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# APUA ADDRESSING WATER WOES

*Story on Page 2*



Senator Rawdon Turner (third from left), commended PABRO's remarkable donation, including an autoclave machine, sanitary products, masks, pediatric scales, and protective gear to the Parham Community Clinic. *Story on page 6.*



# Local News



## APUA continues efforts to resolve water issues

The government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) are working towards improving the distribution of water, starting this month.

APUA has reported that there are currently 11 million gallons of water stored at the water plants, which is 19 million less than what is required for all consumers to receive a 24-hour supply of water. Therefore, APUA aims to resume activity at the Ffryes Reverse

Osmosis Plant by the end of next week and begin production of potable water in Barbuda using green technology.

Meanwhile, in commenting on specific areas of improvement, Hon. Melford Nicholas, Minister for Public Utilities, expressed, "The production of water is the first thing that we have to improve upon. We do not have enough water in production. I am happy to say that by the end of this month, the second plant at Fort James will be

commissioned."

This second plant at Fort James to be commissioned will lead to the production of another 500,000 gallons of water and will ensure that Fort James supplies 1 million gallons of water to consumers.

He adds that the ultrafiltration system is expected to be delivered in October of this year to enhance the consistency of the water supply throughout the nation.

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## A&B takes lead in strengthening agricultural health and food safety policies

Over the past five months, Ms. Stacy Rose, a policy expert consultant, has been working closely with key stakeholders from Antigua and Barbuda's Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) System to develop a comprehensive National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Policy and Action Plan. The policy's development involved a thorough situational analysis and a national stakeholder prioritization workshop, which brought together representatives from various ministries, regulatory bodies, industry players, and the private sector.

The European Union-funded 11th European Development Fund Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Project (11th EDF SPS Measures Project) is being implemented in partnership with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), and CARIFORUM. As part of this initiative, Antigua and Barbuda has been chosen to pilot the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Policy Framework, developed under the project's collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFS).

On May 23rd, 2023, a National Agricultural



Health and Food Safety Policy Validation Workshop was held to review the draft policy. During the workshop, notable remarks were made by Ms. Mariana Arias, Programme Manager at the Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Barbados, highlighting the project's aim to enhance trade and improve the health of animals, plants, and humans. Dr. Janet Lawrence, the 11th EDF SPS Project Manager and IICA's Agricultural Health, Food Safety, and Quality Specialist for the Caribbean, emphasized the project's objectives in building CARIFORUM countries' capacity to comply with SPS measures and modernize SPS services in the region.

Dr. Gavin Peters, Chief Executive Officer of CAHFS, commended Antigua and Barbuda for pioneering the National Policy Framework and stressed the importance of developing and implementing similar policies across all countries in the region. Minister E.P. Chet Greene of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agricul-

ture, Trade, and Barbuda Affairs expressed the significance of strong policies and regulations in preventing food-borne illnesses and safeguarding consumer health and livelihoods.

During the workshop, the draft policy underwent a thorough review, and

amendments were proposed. The finalized version of the policy will be officially submitted to the government for enactment, followed by the implementation of an action plan outlined in the document.

With Antigua and Barbuda leading the way in strengthening agricultural health and food safety policies, the region is taking a significant step towards a more efficient and effective Sanitary and Phytosanitary regulatory regime, ensuring the health and well-being of consumers, livestock, and crops while promoting sustainable development.

### NOTICE

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Dated the 25<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2023

# Local News



## Caribbean professionals participate in climate change specialized training

Six more Caribbean professionals have commenced a year-long journey in the University of the West Indies (UWI) Climate Change and Health Leaders Fellowship Training Program.

They are: Gerty Pierre - Climate Change Director, Ministry of Environment, Haiti; Dr. Clint Todd Lewis - Senior Environmental Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Dr. Nneka Hull James - Veterinary Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Antigua and Barbuda; Dr. Nyoni Winchester - Instructor, St. George's University, Grenada; Jessica John - Vice President, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Nutritionists and Dietitians, Trinidad and Tobago; and Roshnie Jhanjan - Policy Advi-

sor, CARICOM and PAHO affairs and CARICOM Focal Point, Ministry of Health, Suriname.

Their orientation took place on June 1 and followed a summative workshop for cohort two, in Kingston, Jamaica.

The goal of the Fellowship Program, funded by the European Union (EU), is to develop strong, effective Climate Change leaders implementing the One Health Approach. This approach recognises the shared challenges across the region and the intricate interconnections between the health of people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.

During the address to the new cohort, Dean Chambliss, Subregional Programme Director of the Pan Amer-

ican Health Organization's Caribbean Subregional Program Coordination Office, highlighted the significance of the Fellowship within the EU/CARIFORUM Climate Change and Health project. The primary objective of this project is to strengthen climate-resilient health systems in the Caribbean region, and the Fellowship plays a crucial role in achieving this goal.

"Systems, however, are conditional on having well placed, trained, motivated people who are working collaboratively to empower action... The inter-sectorial and multidisciplinary approach of the Climate Change and Health Leaders fellowship training program is designed to create leaders with skills and expertise to address

*cont'd on pg 5*

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## Embracing solar tile technology: Pioneering clean energy at Nelson's Dockyard National Park

A project sponsored by the British High Commission's UK Climate Diplomacy Fund has set in motion an exciting study within the historic Dockyard Precinct to explore the feasibility of integrating photovoltaic tiles for power generation. The National Parks Authority, supported by grant funding from the UK's Climate Resilience Fund, aims to revolutionize energy usage at the UNESCO World Heritage Site and the Nelson's Dockyard National Park.

Unlike conventional solar panels, these innovative photovoltaic tiles seamlessly blend solar technology with the traditional wooden shingles that characterize the Dockyard's architectural heritage.

This integration not only enhances the aesthetic appeal by preserving the historical structures' authenticity but also provides structural resilience against hurricane-force winds—a



*Left to Right - Kadeem Joseph, Political & Projects Officer at the British High Commission in Antigua and Barbuda, Desley Gardner, Heritage Officer at the NPA, Lindsay Thompson, Resident British Commissioner in Antigua and Barbuda, Ann Marie Martin, Parks Commissioner, Charley Williams MBE, Deputy High Commissioner Bridgetown, Dr. Christopher Waters, Heritage Manager at NPA*

vital consideration for the region. Each tile is connected via cables to the power distribution board, combining efficiency and design without compromising the site's architecture and visual integrity.

