Wednesday's general elections.

While some constituencies including St. Peter and St. George, reported consistent voter turnout throughout the day, elsewhere, the lines were less congested with many voters reporting being able to cast their ballots within minutes.

Many voters reported a

seamless voting experience and this is supported by both the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission and Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda who have both reported that no incidents have occurred to mar the very peaceful elections.

Despite the slower turnout in some constituencies as late as midafternoon, numbers across all constituencies began to swell by midafternoon.

Significant spikes in turn out were reported around 3:30 pm in St. John's City East at the Princess Margaret School, St. John's City West at the Villa Primary School and in St. John's Rural North at the Cedar Grove Primary School.

Across the country, the polls also appeared to have begun promptly at 6 am and closed at 6 pm.

Various election observer missions were also

witnessed moving through the polling stations.

Yesterday morning at the opening of the polls in St. John's Rural East, Organization of American States observers were on site at the St. John's Catholic Primary School.

Observers from the five missions now in Antigua and Barbuda would have undertaken similar exercises throughout the day in each of the seventeen constituencies.





## ABLP gov't ending scholarship bonds

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has said the government intends to abandon the system of bonding scholarship recipients after their studies are completed.

The bond, which normally lasts several years, compels students who are the beneficiaries of scholarships secured through the government to spend time in the government's service once they have completed their education.

The prime minister said abandoning the bond is necessary to address the education and skills deficit in the country.

Moving on from this antiquated system, he believes, will create other avenues through which university leavers can contribute meaningfully to their homeland.

"My government will be eliminating the need for

bonding.

"They're many who speak about a 'brain drain', but we'd rather our people leave our shores qualified, go abroad, make money, remit funds to our shores, rather than to stay here uneducated and poor.

"We rather educating them, and if they can't find jobs here, we create the opportunity for them to find jobs abroad.

"At some point, they will return to our shores and even bring superior skills," Browne explained.

On Tuesday at the US\$80 million loan agreement signing between the government of Antigua and Barbuda, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (UWIC), Browne said once the expansion work is complete, the Antigua/Barbu-



da-based campus will move to offer areas of study which will equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the challenges and evolving needs of the

country and the region.

The expanded areas of interest, Browne said, will include climate change, the Blue Economy and Finance.



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# Local News



## Antigua and Barbuda benefits from good relations with Saudi Arabia

The ability of the Antigua and Barbuda government to secure a US\$80 million loan from the Saudi Development Fund was not accidental. Rather, it was the result of a concerted effort to foster amicable diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

That was the position taken by Prime Minister Gaston Browne in his address on Tuesday at the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus during the finalisation of the loan agreement between the government and the Saudi Development Fund.

“We have been nurturing a relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for several years.

“In fact, I will go as far as to say that Antigua and Barbuda has been the most active country engaging the countries of the Middle East, including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I also believe that we



have stronger relations with these countries than any other country in the region,” Browne said.

The prime minister recalled when Saudi Arabia was campaigning for a

seat at the World Trade Organization (WTO), it based an aircraft in Antigua and Barbuda which was used to facilitate the travel of its officials throughout

*cont'd on pg 7*

## Sir Molwyn vows to find his aide's attacker

Monifa St. John, the Ministry of Health, Wellness and Environment employee who was stabbed 14 times in her home on Friday 13th January 2023, is now at home recovering.

Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment, Sir Molwyn Joseph, has made an urgent appeal to the police to bring the perpetrator of the attack to justice.

Sir Molwyn also thanked the staff of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre and the Antigua Barbuda Emergency Medical Services for the role they played in saving his aide's life.



*Sir Molwyn Joseph*

“You're aware that one of my assistants, Monifa St. John, was brutally attacked at her home. In that attack, the assailant inflicted fourteen stabs to her body.

“I am pleased to report to the nation of Antigua and Barbuda, especially the

people of St. Mary's North, that Monifa is recovering and resting comfortably at home,” Sir Molwyn said on Tuesday.

He continued, “I wish to take the opportunity to urge the police department of Antigua and Barbuda to ag-

gressively pursue the culprit for this heinous act.

“We feel strongly that this act was an unusual occurrence and we do not want to make any assumptions, but the viciousness of the attack really speaks to some motive that is not ordinary.

“I therefore wish to assure my constituents that I will not rest, with the support of the police, until we find this assailant.”

Following the attack, St. John was also robbed of government documents that were in her possession as well as the government owned vehicle that was assigned to her.



## Community steel orchestra launched in St. Paul

The people of St. Paul have one more community-based organisation around which they can rally.

The Black Eagle Steel Orchestra was launched at the St. Paul Empowerment Centre on Monday night by the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party's representative for the constituency, E. P. Chet Greene.

At the unveiling of the Black Eagle Steel Orchestra, Greene said it was always his dream for the community to have its own steel band.

Greene said the launch of the steel orchestra signals the revival of the steel band in the community.

At one time in history, St. Paul was home to two steel orchestras.

With the assistance of Veron Henry and other members of the Hells Gate Steel Orchestra, youngsters in St. Paul can now learn the musical artform.

Greene is hopeful that the band will be able to participate in this year's Panorama competition during Antigua's Carnival.



Members of the newly launched Black Eagle Steel band performing at the launch of the steel orchestra in Liberta Monday night

"We have a number of youngsters from our community journey outwards to join steel bands and the plan is to have them redirect those energies inward by becoming part of

Black Eagle Steel Orchestra," he stated.

The steel band will be managed by the non-profit community group, Synergy Inc.

*cont'd from pg 6*

the region as they lobbied Caribbean nations for support.

PM Browne said he actively supported the Saudi's efforts by encouraging his colleague prime ministers to back their bid to join the WTO.

Meanwhile, the prime minister provided insight into the structure of the loan agreement for the expansion of The UWI FIC.

The loan has been provided over a term of 20 years at a concessionary rate of 2 per-












cent per annum. A five-year moratorium has been extended, after which repayment of the principal will begin.

PM Browne expressed confidence that the university will generate enough money

to service the loan based on the increases projected for its student body.

PM Browne also announced once his government is returned to power following Wednesday's elec-

tions, Antigua and Barbuda will appoint a non-resident ambassador to Saudi Arabia as the country seeks to strengthen bilateral relations with its Middle Eastern partner.

Thu 19   Day		Thu 19   Night	
<b>81°</b>		<b>74°</b>	
10%	E 12 mph	17%	ENE 13 mph
Sunny. High 81F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.		A mostly clear sky. Low 74F. Winds ENE at 10 to 15 mph.	
 Humidity <b>69%</b>	 UV Index <b>9 of 10</b>	 Humidity <b>75%</b>	 UV Index <b>0 of 10</b>
 Sunrise <b>6:40 am</b>	 Sunset <b>5:55 pm</b>	 Moonrise <b>4:19 am</b>	 Moonset <b>3:35 pm</b>
 Waning Crescent			

# Local News



## Fred Corbin dismissed as “conspiracy theorist”

Barbadian, Fred Corbin, who recently levelled several outrageous accusations against Prime Minister Gaston Browne has been completely discredited by his own respected countrymen.

Earlier this week, in an attack that was hard to follow, disjointed and exceedingly difficult to take seriously, Corbin accused the prime minister of a barrage of crimes including treason, murder, involvement in biological warfare, human trafficking and money laundering.

Corbin also claimed to have secret files, which he threatened to make public, if Prime Minister Browne did not slink into retirement ahead of Wednesday's election.

Prime Minister Browne called Corbin's bluff and went ahead with contesting his St. John's City West seat.

Corbin has not released the “bombshell” evidence.

On Tuesday, leading Caribbean pollster, Peter Wickham of Barbados said Corbin is known for his wild theories and is not to be taken seriously.

“Fred Corbin is someone who is well known to us in Barbados.

“He is someone who claims to have half a dozen degrees and he also claims to have information from the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) that was supplied to him, and him alone.

“He is someone who ought not to be taken seriously.

