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VACCINE HESITANCY IS PUTTING SOCIETY AT RISK

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Vaccine hesitancy is putting society at risk

Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph has launched Vaccination Week 2023 in Antigua and Barbuda, with a warning that vaccine hesitancy is putting the country at risk of contracting many preventable diseases.

Speaking before a group of health professionals to launch the week, Sir Molwyn noted that the region of the Americas once led the world in the rate of vaccinations that prevented many diseases. Among countries in the Americas, Antigua and Barbuda had a record of vaccination that was among the highest in the region. This, he felt, led to residents in the country not having many of the diseases found in other countries.

However, according to the health minister, that situation has changed over the last three years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which has seen a rise in vaccine hesitancy among residents in Antigua and Barbuda. According to Sir

Molwyn, the situation has raised an alarm at the level of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO).

“The new PAHO Director, Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, calls on countries to urgently step-up routine vaccination programs as the risk of disease outbreaks in the Americas reaches a 30-year high due to a decline in vaccination coverage.

“While the Americas was the first region in the world to eliminate polio in 1994 and has historically been a world leader in disease control and elimination, “national immunization programs have suffered numerous setbacks over the last decade,” Dr. Barbosa said during a media briefing today,” the minister reported.

Dr. Barbosa has also identified inadequate sustainable financing for immunization and an increase in vaccine hesitancy due to misinformation as two of the primary drivers of the



Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph



drop in coverage factors that have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sir Molwyn quotes the PAHO Director as stating that the Region of the Americas is the second in the world with the worst vaccine coverage. Around 2.7 million children did not receive all their vaccine doses in 2021, leaving them without full protection against diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough. Two countries – Brazil and Mexico – account for more than 50% of children that have never received a vaccine in the region.

Failure to effectively implement and maintain routine vaccination coverage leaves children “susceptible to diseases such as polio, tetanus, measles, and diphtheria,” Dr. Barbosa said.

The Health Minister praised the efforts of local nurses in their dedication and commitment to proceed with administering the vaccine regime against a backdrop of widespread misinformation about vaccines, their efficacy, and safety. He pointed to a handbook produced by a team of local health professionals led by Dr. Joycelyn Joseph as a useful tool in helping to educate the population about the importance of vaccinations.

Antigua and Barbuda traditionally had a vaccination rate upwards of 95 percent, but this has seen a decline over the last three years since the COVID-19 pandemic.

| Wed 25 Day | | Wed 25 Night | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 84° |  | 77° |  |
| 24% E 13 mph | | 23% E 9 mph | |
| Mostly cloudy. High 84F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph. | | A few clouds from time to time. Low 77F. Winds E at 5 to 10 mph. | |
| Humidity 71% | UV Index 10 of 10 | Humidity 80% | UV Index 0 of 10 |
| Sunrise 5:33 am | Sunset 6:35 pm | Moonrise 2:22 am | Moonset 2:41 pm |
| | | Waning Crescent | |

High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill receives international award

Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner to the Court of St. James (United Kingdom), Karen Mae-Hill was named Diplomat of the Year for the Year 2023 for the North America and the Caribbean Region at the IHG DIPLOMAT Magazine Awards Ceremony 2023.

The award was presented by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Ivan Romero-Martinez at the Princess Alexandra Hall of the Royal Overseas League, London on Monday 24th April.

In its thirteenth year, the awards ceremony recognises the outstanding work and achievements of London's diplomatic community who are trying to better their nations' well-being.

DIPLOMAT magazine



Karen Mae-Hill

identified 10 categories that recognise different levels of diplomacy, and winners were nominated by their peers. Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner Karen-Mae Hill won in the category for the region of North America and the Caribbean.

In her acceptance speech, she thanked her colleagues in the diplomatic corps for the nomination and the dis-

tinguished judging panel for selecting her for the award.

She expressed how delighted she was that as someone from a small island nation with a large ocean space she could have made such an impression and impact on the diplomatic community in the UK.

She thanked the government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Prime Minister for

giving her the opportunity to serve as its High Commissioner and promised to continue to work hard to represent the interests of Antigua and Barbuda and the wider CARICOM region.

She also thanked her staff at the High Commission and her CARICOM colleague High Commissioners for the support they have given her throughout her tenure.

The evening welcomed the massed ranks of London's diplomatic corps, at what has become a key date in the capital's diplomatic calendar.

BBC Diplomatic Correspondent James Landale was the Master of Ceremonies. The High Commissioner Received a unique plaque which was designed by Royal Warrant Holders' Cleave and Company.



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Local News



CDB endorses Barbuda Energy Project

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has been highly commended by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) for its commitment to advancing green energy on the sister isle.

A sod-turning ceremony was held last week Thursday for the Barbuda Energy Resilience Program.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Director of Project for the CDB, Daniel Best said the programme will be beneficial in several aspects.

“Beyond modernizing

the energy infrastructure, employment opportunities will also be created during the construction and rehabilitation phase, contributing to overall economic activity.

“The provision of a stable source of power in Barbuda can achieve poverty reduction while lowering dependence on expensive fossil fuels.

“From an energy efficient perspective, Antigua and Barbuda’s energy mix will be further diversified by adding renewable energy capacity, thereby con-



tributing to the target of attaining fifteen percent of primary energy coming from renewable energy by 2030. The potential to deliver macro-economic sus-

tainability both in the short-term as well as long term is also a win,” Best noted.

Best said the relationship the bank has forged with the government has resulted in several projects that have benefitted the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda.

“CDB is pleased to support this project which builds environmental and economic resilience, consistent with our energy sector policy and strategy.

“While we have had some challenges in advancing this initiative, credit must be given to the residents, the government of Antigua and Barbuda, and our invaluable partners at the UK Foreign Office, who have signaled their support for this transformative process,” he stated.

The project is being financed through grant funding from the UK, under the United Kingdom Caribbean Infrastructure Fund (administered by the CDB), and a loan from the CARICOM Development Fund.



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ABTA focuses on events to extend the season & increase spending

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) is turning its attention to staging a series of events that are designed to extend the tourism season as well as to encourage more visitor spend.

