

# PM BROWNE: CSME IS 'ACHIEVABLE'



L-R CARICOM Youth Ambassador Esquire Henry, CARICOM Ambassador, Dr. Clarence Henry, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene and CARICOM Youth Ambassador, Pia Nichols.

## PM Browne says a CARICOM Single Market and Economy is ‘achievable’

As Antigua and Barbuda joins the rest of the regional grouping to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Prime Minister Gaston Browne remains optimistic that realizing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) is ‘within reach.’

PM Browne was speaking at the margins of a Flag-raising Ceremony held at the grounds of the Office of the Prime Minister, as part of this country’s observance of the historic milestone for CARICOM.

“That is work in progress. We are making incremental progress and I would say that within the upcoming twenty-four to thirty-six

months we should see some additional achievements. Hopefully, we will see a greater convergence of currencies, the establishment of a regional stock market, there will be greater functional cooperation and all the impediments to setting up this single market and economy will be dispensed with, and in the coming years we will achieve that noble objective,” he remarked.

PM Browne noted that CARICOM has focused significant energy on the establishment of the CSME and towards the stimulation of regional commerce. To achieve this objective, he continued, it was necessary to create, and now to mod-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

ernize, the Common External Tariff (CET) which has been critical in dismantling barriers to trade and commerce within the Community.

On the occasion of the 50th-anniversary celebrations, history has proven that entering into the integration movement was the right decision for CARICOM states. “As we celebrate the 50th year since the signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas, our countries’ collaboration has indeed proven the earlier generation right. CARICOM has made the nation-states a stronger force, especially in multilateral institutions than each could have hoped to be.

“The theme, ‘50 years strong: A solid foundation

to build on’ captures the history of our binding agreement spawned by far-thinking, West Indian leaders of that period. CARICOM, I am told is the oldest surviving integration movement in the developing world,” he stated.

The prime minister again described ‘fifty years of living integration’ as indeed a tremendous accomplishment and testimony of our people’s determination. “Today’s ceremony serves to acknowledge its significance at the highest level, here in Antigua and Barbuda, standing in the shadow of our Parliament Building and the shade of the Prime Minister’s edifice, occupied since the year 2000 by three Prime Ministers,” he declared.

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The Licencing Magistrate

TO: Her Worship  
The Licencing Magistrate for District “A”

TO: The Commissioner of Police

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This Application is made pursuant to Sections 3 and 5 of the Licensing (Intoxicating Liquor) Act, Cap. 249 (as amended ) of the Laws of Antigua and Barbuda.

Dated the 19<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023

.....  
Kwame L. Simon Esq.  
Attorney-at-Law for the Applicant



## Placing LIAT on the Agenda for CARICOM Heads, ‘inescapable’

The future of the regional transportation efforts and the role of LIAT are unavoidable items that will come before the CARICOM Heads of Government summit to be held in Trinidad and Tobago next week.

That is the assessment of Antigua and Barbuda’s Prime Minister Gaston Browne who said the LIAT, and air transportation issues are “inescapable” subjects that will go before the regional leaders.

“I know that there are many countries within the regional integration move-



ment who see this issue as insular. However, I am of the view that LIAT should be respected as a CAR-

ICOM institution, and that there should be a regional effort centred on restoring it in the interest of Caribbean

peoples and ensuring that there is greater connectivity to guarantee that people *cont’d on pg 4*

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# No July 4 public holiday

July 4, the day marking the 50th anniversary of the regional integration movement, CARICOM, will not likely be a public holiday in Antigua and Barbuda.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has indicated that whilst some Caribbean territories have declared public holidays on July 4 to mark the 50th anniversary of CARICOM, he is not in favour of Antigua and Barbu-

da sharing in the recognition of the anniversary by way of a public holiday.

“The Cabinet will give consideration to it but I am not hopeful that there will be a holiday. You would recall that CARICOM Day was once a public holiday in Antigua and Barbuda and it was discontinued because it was felt that there were too many public holidays on the books. We also have to look

at the impact on productivity. It was felt, back then, that it had to be discontinued,” he explained.

According to the prime minister, while a case can be made for a ‘one-off’ holiday to mark the 50th anniversary, he is still reluctant.

If Antigua and Barbuda does not observe July 4 as a public holiday, PM Browne said this does not in any way reflect his government’s

commitment to regional integration and CARICOM.

The matter will be raised at Wednesday’s Cabinet meeting.

*cont’d from pg 3*

within the Caribbean can move, and move readily,” he emphasized.

PM Browne added that his view is that there cannot be a successful integration movement if the people cannot move.

“I am hoping that we can go past the insularity and the national priorities in which, I imagine there are some regional competing forces that would wish to see the demise of LIAT and to recognize the importance of such an institution to complement the efforts of Caribbean Airways (CAL) and that ultimately some form of publicly funded transportation will be critical to achieving sustainable transportation in the region,” he declared.

He said the ‘flawed notion’ that the region must rely exclusively on private sector assets is ‘not a sustainable solution.’ “Antigua and Barbuda believes that ultimately a re-organised, re-capitalised new LIAT, leaving all the legacy issues behind, that will operate professionally, that would operate on the proper basis, will be the answer to the region’s air transportation woes.”





Project Supervisor Mervin Browne

## BOE employee graduates with honours in UWI FIC Harvard University CORE programme

One of the senior staff members of the Board of Education (BOE) – Project Supervisor Mervin Browne – has graduated with honours in the specialized training programme being offered jointly by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus and Harvard University in the United States.

