

PORT OPERATIONS ON TRACK FOR RECORD YEAR

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Charles 'Max' Fernandez, Member of Parliament for St. John's Rural North, spearheaded a back-to-school donation initiative to alleviate the financial burden on his constituents as they prepare for the school year. *Story on page 8.*

Port operations on track for record year

The Antigua Port Authority says its processing of containers for the first half of the year is already better than for the first six months of 2022, and the trend indicates that the port will establish a record in the number of containers it processes in a single year by the end of December.

Port General Manager, Darwin Telemaque says the increase in the number of containers processed is a clear indication that the private sector has rebounded from the COVID-19-related declines, which are reflected in higher imports into the country.

The figures for the period January to June 2023 show that the overall number of containers processed was 956 compared to 868 for the same period in 2022.

That is 88 more containers processed within the six-month period. A



Port General Manager, Darwin Telemaque closer look at the figures also showed increases in all sizes of containers imported into the country.

For 20-foot containers, the figure rose from 156 in 2022 to 174 in 2023; for 40-foot containers, it rose from

710 to 761 and for 45-foot containers, it rose sharply from 2 in 2022 to 21 in 2023.

The overall increase was nine percent in 2023 over 2022.

Telemaque disclosed that container traffic has been growing steadily since 2014 with 2019 established as a record year for Antigua and Barbuda.

However, he noted that since the end of 2021, as the country emerged out of the pandemic, there has been a 41 percent increase in container traffic handled by the port.

“This demonstrates that the private sector is quite resilient, as the increased goods imported into the country are signs of growth in the economy and further indication that we are on track to better even our best previous year, 2019, by the end of this year,” he declared.

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Growing optimism about the performance of the Canadian market

Local tourism officials have expressed much optimism about the performance of the Canadian market, the third most important source market for tourists that visit Antigua and Barbuda.

Following a successful tour of Canada earlier this month, Chief Exec-

utive Officer for the Tourism Authority, Colin C. James said the Canadian market was the last to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, but judging from the July performance it has rebounded remarkably well.

“I just saw the figures for July 2023, and the Canadian market has

grown by over one hundred percent when compared with the same month last year. There were over twelve hundred visitors from Canada in July, so we are excited with the way things are going,” he remarked.

Noting that the tourism business in Canada is largely driven by tour operators, James said it is key to establish and maintain good relations with this group, as so much travel is based on their recommendations.

“We used the opportunity to get in front of all the major distributors in Canada. Now this business is tour operator driven, so we met with Air Canada Vacations, West Jet Vacations, and others, where we shared some of the new things that are happening in our destination. These include properties that are coming on stream within the next year such as the Royalton next April, and the complete refurbishing of Hawksbill Hotel, and these are welcomed developments,” he reported.

James also commended the Antigua and Barbuda team based in Canada for what he described as ‘punching above their weight’. He said the team is much smaller than those of the other Caribbean destinations but despite this, it has been able to achieve much mileage for Antigua and Barbuda.

DEWS

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More benefits for Piango Fest participants

Agro-processors and others who participated in the just-concluded Piango Festival will be invited to a training workshop that will sharpen their skills in several critical areas.

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) National Specialist, Craig Thomas said the training will expose the participants to six subject areas aimed at helping them to grow and to expand their businesses.

“We are going to do some training under a United Nations-IICA Women’s



Craig Thomas

project in six subject areas. These are standards, project development, ICT, social media, food safety, marketing, branding and labeling,” he reported.

The training will be held in the late afternoon to ac-

commodate the participants, most of whom are expected to be females.

Thomas said the workshop will cater for twenty female entrepreneurs especially those in agro-processing, as well as five young

people.

“Some of these ladies here (at the final day of the Piango Fest held at the TN Kirnon School on Sunday) will be a part of that training starting on September 4 and ending on the 14th. These are some of the benefits in store for participating in the festival this year,” he stated.

He also thanked the private sector companies that assisted with sponsoring the Piango Festival noting that public-private partners are important for the furtherance of the agricultural sector.

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Heat wave may extend into next week

Director of the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services, Dale Destin says it is likely that the excessive heat watch that was reported to end today, will be extended for another week.

Citizens and residents venturing outside are speaking of the sweltering heat and the discomfort that comes with it, including dehydration. For some, it is not a phenomenon that they have ever before experienced in these parts and the country may be in for more in the upcoming days.

Last Tuesday, an excessive heat watch went into effect for Antigua and Barbuda and was expected to last until today, with the heat index or “feels like” temperature being 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

The heat is attributed to light winds and relatively high humidity, which cause the heat index to rise to excessive levels.

