



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
POINT EXPRESS
 TRUSTED NEWS AND RESPECTED VIEWS

FRIDAY 21ST JULY 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 140 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

PAGEANTS WEEKEND!



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
 FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS



MR & MISS TEENAGE PAGEANT



SAT JUL 22ND | 8PM | \$20



Premier Beverages



Pageants weekend!

It can be considered Antigua and Barbuda's first 'big' carnival since 2019 and a welcomed return, with a packed programme of activities planned for Antigua Carnival 2023.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 festivals, and when Carnival reappeared in 2022, it was with a reduced schedule of events.

It is now 2023 and the pandemic is a fixture in our rear-view mirrors, the fete season is in full swing, and it is now time for the pageants.

The start of Pageants Weekend is Saturday 22 July with the 2023 Mr. and Miss Teenage Pageant, which will feature 14 young people representing several secondary schools across the country.

This will be followed on Sunday night, July 23, by the Miss Queen of Carnival Pageant, dubbed - the Enchanted Seven, featuring seven of Antigua and Barbuda's finest young women who are vying for the crown.

So far, the build-up to Antigua Carnival 2023 has been the fetes, with multiple events taking place each weekend.

Anticipation is also high as the finalists for the Calypso Monarch and the Jumpy and Groovy Party Monarch competitions have all been named.

The way is now clear for the focus to be on the Pageants and the Pageants alone!

Some have asked why both pageants were not included in the official programme of events following the opening parade next Thursday.

This was explained by Festivals Minister Daryll Matthew who said the organisers wanted the winners to participate in the opening parade



having already been declared winners in both the Teenage and the Miss Queen of Carnival pageants.

Furthermore, he said this will provide the Queen of Carnival additional time to prepare for the JCI Caribbean Queen Show, slated for July 31 at Carnival City.

The Mr. and Miss Teenage Pageant is being sponsored this year, by the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus (UWI FIC), as the educational institution seeks to broaden its outreach with the most critical group of people in the country, young people nearing the end of their secondary education.

The winner's circle will receive scholarships from UWI FIC. Happy Kids will also present the top three males and top three females in the competition with laptops, and they will also receive handsets from Inet.

The fourteen contestants have spent the last several weeks engaged in intense preparation for the competition.

The stage is set, the contestants are ready...Saturday, July 22, 8:00 pm at Carnival City...It's lights!!!... Camera!!!...Action!!!

One night later, it will be time for the Enchanted Seven, the 2023

Queen of Carnival delegates.

The young ladies have had a busy schedule since their unveiling and sponsorship tag at a function held at the Hodges Bay Club.

Along with preparations for their individual and group activities, the delegates participated in a public speaking competition in June, that sought to help build their self-confidence.

Delegate # 2 Ms. Cool and Smooth, Jahkaydah Isaac, emerged as the winner.

The points from this competition do not cross over into Sunday night's pageant.

On Thursday night, the delegates and their respective entourages converged on Carnival City for a full dress rehearsal.

Organizers of the pageant, Marsh and Marsh Productions, led by Brucella Marsh-Sutton have spared no effort in ensuring that the show will be of a high quality.

The delegates are competing for some of the most attractive prizes ever offered in this competition.

The winner will receive a cash prize of \$25,000.00, the first runner-up, \$15,000.00, and the second

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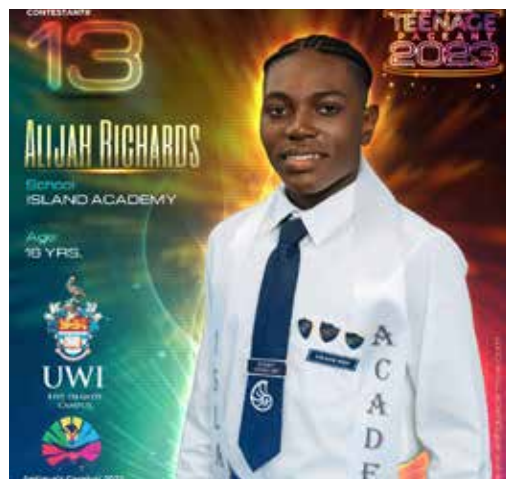
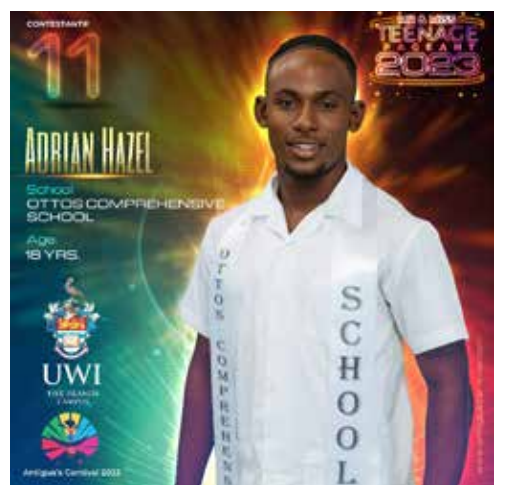


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runner-up \$10,000.00.

The top three winners will also receive gift baskets from Loire Valley Fragrance store.

The Enchanted Seven will compete in interview, performing talent, swimwear, costume, and evening wear segments.

So now...We Ready, We Ready, We Ready...we ready for de shows!!!.....



The 2023 Queen of Carnival Pageant - An Overview

By Raynel Carroll (former Queen of Carnival)

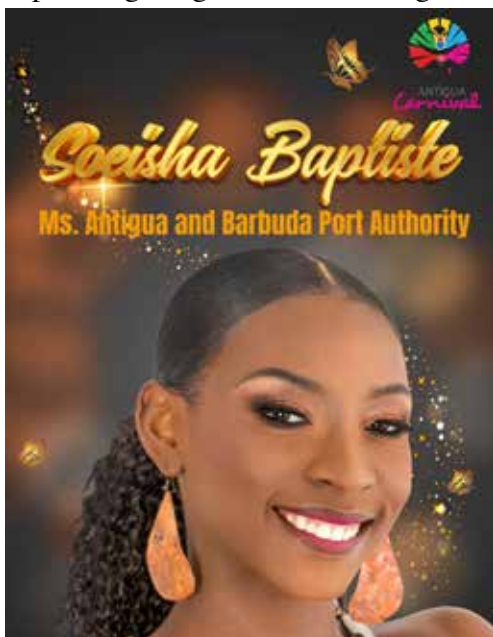
The Queen of Carnival committee, led by the dedicated Mrs. Brucella Marsh-Sutton, has been diligently working to create a mesmerizing show for everyone on July 23 in Carnival City.

From the rigorous screening and selection process to the vibrant launch of carnival, the girls have been fully committed. This journey has transformed them beyond the stage, providing valuable life lessons such as time management, public speaking, and talent improvement. Prepare to be enchanted by the delegates' performances in various captivating segments, including the

interview, swimwear, talent, costume showcase, and evening wear.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Senator Govia and the entire hardworking team of the Marsh and Marsh Committee. Their collective efforts, under the guidance of Brucella Marsh Sutton and the support of Shane Marsh, Kim Joseph, Nadine McDougal, Anandi Carroll, Sharon Davis, Renika Isaac, Carolyn Jarvis, and Arkeem Francis, have made this event possible.

Join us as we celebrate the Queen of Carnival 'Enchanted 7' and witness the unforgettable whimsical display they have prepared for you. Let the magic of carnival come alive on July 23!



Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh suspended

Joanne Walsh, the Chief Magistrate, has been suspended by the Judicial and Legal Services Commission (JLSC).

Legal sources said the suspension, effective July 20, 2023, will be with full pay until the tribunal appointed by the JLSC submits its report, following a hearing to be carried out into the matters surrounding Chief Magistrate Walsh.

The names of the judges who will sit on the panel have not been released. It is unlikely that this will happen before the tribunal members arrive in St. John's for the hearing. The sources said the hearing is likely to take place in August although a precise date has not been given.

Informed sources say the charges were filed by the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission, following an investigation into several complaints lodged against the Chief Magistrate. A total of 10 disciplinary charges have been filed against Magistrate Walsh.

The informed source reported that the probe into Walsh's behavior was conducted by Justice Stanley John, assigned by the Commission.

There has been a long list of complaints lodged against the Chief Magistrate regarding the manner in which she dispenses jus-

tice from the bench, her interactions with defendants before her, and her general attitude towards staff of the magistracy.

There is also one case in which a senior officer at the St. John's Police Station had accused the chief magistrate of conduct unbecoming of her office. The officer said to be second in command at the station, recorded that she had physically assaulted him and used indecent language in the presence of junior court staff.

That was the latest in a series of reports made, including one from a court employee, who alleged she had been the victim of intimidation and aggression by Walsh.

Before her suspension, there were suggestions that she ought to have recused herself and allowed the hearing to proceed.

One of the first tasks at hand now is the appointment of an acting Chief Magistrate, who will perform the duties until the matter is resolved.



Joanne Walsh



Good Morning

D-Inclusive



SUN.
30
JULY
2023

TICKETS:
REGULAR: \$350
NO GATE SALES

MENU



COOLIDGE
CRICKET
GROUND

4:00AM TO
12 NOON

MAIN SELECTION	SIDES	SOUPS
SALTFISH RED HERRING HARD BOILED EGGS SAUSAGE LINKS CORN BEEF SAUTÉED LIVER & ONIONS BAKED HAM CHUNKS	CHOP-UP AVOCADO PLANTAINS (BOILED & FRIED) GREEN PAPAYA FUNGI DUCANA SAUTÉED POTATOES DUMPLING BAKES / JOHNNY CAKE ASSORTED FRITTERS LOCAL BREAD GARDEN SALAD	SOUSE CORN CHOWDER CHICKEN SOUP PIGTAIL SOUP

BREAKFAST POWERED BY JOE MIKES CATERING



Excessive heat possible for Antigua and Barbuda

The Met Office has issued a warning about an excessive heat wave for Antigua and Barbuda over the next three days, starting today (Friday).

Chief Forecaster at the Met Office, Dale Destin said light winds and relatively high humidity will possibly allow for the heat index to rise to excessive levels resulting in dangerously hot conditions.

“The threat of health problems, for mainly sensitive people could rise to at least moderate with the potential for significant impacts. An excessive heat watch is issued when conditions are conducive for an excessive heat event, in the next 24 to 72 hours; however, the timing is still uncertain,” Destin warned.

He added that the threshold heat index temperature for a watch, is 38°C (100°F) or higher, for two or more consecutive days, with the winds usually being 18 km/h or 11 mph or less.

“While extreme heat can put everyone at risk for heat illnesses, health risks are greatest for the elderly, young children, people with chronic illnesses such as breathing difficulties, heart conditions or psychiatric illnesses, people who work or who exercise in the heat, homeless people, and low-income earners.

“Heat illnesses (heat: stroke, exhaustion, fainting, cramps, rash, and edema) are preventable, but they can lead to long-term health problems and even death,” the forecaster cautioned.

Destin is advising that if any symptoms of health illness are present (such as dizziness or fainting, nausea or vomiting, headache, rapid breathing and heart-beat, or extreme thirst) immediately move to a cool place and drink liquids; water is best. The most dangerous heat illness is heat stroke, with symptoms that include complete or partial loss of consciousness or confusion and high

body temperatures. If caring for someone with those symptoms, call 911 immediately. While waiting for help, cool the person right away by moving them to a cool place, applying cold water to large areas of the skin or clothing, and fanning the person as much as possible.

Destin urged everyone to stay alert and take precautions – stay cool and hydrated. Check on vulnerable family members, friends, and neighbours. Those who take medication or have a health condition should ask their doctor if it increases their health risk in the heat and follow the doctor’s recommendations.

Be prepared! This excessive heat watch will be updated accordingly, and there is a chance that a warning will be required. Stay tuned to updates coming out of the Met Office via antiguamet.com, twitter.com/abmetservice, facebook.com/abmetservice

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SOEISHA BAPTISTE



ISCHIKELLE CARBIN



AKIBA AGARD



JAH KAYDAH ISAAC



THYANA SEBASTIAN

Artwork: Takumi Media 2023

23RD JULY 2023

STAND
\$25

RESERVE
\$50

ANTIGUA RECREATION GROUNDS | 8:00 pm



June saw a decline in airlifts and occupancy rates

The Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourist Association (ABHTA) has reported that its occupancy rates and airlift figures declined in the month of June.

The latest data released by the ABHTA shows occupancy among member properties of the association, averaging 53.3 percent. This figure is down by over 11 percent when compared with the 2022 figures. It is also down slightly from 2019, the base year used by the association to assess the industry.

The data also shows that visitors arriving by air during June were down by 15 percent compared to 2019. For June, arrivals totaled 18,048 which is more than 3-thousand less than the 21,175 visitors who arrived in June 2019.

A closer look at the figures re-

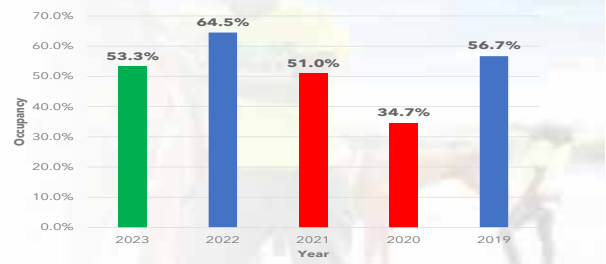


June	2023	2022
Overall Occupancy	53.3%	64.5%
Large > 150 rooms	55.2%	72.5%
Mid size 50-150	48.6%	56.8%
Small < 50	59.8%	65.7%
Luxury	46.5%	57.8%
Mid Range	60.7%	68.2%
Budget	27.6%	50.9%

vealed that while the United States market remains the most important for the industry, there are signs of weakening in other markets, the figures arriving out of the UK, Canada, and the Caribbean are down.

A spokesman for the ABHTA said airlifts into the country are down because the number of flights has reduced from previous years. The An-

Occupancy Comparison June 2019 - 2023



Key Point:

- **June 2023** result, IF equalled to the room nights available in 2019 will be **adjusted average to 44%**

tigua and Barbuda Airport Authority has confirmed that flights out of Canada, the UK, and the Caribbean have been down for a variety of reasons.

All is not doom and gloom however, as a source in the Ministry of Tourism has noted, that while the hotel's occupancy rates have reduced, they do not fully reflect what is happening in terms of stay-over visitors.

"There are other areas of the industry that are not captured by the ABHTA because they are not members of the organization. I am referring to the growing Air B&B market and the vacation rental by owner (VRBO) villa or home rental markets that are a significant slice of the stayover pie," the source explained.

