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TWO HOSPITALIZED AFTER LATE NIGHT SHOOTING

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Local News



Two hospitalized following late night shooting

A late-night shooting at one of the country's leading resort hotels, has left two people in the hospital nursing wounds, and are said to be in stable condition.

The incident happened at Carlisle Bay Hotel in Old Road village, the most southerly community in Antigua. According to police reports, the incident hap-

pened at 11:30 pm on Tuesday night.

The police have been tightlipped about a possible motive for the shooting, only to say that two people

are currently assisting them with their investigation. Other reports indicate that the victims are employees of the hotel and were leaving work when the assailant allegedly approached them and started shooting.

The victims are said to be a 33-year-old man and a 32-year-old woman, were walking towards the gate together, when the first shot was discharged, wounding the male who cried out in pain. Several other gunshots were reportedly fired; the man was shot at least twice, while his female co-worker sustained about three bullet wounds to both arms and her side. Both were rushed to hospital and are said to be in stable, but serious condition.

There have been several theories about a possible motive for the shooting, but neither the police nor associates of the victims appear willing to address this matter, at what is believed to be a very emotional time.

The police have confirmed that one of the two men in custody, assisting with their investigation, also works at the hotel. The two men, aged 23 and 22, both live in Golden Grove New Extension.

The police are appealing to anyone with information surrounding this incident to contact the Bolans Police Station at 462-1080

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Management and security arrangements in place for Alfa Nero

The government has put in place a number of measures to safeguard the multi-million-dollar super yacht, *Alfa Nero*, which it seized on Tuesday, under the provisions of the Antigua Port Authority Amendment Act of 2023.

Antigua Port Authority General Manager, Darwin Telemaque, has reported that systems have been put in place to ensure the proper maintenance of the vessel, as well as to ensure that there is 24-hour security.

Key to all these arrangements, is the situation with the remaining five crew members and their future. Telemaque reported that negotiations have been completed with the crew and they have decided to stay until the vessel is sold, as has been the stated purpose of the government.

“They have stayed with the vessel, and we can also report that the *Alfa Nero* is now flying the flag of Antigua and Barbuda, as those arrangements to have it flagged have been com-



pleted. We are still working on insurance for the vessel. Those negotiations are ongoing. At the same time, we have made arrangements with the Antigua Yacht Club, on a maintenance schedule for the vessel,” said Telemaque. The Antigua Yacht Club will also be responsible for the management of the vessel on an interim basis.

It is clear from the vis-

it aboard the vessel, during the seizure on Tuesday, that there were obvious signs that the vessel is in need of major maintenance work. The *Alfa Nero* has been in the Antigua and Barbuda waters for over a year, after it was sanctioned by the international community and later abandoned by its owner, believed to be a Russian Oligarch.

The crew reported to

the government, that they did not have the funds to carry out the needed maintenance, and that was one of the reasons that spurred the government into action, to effectively take ownership of the vessel.

So far, a shipment of 2,500 gallons of fuel has been delivered to the vessel by the West Indies Oil Company.

The next major step in the process will be the sale of the vessel to the highest bidder or via a public auction. The proceeds from the sale will go towards settling outstanding bills owed to local suppliers, the crew, and the management of the Antigua Yacht Club with the remainder deposited into the national treasury.

Thu 13 Day		Thu 13 Night	
83°	☁️	75°	☁️
21% E 10 mph		21% ENE 9 mph	
Intervals of clouds and sunshine. High 83F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.		A few clouds from time to time. Low near 75F. Winds ENE at 5 to 10 mph.	
Humidity 68%	UV Index Extreme	Humidity 77%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 5:53 am	Sunset 6:22 pm	Moonrise 12:52 am	Moonset 12:07 pm
		Last Quarter	

Hotels occupancy projections for the summer months are out

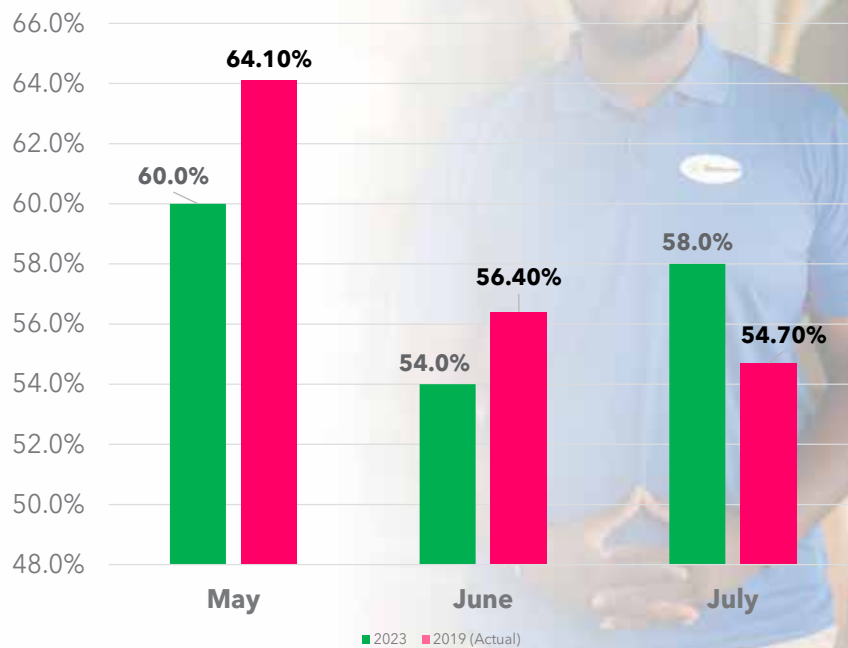
The Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourist Association (ABHTA) is predicting a busy summer period this year but reported that it will fall short of the robust performances of 2019, the best year on record.

The data is based on bookings for hotels operating in the country for the months of May, June and July. The data shows that the bookings for May will see occupancy figures at a rate of 60 percent compared with 64.10 percent for the same month in 2019.

For June, the projections are that occupancy rates will fall to 54 percent compared with 56.40 percent for the same month in 2019. July is predicted to outperform its corresponding month in 2019. This year, occupancy in July will amount to 58 percent, compared with 54.70 percent, in 2019.

According to the ABH-

Stay-over Projections May - July 2023 2023 versus 2019



TA, bookings remain last minute, but later months June and July may still see additional uplift.

The association advised

that air travel remains expensive, however, the demand is still strong for the destination.

It was noted that the summer months will be affected

by reduced airlift from the United Kingdom, while regionally, Aruba and Barbados are aggressively marketing in the UK.

Urgent notice to the public regarding false social media posts on Facebook with images of the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda

The Office of the Governor General has once again been notified that recently, false information purporting to be associated with the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, His Excellency Sir Rodney Williams, has been circulating on Facebook.

The false posts feature a photo of the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda and in at least one case suggest that the Governor General requires personal details from indi-

viduals so that their accounts can be credited.

The Office of the Governor General denounces this false claim and by way of this notice, advises the general public to be wary of any such posts and to report them immediately.

It should be noted that the valid Facebook Page for the Governor General is 'Governor-General Antigua Barbuda' and that no requests

for funds or personal information will be made through this medium.

