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FRIDAY 7TH JULY 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 130 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

ST. MARY'S SOUTH ON THE MOVE

Vote Progress



Vote Sam



Cabinet makes positive moves to complete Alfa Nero sale

The government has indicated that it wants to complete the sale of the super yacht, Alfa Nero, despite a series of attempts to frustrate the process by way of filing several injunctions in the High Court.

After getting a report last week Friday, that the High Court dismissed the latest request for injunctive relief by a Russian citizen/litigant who claims ownership of the vessel, on Thursday the Cabinet decided that it was time to complete the sale, finally.

“The Cabinet has decided to provide the purchaser with the guaran-



tee against future liabilities and to proceed with the consummation of the sale. Further delays may likely frustrate the purchaser.

The Cabinet’s decision will bring an end to the wasteful and frivolous

litigation by the Russian citizen,” according to a spokesman for the Cabinet.

This means that former Google CEO, Eric Schmidt may proceed with the purchase of the vessel. He won the right to purchase the Alfa Nero when he submitted the highest bid, in a sealed bid auction held in June. Schmidt made an offer of USD67.06 million.

The sale of the vessel, which has been abandoned at the Antigua Yacht Club for more than a year has occupied the attention of the nation for the past several months.

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50 high-net-worth Nigerians are coming to Antigua next month

Further details are coming to hand regarding the proposed partnership between the privately-owned Nigerian carrier, Air Peace, and the Antigua and Barbuda government.

At its meeting on Thursday, the Cabinet invited the Development Commissioner, Ambassador Daven Joseph, to report on the negotiations taking place between Air Peace, and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

According to the Cabinet Notes, Joseph traveled to Nigeria to meet with the principal of the airline and a group of wealthy Nigerians, all of whom are multi-millionaires.

Air Peace will fly a contingency of 50 businesspersons to Antigua for a 4-day business symposium in early August 2023; the craft will also bring several cultural groups to participate in the Carnival festivities. The carrier will take its passengers back to Nige-

ria on 9 August 2023.

The Prime Minister also reported that several Caribbean destinations tried to encourage the Air Peace principal to choose their country. The air carrier has already chosen Antigua and has even become a CIP citizen of Antigua and Barbuda. Some specific decisions regarding visas and national origin will be issued to the Immigration Department in order to avoid the debacle which occurred late last year.

PM Browne concludes busy round of engagements at CARICOM Summit

It was one of the busiest CARICOM Summits to be attended by Prime Minister Gaston Browne and his team when they gathered in Trinidad and Tobago for the 45th Heads of Government meeting that also marked the integration movement's 50th anniversary.

As much as he was fully engaged in the official business of the conference that saw representatives from several friendly governments, expressing solidarity and commitment to CARICOM and its member states, PM Browne also used the occasion to engage in bilateral discussions with representatives of some of these governments.

Among those with whom he met was the President of the Republic of South Korea and with whom PM Browne held the latest of a series of high-level discussions at the margins of the summit.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne, left, with the President of the Republic of South Korea

Antigua and Barbuda and South Korea have enjoyed friendly relations ever since both countries established diplomatic ties back in the early 1980s.

South Korea has demonstrated its support for Antigua and Barbuda's devel-

opment by offering a series of scholarships for senior government officials among others.

The country has also made available to the government, a fleet of vehicles utilized by the police department and in particular,

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The prime minister also held talks with senior officials of the U.S., Canada, and the People's Republic of China among others during his attendance at the conference.

Works Ministry commits to ensuring recovery of injured employee

The Ministry of Works says it is committed to ensuring the full recovery of one of its employees who was injured in a work-related explosion more than a week ago.

In a media release, the ministry said it shares sincere concern for the well-being of one of its loyal employees, Gregson Joseph, who, on 26th June 2023, suffered burn injuries whilst working at the Burma Quarry.

It said that at the instant of the reported injury, the Ministry maintained contact with Joseph, who is currently being treated in a private room at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre (SLBMC). The Ministry also contacted immediate family members who re-

side in the United States and Belize as recently as 5th July 2023 appraising them of Mr. Joseph's status.

Family members have been in direct contact with the Medical Director at SLBMC and indicated their satisfaction with the information shared to date. Joseph continues to receive attentive care at SLBMC and, according to the Medical Director, his recovery has been very positive. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains committed to ensuring that Joseph receives the necessary treatment needed for his recovery and remains in close contact with SLBMC and family members, whilst monitoring his progress.



National Solid Waste Management Authority
 Sir George Walter Highway
 Tel: (268) 562-1347/8
 Email: nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag

July 6th, 2023

PRESS RELEASE

The Authority wishes to inform the general public that the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) is the agency mandated by law to collect, transport, and dispose of solid waste in Antigua and Barbuda.

Due to operational challenges faced by the Authority, there have been periodic delays. Therefore the areas affected are as follows:

- Golden Grove New Extension
- Crabb Hill
- Mount Pleasant
- Cedar Grove

The household collections for **Jennings North** and **Yorks Extension** have since been collected. The schedule for **Lightfoot West** and **Gunthorpes** would be completed today.

We thank the residents in those communities for their patience.

The National Solid Waste Management Authority wishes to advise private citizens that if there is a delay or missed collection of their residential waste services, to contact the Authority via the hotline number 562-1347.

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Five ABIT students host exhibition

Five students of the Antigua Barbuda International Institute of Technology based at Coolidge hosted a small exhibition of their semester's work.

The exhibition provided an opportunity for the students to display their creativity and display much of what they learned over the course of the first semester.

The students and the focus of their presentations are Odessa Hazelwood who presented on a history of packaging. It emphasized how the packaging of goods changed through the years, as a vehicle to boost the confidence of the consumer in their products and the demand to know the ingredients used



in the production process. Another student, Anthony Spencer, presented a collection of masks representing various cultures. Spencer has expressed a desire to 'take the world by storm' using his skills at reimagining.

The third display was presented by Terissa Burton who

utilised her visual arts skills to focus on clothing design. Burton explained that her designs were done digitally or were hand painted. Her vision is to extend her 'bloom' line internationally.

The fourth artist presenting her work was Jamil Charles who has channeled

her creativity into cards, both traditional and digital, as well as stencil art. Her stencil art for a start is done on T-shirts. "We are confident that with her creativity, she will find other ways of incorporating her skills. Also presented were picture frames and paper lanterns, the latter she said, is her favourite," shared one of her contemporaries.

The fifth student in the exhibition was Tyler Deazle who has focused his energy on digital drawings. "Pictures they say tell a story. This young budding cartoonist we are sure will have lots of stories to tell visually. Manga and Anime (manga is the term given to Japanese comic books and graphic novels, whereas anime is the name given to Japanese animation) have taken the world by storm and why should young Deazle not ride the crest of this wave? Animation is no longer confined to the drawing board, but with the aid of high-powered graphic cards, so the imagination of the creator is without bounds," another contemporary noted.



