

FRIDAY 18TH AUGUST 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 158 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

# PIANGO FESTIVAL IS THIS WEEKEND

*Story on Page 2*



Several members of the Rastafari Community in Antigua and Barbuda, on Thursday held a celebratory session of chanting and praying at the Office of the Prime Minister to mark the anniversary of the 136th birthday of Marcus Garvey. *Story on page 4.*

# Senator Dwayne George to open Piango Festival

The annual Piango Festival, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture to showcase the agro-processing of two of the country’s most popular fruits – Mango and Pineapple - is taking place on Saturday and Sunday.

The event takes place at the Cades Bay Agricultural Station, near Urlings, and newly appointed government Senator Dwayne George, delivered remarks to formally open the festival, representing Agriculture Minister, E.P Chet Greene, who is away on government business.

Director of Agriculture,

Gregory Bailey, as well as a representative of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), will also address the opening of the Festival, slated for Saturday morning.

A spokesman for the ministry said the festival serves as a showcase for the local agro-processing sector where those involved in this space can put on display their produce to a wide cross-section of society.

“These vendors are able to show the value, added to mangoes and pineapples, to be able to produce items from wine to jams to cakes

and confectionery,” the spokesman stated.

On Sunday, one of the highlights is a competition among the agro-processors sponsored by IICA. “Products must be properly labeled and presented attractively. Serving suggestions for food items are encouraged (how to use them or what dish they can be served with). All products must be attractively presented and labeled. Points will be awarded for the creativity of displays,” according to the registration form circulated to participants.

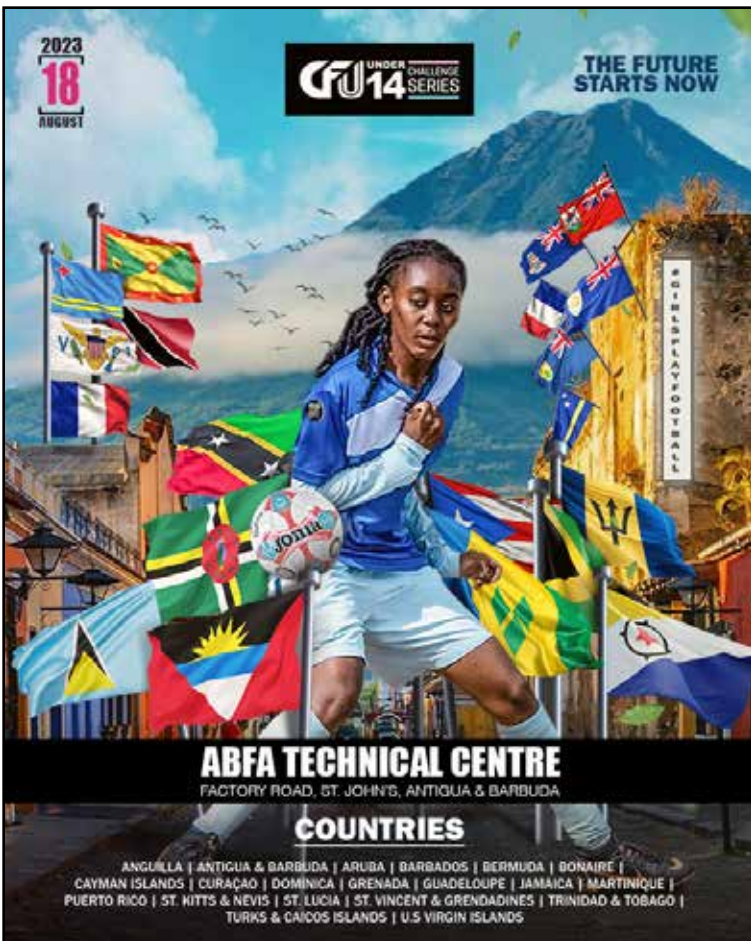
The other activities include organized tours to Clement Farm, one of the




Senator Dwayne George main producers of pineapples, as well as other forms of entertainment including a goat race.

Agriculture Minister Greene will return in time to close the festival on Sunday evening.

Several musical acts will bring the activities to an end later in the evening.





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

August 17th, 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.

In an effort to improve our services and reliability we are updating the residents in the communities below of the delayed waste collection and we are working to resolve the issue promptly.

- Freeman’s Village
- Barnes Hill
- Pares Village

In today’s schedule, an unavoidably late start will be in the following communities:

- Seatons
- Glanvilles
- Bethesda

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.

**“Working In Partnership for a Cleaner Antigua And Barbuda”**

 **The National Solid Waste Management Authority**

## Calvin Ayre Group to undertake major tourism development

Economic Ambassador Calvin Ayre has confirmed that his Ayre Group is to undertake a multi-million dollar tourism investment in the Jolly Harbour area.

Speaking with state television, Ambassador Ayre announced that the Ayre Group will invest some US\$400 million to develop a luxury resort, Niki Beach, on some 10 acres of land at Jolly Beach.

He said a formal announcement will soon be made but his group expects to develop the project over the next three to four years. "It's going to be about a year out before we have shovels in the ground and building foundation but we hope to begin with the demolition of some of the existing buildings by the end of the first quarter of next year," he explained.

He said the project will be on lands adjacent to the home of Prime Minister Gaston Browne, to the edge of the Jolly



*Economic Ambassador Calvin Ayre*  
 Beach property on roughly ten acres of land.

Ambassador Ayre explained that he is making the announcement ahead of a formal launch as the information has been leaking out over time. He further explained that the development will include a luxury resort, as well as private villas.

Regarding financing, the ambassador said his group will make the initial investments and later attract other investors to the project.

"I think this development will 'put Antigua on the map;' I am excited about this project; I live here, I love this area and I would wish nothing better than to have Niki Beach Resort located in the Jolly Harbour area," he stated.

He noted that attracting a high-end clientele to Antigua and Barbuda adds much to the country's tourism yield. "That high-end clientele occupied the same amount of sand as the person who comes off the cruise ship and only wants to buy a beer. So I think if Antigua and Barbuda attracts the bigger spender it would not only be a boost for the economy in the area but for the country overall," he added.



# Curry House

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# Rastafari community celebrates Marcus Garvey's birthday

Several members of the Rastafari Community in Antigua and Barbuda, on Thursday held a celebratory session of chanting and praying at the Office of the Prime Minister to mark the anniversary of the 136th birthday of Marcus Garvey.

The group comprised largely, of members of the Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress, as well as members of other Rastafari groups on the island.