Fresh from the successful staging of the inaugural Tourism Art Week, which concluded over the weekend, the ABTA is now focusing on the upcoming Sailing Week (April 30 to May 7) and Restaurant Week (May 7 - 21).

“One of the things that we have made a conscious effort to do is to ensure that we have enough things on the calendar to extend the tourist season, but also have more things for people to do; for them to get out of the hotels and to spend more,” Chief Executive Officer of



Colin C. James

the ABTA, Colin C. James stated.

He said bringing tourists to the country is not enough; the country needs to find things for the visitors to do while in the country. “You can bring more tourists to the country, or you can encourage those that do come to spend more while they are here, and I think this is what good events tend to do, whether it’s ‘Sip n’ Paint’ or it’s Restaurant Week,

where we are encouraging our restaurants to have pre-set menus so that locals can go out, eat and experience these restaurants. It is also an opportunity for some of our guests in the hotels to come out and partake at some of our eateries,” James remarked.

He said there are some twenty hot spots where we are encouraging guests to ‘eat like a local’ for the duration of Restaurant Week.

He announced that the response to the activities has been overwhelming, to the extent that the organisers have agreed to extend the week by an additional week. “This means that Restaurant Week will now run over 14 days of fine dining and local eating, where we will accentuate and highlight Antigua and Barbuda’s culinary delights,” he emphasized.

Last week, Antigua and Barbuda’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Karen-Mae Hill said with events such as the staging of last weekend’s ‘Playing to Inspire 5’ concert by the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Kanneh-Mason Family, Antigua and Barbuda was solidifying its place as the Caribbean’s events destination.

Sandals Foundation supports Earth Day activities

With an increased need for investments to strengthen the Caribbean’s food security, the Sandals Foundation galvanized the support of hundreds of its ambassadors and Sandals and Beaches Resorts guests across eight islands to celebrate Earth Day, by planting over 900 food-bearing trees in a single day. The large-scale tree planting event formed part of the organisation’s ‘Trees for Life’ campaign and contributed to the charitable arm’s year-long mission of regional food security, which aims to keep local produce in schools and communities.

Heidi Clarke, Executive Director of the Sandals Foundation, weighed



Students at Post Millennial Academy and teachers share smiles with Sandals Team after planting 9 fruit trees on the School grounds

in on the importance of the Earth Day campaign.

“Sustainably increasing food and
cont’d on pg 6

Local News



Fisherman airlifted by CalvinAir Helicopters

Ruan Roberts, the Urlings fisherman who was recently medically airlifted to Guadeloupe by CalvinAir Helicopters has returned home.

CalvinAir Helicopters transported the patient, who had undergone treatment for decompression sickness at the University Hospital of Guadeloupe, late Saturday afternoon, right after he had completed the last round of treatment.

Robert's case was also given special consideration, since there was no available return flight to Antigua before May 1st, and remaining in the facility until then would result in hefty hospital fees.

Although still experiencing fatigue in his limbs, Robert is glad to be back at home and expressed his



Fisherman Ruan Roberts aboard the CalvinAir Helicopter on the mend following treatment in Guadeloupe

gratitude to the Calvin Ayre Foundation and CalvinAir Helicopters, for their swift intervention in his medical emergency.

The Member of Parliament for the area, Kelvin Simon has thanked the Foundation for its critical emergency response service.

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agricultural production is critical to ensuring the presence of fresh local foods for our Caribbean families for years to come. The 'Trees for Life' campaign represents our continued pledge to environmental protection as a company while empowering Caribbean communities with the tools and natural resources to meet their nutritional needs."

In Antigua, several fruit trees were planted at schools in the communities of Bolans Village, All Saints Road, Saint John's, and Cedar Grove Village, bolstering the twin island's foundation to strengthen food security for its citizens.

Sandals Pastry Chef An-



Sandals Team Members at Seaview Farm Primary School.

thony Linor who was part of the volunteer team on the road said, "The experience was very enjoyable and rewarding to all of the volunteers and students involved. Seeing the students motivated to be a part of the seedlings transfer process was

very heart-warming, and I look forward to the follow-up visits to the schools, to make sure the seedlings are growing and are being cared for by the students. It was my first time being a part of the experience and it definitely won't be the last."

Now, with more than 900 steps forward across Jamaica, Antigua, Curacao, Barbados, Turks and Caicos Islands, The Bahamas, Saint Lucia, and Grenada, the 'Trees for Life' campaign builds on the tree planting milestones of years past. In 2021, the Sandals Foundation ambitiously pledged to plant 10,000 trees throughout the Caribbean, not only quickly achieving that goal, but expanding on it by an additional 10,000 trees in 2022. With this incredible start to the year through the Earth Day 'Trees for Life' campaign, the philanthropic arm of Sandals Resorts International is solidifying its mandate in strengthening food security in the region.

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Commentary



To be or not to be: The Case for Republicanism

The following are the opening remarks of Ambassador Dorbrene O'Marde at Monday night's discussion hosted by the UWI FIC as part of its public advocacy series.

Dr. Kristina Hinds – Head of Dept. of Government, Sociology, Social Work & Psychology, UWI, Cave Hill

Ambassador Anthony Hylton – M.P., Constitutional Reform Committee, Jamaica

I don't have a classic definition of 'republicanism' but a quick scan of the literature suggests that it, and I quote "stresses several key concepts - notably the importance of civic virtue, the benefits of universal political participation, the dangers of corruption, the need for separate powers within government, a healthy reverence for the rule of law – and of paramount importance 'political liberty'." These are not foreign concepts to us – at least theoretically.

However, for us – as a people – republicanism also marks the end of colonial political governance that existed in various forms since the mid-sixteenth century. The move to republic status is a feature of the decolonization process and specifically part of the ongoing struggle of formerly colonized people in our Caribbean to force Britain and other European powers to account for their roles in the genocide of indigenous people, for the slave trade and chattel slavery in the region - and the cruelty of extractive colonialism. A successful struggle for republicanism affords us the moral authority to intensify the righting of historical wrongs.