Members of the general public are asked to refrain from sending any information or money to anyone purporting to be the Governor General unless such a request is confirmed by the office of the Governor General.

Any queries regarding requests claiming to be from the Governor General should be directed to 4620002/3/4/5



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

POST OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the post of **Director of Finance** at the University of the West Indies, Five Islands Campus, Antigua.

Candidate should have a Master's Degree in Accounting, Finance or related fields of Business, be a member of a recognised professional body of Accountants and, have wide experience, (preferably in a University) of budgetary control, leadership of financial team,, and the application of modern accounting principles for effective governance of the financial structure of the campus. Additionally, experience in the use of Banner software would be an asset.

The Director of Finance is the Chief Financial Officer of the Campus and is responsible to the Principal for the general administration and control of the financial affairs of the Campus. The Director of Finance has responsibility for the overall management of the Bursary, and in particular, he/she is expected to oversee/manage the execution of the revenue generation plans for the Five Islands Campus. The Director of Finance is also responsible for the submission of accurate, timely and appropriate financial statements, statistics, reports and other information and advice, and the development, implementation and maintenance of accounting and financial policies and systems, as well as the financial management of special projects and fund-raising activities.

The successful applicant must demonstrate a working knowledge of the operations of financial institutions, and will be expected to work closely with the University Bursar who is responsible for the overall financial affairs of the University. He/she will assist in the preparation of annual and biennial estimates, financial reports, annual accounts, and other financial and accounting matters within the framework of the Financial Code of the University of the West Indies.

*The successful applicant will be expected to assume duties by **August 1, 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter**. The closing date for receipt of applications is **April 20, 2023***

An attractive salary package is offered. Full details of the remuneration package may be obtained from the Office of Administration by contacting us on **email:**

hrapplications@uwimona.edu.jm). Detailed applications giving **i)** full particulars of qualifications and experience, biodata; and **ii)** the names, titles, mailing and e-mail addresses, fax and telephone numbers of three (3) referees should be sent as soon as possible to the: **UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR, OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION, THE VICE CHANCELLERY, UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, MONA, KINGSTON 7, JAMAICA, W.I., E-mail: hrapplications@uwimona.edu.jm.**

The University of the West Indies thanks all applicants, however, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Home porting confirmed for four ships for the 2023-24 cruise season

At least four vessels will home port in Antigua during the upcoming cruise season, making the St. John's Harbour one of the busiest in the Eastern Caribbean.

General Manager of Antigua Cruise Ports, Dona Regis-Prosper, said the Star Clipper which home ported in Antigua last Saturday on its final call this season, will be joined by its sister ship, Royal Clipper, and home port at the St. John's Harbour next season.

The other vessels, the P & O Cruises, Arvia and Emerald Azzarra will also be homeporting later in the year, according to Regis-Prosper, who noted that these developments help to confirm that Antigua Cruise Ports is on track to record its best season, so far.



The Star Clipper

“We want homeporting to be a regular occurrence at Antigua Cruise Port regardless of the magnitude. Turn-arounds help to solidify our space as leaders in cruise tourism in the Caribbean,” Regis- Prosper said.

During the Star Clipper’s homeporting call last Saturday, most of the 127

passengers who arrived on the vessel ended their trip in Antigua with 117 visitors debarking during the morning.

Meanwhile, fifty-two people boarded the 170-passenger capacity ship in the afternoon. Operations Manager for Pier Services, Rawle Reynolds said, “We



Operations Manager for Pier Services, Rawle Reynolds

had an efficient operation with Star Clipper and we thank them for a great season and look forward to working with them again in the near future.”

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Antiguan-Canadian artist to attend inaugural Art Week

The multi-talented Antiguan-Canadian artist, Kwame Delfish, is among artists whose works will be on display during the inaugural Antigua and Barbuda Art Week, which takes place from April 16 to 23.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has announced the attendance of Delfish, a painter, graphic designer, and hairstylist at the 2023 edition of the country's Art Week.

The Toronto, Canada-based Delfish joins an esteemed lineup of sculptors, poets, painters, musicians, and dancers in what promises to be a vibrant showcase of Antigua and Barbuda's thriving artistic talent.

"I am honoured to be participating in the inaugural Antigua and Barbuda Art Week, hosted by the Tourism Authority.

"A week dedicated to showcasing the brilliant and creative minds that the country has to offer, is not only important for increased awareness — it fosters a safe and necessary space for continuous conversations to be had about the impact of art on our community.

"I believe that Art Week will be a powerful vessel through which individuals can be inspired, by engaging with artists, learning more about a



In 2015, Kwame Delfish became the first Caribbean Canadian artist to be commissioned to design a coin for the Royal Canadian Mint. Delfish presented the coin to the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda during his 2015 visit to Canada (Photo courtesy: Kwame Delfish)

plethora of artistic mediums, and in turn, become empowered to dig deeper into their own creativity — all while connecting to our rich culture," he stated

He added that this type of experience is invaluable and critical to increased understanding of the intersections between art, culture and community.

Born to Antiguan and Montserratian parents, Delfish's paintings, photography, initiatives, and interests have always reflected his heritage. Through his work with multiple Caribbean community organizations and

his own Hill Studio - a hairstyling venture that specializes in Afro-textured hair - Delfish has emerged as a leading voice in Canada's Black community.

Though his works have been featured in The Royal Ontario Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Contact Photography Festival, he is perhaps best known for his collaborations with the Royal Canadian Mint on their 2015, 2022, and 2023 Black History Month coins.

Unfolding over seven days from April 16 through

April 23, 2023, the inaugural Antigua and Barbuda Art Week will unite the country's greatest talents for a colourful and musical celebration of all things art and culture.

A packed slate of engaging attractions will be complemented by a robust offering of interactive events for spectators, including art workshops, studio tours, an outdoor movie screening, and over 30 artists, exhibiting at the Boom at Gunpowder House and the V.C. Bird International Airport, all around the theme of "Culture in Colour."

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

In Kerala, an aging trend bucks India's booming population

KOCHI, India (AP) — When 82-year-old Vasanthi Baby almost tripped while climbing down the stairs in her home in southern India's Kerala state, she decided, along with her 84-year-old husband V. Baby, to move to an assisted living center.

The couple are two of a growing number of people in India's only aging state that are moving into specialized facilities. They're happy with the care they receive: round-the-clock access to nurses, the reassuring company of their own generation and healthy, regular meals.

"There is a feeling of safety we can only get here," V. Baby said. "We cannot get this at home."

Like millions of others in the region, Baby, a retired math professor, spent his life savings building a two-floor multi-bedroom home. It was meant to last generations: their son Sony was supposed to have and grow his family here, but he emigrated to the United Arab Emirates for work and a better quality of life.

In the past 60 years, the percentage of people age 60 and over in Kerala has shot up from 5.1% to 16.5% — the highest proportion in any Indian state. This makes Kerala an outlier in a country with a rapidly growing population, soon to be the world's most populous at 1.4 billion. India has a booming workforce and young population, but language barriers, climate threats, minimal federal provisions and an increasing desire among younger people like Sony to live elsewhere put the state's older people in a precarious position.

