

ANTIGUANS CHARGED WITH SMUGGLING IN ST. KITTS

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*Seatrade Cruise Global, the premier cruise tradeshow, wrapped up its March 2023 edition. The Antigua & Barbuda delegation was led by Minister of Tourism, Investment, Aviation and Transport, The Honourable Charles 'Max' Fernandez, and included CEO of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James, Javier Jacobs ABTA Operations Manager, Donyelle Bird-Browne, Senior Business Development Manager-Partnerships, Shamoil Richards, Business Development Manager for Canada, Dona Regis-Prosper Manager GPH Antigua Cruise Port and Antigua Port Manager Darwin Telemaque. Team Antigua and Barbuda is pictured here with local cruise industry partners. **Story on page 6.***

Antiguans charged with smuggling in St. Kitts

The two Antiguans who survived the tragedy at sea last Tuesday after they were rescued by St. Kitts-Nevis Coast Guard, have been charged with suspicion of smuggling.

This has been confirmed by law enforcement authorities in the Federation, although no names have been released. There is no word yet on when they will make their first court appearance.

This comes as both the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) out of Martinique and the St. Kitts-Nevis Coast Guard, announced on Friday that they have suspended all recovery operations, hoping to locate the bodies of those missing when the vessel, *Le Belle*

Michelle II, went down early Tuesday morning just off the coast of St. Kitts.

The Guadeloupe registered 30-foot vessel, was believed to have been transporting West African migrants from Antigua and Barbuda to another jurisdiction. The MRCC notified the authorities in both Antigua and St. Kitts after the transponder sent out an alert, when the vessel capsized at sea. There was an estimated 30 persons on board, including the two Antiguans, who were believed to be the captain and a crew member.

Sixteen persons were rescued alive, and three bodies pulled from the sea.

Head of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) Colonel Telbert

Benjamin said, the official count is that eleven persons are missing.

He indicated that this will only change if additional information comes to hand later, to determine that there is a need to change.

He said his counterparts in Basse-terre have indicated that they will not be returning to the site where the vessel went down, unless more bodies pop up to the surface of the water.

The fate of the fourteen West Africans still in custody in St. Kitts remains unsure, the Antigua and Barbuda government has offered to have them sent back to St. John's to be processed, along with those already here.



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Government to acquire additional resources to combat migrant smuggling

The government is actively engaged in discussion to acquire additional assets to better equip the Antigua and Barbuda Coast Guard to effectively patrol the country's coastline and vast territorial waters.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne said discussions are ongoing to acquire a platform that will greatly enhance the capabilities of the Coast Guard. "We are speaking with a foreign government for surveillance assets that will cost approximately US\$8 million. Additionally, other discussions are also taking place with other governments to acquire other resources to add to the fleet of the coast guard," he announced.

The prime minister acknowledged that currently the country does not have the resources necessary to effectively monitor the country's coastline. This makes Antigua and Barbuda and other countries in the North-Eastern Caribbean vulnerable to migrant smuggling which has been recog-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

nized as a growing problem in these parts. "Based on the increase in migrant smuggling in this area, we now have to step up and make the sacrifice to acquire more assets to do better surveillance of our maritime borders," he stated.

Until these additional assets are in the hands of the coast guard, PM Browne said he accepts that the country's coastline is 'somewhat' porous.

He however expressed the view that this situation will change when the addi-



Head of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force Colonel Telbert Benjamin

tional assets arrive. Meanwhile, Head of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force, which oversees the Coast Guard, Colonel Telbert Benjamin, revealed that there are two 'interceptors' now in the hands of the Coast Guard. A third vessel is down for repairs. The two 30-foot vessels were donated by the U.S government.

Col. Benjamin explain that the interceptors are designed for speed and to overtake vessels that may be traversing the nation's water with illegal intent. The vessels are not however, de-

signed for long distances. Benjamin said, the plan is to acquire additional vessels that may travel further out at sea.

These vessels will be complemented with the addition of a radar system that will be able to detect vessels traveling through the country's territorial water.

"Antigua and Barbuda has a huge area as its territorial borders. It's roughly one hundred and ten thousand square kilometers (110,000 square kilo). This is huge when one considers that the land mass is only 440 square kilometers. We are also in the process of acquiring a second aircraft bolstering our air patrol capabilities," he noted.

The Coast Guard has also de-commissioned the Liberta, the Independence era vessel and the Palmetto, is soon to suffer a similar fate.

<p>Mon 03 Day</p> <p>82° ☀️</p> <p>Mostly sunny skies. High 82F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.</p>		<p>Mon 03 Night</p> <p>74° 🌙</p> <p>A few clouds from time to time. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 15 mph.</p>	
<p>🌊 Humidity 64%</p> <p>☀️ UV Index Extreme</p>	<p>☁️ 12%</p> <p>🌬️ E 16 mph</p>	<p>🌊 Humidity 75%</p> <p>☀️ UV Index 0 of 10</p>	<p>☁️ 14%</p> <p>🌬️ E 13 mph</p>
<p>🌅 Sunrise 6:00 am</p> <p>🌇 Sunset 6:20 pm</p>	<p>🌕 Moonrise 4:27 pm</p> <p>🌑 Moonset 4:30 am</p> <p>🌕 Waxing Gibbous</p>		

GG hosts successful protocol training seminar

The Office of the Governor General teamed up with two government ministries to host a three-day interactive seminar entitled “Protocol Expressions” for educators that concluded last week.

The seminar aimed to standardize the understanding and expressions of protocols whenever state dignitaries are present at an educational event. The Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs also assisted with the seminar.

The seminar was triplicated in its presentation to three different groups of

educators and also covered other related aspects of protocol, including event planning, ushering, reception management, safety and security operations and the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Close to one hundred and twenty (120) educators participated in the activity, which included a practical demonstration of the skills and knowledge learned from the group assignments and presentations. The seminars were facilitated by professionals from the Office of the Governor General and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams

Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams commended the facilitators and invitees on such a successful seminar. Sir Rodney shared that “The seminar gave the attendees a clearer understanding of protocol, which not only keeps dignity in its place but has international currency.”

The attendees expressed their satisfaction for its interactive approach and the hands-on nature of the seminar. “The seminar was well-organized and informative, and the facilitators did

an excellent job of making the content accessible and engaging. I feel much more confident in my ability to apply the concepts I learned in my work as an educator,” said one attendee.

The success of the seminar demonstrates the commitment of the Governor General’s Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promoting best practices in protocol and event management. The Office of the Governor General looks forward to hosting similar events in the future.



Denis Friday passes

Word has reached Point Express newspaper of the passing of Denis Friday, an icon in both the tourism sector and culture.

