

TUESDAY 11TH APRIL 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 70 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

ALFA NERO SEIZURE SET FOR TODAY

Story on Page 2



The government is to take control of the multi-million dollar super yacht – Alfa Nero – sometime today (Tuesday April 11) at the Antigua Yacht Club marina, where it has been moored for over a year. Pictured above is the team who will be involved in the seizure of the Alfa Nero. They represent the Antigua Port Authority, Ministry of Legal Affairs, ADOMS, and the Antigua and Barbuda Coast Guard

Seizure of Alfa Nero set for today

The government is to take control of the multi-million dollar super yacht – Alfa Nero – sometime today (Tuesday April 11) at the Antigua Yacht Club marina, where it has been moored for over a year.

The entire process is in the hands of General Manager of the Antigua Port Authority, Darwin Telemaque, the only person authorized by law to carry out the seizure operations.

This action was originally planned for last Saturday, but following intense discussions with the team from the Ministry of Legal Affairs and other solicitors engaged by the government, a decision was made to postpone the action seizure until today.

“Our legal advisors from

the ministry of legal affairs have been in touch with other legal personnel both locally and overseas, and we are at the stage where additional time is required to tie-up ‘a few legal issues’ and to be fully compliant with our ability to take action. We do not wish to have any action taken that can be questioned. We want to ensure that what we do is in line with the legal requirements, meeting all the statutes. We are showcasing Antigua and Barbuda, in this instance, on the global stage. We can’t go wrong!” he declared.

He added that the team decided to err on the side of caution rather than open the possibility of embarrassment to the state.

“The lawyers have ad-



General Manager of the Antigua Port Authority, Darwin Telemaque advised that some time should be given to evaluate and discuss further, and we will move to complete this action by Tuesday (today),” he stated.

Earlier, Telemaque provided a step by step insight as to what will happen with the seizure of the vessel. “On March 21, 2023, I issued an Order of detention for the Alfa Nero. After this was done, anyone who had an interest in the vessel or who was the effective owner had a period of ten days to come forward and make a claim. This was never done. The law, after proves for the action to be advertised in an international medium. This was

not done until March 28th, so the ten day period has now expired,” he detailed.

Following the seizure of the vessel, the Antigua and Barbuda government will assume immediate ownership of the Alfa Nero. Telemaque said there are four tasks that have to be done immediately after the seizure; firstly, he intends to hold discussions with the crew to determine their current status and future plans. He said the government has already agreed to assume their liabilities and that these will be the first things addressed after the sale. Secondly, he will meet with the management of the Antigua Yacht Club to discuss a maintenance schedule for the vessel. Thirdly, discussions are already underway to secure property and indemnity insurance for the vessel, and lastly, arrangements are already in place to secure the vessel with the assistance of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force Coast Guard which is already on site.



Tue 11 Day 83° ☀️ 12% ESE 13 mph Sunshine along with some cloudy intervals. High 83F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph.		Tue 11 Night 74° 🌙 17% E 8 mph Mostly clear skies. Low 74F. Winds E at 5 to 10 mph.	
💧 Humidity 68%	☀️ UV Index Extreme	💧 Humidity 77%	☀️ UV Index 0 of 10
🌅 Sunrise 5:54 am	🌇 Sunset 6:22 pm	🌕 Moonrise 11:52 pm	🌑 Moonset 10:02 am 🌑 Waning Gibbous

Possible teachers' strike averted

Efforts are afoot to satisfy some of the outstanding issues that are at the heart of what appears to be an impasse between the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (A&BUT) and the government.

Over the holiday weekend, the Director of Education Clare Browne issued a press release in which he announced the extension of the Easter school holidays by an extra week; meaning that, instead of schools reopening for the start of the final term in the school year today, schools will now reopen next Monday, April 17.

In the press release, the director noted that he was informed by way of a letter dated April 4, that the A&BUT 'has signaled its intention to "engage in industrial action starting April 11th, 2023." The reason given for the planned course of action is that the membership of the union is dissatisfied with the progress made by the government on outstanding issues raised. In light of this, and because children cannot be left unsupervised or under



Director of Education Clare Browne supervised, particularly at this time of immense challenge with antisocial behavior among young people, the Ministry of Education has taken a decision to extend the Easter Vacation by four days, resorting to the traditional two weeks.' (See full text of press release).

One of the issues raised is school's lighting, especially given the high incidence of vandalism at school plants across the island. Browne has now reported that of the two schools left to have lighting fixtures installed, the Sir Novelle Richards Academy and Pares Secondary School, technicians

have been working feverishly over the weekend to have them fitted and operational, by today.

He noted that the government has sought to address the several issues raised by the A&BUT, including the upgrades, which is about seventy-five percent complete. He explained that upgrades relate to upgrading the salaries of teachers who after attaining higher qualifications, are moved to a higher grade or pay structure.

The Director of Education has expressed his concern over the possibility that industrial action by the teachers, could cause further harm to the students who have had challenges in the last several years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He feels that industrial action at this time would further hinder the learning opportunities for the nation's youth.

Pointe Xpress contacted the A&BUT for a comment but its General Secretary, Sharon Clifton-Kelsick said the union will issue a statement today.

NOTICE

To: Her Worship
The Licensing Magistrate
St. Johns Magistrate Court
Gray's Farm
St. Johns
Antigua.

To: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

Mr. Elyas Alabdul Lah
Cedar Valley
St. John's
Antigua

Dear Madame,

Re: Notice- Application for Liquor Licence

I Elyas Alabdul Lah of Cedar Valley Village, with registered business situated at Grays Farm St. John's Antigua and Barbuda DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that It is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm St. John's, Antigua on Thursday 6th day of April, 2023 next ensuring for a Liquor License Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as J's Mini Mart and Superette, situated at Hand Street pitt Villa in the parish of St. John's Antigua and Barbuda.

Sincerely,
.....
Elyas Alabdul Lah

NOTICE

To: Her Worship
The Licensing Magistrate
St. Johns Magistrate Court
Gray's Farm
St. Johns
Antigua.

To: The Commissioner of Police
Police Headquarters
American Road
St. Johns
Antigua.

Mr. Wael Al Kassie
Cassada Gardens
St. John's
Antigua

Dear Madame,

Re: Notice- Application for Liquor Licence

I Wael Al Kassie of Cassada Garden, with a registered business situated on the old Parham road St. John's Antigua and Barbuda DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that It is my intention to apply at the next sitting of the liquor licensing Court to be held at the Magistrate's Court, Gray's Farm St. John's, Antigua on Thursday 6th day of April, 2023 next ensuring for a Liquor License Pursuant to section (11) (5) of the Licensing (Intoxication Liquor) Act Cap. 249 of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda 1992 Revised Edition, in respect of premises known as J's Mini Mart and Superette, situated at Hand Street pitt Villa in the parish of St. John's Antigua and Barbuda.

Sincerely,
.....
Wael Al Kassie

PRESS RELEASE

TO: All Media Houses

DATE: 9th April 2023

RE: EXTENSION OF EASTER VACATION

The Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers in a correspondence dated 4th April 2023, has signaled their intention to “engage in industrial action starting April 11th, 2023”. The reason given for their planned course of action is that the membership of the Union is dissatisfied with the progress made by the government on outstanding issues raised. In light of this and because children cannot be left unsupervised or undersupervised, particularly at this time of immense challenge with antisocial behaviour among young people, the Ministry of Education has taken a decision to extend the Easter Vacation by four days, resorting to the traditional two weeks. This will allow additional time for the Ministry to work closely with the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers and other agencies to arrive at an acceptable position.

Listed below are the grievances of the A&BUT and the progress made to date by the Ministry of Education on the issues.

Concern	A&BUT Issue	Progress Made
Lighting	14 schools (priority list) should receive lighting of premises	12 schools completed; remaining 2 schools will be completed before 11 th April 2023
Fencing for Sir Novelle Richards Academy	Requested a short-term solution for the erection of a temporary fence for the Sir Novelle Richards Academy.	Commissioned a team to include the MoE’s Facilities Manager, representatives from the Board of Education, Public Works Department and the Lands and Surveys Department to develop the requested short-term solution. The team indicated the projected cost for the fence at SNRA was EC\$300,000. Funding was

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
A.D. 2023

AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Instructed by the **ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA DEVELOPMENT BANK** of 27 St. Mary’s Street, in the City of Saint John, in the State of Antigua and Barbuda, I will sell by public auction on Friday 14 April 2023 at 1:00 p.m. on site, the under mentioned property owned by Mr. Dale Henry of Lamberts, New Winthropes, St. George’s, Antigua.

The property is located at Lamberts, New Winthropes, St. George’s, Antigua and consists of a parcel of land of an area of approximately 5,985 sq. ft. or 0.14 acre; with a two (2) storey three (3) bedroom, two (2) bathroom concrete residential dwelling thereon of an area offering approximately 2,900 sq. ft. of living space inclusive of a lower floor basement for possible commercial use.