The country's population has more than quadrupled since its independence from colonial rule 75 years ago. But the world's largest democracy re-



Elderly men, right and the youth participate in a church procession in Kochi, Kerala state, India, March 10, 2023. In this coastal state in India's southern tip, the aging population provides a stark contrast to the young India of the north. The most literate state in India, Kerala is also the fastest aging part of the country. Declining fertility and increasing longevity have been contributing to the demographic shifts in the State. (AP Photo/ R S Iyer)

mains, in many ways, two countries: a place that is both urban and rural, modern and pre-industrial, opulent and impoverished. For older people, where they fall on the divide determines how they'll live out their autumn years.

Just 20 kilometers away (12 miles) from the assisted living center, in the Mattancherry neighborhood of Kerala's financial capital Kochi, 65-year-old Zainaba Ali lives in a small room with an asbestos roof in a corner of her daughter's house.

Ali spent most of her youth working in the countries around the Middle East as a cleaner but has little savings to show for it. After developing arthritis and a slew of other health conditions making her unable to work, she returned to India.

"I receive a small pension from the government but that hasn't come through in months. I survive on the

goodwill of my children," Ali said. Her daughter doesn't work and her son is a daily wage laborer. "Even buying medicines has become difficult now."

In India, people over 60 are entitled to a state pension of roughly 1,600 rupees (\$20) a month, usually not enough for basic necessities. It means that many older people rely on their children if they are no longer able to work and don't have enough saved up. In Kerala, where there are over 4.2 million elderly people, it can be tough on families' finances.

Flooding and heat waves, both made worse by human-caused climate change, adds to the vulnerability of Kerala's older people, said Anjal Prakash, a research director at the Indian School of Business.

Kochi in particular has been bearing the brunt of the damages. A dis-

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cont'd from pg 10

trous flood in 2018 sunk large parts of the city. The summer months are getting hotter and longer and rains are becoming more erratic and concentrated.

“During monsoons we need to hold open umbrellas inside the house,” Ali said, pointing to buckets kept in various corners of the house. “Summer has become absolutely unbearable. Because of the scorching sun, we often go to the seashore seeking a bit of shade. Inside here the fan does not even run properly.”

Prakash said specific measures to look after older people who have their own needs and vulnerabilities is a “dark spot” in climate policy.

“Understanding the specific needs of seniors is the first step in protecting them. ... People are not trained to rescue older people and children,” he said.

The movement of younger people away from the state also means fewer people to care for their older relatives.

Poonam Muttreja, the executive director of the New Delhi-based Population Foundation of India, pointed to a steady stream of outward migration from Kerala for at least 50 years. In the 1960s and 1970s, “there was a huge migration to the Middle East, eastern Africa.” Many went to other countries as school teachers or nurses, a trend that’s continued in more recent times, now also to Europe and north America, she said.

The aging population, combined with the migration of younger generations, means there will be 35 people over 60 in the state for every 100 working-age people by 2030, according to the Kerala government. It means more specialized care facilities would be needed, with enough workers to staff them.

“Getting qualified employees is a big challenge today and bringing people from other states doesn’t always work because of language barriers,”



An elderly man walks through a street in Mattancherry, one of the oldest regions of the city that is popular for its tourist sites and art galleries in Kochi, Kerala state, India, March 6, 2023. In this coastal state in India's southern tip, the aging population provides a stark contrast to the young India of the north. The most literate state in India, Kerala is also the fastest aging part of the country. (AP Photo/ R S Iyer)

said Alex Joseph, the managing trustee of Signature Homes, the assisted living center where the Babys reside. Joseph added that getting staff from within Kerala is also difficult since most of them aspire to migrate abroad for work.

“Kerala probably sends out more nurses to the rest of the world than any other single region in India or elsewhere. To get them to stay here and work here for long periods is extremely difficult,” he said.

The state’s unique demographics in India are due to declining fertility and increasing life expectancies as a result of statewide policies. Since the state was formed in 1956, Kerala prioritized social welfare and invested heavily in public health and education.

It paid off: Kerala’s literacy rate is 93% compared to India’s 75%. It’s also the only state in India to have a maternal mortality rate that is less than

one for every 100,000 live births.

In other parts of India, especially in poorer regions in the north, states have a larger population, higher levels of corruption and other factors that cause them to lag behind in health and education, Muttreja said.

But like Kerala, “southern Indian states have lower fertility rates because they invested in literacy, health infrastructure and family planning,” said Muttreja. She estimated that states like southern Tamil Nadu could also see Kerala-like trends in the long and medium term.

Although that’s good news for most younger working people, it can be tough on older generations.

Despite his cheerful demeanor, Baby admits he misses his son but agrees there is a better life to be had elsewhere.

“I cannot ask him to stay here,” he said.

Juul Labs agrees to pay \$462 million settlement to six states

By Karen Matthews

Electronic cigarette-maker Juul Labs Inc. will pay \$462 million to six states and the District of Columbia, marking the largest settlement the company has reached so far for its role in the youth vaping surge, the attorneys general in several states announced Wednesday.

The agreement with New York, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Mexico and Washington, D.C. is the latest in a string of recent legal agreements Juul has reached to settle lawsuits related to the way it marketed addictive nicotine products. Critics said Juul was trying to lure children too young to smoke.

Like some other settlements reached by Juul, this latest includes restrictions on the marketing and distribution of the company's vaping products. For example, it is barred from any direct or indirect marketing that targets youth, which includes anyone under age 35. Juul will also limit the amount of purchases customers can make in retail stores and online.

"Juul lit a nationwide public health crisis by putting addictive products in the hands of minors and convincing them that it's harmless," New York Attorney General Letitia James said in a statement. "Today they are paying the price for the harm they caused."

A spokesperson for Juul said with Wednesday's settlement, the Washington D.C.-based company was "nearing total resolution of the company's historical legal challenges and securing certainty for our future."

The spokesperson added that underage use of Juul products has declined by 95% since 2019 based on the National Youth Tobacco Survey. According to the CDC though, since sur-



New York Attorney General Letitia James speaks during a press conference, Sept. 21, 2022, in New York. Embattled electronic cigarette-maker Juul Labs Inc. will pay \$462-million to six states and the District of Columbia, marking the largest settlement the company has reached so far for its role in the youth vaping surge, James said Wednesday, April 12, 2023. (AP Photo/Brittainy Newman, File)

veys were administered online instead of on school campuses during the pandemic, the results cannot be compared to prior years.

Juul rocketed to the top of the U.S. vaping market about five years ago with the popularity of flavors like mango, mint and crème brûlée. But the startup's rise was fueled by use among teenagers, some of whom became hooked on Juul's high-nicotine pods.

Parents, school administrators and politicians have largely blamed the company for a surge in underage vaping.

District of Columbia Attorney General Brian Schwalb said in a statement that Juul "knew how addictive and dangerous its products were and actively tried to cover up that medical truth."