“He has been very unflattering regarding Prime Minister [Mia] Mottley and Prime Minister [Gaston] Browne, so I think there is clear evidence that Barbadians do not take him seriously and I would strongly encourage my Brothers and Sisters in Antigua to

treat him with similar disregard,” said Wickham.

Similar sentiments were echoed by Barbados' former ambassador to the United States of America, John Beale.

“His ideas and his theories are so extreme that one has to question what he's saying. He's an extremist of questionable verification of the facts and basically seems to be an extremist and not really taken seriously,” Beale said.

Prime Minister Browne took to his very active social media page on Tuesday to respond to Corbin's nearly 13-minute-long recording of his conspiracy theory about him, calling it the “fartistic” rambling of a “mercenary who is obviously being paid by the UPP/Asot chaotic coalition to surreptitiously defame me with fabrications, needs to find something constructive to do with his time.”

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## Is crypto about to go extinct?

**By Charu Sudan Kasturi**

As the Los Angeles Rams beat the Cincinnati Bengals in the championship game of the National Football League last February, an unlikely set of players made a splash off the field, in living rooms across the United States.

On one of American television's biggest nights, with 99 million viewers, the Super Bowl broadcast was punctuated by a series of cryptocurrency advertisements. Social media buzzed with talk of how digital tokens had come of age as they grabbed primetime slots previously dominated by mainstream giants like Coca-Cola and General Motors.

One of the advertisements that night had comedian Larry David playing a Luddite dismissing mankind's biggest inventions – from the wheel to Edison's lightbulb to, the commercial suggests, the FTX cryptocurrency exchange. Told that the platform is a “safe and easy way to get into crypto”, David's character says: “Ehhh, I don't think so – and I'm never wrong about this stuff.”

That advertisement hasn't aged well.

With multiple big crypto firms collapsing in recent months, the sector that promised an alternative to the traditional global financial model now faces existential questions. In May last year, the TerraUSD and Luna



coins crashed, losing almost all of their value overnight and wiping out \$45bn from the crypto market in a day. Singapore-based crypto hedge fund Three Arrows Capital abruptly shut down. Crypto lenders Voyager Digital and Celsius Network – which had both loaned money to Three Arrows Capital – soon filed for bankruptcy.

And in November, FTX – the popular crypto trading platform in the Super Bowl advertisement – imploded. Its founder Sam Bankman-Fried was arrested in the Bahamas in December and has been charged with fraud. Bitcoin, the world's best-known cryptocurrency, is today worth only a third of what it was at its peak in October 2021.

The FTX commercial with David ends with the tagline, “Don't be like Lar-

ry.” Today, many of the 420 million people estimated to have invested in crypto might well be wishing they had been more like Larry.

So is crypto about to go extinct?

The short answer: As a concept, cryptocurrencies will probably survive, experts told Al Jazeera. But the sector will likely face increased regulation and an extended period of uncertainty. Many firms and currencies will perish. To stay alive, companies will face one challenge above all else: winning back customer trust.

Crypto ‘ice age’

Cryptocurrency trading platforms have traditionally drawn in customers with the promise of quick returns on investment. The offer: Park money in so-called crypto wallets – which are meant to function in a manner similar

to savings bank accounts – and earn high interest rates, sometimes in double digits. For those who are distrustful of traditional finance, the opportunity to carry out transactions without worrying about a regulator as an intermediary is an added attraction.

But this allure dimmed once the US Federal Reserve and other major central banks around the world sharply raised interest rates through 2022, making more traditional investment options more lucrative than before. The US rate, for instance, shot up by more than 4 percentage points over the course of 2022.

Once TerraUSD and Luna went into freefall, a combination of safer alternatives and reduced trust in crypto led to a crisis that, ac-

*cont'd on pg 10*

# Cryptocurrency



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cording to experts, is far from over.

"I think we'll see a lot more bad news before things start looking better for the sector," Tim Leung, director of the computational finance and risk management programme at the University of Washington in Seattle told Al Jazeera.

With many potential customers now sceptical, crypto platforms will likely witness low trading volumes for a while, Leung said. The crypto sector likes to pride itself on its independence, but it depends on financing from traditional markets. How much of that funding will continue in the current climate is unclear, Leung suggested. With reduced trading and less funding, many smaller firms might go belly up, he warned.

Crypto mining companies, which generate virtual money – or coins – using energy-guzzling supercomputers, will suffer too, Leung said. Reduced demand for coins because of low trading volumes and high energy prices will squeeze the viability of their business model. "I see this phase lasting through 2023," he said. "It's more likely to be a crypto ice age rather than a crypto winter."

The downturn isn't surprising, suggested experts.

"This is a start-up industry with hundreds of firms and lots of innovation," said David Yermack, professor of finance at New York University's Stern School of Business. He told Al Jazeera he expects a chaotic period for cryptocurrencies in the foreseeable future but thinks that "ultimately best practices will emerge through competition".

Governments around the world have signalled plans to step in to shield customers from that chaos. But regulators and analysts appear divided on how best to intervene.

Old laws for new tech?

Gary Gensler, chairman of the US

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), argued in September that existing laws are adequate for the crypto sector. In his view, he said, most cryptocurrencies are similar to traditional securities – tradable financial assets like stocks or bonds.

Hilary Allen, professor of law at American University in Washington, DC, agrees with that approach. Cryptocurrencies and trading platforms, she said, must meet the standards of governance that the SEC demands from old-school securities – including registering with the regulator and demonstrating transparency over assets – or be shut down.

Creating new rules for the crypto industry would be wrong, she said. "That would legitimise the idea that crypto, somehow, is unique, and can't be expected to meet the same standards as mainstream financial assets," Allen told Al Jazeera. "That's a dangerous message to send."

But many other experts disagree.

"There's a fundamental difference between securities and currencies," said Bruno Biais, a professor of finance at the HEC Paris business school. People invest in stocks or bonds based on the cash flow or assets of the company offering them, he said. They buy currency – whether a dollar, a euro or a crypto token – trusting that the coin or note will be accepted by others at a later date.

Trying to fit an existing regulatory framework on cryptocurrencies without adapting it to new technology won't work, said Christian Catalini, founder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Cryptoeconomics Lab.

It won't guarantee consumer protection, Catalini told Al Jazeera. "Worse, it may kill the innovation potential of the space without any meaningful benefit to the public," he said.

Where most analysts do agree is that regulations for the sector must fo-

cus on one kind of cryptocurrency in particular: so-called stablecoins.

Making 'stablecoins' stable

Unlike tokens like Bitcoin, whose price can fluctuate wildly, the value of stablecoins is pegged to a regular currency, like the US dollar or other traditional assets like gold. For instance, each Tether coin, the world's most popular stablecoin – which often trades even more than Bitcoin – is worth \$1. That value stability positions stablecoins as tokens that, while still earning well through crypto wallets, are supposedly safer than other cryptocurrencies.

"The very term, 'stablecoin', conjures the image of a reliable currency that gives customers a false sense of security," Biais told Al Jazeera. "The problem? Unlike regular currencies and banks, stablecoins are basically completely unregulated."

So while in theory, those who own \$100 worth of stablecoins should be able to redeem that amount whenever they want – as would be the case with a banknote – there's no guarantee they'll actually get that money back, said Biais.

The Financial Stability Board (FSB), a global advisory body set up by the G20 after the 2008 financial crisis, has been urging major economies to adopt regulations to ensure that stablecoins demonstrate their ability to pay customers back. In its October 2022 report, the FSB warned that many existing stablecoins "are issued by unregistered and unlicensed entities and do not have credible mechanisms to support their promise of price stability".

While US regulators appear undecided on the need for new rules, many other nations and regions are moving towards laws specifically designed to govern the crypto sector and, in particular, stablecoins. These rules could help ensure that "good actors thrive,"

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# Cryptocurrency

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and bad actors disappear from the crypto ecosystem”, said Catalini.

