

# MARIA: ROADS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS TOP PRIORITY

*Story on Page 2*



Former Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer (third from left), Foreign Minister E.P. Chet Greene (fourth from right), and Venezuelan Ambassador Carmen Velasquez (third from right), along with members of the diplomatic corps, attended the ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of the passing of former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. *Story on page 3*

## Ministry of Works sets priority; fix roads, public buildings etc.

The Ministry of Works has rolled out an ambitious programme for this year that will see major repairs to secondary roads and the completion of some public buildings such as the prison, clinics and police stations.

The details of the programme were presented in parliament on Thursday by the Minister of Works Maria Browne, during the first day of the debate on the 2023 National Budget.

Browne said the ministry is quite aware of the concerns being expressed by residents in multiple communities across An-

tigua regarding the state of their roads and infrastructure, generally. She revealed that in less than two months on the job, the ministry has been able to carry out repairs to several community roads across the island.

“So far we have done the Lablaliah Road in Green Bay Hill, we have seen works done in Seaton, Glanvilles, St. Johnson’s Village, Willikies, Jennings, Friar’s Hill, Belmont and others in two months,” she stated.

She announced that the ministry is creating what she called a ‘Rapid

Response Unit’ to address those concerns that require urgent attention. “We are also able to set up a Rapid Response Unit that is tasked with addressing major irritants among the main arteries with quick fixes to problems that may pop up. The unit has been working very well and I wish to extend my appreciation to its members,” she added.

According to Browne her ministry is giving serious consideration to creating a second unit because, as she stated, ‘they are inundated’ with requests. She disclosed that calls come in ‘every day’ from various communities and also from the members of parliament seeking assistance to address concerns in their areas.

She also indicated that there are some staff issues which she intends to address, and to have resolved to everyone’s satisfaction.

She also revealed that there is already coordination between the Ministries of Works and Utilities to address a long-standing complaint where roads are repaired, only to be dug up soon after by APUA, to lay pipes etc. “We have synergies working between the ministries and we will continue to strengthen these,” she noted.

The Works Minister also reported that consul-



Minister of Works Maria Browne

tations are taking place with the Ministry of Public Safety about completing the work being done at the prison, as well as at several police stations, and clinics that are in urgent need of repairs and renovations.

Earlier in the debate, Opposition Leader, Jamale Pringle made a 3-hour-20 minute rebuttal to the prime minister’s budget presentation. He was critical of many aspects of the budget which he said lacked real policies to deal with many of the problems in society.

He said there were no programmes to stimulate the private sector to create jobs, thus taking some of the burden from government or other programmes to help ordinary citizens deal with the rising cost of living.



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## Government and opposition participate in Chavez tribute

Ten years after the passing of former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the government of Antigua and Barbuda and the opposition participated in a ceremony hosted by the Venezuelan embassy to mark the occasion.

Foreign Minister E.P Chet Greene described the late Chavez as ‘a stalwart and a giant of a man’ and placed him in the pantheon of extraordinary leaders the Americas have produced, to include Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Jose Marti and Simon Bolivar.

“Those are the names that come to mind when I think of Hugo Chavez and his contributions towards building a just America.

“I say America because too often when we hear about America, we think of the United States, but the truth is that we share a common space, the Americas. Chavez’s vision was to have a just Americas, one in which all peoples find a place to live, to work and certainly to make a contribu-



Foreign Minister E.P Chet Greene, left, addresses the gathering. Former Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer was also in attendance.

tion towards development,” he stated.

Greene noted that with ten years passing since Chavez’s death it seems strange, as it is difficult to actually comprehend that ten has elapsed.

“It’s ten years ago and it seems like yesterday that this great man would have left us. I believe that it seems like yesterday because the work, his work, continues in our lives,” he remarked.

The foreign minister recalled that Chavez committed the oil profits to help his people, and his social programme had an impact on their wellbeing as there was a significant drop in Venezuela’s poverty rate.

Also attending the ceremony was former Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer who actually met Chavez on several occasions and who described him as powerful force working on behalf of

the poor and downtrodden in not only his native Venezuela, but all of Latin America and the Caribbean.

“Apart from being the driving force behind the creation of the ALBA and by extension the creation of the PetroCaribe initiative, there were a number of other things that Chavez personally ensured in order to ensure that things happened in order to bring some degree of fairness, opportunity and respectability to the ordinary men and women in the Caribbean,” Spencer declared.

The former prime minister got emotional when he recalled making the infamous ‘midnight call’ to Chavez seeking assistance and was able to get a US\$50 million loan at very concessional rates.

Fri 10   Day		Fri 10   Night	
<b>80°</b>	16% NW 7 mph	<b>71°</b>	3% NNW 6 mph
Partly cloudy. High around 80F. Winds NW at 5 to 10 mph.		Partly cloudy. Low 71F. Winds light and variable.	
Humidity <b>65%</b>	UV Index <b>Extreme</b>	Humidity <b>73%</b>	UV Index <b>0 of 10</b>
Sunrise <b>6:19 am</b>	Sunset <b>6:15 pm</b>	Moonrise <b>9:02 pm</b>	Moonset <b>8:13 am</b>
		○ Waning Gibbous	

# Local News



## National Housing to pass on increased costs to new home purchasers

Individuals entering into new contracts with the National Housing Development and Urban Renewal Company will be paying higher prices for their homes, due to the increases in the price of materials.

This comes as the Cabinet invited senior members of NHDURC to address the issue of the subsidy which new homeowners have been enjoying since the inception

of the company. “Owing to an increase in the cost of the inputs in the construction industry, the cost of constructing homes has increased—even as the contracts to build those homes had been fixed.

More than three hundred homeowners who contracted to purchase homes in 2019 and 2020, before Covid-19 was declared a pandemic, have enjoyed a heightened

subsidy. The cost of building has increased, while the contracts reflected a fixed lower cost, when sold to the homeowners,” a spokesman for the Cabinet disclosed.

During the meeting, both the Cabinet and the Company agreed that a price hike of homes would follow, to match the increased cost of the building materials. No date has yet been deter-

mined. According to the source NHDURC has built more than 700 hundred homes since its founding in 2014; although not connected to the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA), both government entities have together constructed more than 1,000 new homes since 2014.

The source added that National Housing is performing an important social role by employing hundreds of young men in the construction of these homes.

“The benefits are twofold; first they earn money while learning new skills, but equally important, they are now able to make regular payments to the courts for child support.