I see our move to republicanism as political advancement through constitutional reform. I want to make a distinction between 'becoming a republic' and 'republicanism'. The former – 'becom-



Dorbrene E. O'Marde

ing a republic' is an integral component of the latter – 'republicanism' - but may also have independent expression and success.

The case for the Republic of Antigua and Barbuda can be demanded through what I choose to label as 'anti-monarchy' nationalism. Proponents of this ideology reject the basic reality that their ultimate Head of State is simultaneously the Head of State of the country that committed genocide against the indigenous peoples of our region and deemed guilty of the crimes against humanity of the slave trade and slavery. It is also the country that subjected Asian citizens to a deceptive indentureship that facilitated mass migration into the region.

The anti-monarchy nationalism rejects the concept of lineage rulership - as the British monarchy - and condemns it as an outdated institution that at its core is anti-democratic. The issue of race may be included in this purview in that it is deemed historically appropriate, for we – as Africans in the Diaspora free ourselves from white colonial rule.

I have no problem with 'anti-monarchy' nationalism. There is enough historical evidence for its validity and viability as a political movement which at minimum will yield decolonization of our governance systems – liberating us

unto ourselves.

The main challenge for us here in Antigua and Barbuda - and several other CARICOM States – is to achieve success in referenda that require a two-thirds majority – a virtual impossibility without full ideological agreement and the cooperation of both government and opposition political parties. The fact that governments in some of our territories have declared for republicanism is not enough. Decision-making paths are littered with suspicion, political opportunism, political partisanship, human frailty, colonial indoctrination – and compounded by the fact that material benefits are not immediately apparent. It is a difficult concept for many in our money-worshipping societies to accept change without immediate material benefits.

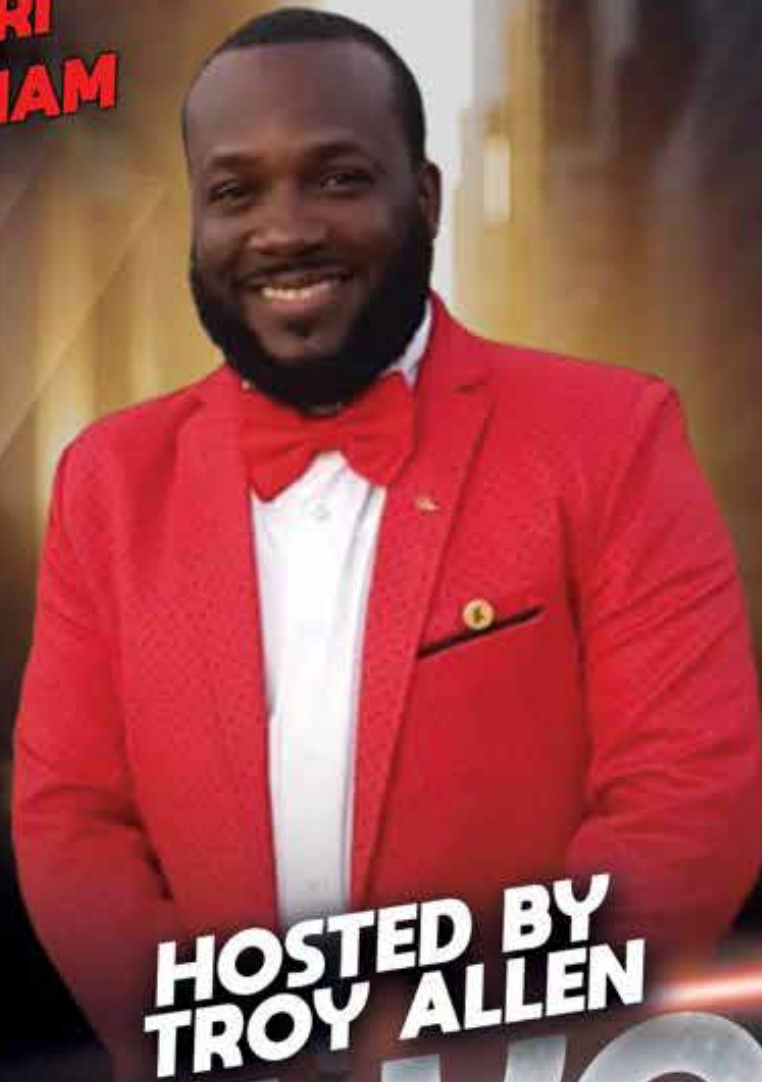
It is important therefore that we conceptualize republicanism beyond the 'anti-monarchy' position. I think that there are two other components of the decolonizing process that we must pay attention to immediately to make republicanism possible and meaningful – they are 1) the decolonization of our education systems and 2) the decolonization of the judicial systems.

The decolonization of our judicial system is of course our ascension to the Caribbean Court of Justice. I remain fascinated that in absence of development capital, many of our governments and people have paid for the provision of a service and refuse to use it – for years. I think we enter the realm of political schizophrenia when we talk of us being a republic, but our apex court is the British Privy Council established around the time of emancipation to provide – inter alia – judicial direction – in

cont'd on pg 10



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Commentary



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the interest of empire. I guess you can become a republic without, what I have identified as elements of republicanism.

The movement to a republic must not only be addressed in our constitution issues related to entrenched clauses, and governance structure/relationships. Comprehensive constitutional reform must do more than address 'mechanical' issues like citizenship, organizational structure, voting rights, etc.; it must do more in shaping our national psyche by the review and expansion of the protection of individual fundamental rights and freedoms; its protestations against corruption and the recognition of new challenges of climate change, sustainability, globalization, and geopolitics.

Constitutional reform must also free the justice/legislative system of colonial vestiges – like gender discrimination and capital punishment and flogging and anti-obeah and weird anti-congregation vagrancy 'watching and beset-

ting' laws.

I, however, think that the decolonization of our education system is critically important in that new relevant content, and approaches are required by and in our populations to help solve, or at least manage the challenges of twenty-first-century globalization – one that has no regard for Black people or small islands.