Browne started the programme in

January this year and completed it in May and emerged as the only person, so far, to complete the highly rigorous and intense course gaining honours in Antigua and Barbuda.

Members of the board for the BOE and staff gathered on Tuesday for a special ceremony to congratulate Browne on his achievement. He has

been described as a dedicated, meticulous, and hard-working member of the senior team.

Board member, Bishop Charlesworth Browne said when he learned that Browne had started the programme, he wondered just how he would cope, given the sheer weight of

*cont'd on pg 6*

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# Local News



## Stakeholders emphasize the importance of safety at VC Bird International Airport

The issue of airport safety was the focus of attention at a Safety Fair held at the VC Bird International Airport on Tuesday.

Organised by American Airlines, with support from the Antigua and Barbuda Airport Authority and the Antigua and Barbuda Airlines Association, the different stakeholders involved in the operations at the airport, made presentations explaining how safety factored into their respective operations.

A spokesman for the organisers said the fair, which ran for four hours,

was aimed at informing members of the public on the various ways in which safety issues remain prominent in the planning and execution of all aspects of the operations at the airport.

For example, one key stakeholder group, the Air Traffic Controllers, demonstrated how they work to keep aircraft separated and safe while they enter or depart Antigua and Barbuda's airspace.

Other issues that were raised include the types of clothing, such as de-cal vests and even shoes that are worn

at some key points at the airport. The airport authority used the opportunity to highlight the many ways it is at work keeping the entire airport as a safety zone.

"Safety is managing risk at acceptable levels, and that was emphasized throughout the fair," the spokesman said.

He added that the 'do's and don'ts' of airport operations were highlighted, and how seemingly mundane things such as debris on the airport runway can be dangerous.

*cont'd from pg 5*

he did so with flying colours, his daily tasks. However, he said he is very proud that not only did Browne complete the rigorous programme, but

he did so with flying colours, attaining honours.

Speaking on behalf of the UWI FIC, the Director of the Life Long Learning

Unit, which facilitates the Harvard CORE programme, Paula Lee noted that the unit offers access to learning and development to individu-

als wishing to upgrade their skills and certification.

"Having registered more than 100 students since the inception of the Harvard CORE programme in 2021, Mr. Mervin Browne is the first participant to have Passed with Honours. This is a huge accomplishment and I am delighted that the Leaders of the Board of Education have planned this ceremony to celebrate Mr. Browne, and his colleagues who participated in the programme."

"The Harvard Credential of Readiness programme offers three courses – Business Analytics, Economics for Managers and Financial Accounting. Each course is designed to help individuals to master essential business skills, confidently participate in organizational decision-making and advance their careers," she remarked.

Lee also revealed that the programme has attracted interests from individuals across the Caribbean.

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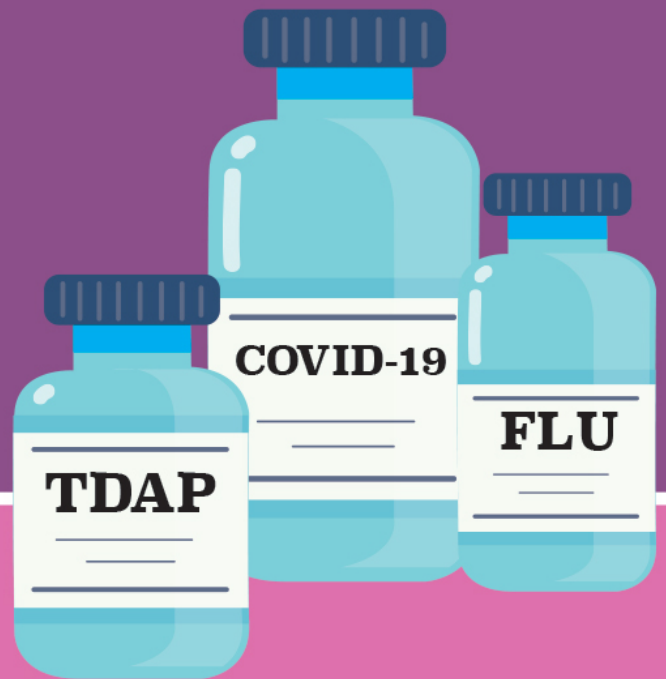
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## US health alert over malaria cases in Florida and Texas

By Michelle Roberts

Florida and Texas are seeing some locally acquired cases of malaria - the first spread of the mosquito-transmitted disease inside the US in 20 years, officials warn in a health alert.

Active surveillance for more cases is continuing, the Centres for Disease Control says.

The risk of catching malaria in the US remains extremely low, it says.

All five patients - four

in Florida, one in Texas - have now had treatment.

Malaria is caused by being bitten by an infected mosquito. People cannot catch it from each other. But the insects catch it from infected people - and the cycle continues.

It is common in large areas of Africa, Asia and Central and South America but not the US.

However, Anopheles mosquitoes, found throughout many parts of the US, can



transmit malaria, if they have fed on an infected person.

The risk is higher in areas where:

the climate means insects

survive during most of the year

travellers from malaria-endemic areas are found

Infected people can suffer fever, sweats and chills. Malaria is an emergency and must be treated quickly with drugs to kill the parasite that causes the infection.

Using insect repellent and covering up can help protect against mosquito bites.

The CDC says it is working with the Florida and Texas health departments and those recently diagnosed and treated "are improving".

