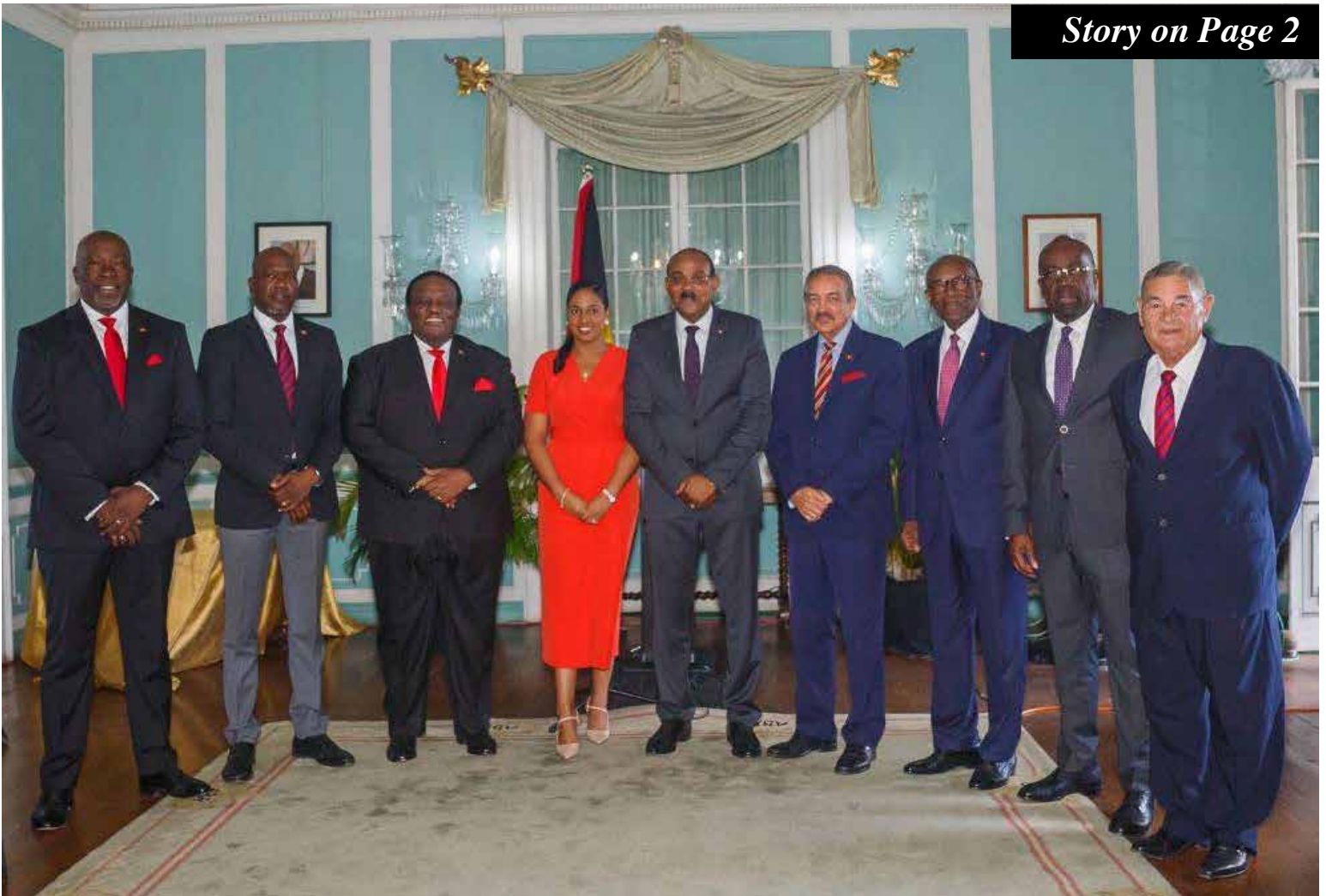


FRIDAY 20TH JANUARY 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 14 | [WWW.POINTVILLE.AG](http://WWW.POINTVILLE.AG)

# SMALLER BROWNE CABINET IN ABLP THIRD TERM



*Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Attorney General Steadroy Benjamin were joined by the seven members of their team who were successful in the 18th January, 2023 elections for their swearing in at Government House.*

# Local News




## PM Browne to name smaller cabinet


A smaller cabinet that will manage the day-to-day affairs of the country is what Prime Minister Gaston Browne has promised. The appointments and

assignment of portfolios for those members will be made known during this morning's swearing-in ceremony at Government House.

Following his swearing-in ceremony yesterday, Mr. Browne said "[It will be] a very small cabinet. I do not believe in bringing in a lot of senators to make ministers, so, you'll have a

*cont'd on pg 3*

**Fri 20 | Day**  
**81°**   
 A few clouds from time to time. High 81F.  
 Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.

**Fri 20 | Night**  
**73°**   
 Clear to partly cloudy. Low 73F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.

Humidity **69%**  
 UV Index **9 of 10**  
 Sunrise **6:40 am**  
 Sunset **5:56 pm**

Humidity **76%**  
 UV Index **0 of 10**  
 Moonrise **5:27 am**  
 Moonset **4:42 pm**  
 ● Waning Crescent



### ELECTION RESULTS 2023

No	Constituency	Elected Candidates	ABLP	UPP	DNA	BPM	IND	Rejected Ballots	Total Votes Cast	No. of Electors	% Turnout
1	St. John's City West	Gaston A. Browne	1295	621	18			14	1948	3053	64%
2	St. John's City East	Melford Nicholas	791	785	13			6	1595	2166	74%
3	St. John's City South	Steadroy Benjamin	889	495	11			6	1401	2060	68%
4	St. John's Rural West	Richard Lewis	1614	1932	31		46	12	3635	5440	67%
5	St. John's Rural South	Daryll Matthew	1424	1074	11		19	13	2541	3910	65%
6	St. John's Rural East	Maria Browne	1770	1460	48			16	3294	5004	66%
7	St. John's Rural North	Charles Fernandez	1563	1358	42			15	2978	4187	71%
8	St. Mary's North	Molwyn M. Joseph	1664	1615	28			22	3329	5171	64%
9	St. Mary's South	Kelvin Craig Simon	862	1061	12			5	1940	2588	75%
10	All Saints East & St. Luke	L. Jamale Pringle	1047	1799	52			10	2908	4128	70%
11	All Saints West	Anthony S. Smith	1461	2022	44			19	3546	5021	71%
12	St. George	Algernon Watts	2005	2146	54			19	4224	5883	72%
13	St. Peter	Asot Michael	899	601	29		2137	14	3680	4609	80%
14	St. Philip North	Robin Yearwood	708	615	16			7	1346	1876	72%
15	St. Philip South	Sherfield Bowen	360	582	28			41	1011	1258	80%
16	St. Paul	E. P. Chet Greene	1244	1101	29			13	2387	3281	73%
17	Barbuda	Trevor Walker	456			624		6	1086	1281	85%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>20052</b>	<b>19267</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>2202</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>42849</b>	<b>60916</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>% of total votes cast</b>			<b>46.8</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>70.3</b>		



*cont'd from pg 2*

smaller, more nimble cabinet and I'm quite sure that based on the expanse of the experience among the members of the cabinet that they will continue to deliver for the people of Antigua and Barbuda".

The previous Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda consisted of at least fourteen members.

Already, the prime minister and his Attorney General have been sworn into office.

The ABLP suffered major losses at the polls, but secured nine seats to retain governance of the country. Prime Minister Browne was asked to comment on the contributing factors.

"There were some challenges that we just couldn't mitigate. The challenges associated with the COVID crisis and climate change. But what is good though, is that we have a fresh term, five years, to resolve the various issues.

"There were some attended issues associated with the crisis; there was an escalation in unemployment, we know that some people were feeling the pressure.

"They had to deal with increased food prices, fuel prices and we understand there are concerns and they had to really place their anger somewhere and it came to us, and we accept, we understand."

While he is focused on learning from the mistakes made and moving the coun-

try to the 'Next Level' of development, the political leader of the ABLP admitted their performance at the polls was also a result of some candidates losing touch with the electorate.

"Unfortunately too, we have to take some responsibility in that we didn't have

the level of energy in our campaign. I think some candidates took it for granted. You can't just go on incumbency on your name.

"You have to get out there, you have to build relations, and this is something I would have said to them from time to time.

"I have to tell you we have a few candidates who just didn't put in the extra effort and the results would have shown that. But at the end of the day, we are grateful that at least we are able to maintain governance of the country," Prime Minister Gaston Browne stated.



**THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
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19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

## DECLARATION OF RESULTS

In accordance with Section 30 (5) of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001, the following persons were duly elected for the seventeen (17) Constituencies in the General Elections held on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2023:

St. John's City West	Gaston Browne	ABLP Candidate
St. John's City East	Melford Nicholas	ABLP Candidate
St. John's City South	Steadroy Benjamin	ABLP Candidate
St. John's Rural West	Richard Lewis	UPP Candidate
St. John's Rural South	Daryll Matthew	ABLP Candidate
St. John's Rural East	Maria Browne	ABLP Candidate
St. John's Rural North	H. Charles Fernandez	ABLP Candidate
St. Mary's North	Molwyn Joseph	ABLP Candidate
St. Mary's South	Kelvin Simon	UPP Candidate
All Saints East & St. Luke	Jamale Pringle	UPP Candidate
All Saints West	Anthony Smith	UPP Candidate
St. George	Algernon Watts	UPP Candidate
St. Peter	Asot Michael	Independent Candidate
St. Philip North	Robin Yearwood	ABLP Candidate
St. Philip South	Sherfield Bowen	UPP Candidate
St. Paul	E. P. Chet Greene	ABLP Candidate
Barbuda	Trevor Walker	BPM Candidate

# Local News

## PM Browne pledges: “I will never betray your trust”

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has pledged never to betray the trust of the people of Antigua and Barbuda moments after he was appointed as the country's prime minister for a historic third consecutive term.