"We decided, that since this is the 136th anniversary of the birth of one of the greatest prophets to have ever lived, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, we decided to pay a courtesy call on the staff of the OPM, to share our joy and our celebrations," shared Priest T.O.N Isaac, who serves as the church's



ambassador assigned to Antigua and Barbuda.

Marcus Garvey was born in St Ann's Bay in Jamaica, on August 17, 1888, and he led a movement that had as its aim the reparation

of former enslaved people in the Caribbean and the Americas to Africa.

"After slavery, many of the formerly enslaved people were still enslaved mentally and Marcus Gar-

vey was the one who said, 'free your minds!' and brought back pride to the Africans in the diaspora," he explained.

According to Priest  
*cont'd on pg 5*

*cont'd from pg 4*

Isaac - Garvey and his movement were seen as a threat to the established order of the day. Such were the fears that he generated, that the US FBI was said to have appointed its first black agents to serve as spies to report on the inner workings of Garvey's movement.

Greetings were also expressed by Secretary of Congress, Priest Vincent Isaac, Priest O'Garro of Trinidad and Tobago, Priest Shimron Davidson, and Ras Selah High Priest of the Big Creek Rastafari group.

The Rastafari leadership said they wanted to especially express their appreciation to Prime Minister Gaston



Browne for his several policy moves that are beneficial to Rastafari. The prime minister's efforts to establish an air bridge with Africa was particularly singled out for praise and commendation.

During the session, the Rastafari made a presentation of the group's local products as well as a letter to Prime Minister Gaston Browne. Permanent Secretary in the OPM, Stacy

Gregg-Paige, accepted the packages on behalf of PM Browne who is traveling.

Chief of Staff in the OPM, Ambassador Lionel 'Max' Hurst, expressed thanks and appreciation to the Rastafari community for sharing the afternoon with staff at the office.

Princess Akasha-Menen Isaac made the formal presentation to PS Gregg-Paige.



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# Local News

## Corporate citizens celebrate with local Soup Kitchen

The St. John's Cooperative Credit Union (SJCCU) which is this week celebrating its 41st anniversary of operations, joined hands on Thursday to serve lunch to the less fortunate who receive a daily hot lunch at the Soup Kitchen, near the public market.

Organizer of the Soup Kitchen, Inspector Veldon Raggette said the credit union not only sponsored the lunch for the day, but its staff members participated by sharing the meals for those who come to the Soup Kitchen daily.

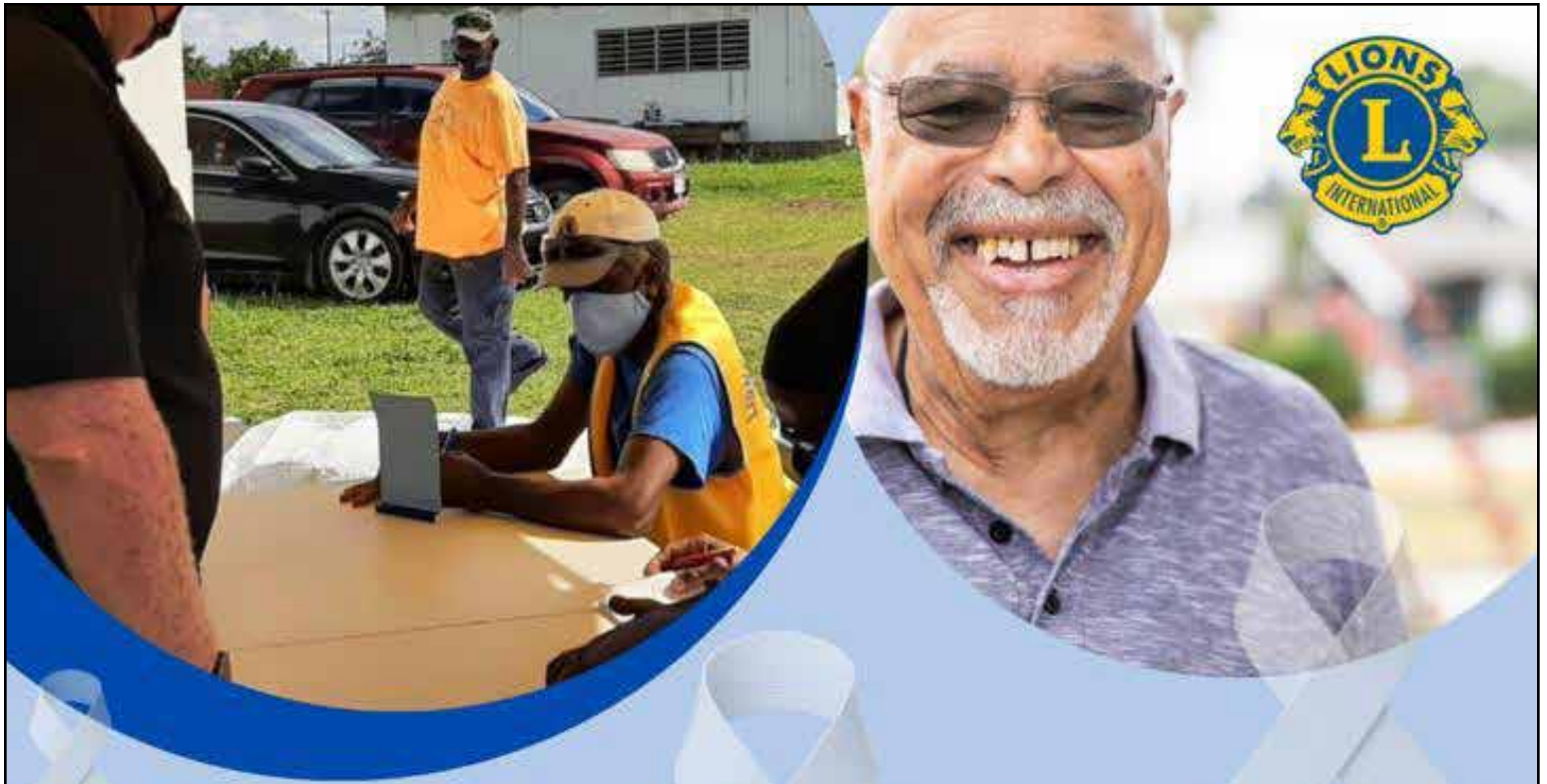
"This is the fifth consecutive year that the members of the credit union are assisting us here at the Soup Kitchen and the gesture was well-received by those who received the lunches. It was a well-balanced meal, and we are thankful to the staff



of SJCCU for their continued support of our efforts," Raggette stated.