US doctors are being advised to consider malaria in any person with an unexplained fever, regardless of international travel history, particularly if they have visited or live in the affected areas of Florida or Texas.

Florida has issued a mosquito-borne illness alert after cases were discovered in Sarasota County and Manatee County, warning residents to drain standing water where mosquitoes can breed and wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.

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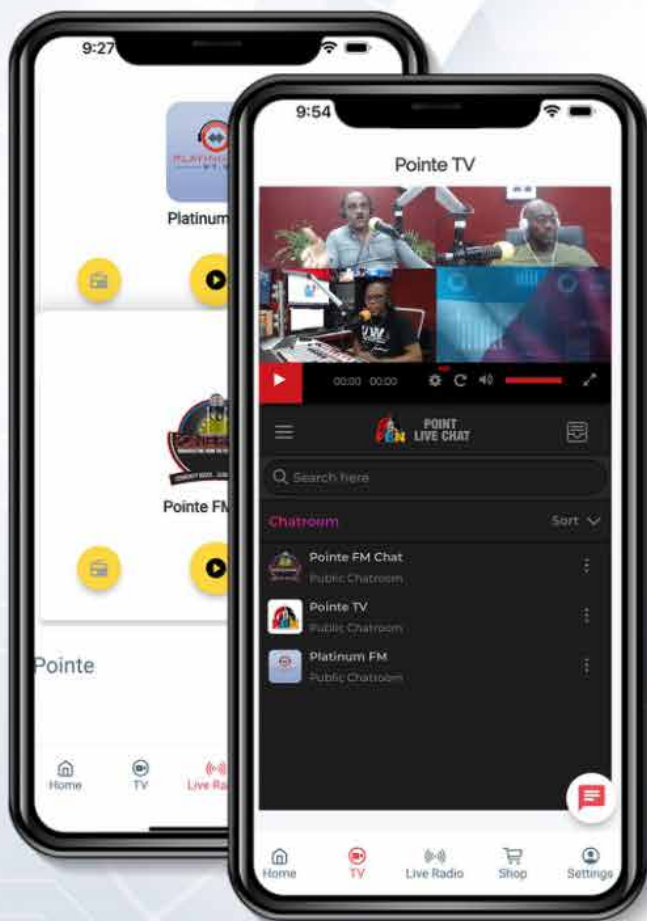


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# Drinks giant Diageo ends 'broken' Diddy partnership

By Natalie Sherman

British drinks giant Diageo has ended its partnership with Sean Combs, known as Diddy, after the rapper sued the firm, accusing it of neglecting his tequila brand due to his race.

The company announced the move while responding formally to the lawsuit, which it asked to be dismissed.

It said Mr Combs' complaints were false and defamatory and made in an effort to extract money from the company.

An attorney for Mr Combs said Diageo was trying to distract from his claims.

Diageo, owner of brands such as Johnnie Walker, Guinness and Tanqueray, said the relationship had been on the rocks since Mr Combs had failed to meet his promises to fund DeLeon Tequila, which they bought together in 2013.

Diageo said it had invested more than \$100m (£78m) in DeLeon Tequila and "tried for years to salvage the broken relationship with Mr Combs".

"Despite having made nearly a billion dollars over the course of our 15-year relationship, Mr Combs contributed a total of \$1,000 and refused to honor his commitments," the company said.

"Mr. Combs' bad-faith actions have clearly breached his contracts and left us no choice but to move to dismiss his baseless complaint and end our business relationship".

Mr Combs rose to fame as a music executive and rapper in the 1990s before branching out into acting and other business ventures.

He had worked with Diageo since 2007, when the company asked him to help promote the company's Ciroc



Diddy  
vodka.

The complaint from his company - Combs Wines & Spirits - against Diageo accused the firm of falling short of its commitments for distribution, investment and brand positioning for DeLeon. It accused the firm of "racial typecasting" and limiting DeLeon's distribution to "urban" neighbourhoods.

An attorney for Mr Combs said he had "repeatedly raised concerns as senior executives uttered racially insensitive comments and made biased decisions based on that point of view".

"Diageo attempting to end its deals with Mr Combs is like firing a whistleblower who calls out racism. It's a cynical and transparent attempt to distract from multiple allegations of discrimination," said his attorney John C Hueston.

He added: "This lawsuit and Mr. Combs are not going away."

In its response, Diageo blamed the problems on Mr Combs' "failure to fund the JV [joint venture]", which it said had "created a contentious re-

lationship, severely damaged the DeLeon brand at a critical juncture, and stalled its promise and potential for growth for several years".

Diageo said it had agreed to forgive Mr Combs' debts during negotiations in 2020. Following a reset, sales volumes had doubled, it said.

"Unfortunately, Combs has proven himself once and for all to be an unreliable and untrustworthy business partner," the company said in its response.

"Despite DeLeon's recent growth and progress, and in disregard of multiple provisions of the DeLeon Agreement, earlier this year Combs again began to threaten Diageo with contrived racism allegations to force Diageo to accede to several outrageous and extra-contractual demands, including for supposed billions of dollars of damages."

Diageo said it remained committed to the success of the DeLeon and Ciroc brands but planned to sever ties.

"We have exhausted every reasonable remedy and see no other path forward," it said.



# Julian Sands: British actor confirmed dead after remains identified

Human remains found in mountains in California have been confirmed to be those of British actor Julian Sands, who went missing on a hike in January.

Walkers found the remains on Saturday, police said, and they have now been formally identified.