Just as it appeared to have been coming to an end, Destin, Director of the Met Office said it is likely that the heat watch will last until next Tuesday.

He explained that the main reason for the high temperatures is the ongoing cyclone in the Atlantic Ocean that is causing wind patterns to be light and unusual across the island.

Residents are being cautioned that there is a long list of illnesses that can arise as a result of excessive heat, chief among them is heat stroke.

Persons are advised to take the necessary precau-

tions that will reduce heat-related illnesses, including staying cool and not venturing outdoors unnecessarily.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
A.D. 2023

AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Instructed by the ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA DEVELOPMENT BANK of 27 St. Mary’s Street, in the City of Saint John, in the State of Antigua and Barbuda, I will sell by public auction on Tuesday 31 August 2023 at 11:00 a.m. on site, the under mentioned property.

The property is located at Dyett Street in Villa, St. John’s, Antigua and consists of a parcel of land of an area of approximately 2,178 sq. ft./ 0.05 acre, with a 514 sq. ft. single storey, two (2) bedroom, one (1) bathroom wooden dwelling thereon.

The service lines for potable water, electricity and telephone which are provided by A.P.U.A are accessible to the property.

The land is registered under the Registered Land Act, 1975 as follows:-

REGISTRATION SECTION: Villa
BLOCK: 62 1693F
PARCEL: 37

Parcel No. 37 of Block No. 62 1693F is bounded by the following:

- On the North by: Parcel 35;
- On the South by: Parcel 39;
- On the East by: Public Road;
- On the West by: Parcel 36

Particulars of the sale can be obtained from:
Mr. Trevor ‘Teddy’ Santos
Licensed Auctioneer
Office: (268) 562-7653
Cell & WhatsApp: (268) 464-7653
Email: info@go-going-gone.com
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The 2023 School Uniform Grant Programme enters its final week

One of the largest social programmes of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, administered by the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Creative Industries, the 2023 installment of the School Uniform Grant Programme (SUGP) commenced on 3rd July 2023 and will officially conclude on Thursday, 31st August 2023.

Figures were not immediately available on how many people have accessed the programme so far this year, but it is believed that a large number of beneficiaries capitalized



on the offer of a regular school uniform per child. For those who intend to but are yet to access the SUGP at the Multi-Purpose Cultural and Exhibition Centre, Perry Bay, the

organizers are reminding returning beneficiaries to present the student's most recent school report and one form of identification (government-issued), while an acceptance letter

from the school or 3rd term report, along with valid identification for the student and parent/guardian must be presented to representatives of the SUGP, for new beneficiaries.

For students entering secondary schools through the Grade Six National Assessment, the identification document for both student and parent/guardian used during registration must be presented when completing the transaction.

The hours of operation this week will be 9 am-4 pm.

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Activities to mark Africa-CARICOM Day planned

Africa-CARICOM Day is a little more than a week away, but already the Antigua and Barbuda Reparation Support Commission (ABRSC) has finalized plans to mark the occasion.

In a statement, the ABRSC has announced its commemorative activities for Africa-CARICOM Day 2023. This special occasion will be marked by a series of events aimed at celebrating the building of strong ties between Africa and CARICOM. At the heart of these celebrations is the Africa-CARICOM Summit scheduled for September 7th, which seeks to foster enhanced social and economic connections between these two global communities.

During the inaugural Africa/CARICOM Summit held on September 7th, 2021, CARICOM Heads made a momentous decision to institutionalize collaboration between Africa, CARICOM, and the diaspora. This was achieved through the establishment of Africa-CARICOM Day on September 7th each year, the creation of a dedicated Secretariat/Structure, and the organization of annual Africa-CARICOM Summits. Member States were strongly encouraged to support this initiative.

In line with this im-

portant initiative, the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission (ABRSC) will have the honour of hosting Cyndi Marshall, known by her stage name Cyndi Celeste, a prominent Barbadian reparations activist. Ms. Marshall will participate in a compelling panel discussion titled 'YOUTH AND REPARATIONS,' set to be held on September 7th, 2023. This dynamic conversation will feature youth leaders engaging in a discourse on reparations and reparatory justice, aligning with CARICOM's efforts to deepen relations with the African Union.