In September, Juul agreed to pay

nearly \$440 million over a period of six to 10 years to settle a two-year investigation by 33 states into the marketing of its high-nicotine vaping products to young people. That settlement amounted to about 25% of Juul's U.S. sales of \$1.9 billion in 2021.

Three months later, the company said it had secured an equity investment to settle thousands of lawsuits over its e-cigarettes brought by individuals and families of Juul users, school districts, city governments and Native American tribes.

The vaping company, which has laid off hundreds of employees, recently agreed to pay West Virginia \$7.9 million to settle a lawsuit alleging the company violated the state's Consumer Credit and Protection Act by marketing to underage users, West

cont'd on pg 13

Gerard Depardieu: French actor faces new sexual assault allegations

Actor Gerard Depardieu has been accused of sexual assault or harassment by 13 women, according to an investigation by French news website Mediapart.

The women claim the star groped them, put his hands in their underwear and made obscene remarks, the site said.

The incidents are alleged to have happened over the past two decades on film and TV sets or in public places.

A lawyer for Mr Depardieu, 74, said he “formally denies all the charges which may fall under criminal law”.

The Oscar- and Bafta-nominated actor is known for films including *Jean de Florette*, *Green Card* and *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

The allegations come two years after he was placed under criminal investigation for rape, which he has denied.

In the Mediapart investigation, one extra on a film set said he put his hand under her dress before trying to “slip in to get to my knickers”. When she pushed



Gerard Depardieu has been nominated for one Oscar and two Bafta Awards.

his hand away, he became aggressive and tried again, the woman claimed.

Another described how the actor “grabbed [me] by the waist” between takes, had a “wandering hand” and “ended up putting his hand on my bum in an insistent way”.

One woman said he tried to “put his hand on my genitals” during a crowd scene. On another occasion, accompanied by a man he introduced as the producer, the actor allegedly grabbed her from behind and “rubbed my hips, stomach and breasts”.

Many of the women told Mediapart they were shocked that no action was taken on the film sets, with his alleged behaviour being tolerated or even met with laughter.

“Adults let an actor fondle my breasts in front of everyone,” said one actress,

who was 17 at the time.

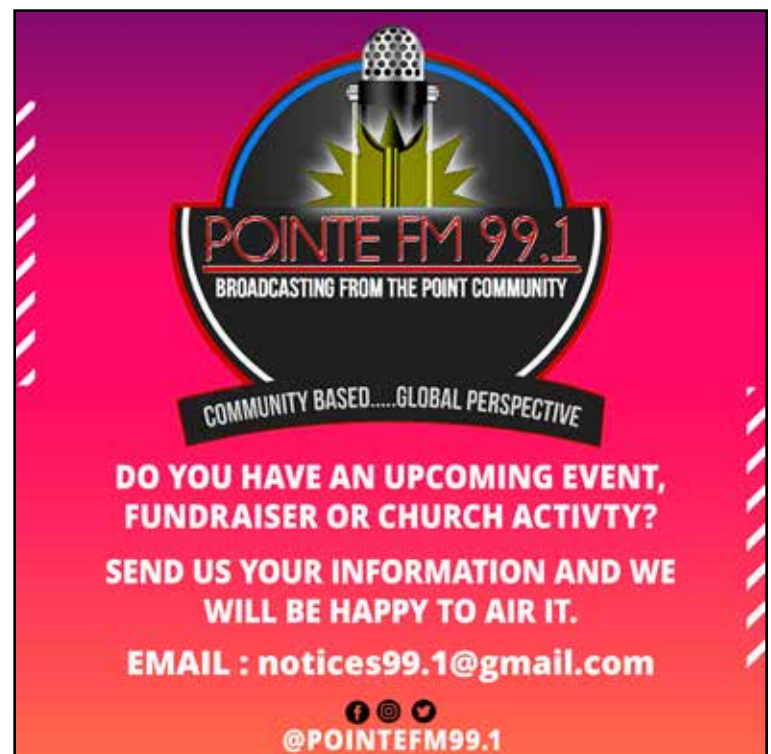
The Paris prosecutor’s office told the AFP news agency on Wednesday it had “not received any new complaint to date”.


Mr Depardieu remains under investigation for allegedly raping an actress in 2018.

cont’d from pg 12

Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey announced Monday. Last month, the company paid Chicago \$23.8 million to settle a lawsuit.

Minnesota’s case against Juul went to trial last month with the state’s Attorney General Keith Ellison asserting that the company “baited, deceived and addicted a whole new generation of kids” as youth cigarette smoking rates fell.




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USVI: Gov Bryan announces new nominees for cabinet, judicial posts

Loop - Governor Albert Bryan has unveiled Dr. Louis Petersen and Ariel Smith as the new nominees to fill vacancies in his cabinet.

Smith has been nominated for the post of Attorney General while Petersen was nominated for Agriculture Commissioner.

Smith is a veteran attorney with the Virgin Islands Department of Justice who currently serves as the chief of the department's Civil Division. She also served as Assistant Territorial Public Defender and has worked as an associate at a local law firm.

Petersen is currently an Assistant Director at the University of the Virgin Islands' School of Agriculture and a former Assistant Commissioner and Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture.

"The Bryan-Roach Administra-



Governor Bryan introduces his Attorney General Nominee Ariel M. Smith and Agriculture Commissioner Nominee Dr. Louis Petersen during the Government House weekly briefing on Tuesday, April 11.

tion has accomplished a lot toward moving this territory forward in the first four years of our term in office. We stabilised our government's fi-

nances, restored the people's trust through transparency, and made good on longstanding obligations to the *cont'd on pg 15*

SVG PM shares thoughts on death penalty

By Melissa Wong

The controversial issue of the death penalty came up during the Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines' Face-to-Face radio programme as he expressed concern about crime and whether certain offences require capital punishment.

On Easter Monday the island recorded a fatal shooting, the first killing by a firearm since February 9, 2023.

Dr Ralph Gonsalves is urging young men to restrain themselves and end their fascination with guns for taking out their anger.

"Everyone has to have a patience and a calm. Not because you get angry or lose yourself to restraint you have to go for the gun. There has to be something that holds you back."

Gonsalves said that something has to be instilled in the family, schools,



Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr Ralph Gonsalves (File photo) churches, the community, mass media, the State and with the appropriate legal framework.

The prime minister said unfortunately both the Court of Appeal and the Privy Council decided practically that no one can be sent to the gallows anymore for murder.

"I have oscillated between the death penalty and no death penalty for a long time now over the last dozen or so years and I came to the conclusion

that there are particular offences you need the death penalty for."

He believes it should be for murder, but not those of passion. The prime minister said that distinction was made in the Constitutional Reform Proposal which went to the people, however, the people rejected it.

"There were many proposals but this was a critical one to write into the constitution... what was not there before... so we could carry out the death penalty in particular cases.

But there it is... we may have to go back to the people on that."

The prime minister added that in the meantime, the existing legal systems will be used as SVG seeks to see how it could bring up persons, particularly young males, and have the necessary restraints so they don't resort to the gun.

BVI leaders square off in election debate

Loop - Political leaders on the British Virgin Islands laid out their development plans last evening for the territory as they participated in a historic leadership debate ahead of the April 24th General Election.