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Health officials attend workshop

The Ministry of Health, Wellness, Social Transformation & the Environment was represented by the Superintendent of Public Health Nurses, Almarie Coates, and Director of Pharmaceutical Services, Alfred At-hill at a workshop on “Digitalization and Strengthening Demand Planning and the Performance of the Expanded Program of Immunization in the Region of the Americas.”

The meeting took place in Panama City, Panama during the period July 4-7, 2023, and was facilitated by PAHO Revolving Fund.

One hundred and thirty-six (136) participants representing thirty-eight countries took part in some very interactive and practical exercises to improve vaccine procurement, delivery, and administration. The objectives of the workshop were:

- ü To provide an overview of

the overall supply chain concepts, product access dynamics, and demand planning processes for Member States.

- ü To identify important elements to support accurate and reliable demand forecasting of Member States.

- ü To introduce the new digital planning module to the relevant national officers and the meeting participants.

The PAHO Revolving Fund has assisted Member States since its inception in 1979 to access cost-effective and quality vaccines to protect their population from communicable diseases.

Representatives from the Revolving Fund have committed PAHO’s commitment to continue offering Member States assistance to increase their vaccine coverage.



Grade Six results due today

Anticipation is building among Grade Six students and their parents ahead of the release, this morning, of the results of the recently concluded national assessment.

The Ministry of Education, Sports, and Creative Industries will meet with primary school principals in a closed-door meeting around mid-morning, where the performance of students will be discussed, and the results released to principals.

A total of 1,330 students from public and private schools, along with one homeschooled pupil wrote

the Grade Six National Assessment on the 7th and 8th June 2023. They were tested in four core subject areas, namely Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

The Grade Six National Assessment is viewed as an exit examination from the primary school system.

Students are assigned to secondary schools based on their performances and also their residential geographic locations.

The release of the results follows a period of marking scripts, data entry, analysis of data, and school placements.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TRANSPORT BOARD

**EARLY
CLOSURE
NOTICE**

Due to the Celebration of the Life of an Employee, please be advised that the Antigua & Barbuda Transport Board will be closed for business at 11:30am on Friday, 7th July 2023 To the General Public

We do apologize for any inconvenience caused
MANAGEMENT



Man sentenced for fighting in prison

A man who was convicted on a charge that involved fighting within HM Prison has been slapped with a 13-year sentence by the High Court.

Nkema Gordon was sentenced on Wednesday, following his conviction on a charge of wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm. This comes on the heels of reports of another fight within the prison this week, that left one man hospitalized.

Reports are that this latest incident happened on Tuesday involving Darren Gittens and Lorenzo Bright,

where Gittens stabbed Bright in the arm and leg during the altercation.

Bright received medical treatment at the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center and was later discharged, as his injuries were not life-threatening. HMP authorities have initiated an investigation into the incident.

Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Pennyfeather, the 'prison boss,' acknowledged the challenges of conflict resolution in the prison environment and expressed concern about the frequent discovery of illegal weapons and contraband within the facility.



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Egbert Merrill Thwaites: Tribute by Dr James Knight delivered at the funeral of M E Thwaites

If no one was taking pictures today, it would have been most ironic, at the funeral of a photographer who was indeed iconic.

Because we are here to celebrate the life of the longest living and the last surviving of the earliest generations of photographers in this country.

When I visited Thwaites at his home last year, sometime before his 99th birthday, we spoke about the old photography fraternity, especially those who were most established and best known nationally.

We spoke of the likes of Emile Piggott, Raphael Humphreys, Charlie Walker, Clem Simmons, and our pioneering press photographer and photojournalist, the eminent Gerald Price, who also had a major studio practice.

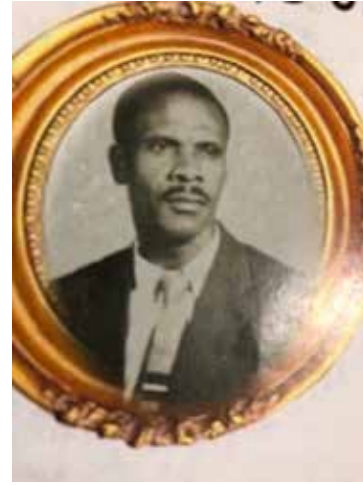
There was also, Freddie Jarvis, and McKinnon. The roving photographer, Warwick, who walked around the urban villages in the afternoons, taking pictures and delivering prints, and becoming famous for fantastic photographic feats, as a result of technical challenges.

More recently, there was Walton Theodore, and who could forget our best-known photography aficionado, Otway Davis, or Master D; at major events, at school sports, at net-

ball tournaments, a camera hung from the neck, taking countless pictures, of which, quite understandably, most persons have never seen a print.

Two of the photographers out of All Saints were less known. Elderfield Samuel (who did some training with my father) and Ivan Scott, the last of them to precede Thwaites in death.

In 1966, I still had another year at the original Otto's Primary School;



the old wooden L-shaped building, with one branch parallel to the Main Road,

and the other parallel to Wickham Street, going into Otto's Newtown.

That year, my family moved from Upper to Lower Ottos, and to get to school, I used to get onto De Souza Road, walk up to All Saints Main Road, and make the right turn, at that corner, where Thwaites had established his studio about five years before.

When he was doing so, the young man who then *cont'd on pg 10*



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Commentary



cont'd from pg 9

headed the DCA, informed him that his business was too small to have the front of the establishment on the main road. So, he opened doors on the De Souza Road side, making that the official front. When I was passing on my way to school, and he was looking out on either side of the building, I would say good morning to him. Not just because I was practicing good manners, but because, through my father, I was familiar with the photographic process, and the studio, therefore it held some curiosity for me.

There were displayed, various types of photographs. Simple portraits, wedding photos, confirmation and birthday photos, passport photos, etc. There were photos of persons posing in their Sunday best, for pictures to send overseas to their relatives in the UK and the USA, who might have sent them parcels, as we said back then, with some of that fine

“dan-dan” that they were wearing, whether brand new or as lightly used “wagee” - wherever that word came from.

But there were also photographic accessories for the hobbyists, and a few cameras too. I was fascinated by the beautiful, shiny, 35mm Agfa with its tan leather case. I imagined its weight. I knew also that there had to be a dark room for processing film and making prints.

Thwaites was running a one-man operation, and he had to go into the dark room to get work done, leaving the rest of the studio unattended. So he needed to find a way of knowing when clients came so that they would not leave in frustration, or get their hands up to mischief. They needed to know that he was aware of their presence.