Cyndi Marshall, a distinguished spoken word poet, writer, and creative entrepreneur, is recognized for her commitment to arts activism and language advocacy. Through her performance poetry and literary contributions, she fosters vital discussions on matters of identity and societal issues. An acclaimed poet, Ms. Marshall has garnered accolades, including the NIFCA award, and has represented Barbados on international platforms such as the Women of the World Poetry Slam in Texas, the 40th Poetry Market in France, and the Vrystaat Arts Festival in South Africa. Her literary works are featured in

esteemed publications like the Caribbean Writer literary journal and the ArtsEtc NIFCA Winning Words Anthology.

Following the panel discussion, an engaging evening of Creative Activism awaits, where Marshall will collaborate with a col-

lective of poets, artists, and musicians. This event will illuminate the power of creative arts as a tool for driving positive change.

Culminating the commemorative festivities is the debut of "Creative Voices," an evening dedicated to

cont'd on pg 8

The Antigua & Barbuda Reparations Support Commission
in recognition of Africa/CARICOM Day 2023

Presents

CREATIVE Voices

An evening of poetry, jazz, spoken word, music and songs.



Featuring:
Kadeem Joseph,
Zahra Airall, Glen
Toussaint, Aisha
Fayola, Michelle
Toussaint, Kiyode
Erasto, and more

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Special feature:
Cyndi Celeste award
winning poet from
Barbados.





Over 700 children receive Back-to-School support from MP Fernandez

For an impressive nine years running, Charles 'Max' Fernandez, Member of Parliament for St. John's Rural North, has consistently spearheaded a back-to-school donation initiative to alleviate the financial burden on his constituents as they prepare for the school year.

During the past weekend, MP Fernandez orchestrated the distribution of approximately 700 school bags and essential supplies to grateful parents and chil-

dren within his constituency. Each family received school bags containing lunch kits, water bottles, activity or coloring books, writing materials, calculators, geometry sets, flash drives, rulers, and crayons.

A team collaborating with the Constituency Representative expressed the importance of this effort, stating, "Our youth are the bedrock of our future. Equipping our students for success is a crucial investment in their education. We

acknowledge that not every family has the means to provide their children with the necessary tools for a productive learning experience. MP Fernandez's annual mission is to ensure that our young learners possess the fundamental resources needed to excel in their studies." A team member further noted, "Supplying essential school items not only relieves financial stress for families but also significantly impacts how well-prepared students are for their curriculum."

In a personalized message to each student, MP Fernandez conveyed, "Dear Student,

As you embark on a new school year, remember that endless opportunities await you. Believe in your capabilities, work diligently, and aspire for greatness. You are the future leaders of our nation, and your potential is boundless."

The St. John's Rural North team emphasizes that studies consistently show that students having their own school supplies can enhance academic performance, creativity, learning attitudes, behavior, peer relationships, and self-esteem. Education stands as the initial step toward breaking the cycle of poverty. A simple collection of pencils and paper can pave the way for a promising and successful year ahead.

cont'd from pg 7

poetry, spoken word, songs, and jazz music. The lineup includes outstanding performers such as Kadeem Joseph, Khadijah Simon, Zahra Airall, Glen Toussaint, Aisha Fayola, Michelle Toussaint, Kiyode Erasto, and more. Notably, the acclaimed poet Cyndi Celeste from Barbados will also grace the stage.

This captivating event is set to take place on Friday, September 8th, 2023, at

JULIE'S on Cross and Tanner Streets, commencing at 8 p.m.

A warm invitation is extended to the general public to attend the events hosted by the ABRSC in commemorating Africa-CARICOM Day 2023 through both the enlightening Youth Panel discussion and the vibrant Creative Voices. As shared by the ABRSC, "Let us come together as Antigua and Barbuda celebrates the enduring bonds between Africa and CARICOM."

DWAYNE GEORGE

ST. MARY'S SOUTH



Hello,

Below are a few immediate plans I have for St. Mary's South. I would like to invite you to take a read and let's discuss a brighter future for us all in St. Mary's South.

GEORGE WINS; YOU WIN

Best wishes,

Dwayne George

BOLANS

- Erect a spectator stand, bathrooms & changing rooms on the field in Bolans.
- Refurbishing & secure sporting complexes around the community.

WEST PALM BEACH

- Trim over grown vegetation.
- Road Work & Drainage infrastructure.

URLINGS

- Erection of basketball court and subsequent fencing of the complex on lands at the back of the Urlings Primary School.
- Renovate and Revitalize the Technical Institute at the Urlings Primary School.

JOHNSONS POINT

- Remedy the infrastructure to get operational the Health Centre/ (Clinic) & MBS Pharmacy at Johnsons Point.
- Maintenance and upgrade to road infrastructure, chiefly around the Darkwood Beach & Ffryers Beach area.

