

LEGAL LUMINARIES: GG HAS NO AUTHORITY TO CONVENE INQUIRY

Story on Page 2



Antigua and Barbuda has identified its developmental priorities as it marches towards achieving the sustainable goals as laid out by the United Nations. *Story on page 4.*

Governor General explains why he cannot independently call Commission of Inquiry



Governor General Sir Rodney Williams

The Office of the Governor General says Sir Rodney Williams cannot call a Commission of Inquiry, without the request of the cabinet, or a duly authorised Minister.

The Office issued a media release on Tuesday afternoon, making it clear that this is supported by the legal opinions of two prominent King's Counsels, Gregory Jones and Allan S. Wood, who acted independently of each other.

The statement says this is also clear in a "written legal opinion dated 18 September 2002, held by the Governor General's office and obtained by the previous Governor General from a specialist independent counsel in London."

The statement says: "In summary, the inability of the Governor General lawfully, to act alone in this matter, is well-established. The Governor General is bound by his oath of office to act in accordance with the established law."

The media release comes in the wake of calls from the main opposition, United Progressive Party, for the Governor General to independently establish a Commission of Inquiry surrounding the arrival of West African migrants on Antigua Airways flights.

There was a picket outside Government House on Tuesday morning to intensify pressure on the Governor General on this matter.



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

May 30, 2023

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT ON GOVERNOR GENERAL'S POWERS TO SET UP A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Upon assuming office, the Governor General took an oath "*to preserve the constitution of Antigua and Barbuda and the law*" and "*conscientiously, impartially and to the best of [his] ability discharge [his] duties as and do right to all manner of people without fear or favour, affection or ill-will.*"

In the light of the debate concerning his powers to call a Commission of Inquiry into matters related to the circumstances under which certain African citizens arrived in Antigua, the Governor General instructed his office to secure independent expert legal advice upon whether he has the power to call a Commission of Inquiry in the absence of a request from the Cabinet (or a duly authorised Minister).

Accordingly, the Office of the Governor General engaged legal firm BDB Pitmans LLP, a reputable chamber with vast constitutional law experience at the level of the Privy Council, to instruct London based senior counsel, Gregory Jones KC to provide a written legal opinion. In addition, the Governor General also separately instructed senior counsel, Allan S. Wood KC, based in the Caribbean to provide an opinion on the same question.

Acting independently of each other, both KCs came to the same view quite separately: namely, that it would not be lawful under the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda for the Governor General to call a Commission of Inquiry otherwise than upon the advice of the Cabinet (or a duly authorised Minister). It should be noted that this view also accords with a written legal opinion dated 18 September 2002, held by the Governor General's office and obtained by the previous Governor General from a specialist independent counsel in London.

These legal opinions also accord with past practice the record shows that on all previous occasions when Commissions of Inquiry were established, they were only done upon the advice of the Cabinet.

Consistent with the principles of transparency and impartiality, the Governor General wrote by letters dated May 24th and 25th 2023, to the Government and the Opposition respectively, setting out the legal position and enclosing copies of all three legal opinions. For the benefit of the general public, the said legal opinions are attached for information purposes.

In summary, the inability of the Governor General lawfully to act alone in this matter is well-established. The Governor General is bound by his oath of office to act in accordance with the established law.

Elvis Pelle jailed for possession of firearm and ammunition

The 21-year-old Villa Area man – Elvis Pelle - who was arrested and charged with the possession of a firearm and ammunition will be spending a year in jail after he was convicted on two charges.

Pelle was sentenced to a three-month prison term on the charge of possession of ammunition and a year for the possession of a firearm. Both sentences will run concurrently.

On Tuesday, May 23, the police charged Pelle with unlawful possession of one .25mm pistol and possession of three rounds of .25mm ammunition.

The police had executed a search

warrant on a property occupied by the convicted man on Sunday 21 May and discovered the illegal weapon and ammunition during their search. He was arrested and taken into custody.


Pelle has also been charged for allegedly robbing a resident of Yorks of an undisclosed sum of money. The alleged incident occurred on April 11, 2023, in Villa.

Meanwhile, Craig Marcelle of Bolans is appearing in the Magistrate’s Court today to answer four charges; the possession of cannabis, the possession of a firearm, the possession of ammunition, and causing public mischief (this is believed to have involved

the discharge of a firearm).

According to police spokesman, Inspector Frankie Thomas, the accused – Marcelle – reported to the Bolans police station that on May 25 he went outside his house to feed his dog, when he was accosted by two armed masked men. A struggle ensued and one of the alleged assailants discharged a firearm and shot Marcelle in the leg.


However, Inspector Thomas said the police carried out their own investigations and found that the report given by Marcelle was untrue. He was arrested and slapped with the four charges.



CBH PUBLIC HEALTH CORNER

TIP OF THE WEEK


Monday May 29, 2023




Cooling potentially hazardous food is a two (2) step process.

Step 1:

140°F
(60°C)







2 hours

Step 2:

70°F
(21°C)





4 hours

The total cooling time should not exceed 6 hours.

Cooling Food Safely!

The time it takes to cool food depends on the thickness or density of the food, and the container in which it is stored. Below are some safe & effective methods for cooling food.

1. Shallow Pans—Place food in shallow pans, and place in refrigerator, or in front of a fan. Pans may remain uncovered during this process.

3. Ice Water Baths— Place containers of hot food in a clean sink or large container filled with ice water. Stir food frequently to cool it faster and evenly.

2. Ice Paddles—Stir hot food with plastic paddles that have been filled with water and frozen.

4. Blast Chillers— Blast chillers can be used to quickly reduce the temperature of large amounts of food or thick food such as mashed potato.

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Vector Control Unit
Tel: 764-4327

Central Board of Health-Upper Church Street centralboardofhealthantiguaandbarbuda

Antigua and Barbuda identifies developmental priorities

Antigua and Barbuda has identified its developmental priorities as it marches towards achieving the sustainable goals as laid out by the United Nations.

In meetings over the past week with representatives from the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) designed to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Prime Minister Gaston Browne provided insights into the government’s priority areas in the medium to long term.

“The five-member team from the UN system headed by Abdullahi Abdulkadri from ECLAC, along with the nation’s Director of International Trade and National SDGs Focal Point, Joy-Marie King met with Prime Minister Gaston Browne where among others, the nation’s leader reaffirmed the twin island state’s commitment towards implementing the SDGs. He further outlined a plethora of initiatives in which the government is



engaged and achievements attained complimentary and aligned with the tenets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” a media release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated.

During these discussions, PM Browne shared with the team what his government’s priorities are in seeking to attain the target date set by the U.N. in 2030.

“The major efforts outlined included the ongoing pursuits in making Barbuda ‘a green resilient island’; plans related to the further development in the area of Education including early childhood and vocational






training; economic diversification- pursuing the opportunities in the areas of the blue economy, medicinal cannabis, and the digital economy; food security, gender equality, and youth empowerment,” the prime minister outlined.