In a post-swearing in interview, PM Browne said he received the message from the people given at the polls held on Wednesday and he is recommitting to working with even more vigor to improve the lives of the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

At Wednesday's general elections, the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party scored a razor thin victory by winning nine of the seventeen constituencies.

According to the prime minister, there were a number of challenges with which



*Prime Minister Gaston Browne* the party had to contend and which may have led to several of his candidates, including four former Cabinet members losing.

“I want to take this opportunity to recommit to the empowerment of the people of Antigua and Barbuda using all of my intellect, all my energies to promote strategies for their empowerment and to make sure that I never betray their trust,” he de-

clared.

The prime minister said he has an unending love for the people of the country and that he will always work hard on their behalf.

On the closeness of the election results, PM Browne noted that he was aware that a third term for a government was always going to be difficult and that this was compounded by several challenges over which the government

had little control. “We had to deal with the escalation of food prices and fuel prices which are issues over which we had no control. This was further compounded by climate change, which led to the drying up of our aquifers and other water sources, forcing us to embark on a process of acquiring reverse osmosis plants to generate water,” PM Browne stated,

He disclosed that there is one more reverse osmosis plant still to be installed but that too has been delayed due to the logistics issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Then he added, what he termed ‘unrelenting opposition propaganda’ much of which were lies or untruths but which apparently were believed by many of the electorate.



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## Caricom Election Observation Mission to Antigua and Barbuda preliminary statement

The seven (7) member CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM) which was mounted by the Caribbean Community, at the invitation of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, observed the General Election on 18 January 2023.

The CEOM visited 184 of 188 polling stations across 16 constituencies in Antigua. Due to logistical challenges polling stations in Barbuda were not visited.

The Mission monitored the Election Day activities by observing the opening of the poll, the voting process, the closing of the poll, the transporting of ballot boxes and the counting of ballots.

In all stations observed, indications are that polling stations opened on time and voting started promptly at 6:00 a.m.

It was observed that all polling stations were fully staffed, and that the two (2) major political parties each had political agents present at all locations.

Most polling stations were conveniently located and generally accessible to the electorate including the disabled.

The CEOM observed that all materials and supplies needed were present in the required quantities. Adequate security was in place at locations observed.

The officers displayed professionalism in the maintenance of law and order which contributed to the level of calm that accompanied the day's activities.

The Mission observed that prior to the opening of polls, many voters were eagerly waiting to cast their vote.

Throughout the day, the polling staff remained focused as they steadily carried out the required procedures, ensuring that eligible voters who turned out were able to cast their vote.

The CEOM also observed that transportation of ballot boxes from

*cont'd on pg 6*



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# Local News



*cont'd from pg 5*

the polling stations to the counting stations was done with adequate security, in the presence of party agents. In all stations observed, the Returning Officers commenced counting of ballots promptly, upon arrival of the ballot boxes.

The count of ballots was done transparently and professionally in the presence of party agents.

While the conduct of the election is highly commendable, all stakeholders, including the main opposition party, with whom the Mission met, raised con-

cerns about the delay in the publication of the register of elections, therefore they had no opportunity to put forward claims and objections.

The Electoral Commission informed the CEOM that the date for the publication of the register was calculated based on the advice of legal counsel and, in its view, the calculation is correct.

The CEOM was made aware that in 2021, persons were appointed to the Constituencies Boundaries Commission to address the disparity in the number of

electors in the constituencies.

While the Mission applauds the effort to address this disparity, there is urgent need to ensure that this exercise is not delayed any further, as completion is extremely necessary prior to the next general election.

Stakeholders raised concerns about the lack of accountability and transparency regarding campaign financing regulations. This is indicative of the need for a framework to be put in place to deal with the issue of campaign financing.

The Mission's assessment of the Election Day's activities is that the voters were able to cast their ballots without intimidation and that the General Election was free and fair, and the outcome reflects the will of the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

The Mission will prepare a detailed report for submission to Her Excellency, Dr. Carla Barnett, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This report will include recommendations and suggestions for strengthening the electoral process in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Mission wishes to congratulate the staff of the Electoral Commission, the Poll Workers, the Candidates and the Security Forces for the mature way in which the elections were conducted. The level of discipline displayed throughout the entire process is highly commendable.

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission wishes to thank the Leaders of the Political Parties, Independent Candidates, Civil Society Groups, Media and the wonderful people of Antigua and Barbuda for their warm hospitality and cooperation which no doubt contributed to the success of the Mission.

*Josephine Tamai  
Chief Of Mission  
Caricom Election Observation Mission  
19 January 2023*



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## Republicanism and CCJ to be considered in near future

The important matters of republicanism and adopting the Caribbean Court of Justice as the country's final court of appeal will remain under consideration, but are not immediate priorities of the Antigua Barbuda Labour Party government.

The topics were raised during a recent interview with Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

In a 2018 referendum, Antiguan and Barbudans opted to remain with the London based Privy Council as the apex court, reject-

ing moves to make the Caribbean Court of Justice the court of final appeal.

Following the results, the government assured it was not abandoning its efforts to replace the Privy Council and would return to the citizenry a second time.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne said the matter will be revisited though not immediately.

"That's something we have to gauge. We have to determine the level of political maturity, because admittedly, some games

were played the last time around and as you know it was voted down. I'm not sure we're at that stage yet and the problem with that is it requires 67 percent a super majority. If it was simply 51 percent, I would have said definitely yes.

"Now clearly, it is an issue we have to address in the future. As to whether or not we'll address it this term, we obviously will have to do some polling again to determine what the mood of the people is and whether or not it's likely that we'll be successful. If

we poll and the people are not ready, we'll just shelf it," Mr. Browne noted.

As it relates to the monarchy, the ABLP leader said the intention is to also poll the citizens before moving forward.

"We'll also poll that to determine how the people think about it probably within the next two years on the basis that we have 67-70 percent of the people supporting the initiative to move, then we'll certainly put a constitutional question to the people," the prime minister posited.



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# Local News

## Greene blames key government agencies for close electoral victory

The newly re-elected parliamentary representative for St. Paul, E.P Chet Greene is blaming several key government agencies for nearly unending his chances in Wednesday's general elections.

Greene said chief among them was APUA which failed to deliver on promises to take steps to improve the water delivery system in the constituency, especially in the English Harbour area.

"I knew English Harbour had some issues, one was the clinic which is yet to be completed. But it was APUA which really gave me 'a run for my money' over the last six weeks of the campaign, and for no reason," he stated emphatically.

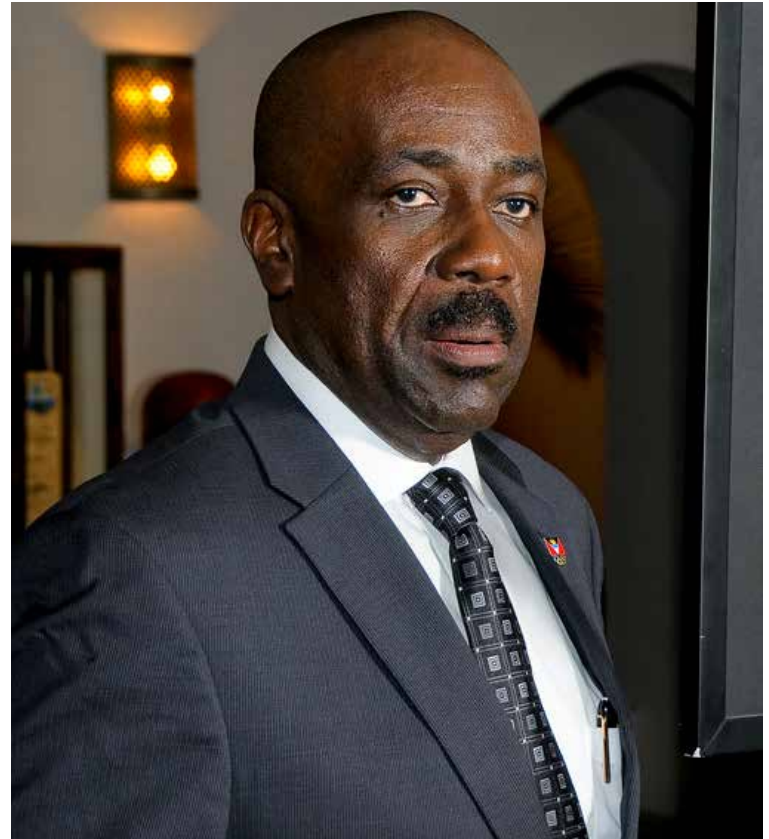
The MP, who held the foreign affairs portfolio in

the last Cabinet, said he was speaking publicly about the matter and that he chose not to be 'diplomatic' about the issue.

"I am saying that I am so disappointed with APUA because the plant in Pigeon Point works; it is serving other areas, but the people can't get water and the people protested on Wednesday with their votes regarding that situation," he declared.

Whilst he acknowledged that he was not the prime minister, he wants a clear message sent to APUA; shape up or ship out!

"I'm in a no-nonsense mood for this term and when I look at people who are affecting the quality of life for residents in my area, it is unacceptable. Why should I pay the political price for



*Parliamentary representative for St. Paul, E.P Chet Greene.*

their incompetence?" he queried.

Greene reported that he

had to spend several thousands of dollars to truck water into the area to help alleviate the problem despite the cabinet's instruction to APUA to construct a pumping station in the area.

The representative also feels that the Ministries of Works and Health also did not deliver on promises to improve the roads and the construction of a clinic which all led to 'slippage' in the level of support he received at the poll.

The final vote count was Greene 1,244 versus Cleon Athill's 1,101.



*One of the multiple reverse osmosis plants operating in Antigua and Barbuda.*



## OECS launches recycle project in the sub region

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has embarked on an initiative, which will focus on the development and implementation of a recycle and plastic waste collection and treatment project in the sub-region.

