

UWIFIC OFF TO 'MAGNIFICENT START'

Story on Page 2



National Secondary Schools Theatre Festival continues

*The character played by 14-year-old Kenneal Athill commits suicide, much to the dismay of his companion played by 13-year-old J'nesia Lavig, both of the Irene B Williams Secondary School. **Story on page 7.***

Sir Hilary congratulates the government for investing in UWI FIC

Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Sir Hilary Beckles has congratulated the Antigua and Barbuda government for investing in the UWI Five Islands Campus (FIC), as it forms part of the university's strategic plan to address issues of access for people in the OECS countries.

Delivering his report on the Academic Year 2021-2022 to the UWI Council on Wednesday, Sir Hilary noted that the people of the OECS had a lower rate of attendance to tertiary level institutions, than other citizens in countries with a university campus.

“For many decades, it has been argued that the university was underperforming in the sub-region of the Caribbean known as the OECS. The OECS states found themselves with the lowest rate of enroll-

ment among young people in higher education in the region. The OECS found themselves in the circumstance where their economies were experiencing anemic growth. The OECS found themselves lagging in economic development and transformation behind those that were invested with a landed campus of the UWI. We therefore, took the bold and strategic decision to institute a UWI campus in the OECS with the FIC in Antigua and Barbuda,” Sir Hilary remarked.

According to the UWI Vice Chancellor, the FIC campus is already off to ‘a magnificent start’, as he congratulated the government for living up to its promise to invest in the university.

He added that while the UWI FIC is primarily a campus for the OECS, like all other UWI campuses,



Sir Hilary Beckles

it is open to citizens of the wider Caribbean. He also expressed the university's pleasure when the government was able to secure funding from the Saudi Funds of US\$80 million to invest in the expansion of UWI FIC.

“The university under

the leadership of Professor Densil Williams had already developed a master plan for the expansion that will include all the facilities necessary for a modern university campus. This US\$80 million investment by the Antigua and Barbuda government will enable the FIC to be able to be fully completed with these facilities within the next two to four years,” he revealed.

Sir Hilary noted that the UWI FIC will emerge from the expansion as a state-of-the-art university, within the university system of the UWI family. “This is an excellent example of the university pushing access beyond the traditional boundaries and frontiers; now we have our fourth landed campus,” he declared.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

A Special Invitation to ALL National Honourees of Antigua and Barbuda

All Members of the Orders of Honours of Antigua and Barbuda are cordially invited to a service of praise and thanksgiving to the Nation of Antigua and Barbuda and to pray for Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla the King's Consort. This Service of Thanksgiving is scheduled to take place on Sunday 7th May, 2023 at the St. John's Pentecostal Church House of Restoration on Lauchland Benjamin Drive at 9:00a.m.

Kindly take note that medals and decorations are to be worn to the Service.



Paula Frederick-Hunte (Mrs.)
Permanent Secretary
Office of the Governor General

Antigua and Barbuda warned to expect more sargassum seaweed

As forecast, most Eastern Caribbean islands have been seeing record amounts of sargassum seaweed in the first quarter of 2023, a period that is normally relatively free of the seaweed.

The level of sargassum arriving now is already severe and is not expected to let up in the coming weeks.

There is still twice as much (202% more) sargassum visible out in the Atlantic as seen this time last year.

There will continue to be a marked difference within the islands of the Eastern Caribbean, in the amount of sargassum they are likely to receive over the next 3 months.

Northern and Middle islands will see a lot more sargassum than customary for these months, whilst Southern islands are expected to experience much less, although cloud cover in the current satellite image may be hiding some southern sargassum.

Northern islands will continue to receive very high volumes of sargassum, with only a short lull at the end of April



before the summer sargassum season.

Middle islands are expected to receive fairly high volumes through mid-April and experience a lull at the end of April; then high volumes going into summer, similar to last year.

Southern islands can expect sargassum towards the end of March, remain clear during April, and start to see sargassum again in May, but less than last year. Influxes of sargassum will be heavier than normal for the remainder of this tourist season in the Northern and Middle islands, whilst Southern islands will enjoy clear beaches through April.

Visitors should be advised, however, that despite high volumes of predicted sargassum, leeward (west coast beaches) generally remain sargassum-free.

The pelagic fishery will continue to be disrupted in the northern and middle islands by large rafts of sargassum at sea.

Flying fish will remain problematic to catch.

Fishers should be careful when navigating, especially at night, to avoid problems associated with driving through thick sargassum.

Nearshore mooring sites and landing beaches on eastward-facing coastlines will likely become inundated with sargassum.

Fisherfolk in the Southern islands should be largely unaffected until May.

Heavy inundation of windward beaches by sargassum in the Northern and Middle islands could spell trouble for nesting leatherback turtles.

Brown tide events as the sargassum decays, will cause damage to critical habitats (coral reefs and seagrasses).

Guys and Dolls
Simply Classy

268-782-6020

CBH battles rodent infestation

The Central Board of Health (CBH) is soliciting the help of homeowners and administrators of government institutions to join in an effort to rid the country of rodents, namely rats.

Principal Public Health Inspector Julianne Mannix said while there is no way to determine whether there has been an upsurge in the number of rodents in the country, there has been a steady stream of complaints, mainly from government-run institutions such as the Clare Vue Hospital and the Fiennes Institute regarding rodent problems.

“The rat infestation is a serious problem based on the reports we have received from clinics, schools, and special-care facilities, for instance, the mental hospital asking for assistance to rid them of rats,” Mannix explained.

She further explained that when the CBH conducts its inspection of these institutions there is one common issue: the improper disposal and handling of waste. “The factors leading to increases in the rat population relate to poor sanitation, improper disposal grease/oils, and unwanted food that is not

properly bagged, and the harbouring of bulky items,” Mannix stated.

According to Mannix the rats that are seen in parts of St. John’s is directly connected to the food that many restaurants dispose of randomly, on a daily basis which forms a natural feeding ground for the rats.