PM Browne also welcomed Antigua and Barbuda’s selection among pilot countries for the Early Warnings for All Initiative (EW4ALL) formally launched by the UN Secretary General in November 2022 at COP 27.

The ECLAC team also met with Foreign Affairs Minister E.P Chet Greene, who pledged his ministry’s continued cooperation with

ECLAC. He indicated that Antigua and Barbuda intends to leverage the Foreign Service to meet its development objectives as he stressed the importance and distinction between food security, food sovereignty, and food safety. The team also engaged with Permanent Secretaries including Ambassador Anthony Liverpool (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Senior Technical Officers of the Government.

According to Director King, “this mission was preceded by a RIA- Rapid Integration Assessment which involved the analysis of various sectoral policy documents and the Medium Term Development Plan (draft) to assess alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.” King further added, “the outcome of this exercise is geared towards the production of an SDGs roadmap which will be presented to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda shortly.”

Wed 31 Day 86°  Partly cloudy skies. High 86F. Winds ESE at 10 to 20 mph.		Wed 31 Night 78°  Partly cloudy. Low 78F. Winds ESE at 10 to 15 mph.	
19%  ESE 14 mph	24%  ESE 10 mph	Humidity 71%	UV Index Extreme
Sunrise 5:33 am	Sunset 6:37 pm	Humidity 85%	UV Index 0 of 10
		Moonrise 3:28 pm	Moonset 2:42 am
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Local News



Free cataract surgery at SLBMC for more than one hundred people

The government, through the Ministry of Health and the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC), held another successful Cataract Surgery Clinic last week, during which over one hundred patients received free life-changing cataract surgeries.

In a media release, the SLBMC said the latest cataract clinic formed part of its mission of transforming lives.

The clinic—held May 21 to 28 and supported by the Ministry of Health and Wellness,—helped individuals who could not afford to pay for cataract surgery or get the vision-correcting care they need.

“There is no way to prevent cataract formation; a condition where the lens of the eye becomes cloudy and eventually results in vision loss. Surgical treatment is necessary to replace

the clouded lens and restore lost sight. There are many working people who need cataract surgery, but can’t afford to pay for it,” explains Dr. Osama Dias, SLBMC Ophthalmologist.

He continued, “The goal is to eradicate blindness due to cataracts in our country and bring as many people as possible from blindness to useful productive lives. Working along with our colleagues from a Trinidad Eye Hospital, we’ve been able to restore sight to hundreds of people whose blindness was not only devastating to them as individuals, it was also a burden on their families.

“No one in Antigua and Barbuda should have to go without needed cataract surgery due to finances. In my estimation, this is simply one of the most impactful programs of our hospital—And we’re doing everything



T'vontae Hawkins, one of the more than 100 persons receiving cataract surgery at the SLBMC

we can to ensure that the people in our community who need this support, get it.”

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INTERESTING FACT

Motor Vehicle License **EXPIRES** on the month identified on Windshield Sticker.

2023

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60269

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ABTB

A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board

iam RoadSmart

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All vaccines administered in Antigua and Barbuda are safe and effective.



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- Mumps
- Rubella
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- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
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- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Haemophilus
- Influenza
- Hepatitis B
- Yellow Fever
- Covid-19 Vaccine.



THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS
& THE ENVIRONMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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South Korea names new ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda

The Republic of Korea (South Korea) has named a new non-resident ambassador to Antigua and Barbuda.

On Tuesday, the diplomat - Sang Ryul Lee – paid courtesy calls to senior government officials including Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Foreign Affairs Minister E.P Chet Greene.

During his call on the Foreign Affairs Minister, Greene commended the longstanding diplomatic relations that existed between both countries, which he characterized as positive, with the continuous people-to-people and government exchanges.

Greene gave further commitments to continue mutual cooperation with the South Korean government on the many issues of mutual concern in the international arena; these include striving to maintain world peace and stability.

The Foreign Affairs Minister recalled that South

Korea has been present in times of need for Antigua and Barbuda. For example, it provided humanitarian assistance of USD 50,000 in November 2017 for disaster relief in the wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma.

Additionally, in 2018, the Government of the Republic of Korea, under their Grant Aid programme, provided equipment/materials for persons living with disabilities in Antigua and Barbuda amounting to USD 90,000.

Another example of their generosity came during the COVID-19 pandemic when South Korea invited officials from the Ministry of Health to a series of online webinars on COVID-19, for policy and technology sharing on Korea's know-how and Q&A's in the fight against COVID-19.

In response, the Ambassador thanked Minister



New South Korea Ambassador Mr. Sang Ryul Lee with Foreign Affairs Minister E.P Chet Greene

Greene for his kind words and the Antigua and Barbuda government for the many years of mutual cooperation and friendship. He also pledged to develop the

relations further, in areas of climate change and issues affecting the region.

Ambassador Sang Ryul Lee is based in the Dominican Republic.

High Court closed for a week

The registrar of the High Court has announced the closure of the court to allow for the courtrooms to be treated for allergens.

Registrar Cecile Hill said the return of some pandemic-related arrangements such as all filings, service, and disposition of matters, not presently on the E Litigation Portal should be done using the email address: emergency.filings@ab.gov.ag as was practiced throughout the

closure of the High Court during the pandemic.

“Attorneys are kindly asked to refer to the Practice Direction No.2 of 20 COVID-19 Emergency Measures (re-issued) for guidance, including the requirements for undertakings with respect to the payment of the filing of fees on the re-opening of the court on January 3, 2022,” a statement from the Registrar’s desk noted.

The release indicated that injunc-

tions and other urgent matters filed manually through the Emergency Filings’ email must be copied to the court administrator, Tammie Gage, the Registrar, and the Deputy Registrar.

According to the release, all matters in the Criminal Division will be postponed until Monday, June 5, while the Civil Division and the Family Division will continue to be heard remotely unless otherwise stated.

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Editor's Note

There is a growing debate on the question of whether or not the Governor General (GG), acting in his discretion, can establish a Commission of Inquiry to look into any matter in the public sphere. *Point Express* newspaper recently reprinted an article

first published in 2001 written by the late Leonard Tim Hector, where he opines that the GG has no such powers.

As the discussion continued, the GG sought the advice of two learned English

lawyers who concluded that indeed, the GG has no such authority.

One of the two opinions was written by Gregory Jones, KC which we publish below.

Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda power to call a Commission of Inquiry

I am instructed by BDB Pitmans on behalf of Sir Rodney Williams, KGN, GCMG, KStJ the current and 4th Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda ("the GG"). The matter concerns the scope of the GG's powers to require the holding of a Commission of Inquiry.

My instructions provide a schedule of enclosures all of which I have read although it has not been necessary to refer to each of these documents in this Opinion.

Background Facts

In November 2022, a number of African citizens arrived on the island via a charter from Africa under the banner of Antigua Airways. Subsequent flights by other entities also brought additional visitors during the election period in January 2023. I am instructed that the presence of the African visitors has resulted in significant discussions in the public domain. The Opposition Party has made several calls for the Governor General to call a Commission of Inquiry into the matter. This call has been heightened with the death of three African visitors who from all reports were on board a vessel which was not legally authorised to transfer the passengers on board.