The St. Lucia-based OECS Commission says the Recycle OECS Project, is being funded by the European Union, through the Agence Française de Développement.

It said the overall objective of the project is to define and develop a financially, self-sustainable plastic waste management model from collection to recycling, that can be adapted to the local context of OECS member states where it is being implemented.

“Plastic pollution is a major problem in the Eastern Caribbean. According to the World Bank report, Marine Pollution in the Caribbean, Not a Minute to Waste,



solid waste generated in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), on average contains 12 percent plastic. Additionally, Caribbean data from beach and coastal clean-ups in 2017 indicate that plastic beverage bottles account for 21 percent of all garbage collected,” the Commission said.

It said the Recycle OECS initiative will be executed through a joint venture

with Seureca, the consulting and engineering division of Veolia, a world leader in optimised resource management such as energy, waste recovery, and recycling, and Unite Caribbean Limited, a development cooperation consulting firm that promotes social, environmental, cultural, and economic development through cooperation and regional technical support.

The project will allow for an assessment of relevant initiatives that deal with solid waste management, thereafter, developing an OECS model system for plastic waste collection and transport, identifying two countries for demonstration of the OECS model system, structuring the collection of all types of plastic in two demonstration countries; and structuring of plastic export chains and processing them in the Caribbean zone.

“The Recycle OECS Project is part of a broader regional initiative with the European Union, which seeks to build on work being done on waste management and the Blue Economy in OECS member states at the national and regional levels.”

“The OECS groups the islands of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands.

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ST. JOHN'S DEPARTURE

**SUNDAY**  
AB 12:00 PM  
BA 3:45 PM

**MONDAY**  
AB 6:00 AM  
BA 8:00 AM

**TUESDAY TO FRIDAY**  
AB 7:00 AM  
BA 3:45 PM

**SATURDAY**  
AB 8:00 AM  
BA 3:45 PM

**TYPHOON EXPRESS**

**MONDAY**  
ST. JOHN'S DEPARTURE  
AB 3:45 PM  
(OVERNIGHT IN BARBUDA)

**TUESDAY**  
BA 6:00 AM TO ST. JOHN'S

**WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY**  
(CRABBS DEPARTURE)  
AB 10:00AM  
BA 3:00PM

**UPDATED SCHEDULE**



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# France: Over 1 million march against raising retirement age

By Sylvie Corbet And Jade Le Deley

At least 1.1 million people protested on the streets of Paris and other French cities Thursday amid nationwide strikes against plans to raise the retirement age — but President Emmanuel Macron insisted he would press ahead with the proposed pension reforms.

Emboldened by the mass show of resistance, French unions announced new strikes and protests Jan. 31, vowing to try to get the government to back down on plans to push up the standard retirement age from 62 to 64. Macron says the measure — a central pillar of his second term — is needed to keep the pension system financially viable, but unions say it threatens hard-fought worker rights.

Out of the country for a French-Spanish summit in Barcelona, Macron acknowledged the public discontent but said that “we must do that reform” to “save” French pensions.

“We will do it with respect, in a spirit of dialogue but also determination and responsibility,” he added.

As Macron spoke, riot police pushed back against some protesters throwing projectiles on the sidelines of the largely peaceful Paris march. Some other minor incidents briefly flared up, leading officers to use tear gas.

Paris police said that 38 people were detained as a mass of people thronged the streets of the capital despite freezing rain, the crowd so big that it took hours to reach their destination. Retirees and college students joined the diverse crowd, united in their fear and anger over the reform.

In a country with an ageing population and growing life expectancy where everyone receives a state pension, Macron’s government says the reform is the only way to keep the system solvent.

Unions propose a tax on the wealthy



People gather on Place de la République during a demonstration against proposed pension changes, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023 in Paris. Workers in many French cities took to the streets Thursday to reject proposed pension changes that would push back the retirement age, amid a day of nationwide strikes and protests seen as a major test for Emmanuel Macron and his presidency. (AP Photo/Lewis Joly)

or more payroll contributions from employers to finance the pension system instead.

Polls suggest most French people oppose the reform, and Thursday was the first public reaction to Macron’s plan. Strikes severely disrupted transport, schools and other public services, and more than 200 rallies were staged around France.

The Interior Ministry said more than 1.1 million people protested, including 80,000 in Paris. Unions said more than 2 million people took part nationwide, and 400,000 in Paris.

Big crowds also turned out for protests against previous efforts at retirement reform, notably during Macron’s first term and under former President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2010. But none of those drew more than 1 million people according to government estimates.

Jean Paul Cachina, 56, a worker in human resources, joined the march in

the French capital — a first ever for him.

“I am not here for myself,” he said. “I am here to defend the youth and workers doing demanding jobs. I work in the construction industry sector and I’m a first-hand witness of the suffering of employees.”

Many young people were among the Paris crowd, including high school students.

Nathan Arsac, 19, a student and member of the UNEF union, said: “I’m afraid of what’s going to happen next. Losing our social achievements could happen so fast. I’m scared of the future when I’ll be older and have to retire.”

Sylvie Bécard, a 59-year-old nurse, said that she joined the march because “we, health care workers, are physically exhausted.”

“The only thing we have is to demonstrate, and to block the economy of the country,” she added.

cont’d on pg 11



*cont'd from pg 10*

The economic cost of Thursday's strikes wasn't immediately clear, but protracted walkouts could hobble the economy just as France is struggling against inflation and trying to boost growth.

Police unions opposed to the retirement reform also took part in the protests, while those on duty sought to contain scattered unrest.

Most train services around France were halted, including some international connections, and about 20% of flights out of Paris' Orly Airport were cancelled.

The Education Ministry said more than a third of teachers were on strike, and national electricity company EDF announced that power supplies were substantially reduced Thursday amid the strikes.

The Versailles Palace was closed Thursday while the Eiffel Tower warned about potential disruptions and the Louvre Museum closed some exhibition rooms.

Philippe Martinez, secretary general of the hard-left CGT union, urged Macron to "listen to the street."

Laurent Berger, head of the more moderate CFDT union, called the reform "unfair" and said Thursday's show of resistance was a warning sign.

Many French workers expressed mixed feelings about the government's plan and pointed to the complexity of the pension system.

Quentin Coelho, 27, a Red Cross employee, felt he had to work Thursday despite

understanding "most of the strikers' demands." Coelho said he fears that the government will keep raising the retirement age, so is already saving money for his pension.

Others worry the reform will hit harder for low-income workers, who live less long than the wealthy.

"It's a social issue. Do you want to retire sick, broken and even some dead? Or do you want to enjoy life?" asked Fabien Villedieu, a 45-year-old railway worker,

French Labor Minister Olivier Dussopt acknowledged "concerns" prompted by the pension plans but said the government rejected other options involving raising taxes — which he said would hurt the economy and cost jobs — or reducing pensions.

The French government is formally presenting the pension bill on Monday and it will head to Parliament next month. Its success will depend in part on the scale and duration of the strikes and protests.

Most opposition parties, including the left and the far-right, are strongly against the plan. Macron's centrist alliance lost its parliamentary majority last year, yet still has the biggest group at the National Assembly, where it hopes to ally with the conservative The Republicans party to approve the pension reforms.

Under the planned changes, workers must have worked for at least 43 years to be entitled to a full pension. For those who do not fulfil that condition, like many

women who interrupted their career to raise children or those who studied for a long time and started working late, the retirement age would remain unchanged at 67.

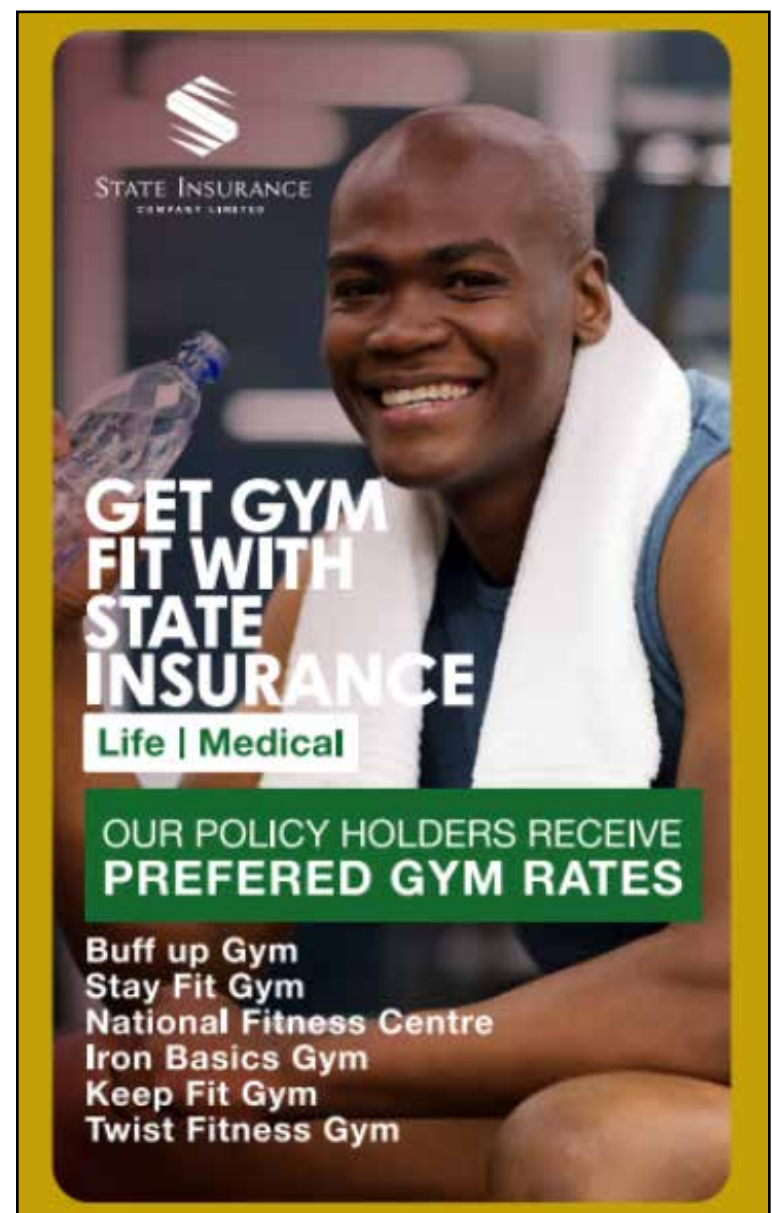
Those who started to work under the age of 20 and workers with major health issues would be allowed early retirement.