Our education system is still colonial – or at least a tool of colonialism – exam focused and very slow to react to the demands of nationhood and sustainable development in today's world. But it can't plan for or teach for development that is not socially and economically defined. Decolonization of education requires support from our planning ministries – for both national planning and human resource development – and critically from ministries of finance – for schools – at all levels. Schools are going to need to be better supported and better staffed.

The disregard of history – of historical analysis of the struggles and sacrifices and in some instances, the heroism of our African ancestors – that brought us here – robs us of a centralizing force for both national and regional unity. The realization that we are the result of our history and that in making history today, we are shaping the history of our children and grandchildren – we must guide our policy and programme decisions.

The critical path to Republic Antigua and Barbuda is political – party political – and to traverse it requires mature democratic thinking and organization – and negotiation skills – and sincere advocacy. Government must clearly define its objectives and its reasoning for reaching to republic status. It has the additional burden in this politically tribal society to prove that the move is not for personal or party aggrandizement but in support of the vision of the majority of people in the country – expressed either through national elections or special referenda.

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Technology

Facebook's parent firm Meta can be sued by ex-moderator, judge rules

By Chris Vallance

A worker who alleges reviewing graphic social media posts harmed his mental health can sue Facebook owner Meta, a Kenyan labour court says.

Daniel Motaung claims he was paid about \$2.20 (£1.80) per hour to review posts including beheadings and child abuse.

He is also suing his then employer Sama, which Meta had contracted to review posts.

Meta argued that the court had no jurisdiction because the company is not based in Kenya, Reuters reported.

But the court disagreed and found that Meta and Sama were "proper parties" to the case.

Meta declined to comment, but legal campaign group Foxglove expected it to appeal.

In 2020, Meta paid \$52m to settle a case brought by US content moderators over mental health issues which they said they developed on the job.

The Kenyan case is supported by Foxglove, whose director Cori Crider said that a key point had been established: "Daniel's win today should send a message to Facebook, and by proxy, all of big tech in Africa.

"Kenyan justice is equal to any tech giant, and the giants would do well to wake up and respect Kenyan peo-



Kenyan lawyer Mercy Mutemi (centre), who is working on both cases against Meta, outside court.

ple - and their law."

Amnesty International Kenya head Irungu Houghton told BBC World Service's Focus on Africa programme: "We are extremely delighted by the ruling. It is not just historic but globally significant."

It was a major development Meta would now face legal action in the global South and could open the door for "content moderators to be protected in a court of law in the countries in which they live", he said.

Facebook employs thousands of moderators to review content flagged by users or artificial intelligence systems to see if it violates the platform's community standards, and to remove it if necessary.

Mr Motaung said the first graphic video he saw was "a live video of someone being beheaded".

He told the BBC in May 2022 that he suffers flashbacks where he imagines he is the victim.

Mr Motaung, who says he has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, believes that his co-workers also struggled with the content they had to view.

"I would see people walking off the production floor to cry, you know, that type of thing," he said.

Mr Motaung was recruited from South Africa to work for Sama in Nairobi, where much of the moderation for East and South Africa was handled.

He claims the support given to moderators was inadequate.

Sama has called his accusations "both disappointing and inaccurate", arguing that it provided all members of its workforce with a com-

petitive wage, benefits, upward mobility, and a robust mental health and wellness programme.

The firm has since ended its moderation work for Meta.

Meta has previously declined to comment directly on the legal action, but has said it requires partners "to provide industry-leading pay, benefits and support".

Campaigners say Monday's court ruling could have significance for other cases they are attempting to bring.

In December, a case, also backed by Foxglove, was launched in Kenya, alleging Facebook's algorithm helped fuel the viral spread of hate and violence during Ethiopia's civil war.

The case asks the court to require the creation of a \$2bn fund for victims of

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Activity snacking may help with type 1 diabetes - study

Walking for three minutes every half an hour could help improve blood sugar levels, a small trial presented at a UK diabetes charity's conference suggests.

The study of 32 people with type 1 diabetes showed blood sugar levels lowered when they took regular walking breaks over a seven-hour period.

Diabetes UK said these «activity snacks» could offer practical, cost-free changes.

Type 1 diabetes affects about 400,000 people in the UK.

The condition happens when the body's immune system attacks insulin-producing cells in the pancreas.

This means the pancreas can no longer produce insulin - leading to high blood sugar levels. People need to take regular insulin medication.

Over long periods of time high blood sugar can result in complications like kidney failure, eye problems and heart attacks.

Dr Elizabeth Robertson, director of research at Diabetes UK, which funded the study, said for people with type 1 diabetes, managing blood sugar levels day in, day out, can be «relentless».

She added: «It is incredibly encouraging that these



findings suggest that making a simple, practical change - such as taking phone calls while walking, or setting a timer to remind you to take breaks - to avoid sitting for long periods - could have such a profound effect on blood sugar levels.

«We look forward to further research to understand the long-term benefits of this approach.»

Lead researcher Dr Matthew Campbell, from the University of Sunderland, said he was surprised by the magnitude of the results with low level activity.

He said for some people with type 1 diabetes «activity snacking» could be an important stepping stone to-

wards more regular physical activity and for others it could be a simple intervention to help manage blood glucose levels.

He added: «Importantly, this strategy does not seem to increase the risk of potentially dangerous blood glucose lows which are a common occurrence with more traditional types of physical activity and exercise.»

In the early-stage trial, which has not yet been published, 32 adults with type 1 diabetes completed two seven-hour sessions of sitting down.

In one session they remained seated. In the other they broke up the seven hours with three-minute bouts of

light intensity walking (at their own pace) every 30 minutes.

Their blood sugars were monitored continuously for 48 hours from the start of each session and they all had similar food during the seven hours and did not change their insulin treatment.

Taking regular walking breaks resulted in lower average blood sugar levels (6.9 mmol/L) over the 48-hour study period compared to uninterrupted sitting (8.2 mmol/L).

Walking breaks also increased the time people spent with their sugar levels within a desirable range.

Dr Campbell said he hoped to complete larger studies over a longer period to better understand the benefits of this approach.