The Prime Minister has announced publicly that while investigations will take place into the matter, the Govern-

ment has no intention of supporting a call for a Commission of Inquiry.

I am instructed that regardless of numerous opinions being put forward that the Governor General is expected to act on the advice of the people's representative government through the Prime Minister/Attorney General or other lawful agent/agency, the Opposition continues to call for the Commission of Inquiry.

By letter dated 13 February, Mr Jamale Pringle, Leader of the Opposition, to Governor General, 13 February 2023 (at Enc 6 to my instructions) sought an audience with the GG to detail concerns about the Antigua Airways matter.

The Throne Speech, 20 February 2023, relating to the Antigua Airways matter indicated that "the Attorney General is leading efforts to find a reasonable solution to this complex challenge." (at Enc. 7 to my instructions).

The minutes of the Meeting held in respect of Antigua Airways dated 24 February 2023, were sent under cover of letter from Office of the Governor General to the Minister of Legal Affairs, Public Safety and Immigration, dated 28 February 2023, signed by Permanent Secretary Frederick-Hunte (at Enc. 8 to my instructions). This was the meeting arranged at the request by the leader of the Opposition (see Enc. 6 to my instructions).

The minutes of the meeting largely consist of a record of the concerns presented regarding the Antigua Airways matter and the impact of the influx of West African migrants unlawfully to the island. At paragraph 5 of the minutes the GG is recorded as having advised: "[T]hat the Honourable Members of Cabinet had turned the matter over to the Honourable Attorney General for investigation and that once the process was completed that the Attorney General would report his findings to the Prime Minister and Cabinet for appropriate action."

The GG also wrote to Jamale Pringle, Leader of the Opposition, on 27 February 2023 regarding the meeting, and those next steps (at Enc. 9 to my instructions).

I understand that the previous GG, Sir James Carlisle, commissioned two public inquiries. One inquiry was set up on 9 July 2001 to investigate concerns relating to the conduct of certain officials in respect of the medical benefits scheme¹. It is thought that on both occasions this was done on the advice of the Cabinet and/or Prime Minister of the day but these are matters which are still to be confirmed.

Issues

I am asked to advise upon the following questions - a. whether the Governor General has the authority under

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Opinion

cont'd from pg 10

normal or other circumstances to call a commission of inquiry if the Prime Minister/legitimate Government has not so advised, particularly in light of s.80 of the Constitution; and b. if there is such authority, what is to be considered a reasonable threshold for making such a decision?

I am also asked by email dated 16 May 2023 from office of the GG, in light of the system of budgeting where the Office of the Governor General is not granted a budget for the purposes of calling an inquiry, or staff to provide support or man a commission and such assistance would have to be carried out by the Government, how would an independent decision be expected to work? I am also asked would the scope include the convention practised in other parts of the Commonwealth (for example, I am told that under the legislation in Canada, Cabinet is vested with the power to call an inquiry).

Statutory Framework

The Constitutional Order

The Antigua and Barbuda Constitution Order 1981, SI 1981 No. 1106 ("ABCO 1981) provides as follows:

"80. (1) In the exercise of his functions the Governor-General shall act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet, except in cases where other provision is made by this Constitution or any other law, and, without prejudice to the generality of this exception, in cases where by this Constitution or any other law he is required to act-

(a) in his discretion;

(b) after consultation with any persons or authority other than Cabinet; or

(c) in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister or any person or authority other than the Cabinet.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall apply to the functions conferred upon the Governor-General by the following provisions of this Constitution, that is to say, sections 63(6), 67(6), 73(1), 87(8) and 99(5) (which require the Governor-General to remove the holders of certain offices from office in certain circumstances).

(3) Where in the exercise of his functions the Governor-General is required to act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet, and it has become impracticable for the Governor-General to obtain such advice, he may exercise those functions in his discretion.

(4) Where in the exercise of his functions the Governor-General is required to act in accordance with the advice of, or after consultation with, the Leader of the Opposition and there is a vacancy in the office of the Leader of the Opposition or if the Governor-General considers that it is impracticable to obtain the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, the Governor-General may exercise those functions in his discretion.

(5) Where in the exercise of his functions the Governor-General is required to act after consultation with any person or authority he shall not be obliged to exercise that function in accordance with the advice of that person or authority.

(6) Any reference in this Constitution to the functions of Governor-General shall be construed as a reference to his powers and duties in the exercise of the executive authori-

ty of Antigua and Barbuda and to any other powers and duties conferred or imposed on him as Governor-General by or under this Constitution or any other law."

"63

(6) A member of a Constituencies Boundaries Commission shall be removed from office by the Governor-General if the question of his removal from office has been referred to a tribunal appointed under subsection (7) of this section and the tribunal has recommended to the Governor-General that he ought to be removed from office for inability as aforesaid or for misbehaviour."

"67

(6) The Supervisor of Elections shall be removed from office by the Governor General if the question of his removal from office has been referred to a tribunal appointed under subsection (7) of this section and the tribunal has recommended to the Governor-General that he ought to be removed for inability as aforesaid or for misbehaviour."

"73. (1) Where the House passes a resolution supported by the votes of a majority of all the members of the House declaring that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister does not within seven days of the passing of that resolution either resign from his office or advise the Governor-General to dissolve Parliament, the Governor-General shall revoke the appointment of the Prime Minister."

"87

(8) The Director of Public Prosecutions shall be removed from office by the Governor-General if the question of his removal from office has been referred to a tribunal appointed under sub-

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section (9) of this section and the tribunal has recommended to the Governor-General that he ought to be removed for inability as aforesaid or for misbehaviour.”

“99

(5) A member of the Commission shall be removed from office by the Governor-General if the question of his removal from office has been referred to a tribunal appointed under subsection (6) of this section and the tribunal has recommended to the Governor-General that he ought to be removed from office for inability as aforesaid or for misbehaviour.”

The Commissions of Inquiry Act 1880.

“Power to Governor General to appoint commissions of inquiry

2. It shall be lawful for the Governor-General whenever he shall deem it advisable, to issue a commission to appoint appointing one or more commissioners, and authorising such commissioners, or any quorum of them therein mentioned, to inquire into the conduct or management of any department of the public service in Antigua and Barbuda, or of any public officer of Antigua and Barbuda, or of any parish or district thereof, or into any matter in which an inquiry would, in the opinion of the Governor-General, be for the public welfare. Each such commission shall specify the subject of inquiry, and may, in the discretion of the Governor-General, if there is more than one commissioner, direct which commissioner shall be chairman, and direct when such inquiry shall be made; if it shall be made within Antigua and Barbuda or outside of Antigua and Barbuda or partly within Antigua and Barbuda and partly outside of Antigua and Barbuda, and the report thereof

rendered, and prescribed how such commission shall be executed, and may direct whether the inquiry shall, or shall not, be held in public. In the absence of a direction to the contrary, the inquiry shall be held in public, but the commissioners shall nevertheless be entitled to exclude any particular person, or persons, for the preservation of order, for the due conduct of the inquiry, or for any other reason:...” [Underling added]

“Remuneration of and secretary

17. The Governor-General may direct what remuneration, if any, shall be paid to any commissioners and acting under this Act, and to their secretary, and to any other persons employed in or about any such commission, and may direct payment of any other expenses attendant upon the carrying out of any such commission, or upon any proceedings for any penalty under this Act. Such sums, so directed to be paid, shall be paid by the Accountant-General out of the ordinary cash balance in the Treasury.”