The successful implementation of this project

would mark a significant milestone for the Nelson's Dockyard National Park, serving as a global model for heritage sites seeking to embrace clean energy solutions while preserving their cultural authenticity.

By reducing reliance on fossil fuels and generating

electricity through photovoltaics, the National Parks Authority aims to enhance the financial sustainability of the park.

This transition will result in reduced electricity bills, allowing more funds to be allocated towards conservation efforts, stabilization projects, and the development of heritage and environmental programs. Furthermore, adopting this environmentally friendly approach will contribute to reducing the park's carbon footprint, aligning with broader sustainability goals.

With the visionary embrace of solar tile technology, Nelson's Dockyard National Park paves the way for other heritage sites worldwide to embark on similar clean energy initiatives. This project exemplifies the harmonious coexistence of tradition and innovation, safeguarding the legacy of the past while creating a more sustainable and resilient future.

### *cont'd from pg 4*

the complex challenges related to climate change and its impacts on health. This threat requires that we plan more strategically, strive to influence policy development, and support community action and advocacy," Mr. Chambliss stated.

He underlined the need for research and monitoring to better understand the specific health impacts of climate change in the Caribbean context, enhanced early warning systems to alert communities and healthcare providers about impending climate-re-

lated health hazards, and increased awareness of adaptive strategies and behavioral changes to reduce vulnerability at the individual, institutional and societal levels.

The prioritization of climate change adaptation and resilience planning in the health sector and interdisciplinary collaboration and active participation in regional and international dialogue on climate change and health were also highlighted.

Co-Coordinator of the program, Professor Christopher Oura expressed that in addition to attending themed

online sessions throughout the year, the Fellows are exposed to a "learning-by-doing approach." They are expected to implement a national project, a symposium and spend a week at a CARICOM Climate Change and Health Agency. "Our fellows are solving real problems and as you finish the fellowship, your involvement will be critical going forward," Prof. Oura said.

The Fellowship is one aspect of the EU/CARIFORUM Climate Change and Health Project, which runs until 2025.

# Local News

## Senator Turner expresses gratitude to Parham Community Group (PABRO)

Senator Rawdon Turner extended his heartfelt appreciation to The Parham Community Group (PABRO) for their exceptional support and generosity towards the Parham community.

Yesterday, PABRO's remarkable donation, including an autoclave machine, sanitary products, masks, pediatric scales, and protective gear to the Parham Community Clinic, exemplifies the immense impact community groups can have on our healthcare system and the well-being of our constituents.

The donation of the autoclave machine is particularly invaluable, as it will enhance the Clinic's ability to maintain the highest standards of sterilization and infection control. This essen-



*Some of the items donated by PABRO.*

tial equipment ensures the safety and health of both patients and dedicated healthcare professionals.

Moreover, the provision of sanitary products, masks, pediatric scales, and protective gear will significantly augment the Clinic's capacity to deliver comprehensive care and create a secure environment for all individu-

als seeking its services.

"I am deeply grateful to PABRO and its members for their unwavering commitment to the betterment of our community. The support provided by community groups like PABRO is instrumental in strengthening our healthcare infrastructure and uplifting the lives of our fellow community

members. Together, we can continue to build a resilient Parham, where everyone has access to high-quality healthcare and a brighter future," Turner said.

"Once again, thank you, PABRO, for your remarkable generosity and for being a shining example of the power of community support," he concluded.

## The Central Board of Health inaugurates CBH Public Health Week

Today marks the conclusion of The Central Board of Health's Public Health Week, which was a new event added to this year's calendar of activities.

Senior Public Health Inspector, Julianne Mannix stated that as a regulatory body with the mandate for a wide range of environmental and public health matters, the Central Board of Health has a vast amount of information that can be shared with the public to improve a person's wellbeing and protect the environment.

She further explained that this is the reason for developing such an event.

This, she says "is to ensure that the public health department can further engage and educate the public."

The event started on June 19th and is scheduled to end on June 23, 2023.

The public engagement focused on a different public health topic every day.

Monday- Potable Water-Media Day, with posts on social media

Tuesday-Rodent Control-Media day, holding talks with officers from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force and a presentation to staff from the Ministry of Agriculture

Wednesday-Onsite wastewater disposal systems- Media Day, talks

with officers from the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force

Thursday: Air quality, mold, and hazardous material. Posts on social media

Friday: Cleaning, disinfection, hand hygiene, and cough etiquette

The participants have been very receptive, and the department hopes that the information learned will be shared and put into practice.

The department intends to make the CBH Public Health Week an annual event.

Information about the week of events can be found on the department's Facebook page.

## Antigua and Barbuda continues to take a lead role in SIDS-related matters

Antigua and Barbuda's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Tumasie Blair joined a distinguished group of speakers, sharing their thoughts on a broad range of pressing issues affecting Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at the Paris Summit #NouveauPacteFinancier.

In championing the cause for SIDS, Blair declared that island states face more troubling times if a solution-driven pathway to building resilience and securing prosperity is not achieved.

"We need 100 percent debt relief, we need to access all forms of financing

in a simple and sustainable manner, we need to achieve the sustainable development goals," Blair urged.

The two-day Summit for a New Global Financing Pact endeavours to address the unfairness in the global

financial system, particularly for low-income and developing countries like Antigua and Barbuda. Mr. Blair's attendance at the Summit and participation on the Panel is crucial as he is a key figure in the ongoing work to establish

the UN-mandated Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI).

It also comes as preparations begin to move into high gear for Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of the 4th SIDS Conference next year, 2024.




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# Local News

## Senator Turner takes part in Pares Primary award ceremony

Senator Rawdon Turner was honored to be a part of the Principal's Award Ceremony at Pares Primary School, where they celebrated the remarkable achievements of the students.

Senator Turner said it is crucial to

recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our children at an early age, as it instills a sense of pride, motivation, and a lifelong love for learning.

The event which was held earlier this week highlighted the dedication and hard work demonstrated by the young individuals, and according to Senator Turner, it was truly inspiring to witness their achievements.