Friday was an ‘ambassador’ for tourism in Antigua and Barbuda and was considered one of the early pioneers of this industry which he embraced wholeheartedly and passionately.

ly.

He was also a cultural icon for his role as a mas player in the early years of Antigua Carnival,

Antigua and Barbuda will not see another Denis Friday anytime soon. His love for country and what it stands for single him out as truly a respected son of the soil



Education; a public good

Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (UWI FIC), Professor Densil Williams, has been sharing his philosophical view of education.

Speaking at a recent function at the university campus, Prof. Williams described education, particularly higher education, as ‘a public good’.

“I am of the view that despite the private benefits from education, the social benefits you get from education is greater than the private benefit, and as a result of that, education automatically becomes a public good,” he stated.

He added that one must not look at education as a ‘private enterprise’ for the individual pursuing the higher learning, rather education is a public good where everyone benefits; “because when you look at the economics of education, although I, Densil Williams may have some private benefits that I gain by investing in tertiary education, and I may have

the best house, the best car, when I do my research and my research informs policy and policy changes, the lives of thousands of people, that the public benefits is greater than the individual private benefit I get,” he stated.

According to the UWI FIC Principal, when one looks at the externalities you get from education, it is true that from a pedagogical point of view education is indeed a public good.

“So if we take that kind of interpretation of education, we will see why the state must invest in education, because the public gain is greater than the private benefit,” he emphasized.

He added that this is the type of discourse that needs to start happening in the OECS states, as education needs both public and private funding to improve access to higher learning. Otherwise, he added, many persons ‘will be left behind’.

He noted that only two out of ev-



Principal of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (UWI FIC), Professor Densil Williams

ery ten persons in the OECS move on to higher education. This he added, is too low a percentage to provide the human capital necessary for the advancement of the region.

Antigua and Barbuda participate fully at Seatrade 2023

Seatrade Cruise Global, the premier cruise tradeshow, wrapped up its March 2023 edition bringing together more than 10,000 cruise industry attendees, 80 cruise lines, five hundred exhibitors, and representatives from over 85 destinations attended the cruise industry's leading business to business conference and tradeshow at the Greater Fort-Lauderdale Broward Convention Center for optimum discussions with key take aways, on what success looks like; while sharing ship and destination updates and planning ahead.

The Antigua & Barbuda delegation was led by Minister of Tourism, Investment, Aviation and Transport, The Honourable Charles 'Max' Fernandez, and included CEO of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James, Javier Jacobs ABTA Operations Manager, Donyelle Bird-Browne, Senior Business Development



Team Antigua and Barbuda with Virgin Voyages.

Manager-Partnerships, Shamo Richards, Business Development Manager for Canada, Dona Regis-Prosper Manager GPH Antigua Cruise Port and Antigua Port Manager Darwin Telemaque.

The team hosted dozens of meetings focused on the pertinent business of creating and maintaining partnerships, addressing any infrastructural requirements necessary, itinerary

inclusion discussions, and updates on Barbuda at the destination dedicated strategic meeting. The supporting team at the destination's newly designed booth presented an energetic, united, fun, and up-beat vibe where all felt comfortable and relaxed conducting business, sharing information, and connecting face-to-face during the show

Other local partners who took advantage of the

opportunity to be a part of team Antigua and Barbuda's efforts to increase its business from the sector included Bryson's Shipping and Insurance, Heavenly Tours, Tropical Adventures Antigua, The Rendezvous Company Antigua, and Fat Tire Electric Bike Tours.

Minister Charles Fernandez reiterated that attendance at Seatrade is a must as we continue to build our port reputation as a marque one. "Antigua & Barbuda is a leading cruise destination in the Caribbean and forums like Seatrade give the opportunity to build dynamic, market and data-driven business-to-business relationships. The convention integrates meetings and events with a broad array of industry insights, digital campaign reports, da-



Team Antigua and Barbuda with Royal Caribbean Group.

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UK-based company secures cannabis license

Antigua Agronomics, a locally registered company whose principals are based in the United Kingdom, has received its certificate from the Medicinal Cannabis Authority, to operate in the medicinal cannabis sphere that is now being developed here in Antigua and Barbuda.

Chief Executive Officer Ashley King, said the license grants his company the right to cultivate cannabis, and extract the oil from the plant for medicinal use, both locally and for export.

“We are aiming to become a global supplier in the medicinal cannabis market. We are happy to have received our certificate, and



The principals of Antigua Agronomics, Richard O'Brien (left) Ashley King (centre) and Dwight Henry (right).

we wish to thank everyone here who helped us along the way,” he stated.

King said both he and his team have been traveling to and from the country over the past several years, and there are plans to assist

the country beyond the areas of medicinal cannabis.

“We will be constantly contributing towards improving the country’s agricultural sector, we plan to train young farmers in the aquaponics sector, as well

as offer assistance in the area of health,” he added.

The company will also be providing employment opportunities to at least a dozen people when it begins operations here over the next several months, according to King.

Another director, Richard O’Brien, described the operation simply as, ‘from seeds to finished products’ such as oils, that will help in the care of cancer patients and others with pain management issues.

Antigua-born Dwight Ateba Henry who is originally from Bolans, but who now resides in the UK, also serves as a director of the company.

cont'd from pg 6

ta-focused information, and solutions that create uniquely rich and vibrant destination experiences that must be included in the various cruise itineraries.

As true industry partners, we strive to build our stakeholders businesses by creating opportunities that inspire, amaze, and deliver with breakthrough results.

With several cruise industry events each year, our teams are creators and connectors who are thoroughly immersed in the industry we serve, and committed to supporting the communities and destination in which we operate,” said the Minister.

The recent investments in the industry have been yielding results, particularly for the upcoming summer season where some forty-two calls are already booked between April and August 2023 as compared with only three last year. The team also used

the opportunity to share updates on all aspects of the destination ranging from the dredging of the harbour to the exciting new tours and excursions that present a win-win opportunity to both the cruise lines and local entrepreneurs to increase the earnings from the sector.

Colin C. James, CEO of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority remarked, “With each year since the pandemic, we continue to see cruise passenger interest, and port calls increasing, and this tradeshow and conference allows for us to share the continuance of that by recording a 78.7% increase, three hundred and forty-nine calls and just short of four hundred thousand passengers when compared to the previous year.

“We drew cruisers from the United States, Canada, UK, Europe, as far flung as Australia and now especially with our homeporting initiative, the surrounding Caribbean”.



Team Antigua and Barbuda with Aida Cruise Lines.