NEW VILLAGE

- Repair and erect walk-ways to homes.
- Clean drains of debris and flush clean.

“It is my solemn commitment, when elected, to donate half of my salary for 6 months to the development of our community’s upliftment”

Dwayne George



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Dwayne George excites SMS with a commitment to progress

In the upcoming by-elections for St. Mary's South, Senator Dwayne George of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party stands out with a comprehensive and transformative immediate plan for the constituency. With a vision centered on community development, infrastructure improvements, and citizen empowerment, George's plans will undoubtedly bring prosperity and opportunities to St. Mary's South.

Revitalizing Sporting Complexes and Facilities

Sen. George recognizes the importance of sports in promoting healthy lifestyles, community engagement, and talent development. His commitment to refurbishing and securing sporting complexes across the community is a testament to his dedication to youth empowerment. By erecting a spectator stand, bathrooms, and changing rooms in Bolans, George will provide a safe and enhanced environment for athletes and spectators alike, in addition to the erection of a basketball court and fencing of the complex in Urlings. This initiative will encourage greater participation in sports and boost the overall quality of life in the area.

Improving Infrastructure for a Better Future

Roadwork and drainage infrastructure are of-



ten overlooked aspects of community development, yet they play a crucial role in improving accessibility, commerce, and quality of life for residents. George's plan to address overgrown vegetation and work on roadwork and drainage infrastructure in West Palm Beach is a much-needed step toward enhancing public safety and facilitating economic growth in the community. These improvements will not only benefit residents directly but will also attract businesses and investors, stimulating further development.

Investing in Education and Technical Skills

Sen. George understands that education is the foundation for personal and societal growth. By focusing on education and technical skills, George is taking a proactive approach to equip the youth of St. Mary's South with the necessary tools for success. The

renovating and revitalizing of the Technical Institute at Urlings Primary School, will provide opportunities for skill development, sportsmanship, and community engagement. These initiatives will contribute to a well-rounded educational experience, empowering young individuals to pursue their dreams and contribute to the local economy.

Enhancing Healthcare Facilities and Services

Access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right for every citizen. George's commitment to remedying the infrastructure of the health center and pharmacy in Johnsons Point will ensure that residents have access to essential medical services within their community. Additionally, the maintenance and upgrade of the road infrastructure in areas such as Darkwood Beach and Ffryes Beach will facilitate emergency response and medical care, ul-

timately improving overall public health outcomes.

Creating Safe and Functional Living Spaces

The well-being of residents should be a top priority for any representative. Sen. Dwayne George's plan to repair walkways and clean drains in New Village demonstrates his commitment to providing safe and functional living spaces for constituents. By ensuring the cleanliness and proper functioning of public areas, George aims to promote hygiene, prevent potential health hazards, and preserve the sense of pride and dignity within the community.

Sen. George's immediate plans for St. Mary's South exemplify his vision for a more prosperous, inclusive, and empowered constituency. By prioritizing community development, infrastructure improvements, education, healthcare, and citizen well-being, George aims to leave a lasting and positive impact. It is time for the people of St. Mary's South to unite behind a leader who not only has a clear plan but also possesses the determination and dedication to execute it. With a solemn commitment, when elected to parliament to donate half of his salary for 6 months to the development of St. Mary's South, it is clear when Dwayne wins; you win.

Elton John spends night in hospital after fall at French villa

By Steven McIntosh

Sir Elton John is back home after spending the night in hospital, after he fell over at his villa in Nice.

The singer, 76, was taken to the orthopaedic department of the Princess Grace hospital centre in Monaco where he was treated for minor injuries.

Sir Elton was admitted “following a slip yesterday at his home in the south of France”, a spokesman confirmed to BBC News.

“Elton visited the local hospital as a precautionary measure,” he continued.

“Following check-ups, he was immediately discharged this morning and his now back at home and in good health.”

Sir Elton has been spending the summer in France with his husband David Furnish and their two sons after completing his long-running Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour in July.

A month earlier, he performed a



Sir Elton John headlined Glastonbury earlier this summer

career-spanning headline set on the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury Festival.

The performances marked Sir Elton’s retirement from live touring, but the singer has not ruled out occasional one-off performances in the future.

He also recently gave evidence as a defence witness at Kevin Spacey’s trial, which ultimately saw the actor

cleared of sexual assault.