Mr. Turner had the privilege of presenting the top male and female students with a \$1,500.00 scholarship each towards their schooling.

These scholarships will provide invaluable support and enable them to continue their educational journey with greater opportunities and resources.

He congratulated the recipients and commended all the students of Pares Primary School for their outstanding efforts. It is through events like these that the youth are empowered and society can nurture their potential, and shape a brighter future for the community.



Senator Turner extended gratitude to the school administration, teachers, and parents for their unwavering commitment to the education and growth of these exceptional students.



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## A&B boasts lowest US visa denial rate in OECS

Loop - The rate of rejection for United States non-immigrant visa applications by Antigua and Barbuda was one of the lowest in the Caribbean region for the year 2022.

A report on the US State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs website says that Antiguan and Barbudan nationals who applied for and were denied B-1 or B-2 visas last year stand at 14.09 per cent.

In comparison, the rate of visa rejections for Dominica is 25 per cent, Grenada - 16.58 per cent, St Kitts & Nevis - 17.14 per cent, St Lucia - 16.72 per cent, and St Vincent & Grenadines - 14.12 per cent.

That means that the twin island has the highest approval rate in the OECS.

Meanwhile, the report disclosed that across CARICOM, the Bahamas has an 8.3 per cent refusal rate, Barbados - 6.55 per cent, Belize - 26.45 per cent, Guyana - 28.42 per cent, Jamaica - 30.04 per cent, Suriname - 11.91 per cent, and Trinidad & Tobago - 13.64 per cent.

US law generally requires visa applicants to be interviewed by a consular officer at a US Embassy or Consulate. In the case of citizens of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent & the Grenadines-the US Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados.

After relevant information is reviewed, the appli-

cation is approved or denied, based on standards established in the North American country.

An application may be denied because the consular officer does not have all of the information required to determine if the applicant is eligible to receive a visa, because the applicant does not

qualify for the visa category for which he or she applied, or because the information reviewed indicates the applicant falls within the scope of one of the inadmissibility or ineligibility grounds of the law.

An applicant's current and/or past actions, such as drug or criminal activities, as

examples, may make the applicant ineligible for a visa.

If denied a visa, in most cases the applicant is notified of the section of law which applies.

For persons from Antigua and Barbuda, a US visa is a major asset to have with the various states being popular vacation spots.



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# Belize certified malaria-free by WHO

CMC - The World Health Organisation (WHO) has certified Belize as malaria-free, following the country's over 70 years of continued efforts to stamp out the disease.

"WHO congratulates the people and government of Belize and their network of global and local partners for this achievement", said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

"Belize is another example of how, with the right tools and the right approach, we can dream of a malaria-free future."

Belize now joins 41 other countries to have been certified as malaria-free by WHO, including 11 countries in the Region of the Americas.

"Following the achievement of Paraguay, Argentina, and El Salvador, Belize today becomes the fourth country in the Americas and the second in Central America to be certified as free of malaria over the last 5 years," PAHO Director, Dr Jarbas Barbosa said.

"This is an extraordinary achievement for Belize, and will also serve as inspiration for the other endemic countries in the Americas."

WHO said that over the last three decades, Belize



has achieved a dramatic reduction in its malaria burden, from a peak of about 10 000 cases in 1994 to zero indigenous cases in 2019.

Belize's success has hinged on strong surveillance for malaria, access to diagnosis, and effective vector control methods including insecticide-treated mosquito nets and indoor spraying of insecticides.

Trained community health workers have played a vital role in timely diagnosis and treatment.

In 2015, Belize re-oriented its malaria programme to place a greater focus on enhanced surveillance among high-risk populations, allowing for strategic targeting of interventions and available resources in priority areas.

Belize maintained ma-

laria surveillance efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and made efforts to integrate malaria and COVID-19 surveillance systems.

The WHO said that a long-standing partnership between the national malaria programme and the Belize Vector Ecology Centre ensured entomological surveillance, which provided critical information on the distribution and density of malaria-carrying mosquitoes and their resistance to insecticides used in malaria control. Cross-border collaboration with neighbouring Mexico and Guatemala has also been key to success.

Belize has participated in regional and sub-regional initiatives to keep malaria at the forefront of their public health agenda,

such as Elimination of Malaria in Mesoamerica and the Island of Hispaniola, financially supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the Regional Malaria Elimination Initiative, an initiative established by the Inter-American Development Bank with technical leadership from PAHO and the participation of the Council of Health Ministers of Central America.

With support from United States Agency for International Development, (USAID) PAHO said it has provided technical cooperation throughout Belize's anti-malaria campaign.

"This success in Belize contributes to PAHO's Disease Elimination Initiative which aims to eliminate more than 30 communicable diseases, including malaria, in the Americas by 2030.

"Belize is also a member of the "E-2025" initiative – a group of countries identified by WHO as having the potential to eliminate malaria by 2025."

Belize is the third country to be awarded a malaria-free status in 2023, following the certifications of Azerbaijan and Tajikistan in March.





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# The World Around Us



## Windrush scandal rumbles on five years after UK government's apology

Loop - When Thomas Tobierre's wife, Caroline, died in 2021, he didn't know how he was going to pay for her funeral.

That's because he had drained his savings while caught up in a UK immigration crackdown that improperly targeted legal residents largely from the Caribbean and other parts of the former British Empire. While a government compensation program eventually covered the cost of his wife's funeral, Tobierre is still fighting for reimbursement of the 14,000-pound pension (\$17,891) he cashed in to make ends meet when no one would hire him because of his disputed right to work.

He isn't alone. Five years after the UK government apologised and promised to compensate those who were affected in what became known as the Windrush scandal, thousands of people who had their lives upended are still battling for what they consider fair settlements.

"They've got no compassion," Tobierre told The Associated Press, referring to the slow-moving compensation claims process. "They need to be aware that what they're doing is utterly, grossly wrong."

The comments underscore the frustration of many



Thomas Tobierre looks at a photograph of him hugging his late wife, Caroline, in his house in Essex, England, Tuesday, June 20, 2023. (AP Photo/Alberto Pezzali)

people of Caribbean descent who complain the government is dragging its feet even as it prepares to mark the 75th anniversary of Windrush Day, the symbolic start of the mass migration that reshaped the UK after World War II. Events scheduled around the country will celebrate the contributions Caribbean immigrants have made to Britain since June 22, 1948.

