

THURSDAY 9TH MARCH 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 48 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

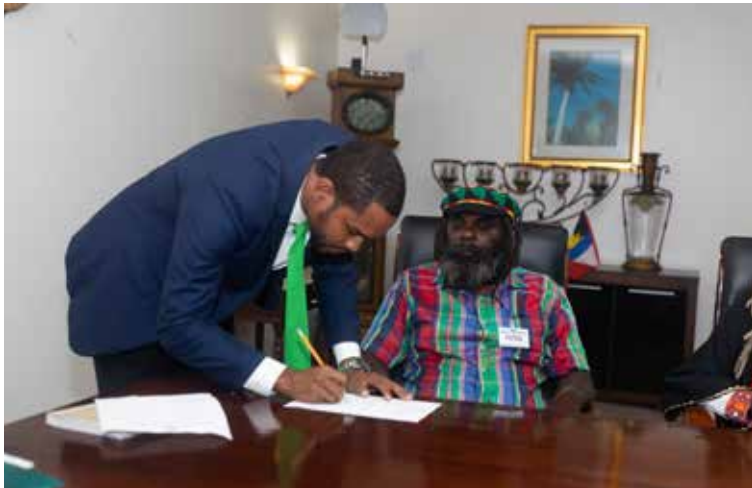
RASTAFARIANS FREE TO USE MARIJUANA AS SACRAMENT

Story on Page 2



UWI FIC Registrar, Hiram Forde, right, and CIBC FCIB Country Manager, Ladesha James-Williams, second left, pose for a photo with awardees Kendra Meade and Vanessa Williams. A four-member team from the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus is traveling to St. Vincent and the Grenadines today to meet with potential students who may wish to study here in Antigua and Barbuda. **Story on page 3.**

Rastafarians can now freely use marijuana as a sacrament



Three of the Rastafarian communities in Antigua and Barbuda that have registered with the Medicinal Cannabis Authority have been granted the right to utilize marijuana as part of their religious practices.

This came after the three groups - Nyabingi Theocracy, One Love and Ras Freeman – were formally presented with the official authorization certificates at a brief ceremony held at the Office of the Prime Minister on Wednesday.

Spokesman for the Medicinal Cannabis Authority, Regis Burton, said the provision acknowledges the rights of the Rastafarian

communities and the respect that comes with the certificates. “We are looking at authorizing the sacramental use of marijuana and this will be backed up by law. It therefore provides both acceptance and protection for the Rastafarians who use marijuana in their religious ceremonies,” he noted.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne called the occasion a ‘historic moment’ noting that Antigua and Barbuda is the first country, not only in the Caribbean but in the wider world to grant this special privilege to the Rastafarians. “It shows the commitment of my ad-

ministration to ensure inclusivity; to ensure that no group of individuals is left behind based on economic standing, their belief, or religious practices. We believe strongly in inclusivity, equality of opportunity and justice,” he remarked.

Browne said it’s unfortunate that the history of

Rastafarianism has been one replete with abuse, as previous administrations both here and across the region have castigated the Rastafarians as well as marginalised and demonised members of the group.

But the prime minister credited Rastafarians for a number of positives within the general society, many of which are today very popular such as the use of plant-based diets.

During the ceremony representatives from the three groups signed to acknowledge that their groups have been granted the rights to use marijuana during religious observances.

Thu 09 Day 81° ☀️ Intervals of clouds and sunshine. High 81F. Winds W at 5 to 10 mph.		Thu 09 Night 72° ☁️ A few clouds. Low 72F. Winds WNW at 5 to 10 mph.	
☔ 10% W 10 mph	☔ 24% WNW 7 mph	💧 Humidity 65%	☀️ UV Index Extreme
🌅 Sunrise 6:19 am	🌇 Sunset 6:15 pm	💧 Humidity 77%	☀️ UV Index 0 of 10
		🌕 Moonrise 8:11 pm	🌑 Moonset 7:39 am
		🌘 Waning Gibbous	

UWI FIC mounting recruitment drive in SVG

A four-member team from the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus is traveling to St. Vincent and the Grenadines today to meet with potential students who may wish to study here in Antigua and Barbuda.

The high-powered team is traveling to Kingstown following a similar engagement in St. Kitts and Nevis described as ‘a huge success.’ Led by Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Curtis Charles, the party also includes head of the School of Humanities and Education - Dr. Andrew Hunte, Assistant Registrar - Akelia Browne and Recruitment Officer - Adeola Matthew.

The team will meet with students from nine secondary schools, community interactions and that country’s community college.

According to Matthew, the data shows that only two out of ten persons from within the OECS, move on to university level training and this statistic is not sufficient to build the human capital necessary for development.

“We are going to St Vincent to reach out to students, reach out to the community at large, to let them know of the offerings here, as well as to encourage the students, especially at the secondary school level and community college to pursue university education.

“Based on the data, we have taken on the mandate



UWI FIC Recruitment Officer, Adeola Matthew UWI FIC Registrar, Hiram Forde

of our wider university to get out into the communities and let people know of the importance of university education,” Matthew added.

She disclosed that in St Kitts more than three hundred persons expressed a desire to pursue studies at UWI FIC, but based on the high number of Vincentians living in Antigua, she anticipates that the numbers there will be even bigger.

“Most of us in the OECS would have had to travel to Cave Hill (Barbados) or Mona (Jamaica) to study, so now there’s an opportunity to study right here in Antigua, same EC currency, and with the family connections in these parts it makes it easier,” she emphasized.

Campus Registrar Hiram Forde said the campus was created to serve not just Antigua and Barbuda but the wider OECS. “We had a very vigorous strategy pre-COVID, but

COVID came and threw us off for two years making it impossible to do those road shows in 2020, as had been planned. We have a

vigorous campaign about providing access and this means increasing, dramatically, the student roll,” he declared.

PROBATE FORM P7

Rule 15

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

(Probate)

In the Estate of DAVENPORT ELDRED ANGELO JONAS late of Pigotts Village, St. George, Antigua, Deceased

ADVERTISEMENT OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT

TAKE NOTICE that an application has been filed by Denise Parillon of Potters Village, St. John, Antigua for a Grant of Probate of the will of the above named deceased who died on the 6th day of September, 2022 without revoking a will bearing the date of 23rd day of May, 2019 wherein the Applicant is Sole Executor.

Any person having an objection to the application for the Grant of Probate shall file an objection within 14 days of the publication of this Notice.

Dated this 20th day of February, 2023.


Denise Parillon
Executor

Filed by Jonas Parillon & Co. Inc., Attorneys-at-Law for the Applicant, whose address for service is Sir Sydney Walling Highway, St. John, Antigua. Email: jonasparillon@gmail.com. Telephone: 562-6530.

Counterfeit EC\$100 paper notes in circulation

Residents of Antigua and Barbuda are being asked to be on the lookout for counterfeit \$100 notes that are currently in circulation in the country.

In a press statement, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) says the notes bear the serial numbers: VB0426226 and WD230137.

The ECCB wishes to remind the public that counterfeit notes have no value, and that it is a criminal offence to use or be in possession of counterfeit notes.

The ECCB urges the public to

note the security features of genuine EC paper notes which include:

1. A security thread with text reading “ECCB” which incorporated into the paper. The thread can be seen clearly through the paper.

2. A serial number printed vertically on the left-hand side and horizontally on the right-hand side of the notes. No two notes of the same denomination bear the same serial number.