The service lines for potable water, electricity and telephone which are provided by A.P.U.A are accessible to the property.

The land is registered under the Registered Land Act, 1975 as follows:-
REGISTRATION SECTION: New Winthropes & Cassada Gardens
BLOCK: 42 1995E
PARCEL: 308

Parcel No. **308** of Block No. **42 1995E** is bounded by the following:

- On the North by: Parcel 749 ;
- On the South by: Public Road;
- On the East by: Parcel 309;
- On the West by: Public Road

Particulars of the sale can be obtained from the undersigned at his office at Crosbies, St. John’s, Antigua.
 Phone: (268)562-7653 Office
 (268)464-7653 Cell/ WhatsApp

Sgd. Trevor ‘Teddy’ Santos
Auctioneer

Website:
www.go-going-gone.com

Instagram:
[tts_auction_antigua](https://www.instagram.com/tts_auction_antigua)

Facebook:
 Auction Antigua

Email:
info@go-going-gone.com

		previously arranged through a loan from the Caribbean Development Bank Third Basic Project for Education, EQUIP, and owing to the cost for a temporary fence, recommended an alternate short-term measure of three-day time security officers on plant until the fence is erected.
		In a meeting with the Cabinet on Wednesday 5 th April 2023, it was arranged that Cabinet officials, a team from Lands and Surveys, other officials and the Union will meet on Tuesday 11 th April at the SNRA to again highlight the boundaries of the school and begin erecting a fence shortly thereafter. The Cabinet has projected fence completion within one month.
Teacher Upgrades	All upgrades should be completed by 31 st March 2023	326 teachers were upgraded. Most of that number have received their upgrade instruments and corresponding remuneration; 53 upgrade instruments remain uncollected at the Ministry by teachers, 3 persons were outside of the upper time limit of the Cabinet Decision and will be addressed in the new cohort for upgrades. The Ministry is trouble-shooting the data for approximately 15 teachers who have indicated issues with their upgrades. Although most of the upgraded teachers have received payments, a few are outstanding as the Treasury continues to make payments as resources allow. A call has been made for teachers to reach out where there are issues. The Ministry continues to work with the Establishment Department and the Treasury to ensure that all outstanding teachers are upgraded and paid.
	Teachers’ Retroactive Payments	In keeping with a previous agreement, the Special Upgrades Committee comprising of representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Establishment Department, the Ministry of Education and the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers will reconvene on 17 th April 2023 at 2:00 pm to address retroactive payments.
Head of Department Ex Gratia Payments	34 teachers acted as Heads of Departments	13 teachers received their Ex-Gratia payments on 6 th April 2023. The Treasury has indicated that the remaining teachers will receive their payments at the end of April 2023.
Electronic Surveillance	All schools on the priority list should receive camera surveillance (15 schools)	August to November 2022 - Assessments done on school plants to determine the best solution. Sourcing and importing of equipment for the pilot phase. December 2022 – Installation of a wireless solution at the Princess Margaret School as the first pilot school. January to February 2023 – Pilot assessment stage and installation of wireless cameras at Clare Hall Secondary and All Saints Secondary Schools as part of the pilot stage. February 2023 - An agreement was made with a private donor to install wire-based solution in secondary schools. Wireless solution intended for smaller schools. March 2023 – Work began at the Ottos Comprehensive School. Assessment and installation work conducted at the Antigua Girls’ High School, Antigua Grammar School and Sir Novelle Richards Academy for a wire-based solution.
		The progress was reported to the A&BUT in March highlighting the challenges and the need for a sustainable solution for schools on the priority list. The Ministry registered its concerns that much more time was needed to allow for a sustainable solution and for this process to be done properly bearing the need to ensure that the right solution is employed. It was reiterated that rushing the process may be disastrous for the education system in general.
Collective Bargaining Agreement	Reconvene collective bargaining	A meeting with the Minister for Civil Service Matters and representatives of the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers will take place on Tuesday 11 th April. The proposal from the Government’s Negotiating Team will be brought before Cabinet on Wednesday 12 th April 2023.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries remains committed to working with the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers to ensuring that learning environments are healthy, safe and conducive to learning and that all teachers receive their due worth.



The local team led by Ambassador Daven Joseph along with Chief Immigration Officer Katrina Yearwood and her team.



Representatives of UNHCR, IMO and PAHO

UNHCR to submit preliminary report on migrants today

Representatives from several international organizations, who spent more than a week in the country holding interviews with the West Africans living here since late December, are expected to submit a preliminary report of their findings today.

The seven-member team represent the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Migration Organisation (IMO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) completed interviews with approximately one hundred and twenty-five of the migrants living in several areas. Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to Nigeria, Daven Joseph and Chief Immigration Officer, Katrina Yearwood were among the local officials accompanying the team on its visits.

Joseph said, the information gleaned will assist the government to formulate a policy position of what to do with the West Africans who arrived here in late December, on charters that operated

falsely under the Antigua Airways banner.

"The government is expected to use the findings of the report to make a determination on whether to repatriate the West Africans to Cameroon, their native land, or to assimilate them into the local society.

"For example, if the government decided to repatriate them to their homeland there are a number of international obligations to which the government must adhere. Secondly, if the decision is to assimilate them then the socioeconomic capacity of the country would be called into question," Joseph explained.

He confirmed that there is now significant pressure on the government to handle this matter correctly, especially in light of the tragedy two weeks ago when thirty migrants took a small vessel on a fateful journey from Antigua, heading to what was believed to have been the US Virgin Islands. The vessel capsized at sea leaving three persons dead and another thirteen missing.

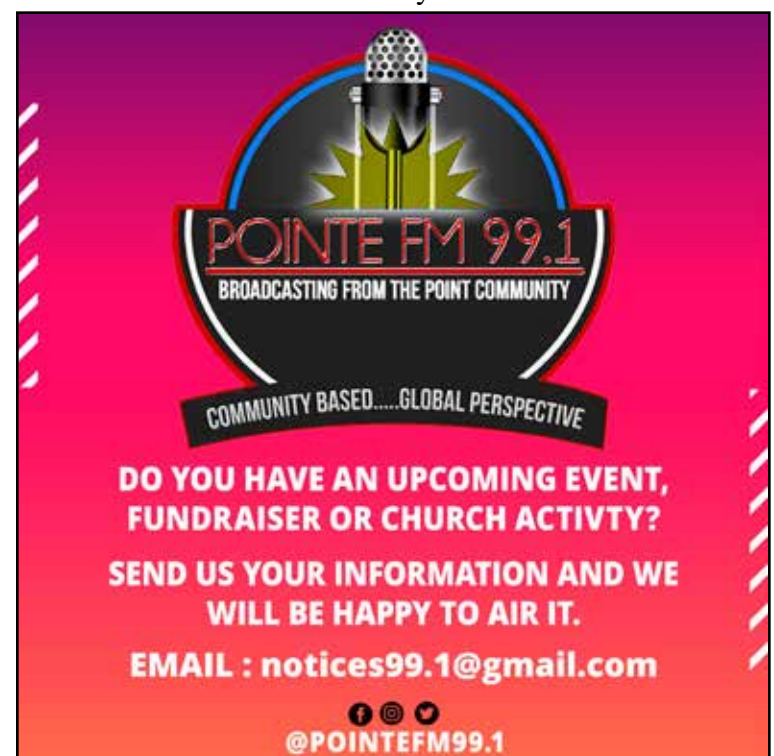
During the discussions,

Ambassador Joseph said the migrants were advised not to 'put themselves in harm's way' by attempting to leave the country illegally. He added that several have expressed concerns about their safety here in Antigua and Barbuda, as their presence has now become a 'hot button item'.

"They have expressed gratitude at the hospitality they have received and are thankful for the assistance they have received from some members of the soci-

ety. However, they don't feel comfortable with the fact that they are the cause for some measure of political divide and they have expressed fears about their own safety," he revealed.

Joseph added that one member of the team indicated that from interactions with the migrants, fears were expressed about having to seek medical attention should they become ill and what such exposure would do to their safety.



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Antigua Airways principals not in possession of passports

Information Minister Melford Nicholas has confirmed that the government's transaction with Antigua Airways was incomplete, and as such no Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP) files (passports) were given to the principals of the airline.

Ten (10) Antiguan and

Barbudan Passports were to be given to the airline's financiers that would have represented a 20% stake in the carrier for the government of Antigua and Barbuda, once final arrangements were completed for it to operate commercially.

The Cabinet spokesman

told reporters on Thursday, that the suspension of operations while still in the charter stage, meant the Citizenship by Investment files were not given to the Africans.

"The option, once the airline was established for Antigua to retain an equity position, the route of utilising

the funding through the CIP, would have been the method of acquiring those shares. Neither option took place. Neither did the government subscribe, because the airline was not effectively established, nor that the files were made available to Marvellous Mike."

The non-compliance of several regulatory requirements resulted in the government suspending charter service between Nigeria and Antigua and Barbuda that was inaugurated in November 2022.