Protracted strikes met Macron's last effort to raise the retirement age in 2019. He eventually withdrew it after the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Retirement rules vary widely from country to coun-

try, making direct comparisons difficult. The official retirement age in the U.S. is now 67, and countries across Europe have been raising pension ages as populations grow older and fertility rates drop.

But opponents of Macron's reform note that, under the French system, people are already required to work more years overall than in some neighbouring countries to receive a full pension. The plan is also seen by many as endangering the welfare state that's central to French society.



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# Opinion

## Apologies for slavery are commendable, but not nearly enough

By Tafi Mhaka

On December 19, 2022, the Netherlands became the first Western nation to formally apologise for participating in and profiting from the transatlantic trade of enslaved people.

Speaking at the National Archives in The Hague, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte apologised on behalf of his government for the country's role in slavery, calling it "ugly, painful, and even downright shameful".

"For hundreds of years, people were made of merchandise, exploited and abused in the name of the Dutch state," Rutte said. "For that, I offer the apologies of the Dutch government."

That the Dutch government finally found the courage to fully acknowledge and officially apologise for its role in "abetting, stimulating, preserving and profiting from centuries of slave trading" is highly commendable.

But the paths to reconciliation and healing suggested by the government are equally underwhelming.

In his apology, Rutte admitted that "centuries of oppression and exploitation still have an effect to this very day" and talked about "doing justice to the past and healing in the present".

To kick-start this healing process, the Dutch PM said, his government will work to "enhance knowledge of the history of slavery" and



*Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte offers an official apology for the Netherlands' participation in slavery, at the National Archives in The Hague, The Netherlands, 19 December 2022 [Robin Vin Lonkhuisen/EPA-EFE]*

to "ensure more awareness, acknowledgement and understanding". To this end, he announced the creation of a 200-million-euro (\$216m) fund to help tackle the legacy of slavery and boost education.

Yet nowhere in his landmark apology Rutte expressed an intention to take the one action descendants of enslaved people repeatedly said would make the biggest difference in righting the wrongs of the past: pay reparations.

The Netherlands, like most Western nations, owes the immense economic prosperity it is experiencing today in part to the profits it made from slavery.

In 2019, a five-year research project funded by the Dutch Research Council titled "Slaves, commodities and logistics" concluded that "economic activities related to the slave trade between Europe, Africa and America

made a significant contribution to Dutch prosperity in the second half of the eighteenth century".

According to the study, in the reference year 1770, some 5.2 percent of the Dutch gross domestic product (GDP) was based on the transatlantic trade of enslaved people – a contribution almost equivalent to that of the entire port of Rotterdam today.

Rutte did not mention any of this in the carefully curated speech he delivered at the National Archives in December. The Dutch government, despite offering a historic official apology for slavery, clearly still has no intention to return to the descendants of enslaved people what it stole from them.

The Netherlands, regrettably, is not alone among countries that benefited from slavery in refusing to pay. The governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and others are

also staying mum in the face of increasingly louder calls for reparations.

To defend their governments' refusal to pay up, politicians and opinion leaders – and especially white conservatives who tend to view all efforts towards racial justice suspiciously – in these countries always offer the same tired arguments. They claim that "no one alive today is directly benefitting or suffering from slavery", that it is "a thing of the past", and that "it would be impossible to determine who deserves to be paid".

These arguments, of course, do not stand even the most basic scrutiny.

For one thing, people are still clearly benefiting and suffering from slavery.

In the US, for instance, the Brookings Institution estimates that the average white family has approximately 10 times the amount of wealth as the average Black family. And white college graduates possess more than seven times more wealth than Black college graduates. In the UK too people from Black African backgrounds typically hold the least wealth, about one-tenth of the wealth held by white Britons.

Such inequalities, compounded by systemic racism in all areas of life – from health and housing to education and law enforcement – are direct, modern-day consequences of slavery affect-

*cont'd on pg 13*



## Shaggy announces Soca EP, performance at Kes the Band's IzWe concert

Shaggy is doing a soca EP.

Speaking at a press conference to promote Kes the Band's IzWe Carnival concert, the Grammy-award winner announced the album.

Shaggy, who has a soca collaboration with Kes the Band frontman Kees Diefenthaller called "Mood", said the album will also feature soca artistes such as Patrice Roberts, Bunji Garlin and Skinny Fabulous.

There has been a lot of discussion about soca's breakthrough to become a mainstream genre, particularly in Jamaica.

Asked about his thoughts on soca's rise, Shaggy said he thinks there is a good feeling for it.

"From my experience in



Shaggy. Photo by Jonathan Mannion

music and taking music to the guest performers at IzWe.

He said their song "Mood" began as a track for his Christmas album, Christmas in the Islands, but it had such a feel-good vibe that it made him go in another direction.

"It just sparked an idea to do it like a soca song and of course, the whole thing was inspired by the feel-goodness of it and no-

body does that more than Kees currently in the genre.

The whole track screamed Kees and I thought why not do a soca EP and that is part of it," he said, noting that he was attracted to Kees' music because he goes out of the box.

This is not Shaggy's first foray into soca.

He has done soca collabs with the likes Allison Hinds and Machel Montano, his first being with Montano on the track "Toro Toro" in 1998.

Shaggy said he is excited to perform in Trinidad as he has not performed during Carnival in a long time.

IzWe takes place on Valentine's Day, February 14 at the Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba, South Trinidad. (LOOP)

*cont'd from pg 12*  
ing millions of people.

And slavery is hardly just a "thing of the past" in countries shaped by and built around it, such as Suriname, where direct descendants of people enslaved by the Dutch and brought there to work in plantations make up most of the population.

In Africa too the immense wealth lost to slavery cannot simply be ignored or forgotten, since its return would resolve most of the continent's fundamental problems almost overnight and make it into a leader of the global economy.

The question of who should receive reparations is not necessarily complicated either. After the abolishment of slavery, the Netherlands, the US, France, Denmark and the UK all moved to compensate former slavers for so-called "loss

of property". The UK government only finished paying the debts it acquired to pay former slavers in 2015. But all this time, none of the former slave-holding countries paid a single penny to formerly enslaved people or their descendants.

It is therefore high time for compensation to be paid not to those who "made people into merchandise" but to those who continue to carry the pain and the scars of their ancestors.

The Caribbean Community, a grouping of 15 Caribbean countries whose populations are dominated by descendants of formerly enslaved people, created a 10-point plan for reparatory justice for European governments.

It wants the latter to offer, among others, a full formal apology, repatriation opportunities, debt cancellation, technology transfer, psychological reha-

bilitation, and African knowledge programmes.

This 10-point plan could be a great starting point for governments truly willing to confront the past with all its ugliness and start a healing process.

Any form of sociopolitical and economic redress cannot merely assuage the collective conscience of white people in the West: it must be unapologetically substantive and enduring, despite the high costs of financial restitution.

Some 160 years after the abolition of slavery in Europe and the US, Western countries, quite evidently, have an obligation not only to apologise, but also to reparations and embark on comprehensive social justice programmes.

Apologies are commendable, but descendants of enslaved people also need reparations and social change.

## Alec Baldwin and armourer will be charged with involuntary manslaughter after fatal shooting of Halyna Hutchins on the set of 'Rust'

*By Josh Campbell, Paul Vercammen, Holly Yan and Travis Caldwell*

Actor Alec Baldwin, who fatally shot a cinematographer on the set of the Western movie "Rust" in 2021, and the film's armourer, Hannah Gutierrez Reed, will each be charged with two counts of involuntary manslaughter, prosecutors said Thursday.

The family of Halyna Hutchins, who was the film's director of photography, thanked prosecutors for their decision.

"It is a comfort to the family that, in New Mexico, no one is above the law," the family said in a statement released by attorney Brian J. Panish.

Baldwin has maintained he was not aware the gun he fired during a rehearsal contained a live round. His attorney called the prosecutors' decision "a terrible miscarriage of justice."

"This decision distorts Halyna Hutchins' tragic death and represents a terrible miscarriage of justice. Mr. Baldwin had no reason to believe there was a live bullet in the gun – or anywhere on the movie set," attorney Luke Nikas said.

"He relied on the professionals with whom he worked, who assured him the gun did not have live rounds. We will fight these charges, and we will win."

An attorney for Gutierrez Reed said he believes jurors will find his client not guilty.

"We were expecting the charges but they're absolutely wrong as to Hannah – we expect that she will be found not guilty by a jury and she did not commit manslaughter," attorney Jason Bowles said in a statement Thursday.



*Alec Baldwin stands outside the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Office after being questioned.*

ney Jason Bowles said in a statement Thursday.

"She has been emotional about the tragedy but has committed no crime."

Baldwin and Gutierrez Reed each face two counts of involuntary manslaughter so that a jury can decide which specific count may be more appropriate, New Mexico First Judicial District Attorney Mary Carmack-Altwies said.

If convicted, "they will only be sentenced to one count," the prosecutor said.

In either case, a conviction is punishable by up to 18 months in jail and up to a \$5,000 fine, prosecutors said.

But one count would involve a firearm enhancement, or added mandatory penalty, because a firearm was involved. In that case, the crime could be punishable by a mandatory five years in jail, prosecutors said.