For example, in 2021 during the pandemic, there were roughly one thousand Air B&B properties up for rental. From that figure, according to the source, this could account for an additional 2500 rooms. "It is fair to say that there may be as many rooms available through these channels as are available in the traditional hotels," he further explained.

Currently, the Ministry of Tourism is working in conjunction with the Inland Revenue Department to have these properties registered.

ANTIGUA
AND BARBUDA
The best is just the beginning.

Antigua Carnival 2023

Antigua Barbuda
FESTIVALS
COMMISSION

ANTIGUA Carnival 2023

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

UWI FIVE ISLANDS CAMPUS MR. AND MS. TEENAGE PAGEANT

Sat Jul 22nd | 8:00pm | \$20

QUEEN OF CARNIVAL

Sun Jul 23rd | 8:00pm | \$25 | \$50

OFFICIAL OPENING

Thur Jul 27th | 3:00pm - 9:00pm

FACEOFF

Fri Jul 28th | 9:00pm

CAVALIER RUM TSHIRT MAS

Sat Jul 29th | 3:00pm - 9:00pm

OASIS JR CARNIVAL | 2:30pm
SMALTA JR CALYPSO | 6:00pm

Sun Jul 30th | \$15

JAYCEES QUEEN SHOW

Mon Jul 31st | 8:00pm | \$50 | \$150

DRUESDAY

Tue Aug 1st | 9:00pm

GLOBAL PORTS JR PARTY MONARCH

Wed Aug 2nd | 8:00pm | \$15

COOL & SMOOTH MELTING POT
Thur Aug 3rd | 8:00pm | \$65 | \$350

CARIB BEER
CALYPSO MONARCH
Fri Aug 4th | 8:00pm | \$30

STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LTD PANORAMA
Sat Aug 5th | 8:00pm | \$30

APUA INET PARTY MONARCH
Sun Aug 6th | 8:00pm | \$40

CAVALIER RUM J'OUVERT
3:00am - 10:00am
CAVALIER RUM
CARNIVAL MONDAY
Mon Aug 7th | 2:00pm

CAVALIER RUM
PARADE OF THE BANDS
Tue Aug 8th | 12 Noon

LAST LAP
Tue Aug 8th | 7:00pm

OFFICIAL

#carnivaliscalling



JCI to assist with two students' education at ASC

Two students of the Antigua State College are to receive financial and other assistance for the upcoming school year through collaborative efforts of JCI Antigua and Grant Thornton.

The organization's Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) through its Youth Empowerment through Education Initiative has awarded Vinne-Cara Lindsey with a full scholarship to cover fees at the Antigua State College for the academic year 2023-2024. Jadon Reid who came close to receiving the scholarship, was supported with his request for a laptop, which was made possible through Happy Kids.

Chairperson Aneika Davis stated that "We firmly believe that this opportunity will provide the students with the necessary assistance required



to complete their college education without the burden of fees and resources. We express heartfelt appreciation to our sponsors Grant Thornton and Happy Kids for their generous donations in making this noble initiative a success."

"To all applicants, we were truly moved and inspired by each story. We are proud of your unwavering com-

mitment to your personal development and that of your wider community. We take this opportunity to wish you every success in all your future endeavours." Deputy Chair Akilah Anderson added.

The Youth Empowerment Programme specifically focuses on the development of our nation's youth, including its production of the annual prestigious YEP Awards which is slated for November 26, 2023.

JCI Antigua President Laurel Jonas said, "JCI Antigua believes that education is a tool that fosters the continued development of our youths, Antigua and Barbuda, and the world at large. Our young people are our future, and we will continue to engage and empower our youth through our YEP initiatives as well as our many other projects and programmes."



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Saturday, 29 July, 2023

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goodie bag, food, drinks, and good vibes!**

Meeting Point: Environmental Division

All funds raised will be donated to Breast Friends and The Oncology Department at The Sir Lester Bird Mount St. John's Medical Centre.

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Register at the CIBC FirstCaribbean Old Parham Road branch or contact the persons below:

- Alexei Whyte – 484-5104
- Khadijah James – 484-5064
- Natasha Charles – 484-5137
- Priscilla Leonce – 484-5115

**SIR LESTER BIRD
MEDICAL CENTRE**



**FirstCaribbean
International Bank**

Opinion

On September 11, Small Island States get their day in court

By Sir Ronald Sanders

In the face of unremitting climate change threats and unfulfilled promises from industrialized nations, leaders of small island states have courageously taken matters into their own hands. Their frustration with lacklustre funding and inadequate solutions to fortify their countries against climate change has led them to pursue the power of the international legal system. They are seeking justice against those nations whose excessive greenhouse gas emissions pose an existential threat to their peoples.

The International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) has consented to hear their groundbreaking case in which they are aiming to ascertain the legal responsibility of States for carbon emissions, marine pollution, rising sea levels, and the resultant damage inflicted on other states. The landmark hearing will take place in Hamburg from September 11 to 13, 2023.

It was just a short 21 months ago that the Prime Ministers of Antigua and Barbuda and Tuvalu, Gaston Browne and Kausea Natano respectively, showed extraordinary foresight and bravery by embarking on a novel legal journey to combat the threats of climate change to their

peoples' survival. An historic accord was signed on the sidelines of the COP26 meeting in Glasgow, giving birth to The Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS) as an international body, registered with the United Nations Secretariat, with a mandate to pursue the implementation of international law regarding climate change.

Today, their daring initiative is reaping results. Supported by an international team of legal experts and representatives from five other small island states, their plea for an Advisory Opinion was submitted to ITLOS on June 16, 2023.

Two crucial questions are posed to the tribunal: Firstly, what are the State Parties' obligations to prevent, reduce, and control marine environment pollution due to climate change effects, including ocean warming, sea level rise, and ocean acidification, all spurred by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions? Secondly, how must the marine environment be protected and preserved in the face of these climate change impacts?

Their choice to engage the international legal system is the culmination of years of frustration over in-



Sir Ronald Sanders

industrialized nations' seeming lip-service and labyrinthine funding mechanisms, proposed at over years of meetings of the UN Committee of the Parties (COP).

Often the pledges that are made do not offer additional money; in many cases the funds are repurposed from other promises that were not kept. Additionally, the dizzying number of new mechanisms that are supposedly set up are not only narrow in their purpose, but the means of accessing them are both obtuse and restrictive.

Among these are the Global Shield Solutions Platform, which builds on the InsuResilience Solutions Fund and a Global Shield Financing Facility set up at the World Bank; the Climate Vulnerable Forum & V20 Joint Multi-Do-

nor Fund that promises to establish a loss and damage program utilizing the GEF Small Grants Programme structure to make smaller funding amounts directly available to affected communities.

Highlighting these inadequacies is the much-lauded 'loss and damage' fund, discussed for the first time at the 27th COP meeting in Egypt. While it was hailed as a breakthrough, the reality was a mirage. The practiced and clever negotiators of the industrialized states at COP27 did not establish a fund nor the means to make it operational; they merely agreed to set up a Transitional Committee comprising representatives from 24 countries—10 from developed countries, including the United

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States, and 14 from developing countries. The purpose of the Committee is to make recommendations to COP28 in December 2023, including on what countries should contribute to the fund, how the fund will be administered, and what funding arrangements might be possible.