He added: «The reality is simple ways of encouraging moving more through the day should benefit the vast majority of people.»

cont'd from pg 12

hate on Facebook and changes to the platform's algorithm.

Meta said that hate speech and incitement to violence were against the platform's rules, and says it invests heavily in moderation and tech to remove such con-

tent.

It told the BBC: «We employ staff with local knowledge and expertise and continue to develop our capabilities to catch violating content in the most widely spoken languages in the country, including Amharic, Oromo, Somali and Tigrinya.»

Don Lemon, CNN anchor, fired after 17 years on the network

By Holly Honderich

CNN anchor Don Lemon has hit out at the network after his firing, which came after accusations of misogyny and misbehaviour.

"I am stunned," Lemon wrote on Twitter, saying he was told by his agent he had been let go.

CNN said it "parted ways" with Lemon, who co-hosted its morning show, saying "we wish him well".

It follows on-air remarks by Lemon in which he said Republican Nikki Haley, 51, was not "in her prime".

The dismissal also comes on the heels of another major US media departure. Just moments before Lemon's announcement, Fox News announced it was parting ways with primetime host Tucker Carlson.

A long-time fixture of the network, Lemon was most recently a co-host of CNN's *This Morning* programme.

But he landed in hot water earlier this year after comments he made about Republican presidential hopeful Nikki Haley, a former UN ambassador and governor of South Carolina.

Ms Haley was not "in her prime", Lemon said in February, a remark widely decried as sexist.

"When a woman is considered to be in her prime - in her 20s, 30s and maybe her 40s," he said.

"I'm just saying what the facts are - Google it," he added, in response to objections from his female co-hosts, Poppy Harlow and Kaitlan Collins.

Lemon later apologised to the CNN newsroom and agreed to partake in "mandatory training" to address the incident.

But the remarks sparked widespread criticism, including from actress Michelle Yeoh, 60, who appeared to reference the comments in her Os-



Don Lemon

car's acceptance speech last month, saying: "Ladies, don't let anybody tell you you're ever past your prime."

In a tweet on Monday, Ms Haley appeared to address the firing, calling it a "great day for women everywhere" adding "#StillInMyPrime".

Lemon's reputation was further clouded by a report from *Variety* earlier in April, which detailed accusations of misogynistic behaviour toward his CNN colleagues.

He called a producer fat to her face, *Variety* reported, mocked and mimicked one colleague and allegedly sent threatening texts to another. A representative for Lemon denied the reports.

The 57-year-old had appeared on CNN on Monday during the morning programme as normal, before reports of his dismissal were publicised later that day.

"After 17 years at CNN I would have thought someone in management would have had the decency to tell me directly," Lemon wrote on Twitter.

"At no time was I ever given any indication that I would not be able to continue to do the work I have loved at the network."

He continued: "It is clear that there

are larger issues at play."

The network did not elaborate on the reason for his dismissal. But in a second statement issued on Monday afternoon, it called Lemon's description of events "inaccurate", saying he had been given an opportunity to meet with management.

Lemon has hired entertainment lawyer Bryan Freedman to address his contract with CNN, which was signed to last until 2026, the *New York Times* reported, citing sources familiar with the deal.

CNN *This Morning* will continue with Lemon's former co-hosts, Ms Harlow and Ms Collins, the network said.

Lemon came to CNN in 2006 after working for a local NBC station in Chicago. For over eight years, he hosted the primetime show *Don Lemon Tonight*. He left the slot to help launch CNN *This Morning* last November alongside Ms Harlow and Ms Collins.

After Lemon's comments about Ms Haley, CNN producers discovered guests did not want to appear on the show with Lemon, the *New York Times* reported. The show has struggled with ratings in recent months.

CARICOM Heads call on the US to join “War on Guns”

In an unprecedented move, leaders of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) made a declaration against the trade of illegal guns at the recent symposium held in Trinidad & Tobago, and has called for the United States to join the fight against exporting such firearms.

“We declare a War on Guns to combat the illegal trade which provides the weapons that contribute significantly to crime and violence in our Region causing death, disabilities and compromising the safety of our citizens,” the CARICOM official statement said.

“We call on the United States of America to join the Caribbean in our War on Guns and urgently adopt and take action to stop the illegal exportation of firearms and ammunition into the Caribbean,” the statement continued.

The declaration followed the CARICOM’s Regional Symposium last April 17 and 18 that intended to address crime and violence as a public health issue.

“We reiterate that the Caribbean must be a Zone of Peace, which will



allow us to achieve our goal of a secure, stable and prosperous Community for all our citizens,” it concluded.

Caribbean leaders shared their respective thoughts on curbing crime and violence in the region.

Jamaica’s prime minister, Andrew Holmes, called for reform on the justice system that wasn’t designed to address criminal threats facing the region.

“We must reform our legislation to match the growing sophistication, scale, and nature of the threat. Our jurisprudence must incorporate measures which will support enhanced security operations, which will support the use of emergency powers,

and which will support preventative action to disrupt and control the space in which criminals operate before they commit the act of violence,” Holmes said.

Roosevelt Skerrit, Dominica’s prime minister, believed that a review in the education sector in the Caribbean is necessary to address the root of crime.

“We boast of the percentage of passes at CXC but we fail to pay attention to the 20 or 30 per cent of those who did not make it to the matriculation level,” Skerrit said. “We are focused on those who do well academically but we fail to pay attention

cont’d on pg 16

Cellphones, hacksaw blade confiscated from Vincy prison

Loop – A search of His Majesty’s Prison’s Belle Isles Correctional Facility in St Vincent and the Grenadines has unearthed several illegal items within the prison walls.

A targeted search of the facility was done based on intelligence.

During the search, a cache of contraband items that pose a safety risk was found and confiscated. These items included: 46 cellphones, 28 phone char-



Table showing contraband found at His Majesty’s Prison’s Belle Isles Correctional Facility in SVG. (Photo via :RSVGPF)

gers, 23 phone batteries, 14 leaf, and cigarettes.