The debate was organised by the H Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC) Virgin Islands Studies Institute.

The Virgin Islands Party's (VIP) Dr Natalio Wheatley, the Progressive Virgin Islands Movement's (PVIM) Ronnie Skelton, the National Democratic Party's (NDP) Marlon Penn, and Julian Fraser of Progressives United (PU) were pressed by moderator Ronn Grant on topics such as fiscal policy, social welfare, the commission of inquiry, independence and healthcare.

All of the leaders agreed that the British Virgin Islands was at a difficult juncture in its history as it deals with implementing governance reforms that were recommended in the Commission of Inquiry report and reconstruction from two devastating hurricanes.

In his opening statement, Fraser said Virgin Islanders "can't afford" to have the UK impose direct rule as locals have been doing the work necessary to reform the system, including the formation of a Unity Government.

And that's why he said it is important for Virgin Islanders to elect a com-



petent government on Election Day.

Penn stated the NDP is not against the BVI becoming an independent country but local institutions need to be strong before that step can be taken.

"We have to particularly look at our institutions and ensure that they're fit for purpose," Penn stated.

He continued: "We saw in the [Commission of Inquiry] where many of our institutions were challenged... in terms of the ones that are responsible for holding accountability, good governance, and making sure that persons in the political class, in other classes are held accountable and the good governance structures that are necessary."

"As it pertains to self-determination, we have to ensure, as I said earlier, to build those institutions, to make sure those institutions continue to be strong and robust as we move forward," Penn said.

Wheatley committed to repealing the Retiring Allowances (Legislative Services) Amendment Act, 2021, which is known locally as the "greedy bill". The bill was criticized for giving hefty retirement benefits to former legislators.

"I will not collect a dime on that Retirement Act in its current form and I intend, God willing, [if] I'm given the opportunity, to repeal the entire bill," Wheatley stated.

Skelton stated his party wants to increase the minimum hourly wage from US\$6 per hour as part of efforts to reduce the BVI's wealth inequality. He noted that many businesses aren't paying their employees the minimum hourly rate.

"These people cannot live on \$48 a day," Skelton said whiling noting that a PVIM government will also look at placing limits on what businesses can charge for food items.

cont'd from pg 14

people," Bryan said during his introduction of the two nominees. "We also made significant strides in our recovery and transformation. We are making tremendous progress towards the modernisation of our public infrastructure.

Bryan also announced Yvette Ross-Edwards as his

nominee for a seat on the bench of the Virgin Islands Superior Court on St. Croix.

Ross-Edwards received her law degree from Albany School of Law and was barred in 1992 by the Virgin Islands Bar Association.

"She has had a very extensive and diverse legal career both publicly and in private practice. She is an

active member of the community and will serve us well on the bench," Bryan said. "I am sure the Senate will arrive at the same conclusion and I look forward to her successful confirmation."

The Governor had previously announced his nomination of Ms. Thomas-Jacobs for the V.I. Superior

Court on St. Thomas and the re-nomination of Judge Harold Willocks for another six-year term on the Superior Court bench on St. Croix.

Thomas-Jacobs and Judge Willocks are currently set to go before the Legislature's Rules and Judiciary Committee for a nomination hearing.

Germany scales back cannabis liberalization after EU talks

BERLIN (AP) — Germany's government presented scaled-back plans Wednesday to liberalize the country's rules on cannabis, including by decriminalizing possession of limited amounts and allowing members of nonprofit "cannabis clubs" to buy marijuana for recreational purposes.

In a second step, German officials also envision setting up regional test projects to sell cannabis through "commercial supply chains," Health Minister Karl Lauterbach said. But the proposal differs from one he presented in October, which foresaw allowing the sale of cannabis to adults across the country at licensed outlets.

The German government revised the plan following talks with the European Union's executive commission. Agriculture Minister Cem Özdemir said EU law "sets us limits we must respect, but that I will also say we are pushing."

Lauterbach had cautioned all along that the government would only proceed with its original plan if it got the green light from the EU.

Germany has allowed some patients to get cannabis as a prescription medication since 2017.

The proposed new legislation foresees legalizing the possession of up to 25 grams (nearly 1 ounce) of cannabis for recreational purposes and allowing individuals to grow up to three plants.

It would let German residents 18 and older join nonprofit "cannabis clubs" with a maximum 500 members each, which would be allowed to grow cannabis for members' personal consumption. Individuals would be allowed to buy up to 25 grams per day, or up to 50 grams per month — a figure that would be limited to 30 grams for adults under age 21.



German Agriculture Minister Cem Özdemir, left, and German Health Minister Karl Lauterbach, right, address the media during a press conference in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, April 12, 2023. The German government on Wednesday presented scaled-back plans to liberalize the country's rules on cannabis, which would decriminalize possessing and growing limited amounts of the substance and allow its sale for recreational purposes to members of nonprofit 'cannabis clubs.' (Britta Pedersen/dpa via AP)

Membership in multiple clubs wouldn't be allowed, and authorities could limit the number of clubs. The clubs' costs would be covered by membership fees, which would be staggered according to how much cannabis the members use.

Özdemir said that draft legislation will be finalized this month and that "consumption will become legal this year already." Officials hope that the first step will help push back the black market.

This fall, the government plans to map out the next step: five-year tests of regulated commercial supply chains in select regions. Lauterbach said details, including which regions would be chosen, have yet to be thrashed out.

The government wants to have the pilot projects scientifically evaluated. The ministers were optimistic that successful tests would enable them to

build pressure for a change of policy at the EU level, and ultimately to clear the way for their original plan to allow licensed sales.

The feedback so far from Brussels "is on the one hand, something that perhaps disappointed us, but on the other hand also an opportunity — the opportunity to build the basis for a European cannabis policy with a well-conducted study," Lauterbach told reporters in Berlin.

The plans will need the approval of the German parliament's lower house, but officials said an endorsement is not needed from the upper house. That chamber represents Germany's 16 state governments, many of which include the country's main center-right opposition bloc.

The bloc has opposed liberalizing cannabis laws. One conservative re-

cont'd on pg 17

Bear hunt after jogger slain in Italian Alps

By Davide Ghiglione

Italian authorities are on the hunt for a bear that killed a 26-year-old jogger in the north-eastern region of Trentino last week.

Andrea Papi's funeral took place on Wednesday. The 17-year-old female bear that killed him was known as JJ4 and identified through genetic testing.

JJ4 also attacked a father and son in June 2020.

The provincial government had issued an order for the bear to be killed at the time, but it was overturned by a court.

This time authorities have opted to euthanise the bear. "We are doing everything we can to locate the bear and ensure the safety of local residents," said Maurizio Fugatti, the president of the Trentino region.

Mr Papi was running in the countryside when he was attacked and killed, sparking fear among residents. Many have called the bear to be captured and demanded changes to a European plan called "Life Ursus" which is aimed at reintroducing brown bears in the Alps.



The bear attack on Andrea Papi has prompted fear among residents in Trentino.

People in Trentino have been expressing condolences and solidarity with Mr Papi's family. Candles have been outside windows as a symbol of mourning, and local municipalities have lowered their flags to half-mast.