So one day, in the darkness, he was struck by a bright idea. He placed a doorbell on the wall of the studio, at

a spot where everyone would hear it. He ran the wires overhead and down to the thresholds of the doors, placing the switches/buttons under the heavy Welcome rubber mats. When anyone stepped into the doorway, the bell would ring quite loudly.

Well, it did seem to be quite a brilliant idea, until my little friends from Otto's School found out. Oh, they made him hop.

A little group would approach. Two or so might keep watch to see if any big people were looking. That was very important in those days. Another one or more would be positioned where they could see any movement inside, and the designated chief gremlin would press his or her foot down on the mat. (a) R-i-n-g. “He ah come?” (b) “No, not yet!”

R-i-n-g. “He ah come, he ah come!!!” Off they would go scampering – just to hide until he went back inside. Then they, or another group of gremlins, would repeat the action. Lunchtime and 3:00 pm were certainly not happy hours for Thwaites. Eventually, he removed the switches.

It must have been annoying, but I never really saw him displaying anger. He must have appreciated that children would be children. Sometime after, he began selling children the most delicious ice cream they had ever tasted. I speak in the third person because I didn't participate in the mischief, and I never had money to buy the ice cream.

But apart from Thwaites's prominent role in the field of photography, and his supplying delicious ice cream as a delicacy, was his humble contribution to our process of democracy.

In 1960, there was a general election, on November 29th, as though to celebrate Thwaites's 37th birthday. It was the second general election after the attainment of full adult suffrage in 1951. The Antigua Labour Party

cont'd on pg 12

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Commentary

cont'd from pg 10

had won all seats in the previous election of 1956. It was a time when one could hardly find a person, certainly not a working-class person, who did not support the ALP.

In the 1960 election, there were two other parties. They held meetings at what was then known as De

Souza Road Corner. Miss De Souza, popularly known as Ginger Tea, still lived on the western side of the corner.

My father ran in that election, on the platform of the Antigua and Barbuda Democratic Movement (ABDM), and he spoke at De Souza Road Corner. Lighting and PA systems

in use were still primitive then.

Two decades later, there had been major political splits and shifts, new political parties, and countless political meetings had taken place at that corner, all facilitated by Thwaites.

The corner had become well known as the political institution now called

Thwaites Corner. In 1980, the ACLM participated in the general election, and that's where the campaign was launched. I was the first candidate announced. So, two decades after my father spoke at De Souza Road corner, I spoke at what had become the increasingly iconic Thwaites Corner.

The concept of a dark room in these digital days, and nights, is hardly one that's completely dark. There's a little amber beam coming from one corner, a red one coming from another. A green one is coming from a router or a charger, etc.

Even from other household appliances - microwave timers, water dispensers, etc. So the confluence of all these little beams produces enough glow for people to be guided around the room without a bright overhead light.

Very few people in this world get to shine a great light over the entire globe. But countless people, whom we will never know, acting humbly within their communities, produce light or allow light to shine in their little corners, and it's the sum of these humble lights that have the potential to illuminate the globe and guide us along the way.

A man who spent so many hours of his working days in a dark room has been able to demonstrate to us, the significance of the age-old exhortation, brighten the corner where you are. Long live Thwaites Corner.



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ISAIAH 45:22

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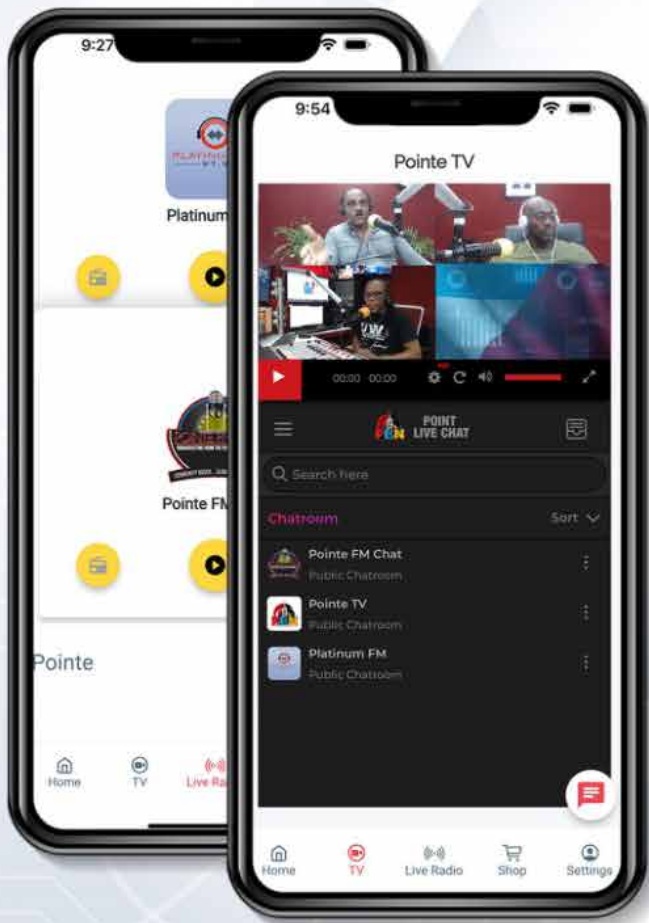


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Opinion



Oceans: Do Caribbean countries sink or swim?

By Sir Ronald Sanders

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador 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.)

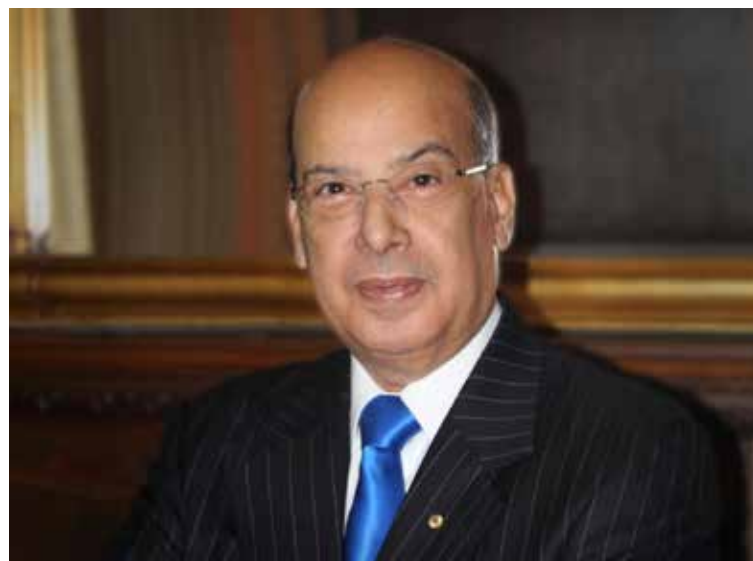
The peoples of small island states and coastal communities have long relied on the ocean for a multitude of benefits, including recreation, the delivery of goods and tourists, and a vital source of food through fishing. However, all these benefits, and much more, are currently under grave threat due to climate change, global warming, and sea-level rise. The damage is already taking its toll, imperceptibly but steadily, and it is crucial that we take action to preserve and develop the economic opportunities that the sea around us holds.