April is World Autism Awareness Month

Sunday April 2 marked the 16th annual World Autism Awareness Day—a day to recognize people living with autism. This day of awareness for autism being recognized under the theme: “Transformation: Toward a Neuro-Inclusive World for All,” signals the need for the entire society to take action on behalf of, and alongside those with autism.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), autism (also referred to as autism spectrum disorder or ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects 1 in 100 young people. It can have a wide range of effects on a child’s development, from challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. Characteristics may be detected in early childhood, but autism is often not diagnosed until much later.

“I encourage us all to take this special day to commit to reaching out to those around us who have differences, unique perspectives or life pathways, or who need a helping, encouraging hand,” said Dr. Shivon Belle-Jarvis, Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre Pediatric Department’s Chair. “Those of us with our own differences, can speak up to offer our unique voices to the conversation. If we can expand our horizons in our own lives, we will do a better job of making room for ev-

eryone, every day, including those with autism.”

She added; “We owe it to our fellow Antiguans and Barbudans to do everything we can to address the disparities they face, and to support autistic people with tools that facilitate clearer communication, increased productivity, and greater independence.”

World Autism Awareness Day also serves to launch April as Autism Awareness Month. Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre encourages all to join its awareness raising, and support activities that will be



taking place this month, and to help celebrate and support the neurodiverse citizens among us.

During the month, teams from the SLBMC will be making radio and television

appearances to speak about autism, as part of the awareness campaign. The Rotary Club of Antigua Sundown will also stage an autism walk during the month, as part of the awareness campaign.

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Opinion

Murder she wrote

By Tony Deyal

Researching an article on the police “service” in Trinidad and Tobago (T and T), as well as a few of the other Caribbean countries, I started with the realisation that, in putting the words “police” and “service” in “con-junction” (or any other kind of junction for that matter), I had created an oxymoron (a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction). I realised that I had to reconsider and do a reconnoitre.

I then thought of the word “brass”, which is used mainly by the media to describe the leadership of the “police force” (a term which is a synonym instead of an oxymoron and means the words are similar in meaning).

I found out that “brass” most likely came from “brassard” – a band worn on the sleeve, typically with a uniform. Even though almost every country in the region has a ‘police brass band’, I was not sure if it was the right word.

The reason for my lack of conviction (in more ways than one) is that, many years ago, my friends from the Trinidad and Tobago Television (TTT) company in Trinidad decided to hit the road early on the first morning of the national carnival with what turned out to be a double entendre of the worst sort.

Because at least two of the leaders had decided to give up drugs, the band’s name was meant to be a pun, ‘ABANDON DRUGS’, but when we reached the “panyard” of the group supplying the music, and started our journey around Port-of-Spain with them, it was clear that we were ‘a band on drugs’.

I then checked “Brassie” and found it is a “number two wood” which, in the hands of the police, especially when they’re trying to make you confess, could be deadly. One colleague

told me that ‘brass’ is a slang word for ‘money’ and that is what the police demand when they catch you committing any kind of crime. He added, “Tony, I don’t think you know that, in the old days, ‘brass’ used to be a slang for ‘prostitute’.” I kept quiet. I was not so brass-faced to repeat it.

INTERESTED IN BRASS

The reason why I’m interested in brass is that, recently, the Commissioner of Police (CoP), Erla Harewood-Christopher, told some business people, “An evil has spread over the land and we must recognise, those of you who are spiritually inclined, you must recognise that this is beyond the physical and, unless we seek the intervention of the greater spirit, whatever we may call him ... if we need to really bring Trinidad and Tobago back to that place where we want it to be.”

The reason she gave for seeking divine support was, “Because the police can come up with whatever strategy, but, unless we enlist the help of God, we will be working in vain.”

Interestingly, in 2013 when the murder rate in Jamaica went from 1,100 in 2012 to 1,200 in 2013, Peter Bunting, Jamaica’s national security minister, who was under considerable public pressure, called for divine intervention and not just to keep his job.

He was quoted by Tony Best in ‘Afro Briefs, Religion’ saying, “The best efforts of the security forces by itself will not solve the crime problem in Jamaica, but it is going to take divine intervention, touching the hearts of a wide cross section of the society.”

Mr Best added, “His (Bunting’s) words immediately triggered strong criticisms from several sections of the public who accused him of surrendering to crime and demoralising people. For instance, a former national security minister, Derrick Smith, called on then



Tony Deyal

Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller to relieve Bunting of his post.” Interestingly, murders in Jamaica dropped to 1,005 in 2014 but then shot up to 1,208 in 2015, and to, the highest of all so far, 1,647 in 2017.

The Trinidad churches have generally responded to the commissioner’s call like Catholic priest, Fr Martin Sirju, who recommended, “We cannot discount the fact that we must work and pray. It’s not either or, it’s an ‘and’.” Even though I don’t put my money on “and”, the other religious bodies, very much aware that 2022 (last year) was the “deadliest” year in T&T with 598 murders (not including people killed by the police), were big on the “and”, and hopefully so.

This year, the World Population Review has placed T and T sixth in the world’s murder parade (71.64 per 100,000 people) with Venezuela, the country’s nearest neighbour, in first place (83.76).

Guyana is seventh (68.74) and Jamaica 10th (67.42). Barbados is not in the list of 135 countries.

This is why I am sceptical of ‘ands’ and prefer the government to get off their butts and butts, especially in managing the police. For instance, a racist, a murderer, and a wife beater walked into a bar.

The bartender asked, “What can I get you, Officer?” Then a lay priest, *cont’d on pg 11*

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a stalker and a policeman went into the same bar. He ordered a beer.

NOT IN THE BIBLE

Actually, one preacher told his flock, "The Bible says 'God helps those who help themselves'." They cheered him. Unfortunately, while it is a saying that inspires people by emphasising the importance of self-initiative, it is not in the Bible which, in fact, teaches the opposite. Isaiah 25:4 declares, "For you have been a defence for the helpless, a defence for the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm ..."

The closest I've come to the combination of self-help and heavenly support is in Timothy 5:8, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Actually, the closest any religion came to the Lord and self-help is linked to the Prophet Muhammad who noticed a Bedouin tribesman leaving his camel without tying it.

He asked the Bedouin, "Why don't you tie down your camel?" The Bedouin answered, "I placed my trust in Allah." At that, Muhammad said, "Tie your camel and place your trust in Allah." Many years later, Oliver Cromwell told his troops, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry."

In T&T these days, you can keep your powder as dry as you can by wrapping

it up in a waterproof pouch, and even pray every night and day.

Yet, if a thief or killer is not on the premises when the police arrive, or is there and has money to pass, he or she has a close to 100 per cent chance of getting away with it.

In fact, the entire country is like what the former

mayor of Washington, DC said about his city, "Outside of the killings, we have one of the lowest crime rates in the country."