In the village of Caldes, a large crowd of mourners filled a church to pay their respects and offer support to Mr Papi's family at his funeral.

"The village is upset, angry," Antonio Maini, mayor of Caldes, told reporters outside the church. "One of our boys has died, we are in mourning, but we are also angry because he died from a bear attack. An event that should not have happened."

The incident has reignited the debate about the

coexistence of humans and wildlife in the area and raised questions about how best to balance the need to protect endangered species with the safety of residents.

Bears are a protected species in Italy, and their population has been increasing in recent years due to conservation efforts. However, their presence in residential areas can pose a risk to human safety, as highlighted by the attacks.

"A conscientious administration should act in compliance with the rules for the protection of biodiversity and should not be moved by a spirit of retaliation, a spirit of revenge," the international Organisation for the Protection of Animals (OIPA) wrote

in a note.

The species was reintroduced in the region about two decades ago. Since then, the bear population in Trentino has surged from three to approximately 100, according to data provided by the province.

Despite hopes that the bears would spread across the Alps, they have largely remained concentrated in Trentino.

JJ4, the bear responsible for the recent fatal attack on the jogger, was born in Trentino. Her parents were brought to the area from Slovenia.

Italy's environment minister, Gilberto Pichetto Fratin, said the bears might be relocated to other parts of the country, if not abroad, and locals could be equipped with anti-aggression spray.

"Bears and wolves have become a problem, for farmers, breeders, inhabitants, tourists," Reinhold Messner, an Italian mountaineer and explorer told daily newspaper La Stampa.

"We need a precise regulatory framework, so it is clear how to deal with situations of this kind."

cont'd from pg 16

gional official went to Brussels to lobby against Lauterbach's initial plan.

Center-right health policy spokesman Tino Sorge told the Funke newspaper group that the government was pressing ahead with legalizing a risky drug "despite European legal hurdles, clear expert opinions and bad experiences from other countries." He accused Lauterbach of setting the wrong

priorities.

The health minister argued that Germany's existing policies have failed. He said the government's aim is to offer greater safety, protect consumers against contaminated and toxic products, and reduce drug-related crime.

"We are not creating a problem," Lauterbach insisted. "We are trying to solve a problem."

He reiterated that Germany doesn't want to emulate the model of the neighboring Netherlands, which combines decriminalization with little market regulation.

The cannabis plan is one of several social reform projects that German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's socially liberal three-party governing coalition agreed to embark on when it took office in December 2021.

Hundreds forced from Indiana homes as plastics fire burns

RICHMOND, Ind. (AP) — An evacuation order affecting more than 1,000 people was expected to remain in place through Wednesday around a large industrial fire in an Indiana city near the Ohio border where crews worked through the night to douse piles of burning plastics, authorities said.

Multiple fires that began burning Tuesday afternoon were still burning Wednesday afternoon within about 14 acres of various types of plastics stored both inside and outside buildings at the former factory site in Richmond, 70 miles (113 kilometers) east of Indianapolis, Richmond fire Chief Tim Brown said.

He said the fire is contained within the old factory site but not under control and the firefighting effort is ongoing. Brown said the fire response team has a very tentative goal of finishing up dousing the flames by Saturday morning, but added Wednesday afternoon “that’s a guess.”

Brown said their goal is to put out the fires, not let them burn, and said rumors to the contrary were incorrect.

“We are attempting to put the fire out. We are not letting it burn. Evidently there’s some misinformation out there that we’re letting it burn,” he said.

Between 1,500 and 2,000 people who live within a



Firefighters walk out of the site of an industrial fire in Richmond, Ind., Wednesday, April 12, 2023. Authorities urged people to evacuate if they live near the fire. The former factory site was used to store plastics and other materials for recycling or resale. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy)

half-mile (0.8 kilometer) of the plant were told to leave after the fire began, said David Hosick, spokesperson for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

Brown, the fire chief, said it’s unclear how many people have been evacuated from around the site. People outside that radius who live downwind of the fire were advised to keep windows closed and pets inside.

Brown said the evacuation order would remain in place through Wednesday and perhaps into Wednesday night, depending on how much progress crews make in putting out the flames. He said the fire’s cause remains under investigation and the only injury has been a fire-

fighter who suffered a minor ankle injury overnight Tuesday.

Some Richmond residents forced from their homes took shelter starting Tuesday afternoon at Oak Park Pentecostals, after families picking up their children from the church’s daycare realized they could not return home, said executive pastor Jesse Arthur. He expects the church’s expansive gymnasium, with bathrooms, showers and the daycare — and water and hot food provided by the Red Cross and residents — could fill up Wednesday evening.

“I think most everybody was exhausted. Long day. Traumatic. Everything’s up in the air,” Arthur told The

Associated Press on Wednesday.

Terry Snyder Jr. spent a restless night at the church Tuesday night with his parents, who are worried about their home of five years. All three were coughing from the smoke as both Snyder and his mother, Wendy, have asthma, while his father, Terry Snyder Sr., has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

“I didn’t sleep all night. I was nervous,” Wendy Snyder said. “... I’ve never been displaced from my home.”

Aaron Stevens, a Richmond police officer who lives six blocks from the plant, remained at his home Wednesday despite the evacuation order and watching ash fall

cont’d on pg 19

cont'd from pg 18

on his deck and backyard. His sister, who lives closer to the fires, was staying with him to escape the smoke and Stevens said he's keeping an eye on the changing updates around the smoke.

State and federal regulators were at the scene to monitor air quality and other environmental impacts at the site, which local officials said has been used to store plastics and other materials for recycling or resale.

Jason Sewell, the on-scene coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, said the agency has been doing roving air sampling outside the evacuation area and into part of nearby Ohio, but no toxic compounds have been detected.

He stressed, however, that smoke is harmful to inhale because it contains particulate matter of different sizes and can contain toxics, and residents should avoid the smoke.

Sewell said air sampling was continuing Wednesday in Richmond, a city of 35,000 residents.

President Joe Biden, who has been visiting Northern Ireland and Ireland, spoke by phone to Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb and offered his support and any additional federal assistance needed to respond to the fire, the White House said.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the federal agency was working closely with its state and local partners in responding to and monitoring the fire. He said

an EPA team would be collecting samples of debris in the area Wednesday "to determine whether asbestos-containing materials may have left the site."

"So we're following the situation very closely and will continue to provide the community with any assistance that they need," he said in the nation's capitol before speaking about tough new automobile pollution control limits.

Because of smoke still wafting from the fire, Indiana's environmental agency issued an air quality advisory Wednesday for two eastern Indiana counties, Wayne and Randolph, warning that fore-

casts call for elevated levels of fine soot particles in the air. That advisory was later extended through Thursday.

Indiana's state fire marshal, Steve Jones, said residents need to get away from the smoke plumes, especially elderly people with respiratory problems.

"There's a host of different chemicals that plastics give off when they're on fire. And so it's concerning," Jones said.

Pastor Ken Harris at Bethesda Worship Center in Richmond said the church housed several families, about 20 people total, Tuesday night after evacuation orders were issued, but those

families were later moved to a separate, larger facility about 5 miles (8 kilometers) away.