Almost 500,000 people from Britain's Caribbean outposts came to the UK between 1948 and 1971, invited by the government to help rebuild a nation ravaged by the war. As citizens of the British

Empire, they had the right to live and work in the country. Few documents were required, especially for children, who often travelled on their parents' passports.

The Windrush scandal first came to light in 2018, when Britain's news media began reporting on the stories of long-term residents who had lost their jobs, homes and benefits, such as free medical care, because they couldn't produce paperwork proving their right to live in the UK.

Some were detained, and dozens were deported to countries they barely remembered.

While the government pledged that those wrongly targeted would be compensated swiftly, advocates for the victims say that promise has gone unfulfilled.

The most recent data from the Home Office, the government department that oversees immigration and the compensation program, shows that 46 per cent of the 6,122 claims were "fully closed" as of April, indicating that all appeals had been exhausted. But the number of outstanding victims may be far higher. The Home Office had estimated there

*cont'd on pg 14*



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- Assists with the preparation of annual budgets;
- Services brokers, provides quotations on personal lines and commercial business and direct commercial business;
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- Assists with policy signing;
- Reviews staff performance;
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- Assists with the development and execution of the company's marketing and public relations initiatives;
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# The World Around Us



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were about 12,000 victims — though not all have come forward to make claims.

Part of the reason for a discrepancy may be because many of the affected residents are uncomfortable presenting claims to the Home Office, which was responsible for the original crackdown.

Almaz Teffera, a racism researcher at Human Rights Watch, argues that administration of the program should be turned over to an independent body.

“How can a compensation scheme be held by the same agency that also committed the wrongs?” Teffera said. “There is a trust issue in the scheme from the very get-go.”

Home Secretary Suella Braverman acknowledged

there was more to do, but she insisted that the agency had made progress.

“I and the whole of government remain absolutely committed to righting the wrongs of the Windrush scandal,” Braverman said in a statement. “Already we have paid or offered more than 72 million pounds (\$91.7 million) in compensation to those affected, and we continue to make improvements so people receive the maximum award as quickly as possible. But we know there is more to do, and will work tirelessly to make sure such an injustice is never repeated.”

After early complaints about the program, an independent review completed in 2020 recommended widespread changes to speed up claims processing.

But two years later, a follow-up report found that the Home Office had failed to implement some of the most important recommendations, including improved training on issues of race, hiring more senior staff members from minority ethnic communities and increasing outside scrutiny of the agency.

Lawyers working with Windrush victims say that little has changed despite the Home Office’s commitment to honour the recommendations.

Nicola Burgess of the Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit said if that anything, things are worse.

“Many families were torn apart because of this,” Burgess said.

“So it was always a political issue. Absolutely. And

now five years on, I would say it is a political issue again, because they have rolled back on their commitment to right wrongs.”

Victims also complain about the complexity of the process, which involves filling out a 44-page questionnaire and providing documents to verify where a claimant came from, how long they’ve been in Britain and how they were affected.

Even those with legal help struggle to provide all the information required, and those without assistance are sometimes scared off, victim advocates said.

“Imagine having to put together an application form that requires you to go back 30 years ... to substantiate that you have, in fact, incurred these losses,” Teffera said. “And so, it’s retraumatizing.”

The Home Office acknowledged in December 2021 that it had made a “slow start” in compensating people, but said it had overhauled the program to make it simpler and faster.

Thomas Tobierre isn’t convinced.

His story begins like that of many caught up in the Windrush scandal.

Born on the island of St. Lucia, Tobierre moved to Britain with his family in 1961 when he was 7. Like many young people at the time, he traveled on a family passport.

His troubles began in 2017, when the company he had worked at for almost three decades closed and he

*cont'd on pg 15*



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*cont'd from pg 14*

had to find a new job.

He soon discovered that rules designed to combat illegal immigration meant he had to show proof of his right to work before anyone would hire him. But without a British passport or immigration documents, he couldn't satisfy employers, even though he had worked and paid taxes in the U.K. since he was 15.

He eventually secured the right documents, but it took a year. In the meantime, he maxed out his credit card and cashed in his pension.

His wife Caroline, a cleaner, took on more work to help make ends meet. When she told her family she was very tired, they put it down to the extra hours. It was only later, when she was diagnosed with Stage 4 bowel cancer, that they understood it was something more serious.

With a new job and no seniority, Thomas struggled to get time off to accompany her to chemotherapy appointments, particularly since he had to take public transportation after selling his car.

It was about this time that newspapers started reporting on the broader Windrush scandal and Tobierre discovered others had similar issues. After much tangling with the bureaucracy and when it became clear Caroline's cancer had spread, Tobierre finally accepted an offer of compensation from the Home Office, because he knew she didn't have much time left.

Caroline's own claim for the impact on her as a fami-

ly member wasn't processed before she died despite pleas from the family that she had but weeks to live. Desperate to pay for her funeral, Thomas and the couple's daughter Charlotte outlined their wish to give her a proper funeral on a national radio program.

Later that afternoon, the Home Office offered her a payment of 20,000 pounds,

a sum ultimately increased to 40,000 pounds.

Charlotte continues to fight, protesting the Home Office's failure to reimburse her father for his lost pension and filing her own as a family member.

Fighting for everything, documenting everything and dealing with an anonymous bureaucracy that moves at

a glacial pace has been very hard, she said. But she and her father keep telling their story since many claimants have no one.

"It's a big trauma," Charlotte said of her dealings with the Home Office. "They can compensate moneywise, but it's definitely a lifelong scar that I think every Windrush claimant will bear."

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# Regional News

## Grenada still awaiting details on CAN+ visa expedition program

Grenada's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it is still awaiting information from Canada regarding the country's recent addition to the CANADA Plus (CAN+) visa expedition program.

In a statement today, the ministry said it will update citizens about the timeline for CAN+'s rollout once it is confirmed.

"The Government of Grenada thanks the Government of Canada for affording this hassle-free visa application procedure to our citizens, and by so do-



ing, helping to advance the people to people exchanges that are a very valuable part of our relationship with Canada. The Government of Grenada continues to work toward the strengthening of

bonds between both countries," the ministry said.