I was by the bus stop in downtown Port-of-Spain and asked a vendor how far it was to Morvant/Laventille where the minister of national security lives and where the murder rate last

year was the highest in the country with 48 murders. "I don't know," he replied. "No outsider has ever made it. And a lot of the insiders as well."

Tony Deyal was last seen saying that, if crime in Trinidad went down 100 per cent, it would still be at least 50 times higher than it should be.



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

VACANCY

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JOB SUMMARY

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- A combination of education and experience that provides knowledge skills, and ability to perform the duties of this position will be considered.

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- Direct the development and implementation of the operational budget and monitor expenditures;
- Provide leadership to the team;
- Establish professional relationships in the internal and external stakeholders.

Tiny Dutch Caribbean islands move to save coral reefs

ORANJESTAD, St. Eustatius – A major environmental project is under way in St. Eustatius – affectionately known as Statia – and Saba to reduce erosion and safeguard endangered reefs around the two islands in the Caribbean Netherlands. The project, dubbed “Healthy and Resilient Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Through Reforestation of St Eustatius and Saba”, will include the reforestation of areas stripped bare of vegetation due to land erosion caused by heavy rainfall.

“Due to large increases in above-ground water movement during heavy rainfall, along with the low abundance of vegetation on the islands, the near-shore coral reef ecosystems have been severely impacted,” said Anthony Reid, Statia’s director of economy, nature, and infrastructure (ENI). “In response to this impact, this project aims to enhance the ability of the governments and national parks foundations on both islands to respond to the needs of the marine environment through reforestation. This will improve the ecosystem services, biodiversity, and economic resilience of Statia and Saba.”

The €722,165 project is funded by the European Union, through its 11th European Development Fund programme, a €30.5 billion aid package for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and overseas countries and territories (OCTs). The Dutch Caribbean islands’ undertaking falls directly under the Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Marine Biodiversity Programme (RESEMBID), a 69-month programme which began in 2019 to support the sustainable human development efforts of the 12



Denuded areas to be restored (YELLOW), area to be replanted as beautification/community support (RED), high priority ecological areas to be reforested when roaming livestock are removed with a start beyond the duration of the project (PURPLE), nursery/Reforestation central site (GREEN), known major sediment outlets (WHITE).

Caribbean OCTs, namely: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Statia, St. Maarten and St. Barths.

The implementing partner for RESEMBID is Expertise France, the French public agency for the design and implementation of international technical cooperation projects, which signed an agreement with the Statia government late last year, under which Statia will oversee implementation of the venture.

The St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) will execute the project as part of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with the Statia government. Other partners for this activity are the Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF) and the Government of Saba.

As part of the MOU, Statia (8.1 square miles) and Saba (five square miles) will share expertise and experiences. Statia will also begin cultivation of plants for Saba, while that island builds the necessary infrastructure. Statia’s beekeepers will also train potential new beekeepers in Saba.

“The team at STENAPA and SCF look forward to continuing, improving, and expanding our planting efforts working on the experience and knowledge we’ve gained over the last few years. Working with the government and each other to reduce erosion around Statia and Saba will help safeguard our reefs, benefiting fishermen, divers, and everyone who values our islands’ valuable marine environment,” said Erik Bowman, the STENAPA director. “Increasing biodiversity - especially of pollinators, such as bees - will benefit not only Statia and Saba’s nature, but also help our agricultural sectors and help towards improving our islands’ food security and hurricane resilience.”

The non-government organisations and the Statia Government signed an agreement late last year, financed by the EU and implemented by the Expertise France programme, RESEMBID. This project will benefit both Statia and Saba by reforesting erosion-prone, watershed and discharge areas, which in turn will slow and redirect water into below-ground aquifers in the denuded areas. It will also restrict the release of sediment onto surrounding coral reefs. Thus, it will improve the resilience of both the forest and coral reefs, for the benefit of the local populace.

Twitter's blue ticks disappear as Musk attacks NY Times

By Alys Davies

The New York Times has lost its blue tick on Twitter after it said it would not pay to remain verified.

Twitter has started removing verification badges from accounts which already had a blue tick, after announcing they would be part of a paid subscription from 1 April.

The New York Times, along with several other organisations and celebrities, said they would not pay for the tick.

It prompted Elon Musk to launch a volley of insults at the newspaper.

"The real tragedy of @NYTimes is that their propaganda isn't even interesting", Mr Musk, who owns Twitter, wrote on the platform.

"Also, their feed is the Twitter equivalent of diarrhea. It's unreadable," he added.

There has been no official comment from Twitter and the New York Times has not responded to Mr Musk's comments.

Under Twitter's new rules, blue ticks which once showed official, verified accounts, will start to be removed from accounts which do not pay for it.

Organisations seeking verification badges instead have to pay a monthly fee of \$1,000 (£810) to receive



a gold verification tick, while individual accounts must pay \$8 (£6.40) a month for a blue one.

The subscription service will generate revenue for Twitter, however concerns have been raised that without the verification process, it will be difficult to tell genuine accounts from impersonators.

As well as not paying the subscription fee, the New York Times said it would also not pay for the verification of its journalists' Twitter accounts, apart from in "rare instances where this status would be essential for reporting purposes", a spokesperson said.

Following the announcement, the newspaper, which has almost 55 million Twitter followers,

lost its verification badge.

But it is unclear whether all organisations must sign up to the subscription service in order to remain verified.

Ten thousand of the most-followed organisations on Twitter will be exempt from the rules, the New York Times reports, citing an internal Twitter document.

Since December, Twitter has introduced three different coloured verification badges: gold ticks are used for business organisations, grey ticks are for government-affiliated accounts or multilateral organisations, and blue ticks are used for individual accounts.

Many news organisations including CNN, the Los Angeles Times and the

Washington Post - companies which also said they will not pay for Twitter verification - now have gold ticks.

Other New York Times accounts, such as New York Times Arts and New York Times Travel, also have the gold badge.

The removal of the blue ticks seems to be happening gradually. This could be because it is largely a manual process, according to The Washington Post, citing former employees of the company.

Celebrities like American basketball great LeBron James, who said he would not be paying for Twitter verification, still has a blue tick. The same is true of US rapper Ice-T, who has also criticised the new fee-paying system.

Opec oil producers announce surprise cut in output

BBC - Several of the world's largest oil exporters have announced surprise cuts in production in a move which is expected to push up prices.

Saudi Arabia, Iraq and several Gulf states said they were cutting output to support market stability.

Oil prices soared when Russia invaded Ukraine, but are now back at levels seen before the conflict began.

However, the US has been calling for producers to increase output in order to push energy prices lower.

High energy and fuel prices last year helped to drive up inflation - the rate at which prices rise - putting pressure on many households' finances.

Responding to news of the latest cuts, a spokesperson for the US National Security Council said: "We don't think cuts are advisable at this moment given market uncertainty - and we've made that clear."