Charges against Baldwin and Gutierrez Reed will be formally filed

by the end of this month, Carmack-Altwies said. She will not be asking for the defendants to be arrested at that time, the prosecutor said.

Baldwin and his legal team feel "blindsided" by the announcement, Nikas said.

They were not given any indication Baldwin would face criminal charges and "learned of the charges in the media," he added.

Carmack-Altwies told CNN her office was in "almost constant contact" with the opposing parties' attorneys "for about the last six weeks."

"They didn't know exactly what was coming, but they were aware that we were contemplating charges and they were aware of what the contemplated charges were," she said.

The district attorney said she believed "Rust" had a "really fast and loose set," saying there was a lack of safety standards and "live rounds

*cont'd on pg 15*



## Rihanna gets apology from Stephen A. Smith over Super Bowl remarks

By Lisa Respers France

ESPN analyst Stephen A. Smith learned the hard way that if you come for Rihanna, her fans are only going to give you “FourFiveSeconds” to apologise.

During an appearance Wednesday on Sherri Shepherd’s daytime talk show, Smith made a comment about the singer’s upcoming performance at the Super Bowl Halftime Show.

“There’s one thing she’s not, she ain’t Beyoncé,” said Smith, who prefaced that comment with saying Rihanna was “spectacular” and congratulating her on becoming a new mom.

When the audience reacted negatively to his comment, Smith added, “The only reason I brought up Beyoncé is because Beyoncé recently performed at the Super Bowl.”

That wasn’t enough to soothe the Navy, as Rihanna’s devout fans are known, and they went in hard on Smith on social media.



Stephen A. Smith and Rihanna.

Smith then took to social media to offer a three-minute long video apology, and he tweeted, “Apologies to Rihanna for my words, gotta be more careful.”

“I’m gonna own it. I know what y’all trying to do, but I’m gonna own it because I get paid to speak for a living, so I need to be more careful,” he said in his video. “I want Rihanna to know, you’re a superstar, you’re sensational,

you’re spectacular, you’re no joke and you are a worthy person to be doing the Super Bowl Halftime Show.”

Smith said he’s a Beyoncé fan and thought both her 2013 solo performance and her 2016 appearance with Bruno Mars and Coldplay were two of the best Super Bowl Halftime performances he had ever seen.

“What I’m saying is anybody has to measure up to that,” Smith said.

*cont’d from pg 14*

on set – they were mixed in with regular dummy rounds.”

“Nobody was checking those, or least they weren’t checking them consistently,” Carmack-Altwies said.

“And then they somehow got loaded into a gun, handed off to Alec Baldwin; he didn’t check it, he didn’t do any of the things that he was supposed to do to make sure that he was safe or that anyone around him was safe. And then he pointed the gun at Halyna Hutchins and he pulled the trigger.”

Baldwin was also a producer for “Rust” and

therefore had additional responsibilities, the district attorney said.

“As a producer, he also had a duty to make sure that the set was safe,” Carmack-Altwies said. “And then as an actor that day, he should have checked that gun, checked those projectiles.”

Hutchins was struck and killed by a live round of ammunition fired from a prop gun being held by Baldwin, who maintains he did not pull the gun’s trigger.

Director Joel Souza was also shot and injured. No charges will be filed against Souza in relation to the

shooting.

In the summary of the postmortem investigation into Hutchins’ death – which was formally signed by the New Mexico chief medical investigator – the cause of death is listed as “gunshot wound of chest,” and the manner of death is listed as an “accident.”

“Review of available law enforcement reports showed no compelling demonstration that the firearm was intentionally loaded with live ammunition on set.

Based on all available information, including the absence of obvious intent

to cause harm or death, the manner of death is best classified as an accident,” the report concluded.

An FBI forensics report said the weapon could not be fired during FBI testing of its normal functioning without pulling the trigger while the gun was cocked.

The report also noted the gun eventually malfunctioned during testing after internal parts fractured, which caused the gun to go off in the cocked position without pulling the trigger.

The shooting has led to a whirlwind of finger-pointing and allegations of negligence from those involved.

# Regional News



## Trinidad Police kill two men during sting operation involving social media

CMC - Trinidad Police shot and killed two men and seized a quantity of firearms following a sting operation into a spate of robberies with criminals using social media to lure victims.

A police statement said one other person had also been detained in the operation that took place at Barataria on the outskirts of the capital on Tuesday.

The statement said police officers had responded to a Facebook advertisement in which a vehicle was being offered for sale.

“Acting on information, police officers proceeded to 11th Street,

Barataria, where two suspects, who were allegedly armed with firearms, approached an unmarked police vehicle and pointed the firearms at plainclothes police officers,” the statement said.

It said other police officers, who were in another unmarked police vehicle parked nearby, announced their presence and the men allegedly pointed the firearms in the direction of those officers.

“The lawmen, in keeping with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service’s (TTPS) Use of Force Policy, discharged their weapons in the direction of the two suspects. One of

the men then took off running after he allegedly dropped a firearm onto the roadway.

He then entered a white Nissan in an attempt to escape.

“Police officers gave chase and a shootout ensued.

The statement said both suspects were taken to the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex in Mt. Hope where they were pronounced dead.

The police said their identities remain unknown at this time and the 38-year-old driver of the vehicle is assisting with their investigations. The police said they had also recovered three firearms.

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## Jamaica's Finance Minister shocked by alleged multi-billion-dollar fraud

CMC - Finance Minister Dr. Nigel Clarke has expressed his "shock" at the alleged multibillion-dollar fraud that has been uncovered at the investment firm, Stocks and Securities Limited (SSL).

"I am in shock, and feel a profound level of anger and disgust, at the alarming and evil fraud that has allegedly been committed," Clarke said in a statement.

Last week, SSL disclosed that several of its clients, including Jamaican sprint legend, Usain Bolt, had been fleeced of millions of dollars in local and foreign currencies given to the firm to invest.

Bolt has indicated through his lawyer that he had a balance of US\$12.7 million at SSL as at October 31, 2022, but that figure declined to US\$12,000 on January 11.

The attorneys representing Bolt want SSL to return the track star's US\$12 million in investments, in record time, or face a huge lawsuit

The law firm Frater, Ennis & Gordon has given SSL ten days to furnish the money Bolt invested ten years ago

"While not receiving instructions from Bolt to proceed against the FSC, attorney-at-law Linton Gordon said the regulator failed to carry out its responsibilities and duties in accordance with Section 6 of the Financial Services Commission Act," the paper added.

The Financial Services Commission (FSC), which regulates investment houses, has since taken temporary management of SSL. It has also appointed a special auditor for the



*Dr. Nigel Clarke*  
firm.

In his statement, Nigel Clarke defended the local financial sector, saying "it is tempting to doubt our financial institutions but I would ask that we don't paint an entire hard working industry with the brush of a few very dishonest individuals.

"Jamaica is the leading financial centre in the English-speaking Caribbean and we will do everything in our power to protect Jamaica's position in this regard," Clarke added.

The FSC has also sought to reassure investors that the alleged fraud at SSL is not an indication that the sector is not safe.

The Jamaica Securities Dealers Association (JSDA) also says it is deeply concerned about the situation noting that it has implications for reputational risks and confidence erosion.

The JSDA said while it cannot speak on cases under investigation in order not to prejudice the process and outcome, it said it is committed to a thorough investigation and full accountability for all perpetrators of fraud.

"As businesses, we are mindful that fraud is a reality in both the local and global financial industry," the JSDA said in a statement.

"To mitigate against fraud, our institutions implement various detection and prevention mechanisms, which require constant evaluation and improvement as new and more sophisticated fraud schemes continue to emerge."

It said its members will work collectively and independently to ensure that all customers are fully apprised of measures that are at their disposal

*cont'd on pg 18*

## PM Rowley defends press freedom in Trinidad and Tobago

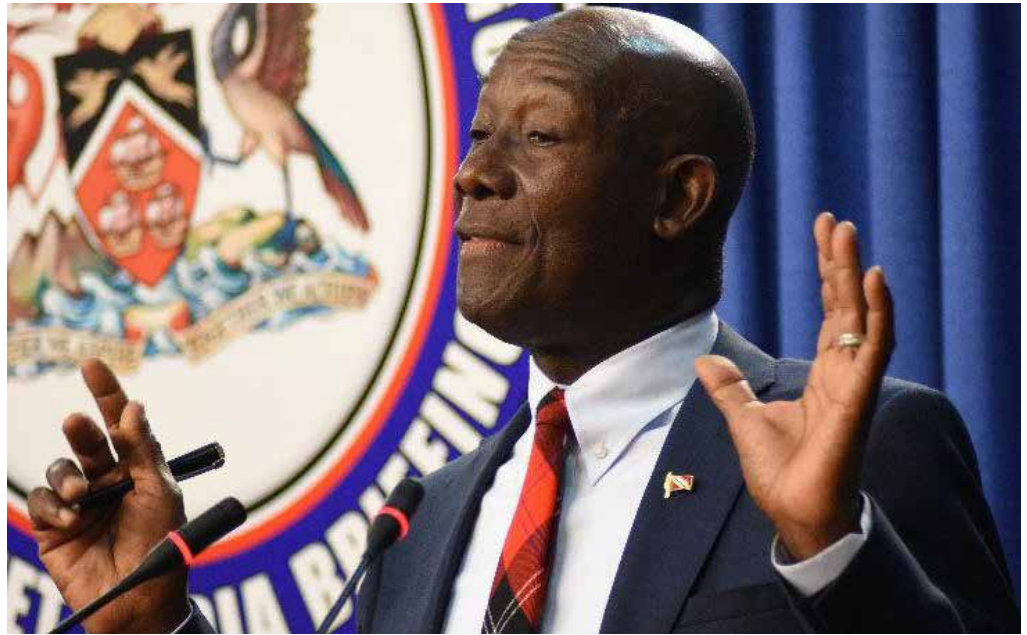
CMC - Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley says he found it “difficult” to accept the allegation of there being no press freedom in Trinidad and Tobago after he had been called upon to state the criteria used by his office to allow journalists to cover press briefings at the Diplomatic Centre.