Analysis

The power to appoint a commission of inquiry at s.2 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1880 (CIA 1880) is lawful only when the GG “deems it advisable.” What does that mean?

According to Sir Fred Phillips² “There is a widespread belief that a Governor General (“GG”) possesses executive powers under the Westminster model. However, when an Act states that, ‘It shall be lawful for the Governor General whenever deems it advisable ...’, what is intended is that the Governor General should act on the advice of the Cabinet.”

According to Phillips where a statute confers powers on the GG those powers cannot be exercised by

him in his deliberate judgment, but upon the advice of Cabinet or a minister delegated by Cabinet. This is in keeping with the convention that the Sovereign acts on the advice of the Cabinet. The Sovereign must not enter the political arena, with all that that implies for confrontation with the Cabinet and members of the Opposition. “Failure to observe this convention can have dire consequences for the Governor General who is subject to dismissal by the Sovereign on the advice of the PM.”

Section 2 of the CIA 1880 must be read in the context and in accordance with the Constitution. Analysing s.80(1) of the Constitution, Phillips notes it is identical to most other Constitutions in the region. It sets out at (1) that the overarching position that subject to prescribed exceptions: “the exercise of his functions the Governor-General shall act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet, ...”

Sections 63(6), 67(6), 73(1), 87(8) and 99(5) (set out above) of the Constitution carve out specific functions which the GG is at liberty to exercise at his own discretion, none of which includes a discretion to call a Commission of Inquiry.

In addition, s.80(1) foreshadows the possibilities of categories of exceptions which may “require” the GG to act in a certain way; in particular, s.80 provides that where an Act may “require” the GG to act “in his discretion.” (s.80(1)(a)). Does s.2 of the CIA 1880 come within this category of exception? The answer is: No. Section 2 of the CIA 1880 does not require the GG to use his discretion to call an inquiry. The sub-heading makes clear that s.2 relates to a “power” (in contrast to a requirement or duty) and uses the words “whenever he shall deem it advisable” as opposed to the

cont'd on pg 14

Opinion

cont'd from pg 13

words “in his discretion.” That form of words as highlighted by Philips has a particular meaning and is frequently used where the power to the GG is subject to advice of the cabinet.

I am therefore clear in my view that the GG may only exercise this power to commission an inquiry where he is so advised by but upon the advice of Cabinet or a minister delegated by Cabinet.

My opinion accords with the wider approach adopted in respect of the

powers of the GG in other jurisdictions within the Commonwealth. Barnett notes that:

“In accordance with normal Commonwealth practice and constitutional convention the principle that the Sovereign acts on the advice of the local Prime Minister ... is not expressed but it is well understood that this is the constitutional convention.”

The principles were well established upon the creation of the GG role. Evatt commenting in 1940 upon the Imperial Conferences held in the

preceding decades stated:

“The Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930, while assimilating the duties of a Governor-General to those of the King himself, have only told us that the Governor-General of a self-governing Dominion, like His Majesty in England, always acts on the advice of responsible Ministers. But it is well settled that this general principle does not mean that the King’s representative must in all circumstances take positive action in accordance with the advice of Ministers for the time being. It means only that the King’s representative’ must act constitutionally, not personally ... he can only refuse to act upon the advice of existing Ministers if he is able to find another set of Ministers who, by accepting office after the refusal, will necessarily, accept the full political responsibility for such refusal.”

More specifically, this continues to be the approach in essence adopted in the Caribbean jurisdictions. In the Caribbean, many prerogatives have been woven into the constitutional text and are exercised by the head of state, ministers on his or her behalf or other public bodies.³ Statute determines the scope of the prerogative power. One of the main conventions of the UK Constitution— that the Crown should exercise his or her functions on advice— is thus translated into a constitutional rule that the head of state must act on the advice of Cabinet unless it is expressly provided for otherwise. Tracy Robinson, Arif Bulkan & Adrian Saunders specifically cites s.80(1) of the ABCO 1981 as an example of this.

I have been provided with a copy of the Opinion of J.G. Le Quesne, 3 Hare Court, Temple, dated 18 September 2002 (at Enc. 3 to my instructions). I agree with those instructing

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REROUTING
YOUTH CONFERENCE

Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.
ISAIAH 45:22

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cont'd from pg 14

me, that whilst entitled “in the matter of the Commission of Inquiry Act, Cap 91 and in the matter of the Governor General calling a Commission of Inquiry”, the opinion appears to relate more directly to the ability of the Governor General to implement recommendations of a Royal Commission. However, at paragraphs 15 & c., Mr Le Quesne considered the Governor General’s powers to initiate a conference without the advice of Cabinet, particular given s.80 of the Constitution and concluded he could not. Paragraph 20 then states:

“I do not know whether it has been suggested that the Governor General could summon such a conference under the Commission of Inquiry Act. He certainly could not do so without the advice of Cabinet: see my Opinion of 19th June 2001”.

This Opinion is consistent with my own views as expressed above. It would of course be useful however to be provided with a copy of the earlier opinion dated 19 June 2001 which appears more directly relevant to the current question.

Finally, I note the reference in the Privy Council decision in *Mitchell v Georges* [2014] UKPC 43 at [3] to the equivalent process in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the calling of a Commission of Inquiry, which recorded that “the Governor General, acting on the advice of the Cabinet ...”. I do not rely upon this as the basis of my opinion but it seems consistent with my understanding of the correct position.

Conclusions

Whether the Governor General has the authority under normal or other circumstances to call a Commission of Inquiry if the Prime Minister/legitimate Government has not so advised, particularly in light of s.80 of the Constitution?

For the reasons I have set out above, in my opinion it would not be lawful for the GG to call a Commission of Inquiry under s.2 of the CIA 1880 save upon “the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet,...” (s.80(1) of the ABCO 1981). It is my understanding that the current advice by the Cabinet to the GG is that an inquiry should not be commissioned and further that the matter is being addressed by the Attorney General.

In these circumstances it would not be lawful for the GG to seek to set up a Commission of Inquiry.

If there is such authority, what is to be considered a reasonable threshold for making such a decision?

This question does not arise in the light of my answer given above.

In light of the system of budgeting where the Office of the Governor General is not granted a budget for the purposes of calling an inquiry, or staff to provide support or man a commission and such assistance would have to be carried out by the Government, how would an independent decision be expected to work?