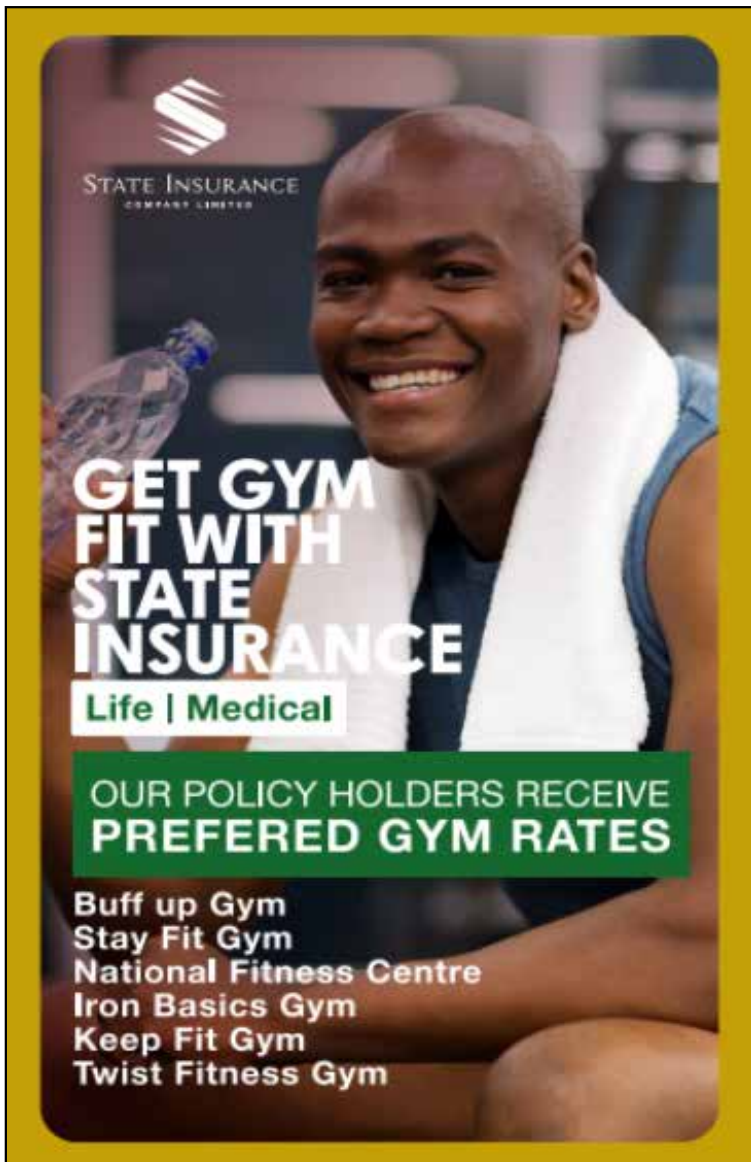
3. On the front left-hand side, a watermark of Queen Elizabeth II can be seen when the note is held up to

light. A watermark highlight, which reads “ECCB” can also be seen clearly when the note is held up to light.

4. An image of several fishes, printed with special ink, which glows, is at the centre of the back of the note.

5. Genuine bank notes are printed on special paper which gives them a unique feel.

Individuals who think they may be in possession of EC counterfeit paper notes, should report the matter to the police station nearest to them.



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COMPANY LIMITED

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FIT WITH
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Life | Medical

**OUR POLICY HOLDERS RECEIVE
PREFERRED GYM RATES**

Buff up Gym
Stay Fit Gym
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Iron Basics Gym
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Twist Fitness Gym



**Government of
Antigua & Barbuda**

**Ministry of Education, Sports & Creative Industries
Government Complex, Queen Elizabeth Highway
St. John's, Antigua**

Tel: 462-0192/462-0193/462-0198/462-0199

Overseas: 268-462-4959/1051

Fax: 268-462-4970

OAS Scholarship Application Announcement

The Organization of American States announces its 2023 call for scholarship applications for undergraduate and graduate academic studies and graduate research.

More information can be obtained through the links listed below.

- Call for applications for Graduate Studies: https://www.oas.org/en/scholarships/Academic_Program_OAS_2023.asp
- Call for applications for Undergraduate Studies: https://www.oas.org/en/scholarships/specaf_2023.asp
· Scholarship application form for Undergraduate Studies (last two years of a Bachelor's degree): <https://www.oas.org/fms/Announcement.aspx?id=1137&Type=1&Lang=Eng>
- Scholarship application form for Graduate Studies: <https://www.oas.org/fms/Announcement.aspx?id=1136&Type=1&Lang=Eng>

Deadline for submission of applications and accompanying documents to the Director of Education, Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries is Friday 31st March, 2023.

Two nursing students receive scholarships from CIBC FCIB



Student Nurse and awardee, Kendra Meade



Student Nurse and awardee, Vanessa Williams

Two nursing students at the University of the West Indies Five Islands campus have been awarded scholarships to complete their studies from CIBC First Caribbean International Bank.

Third year student, Kendra Meade and first year student, Vanessa Williams were presented with the award at a brief ceremony held at the university campus on Wednesday morning.

The ceremony was held on March 8 in observance of International Women's Day and the awards were presented as part of CIBC FCIB's core values 'to empower and support each other'.

Campus Registrar Hiram Forde spoke of the importance of establishing a School of Health and Behavioural Sciences early in the formation of the UWI FIC. He said this year the school will graduate its first cohort

of nurses.

Forde thanked CIBC FCIB for their support, and he invited other corporate entities in the country to follow the example made by the financial institution. "The FIC thrives on trying to set up niche initiatives, so part of our broad remit as part of the UWI Triple A strategy 2019-22 are access, alignment and agility. This function is really an alignment between academia and the private sector with government as the third leg," he stated.

CIBC FCIB Country Manager, Ladesha James-Williams said the theme of this year's International Women's Day observance provided an impetus for the bank to undertake a special move to mark the occasion.

"When we heard the theme for this year DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for gender equality, we

immediately thought of UWI Five Islands and the excellent work being done here to promote innovation and technology.

"CIBC First Caribbean is relentless in our pursuit to innovate and improve the lives of our clients, staff, and our communities at large.

"We view technology and the rapid speed of digital transformation as an enabler to innovation and look forward to seeing what these bright minds at UWI Five Islands will achieve in the very near future," she noted.

The two nurses have expressed their gratitude to CIBC FCIB for their assistance, noting that they were quite excited when they learned that they had won the scholarship. Both had to submit an essay highlighting the importance of the scholarship and it was on that basis that they were selected.

Ministry of Health salutes women

Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph says the theme for International Women’s Day 2023 DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality, is in line with the policy objectives of the ministry.

In his message to mark the occasion, Sir Molwyn rolled out a number of policy objectives which the ministry will seek to achieve in the future. “The construction of the modern polyclinics and community centres in Glanvilles and Villa Area is just the beginning of our plans for modernizing and introducing new technologies in healthcare infrastructure. The next stop is the Fiennes Institute, a move that the nurses as well as the older women of this country will no doubt welcome,” he stated.

He added that the ministry is aware, from the overwhelming participation in their cervical cancer screen-



Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph joined in saluting women on International Women’s Day.

ing, that the women in this sector are quick to adapt to new technologies and innovative methods for delivery of healthcare services. He added that, it is the view that women will respond positively.

Permanent Secretary in the min-

istry of health, Ena Dalso-Henry expressed her gratitude to be working alongside the many women engaged in providing healthcare to the nation.