The reduction in output - which amounts to more than one million barrels per day - is being made by members of the Opec+ oil producers. The group accounts for about 40% of all the world's crude oil output.

Saudi Arabia is reducing output by 500,000 bpd and Iraq by 211,000. The UAE, Kuwait, Algeria and Oman are also making cuts.

A Saudi energy ministry



official said the move was "a precautionary measure aimed at supporting the stability of the oil market", the official Saudi Press Agency said.

Analysts said they expected oil prices - which are currently at about \$80 a barrel - to rise as a result. Oil broker PVM told Reuters that prices could rise by "as much as \$3" a barrel, while the head of investment firm Pickering Energy Partners said prices could jump by \$10.

This surprise announcement is significant for several reasons.

Despite price fluctuations in recent months, there were concerns that global demand for oil would outstrip supply, especially towards the end of the year. Analysts expect oil prices to shoot up following today's announcement, which could potentially put more pressure on inflation - worsening the cost-of-living crisis and

raising the risk of recession.

Interestingly, this announcement comes just a day before the Opec+ meeting. There were indications from members that they would stick to the same production policy, meaning there would be no fresh cuts, which is why it has come as a huge surprise. There is a possibility that more members of the group could announce voluntary cuts - squeezing supplies even more.

The development will also likely further strain ties between the US and Saudi Arabia-led Opec+. The White House had called on the group to increase supplies to cool down prices and check Russian finances.

However, today's announcement also underlines the close cooperation between oil-producing countries and Russia.

The latest reductions come on top of a cut announced by Opec+ in Octo-

ber last year of two million barrels per day (bpd).

However, last year's cut came despite calls from the US and other countries for oil producers to pump more crude.

When the Opec+ group announced its production cuts in October, US President Joe Biden said he was "disappointed by the short-sighted decision".

The Opec+ group includes the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) as well as other countries including Russia.

Russia has said it will extend its already-announced production cut, of half a million barrels per day, until the end of the year.

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February last year sent energy prices soaring over worries about oil supplies. The price of the Brent Crude - an international benchmark - hit a high of close to \$130 a barrel at one point.

Belize imposes stricter travel rules for Jamaicans and Haitians

By Dillon De Shong

Haitians have lost their privilege to enter Belize visa free while Jamaicans must show proof that they have paid for their lodging before they enter the country as part of new immigration protocols adopted today.

The Belizean Government announced the decision after cabinet met earlier this week and discussed how nationals from both Caribbean Community island nations are using Belize as a transit point for their attempts to cross into the United States illegally.

“After a thorough discussion on the increasing number of visitors who are using Belize as a transit country to reach the United States, Cabinet determined that Belize will invoke Article 226 (a) of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, which will allow for the Minister of Immigration to immediately impose a visa requirement for Haitians wishing to visit Belize and to require Jamaican nationals to provide



evidence of fully paid non-refundable hotel reservations prior to boarding flights to Belize,” the government said.

Both Jamaica and Haiti are signatories to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), which allows nationals of member countries to travel freely between states for business, cultural and tourism purposes.

A ministerial task force to address “rampant smuggling” occurring across Belize.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration will chair the task force which will include the Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries and the Minister of Tourism & Diaspora Relations.



Accident victim Asher McIntyre.

Grenada: Man charged for causing death by dangerous driving

Loop – A 38-year-old man has been charged with causing death by dangerous driving by the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF).

Cosmo Hosten, an Event Planner from True Blue, St. George, was arrested and charged for the accident which occurred along the Grand Anse Public Road, St George, on March 6th, 2023, resulting in the death of Asher Mc Intyre of Mt. Hartman, St George.

Hosten appeared at the

St. George’s Magistrate’s Court, on March 31 and was granted bail in the sum of EC\$40,000 with two sureties.

According to bail conditions, Hosten must have no contact with any witness to the matter, surrender his travel documents and report to the South St George Police Station every Monday between the hours of 6 am and 6 pm. He is scheduled to return to court on Tuesday 18th July, 2023.

St Kitts and Nevis reaffirms support for Taiwan

By Dillon De Shong

Taiwan can count on St Kitts and Nevis' support and friendship on the diplomatic and economic front for the foreseeable future.

St Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister Dr Terrance Drew gave the commitment in a statement as both islands commemorated 40 years of diplomatic relations.

"We cherish the robust partnership between both our countries since the initiation of our bond almost 40 years ago and look forward to deeper cooperation in the future," Drew stated.

"As Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to make progress in its thrust to become a Sustainable Island State, we take this opportunity to commend the Republic of China (Taiwan) for its leadership in key areas such as technology



Prime Minister Terrance Drew and President Tsai Ing-wen. Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of St Kitts and Nevis.

and supply chains and its essential value to the green transition and climate resilience."

This commitment to remain a relationship with Taiwan from St Kitts and Nevis comes as the self-governing island lost another diplomatic partner.

Honduras recently cuts ties with Taiwan, which

calls itself the Republic of China, and signed on to the "one-China principle" which requires diplomatic partners of the communist mainland China to recognise that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, and the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China".

Only 13 countries recognise Taiwan as a sovereign state and they include Belize, Haiti, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

President Tsai Ing-wen is currently visiting some of Taiwan's diplomatic partners in the region.

Tsai is in Guatemala and will visit Belize before heading to the United States.

Haitian man stabs US tourist in Turks & Caicos Islands

Loop – A 35-year-old Haitian national was arrested by police on the Turks and Caicos Islands today after he allegedly stabbed an American tourist.

The Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RTCIPF) said Santos Charles allegedly attacked the 48-year-old tourist with a knife during a confrontation in the vicinity of Salt Mills, Grace Bay.

The injured man was rushed to Cheshire Hall Medical Centre where he was treated.

Police said Charles was arrested at the scene and taken into custody.

In a statement, Commissioner of Police Trevor Botting comment said the attack was the second act of aggression allegedly carried out by the man within a 24-hour period.

"I can confirm that he had been in police custody overnight, having been involved in an unrelated incident at a resort where he caused a disturbance," Botting said.

"I have ordered an internal review

of the arrest, detention and subsequent release of Mr. Charles following the incident at the resort last night. I am aware of the speculation being circulated in various chat groups and social media outlets, however, be assured that the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force will continue investigations into the factual circumstances surrounding the incident."

The top cop called on witnesses to come forward and assist police with their investigation.

Russian strike on eastern city Kostyantynivka 'kills six'

By Laurence Peter

Ukraine says heavy Russian shelling has killed at least six civilians in Kostyantynivka, an industrial city near embattled Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine.

Missiles and rockets damaged 16 apartment blocks and other buildings including a nursery school, head of the presidential staff Andriy Yermak said on social media.