Sands, 65, was best known for his roles in the Oscar-winning film *A Room With A View* and TV dramas *24* and *Smallville*.

His other credits included 2011's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, in which he appeared opposite Daniel Craig.

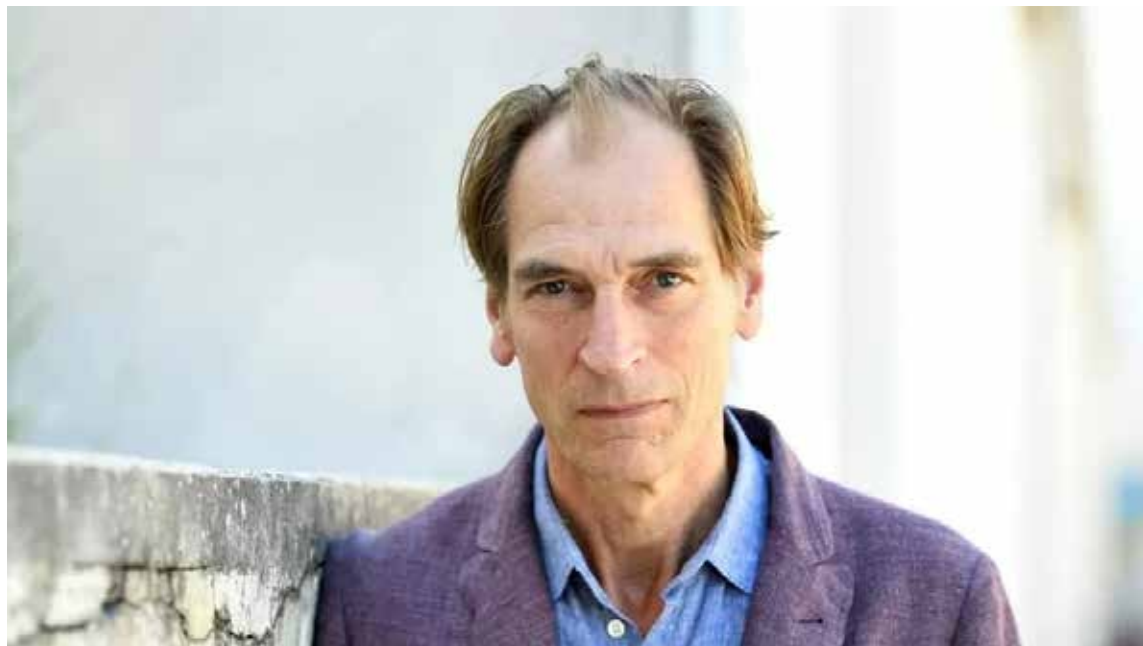
Sands disappeared on 13 January during bad weather in the Baldy Bowl area of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Air and ground searches were hampered as California was battered by deadly storms, as well as icy conditions and a threat of avalanches.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said the remains found in the Mount Baldy area at the weekend had been positively identified as the missing actor.

"The manner of death is still under investigation, pending further test results.

"We would like to extend our gratitude to all the



*Sands appeared in films such as *Leaving Las Vegas*, *Benediction* and *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*.*

volunteers that worked tirelessly to try to locate Mr Sands," they said in a statement.

Last week, the star's family thanked the Californian authorities for their efforts in trying to locate him.

"We are deeply grateful to the search teams and coordinators who have worked tirelessly to find Julian," they said.

"We continue to hold Julian in our hearts with bright memories of him as a wonderful father, husband, explorer, lover of the natural world and the arts, and as an original and collaborative performer."

At the end of January, brother Nick Sands, who

lives in North Yorkshire, where he, Julian and their three other brothers grew up, said he had already said his "goodbyes".

"I have come to terms with the fact he's gone and for me that's how I've dealt with it," he said.

Sands was a keen hiker. His friend and hiking partner Kevin Ryan has previously said that it was a true passion of his, and that "he was the most advanced hiker I know".

Born in Otley, Yorkshire, and educated at Lord Wandsworth College in Hampshire, Sands started his acting career with roles in such films as the *The Killing Fields*.

That brought him to the attention of director James Ivory, who cast him, ahead of the likes of Rupert Everett, in the 1985 film adaptation of EM Forster's novel *A Room With A View*.

Set in Edwardian-era England and Italy, the film centred around Helena Bonham Carter's character Lucy Honeychurch and her ever-growing love for Sands' free-spirited George Emerson.

The film, which also featured Dame Maggie Smith, Daniel Day-Lewis and Dame Judi Dench, was a box office hit and won Oscar, Bafta and Golden Globe awards. The British Film In-

*cont'd on pg 12*

## CARDI rep died from single gunshot wound to the head in St Vincent

CMC - An autopsy has found that the Dominican-born representative of the Caribbean Agricultural Research Development Institute (CARDI), whose body was found in a diplomatic vehicle on June 18, died from a single gunshot wound to the head.

Police have meantime, released one person that had been assisting their investigations into the death of Gregory Linton, 43 and have not commented since releasing a terse statement last week about the death of the CARDI representative in St Vincent and the Grenadines.

Linton, who was based in SVG since 2017, is said to have had diplomatic status and the vehicle in which his body was found had a "CD" registration plate, indicating that it was accorded diplomatic status and privileges.

Police said that at the time of his discovery, the body was "partially decom-

posed" and found in the passenger seat of the car by a male, who is said to have been a long-time friend of the agriculturalist.