Were the GG to be advised by the Cabinet to call a Commission of Inquiry, the COI 1880 provides various provisions relating to the appointment of commissioners, procedural powers, etc. to ensure that the commission can be established and function. In particular, the costs and remuneration for staffing the Commission are expressly addressed at s. 17 and are paid upon the direction of the GG out of the ordinary cash balance in the Treasury:-

“Remuneration of and secretary

17. The Governor-General may direct what remuneration, if any, shall be paid to any commission-

ers and acting under this Act, and to their secretary, and to any other persons employed in or about any such commission, and may direct payment of any other expenses attendant upon the carrying out of any such commission, or upon any proceedings for any penalty under this Act. Such sums, so directed to be paid, shall be paid by the Accountant-General out of the ordinary cash balance in the Treasury.”

Would the scope include the convention practiced in other parts of the Commonwealth for example in Canada where the legislation speaks to the Cabinet being vested with the power to call an inquiry?

The powers and duties of GGs in the Commonwealth are statutorily regulated prerogative powers. Unless a particular Constitution/Act expressly provides for personal discretion in exercising a power, it must be exercised in accordance with the constitutional convention that the Sovereign acts on the advice of the Cabinet.

I have addressed above the wider conventions as they exist in the Commonwealth and in the Caribbean, in particular. For present purposes, in my view, the position is sufficiently clear in respect of the Constitution and legislation in Antigua and Barbuda set against the normal conventions that apply that it is not necessary to seek to draw anything from the specific legislation in Canada in respect of the calling of inquiries.

I have nothing further to advise as presently instructed. I am happy to advise further upon any aspect arising from this Opinion whether by telephone or as those instructing me consider appropriate.

GREGORY JONES KC
Francis Taylor Building
Temple
LONDON
17 May 2023

Belize: Controversial Port agreement to be reviewed

(CMC) - Belize Prime Minister John Briceño says an investigation will be launched into a controversial agreement signed with Portico Enterprises Limited, the parent company for Port of Magical Belize, by a senior government minister of the last administration.

Briceño, who arrived from South Korea on Monday night, told reporters that the agreement which was reportedly signed by the former economic development minister, Erwin Contreras, without the knowledge of the Dean Barrow government, is now the focus of the cabinet.

The agreement was October 1, 2020 between the Ministry of Economic Development and Portico Enterprises and the parent company for Port of Magical Belize.

The 31-page document states:



John Briceño, Prime Minister of Belize.

“the developer has invested directly and indirectly, considerable finances, time and other resources in and for the conceptual design and preliminary business plan for the development, construction, operation and management of a cruise ship docking facility, including access channel and other

maritime and offshore structures....”.

The agreement allows for the company “strategically” locating its products in duty-free stores, concession stands, beaches, restaurants, bars and a hotel of 300 rooms with casinos throughout the terminal and its surroundings.

The project facility is located on the coast of the Belize District, three miles south of the Sibun River, Belize District.

The agreement was leaked to the media last week and Prime Minister Briceño, while expressing disappointment with the leak, said the government is examining legislation that will give the necessary development concessions to Port Magical Belize.

“And once we do that, then we will do whatever investigations have to be
cont'd on pg 17

Guyana police to charge pilot with human trafficking

(CMC) - The Guyana police say they will lay human trafficking charges against a 45-year-old pilot and businessman whom they said had been bringing Venezuelan nationals into the country over a six-month period.

“Following the investigation, legal advice was given by the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) for Orlando Charles to be charged with 16 counts of Trafficking in Persons,” police said in a statement.

It said that Charles had been engaged in illegal ac-

tivities trafficking in the Spanish-speaking nationals between the Mazaruni River in Region 7 (Cuyuni-Mazaruni) and Georgetown between November 1, 2022 and May 18, 2023.

The police said that the victims reported the matter to the law enforcement authorities, resulting in the Trafficking in Persons Unit of the Criminal Investigation Department immediately conducting an investigation.

The police said it would continue to work with other stakeholders to conduct



intelligence-led operations, spot inspections, awareness, and training in every region of Guyana.

Guyana and the Bahamas were the only two Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries that the

United States said met the minimum standards for eliminating human trafficking.

Both countries maintained their Tier One ranking on the 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report.

Haiti: Decline in violence by armed gangs thanks to vigilante group

(CMC) - A human rights group in Haiti says violence by armed gangs in the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country has declined significantly following the emergence of a vigilante group, known as Bwa Kale, in April.

The Centre d'analyse et de recherche en droits de l'homme (CARDH) in a report said that the vigilante group, linked to at least 160 killings in April, began after residents in Port-au-Prince lynched and set fire to more than a dozen suspected gang members on April 24.

It said the activities of Bwa Kale have resulted in no kidnappings taking place from April 24 to May 24, while 43 gang-linked slayings occurred during the same period. CARDH said 146 gang murders were recorded between April 1 and April 23.

"Without making a value judgment, the 'Bwa



Kale' movement has in just one month produced convincing, visible results; fear has changed sides. Both kidnappings and gang-related killings have fallen drastically," CARDH added in the report.

CARDH said the vigilante groups are mainly made up of young people including some children, and likely emerged from the extreme cruelty inflicted by gangs, the ineffectiveness of the government, police and army and the lack of international action.

Last week, Caribbean

Community (CARICOM) leaders appointed three former prime ministers as members of an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) as the regional integration grouping seeks to extend its Good Offices to the government of Haiti and other Haitian stakeholders.

At their summit in the Bahamas in February, the regional leaders reiterated that CARICOM must play a leadership role in addressing the deteriorating situation in Haiti, "towards which there are moral and political obligations"..."

Earlier this month, United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, described Haiti as a "tragic situation" and appealed to the international community to do more to help the French-speaking CARICOM country overcome its present political and socio-economic conditions.

Guterres said that Haiti faces dramatic humanitarian needs, a political system that is paralysed and levels of violence by gangs "that are absolutely appalling.

The UN Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) said in the month of April alone, more than 600 people were killed in violence in the country's capital. This follows the killing of at least 846 people in the first three months of 2023.

BINUH said that overall, the number of victims of killings, injuries and kidnappings increased by 28 per cent in the first quarter of the year, with a total of 1,634 cases reported.

cont'd from pg 16

done. We will do an investigation, and if there was anybody, any corrupt act under the previous government, then we will act on it.

"I am very disappointed that this paper was leaked out. As you all know, when we were appointed to the Cabinet, we signed an oath of confidentiality that what is discussed in Cabinet should remain there because then this allows ministers to be able to speak their minds freely. The paper came to

the Cabinet," he added.

Prime Minister Briceño said the ministers during the discussions raised "some issues, rightly so" with the agreement, adding that the new document will be taken to the National Assembly.

"What I can assure you right now is that whatever that UDP (United Democratic Party) signed under the definitive agreement that will not fly. We are going to be redoing it," he added.

Last week, Deputy Prime Minister Cordel Hyde discussed the likelihood of new legislation being introduced in parliament to address the issue of Port of Magical Belize.