“If there’s a press conference at the prime minister’s residence and we invite TV6, CNC3, TTT, Channel 5, even Loop of the modern era, I find it difficult to accept that it is said that if I don’t allow every media Mary and Johnny that there is not press freedom in Trinidad and Tobago,” Rowley told journalists attending a function organised by his ruling People’s National Movement (PNM) on Monday night.

Rowley said he “will preserve the prerogative of the prime minister’s office to invite mainstream media to prime minister’s press conferences,” adding “when we think we have 12 or 14 media houses, we think we’re covering the ground very well, and therefore tonight we plead ‘not guilty’.”

He said that by law, government information is gazetted and shared with the public, and in some cases with daily newspapers as required.

Last weekend, the Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago (MATT) said its membership had raised questions over the criteria for inviting journalists to cover press briefings at the Diplomatic Centre after some of them said they were barred from participat-



Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Dr. Keith Rowley

in in a news conference.

“The MATT executive agrees that concerns regarding the selection process for attendance at the Diplomatic Centre are valid and must be addressed to ensure fair access to all media practitioners in the public interest.

“With the relaxation of pandemic related restrictions, the prime minister’s office has yet to provide either guidance or criteria for access to press conferences held at the Diplomatic Centre,” MATT said, adding that “if interested media houses are denied access to question the prime minister about his announcements and a list of specially invited media guides invitations, there should be clarity about what qualifies one media house as “special” over another.

safety of our clients and business.

“Our customers have entrusted us as custodians of their investments, and this is a responsibility we do not take lightly. As such, we commit to full transparency as we identify and implement opportunities for constant improvements.”

“All practising journalists should have an opportunity to question the government in person, and if space or social distancing is a concern, as it was during pandemic restrictions, then an opportunity to rotate journalists for access should be the norm,” MATT said in its statement.

But Keith Rowley told the function on Monday night that he “heard a suggestion that what I should do is rotate the invitation if a fixed number is a number that we’re using, and I would like to ask CNC3 would you accept being rotated out of the press conference so that the latest blogger who calls himself the media with a name and a jersey comes in?”

“Does the media have any interest in putting questions for anybody else? We have an Opposition Leader who hasn’t taken questions from the media for 12 years.

“So I have to conclude that you’re very selective in the questions you ask and who you ask the questions to, but then of course, you are the free media.”

*cont’d from pg 17*

to do personal checks and balances.

“We are committed to enhancing our internal and industry controls, educating our clients, and improving our service through the consistent use of best practices and systems that detect and prevent gaps, ensuring the



## New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern, an icon to many, to step down

AP - New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who became a global icon of the left and exemplified a new style of leadership, said Thursday that she would leave office.

Just 37 when she became leader, Ardern was praised around the world for her handling of the nation's worst-ever mass shooting and the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic. But she faced mounting political pressures at home and a level of vitriol from some that hadn't been experienced by previous New Zealand leaders. Still, her announcement came as a shock throughout the nation of 5 million people.

Fighting back tears, Ardern told reporters in Napier that Feb. 7 would be her last day as prime minister after five and a half years in office.

"I know what this job takes, and I know that I no longer have enough in the tank to do it justice. It is that simple," she said.

Lawmakers in her Labour Party will vote for a new leader on Sunday.

Ardern became an inspiration to women around the world after first winning the top job in 2017. She seemed to herald a new generation of leadership — she was on the verge of being a millennial, had spun some records as a part-time DJ, and wasn't married like most politicians.

In 2018, Ardern became



*New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, right, with her fiancée Clark Gayford leave a press conference after announcing her resignation in Napier, New Zealand, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023. Fighting back tears, Ardern told reporters that Feb. 7 will be her last day in office. (Mark Mitchell/New Zealand Herald AP)*

just the second elected world leader to give birth while holding office. Later that year, she brought her infant daughter to the floor of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

She notched up centre-left victories while right-wing populism was on the rise globally, pushing through a bill targeting net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, overseeing a ban on assault weapons, and largely keeping the coronavirus out of New Zealand for 18 months.

Her approach to the pandemic earned the ire of U.S. President Donald Trump, and she pushed back against wildly exaggerated claims from Trump about the spread of COVID-19 after he said there was a massive outbreak and "It's over for New Zealand. Everything's gone."

"Was angry the word?" Ardern said about Trump's

comments in an interview with The Associated Press at the time.

In March 2019, Ardern faced one of the darkest days in New Zealand's history when a white supremacist gunman stormed two mosques in Christchurch and slaughtered 51 worshippers during Friday prayers. Ardern was widely praised for her empathy toward survivors and New Zealand's wider Muslim community in the aftermath.

After the mosque shootings, Ardern moved within weeks to pass new laws banning the deadliest types of semi-automatic weapons. A subsequent buyback scheme run by police saw more than 50,000 guns, including many AR-15-style rifles, destroyed.

Less than nine months after the shooting, she faced another tragedy when 22 tourists and guides were killed

when the White Island volcano erupted.

Ardern was lauded globally for her country's initial handling of the pandemic after New Zealand managed to stop the virus at its borders for months. But she was forced to abandon that zero-tolerance strategy as more contagious variants spread and vaccines became widely available.

She faced growing anger at home from those who opposed coronavirus mandates and rules. A protest against vaccine mandates that began on Parliament's grounds last year lasted for more than three weeks and ended with protesters hurling rocks at police and setting fires to tents and mattresses as they were forced to leave. This year, Ardern cancelled an annual barbecue she hosts due to security fears.

Ardern last month announced that a wide-ranging Royal Commission of Inquiry would look into whether the government made the right decisions in battling COVID-19 and how it could better prepare for future pandemics. A report is due next year.

Many observers said sexism played a role in the anger directed at Ardern.

"Her treatment, the pile on, in the last few months has been disgraceful and embarrassing," wrote actor Sam

*cont'd on pg 20*

# Protesters stream to Peru capital demanding president resign

AP - People poured into Peru's coastal capital, many from remote Andean regions, for a protest Thursday against President Dina Boluarte and in support of her predecessor, whose ouster last month launched deadly unrest and cast the nation into political chaos.

There was a tense calm in the streets of Lima ahead of the protest that supporters of former President Pedro Castillo hope opens a new chapter in the weeks-long movement to demand Boluarte's resignation, the dissolution of Congress, and immediate elections. Castillo, Peru's first leader from a rural Andean background, was impeached after a failed attempt to dissolve Congress.

"We have delinquent ministers, presidents that murder and we live like animals in the middle of so much wealth that they steal from us every day," said Samuel Acero, a farmer who heads the regional protest committee for the Andean



*Anti-government protesters face off with security outside Alfredo Rodriguez Ballon airport in Arequipa, Peru, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023. Protesters are seeking immediate elections, President Dina Boluarte's resignation, the release of ousted President Pedro Castillo and justice for up to 48 protesters killed in clashes with police. (AP Photo/Jose Sotomayor)*

city of Cusco. "We want Dina Boluarte to leave, she lied to us."

Anger at Boluarte was the common thread as street sellers hawked T-shirts saying, "Out, Dina Boluarte," "Dina murderer, Peru repudiates you" and a call for "New elections, let them all leave."

"Our God says thou shalt not kill your neighbour. Dina Boluarte is killing, she's making brothers

fight," Paulina Consac said as she carried a large Bible while marching in downtown Lima with more than 2,000 protesters from Cusco.

By early afternoon, protesters had turned key roads into large pedestrian areas in downtown Lima.

The protests have so far been held mainly in Peru's southern Andes, with 54 people dying amid the unrest, the large majority killed in clashes with security forces.

es.

"We're at a breaking point between dictatorship and democracy," said Pedro Mamani, a student at the National University of San Marcos. Students there are housing demonstrators who travelled for the protest that is being popularly referred to as the "takeover of Lima."

The university was surrounded by police officers, who also deployed at key points of Lima's historic downtown district.

Some 11,800 police officers were being sent out, Victor Zanabria, the head of the Lima police force told local media. He played down the size of the protests, saying he expected around 2,000 people to participate.

There were protests elsewhere and video posted on social media showed a group of demonstrators trying to storm the airport in southern Arequipa, Peru's second city. They were blocked by police but the airport paused

*cont'd on pg 21*

*cont'd from pg 19*

Neill on Twitter. "All the bullies, the misogynists, the aggrieved. She deserved so much better. A great leader."

But Ardern and her government also faced criticism that it had been big on ideas but lacking on execution. Supporters worried it hadn't made promised gains on increasing housing supply and reducing child poverty, while opponents said it was not focusing enough on crime and the struggling economy.

Ardern described climate change as

the great challenge for her generation. But her policies faced scepticism and opposition, including from farmers who protested plans to tax cow burps and other greenhouse gas emissions.

Ardern had been facing tough prospects at the ballot box. Her centre-left Labour Party won reelection in 2020 with a landslide of historic proportions, but recent polls have put her party behind its conservative rivals.

She said the role required having a reserve to face the unexpected.

"But I am not leaving because it was hard. Had that been the case I probably would have departed two months into the job," Ardern said. "I am leaving because with such a privileged role comes responsibility. The responsibility to know when you are the right person to lead, and also, when you are not."

She said her time in office had been challenging but fulfilling.

"I am entering now my sixth year in office, and for each of those years, I have given my absolute all," she said.



## At least 145 people feared dead after Congo boat sinking

AP - At least 145 passengers are missing and feared dead after a motorised boat overloaded with goods and animals sank at night on a river in northwestern Congo, authorities said Thursday.

About 55 people survived the disaster, officials said. The boat had been travelling to the neighbouring

Republic of Congo when it capsized the Lulonga River late Tuesday near the town of Basankusu.