The Public Health Inspector issued a warning to householders about the dangers of providing the conditions for rats to thrive.

“It is very important that we keep our workspace and surroundings clean to keep rats away. Rats are known



to carry deadly diseases such as hantavirus, rat bite fever, and more common to Antigua and Barbuda is leptospirosis. Signs to look out for to know that rodents are present are rat droppings and rat gnaw marks. If found, look for gaps or holes inside or outside the home or workplace and seal it up,” she added.

Mannix noted that rats like to hide inside cabinets and drawers; therefore, these areas should be checked. “After eating, thoroughly clean the area and wash hands thoroughly. It is very important that we get rid of all rubbish including bulk waste. Cut and remove overgrown vegetation, store garbage in tightly fitted containers, and refrain from throwing bits of food outside,” she reiterated.

She noted that her department only serves government institutions. Private individuals will need to contract an exterminator to control their rodent problem.

KEEP THEM OUT! STARVE THEM OUT! CLEAN UP! This is the theme of the current anti-rodent campaign by the CBH.

DEWS

STEEL & PLYWOOD

SALE

SPECIAL OFFER!

\$3350.00

1/2 STEEL

3/8 STEEL

5/8 STEEL

20% OFF

3/4 FORM PLY

T1-11 5/8

T1-11 3/8

BEADED 3/8

 DEWS
  dewspro
  info@dewspro.com
  729-3397/ 729-1210

Nurses unhappy with government's offer

Nurses employed by the government are restive, as they are unhappy with the pace of negotiations by the government negotiating team, as well as working conditions at many of the health institutions.

A source close to the executive for the Antigua and Barbuda Nurses Association said the association is asking for a fifteen percent increase for its members, as well as improvements to many of the clinics and health care facilities.

The source said the nine percent increase that the government is offering to all groups of public workers is not sufficient. The source did not indicate whether or not the association is prepared to accept a compromise on the rate increase.

The association also met with Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph this week to raise concerns over the state of many of the clinics in the country. According to the source many clinics are in a state of disrepair and are not suited to accommodate patients or nursing staff.

During the meeting, the minister gave the commitment to complete repairs to two of the clinics that have been closed – All Saints and Urlings – within the next two weeks and then to move on to other clinics immediately. He promised to systematically repair the

clinics so that nurses can feel comfortable.

There are also issues with the conditions at the Clare Vue Hospital and the

Fiennes Institute which the association also wants to be addressed as soon as possible.

However, despite these

issues, the association has not issued a notice of industrial action to the government nor to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre.



Exciting job opportunity for a new company in Antigua

Chief Accountant

Professional accounting designation preferred , 3 years or more of accounting experience

Main Responsibilities

- Overseeing Financial operations
- Generating reports for board of directors
- Creating Budgets and strategies to improve Financial position
- Be responsible for all accounting aspects to the level of trial balance
- Develop and maintain accounting standards and procedures
- Manage the accounts department on a day to day basis
- Timely accounting and transactions
- Ensure supplier invoices are paid on time
- Prepare payroll
- Preparation of Financial statements
- Revise expense reports
- Responsible for daily cash management activities which includes bank reconciliation
- Ensure high standard of internal control is embedded into workflows

Send your CV to info@caricompass.com

Only qualified applicants will be considered

All set for Antigua Sailing Week

The 54th edition of Antigua Sailing Week is all set, with the famous regatta's on-the-water action kicking off with a spectacular curtain raiser on Saturday 29 April, the stand-alone Peters & May Round Antigua Race. Five days of red-hot racing follow for Antigua Sailing Week, with legendary shoreside celebrations and daily prize-giving ceremonies. New to the race programme for 2023 will be the Antigua Wing Foil Championships with two days of in-harbour racing and a one-day downwinder on Lay Day, as well as an RS Elite One Design class.

Antigua Sailing Week is a melting pot of nations; boats from 18 countries are competing in the 54th edition. Sailors come from all over the world to experience Antigua & Barbuda, a spectacular Caribbean destination, surrounded by world-class sailing waters. Racing is not the only source of fun



and thrills, shoreside the party scene after racing is renowned.

By mid-regatta, the Reggae in the Park live gig is followed by all the laughter you can handle on Pigeon Point Beach for Lucky Eddi's Lay Day. The final prize-giving ceremony in Nelson's Dockyard is always a memorable night!

Taking a bow on the main stage by winning your race class during Antigua Sailing Week is the aim, but it is also the pathway to the ultimate goal, the big one - lifting the Lord Nelson Trophy.

Jaime Torres, Antigua Sailing Week's Race Manager is ready to welcome sailors from around the globe, as well as closer

to home to this bucket-list Caribbean regatta. "With a very good forecast and so many great racing boats, we are looking forward to some very close racing. The boats in most divisions are very evenly matched and have very narrow rating bands. It will be a superb regatta and grand finale to the 2023 Caribbean racing season."



Anthony Ambrose

Milestone celebrations for two senior citizens

An Antigua and Barbuda citizen who currently resides in the United States turns 103 today, April 27, 2023.

His name is Anthony Ambrose who hails from Bethesda but has resided in the United States for many years. Not much information about his life was immediately available, but this publication wishes to extend congratulations to the son of the soil on this remarkable milestone.

Tomorrow, April 28, will be the 100th birthday of Lady Marie Shoul, wife of the late businessman and cultural icon, Sir John Shoul. She is also the mother of the former Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Sir David Shoul.



Dramatic presentations examine social issues

At least two of the dramatic presentations staged on Wednesday's opening of the drama section of the National Secondary Schools Theatre Festival examined social issues being confronted by today's youth.

In an improvisational piece performed by the students of the Irene B Williams Secondary School, the piece looked at the issue of suicide, while in the night's first performance, the drama students of the Princess Margaret School examined the issue of skin-bleaching and other popular surgically engineered changes to the body.

The play – Skin Deep – told the story of a young woman who resorted to these measures in the hope of finding happiness. In the end, however, she learned that happiness comes from within and cannot be achieved through alterations to the natural look or shape of the body.