The European Union’s new regulation, known as Markets in Crypto-Assets (MiCA), will require all crypto firms to register with authorities. Stablecoins will need to guarantee assets to pay customers back at any time. MiCA comes into force in 2024.

Japan passed a law last June under which only banks and other strictly regulated financial institutions can offer stablecoins. And the British government has proposed that the Financial Conduct Authority, the country’s top financial ser-

vices regulator, would have oversight over crypto firms.

Meanwhile, India’s finance minister has said that crypto regulations would be a priority of the country’s G20 presidency in 2023. A global framework to regulate crypto is indeed essential, said Leung of the University of Washington, since many firms in the sector have a footprint across geographies.

But for any of this to help revive the industry, crypto firms will first need to regain the confidence of customers, said experts.

**Matter of trust**

Many crypto enthusiasts will likely watch to see how big cases of fraud, such as

the one involving FTX, play out, said Biaisi of HEC Paris. If they see justice, and if those who have lost money because of such scams get it back, that would help rebuild trust, he said.

Some experts, like Allen at American University, believe that crypto has little to meaningfully offer to the financial world in the future. “When you peel away the rhetoric, there really isn’t anything there that you can’t do using traditional finance instruments,” she said.

Others remain convinced that crypto, with its potential to enable peer-to-peer, decentralised financial exchanges, represents a transformational technolo-

gy. “The technology is here to stay, even if a number of the initial projects in the crypto space are falling,” MIT’s Catalini said.

He described the moment as similar to the dot-com bubble that burst in the late 1990s when many early online firms went bust. Those – like Amazon – that survived or came up later are among “the internet giants of today”, he said.

Still, until the dust settles and reliable regulations come in, Leung at the University of Washington said it’s best to be cautious. “You don’t want to make decisions based on Super Bowl commercials,” he said. “This isn’t a game.”



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# Climate Change



## At Davos, UN chief warns the world is in a 'sorry state'

By Jamey Keaten

The world is in a “sorry state” because of myriad interlinked challenges including climate change and Russia’s war in Ukraine that are “piling up like cars in a chain reaction crash,” the U.N. chief said at the World Economic Forum’s meeting Wednesday.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres delivered his gloomy message on the second day of the elite gathering of world leaders and corporate executives in the Swiss ski resort of Davos. Sessions took a grim turn when news broke of a helicopter crash in Ukraine that killed more than a dozen people, including Ukraine’s interior minister and other officials.

Forum President Borge Brende requested 15 seconds of silence and Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska dabbed teary eyes, calling it “another very sad day,” then telling attendees that “we can also change this negative situation for the better.”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was scheduled to address the conclave by video link as the Ukrainian delegation that includes his wife pushes for more aid, including weapons, from international allies to fight Russia. Speaking shortly before Zelenskyy is German Chancellor



*The logo of the World Economic Forum displayed on a window during the Annual Meeting of the Forum in Davos, Switzerland Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2023. The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum is taking place in Davos from Jan. 16 until Jan. 20, 2023. (AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)*

Olaf Scholz, who is facing pressure to send tanks to help Ukraine and is the only leader to attend Davos from the Group of 7 biggest economies.

Guterres said the “gravest levels of geopolitical division and mistrust in generations” are undermining efforts to tackle global problems, which also include widening inequality, a cost-of-living crisis sparked by soaring inflation and an energy crunch, lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, supply-chain disruptions and more.

He singled out climate change as an “existential challenge,” and said a global commitment to limit the Earth’s temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius “is nearly going up in smoke.”

Guterres, who has been one of the most outspoken world figures on climate

change, referenced a recent study that found scientists at Exxon Mobil made remarkably accurate predictions about the effects of climate change as far back as the 1970s, even as the company publicly doubted that warming was real.

“We learned last week that certain fossil fuel producers were fully aware in the 1970s that their core product was baking our planet,” he said in his speech. “Some in Big Oil peddled the big lie.”

Critics have questioned the impact of the four-day meeting where politicians, CEOs and other leaders discuss the world’s problems - and make deals on the sidelines - but where concrete action is harder to measure. Environmentalists, for example, slam the carbon-spewing private jets that ferry in bigwigs to an

event that prioritises the battle against climate change.

On the second day, government officials, corporate titans, academics and activists were attending dozens of panel sessions on topics covering the metaverse, environmental greenwashing and artificial intelligence.

Ukraine has taken centre stage as the anniversary of the war nears, with Zelenska pressing attendees to do more to help her country at a time when Russia’s invasion is leaving children dying and the world struggling with food insecurity.

The crash added more tragedy after a Russian missile strike hit an apartment building over the weekend in the southeastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro, killing dozens of people in one of the deadliest single attacks in months.

But Ukraine is gaining additional international support: Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said Tuesday that the Netherlands plans to “join” the U.S. and Germany’s efforts to train and arm Ukraine with advanced Patriot defence systems.

The German government has faced mounting pressure to make another significant step forward in military aid to Ukraine by agreeing to deliver Leopard 2 battle tanks. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is

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## Sandra Maynard named new UWI Pro Vice-Chancellor Global Affairs

The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has announced the appointment of its new Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Global Affairs, Sandra Maynard.

Maynard, whose appointment became effective on January 1, 2023, will lead the regional university's global engagement portfolio and coordinate all internationalisation and global initiatives.

She follows a distinguished list of candidates to hold this PVC post which is situated within the university's regional headquarters in Mona, Jamaica.

These include the late Ambassador Dr Richard L. Bernal, Dr Luz Longsworth and Dr Stacy Richards-Kennedy.

Developing on the work of her predecessors, Vice-Chancellor of The UWI Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, to whom the new PVC reports directly stated, "One of the major initiatives she will give oversight to, is the progression of the new UWI Global Campus, leveraging the high reputation of the regional university to build capacity and generate revenue as a core part of the University's financial future."

Introducing the national of St. Kitts and Nevis as "a member of the Caribbean diaspora in Britain, and a product of the Windrush generation," Vice-Chancellor Beckles noted the significance of her portfolio especially as the University advances phase two of its Triple A Strategy 2022-2027, with a laser focus on converting its global reputation into



*Sandra Maynard*

revenue generation.

He underscored, "She has considerable experience in international student recruitment in China and elsewhere. Serving as a critical part of Coventry University's global agenda, she was also a project leader in setting up the UWI-Coventry Institute for Industry-Academic Partnership."

The qualified Barrister-at-Law, since 1998 has practised both privately (domestic and internationally) and for the UK's Crown Prosecution Service.

Her journey working in academia began in 2012 as a Senior Lecturer and advanced to an Associate Professor in Law at Coventry University.

She has held senior leadership and management roles within UK universities across the sectors of law, business and university group subsidiaries both nationally and regionally, and managed multi-disciplinary and multi-functional teams through globally dis-

ruptive changes such as BREXIT and COVID-19.

She has been responsible for driving the development of internationalisation in higher education, and more recently, her particular focus has been on income generation nationally and globally within Higher Education. She was instrumental in the development of a national curriculum in the criminal justice sector in the UK and led on and secured significant government contracts.

She has also spearheaded the development and delivery of global executive and governmental training. In addition, PVC Maynard serves as a Visiting Professor at two institutions in France.

As it extends a warm welcome to PVC Maynard to The UWI community, the institution offers both congratulations and well wishes to her for a successful tenure as Pro Vice-Chancellor Global Affairs. (CMC)

**cont'd from pg 12**

scheduled to visit Berlin this week and then host a meeting of allies at Ramstein Air Base in western Germany.

Guterres was not optimistic that the conflict, be-

ing waged less than 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) from Davos, could end soon.

"There will be an end of this war. There is the end of everything. But I do not see the end of the war in

the immediate future," he said. Deep historical differences between Russia and Ukraine make it more difficult to find a solution based on international law and that respects territorial integrity,

he added.

"For the moment, I don't think that we have a chance to promote or to mediate a serious negotiation to achieve peace in the short term," Guterres said.