She said women have left an indelible mark on the healthcare delivery system in the country.

Johnson’s Point pharmacy to close for urgent repairs

Dispensing services at the Medical Benefits Scheme (MBS) Johnson’s Point pharmacy is suspended with immediate effect to commence renovations and repairs of the facility.

This decision follows discussions between the MBS Executives and the Minister of Health, Sir Molwyn Joseph.

Beneficiaries who rely on the Johnson’s Point pharmacy services are encouraged to utilize MBS pharmacies located at All Saints, Browne’s Avenue, Clare Hall, Gray’s Farm, or on Nevis Street.

These locations are fully

equipped to provide a combination of walk-in (same day) and prescription drop-off and medication pick-up services except Gray’s Farm, which offers same-day only. MBS is also exploring alternative arrangements to ensure that beneficiary needs in the Johnson’s Point area are better met.

The public is advised to stay tuned to the media for updates on the progress of the alternative arrangements. The government is committed to providing a safe and modern healthcare environment to all its residents.

Police Commissioner salutes female officers on International Women’s Day

The Commissioner of Police and other male officers within the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda are taking the time out to salute female police officers, and wish them a happy International Women’s Day.

The commissioner said he is pleased to be associated with commissioners of police from across the region and other world leaders, who are saluting women in their celebration.

Mr. Rodney, in his reflection on the role of women in law enforcement, highlighted several female officers who were trailblazers, and served as examples for other females to emulate.

He mentioned the contributions of Mrs. Maple Walter-Southwell, Mrs. Jocelyn Benta-Richards, and former commissioner of police, Ms. Delano Christopher, among several others, including those who are currently serving.

He said, “It is not by coincidence that International Women’s Day is celebrated just a few days after the Women’s Police Retreat. The idea was for it coincide with this international event, and to demonstrate my overall support for the empowerment of women within the police organization”. “Our women should have an equal opportunity to fulfill their true potential, as future leaders”.

Commissioner Rodney

is further encouraging female officers to stand out and make a difference; not only as we celebrate International Women’s Day, but as we celebrate the empowerment of women in our society.

International Women’s Day is celebrated annually on March 8 as a focal point in the women’s rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, and violence and abuse against women.



Commissioner of Police, Atlee Rodney

◆ **FOR PARENTS-GRANDPARENTS-TEACHERS-
MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

@cereneprince

**PARENT WORKSHOP:
CHARACTER BUILDING IN
CHILDREN AND TEENS FOR A
HEALTHY AND SUCCESSFUL FUTURE
(IN-PERSON•ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA)**

ABOUT THIS WORKSHOP
This workshop is designed for everyone with a focus on providing Parents a safe space to discuss struggles, receive support and discover solutions to improve child/teen behavior.

DATE AND PLACE
15th and 16th March 2023
430pm-630pm
National Public Library

OUR MAIN TOPICS

- Child/Teen Development/Puberty
- Education and Mental Health
- Character Building
- Parenting Styles and Techniques
- Techniques to manage stress
- Parent and Chld Resources

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Tourism Week to feature art from the nation's youth

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority will celebrate Antigua and Barbuda's culture through the artwork of students across the twin-islands during Antigua and Barbuda Art Week taking place from April 16 – April 22, 2023.

Students in Antigua and Barbuda between the ages of 5 – 17, are being encouraged to participate in the Antigua and Barbuda Art Week Schools' Art Competition being held under the theme 'Culture in Colour'.

Hosted by the Tourism Authority in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Educa-

tion, the Art Week competition motivates students to take inspiration from Antigua and Barbuda's culture when creating art.

"Antigua and Barbuda has such a rich culture and we are excited to see where our students will take their inspiration from", said Colin C. James, CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority.

Winning entries in the Antigua and Barbuda Art Week Schools' Art Competition will be displayed at the V.C. Bird International Airport and The Boom Restaurant at Gunpowder House.



Young artist Genesis Clarke (left) enjoys painting as a hobby. She has indicated that she will be participating in Antigua and Barbuda Art Week. (Photo courtesy: The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority)

Viewers of the art exhibition will gain a greater appreciation for Antigua and Barbuda.

Entries are being accepted from students within the categories: ages 5 – 12, and ages 13 – 17. To be eligible the artwork should be no smaller than 14" x 14" and no larger than 14" x 16". The entry can be a painting or a drawing using quick-drying paint, watercolor/acrylic paint, crayon pencils/wax crayons or a collage. The entry may be submitted on Manilla Paper, Water-Colour Paper or Bristol Board. Only one entry is allowed per student.

The winning pieces will be selected by a team of established artists in Antigua and Barbuda's art community. Entries will be judged on creativity, relevance to the theme, content and quality of presentation.

NOTICE

This notice serves as a reminder of Antigua Cruise Port's final homeporting operation for the season with the cruise vessel, Arvia on Saturday March 11, 2023.

Access to the boardwalk will be restricted from 12:00pm on that day to facilitate smooth passenger flows. Access to the Fifth Berth will only be granted to returning passengers who have ship identification.

Additionally, the Antigua Cruise Port parking lots at the end of Long and Church Streets will be restricted to taxis that are working with the cruise ships.

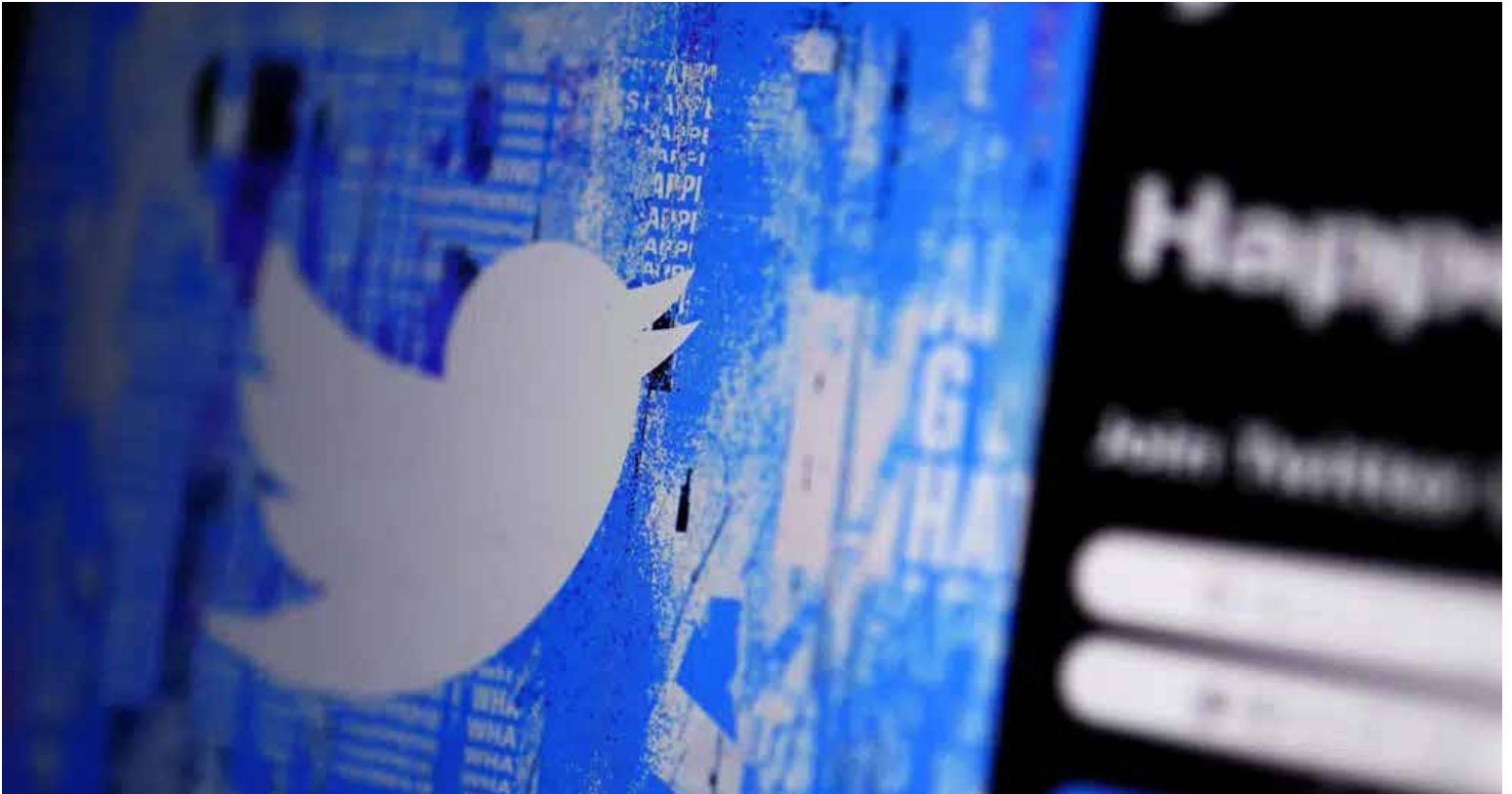
All other parking passes will be suspended on that day.