It's been approximately two weeks since Canada's High Commissioner to the Eastern Caribbean, Lilian Chatterjee, announced

that Grenada and Dominica were added to the list of CAN+ eligible countries.

"Canada values its relations with Grenada. Glad to announce that Grenada is in the CAN+ program for expedited visa processing for its citizens who had Canadian visas over past 10 years or valid current US visa," Chatterjee said in a Twitter post on June 7.

Grenadians, who meet the requirements, can have their visa processed within 10 days from the date of application.

## Spanish could become a compulsory subject in Guyanese schools

CMC - President Dr Mohammed Irfaan Ali has announced his intentions to explore making Spanish a compulsory subject in secondary schools across Guyana in order to instil needed skills in students.

The Head of State, while addressing the opening of the new Good Hope Secondary School, said learning this language would be an asset to any student given Guyana's geographic location.

The president disclosed that he regretted not studying a foreign language while in high school.

He added that his appreciation for the language has grown tremendously, so much so that he believes students should be required to learn Spanish.

"We now have to move towards making Spanish compulsory in our school system because it is vitally important for young people coming up



*President Dr Mohammed Irfaan Ali.*

in this country," he said.

Ali stated that learning a foreign language will help to make students more marketable when they enter the world of work.

With these benefits, the President said he would ask the relevant author-

ities to fully examine the steps needed to push language learning in Guyana.

However, the president did not discount the value of learning other foreign languages but said learning Spanish should be the minimum foreign language requirement in schools.



# St. Kitts approves law to allow marijuana smoking in some public spaces

**By Dillon De Shong**

St Kitts and Nevis has moved one step closer to becoming one of the most marijuana-friendly places in the Caribbean as parliamentarians approved four bills regarding its use and possession.

The Smoking (designated Areas) Bill, 2023, Drugs (Prevention and Abatement of the Misuse and Abuse of Drugs) (Amendment) Bill, 2023, the Rastafari Rights Recognition Bill, 2023 and the Freedom of Conscience (Cannabis) Bill, 2023 were unanimously approved by Members of Parliament during yesterday's National Assembly Sitting.

The Smoking (designated Areas) Bill, 2023, which was presented in Parliament by Prime Minister Terrence Drew, designates certain specified public places as smoking areas, to prohibit smoking outside of a designated area in public places, to better provide for protection from exposure to certain types of smoke and for related or incidental matters.

In his opening presentation on the Bill, Drew stated: "It is not for me to judge who should smoke or who should not smoke, however, I think it is imperative that we seek to create a situation where both those who smoke and those who don't smoke can exist in harmony".

Drew said he believes creating specific places for smoking is the best scenario for St Kitts and Nevis.

"You wouldn't want people to just be in a crowd or down the street just smoking because not everybody around might want to partake in it and



that is ok as well, but you don't want people to not have an opportunity to express themselves. So, if we have ... an environment that enables all to exist, while we upkeep the law, I really think that it is the best scenario that we can have," Drew added.

Opposition Leader Mark Brantley said he was concerned the bill would encourage islanders to operate vehicles while under the influence of marijuana.

He highlighted the government's move to make the upcoming St Kitts Music Festival marijuana friendly as a potential risk for motorists and pedestrians.

"I'm simply saying now that we are taking this formal step, what happens when the festival is over and people take to our roads? I think it is a legitimate concern. It is no different to when people drink alcohol excessively and what happens when they get on our roads," he said.

Brantley said the issue goes beyond

separating smokers from non-smokers.

"We have come here time and time again and tinkered with the law but I have not seen the [educational program] roll out to say to our people these are the possible impacts," Brantley stated while questioning whether police officers have tools to detect if a motorist is driving high on marijuana.

People's Action Movement Leader, Shawn Richards, called on the government to educate the public about the effects of smoking and drug abuse.

Richards said there are many persons in St Kitts and Nevis who have developed mental issues from smoking marijuana and other drugs.

He highlighted that people have resorted to adding other drugs to their marijuana cigarettes to give the joint a "different flavour".

Richards, a former Education Minister, also expressed concerns about the long-term effects on the healthcare system.

# Ukraine strikes Chonhar bridge to Crimea, says Russia

By Paul Kirby

Ukraine has attacked a bridge linking southern Ukraine to the Crimean peninsula with long-range British missiles, Russian officials say.

The two parallel Chonhar bridges were both damaged, said the Russian-installed governor in occupied Kherson Vladimir Saldo. No-one was hurt.

Mr Saldo said it was likely British Storm Shadow missiles were used in an attack "ordered by London".

The bridge is the shortest route from Crimea to the front line in the south.

It is also an important link to the occupied city of Melitopol, which lies on the coastal route from the Russian border across southern Ukraine to Crimea.

Photos posted by Vladimir Saldo showed a gaping hole in one of the two bridges, but he said repairs would be made quickly and vehicles would take an alternative route temporarily. Another Russian-installed official, Nikolai Lukashenko, said repairs could take weeks.

Ukrainian military spokeswoman Natalia Humeniuk said on national TV that the army was aiming to disrupt Russia's supply routes and a military intelligence official, Andriy Yusov, said more attacks would follow.



*The surface of the Chonhar bridge was damaged prompting traffic to use an alternative route.*

Russia uses the road as a land bridge to Crimea, and Melitopol is thought to be one of the targets of Ukraine's counter-offensive, which began in the southern region of Zaporizhzhia earlier this month.

Russian forces seized the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in 2014 and then in February last year they invaded Ukraine's southern coastal region too.

Ukrainian forces have bombed Russian-controlled bridges in the region before. Last summer, in the weeks before they recaptured the city of Kherson on the east bank of the Dnipro river, they repeatedly attacked

the Antonivskiy bridge to stop Russian forces bringing supplies from occupied Crimea.

Then in October a bridge across the Kerch Strait linking Crimea to Russia was put out of action for weeks in a deadly attack condemned by President Vladimir Putin called an "act of terrorism". Even now the Kerch bridge is not open to all traffic.

Vladimir Saldo threatened to retaliate for the latest attack by targeting a bridge linking neighbouring Moldova with Romania. Romania, a Nato member, and Moldova condemned his comments as unacceptable.

able.