Jean-Pierre Wangela, the president of civil society groups in the area, told journalists that at least 145 people were missing. He blamed overloading for the boat's demise, but said that

locals have few other options.

"There's no other means of transport currently in our province and here in the territory of Basankusu," he said.

Boat sinkings causing dozens of fatalities are all too common in remote parts of Congo, where travel by

road is at times impossible. Many watercraft are overloaded with goods and people who don't know how to swim. Rescue operations are extremely limited in remote parts of the country.

In October, more than 40 people died on the Congo River in Equateur province under similar circumstances.

*cont'd from pg 20*  
operations.

The demonstrations that erupted last month and subsequent clashes with security forces were the worst political violence in more than two decades and has highlighted the deep divisions between the urban elite largely concentrated in Lima and poor rural areas.

By bringing the protest to Lima, demonstrators hope to give fresh weight to the movement that began when Boluarte was sworn into office on Dec. 7 to replace Castillo.

"When there are tragedies, bloodbaths outside the capital it doesn't have the same political relevance in the public agenda than if it took place in the capital," said Alonso Cárdenas, a professor of public policies at the Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University in Lima.

"The leaders have understood that and say, they can massacre us in Cusco, in Puno, and nothing happens, we need to take the protest to Lima," Cárdenas added, citing cities that have seen major violence.

The concentration of protesters in Lima also reflects how the capital has started to see more anti-government demonstrations in recent days.

The protesters were planning to march Thursday from downtown Lima to the Miraflores district, an emblem-

atic neighbourhood of the economic elite.

The government has called on protesters to be peaceful.

Boluarte has said she supports a plan to push to 2024 elections for president and Congress originally scheduled for 2026.

Many protesters say no dialogue is possible with a government they say has unleashed so much violence against its citizens.

As protesters gathered in Lima, more violence erupted in southern Peru.

In the town of Macusani on Wednesday, protesters set fire to the police station and judicial office after two people were killed and another seriously injured by gunfire amid anti-government protests. The person who was injured died Thursday morning in hospital, said a health official in the town.

Activists have dubbed Thursday's demonstration in Lima as the Cuatro Suyos March, a reference to the four cardinal points of the Inca empire. It's also the name given to a massive 2000 mobilisation, when thousands of Peruvians took to the streets against the autocratic government of Alberto Fujimori, who resigned months later.

There are several key differences

between those demonstrations and this week's protests.

"In 2000, the people protested against a regime that was already consolidated in power," Cardenas said. "In this case, they're standing up to a government that has only been in power for a month and is incredibly fragile."

The 2000 protests also had a centralised leadership and were led by political parties. "Now what we have is something much more fragmented," Coronel said.

The latest protests have largely been grassroots efforts without a clear leadership.

"We have never seen a mobilisation of this magnitude, there's already a thought installed in the peripheries that it is necessary, urgent to transform everything," said Gustavo Montoya, a historian at the National University of San Marcos. "I have the feeling that we're witnessing a historic shift."

The protests have grown to such a degree that demonstrators are unlikely to be satisfied with Boluarte's resignation and are now demanding more fundamental structural reform.

The protests have emerged "in regions that have been systematically treated as second-class citizens," Montoya said. "I think this will only keep growing."

# Sports News



## Andy Murray beats Thanasi Kokkinakis at Australian Open

BBC - Andy Murray produced another scarcely believable display to fight back from two sets down to beat Thanasi Kokkinakis in an epic Australian Open match finishing at 04:05 local time.

In one of the latest finishes in tennis history, Murray won 4-6 6-7 (4-7) 7-6 (7-5) 6-3 7-5 on a night of gruelling physical and mental endurance.

The second-round match started at 22:20 and lasted five hours 45 minutes.

It was the longest contest in 35-year-old Murray's eventful career.

The exhausted Briton remained straight-faced after taking his first match point before the two players enjoyed a warm embrace at the net.

With his mum Judy in tears in the stands, he then let out a huge roar as he contemplated one of the best comebacks of his career.

A healthy and boisterous crowd stayed inside Margaret Court Arena until the end, showing their appreciation for the efforts of both men and providing much-needed vocal support.

The match is the second-latest finish in Australian Open history after a 2008 third-round match between Lleyton Hewitt



*Andy Murray has won 11 matches from two sets down, meaning he has completed more successful comebacks than any other player.*

and Marcos Baghdatis that ended at 04:34.

"The match was very up and down, there was frustration, tension, excitement, all that stuff," Murray said.

"It's amazing to win the match but I also want to go to bed now. I want to sleep."

Murray is the second Briton to reach the third round at Melbourne Park this year, joining Dan Evans, with Cameron Norrie hoping to join them by beating Czech youngster Jiri Lehecka on Friday.

Murray has regularly defied the odds since coming back from the hip surgery in 2019 which he thought would end his ca-

reer - including in his first-round victory over Italian 13th seed Matteo Berrettini on Tuesday.

Two days later, the Scot did it again with a comeback that ranks as simply extraordinary, even by his standards.

Amid the high of beating Berrettini, Murray cautiously spoke about the impact the five-set thriller would have on his body - a combination of his advancing years and the strain caused by his implanted metal hip - before he faced 26-year-old Kokkinakis.

"I felt physically better today than I did the other day, which is a positive thing - but finishing at 4am is not ideal," the former

world number one said.

Murray could not have asked for more time to recover but the trade-off was playing in chilly conditions, which led to long rallies, long points and a very long night.

The five-time Australian Open finalist started slowly and struggled to find rhythm, with his regular chuntering to his support box an early indication he was not happy.

Kokkinakis, backed by a raucous crowd on an initially packed Margaret Court Arena, punished him with plenty of powerful and precise forehand winners on his way to a two-set lead.

At that point, you won't  
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# Sports News

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dered how much energy - mental and physical - Murray had left in the tank.

Almost four hours later, we had the answer.

Murray trailed 5-2 in the third set but used all of his experience to maintain his composure as Kokkinakis got tight when he tried to serve out the match.

A horribly skewed smash summed up the strain felt by the world number 159 and Murray used the momentum to dominate the fourth set.

Deep into the decider it was still impossible to confidently predict who would emerge as the victor, but Murray decisively broke at 5-5 and served out for an extraordinary win.

"It was by far the longest match I've played but in those conditions that is what is going to happen," Murray said.

"To play in the cold at that time of the day and, with balls like that, you will get long rallies and long points."

The one thing that has evaded the former world number one since his comeback in 2019 is another deep run at a major like he made with regularity in his prime.

If he manages to recover sufficiently to beat Spanish 24th seed Roberto Bautista Agut - coincidentally the man he played in what he thought might have been his final Grand Slam match before the hip

operation four years ago - he will reach the fourth round of a major for the first time since 2017.

The late finish brought more questions about why tennis allows this to happen and led to more scrutiny of the scheduling.

During the match, Murray screamed his frustration after losing a point and asked why they were "still playing at 3am".

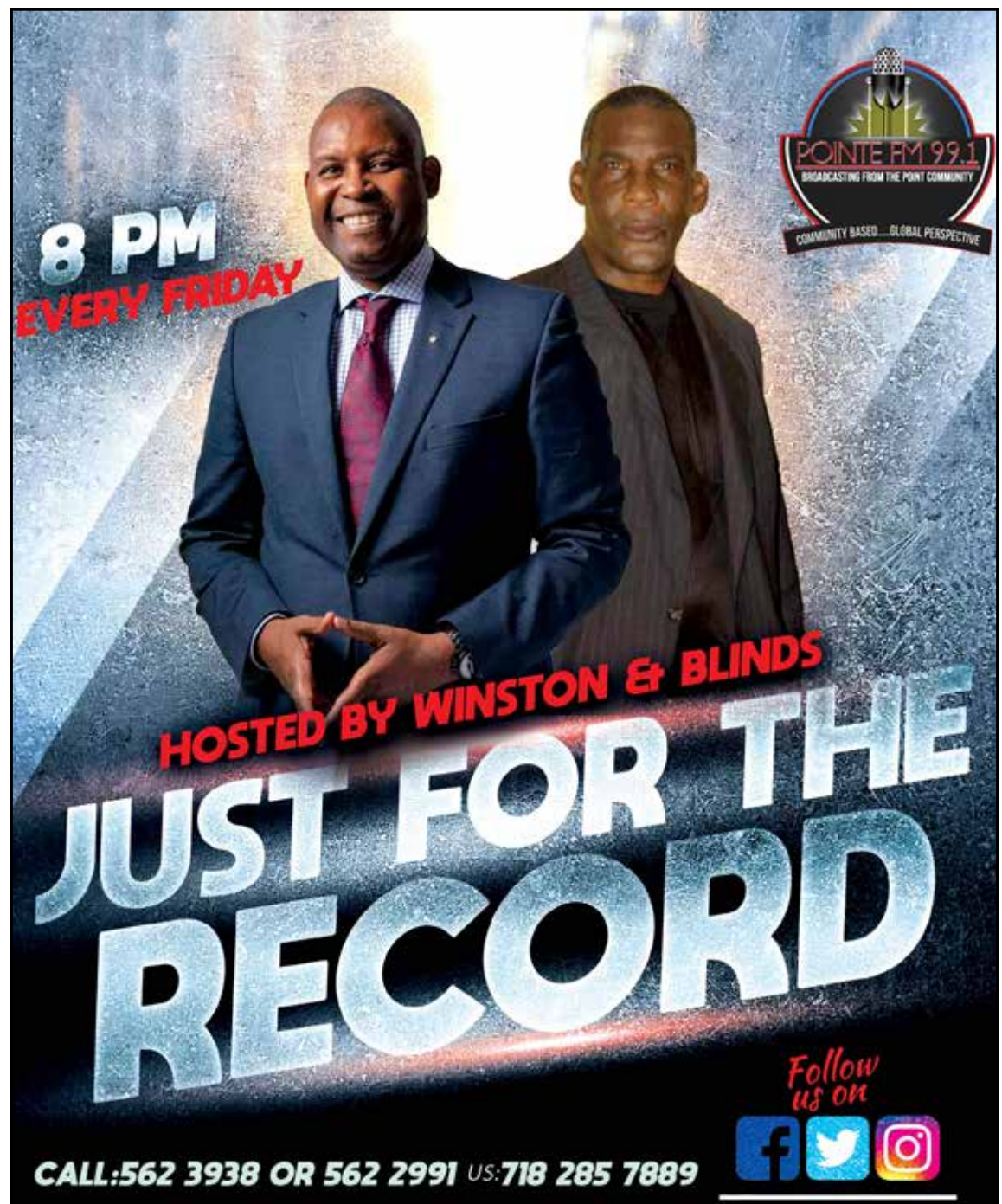
Afterwards, he continued to express his displeasure and told a huddle of journalists, who were waiting in a corridor underneath Rod Laver Arena in a bid to speed up his exit, it was a "farce".