Meanwhile, the National Housing and Urban Renewal Company will seek to enter into an agreement with the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education (ABICE) as the institute continues to expand its services.

They will prepare many young men and women, working for NHDURC to acquire certification in a number of building trades and other specialties. ABICE continues to expand and grow, making use of a grant by a wealthy Italian to construct additional classrooms.

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## Calvin Ayre to purchase portion of Jolly Beach Hotel for new project

While work continues to refurbish Jolly Beach Hotel, a portion of that 30-acre property is set to be sold to billionaire Calvin Ayre to transform the proposed area.

The new development, Nikki Beach and residences is a US\$250 million-dollar investment, which will boast 90 rooms, 70 branded residences, 10 villas, 2 restaurants, a beach club, spa and gym.

“The other section is likely to be Nikki Beach. It’s a very high-cost hotel, much like a Blue Waters. I think we have already made an arrangement with Calvin Ayre,” Chief of Staff in the Prime Minister’s Office Lionel ‘Max’ Hurst revealed yesterday during the post Cabinet press briefing.

“Subtract 78 of them from the 464 and that’s about how many the Elite group will develop. [Calvin Ayre] won’t

build 78 rooms but the way this wing is arranged it has 78 rooms,” Hurst explained.

Work began last year to refurbish the resort which was closed in 2020 due to financial troubles.

Elite Island Resorts is working alongside the government on this project, pumping up to an estimated US\$6 million.

Already US\$2.2 million has been spent to refurbish the property and thus far, more than 160 rooms have been deemed fit for operation. Despite the progress, much work still needs to be done on the property.

According to this week’s Cabinet report, two business managers employed by the hotel – which currently employs 132 employees – met with the Cabinet on Wednesday to speak on the work re-



Calvin Ayre

quired to ramp up the restoration.

The managers reported that a number of upgrades must take place, to include: a 250,000-gallon water-storage tank; a reverse osmosis plant that produces 65,000 gallons per day; an electrical system to be upgraded; new air conditioning systems on the rooftops and other spaces; and, the property is to be properly fenced.



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## 25-year-old man acquitted on rape charge

A 9-member mixed jury has returned a majority decision of not guilty in a case where a 25-year-old man was charged with raping his teenaged co-worker.

Both the alleged victim and the accused worked at a villa in English Harbour on the night of the alleged crime – December 24, 2020 – when the accused celebrated her 17th birthday.

The court heard that there was much celebrating for the birthday with dancing and alcohol consumption. As was the custom at the time, one member of staff was required to stay overnight at the villa, and it was the accused's turn to do so.

After the partying, the court heard that the alleged victim decided that she too would stay back with the accused and whilst there were two beds in the guest house, the two were laying down on one bed listening to voice notes offer-

ing birthday greetings.

The accused informed the court that during these exchanges they started kissing and he soon turned off the light with the kissing leading to physical sexual contact.

During the encounter, he suggested that they change sexual positions and at this point the victim is said to have gotten up from the bed, gone into the bathroom and locked the door.

She remained there and was crying for some time. The accused said he went to seek help after the alleged victim was crying non-stop.

The next day, the matter was reported to the police as the alleged victim claimed that she was raped.

The case was heard before Justice Ann-Matie Smith with the accused represented by attorney, Wendel Robin-



*Mother of acquitted man with attorney Wendel Robinson*

son assisted by Marie McDougal while acting Director of Public prosecution, Shannon Jones-Gittens represented the crown.

## Antigua and Barbuda to host SIDS conference next year

Minister of Foreign Affairs, E. P. Chet Greene was elected Vice President of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) in Doha, Qatar. Minister Greene along with the high-level delegation of Antigua and Barbuda were in Doha on a fact-finding mission to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and provide guidance to Antigua and Barbuda on hosting a similar global conference, the Fourth United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (4th SIDS Conference) in the summer of 2024.

Foreign Minister Greene noted the necessity to collaborate and partner with the government and people



*Antigua and Barbuda delegation to the meeting in Qatar*

of Qatar as an exemplar of their successful hosting of FIFA World Cup 2022 and their demonstration of strong leadership in hosting LDC5. The team was afforded the opportunity to engage with the secretariat of LDC5 and gained behind the scenes experience associated with hosting the international conference.

Coming out of a bilateral

with H.E. Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations, a commitment was made to offer support to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in hosting the 4th SIDS Conference. The minister expressed his profound gratitude to the people and Government of Qatar for its continued generosity for

providing travel and accommodations to the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda at LDC5 and most importantly, for its commitment of support towards the 4th SIDS Conference. The 4th SIDS Conference will bring together World Leaders, the Private Sector, Civil Society, and youth to generate a holistic approach that will identify challenges and opportunities for sustainable development and building the resilience of SIDS.

Throughout the five-day visit, Foreign Minister Greene also held talks with high officials from the United Nations, including the interim Executive Director of UNOPS who made commitments to support Antigua

*cont'd on pg 7*

## Marshall highlights moves to foster safer digital spaces for all

The Antigua and Barbuda government wants to foster safer digital spaces for all in society, at a time when it has been acknowledged that there are unsafe spaces for women and girls within the digital world.

The observation comes from Minister of State with responsibility for Social Transformation - Senator Samantha Marshall, who addressed a number of pertinent matters related to the protection and advancement of women and girls in Antigua and Barbuda, during the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations, in New York.

Minister Marshall was at the time speaking during a Ministerial Roundtable this week, that discussed fostering inclusive innovation and technological changes to empower women and girls and create safer digital spaces.

She shared Antigua and Barbuda's interest and investment in Science, Technology Engineering and

Mathematics (STEM), noting that 80 percent of current employment opportunities now and in the future, are linked to this field.

Marshall's comments came against the backdrop of the observation of International Women's Day under the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality".

She went on to highlight the progress being made in Antigua and Barbuda to foster safer digital spaces such as the country's Electronic Crimes Act, and the adoption of remote, virtual testimony through the model sexual offenses court.

"Antigua and Barbuda introduced laws to protect against cybercrimes and acts of electronic abuse to create safe spaces for our girls and women within the digital world. Such legislation penalizes several cybercrimes to include cyberbullying, violation of privacy and pornography," Minister Marshall shared.

The Minister declared that Antigua and Barbuda



Minister of State with responsibility for Social Transformation - Senator Samantha Marshall at the UN.

being the only OECS jurisdiction to have a Support and Referral Centre and the first model court for sexual offenses within the same jurisdiction, has used the digital space to create safe spaces for victims of sexual offences.