# Regional News



## Jamaica records 56 percent drop in murders for first 14 days of the new year

CMC - Jamaica has recorded 32 murders during the first 14 days of 2023 as compared with 72 for the corresponding period last year, as the government moves to finalise proposals to make the death penalty the automatic punishment for capital murder and 45 years' imprisonment the minimum sentence for other homicides.



the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), showed that St. James, Manchester, Clarendon had recorded the most killings with 13 murders,

while St. Catherine South, Westmoreland, and St. Andrew South each recorded three murders.

Several areas, including

Trelawny, St. Ann, Portland, St. Catherine North, St. Andrew Central, and Kingston Central, had not recorded any murder up to January 14.

The JCF figures also show a reduction in shootings, rape and robberies, while break-ins remain on par year-on-year.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Andrew Holness says *cont'd on pg 15*

## Brazil's Lula removes soldiers from guarding presidential residence

Reuters - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has removed 40 troops guarding the presidential residence after expressing distrust in the military for failing to act against demonstrators that ransacked government buildings on Jan. 8.

His decision was published on Tuesday in the government's official gazette.

Most of the troops guarding the Alvorada palace, as the presidential residence is called, are from the army, but some are also members of the Navy, Air Force and a militarised police force.

Last week, Lula told reporters that security force members were complicit in letting a mob of supporters of far-right former President Jair Bolsonaro storm the main buildings that form the seat of power in Brasilia.

The president's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on who would replace the troops guarding the residence.

Investigations into the rampage have begun to show apparently inten-



*Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva speaks during the inauguration ceremony of the new Banco do Brasil President Tarciana Medeiros, in Brasilia, Brazil January 16, 2023*

tional lapses in security that allowed it to occur.

Several thousand Bolsonaro supporters stormed the Congress, the Planalto presidential palace and the Supreme Court seeking to overturn the result of the October election narrowly won by Lula.

"There were a lot of people who were complicit in this among the military police. There were many people from the armed forces who were

complicit," Lula told journalists. "I am convinced that the door to the palace was opened to allow these people in, because I did not see that the door was broken."

Lula has also stepped up criticism of the army for not doing anything to discourage a two-month-old encampment of Bolsonaro supporters outside its headquarters, where they clamoured for the military to overturn the presidential election result.



## Bahamas interception of sea-borne Cuban migrants jumps in 2022

Reuters - The Bahamas detained an increasing number of sea-borne Cuban migrants in 2022 compared with 2021, according to figures released to Reuters, as an economic crisis triggered an exodus from the Communist-run island.

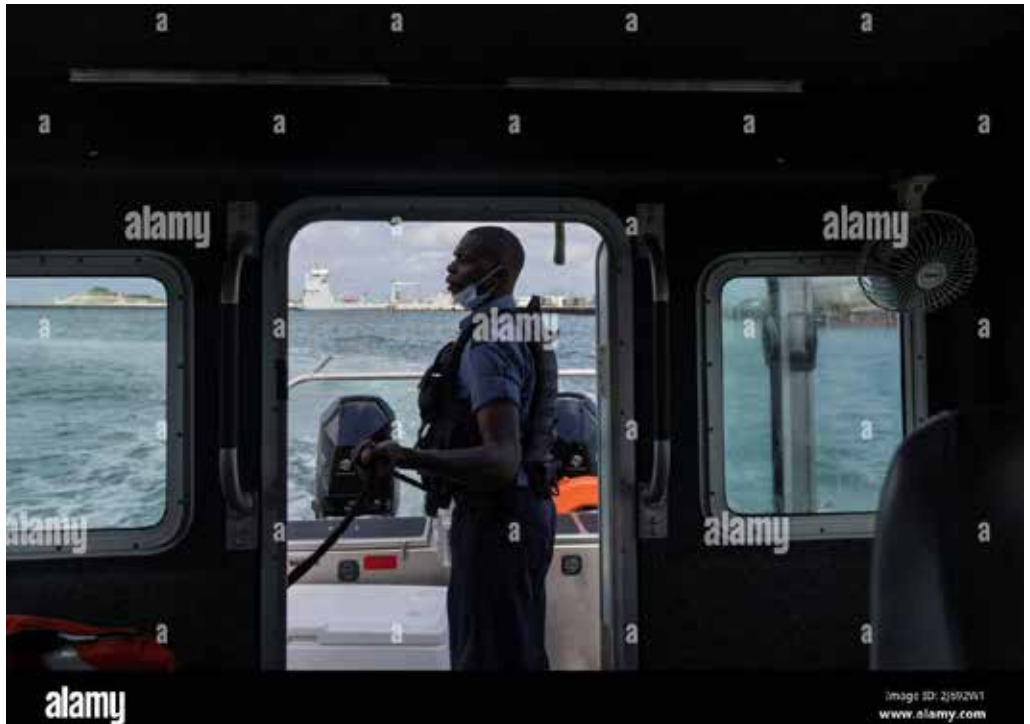
The Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) apprehended 623 Cuban migrants in 2022 compared with 17 the year before, according to RBDF figures provided to Reuters, with migrant interceptions picking up pace in recent months.

Cuban vessels typically end up in Bahamian waters after being blown off course or navigating the wrong way while trying to reach Florida.

Vessels are increasingly leaving Cuba's central Ciego de Avila province, RBDF Commodore Dr. Raymond King told Reuters, an area that is closer to The Bahamas.

"The number of Cuban migrants intercepted thus far has increased significantly during the past two months," King said, noting that 61 Cubans have been intercepted in Bahamian waters so far this year.

Most Cuban migrants in 2022 arrived in the United States by the border with Mexico, though some still



*A member of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force departs from Coral Harbour Base in Coral Harbour, Bahamas April 20, 2022. Picture taken April 20, 2022*

made perilous sea voyages.

The frequency of vessel departures from Ciego de Avila has increased from two to six vessels on average per day, King said. There were also more Cubans onboard each improvised vessel, with an average of eight to 20 people.

The expectation that the Biden administration would ease border restrictions known as "Title 42" was likely

a factor in the increased migrant of 2022, he said.

But the United States in January expanded Trump-era restrictions to rapidly expel Cuban, Nicaraguan and Haitian migrants caught illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, while allowing up to 30,000 people from those three countries plus Venezuela to enter the country by air each month.

*cont'd from pg 14*

the Cabinet is expected to finalise proposals to make the death penalty the automatic punishment for capital murder and 45 years' imprisonment the minimum sentence for other homicides on Monday.

Holness, speaking at a function in Montego Bay, St. James, on Saturday night, said the government will be moving with alacrity

to make the changes.

"While we have not yet finalised the proposals, we hope to do so on Monday when we meet at Cabinet. It will look something like this: for capital murder, the penalty is death. If not applied, then life (imprisonment) without parole.

"For non-capital murder, it is our recommendation that the penalty will now be 45 years to life, or rather life

imprisonment, and you must serve 45 years before consideration of parole," Prime Minister Holness added.

Holness said over the years, killers have come to think that the penalty for murder is not the death penalty or life imprisonment and with a good lawyer, they will be back on the streets to enjoy their lives.

"Our penalty remains, if you take a life, and you are

convicted of such, your useful life should be taken. So while there are many issues around the death penalty and how it is used, there should be no issue around the incarceration of somebody who deliberately, willfully, repeatedly takes life," Holness said.

Last year, Jamaica recorded 1,498 murders as compared with 1,474 murders in 2021.

# Ukraine's interior ministry leadership killed in helicopter crash

BBC - The three main figures in Ukraine's interior ministry have been killed in a helicopter crash beside a nursery in an eastern suburb of the capital Kyiv.

Interior Minister Denys Monastyrsky, 42, died alongside his first deputy minister and state secretary.

Fourteen people died when the helicopter came down in Brovary around 08:30 local time (06:30 GMT), including one child, authorities said.

There is no indication the crash was anything other than an accident.

But the SBU state security service said it was following several possible causes for the crash, which included sabotage as well as a technical malfunction or breach of flight rules.