"Who is it beneficial for? A match like that and that's what the discussion is. Rather than about an epic match, it ends in a farce," he said.

"Amazingly, people stayed until the end and created an atmosphere, I really appreciate that. Some people need to work.

"But if my child was a ball kid for the tournament and they're coming home at 5am I'm snapping at that.

"It's not beneficial for them, for the umpires, the officials. I don't think it's amazing for the fans. It's not good for the players."



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Players of the Villa Lions team participate in a training session at the Fort Road playing field on Thursday, 19th January, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

## Villa Lions coach encouraged by recent performance

Coach Auckland “Pin Up” Jarvis is heartened by the recent performance of the Villa Lions team in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association’s (ABFA) Premier Division.

A 2-1 win against Liberta Black Hawks and a 5-0 drubbing of Five Islands last Sunday, have propelled Villa Lions into third place behind leaders All Saints United and Jennings Grenades in the 16-team top domestic league.

Jarvis said the recent win against five islands in which striker Joshua Ferdinand scored twice has invigorated the Villa Lions camp which is now bubbling with confidence.

“The feeling in the camp is good. The last few games, our striker, who had been struggling, scored a few goals. We had him on the bench and he came on and scored two late goals to really pump the team up,” Jarvis said.

“There are other young players that got their first goal in that game. Shawn Tomlinson joined the team for his first game and got a goal and an assist. Now Judah Christian played his first game and created the second goal.

“So, within the camp, the guys are

very high spirited so we got a lot of good performances from the guys in the last game so that really proved that we are going forward, moving forward.”

Jarvis said the Villa Lions are looking forward to continuing their good form with another win when they face Ottos Rangers in the first game in the 8th week of matches at the ABFA’s Technical Center at 7 pm today, Friday, 20th January.

He adds that Villa Lions will also be strengthened with the return of national midfielder Ronaldo Flowers from a lengthy spell on the sideline due to injury, Cuban Striker Pocholo and defender Timothy Sanasie, who is in the process of getting a transfer from premier league team SAP.

“Yeah, we are looking forward to it with high spirits. Looking forward to getting another win to keep the team going forward,” Jarvis said.

“There is a good spirit within the camp and there are a few things happening within the camp that we are trying to get fully sorted out. But we are confident that it’s going to happen and the guys are very confident.

“We have Ronaldo Flowers who

is cleared to play again. He probably won’t play this game, but cleared to play also is Timothy Sanasie coming in from SAP and he is also a nice young defender.

“The main thing about it though is the Spanish striker we had with us for the past few years should be arriving today (yesterday Thursday) as we speak.

“So, the spirit in the camp is very optimistic looking forward. We are getting better as a team, and we want to keep working together and keep winning games.”

The Premier Division league will continue with a triple header at the ABFA Technical Center tomorrow.

Greenbay Hoppers will face Old Road at 4pm, Swetes take on Tryum at 6 pm and Pigotts Bullets face Parham at 6 pm.

In Sunday’s triple header at the same venue, Cedar Grove Blue Jays will oppose All Saints United at 4 pm, Jennings Grenades will tackle Empire at 6pm and Five Islands will clash with SAP at 8 pm.

Liberta Black Hawks will challenge Willikies at 7 pm on Monday, 23rd January.



## National golfer off to pursue studies and compete in the US

National top-ranked golfer Demar James left Antigua and Barbuda to pursue studies in the United States last Wednesday.

The 18-year-old James will be pursuing studies in Business Management at Kentucky State University.

The former Island Academy student will also be representing Kentucky State on the American University Golf Circuit.

James will make his debut on the golf course for Kentucky State University during the Men's Golf Spring Schedule which will commence with the Delta State Invitational at the Cleveland Country Club in Cleveland, Mississippi, from 13th to 14th March.

He will also contest in the Saginaw Valley Invitational at Kearney Hills Golf Course in Lexington, Kentucky, from 18th to 19th March and the Southwest Golf Klash in Kentucky at Perry Park Golf Resort in Perry Park, Kentucky from 25th to 27th March.



*National top-ranked golfer, Demar James, left Antigua and Barbuda to pursue studies in the United States last Wednesday. (Photo courtesy Jermaine Kentish)*

James will participate in the Shorter Hawk Invitational at Stonebridge Golf Club in Rome, Georgia, from 2nd to 4th April and the SIAC Conference Championship at location to be announced on 17th to 19th April.

The young Antiguan golfer is also planning to contest either the NCAA Regionals or the PGA Collegiate Championship on 8th to 10th May.

James departed to the United States after achieving a long list of accomplishments and Awards in Antigua and other countries in the Caribbean.

He won the International Junior Golf Tournament in 2011, Inter-schools Golf Tournament in 2012, the Antigua Open Junior Championship in 2013, the Junior Christmas Tournament in

2013 and the St. Kitts Open Junior Championship in 2013.

James also finished second at the St. Lucia Open Junior Championship in 2013, won the Antigua Open Junior Championship in 2014 and the St. Kitts Open Junior Championship in 2014.

He finished third at the Trinidad Junior Open in 2015, won the Antigua Open Junior Championship in 2015, the St. Kitts Open Junior Championship in 2015 and the Henry Brunton Junior Golf Championship in 2015.

James also claimed the Schools Independence Golf Championship in 2016 and the Republic Bank Caribbean Junior Open Golf Championships in 2016.

He captured the Junior Christmas Tournament in 2016, the Antigua Open Junior Championship in 2017 and the IJGT Junior Golf Championship in 2017.

James won the Trinidad Junior Open in 2018 and the St. Kitts Open Junior Championship in 2016.

**cont'd from pg 26**

is something that I am looking forward to," Benjamin said.

"Whenever you get an opportunity to see what contribution you can make in a positive way; it is always something that you are up for.

"So it is a sort of a two-fold situation where you can make a contribution at that level and in the meantime, you can do some assessment to see what it is that we need to do back at the academy level

and even lower down so that these guys can be well equipped when they get to that international level.

"So, I just look at it as an opportunity to further make an impact into the academy."

The West Indies team will land in Zimbabwe early next week ahead of a three-day warm-up match against a local side set for 28th to 30th January at the Bulawayo Athletic Club.

West Indies will then play two

Test matches against Zimbabwe at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo, with the first Test running from 4th to 8th February, and the second match from 12th to 16th February.

The squad will then travel on to South Africa for West Indies' last two matches in the current ICC World Test Championship (WTC) cycle. Following the Test Series, West Indies will play South Africa in three One Day Internationals and three T20 Internationals.

## Benjamin relishes opportunity to serve as Windies bowling coach

Former West Indies, Leeward Islands and Antiguan fast bowler Kenneth “Flipper” Benjamin is looking forward to undertaking his role as the Bowling coach of the current senior West Indies team for their upcoming tour to Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The 55-year-old Benjamin was named as part the Team Management Unit to support interim Head Coach Andre Coley throughout the two-Test tour of Zimbabwe from 28th January to 16th February, as well as the multi-format tour of South Africa, which includes two Tests, three One-Day Internationals (ODIs) and three T20 Internationals (T20Is) from 21st February to 28th March.

Benjamin will also be working alongside Assistant Coach, Rayon Griffith, current Head Coach of the Guyana Amazon Warriors, who continues in his coaching role with the West Indies.

Team Manager Rawl Lewis, Physio Denis Byam, Analyst Avenesh Seetaram and Media Officer Dario Barthley comprise the full Team Management Unit who will depart for Zimbabwe this coming weekend.

Benjamin said he wel-

comes the opportunity to continue the work he has been doing at the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Academy programme alongside Coley, who is the head Head Coach.

“The interim coach, Coley, and myself, we have been working with the West Indies Academy and we did the West Indies A Team series versus Bangladesh in July and August (2022) in St Lucia,” Benjamin said.

“So, I think it is just a situation where he (Coley) probably feels he wants to continue with me as the bowling coach. I actually think it is a good thing to go and have a look to see what contribution I can make and also to have an eye on what we need to do back at the academy to get these youngsters ready for that level.”

Benjamin, who has played professionally in the South African domestic league with Gauteng from 1999 to 2000 and Easterns from 2000 to 2001, also served as the bowling coach alongside head coach Gus Logie during the West Indies tour to Zimbabwe in October to November 2003 for a two-Test and a five-match One-Day International series.

Benjamin, who has also



Former West Indies, Leeward Islands and Antiguan fast bowler, Kenneth ‘Flipper’ Benjamin, is looking forward to his role as the bowling coach of the senior West Indies team in the upcoming tours of Zimbabwe and South Africa. (File photo)

been honing his skills in Antigua with PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks since ending his stint with the West Indies in which he claimed 92 wickets in 26 Test from 1992 to 1998, said he is also looking forward to returning to

the African Continent to continue to make his contribution to West Indies cricket.

“Yes, it is familiar territory. I have been to Zimbabwe and South Africa in 2003 with Gus Logie. Yes, it

*cont’d on pg 25*