When these convoluted mechanisms are coupled with a 13-year failure by industrialized nations to deliver on the promise of providing US\$100 billion annually in climate finance for low- and middle-income countries, the resolve of small island state leaders to seek justice through the international legal system is fully understandable.

In pursuing the establishment of COSIS and seeking an Advisory Opinion from ITLOS, the leaders of small island states were frequently discouraged from their path by governments of industrialised nations. The latter fear edicts from international legal bodies which, at the very least, establish their obligations; they much prefer non-binding negotiations such as the COP process in which their considerably greater skills and leverage give them an advantage.

Nonetheless, the small island state leaders pursued their cause relentlessly, understanding that the stakes are too high to acquiesce to pressure. Their commitment resonates with the

words of Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who declared, "The time for empty promises is over." The leaders have been joined by 33 other countries and 9 international organizations in making submissions to ITLOS.

The upcoming ITLOS hearing in September is a significant milestone, with implications that could re-

define the climate change landscape. The fight waged by the leaders of Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Niue, Palau, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Vanuatu through COSIS is not just for their nations. It's a fight for climate justice that will resonate across the globe.

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassa-

dor to the United States and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)



PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice serves to inform the public that **Athena Richardson**, who held the position of Dispatch Manager, Sales and Distribution in our Company is no longer employed by or professionally connected with Antigua Wireless Ventures trading as Digicel Antigua as of 12th July, 2023.

Please refrain from conducting any transactions related to your Digicel account with said individual.

Regards,
Public Relations Officer
Digicel Antigua



Photo during the first and last IATSE strike in 2007.

Broadway strike averted hours after walkout vote

By **Chloe Kim**

A strike affecting Broadway shows looks likely to be averted, just hours after a union representing 1,500 backstage workers announced a vote to walk out.

The tentative deal means the strike, which could have begun as early as Friday halting 28 shows in New York and 17 touring shows, is now off.

The deal, details of which are not yet known, must still be agreed by members before it can go into effect.

It came just hours after the union announced the walkout vote.

The rapidly proposed agreement stands in contrast to the ongoing dispute between writers and guild actors and Hollywood studios and producers.

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), which represents stagehands, hair and make-up artists and wardrobe talent on Broadway, said it was negotiating with the Broadway League and Disney Theatrical, two groups representing Broadway producers.

IATSE members had been arguing

for salary increases and guaranteed weekly and daily rest periods, and any walkout would have seen the curtain close on hit shows like *Wicked*, *Back to the Future*, and *& Juliet*.

The union said it would confirm details and ratify what it described as the new “Pink Contract” in the coming days.

The earlier announcement of a walkout vote so close to the potential start of a strike was seen as a rarity. Strike votes are usually held long in advance of a strike deadline, allowing for more negotiating time.

Before the tentative deal was announced, IATSE’s Matthew Loeb said: “We need to show strength and unity to ensure we win the wages, benefits, and rights that all members at IATSE have earned and deserve.”

A strike on Broadway - the main Manhattan thoroughfare that is home to major theatres - would have seriously affected New York City’s tourist economy, as its theatres are a draw for visitors in their own right.

The Broadway League reported that

theatres had a total attendance of 12.3 million this past season and grossed \$1.6bn (£1.2bn) in ticket sales in the first full season since the pandemic.

Without a deal, IATSE would have become the third major entertainment union to strike this summer, joining the Screen Actors Guild - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) and the Writers Guild of America (WGA).

Last week, 160,000 members of SAG-AFTRA went on strike, joining the 11,000 members of the WGA who have been striking for months.

Rather than inching towards an agreement, the Hollywood dispute showed signs of heating up on Thursday after one studio, Universal, was forced to deny claims it intentionally cut back trees shading a picket line in Burbank.

The Actors’ Equity Association, which represents acting talent on Broadway, approved a three-year contract in December 2022. The first, and last, IATSE strike was in 2007 and lasted 19 days.

FLU SYMPTOMS

INFLUENZA



DRY COUGH



CHILLS



HEADACHE



FEVER



RUNNY NOSE



MUSCLE ACHES

PREVENTION



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Elon Musk: Tesla may cut prices again in ‘turbulent times’

By Annabelle Liang

Tesla chief executive Elon Musk says the electric carmaker could continue to cut prices as the world economy is in “turbulent times”.

The multi-billionaire’s comments came after the company reported that its profit margins had been squeezed as it faced tough competition.

In recent months, Tesla has cut its prices several times in major markets, including the US and China.

The firm’s shares fell by more than 4% in after-hours trade in New York.

Tesla reported that its profit margin had fallen to the lowest level in four years.

The company said its gross profit margin fell to 18.2% for the three months to the end of June, down from 26.2% for the same period last year.

During a call with Wall Street analysts, Mr Musk signalled that he was open to cutting prices further if needed.

“One day it seems like the world economy is falling apart, next day it’s fine. I don’t know what the hell is going on,” he said.

“We’re in, I would call it, turbulent times,” Mr Musk added.

Investors are concerned about the possibility of more price cuts at Tesla, Arun Sundararajan, a Professor



at the NYU Stern Business School, told the BBC.

“This feels like a price war with no long term strategy to raise margins if Tesla wins the war,” he added.

Earlier this year, Mr Musk said he believed pursuing higher sales, with

lower profits, was the “right choice” for Tesla.

The firm has lowered prices in markets including the US, UK and China to compete with rival manufacturers.

Earlier this month, the company said it delivered a record number of vehicles in the three months to the end of June.

It comes as more carmakers have agreed to adopt Tesla’s electric vehicle (EV) charging technology.

On Wednesday, Japanese motor industry giant Nissan said its EVs in the US and Canada would be equipped with Tesla-developed charging ports from 2025.

Nissan Americas’ chairperson Jérémie Papin said the firm was committed “to making electric mobility even more accessible”.

The announcement follows similar moves by US car manufacturers Ford and General Motors.

Christian Union Pre & Junior Academy Registration Script

Registration/Admission is now open at the Christian Union Pre. and Junior Academy. We welcome your preschoolers and primary students for the academic year 2023/2024. At Christian Union, we emphasize holistic growth through academic excellence and Biblical values. Come join us as we carry on the Christian Union legacy of 40 years! Hurry! The first 10 registrants get free school supplies!

Preschool Registration Fee – \$80.00

Primary School Registration Fee - \$130.00

Documents Needed:

Birth certificate

Immunization card

Report card

Transfer letter from past school

For further details contact our office at 562 - 8289/ 8188, 788-6625, 724-6006, or email us at cuja_2006@yahoo.com

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Shooting incident in Kingstown leaves five dead in St Vincent

There is anxiety in St Vincent and the Grenadines as a mass shooting in the Harbour Club area of Kingstown left five persons dead on Wednesday night.

The Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force has issued a statement called “Commissioner’s Report on Mass Shooting”, which states that the police responded to the incident around 8 pm. Investigations reveal that five persons were fatally wounded. The police processed the scene and are carrying out further investigations into these shootings and other offences.

The members of the Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force have expressed condolences to the relatives and friends of the deceased persons in last night’s shooting and other victims of homicides in St Vincent and the Grenadines.

The police force is asking anyone with information that can lead to the arrest and conviction of persons who have committed these crimes and other crimes to provide the police with such information.

This information can be sent via telephone number 911, 999, 4571211 or 4561810 or any police officer who you are comfortable communicating with.

It said the public can



Crime scene in Kingstown, St Vincent. (Photo via: RSVGPF)

be assured that the information would be held to the strictest of confidence as additionally, there are laws in place in St Vincent and the Grenadines to give evidence without their identity being revealed.