"Hence, such victims can give their evidence before the Court free of any intimidation or threat of the accused by doing so virtually in accordance with the relevant legislation. Antigua and Barbuda can and will still do more to ensure that we create safe spaces for our women and girls within

the digital world," she explained.

She also spoke about opportunities in STEM that have been provided for young women such as the Ministry of Education's robotics camp which was held for the first time in 2022 and will now be an annual event.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, Minister Marshall noted, is committed to fostering equitable participation in tech spaces and to continuously improve legislation to protect women and girls, by ensuring equal access and safety through design.

*cont'd from pg 6*

and Barbuda's hosting of the 4th SIDS Conference and to provide technical support to Antigua and Barbuda's national development efforts.

While in Doha, the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda actively participated in various meetings and key events.

H.E. Walton Webson, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of

Antigua and Barbuda to the UN, led discussions at an event on the development of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) where Prime Minister Browne is currently the Co-Chair of the High-Level Panel of Experts on the development of the MVI.

Mr. Tumasie Blair, Deputy Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the UN was elected Rapporteur-General of LDC5 and deliv-

ered the report of the Conference at its closing. Other members of the delegation included Ms. Karen Cabral, Chief Protocol Officer within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Claxton DUBerry, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to the UN, Mr. Lance Browne, Consular Officer within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ms. Sheila Roseau, special adviser for the 4th SIDS Conference.



## Youth community activist donates televisions to Greenbay Primary School

Greenbay Primary School is the recipient of two (2) brand new 32-inch Smart TV's which were donated by community activist and Philanthropist Michael Joseph. Joseph who hails from the Grays Green community has been involved in sponsoring various youth related activities within the schools since 2019.

Two weeks ago, the young business owner, continued his tradition by donating football jerseys, shin guards, footballs, a water cooler, and a cheque in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00), to both the Five Islands Primary School and the Greenbay Primary School.

At the time of the donation to Greenbay Primary School, Joseph was


approached by the kindergarten teacher and showed a laptop that is being used to teach educational videos to the young pupils. Upon seeing the need, he immediately made a commitment to provide the requested resources to outfit both kindergarten classes with modern televisions to aid in strengthening the teaching capacity at the school.


The former student of the Five Islands School says that as a son of the community, he shares a great appreciation for the needs that currently exist and owes his every success to the lessons learned growing up in Grays Green. Joseph says, "I remain committed to seeing the greatest potential of Grays Green. The constituency has challenges, it has needs, but it also has a wealth



of knowledge, capacity and potential to take our country forward. I encourage every individual to do their part to fill gaps that currently exist."

Joseph indicated that in this juncture of his life he wants to be part of the change to seeing a brighter Grays Green and will be utilizing the resources of his wide network to contribute to this goal.









**NOTICE OF RECORD DATE**  
**66<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
 TO: SHAREHOLDERS OF ANTIGUA COMMERCIAL BANK LTD.  
 TRADING AS ACB CARIBBEAN

Pursuant to section 110 of the Companies Act, 1995 of the laws of Antigua and Barbuda, **NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Board of Directors of **ANTIGUA COMMERCIAL BANK LTD. TRADING AS ACB CARIBBEAN** has fixed **Thursday March 16, 2023** as the **RECORD DATE** for determining the Shareholders entitled to receive:

- **Notice of the 66th Annual General Meeting** of the Company to be held via hybrid format (both online and in-person) on **Wednesday April 12, 2023 at 2:00pm** at the **Sir John E. St. Luce Finance and Convention Centre** on Factory Road, St. John's, Antigua and on the Zoom Webinar Platform, and
- **Payment of a Dividend**, if declared, for the financial year ended September 30, 2021.

Be advised that only the Shareholders of the Company on record at the close of business on **Thursday March 16, 2023** will be entitled to receive Notice of the Meeting and payment of a Dividend.

**Notice of the 66th Annual General Meeting** will be subsequently issued in accordance with Articles 12.3 and 12.4 of the Company's Bylaws by publication in the newspaper and on the Company's website, <http://www.acbonline.com> and by email distribution for the attention of the Shareholders of the Company.

[www.acbonline.com](http://www.acbonline.com)    

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**RHODETTE F. C. PAIGE**  
 LEGAL COUNSEL/CORPORATE SECRETARY  
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## Shaggy paying it forward, doing his part to help Caribbean artistes

By *Laura Dowrich-Phillips*

After years of building his career to become a global superstar, Shaggy is paying it forward and helping Caribbean artistes to properly navigate the music industry.

His first Island Music Conference, held in Kingston last month, marked his formal approach to educating artistes, producers, songwriters, managers and other music stakeholders about the industry.

The conference, held during Reggae Month, was a collaboration between Shaggy, Sharon Burke of Solid Agency and media consultant Judith Bodley.

Speakers from Pandora, Tik Tok, Audiomack, YouTube, Warner Music, BET, Ineffable Records and BBC1X-TRA among others, convened in Jamaica to speak on a range of topics from mental health and style to contracts and social media marketing.

Speaking to Loop News during a visit to Trinidad, Shaggy said the conference, in his estimation, was a success.

“It achieved more than we thought. First of all to have some of the panelists we had from YouTube, Tik Tok, Instagram, some of these are top brasses who came in based on our relationships and friendships and the idea of trying to ignite the region and put us in a conversation to level the playing field,” he said.

He said they could have had more high-level panelists but the conference took place around the same time as the Grammys and the NFL’s Superbowl so they may have to reconsider the dates for the event in the future.

The event was supported by Jamaican artistes among them Valiant, Tee-Jay and Bounty Killer and Shaggy not-



*Shaggy*

ed that a lot of young and new artistes were in attendance.

“In the business of music and doing music I realized there are a lot of people who don’t have the knowledge. When we had our run in dancehall, when Sean Paul and Shaggy and Wayne Wonder were happening remember Gwen Stefani came in and she had “Hey Baby” with Bounty Killer and then right after that she started to sell Caribbean-infused handbags and shoes and purses through Neiman Marcus and these stores. None of us was educated to take those opportunities,” he said.

“For the first time, we were more than a conversation, we were a bigger part of the market share and we didn’t know how to capitalise on it. That comes from education...I didn’t have management or a team at the time that was smart enough to capitalise on my

breakthrough.”

Shaggy observed that many artistes think once they make it with a big song that is it. He said, however, that the work actually begins when you make that breakthrough.