The State Emergency Service had previously stated that up to 18 people were killed but later revised the death toll from the crash, saying 14 had died.

Mr Monastyrsky, who was one of President Volodymyr Zelensky's longest serving political advisers, is the highest profile Ukrainian casualty since the war began.

The deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said the minister had been travelling to a war "hot spot" when his helicopter went down.

The head of police in



*The remains of the helicopter were visible outside a residential building in Brovary*

the north-eastern city of Kharkiv, Volodymyr Tymoshko, said the ministerial team were on their way to meet him there and he had spoken to them only yesterday.

The minister's death cuts to the heart of the government in Kyiv as the interior ministry has the vital task of maintaining security and running the police during the war.

President Zelensky has spoken of a terrible tragedy that claimed the lives of "true patriots".

The head of Ukraine's national police force, Ihor Klymenko, has been appointed acting interior minister following Mr Monastyrsky's death.

Witnesses in Kyiv said Russia's war was to blame for the disaster.

"It was very foggy and

there was no electricity, and when there's no electricity there are no lights on the buildings," local resident Volodymyr Yermelenko told the BBC.

Key officials are flown by helicopter across Ukraine at tree-level, but that comes with risks.

All that was recognisable of the helicopter was a door panel and one of its rotors which landed on the roof of a car. Next to it were three bodies covered in foil blankets.

The main kindergarten building was left badly damaged by the crash.

The 42-year-old interior minister was a prominent member of President Volodymyr Zelensky's cabinet.

He was a recognisable face for Ukrainians throughout the war, updat-

ing the public on casualties caused by Russian missile strikes since Ukraine was invaded in February 2022.

Ukrainian officials said those on board the helicopter included six ministry officials and three crew.

First deputy minister Yevhen Yenin died along with state secretary Yuriy Lubkovich, whose task was to organise the work of the ministry.

Before he moved to the interior ministry, Mr Yenin helped represent Ukraine's government abroad.

Mr Tymoshenko said the interior ministry's work would not be affected by the loss of its leaders, but government colleagues were visibly shocked as they reacted on national TV.

A friend of the late minister, MP Mariia Mezent-

*cont'd on pg 17*



*cont'd from pg 16*

seva, said it was a tragedy for everyone as the ministry had a significant role in Ukraine's response to the invasion.

"He responded 24/7 to his colleagues, friends and family. He was very close to President Zelensky from day one of his presidential campaign," she told the BBC.

National police chief Ihor Klymenko wrote on Facebook that the helicopter belonged to Ukraine's state emergency service, while other officials said it appeared to be a French Super Puma aircraft.

Parents were bringing their children to the kindergarten before going to work when the helicopter came down.

"The pain is unspeakable," the president said. "The helicopter fell on the territory of one of the kindergartens."

Many of the casualties were on the ground. As well as the child that was killed, 11 of the 25 injured on the ground were youngsters.

According to state emergency services officials, one child is missing.

Witnesses said the pilot had tried to avoid high-rise buildings before the crash, and instead went down near the kindergarten.

One local woman told the BBC that she had seen a terrible flash as the helicopter circled above her home.

The pilot had clearly tried to avoid her 10-storey block of flats and chose

to go down closer to the smaller building, she said.

"Parents were running, screaming. There was panic," said local volunteer Lidiya. Emergency services and residents rushed to evacuate the children as fire spread through the nursery building.

Resident Dmytro described jumping over a fence to help get children out.

One girl he picked up was called Polina, but when her father ran in calling her name he did not recognise her as her face was covered in blood.

Tetiana Shutiak, an aide

to Mr Monastyrskyi, also died in the crash.

Interior ministry adviser Anton Herashchenko said the three men were friends and statesmen who had worked to make Ukraine stronger.

"We will always remember you. Your families will be cared for," he said on Facebook.

Ms Mezentseva said she had initially thought that the disaster was fake news: "But unfortunately it's true."

It was only four days ago that Ukraine was hit by one of the worst attacks since the start of the war

in which 45 civilians were killed.

A Russian missile hit a block of flats in the central city of Dnipro killing 45 people, including six children.

President Zelensky was due to address the World Economic Forum in Davos by video link later on Wednesday.

Ukraine has appealed to the West to provide tanks to help respond to any expected new Russian offensive.

A decision is likely to be made later this week when Western allies discuss the war at Ramstein air base in Germany.



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## Another Khan party-led provincial assembly dissolved in Pakistan

Al Jazeera - The provincial assembly in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been dissolved, the second such move in less than a week as former Prime Minister Imran Khan pushes for early national elections.

The governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali, on Wednesday signed a letter dissolving the provincial assembly "with immediate effect".

He was acting on a request by the provincial chief minister, Mahmood Khan, a senior member of Khan's Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

On Saturday, the assembly in Pakistan's most populous province, Punjab, was dissolved following an order by PTI chief Khan, who since his removal as prime minister last April, has been demanding immediate polls, otherwise scheduled in October this year.

Pakistan's constitution says new elections must be held within three months of the dissolution of a provincial legislature if the house fails in setting up an interim government.

The South Asian nation historically conducts federal and provincial elections simultaneously, but the constitution allows for separate poll dates as well.

Khan's PTI hopes the dissolution of two of the country's four assemblies



Since his removal as prime minister last year, Imran Khan has been demanding early general elections [File: K M Chaudary/AP]

will force Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government to announce immediate general elections.

"We will return with two-thirds majority not just in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but all of Pakistan, and form a government on the basis of our performance," provincial chief minister Khan said in a video message on Tuesday after he wrote to the governor to dissolve the assembly.

PTI leader Musarrat Jamshed Cheema told Al Jazeera it is imperative that the government thinks beyond its "self-interests" and goes into early elections.

"You will have more than 70 percent of Pakistan contesting the provincial elections after the

dissolution of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab assemblies. Why are they reluctant to hold general elections? Not only will the delay damage them politically, it is harming Pakistan's situation as well," she said.

Saif Ali Khan, lawyer and former adviser to Mahmood Khan, said the PTI decided to dissolve the assemblies to push the country into general elections.

"The ruling alliance is still trying to sabotage our efforts as they do not want to hold early elections. We will fight all their tactics on political and legal forums," he told Al Jazeera.

Lahore-based political analyst Benazir Shah said Imran Khan, by pushing for

immediate polls, is trying to take advantage of his rising popularity among the people.

"If Khan can form governments in both the provinces, and Punjab in particular, he will get a huge advantage in the next general election," she told Al Jazeera.

Shah said the ruling alliance does not have many options to manoeuvre the political crisis and could be forced to play on Khan's terms.

"In the next three months, they would have to hurriedly put together an election campaign, mobilise their voters and craft an effective election narrative to counter Khan. None

*cont'd on pg 19*



## Aid groups urge debt cancellation to ease Ghana's economic woes

Al Jazeera - More than two dozen aid and campaign groups have called for international creditors to cancel a large portion of Ghana's debts as it struggles to contend with an economic crisis.

Ghana's consumer inflation rose to a record 54 percent year-on-year in December, driven by rising fuel, utility and food costs. International reserves have dwindled to less than two months of import cover.

"The people of Ghana have suffered extensively from the crisis," the groups, which all have operations in Ghana, said in an open letter on Wednesday. "Wealthy private lenders must share in the costs of a crisis they helped to create and cancel the debt."

The government asked to restructure its bilateral debt under the G20 common framework platform – launched in 2020 to help coordinate debt reprofiling and restructuring – this month after announcing it would default on most of its external debt at the end of last year.

Ghana is expected to miss a \$41m interest payment due on a \$1bn euro-bond on Wednesday. The Ministry of Finance said in December that interest payments have risen to 70 percent to 100 percent of government revenue.

"Ghana's lenders, particularly private lenders, lent at high-interest rates because of the supposed risk of lending to Ghana," the aid groups'



Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta this month extended Ghana's domestic debt exchange deadline for a third time until January 31 to secure a \$3bn IMF bailout [File: Jose Luis Magana/AP Photo]

letter said.