He added that a total of 62 persons received lunch on Thursday, through the joint efforts of the SJCCU and the Soup Kitchen. He is also appealing to other corporate citizens to assist the Soup Kitchen as many less fortunate have come to rely on the daily hot lunches that it provides.





**Lions Club of Antigua and Dr. Dwayne Thwaites** with assistance from  
Dr. Danny Caruso, Dr. Christopher Gomez, Dr. Obi Ekiwenna, Dr. Brian Cohen and Dr. Regene Johnson

present

# PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING

**SATURDAY AUGUST 19TH, 2023**

**Venue: The Lions Den**

**Registration begins at 7:00am and ends at 11:00am**

**Examination: Begins at 8:00am**

**Registration contribution: \$30.00 ECD**

**Breakfast will be on sale**

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## The late Captain Wade McDonald gets a water cannon salute

Family, friends, and former colleagues of the retired airline pilot, Captain Wade Austin McDonald, who died in Aruba on Sunday, gathered at the VC Bird International Airport on Thursday, as the aircraft that flew his body back to Antigua was given a water cannon salute.

Cpt. McDonald was remembered as an outstanding airline captain who helped to train and shape the careers of hundreds of pilots, who flew for LIAT and other airlines around the world.

Former chairman of the Leeward Islands Pilot's As-

sociation, Capt. Carl Burke said of McDonald, that aviation in the region had suffered a significant loss at the passing the distinguished pilot.

“He has inspired and trained many of the pilots who went through LIAT over the past three decades. He was a very influential guy and one for whom I had much respect,” Cpt. Burke stated.

He said the gathering at the airport was their way of honouring Capt. McDonald and to pay their final respects.



Wade McDonald

Capt. McDonald was in Antigua and Barbuda for Guyanese by birth but lived many years.

### HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER VACANCY



National Solid Waste Management Authority

P.O. Box 2224, St. John's Antigua, Antigua W.I.  
Tel: (268) 562-1347/8/9 Fax: (268) 562 1350 Email: [nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag](mailto:nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag)

#### WE ARE HIRING

The National Solid Waste Management Authority is seeking to recruit highly qualified and motivated individual to fit the position of A *Human Resource Manager*

#### JOB FUNCTION

The Human Resources Manager leads and directs the routine functions of the HR Department including the management of the following HR programmes: recruitment, selection and onboarding, training and development of staff, employee engagement, compensation and benefits, performance management including ensuring legal compliance.

#### PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Manages talent acquisition process, including recruitment, selection and onboarding of skilled candidates.
2. Partners with senior leadership to execute the organisation's talent strategy.
3. Oversees the daily operation of the HR Department
4. Provides guidance and counselling to Managers and Staff
5. Oversees and manages a performance management programme
6. Develops and implements HR strategies and initiatives and department's budgets
7. Maintains knowledge of trends, best practices, regulatory changes and new knowledge to communicate changes in policy, practice and resources.
8. Manages and monitors benefit administration
9. Manages HRIS

#### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS & CRITICAL SKILLS:

1. Bachelor's degree in Human Resources or a related field required; Master's Degree preferred.
2. HR Certification.
3. A Minimum of eight years of human resource experience in a leadership role.
4. Sound knowledge of local Labour laws and regulations, such as the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Code and other relevant legislation.
5. Record keeping and report writing skills.
6. Experience in writing policies.
7. Advanced interpersonal and communication skills.
8. Sound decision making and analytical skills.
9. Exhibits confidentiality, tact, and initiative in dealing with official matters.
10. Proven ability to plan, to organize, execute and manage time and multiple tasks effectively.
11. Experience with digital technology.

Email your resume to the General Manager at: [nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag](mailto:nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag) indicating the position that you are applying for by August, 31st 2023. ONLY suitable applicants will be contacted.

### LANDFILL MANAGER VACANCY



National Solid Waste Management Authority

P.O. Box 2224, St. John's Antigua, Antigua W.I.  
Tel: (268) 562-1347/8/9 Fax: (268) 562 1350 Email: [nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag](mailto:nswma@solidwaste.gov.ag)

#### WE ARE HIRING

The National Solid Waste Management Authority is seeking to recruit highly qualified and motivated individual to fit the position of a *Landfill Manager*

#### JOB FUNCTION

The Landfill Manager administers the efficient and cost effective operation of the landfill while meeting or exceeding the requirements of environmental laws, rules, regulations and standards governing Antigua and Barbuda. The Manager should be able to provide efficient solutions to address existing or emerging problems covering sound waste management practices and operations at the Cook's Sanitary Landfill and Civic Amenity Site.

#### PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Monitors the operation of the landfill and prepares environmental compliance reports for NSWMA.
2. Monitor payment and billing procedures
3. Assign, schedule, and supervise the work and performance of subordinates
4. Administers the Landfill budget, approves purchases and payments related to Landfill operations.
5. Prioritizes and schedules maintenance within the landfill facilities along with equipment.
6. Designs and supervises infrastructure additions and/or improvements.
7. Prepares and administers contracts for site contractors and consultants.
8. Reviews and approves designs prepared by consultants.
9. Reviews and approves environmental and geotechnical monitoring reports prepared by consultants.
10. Performs and/or supervises surveying by staff and/or consultants as needed for site maintenance, environmental or geotechnical monitoring.
11. Prepares reports and summaries for the General Manager and/or Board of Directors.
12. Supports the General Manager and follows through with details as assigned.
13. Reviews and updates the landfill operations plan, storm water pollution prevention plan, environmental monitoring plan and integrated contingency plan.
14. Collects samples and/or performs testing of water, soil and landfill gas as needed.

#### OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Prepares annual landfill budget based on cost projections, new projects and estimated operating costs.
2. Prepares capital improvements and oversees current projects.
3. Prepares Requests for Proposals, Specifications and Contract Documents, Task Order Memoranda and Change Orders for capital improvements.
4. Enforce new and established safety rules and protocols
5. Responsible for interviewing, selecting and ensuring training and development needs are met for staff members, laborers, and vendors associated with project work
6. Prepares Annual Performance Evaluation and feedback to team members, utilizes coaching and counseling techniques, as well as progressive discipline for performance deficiencies.
7. Scheduling responsibilities for staff, laborers and vendors related to project work
8. Other duties as assigned, and as needs are determined.

#### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS & CRITICAL SKILLS:

1. Bachelor's degree in Environmental Engineering and Science or a related field required; Master's Degree preferred
2. Certified as a Landfill Manager or ability to obtain certification within one (1) year is required
3. A Minimum of ten (10) years of experience in a leadership role in a related field.
4. Prior experience in the waste disposal and/or Waste-to-Energy field very desirable
5. Basic surveying experience with Total Station surveying instruments and the ability to train staff in its use.
6. Ability to prepare topographic survey drawings and calculate waste and earthwork volumes using CAD software.
7. Knowledge and experience with Landfill fires, erosion control practices and devices
8. Analytical thinker who can multi-task, is a self-starter and is very organized
9. Proven leader, motivator, clear communicator and team player
10. Solid knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite of products
11. Good verbal and written communication skills

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# Opinion

## Haiti: a peaceful multinational approach, not a warlike force

By Sir Ronald Sanders

Haiti needs “to get its political and governance act together”. That is among the important messages that UN Secretary General, António Guterres, delivered to the UN Security Council in a letter on August 14, 2023.

Guterres’ letter was a response to the Security Council’s request for proposals to tackle the security and humanitarian crises in Haiti.

While the Secretary General repeats his call made to the Security Council in July 2023 “to authorise the immediate deployment of a robust international security force” to help Haiti’s police fight criminal gangs, the significance of this latest letter is the importance of settling the vexed issue of the country’s governance.

Guterres emphasized that “Without a meaningful reform of the political system, Haiti will continue to face these cycles of crises and instability emanating from weak political representation and disenfranchisement, a political climate, and fragile and politicized state institutions”.

Failed and corrupt governance has been at the root of Haiti’s poverty, economic backwardness, and inadequate physical and social infrastructure.

From these circumstances gangs were formed, first as tools of rival politicians and business oligarchs, and then as a force to take advantage of a situation of totally collapsed governance structures and systems.

Haiti has no legislature; its Court system is utterly dysfunctional; and many of Haiti’s political parties and civil society organizations have declared no confidence in the self-appointed government of Haiti which has shown no inclination to establish a transitional government that genuine-

ly shares power and represents a broad cross section of the society.

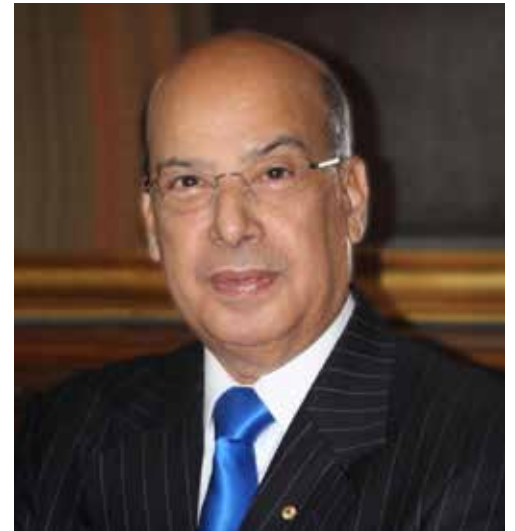
The situation in Haiti is dire, and the people of Haiti deserve to be liberated from the persistent deprivation and suffering that they are forced to endure. But the proposed “deployment of a specialized multinational force enabled by military assets, coordinated with the national police”, should be at the request of an agreed transitional government if it is to enjoy popular backing.

As the organization, Human Rights Watch, observed: “The Haitian government has failed to protect people from the violence of these criminal groups, many of which have alleged ties with senior political officials, economic actors, and police officers. International security support may be required, but it will most likely only be effective with a new transitional government and as part of a multi-faceted response with strong human rights safeguards”.

Such a transitional government is necessary, bearing in mind that many Haitian organizations believe that any successful external force would end up, intentionally or otherwise, maintaining the present unelected government of Dr. Ariel Henry.

If success means getting rid of gangs by “active use of force in targeted police operations against heavily armed gangs”, as Secretary General Guterres described it, then what is really meant is war against the gangs that are now entrenched throughout Haiti.

Such a war would not result in casualties only among gang leaders and members. It would also include fatalities among communities, which are used as protective shields in any resistance to “active use of force”. The



Sir Ronald Sanders

deaths of combatants from any multinational force could also be considerable.

The governments of the Bahamas and Jamaica have understandably offered to join an external force. Both countries face challenges from Haitians seeking refuge, leading to substantial expenditures on border protection, repatriation efforts, and containment. This direct impact underscores their vested interest in Haiti’s stabilization.

The governments of Canada and the United States, arguably having a similar vested interest, have yet to express intentions to contribute police or soldiers. Instead, they encourage countries in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean to do so, providing logistical support and finance for operations.

Apart from The Bahamas and Jamaica, no government has made a formal decision to commit troops. Even Kenya is awaiting a study before declaring its position.

To some extent, reluctance stems from the fact that this would not be a “peace keeping force”, operating with

*cont’d on pg 11*

*cont'd from pg 10*

a mandate from the UN Security Council. Instead, it would be force made up from willing countries, undertaking the “recapture of areas under gang control”.

Such a mission is easier said than done. The gangs were already well armed, violent and accustomed to confrontation and killing before the much-publicized discussions, concerning the deployment of a multinational force. Some of the gangs are linked to organized criminal enterprises and they would have been fortified with more powerful weaponry than they already possessed.

Guterres pointed out to the Security Council that the “gangs have become more structured, federated and autonomous [-] consolidating control over the population”. The gangs also have a vested interest in preserving themselves and the criminal activity from which they derive money and power; they will not slink away with their tails between their legs. They will fight, viciously.

The argument has been advanced that, integral to stability in Haiti, are general elections at which voters will elect the president of the country and representatives to the legislature and municipalities. The argument continues that to mount such elections requires Haiti to be secure. Therefore, getting rid of the gangs and establishing a functional police force are compulsory.

But even if a multinational force is constructed and it entered Haiti at the request of the unelected Prime Minister, Dr Ariel Henry, eliminating gangs after a bloody confrontation, the fundamental issue of Haiti’s governance would remain.

Elections, organised only by Dr Henry’s government, would not satisfy any - other than his own political party - that such elections would be organized, administered and conducted to produce free and fair results, particularly if they come after a period of violent conflict. The existing disaffection and hostility

would explode into protests and demonstrations.

Given all this, Haiti might now best be served by a multinational team of negotiators and facilitators made up of persons from countries with leverage and others that enjoy goodwill of Haitian players. Such a team could work with the various parties in Haiti to establish a transitional government that would have the authority to interface with, and make credible requests of, the international community, including for clearly defined police assistance.

The team might also begin to explore with the main

gang leaders the terms of dismantling their organisations and laying down their weapons with the aim of preventing widespread violence and bloodshed.

*(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. Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com))*



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## PM Andrew Holness says Jamaica is near full employment

CMC - Prime Minister Andrew Holness, says Jamaica is close to full employment as the country recorded a record low unemployment level of 4.5 per cent.