“These are things we need to keep teaching and let them know how necessary it is. So apart from me screaming it, let’s bring some big players to say yeah this is how it is done and validate what we are saying,” he said, explaining the purpose of the conference.

The lessons he seeks to convey to Caribbean artistes through the conference are lessons he had to learn along his journey. His knowledge, he said, came from trial and error.

“I had the biggest album in the world with Hotshots. I went Diamond, everyone knew my name, I performed

*cont’d on pg 11*



*cont'd from pg 10*

with Michael Jackson. I met the queen, I met the pope, Nelson Mandela but as somebody was ahead in that culture if I had a smarter team around me there was a lot more we could have accomplished," he said, drawing comparisons to Reggae-ton artistes who, he said, has educated and smart people in charge.

Shaggy said Caribbean music could benefit from the wide support Reggae-ton receives throughout Latin America.

"We are taking a culture that is less than five percent of the global market share so literally for us to do that it starts from us sporting our own," he said, calling for radio quotas to ensure a certain percentage of our music is played on our airwaves.

"Radio is not the tell all but it certainly is still relevant," he countered when asked if quotas can work in an age where everyone has access to music via their devices.

He also called for a Caribbean Grammy Awards.

"That's one way to go but we can't achieve these things without leverage and we can't get leverage without numbers and we can't get numbers without support," he said.

Looking at the music itself, Shaggy, who is a very versatile artist, champions hybrid music as a key factor for success. He also believes music should not be seasonal and that lyrics matter.

"Songwriting is a craft,

Mastering your craft is also about having your finger on the pulse. It is really about writing songs that are relatable. Lionel Richie looked at me one day and said that he has written one song in his entire career. I said I don't understand what you mean, you have many songs and he said they are all about the same thing, "I Love You", three little words. He keeps writing the same thing over and over because it is relatable," he explained.

"It Wasn't Me was relatable. It's a song about banging but whether you are young or old, straight or gay, Muslim or Christian, it is relatable."

Shaggy isn't a fan of writing camps as he believes each writer has his or her own process. He advises, however, that people look to the greats in the industry who are masters of their craft. His favourites are the Beatles, Lionel Richie, Simon and Garfunkel, and Bob Marley

"I studied those people and bring some of that into my craft. I don't like the idea of a writing camp where they are telling you it should be done one way, it is really not my thing," he said.

Apart from helping the Caribbean music industry through the Island Music Conference, Shaggy also works one on one with various artistes. In the past, he helped to shine a spotlight on artistes such as Rick Rock and Rayvon.

Last year, he worked with Spice and Sean Paul on the

single "Go Down Deh" and helped to promote Spice all over the US. He also recently worked with Teejay and for the Superbowl, did the "Electric Slide" song for the Jeep commercial with Marcia Griffiths.

On the soca end, Shaggy recently collaborated with Kees Dieffenthaler for the song "Mood" and will feature other soca artistes on his first-ever soca album due to drop this month.

"My job is to pay it forward, my job is to use my platform to promote the culture," he said.

But if you think getting on Shaggy's radar is easy, think again. He said artistes

must work their way up.

He said: "For us to have a conversation with YouTube or Live Nation, it really boils down to leverage and that leverage is being on their radar. We will be on their radar when we start doing numbers. So the same thing with any artiste. You are not going to just start out and I will do a song with you. I did a song with Spice because she was on my radar, she worked her way up and I said okay let me give her a shot. Teejay has done enough songs and worked his way up so I said let me do a song with him. It's an investment you are putting into that person to move forward."



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## WHO: Massive efforts needed to reduce salt intake and protect lives

Loop - A first-of-its-kind World Health Organization (WHO) Global report on sodium intake reduction shows that the world is off-track to achieve its global target of reducing sodium intake by 30 per cent by 2025.

Sodium, an essential nutrient, increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and premature death when eaten in excess. The main source of sodium is table salt (sodium chloride), but it is also contained in other condiments such as sodium glutamate.

The report shows that only 5 per cent of WHO Member States are protected by mandatory and comprehensive sodium reduction policies and 73 per cent of WHO Member States lack full range of implementation of such policies.

Implementing highly cost-effective sodium reduction policies could save an estimated 7 million lives globally by 2030. It is an important component of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing deaths from non-communicable diseases. But today, only nine countries (Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Uruguay) have a comprehensive package of recommended policies to reduce sodium intake.

“Unhealthy diets are a leading cause of death and



*Salt (Photo credit: iStock).*

disease globally, and excessive sodium intake is one of the main culprits,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. “This report shows that most countries are yet to adopt any mandatory sodium reduction policies, leaving their people at risk of heart attack, stroke, and other health problems. WHO calls on all countries to implement the ‘Best Buys’ for sodium reduction, and on manufacturers to implement the WHO benchmarks for sodium content in food.”

A comprehensive approach to sodium reduction includes adopting mandatory policies and WHO’s four “best buy” interventions related with sodium which greatly contribute to preventing noncommunicable diseases. These include:

Reformulating foods to contain less salt, and setting targets for the amount of sodium in foods and meals

Establishing public food procurement policies to limit salt or sodium rich foods in public institutions such as

hospitals, schools, workplaces and nursing homes

Front-of-package labelling that helps consumers select products lower in sodium

Behaviour change communication and mass media campaigns to reduce salt/sodium consumption

Countries are encouraged to establish sodium content targets for processed foods, in line with the WHO Global Sodium Benchmarks and enforce them through these policies.

Mandatory sodium reduction policies are more effective, as they achieve broader coverage and safeguard against commercial interests, while providing a level playing field for food manufacturers.

As part of the report, WHO developed a Sodium country score card for Member States based on the type and number of sodium reduction policies they have in place.

“This important report demonstrates that countries must work urgently to imple-

ment ambitious, mandatory, government-led sodium reduction policies to meet the global target of reducing salt consumption by 2025,” said Dr Tom Frieden, President and CEO of Resolve to Save Lives, a not-for-profit organisation working with countries to prevent 100 million deaths from cardiovascular disease over 30 years. “There are proven measures that governments can implement and important innovations, such as low sodium salts. The world needs action, and now, or many more people will experience disabling or deadly—but preventable—heart attacks and strokes.”

The global average salt intake is estimated to be 10.8 grams per day, more than double the WHO recommendation of less than 5 grams of salt per day (one teaspoon). Eating too much salt makes it the top risk factor for diet and nutrition-related deaths.