Ukraine's counter-offensive in the south and east has made slow progress, with claims of eight villages recaptured so far.

The campaign was made harder when the Kakhovka dam on the Dnipro river was destroyed this month in a suspected Russian sabotage attack. Areas downstream of the dam were flooded, making crossing the Dnipro river much harder. Dozens of people have died, farms have been ruined and water supplies have been affected.

Russian forces have continued to target Ukrainian cities including a residential area of President Volody-

*cont'd on pg 19*



## Rust shooting: Prosecutors charge armorer with evidence tampering

By Madeline Halpert

Prosecutors have charged a Rust film armorer with evidence tampering in connection to the fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins, US media report.

Hannah Gutierrez-Reed has already been charged with involuntary manslaughter.

She will face an additional charge in relation to “the transfer of narcotics to another person”, prosecutors said.

Ms Gutierrez-Reed will plead not guilty to the new charge, her lawyer told the New York Times on Thursday.

The BBC has reached out to Ms Gutierrez-Reed and prosecutors for comment.

In court filings, prosecutors allege Ms Gutierrez-Reed transferred narcotics to another person



Cinematographer Halyna Hutchins was killed during the filming of *Rust* in New Mexico.

on 21 October 2021, the day Hutchins was killed, in order to “prevent the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of herself”, Reuters reported.

Last week, in separate court filings, prosecutors claimed Ms Gutierrez-Reed was likely hungover during the day of

the shooting because she drank alcohol and smoked marijuana in the evenings while the film was being made.

Ms Gutierrez-Reed’s lawyer, meanwhile, has said prosecutors have mishandled the case and resorted to “character assassination”. Her attorneys

have filed a motion seeking to dismiss the involuntary manslaughter charge brought against her.

The latest court filing comes two months after prosecutors dropped charges against actor Alec Baldwin, just two weeks before his trial was set to begin.

He had been charged with two counts of involuntary manslaughter after Hutchins was killed by a live bullet fired from a prop gun he was using during the filming of *Rust* in New Mexico.

New Mexico Special Prosecutor Kari Morrissey said “new facts were revealed” that required further investigation.

*cont’d from pg 18*

myr Zelensky’s home city of Kryvyih Rih and the southern port of Odesa overnight.

President Zelensky told Ukrainians on Thursday that intelligence services had received information that Russia was preparing the “scenario of a terrorist attack” on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, seized during the full-scale invasion last year.

The plant is the biggest in Europe and Mr Zelensky warned that “radiation has no state borders”. The Kremlin immediately

rejected his comments as “another lie”.

Although the plant’s six reactors have all been shut down, the UN’s atomic energy agency warned on Wednesday that the safety and security situation there was “extremely fragile”.

Water levels in a channel used to cool the reactors have declined since the Kakhovka dam was destroyed and the UN agency said the situation around the plant had become increasingly tense amid reports of Ukraine’s counter-offensive.

## At least 30 migrants feared dead in Canary Islands disaster

By Oliver Slow

More than 30 migrants may have drowned after their boat sank in the Atlantic Ocean off the Canary Islands, two charities have said.

Walking Borders and Alarm Phone said the boat was carrying around 60 people.

Spanish authorities said rescue workers found the bodies of a minor and a man, and rescued 24 other people - but did not know how many people were on-board.

The incident places fresh scrutiny on Europe's response to migration, after a boat sank off Greece last week.

Helena Maleno Garzon, from Walking Borders, said that 39 people had drowned, including four women and a baby, while Alarm Phone said 35 people were missing. Both organisations monitor migrant boats and receive calls from people on board or their relatives. The boat sank about 100 miles (160km) south-east of Gran Canaria on Wednesday.

"It's torture to have 60 people, including six women and a baby, waiting for more than 12 hours for a rescue in a flimsy inflatable boat that can sink," Ms Garzon said.

A Spanish rescue service ship, the Guardamar



Each year thousands of migrants make the journey from Western Africa to the Canary Islands.

Caliope, was only about an hour's sail from the dinghy on Tuesday evening, Reuters reported, citing Spanish state news agency EFE.

The ship did not aid the dinghy because the operation had been taken over by Moroccan officials, which dispatched a patrol boat that arrived on Wednesday morning, 10 hours after it had been spotted by a Spanish rescue plane, Reuters reports.

The BBC has sent a request for comment to Morocco's interior ministry.

Angel Victor Torres, leader of the Canary Islands region, described the incident as a "tragedy" and called on the European Union to establish a migration policy that "offers coordinated and supportive responses" to the issue of migration.

Although off Africa's western coast, the Canary Islands are part of Spain, and many migrants travel from Africa to the archipelago in the hope of reaching mainland Europe.

The Western Africa-Atlantic migration route is considered one of the world's deadliest, and at least 543 migrants died or went missing on that journey in 2022, according to the UN's International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

IOM said there were 45 shipwrecks on the route during that period, but acknowledged the figure is "probably underestimated" because data is scarce and incomplete.

Most of those making the journey are from Morocco, Mali, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and other parts

of Sub-Saharan Africa, it said.

Separately, Spanish authorities also rescued more than 160 people from three other boats near the islands of Lanzarote and Gran Canaria overnight on Wednesday and Thursday morning.

The news comes after a migrant boat carrying hundreds of people sank off the Greek coast last week, with at least 78 known to have died, although many more are feared to have drowned.

The UN's human rights office says that up to 500 people are still missing, and the BBC has obtained evidence casting doubt on the Greek coastguard's account of what happened.

The coastguard claims that the boat was on a course to Italy and not in need of rescue.



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St. John's, Antigua & Barbuda – Friday, June 23, 2023

Digicel reveals its new Prime Ultra Bundles geared at giving customers more. Since launching almost three years ago, Digicel's Prime Bundles have given customers across Antigua & Barbuda more...more choice for their budget, more entertainment options, more data...Simply more. The move is a direct response to the virtual explosion in demand for mobile data, especially on Digicel's top-rated network.

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As part of Digicel's Prime Ultra bundles, the company will continue to offer endless minutes and dedicated data for YouTube and TikTok, but now with data for customers to use all their favorite social apps like WhatsApp, SnapChat, Facebook and IG for messaging. This, in addition to an increase any-use data means that Digicel customers will continue enjoying a premium service on its network.