This can be done by virtue of The Witness Special Measure Act.

Meanwhile, the police commissioner also addressed information being circulated of other shooting incidents in St Vincent and the Grenadines last night.

The Police Force said this information was checked out and found to be false. There was no shooting in Ottley Hall,

Campden Park, Fairbane Pasture or any other part in St Vincent and the Grenadines last night.

Persons are being advised to stop spreading and circulating false information.

The public is reassured that despite the regrettable spate of violence that is currently being experienced in St Vincent and the Grenadines, SVG is still a safe place.

The RSVPF noted one week ago the island concluded a successful, enjoyable and generally adverse incident-free Vincy Mas. Thousands of people enjoyed the carnival and had

fun in a safe environment.

The Police Commissioner said the serious crimes that are being committed are by and large committed by a very small group of people against others of the same ilk.

“We advise persons to settle their differences in a more mature, civilise and amicable manner. Also, we strongly advocate that persons respect the rights to life of each other.”

The Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force added that it is embarking on new methods of policing while utilising the tried and tested police practices.

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Jamaica-US downplay diplomatic row

CMC - The Jamaica and United States governments have sought to downplay suggestions of a diplomatic row between them after media reports said that the two countries are at odds over diplomatic postings.

Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister Kamina Johnson Smith, has in a statement, dismissed media reports of the diplomatic row reportedly sparked by a plan by the United States to post a diplomat involved in a same-sex marriage in Kingston.

“In accordance with diplomatic practice and within the ambit of Jamaica’s Constitution, Jamaica grants privileges and immunities to incoming diplomats, their staff, and families to either reside in or visit the country,” Johnson Smith said.

“All requests made to the foreign ministry are considered within this context. Members of staff from both countries continue to reside and work in each other’s territory and are expected to observe the laws of their host country,” she added.

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade has complied with these procedures and has, in fact, conducted its customary rotation exercise. Heads of Jamaican missions in the United States whose tenure will come naturally to an end later this year are already preparing for their transition,” Johnson Smith



said as she sought to downplay the reported diplomatic tit-for-tat.

“The Government of Jamaica recognises the importance of maintaining the traditions and practices of diplomacy, which have long ensured a seamless relationship with the diplomatic community and supported vibrant and admirable relations with the United States for over 60 years,” said Johnson Smith.

“The people-to-people relations between Jamaica and the United States have been a most successful area of cooperation, and we look forward to their continuation. There is no diplomatic row between Jamaica and the United States as we continue to enjoy strong and positive diplomatic relations,” added Johnson Smith.

Media reports here said that earlier this year, Washington wrote to the Andrew Holness government seek-

ing approval for the married partner of a diplomat about to be posted to Jamaica and who is in a same-sex relationship to be given diplomatic immunity and all the privileges of a diplomat.

Jamaican laws do not recognise same-sex couples and the spouse would not qualify for the privileges awarded to a heterosexual married couple.

Radio Jamaica News quoting sources, said that the US then responded rejecting a request from the Jamaican government to extend the stay of three diplomats in Jamaica’s embassy and consulates in the United States.

The radio station said that the US served notice that the trio must leave immediately after their five-year diplomatic visa expires.

“This is in contrast to what now obtains, where extensions to diplomatic visas for Jamaican diplomats

beyond the five-year period are routine,” Radio Jamaica News reported, adding that “among those affected are Jamaica’s ambassador to the US, Audrey Marks, and Consul General Oliver Mair, based in

Miami, who the Americans say must leave and return to Jamaica this year”.

But in her statement, Johnson Smith said Jamaica has always complied with procedures and set term limits for the length of stay of diplomats within the United States.

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade has complied with these procedures and has, in fact, conducted its customary rotation exercise. Heads of Jamaican missions in the United States whose tenure will come naturally to an end later this year are already preparing for their transition.

cont’d on pg 21

UK suspension of visa-free access 'unfortunate' – says Dominica PM

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has told the Commonwealth of Dominica in a national address that the decision of the British Government to suspend VI-SA-free access for Dominica is unfortunate and hurts him but shall not permanently harm Dominicans.

In his address he assured nationals of Dominica that the British Government has made it clear that the decision does not represent a deterioration of relations between the two nations nor is it indicative of any diplomatic or other fallout.

The prime minister explained that every nation will rightly continuously review its own immigration policies and attitudes to address what it sees as contemporary challenges.

He said the decision of the United Kingdom to suspend visa-free access to the UK for holders of passports from a number of countries, including Dominica, must be understood in that general context.

PM Skerrit noted the



Prime Minister of Dominica, Roosevelt Skerrit.

UK have cited concerns with Dominica's CBI programme. "I wish to assure the Dominican people that several changes have already been made to the structure and management of our program and in the weeks and months ahead, we will continue to implement additional measures to strengthen the pro-

gramme." Dominica's prime minister said much like the EU, the UK is in the midst of setting up its own Electronic Travel Authorisation program. When implemented later this year, anyone entering the UK who does not require a visa, will have to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorisation to en-

ter the UK.

PM Skerrit said he understands that at this time the imposition of visa requirements will create an inconvenience for many citizens who visit the UK for vacation, to visit family and who transit the UK frequently.

He noted this, however, does not prevent Dominicans from travelling to or through the United Kingdom as Dominicans are still welcome in the United Kingdom.

The prime minister added that to reiterate their desire not to impede the efforts of Dominican residents at home to enter and transit the United Kingdom, the British government has instituted a programme where it shall accept applications online and set up an office on demand in Dominica to allow applicants to submit their biometrics and to finalise their applications.

Dominicans who do not reside in Dominica can also request entry visas at UK consular offices nearest to them.

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"The Government of Jamaica recognises the importance of maintaining the traditions and practices of diplomacy, which have long ensured a seamless relationship with the diplomatic community and supported vibrant and admirable relations with the United States for over 60 years," said Johnson Smith.

In a statement, the US Embassy here said that both countries "continue to enjoy close ties based on shared values, trade, culture, tourism, and a vibrant diaspora community in the United States".

It said that as of August 2021, diplomats from all worldwide bilateral missions to the United States are accredited for a maximum of five years.

"At the conclusion of the five-year period, in the absence of a waiver approved by the [State] Department, the diplomats are expected to end their tour with the bilateral mission and depart the United States. Ambassadors, chargés d'affaires and deputy chiefs of mission are exempt from the five-year accreditation policy," the Embassy added.

Xi Jinping meets Henry Kissinger as US seeks to defrost China ties

By Tessa Wong

Chinese president Xi Jinping has given a warm welcome to former top diplomat Henry Kissinger, as the US pursues closer ties with China.

Mr Kissinger's surprise trip to the Chinese capital comes amid a flurry of visits by top US officials.

The former secretary of state, who is 100 years old, played a crucial role in helping China emerge from diplomatic isolation in the 1970s.

The US has stressed he is visiting in his capacity as a private citizen.