In a statement on Wednesday, Prime Minister Holness described as “welcomed news” the report by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) that the out-turn, based on the April 2023 Labour Force Survey, is 1.5 percentage points lower than the figure for the corresponding period in 2022.

“We are now close to full employment... [and] that our economy continues to expand,” Holness said, adding “but what it really means is that more Jamaicans have income.

“It means that more Jamaican families can do much better than they were doing before,” said Holness, who is also the Minister of Economic Growth and Job Creation.

“This is the best news that our economy can have...we are building Jamaica”.

Speaking at STATIN’s quarterly digital media briefing on Tuesday, Director General, Carol Coy, said that the number of unemployed persons in April this year fell by 19,700, or 24.3 per cent, to 61,300, compared to the corresponding



period in 2022.

She noted that the number of unemployed males fell by 8,900, or 26.3 per cent, to 24,900, while the corresponding out-turn for females dropped from 47,200 last year to 36,400 in April.

The number of unemployed youth, aged 14 to 24, was 24,600, a decrease of 6,800 or 21.7 per cent.

The number of employed persons increased by 43,300 to 1,312,600.

“Females accounted for over two-thirds of this increase. Employed females grew by 5.1 per cent or 29,700, while employed males increased by two per cent or 13,600,” Coy said.

STATIN also advised

that there was increased employment in all age groups.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Aubyn Hill, says the authorities are seeking to remove barriers to get small businesses to increase exports.

Hill, said the Ministry has several programmes designed to assist small business operators to export their goods and services.

“Some of those barriers are, frankly, financial barriers, so we developed a programme in the ministry called the Productive Inputs Relief (PIR),” he added.

The PIR scheme facilitates duty-free importation of specific items intended

for productive use.

Through the PIR system, the Government has targeted specific sectors – agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, healthcare, and the creative industries – which are being leveraged to promote and stimulate economic growth.

“We are working to take away all those hurdles if they exist, so we get them to the point of export,” he said.

The PIR is part of the government’s Fiscal Incentive Regime and was introduced in January 2014 to simplify and streamline the process of granting government fiscal incentives to companies and individuals across growth sectors.

## PAHO: Americas to expand genomic surveillance for dengue

Laboratory experts gathered this week in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, to discuss increasing the use of tools to detect and monitor mosquito-borne diseases in the Americas. The meeting, led by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), comes as some countries in the region face large-scale outbreaks of dengue and intense circulation of chikungunya.

The annual meeting of the Arbovirus Diagnosis Laboratory Network of the Americas (RELDA), of which PAHO is the technical secretariat, takes place this week until Thursday. Members, which are made up of 35 national laboratories from across the region, technical advisors and WHO collaborating centres, will review ways to expand genomic and entomovirological surveillance to major arboviruses.

“At least nine arboviruses with public health impact - such as dengue, zika, chikungunya and yellow fever - are circulating in Latin America and the Caribbean, so strengthening and expanding laboratory detection and surveillance capacities are key to ensuring a timely response to outbreaks and epidemics,” Sylvain Aldighieri, Deputy Director of PAHO’s Department of Health Emergencies, said.



Arboviruses are transmitted by the bite of arthropods (mosquitoes and ticks, among others). From the beginning of 2023 until the end of July, more than 3 million new dengue infections and more than 324,000 cases of chikungunya were reported in the Americas.

With 27,000 cases across the region in the same period, Zika has a lower incidence rate, while sporadic cases of yellow fever represent a permanent risk of re-emergence of this potentially lethal disease.

“The epidemiological picture of arboviruses in the region is highly complex due to the epidemic poten-

tial of these diseases,” José Luis San Martín, PAHO regional advisor on arboviral diseases, warned. “We must carry out an integrated prevention and control strategy that uses new innovations to closely monitor these viruses in laboratories,” he added.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, genomic surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 proved key to understanding the virus, its variants, and advising public policy to prevent and control of the disease.

In the past years, investment and international cooperation have strengthened RELDA laboratories, and

now at least eight countries in the region have introduced genomic sequencing within the framework of PAHO’s Regional Strategy for Genomic Surveillance.

Many countries are taking advantage of these capacities and have started sequencing dengue, yellow fever, chikungunya and other viruses, some for the first time. With RELDA’s support, laboratories can expand this surveillance to find out the genomes of arboviruses circulating in their territory, their dispersion patterns and analyse whether mutations are associated with greater transmissibility or severity.



## American Canadian School of Medicine in Dominica welcomes first batch of students

The school year for Dominica's newest private medical school has officially begun as it welcomed students from all over the world this week.

A total of nine students enrolled at the American Canadian School of Medicine (ACSOM), a premier institution that replaced the Ross University School of Medicine in Picard, Portsmouth.

Ross University was the longest existing medical school in Dominica that operated for more than four decades until it stopped accepting students for four years.

At his address at the white coat ceremony last August 13, ACSOM President Casey James stressed that the institution "extends beyond producing exceptional physicians; it aspires to elevate healthcare standards within Dominica and beyond."

"For decades, Dominica has proven to be an exceptional location for medical education," James said as quoted by Dominica News Online. "Dominica's healthcare system has provided medical students with many of their first and most impactful experiences as student learners."

James also thanked support given by the government of Dominica in the foundation of ACSOM. "It bridges resources for our shared mission for advancing health care," he said.

ACSOM has been accredited by internationally recognised agencies such as the International Accreditation Registry (IAR) and the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (ACCM).

The newly-opened medical school is just one of the many institutions that Dominica has launched to enhance its capacity to provide sus-

tainable medical and healthcare support not only to its residents but also to its international stakeholders.

Two new hospitals in Dominica are operating smoothly: the Dominica China Friendship Hospital is almost completed, and the new Marigot Hospital boasts state-of-the-art medical equipment and furnishings to better cater to the needs of patients. The construction of the new Reginald Armour Hospital, which will also be in Portsmouth, will commence soon.

Dominica's long standing developer, MMC Development Ltd., spearheaded the construction of the New Marigot Hospital, with funding mostly coming from Dominica's Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programme. MMC Development Ltd. is also in charge of the development of the other twelve health and wellness centres across the island.

## SVG: Vincentian-American drowns at Rabacca Beach

The Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force is investigating the suspected drowning of a Vincentian-American at Rabacca Beach, Georgetown on Tuesday.

Georgetown Police said that at 6:24 pm it received reports that Andre Stephens was in the water when he encountered difficulties and disappeared from view.

A search was mounted to find Stephens, who is from Georgetown, however his body was not recovered that night.