Minister Nicholas pointed out that the transaction would have been completed once the carrier was fully established. However, the prevailing circumstances mean government has retained the 10 CIP files.

"I want to reassure you and the public that there has been no loss. Antigua had never subscribed. The option was available to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda once the airline was established. This venture of Antigua Airways utilising the charter means as a precursor to the full establishment of the airline, was I think, what the PM was referring to and with the adverse publicity that has come with that particular venture, it is clear that that airline proposition would no longer be feasible. So, there is no loss here to the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda," Minister Melford Nicholas assured.



V. C. Bird International Airport and Codrington Airport are managed by Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority.

It is the strategic goal of ABAA for V. C. Bird International Airport to be the gateway of choice to the Eastern Caribbean and beyond.

ABAA is seeking individuals to fill the position listed.

The deadline for applications is May 31, 2023.

NB: Only qualified applicants will be acknowledged.

Send applications and curriculum vitae to:
Vacancy: ABAA Senior Managers
 c/o CoreConsult Inc.
 Aflak Building, Friars Hill Road
 P. O. Box 2118, St. John
 Antigua and Barbuda
 Email: jobs@coreconsultinc.com

NB: Selected applicants will be required to complete psychometric assessments.

VACANCY

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

JOB SUMMARY

Plan, implement, and oversee financial and administrative operations, serve as the custodian of all funds, assets, and securities, and provide direction and leadership to staff.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Minimum of bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Public Administration, Airport Management or a related field;
- Certification as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or Certified Internal Auditor is desirable;
- Minimum of ten (10) years experience with progressively more responsibilities;
- A combination of education and experience that provides knowledge skills, and ability to perform the duties of this position will be considered.

CORE DUTIES

- Manage all financial operations;
- Oversee all treasury activities;
- Maintain maximum customer satisfaction within the guidelines and regulations of the airline industry;
- Monitor the organizational structure, staffing, service levels, and administrative systems required to accomplish the goals and objectives effectively and efficiently;
- Direct the development and implementation of the operational budget and monitor expenditures;
- Provide leadership to the team;
- Establish professional relationships in the internal and external stakeholders.

Seven police officers on RSS deployment to St. Lucia

Seven members of the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda departed the country on Saturday 8 April to St. Lucia, to join their regional counterparts in assisting to restore law and order on the neighboring island.

The deployment is in keeping with the mandate of RSS to provide the necessary security assistance to its member states within the region; in this case St. Lucia, as they are currently experiencing a wave of violent crimes.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has responded to the needs of the Government of St. Lucia in a pos-

itive manner, and as a result, the contingent of officers will be part of the RSS operation for a period of three weeks, in the first instance.

The senior command of the police force was present at the airport to support and encourage the officers, as they were preparing to depart Antigua.

They were told to be ambassadors of Antigua and Barbuda, and to perform their duties with commitment and professionalism.

Meanwhile, the Police at Willikies are continuing to probe an apparent drowning incident of a 68 year-old Canadian male at Devil's Bridge, in

the early morning hours of Saturday 8 April.

The man's body was fished from the water by members of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force Coast Guard and taken to the Coast Guard Base.

A medical doctor arrived on the scene and pronounced the man dead, at approximately 8:42 am.

The deceased reportedly arrived in Antigua on April 3 with other family members and was staying at the Pineapple Beach Hotel.

He was due to leave the country today.



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ECCB halts sale of FCIB assets in St. Kitts-Nevis

FirstCaribbean International Bank Limited has announced today, that the sale of its assets of FirstCaribbean International Bank (Barbados) Limited in St. Kitts, to St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla National Bank Limited (SKNANB) will no longer proceed.

The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank ('ECCB') provided conditional approval for the sale of the assets and banking business of FirstCaribbean International Bank (Barbados) Limited ('FCIB Barbados') in St. Kitts, to the St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla National Bank Limited ('SKNANB') on July 15, 2022, subject to certain conditions.

SKNANB recently informed FCIB Barbados that it has not secured final approval from the ECCB to conclude the acquisition. The

ECCB subsequently notified FCIB Barbados of its decision to not grant final approval for the sale of its operations in St. Kitts.

Notwithstanding the denial of approval outlined above, the ECCB remains fully engaged with FCIB Barbados as it continues to assess its operational footprint in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union. This means that FirstCaribbean International Bank (Barbados) Limited will retain its presence in St. Kitts and has announced plans to transform the way it does business there.

Chief Executive Officer of CIBC FirstCaribbean, Mark St. Hill, noted that while the ending of the sale process is disappointing for the bank, CIBC FirstCaribbean will take advantage of this opportunity to refine its business in St. Kitts. He added:

"We are an agile organisation and it is our duty on behalf of our employees and clients to ensure that we deliver a steady ship that provides omni-channel access to banking services in St. Kitts. We are prepared to pivot and look toward growing our business in St. Kitts, into the future."

Managing Director for the bank in Barbados and the OECS countries, Donna Wellington, noted that the bank will take this opportunity to transform its business in St. Kitts. "Our priority is to signal to the market that we are staying and open for business. We have been conservative in the St. Kitts market over the past year-and-a-half as we prepared the business for sale.

However, we will now concentrate our effort on building the business, reconnecting with both our Retail and Corporate clients in a big way and providing them with the best products and services CIBC FirstCaribbean has to offer."

Ms. Wellington went on to thank both staff and clients for their commitment to the bank. "Our employees are a huge asset to the business, and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for the grace and professionalism they have exhibited over the past several months.

As for our clients, we have already spoken to some of them and they have assured us of their continuing support for us, so it is full steam ahead."

Ms. Wellington noted that the bank plans to eventually transform its branch and network in Basseterre to be able to provide access to both in person and digital banking services to St. Kitts, with the installation of Smart ABMs, and other self-serve products that will allow customers to choose how and where they bank with CIBC FirstCaribbean.



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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

A call for action: Improving the transportation dimension in the supply chain for economic sustainability within the Caribbean

Dear Editor,

Few of us stop to think about the supply chain. However, supply chain and supply chain management have been around for as long as businesses, whether formal or informal, have existed. It, therefore, would be really hard not to overstate the importance of the supply chain and supply chain management to Caribbean economies.

Most Caribbean economies depend on tourism for a significant share of their gross domestic product; and, despite historical efforts to change this pattern, tourism has traditionally been heavily reliant on imports. Like other economies, the Caribbean has to export its own goods and services to obtain the foreign exchange necessary to import those goods and services that we do not produce. Speedy, efficient, and cost-effective delivery is, therefore, vital to the survival of our economies and the quality of life of our people. This is where the notion of supply chain and supply chain management comes in.

Supply chain is a network of individuals and firms that are involved in creating a product, converting it into a finished good, and delivering it to the consumer. Supply chain management involves all activities from planning, procurement of raw materials, and the production of finished goods to final distribution to the consumer. While it sounds simple, a careful analysis will show that a product can pass through many steps from start to finish. So, for example, the consumer of Angostura bitters who lives in New York City sits at the end of a complex system leading from procurement, shipping, warehousing, marketing, and delivery to the end user. In fact, this is only a

part of the process of bringing Angostura bitters to the consumer. First, the farmers supply the input of “vegetable matter” (herbs and spices, grasses, roots, leaves, and fruits), which is then infused with alcohol by Angostura to make the final product.

Additional components of supply chain management include transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and customer service. All of these activities positively impact the lives of ordinary Caribbean people through job creation, increased access to goods and services, and economic growth.

We wish to bring to sharper focus the critical role of transportation in the supply chain, which is the movement of goods and services from one point to the next. The speedier and more cost-effective, the better.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic forced many organizations and individuals to reflect on this important dimension of the supply chain when they were left stranded as transportation ground to a halt. Such was the case for many months, as there was little or no movement of goods and services via air, ground, or sea. Economically, the reality was even grimmer for Caribbean countries when no tourists came calling.

The pandemic awakened the sensibilities of Caribbean nations in terms of international trade. The limited availability and sometimes absence of transportation moving goods from international trading partners to the Caribbean drove home the point more forcefully, that transportation is important to the economic viability of the region. So, while COVID-19 and other shocks present an opportunity

for deepening integration and lessening the dependency on main markets, such as China and the United States, the Caribbean needs to look at critical elements in strengthening the supply chain throughout the region.

In a 2022 article published by the Jamaica Information Service, Mr. John Mahfood, President of the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association (JMEA), spoke of the tremendous difficulties countries around the Caribbean were experiencing with shipping logistics. This, he pointed out, resulted in a shortage of some commodities. Some Jamaican companies were not getting the products they needed. In light of these challenges, he stressed the need for Caribbean businesses to look at what each country can produce and how they can support each other. Initiatives by regional stakeholders within the supply chain to cooperate can only augur well for the transportation element, as Caribbean nations stand to gain from increased regional trade, access to markets, reduced costs, and timely delivery without having to focus greatly on markets external to the region for some goods and services. Perhaps a careful study of the supply chain for goods traded within the Caribbean might help to expand Caribbean trade and encourage the provision of more transportation services at lower costs.