Please note that the drop off point for tourists returning from excursions is at the top of Heritage Quay on Thames Street.

Thank you for your cooperation thus far.



FTC probes Twitter data practices after Elon Musk's layoffs



The Twitter splash page is seen on a digital device on April 25, 2022, in San Diego. The Federal Trade Commission is investigating Elon Musk's mass layoffs at Twitter and trying to obtain his internal communications as part of ongoing oversight into the social media company's privacy and cybersecurity practices, according to documents described in a congressional report. (AP Photo/Gregory Bull, File)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Trade Commission is investigating Elon Musk's mass layoffs at Twitter and trying to obtain his internal communications as part of ongoing oversight into the social media company's privacy and cybersecurity practices, according to documents described in a congressional report.

The FTC has been watching the company for years since Twitter agreed to a 2011 consent order alleging serious data security lapses. But the agency's concerns spiked with the tumult that followed Musk's Oct. 27 takeover of the company.

The Republican-led House Judiciary Committee published excerpts from the FTC's letters Tuesday as part of a report alleging that the agency was overreaching "to harass Elon Musk's Twitter."

The House said the requests amounted to a deluge of "demands about its personnel decisions in each of the company's departments, every internal communication relating to Elon Musk and even Twitter's interactions with journalists" who Musk's team allowed to see certain employee emails and messages.

Those documents were dubbed "The Twitter Files" and were meant to show how the company made decisions to moderate content before Musk took over.

In a response to the House report, the FTC said, "Protecting consumers' privacy is exactly what the FTC is supposed to do. It should come as no surprise that career staff at the commission are conducting a rigorous investigation into Twitter's compliance with a consent order that came into effect long

before Mr. Musk purchased the company."

Twitter had already paid a \$150 million penalty in May, about five months before Musk's takeover, for violating the 2011 consent order. An updated version established new procedures requiring the company to implement an enhanced privacy-protection program as well as beefing up information security.

But in November, a group of Democratic senators called those commitments into question and asked the FTC — led by Chair Lina Khan, a Democrat — to investigate any possible violations amid concerns that reports of Twitter's disorder and drastically reduced staff under Musk posed serious security risks. The FTC said at the time it was "tracking recent developments at Twitter with deep concern."

Jury deliberations begin for XXXTentacion's accused killers

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Jury deliberations began Wednesday in the trial of three men accused of murdering rising rap star XXXTentacion during a 2018 robbery outside a Florida motorcycle shop after the alleged gunman's attorney argued that DNA evidence proves his client and another man are innocent.

Attorney Joseph Kimok gave the final defense closing argument in the trial of three men accused of first-degree murder, telling jurors that while the artist struggled with his killers before being shot and DNA was found on the body and on a stolen necklace, it wasn't from his client, 28-year-old Michael Boatwright. Nor was it from accused second gunman Trayvon Newsome, 24, or accused getaway driver and ringleader Dedrick Williams, 26.

"Whoever (XXXTentacion) struggled with is not in this courtroom," Kimok told jurors as the four-week trial neared its conclusion. "The DNA proves that someone not named Michael Boatwright or Trayvon Newsome participated in this murder."

A fourth man, Robert Allen, pleaded guilty last year to second-degree murder and testified against his former friends. Attorneys



Shooting suspect Michael Boatwright, center, stands with his attorneys, Skyleer Hill and Joseph Kimok, at they wait for the jury to enter the courtroom for day two of closing arguments in the XXXTentacion murder trial at the Broward County Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Wednesday, March 8, 2023. Beach in 2018, allegedly by defendants Boatwright, Trayvon Newsome, and Dedrick Williams. (Amy Beth Bennett/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP, Pool)

for all three men say he is lying about their clients' involvement in the slaying and robbery, which netted \$50,000. They also say Broward County sheriff's detectives botched the investigation, failing to consider other possible suspects including Canadian rap star Drake, with whom XXXTentacion had an online feud.

Lead prosecutor Pascale Achille in her rebuttal argument Wednesday admitted that Allen is not a perfect witness, that he has previous felony convictions, but co-conspirators in murders rarely are.

"Plans hatched in hell

do not have angels for witnesses," she said.

Achille said that while detectives never found the guns, masks and money, only Williams was arrested within days of the shooting, giving the others time to hide any evidence. She said the lack of DNA evidence linking the defendants to the killing is irrelevant — that fact does not exclude them. She said much more importantly, cellphone data shows the defendants were together near the motorcycle shop at the time of the slaying and that Bluetooth data puts them in the SUV used by the shooters at that same time.

During her prima-

ry closing argument Tuesday, Achille played surveillance video from the motorcycle shop and elsewhere that she says backs up Allen's testimony. She also played cellphone videos the defendants allegedly took hours after the killing that showed them smiling and dancing as they flashed handfuls of \$100 bills.

Boatwright, Williams and Newsome all face mandatory life sentences if convicted. Prosecutors did not seek the death penalty.

While the three are being tried together, the jury has to decide separately on

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Harry & Meghan's daughter christened, will use royal title

AP - Prince Harry and his wife Meghan announced Wednesday that their daughter had been christened in a private ceremony in California, publicly calling her a princess and revealing for the first time that they will use royal titles for their children.

Princess Lilibet Diana, who turns two in June, was baptised on Friday by the Archbishop of Los Angeles, the Reverend John Taylor. Harry and Meghan said in a statement. Lilibet's title and that of her brother, Archie, who will be four in May, will be updated on the Buckingham Palace website later.

The announcement marked the first time that the children's titles had been used in public.

The question of the children's titles took centre stage two years ago during Harry and Meghan's television interview with Oprah



Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle. (AP Photo/Matt Dunham, Pool, File)

Winfrey. Meghan, who is biracial, said that when she was pregnant with Archie "they" — presumably the palace — "were saying they didn't want him to be a prince ... which would be different from protocol."