In For Better or Worse the Irene B Williams students looked at how despair and loss of hope can drive an individual to commit suicide. It also looked at how such an act affects the victim's family and loved ones.

The second night of drama takes place at the

Dean William Lake Cultural Centre this evening with two more schools performing dramatic pieces.

The Cultural Division, which organizes the event, will stage a prize-giving ceremony over the weekend, where the outstanding performers, writers, and directors will be honoured.

Thu 27 Day		Thu 27 Night	
84°	24% SE 9 mph	75°	24% SE 5 mph
Intervals of clouds and sunshine. High 84F. Winds SE at 5 to 10 mph.		A few clouds. Low near 75F. Winds light and variable.	
Humidity 73%	UV Index Extreme	Humidity 85%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 5:44 am	Sunset 6:25 pm	Moonrise 11:48 am	Moonset 12:29 am
		First Quarter	

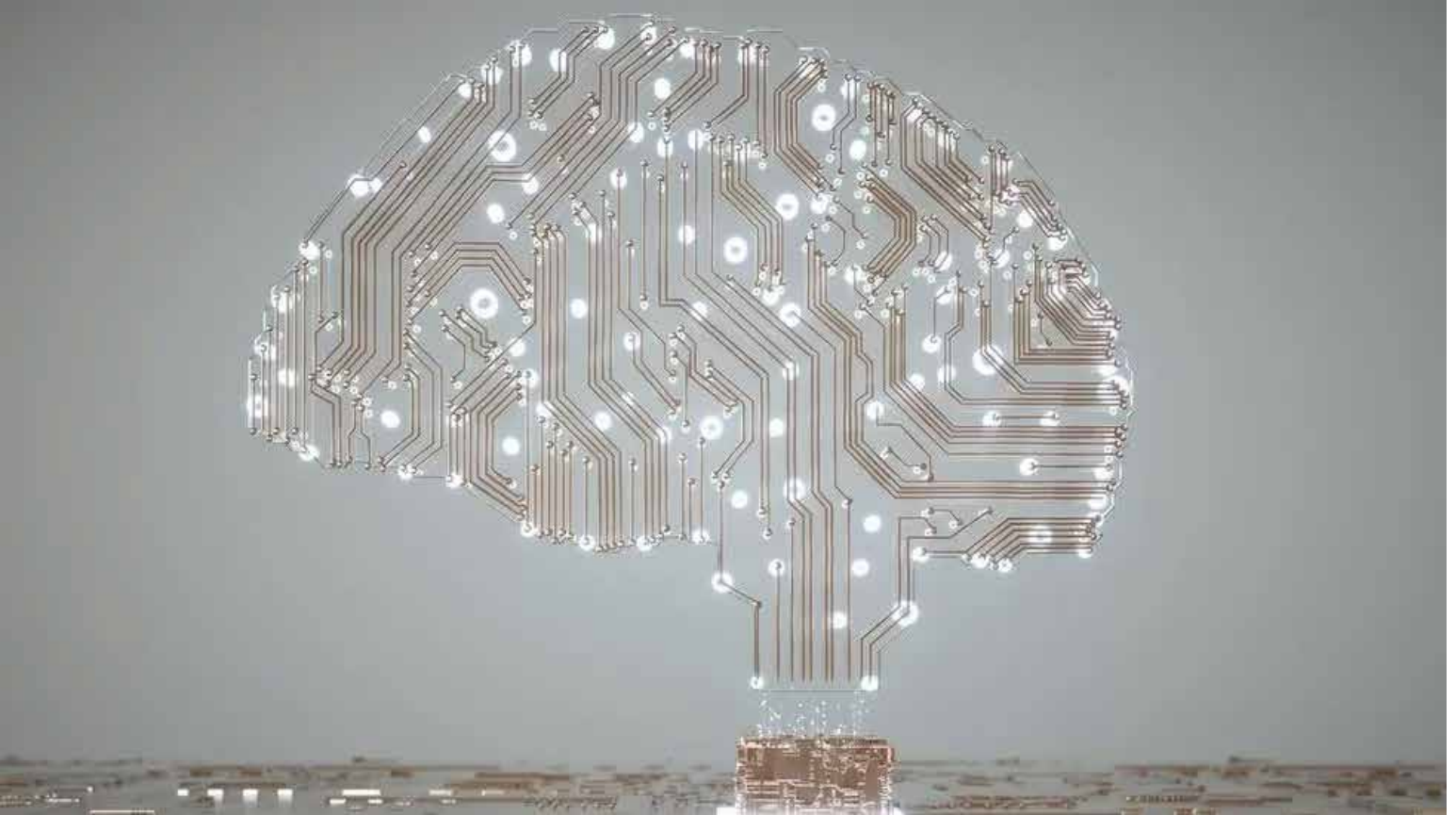
STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED

Live in a better State of mind

www.sicantigua.com
info@sicantigua.com
1 (268) 481-7800\04

AI creators must study consciousness, experts warn



By Zoe Kleinman

An open letter signed by dozens of academics from around the world calls on artificial-intelligence developers to learn more about consciousness, as AI systems become more advanced.

“It is no longer in the realm of science fiction to imagine AI systems having feelings and even human-level consciousness,” it says.

Most experts agree AI is nowhere near this level of sophistication.

But it is evolving rapidly and some say developments should be paused.

The term AI covers computer systems able to do tasks that would normally need human intelligence. This includes chatbots able to understand questions and respond with human-like answers, and systems capable of recognising objects in pictures.

Generative Pre-trained Transformer 4 (GPT-4), an AI system developed

by ChatGPT chatbot creator OpenAI, can now successfully complete the bar exam, the professional qualification for lawyers, although it still makes mistakes and can share misinformation.

But this is just one function of AI. AI products are being deployed in many sectors, including health research, marketing and finance.

Technology billionaire Elon Musk co-signed a recent letter saying further AI developments should be put on hold until effective safety measures could be designed and implemented.