The World Bank reports that oceans contribute \$1.5 trillion annually to the global economy, and this number is expected to double to \$3 trillion by 2030. However, the bank also warns that climate change is causing serious changes in oceans, including temperature increases, sea-level

rise, and acidification. Oceans are becoming more acidic as they absorb more CO₂ from the atmosphere, and concurrently, oxygen levels are decreasing.

One of the most alarming issues affecting our oceans is the rampant pollution of plastic waste. According to UN Secretary-General António Guterres, around 8 million tons of plastic waste enter the oceans each year. Without drastic action, it is projected that plastic waste could outweigh all the fish in the oceans by 2050. This plastic pollution is not confined to certain areas but is found even in the most remote and deepest ocean trenches. It not only poses a threat to marine life but also inflicts significant harm on communities that depend on fishing and tourism. The magnitude of the problem is exemplified by the existence of a mass of plastic in the Pacific Ocean that is bigger than France.

Oceans, as the largest heat sink on the planet, absorb a staggering 90% of the excess heat caused by climate change. They also act as efficient carbon sinks, absorbing approximately 23% of human-caused CO₂ emissions. However, the role of oceans as a carbon sink is directly affected by the impacts of



Sir Ronald Sanders

climate change on ocean health. Rising ocean temperatures, resulting from global warming, contribute to thermal expansion and sea-level rise. Additionally, warmer ocean surface temperatures intensify tropical storms, posing a greater threat to coastal communities.

The Caribbean, consisting of small island nations and low-lying coastal areas, is especially vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Coastal erosion, flooding, and salt-water intrusion are not future possibilities but stark realities threatening the very existence of our communities. The loss of land and displacement of people have far-reaching implications that extend well beyond our regional borders.

Adding to the Caribbean's woes, the warming

of oceans intensifies the destructive force of hurricanes and tropical storms. As global temperatures rise, sea surface temperatures follow suit, leading to more frequent and severe weather events. These natural disasters wreak havoc on our coastal infrastructure, decimate economies, and put countless lives in danger.

Coral reefs, the lifeblood of the Caribbean Sea, are in a state of crisis. Climate change has unleashed mass bleaching events and extensive degradation, threatening the very foundation of these ecosystems. The loss of vibrant coral reefs not only erodes biodiversity but also cripples our tourism industry, a significant driver of their economies.

The impact of climate
cont'd on pg 15

cont'd from pg 14

change on fishing exacerbates food security challenges and jeopardizes the livelihoods of our fisherfolk and populations as a whole. Rising ocean temperatures and shifting marine ecosystems make fish stocks increasingly vulnerable, undermining the sustainability of our fisheries.

Furthermore, the acidification of our oceans presents a silent but deadly threat to marine life. As carbon dioxide emissions increase, seawater absorbs more CO₂, leading to acidification that hinders the ability of coral reefs and shellfish to build and maintain their structures. This jeopardizes the entire food chain and ecosystem balance, with profound implications for the Caribbean's fisheries, tourism, and overall well-being.

In addition to these challenges, the harmful effects of sargassum present an urgent crisis that demands our attention. Sargassum blooms have been

occurring with increasing frequency and magnitude, causing ecological, economic, and social disruptions. These large mats of seaweed smother coral reefs, seagrass beds, and other vital habitats, leading to the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of essential marine ecosystems. Furthermore, as sargassum decomposes, it depletes oxygen levels in the water, creating "dead zones" that further threaten marine life.

Several Caribbean islands have already experienced the economic repercussions of the sargassum invasion. The sight and smell of decomposing seaweed along once-pristine coastlines deter visitors, resulting in a loss of revenue, job cuts, and diminished livelihoods for those dependent on the tourism industry. Small-scale fishers also face challenges, as sargassum damages fishing equipment and hinders fishing operations.

It is widely acknowledged that

the Caribbean faces an existential threat from climate change. However, the future of the Caribbean region depends on recognizing the value and vulnerability of the surrounding Ocean. It can allow us to swim to greater economic opportunity, or it can sink us under the impact of climate change.

At COP 28, in Dubai in December this year, Caribbean countries must form a strong alliance with other nations, through partnerships with countries such as France and Costa Rica. France will host the third UN Ocean Conference in 2025 in France, following a preparatory meeting in Costa Rica in 2024. The Caribbean should actively participate in both meetings, advocating for the preservation and sustainable development of our oceans and the Caribbean Sea.

Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com

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Ricky Martin, Jwan Yosef announce divorce after six years of marriage

AP - Ricky Martin and Jwan Yosef are divorcing after nearly six years of marriage, the couple announced Thursday.

“For some time, we have considered transforming our relationship, and it is after careful consideration that we have decided to end our marriage with love, respect and dignity for our children,” the couple wrote in an Instagram post, shared in Spanish on Martin’s profile and in English on Yosef’s.

Martin’s publicity team confirmed the accuracy of the post to The Associated Press. No other details were provided. People magazine first reported the news.

Martin, singer of such Spanish-language and English-language hits like “Livin’ la Vida Loca,” “She



Jwan Yosef, left, and Ricky Martin appear at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, California, on March 27, 2022. (Photo by Evan Agostini/Invision/AP, File)

Bangs,” “La copa de la vida” and “Vente pa’ ca,” has won two Grammys and four Latin Grammys and also acted. Yosef is a Swedish artist of Syrian origin.

“Our greatest desire now is to continue having a healthy family dynamic and

a relationship centred on our genuine friendship as we continue the joint upbringing of our children,” Martin and Yosef wrote in the statement. “We are united in nurturing this new chapter of our lives.”

Martin, 51, and Yosef,

38, were married at the end of 2017. By then, the Puerto Rican singer was already the father of twins Matteo and Valentino, who will turn 15 in August and born via surrogate. Yosef and Martin had two other children together: Lucía, now 4, and Renn, now 3.

Last September, Martin sued his nephew over the fallout of sex abuse allegations the nephew recanted. Arguing that the claims cost him millions of dollars in lost income, Martin said he had been “persecuted, besieged, harassed, stalked and extorted” by his “troubled” nephew for economic reasons. The AP confirmed that, days later, the nephew filed a sexual assault complaint. Martin declined to comment at the time.



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Netherlands to return treasures to Indonesia and Sri Lanka



The "Lombok Treasure", looted by Dutch soldiers in 1894 is being returned to Indonesia.

By Mattea Bubalo

The Netherlands is set to hand back hundreds of precious artefacts taken from Indonesia and Sri Lanka during its colonial period.