"Given that they lent seeking high returns, it is only right that following these economic shocks, private lenders willingly accept losses," it argued.

Signatories of the letter – which included Oxfam, Christian Aid, Caritas Ghana, Debt Justice and Action-Aid – said the key challenge was to get private lenders to agree to a significant debt cancellation.

"The G20 can help by making clear that Ghana will be politically and financially supported to remain in default on any creditor which does not accept the necessary debt restructuring," they said.

turing," they said.

Ghana launched a domestic debt swap plan at the start of December, days before clinching a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a \$3bn rescue package.

The IMF has said its board will approve the deal only if Ghana undergoes comprehensive debt restructuring.

The deadline to register for what has been called the domestic debt exchange has been extended three times as authorities struggle to entice bondholders to participate in the programme.

**cont'd from pg 18**

of this will be easy for the ruling coalition's parties, which have recently taken back-to-back electoral losses and are seen as being hand-in-glove with the military," she said.

PTI's lawyer Khan said the ruling alliance does not have the moral credibility to lead the country, which is already facing a dire economic crisis, made worse by last year's catastrophic floods.

"If you're driving a bus and see the driver as incompetent, you do not wait for the bus to crash or get into an accident. You try and change the driver at the earliest. This is what we want for Pakistan," he told Al Ja-

zeera.

"We cannot wait for a few more months which could take us to a point of no return. Let the public decide who should have the mandate to make difficult decisions."

# Hampered by bad hip, Rafael Nadal loses at Australian Open

AP - Rafael Nadal bowed his head during changeovers and rested his elbows on his knees, the very picture of resignation.

What already was a poor start to 2023, following a year marred by all manner of health issues, reached a low point at the Australian Open on Wednesday.

The defending champion and No. 1 seed at Melbourne Park, Nadal injured his left hip and lost to Mackenzie McDonald 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 in the second round, abruptly ending his bid for a record-extending 23rd Grand Slam trophy.

"It's a tough moment. It's a tough day," said Nadal, a 36-year-old Spaniard. "I can't say that I am not destroyed mentally at this moment, because I would be lying."

He pulled up awkwardly at the end of a point late in the second set against the 65th-ranked McDonald.

Nadal was visited by a trainer on the sideline, then left the court for a medical timeout. Up in the stands, his wife wiped away tears. Nadal returned to play, but was clearly compromised and not his usual indefatigable self, saying afterward that he could not hit his backhand properly and could not run much, either.

But Nadal added that, as the reigning champion of the tournament, he did not want to leave the court via a mid-match retirement.

He said the hip had been bothering him for a couple of days, but it was never as bad as it became on Wednesday. Nadal was not sure exactly what the nature of the injury was, saying that he will have medical tests to determine if it has to do with a muscle, joint or cartilage.

"It's never over until it's over"



Rafael Nadal, left, of Spain congratulates Mackenzie McDonald of the U.S., following their second round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023. (AP Photo/Dita Alangkara)

type thing. He didn't even want to roll over and quit. He kept fighting until basically the end, even though he maybe didn't have all his game," said McDonald, a 27-year-old who won NCAA championships in singles and doubles for UCLA in 2016.

"I was in the locker room," McDonald said about the aftermath of the match, "and I was like, 'Hey, that's actually really big for me, because I haven't beaten someone of that calibre.'"

This is Nadal's earliest exit at any Grand Slam tournament since bowing out in the first round in Melbourne in 2016 against No. 45 Fernando Verdasco. That also made Verdasco the lowest-ranked player to defeat Nadal in Australia - until, of course, McDonald on Wednesday.

McDonald has never been past the fourth round at a major tournament. In his lone previous matchup against Nadal, at the 2020 French Open, McDon-

ald won a total of just four games in a lopsided loss.

"He kicked my butt," McDonald recalled Wednesday.

This result overshadowed everything else going on in Melbourne, of course, on a day that persistent rain pushed back the start of play on all but the three courts with retractable roofs until after 5 p.m. local time.

That meant some players - most notably, No. 1 Iga Swiatek, No. 3 Jessica Pegula and No. 6 Maria Sakkari - won matches that put them in the third round before more than a dozen others even had contested a single point in the first round.

At night, 2022 French Open runner-up Coco Gauff got past 2021 U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu 6-3, 7-6 (4) in a second-round meeting between two of the sport's young stars.

"I know a lot of people were look-

*cont'd on pg 21*



## Usain Bolt's lawyers give SSL 10 days to return missing millions

CMC - The legal team for retired sprint king Usain Bolt has given Stocks and Securities Limited (SSL), a company holding investments for the eight-time Olympic champion, 10 days to return his missing funds or face criminal and civil action.

That's the ultimatum given in the case of the massive reported fraud that is currently unfolding at the investment firm, where Bolt had invested significant sums, reportedly towards his "self-designed pension".

In a letter to SSL dated January 16, 2023, the authenticity of which was verified by Loop News on Tuesday, the law firm of Frater, Binns and Gordon told SSL that Bolt's account contained in excess of US\$12 million (J\$1.8 billion) as at October 31, 2022.

However, according to the letter, the account currently contains US\$12,000 (J\$1.8 million).

His attorneys are demanding payment of

US\$12,758,181.74 within 10 days, referencing the balance on October 31, 2022, "as issued to him by you".

Bolt is reportedly among more than 20 people who have had their accounts depleted in the reported fraudulent activities now being probed at SSL.

According to the Financial Investigations Division (FID), the length of time during which "questionable actions" were taken against some of the affected accounts in the SSL probe was over a decade.

News emerged last week that the Olympian lost his millions that he invested with the firm. Since then, the SSL management has said that they have taken steps to secure assets in its control and strengthened internal protocols to detect suspicious activity in the shortest time possible.

SSL said that it became aware of fraudulent activity by a former employee of the company and, following



Usain Bolt

initial internal investigations, the management referred the matter to the relevant law enforcement authorities to facilitate a thorough and complete examination of all its aspects.

The FID and the JCF's Fraud Squad are collaborating on the investigation while the Financial Services Commission has appointed business recovery expert Kenneth Tomlinson as the temporary manager for the firm.

Also, following reports by The Gleaner that the FSC flagged SSL as a problem entity several years ago over

the firm's questionable business practices, Opposition spokesman on Finance Julian Robinson has expressed concern over the commission's "apparent failure" to provide adequate regulatory oversight of companies operating in the non-deposit taking financial services industry.

According to Robinson, Jamaicans have become concerned about the safety of their funds at these institutions. He has also called on the Government to break its silence and tell Jamaica what it is doing to restore confidence to this critical sector of the economy.

*cont'd from pg 20*

ing forward to that matchup," said Gauff, an 18-year-old American. "I'm glad we got the prime spot. I hope we delivered."

Seeded men who won included No. 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas, No. 6 Felix Auger-Aliassime, No. 7 Daniil Medvedev - the runner-up to Nadal last year and to Novak Djokovic in 2021 - No. 15 Jannik Sinner and No. 16 Frances Tiafoe.

"I told him, 'You're going to be

in a position to win today. You can win today," Tiafoe said about fellow American McDonald. "Sort of seeing how he feels, I'm happy for Mackie. 'GOAT wins' don't come easy. Something to tell his grandkids one day, and you have to be happy for that guy."

A year ago, Nadal won the Australian Open for the second time to earn his 21st major championship, then raised his total to 22 - the most for a man - at Roland Garros.

He is currently ranked No. 2 but

was the top seed at Melbourne Park because No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz is sitting out the Australian Open with a bad leg.

Nadal's body has betrayed him quite a bit recently.

He needed pain-killing injections for his left foot on the way to winning the French Open last June, pulled out of Wimbledon last July before the semifinals because of a torn abdominal muscle and also dealt with a problem with rib cartilage in 2022.