And on Tuesday, his ex-wife, Talulah Riley, tweeted artificial general intelligence (AGI) - AI capable of human-level intellectual tasks - needed “the equivalent of [environmental activist] Greta Thunberg” to raise awareness and encourage public debate.

The Association for Mathemati-

cal Consciousness Science (AMCS), which has compiled the open letter, titled “The responsible development of AI agenda needs to include consciousness research”, said it did not have a view on whether AI development in general should be paused.

But it pushed for a greater scientific understanding of consciousness, how it could apply to AI and how society might live alongside it.

“The rapid development of AI is exposing the urgent need to accelerate research in the field of consciousness science,” the letter says.

Its signatories include Dr Susan Schneider, who chaired US space agency Nasa, as well as academics from universities in the UK, US and Europe.

Last year, a Google engineer was fired after claiming an AI system was sentient.

cont'd on pg 10

**THURSDAYS
6:30PM - 8:30PM**



**HOSTED BY
CARL CHRISTOPHER**

THE NEXT LEVEL

**CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1**

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Commercial quantities of oil found at Guyana's Lancetfish-1 well

Loop - Hess Corporation has announced today the discovery of oil at the Lancetfish-1 well in the Stabroek Block, offshore Guyana.

The company, which has a 30 per cent shareholding in the Stabroek Block, announced the development in its Estimated Results for the First Quarter of 2023.

"The Lancetfish-1 well encountered approximately 92 feet of oil bearing sandstone reservoir. The well was drilled in 5,843 feet of water by the Noble Don Taylor and is located approximately 4 miles south-east of the Fangtooth discovery," Hess said.

On the flip side, Hess said the Kokwari-1 exploration well, which was drilled a few months ago, did not encounter commercial quantities of hydrocarbons.

Hess Corp's prospects in Guyana looks bright as oil production in the Stabroek Block is increasing.

Net production from



the Liza Destiny and the Liza Unity FPSOs totalled 112,002 barrels of oil per day (bopd) in the first quarter of 2023 compared with 30,000 bopd in the first quarter of 2022.

The Liza Unity FPSO, which commenced pro-

duction in February 2022, reached its production capacity of approximately 220,000 gross bopd in July 2022.

"In the first quarter of 2023, we sold nine cargos of crude oil from Guyana compared with two cargos

in the prior year quarter. The third development, Payara, which will utilize the Prosperity FPSO with a production capacity of approximately 220,000 gross bopd, is targeted for startup early in the fourth quarter," the company said.

cont'd from pg 8

Blake Lemoine wrote Google's large language model Lamda, which underpins its ChatGPT rival, Bard, expressed feelings.

Google has maintained Lamda was doing exactly what it had been programmed to do - communicate in a human-like way.

But Google boss Sundar Pichai recently told US news platform CBS he did not "fully understand" how Bard worked.

The human mind was not fully understood either, he added, which is why the AMCS is calling for more research.

But there is as much excitement as nervousness around AI. It is the big buzzword in big tech and investment money is pouring in to AI-related projects.

Released in November, ChatGPT, became an instant viral sensation, the populist "face" of AI, with millions of people trying it out.

Using the internet as a database, it can give written answers to questions in a natural, human-like way.

Microsoft, which has invested heavily in OpenAI, says AI can take "the drudgery" out of mundane jobs such as office administration.

A recent report by Goldman Sachs suggests AI could replace the equivalent of 300 million full-time jobs.

And while the AI industry will create of new human jobs, they are likely to require new skills.

Fugees rapper Pras found guilty in political conspiracy

Loop – A Fugees rapper accused in multimillion-dollar political conspiracies spanning two presidencies was convicted Wednesday after a trial that included testimony ranging from actor Leonardo DiCaprio to former US Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Prakazrel “Pras” Michel was accused of funnelling money from a now-fugitive Malaysian financier through straw donors to Barack Obama’s 2012 reelection campaign, then trying to squelch a Justice Department investigation and influence an extradition case on behalf of China under the Trump administration.

The defense argued the Grammy-winning rapper from the 1990s hip-hop group the Fugees simply wanted to make money and got bad legal advice as he reinvented himself in the world of politics.

Michel first met Malaysian financier Low Taek Jho in 2006, when the businessman usually known as Jho Low was dropping huge sums of money and hobnobbing with the likes of Paris Hilton.

Low helped finance Hollywood films, including “The Wolf of Wall Street.”

DiCaprio testified Low



Prakazrel “Pras” Michel, left, a member of the 1990s hip-hop group the Fugees, accompanied by defense lawyer David Kenner, right, arrives at federal court for his trial in an alleged campaign finance conspiracy, Thursday, March 30, 2023, in Washington. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik, File)

had appeared to him as a legitimate businessman and had mentioned wanting to donate to Obama’s campaign.

Michel also testified in his own defense. He said Low wanted a picture with Obama in 2012 and was willing to pay millions of dollars to get it.

Michel agreed to help and used some of the money he got to pay for friends to attend fundraising events. No one had ever told him that was illegal, he said.

Prosecutors said Michel was donating the money on Low’s behalf,

and later tried to lean on the straw donors with texts from burner phones to keep them from talking to investigators.

After the election of Donald Trump, prosecutors say Michel again took millions to halt an investigation into allegations Low masterminded a money laundering and bribery scheme that pilfered billions from the Malaysian state investment fund known as 1MDB. Low is now an international fugitive and has maintained his innocence.

Michel also got paid to try and persuade the US to

extradite back to China a government critic suspected of crimes there without registering as a foreign agent, prosecutors said.

On that charge, the defense pointed to testimony from Sessions, who was Trump’s top law enforcement officer until he resigned in 2018.

Sessions said he’d been aware the Chinese government wanted the extradition but didn’t know Michel.

The rapper’s ultimately futile efforts to arrange a meeting on the topic didn’t seem improper, the former attorney general said.