More evidence is emerging documenting links between high sodium intake and increased risk of other health conditions such as gastric cancer, obesity, osteoporosis and kidney disease.

WHO calls on Member States to implement sodium intake reduction policies without delay and to mitigate the harmful effects of excessive salt consumption. WHO also calls on food manufacturers to set ambitious sodium reduction targets in their products.



## China ready to help Caribbean with transition to solar energy

By Alina Doodnath

Chinese deputy official Liu Hanyuan said China's is willing and ready to assist Caribbean regions with the transition to renewable energy, particularly solar, through collaboration and technological assistance.

Speaking with Loop News for the first session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC), Liu said because of the Caribbean's sunny location solar is a good choice for alternative energy.

Liu said from the technical perspective it is possible to reduce the cost for solar energy, however in the Caribbean region photovoltaic (PV) systems are still being introduced. Another issue would be shipping, which contributes to higher costs.

He said however if there is enough demand this could help make solar more affordable.

"If there is the demand, the price would be cheaper and cost could be lower, and they could also enjoy the same prices as people in China."

He added that there are no limitations with regard to the sharing of Chinese technology and skills in assisting the Caribbean region in the transition to solar energy.

"From the Chinese perspective of the government with regard to these enterprises, there are absolutely no limitations for the transmission of this technology into the Caribbean region. But we need two things, more demand and the new systems being established, which will help bring lower energy costs."

He said however that once these systems are built the price of energy will be comparatively lower than fossil fuels.



Deputy official for China's National People's Congress, Liu Hanyuan, is chairman of the Board of Directors of Tongwei Group and co-chairman of the China Photovoltaic Agricultural Industry Technology Innovation Strategic Alliance. Liu spoke with reporters during the Two Sessions on climate change issues on March 8, 2023.

He said it's hoped that they can assist with the construction of more solar facilities to assist with the Caribbean region's energy goals.

Liu, who is chairman of the Board of Directors of Tongwei Group and co-chairman of the China Photovoltaic Agricultural Industry Technology Innovation Strategic Alliance, said China's green development strategy has clear goals for reducing CO2 emissions, one of which is developing its solar energy production.

China is also open to developing and providing technological support for other countries in this regard via its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

In Trinidad and Tobago, sod has been turned for the construction of a solar park system at the Piarco International Airport, via a \$12 million grant from the European Union's Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) programme.

Plans are also underway for the construction of the country's largest solar energy project to be developed and executed by a consortium between Lightsource bp, bp Alternative Energy Trinidad and Tobago and Shell Renewables Caribbean.

It is the first joint project between the three entities.

The 148MW total is split over two sites, Brechin Castle (122MWp) and Orange Grove (26MWp), the latter of which will see bp and Shell collaborate with the University of the West Indies.

Construction is expected to begin in Q1 2023, and operations in Q3-4 2024.

The project came about in response to the Trinidadian government's request for proposal (RFP), seeking projects to contribute to the country's commitment to lower greenhouse gas emissions in the power sector by 15 per cent by 2030.

## Jamaica announces increase in minimum wage in April

Karl Samuda, Jamaica's Minister of Labour and Social Security, will announce an increase in the minimum wage in April.

This was revealed by Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, as he opened the 2023/24 Budget Debate in the House of Representatives on March 7.

Clarke stated that the Jamaican people's lives have always been prioritized by the government in order to improve their living standards and allow them to live more meaningful lives.

"As a result, the most recent increase under the Minimum Wage Act in 2022 was the single largest increase in the entire history of the Minimum Wage Act, moving from \$7,000 to \$9,000, a 29% increase," he explained.

The Minister stated that because the minimum wage was only changed



one year ago, many minimum wage earners are concerned about having to wait another year or two for another increase.

"We know that times are tough, and we know that in today's Jamaica, that \$9,000 is an insufficient amount to live on in Jamaica, especially after the inflation shock last year," Dr. Clarke said, adding that the Minister is aware of this.

On March 2, Samuda informed

the Standing Finance Committee that the National Minimum Wage Advisory Council's report had been submitted to him.

"By law and convention, the Minister of Labour is the only person who announces the new Minimum Wage rate. As a result, he will announce the rate..., and he will have the Cabinet's approval. "Minimum wage earners can expect a significant increase," Clarke said.

## Alleged pirate attack off the coast of Guyana



The guns, bow and arrows that were seized.  
(Photo: Guyana Police Force)

Loop - Three suspected Venezuelan nationals were nabbed in rough waters by the Guyana Police Force and GDF Coast Guard as they attempted to flee with a stolen Guyanese-owned fishing boat. According to a report, the authorities were alerted to an alleged pirate attack in an area at Waini Point, North West District on Tuesday.

A Coast Guard vessel managed to capture the suspects in rough waters as they failed to flee towards the Venezuelan border with the boat and outboard engines they allegedly stole.

It is reported two Guyanese fishermen were asleep on the vessel, which was moored at Waini Point,

North West District when they were awoken by the three suspects who were armed with guns, bows and arrows.

The victims said the alleged 'pirates' spoke to them in a foreign language (believed to be Spanish). The suspects ordered them off the fishing boat, which they took control of, and fled toward the Venezuelan border.

The two victims, a 24-year-old and a teenager managed to alert another nearby fishing vessel, which assisted them.

The victims reported the matter to their boss, who owns the fishing boat and the matter was subsequently reported to the Police.

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## Over 200 illegal migrants detained in the Turks and Caicos Islands

Loop - The Turks and Caicos Islands continues to deal with an influx of illegal migrants after a vessel was intercepted on Wednesday.

According to an official report, Marine Branch Officers of the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force were dispatched yesterday afternoon following reports that a suspicious vessel was seen making its way towards West Caicos.

Acting on the information received, at around 2:51 pm, the officers, via the Sea Protector vessel, intercepted a migrant vessel about 3.5 miles south-west of the Bluff, Providenciales.

The migrant vessel was found carrying a total of 202 illegal migrants - 40 females; three of whom are minors and 162 males, including one minor.

The illegal migrants were handed over to the Immigration Task Force.

Additionally, Marine Officers seized four packages containing what appeared to be cannabis, floating in close proximity to the illegal migrant vessel.

The suspected drugs were handed over to officers of Grace Bay Police Post.

The RTCIPF can confirm, this is the eighth interception for the year.

Acting Commissioner of Police Rodney Adams said: "I would like to congratulate the Marine Branch for yet another successful operation.