*cont'd on pg 22*

# Sports News



## West Indies Women acclimatising on schedule in South Africa

The West Indies Women have had two practice sessions and a warm-up match against a South Africa XI, since their arrival in South Africa last Thursday. The match was planned for both teams to get middle practice ahead of their Tri-Series with third team, India. Afy Fletcher anchored the West Indies innings with an unbeaten 41 from 58 balls which included five boundaries. Shabika Gajabi and Shemaine Campbelle both made 14, as the West Indies

posted 105-9 from their 20 overs. South Africa XI had a nailbiter in their run chase but thanks to a top-score of 29 from Delmi Tucket and 21 from Lara Goodall, they achieved their target off the last ball.

Both teams then played out two 'Super Over' scenarios, with each team earning a victory a piece. South Africa and the West Indies have a history of matches being decided by 'Super Overs', it has happened twice before with the West

Indies Women winning both times.

Head Coach Courtney Walsh was pleased with the way the team has adjusted to the conditions and believes that they will start clicking in time for the Tri-Series and ICC Women's T20 World Cup next month.

He said:

"It was good to get a run out, different conditions (to back home) so it was good to assess and get some match practice. I thought playing 20 overs and then

the two Super Overs was exactly what we wanted to get done. It was good to see the competitiveness so I'm happy to see what we've done today."

Walsh added,

"Some people are still a bit jet-lagged, me included but the team is coming together and gelling pretty well. What I am most happy about is the togetherness in the team with everyone looking out for each other. The competitiveness with the South African team is sort of a friendly rivalry and it helps us to play better cricket, so as long as we come out on top I am happy."

The West Indies Women will play at least four matches, playing two matches each against hosts South Africa and India. The two leading teams will then play each other in the Tri-Series Final on 2 February. West Indies will also play a warm-up match against South Africa ahead of the Tri-Series at Beacon Bay on 16 January.

Final squads for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa must be submitted by 2 February. The eighth edition of the marquee ICC Women's event will begin on 10 February with hosts South Africa taking on Sri Lanka. West Indies have been drawn in Group 2 alongside England, India, Pakistan and Ireland.

### *cont'd from pg 21*

Nadal's exit drains the tournament of yet more star power. In addition to his absence and Alcaraz's, 2022 Wimbledon runner-up Nick Kyrgios pulled out because his left knee needs arthroscopic surgery, four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka is off the tour while she is pregnant, two-time major champ Simona Halep is serving a provisional doping ban and Venus Williams is hurt.

That is all on top of this: The 2023 edition of the Australian Open is the first Grand Slam tournament since Serena Williams and Roger Federer announced their retirements.

Nadal arrived in Melbourne with an 0-2 record this season, making him 1-6 dating to September, when he lost to Tiafoe in the fourth round of the U.S. Open.

Even during a first-round victory Monday, a four-setter against a cramping Jack Draper, Nadal never quite seemed to be at his chase-every-ball, put-every-high-spin-shot-on-target best. He looked, somehow, his age.

The same was the case from the outset against McDonald.

"I'm really happy with how I started

that match. I thought I was playing really well, serving great, returning well, too," McDonald said. "So I was really taking it to him."

That is true. From the get-go, McDonald was on, Nadal was off.

The very first game served as something of a harbinger: McDonald broke for a 1-0 lead thanks to a trio of unforced errors by Nadal - two off his feared lefty forehand side.

Out of sorts, Nadal got into a back-and-forth with chair umpire Marijana Veljovic during breaks in action about whether she was starting the between-points serve clock too quickly for his liking.

Soon, McDonald was up a set. Then he went up a break right away in the second.

After one point in that set, Nadal showed real signs of trouble. He squatted behind the baseline and placed his racket down on the court. Then he went over and leaned on a sign, prompting Veljovic to ask whether Nadal was OK.

Nadal watched a couple of serves off McDonald's racket fly past him, then was checked on by the trainer. While the match would proceed, it essentially was over right then and there.



## West Indies Test squad named for series in Zimbabwe

CWI - The Cricket West Indies' Men's Selection Panel today announced the 15-member squad for the upcoming two-match Test Series in Zimbabwe, starting on 4 February. The Selection Panel recalled experienced fast bowler Shannon Gabriel, as well as left-arm spinners Gudakesh Motie and Jomel Warrican.

Gabriel has taken 161 wickets in 56 Tests, placing him joint 12th in the West Indies all-time wicket-takers list and more recently was the joint-leading wicket taker in the CG United Super50 Cup for the Trinidad and Tobago Red Force in November last year. Gabriel's last Test Match was against Sri Lanka in November 2021. Warrican's last international appearance was also in Sri Lanka in December 2021 when he played in both matches in the Test Series. Motie made his Test debut for West Indies in Antigua in June 2022 in the first Test of the two-match Series victory against Bangladesh.

Jayden Seales is unavailable for selection following a knee injury and subsequent surgery; while Anderson Phillip is also unavailable due to injury.

Lead Selector, The Most Hon Dr Desmond Haynes said:

"This is the start of the international calendar for 2023 and we will hope to start with a win. We appreciate it



*Gabriel, Warrican and Motie recalled to 15-member squad*

won't be an easy assignment as Zimbabwe, like most other teams in world cricket, play very well on their home soil on pitches that will support their style of play." Haynes added: "We looked at the conditions we anticipate playing in, and have included two left-arm spinners who didn't go to Australia in Motie and Warrican. With our fast bowlers, Seales has done extremely well for us since he started back in 2021, but with him unavailable we have decided that Gabriel would be best able to fill that role. He (Gabriel) is an experienced bowler who has been at the international level for over 10 years and has knowledge of the conditions in Zimbabwe when we won there in 2017."

"We looked at the conditions we anticipate playing in, and have included two left-arm spinners who didn't go to Australia in Motie and

Warrican. With our fast bowlers, Seales has done extremely well for us since he started back in 2021, but with him unavailable we have decided that Gabriel would be best able to fill that role. He (Gabriel) is an experienced bowler who has been at the international level for over 10 years and has knowledge of the conditions in Zimbabwe when we won there in 2017."

West Indies will play both Test matches at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo, with the first Test running from 4 to 8 February, and the second match from 12 to 16 February. Ahead of the two-Test Series, West Indies will have a three-day warm-up match against a local side set for 28 to 30 January at Bulawayo Athletic Club. All matches start at 10am local time (4am Eastern Caribbean/3am Jamaica).

The last Test Series be-

tween Zimbabwe and the West Indies was also played at Queens Sports Club in October 2017. West Indies won the two-match Series 1-0, winning the first contest by 117 runs with the second Test ending in a draw.

### FULL SQUAD

Kraigg Brathwaite (captain), Jermaine Blackwood (vice-captain), Nkrumah Bonner, Tagnarine Chandernagor, Roston Chase, Joshua Da Silva, Shannon Gabriel, Jason Holder, Alzarri Joseph, Kyle Mayers, Gudakesh Motie, Raymon Reifer, Kemar Roach, Devon Thomas, Jomel Warrican.

### MATCH SCHEDULE

28-30 January: three-day warm-up match at Bulawayo Athletic Club

4-8 February: 1st Test at Queens Sports Club, Bulawayo

12-16 February: 2nd Test at Queens Sports Club

# Sports News



## Dominatrixx win Team Three-Hand Domino Competition

Dominatrixx captured the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association's (ABNDA) Accumulated Team Three-Hand Competition which concluded at the ABNDA's headquarters in Ottos over the weekend.

Dominatrixx won their last two encounters during the fifth and final week of matches on the 12th and 13th January to claim the title by 13 points ahead of their closest rivals, Double Six.

Dominatrixx and Ramplers both scored 70 points in the fourth match last Thursday after Bolans Revellers B team failed to show up for the encounter.

Dominatrixx and Willikies Superstars A team also scored 70 points each in the fourth match last Friday after Bolans Revellers B team once again forfeited the encounter.

Those results ensured that Dominatrixx finished the competition as winners by amassing an overall total of 776 points. Double Six claimed the runners-up position with a total of 763 points, with Triple Dynamite taking third place with an overall total of 754 points.