Cops and residents returned to the beach on



Wednesday and the 65 year old's body was found.

In the police statement, Commander of the Eastern Division, Superintendent

Hesran Ballantyne, commented: "The body of Andre Stephens was recovered just before 9:00 am. It washed ashore

on the Rabacca Beach. The District Medical Officer was called to the scene and pronounced Stephen deceased."

## St Kitts: Business chamber alarmed by rising armed robberies

The St Kitts and Nevis Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SKNCIC) has called on citizens to come forward and assist police with their investigation into crimes in the country.

In a statement, SKNCIC said it is alarmed by the upsurge in robberies in St Kitts and Nevis. On August 12, armed men stormed the Rams Supermarket locations in Camps and Bird Rock and robbed the store of money and other valuables.

SKNCIC said: "Cooperation from the community is crucial in ensuring that these criminals are swiftly



brought to justice and reducing the incidence of such criminal activity."

"The SKNCIC believes that swift action and the full cooperation of the public will help to maintain the peace and prosperity of St

Kitts and Nevis. By working together as a united community, we can ensure that our businesses and citizens are protected from criminal activities."

The chamber recently met with representatives of

the Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force to discuss ways both agencies can work together to fight crime.

"Both parties have pledged to form a closer working relationship to look at and ways to mitigate the spread and impact of crime in our communities.

"The SKNCIC recognises the importance of maintaining a safe and secure environment for businesses to operate effectively, contribute to the local economy, and provide essential goods and services to the community," the chamber stated.

## Pakistan: More than 100 arrested after churches burned

By Caroline Davies

More than 100 people have been arrested in a city in east Pakistan after thousands of Muslims burned churches and vandalised homes.

Violence in Jaranwala was sparked by claims that two Christian men had torn pages from the Quran.

The historic Salvation Army Church was still smouldering on Thursday, one day after the riot.

Ruins have been surrounded with barbed wire as the situation remains tense in the city.

Public gatherings have also been restricted for seven days in Faisalabad district, which includes Jaranwala.

The two men accused of damaging the Quran, Islam's holy book, have been charged with blasphemy, which is punishable by death in Pakistan.

Even though Pakistan has yet to sentence anyone to death for blasphemy, a mere accusation can result in widespread riots, sometimes leading to lynchings and killings.

A local official told BBC Urdu that authorities had received calls about protests and fires early on Wednesday morning, after reports about the desecration of the Quran circulated in the city and on social media.

Authorities said torn



Smouldering flames litter the ruins of a church in Jaranwala, Pakistan.

pages of the sacred text with blasphemous content allegedly scribbled on them in red marker ink were found near a Christian community.

The reports sparked outrage among the Muslim community, and the violence that ensued saw mobs attacking and looting private homes belonging to Christians.

Police told the BBC that possessions belonging to Christians were pulled into the streets and set on fire.

Yassir Bhatti, a 31-year-old Christian, was one of those forced to flee their homes.

"They broke the windows, doors and took out fridges, sofas, chairs and other household items to pile them up in front of the Church to be burnt," he told AFP news agency.

"They also burnt and desecrated Bibles, they were ruthless."

Videos on social media show protesters destroying Christian buildings while police appear to watch on.

Pastor Javed Bhatti, a local priest, told the BBC: "They burnt everything. They destroyed our homes, this house of God."

Another woman, called Sonam, fled with her three children just before the area was attacked.

"We just left without dressing," she said. "We picked up our small children and just ran."

Usman Anwar, the police chief in Punjab province, was asked by the BBC why - according to some eyewitness accounts - the police did not appear to try to stop the protestors.

He said that law en-

forcement did not want to escalate the tension in case it led to loss of lives.

He also confirmed the arrest of over 120 people for their involvement in the unrest. Police identified them through social media videos.

The police chief added that five cases have been filed against hundreds of people suspected of being responsible for the violence. More arrests are expected once the identification process is concluded.

Two years ago, a Sri Lankan man accused of blasphemy was killed by an enraged mob and had his body set on fire. In 2009, a group burned down about 60 homes and killed six people in the Gorja district in Punjab, after accusing them of insulting Islam.

cont'd on pg 17



## Private jet crashes onto Malaysia highway, killing 10 - police

At least 10 people were killed when a private jet crashed onto a car and a motorbike on a highway as it attempted to land, Malaysian police say.

Malaysia's civil aviation authority said six passengers and two crew had been on board the Beechcraft jet.

The jet had been travelling from Langkawi to Private jet crashes onto Malaysia highway, killing 10 Selangor, to the west of the capital Kuala Lumpur.

The Selangor police chief said the aircraft had lost contact with the air traffic control tower.

"There was no emergency call, the aircraft had been given clearance to land," Hussein Omar Khan said.

Investigators are trying to find the plane's black box containing its flight data.



"For now we cannot say what was the cause of the crash since investigations are underway," Transport Minister Anthony Loke said.

"Forensic officials are identifying the remains of all the victims," he added.

A witness told Reuters that he had been working on site as an engineer when he heard an explosion. He went to where the crash happened and saw injured people.

Mohamad Syahmie Mohamad Hashim, a former member of the Malaysian

Air Force, told AFP that he saw the plane flying erratically.

"Not long after that I heard a loud boom," he said. "I sped towards the location and saw the remains of an aircraft. I couldn't do anything."

*cont'd from pg 16*

Pakistan inherited the blasphemy law from the British in the 19th Century. In the 1980s, Islamabad introduced stiffer penalties, including the death sentence for insulting Islam.

Around 96% of Pakistan's population is Muslim. Other countries, including Iran, Brunei, and Mauritania also impose capital punishment for insulting religion.

Religion-fuelled violence in Pakistan has risen since the country made blasphemy punishable by death, as it "bolsters violent behaviour," Iftekharrul Bashar, a researcher at the think-tank RSIS who focuses on political and religious violence in South Asia, told the BBC.

"The Pakistani society has experienced increased fragmentation, driven by widening economic disparities, leading to an upsurge in violence directed towards minority religious groups," Mr Bashar said.

"The emergence of extremist and vigilante factions within Pakistan, some of which exhibit significant financial backing, also contributed to this trouble trend."

Amir Mir, the information minister for Punjab province, condemned the latest alleged blasphemy and said in a statement that thousands of police had been sent to the area, with dozens of people detained.

The angry group was mostly made up of people from an Islamist political

party called Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a government source told Reuters. The TLP has denied any involvement.

Caretaker PM Anwar ul-Haq Kakar called for swift action against those responsible for the violence.