The prison service explains that diggers are implements used in fights to inflict injuries.

According to Dwayne

Bailey, Acting Superintendent of Prisons, the searches were undertaken by the prison authority to safeguard the safety of inmates, employees, and visitors.

As part of its usual operational processes, the prison conducts routine searches of the facilities.

The prison authority is asking for the public’s support in keeping the facilities safe.

The search took place last Friday.

Regional News



US urges Suriname to sign Los Angeles Declaration on Migration

CMC - The United States is urging Suriname to join 21 countries in the region that are supportive of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration, according to a US spokeswoman.

Launched at the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, California in June 2022, the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection aims to mobilize the entire region for bold action on migration issues in the region.

"We know that not all migrants enter the United States and other countries through regular routes, so we see visa requirements as an important step in addressing irregular migration," the US embassy spokeswoman told the *de Ware Tijd* newspaper.

Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation Minister, Albert Ramdin acknowledged that the Dutch-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country had been unable to sign the declaration in June last year noting that the Chandrikapersad "Chan" Santokhi government first wanted to study the accord carefully and make a proper



evaluation.

He said this has now been done and Suriname will also support the declaration and the objectives contained therein.

The US embassy official said Washington supports safe, orderly and humane migration through reciprocal and multilateral diplomacy and targeted capacity-building programmes.

These include regular labor migration pathways that promote paid work and access to formal labor markets and ensure migrant worker protection during the recruitment and employment process.

The US also remains vigilant for human trafficking and smuggling and possible terrorist threats, both

in the region and around the world.

"It is important to screen migrants to determine if they could be victims of trafficking and to support victims of trafficking."

"We are working with our partners to deter terrorist threats and ensure the security of the United States," the US embassy official said.

Last week, Suriname announced that it will reintroduce visa requirements for 21 countries from May 1 after an evaluation showed that citizens of those countries have widely abused the visa-free regime.

To address migration concerns and potential criminal or terrorist threats, the US Embassy said it is work-

ing closely with Suriname on a range of programs to improve security, share information and humanely manage migration, along with regional partners such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), CARICOM and the Security Initiative for the Caribbean Basin.

Last month, the US embassy in Guyana warned of a security threat against US interests in that country and the US spokeswoman said security here remains a high priority.

"The US State Department has no higher priority than the safety and security of US citizens travelling and living abroad. US embassies periodically publish information on the security environment and travel guidelines to inform US citizens."

"There has been no recent adjustment in such information and advice with regard to Suriname," said the spokeswoman.

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to the mental and emotional state of our children."

Skerrit's priority in Dominica is the modernization of the educational facilities in the country. A number of schools are

being funded by the nation's Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programme, with the construction work overseen by MMC Development Ltd., the developing arm of Dubai-based firm Montreal Management Consultants Est (MMCE).

Kyiv secures bridgehead across key Dnipro River - reports

By Jaroslav Lukiv

Ukrainian troops have set up positions on the east bank of the Dnipro River in southern Kherson region, reports say.

The region is partially Russian-held and crossing the river could be significant in future offensives.

The US-based Institute for the Study of War says Russian military bloggers have posted “enough geo-located footage and text reports to confirm” the advance.

BBC Ukraine says its military sources have reported a “certain movement across [the] Dnipro” near Kherson city.

Ukraine’s military has not confirmed the movement, while Russia has denied the reports.

But if the reports that Ukraine has secured a bridgehead on the east bank are correct, it could be significant in helping Kyiv drive Russian troops back.

A Ukrainian advance in the area could, in the future, even cut the land corridor to Ukraine’s Crimea peninsula, annexed by Russia in 2014.

However, military experts say any Ukrainian troop movements in the bridgehead area - which is crisscrossed by floodplains, irrigation canals and other water obstacles - would be a tough task.



Russian troops destroyed the key Antonivskiy bridge over the Dnipro River when they were forced to withdraw last November.

And Ukrainian advances would be further complicated by Russia’s significant advantage in the air.

Ukraine’s military has for some time publicly spoken about preparations for a major counter-offensive, without specifying where and when it could be launched.

Until now, all of the Kherson region on the east bank of the Dnipro has been under Russian control, with the wide river serving as a natural barrier.

The regional capital - sitting on the west bank - was liberated by Ukrainian forces last November.

In Sunday’s report, the Institute for the Study of

War (ISW) said “geo-located footage published on 23 April indicates that Ukrainian forces are operating in areas north-west of Oleshky on the east” bank of Dnipro.

The ISW added there was not enough information to analyse the scale of the reported Ukrainian advance - or the further intentions of the Ukrainian military.

On Monday, Russia’s WarGonzo military blogger reported that Ukrainian troops were “trying to gain a foothold on Bolshoi Potemkin [Velykyi Potyomkin - Ukrainian] island”, which is located between the new and old channels of the Dnipro.

Nataliya Humenyuk, a spokeswoman for Ukraine’s South Command, neither confirmed nor denied reports that Ukrainian forces had secured a bridgehead on the east bank.

She told Ukraine’s TV channels that “difficult work is continuing”.

A military operation requires “informational silence until it is safe enough for our military”, the spokeswoman stressed.

Meanwhile, the Russian-installed head of the Kherson region, Vladimir Saldo, said on Sunday “there were no bridgeheads on the left [east] bank near Oleshky, or any other places” on that side of the river.

Sudan crisis: New ceasefire announced but doubts remain

By George Wright

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken says warring parties in Sudan have agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire from midnight (22:00 GMT) on Monday.

It is at least the third ceasefire to be announced since violence erupted this month but none have held.

Mr Blinken said agreement had been reached between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) after 48 hours of negotiations.

At least 400 people have been killed since fighting erupted on 15 April.

UN Secretary General António Guterres has warned the violence in Sudan risks causing a “catastrophic conflagration” that could engulf the whole region and beyond.

The RSF backed up Mr Blinken’s announcement, saying they affirmed their “commitment to a complete ceasefire during the truce period”. The army did not immediately comment on the news.

Since the violence began, residents of the battle-scarred capital Khartoum have been told to stay inside, and food and water supplies have been running low.