Objects to be returned include a gem-encrusted bronze cannon and a looted cache of jewels from the "Lombok treasure".

A report had urged the government to return items if countries request them.

The agreed restitution comes as the Netherlands increasingly confronts its colonial past.

Other countries have also begun returning precious looted artefacts in recent years. Notable examples include British and German museums signing over some of the so-called Benin Bronzes stolen from Nigeria during a large-scale 1897 British military expedition.

"[This is] the first time that we are returning objects that should never have been in the Netherlands," Culture Minis-

ter Gunay Uslu said.

"But we are not just returning objects. We are actually starting a period in which we are more intensively cooperating with Indonesia and Sri Lanka."

Among the collections to be handed back to Indonesia is the so called "Lombok treasure" - a trove of jewels, precious stones, gold and silver which was looted by the Dutch colonial army from a royal palace on Indonesia's Lombok island in 1894.

Sri Lanka will take back a lavishly decorated 18th Century bronze cannon, currently on display at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, thought to have been a gift from a Sri Lankan aristocrat to the King of Kandy in the 1740s.

The cannon is believed to have fallen into Dutch hands in 1765, when Dutch troops attacked and conquered the Sri Lankan kingdom of Kandy.

Culture Minister Uslu said the government was acting on recommenda-

tions laid out in a 2020 report by a Dutch committee investigating art taken during the colonial era.

The committee urged the government to be "willing to return unconditionally" any cultural objects looted in former Dutch colonies if requested by the source country.

"The Netherlands must assume responsibility for its colonial past by making the recognition and redress of this injustice a key principle of the policy on colonial collections," the report said.

The country has been wrestling with its legacy more openly in recent years.

On Saturday, King Willem-Alexander formally apologised for the Netherlands' role in the slave trade, saying he felt "personally and intensely" affected.

The country became a major colonial power after the 17th Century, holding territories across the globe, and Dutch slave traders trafficked more than 600,000 people.

Trinis and Grenadian convicted on drug charges in St Kitts and Nevis

By Dillon De Shong

Four foreigners were convicted in St Kitts and Nevis on drug possession and importation charges.

Judge Renold Benjamin sentenced the four men, who are from Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, on Monday.

The men were arrested on October 4, 2022 after a search on the MV Elizabeth C at the St Kitts' Deep Water Port led to the discovery of 801.3 kilograms of cocaine, which had a street value of EC\$71,369,100 and the cannabis was EC\$71,369,100.

Saleem Kevin Ali of Trinidad was sentenced to three years for the importation and possession of cannabis with

intent to supply.

Peter Oliver Scotland of Trinidad was sentenced to five years and four months for the possession, importation and intent to supply cocaine.

Micheal Jevan Jack of Trinidad was sentenced to three years for the importation, possession and intent to supply cannabis.

Desue Mc Farlane of Carricacou was sentenced to eight years and four months for importation, possession and intent to supply Cocaine and four years and 10 months for the importation and supply of cannabis.

All of the sentences are set to run concurrently at His Majesty's Prison.



Top: Desue McFarlane (left) and Peter O Scotland. Bottom: Saleem K Ali (left) and Michael J Jack.

CARICOM leaders agreed to deal for free movement of people by 2024

By Dillon De Shong

"I believe the founding fathers are smiling from heaven," were the words uttered by Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Chairman and Prime Minister of Dominica Roosevelt Skerrit as he announced last evening that leaders have agreed to having free movement for all categories of people by March next year.

The announcement was met with cheers from the Caribbean leaders and diplomatic representatives present at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Port of Spain, Trinidad for the closing news conference of the 45th Regular meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of



the Treaty of Chaguaramas being signed.

"Obviously there are some legal issues that we have to examine. And we have given our legal people, some months to examine those legal issues and to ensure that they can come to us by the 30th of March to take a definitive position on this," Skerrit told reporters.

"Of course, we have this new security agreement in place already that governments can benefit from. But we believe this is the fundamental part of the integration architecture and at 50 we could not leave Trinidad and Tobago and not speak about the core of the individual movement, that is people's ability to move

freely within the Caribbean Community. And I think we would have served the community well at this meeting by arriving at that decision."

Currently, university graduates, nurses, teachers, media workers, musicians, agriculture workers and private security officers are among the 12 categories of people eligible to seek employment in any of the countries that are part of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME).

Skerrit said the expansion of free movement will not be extended to Haiti as Prime Minister, Dr Ariel Henry, asked for the French speaking island to be left out of the arrangement due to their humanitarian, social, security and political issues.

cont'd on pg 19

Coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions appointed

By Laura Dowrich-Phillips

United States Secretary of State Antony J Blinken has announced the appointment of the first US Coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions.

Addressing CARICOM leaders in Port of Spain on Wednesday, Blinken announced that Michael Ben'Ary – a very experienced DOJ prosecutor – will serve as the United States' very first coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions.

The announcement follows continued dialogue between CARICOM and the US on the issue of crime in the region and the proliferation of illegal firearms from the US.

"We're also working together to address another priority that you share,



US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken addressing Heads of State at the CARICOM 45th general meeting in Trinidad and Tobago.

and that is to stem the rising tide of violent crime taking a devastating toll on communities across the region – especially, we know, young people – hurting local business, undercutting foreign investment, eroding the trust of citizens in their governments," Blinken told the leaders.

"Last July, Congress

passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. This included new federal provisions that increase criminal penalties to up to 15 years in jail for traffickers, straw purchasers. This is a tool that's vital for holding accountable those who smuggle US arms to the Caribbean."

Blinken said the US

supports the creation of CARICOM's new Crime Gun Intelligence Unit, which is improving information sharing among law enforcement agencies and strengthening the capacity of countries to investigate gun-related crimes.

Last month at a meeting with Caribbean leaders in the Bahamas, US Vice President Kamala Harris reiterated her administration's commitment to disrupt gun trafficking. She announced then the creation of a Coordinator for Caribbean Firearms Prosecutions.

She said this effort will be aided by the bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which President Joe Biden signed last year, and includes new federal criminal offenses for firearms trafficking and straw purchases.

cont'd from pg 18

Current visa arrangements placed on Haitian nationals would also remain in place.

In addition to free movement, Skerrit said there would be "certain contingent rights" such as access to primary and emergency healthcare and free primary and secondary education.

Pressed further for details on the agreement, Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley said leaders are taking a cautious approach when agreeing to the minimum set of rights guaranteed to CARICOM citizens in an effort to prevent governments from being sued.

Mottley said leaders are looking at the CARICOM Development Fund to finance the changes to help guarantee

that each country could bring its services up to a minimum level to support free movement.

She noted the present version of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas had certain principles that could make countries liable unless removed.