Media reports said that Linton was scheduled to leave St Vincent on the Friday before he was found dead and in a statement, CARDI expressed "unbelievable shock and deep sadness" at his death.

"Prior to his passing Greg was involved in the implementation of the Regional Coconut and Sweet Potato projects in St. Vincent and the Grenadines," the Trinidad-based CARICOM agency said in a statement.

CARDI said that the week before his death, Linton participated in a regional coconut workshop in Grenada where he shared his experiences with managing coconut pests.

"Perhaps one of Greg's most significant achievements was being part of a team which developed a lo-



Gregory Linton.

cally-produced lime sulphur base organic post-harvest treatment for dasheen. This treatment allowed farmers to successfully restart export to the lucrative European market," CARDI said.

"At the time of his passing, he was working with local and international partners to fine-tune this treatment as well as test more environmentally friendly pesticides as post-harvest treatment options.

"Greg was the face of CARDI on multi-agency teams that conducted

post-disaster risk assessment for the agricultural sector following natural disasters across CARICOM. He was involved in assessments following the passage of Hurricane Maria (Dominica, 2017), Hurricane Dorian (the Bahamas, 2019), flooding (Guyana, 2021) and the eruption of La Soufrière volcano (St Vincent and the Grenadines, 2021). His leadership on these missions was always efficient and highly commendable, facilitating quick decision-making, to minimise loss of livelihoods and reduced suffering."

CARDI said Linton was an outstanding researcher and that he will be remembered by his CARDI family as a dedicated, compassionate professional always willing to go the extra mile.

Police have asked members of the public who have information that can help with the investigation to contact them.

### cont'd from pg 11

stitute has named it one of its top 100 British films.

Later, Sands played the English Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley in Ken Russell's psychological thriller *Gothic*, before moving to Hollywood.

He played the title role in the 1989 horror film *Warlock* and its sequel, and his other big screen credits included prominent parts in *Arachnophobia*, *Boxing Helena* and *Leaving Las Vegas*, as well as starring opposite Jackie Chan in the action-comedy

film *The Medallion* in 2003.

His TV roles included a Russian terrorist in Kiefer Sutherland's TV drama *24* in 2006, and Superman's biological father Jor-El in *Smallville* in 2009.

Friend and fellow actor John Malkovich introduced Sands to his wife, the writer Evgenia Citkowitz. The couple, who had two children, lived in North Hollywood.

Sands was previously married to Sarah Sands, former editor of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, with whom he also had a son.



## Guyana to construct more core homes for low income families

Guyana continues to focus on the building of affordable homes as the Ministry of Housing and Water's Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA) will undertake the construction of 70 core homes for low-income families in Region Four.

According to the Department of Public Information (DPI) the ministry is inviting bids from eligible bidders to carry out the project which entails the construction of 20 x 20 feet two-bedroom concrete units.

The Core Homes Initiative falls under the \$5.8 billion (US\$28 million) Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Programme (AHUAP) funded by the Inter-American Bank (IDB).

A total of 250 low-in-



One of the cores constructed in Region Three. (Photo credit: DPI).

come families are set to benefit from the programme.

Each unit costs about \$4 million and beneficiaries are only required to contribute a sum of \$100,000 towards the cost of the home. They

also receive a five-year termite treatment certificate and electrical certificate for the building valid for 10 years.

Last month, the ministry handed over 13 homes to

families in Sophia, Georgetown.

In that community alone, some \$191.6 million has been allocated for the construction of 80 core homes.

## Two injured in separate shooting incidents in Grenada

Two men were injured during separate shooting incidents in Grenada over the weekend.

The Royal Grenada Police Force confirmed a shooting incident on Sunday at Crochu, St Andrew, which resulted in one man sustaining injuries. Another man is in police custody assisting with the investigation into that matter.

In an unrelated incident, on Sunday, officers



proceeded to La Calome, St David following reports of gunshots being fired.

Preliminary information revealed there was an

altercation between three men when one of the men drew an object resembling a gun and threatened to shoot. This was followed

by the sound of a loud explosion and one of the other two men was struck and sustained minor injuries. Villagers intervened and the assailant fled the scene.

He was later apprehended and found to have several injuries to his body. He was taken for medical attention and later admitted as a patient at Mt Gay Hospital.

Police investigations into both matters continue.

## Canada wildfires spark air quality alerts in Chicago and Milwaukee

By Mike Wendling

Heavy smoke from wildfires has prompted air quality warnings in midwestern US cities such as Chicago, as well as parts of Canada.

The outdoor air quality registered among the world's worst on Tuesday, with a visible haze and burning smell lingering over the region.

Smoke continues to drift south and east across North America in waves.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre has said



this year is the worst wildfire season on record.

Cities including Chicago

and Milwaukee, as well as parts of Michigan and Ontario, registered air quality index levels in the 200s on a 500-point scale.

Those are numbers considered "very unhealthy", although lower than the levels seen earlier this month, which breached 400 in New York and other parts of the northeast.

Health authorities said that groups including children, the elderly and people with respiratory problems should limit outdoor activities when air quality is poor.

Chicago school officials held summer programmes indoors on Tuesday, while in New York, the city mayor warned people to expect "worse air quality" starting on Wednesday.