Islands like Dominica need to address data gap to remain 'habitable', report says

With climate change disproportionately affecting small island developing states (SIDS) like Dominica, experts are calling for a close collaboration between the scientific community and local governments to develop sustainable plans to keep these states "habitable."

In a comprehensive report prepared by BBC's Future Planet, experts weighed in on the future of SIDS how they can combat the effects of climate change, especially in the Caribbean where 16 countries fall under this vulnerable category.

The report cited Shobha Maharaj, a climate impacts scientist and lead author of the small islands chapter in the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, who suggested to address the data gap in climate action.

"We don't have data on future sea-level rise and wave climate projections for most islands. Think about that. We're so exposed and vulnerable on our coastlines," Maharaj said.

The scientist also said data on "the value of ecosystems services to tackling climate change, and studies to model their fu-



ture habitability" are also important.

Above all else, there must be "clear, direct communication chains from scientists to policymakers to ensure they are aware of what's lacking and the consequences."

One of the challenges small islands face in combating climate change is their own respective unique topography, and Dominica, which aims to become the world's first climate resilient nation, is no exception.

According to Emily Wilkinson, a senior research fellow for the London-based think tank Overseas Development Institute, generating accurate weather forecasts can be tricky especially with the

mountainous ones.

"Many communities get completely cut off by tropical cyclones, sometimes for weeks," Wilkinson said.

Dominica has developed a system to disseminate forecasts and warnings as soon as they can with a special "grassroots approach of support and communication using traditional conch shells."

The island has also resorted to revising its building code last year in line with its climate-resilient goals.

MMC Development Ltd., a private development company that has been working closely with the government of Dominica is keeping with protocols

under Dominica's 2020-30 Climate Resilience and Recovery Plan.

With over 2,000 houses built to withstand natural disasters, MMC Development Ltd. has helped the government provide climate-resilient homes to residents who have been affected by the violent storms and hurricanes that pummelled the island in the last years.

"With the intensity of the hurricane and dealing with the impacts of climate change, resilient housing became a priority," said Frederick Donaldson, the disaster coordinator for the territory and a member of the Kalinago community, in his interview for the BBC article.

Belize: Drug laced treats lands children in hospital

Loop - The saying “Don’t take candy from strangers” became a parent’s worst nightmare in Belize when several adults and children fell ill after ingesting drug-infused candies.

A report from the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMH) indicates that its Mass Casualty Code was triggered yesterday after seeing a high number of students admitted to its Accident and Emergency Unit after seemingly consuming said treats.

Twenty-seven children, aged 5 to 15 years, have been examined at the KMH along with four adults who appeared to be intoxicated.

At the time of the incident, some of the children

were unresponsive and unconscious.

Presently, all children and adults are in a stable condition.

Initial information is that the treats were purchased from two individuals, who are now in police custody along with some recovered items.

During their interviews, the suspects claimed that the treats were purchased from another source.

The Commissioner of Police has instructed that a thorough investigation be conducted to identify the primary source of the product.

The Office of the Prime Minister has instructed that a full and thorough investigation be conducted to determine the source of some



sweet treats, confirmed by testing to be laced with marijuana.

The treats were collected for forensic analysis along with urine samples. The KMH, National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC), and a team from Central Health Region are conducting the investigation.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness has dispatched public health inspectors and NDACC case officers to the affected primary school to investigate. No other children were found

sick at the school.

An NDACC outreach case worker has also been dispatched to the KMH to investigate the situation.

The Office of the Prime Minister will continue to work closely with the KMH, Belize Police Department and Ministry of Health & Wellness to address this matter.

Prime Minister Briceño reiterates that “All efforts will be taken to ensure that our children are protected and where this matter is concerned, we will ensure that justice is served.”

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT, FUNDRAISER OR CHURCH ACTIVITY?
SEND US YOUR INFORMATION AND WE WILL BE HAPPY TO AIR IT.
EMAIL : notices99.1@gmail.com
 @POINTEFM99.1

SVG: Opposition says island being used 'like propaganda for Russia'

CMC - Opposition Leader Dr Godwin Friday says it appears as though St Vincent and the Grenadines is being used "like propaganda for Russia" as he responded to the discussions held last week between Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves and Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, in Venezuela.

"The image of that at this time is as if we are becoming like propaganda for Russia," Friday said on his weekly radio programme, adding "This is something that we can't afford for the image of our country and for the prime minister of our country.

The Opposition Leader said that he knows that St Vincent and the Grenadines has to "deal with countries all over the world...but to have a situation where you're standing up there and making joint statements at a time when the real matter of serious concern in that country is the invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the continuing war there.

"I hope that was a matter that was the first matter of discussion, but it didn't come out in any of what I saw in that article," Friday said.

Gonsalves, who is due to inform Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders on Thursday regarding his meeting with the Rus-



Dr Godwin Friday, Opposition leader, St Vincent and the Grenadines.

sian foreign minister, said that Lavrov was touring Latin America and held talks in Brazil with President Lula da Silva "about putting together what you call a club of countries of and for peace to see if we can have the matter, this war in Ukraine..."

He said the Russia-Ukraine war is "going on too long and there is too much suffering there by the combatants, too much money is spent on it by NATO, lives lost, injuries, dislocations and the knock-on effect of what is taking place there and the sanctions which follow, the knock-on economic effect — rising prices, rising interest rates, making life harder for people".

Gonsalves said the ongoing conflict, which began in February 2022, "is a

matter of great importance and I have organised that I can go and speak to the foreign minister of the Russian Federation precisely on this very question of peace".

But Friday told his radio listeners that "you can't just be standing up there and saying that you are friends and so on with countries and showing your political leanings, leftist political leanings one way or another.

"In those situations, you have to look out for the interests of the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines irrespective of your own personal feelings," he said adding that the island awaits more information about the meeting.

"And I want to know how is it that you didn't hear him, Ralph, bragging about it and talking about it, as he

normally does? And this is a situation that we have to monitor very carefully to make sure that our name of the country... St Vincent and Grenadines is not squandered and we don't be perceived as being closely aligned with a government that 143 nations at the UN condemned its referendum and annexation of part of Ukraine territory, even St Vincent and the Grenadines voted for that resolution.