"We gave them a safe space to breathe and collect their thoughts," Harris said Wednesday as dark gray smoke billowed in the distance through the clear-blue sky beyond the church's windows.

Richmond Mayor Dave Snow said Wednesday that the plastics recycling site had been under a city order to clean up and remediate the complex, but said the business owner had ignored that order. Snow called that person "a negligent business owner."

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Sports News



Charles among winners in Wings' Easter Monday Road Relay & Fitness Walk

Hannah Charles of Hurricane Power was among the winners of the CPTSA Wings Sports Club's 26th Easter Monday 4 x 1 Mile Road Relay & Fitness Walk.

Charles won the female division title in the 4-Mile Road Run from Camp Blizzard to the Christ the King High School (CKHS) in a time of 32 minutes and 32 seconds.

Schenectady Deane finished second while Yolanda Joseph came third.

The male category of the road run was won by Kemar Thomas of Hurricane Power in a time of 21 minutes and 19 seconds. Ragi Burton clocked 29 minutes and 33 seconds to finish second.

The female division of the 4-mile fitness walk



Hurricane Power's Hannah Charles, left, won the 4-mile road run from Camp Blizzard to Christ the King High School during the CPTSA Wings Sports Club's 26th Easter Monday 4 x 1 Mile Road Relay & Fitness Walk on 10th April, 2023. (Photo courtesy CPTSA Wings)

was won by Nayana Matthew. Reouloua Dowe came second and Topcy David finished third.

The male category of the fitness walk was cap-

tured by Harris Henry with Donald Francis finishing second. A total of 12 persons participated in the Fitness Walk.

There were a number of

winners in the various categories of the 4 X 1 Mile Relay.

CPTSA Wings captured their title in the Under-15 *cont'd on pg 21*

APUA inet partners with Cool and Smooth T20 2023

Antigua's homegrown telecommunications company, APUA inet, is happy to announce its partnership with Cool and Smooth T20 Explosion 2023.

APUA inet has played an integral part in developing the tournament by supporting the players through being the official Player-of-the-Match sponsor and by bringing the action to the fans through giveaways and entertainment on match days.

However, inet's involvement will be even more noteworthy this year with events planned for the month of April to promote the competition throughout the participating commu-

nities in the lead up to the grand finale on April 29.

This began with a block party on April 1 in the championship teams' village, Liberta.

Tournament Coordinator, Dario Barthley says, "Cool & Smooth T20 and APUA Inet stand for the same things, high quality professional service from a brand that is rooted in the communities and connected to the people on the ground.

"As the official telecommunications partner, inet has shown their commitment to pushing this tournament forward in many ways, both on

and off the field and with some of the plans we have discussed for the future, we only see the relationship becoming more mutually beneficial in years to come."

This partnership is crucial to the structure of the competition and are hopeful that it can be even more expansive in the future.

With just 15 days to the start of the tournament, anticipation builds nationwide for the biggest sporting festival in Antigua. For more information, stay tuned to various local media outlets and the Cool and Smooth T20 digital platforms.

Da Squad beat Jets to remain unbeaten in volleyball league

Reigning champions Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad have maintained their perfect record in the female division of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABA-VA) Local Club League.

Da Squad continue to lead the competition by coming from behind to overcome Jets 3-1 and extended their unbeaten run to a league leading 5-0 record in the latest round of games at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

But it was the Jets who made the better start to the game, taking to a 1-0 lead by grabbing the first set 25-17.

However, last year's winners showed the strength of champions by rebounding to win the next three sets and the match 25-22, 25-18, 25-16 as the Jets ran out of steam and wilted under pressure to slip to their second defeat in six encounters.

But Jets won their fourth game of the competition by soaring to a 25-18, 23-25, 26-24, 25-21 victory over Ston-



Players of Da Squad (yellow and black uniform) compete against Jets in the female division of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABA-VA) Local Club League at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday, 8th April, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

eville, who suffered their fourth loss in five outings.

Former female division champions Paragons recorded their third win in four games by trouncing North Coast Hardware Starz Juniors 25-23, 25-1, 25-5. It was the fourth loss in as many encounters for Starz Juniors.

Starz Seniors won by default over Paragons, who were unable to field a team. They now move into second place behind Da Squad with a 4-1 record.

Starz Seniors were credited with a score of 25-0, 25-0, 25-0 and the points for the win by default over Paragons.

Necomers Pytonz and Caribbean Alliance Insurance Storming Lions also notched up wins to join defending champions Stoneville at the top of the men's division with 4-1 records.

Pytonz won by default over Renegades and were credited with a 25-0, 25-0, 25-0 victory, while Storming

Lions romped to an emphatic 25-16, 25-13, 25-15 victory over Sharks, who suffered their fifth loss in as many outings.

The competition will continue with a female division double header at the YMCA Sports Complex today (Thursday).

North Coast Hardware Starz Juniors will face Royal Cruisers at 6:30 pm while Paragons will take on Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad at 7:30 pm.

cont'd from pg 20

Girls division in a time of 31 minutes and 54 seconds.

Hurricane Power won the relay in the Under-20 male category with a time of 23 minutes and 10 seconds.

A team from the Antigua and Barbuda National Cadets Corps finished second by clocking 28 minutes and 54 seconds while another team from the Antigua and Barbuda National Cadets Corps came third in a time of 31 min-

utes and 52 seconds.

Hurricane Power captured the Under-30 Female Division title with a time of 27 minutes and 21 seconds.

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Referees captured the Under-30 Male category by clocking 23 minutes and 16 seconds.

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Referees also won the Over 30 Female Division in 29 minutes and 38 seconds.

Hurricane Power also won the Over 30 Male category by clocking 20 minutes and 32 seconds.

Two teams from the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Referees captured second and third places respectively.

The 26th Easter Monday 4 x 1 Mile Road Relay & Fitness Walk, which is organized and hosted by the CPTSA Wings Sports Club, was sponsored by Kenneth A. Gomez Insurance.



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



Squads named for Headley Weekes Series to be played at CCG

Cricket West Indies (CWI) Senior Men's Selection Panel has named the squads for the upcoming Headley Weekes Tri-Series.

Team Headley – named in honor of George Headley – will be captained by Joshua Da Silva, the wicket-keeper-batter. Team Weekes – named in honor of Sir Everton Weekes – will be led by Alick Athanaze, the left-handed top-order batter.

The two teams have been drawn from the leading performers in the 2023 West Indies Championship and those deemed to be on the fringe of the Test team.

Additionally, CWI named the teams to provide further first-class opportunities to the best performers from the West Indies Championship in a competitive and intense setting, as well as opportunities for players who the selectors believe would benefit from playing red-ball cricket as West Indies prepare for the upcoming "A" Team tour of Bangladesh and the two-Test Series against India at home.

Team Headley and Team Weekes will play against each other and against the West Indies Academy in the three-match series running from 19th April to 6th May, at the Coolidge Cricket Ground (CCG) in Antigua.

All three matches have been awarded first-class status. The West Indies Academy was unveiled last year and played CG United Super50 tournament last November.