"The protection of the TCI border remains a high priority for the RTCIPF and we remain grateful for the collaborations between our regional and international partners. Through several agencies, including the RTCIPF Marine Branch, Maritime Operations Center and the Immigration Task Force working cohesively, this sloop was identified and intercepted, preventing over 200 irregular migrants from entering the TCI illegally.

"These are challenging operations in a dangerous environment, and I wish to thank members of the public for their continued support of the Force by sharing information with us. We are extremely grateful and by working in partnership with



Vessel with illegal migrants intercepted in the TCI.

your police service, together  
 we can certainly make a dif- TCI." ference in building a safer

### cont'd from pg 14

As a result, Police and Coast Guard ranks swiftly proceeded to a notorious area on the water top called 'Crab Dog' area, where they observed and attempted to intercept the stolen boat with the suspects inside.

When the suspects saw the Police and Coast Guard ranks approaching, they jumped overboard. However, the team

apprehended them and later learned they were all Venezuelan nationals.

The boat and the suspects were escorted to a safe area out of the treacherous water where a search was conducted, and two single-barrel shotguns, one live 5.56 round of ammunition, two arrows and one bow were found hidden in the boat.

The suspects are presently in custody, assisting with the ongoing investigation.

## Rochester concert stampede claims third victim; venue closed

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — A third person has died after being injured in a stampede after a weekend concert by the rapper GloRilla in western New York, police said Thursday.

Aisha Stephens, 35, of Syracuse was the only person who remained hospitalized following a Sunday evening performance by the Memphis, Tennessee, rap star and Finesse2tymes at the Rochester Main Street Armory. She died Wednesday night.

Two other women, Rhondesia Belton, 33, of Buffalo and Brandy Miller, 35, of Rochester, also died and several people were injured after being caught up in a crush of concertgoers



*GloRilla*

who surged toward the exits after the show.

Police said the stampede may have been triggered by unfounded fears of gunfire.

The city refused to renew the venue's entertainment license on Wednesday, effectively shutting it down while criminal and

regulatory investigations are underway, said Patrick Beath, the city's deputy corporation counsel. In addition to a police investigation, he said fire and code enforcement authorities are inspecting the building and reviewing photos and video from the concert to determine if

there were any violations.

The armory's owner has not responded to numerous emailed requests for comment.

The main arena in the fortress-like armory has a capacity of about 5,000 people, city officials said.

As the concert ended Sunday, people exiting the venue just after 11 p.m. began to surge dangerously after hearing what they believed to be gunshots, city officials have said. Police found no evidence of gunfire.

Crowd surges at large events have turned deadly before, including one at a 2021 concert by rapper Travis Scott in which 10 people died.

## Ukraine war: Russia fires hypersonic missiles in new barrage

**By Henri Astier**

At least nine people have died in a new wave of strikes across Ukraine in which Russia used powerful weapons, including rare hypersonic missiles.

Russia had reportedly not fired Kinzhal hypersonic missiles - which can evade air defences - since the early months of the conflict.

The latest barrage was the most severe to hit Ukraine for weeks.

It cut power to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant - Europe's biggest - although it was later restored.

On Thursday Russian defence ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said: "High-precision long-range air, sea and land-based weapons, in-

cluding the Kinzhal hypersonic missile system, hit key elements of Ukraine's military infrastructure."

It was the biggest day of Russian strikes on Ukraine since the end of January,

The Ukrainian military claimed it had successfully shot down 34 cruise missiles and four Iranian-made Shahed drones.

But it also said it had been unable to intercept the six Kinzhal ballistic missiles - nor was it able to destroy older weapons, such as Kh-22 anti-ship missiles and S-300 anti-aircraft missiles.

"This was a major attack and for the first time with so many different

types of missiles," the Reuters news agency quoted a Ukrainian air force spokesperson as saying. "It was like never before."

President Vladimir Putin has highlighted Russia's investment in ballistic hypersonic missiles, which can travel at more than five times the speed of sound.

Nuclear energy operator Energoatom said the strike at the Zaporizhzhia plant had cut off the link between the facility and the Ukrainian power system.

For the sixth time since it was taken over by Russia a year ago, the facility operated on diesel generators until

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## Several killed in shooting in Hamburg church

BERLIN (AP) — Shots were fired inside a building used by Jehovah's Witnesses in the northern German city of Hamburg on Thursday evening, and an unspecified number of people were killed or wounded, police said.

The shooting took place in the Gross Borstel district, a few kilometers (miles) north of the downtown area of Germany's second-biggest city.

"We only know that several people died here; several people are wounded, they were taken to hospitals," police spokesman Holger Vehren said.

He said he had no information on the severity of the injuries suffered by the wounded.

Local media footage



Armed police officers near the scene of a shooting in Hamburg, Germany on Thursday March 9, 2023 after one or more people opened fire in a church. The Hamburg city government says the shooting took place in the Gross Borstel district on Thursday evening. (Jonas Walzberg/dpa via AP)

showed a big police presence outside the Jehovah's Witnesses' Kingdom Hall, a modern three-story building.

Vehren said police were

alerted to the shooting about 9:15 p.m. and were on the scene quickly. He said that after officers arrived, they heard a shot from an upper floor and found a person up-

stairs who may have been a shooter. He said police did not have to use their firearms.

Vehren said there was no immediate indication that a shooter was on the run and that it appeared likely that the perpetrator or perpetrators were either in the building or among the dead.

Police had no information on the event that was under way in the building when the shooting took place.

They also had no immediate information on a possible motive. Vehren said that "the background is still completely unclear."

Hamburg Mayor Peter Tschentscher tweeted that the news was "shocking" and offered his sympathy to the victims' relatives.

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the link was restored later on Thursday.

Electricity is needed for cooling radioactive material present at the plant.

"Today's loss of all external power once again demonstrated how fragile and dangerous the situation is for the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant," said Rafael Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Earlier on Thursday he had called for an international commitment to protect the plant, following a series of strikes since the invasion began.

"Each time we are rolling a dice.

And if we allow this to continue time after time then one day our luck will run out," Mr Grossi said.

In the capital Kyiv, emergency services attended the scenes of blasts in western and southern districts.

A missile also hit an energy facility in the port city of Odesa, triggering power cuts, its governor Maksym Marchenko said. Residential areas were also hit but no casualties were reported.

Elsewhere, Ukraine's military says it has pushed back intense Russian attacks on the embattled eastern city of Bakhmut despite Russian forces claiming to have taken control of its eastern half.