Finishing one point behind are joint fourth-place finishers Bolans Revellers A and C teams with 753 points apiece.



*The Dominatrixx won the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association's Accumulated Three-Hand Competition after five weeks of matches which ended at the national organization's headquarters in Ottos on Friday, 13th January, 2023. (File photo)*

Double Six finished third with 68 points in the fifth and final match last Thursday. The game was won by Willikies Superstars A team with 74 points and Bolans Revellers A team finished second with 70 points.

But Double Six won the third match on Friday by scoring 84 points to finish ahead of the Bolans Revellers D team with 70 points and Ramplers with 63 points.

Triple Dynamite won their last two matches. Triple Dynamites won the second match on Thursday by scoring 83 points to beat Moise Eagles with 76 points and Bravo with 66 points.

Triple Dynamite and Unstoppables both scored 70 points in the fifth and final match on Friday after

Parham Strikers failed to show up for the encounter.

Moise Eagles Warriors won the opening match on Friday to finish the competition in sixth place with an overall tally of 742 points. Moise Eagles scored 79 points to beat Legacy with 74 points and the Bolans Revellers A team with 72 points.

The Willikies Superstars B team claimed victory in the second match on Friday to finish the competition in seventh position with an overall tally of 731 points.

The Willikies Superstars B team scored 84 points to defeat the Bolans Revellers C team with 78 points and Bravo with 63 points.

Bravo ended the competition in eighth position with a total of 729 points,

one point more than the Bolans Revellers D team which finished ninth overall in the standings.

Bolans Revellers D team won the opening match last Thursday by scoring 81 points to finish ahead of the Willikies Superstars B team with 74 points and Parham Strikers with 71 points.

Ramplers and Unstoppables finished in joint 10th place by amassing an overall total of 718 points, one point ahead of the Willikies Superstars A team which claimed the 12th position ahead of Legacy that ended in 13th place with 714 points.

Legacy won the third match last Thursday with a score of 69 points to prevail over Bolans Revellers C team with 68 points and Unstoppables with 56 points.

Parham Strikers finished second from bottom in the standings with a total of 615 points and Bolans Revellers C team ended in the cellar position with 530 points.

The Accumulated Team Three-Hand contest concludes the shortened 2022 national domestic season. The 2023 domino season will commence with a march past on Saturday, 21st January and the first competition for the new year will begin on Thursday, 26th January.



## All Saints Pythons snatch last semi-final spot in ABCA's 10 Splash

All Saints Pythons have snatched the last semi-finals berth in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) 10 Splash competition.

With the top two teams in both groups advancing to the semi-finals, All Saints Pythons qualified as runners-up in Zone B behind Empire Nation who won the group with a tally of 18 points.

All Saints Pythons snatched a six-wicket win against Freetown with a ball to spare in the final preliminary round match at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Tuesday.

Chasing a victory target of 93 runs, All Saints Pythons achieved the required target for the loss of four wickets in 9.5 overs.

Openers T'Ron Payne made 29 off 24 balls and captain Michael Dover struck 27 off 19 balls, while Kenny Sutton was not out on 13 off 10 balls.

Earlier, opener Rolston "Triss" Phillip smashed an unbeaten 43 off 25 balls, including three fours and three sixes, to lift Freetown to 92 for four off their allot-

ted 10 overs.

Captain Austin Richards Jr. contributed 20 off 18 balls and Jamaual Fernandez chipped in with 18 off 12 balls.

The result ensured that All Saints Pythons ended their preliminary campaign with 14 points, the same as Jennings Tigers who finished with a superior net run rate.

The Pythons and Tigers ended with identical records of three wins, one loss and one no result. But according to competition rules, if teams have the same amount of points and wins, the tie-breaker will be the head-to-head match.

Therefore, All Saints Pythons advance to the semis by virtue of beating Jennings Tigers by eight wickets when both teams met in their preliminary match on 7th January.

Pigotts Crushers beat fellow semi-finals qualifiers PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks by 10 wickets in a rain affected match to win Zone A with 18 points at the same venue on Tuesday.

In a match reduced to



*All Saints Pythons' player T'Ron Payne, left, accepts his man of the match award from the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's Director Avery Henry at the end of his team's encounter against Freetown in the ABCA 10 Splash competition at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Tuesday. (Photo courtesy ABCA)*

six overs due to rain, Liberta Black Hawks were restricted to 40 for four after being sent in to bat in the top of the table Zone A clash.

Captain Kadeem Phillip top scored with an unbeaten 21 off 19 balls, including two sixes and a four.

Pigotts then coasted to victory, reaching the required target of 41 runs without losing a wicket with 15 balls to spare.

Openers Essan Warner hit an unbeaten 24 off 12

balls and Kadeem Henry made 14 not out off 10 balls.

Their first defeat in five encounters ensured the Liberta Black Hawks finished second in Zone A with 14 points.

The semi-finals will be contested at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium today, Thursday, 19th January.

Empire Nation will face Liberta Black Hawks at 2:30 pm and Pigotts Crushers will meet All Saints Pythons at 5:30 pm.

The two semi-finals winners will clash in the final at the same venue at 5:30 pm tomorrow, Friday, 20th January. The final will be preceded by a playoff for third place between the two losing semi-finalists at 2:30 pm.

### cont'd from pg 26

poned due to water on the field at the same venue. Sap was slated to meet Wilkies, while Greenbay Hoppers was slated to face Ottos Rangers.

The first division will continue with four matches today, Thursday, 19th January. Green City will host Fort Road at the

Bendals playing field at 5 pm.

The other three matches are slated to kick-off at 4:20 pm. John Hughes will entertain Young Lions at John Hughes, JSC Progressors will host West Ham at the St. Johnston's playing field and Lion Hill will meet Bendals at the Golden Grove playing field.

## Attacking Saints trounce Wings to advance to second place in Second Division

Attacking Saints recorded the only victory to advance into second place in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on Tuesday.

Attacking Saints romped to a 5-1 victory over CPTSA Wings at the St. Johnston's playing field to record their sixth win in seven matches to advance into second place in the standings with 19 points, two points behind unbeaten leaders Jennings United.

Joshua Samuel scored the first of two goals in the 7th minute to put Attacking Saints ahead. Goals by Sha-keem Languedoc in the 16th minute and Malone Joseph in the 20th minute gave Attacking Saints a 3-0 halftime advantage.

Samuel further increased his team's advantage by scoring his second goal of the match in the 57th minute, while Offarie Charles completed Attacking Saints' scoring with a 61st minute conversion.

Jaden Browne scored a consolation goal for Wings by converting a penalty in the 90th minute. But it was insufficient to help Wings to avoid their sixth defeat in seven matches as they remain in the lower half of the standings on three points.

Golden Grove and English Harbour fought to a 2-2 draw at the Golden Grove playing field.

Precious Francis scored in the 24th minute to give Golden Grove a



Attacking Saints recorded the only victory to advance into second place in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division on Tuesday, 17th January. (File photo)

1-0 halftime lead. But Nigel Graham scored his first of two goals in the 48th minute to equalize for English Harbour.

Terrence Spencer restored Golden Grove's lead by scoring in the 64th minute, but for the second time in the match, Graham scored the equalizer for English Harbour with his second conversion in the 71st minute.

The result lifted English Harbour to nine points from eight matches, comprising three losses, three draws and two wins. Golden Grove's first draw in four outings carries them to four points.

Freemans Village and Bethesda also played to a goalless draw at the Freemans Village playing field. Free-

mans Village's second draw in seven matches carries them to 14 points.

It was also the second draw in seven encounters for Bethesda who advance to 11 points.

Tuesday's other two matches, which were slated to take place at the ABFA's Technical Center at Paynters, were not played after rain throughout the day left the field saturated with water.

The matches affected were a first division affair between leaders Garden Stars and Bolans and a second division encounter between Sea View Farm and Belmont FC.

Monday's scheduled premier league encounters were also post-

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