Team Weekes will feature Athanaze, who was the leading batter in the West Indies Championship with 647 runs, which included two centuries; left-arm spinner Veerasammy Permaul the second-highest wicket-taker with 28 wickets; as well as Jahmar Hamilton who was the joint leading keeper with 19 dismissals.

Team Headley will feature experienced left-hander Darren Bravo, who was the second highest run-scorer in the West Indies Championship with 446 runs which included two centuries; fast bowler Akeem Jordan who was third highest wicket-taker with 22 wickets in four matches; as well as Tevyn Walcott, who was the joint leading keeper with 19 dismissals.

Shai Hope was selected but was given permission to represent Yorkshire in the English County Championship while Rahkeem Cornwall and Shane Dowrich made themselves unavailable for selection.

Lead Selector, Dr Desmond Haynes, said, "Following the conclusion of the West Indies Championship, we are pleased to have more first-class matches on the calendar.

"This is a great initiative and will provide our players with more opportunities as we look ahead to the very important Test Series against India later in the year as well as 'A' Team matches. We



Alick Athanaze will captain Team Weekes in the CWI Headley Weekes Tri-Series. (File photo)

looked at everyone who was available, and we came up with teams who will be very competitive and push each other."

All matches in the Headley Weekes Tri-Series will be streamed LIVE on the Windies Cricket YouTube channel.

FULL SQUADS: Team Headley- Joshua Da Silva (captain), Sunil Ambris, Darren Bravo, Justin Greaves, Kavem Hodge, Chaim Holder, Akeem Jordan, Marquino Mindley, Shayne Moseley, Gudakesh Motie, Anderson Phillip, Kieran Powell and Tevyn Walcott.

Team Weekes -Alick

Athanaze (captain), Tagnarine Chanderpaul, Keacy Carty, Dominic Drakes, Jahmar Hamilton, Brandon King, Jair McAllister, Zachary McCaskie, Veerasammy Permaul, Raymon Reifer, Kevin Sinclair, Nial Smith and Devon Thomas.

West Indies Academy - Kevlon Anderson, Ackeem Auguste, Joshua Bishop, Teddy Bishop, McKenny Clarke, Rivaldo Clarke, Joshua James, Johann Layne, Kirk McKenzie, Ashmead Nedd, Kelvin Pitman, Keagan Simmons, Ramon Simmonds, Kevin Wickham and Nyeem Young.



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CWI to recruit new head coach for Windies women's team

Cricket West Indies (CWI) will shortly be starting the process to recruit a new West Indies Women's team Head Coach after taking the decision not to renew the contract of Women's Head Coach Courtney Walsh and Technical Assistant Coaches Robert Samuels and Corey Collymore.

This follows a review of the senior women's team performances and programme.

During Walsh's tenure, which started in October 2020, he oversaw Home and Away Series wins to Pakistan and secured a semi-final spot in the 2022 ICC Women's 50-over Cricket World Cup.

CWI Director of Cricket Jimmy Adams said, "We are very grateful for the contribution of Courtney and his



Coaches Corey Collymore, left, and Courtney Walsh, center, at a West Indies women team training camp at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua in January 2023. (CWI Media)

technical team over the past two and a half years and we wish them all the best going forward.

"CWI remains committed to our international women's programme and will now be focusing on recruiting a new Head Coach and technical support team.

An interim technical support team will be put in place during the recruitment period."

Further information on the recruitment process will be provided in the coming weeks with the coaching roles being critical for the development of women's

cricket in the West Indies.

In recent years, CWI has significantly increased investment into the women's game at every level focusing on deepening the talent pool within the Caribbean and producing the next generation of West Indies Women's players.

cont'd from pg 26

"I feel very good about the support we got because normally, nobody come and support the teams, but we have 20 to 30 fans every night that came and supported us, so we just try to give of our best every night."

By virtue of winning the league title, Spanish Heat have gained automatic promotion to the ABBA first division league, which is slated to commence on Sunday, 30th April at the JSC Sports Complex.

Matthew said the players of Spanish Heat are grateful to ABBA for allowing them to compete in the second division and they are looking forward for the opportunity to raise their level of play in what is anticipated to be a

much tougher division one league.

"I'm very grateful that we got the chance to play and now we play in the first division. I am glad for that. They gave us the chance and we proved ourselves," Matthew stated.

"Well we are looking forward to stepping up and compete to the highest level. We know we can do it so we will just go with our game plan, follow our game plan and stick together."

Meanwhile, second place division two league finishers Ottos Coolers have opted out of their opportunity to compete in the first division after joining Spanish Heat in gaining automatic promotion the nation's top domestic basketball league.

In an effort to create a stronger team, the players of Ottos Coolers will be joining forces with their colleagues on the division one team Ottos Full Throttle in the league.

Ottos Coolers will be replaced by the second division's third place league finishers All Saints Slam in the division one league.

Registration is currently ongoing for teams to participate in this year's division one league. But seven teams are already confirmed to take part in the 2023 ABBA Division One league competition.

They are Cutie's Ovals O'Jays, Flyers, North Side Stingers, Baldwin Spencer's Braves, Ottos Full Throttle, Potters Steelers and All Saints Slam.

Spanish Heat sweep Ottos Coolers to win D-2 Playoff title

Galaxia Bar Spanish Heat have completed the double in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division.

Spanish Heat, who had beaten Ottos Coolers to win the league title last month, added the playoff championship to their collection by sweeping the same opposition 3-0 in their best of five finals series to capture the Second Division Playoff Championship before a noisy crowd at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday night.

Like the previous two games, Spanish Heat were able to stave off a strong challenge from Ottos Coolers, prevailing 94-85 in Game Three of the finals to wrap-up the series and the title.

Spanish Heat were led by Jesus Emmanuel, who shot a team-high 22 points and claimed eight rebounds and Steven Matthew produced 20 points, eight assists and seven rebounds.

They received good support from team-mates Antonio Cruzdehaa with 15 points and six rebounds, Kelvin Pimentel with 11



Spanish Heat's captain Kelvin Pimentel, fifth from left, accepts the second division playoff championship trophy from ABBA President Michael Freeland at the end of Game Three final at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday, 11th April, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

points and nine rebounds and Wilkin Floyd with 10 rebounds, nine points and six rebounds.

For Ottos Coolers, captain Lincoln Weekes shot a game high 28 points and grabbed seven rebounds, Ismael Palemo sank 21 points and snapped up 15 rebounds, and Javon Simon converted 20 points and claimed eight rebounds.

Following the game, President of ABBA Mi-

chael Freeland presented Spanish Heat's captain Kelvin Pimentel with the playoff championship trophy.

Steven Matthew expressed his happiness with winning the titles, but also commended Ottos Coolers for putting up a tough challenge. Matthew said his team also appreciated the great support they receive from their supporters at every game.

"I feel happy. We do it as a team. We came with a goal to win both championships, the league and the playoff championship, and we came together and we get it," Matthew said.

"It was very competitive. Every night the guys on both teams came and brought their best. But we just stuck together and we were able to come away with a win every night.

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