Moscow has been trying to take Bakhmut for months, as both sides suffer heavy losses in a grinding war of attrition.

"The enemy continued its attacks and has shown no sign of a let-up in storming the city of Bakhmut," the general staff of the Ukrainian armed forces said.

"Our defenders repelled attacks on Bakhmut and on surrounding communities."

Between 20,000 and 30,000 Russian troops have been killed or wounded in the battle for the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut since it began last summer, Western officials say. The figures cannot be verified independently.



Assistant coach Fitzroy Benjamin, right, engages some of his players at the end of Da Squad's opening game at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

## Da Squad make winning start in defense of female volleyball title

Reigning champions Da Squad made a successful start in defense of their national female division title in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League on Wednesday night, 8th March.

Da Squad, who won their inaugural championship by dethroning perennial champions Paragons last year, opened their title defense with a comfortable 3-0 straight-set win over newcomers Royal Cruisers in their female division encounter at the indoor volleyball stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

The defending champions took control of the game from start to finish as they overpowered the inexperienced and younger Royal Cruisers outfit to win the encounter 25-16, 25-13, 25-18.

Da Squad's Head Coach Carl Williams said they had to overcome some niggling challenges to iron out

the team chemistry in their opening game, but he was satisfied with the victory, and is confident of making a successful defense of their title.

"Was our first game in the competition. We have quite a few new players, new pieces, so it's a bit of just trying to get to know the person next to you and see how they play.

"Plus, we had players who had flu, who have been out of training and different stuff. But generally, I am pleased," Williams stated.

"I see where we need to work and get the synergy back so that will be the focus for the next week or so.

"To be honest with you, I think we will defend our title successfully. It may be a bit tougher, but we definitely should defend this championship."

It was the second defeat in as many outings for Royal Cruisers, who also suffered a 25-11, 25-7, 25-22 straight-set loss to last year's

runners-up Paragons in the opening game of the new season last Saturday.

Meanwhile, Storming Lions also made a successful start to their campaign in the men's division by coasting to a 3-0 straight-set victory over High Flyers in their opening game, which was the second encounter of Wednesday night's double-header.

The Storming Lions dominated their opponents as they surged to a convincing 25-22, 25-18, 26-24 victory.

The ABAVA Local Volleyball League will continue with a double header at the YMCA Sports Complex tomorrow evening, Saturday, 11th March.

Jets will face North Coast Hardware Starz Jr in a female division encounter at 6:30 pm, while Storming Lions will return to action against reigning men's division champions Stoneville in the second game at 7:30 pm.



## Narrow win for Antigua State College in schools' netball contest

The Antigua State College snatched a narrow two-point win in the Cool & Smooth Inter-Schools' Netball Championship at the YMCA Sports Complex on Wednesday, 8th March.

State College earned a 17-15 victory over the Clare Hall Secondary School in the 18 and Under Division. Zhanra Pereira sank 12 of her 20 attempts and Cedrica Joseph scored five of her seven tries for State College.

Ijahnae Isadore converted seven of her 14 tries and Jahlika Pascal scored eight of her 15 shots for Clare Hall Secondary.

Ottos Comprehensive School also prevailed 17-12 against Irene B Williams Secondary in the same division, while the Antigua Girls High School's First Team pulled off an 8-5 victory over the Princess Margaret School in the 13 and Under Secondary Division.

In the 16 and Under category, Princess Margaret School trounced the First Team of the Christ the King High School 18-4 with Kadyah Alexander scoring 12 of her 25 attempts and Jahida Payne converting seven of her 15 shots for the winners. Jodaliah Constant sank three of her six attempts for Christ the King High.

The Irene B Williams Secondary snatched a 9-8

victory against the Second Team of Christ the King High School. Jacquena Top-pin scored five of her eight shots and Amyah Francis scored three of her five attempts for Irene B Williams Secondary.

The Ottos Comprehensive School defeated All

Saints Secondary School 12-6.

Kiara Samuel scored eight of her 16 tries and Jessica Massicott converted three of their eight attempts for Ottos Comprehensive. Kinisha James sank three of her four shots and Shakorah Prince scored three of

her eight tries for All Saints Secondary.

All Saints Secondary rebounded to beat St Mary's Secondary 10-6 in their encounter. Kinisha James scored seven of her 14 tries and Shakorah Prince converted four of her eight tries for All Saints Secondary.



## Scotland cricketers to be part of 2023 CST20 tournament

Eight Scottish internationals will face off against each other in this year's Cool and Smooth (CS) T20 Explosion in Antigua, with the competition set to bowl off on 13th April, 2023.

Fresh from lifting the ICC Men's CWCL2 trophy in February, the bulk of the Scotland Men's squad will now get a taste of West Indian conditions for the first time.

According to a media release from the organizers of the Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion, Scotland's captain Richie Berrington will enter the draft, alongside vice-captain Matthew Cross, Michael Leask, Chris Greaves, Hamza Tahir, Liam Naylor and Oliver Davidson.

Also involved will be George Munsey, who returns to Antigua for his second consecutive season with the Jennings Tigers, and his international team-mates will each be selected by one of the other seven clubs in the competition.

This is an increased Scottish presence on the Cool and Smooth T20, after batsman George Munsey lit the 2022 tournament on fire competing for the Jennings Tigers.

Munsey won the most runs award, blasting 206 runs in four innings, averaging 51 with a strike rate of 160. Munsey led the Tigers to the top of Group 2 and a fourth-place finish in the final tournament standings.

Munsey is excited not only return to Antigua for a second consecutive year, but for his international team-mates to join him and experience the fantastic culture.

"I'm so excited to be coming back to play the tournament again. Last year was a lot of fun and was great preparation for my season. It's another opportunity for me to play on Caribbean

pitches and get acclimatized for future events like the Caribbean Premier League and other ICC tournaments taking place in the West Indies," he said.

"With some of my international teammates being involved as well -we want to have an intense camp which will be a massive build up for the ICC World Cup Qualifiers that we will compete at in Zimbabwe. These will be potentially similar conditions, so it's going to be brilliant preparation for me and most of all for my teammates to experience what the Cool and Smooth T20 has to offer."

The Scotland One Day International squad will attend a training camp in Antigua ahead of the tournament, in preparation for the 2023 World Cup Qualifiers in Zimbabwe, set to take place in June.

The camp will run between 1st and 12th April with the players acclimatizing to local conditions, which should be similar to those in Zimbabwe.