"During the pandemic, we had to carve out certain things. There were restrictions on movement for public health purposes—that was understood. The treaty provides for restrictions for national security purposes. The treaty provides for restrictions for balance of payments purposes. We have determined that in order to facilitate freedom of movement, we may have to do it in a way where we guarantee a minimum level of rights and that may re-

late to primary education as you heard Prime Minister Skerrit say. It may relate to Primary Health Care, it may relate to emergency health care, we are already covered with Social Security rights through the agreement that exists in CARICOM," Mottley stated.

"So what we are doing is to ensure that the desire of heads is met by the reality of implementation and we give ourselves this period of time to be able to make the amendments to the treaty so that countries can do so without fear of any further recriminations."

Mottley said the development is timely given the challenges that Caribbean countries facing a number of challenges that would require them to work together.

Sweden jails Kurd for financing terrorism after Turkey calls for crackdown

By Paul Kirby

A Swedish court has jailed a Kurdish man for four-and-a-half years for crimes including attempting to finance terrorism.

It is the first time Sweden's updated terror laws have been used in a case involving the Kurdish militant PKK.

Turkey has long called on Stockholm to crack down on Kurdish separatists.

Sweden's bid to join Nato has been delayed principally by Turkey's demand that it extradites dozens of people it views as terrorists.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet the Swedish prime minister in Lithuania on Monday ahead of a Nato summit, where Sweden is hoping to be welcomed into the Western defensive alliance.

President Joe Biden told Sweden's leader Ulf Kristersson this week that the US was "anxiously looking forward" to his country's membership.

Addressing Stockholm district court on Thursday, Judge Mans Wigen was at pains to stress that Sweden's bid to join Nato had had no impact on its decision.

Last month prosecutor Hans Ihrman stressed that the timing of the case was "pure coincidence", even though Turkey had urged Sweden to use terror laws to target Kurds suspected of having links to PKK militants.

But the timing was not lost on commentators who pointed out that it sent a message to Ankara that Sweden was getting tough on the PKK, which launched an armed struggle against the Turkish state in 1984.

Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the case was an example of how organised crime in Sweden was linked to terrorist organisations in Turkey.



Judge Mans Wigen said Sweden's bid to join Nato had no bearing on the verdict.

The 41-year-old Kurdish man who was jailed on Thursday has Turkish origins and the judge said he would be deported as soon as he had served his sentence.

He was found guilty of trying to persuade a Kurdish businessman at gunpoint outside a bar in Stockholm to providing funding for the PKK, which is considered a terrorist group by both the US and EU.

Sweden toughened its anti-terrorism laws last month to outlaw arranging meetings to provide financial or other aid for banned groups. The government said it was closing a loophole in existing legislation but critics warned it could affect freedom of speech.

Last month the government also announced it would extradite a Turkish Kurd who was legally resident in Sweden. Turkey said it was because of a drug crime but the man argued he was being pursued because of his support for Turkey's biggest pro-Kurdish political party.

Thursday's jail sentence coincided with a key meeting in Brussels involving the foreign ministers of Sweden, Turkey and Finland, ahead of next

week's Nato summit in Vilnius.

Finnish Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen told Swedish radio she was hoping for a quick announcement on Nato membership, even though Turkey had made no promises.

The Nato chief said talks would continue right up to the eve of the summit: "What is possible and what we're all working to achieve is a positive decision at the summit."

Finland and Sweden decided to join Nato in response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and Finland officially became a member in April after Turkey eventually withdrew its initial objections.

But Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly highlighted problems with Sweden's bid, saying even this week that it needed to do more on its "homework".

He said Sweden had taken steps in the right direction, by changing anti-terror laws, but he complained PKK supporters continued to organise protests "praising terrorism".

Hungary has also stalled on backing the Swedish bid, but says if Turkey shifts its stance it will not delay

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Israeli-Russian researcher Elizabeth Tsurkov held captive in Iraq since March

BBC - An Israeli-Russian researcher who went missing in Iraq in March is being held captive by a Shia militia, says Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Elizabeth Tsurkov, a PhD student at Princeton University in the United States, was conducting research in Baghdad when she was kidnapped.

"We hold Iraq responsible for her safety and well-being," Mr Netanyahu's office said.

Ms Tsurkov is being held by Kataib Hezbollah, according to Israel.

It did not specify what the group's demands were.

Kataib Hezbollah (Brigades of the Party of God) is a powerful Iraqi Shia militia that gets financial and military support from Iran. The US has designated the group as a terrorist organi-

sation since 2009.

Israel said the matter was being handled by "relevant parties... out of concern" for Ms Tsurkov's "security and well-being".

Iraq and Israel do not share diplomatic relations. Last year, Iraq's parliament passed a law that criminalises any attempt to normalise ties with Israel, which it has never recognised.

Ms Tsurkov's family said in a statement that they hold "the Iraqi government as directly responsible for her safety", the Washington Post reported.

Ms Tsurkov entered Iraq on her Russian passport, Mr Netanyahu's office said.

The New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy, a Washington-based think tank where Ms Tsurkov is a fellow, said she last contacted them in March and that they later learnt from



Elizabeth Tsurkov is a PhD student at Princeton University.

sources of her kidnap by a "pro-Iranian militia".

"Our first instinct was to shout about her disappearance on the internet, in the media and on these pages," the institute said in a statement in its magazine, adding that it decided not to do so because of her family's wishes and in the hope of a quick resolution.

According to Ms Tsurkov's website, her research focuses on the Levant - a historical term that

refers to a large geographical region including present-day Israel, Syria and other areas - and "the Syrian uprising and civil war".

New Lines said Ms Tsurkov's situation was complicated by that fact that she was "an outspoken critic" of the three countries that may be involved in negotiations for her release: Israel, Iran and Russia.

"All of us feel that the United States needs to be involved in some way in helping [Ms Tsurkov]," it said, pointing to her involvement with New Lines and Princeton.

In a statement posted on Twitter, Princeton said: "We are deeply concerned for her safety and well-being, and we are eager for her to be able to rejoin her family and resume her studies."

The US, Russia, Iran and Iraq have not officially commented yet.

cont'd from pg 20

the process.

Mr Erdogan also cited the burning of a Koran during a protest by an Iraqi Christian immigrant outside a mosque in Stockholm this week which he condemned as a hate crime and which prompted outrage in many Muslim countries.

Swedish police allowed the protest to go ahead after a court overturned a ban on burning the Koran because of freedom of speech laws.

The Swedish government criticised

the action as "Islamophobic" and a survey of 1,000 Swedes on Thursday suggested more than half believed that burning the Koran should be banned.

However, police have received further applications to burn both the Koran and the Torah in the coming days and say each request will be assessed according to the freedom of expression laws.

Israel's ambassador said he was shocked and horrified by the prospect of any more holy books being burned in Sweden.