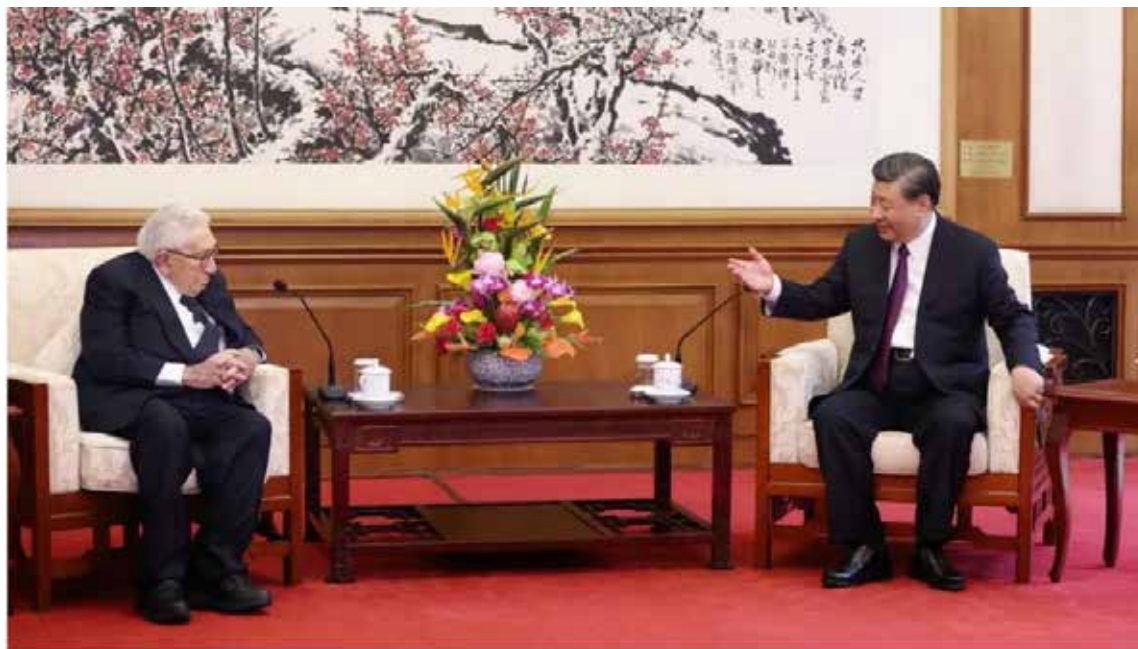
But given his outsized stature in China, he could act as a backchannel for US-China negotiations.

State television showed Mr Xi smiling as he told Mr Kissinger: "I'm very glad to see you, sir."

They met at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, a more intimate space than the sprawling Great Hall of the People where official meetings with foreign diplomats are usually hosted.

Diaoyutai was also the place where, half a century ago, Mr Kissinger met Chinese officials in a secret visit that helped to kick-start the normalisation of US-China ties, noted Mr Xi.

"We will never forget our old friends, and will not forget your historical contributions to develop US-China relations and friendship



Mr Xi smiled and spoke with affection as he addressed Mr Kissinger on Thursday.

between the two peoples," he added.

Mr Xi's affectionate tone mirrored the conciliatory messaging from other top officials who met Mr Kissinger after he touched down on Monday.

Chinese statements on his meetings with top diplomat Wang Yi and defence minister Li Shangfu emphasised the need for respect, co-operation and "peaceful co-existence" between the two superpowers.

The read-outs also quoted Mr Kissinger as saying he was a "friend of China", that "neither the United States nor China can afford to treat the other as an adversary", and that their relations would be "central to the peace in the world and to the progress of our society".

Chinese state media have cast Mr Kissinger's

visit in a positive light, while on social media many marvelled at Mr Kissinger's stamina, discussing his trip with the Weibo hashtag "Kissinger can still fly to Beijing for a business trip despite being 100 years old".

But some online also lamented that the US was sending centenarians to promote ties. "Politicians with great wisdom are getting fewer," said one user.

A State Department spokesman earlier this week said that they were aware of Mr Kissinger's trip and "would not be surprised" if he decided to brief them upon his return.

But they also stressed he was there "under his own volition" and not acting on behalf of the US government.

As a private citizen, Mr Kissinger can be more frank

in his discussions with Mr Xi and other officials, affording him more leeway in presenting US concerns and demands.

It is also less controversial for him to meet figures such as Mr Li, who has been under US sanctions since 2018 for purchasing arms from Russia.

Last month Beijing refused to let Mr Li meet his US counterpart Lloyd Austin at a forum in Singapore, citing the sanctions.

It may be of little surprise that Mr Kissinger decided to take matters into his own hands with his visit.

In an interview in December, Mr Kissinger had criticised the Trump and Biden administrations' approaches to China.

He said the current US government was attempting a dialogue that "usual-

cont'd on pg 23

Malawi racist videos: Chinese man convicted after BBC expose

By Peter Jegwa

A Malawian court has convicted a Chinese national on multiple charges including trafficking and procuring children to take part in entertainment.

Lu Ke, also known as Susu, has been handed a 12-month prison sentence, which he has already served in police custody.

He has been ordered to leave the country within seven days and is barred from ever returning.

He was arrested last year following a BBC Africa Eye investigative report.

The report showed him filming Malawian children making personalised greet-



Lu Ke said he had made his videos in order to spread Chinese culture.

ing videos, some of which included racist content.

The videos were being bought for up to \$70 (£55) on Chinese social media and internet platforms.

When news of his offensive videos broke, he fled to neighbouring Zam-

bia as Malawian authorities issued a warrant of arrest against him.

He was arrested and convicted of entering the country illegally and was then extradited to Malawi.

He was denied bail and has been in police custo-

dy until his sentencing on Thursday.

He faced 14 charges against him, including procurement of children for use of entertainment, child trafficking, illegal use of the internet and harmful social practices.

Lu Ke denied making derogatory videos.

In his defence, the court was told he had already paid 16m Malawian kwacha (\$16,000; £12,500) to the government to compensate his victims and for social responsibility activities in the community.

He said he had made his videos in order to spread Chinese culture to the local community.

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ly begins with a statement of Chinese iniquities” and that discussions were “stymied”.

While Mr Kissinger is no stranger to China - he has visited it more than 100 times and last met Mr Xi in 2019 - this trip comes at a turning point in the US-China relationship.

After months of hostility exacerbated by this year's spy balloon incident, diplomatic negotiations appear to be back on track with China welcoming a series of top US officials in the space of a few weeks.

Apart from Secretary of State Antony Blinken who visited last month, Mr Kissinger is the only US figure Mr Xi has met in recent weeks - a measure of the respect the veteran diplomat still commands in China.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen

and US special envoy for climate John Kerry have also paid visits to Beijing, but did not get face time with China's president.

With its overtly warm reception of Mr Kissinger, Beijing has clearly signalled it wants more engagement from the US, with Mr Wang saying “the US' China policy needs Kissinger's diplomatic wisdom and Nixon's political courage”.

But this will not change the fact that China will, in the end, stick to its priorities, said Wen-ti Sung, a political scientist with the Australian National University.

“Beijing may potentially consider making token gestures of goodwill after Kissinger's trip both as a thank-you to its friend and boost Kissinger's standing,” he told the BBC.

“But do not expect it to meaning-

fully shift the fundamentals driving US-China relations, which will be governed not by individual considerations, but by what Beijing sees as its own national interests.”

Though Mr Kissinger has a controversial reputation in other parts of Asia for his role in the Vietnam War, in China he remains highly regarded for aiding the country's re-engagement with the world.

In 1971, while the US and China officially had no ties, Mr Kissinger had paid clandestine visits to Beijing to arrange a trip by then-US President Richard Nixon.