The Scottish squad is set to have a series of practice sessions and matches against regional opposition to assist in their preparation.

The tour is a fantastic opportunity for Scotland's players to gain much-needed experience as they continue climbing the world cricket ladder, preparing for a historic 2023 Men's ICC ODI World Cup, and exposing their players to foreign conditions.

It is also seen as a unique way for Antigua to display its one-of-a-kind culture to the world.

The tour is expected to gain significant media coverage and it presents a chance for Antiguan cricketers to rub shoulders with experienced international players.



National Hero Sir Vivian Richards, left, presents Scotland's George Munsey with his award for scoring the most runs in the 2022 Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua on 7th May, 2022. (Photo courtesy CST20)

Cricket Scotland Chief Executive Gordon Arthur said, "We're delighted to have Scottish representation in the 2023 Cool and Smooth T20.

"This is an excellent chance for members of our Men's squad to show off their talents in a fabulous environment, and we hope they relish participating once again on a high profile stage -this time against each other.

"Importantly from a long-term perspective, this tour gives our players more vital preparation time ahead of June's World Cup qualifier.

"Any opportunity to practice and compete in similar conditions to what we expect to face in Zimbabwe is precious. Our new Interim Head Coach Doug Watson will also arrive in An-

*cont'd on pg 21*



## New cycling season to commence with Pan Am Base race

Following last Sunday's postponement, the 2023 domestic season of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) will commence on Sunday, 12th March.

The ABCF had postponed the official start of the new season until the 12th March due to a number of other activities that were taking place across the twin-island state on Sunday, 5th March.

The new season will begin with the Pan Am Base race at 7 am on Sunday and cyclists from the major cycling clubs across the island are expected to compete in several categories.

The Elite Male cyclists will be required to complete 30 laps around the Pan Am Base to win the race.

Cyclists contesting the Junior Male category will be required to complete 28 laps, while those in the Masters division will ride for 22 laps.

The cyclists in the Elite Female,



Local cyclists will take to the streets in the opening race of the 2023 domestic season, which will be the Pan Am Base Race on Sunday, 12th March. (Photo courtesy the ABCF)

Junior Female, Sports Class and the Cadets in the 14 to 17 age group will battle for supremacy for a duration of 18 laps.

The Cadets in the 11 to 13 age

group will compete over a distance of eight laps.

The Pan Am Base race is being sponsored by APUA Inet, Paradiso Water and Gatorade.

## Parish League cricket continues this weekend

The 2023 Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Parish League domestic season will continue with the third and fourth round matches in the Sir Curtly Ambrose Limited Overs

Competition this weekend.

In tomorrow's (Saturday) third round matches, Dreams 2 Reality Sea View Farm will face Mahico at Clare Hall, Freetown will host Antigua Masters, for-

merly St Paul's, at Freetown and Police will meet Urlings at Urlings.

Dirk Scouton and Oliver Benjamin will umpire at Clare Hall, Llewellyn Simon and Bertel Baltimore will

officiate at Freetown while Calvin Thomas and Nigel Browne will umpire at Urlings.

On Sunday, Time of Victory Old Road will entertain Police at Old Road. The umpires are Calvin Thomas and Nigel Brown.

Mahico will take on Freetown at Clare Hall. The officiators will be Llewellyn Simon and Bertel Baltimore.

Dreams 2 Reality Sea View Farm will oppose Antigua Masters at Sea View Farm where Dirk Scouton and Oliver Benjamin will officiate.

*cont'd from pg 20*

Antigua during the tour, and will have the chance to begin work immediately with his players.

"Cricket Scotland has faced a number of financial challenges in recent months, but we are committed to providing our elite Men's and Women's squads with every opportunity to compete at the highest level possible, whilst ensuring the long-term stability of the business.

"We are close to confirming details of a series of fixtures for the Women's International squad in 2023, which will build on the historic participation of the U19 Women's team at the inaugural ICC U19 World Cup in January.

"Scotland's international cricketers are our global ambassadors for the sport, and this tour to Antigua underlines their increasing standing in the world game."

## Attacking Saints retake second spot in Second Division League

Attacking Saints have regained second place in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division football league.

Goals by Joshua Samuels in the 38th and 83rd minute gave Attacking Saints a 2-0 win over Sea View Farm at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints on Wednesday, 8th March.

Their ninth win in 13 matches allows Attacking Saints to overtake Sea View Farm into second place in the 15-team competition by advancing to 30 points, two ahead of Sea View Farm, who slipped to third place on goal difference after suffering their third loss in 13 outings.

Attacking Saints are now two points adrift of unbeaten leaders Jennings United, who had their encounter against Belmont FC at Jennings postponed on Wednesday.

Freemans Village remained in fourth place on goal difference after playing to a 1-1 draw with Real Blizzard at the New Winthropes playing field.

Malik Charles scored in the 33rd minute to give Freemans Village a 1-0 half-



The Attacking Saints Football Team. (File photo)

time lead, but Karl Hampson scored an equalizer for Real Blizzard with a 53rd minute conversion.

Their fourth draw in 14 matches allows Freemans Village to join neighbours Sea View Farm on 28 points, while Real Blizzard advance to 22 points and up to fifth place after experiencing their fourth draw in 13 encounters.

But Bethesda and Golden Grove celebrated victories in their respective matches on Wednesday. O'Shale Simon scored a hat-trick to lead Bethesda to a 4-2 victory against bottom team TAMO FC at the Gold-

en Grove playing field.

Simon scored in the 13th minute, converted a penalty kick in the 26th minute and had a 74th minute conversion, while Chunsea Martin scored the other goal for Bethesda in the 55th minute.

De'Aundre Ralph scored in the 43rd minute and Jahiem Grant had a 46th minute conversion for TAMO FC, who suffered their 12th defeat in 13 outings to remain in the cellar position on three points.

Their sixth win in 14 matches lifted Bethesda up to seventh place on goal difference after joining Master Ballerz, who are now in

sixth place, on 21 points.

Terrence Spencer scored a hat-trick to propel Golden Grove to a 5-0 drubbing of Young Warriors at the Buckley's School playing field.

Spencer scored in the 23rd, 50th and 73rd minute, while the other goals for Golden Grove were converted by Darryl Samuel in the 26th minute and Yowzan Morris in the 44th minute.

Their sixth win in 14 matches lifted Golden Grove to 20 points and up to 8th place in the standings, while Young Warriors remain third from bottom with eight points after slumping to their ninth loss in 13 appearances.