**Commercial Manager, Ikenley Francis continued...**

*“We're giving our customers more choice, so they can use their data however they choose. These Prime Ultra Bundles will also come with a price adjustment, which is why we are constantly looking for ways to give our customers more value.”*

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For further details on the updated bundles and price adjustments, visit the website at: [digicelgroup.com](https://digicelgroup.com) (Prepaid Bundles | Digicel Antigua & Barbuda).



## Gomes commends schools' football organizers for successful season

The Technical Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA), Sowerby Gomes, commended the organizers of the school football programme for completing a successful season of competitions during the school year.

The football division within the Ministry of Sports completed their competitions for the 2022-23 school year with the final and presentation of awards for the Primary School Cup on Monday, June 19th.

Golden Grove Primary played unbeaten to secure their third consecutive title and retained the Primary School Cup by beating TN Kirnon Primary 2-0 in the final at the Rising Sun playing field.

Gomes, who was on hand to witness the occasion and was one of the officials that were utilized to hand out medals and trophies during the presentation of awards that was held after the final, commended the school's football coordinator, Rohan "Porridge" Benjamin, for his efforts in coordinating a successful programme.

"Well, it's very good for football. One, you've got to be thankful for the conditions that we experienced in terms of good weather because sometimes weather is the major factor that hampers youth leagues from taking place across Antigua and Barbuda. But this year we have been getting some good weather," Gomes said.

"But I would just like to recognize the efforts of the coordinator of school football, Rohan 'Porridge' Benjamin, for carrying out from start to finish to be able to have a successful season."

Gomes also singled out the coach of three-peat champion Golden Grove Primary, Karen "Dookie" Warner, for special commendation.

He said Warner, who is a certified



*The Technical Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association Sowerby Gomes, left, greets Golden Grove Primary School goalkeeper Jaheam Anderson during the presentation ceremony after the Primary School Cup final at the Rising Sun playing field on Monday, June 19th, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)*

coach with a CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central America, and the Caribbean Association of Football) B license, has been using her high level of coaching education to improve the players under her care at Golden Grove Primary School.

"As we saw the better team winning today, they have been successful. I definitely want to congratulate the female coach, Karen Warner, who has been consistent over the last three years," Gomes stated.

"This has been a three-peat for her, and it speaks to her level of education in the sport. Karen Warner has a CONCACAF coaching 'B' license, and I'm telling you, she is transforming these young students.

"So as one set of students leaves, she is able to replicate that level of performance with the other batch that is coming forward. It speaks to where she is at."

Gomes also highlighted that the two teams which contested the final of the Primary School Cup are being coached by female coaches.

"As we congratulate all the teams that took part in the primary school football competition, we are happy to see two female coaches, Nekiesha Samuel of TN Kirnon School and Karen Warner of Golden Grove Primary School, and I am just saying that football was the winner today," Gomes stated.

"But I am also happy to see the young talent that is blossoming, and the head coaches for the two teams that contested the final are females, which is doing wonders for football across the landscape of Antigua and Barbuda."

The competitions in the secondary division of the schools' football programme were played during the period of October last year and January this year.



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# Sports News

## Benjamin says players' camaraderie plays pivotal role in Da Squad's title success

Coach Fitzroy Benjamin said an improvement in camaraderie played a pivotal role as a catalyst in the Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad's title-winning performance in this year's Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League.

Da Squad accomplished the feat of capturing dual championships by winning the female division titles in the round-robin league tournament and the President's Cup competition, which climaxed at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday, June 17th.

Benjamin said while there was a notable improvement in the team's chemistry in this year's competition, there was a drop in the standard of play for Da Squad, who retained the championship after winning their inaugural title last year.

"We have some Cubans, we have some from Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), four locals, one from St. Lucia, and that's pretty much the make-up of the team.

"But I think some of the girls that are locally based here, they look at the overseas-based players, well, they have been here since 2018 and before, but they think their overseas experience undermines them.

"But I think it is something we as coaches have to work on in getting the camaraderie together, and it is much better than last year because they realize the importance of everybody on the court," Benjamin said.

"It is not just one or two persons that make up the team; it is all six persons plus those players on the bench and the coaches, so they have to give them respect for that.

"So the camaraderie is getting there. It's better this year than last year, but the standard of play is not as



*Caribbean Alliance Insurance Da Squad celebrate with their trophy after retaining their female division title during the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local Club League at the YMCA Sports Complex on Saturday, 17th June, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)*

high as last year."

Benjamin said Da Squad was able to strengthen its training and preparation programme with the help of coach Elwin Oxley of Barbados.

"It's a better programme and coach Oxley from Barbados came and assisted us. Coaching, especially females, is not an easy job, and it is not something that I do fulltime," Benjamin said.

"So coming here after work and him (Oxley) being here and just focusing on preparing the team is better for us. Coaching females is a challenge because the players all come with their different egos."

It has been rumoured that some people are contemplating putting to-

gether an all-star team to dethrone Da Squad in next year's competition.

Benjamin said he would welcome the challenge of facing an all-star team, which he hopes will help Da Squad's players raise their standards after experiencing a decline in their play during this year's competitions.

"I think it's the level that we play against that leads to a drop in the level of our play. So sometimes our players stoop to that level," Benjamin stated.

"I know there are rumours being bantered around that they are going to put together a combined team to play us after this tournament, so I am looking forward to seeing that team, and maybe, at that time, we will see some competition."



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# Sports News



## Dave Joseph one-day contest continues this weekend

The Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Parish League Dave Joseph Limited Overs Competition will continue with the fifth and sixth rounds of matches this weekend.

In tomorrow's (Satur-

day) fifth round of matches, Old Road will take on defending champions Police at Old Road, Mahico will face Freetown at Freetown, and Masters will tackle Dreams 2 Reality Sea View Farm at Sea View Farm.

Dallis Adams and Malique Telemaque will umpire at Old Road; Dirk Schouten and Llewellyn Simon will officiate at Freetown; and Oliver Benjamin and Julion Daniel will umpire at Sea View Farm.

Three matches are also scheduled for Sunday. Old Road will clash with National Parks/Cool & Smooth Masters at Old Road. Oliver Benjamin and Malique Telemaque will be the umpires.