"So why are we then now seeming to give political cover or propaganda to Russia by having these joint meetings and declarations from St Vincent and Grenadines.

"That is something we have to look at very carefully and you'll hear me speak more about it as I look at the circumstances more thoroughly," Friday added.

Manhunt under way after deadly Mississippi jail break

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

Police are hunting for four inmates who escaped a Mississippi jail, including one now believed to have killed a man while on the run.

The suspects were found missing during a routine headcount at the Raymond Detention Center near Jackson on Sunday, according to authorities.

One of the suspects, 22-year-old Dylan Arrington, is now believed to have murdered a man and stolen his truck.

At least one of the suspects is believed to have fled to Texas.

In addition to Dylan Arrington, the suspects have been identified as 51-year-old Jerry Raynes, and Casey Grayson and Corey Harrison, both 22. Mr Raynes has a long history of escaping from jail facilities, including the Raymond Detention Center in 2021, according to local authorities.

The men were in custody on a variety of charges, primarily related to thefts. Mr Arrington was in custody on firearm and auto theft charges.

Residents of the area have been told to be on the look-out for the suspects as local, state and federal police conduct their manhunt.

In a Facebook post, au-



From left to right: Dylan Arrington, Corey Harrison, Jerry Raynes and Casey Grayson.

thorities in nearby Leake County asked residents to be “extremely cautious”, keep their doors locked and avoid having keys or weapons in parked vehicles.

At a news conference earlier this week, Hinds County Sheriff Tyree Jones said that after the four were found missing on Sunday, jail authorities discovered two “breaches” in the building, including one on the jail’s roof.

Authorities now believe that the suspects escaped to the jail’s roof on Saturday and left the facility at various times.

Jackson Police Chief James Davis said that Mr Harrington is now the prime suspect in the death of local man Anthony Watts, 61.

Mr Watts was shot and killed around 19:00 local time on Monday after pulling over to help a man - now

believed to be Mr Arrington - who had crashed a motorcycle. He was found dead at the scene and his vehicle, a red truck, remains missing.

In a Twitter post on Wednesday, Hinds County Sheriff Tyree Jones wrote that police had exchanged gunfire with a barricaded suspect believed to be Mr Arrington in the town of Carthage.

The Sheriff’s Office in Leake County - where Carthage is located - later announced that a police investigator was shot in the leg during the incident. He was taken to hospital where he was stabilised.

Following the roughly two-hour stand-off, an “unidentified deceased person” was found in the home, which had caught fire. It is not yet known if the dead person is Mr Arrington.

Another suspect, Jerry

Raynes, is believed to have stolen a government public works vehicle which was later found near Houston, Texas.

Police have released surveillance footage showing Mr Raynes at a petrol station in Spring Valley, Texas, just outside of Houston.

In July, a federal judge seized control of the Raymond Detention Center, citing “severely deficient” conditions and a “stunning array” of assaults and deaths among detainees.

A public safety consultant was appointed as a “receiver” by the judge in October, with 120 days to devise a plan to improve conditions.

The judge’s order was stayed by an appeals court in December after local officials asked for the move to be reconsidered.

Sudan crisis: Fighting flares up despite ceasefire

BBC - Fighting is continuing in parts of Sudan despite a 72-hour ceasefire largely holding.

Speaking via phone from Omdurman, the city adjoining the capital Khartoum, the BBC's Mohamed Osman says fighting broke out near TV and radio buildings.

There is no fuel and a lack of doctors, and people are struggling to access food and money, our correspondent adds.

Sudan's army chief has reportedly approved extending the ceasefire - due to expire on Friday - for 72 hours.

Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan gave initial approval to the proposal from the regional African bloc Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Reuters news agency reports.

The proposal suggests sending envoys from the Sudanese army and rival group Rapid Support Forces (RSF) to Juba in South Sudan to discuss the details.

The current ceasefire began at midnight local time (22:00 GMT) on Monday bringing a pause to a conflict which erupted on 15 April amid a power struggle between the leaders of the army and the RSF.

People in Khartoum and Omdurman are finding it difficult to find clean water



People gather in Khartoum on Wednesday.

and food and access to cash, our correspondent says.

Explosions and gunfire could still be heard on Wednesday, with warplanes in the air, although it was quieter than before the ceasefire and the situation was good enough for evacuations to continue.

Our correspondent says he and his family find it difficult to sleep because of the explosions and shooting.

Gangs have also been looting homes and empty buildings, targeting cars and vehicles, he adds. Local people fear what will happen after the ceasefire ends.

Both sides still man checkpoints but these are fewer in number as some troops have withdrawn to other areas.

The warring factions both claim to control important places like airports

and army headquarters. There is no internet access and phone lines are poor.

At least 459 people have been killed since the fighting broke out though the actual number is thought to be much higher.

Earlier the World Health Organization said it expected "many more" deaths due to disease, a lack of access to food and water and disruption to health facilities.

Several countries have evacuated their nationals since the ceasefire took hold.

A boat evacuating more than 1,600 people from dozens of countries arrived in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday and both Germany and France say all their citizens have now left the country.

The first flight bringing British national home landed at Stansted on Wednesday,

via Larnaca in Cyprus.

Some 536 British nationals have been evacuated from Sudan on six flights, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said.

The chairman of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission confirmed to the BBC that evacuations of stranded Nigerian students in Sudan had started.

It is thought there could be up to 5,000 Nigerians living in Sudan, and that 3,500 of them are students.

However, a UK-born student in Sudan said she did not have enough petrol to get to rescue flights.

Samar Eltayeb, 20, from Birmingham, has been sheltering with a relative outside Khartoum since fighting began.

The third-year medical *cont'd on pg 17*

Ukraine war: Sniper kills fixer and wounds Italian reporter in Ukraine

By George Wright

A Ukrainian journalist working as a fixer for Italy's La Repubblica newspaper has been shot dead by snipers in Ukraine.