The following year Mr Nixon landed on Chinese soil and met top leaders including Mao Zedong. It paved the way for the normalisation of US-China diplomatic relations and the opening-up of China's economy.

Berlin search for suspected lioness continues as night falls

By Antoinette Radford

Police are searching for an animal they believe is a lioness in the south-western outskirts of Berlin.

A police spokeswoman said they received calls and a video alerting them to the wild animal at about midnight on Wednesday, and immediately began their search.

At least 30 police cars were deployed, and veterinarians were called to assist in the search for the big cat.

Residents were told to stay indoors until it is found.

On Thursday evening, police told a local resident that they had “just seen” the lioness and that the search for the animal had entered a “hot phase”, German outlet Bild reported, adding that officers shouted at joggers to “get out of the woods quickly”.

However, the animal remained elusive after nightfall on Thursday as police hunted with night vision and thermal imaging equipment.

While the number of officers has been reduced, Beate Ostertag of Berlin police told public broadcaster RBB that police would “be in action until the animal is found”.

Kleinmachnow Mayor Michael Grubert earlier said authorities had not been able to verify the initial reports of the animal sighting.

A video shared on Twitter - which police believe is real - also appeared to show a lioness in a heavily forest-



People searching for the suspected lioness carried tranquiliser guns.

ed residential area of Kleinmachnow.

However, it is unclear where the animal came from. Local zoos, animal sanctuaries and circuses said no lions have escaped from their facilities.

Police spokesperson Daniel Keip told RBB that “in the summer you often hear reports of crocodiles in swimming lakes and then it turns out all it was, was a big duck. In this case it’s obviously totally real. We’re dealing with a lioness that’s roaming freely through Teltow, Stahnsdorf and Kleinmachnow.”

But Michel Rogall, a circus director in Teltow who was woken by police at 02:00 local time, is not so sure.

“If it’s a lion, I’ll eat my hat,” he told the Tagesspiegel newspaper. In addition, he told Reuters that there was no circus with wild animals on the road in eastern Germany, “and they wouldn’t escape either [if there was]”.

Residents have been ad-

vised to stay indoors and keep their pets with them. Police have also told people to avoid the forest and seek shelter immediately if they see the lioness.

Mr Grubert said authorities were focusing their search on a large area next to a wood where people walk their dogs. Authorities believe the lioness may be sleeping there.

He added that there was “no panic, no hysteria... but we do urge people not to go running or cycling in the woods”.

“Our hunters... are also equipped with ammunition,” he said. “The first objective is to capture. Other measures will only be taken by police officers if their lives or the lives of others are endangered.”

Helicopters have been deployed to find the elusive animal as well as drones and heat-seeking cameras, Mr Grubert said.

Veterinarians and hunters

with tranquiliser guns are also involved in the search, while local media reported that police were using an armoured vehicle normally deployed in anti-terrorism operations.

Florian Eiserlo of the Four Paws animal welfare organisation told the Rheinische Post newspaper that if anyone runs into the animal, they should not panic.

“Stand still, stay calm, try to head to a safe area such as a car or a building,” they said.

Berlin’s local press is also full of tips on what to do if one does run into a lioness - which includes not running or panicking, and slowly backing away from it.

Vanessa Amoroso, head of the wild animals in trade unit at Four Paws, said if the animal was a lioness, it is likely to have been kept as a pet.

She said inconsistent laws across Europe made the trade of big cats much easier, as they are allowed as pets in many countries.

Ms Amoroso called on the German government to regulate those trading and keeping exotic animals.

“Germany’s position as one of the world’s largest markets for wild animals as pets demands effective measures to counteract the ease with which potential buyers can acquire animals through online platforms and exchanges,” she added.

Matthew tells young cricketers to maximize opportunities on UK tour

The Minister of Sports, Daryll Matthew, has challenged the players of the Combined Schools Cricket Team to capitalize on the opportunity during their tour to the United Kingdom, where they will be engaged in a series of matches and other activities.

The Combined Schools team met with Matthew and the Director of Sports, Heather Samuel Daley, prior to embarking on their tour to the United Kingdom from July 21st to August 15th.

Minister Matthew called on the players to make full use of this opportunity and make their colleagues, coaches, families, friend, and the entire nation of Antigua and Barbuda proud.

“Set up a meeting with the cricket team from Oxford University to see if there is any kind of exchange we can do. Use these opportunities. Maybe something comes out of it, or maybe nothing comes out of it. There are opportunities, but you have to first put yourself in a position to take full advantage of the opportunity,” Matthew stated.

“So guys, I am jealous of you all right now. I wish 30 years ago I had had an opportunity like this in any sport. There are a lot of other disciplines right now, and the Director will tell you that the basketball unit wanted money to travel and



Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew. (File photo)

carry the school’s team to the Bahamas. Volleyball went to St. Maarten, but you are going to England.

“If that is not a demonstration of the commitment and belief that we have in all of you, I don’t know what is. Don’t let us regret it.

“Make your coaches proud. Make your schools, your community, your family, and Antigua and Barbuda proud.”

Matthew revealed that the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has invest-

ed more than EC\$200,000 to facilitate the Combined Schools Cricket Team’s tour to the United Kingdom.

Matthew also called on the players to give their best at all times, regardless of the results of the matches.

“Whatever the results, I don’t care about winning or losing. The result doesn’t matter to me because none of you are getting paid to play. Results only matter when you are getting paid to play. At this level, what matters to me is that you go out

there and play hard; you do your best,” Matthew stated.

“Display good sportsmanship. If the other team happens to win the game, you go and congratulate them. If you win the game, you don’t get arrogant and cocky.

“But appreciate when people put hard work into their game and you see the result of it. Use it as a stepping stone to do the same thing.

“Work hard, get good results, show good sportsmanship, don’t be an idiot, don’t be rude, listen to your coach, and just recognize that people are watching you. People are going to judge all of us based on how you behave.”

The tour has been organized in collaboration with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda via the Ministry of Education, Sports, and the Creative Industries and the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission in London.

The Antigua and Barbuda Under-19 team comprises 15 players and four officials, who will form the supporting staff.

During the tour, the young Antigua Combined Schools team will play 10 matches, including seven one-day games and a T20 encounter in England and two limited-overs matches in Scotland.

Joseph attains commendable finish at golf tournament in USA

Antigua and Barbuda's young golfer Siyolo Joseph secured a commendable finish at the prestigious Optimist International Junior Golf Championships at the Trump National Doral Resort and Spa in Miami from July 14th to 19th.

Joseph finished jointly tied in the 32nd position among a field of 95 golfers from across the globe that contested the Boys 13 to 14 age category.

Joseph and Marco Baima of Texas, USA, finished the three rounds of competition tied with an overall gross score of 237.

Joseph shot scores of 80, 80, and 77 in the division, which was won by Ajalawich Anantasehakul of Thailand with an overall gross of 210.

Joseph also finished in the lower half of the standings at the IMG Academy Junior World Championships, which were held at the Arrowood Golf Course in Oceanside, San Diego County, California, from July 8th to 13th.

Joseph finished tied for 151st with three other golfers from a field of 173 participants in the Boys 13 to 14 age category.

Joseph, Maadi Kiri of New Zealand, and Jui Ching Wang of Chinese Taipei all finished jointly tied with gross scores of 237 in three rounds of golf.

Joseph shot a score of 78 on the first day, 82 on the second and 77 during the final round.