Meghan suggested that this was because Archie was the royal family's "first member of colour" and would have marked the first time a royal grandchild wasn't given the same title as the other grandchildren.

At the time, royal experts said Meghan's comments appeared to be based on a misunderstanding of the way royal titles are conferred.

Titles are conferred in line with a decree issued by King George V in 1917 that limits the titles of prince and princess to the male-line grandchildren of the sovereign.

As long as the late Queen Elizabeth II was alive, Harry and his older brother, Prince

William, were the sovereign's grandchildren. Harry and William's children, as great-grandchildren, didn't receive the titles automatically.

But Elizabeth had the power to amend the rules, and in 2012 she decreed that the children of Prince William and his wife, Catherine, would be princes and princesses. This decree didn't apply to Harry and Meghan.

However, the situation changed when King Charles III ascended the throne on the death of his mother last September.

William and Harry are the king's sons, meaning their offspring are now royal grandchildren and so entitled to be known as prince and princess.

Nonetheless, they have remained a plain "master" and "miss" on the Buckingham Palace website for the past six months.

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each and could convict just one or two. The jurors deliberated for about an hour Wednesday before adjourning. They will resume Thursday.

XXXTentacion, whose real name was Jahseh Onfroy, had just left Riva Motorsports in suburban Fort Lauderdale on June 18, 2018, with a friend when his BMW was blocked by an SUV that swerved in front.

Surveillance video showed that two masked gunmen emerged and confronted the 20-year-old rapper at

the driver's window, and one shot him repeatedly after a 45-second struggle. They then grabbed a Louis Vuitton bag containing the \$50,000, which XXXTentacion had just withdrawn from the bank. They then got back into the SUV and sped away. The friend was not harmed.

Prosecutors say the three defendants and Allen set out that day to commit robberies and went to the motorcycle shop to buy Williams a mask. There they spotted the rapper and decided to make him their target.

Prosecutors say Allen and Williams went inside the motorcycle shop to confirm it was him. They then went back to the SUV they had rented, waited for XXXTentacion to emerge and ambushed him, according to prosecutors. The rapper, who pronounced his name "Ex ex ex ten-ta-see-YAWN," was a platinum-selling rising star who tackled issues including prejudice and depression in his songs. He also drew criticism over bad behavior and multiple arrests, including charges that he severely beat and abused his girlfriend.

Cuba tobacco farmers recuperate after ruinous Hurricane Ian

Loop - A neighbour lent him a house to dry leaves, and he had a little fertilizer saved, so he plucked up the courage to plant. Now, Hirochi Robaina can hardly believe the resulting miracle.

Robaina, one of the most recognised tobacco producers in Cuba, marvels as he walks through the intense green of plants that have grown more than a meter (three feet) high in the Pinar del Río region.

Six months after Hurricane Ian devastated 80 per cent of the region's tobacco infrastructure, farmers are trying to recuperate from the disaster. And though they'll produce less than in past seasons, they say they'll still be able to harvest the leaves for premium hand-rolled cigars, one of the Caribbean nation's key exports.

"Not a single tobacco house was left standing. There were no warehouses, there was no tree left," Robaina told The Associated Press, remembering how the storm left the region at the end of September. "Everything broke and at that moment I did not believe it was possible to plant."

Robaina, 46, is heir to a grandfather's estate that is so famous that a cigar brand bears his name: Vegas Robaina. At the beginning of October, Robaina



Hirochi Robaina shows his tobacco plants growing near San Luis, Pinar del Río, Cuba, Tuesday, February 28, 2023. (AP Photo/Ismael Francisco)

was resigned to planting only beans and vegetables — something, at least, but a waste for land that can produce some of the finest export tobacco.

But then he changed his mind and decided to try planting tobacco "to maintain the family tradition of a century," he said, showing his tobacco over two hectares (about 5 acres) — or about 30 per cent of what he had at this time in 2022.

Ian's impact added to an already intense economic crisis in Cuba, where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dropped 11 per cent in 2020.

Many farmers don't remember ever having lived through the kind of de-

struction brought by the hurricane. In the fall, they had doubted they would even be able to plant any tobacco this season. It requires special care, application of fertilisers at precise moments, irrigation, cloth to cover the plants and drying houses for the leaves.

With winds of more than 200 kilometres per hour (125 miles per hour), Ian crossed the island from south to north to the west, devastating the Pinar del Río region where 80% of the island's tobacco is produced including almost all of its tobacco for export.

Five people in Cuba died overall and 30,000 were evacuated. Thousands of utility poles fell.

Entire communities were without electricity, water, and telephones for weeks. Rice, corn, sweet potato and fruit crops were destroyed.

Some 10,000 tobacco drying houses were toppled. About 33,000 tons of stored leaves were lost, according to authorities.

Private tobacco producers have been meeting with authorities since last fall to secure commitments for the state to help settle debts and pay for materials to rebuild tobacco drying houses. Help also has come from fellow tobacco producing nations Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, and producers also chipped in to help

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Guyana: Land preparation completed at sites of new regional hospitals

Loop - Work is progressing smoothly at the sites of six new regional hospitals in Guyana, according to an update from Health Minister Dr Frank Anthony.

Anthony told the Department of Public Information (DPI) that the contractor has already completed land preparation at the sites located in Anna Regina, De Kinderen, Bath, Number 75 Village, Diamond and Enmore.

“The contractor has taken over several of the sites and very shortly, we’ll start seeing work being started at each of these sites.

“A lot of progress has been made. The designs are almost complete.

“So, we’ll start seeing construction in a short period,” the health minister stated.



Heavy equipment stationed at one of the six new hospital sites. Photo via DPI.

Each of the modern hospitals will be 65,000 square feet and equipped with 75 hospital beds.

When completed, they will ease the burden on the country’s main medical facility—the Georgetown Public Hospital—and it

will eliminate the need for persons from rural areas to trek to the capital city for most of their healthcare needs.

Meanwhile, progress is also being made on the GYD\$12.4 billion state-of-the-art Pediatric and

Maternal Hospital in Ogle.

Australian company – VAMED—is expected to start piling for the foundation later this month.

The facility is expected to be commissioned by 2025 and will be equipped with 256 beds.

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each other.

Reiniel Rojas, a 33-year-old farmer who has been cultivating premium tobacco for ten years, planted 13 hectares (about 30 acres) around La Coloma thanks to the fact that he was able to finish his drying houses.

“The recovery was quick,” Rojas said.

Rojas got seeds from a colleague to plant. Robaina received four chainsaws from producer friends from other countries and his cousin lent him the drying house, while he loaned some fertile land to two other

farmers.

Nature also helped by withholding plagues of caterpillars or fungi, so demand for pesticides was low.

A tobacco house costs a producer around \$20,000 at the official exchange rate. A good harvest, with the delicate work of a whole year, can pay a farming family up to \$50,000 dollars, farmers told the AP.

The figure is not small for Cuba, where a state salary in the city amounts to about \$200 a month at the official rate in the limited official economy, but would be only about \$29 in practical terms for most Cu-

bans in the broader, informal economy.

Enrique Blanco, agricultural director of Tabacuba, part of the state-owned Cubatabaco company that regulates and manages tobacco, told the AP that this year’s plan for tobacco planting already is down to about 9,500 hectares (23,000 acres) — down from an initially planned 15,000 (37,000).