Bogdan Bitik was working with Italian reporter Corrado Zunino, who was wounded, when they were ambushed by suspected Russian snipers in the Kherson region, the newspaper said.

Both were wearing bulletproof vests with "Press" written on them, it added.

Russia says it has annexed Kherson despite only controlling some of it.

The reporters were targeted near the Antonivskiy bridge across the Dnipro river near the Ukrainian-held city of Kherson, which sits on the river's west bank.

Russian troops destroyed the bridge when they withdrew across the river from the city in November. Ukrainian forces are now reported to have set up positions on the eastern bank nearby.



Italian reporter Corrado Zunino was wounded.

The reporters had passed three checkpoints and the Ukrainian military had let them through "without problem", Zunino said in a telephone conversation with his newspaper.

He then heard a "hiss" and saw his colleague lifeless on the ground.

"We were hit. I saw Bogdan on the ground, he wasn't moving," he said

"I crawled until I got out of the line of fire. I ran until I came across a civilian's car. I was covered in blood. I tried several times to call

Bogdan, he didn't answer."

Zunino is being treated in hospital in Kherson.

Bitik "unfortunately did not make it", the newspaper wrote, adding that he leaves behind his wife and a son.

"He was a great friend of mine, the pain is excruciating," Zunino said.

The newspaper said it was proving difficult to recover Bitik's body because of Russian snipers.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba told Italian media that the Russians were responsible for

the killing.

"Russians don't care if you're Russian, Italian or Ukrainian, they just shoot," he said.

Moscow did not immediately comment.

Before this death was announced, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said eight reporters had been killed and 19 injured in Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion last year.

Crossing the Dnipro river could be significant in future offensives. 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.

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Moscow-controlled parts of Kherson last week.

cont'd from pg 16

student at Sudan's National University has been waiting to be evacuated to join her parents and siblings in the UK.

"We have no gas, and the petrol stations are empty," Ms Eltayeb said.

"There'll be constant flights within the next few days, but if I can't find gas to get there, then I'm stuck."

Buses carrying evacuees are continuing to leave Khartoum despite

soaring prices of fuel and bus tickets.

Meanwhile, former Sudanese politician Ahmed Haroun said that he and other former officials are no longer in jail.

Reports emerged this week of a prison break at Kober in Khartoum where Ahmed Haroun was serving a sentence alongside Omar al-Bashir, Sudan's former president.

The Sudanese army said Bashir was moved from the prison to a military hospital before the fighting erupt-

ed.

Both Bashir and Haroun are facing charges by the International Criminal Court for their alleged role in the atrocities in the western Sudanese region of Darfur.

On Tuesday, Haroun confirmed in a statement aired on Sudan's Tayba TV that he and other Bashir loyalists who served under him had left the jail - but said he would be ready to appear before the judiciary whenever it was functioning.

South African test batsman Hamza back after doping suspension

CAPE TOWN (Reuters) - Test batsman Zubayr Hamza is to return to international cricket in June following a doping suspension after being chosen for the South Africa A squad to tour Sri Lanka.

Hamza, who have played six tests for South Africa and a single One Day International, was handed a nine-month suspension last year after testing positive for a banned substance.

Hamza had intended to take his own anti-allergy medication, but accidentally ingested his father's heart medication that contained the banned substance Furosemide, according to his submission to the ICC's Integrity Unit.

The suspension ended in December after which Hamza has played in four first class matches in South African domestic competition.

The squad includes eight test players and will take on Sri Lanka A in three ODIs in Kandy and two four-day matches in Dambulla.

Meanwhile, India recalled middle-order batsman Ajinkya Rahane for the World Test Championship (WTC) final against Australia at the Oval in June.

Former vice-captain Rahane played the last of his



South Africa's Test batsman Zubayr Hamza is to return to international cricket in June following a doping suspension. (Reuters)

82 tests in January 2022, but has been in impressive form in the ongoing Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament.

With Shreyas Iyer sidelined due to a back injury which required surgery, India have gone back to Rahane, who averages 49.44 in tests with 12 centuries to his name.

KS Bharat retained his place behind the stumps with first-choice wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant continuing his recovery from a car crash in

December.

India will also be without pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who is completing his rehabilitation after undergoing a back operation last month.

Captain Rohit Sharma's 15-member squad includes six specialist batters and three spin all-rounders - Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel.

India reached the final of the inaugural WTC in June 2021, but lost by eight wick-

ets to New Zealand in a rain-hit contest in Southampton. Australia announced their squad for the 7th to 11th June contest earlier this month.

India squad: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane, KL Rahul, KS Bharat (wicket-keeper), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Shardul Thakur, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umesh Yadav and Jaydev Unadkat.



TN Kirnon Primary (orange and black uniform) remain unbeaten after the latest round of matches in the Primary School Cup Football Championship. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

TN Kirnon and Golden Grove stay unbeaten in Primary School Cup

TN Kirnon and reigning champions Golden Grove recorded wins to keep their unbeaten run intact in the latest round of matches in the Primary School Cup football competition.

TN Kirnon Primary notched up their third win in as many outings by pulling off a 3-0 victory against Gospel Light Elementary at the TN Kirnon School's playing field to remain the only unbeaten team in Group C.

Cedar Grove Primary secured their second win in four matches by recording a 3-0 victory against Wilkies Primary in the same group.

But the other two Group C matches ended in draws. Pigotts and Parham primary fought to a nil-nil draw while Villa Primary and Pares Prima-

ry also played to a goalless draw at the Rising Sun Grounds.

Golden Grove continued their dominance in Group A as they notched up their fourth win in four matches by beating last year's losing finalists Five Islands Primary 3-0 at the Golden Grove playing field. It was the third loss in four matches for Five Islands Primary.

Jennings Primary also kept their unbeaten record intact in Group A by recording their third win in four matches with a 2-1 victory against Olivia David Primary.

But the Group A match between Urlings Primary and the Foundation Mixed School will be replayed while the encounter between Old Road and Greenbay was postponed.