Trump aide Walt Nauta pleads not guilty in Mar-a-Lago documents case

By Madeline Halpert

Donald Trump's aide Walt Nauta has pleaded not guilty to charges related to hiding secret documents for his boss at Mar-a-Lago, the former president's residence.

The navy veteran, who was indicted at the same time as Mr Trump, faces six charges, including conspiracy and making false statements.

The former president pleaded not guilty during an arraignment last month.

It's not clear when Mr Trump's and Mr Nauta's trial will begin.

Prosecutors have accused Mr Nauta, 40, of moving boxes containing top-secret government documents at Mar-a-Lago for the former president and then helping to hide them from federal officials who demanded them back.

His arraignment was initially expected to take place at the same time as Mr Trump's, but it was pushed back because Mr Nauta had yet to find a local Florida lawyer.

He is now being represented by criminal defence attorney Sasha Dadan.

Mr Nauta smiled at reporters but did not say anything when he arrived at court in Miami, Florida, for the hearing, according to Reuters.

Stanley Woodward, who previously represented Mr Nauta during other hearings, entered the plea on behalf of his client on Thursday and waived the reading of the indictment, according to US media reports.

Mr Trump is facing 37 counts in



Mr Nauta faces six charges, including conspiracy and making false statements.

the Mar-a-Lago case, including wilful retention of national defence information and obstruction of justice.

In a 49-page indictment unsealed in June, prosecutors allege Mr Trump illegally held on to files with sensitive information and obstructed federal government efforts to retrieve them.

According to the indictment, Mr Trump directed Mr Nauta to move boxes that were a focus of the investigation from a storage room at the Mar-a-Lago resort. Prosecutors said he can be seen on surveillance footage moving the boxes.

Mr Nauta - who was a White House military valet to Mr Trump and later joined him as an assistant at his Florida estate - was allegedly told to conceal the files from Mr Trump's attorney and the FBI.

Mr Nauta's arraignment comes a day after a federal judge unsealed parts of an affidavit the FBI used to obtain a

search warrant for Mar-a-Lago.

While much of the warrant still remains redacted, newly unsealed portions of the document revealed the trove of evidence federal investigators obtained before carrying out the search warrant last August, including surveillance video appearing to show Mr Nauta moving boxes before investigators came to look for them.

The federal judge said other parts of the search warrant will remain sealed to "comply with grand jury secrecy rules and to protect investigative sources and methods".

Mr Trump - who is the leading Republican candidate for the 2024 presidential election - is the first former president to be indicted on federal and state charges.

He faces a separate case in New York related to a reimbursement he made for a hush-money payment given to a porn star.

ABAA names team to contest NACAC Chamapionships

By Carlena Knight

Several of the nation's top youth athletes have been selected by the Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association (ABAA) to represent Antigua and Barbuda at this month's edition of the NACAC U18 and U23 Track and Field Championships.

The North American, Central American and Caribbean Championships (NACAC) is a continental track and field athletics event organised by the North American, Central American and Caribbean Athletic Association.

This is the 12th edition of the biennial athletics competition between North American, Central American and Caribbean Athletic Association in the U23 category and third edition of NACAC U18 Championships in Athletics for athletes under the age of 18.

It is scheduled to run from July 21-23 in San Jose,



Lanica Locker

Costa Rica.

The six-member contingent features the national 100m and 200m female champion Lanica Locker and the 200m male champion, Darion Skerritt.

Also on the team are the 2022 Carifta 100m gold medalist Dwayme Fleming and the 2023 Carifta silver medalist in javelin Maliek Francis.

Kasiya Daley and Geolyna Dowdye who were named the most outstanding male and female performers in this year's Interschool Track and Field Championships were also named in

the squad.

Both Locker and Dowdye will compete in the girls U18 100m and 200m while in the male equivalent, Kasiya Daley (100m, 200m), Dwayne Flemming (100m) and Maliek Francis (javelin) will clash.

Skerritt will be the lone athlete in the U23 section in the 200m.

He will be hoping to have a better showing than at the CAC Games where he was disqualified in the men's 200m Heat 3 race after stepping on the line. He initially ran a time of 21.02secs which based on the times in



Kasiya Daley



Dwayne Flemming

his heat would have landed him in 4th place.

The race was eventually won by the Dominican Republic's Alexander Ogando in a time of 19.99secs.

Kesswin Anthony is the Head Coach while Joanne Small is the Manager/Chaperone.

The team will leave on July 18.



Geolyna Dowdye



Maliek Francis (left)



Darion Skerritt

Brathwaite ready face India, happy to have Lara on board

West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite said his side is eager to return to action when they face India in the upcoming two-match Cycle Pure Agarbathi Test Series on home soil.

The West Indies squad is presently in camp in Antigua ahead of the start of the series on July 12th, and Brathwaite also welcomed the presence of legend Brian Lara, who is attending in his role as the team's performance mentor.

In an interview with CWI Media, Brathwaite said, "It's important to start well."

"We are playing against India, so you know the guys are really looking forward to it. Dominica will host the first Test match, and we call for the supporters in Dominica to come out and support us. But the guys are really looking forward to the first two Test matches of this cycle."

He adds, "That's great you know in



West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite. (CWI Media)

terms of the 100th Test match against India, and it's in Trinidad, and you know they love their cricket there, so I think it's important, and we have to try to make the region proud.

"The guys have put in some good effort in the last three days, and they still have a few days left and you know we have keep pushing hard."

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Black Hawks seek to continue perfect run in ABCA Super40 Cup

Cup-holder PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks will be seeking to continue their winning form when the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 limited overs competition resumes this weekend.

The Black Hawks will enter the third round of matches tomorrow (Saturday) with a perfect two wins from their previous matches.

The defending champions and the Empire Nation are the only two sides in

the nine-team round-robin competition that still hold a perfect record just after the first two rounds of matches.

But while the Empire Nation will be resting on Saturday, the Black Hawks will be seeking to extend their unbeaten run when they host the Bolans Blasters at Ball Beef in Liberta in one of four third-round matches.

The Jennings Tigers will go in search of their first win when they host the Pigotts Crushers at the

Jennings playing field.

The Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles will be aiming to get their second win in three outings when they clash with the Wes Rising Sun Spartans at the Rising Sun playing field.

The New Winthorpes Lions will also be seeking their first win in two matches when they entertain the All Saints Pythons at the New Winthorpes playing field.

The 40-over aside competition will continue

with four more matches on Sunday.

The Bolans Blasters and the Jennings Tigers will clash at the Bolans playing field. The Pigotts Crushers will meet the New Winthorpes Lions at the New Winthorpes playing field.

The All Saints Pythons will meet the Bethesda Golden Eagles at the Bethesda playing field, and the Rising Sun Spartans will face the Empire Nation at the Rising Sun playing field.