President Irfaan Ali of Guyana, in his address to the Caribbean Investment Forum in March 2022 stated, “We could create all the goods, but if you don’t have the means to move the goods and the services, then you have a serious problem.” In essence, transportation is the key enabler of eco-

cont’d on pg 11

Letter to the Editor

cont'd from pg 10

conomic and social prosperity.

An effective supply chain manages the flow of products, information, and funds to maintain a high level of products for the market while keeping costs low. However, this flow is hampered by the lack of a cohesive and affordable transportation system among Caribbean islands. Let us, therefore, not forget passenger transport connectivity. The problem of intra-Caribbean travel has been a sore point for decades.

Caribbean people have often experienced many difficulties travelling intra-regionally. Currently, there is a chronic lack of access to the movement of air cargo and passengers within the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), with LIAT 1974 in receivership and the new LIAT 2020 operating below the required airlift capacity. In the wider Caribbean, island-to-island access is sometimes only possible through multi-city flights. Not to mention the prohibitive cost of airfare compared to air travel outside the region. As Ambassador Ronald Sanders opined in a May 5, 2013 article in the Jamaica Observer, "The agony of Caribbean transport is crying out for focused attention." Indeed, travelling between Caribbean countries can be costly, tiring, and sometimes bordering on a maze-like activity. Perhaps it is time to tackle this problem on a full-scale basis through an

analysis of a regional supply chain.

The supply chain can be considered a complex system. For it to work efficiently, it requires collaboration from all stakeholders. If the region is to really move to the next level with its industries and trade, the leaders of governments and businesses

must move intentionally and with alacrity to integrate and improve the transportation infrastructure within the Caribbean region, if the Caribbean is to (i) withstand external shocks and (ii) enhance the productive capacity of our economies by moving people, goods, and services freely throughout.

It is now imperative that Caribbean people recognize the value of the supply chain and prioritize its management to ensure that we build sustainable economies in the region.

The time to act is now!

Contributors: Roberts, Skepple, Cain

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Opinion

Mature response from Guyana at ICJ victory over Venezuela

By **Sir Ronald Sanders**

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own)

Guyana has won a second judgement in an ongoing case against Venezuela, at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague, "to confirm the legal validity and binding effect" of an 1899 arbitration that determined the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela as "a full, perfect and final settlement".

The Court made the latest judgement with 14 Judges in favour and one against. The Judge, casting the single dissenting vote was Mr. Philippe Couvreur who was chosen by the Venezuelan Government to sit as an ad hoc judge in the case.

At stake in the case was the acceptability or rejection by the Court of a preliminary objection from the Venezuelan government, which argued that the United Kingdom (UK) is an indispensable third party without whose consent the Court cannot adjudicate upon the dispute.

The UK is the former

colonial power in Guyana (formerly British Guiana) which became an independent, sovereign state on 26 May 1966. The UK was party to the 1899 arbitral award, but by an agreement, signed on 17 February 1966 in Geneva (to which Guyana became a party at its independence) the settlement of the dispute, which Venezuela resurrected in 1962, was left to Guyana and Venezuela in accordance with procedures set out in the agreement.

The Judges of ICJ, having considered the legal arguments made by Guyana and Venezuela, and after examination of the historical facts of the case, decided to reject the Venezuelan preliminary objection, saying that the exercise of the Court's jurisdiction "is based on the application of the Geneva Agreement" and that the UK was not involved in the dispute settlement arrangements between Guyana and Venezuela, nor did either of them "request the United Kingdom's participation".

An important aspect of the 1966 Geneva Agreement was that, as the Court put it, "Guyana and Venezuela could submit the dispute to one of the means of settlement set out in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, without the involvement of the United Kingdom." Article 33



Sir Ronald Sanders

allows for the parties to a dispute "to seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice." One of the solutions is that if the parties fail to reach agreement regarding the means of settlement, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall choose another of the means stipulated in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Guyana and Venezuela failed to find a settlement after 52 years of direct discussion, mixed commissions and mediation. Therefore, on 30 January 2018, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, chose the ICJ "as the means that is now to be used for its solution". Subsequently, Guyana instituted proceedings against Venezuela at the ICJ to estab-

lish "the legal validity and binding effect" of the 1899 boundary settlement. At that time, two generations of Guyanese had lived in uncertainty and fear of Venezuela's aggression and incursions into their territory.

Venezuela was unhappy about the involvement of the ICJ from the outset, even though it is the instrument of a legal and peaceful process that the UN Charter provides for the settlement of disputes and is one that has been used from its inception by nations across the world. Consequently, on 18 June 2018, Venezuela launched its first objection to the case brought by Guyana, stating that the ICJ had no jurisdiction to hear the case.

In all fairness to Venezuela, the ICJ decided to postpone hearing the merits of the Guyana case until it had considered the Venezuelan arguments regarding the

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Sahara dust plume reduces air quality across the Caribbean

Loop - Air quality levels across the Caribbean are moderate as a plume of Saharan Dust continues its journey over the region.

Antigua and Barbuda's Meteorological Service said the dust plume has a particulate matter (PM) of 2.5 and a concentration of 10.

The meteorological service said the air quality is acceptable even though there are a few pollutants present.

However, meteorological and disaster management agencies warned persons, who are sensitive to the dust and pollutants, to take precautions.

"Sensitive groups such as the elderly, children, and those with respiratory and cardiovascular ailments should take the necessary precautions," Montserrat's Disaster Management Coor-



Saharan air layer forecast (Photo credit: myfoxxhurricane).

dination Agency (DMCA) said in an advisory. The dust plume is expected to affect the region until mid-week.

The Fox News Saharan Air Layer Forecast models show the dust will af-

That reprieve from the dust will not last long as another plume is set to arrive a few days later.

cont'd from pg 12

Court's jurisdiction. On 18 December 2020, the Court found that it did have jurisdiction to hear Guyana's case on the validity of the 1899 arbitral award. That was the first legal blow to Venezuela.

On 7 June 2022, Venezuela responded by filing the preliminary objection which the Court agreed was admissible for consideration. However, having examined the argument for the preliminary objection, for five months since 17 November 2022, the Court rejected it on 6 April 2023, confirming that it can adjudicate upon the merits of the case brought by Guyana for judicial settlement. But it will be another year before that happens; Venezuela has

been given a year to respond to Guyana.

It is clear that, in these judicial proceedings, Venezuela has been given every opportunity to present its objections, and lengthy consideration has been given by the ICJ to its arguments before rejecting them. The international judicial system is working in a fair and objective manner, about which Venezuela can have no reason for complaint.

The more fundamental problem is that since 1962, sixty-three years after its parliament accepted and praised the 1899 arbitration, which gave Venezuela more territory than it had, successive Venezuelan governments have tried to distract attention from their deep internal divisions by trying

to build unity around a false claim to the Essequibo region.

That claim was developed on an unsubstantiated note from a dead man, Severo Mallet-Prevost, a member of Venezuela's legal team during the 1899 proceeding, that he knew of a "political deal" in the arbitration's findings. Similar unsubstantiated allegations were made in Venezuela's preliminary objection submitted to the ICJ in 2022. They are a flimsy basis on which to build an entire national belief system, but it has been reinforced in Venezuelan schools and enhanced by false maps of the country. This disinformation has also promoted hostility toward Guyana from Venezuelan citizens.

The ICJ process may eventually settle the legal basis for the Guyana-Venezuela boundary. It is in both countries' interest to continue to participate fully in the Court's proceedings, and, once finalized, to accept its decision, as many other countries have done since 1946.

It is good that Guyana did not take a triumphalist stance toward Venezuela after its two legal victories at the ICJ. Instead, its President, Irfaan Ali, took the mature position of simply stating Guyana's confidence "that its longstanding international boundary with Venezuela will be confirmed by the Court."

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsaders.com

Two-year-old boy and grandmother savagely slain in Saint Lucia

By Kingsley Emanuel

A Saint Lucian family of Westall Group, Vieux-Fort, is consumed with grief and anger after two of their loved ones were slain last evening while in their bed.

Dead are Tara Joseph, 47, aka Lucess, who was shot four times, and her grandson, Kentrell Joseph, 2, who received eight gunshots. Tara was pronounced dead at the hospital, while her grandson was pronounced dead at the scene of the crime.

According to a family member, the assailants used a chair to reach a partially opened window in the house from where they fired the gunshots.

“I heard someone kick the gate open and heard gunshots bursting. I did not want to open my door because gunshots were bursting,” the family member recounted.

He said his cousin in the nearby house shouted at him, saying that they were killing his mother.

“I came in the yard and saw the child flat on the ground. Those guys have no heart,” the family member



Tara Joseph and the house in which she and her 2-year-old-old grandson were shot up on Saturday, April 8.



grieved.