Mahico will take on Urlings at Urlings, where Julion Daniel and Dirk Schouten will be the umpires, while Freetown will meet the Police at Freetown. Llewellyn Simon and Dallis Adams will be the officiators at Freetown.

Meanwhile, Empire Nation and defending champions PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks will clash in the final of the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Two-Day Competition at King George this weekend.

The match, which is expected to be a keenly contested affair, will bowl off tomorrow at 11 am.

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## West Indies trounce Nepal, Netherlands beat USA

The ninth and 10th match of the ICC Cricket World Cup Qualifiers 2023 saw the West Indies defeat Nepal by 101 runs at the Harare Sports club and the Netherlands edge past the USA by five wickets at the Takashinga Sports Club yesterday.

Asked to bat first in the ninth match, the West Indies batters unleashed an onslaught on Nepal's bowlers. The West Indies innings were dominated by centuries from Shai Hope and Nicholas Pooran.

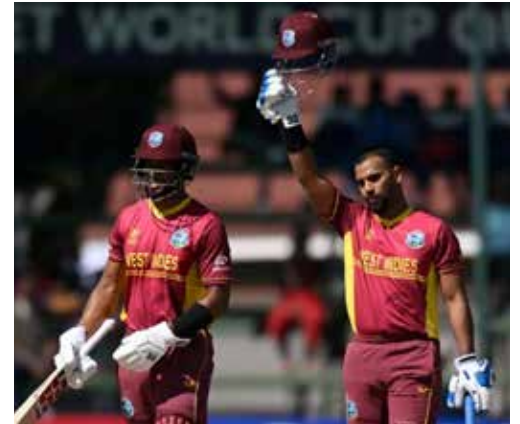
Hope displayed his class and skill with a brilliant 132 off 129 deliveries. Pooran was equally impressive and smashed a quick-fire 115 off 94 balls.

Their partnership laid the foundation for a formidable West Indies total of 339 for seven off their allotted 50 overs. Lalit Rajbanshi bagged three for 52.

In reply, Nepal batters fought hard but struggled to keep up with the required run rate. Aarif Sheikh played a crucial knock of 63 off 93 balls, anchoring the innings and attempting to stabilize the Nepal chase.

Gulsan Jha contributed 42 off 58 deliveries. However, the rest of the batting order failed to provide substantial contributions and Nepal eventually were bowled out for 238 runs. Jason Holder claimed three for 34.

On the other hand, the Netherlands won the toss and elected to bowl first in their match against the USA. The decision seemed justified as the USA batters struggled to build partnerships early on. Shayan Jahangir held the innings together with a knock of 71 from 86 balls. Jessy Singh provided support with 38



West Indies batsmen Shai Hope, left, and Nicholas Pooran, right, hit centuries during their ICC Cricket World Cup Qualifier against Nepal in Harare, Zimbabwe, on Thursday, June 22, 2023. (Getty Images/ICC)

off 53 balls.

The Dutch bowlers put in a disciplined performance, preventing the USA from accelerating their scoring rate. Bas de Leede and Ryan Klein were the picks of the bowlers, claiming two wickets each. De Leede conceded 37 runs in his quota of ten overs, while Klein was economical, giving away only 31 runs.

Chasing a target of 212, the Netherlands got off to a solid start with Scott Edwards leading the way. Edwards hit a blistering 67 from 60 deliveries and provided a strong foundation for the run chase.

Teja Nidamanuru further propelled the Dutch innings with his aggressive stroke play as well, and contributed a brilliant 58 off 68 balls.

Despite losing a few wickets in the middle overs, the Netherlands remained composed and continued to score at a brisk pace.

Although Jasdeep Singh was the standout bowler for the USA and took two wickets for 35 runs in his spell, his efforts went in vain as the Netherlands comfortably reached their victory target with 6.4 overs to spare and five wickets in hand.



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## Matthew congratulates Golden Grove Primary on title-winning success

The Member of Parliament for the constituency of St John's Rural South, Daryll Matthew, is congratulating Golden Grove Primary School for winning the Primary School Cup football competition for the third year in a row.

Golden Grove Primary played unbeaten to secure their hat-trick of title wins and retain the Primary School Cup by beating TN Kirnon Primary 2-0 in the final at the Rising Sun playing field on Monday.

Matthew, who is currently serving in the government of Antigua and Barbuda as Minister of Education and Sports, has been a long-standing supporter of Golden Grove Primary School and its football teams.

As one of the team's most ardent supporters, Matthew rarely misses a game being played by Golden Grove Primary, which is also located in the constituency of St. John's Rural South.

After witnessing the team's victory over TN Kirnon Primary in Monday's final, Matthew was among the first to offer congratulations to coach Karen Warner and the team and was also given the honour of presenting the championship trophy to Robert Jeffery, captain of the Golden Grove Primary, during the brief awards ceremony.

Matthew pledged to continue his long-standing support of Golden Grove Primary School.

"Absolutely, and I first want to congratulate the coach, Karen Warner, the principal, and all the students of Golden Grove Primary School. When



Golden Grove's Captain Robert Jeffery, right, accepts the Primary School Cup trophy from Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew after the final at the Rising Sun playing field in St. John's, Antigua, on Monday, 19th June, 2023. (Photo by Elwin Francis)

you win one time, it can be called an accident, but when you win two or three times in a row undefeated, it really shows a lot of preparation and hard work going into the team," Matthew said.

"I have been supporting this team even before being a minister here, but I am really proud of them, and I will continue to support them going forward, and I wish them all the best."

The Ministry of Sports has been criticized in some quarters for the quality of the schools' football programmes that are organized by the department's football unit, which is supervised by coordinator and former senior national team coach Rohan "Porridge" Benjamin.

However, the Minister of Sports

is appealing to the general public to manage their expectations and support the players by giving them the best opportunity to excel.

"Well, I just like to encourage the public to manage their expectations because, you know, almost every parent sees a super star in their child, and every fan sees a super star in an athlete that they like," Matthew stated.

"But at the end of the day, we need to recognize that they are children, and rather than criticize, we need to support them and continue to build their confidence and build them up. So that's my appeal, really, to the public.

"Let's continue to support our student athletes; let's continue to encourage them; and let's continue to give them everything they need to excel."