Members of the national domino team engage in practice sessions at the ABNDA's headquarters in Ottos during this month. (ABNDA)

ABNDA works to secure funding for World Domino Championship

The Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association (ABNDA) is currently in the process of securing the finances to facilitate the national team's participation in the World Council of Domino Federation's (WCDF) Championship in Guyana in August.

The Public Relations Officer of the ABNDA, Carol-Faye Bynoe, said it will cost each member of the national team approximately EC\$4,000 to participate in the World Domino

Championship, which will be hosted at the Guyana National Stadium in Providence from August 12th to 21st.

"It's an estimated cost of at least EC\$4,000 per player to take care of airfare, accommodation, and meals. We had to secure our seats and our airfares early, so people dealt with that on their own. Some of them sought assistance from people they know, business places, or whatever. But we had to get the airfares out of the way,"

Bynoe stated.

"I will say about 95 percent of that is done. The other expenses that we had was to pay down on our accommodations, so that was also dealt with.

"But we are doing fundraisers. We have been having fundraising activities. We have done two lunches so far, and we had a dance on July 1st, and then on July 29th, we will have our final lunch."

Bynoe said the 45-member national team, which comprises male and female players, has been seeking financial support via sponsorships from businesses, while the ABNDA has also reached out to the Ministry of Sports for its assistance in helping the team meet its expenses for the world championship in Guyana.

"So everybody that is part of the traveling team is trying their best to see how they can get sponsorship from the business sector, and we also made an application to the Ministry of Sports for financial assistance," Bynoe said.

"We do not know how much we are going to be getting from the Ministry of Sports as yet, but everything was presented to the ministry, and a lot of letters were written so the players could take them to their bosses or different business places and stuff like that. So I think we are in a good place, but we still have a little way to go."

The national domino team is currently training on Thursday nights, Friday nights, and Sunday afternoons in preparation for the world championship.

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Lara worked with the team earlier in the year on the tours of Zimbabwe and South Africa, and Brathwaite said he has a positive influence on the players.

"It's great to have him here. In terms of the conversations we have with him, we always learn and he big on planning... on how you are going to score your runs. His advice on situations is great and it will only help the batters," Brathwaite said.



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The Flyers basketball team. (File photo)

Wins for Flyers and Ovals OJays in division one basketball league

The Flyers and Cuties Ovals OJays have won their latest games in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) First Division League.

The Flyers recorded their sixth win in nine games by soaring to an emphatic 39-point victory against All Saints Slam in the opening

game of a double-header at the JSC Sports Complex on Wednesday night.

T-Shawn Lewis shot a game-high 26 points and snatched six rebounds to lead the Flyers to their 92-53 victory.

Jabari Williams sank 20 points and grabbed 14 rebounds; Javonte Daley

produced 19 points, eight assists, and six rebounds; and Eric Joseph converted 15 points for the Flyers.

John Rolland Jr. had 10 points and eight rebounds, and Ezekiel Francois chipped in with 12 rebounds and nine points for the All Saints slam, which lost for the 10th time in 12 games.

The Ovals OJays secured their seventh win in nine games by surging to an easy 33-point victory against the Ottos Full Throttle in Wednesday night's second encounter.

Joshua Minner shot a game-high 34 points and distributed five assists to lead the Ovals OJays to their 96-63 victory.

Kareem Edwards sank 18 points; Mario Davis had 15 points and 11 rebounds; and Alexis Jackson converted 13 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for the Ovals OJays.

Lincoln Weekes produced 25 points and six rebounds; Warren Bogle had 16 points and six rebounds; and Shaquille Kelly contributed 12 points, 10 rebounds, and five steals for the Ottos full throttle, who lost for the sixth time in 10 games.

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More than 5,000 golfers compete in official Optimist District qualifying tournaments. The best of these golfers, along with international golfers from around the globe, advance to the annual Optimist International Junior Golf Championships.

Siyolo Joseph will be competing against his peers from around the world in the Boys 12 to 13 category at the IMG Academy Junior World Championships in California.

In 1968, the San Diego Junior Golf Association founded the Junior World Golf Championship to connect young golfers from all parts of the world.

Not only was it their goal to provide youth with a premier golf experience, but they also dreamed that the championship would build greater understanding among people of different cultures and values.

In its inaugural year, the event attracted 475 junior golfers from seven countries and 20 states in America.

Today, the tournament has grown to 1,250 participants, representing 56 countries and 42 American states. The IMG Academy Junior World Golf Championships is now the largest international event in the world and is unique for its international representation and cultural diversity.

Young Antiguan golfer to contest major tournaments

One of Antigua and Barbuda's top young players, Siyolo Joseph, left the island yesterday (Thursday) to participate in two major junior golf tournaments, which will be taking place this month in the United States of America (USA).

Joseph, who is accompanied by his father, former West Indies, Leeward Islands, and Antiguan cricketer Sylvester "Bouncing" Joseph, will be participating in the IMG Academy Junior World Championships at the Arrowood Golf Course in Oceanside, San Diego Country, California, from July 8th to 13th.

Siyolo Joseph will then travel to Florida, where he will contest the equally prestigious Optimist International Junior Golf Championships at the Trump National Doral Resort and Spa in Miami from July 14th to 19th.

According to founder and coach Marlon "Boozie" George of the Cedar-Valley-based Striving for Success junior golf academy, of which Joseph is a member, the young Antiguan golfer gained the opportunity to contest the two competitions in the United States

after securing top honours at a pre-qualifying competition, the 2023 Optimist Barbados Golf Classic, which was held at the Barbados Golf Club from April 11th to 14th.

George said Joseph, who won the Boys 12 to 13 Division at the Optimist Barbados Golf Classic, not only gained qualification to the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship in Florida, but it also allowed him to acquire world ranking points, which made him eligible to take part in the IMG Academy Junior World Championships.

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, are unable to Travel to the prestigious 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, are unable to take their spots at the Op-



The team of Siyolo Joseph, right, Sylvester 'Bouncing' Joseph, centre, and Omary James, left, captured the overall title at the Chippin for Charity Golf Tournament at the Cedar Valley Golf Course on Saturday, February 19th, 2022. (File Photo)

timist International Junior Golf Championship in Florida due to their inability to acquire visas to facilitate traveling to the USA.

Siyolo Joseph and Marquise George are listed to contest the Boys 12 to 13 division from July 14th to 19th, while Francis is listed to compete in the Girls 15 to 18 category at the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship in Miami, Florida, from July 24th

to 29th.

The Optimist International Junior Golf Championship is one of the largest and best-known junior golf tournaments in the world.

Each year, more than 600 golfers participate in The OPTIMIST. Optimists have been involved in the sport of junior golf for more than 30 years by holding local, regional, and international tournaments.

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