The toll was not verified by the BBC.

The city is just 27km (17 miles) west of Bakhmut, where many have died on both sides in months of heavy fighting.

Mr Yermak said the Russians hit Kostyantynivka with S-300 surface-to-air missiles and Uragan rockets, and at least eight people were injured.

The city is near Kramatorsk and Sloviansk, two key cities which Russia is striving to capture in order to complete its occupation of Donetsk region. Kostyantynivka's population before Russia's February 2022 invasion was about 70,000.

Explosions also rocked Russian-occupied Melitopol on Sunday, the southern city's Ukrainian mayor Ivan Fedorov said. He said the blasts targeted the rail depot there.

Melitopol has been hit repeatedly by Ukrainian missiles because it is a trans-



Ruined apartment blocks in Kostyantynivka.

port hub for the Russian military, lying just north of Russian-occupied Crimea.

On Saturday Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu told fellow Russian commanders that steps were being taken to ramp up ammunition production. "The volume of supplies of the most needed ammunition has been determined. Necessary measures are being taken to increase them," he said.

Independent military analysts have said repeatedly that Russia is running short of precision weapons, after firing so many in the Ukraine war.

Mr Shoigu and the de-

fence ministry have been sharply criticised by Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of Russia's Wagner mercenary group, who accuses them of depriving his troops of key ammunition. Wagner - officially called a private military company - has suffered heavy losses in the Bakhmut fighting, with convicts released from Russian prisons drafted in to swell the group's numbers.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky insists that, despite heavy casualties, his forces entrenched in ruined Bakhmut will not surrender the city. The Russians are reported to have made small gains there in

recent days.

Bakhmut has little strategic value, but Ukraine has seen it as an important drain on Russia's military equipment and manpower.

In a Telegram post on Sunday Mr Zelensky praised his compatriots in a message marking a year since Russian forces were expelled from the Kyiv region.

"Ukrainian people! You have stopped the greatest anti-human force of our time. You have stopped a force that despises and wants to destroy everything that gives meaning to people. And we will free all our lands," he said.

Trump 'gearing up for battle' at New York court hearing, lawyer says

By Nadine Yousif

Former US president Donald Trump is "gearing up for a battle" ahead of his scheduled court hearing on Tuesday, his lawyer has said.

Mr Trump is expected to fly to New York City from his Mar-a-Lago home on Monday to face charges related to hush money payments made to a porn star.

He then plans to return to Florida following his court hearing, where he will address his supporters.

Mr Trump has continued to deny any wrongdoing.

His lawyer, Joe Tacopina, promised that any charges against the former president will be fought vigorously.

"He's someone who's going to be ready for this fight," Mr Tacopina told ABC's *This Week* programme on Sunday.

"We're ready for this fight. And I look forward to moving this thing along as quickly as possible to exonerate him."

Media reports have said that Mr Trump will be facing more than 30 charges related to business fraud over a \$130,000 (£105,000) pay-out to Stormy Daniels in 2016 that was made in an attempt to buy her silence over an alleged affair.

Sources familiar with the case have told US media that the former president is



Barricades have been set up outside the offices of the Manhattan District Attorney in anticipation of Donald Trump's indictment.

being charged with falsifying business records in the first degree - a felony under US law.

Details of the charges, including what they are and how many, remain under seal. Mr Tacopina has said that he himself has not yet seen the charges.

Mr Trump has been reportedly meeting with his advisors and legal team to plan his defence ahead of his flight to New York on Monday.

Law enforcement officials have told BBC's US partner, CBS News, that the former president will be escorted by members of the US Secret Service on his way to New York.

He is expected to hand himself over to authorities on Tuesday, with a hearing due to take place at 14:15 (19:15 BST) in Manhattan.

Judge Juan Merchan will preside over Mr Trump's criminal arraignment.

The Manhattan courthouse will be closed in the afternoon for the hearing, his lawyer said. The former president will not be handcuffed, but Mr Tacopina added that other details of the arraignment are still a mystery.

"This is unprecedented... I just don't know what to expect to see," he said.

"What I hope is that we get in and out of there as quickly as possible, that it's... a typical arraignment where we stand before the judge, we say 'not guilty,' we set schedules to file motions and whatnot... and we move forward and get out there," he said.

Law enforcement officials - including the FBI, New York City court of-

icers and Secret Service - have been preparing for Tuesday.

The New York Police Department has also reportedly intensified security measures in anticipation of any protests around the city.

A rally for Mr Trump with Republican House Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene has been scheduled for noon on Tuesday in New York, calling for supporters to join in "peaceful protest" against the indictment.

Later on Tuesday, Mr Trump is scheduled to return to his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida after his hearing, where he has said he will make an address at 20:15 EST.

Around a dozen of his supporters had gathered outside Mr Trump's Flor-

cont'd on pg 19

Burkina Faso expels correspondents from French newspapers

BBC - Burkina Faso has expelled journalists from two leading French newspapers, in the latest move against France by Burkina Faso's military junta.

Sophie Douce of *Le Monde* and Agnès Faivre of *Libération* arrived in Paris after being given 24 hours to leave.

The expulsions follow the publication of a *Libération* investigation into a video which showed children being executed in military barracks.

The authorities described it as manipulation disguised as journalism.

The two newspapers condemned the expulsions as a major setback for press freedom in the former French colony.

Douce said plain-clothed security officers had visited her house on Saturday and said her accreditation was being withdrawn.

Douce's reporting "obviously ended up seeming unbearable" to the military regime that seized power in a coup last September, *Le Monde's* Director Jérôme Fenoglio said in a statement.

Libération said the investigation by Faivre into children and adolescents allegedly being killed in a military barracks was likely to have displeased the authorities.

"These restrictions on freedom of information are unacceptable and the sign of a power that refuses to allow its actions to be questioned," it said.



Burkina Faso has been taking a tough line against France since Capt Ibrahim Traoré (C) took power last year.

The expulsion of the journalists is the latest sign that Capt Ibrahim Traoré's regime is cracking down on French media.

It had earlier suspended broadcasts of two state-owned media outlets, France 24 and Radio France International (RFI).

France 24 was suspended last month after the authorities accused it of being a "communications agency" of the militants by broadcasting an interview with the head of al-Qaeda's North Africa wing, Yezid Mebarek, who is also known as Abu Ubaydah Yusuf al-Anabi.

France 24 described the allegation as defamatory, saying it had never invit-

ed the al-Qaeda leader to speak directly on its programmes, and had "simply reported his words in the form of a column, ensuring the necessary distance and context".

In December, RFI was suspended after being accused of broadcasting false reports, which it denied.

Burkina Faso was once a staunch ally of France, but the military regime has been turning its back on the former colonial power.