And Pakistani bishop Azad Marshall, in the neighbouring city of Lahore, said the Christian community was "deeply pained and distressed" by the events.

"We cry out for justice and action from law enforcement and those who dispense justice, and the safety of all citizens to intervene immediately and assure us that our lives are valuable in our own homeland," he posted on X, formerly known as Twitter.



*Soldiers have been deployed in the run-up to the election on Sunday.*

## Second Ecuador politician killed in less than a week

**By Vanessa Buschschlüter**

A local party leader has been killed in Ecuador, the second politician to be assassinated in the space of a week.

Pedro Briones was shot dead by gunmen on a motorcycle at his home in northern Esmeraldas province.

His killing comes just five days after presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio was gunned down in the capital, Quito.

Ecuador's murder rate has surged as local gangs have forged alliances with international crime cartels.

The killings of politicians have rocked the country ahead of snap presidential elections on 20 August.

Mr Briones was a leader of the left-wing Citizen Revolution Party in Esmeraldas. Fellow members of the party expressed their condolences to his family.

The party's presidential candidate, Luisa González, said that Ecuador was going through "its bloodiest period".

Former president Rafael Correa, who founded the Citizen Revolution Party, wrote: "They murdered another of our colleagues in Esmeraldas. Enough is enough!"

Police have not yet officially commented on the murder but local media reported that the two gunmen had fled on a motorbike after shooting dead Mr Briones in San Mateo, south of the city of Esmeraldas. It is not yet clear what the possible motive may have been.

Esmeraldas province, on the border with Colombia, has been one of the worst hit by the wave of violence which has spread across the country.

Its porous border with Colombia and its location on the Pacific coast makes the province attractive to drug

smugglers who traffic cocaine from Colombia through Ecuador to the US and Europe.

But the violence has not been contained to Esmeraldas. Last month, the mayor of the port city of Manta in Manabí province was shot dead as he was inspecting a public works project.

The highest-profile victim so far has been Fernando Villavicencio, an outspoken journalist who had uncovered corruption scandals and denounced links between organised crime and government officials.

Six men have been arrested in connection with his assassination, all of them Colombian citizens.

FBI agents arrived in the country from the US on Sunday and have joined forces with Ecuadorean police to investigate Fernando Villavicencio's murder.

# FLU SYMPTOMS

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CHILLS



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FEVER



RUNNY NOSE



MUSCLE ACHES

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# Sports News



## Jamaica Tallawahs triumph over St. Lucia Kings in CPL opening match

In the thrilling kickoff to the new Caribbean Premier League (CPL) season, reigning champions Jamaica Tallawahs marked a triumphant start by overcoming the St. Lucia Kings by 11 runs.

The match was held at the Darren Sammy Cricket Stadium in St. Lucia on Wednesday night.

Leading the Tallawahs' charge was their newly appointed captain, Brandon King, who showcased a commanding performance by notching up an impressive half-century in his team's total of 187.

Opening the batting, King demonstrated impeccable form, scoring 81 off just 53 deliveries. His innings was studded with nine fours and three towering sixes. Giving him company at the other end was Kirk McKenzie, who made a swift 20 off 11 balls.

Later in the innings, Pakistan's Imad Wasim added a handy 19 runs from 14 balls. However, it was Roston Chase's spin that turned heads, as he scalped three wickets for 39 runs.

Not one to be left behind, Chase also anchored the



The Jamaica Tallawahs (CPLT20)

King's response with the bat, as they were restricted to 176 for eight off their allotted 20 overs.

His fiery 53 off 31 balls,

consisting of four fours and three sixes, kept the hope alive for the home team. Yet, his dismissal at the hands of debutant Salman Irshad during the first ball of the climactic final over was a decisive moment, leaving the Kings 11 runs short of their target.

Roshon Primus's late efforts of a rapid 37 off 20 balls were not enough. The bowling side had Imad Wasim shining as he secured three wickets for a mere 27 runs. Both Irshad and spinner Chris Green made their presence felt by taking two wickets apiece.

A jubilant Brandon King, reflecting on the victory, expressed satisfaction with his personal performance and the promising commencement to the Tallawahs' season.

He emphasized his delight at contributing significantly in the CPL's inaugural match and voiced his hope to maintain this stellar form throughout the tournament. (CNW)

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*Jamaica's Reggae Boyz (Concacaf)*

## Reggae Boyz to play first CONCACAF Nations League matches at home

Jamaica's national football team, the Reggae Boyz, are set to begin their CONCACAF Nations League (CNL) journey at home against Honduras in the coming month.

The match against Honduras is scheduled for September 8th at Kingston's National Stadium.

Under the guidance of Head Coach Heimir Hallgrímsson, the Boyz made a commendable journey to the Gold Cup quarter-finals in North America.

The upcoming CNL League A group stage matches present Hallgrímsson with a prime opportunity to further refine his team's dynamics.

As the Jamaica Football Federation has set its sights on the 2026 FIFA World Cup finals, Hallgrims-

son will be assessing potential players during these games.

Other teams in Group B of the updated CNL include Cuba, Grenada, Haiti, and Suriname. Haiti, after their notable performance in the Gold Cup, will play in Kingston four days after the Honduras match. Dates have yet to be determined for other group stage matches.

In Group A, Panama, who recently finished as runners-up to Mexico in the Gold Cup, lead a group comprising teams such as Curaçao, El Salvador, Guatemala, Martinique, and Trinidad & Tobago.

These group stage matches will follow a home and away round-robin format, with games scheduled for September and October.

The quarter-finals in November will see the top two teams from each group join football powerhouses like Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico, and the reigning champions, USA. These teams will compete in home and away matches.

With the top six teams from the CNL securing spots for the 2024 CONMEBOL Copa America finals, those who do not advance past the CNL quarter-finals will compete in two knockout matches for a shot at the esteemed Copa America contest.

The third edition of the CNL finals is set for March 2024, recalling the recent victory of the US team over Canada with a 2-0 win, marking their second consecutive CNL title win in June 2023.

## Man City wins UEFA Super Cup by beating Sevilla

ATHENS, Greece (AP) - Manchester City marked its first appearance in the UEFA Super Cup by beating Sevilla 5-4 in a penalty shootout on Wednesday to add another piece of silverware to its vast haul under manager Pep Guardiola.

After a 1-1 draw in regulation time and then nine successful spot kicks in the shootout, Nemanja Gudelj struck his attempt against the crossbar to hand City victory inside Stadio Georgios Karaiskakis.

It was a 15th trophy won by City in Guardiola's reign that started in 2016 and made up for the loss to Arsenal in a penalty shootout in the Community Shield 10 days ago.