There will be some 2,100 hectares (5,200 acres) of premium leaves grown under the cover of fabric, with which the country hopes to cover the coming export demand, Blanco said.

BNTF provides gender sensitisation for parents and teachers in Grenada

The Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) recently provided gender sensitisation training for 52 persons in the education sector in Grenada.

The training took place over a two-week period at the end of February 2023.

“Building on previous programmes, the BNTF continues to mainstream gender considerations in all interventions and at every stage of the project cycle,” said George Yearwood, the Portfolio Manager of the BNTF. “This heightens awareness of the different situations faced by women, men, boys and girls, and this awareness impacts the design of interventions and their evaluation.”

The BNTF Programme is the main vehicle of the CDB for pursuing poverty reduction in the Caribbean, through the provision of basic infrastructure and skills training towards improving the livelihoods of beneficiaries in nine Participating Countries (PCs). The BNTF operates in Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.

In the 42 years that it has been established, BNTF has implemented over 3000 sub-projects which have directly im-



Participants settle in for the start of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) Gender awareness training at the St Dominic's RC School in Grenada. This was the first of three training sessions which were held to help parents and teachers understand gender and its importance for national development.

pacted the lives of more than three million men, women, and children.

The training for teachers, parents and other staff members took place at three schools in Grenada:

1. Victoria School for Special Education
2. St Dominic's R.C. School
3. St John's Street Early Child Development Center.

It was well received by the participants.

For parent, Marlyn Evans, the training reinforced some perceptions about gender that she already had while challenging others.

“For me it was important to come to the training with an open mind. So, I was able to see some of

the areas where there was inequality among men and women. I definitely am going to go home and discuss it more with my girls,” she said.

According to Dr Maria Ziegler, Gender Specialist for the BNTF, Gender Equality is an important objective and cross-cutting theme for the CDB's BNTF.

She explained that the BNTF takes a holistic approach to its work by funding infrastructure and capacity development as well as by addressing the underlying norms and behaviours that affect equal access to the benefits of the latter by women and men, boys and girls.

Gender sensitisation trainings, she said, are very important to raise awareness and stimulate the changing of gender stereotypes and harmful gender norms which affect behaviours and societal expectations and also equality or inequality in outcomes.

In 2022, the BNTF built or upgraded 61 classrooms in basic schools impacting 3,146 students (1,657 male, 1,489 females). Concurrently some 192 teachers (155 females and 37 males) were trained in elements of basic education and 286,216 (18,161 male, 268,055 female) in various areas of livelihood enhancement.

WHO fires director in Asia accused of racist misconduct

LONDON (AP) — The World Health Organization has fired its top official in the Western Pacific after the Associated Press reported last year that dozens of staff members accused him of racist, abusive and unethical behavior that may have compromised the U.N. health agency's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

In an email sent to employees on Wednesday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Dr. Takeshi Kasai's appointment had been "terminated" after an internal investigation resulted in "findings of misconduct."

Tedros did not refer to Kasai by name, referencing only his title as regional director in the Western Pacific. It is the first time in WHO's history that a regional director has been dismissed.

"This has been an unprecedented and challenging journey for all of us," Tedros wrote. He said that the process of naming a new regional director for the Western Pacific would begin next month, with the election to be held in October.

The Japanese government, which supported Kasai's nomination for the role, declined to comment. Kasai previously denied acting in a racist or abusive way, saying that although he asked a lot of his staff, his behavior "should not result in people



World Health Organization Regional Director for Western Pacific Takeshi Kasai addresses the media at the start of the five-day annual session Monday, Oct. 7, 2019, in Manila, Philippines. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez, File)

feeling disrespected."

A summary of the internal WHO investigation presented at a meeting of the agency's executive board this week in Geneva found Kasai regularly harassed workers in Asia, including engaging in "aggressive communication, public humiliation, (and) making racial comments."

Senior WHO directors told the organization's top governing body that Kasai had created a "toxic atmosphere," that staff members were afraid of retaliation if they spoke out against him and that there was a "lack of trust" in WHO.

The officials also found Kasai manipulated at least one performance evaluation of a subordinate, according to confidential materials obtained by the AP.

Kasai's removal follows an AP investigation pub-

lished in January 2022 that revealed more than 30 unidentified WHO staffers sent a written complaint about the director to senior WHO leaders and members of the organization's executive board.

Documents and recordings showed Kasai made racist remarks to his staff and blamed the rise of COVID-19 in some Pacific countries on their "lack of capacity due to their inferior culture, race and socioeconomic level."

Several WHO staffers working under Kasai said he improperly shared sensitive COVID vaccine information to help Japan, his home country, score political points with targeted donations. Kasai is a Japanese doctor who worked in his country's public health system before moving to WHO, where he has been for more

than 15 years.

Days after the AP report, WHO chief Tedros announced that an internal probe into Kasai had begun. Tedros informed staff in an August email that Kasai was "on leave" and another senior official was dispatched to replace him temporarily.

The termination of such a high-level official stands in stark contrast to WHO's reluctance to punish other perpetrators of abusive and sometimes illegal behavior, including sexual abuse and exploitation during the 2018-2020 Ebola epidemic in Congo.

More than 80 outbreak responders working primarily under WHO's direction sexually abused or exploited vulnerable women; an AP investigation found senior WHO management was informed of multiple exploitation claims in 2019 but refused to act and even promoted one of the managers involved.

A recent internal U.N. report found the agency's response to one case of alleged exploitation did not violate the rules because of a loophole in how WHO defines victims, a finding independent experts described as "an absurdity."

No senior WHO officials linked to the sexual abuse in Congo have been fired despite Tedros' insis-

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Four more acquitted over Brussels heist; diamonds still missing

BRUSSELS (AP) — Nearly a decade after a brazen diamond heist at Brussels airport, it looks like a near-perfect crime.

While one person was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison and a small part of the loot — estimated in 2013 to be worth \$50 million — was recovered, 18 other people were acquitted in 2018 and four more were acquitted on appeal Wednesday, leaving it unclear whether the mastermind will ever be found.

The Brussels appeals court said in its ruling that “the elements of the investigation are not sufficiently reliable” and that they were insufficient to convict the last four defendants in the case.

The robbery drew comparisons to the Hollywood movie “Ocean’s Eleven” for its clean, clinical execution that left no one hurt.

On a crisp, wintry evening in 2013, eight robbers dressed in police clothing cut through security fences



Baggage carts make their way past a Helvetic Airways aircraft from which about \$50 million worth of diamonds were stolen on the tarmac of Brussels international airport, on Feb. 19, 2013. (AP Photo/Yves Logghe, File)

at Brussels international airport and headed for a Swiss-bound plane where parcels of gems from the nearby Antwerp global diamond hub were being loaded. They brandished machine guns at pilots and transport security officials, got into the hold of the plane and took off with 120 parcels.

It barely took five minutes and none of the 29 passengers on the plane knew

anything was happening. Because of the perfection of the operation, there were immediate suspicions there was help from inside the airport.

Investigators thought they were close to finding the robbers several times, especially three months later when they detained several dozen people in a three-nation sweep and recovered some of the diamonds. But the courts found

the evidence unconvincing.

“There were so many elements that were presented as overwhelming evidence, but after a close look appeared to be deformed, and badly interpreted,” said defense lawyer Benjamine Bovy, adding that the those looking into the case were too fixed on one scenario only.

“The mountain gave birth to a mouse,” Bovy said.

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tence the agency has “zero tolerance” for misconduct.