This followed an announcement made by Portico Enterprises on May 23, regarding the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Boskalis International and the Royal Caribbean Group to form a joint venture to develop, manage and operate the Port of Magical Belize.

Two believed trapped after Davenport, Iowa building collapse

By Alys Davies

Officials believe two people are possibly still alive in the rubble of a building in Davenport, Iowa, nearly 48 hours after it partially collapsed.

Three other residents remain unaccounted for, the city's mayor said, with no deaths confirmed so far.

On Monday, 52-year-old Lisa Brooks was rescued from the six-storey building after hiding under a sofa, her family told NBC News.

Nine people have been rescued since Sunday's incident, according to NBC.

Before Ms Brooks was rescued, city authorities had sent out a press release stating that the demolition of the building was expected to start on Tuesday.

The announcement prompted some protesters to gather outside the building - a century-old former hotel which housed 84 apartments and businesses.

Demolition plans were paused after Ms Brooks was found Monday evening. She was able to call for help after the phone in the apartment she was stuck in started working again, relatives said.

Davenport Mayor Mike Matson admitted that authorities did not know why she had not been found sooner.

"This is an active incident that is very fluid and ever-evolving," he said at a news conference on Tuesday.

April Hitchcock, whose brother Ryan is among those possibly still inside, said he had "probably not survived" and that her family wanted an orderly dismantling of the building to go ahead.

"I don't discount that he could be



Local officials believe the building is at risk of collapsing entirely.

trapped under there miraculously," Ms Hitchcock told reporters. "But we don't want to see any other families lose their lives or anybody else be injured."

Officials believe the building is at risk of collapsing entirely and are looking at ways to bring the rest of it down safely to prevent injuries to emergency workers.

"You can't run up to a pile of rocks and start pulling things off," Davenport Fire Marshal Jim Morris said at the news conference. "There are a lot of things we have to factor".

Mr Morris said Tuesday that state experts are on site to determine the best course of action. He added that the building could come down

cont'd on pg 19

North Korea launches rocket after satellite warning

North Korea has launched a rocket shortly after announcing it planned to send up its first space satellite, sources in Japan and South Korea say.

Japan issued a warning to residents in the southern prefecture of Okinawa but later reported there was no danger of the rocket hitting its territory.

The rocket has since come down, possibly after breaking up in the air.

North Korea said earlier it planned to launch a satellite by 11 June to monitor US military activities. Japan said it was ready to shoot down anything that threatened its territory.

There was chaos and confusion in Seoul, the South Korean capital, on Wednesday morning local time, as people awoke to the sound of an air raid siren and an emergency message telling them to prepare for an evacuation - only to be told 20 minutes



A TV screen in Japan displays a missile warning.

later it had been sent in error.

The stakes are high on the Korean Peninsula, where tensions have existed between the two countries for 70 years, and this false alarm could seriously damage people's trust in the alert system.

North Korea poses a

threat to South Korea, and if there is an alert in the future one question being asked is whether it will be taken seriously, or brushed off as another mistake.

South Korea's military said the projectile might have broken up in mid-air or crashed after it vanished from radar early, adding

that analysis was being conducted, Yonhap news agency reports.

On Tuesday, Ri Pyong Chol, vice chairman of North Korea's ruling party's central military commission, announced the launch plan, saying it was in response to "reckless military acts" by the US and South Korea.

He accused the countries of "openly revealing their reckless ambition for aggression".

Before Wednesday's launch, the US state department said any North Korean launch that used ballistic missile technology would violate multiple UN Security Council resolutions.

cont'd from pg 18

"20 minutes after we leave here".

Seven people were rescued from multiple floors immediately after its collapse on Sunday, while twelve were able to walk out of the building on their own, the city's fire chief Michael Carlsten said earlier.

An eighth person was rescued earlier on Monday and was taken to hospital, Mr Carlsten added.

The city said on Monday evening that after "extensive rescue operations,

no confirmed viable signs of life" have been found, adding that the police had also been working to contact all the individuals known to have been residents in the building.

During Monday's news conference, officials did not explain why they thought only two of the five people unaccounted for were still in the building.

The cause of the building's collapse remains unclear, but a gas leak and substantial water damage have been discovered.

Iran tries female journalists who reported on Mahsa Amini's death

By David Gritten

Two Iranian female journalists who helped break the story of Mahsa Amini's death in custody in September have gone on trial before a Revolutionary Court.

Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi have been charged with "collaborating with the hostile US government" and "propaganda against the establishment".

Ms Hamedei's husband said her trial opened in Tehran on Tuesday, a day after Ms Mohammadi's began.

The women deny the charges and insist that they were just doing their jobs.

Iranian authorities have arrested at least 75 journalists since mass anti-government protests swept across the country in the wake of Ms Amini's death, according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF). Seventeen, including Ms Hamedei and Ms Mohammadi, are still in prison.

Ms Amini died in hospital in Tehran on 16 September, three days after she was detained by morality police for allegedly wearing her hijab "improperly".

Witnesses said the 22-year-old Kurdish woman was beaten while in custody, but authorities blamed "sudden heart failure" for her death.

Ms Hamedei, a 30-year-



Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi and their newspapers insist they were just doing their jobs.

old journalist with the Sharq newspaper, photographed Ms Amini's father and grandmother embracing. She posted it on Twitter with the caption: "The black dress of mourning has become our national flag."

Ms Mohammadi, a 35-year-old reporter with the Hammihan newspaper, published a story about Ms Amini's funeral in her hometown of Saqqez. She described how hundreds of mourners cried out "Woman, life, freedom", which became one of the main slogans of the protests.

Security forces arrested Ms Hamedei on 22 September, while Ms Mohammadi was detained a week later.

Prosecutors refused to provide their families and lawyers with information about the cases against the

two women, who were kept in harsh conditions at Evin Prison and Qarchak Women's Prison.

But at the end of October, Iran's ministry of intelligence and the intelligence agency of the Revolutionary Guards issued a statement accusing Ms Hamedei and Ms Mohammadi of being trained by the US Central Intelligence Agency to foment unrest in Iran.

And last month, the judiciary's spokesman announced that they had been charged with "collaborating with the hostile government of America, conspiracy and collusion to commit crimes against national security and propaganda against the establishment".

On Monday, Ms Mohammadi's lawyer confirmed she had attended the first session of her closed-

door trial at Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, which is presided over by the notorious judge Abolqasem Salavati.

Shahabeddin Mirlohi told Hammihan that he was not permitted to speak.

"We had significant and serious formal objections in the case," he added. "In our view, the Revolutionary Court does not have jurisdiction over this case, and it should be heard in a competent court with the presence of a jury and in an open manner."

Sharq journalist Milad Alavi tweeted that "her basic rights and clear legal requirements were violated", adding: "They ridiculed the concepts of 'court of law' and 'fair trial'!"

Ms Hamedei's separate trial began on Tuesday, according to her husband.