The assailants went into another home of a relative of the victim before shooting the two victims, but the occupant of that home wasn't there at the time.

“If I was at my home I would be dead also. It's a good thing I was not at home,” the grieving family member said.

On Saturday, April 8, the presence of the police officers wasn't as noticeable in Vieux-Fort as in previous days. The grieving family members believed that the incident may not have occurred had there been a strong police presence.

In another incident, a young man from Vieux-Fort was gunned down last night in the usually quiet community of Cedars Heights.

Former BVI Premier hopes for relaxed conditions ahead of trial



Former British Virgin Islands Premier Andrew Fahie

CMC - Former British Virgin Islands Premier Andrew Fahie, who is facing charges of drug smuggling and money laundering, has filed a motion before a Florida court to receive more flexible bond conditions ahead of his trial.

Fahie has been charged along with his co-accused — former BVI Ports Authority Director Oleanvine Maynard and her son, Ka-

deem Maynard.

The Maynards remain incarcerated ahead of the trio's expected July trial.

A report published by BVI News — states that on Friday, Fahie's attorney, Theresa Van Vliet petitioned the court to allow him to travel for dental appointments and increased visits to his lawyer.

According to Van Vliet *cont'd on pg 15*

Guyanese private sector optimistic about visa free entry to Canada

(CMC) – The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) says it remains optimistic about plans to remove visa restrictions in the future on Guyanese nationals entering Canada.

In a statement, the GCCI said senior officials of the private sector group held discussions with Canada's High Commissioner to Guyana, Mark Kevin Berman on the issue and that they were assured "that discussions were underway to remove visa restrictions altogether in the future, a decision that both parties are optimistic about".

The CCI delegation, which included its president, Kester Hutson, and Senior Vice President, Richard Rambarran, also discussed with the Canadian diplomat "the need to improve transportation infrastructure for cargo shipping and direct flights between the two nations".

The statement said that during the meeting, the par-



GCCI President Kester Hutson (left), Canadian High Commissioner Mark Kevin Berman and GCCI's Senior Vice President Richard Rambarran (Photo: GCCI)

ties discussed the potential for strategic partnerships between Guyana and Canada in various sectors, including agro-processing, tourism, and other traditional sectors.

"The High Commissioner emphasised the importance of maximising the opportunities available in both nations through collaboration and cooperation. To this end, GCCI is currently working to organise more

outgoing trade missions to Canada, with the aim of fostering stronger ties between the two countries," the statement added.

The statement quoted Hutson as expressing his gratitude to the High Commissioner "for his engagement and commitment to strengthening the relationship between Guyana and Canada.

"With continued cooper-

ation, there is no doubt that both nations can achieve great success together," the statement added.

The United Kingdom recently removed its visa requirement for Guyanese travellers wishing to stay in the country for up to six months once they meet specific requirements, which include having access to enough funds to support their stay.

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the motion was not opposed by the prosecution.

Fahie currently has limited flexibility after a revised bail bond order only allowed him to travel for court appearances.

Conditions of the bond meant that his attorney had to travel to his two-bedroom apartment for client visits. According to the report, the apartment is shared with his two

daughters who are attending college, based on this, Van Vliet told the court that the size of the former Premier's residence makes confidential communication difficult, if not impossible, if either of his two daughters is at home.

She said trial preparation would be better served in an office replete with the necessary materials and resources, including the ability to speak freely and confidentially with his attorney.

Van Vliet said her client recently obtained permission to travel to his dentist for a root canal and wanted additional modification on the bond order to allow for follow-up dental visits as well as attorney visits to her offices either in Miami during the trial or in Fort Lauderdale.

She said the visits would be no more than three times per week, beginning around June 26, and continuing through the duration of the trial.

Gunman kills four in Kentucky bank shooting

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A 23-year-old bank employee armed with a rifle opened fire at his Louisville workplace Monday morning, killing four people — including a close friend of the governor — while livestreaming the attack, authorities said.

“Let’s be clear about what this was,” Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg said. “This was an evil act of targeted violence.”

The shooting, the 15th mass killing in the country this year, comes just two weeks after a former student killed three children and three adults at a Christian elementary school in Nashville, Tennessee, about 160 miles (260 kilometers) to the south. That state’s governor and his wife also had friends killed in that shooting.

Police arrived as shots were still being fired inside Old National Bank and killed the shooter in an exchange of gunfire, Louisville Metro Police Department Chief Jacquelyn Gwinn-Villaroel said at a news conference.

“The suspect shot at officers,” the police chief said. “We then returned fire and stopped that threat.”

The chief identified the shooter as Connor Sturgeon, who she said was livestreaming during the attack.

“That’s tragic to know that that incident was out there and captured,” she said. “We’re hopeful that we can have that incident removed, that footage removed.”

Nine people, including two police officers, were treated for injuries from the shooting, University of Louisville Hospital spokeswoman Heather Fountaine said in an email. One of the officers, a 26-year-old who had graduated from the police academy on March 31, was in critical condition after being



Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear arrives at the scene of a shooting in Louisville, Ky., Monday, April 10, 2023. (Michael Clevenger/Courier Journal via AP)

shot in the head and having surgery, the police chief said. At least three patients had been discharged.

An emotional Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said he lost one of his closest friends in the shooting in the building on East Main Street not far from the minor league ballpark Louisville Slugger Field and Waterfront Park.

“These are irreplaceable, amazing individuals that a terrible act of violence tore from all of us,” the governor said of the victims.

It was the second time that Beshear was personally touched by a mass tragedy since becoming governor.

In late 2021, one of the towns devastated by tornadoes that tore through Kentucky was Dawson Springs, the hometown of Beshear’s father, former two-term Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear. Andy Beshear frequently visited Dawson Springs as a boy and has talked emotionally about his father’s hometown.

Beshear spoke as the investiga-

tion in Louisville continued and police searched for a motive. Crime scene investigators could be seen marking and photographing numerous bullet holes in the windows near the bank’s front door.

As part of the investigation, police descended on a neighborhood about 5 miles (8 kilometers) south of the downtown shooting. The street was blocked as federal and local officers talked to residents. One home was cordoned off with caution tape.

“I’m almost speechless. You see it on the news but not at home,” said Kami Cooper, 38, who lives in the neighborhood.

A man who fled the building during the shooting told WHAS-TV that the shooter opened fire with a long rifle in a conference room in the back of the building’s first floor.

“Whoever was next to me got shot — blood is on me from it,” he told the news station, pointing to his shirt. He said he fled to a break room and shut

cont’d on pg 17

China military 'ready to fight' after drills near Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — China's military declared Monday it is "ready to fight" after completing three days of large-scale combat exercises around Taiwan that simulated sealing off the island in response to the Taiwanese president's trip to the U.S. last week.

The "combat readiness patrols" named Joint Sword were meant as a warning to self-governing Taiwan, which China claims as its own, China's military said earlier.

"The theater's troops are ready to fight at all times and can fight at any time to resolutely smash any form of 'Taiwan independence' and foreign interference attempts," it said Monday.

The exercises were similar to ones conducted by China last August, when it launched missile strikes on targets in the seas around Taiwan in retaliation for then-Speaker Nancy Pello-



The evening news broadcast shows Chinese fighter jets on an aircraft carrier with the Chinese subtitles "Eastern Battle District successfully concludes the patrol exercise around the taiwan island and Joint Sword exercise" on an outdoor screen in Beijing, Monday, April 10, 2023. China's military declared Monday it is "ready to fight" after completing three days of large-scale combat exercises around Taiwan that simulated sealing off the island in response to the Taiwanese president's trip to the U.S. last week. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan)

si's visit to Taiwan, but have been smaller and less disruptive.

Military experts say the exercises serve both as intimidation and as an opportunity for Chinese troops to practice sealing off Taiwan

by blocking sea and air traffic, an important strategic option the Chinese military might pursue in the event it uses military force to take Taiwan.

The Chinese actions follow President Tsai Ing-

wen's delicate mission to shore up Taiwan's dwindling diplomatic alliances in Central America and boost its U.S. support, a trip capped with a sensitive meeting with U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in California. A U.S. congressional delegation also met with Tsai over the weekend in Taiwan after she returned.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby reiterated the position of President Joe Biden's administration that Tsai's transit through the U.S. and the congressional visit to Taiwan were not out of the norm. Tsai transited through the United States

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the door.

Deputy Police Chief Paul Humphrey said the actions of responding police officers undoubtedly saved lives.

"This is a tragic event," he said. "But it was it was the heroic response of officers that made sure that no more people were more seriously injured than what happened."

Just a few hours later and blocks away, an unrelated shooting killed one man and wounded a woman outside a community college, police said.

The 15 mass shootings this year are the most during the first 100 days of a calendar year since 2009, when 16 had occurred by April 10, according to a mass killings database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University.

Going back to 2006, the first year for which data has been compiled, the years with the most mass killings were 2019 and 2022, with 45 and 42 mass killings recorded during the entire calendar year. The pace in 2009 slowed later in the year, with 32 mass killings recorded that year.