“What we need now is consistency in how WHO applies the rules on abuse,” said Sophie Harman, a professor of international politics at Queen Mary University of London. “The survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation from (Congo) are still looking for justice; the WHO has to show them that they matter.”

In January, the AP reported that a WHO doctor hoping to replace Kasai as regional director in the Western Pacific had previously faced sexual misconduct accusations.

Internal documents showed senior WHO managers were aware of past sexual harassment claims involving Fijian physician Temo Waqanivalu, who also was accused of assaulting a woman at a Berlin conference. With support of some WHO colleagues and

his home country, Waqanivalu was preparing to run for the regional director job.

Javier Guzman, of the Center for Global Development, said a robust internal justice system at WHO was still lacking.

“Making decisions on high level cases such as the one on Dr Kasai is not enough,” Guzman said. “WHO and Dr. Tedros should do better to guarantee that the zero-tolerance policy is real.”

Xi accuses U.S. of trying to block China's development

BEIJING (AP) — Is the United States out to sabotage China? Chinese leaders think so.

President Xi Jinping accused Washington this week of trying to isolate his country and hold back its development. That reflects the ruling Communist Party's growing frustration that its pursuit of prosperity and global influence is threatened by U.S. restrictions on access to technology, its support for Taiwan and other moves seen by Beijing as hostile.

Xi, China's most powerful leader in decades, tries to appear to be above problems and usually makes blandly positive public comments. That made his complaint Monday all the more striking. Xi said a U.S.-led campaign of "containment and suppression" of China has "brought unprecedented, severe challenges." He called on the public to "dare to fight."

On Tuesday, Foreign Minister Qin Gang sharpened the warning, saying Washington faces possible "conflict and confrontation" if it fails to change course.

"The foreign minister is speaking on behalf of a widely held view that the United States is coming after China and they have to defend themselves," said John Delury, an international relations specialist at Yonsei University in Seoul.

China is hardly the only government to fume at Washington's dominance of global strategic and economic affairs. But Chinese leaders see the United States as making extra effort to thwart Beijing as a challenger for regional and possibly global leadership.

The ruling party wants to restore China's historic role as a political and cultural leader, raise incomes by transforming the country into an inventor of technology, and unite what it considers



U.S. President Joe Biden, right, stands with Chinese President Xi Jinping before a meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit meeting on Nov. 14, 2022, in Bali, Indonesia. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon, File)

the Chinese motherland by taking control of Taiwan, the self-ruled island democracy that Beijing claims as part of its territory.

Beijing sees those as positive goals, but American officials see them as threats. They say Chinese development plans are based at least in part on stealing or pressuring foreign companies to hand over technology. Some warn Chinese competition might erode U.S. industrial dominance and incomes.

Washington has set back Beijing's plans by putting Chinese companies including its first global tech brand, Huawei, on a blacklist that limits access to processor chips and other technology. That crippled Huawei's smartphone brand, once one of the world's biggest. American officials are lobbying European and other allies to avoid Huawei equipment when they upgrade phone networks.

Washington cites security fears, but Beijing says that is an excuse to hurt its

fledgling competitors.

The two governments have the world's biggest trading relationship and common interests in combating climate change and other problems. But relations are strained over Taiwan, Beijing's treatment of Hong Kong and mostly Muslim ethnic minorities, and its refusal to criticize or isolate Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

The official Chinese view has soured following an uptick when Xi met U.S. President Joe Biden in November in Indonesia, said Shi Yinhong, an international relations specialist at Renmin University in Beijing. He noted that in the five months since then, Washington approved more weapons sales to Taiwan, criticized Beijing's stance on Ukraine and put more Chinese companies on export watchlists, all of which China saw as hostile.

Xi and Qin spoke in a "dramatic way" this week, but "the essence of what *cont'd on pg 18*

International

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they said is China's long-term stance," Shi said. The leadership believes "the United States has implemented almost all around, drastic and desperate containment of China in all respects, especially in strategic and military fields."

"The risk of military conflict between China and the United States is getting bigger," Shi said.

A State Department spokesperson, Ned Price, said Washington wants to "coexist responsibly" within the global trade and political system and denied the U.S. government wants to suppress China.

"This is not about containing China. This is not about suppressing China. This is not about holding China back," Price said in Washington. "We want to have that constructive competition that is fair" and "doesn't veer into that conflict."

The United States formed a strategic group, the Quad, with Japan, Australia and India in response to concern about China and its claim to vast tracts of sea that are busy shipping lanes. They insist the group doesn't focus on any one country, but its official statements

are about territorial claims and other issues on which they have disputes with Beijing.

The latest change in tone follows acrimonious exchanges over a Chinese balloon that was shot down after passing over North America. Its electronics and other equipment are being examined by the FBI.

Qin, the foreign minister is "trying to position China as a global force for moderation and for peace" in front of foreign audiences and say "it's the Americans who are blowing things out of proportion," Delury said.

Xi's government is especially irritated by displays of support by American and other Western legislators for Taiwan, which split with China in 1949 after a civil war.

Taiwan never has been part of the People's Republic of China, but the Communist Party says the island of 22 million people must unite with the mainland, by force if necessary.

Washington is obligated by federal law to see that Taiwan has the weapons to defend itself and has sold it fighter jets and missiles. Chinese leaders complain that encourages Taiwanese politicians

who might want to resist unification and possibly declare formal independence, a step Beijing says would lead to war.

Premier Li Keqiang, who is due to step down as China's No. 2 leader this month, called on Sunday for "peaceful reunification." But Xi's government also has stepped up efforts to intimidate the island by flying fighter jets and firing missiles into the sea nearby.

The latest downturn is "testament to the real degradation" of U.S.-Chinese relations, which "never had much trust," said Drew Thompson, a fellow at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore.

Chinese leaders "consider any sort of discussion on strategic issues as sensitive and out of bounds," which leads to "heightened risk of miscalculation," Thompson said.

"They believe the U.S. is a hegemon that seeks to undermine the Communist Party and its legitimacy, and they have ample evidence of that," he said. "But should perceptions and the balance of interests change, they could just as easily believe the U.S. is a partner for achieving the party's objectives."

Guys and Dolls
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Girls' semifinals line-ups confirmed in schools' volleyball competition

The Girls' Division semi-finals line-ups in the playoffs of the Inter-Schools' Volleyball Championship were decided at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Tuesday afternoon, 7th March.

The Antigua Girls High School's Second Team and the Sir Novelle Richards Academy won their opening round play-off encounters to book their spots in the female division semi-finals.

The Antigua Girls High School's Second Team beat Ottos Comprehensive School 15-12, 15-12, while Sir Novelle Richards Academy overcame the Christ the King High School's First Team, winning 15-7, 15-12 and 15-10.

The first teams of both Island Academy and the Antigua Girls High School also won their opening playoff encounters on Monday to secure their places in the Girls' Division semi-finals.

The Island Academy's First Team defeated the Third Team of the Antigua Girls High School 15-1, 15-12, while the Antigua Girls High School's First Team prevailed 15-13, 15-8 against the Second Team of Island Academy.

In the girls' semi-finals, the First Team of Island Academy will face the Sec-

ond Team of the Antigua Girls High School, while the First Team of the Antigua Girls High School will meet the Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

Ottos Comprehensive School and the First Team

of Island Academy have advanced to the Boys' Division final.

Ottos Comprehensive School came from behind to oust the Pares Secondary School's First Team 2-1 in their playoff series on

Monday, winning 22-25, 25-15, 15-12.