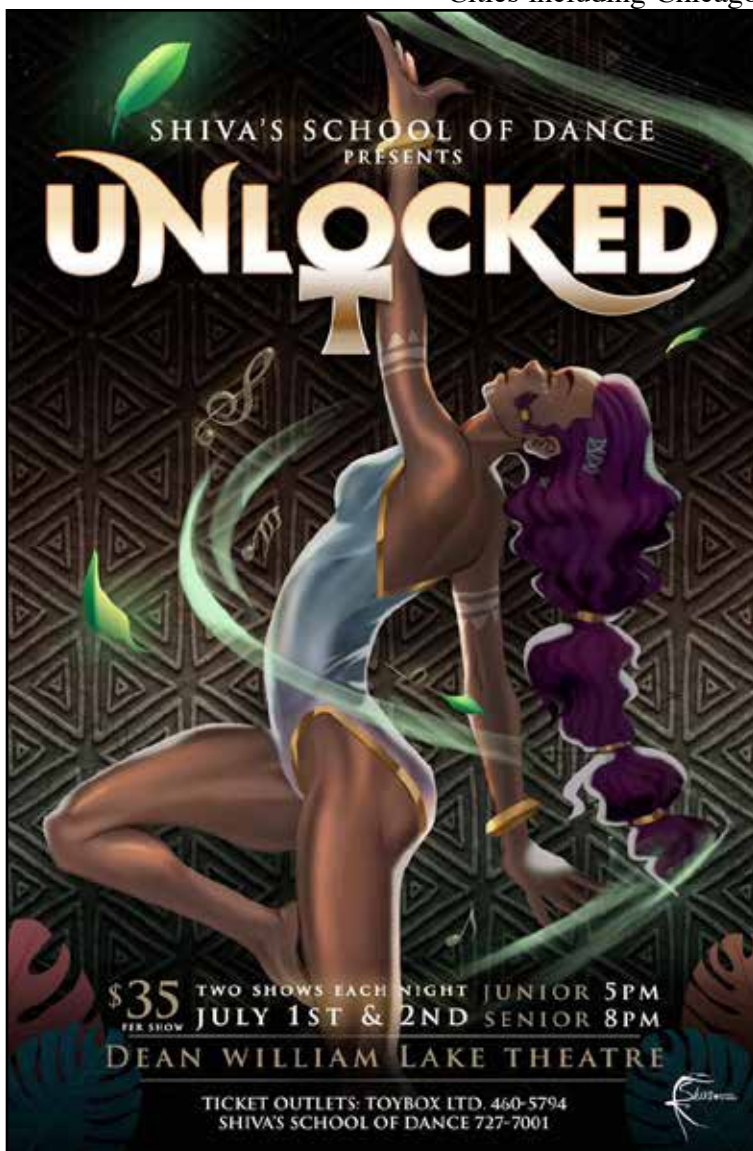
The smoke hitting the US Midwest on Tuesday is forecast to continue to drift to the south and east over the next few days, covering most of the province of Ontario before reaching the east coast.

New York Governor Kathy Hochul said in a news conference on Tuesday that "air quality is deteriorating very quickly in our state" and warned pollution levels will worsen throughout the week but are not forecast to be as bad as they were earlier this month.

She noted that many children are currently at summer camps, which are shifting plans to keep children indoors as the smoke hits.

Canadian fire authorities say nearly 500 fires are still burning out of nearly 3,000 recorded so far this season. A total of 7.7 million hectares (30,000 square miles) - an area roughly the size of South Carolina - has already been burned.

The fires have released a record 160 million tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere, according to the European Union's Copernicus Atmospheric Monitoring Service, which announced that the smoke has begun to drift into parts of Europe.



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## French police kill teen who refused traffic stop



A firefighter extinguishes a car set ablaze during a protest against the 17-year-old's death.

### By Antoinette Radford

French police shot dead a 17-year-old who failed to stop when ordered to by traffic police outside Paris on Tuesday.

Video circulating on social media shows a police officer pointing a gun at the driver of a car, before a gunshot is heard. The car crashes to a stop.

Emergency services attempted to resuscitate the teenager at the scene, but he died shortly afterwards.

The officer accused of firing the shot has been detained on homicide charges.

The footage, verified by AFP news agency, shows two police officers trying to stop the vehicle. One points his weapon at the driver through the window and appears to fire at point-blank range as he tries to drive off.

Two others were in the car at the time of the shooting. One passenger fled while another was arrested and tak-

en into custody.

Paris police chief Laurent Nuñez told French television station BFMTV that the policeman's actions "raises questions", though he suggested the officer may have felt threatened.

The 17-year-old's family lawyer Yassine Bouzrou insisted was an illegitimate defence, telling the same channel the video "clearly showed a policeman killing a young man in cold blood".

He added that the family had filed a complaint against police for "lying" - after initially claiming the car had tried to run down the officers.

The shooting triggered a series of protests on Tuesday night in Nanterre, the area where the teenager was killed.

Cars, rubbish bins and wooden pallets were set alight, and fireworks set off. Seven people were arrested after confronting riot police at the scene, authorities said.

Another lawyer representing the

victim's family, Jennifer Cambla, told local media that nothing could justify what had happened, and described the death as an "execution".

France's Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin told parliament on Tuesday the two officers involved in the incident were being questioned by the police. He said the video shared on social media was "extremely shocking".

Left-wing leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon expressed his "heartfelt condolences" to the family of the teen. "No officer has the right to kill unless in self-defence," he wrote in a tweet.

"This uncontrolled police force discredits the authority of the state. It needs to be completely overhauled," he added.

Two weeks ago, a 19-year-old driver was shot dead by police in the western France town of Angouleme, after allegedly hitting an officer in the legs during a traffic stop.