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six times between 2016 and 2019.

“There was no reason to react in any way militarily,” he said. “There’s no reason for tensions across the Taiwan Strait to devolve into any kind of conflict.”

China responded immediately to the McCarthy meeting by imposing a travel ban and financial sanctions against those associated with Tsai’s U.S. trip and with increased military activity through the weekend.

“China wants to use any increase of diplomatic interactions between the U.S. and Taiwan as an excuse to train its military,” said Kuo Yu-jen, a defense studies expert and director of the Institute for National Policy Research in Taiwan.

Beijing says contact between foreign officials and the island’s democratic government encourages Taiwanese who want formal independence, a step China’s ruling Communist Party says would lead to war. The sides split in 1949 after a civil war, and the Communist Party says the island is obliged to rejoin the mainland, by force if necessary.

After Pelosi visited Taiwan, China conducted missile strikes on targets in the seas around Taiwan, while also sending warships and war planes over the median line of the Taiwan Strait. It also fired missiles over the island itself which landed in Japan’s exclusive economic zone, in a significant escalation.

The live-fire exercises disrupted flights and shipping in one of the busiest shipping lanes for global trade. This time, shipping and maritime traffic have largely continued as normal, Kuo said.

The exercises this time have focused more on air strength, with Taiwan reporting more than 200 flights by Chinese warplanes in the past three days. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, citing the People’s Liberation Army, said the exercises are “simulat-

ing the joint sealing off” of Taiwan as well as “waves of simulated strikes” at important targets on the island.

On Monday, the PLA said its Shandong aircraft carrier was taking part in the exercises encircling Taiwan for the first time. It showed a video of a fighter jet taking off the deck of the ship in a post on Weibo, the social media platform.

The appearance of the Shandong aircraft carrier in the Pacific Ocean suggests that it could be used to prevent foreign militaries from coming to help Taiwan, said Han Gan-ming, a research fellow at the government-backed Institute for National Defense and Security Research.

“In the future if there’s a similar military maneuver, then Taiwan will have to face it alone,” Han said.

Between 6 a.m. Sunday and 6 a.m. Monday, a total of 70 planes were detected and half crossed the median of the Taiwan Strait, an unofficial boundary once tacitly accepted by both sides, according to Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defense. Among the planes that crossed the median were eight J-16 fighter jets, four J-1 fighters, eight Su-30 fighters and reconnaissance planes. Taiwan also tracked J-15 fighter jets, which are paired with the Shandong aircraft carrier.

By Monday evening, Taiwan’s defense ministry reported another 91 flights by bombers, as well as multiple fighter jets, early warning aircraft and military transport planes.

That followed a full day between Friday and Saturday in which eight warships and 71 planes were detected near Taiwan, according to the island’s Defense Ministry. It said in a statement that it was approaching the situation from the perspective of “not escalating conflict, and not causing disputes.”

Taiwan said it monitored the Chinese moves through its land-based missile systems, as well as from its own navy vessels.

China’s military harassment of Taiwan has intensified in recent years with planes or ships sent toward the island on a near-daily basis, with the numbers rising in reaction to sensitive activities. The military activity has increased a notch since Pelosi’s visit, with Chinese PLA fighter jets regularly flying over the middle boundary line. Experts say PLA navy vessels regularly navigate the waters off Taiwan’s northeastern coast.

Meanwhile, to the south in the South China Sea, the U.S. 7th Fleet said its missile destroyer USS Milius sailed by Mischief Reef in a freedom of navigation operation. China has built an artificial island on the sea feature to stake its claim to the disputed territory.

China said the U.S. “illegally trespassed” into waters near the reef without the permission of the Chinese government, according to a statement from the Chinese military’s southern command.

Outside of the military maneuvers, Kuo said he was worried about the announcements from Fujian’s Maritime Safety Administration from last week, when it said it would conduct “on-site inspections” of cargo ships and working vessels in the Taiwan Strait as part of a patrol exercise.

“First they’ll target ships traveling between the Strait, then they will target any international ship,” he said. “Gradually this will become the de facto new status quo.”

One of the U.S. representatives who attended the meeting with Tsai last week said Saturday the U.S. must take seriously the threat China poses to Taiwan. Republican Mike Gallagher, chairman of the U.S. House Select Committee on China, told The Associated Press that he plans to lead his committee in working to shore up the island government’s defenses, encouraging Congress to expedite military aid to Taiwan.

Ukraine, Russia send home around 200 troops in prisoner swap

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — More than 200 Russian and Ukrainian soldiers have returned home in a prisoner swap, the warring countries said Monday.

Russia's Defense Ministry said 106 Russian soldiers were released from Ukrainian custody as part of an agreement with Ukraine.

Andriy Yermak, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff, said that Russia freed 100 Ukrainian prisoners.

Neither announcement mentioned whether any intermediaries were involved in the agreement.

Some of the Ukrainian soldiers have severe injuries and illnesses, Yermak said in a statement published on Telegram.

He added that the latest of the sporadic prisoner swaps in the war that started in February 2022 was "not an easy one." He did not elaborate.

Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War alleged that almost half of the 80 men and 20 women soldiers who returned home "have serious injuries, illnesses or have been tortured." It presented no evidence for its claims.

According to Ukrainian news reports, one of the women prisoners is Valeriia Karpilenko, a border



Ukrainian soldiers ride atop an APC in the heaviest battles with the Russian invaders in Bakhmut, Donetsk region, Ukraine, Sunday, April 9, 2023. (AP Photo/Libkos)

guard who had helped defend Mariupol's Azovstal steel plant. Last May, she married a Ukrainian soldier in the steel plant's basement while Russian forces surrounded the complex. Her husband was killed three days later.

The freed Russians were being flown on military transport planes to Moscow for medical treatment and rehabilitation, the Defense Ministry said.

Such exchanges represent one of the few areas of cooperation between

Ukraine and Russia. The two sides have returned hundreds of each other's soldiers, as well as the bodies of fallen troops, since the war began.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's presidential office said at least six civilians were wounded in the latest Russian shelling.

Separately, Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said Russian forces struck a power plant and residential buildings in the eastern province.

The Russians also

shelled nine border villages in the provinces of Kharkiv, Sumy and Chernihiv.

Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said in televised remarks that the country has nearly seven million internally displaced people, including about one million children.

Most of them have abandoned their homes in the east and the south to move to safer locations in central and western Ukraine.

Barnes wins gold, Francis gets silver at Carifta Games

First-timers Gerilin Barnes and Maliek Francis won a gold and silver medals respectively for Antigua and Barbuda at the 50th Carifta Games at the Thomas Robinson track and field stadium in Nassau, The Bahamas.

Barnes, making her debut appearance at the historic regional youth track and field showpiece, claimed gold in the Under-17 Girls Long Jump.

She soared out to a mark of 5.60 metres, a mere three centimetres clear of Jamaica's Sashana Johnson's 5.57 metres. The bronze medal was won by Hilaire Oceane Saint of Guadeloupe with a jump of 5.54 metres.

Francis, a student of the



Javelin thrower Maliek Francis, left, and Long Jumper Gerilin Barnes. (Photo courtesy ABAA)

Antigua Grammar School who is also making his debut appearance at the Carifta Games, grabbed a silver medal in the Under-17 Boys Javelin.

Francis hurled the implement 50.45 metres for

the silver medal, finishing second behind Dominica's Addison Alickson James, who threw 60.16 metres to win the gold medal.

Guadeloupe's Tristan Carias captured the bronze with his throw of 49.48 me-

tres.

Antigua and Barbuda's sprinters Geolyna Dowdye and La'Nica Locker missed out on winning a medal, but did well to reach the final of the Under-20 Girls 100 metres.

Dowdye finished fourth in the final with a time of 11.88 seconds, while Locker came seventh in a time of 11.97 seconds.

The Under-20 Girls 100 metres final was won by Jamaica's Alana Reid in 11.17 seconds ahead of her compatriot Alexis James, who clocked 11.53 seconds.

Sanaa Frederick of Trinidad and Tobago captured bronze medal by finishing third in a time of 11.65 seconds.

Antigua capture 10 medals at Carifta Swimming Championships

Antigua and Barbuda captured four medals on the final day to finish with a total of 10 medals as the 2023 Carifta Swimming Championships came to an end in Curacao on Sunday.

Ellie Shaw brought home gold in the 13-14 girl's 100 breaststroke in fine style, clocking a new Carifta record and also established a new national record in a time of 1:14.28.

Shaw also broke the old Carifta record in the 50-meter Breaststroke the day before, but the new record is now held by Martinique who won that event.

Swimmers Anya DeGannes and Reuben Edwards both won silver medals in the 11 to 12 girls and boys 400-meter

freestyle events.

Carifta first-timer Madison MacMillan clocked a personal best in the girls 13-14 200-meter backstroke in a time of 2:33.97 to bring home bronze and broke the old national record of 2:39.63, which was held by Gabriella Gittens since 2016.