The bombing has hit key infrastructure, like water pipes, meaning that some people have been forced to drink from the River Nile.

There will be hopes the ceasefire will allow civilians to leave the city. Foreign governments will also hope it will allow for continued evacuations out of the country.

Countries have scrambled to evacuate their diplomats and civilians as fighting raged in central, densely populated parts of the capital.

Earlier on Monday, Mr Blinken



A girl waits to leave Khartoum.

said that some convoys trying to move people out had encountered “robbery and looting”.

The US, he added, was looking at potentially resuming its diplomatic presence in Sudan but he described the conditions there as “very challenging”.

Sudan is suffering an “internet blackout” with connectivity at 2% of ordinary levels, monitoring group NetBlocks said on Monday. In Khartoum, the internet has been down since Sunday night.

It is estimated that tens of thousands of people, including Sudanese citizens and those from neighbouring countries, have fled because of the unrest.

Violence broke out primarily in Khartoum, between rival military factions battling for control of Africa’s third largest country.

This came after days of tension as members of the RSF were redeployed around the country in a move that the army saw as a threat.

Since a 2021 coup, Sudan has

been run by a council of generals, led by the two military men at the centre of this dispute - Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the head of the armed forces and in effect the country’s president, and his deputy and leader of the RSF, Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as Hemedti.

They have disagreed on the direction the country is going in and the proposed move towards civilian rule.

The main sticking points are plans to include the 100,000-strong RSF into the army, and who would then lead the new force.

Gen Dagalo has accused Gen Burhan’s government of being “radical Islamists” and that he and the RSF were “fighting for the people of Sudan to ensure the democratic progress for which they have so long yearned”.

Many find this message hard to believe, given the brutal track record of the RSF.

Gen Burhan has said he supports the idea of returning to civilian rule, but that he will only hand over power to an elected government.



The car hit people near the busy Machane Yehuda market area.

Five injured in Palestinian car ramming attack

By Raffi Berg

Five people have been injured in a car-ramming attack by a Palestinian in central Jerusalem, Israeli police say.

The vehicle hit pedestrians near the busy Machane Yehuda market.

The attacker was shot and killed at the scene by a civilian. Police say the assailant was a 39-year-old man from occupied East Jerusalem.

It came as Israel began to mark Memorial Day for fallen soldiers and victims of attacks - one of the most solemn days in the national calendar.

Speaking at a Memorial Day event, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attack was "another attempt to murder Israeli citizens".

"These terrorist attacks come with the expectation that they will overcome us and will uproot us from here, and if they could, they would

murder us all. But they will not overcome us; we will overcome them."

Footage from the scene just moments after the incident shows a dark-coloured Chevrolet hatchback, its front crumpled and windscreen cracked, at a standstill on a zebra crossing between Kiah Street and Agrippas Street.

A man in a dark blue T-shirt and black jeans is seen slumped over the bonnet, not moving, as police and civilians mill around.

Israel was on heightened alert ahead of Memorial Day, which commemorates soldiers and civilians who have been killed in conflict and attacks since 1860.

The sombre occasion leads into Independence Day on Tuesday night and Wednesday. The day is celebrated with patriotic events, with this year marking Israel's 75th anniversary.

Palestinians, however, consider Israel's formation in 1948 as a catastrophe which led to the displacement of up to 750,000 of their people in the Arab-Israeli war that followed.

Monday's attack comes amid a surge in Israeli-Palestinian violence this year.

In the early hours of Monday, a 20-year-old Palestinian was shot and killed during an Israeli army arrest raid in a refugee camp near the city of Jericho, in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said.

Since the start of this year, more than 90 Palestinians - militants and civilians - have been killed by Israeli forces. Eighteen Israelis, a Ukrainian and an Italian - all civilians, except for an Israeli paramilitary police officer - have been also killed in attacks by (or suspected to have been carried out by) Palestinians and, in one case, an Israeli Arab.

Sports News



Buckley's 3J's still unbeaten in men's softball cricket contest

Marco Inc/Grill Box Buckley's 3J's secured their third win in a row in the Antigua and Barbuda Softball Association's (ABSCA) Caribbean Alliance Insurance Men's 30 Over Competition on Sunday.

Buckley's 3J's snatched a six-run victory over Rackaman Construction Strictly Business in a match-up between two teams that won their first two matches.

Buckley's 3J's made 114 all out in 25 overs after winning the toss and deciding to bat. Rodney Williams struck 23 and Kemar Christian got 22. Kerry Mentore bagged three for 15 and Winston Roberts picked up two for 28.

Strictly Business were then bowled out for 108 in 25.3 overs. Kim George

cracked 43 and Kerry Mentore scored 17.

Gregson Merrick grabbed three wickets for seven runs, Rodney Williams took two for 20 and Bryan Burton captured two for 23.

There were also contrasting wins for Old Road and Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets. Old Road snatched a one-run win against 300 while Bullets crushed Sisserou by 153 runs.

Old Road won the toss and batted, scoring 187 for eight off 24 overs. Vincie Bowen slammed 71 and Julian Joseph cracked 45.

Veston Lewis claimed three for 40 and Denfield Weatherhead captured three for 50.

In reply, 300 fell just two runs short

of their victory target as they were restricted to 186 for four off their 24 overs.

Justin Periera smashed 73 and Molvin James hit 34 not out while Matthew Miller took three for 48.

Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets made 206 for four off 26 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Bernel Peterson slammed 61 and Morrison Browne struck 48. Ernest Sergenton had two for 25 and Vishal Gobin took two for 44.

Sisserou were then dismissed for 53 in 15 overs with Sylvester Scotland getting 14. Andra Samuel snatched three for 16, Johnson Charles picked up two wickets for two runs and Morrison Browne captured two for 16.

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TUESDAYS



The Antigua and Barbuda cricket team prior to the start of their opening match in the Senior Leeward Islands Women's 50 Overs Championship at Conaree in St Kitts on Sunday. (Photo courtesy ABCA)

Winning start for Antigua at LI Senior Women's Tournament

Antigua and Barbuda made an impressive start to the Senior Leeward Islands Women's 50 Overs Championship in St Kitts on Sunday.