"The manager made it so clear to us before the game how much he wants to win this trophy," City midfielder Jack Grealish said about the annual match between last season's winners of the Champions League (City) and Europa League (Sevilla).

"You want to win everything anyway but that gave us more of an urge. This club has never won it. It's a brilliant feeling."

Youssef En-Nesyri's towering header gave Sevilla the lead in the 25th minute of a match played in stifling heat and humidity in Athens.



Manchester City players celebrate after winning the UEFA Super Cup Final soccer match between Manchester City and Sevilla at Georgios Karaiskakis stadium in Piraeus port, near Athens, Greece, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2023. (AP)

City equalized through a header by winger Cole Palmer in the 63rd as the European champions dominated the second half, with star striker Erling Haaland staying on the field for the whole game despite a big Premier League match against Newcastle coming up on Saturday.

Guardiola became the second manager, after Carlo Ancelotti, to win the Super Cup four times and the first to win it with three different teams after doing so at Bayern Munich (2013) and Barcelona (2009, 2011).

Kyle Walker lifted the cup amid ticker tape and

chants of "Champions" by his City teammates on the stage in the middle of the field. It is becoming a familiar sight, with the club having won the Premier League-FA Cup-Champions League treble last season for the first time.

This season might be tougher for Guardiola and City, with the match perhaps highlighting the team's need for more creativity and goal threat following the offseason departures of Ilkay Gundogan and Riyad Mahrez and an injury to Kevin De Bruyne that could sideline him for up to four months.

Palmer could be one

answer, with the 21-year-old academy product impressing as City's most dangerous player and nodding in from Rodri's cross to add to his goal in the Community Shield. He should get more game time this season on the right wing following Mahrez's move to Saudi Arabia.

"This guy is incredible and he's got good players to learn off and the best manager in the world," Walker said of Palmer.

"He needs to keep going, keep his feet on the floor like he has been and keep scoring goals. If he keeps improving, he'll be fine."



Cyclists compete during one of the previous ABCF's road races in Antigua and Barbuda. (File photo)

## ABCF to stage Three-Stage Race this weekend

The Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) will be resuming its racing calendar with the staging of its Three-Stage Race this weekend.

Stage One of the event will commence with an 8.1-mile Time Trial tomorrow (Saturday), starting at 8 am.

The cyclists will start on the LIAT Road, proceed to the Jabber Grabber on the Jabberwock Road; then turn around and travel along the same route back to where the race started to finish the Time Trial.

Cyclists in the Elite Male, Junior Male, and

Masters divisions will be required to complete two laps of the course, while participants in the other categories will only have to complete the course once.

Later that day, they will compete in Stage Two, which is a 43.86-mile Criterion race on the Pan Am Base circuit in Coolidge at 3 pm.

The Cyclists will start on the LIAT Road, travel eastward, make a left turn onto Burma Road, turn left onto Hospitality Drive, turn left onto the Sir George Walter Highway, and turn left onto the LIAT Road to

the finish line.

Cyclists in the Elite Male and Junior Male classes are required to complete 30 laps of the route, while those in the Masters division will complete 25 laps.

The cyclists in the other categories will be required to complete 20 laps of the course.

Stage Three will be a 76.8-mile Road Race on Sunday.

The road race on Sunday is expected to be the most grueling of the three-stage event.

The cyclists will start the race at 8 am at the Po-

lice Recreation Grounds and will travel eastward to the St. James' Club in Marmora Bay in St. Paul's and back.

Cyclists in the Elite Male Class will be required to complete three laps of the course. Participants in the Junior Male, Masters, and Sports classes will cover two laps, while those in the other categories will complete the route just once.

There will be one registration, and participants will be required to pay a fee of EC\$20 for members and EC\$50 for non-members.

The cyclists must participate in all three stages to win the event, which is sponsored by Subway Restaurant, APUA Inet, Anjo's Wholesale, who are local agents for Gatorade sports drink, Anjo Insurances, and the Paradiso Water bottling company.

*cont'd from pg 24*

Tony Phillip.

In the absence of defending champion Kenroy Christian, the Men's Physique title will be up for grabs. All seven bodybuilders who will be competing for top honours in the Novice Men's Physique have also registered to compete for the Men's Phy-

sique crown.

They will be competing against Andre Anthony, Brad Benjamin, Josh Matthias, Jamil Edwards-Spencer, Rashawn Gooden, and Itano Bachelor.

Saturday's event will feature guest posers, IFBB Elite Pros Duncan Corbin and Tony "Tiger" Jacobs.

## Bodybuilders take spotlight at national championships

Some of the nation's bodybuilders will take the spotlight this weekend when the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Bodybuilding and Weightlifting Federation's (ABABWF) National Championships are held at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound on Saturday at 6 pm.

Over 40 athletes have registered to compete in

this weekend's event, which will take place at the new location as the ABABWF moves away from its usual host venue, the Dean William Lake Cultural Centre in St. John's.

This year's national championships will feature four novice categories because several of last year's winners and more experienced bodybuilders have attained the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) Pro Cards.

David Richards, Kallan Rodney-Greene, and Jonathan Aubrey will battle for the Novice Classic Physique title.

Shaquelle Thomas will be seeking to reclaim the Classic Physique title after he was dethroned by Jamille Knight last year. Knight has not registered to defend his title at Saturday's event.

Thomas will be seeking to impress the judges against challenges from Richards, Rodney-Greene, Aubrey, Che-Vaughn Ferris, and Tristan Hughes.

Seven bodybuilders will be vying for the Novice Men's Physique title. They are George Lares, Seymour Brooks, James Feddoes, Tenneson Cornelius, Larenz



Franklyn Carbon

Benjamin, Javhone Miller, and Stannard Edwards.

Jeredith John-Jules has registered to compete for the Novice Bikini Wellness title, while Orlanda Small and Joshuel Chiddick will battle for top honours in the Novice Bikini Fitness category.

In the absence of defending champion Makiva Elvin, veteran Yvette Butler, Naricca Ballantyne, and Kimberly Greenaway will be among the top contenders for the Bikini Fitness title.

They will all be facing

challenges from Chiddick, Small, Ediniz Norde, Claudette Harris, and Rachael Greaves for the Bikini Fitness title.

Kayla Joseph will be seeking to retain her Bikini Wellness title against challenges from John-Jules, Kala Francis, and Ahjanya King.

Steve Simon will not be defending his Men's Bodybuilding title. Vying for this year's title will be the experienced Franklyn Carbon, David Weston, Rodney George, Semaj Barnes, and

*cont'd on pg 23*



Yvette Butler