Other finalists included Tivon Benjamin in the 15-17 boys 400 Freestyle in 8th place; Selah Wiltshire in the 13-14 girl's 100 breaststroke in a personal best time of 1:23.72 resulting in a 5th place finish; and Reuben Edwards in 11-12 boy's 50 Freestyle finishing in 8th place.

In total, Antigua captured 10 medals, com-

cont'd on pg 21



National swimmer Ellie Shaw. (Photo courtesy ABSF)



The Striving for Excellence contingent at the VC Bird International Airport prior to departing for Barbados to participate in the Annual Optimist Barbados Golf Classic on Monday, 10th April, 2023. (Photo courtesy Striving for Excellence)

Young Antiguanans off to contest Optimist Barbados Golf Classic

A 16-member squad of the Striving for Excellence Golf Academy left Antigua and Barbuda yesterday (Monday) to participate in the Annual Optimist Barbados Golf Classic.

The contingent comprised both boys and girls who will be flying the national flag of Antigua and Barbuda at the event, which is being held at the Barbados Golf Club from 11th to 14th April.

The squad comprised a number of Antigua and Bar-

buda's top young golfers.

Among them is the 2022 Eastern Caribbean Golf Association (ECGA) women's champion, Andreina De La Cruz; Marquise George, who in 2022 became the youngest golfer to qualify for the Antigua and Barbuda Men's Golf Team at the age of 12; Ashley Francis, who is the 2022 National Women's Champion; and Katherine Woodhouse, the 2022 Antigua Open Champion.

The Optimist Barbados

Classic brings together leading golfers from around the region and presents a huge opportunity for Antiguan Junior Golfers to showcase their skills in competition with their peers and be recognized regionally and internationally.

Antigua and Barbuda will be represented in the 12-13, 14-16 and 17-18 age categories.

The 16 players are accompanied by four coaches. They are Skey Anthony,

Marlon George, Melinda Winter and Michelle Wynter.

The Winners of the Optimist Barbados Golf Classic will qualify for the prestigious Optimist International Junior Golf Championship slated for July at the Trump National Doral Resort and Spa in Florida.

Full Squad: Siyolo Joseph and Marquise George (Boys 12-13); Taj Hill Barnes, Keiohn James, Iman Henry (Boys 16-18); Jade Andrew, Jenna Andrew, Thiasse Warner, Nicole Wetherill, Kimberlyn Wetherill (Girls 13-14); Ashley Francis, Meleah George, Lenijah Thomas, Andreina De La Cruz, Katherine Woodhouse, Alexandria "Lexi" Hunt and Anya Tavernier (Girls 15-18). Coaches: Skey Anthony, Marlon George, Melinda Winter and Michelle Wynter.

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prising 2 gold, 4 silver and 4 bronze.

Ellie Shaw (14) won 2 gold in the 200 and 100-meter Breaststroke and a silver in the 50-meter Breaststroke.

Anya DeGannes (11) claimed silver in the 400-meter Freestyle and 2 bronze in the 100 Butterfly and 200-meter Freestyle.

Reuben Edwards (12) won two silver medals in the 200 and 400-meter Freestyle.

Selah Wiltshire (14) captured a bronze in the 50-meter Breast stroke and Madison Mac-Millan (14) secured a bronze in the 200-meter Backstroke.

The Antiguan swimmers set seven new age group and national records at the meet.

Bahamas once again won the championship with 1,113 points. The Cayman Islands came second with 752 points and Trinidad & Tobago claimed third place with 534 points.

GRASSROOTS

**EVERY MONDAY
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Juel 1 win 17th Gillian Brazier Basketball Shoot-Out

Juel 1 of Canada are the champions of the 17th Gillian Brazier Basketball Shoot-Out.

They won the female competition by snatching a one-point win against fellow Canadians Juel 2 in a nail-biting final at the JSC Sports Complex on Good Friday.

Hana Duvnjak scored 10 points while Emilia Vlatkovic produced eight points, four rebounds and three assists to lead Juel 1 to their narrow 44-43 victory.

Rayah Valcin Joseph had eight points and five rebounds while Maeve McSwiggan, Chelsea Hemeon and Nora Miller each scored six points for Juel 2.

Another Canadian team, Juel 3 captured the bronze medals. Juel 3 trounced Antigua and Barbuda's Island Original Cyclones 70-32 in play-



Juel 1 of Canada are the champions of the 17th Gillian Brazier Basketball Shoot-Out. (Photo courtesy CPTSA Wings)

off for 3rd Place.

For Juel 3, Larissa Ruggiero had 23 points and five rebounds while Jade Dittmer produced 14 points and five

rebounds.

For Island Original Cyclones, Mary Jane Grant converted 10 points and grabbed nine rebounds.

Spanish Heat move closer to capturing double in second division basketball

Galaxia Bar Spanish Heat is just one win away from capturing the double in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division.

The League champions can achieve the feat by securing victory over Ottos Coolers in Game Three of their best of five Second Division Play-off Finals at the JSC Sports Complex at 7pm today (Tuesday).

Spanish Heat will enter tonight's game with a 2-0 lead after snatching an 80-78 victory against Ottos Coolers in Game Two of the finals on Saturday night.



The Spanish Heat basketball team. (File photo)

Steven Matthew sank 22 points and Jesus Emmanuel scored 18 points and claimed six rebounds for Spanish Heat who also defeated Ottos Coolers in the final to win the sec-

ond division league title at Ovals last month.

They receive good support from team-mates Kelvin Pimentel with 13 points and eight rebounds and Antonio Cruzdehaa with 10

points and eight rebounds.

Ismael Palemo shot a game-high 26 points and grabbed 13 rebounds while captain Lincoln Weekes contributed 18 points, eight rebounds and eight assists for Ottos Coolers.

Team mates Vladimir Castro chipped in with 13 points and Javon Simon scored 10 points and snatched 11 rebounds for Coolers.

Spanish Heat prevailed 94-82 against Ottos Coolers in the opening game of the best of five series at the JSC Sports Complex last week.



KIWANIS AR FUSION CHARITY GOLF DAY 2023



April 22
SATURDAY | 2023

Tee Time | **Entrance Fee**
9:00am | EC \$250 (US \$100)

CEDAR VALLEY GOLF CLUB

The Package Includes:

- One round of 18 holes greens fees
- One round of 18 holes cart fees
- Morning snack with juice, coffee, or tea from 8:30am
- Antiguan style Lunch
- One bottle of water per person at tee time
- Free (surprise) refreshments during play
- Drink carts will be available around the course during play

PRIZES

- 2 – Person Scramble
- Closest To the Pin
- Longest Drive (Closest To the Line)
- Best & Worst Dressed Teams
- And Many More Exciting Prizes

Numerous fantastic items will be up for auction & raffle at the end of the event..



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The Villa Lions football team. (File photo)

Villa Lions drop crucial points in premier league

Villa Lions dropped crucial points in their opening game of the second round group format of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League.

The number three ranked Villa Lions, the top seed in Group 3, crashed to a surprising 3-4 loss to Cedar Grove Blue Jays in the feature match of a triple header at the ABFA's Technical Center on Saturday night.

Javorn Benjamin snatched victory for Cedar Grove by scoring the late winner in the 89th minute. The winner came after Keon Greene had scored his equalizing second of two goals by converting a penalty kick in the 74th minute to draw Cedar Grove level with Villa at 3-3.

The referee had awarded Cedar Grove the penalty after Villa's goalkeeper Shahoi "Pookie" Dorsette fouled an opposing player in the 18-yards box.

Dorsette was also given the red card for committing the infringement, thus reducing the Villa Lions to 10-men for the rest of the game.

Cuban striker Yasnay Torres, who recorded a hat-trick, had given Villa a two-nil lead in the match by scoring in the 10th and 19th minute.

But Greene scored his first goal of the match in the 21st minute and a 42nd minute conversion by Mikele Culzak put Cedar Grove level as both teams ended the first half deadlocked 2-2 at halftime.

Torres completed his hat-trick by scoring in the 61st minute to give Villa Lions a 3-2 lead before Dorsette's indiscretion provided the Blue Jays with the opportunity to get even and go on to pull off their surprising victory.

The result has seriously dented the Villa Lions' chances of capturing this season's premier league title. Villa Lions will remain in third place on 37 points with just two more games remaining.

The win is unlikely to help Cedar Grove Blue Jays avoid automatic demotion to the first division next season. The three bottom teams will be relegated at the end of the season and the Blue Jays remain in the relegation

zone.

The Blue Jays advanced to 10 points but remain third from bottom of the 16-team competition with two games remaining.

SAP trounced Swetes 4-1 in a match-up between the other two teams in Group 3 in the opening game of Saturday's triple-header.

All the goals were scored in the second half following a goalless first half. SAP took the lead via a Tyrique Tonge's 46th minute conversion, but Shackwon Simon scored in the 51st minute to equalize for Swetes.