Instead, it is seen to be strengthening ties with Russia in a bid to defeat militant Islamists who have wreaked havoc across the region. In February, French troops pulled out after the regime asked them to leave.

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ida home over the weekend, waving "Trump 2024" flags and banners at passing motorists, many of whom honked their horns in support - but also disagreement.

They were outnumbered at the site by journalists, photographers and camera crews waiting for Mr Trump's departure to New

York.

"We're just here to let him know we have his back," one woman told the BBC. "Just like he's always had ours... he'll go up to New York and beat this very soon."

Mr Trump, who is running for president again in 2024, has accused the Manhattan district attorney of

"political prosecution".

He is the first US president - sitting or former - to be charged with a criminal felony.

Other Republicans, including House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, have spoken out in support of him and have also accused the district attorney of weaponising the criminal justice

system to influence the outcome of next year's presidential election.

In response, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said the charges had been brought by citizens of New York doing their civic duty - and neither the former president nor Congress could interfere with proceedings.

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Garden Stars extend lead at top of first division league

Unbeaten leaders Garden Stars have opened up a 19-points gap at the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) First Division league.

Garden Stars recorded their 16th win in 17 matches by surging to a 3-1 victory over Bolans at the Bolans playing field on Friday to advance to 39 points, 19 points clear of their closest rivals John Hughes.

Karique Knight and Tarek Charles were among the scorers for Garden Stars while Karanja Mack scored a consolation goal for Bolans, who remain in 9th place on 19 points after losing for the 8th time in 17 outings.

John Hughes, who are in second place, dropped points further behind runaway leaders Garden Stars, slumping to a 4-1 loss against Fort Road at the Golden Grove Playing field on Thursday.

The goals for Fort Road were scored by Jermaine Meade in the 43rd minute, Nosakhare Edoleyi converted an own goal in the 49th minute, Ezekiel Thomas netted in the 55th minute and Rashid Burton also converted an own goal in the 84th minute.

Troy Jules scored a consolation goal for John Hughes, who were beat-



The Garden Stars football team. (File photo)

en for the fifth time in 17 matches, but remain in second place on 30 points.

Fort Road will advance to 24 points but will also remain in seventh place on goal difference after securing their seventh win in 17 matches.

Amali Colbourne and Commarly Joseph each scored twice as Green City will remain in third place on goal difference after romping to a four-nil drubbing of bottom team JSC Progressors in their encounter at the Bendals playing field.

Colbourne had conversions in the 19th and 21st minute, while Joseph scored in the 62nd and 77th minute for Green City, who will advance to 29 points after claiming their ninth win in 16 matches.

JSC Progressors will remain firmly rooted at the bottom of the 12-team competition with six points after losing for the 13th time in 17 outings.

Lion Hill will remain in fourth place on goal difference after snatching a 1-0 win against Young Lions at the Old Road playing field.

Cassell Southwell scored the lone goal of the match in the 23rd minute to give Lion Hill their 8th win in 17 matches to advance to 29 points.

Young Lions will remain in sixth place on goal difference with 24 points despite suffering their ninth loss in 17 matches.

Bendals will stay fifth in the standings after being given a 3-0 win by default over West Ham, who failed to turn up for the schedule

meeting at the Fort Road playing field.

Bendals advanced to 27 points after getting their 8th win in 17 matches, while West Ham will remain second from bottom of the standings on nine points after slipping to their 11th loss in 16 encounters.

A 60th minute conversion by Cecil Daley was sufficient to give Police a 1-0 win against Potters Tigers in their first division affair at the Potters playing field.

Police will advance to 23 points and will remain in 8th place after securing their sixth win in 17 matches, while Potters Tigers will stay third from bottom of the standings with 16 points after suffering their 9th loss in 17 matches.



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COMING SOON APRIL 5TH

Second practice match between Windwards and Leewards ends in a tie

The second practice match between the under-15 teams of the Leeward Islands and the Windwards Islands ended in a tie at the Police Recreation Ground on Friday.

Set 181 to win, the Leeward Islands just fell short as they finished on exactly the same total as the Windwards in their victory chase. The Leewards were all out for 180 in 38.3 overs.

J'Quan Athanaze hit a top-score of 35 off 53 balls before he was run out, Lawshorn Bergan contributed 32, opener Lyhte Browne struck 24 and captain Matthew Miller chipped in with 23.

Windwards skipper Theo Edward grabbed three wickets for 39 runs and Leon Alexander captured two for 42.

Opener Johnathan Daniel top-scored with 65 off 66 balls and Cody Fontenelle contributed 25 off 30 balls in the Windwards total of 180 off 39.4 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Jathan Edwards captured three wickets for 26 runs and Rondre Daniels picked up two wickets for 15 runs.

The Windward Islands had coasted to a five-wicket victory over the Leeward Islands in the first of the two limited overs practice matches at the same venue last Wednesday.



Players and officials of the Windward and Leeward Islands teams at the end of their two practice matches at the Police Recreation Grounds on Friday, 31st March, 2023. (Photo courtesy LICB)

The Leeward Islands won the toss and batted first and were dismissed for 113 off 32.2 overs. In reply, the Windward Islands cruised to victory at 117 for five in 23.1 overs.

Both teams were using the practice matches to finalize their preparations for the Cricket West Indies Rising Stars Under-15 Super50 Tournament, which is being hosted here in Antigua and Barbuda from 2nd to 13th April.

The Windward Islands have already selected their 14-member squad and four reserve players, while the Leeward Islands finalized their squad after the second practice match. Antiguan Matthew Miller will once again be captaining the Leewards in this month's regional tournament.

The six regional teams, including defending cham-

pions Barbados, will be participating in the limited overs tournament in which matches will be played across three venues here in Antigua.

The five rounds of matches will be played at Ball Beef in Liberta, the Coolidge Cricket Ground and the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, which will also host the awards and closing ceremony at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, 12th April.

The regional tournament will bowl off with the first round of matches, due to start at 9:30 am tomorrow, Tuesday, 4th April.

The Leewards will open their campaign against the Windwards at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. Barbados will take on Jamaica at Ball Beef in Liberta, while Trinidad & Tobago will clash with Guyana at the Coolidge Cricket Ground.

Leeward Islands 14-member squad: Matthew Miller (captain), Lyhte Browne (vice-captain), Sachin Saunders, Tanez Francis, Kunal Tilokani, Lawshorn Bergan, Eirette Richards, Jaheem Clarke, Amoree Jones, Jhadone Herbert, J'Quan Athanaze, Krishna Gidhari, Rondre Daniel and Jathan Edward.