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Sports News



GNFC Youth League ends with awards ceremony

The outstanding teams and individuals were rewarded with their prizes as the 2023 Gomez/Netherlands Insurance Youth Football League concluded with an Awards Ceremony at the Fort Road basketball court on Saturday.

The awards were presented by Jason Cordice, who is President of the Parents Association of the Generation Next Football Club (GNFC), organizers of the annual event.

He was assisted by representatives of the youth league sponsors - Operations Manager of Kenneth A Gomez Insurance Agency Limited Marissa Hallpike and Trevor Singh, who is Nestle Business Manager of AS Bryden & Sons, local agents for Milo.

The Under-7 Boys Division Champions were Pigotts Bullets FC A, the Pigotts Bullets FC 1 captured the runners-up prize while



The Girls Division winners Cutting Edge FC1. (Photos by Elwin Francis)

GNFC Rebels A finished in third place.

Pigotts Bullets FC won all the individual awards in the division. Jordan Lake won the Best Goalkeeper Award, Trey Dover took home the Best Defender Award, Drayshan Blackstock claimed the Best Midfielder title while Amaad Phillip won the Golden Boots or most goals award in the Under-7 Boys Division.

GNFC Rebels also won all the individual awards in the division. Kyle Pringle won the Best Goalkeeper Award, J'den Gordon captured the Best Defender and Golden Boots awards while

The Under-9 Boys Division champions were the GNFC Rebels. TAMO FC came second and Pigotts Bullets FC finished in third place.

GNFC Rebels also won all the individual awards in the division. Kyle Pringle won the Best Goalkeeper Award, J'den Gordon captured the Best Defender and Golden Boots awards while

Karan Cordice claimed the Best Midfielder Award.

GNFC Rebels captured the Under-11 Boys Division with Pigotts Bullets FC finishing second and Villa Lions in third place. Chase Garner of GNFC Rebels won the Best Midfielder and Golden Boots awards. Ethan John and Tevorn Henderson of Pigotts Bullets FC claimed the Best Goalkeeper and Best Defender awards respectively.

Villa Lions were crowned champions of the Under-13 Boys Division. GNFC Rebels took second place while TAMO FC came third. Allan Henry and Mekhi Nathan shared the Golden Boot Award.

Alyssa Laviscount of GNFC Rebels won the Best Goalkeeper Award, while Villa Lions' Kahrique Joseph and Junior Lewis captured the Best Defender and Best Midfielder awards re-

cont'd on pg 23



The Under-15 Boys Division winners Villa Lions.



The Under-9 Boys Division champions GNFC Rebels.

cont'd from pg 22

spectively.

Villa Lions also won the Under-15 Division with GNFC Rebels finishing second and Willikies FC claiming third place. Villa Lions claimed three of the four individual awards. Tobe Lewis captured the Best Goalkeeper Award, Samuel Brazier Jr was the Best Midfielder and Silence Manyaka won the Golden Boots Award. Seth Layne of GNFC Rebels claimed the Best Defender Award.

The Under-17 Boys Division was won by New Evolution. Willikies FC took the runners-up prize while Gray's Green captured third place honours.

New Evolution also won all the individual awards in their division. Zahiem Joseph claimed the Best Goalkeeper Awards, Jordan Francis won the Best Defender Award, Jevaughn Jarvis captured the Best Midfielder Award and Jonathan Shoy took the Golden Boots Award.

The Girls Division was won by Cutting Edge FC1, Wadadli FC took second place while GNFC Rebels came third. Cutting Edge FC1 also claimed three of the four individual awards in the division.

Onaya Prince claimed the Best Goalkeeper Award, Abisha Henry captured the Best Defender Award and Ajahna Martin took the Best Midfielder Award. Iressiea Allen of TAMO FC won the Golden Boot Award.



GNFC Rebels captured the Under-11 Boys Division title.

President of the Generation Next Football Club (GNFC) Ricky Santos expressed his satisfaction with this year's league and the support of the sponsors Kenneth A Gomez Insurance Agency Limited and AS Bryden & Sons.

"I am extremely excited. It was a wonderful turnout. I am a little bit disappointed with the turnout for the award ceremony, however, the turnout in terms of the league was fantastic.

"It was very competitive, particularly in two divisions, the Under-11s and Under-13s, where it went down to the wire. But all in all, it was a fantastic tournament.

"I am very pleased, and of course, I am very grateful to the sponsors. They are the ones who make this event happened, we just manage the league."

Hallpike said her company's sup-

port of the youth league is an investment in the young leaders of Antigua and Barbuda.

"Kenneth A Gomez Insurance Agency Ltd., being a local company, sees the importance in investing in the young leaders of Antigua and Barbuda, be it is through sports or other positive activities," Hallpike stated.

"We are therefore pleased to collaborate with Netherlands Insurance Company West Indies Limited to sponsor the Generation Next Youth Football League.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to helping young footballers realize their dreams of becoming excellent players, and most importantly, we are proud to play an integral role in building team spirit and community togetherness through events such as these."



The Under-13 Boys Division champions Villa Lions.



The Under-17 Boys Division champions New Evolution.

Sports News



Rain causes disruption of ABCA's Two-Day competition

All encounters ended in draws during a rain affected seventh round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Two-Day Championship over the weekend.

Cup-holders PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks played to a draw with Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at Ball Beef in Liberta.

Joshua Thomas hits a century as the Black Hawks declared their first innings closed at 288 for nine off 75.2 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat.

Thomas slammed an unbeaten 123 off 183 balls with 20 fours and captain Kadeem Phillip chipped in

with 32. Fast bowler Kelvin Pitman captured three for 33 and Shacoy Floyd picked up three for 37.

Cleton Payne then struck 45 in Bethesda's reply of 114 all out in 52.4 overs. Amahl Nathaniel snapped up five for 23.

The Black Hawks reached 146 for two off 27 overs in their second innings when the match ended. Michael Greaves hit an unbeaten 56 off 61 balls and opener Malique Walsh was not out on 54.

All Saints Pythons and Empire Nations played to a draw in their encounter at Mack Pond in All Saints. The Pythons made 167 all out off 52 overs after being sent in to bat. Michael Marcellin struck 55 and



Amahl Nathaniel bags a five-wicket haul for the Black Hawks. (ABCA)

Kenny Sutton cracked 48 off 41 balls. Off spinner Justin Athanaze grabbed five for 30.

Empire Nation reached 141 for nine when the game ended. Rasheed Henry scored 53 off 55 balls and Tariq Benjamin made 43. Marcellin claimed four for 43 and Conroy Semple took three for 19.

Bolans Blasters and Combined Schools played to a draw at Factory. Isaiah Attwood bagged six for 43 as Bolans Blasters tumbled to 125 all out in 34.3 overs.