Team Antigua and Barbuda crushed St Kitts women by a massive 224 runs in their opening encounter at Conaree.

Set 264 runs to win, St Kitts were bundled out for a paltry 39 in 22.3 overs with six of their batters being dismissed without scoring. The main contributor to the total was 18 extras, including 15 wides.

Off-spinner Jenisen Richards snapped up four wickets for three runs and captain Chey-Ann Moses grabbed four wickets for 18 runs.

Vice-captain Amanda Edwards struck a half century as Antigua and

Barbuda made 263 for eight off their 50 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Edwards cracked 56 off 59 balls before retiring, Tonya Martin hammered an unbeaten 46 off 45 balls and wicketkeeper/batsman Terez Parker chipped in with 36 off 49 balls.

There was also a contribution of 61 extras, including 46 wides and 11 no balls, to the Antigua and Barbuda total. Shacarma Warner captured three for 43 and Tynetta McKoy claimed two for 65.

It was the second defeat in as many matches for St Kitts after crashing to 113-run loss against Nevis in their opening encounter at the Violet O Jeffers Nichols (VOJN) Primary School Grounds in Nevis on Friday.

Batting first, Nevis made 250 for six in their 50 overs with Senior Leeward Island team players Melissa Clarke smashing 79 and Saneldo Willett hitting 58. Gabrielle Haryllall took two for 34 in her 10 overs.

In reply, St Kitts tumbled to 137 all out in 31.1 overs with Tynetta McCoy getting a topscore of 40. Martha Dookhan snapped up four wickets for 12 runs and Rozel Liburd picked up two for 20.

Antigua and Barbuda and Nevis will clash in the last match of the 50 Overs Competition at the Elquemado Willett Park in Nevis at 10 am today (Tuesday).

The three teams will then contest a T20 competition from 26th to 28th April.



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West Indies 'A' Team to play three four-day 'Test' matches in Bangladesh

Cricket West Indies (CWI) and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) have announced the match schedule for the upcoming Men's "A" Team Series in Bangladesh.

The West Indies "A" Team will arrive on 11th May and play three four-day "Test" matches at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium (SICS) in Sylhet. These matches will have full first-class status.

This will be the second West Indies Men's "A" Team series since 2020, when COVID-19 caused major disruptions.

It is a reciprocal tour by West Indies "A" following the Bangladesh "A" team's visit last August, when they played two four-day first-class matches and three 50-over List A matches at the Daren Sammy Stadium in Saint Lucia.

West Indies Men's "A" team matches are an important development opportunity for players pushing for selec-



Players of the West Indies A team celebrate a dismissal during their Test Series against Bangladesh at the Daren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia in August, 2022. (CWI Media)

tion to the West Indies senior team and for emerging players to build their first-class international experience.

Roland Holder, CWI's Manager of Cricket Operations, reiterated that the series would provide exposure for several players and noted it was significant part of CWI's commitment to continually develop talent and prepare

them for the demands at international cricket.

Holder said, "We are again pleased to work closely with the BCB as we confirm the match schedule for this upcoming Men's 'A' Team Series. Last summer we had a competitive five-match series with red ball and white ball matches in Saint Lucia.

"This time around our players will get to experience foreign conditions and this is a vital part of their development in the pathway toward full international selection and provides a platform for further exposure and progress following the recent West Indies Championship and new Headley Weekes Tri-Series."

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nades all the way to finish in the runners-up position with 46 points as they scored three second half goals to beat Ottos Rangers 3-0 in their final outing in the second game on Sunday.

The goals were scored by Nazir McBurnette in the 64th minute, Kendrick Challenger in the 70th minute and Roneba Cordice, who converted a penalty in the 87th minute.

Ottos Rnagers finished the match

with 10 men after Mark Portsmouth was given a red card for serious foul play in the 75th minute. Rangers ended their campaign with 25 points from their quota of 18 matches.

Swetes came from behind to snatch a 2-1 win against Villa Lions in the opening game on Sunday. Zacheim Greene scored in the first minute to put Villa Lions ahead.

However, first half goals by Reuben Reubel in the 32nd minute and Shackwon Simon in the third min-

ute of first half added on time (45+3 minutes) gave Swetes their victory.

Villa Lions ended their final game of the season with nine men after goalkeeper Shanoi Dorsette and forward Joylan Sinclair were both given red cards in the latter stages of the encounter.

It means that Villa Lions lost their last three matches to finish their premier league campaign in third place with 37 points, while Swetes ended in the sixth position with 29 points.



Sandals, Inet Jennings Grenades captured their inaugural Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's Premier Division league title at the ABFA's Technical Center on Sunday, 23rd April, 2023. (Photo courtesy ABFA)

Jennings Grenades capture first Premier league title

Sandals, Inet Jennings Grenades captured their inaugural Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division league title on Sunday night.

Grenades claimed their maiden premier league crown by trashing Empire 7-0 in their final encounter, which was the last game of a triple header at the ABFA's Technical Center.

Grenades laid the foundation for their title winning victory by rushing to a 3-0 halftime lead with goals by Sherman Augustin in the first minute,

Tev Lawrence in the 30th minute and Rakeem Henry in the 42nd minute.

They sealed their successful season in which they also captured the Cool and Smooth, Joma Caribbean Knockout Championship, by converting four more goals in the second half of the lopsided premier league encounter.

The Grenades had second half goals from Carl Osbourne in the 75th minute, Ridel Stanislas in the 77th minute, Keanu Barrett in the 84th minute and Donovan Baptiste in the 90th minute.

Empire ended the game with 10 men after forward Rakeem Joseph was given a red card for serious foul play in the 82nd minute. It was a disappointing end to Empire's campaign in the premier league as the former champions finished with 24 points from their quota of 18 matches.

Jennings Grenades finished their premier league campaign with their 16th win in 18 matches to claim the title with 48 points, two more than All Saints United, who came second.

All Saints United pushed Gre-

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