The Boys 13 to 14 category was won by Nemo Tsai of Ann Arbor, Missouri. Tsai clinched the title ahead of Evan Liu of Rancho Santa Fe, California, after both golfers finished with an overall gross score of 203.

Tekeru Michiue of Japan claimed third place with an overall gross of 204 and scored of 71, 65, and 68 during the three rounds.

The young Antiguan golfer gained the opportunity to contest the two competitions in the United States after winning the Boys 13 to 14 category at a pre-qualifying competition, the 2023 Optimist Barbados Golf Classic, which was held at the Barbados Golf Club from April 11th to 14th.

However, fellow Antiguan junior golfers Marquise George and Ashley Francis, who also qualified for the tournament in Florida by producing outstanding performances at the 2023 Optimist Barbados Golf Classic, were unable to Travel to the prestigious



Antiguan junior golfer Siyolo Joseph. (File photo)

cont'd on pg 27



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The Empire Nations cricket team. (File photo)

Empire Nations meet the Black Hawks in top of the table Super40 clash

The defending champions, the PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks, and the Empire Nation will meet in a top-of-the-table clash in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 Cup this weekend.

Both teams, who have yet to lose a match after five encounters, will meet at King George V Grounds in Gray's Farm on Sunday.

Victory for either side will be a psychological

boost for the winners, who are almost certain to seal their spot in the semi-finals with a win on Sunday.

Both the Black Hawks and Empire will go into this weekend's round of matches as joint leaders of the nine-team, 40-over-per-side round-robin competition.

They are heading into this weekend's matches as the only unbeaten sides left in the limited overs contest, and both are jointly tied at the top of the standings with

a perfect 20 points.

Before Sunday's top-of-the-table clash, both sides will have the opportunity to extend their unbeaten runs as they will be in action when the competition resumes with more matches tomorrow (Saturday).

The Black Hawks will host neighbours the All Saints Pythons at Ball Beef in Liberta, while the Empire Nation will be away against the Bolans Blasters at the Bolans playing field.

The Jennings Tigers will entertain the Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles at the Jennings playing field, while the WES Rising Sun Spartans will welcome the New Winthorpes Lions at the Rising Sun Grounds in St. John's in the other two

matches on Saturday.

In the other encounters on Sunday, the All Saints Pythons will take on the Jennings Tigers at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.

The Bolans Blasters will meet the Pigotts Crushers at the Pigotts playing field, and the New Winthorpes Lions will clash with the Bethesda Golden Eagles at the New Winthorpes playing field.

Following this weekend's matches, the ACBC Super40 Cup will go on a two-week break in recognition of the national annual Carnival celebrations.

The competition will resume with the final round of matches in the preliminary phase on Saturday, August 12th.

cont'd from pg 26

tournament due to visa restrictions.

Marquise George, who had qualified to contest the Boys 12 to 13 division, and Francis, who won the Girls 15 to 18 age group category at the Optimist Barbados Golf Classic, were unable to compete at the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship in Florida due to their inability to acquire visas to facilitate traveling to the USA.



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Women's World Cup hosts begin with wins and record crowds

SYDNEY/AUCKLAND (Reuters) - Co-hosts Australia and New Zealand opened the ninth Women's World Cup with wins and record crowds yesterday (Thursday), after a shooting near the Norwegian team hotel in Auckland that left three dead and six injured.

Police said the shooter was among those killed and the danger from the incident was over, while New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said there was no risk to national security.

After an opening ceremony celebrating traditional Maori culture including the famous Haka war dance, a slick team goal finished off by Hannah Wilkinson at Eden Park was the difference in New Zealand's 1-0 victory over Norway, their first ever at a World Cup. The crowd of



Australia's Steph Catley, center, celebrates after scoring the opening goal from the penalty spot during the Women's World Cup soccer match against Ireland at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia, Thursday, July 20th, 2023. (AP)

42,137 beat the host nation's previous record for an international soccer match.

"To get their first win at home while they're hosting... it's a moment in history, for women's football and for New Zealand women's football," said Kirsten Johnson, a 39-year-old New Zealand

supporter from the United States.

Authorities deployed extra police and security outside the stadium following the shooting in New Zealand's largest city. A statement from football's governing body FIFA said it was supporting teams in the vicinity of the in-

cident. A fan park in the city will remain closed on Thursday, organisers said.

Australia's Matildas began their campaign with a scrappy 1-0 win against Ireland in front of a crowd of 75,784 fans at Stadium Australia in Sydney – a record attendance for a women's soccer match in the country.

"It was really entertaining match, fast paced and intense, it was great," said Australia supporter Jacinta Hayde.

"I think we've just got great momentum at the moment, really looking forward to seeing the rest."

They were dealt a blow before kick-off, however, when talismanic striker Sam Kerr, arguably the face of the tournament, was ruled out of the first two games with a calf injury.

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Kohli halts Windies fight-back

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) - Virat Kohli moved to within 13 runs of his 29th test ton on his 500th international appearance as India rallied from a rocky afternoon session to reach 288 for four against West Indies at stumps on the first day of the second Test at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad yesterday (Thursday).

Kohli is 87 not out in his 111th Test after 274 One-Day Internationals and 115 Twenty20 matches. He moved 10th on the list of combined appearances in the three formats, which another India great Sachin Tendulkar tops with 664.

Kohli brought up his 30th Test 50 with a boundary against left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican, who ended the day with one for 55. Ravindra Jadeja (36 not out) is with Kohli at the crease in an unbroken 106-run partnership for the fifth wicket.

India dominated the opening session at Queen's Park Oval, going to lunch at 121 without loss in 26 overs, before West Indies hit back with four wickets in the afternoon. India was pinned back at 182 for four at tea after almost 51 overs.

Pacer Jason Holder ended India's 139-run opening stand by claiming Yashasvi Jaiswal (57), who was



India's Virat Kohli plays a shot from the bowling of West Indies' Jomel Warrican on day one of their second cricket Test match at Queen's Park in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Thursday, July 20th, 2023. (AP)

caught by Kirk McKenzie. No. 3 Shubman Gill (10) was then caught behind off Kemar Roach, who has taken one for 64, and Warrican bowled India captain Rohit Sharma shortly afterward for 80, which included two sixes and nine fours.

Ajinkya Rahane's dismissal for eight against Shannon Gabriel, who has picked up one for 50, triggered tea with the hosts back in the match.

But India reclaimed the advantage after the interval and once again it was Kohli driving the team on, playing a patient innings of 87 not

out off 161 balls, with eight boundaries.

West Indies won the toss and chose to bowl first as the hosts try and level the two-match series. The pitch has no grass and is expected to become slower.

It was some honour restored Thursday for West Indies after the home side suffered an innings loss in three days in Dominica last week. India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin took a match haul of 12 wickets.

West Indies gave a debut to top-order batter McKenzie for Raymon Reifer and also brought in

fast bowler Gabriel for Antigua off-spinner Rahkeem Cornwall. McKenzie, a left-hander like Alick Athanaze, who debuted last week, has a first-class average of 39.40 from nine matches.

India is debuting medium-pace bowler Mukesh Kumar after Shardul Thakur suffered a groin issue. Kumar averages 21.55 in first-class cricket.

The match is the 100th between the teams. West Indies has won 30 and India 23, but West Indies has not won this contest for 21 years. The teams first met in a test in 1948 in New Delhi.