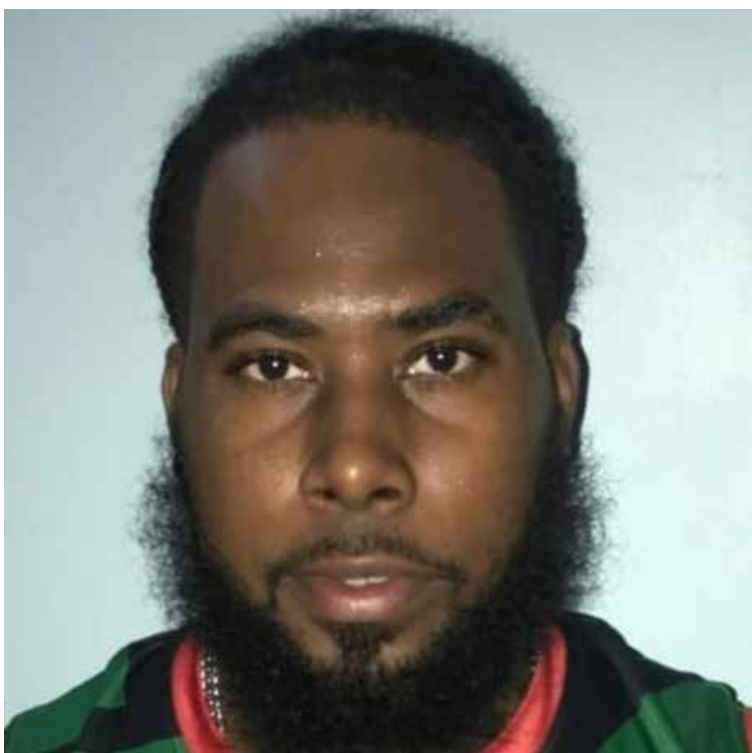
In reply, Combined Schools reached 177 for seven off 41 overs at the end of the match. Captain George Elvin cracked 77 and Melique Jacobs was

not out on 55 off 42 balls. Orlando Peters picked up three for 37.

Jennings Tigers and New Winthropes Lions battled to a draw at Jennings. The Tigers declared their first innings closed at 233 for eight off 60 overs. Jedidiah Martin made 86, Nicolas Tappin scored 57 not out and Glenton Williams struck 32. Shavon Moore took four for 50.

In reply, the Lions reached 163 for nine off 34.1 overs at the end of the match. Bartlette Henry slammed 79 off 77 balls while Williams captured six for 66.

Pigotts Crushers played to a draw with Wes Rising



Joshua Thomas hits a century for the Black Hawks

cont'd on pg 25



Sagikor Life Enforcers are the champions of the Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) St John's Co-Operative Credit Union 15-Over Women's Competition. (Photo courtesy ABSCA)

Enforcers win ABSCA's 15-Over Women's Competition

Sagikor Life Enforcers have won the Antigua and Barbuda Softball Cricket Association's (ABSCA) St John's Co-Operative Credit Union 15-Over Women's Competition.

Enforcers sealed their title with a seven-wicket victory against Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets in their final encounter to finish at the top of the round robin competition with 95 points, winning nine of their

10 matches while the other was rained out.

Bullets made 57 for four off their 15 overs with Cheryl Williams getting 27 not out. Loukuell Pelle had one wicket for eight runs, Gaynell O'Garro took one wicket for nine runs while Kimberly Anthony and Camille Thorpe each picked up one for 12.

Enforcers then achieved victory at 58 for three in 13.4 overs. Loukuell Pelle

made 22 not out while Sacha Michael and Grace Persaud each contributed 13.

Mauricia Willette claimed one wicket for nine runs, Eldora Sylvester captured one for 12 while Annette Frank took one for 14.

Flyers finished in second place with 70 points after soaring to a nine-wicket win over Foster Jonas, Harley Maintenance Potters Uprising.

Potters Uprising made 78 for four off their 15 overs with Nolia Elvin hitting 28 and Joan Thomas scoring 27. Coller Simon and Akeda Francis each picked up one for 12 and Monique Francis captured one for 15.

Flyers then secured victory by scoring 82 for one off just nine overs. Makada Samuel slammed 51 not out

and Robinette Burton was not out on 12. Tawana John picked up one wicket for seven runs.

Sacha Michael of Enforcers claimed the Most Valuable Player of the tournament award with an aggregate of 254 runs and six wickets.

Akeda Francis of Flyers took the most wickets. Francis captured 12 wickets for 101 runs in 20 overs.

Tawana John of Potters Uprising had the Best Bowling Figures of four overs, eight runs and four wickets.

Nolia Hodge-Elvin of Potters Uprising scored the Most Runs with a total of 293, while Cheryl Williams of Bullets achieved the Highest Individual Score of 72 runs.

cont'd from pg 24

Sun at Rising Sun in St John's. The Crushers declared their first innings closed at 233 for eight off 47 overs.

Jewel Andrew hammered 71, opener Kadeem Henry cracked 66 off 68 balls and Vincent Shadrach Jr struck 45 off 42 balls. Rising Sun reached 124 for nine off 33 overs at the end of the match.

Royal Richards topscored with 45 off 38 balls while Crushers' captain Demari Benta snapped up seven wickets for 48 runs.

Team Antigua Island Girls depart for 2023 Pacific Challenge

Team Antigua Island Girls left the country on Sunday for the first leg of their journey to competing in the inaugural Pacific Challenge put on by Atlantic Campaigns.

The team was expected to spend two days in Miami finalizing their row essentials before heading to Monterey, California, which is the starting line for the 2,800 nautical-mile row.

The teams leave Monterey Bay and end in Hanalei Bay on Kauai, Hawaii. The sendoff was intimate, with just family, and it was characterized by mixed emotions -prayerfulness, pride, nervousness - especially on the part of the relatives, and a tinge of sadness from the team, since their numbers were reduced to three.

Owing to pressing, personal reasons, Elvira Bell-Bailey won't make the row. She will now pivot to joining the support team. That notwithstanding, the trio of Christal Clashing, Samara Emmanuel and Kevinia Francis will fly the flag of Antigua and Barbuda, and they will do so proudly.

"For our Atlantic crossing, our mantra was no matter what happens, just keep rowing, and that's what we're going to do. We're going to turn the disappointment of being reduced to three to fuel," stated Francis, who is the team captain.

Rowers are due in California no later than 1st June, where they will go through their final paces, including inspections and briefings and land-based training ahead of the 12th June start date. As they departed, Team Antigua Island Girls made a plea for support.



Team Antigua Island Girls trio, from left to right, Samara Emmanuel, Christal Clashing and Kevinia Francis left Antigua on Sunday en route to California, USA. (Photo courtesy TAIG)

"We're asking people to rally around us, morally and financially, as we're still short of our fundraising goals. We'd also love to log on when the chance presents and see our people pulling with us with words of encouragement," Clashing said.

The team thanked sponsors Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Budget Marine, Cool and Smooth, Eubegood2,

Jumby Bay Island and Kennedy's Club Ltd. Shell Beach Marina, Antigua Slipway, State Insurance Company Ltd, and Seagull Inflatables are also integral in the team's participation.

Donations to Team Antigua Island Girls may be made at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/team-antigua-island-girlsback-on-the-row-again> and Caribbean Union Bank, Acct # 20004631.