That was as close as Swetes got in the game as they were unable to add to their tally while SAP went on to score three more times to cruise to victory.

Dannell Osbourne scored in the 68th minute to restore SAP's lead, which they never relinquished.

An own-goal, scored by Jomo Andrew in the 82nd minute, made it 3-1 and Shaquann Telemaque hit home in the 88th minute to wrap-up SAP's victory. The win lifted SAP to 23 points to move one point above Swetes.



MATCH SCHEDULE

APRIL 13TH - APRIL 29TH

THURSDAY APR 13TH

4:30PM	Liberta Blackhawks	VS	Empire Nation
8:30PM	Bethesda Golden Eagles	VS	Bolans Blasters

FRIDAY APR 14TH

4:30PM	Jennings Tigers	VS	New Winthorpes Lions
8:30PM	Pigotts Crushers	VS	All Saints Pythons

SATURDAY APR 15TH

12:30PM	Liberta Blackhawks	VS	Bolans Blasters
4:30PM	New Winthorpes Lions	VS	Pigotts Crushers
8:30PM	Empire Nation	VS	Bethesda Golden Eagles

SUNDAY APR 16TH

12:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	Jennings Tigers
4:30PM	Bolans Blasters	VS	Pigotts Crushers
8:30PM	New Winthorpes Lions	VS	Liberta Blackhawks

MONDAY APR 17TH

4:30PM	Bolans Blasters	VS	Jennings Tigers
8:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	Bethesda Golden Eagles

TUESDAY APR 18TH

4:30PM	Jennings Tigers	VS	Empire Nation
8:30PM	Liberta Blackhawks	VS	Pigotts Crushers

WEDNESDAY APR 19TH

12:30PM	New Winthorpes Lions	VS	Bethesda Golden Eagles
4:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	Bolans Blasters
8:30PM	Liberta Blackhawks	VS	Jennings Tigers

THURSDAY APR 20TH

12:30PM	Pigotts Crushers	VS	Empire Nation
4:30PM	Liberta Blackhawks	VS	Bethesda Golden Eagles
8:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	New Winthorpes Lions

FRIDAY APR 21ST

4:30PM	Bethesda Golden Eagles	VS	Pigotts Crushers
8:30PM	New Winthorpes Lions	VS	Empire Nation

SATURDAY APR 22ND

4:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	Liberta Blackhawks
8:30PM	Empire Nation	VS	Bolans Blasters

MONDAY APR 24TH

2:30PM	All Saints Pythons	VS	Empire Nation
6:30PM	Jennings Tigers	VS	Pigotts Crushers

TUESDAY APR 25TH

4:30PM	New Winthorpes Lions	VS	Bolans Blasters
8:30PM	Bethesda Golden Eagles	VS	Jennings Tigers

THURSDAY APR 27TH

4:30PM	Semi-Final 1
8:30PM	Semi-Final 2

SATURDAY APR 29TH

4:30PM	Third Place Match
8:30PM	Finals



SIR VIVIAN RICHARDS CRICKET STADIUM



Scotland and Patriots share honours in latest T20 practice matches

The Scotland cricket team and the St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots shared honours in two T20 practice matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

The St Kitts and Nevis Patriots snatched a one-run win in the first encounter. The Patriots made 172 for seven off their 20 overs with

Kevin Wickham smashing 56 off 30 balls and Karima Gore cracking 40 off 26 balls.

Jack Jarvins captured three for 25 and Chris Greaves picked up two for 46.

In reply, Scotland fell one run short as they were restricted to 171 for nine off their 20 overs. Matthew Cross slammed 88 off 58 balls and Chris Greaves struck 25 off 16 balls.

Sheldon Cottrell claimed two for 12 and Dominic Drakes picked up one for 16.

Scotland pulled off a seven-run win over the Patriots in the second encounter. Scotland made 157 for seven off 16 overs with Michael Leask getting

43 off 31 balls and Chris McBride scoring 39 off 24 balls. Nathan Edwards snapped up four for 31.

The Patriots were then limited to 149 for nine off their 16 overs. Shalome Parnell cracked 53 off 27 balls and Dominic Drakes made 30 off 22 balls. Ali Evans grabbed five for 34 and Jack Jarvis took two for 32.

Scotland had crashed to a seven-wicket defeat against the Leeward Islands Hurricane in their second 50-over practice match in Liberta on Good Friday.

Batting first, Scotland tumbled to 54 all out in 28 overs with Liam Naylor getting 20. Daniel Doram snatched four for 13, Kofi James grabbed three for 17 and Kian Pemberton claimed two for 15.

The Leewards Hurricane then coasted to victory at 55 for three in 16.2 overs with Larry Audaine hitting 34 not out off 57 balls. Hamza Tahir captured two for 17.

The Leeward Islands Hurricane had beaten Scotland by five wickets in the first 50 overs practice



Kevin Wickham of the St Kitts and Nevis Patriots struck a half century in a T20 practice match against Scotland at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Sunday, 9th April, 2023. (Photo courtesy CST20)

match at Liberta last Thursday.

Scotland and the St Kitts and Nevis Patriots will clash in two more T20 matches at Liberta today

(Tuesday) and at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium tomorrow (Wednesday).

Some members of the Scotland squad will remain in Antigua for the 2023 Cool & Smooth T20 explosion, which will take place at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium from 13th to 29th April.

The rest of the Scotland national team players will depart Antigua on Saturday, 15th April.

cont'd from pg 28

Rodney Lawrence scored a hat-trick to lead Greenbay Hoppers to a 5-2 victory over Ottos Rangers in the other Group 2 match on Saturday.

Lawrence had conversions in the 67th, 69th and 88th minute while the other goals for Hoppers were scored by Eugene

Kirwan in the 23rd minute and Da Paul George.

Junior Benjamin scored both goals for Ottos Rangers with conversions in the 50th and 88th minute.

Hoppers advanced to 23 points, while Ottos Rangers will remain on 22 points. Both teams have two matches remaining.

Jennings Grenades stay on course for first premier league title

Jennings Grenades remain on course to capture their first ever premier league title in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) top domestic League on Sunday.

The number one ranked Grenades, the top seed in Group 1, romped to a 5-1 victory over bottom team Liberta Black Hawks in their opening game of the second round group format at the ABFA's Technical Center.

The goals for Jennings Grenades were scored by Rakeem Henry in the 22nd minute, Quinton Griffith in the 53rd minute, Ridel Stanislas in the 72nd minute, Tev Lawrence in the 78th minute and Donovan Baptiste in the 84th minute.

Shavorn Phillip scored a consolation goal for Liberta in the 43rd minute.

Their 14th win in 16 matches lifted Jennings to 42 points and ensured the Grenades will remain at the top of the overall standings, while Liberta, who will be automatically relegated to the first division next season, remain in the cellar position without a point.

Malcolm Stewart scored a hat-trick as Parham defeated Empire 5-2 in the

other Group 1 encounter on Sunday. Stewart had conversions in the 19th, 64th and 72nd minute while the other goals for Parham were scored by Andy Daniel in the 4th minute and Keith Conner in the 51st minute.

Empire's goals were scored by Jevaughn Jarvis in the 10th minute and Rakeem Joseph in the 87th minute. The win ensures Parham will join Empire on 21 points with two matches remaining.

Old Road and Pigotts Bullets fought to a 1-1 draw in their first Group 4 encounter on Sunday.

William Pereira snatched the equalizer for Pigotts Bullets by scoring in the first minute of added on time. Following a goalless first half, Stefan Smith had scored in the 53rd minute to give Old Road the lead.

Old Road will move on to 28 points to remain in fourth place while Pigotts Bullets will advance to 17 points, thus avoiding automatic relegation to the first division next season.

Willikies beat Tryum 4-2 in the opening Group 4 affair last Thursday. Nadre Thomas had a 15th minute conversion, Twown James netted in the 18th minute,



The Jennings Grenades football team. (File photo)

Denie Henry scored in the 80th minute and James Simon converted an 82nd minute goal for Willikies.

Romario Dennie converted a penalty kick in the 24th minute and Hanel Almar Burrell scored in the 28th minute for Tryum.

Willikies will advance to 24 points while Tryum will remain on 25 points with two matches remaining.

All Saints United won their opening match in the second round group format to stay in contention among the front runners.

All Saints United, ranked number two and the top seed in Group 2, romped to a 6-1 drubbing of Five Islands in their opening affair last Thursday.

Following a goalless

first half, Kwazim Theodore scored twice with conversions in the 67th and 70th minute, Leroy Graham netted in the 47th minute, Kendukar Challenge had a 76th minute conversion, Shafeeq Joseph scored in the 90th minute and Dia Martin completed the rout for All Saints by scoring in the first minute of added on time.

Armando Marty Lucaces scored a consolation goal for Five Islands who will also be automatically relegated, as they remain second from bottom of the overall standings on three points with two matches remaining.

All Saints United have advanced to 40 points but will remain in second place with two more matches to play.

cont'd on pg 27