## Honduras brings in curfews after night of violence

By Adam Durbin

The president of Honduras has declared an immediate curfew in a town where 13 people were shot dead on Saturday.

Xiomara Castro described the killings in a pool hall in Choloma as a “brutal and ruthless terrorist attack”.

The victims, who were at a birthday party, were 12 men and one woman.

Separate murders in the northern Sula Valley region brought Saturday’s death toll to at least 20, authorities said, and are thought to be linked to drug-trafficking gangs.

The curfew comes in from 21:00 local time (04:00 BST) to 04:00 from Sunday and will run for at least 15 days.

It will be extended to nearby San Pedro Sula - the central American country’s second-largest city - on 4 July.

Ms Castro said the measures were being put in place in response to “the brutal and ruthless terrorist attack by hired killers trained and directed by



Police patrol near the scene of the shooting in Choloma.

drug lords” in the Sula Valley.

“Multiple operations, raids, captures and checkpoints are initiated,” she said.

The Honduran government has also said 1,000 additional security officers will be sent to the area and is offering a reward of around \$33,000 (£26,000) for help identifying and capturing those responsible for the Choloma shootings.

A partial state of emergency in areas of the country has been in place since December as part of efforts to confront violent gangs, with the country struggling to bring escalating war-

fare and drug crime under control in recent years.

Along with neighbours El Salvador and Guatemala, the country is a major transit route for cocaine coming from South America to the United States.

The shooting came a week after at least 46 women were killed in gang violence as part of a prison riot near the capital Tegucigalpa.

Survivors told local media that it was triggered by rivalries between two of Central America’s most notorious criminal organisations: the 18th Street Gang and MS-13.



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# Sports News



## Bullets claim narrow win in T20 softball competition



Deran Benta slammed 40 for Bullets in their T20 match against PMS. (File photo)

The Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets snatched a narrow 10-run victory over PMS in the Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) Male T20 Competition on Sunday.

The Bullets won the toss and batted, scoring 155 for five off their 20 overs. Deran Benta slammed 40, Julian Charles hit 35, and Bernel Peterson struck 30. Glenroy Farrell and Richie Thomas each picked up two wickets for 30 runs.

In reply, PMS fell short, as they were all out for 145 with one ball to spare. Sunil Govia hit 26, Kenny Benjamin scored 24, and Walter Carr made 20.

Dorian Grant snapped up five for 28, Benta claimed two for 30, and Andra Samuel picked up two for 34.

Dredgers claimed a three-wicket win against Sissereou, who were dismissed for 88 in 14 overs. Leroy John-Baptiste struck 18 and Sylvester Scotland scored 17. Stelbert Plant snapped up four wickets for 11 runs, and Bellot took three wickets for 15 runs.

Dredgers achieved victory at 91 for seven in 12.3 overs. Zach Thomas cracked 25, Melvin Charles hit 24, and Bellot chipped in with 22. Carl Simon snatched three wickets for 10 runs, and Iverson Joseph captured two for 22.

Marco Inc./Grill Box Buckleys 3J's won by default against Old Road, who were unable to field a team, and Strictly Business also won their encounter against 300.

The Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets and Flyers recorded wins in the ABSCA's Female T20 Competition.

The Bullets trounced Sagicor Life Enforcers by 69 runs. The Bullets won the toss and batted, scoring

*cont'd on pg 19*

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## Matthews ton leads West Indies to opening CG United ODI win

GROS ISLET, St. Lucia - The West Indies Women took a 1-0 lead in the three-match CG United One Day International series, defeating Ireland by 58 runs at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in St. Lucia on Monday.

Winning the toss and batting first, Captain Hayley Matthews led the West Indies with her fourth ODI century, hitting 109, which came off 107 balls and included nine fours and two sixes.

Stafanie Taylor notched her 40th half-century with 55 off 68 balls and Chinelle Henry brought up her maiden ODI half century in 38 deliveries as the West Indies posted 297 for six in their 50 overs. Cara Murray was the pick of the Irish bowlers as she claimed three for 60.

It was a match filled with milestones for Taylor and Matthews. Taylor is now the third ranked woman with the most 50+ scores in Women's ODIs with 46 to her name.

Matthews became the third West Indian to reach 2,000 ODI runs, and the pair



West Indies Captain Hayley Matthews bats during the first ODI against Ireland at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground in St. Lucia on Monday, June 26th, 2023. (CWI Media)

posted their third ODI century partnership, batting for the West Indies.

Matthews then returned with the ball to capture three for 53. She was supported by Afy Fletcher with two for 49 and Qiana Joseph with two for 53 as the West Indies spun the Irish batter into a web.

Ireland reached 238 for nine in their 50 overs. Gaby Lewis with 83 off 100 balls and skipper Laura Delany with 40 off 53 balls were

their top run getters.

After the victory, Matthews, who won the man of the match award, told CWI Media, "We definitely wanted to set high standards and individual players and as a team and we wanted to get some runs under our belts in the first game. We wanted to set high standards to carry through for the remainder of the series. It was a really good overall team performance.

"We had a number of

batters chipping in and getting milestones in the process, which is good to see and then an all-round performance by the bowlers to restrict Ireland. We still have a few areas to improve on but overall I am happy with the performance and win today."

The teams will meet again today (Wednesday) in the second CG United ODI. First ball is at 10am Eastern Caribbean (9am Jamaica time).