Potters Primary hammered the combined Freetown/Newfield primary schools 8-0 at the Liberta playing field to claim their fourth win in as many matches in Group B.

But Liberta Primary's three-match unbeaten run was ended by a 5-2 loss against the JT Ambrose Primary, who maintained their perfect record with their third win in as many matches.

Freemans Village notched up their third win in four matches with a 5-1 drubbing of St Peter's Primary.

The two bottom teams in Group B, Cobbs Cross and Sea View Farm primary, are still searching for their first win. Both teams who had lost their previous three matches, battled to a 5-5 draw in their latest encounter.



**MON - FRI
9AM TO 11AM**



**HOSTED BY
TROY ALLEN**

TALK YOUR MIND

**CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1**

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER



The Nevis Team which defeated Antigua and Barbuda in their LICB Women's 50-Overs Championship match at the Elquemedo Willett Park in Nevis on Tuesday, 25th April, 2023. (Photo courtesy LICB)

Antigua lose to Nevis in LICB 50-Over women's contest

Antigua and Barbuda suffered a 37-run loss to Nevis in their Senior Leeward Islands Cricket Board's (LICB) Women's 50-Overs Championship match at the Elquemedo Willett Park in Nevis on Tuesday.

Nevis won the toss and opted to bat, making 206 all out in 48.4 overs. Opener Melicia Clarke hit a half century, topscoring with 80 off 85 balls with 10 fours.

Clarke shared a sec-

ond wicket century stand of 129 runs with Arsheena Freeman, who struck 37 off 109 balls with three fours.

Opener Davonique Maynard with 18 and Martha Dookhan, who made 17 not out, were the only other Nevisians to reach double figures. There was a contribution of 40 extras, including 26 wides.

Off-spinner Jenisen Richards captured four wickets for 38 runs in her 10 overs and Kimberly An-

thony claimed three wickets for 28 runs in eight overs.

In reply, Antigua and Barbuda lost wickets steadily throughout their innings and were all out for 169 in 38.2 overs. Wicketkeeper/batsman Terez Parker hit an unbeaten half century as she top scored with 80 not out off 110 balls with 12 fours.

Antigua and Barbuda were reduced to 94 for nine, but Parker shared a

75-run last wicket partnership with number 11 batter Danesia Wilson, who made 14. There was also a contribution of 50 extras, including 46 wides, to the Antigua and Barbuda total.

Rozel Liburd snapped up five for 39 in her quota of 10 overs, Dookhan picked up two for 30 and Clarke captured two for 38.

It was the second win in as many matches for the Nevisians while it was the first loss suffered by Antigua and Barbuda after winning their opening encounter against St Kitts by 224 runs at Conaree in St Kitts on Sunday.

The three teams will be contesting a T20 competition, which commenced yesterday, from 26th to 28th April.

cont'd from pg 22

The Golden Eagles then secured their second win of the tournament, reaching their 72-run victory target for the loss of five wickets with 6.3 overs to spare.

Opener Kevin Pitman top scored with 21, Sadique Henry made 15 and Shacoy Floyde chipped in with 12, while Winston Nelson claimed two wickets for 14 runs.

The Golden Eagles finished in the cellar position at the end of the preliminaries with two wins and five losses, while the Tigers ended in sixth place with a record of three wins and four defeats.

In today's (Thursday) semi-finals, Empire Nation will face Pigotts Crushers at 4:30 pm and Liberta Black Hawks will take on Bolans Blasters at 8:30 pm.

Blasters grab last spot in semis of T20 Explosion

Bolans Blasters snatched the last qualifying spot into the semi-finals of the Cool and Smooth T20 Explosion on Tuesday night.

The Blasters booked their spot into the semis by snatching a 15-run win over the New Winthorpes Lions in the last match of the preliminaries. It was the first game of a double header at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

Sent in to bat first after losing the toss, Bolans Blasters made 105 for four off their allotted 20 overs with Captain Kerry Mentore hitting a top score of 34 off 52 balls.

Orlando Peters made 22 off 27 balls and Gavin Williams also hit a quick-fire 22 off 12 balls with two fours and two sixes. Michael Palmer captured two wickets for 13 runs.

Chasing 106 to win, New Winthorpes fell short as the Lions could only muster 90 for nine off their 20 overs, hence were eliminated from reaching the semi-finals of the tournament with a record of three wins and four losses in their seven preliminary round matches.

Bartlette Henry with a top score of 18 and Ian Eusebe, who was not out on 10, were the only two Lions batsmen to reach double figures. Michael Harilall grabbed two wickets for seven runs in his four overs, Morton Browne took two for 12 and pacer Taiem Tonge captured two for 13.

The Blasters became the third team to qualify for the semi-finals with identical records of four wins and three losses as they finished in



The Bolans Blasters celebrate reaching the semis after beating the New Winthorpes Lions in their last preliminary round encounter in the Cool and Smooth T20 Explosion at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Tuesday, 25th April, 2023. (CST20)

fourth place at the end of the eight-team round robin preliminaries.

Sharing identical records with the Blasters at the end of the preliminaries are Empire Nation, who finished second and Pigotts Crushers in third.

The other qualifiers, reigning champions Liberta Black Hawks, took the top seed into the semi-finals by topping the preliminaries with six wins from their quota of seven matches.

But Jennings Tigers, the only team to beat the Black Hawks, missed out on a semi-finals berth after suffering a five-wicket loss to bottom team Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda

Golden Eagles in the last preliminary round encounter on Tuesday.

Jennings Tigers were bundled out for just 71 runs in their 20 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Glenton Williams with a run-a-ball 18 and Paul Miller with 13 were the only two Tigers batsmen to reach double figures.

The veteran and former Leeward Islands leg-spinner Anthony "I Roots" Martin capped a fine bowling display throughout the tournament by grabbing three wickets for 10 runs in his four overs. Mekali Tonge gave good support by capturing two for 14.

cont'd on pg 21