The Island Academy's First Team defeated the Sir Novelle Richards Academy in their playoff series on Tuesday, prevailing 25-22, 25-17.





The New Evolution Football Team at the Fort Road playing field on Saturday, 25th February, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

New Evolution make winning start to campaign in youth league

New Evolution notched up their second win in as many matches in the Gomez/Netherlands Insurance Youth Football League over the weekend.

Playing in the Under-17 Boys Division at the Fort Road playing field, New Evolution romped to a 3-0 victory over Liberta on Saturday, 4th March, after recording a 2-0 win against Generation Next FC (GNFC) Rebels in their opening round encounter at the same venue the previous weekend.

Willikies, Soccer Academy and Gray's Green also made it two wins in a row by winning their respective matches in the same division.

Willikies beat Wings FC 3-1 on Saturday and trounced Freemans Village 4-0 in their opening round encounter on Saturday, 25th February.

Soccer Academy hammered Freemans Village 3-0 last Saturday to fol-

low up on their 2-0 victory against Wings FC the previous weekend.

Gray's Green prevailed 2-1 against GNFC Rebels last weekend. Gray's Green were also credited with a 3-0 win after the organizers overturned their 6-3 loss to Villa Lions in their opening encounter.

The organizers awarded Gray's Green the victory after Villa Lions were found guilty of breaching the competition's rules by fielding an ineligible or over-aged player in their opening round encounter on 25th February.

Villa Lions opened their campaign with a 3-0 win against Willikies in the Under-15 Boys Division at the St. Anthony's Secondary School's playing field last Saturday.

It was the first loss for Willikies, who had defeated Five Islands 4-1 in

their opening round match.

Gray's Green were held to a 2-2 draw by Earthquake FC after beating GNFC Rebels 3-0 in their opening round encounter. Five Islands and Generation Next FC fought to a 1-1 draw when they met last Saturday.

Generation Next FC Rebels kicked-off their campaign in the Under-13 Boys Division with a 3-0 win against Greenbay Hoppers at the American University of Antigua (AUA) playing field last Saturday.

Greenbay Hoppers had played to a 1-1 draw with Northern Patriots in their opening encounter. But Pigotts Bullets suffered a 1-0 loss to TAMO FC after beating Earthquake FC 2-0 in their opening encounter.

Villa Lions launched their campaign with a 5-0 drubbing of Earthquake FC last Saturday.

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Willikies Superstars and Dominatrixx continue to lead Team Four Hand domino contest

Willikies Superstars and Dominatrixx recorded wins in their latest matches to remain at the top of the Team Four-Hand competition in the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association's (ABNDA) League.

Willikies Superstars, who romped to an emphatic 60-25 victory to inflict the first defeat on Dominatrixx in Team Four-Hand matches in the previous round, claimed more success in the sixth round of matches at the ABNDA's headquarters in Ottos over the weekend.

Willikies Superstars overcame Bolans Revellers 44-33 in one of three matches last weekend. After their perfect run was ended by Willikies Superstars in the previous round, Dominatrixx returned to winning form by trouncing Ramplers 49-24 in their latest encounter last weekend.

The results ensured that Dominatrixx and Willikies Superstars remain joint leaders of the Team Four-Hand competition with identical records of five wins and one defeat after six round of matches.

Double Six cruised to a convincing 69-12 victory over Unstoppables in last weekend's other Team Four Hand encounter.

Leaders Dominatrixx continue to excel in the Team Three-Hand com-



The Dominatrixx Domino Team. (File photo)

petition as well by winning their latest encounter in the fifth round of matches last weekend.

Dominatrixx chalked up 78 points to win their encounter against Moise Eagle Warriors who scored 67 points and the Bravo A Team who recorded 61 points.

In other fifth round matches, Future amassed 79 points to win their encounter with Parham Strikers who had 74 points and the B Team of Willikies Superstars with 69 points.

The Bolans Revellers C Team recorded 84 points to beat Triple Dynamite with 80 points and Ramplers who

had 74 points.

The A Team of Bolans Revellers celebrated success as well, recording 91 points to prevail against the Double Six A Team with 76 points and Legacy with 54 points.

The Double Six B Team scored 78 points to win their match against the Bravo A Team, who secured 68 points, and Rising Stars with 61 points.

The Willikies Superstars A Team amassed a total of 79 points to narrowly beat Unstoppables, who finished second with 78 points, and the Bolans Revellers B Team in third with 66 points.

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Pigotts Bullets made it two wins in as many outings by snatching a 1-0 victory over Villa Lions in the Under-11 Boys Division at the AUA playing field last weekend.

Pigotts Bullets had

prevailed 2-1 over GNFC Rebels in their opening affair the previous weekend. Generation Next FC Rebels rebounded to record a 3-1 victory over Liberta FC last Saturday.

Five Islands FC also won their second game in

a row in the Under-9 Boys Division by beating Pigotts Bullets 2-0 last weekend. Five Islands defeated GNFC Rebels 2-0 in their opening affair.

Generation Next FC Rebels rebounded by beating TAMO FC 2-0 when

both sides met last weekend.

In the Under-7 Division matches last weekend, Pigotts Bullets A trounce GNFC Rebels 1 9-0, but GNFC Rebels A trounce Pigotts Bullets 1 4-0 and Earthquake prevailed 1-0 against TAMO FC.

FC Master Ballerz and English Harbour claim wins in second division

FC Master Ballerz and English Harbour recorded wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League on Tuesday, 7th March.

FC Master Ballers secured a 2-0 win over ABAYA at the Parham playing field. Romar Gidrisingh scored in the fourth minute and Tishorn Davis had a 90th minute conversion to give Master Ballerz their sixth win in 13 matches this season.

The result allows FC Master Ballers to advance to 21 points and move into fifth place on goal difference in the standings. ABAYA remain on eight points and 12th in the standings after slumping to their 9th loss in 13 encounters.

English Harbour enjoyed a goal-feast as they romped to an 8-4 victory over Blackburn Palace in their encounter at the English Harbour playing field.

Kylon Cabral scored twice for the home side by converting a penalty kick in the 24th minute and also had an 88th minute conversion.

Dominic Christopher scored English Harbour's opening goal in the 4th min-



The FC Master Ballerz Football Team. (File photo)

ute. Their second goal was scored by Delroy Simpson, who converted a penalty kick in the 16th minute.

Also scoring for English Harbour was their chief marksman Nigel Graham, who had a 17th minute conversion.

The other goals for English Harbour were scored by Junior Bingham in the 31st minute, Antoniel Campbell in the 40th minute and Wayne Phillip in the first minute of added on time or the 91st minute.

Sadiki Roberts scored

all four goals for Blackburn Palace, who remain second from bottom of the 15-team competition with three points after crashing to their 12th defeat in 13 matches.

Their fifth win in 13 matches carries English Harbour to 19 points and into seventh place on goal difference.

Action in the ABFA's domestic programme will continue with four matches in the first division leagues today, Thursday, 9th March.

Leaders Garden Stars will take on bottom team JSC

Progressors in the first game of a double header at the ABFA's Technical Center at 4 pm.

John Hughes, who are currently second in the standings, will clash with West Ham, who are second from bottom of the standings, in the second encounter at 6:30 pm.

The other two matches will kick-off at 4:30 pm. Potters Tigers will entertain Bendals at the Potters playing field, while Bolans will host Lion Hill at the Bolans playing field.