*cont'd from pg 18*

146 for six off their 20 overs.

Cheryl Williams slammed 52 with 10 fours, Althea Gage smashed 26 not out, and Alexis Pickett scored 17. Gaylanell O'Garro picked up two wickets for 13 runs.

In reply, the Enforcers were restricted to 77 for five off their 20 overs.

Camille Thorpe was left not out on 19, while Gaylanell O'Garro and Grace Persaud each made 11. Mary Browne captured two for 13.

The Flyers defeated the Jennings Rockets by 13 runs. The Flyers made 132 for four off their 20 overs. Robynette Burton hit an unbeaten 31; Sevlly Ireland struck 26, and Monique Titus

made 21 not out.

In reply, Rockets could only muster 119 for seven off their 20 overs. Kushana David hit 26, Rhea Bobb made 20, and Chemique Benjamin chipped in with 18.

Akeda Francis grabbed three wickets for 14 runs, and Valencia Thomas captured two for 14.



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Referee Technical Instructor Victor Stewart runs a drill during the ABFA FIFA RAP Course.

## ABFA successfully hosts 2023 FIFA RAP Course

Twenty-four local referees and eight newcomers, who recently concluded a local referee certification, had the chance to enhance their skills during the 2023 FIFA RAP Course that was hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA) from June 21st to 25th.

The theoretical aspects of the course were held at the John E St. Luce Financial Building on Factory Road, St. John's, Antigua, while the group took to the Astroturf at Paynter's for the practical.

Referee Technical Instructor Victor Stewart, Fitness Instructor Rohan Tho-

bourne, and FIFA Referee Development Officer Javier Santos facilitated the course.

The course provided match officials the chance to delve into the laws of the game, a barometer to gauge their abilities, and the opportunity to set goals and work towards achieving them.

Acting ABFA Co-President Daryll Michael, during the opening ceremony, told the referees to capitalize on the training and, afterwards, to put the knowledge to use. He also declared the course open.

FIFA assistant referees Iroots Appleton, Wasnah Barnarde, Abigail



From left to right: Referee recruit Shequancia Williams, FIFA AR Abigail Brathwaite, and referees Giovanni James and Gerald Otto participate in the ABFA FIFA RAP Course from June 21-25.

Brathwaite, Nikesha Gage, and Kevin Peters, attended the course, serving as motivation for the other participants while at the same time honing their own skills.

ABFA Referee Coordinator Kelesha Antoine said

the initiative placed the referees in good stead.

"The course went well," Antoine said. "All the participants were engaged, and the instructors were pleased with the level of participation of the young ones."

"The course served its purpose of preparing the referees for the Women's League and the season ahead. They understand the interpretation of the laws of the game and how to apply them."

**cont'd from pg 22**

award for being man of the match in the semi-final against the Liberta Black Hawks, while Tyrone Williams Jr. of Empire Nation captured the man of the match award in the semi-final against the All Saints Pythons.

Demari Benta captured five for 59 and

slammed 60 off 67 balls, while Williams Jr. struck 122 off 190 balls with 13 fours and three sixes in the semi-finals.

The teams and players will now be getting ready for this season's last domestic competition, the ABCA Super 40, which is slated to begin this weekend.

## Top performers in two-day competition get awards

The Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association (ABCA) presented several monetary awards to the outstanding teams and players following the completion of its two-day competition on Sunday.

The ABCA's President Leon "Kuma" Rodney, Secretary Mariella Miller, and Director Elkanah Charles were involved in the presentation of the awards following the two-day finals between champions PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks and Empire Nation at King George V Grounds.

Captain Rahkeem "Jim-

bo" Cornwall accepted the championship trophy and winners' cheque from Rodney on behalf of the Liberta Black Hawks, who retained the title by taking first innings honours against Empire Nation in the drawn finals at the same venue.

Empire Nation made 184 and declared their second innings at 222 for eight, while the Black Hawks made 270 and 60 for two in the encounter.

Captain Kenrick Scott collected the cheque for Empire Nation for finishing in the runners-up position.

Hayden Walsh Jr. took



Liberta Black Hawks' leg-spinner Hayden Walsh Jr. accepts his man of the match award for the two-day final from ABCA's president Leon 'Kuma' Rodney, right, during the presentation ceremony at King George V Grounds on Sunday, June 25th, 2023.



Pigotts Crushers' player Kadeem Henry, left, accepts his award for the batsman with the most runs in the two-day competition from ABCA's Director Elkanah Charles during the presentation ceremony at King George V Grounds on Sunday, June 25th, 2023. (Photos by Elwin Francis)

home the monetary prize for capturing the player of the finals accolade. Walsh claimed six for 59 and hit a top score of 92 off 61 balls, with 10 fours and six sixes, in the finals.

The cash award for the Most Valuable Player (MVP) was claimed by left-arm spinner Glenton Williams of the Jennings Tigers.

Williams, who was not in attendance at the presentation ceremony, was also given a financial reward for being the bowler with the most wickets (77 in 15 innings).

Glen Miller of the Jen-

nings Tigers collected both awards on behalf of Williams.

Kadeem Henry of the Pigotts Crushers accepted his award for being the batsman with the most runs in the two-day competition. Henry had an aggregate of 729 runs at an average of 56.08 in 15 innings.

Monetary prizes were also presented to the two losing teams in the semi-finals, the Pigotts Crushers and the All Saints Pythons.

Demari Benta of the Pigotts Crushers claimed the

*cont'd on pg 21*