Full Windward Islands squad: Theo Edward (captain), Leon Alexander, Khavaughn Bartholomew, Jordan Charles, Johnathan Daniel, Lybird Darroux, Lebron Douglas, Earsinho Fontaine, Cody Fontenelle, Elran Glasgow, Jaheem Simeon, Aaron St. Claire, Kenneth Valmond, Tyler Venner. Reserves: Jawayne Adams, Denzie Jno Paul, Xzavion Rock, Zach Thomas. Coach: John Eugene; Manager: Johnson Richardson.

Sports News



Reigning female club champions Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad volleyball team. (File photo)

Stoneville and Da Squad stay on course in strong defense of volleyball titles

Stoneville and Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad notched up victories in their latest games

to maintain their strong start in defense of their respective male and female division titles in the Anti-

gua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League.

Stoneville overcame High Flyers in four sets in the second game of a double header at the indoor volleyball stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday night.

After losing the opening set 20-25, Stoneville rebounded to win the next three sets and the match.

The defending men's division champions close out the encounter, winning 25-13, 25-16, 25-17 to clinch their fourth win in five outings.

It was the second defeat in five encounters for High Flyers.

Da Squad cruised to a comfortable 3-0 straight-set victory over Starz Seniors in the opening encounter of Saturday night's double header.

It was a top of the table match-up between two teams that would have won their first three encounters, but the reigning female champions showed the gulf in class between the two teams by cruising to their 25-13, 25-22, 25-20 victory to keep their unbeaten record intact.

Da Squad are now sole leaders of the female division with a perfect 4-0 record, while Starz Seniors, who lost for the first time in the competition, are now in second place with a 3-1 record.

The competition will resume with another double header at the same venue on Wednesday, 5th April.

Stoneville will face Jets in a female affair at 6:30 pm, while newcomers Pytonz will clash with Renegades in a men's division encounter at 7:30 pm.

AGS record fourth innings victory in schools' cricket

The Antigua Grammar School have claimed their fourth innings victory in the Under-19 Boys Division two-day competition of the Inter-Schools Cricket Championship.

Inspired by a fine-all-round performance by Jewel Andrew, Antigua Grammar crushed Ottos Comprehensive School by an innings and 137 runs at Rising Sun in the latest round of two-day matches.

Andrew grabbed six wickets for two runs and fast bowler Glen Williams snapped up three wickets for four runs as Ottos Comprehensive were bundled out in their first innings for 22 in 8.4 overs.

Andrew then struck his second consecutive unbeaten century, slamming 127 not out while Shamar Pereira chipped in with 45 to propel Antigua Grammar



Antigua Grammar School allrounder Jewel Andrew. (File photo)

School to 210 for two declared in their reply.

Facing a deficit of 180 runs, Ottos Comprehensive were dismissed for 51 off 13.1 overs in their second innings.

Pereira snatched six wickets for six runs with his

off-spin while Isaiah Attwood claimed five wickets for 15 runs.

Clare Hall Secondary and the Sir Novelle Richards Academy played to a draw in their two-day encounter.

Batting first, Sir Novel-

le Richards Academy were dismissed for 94 in 24 overs in their first innings. Tyree Moore grabbed four for 23 and Kimberly Anthony snapped up three wickets for nine runs.

In reply, Clare Hall Secondary made 74 for nine off 20 overs. Tyree Moore made 17 and Amos Christian got 15.

Shawn Harris grabbed four wickets for six runs, Demar Adams picked up three wickets for 20 runs and Jared Jno Baptiste captured two wickets for 27 runs.

Sir Novelle Richards Academy were 66 for eight off 26 overs in their second innings when the match ended. Jared Jno Baptiste made 27 while Tyree Moore claimed three wickets for 20 runs and Jordan Castello snapped up two wickets for three runs.

cont'd from pg 26

trophy and also happy that I can bring smiles to the faces of the supporters.”

Chasing 143 to win, the Hurricanes started the final day on 81 for one, and at 91 for one, they looked set for a comfortable victory.

However, Sinclair's incredible spell of bowling removed two key Hurricanes batsmen, Keacy Carty for 21 and Devon Thomas for nought and caused a collapse in which the Hurricanes spectacularly lost their last nine wickets for 34 runs that led to their surprising defeat. Opener Kieran Powell top-scored with 61.

The Leeward Islands off-spinner Rahkeem Cornwall finished with the most wickets, grabbing 35 scalps in the tournament while the Hurricanes' skipper Jahmar Hamilton had the most dismissals (19) with 17 catches and two stumpings.

Windward Islands captain Alick Athanaze scored a total of 647 runs to finish with the most runs, while Zachary McCaskie of Barbados Pride claimed the most catches (13).

Guyana ended the tournament with 84.0 points, Windward Islands Volcanoes were second on 74.2 points, while last year's champions Barbados

Pride ended third on 55.6 points.

They were followed by T&T Red Force with 49.4 points, Leeward Islands Hurricanes with 46.2 points and Jamaica Scorpions with 25.6 points.

Looking ahead, the new Headley Weekes Series will feature two teams drawn from the top performers in the 2023 West Indies Championship and players outside the starting West Indies Test XI.

The two teams will play each other and the West Indies Academy in a three-match Series running from 18th April to 6th May, to be played at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua.

Guyana beat Leewards en route to West Indies Championship Title



Guyana Harpy Eagles celebrate after winning the West Indies Championship title and claim the Headley-Weekes Trophy at Providence in Guyana, 1st April, 2023. (CWI Media)

Georgetown, Guyana – Guyana Harpy Eagles secured a thrilling 17-run victory over the Leeward Islands Hurricanes to win the West Indies Championship title and claim the Headley-Weekes Trophy.

Kevin Sinclair's six-wicket haul sealed the deal for Guyana as they bowled out Leewards for 125 on the fourth and final morning on Saturday at the Guyana National Stadium.

Off-spinner Sinclair's career-best figures of six for 33 from 16.5 overs combined with left-arm spinner Veerasammy Permaul, who took three for 44, as nine wickets fell on the final

morning.

Captain Leon Johnson had the honour of raising the Headley-Weekes Trophy, capping off the final day of his professional career. The presentation was done by Enoch Lewis, Director of Cricket West Indies.

"This was a great performance ... a great team performance and I'm massively proud of everyone who contributed towards us winning.

"We worked hard before the season, and we worked hard throughout this season. We were really tested in this final match, and we responded to the challenge with a magnificent win,"

Johnson said.

"One of the great things about the season was the progress made by the young players in the team. As various time they stood up with major performances and that was great to see.

"We made progress. Also, tribute to the senior players who also led from the front, offered invaluable advice and made my job as captain easier on and off the field.

"Thanks to the fans and all those persons who backed us from start to finish. As a proud Guyanese I retire from the game lifting this prestigious

cont'd on pg 25