Since releasing his debut album in 1969, Sir Elton has become one of the UK’s best-loved musicians, with hits including Tiny Dancer, I’m Still Standing, Your Song and Are You Ready For Love?

A film released in 2019, Rocketman, saw Taron Egerton portray the singer in the story of his life and career.



Guys and Dolls
Simply Classy

268-782-6020

OnlyFans: Who is Leonid Radvinsky, the elusive owner of a porn empire?

OnlyFans' profits have skyrocketed in the past year and news that its owner earned more than \$300m (£238m) in dividends has ignited fresh questions about the pornography mogul.

Leonid Radvinsky is a 41-year-old Ukrainian-American entrepreneur with an estimated net worth of \$2.1bn.

He bought the company in 2018 from father and son team, Guy and Tim Stokely, who had started it two years earlier with a £10,000 (\$12,500) investment.

He's thought to have paid millions of pounds for it. But who is he, and where has his money come from?

To put it bluntly, very little. Despite the premise of the platform he owns, Mr Radvinsky chooses to keep his personal life private. He has not given many interviews.

Yet despite an apparent aversion to publicity, there are hints about his life on a LinkedIn profile and a personal website.

According to his LinkedIn, Mr Radvinsky is a venture capital investor, philanthropist and technology entrepreneur who has "a special interest in emerging social media platforms".

On his own website, Mr Radvinsky says he has spent the last two decades "building software companies and contributing to the open



Leonid Radvinsky source movement".

Born in the Ukrainian port city of Odesa, Mr Radvinsky's company donated to the relief effort in Ukraine using cryptocurrency, and the real-terms value of the donation in 2022 came to more than \$1.3m, according to CoinDesk.

Mr Radvinsky says he donates "a huge amount of time, effort and money to non-profit causes," like charities and technological endeavours.

Outside of programming and philanthropy, he "is an avid reader who's always ready for a chess match and is an aspiring helicopter pilot," his website says.

His family moved to the United States when he was a child and they settled in Chicago, the Daily Telegraph reported. He now lives in "sunny Florida" but we do not know exactly where.

The billionaire is described by Forbes as a married man, but the BBC has been unable to verify the identity of his spouse.

OnlyFans is not Mr Radvinsky's first business linked to the pornography industry.

Mr Radvinsky studied economics at Northwestern University, near Chicago, Illinois, and graduated in 2002. Since then, the entrepreneur has delved into several projects.

Prior to becoming the sole shareholder of OnlyFans' parent company, Fenix, he founded a website referral business called Cyberbertania.

According to Forbes, the business offered users links to passwords for content, including pornography, beginning in the late 1990s.

Before stepping in to buy OnlyFans, he also

owned a successful adult webcam business.

Mr Radvinsky did not respond to a BBC request for interview.

Fenix, the business that owns OnlyFans, is still registered in the UK despite Mr Radvinsky being based in the US.

But the company's chief financial officer, Lee Taylor, is based in the UK, according to Companies House records.

Public records show investor and founder Guy Stokely resigned from OnlyFans' parent company, Fenix, in December 2021.

In the same month, Tim Stokely, Guy's son, stepped down as OnlyFans' chief executive to "pursue new endeavours".

Under Mr Radvinsky's ownership, OnlyFans has flourished. It is no longer *cont'd on pg 13*

Heat stress will continue for next three months in Caribbean region

CMC - The Barbados-based Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF) Monday said that for the next three months, ocean temperatures should remain well above average, continuing to amplify heat stress in the Caribbean.

In its latest edition of the Caribbean Climate Outlooks, CariCOF said that for the period September to November “Pacific and Atlantic ocean temperatures should remain well above average, continuing to amplify heat stress in the Caribbean through October by increasing temperatures, humidity and heatwave frequency to rival some of the warmest heat seasons on record”.

It said that a moderate to strong El Niño, a climate pattern that describes the unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean, should dampen rainfall frequency and tropical cyclone intensity in Belize and the islands and lead to more short-term dry spells than



usual.

“By contrast, record-warm Atlantic waters are to increase showers intensity, leading to limited drought concern, but a particularly high potential for flooding and cascading hazards. In the Guianas, the hot and dry season will likely be intense.

“However, the coinciding unusually warm Pacific

and Atlantic have opposing effects on Caribbean rainfall and hurricane season activity. For now, the record-warm Atlantic appears predominant in much of the islands, resulting in limited drought concern, whereas the potential for flooding, flash floods and cascading hazards will be high due to copious rains. By contrast, the Guianas

will be predominantly drier and hotter from mid-August,” it added.

It said rainfall totals to October are likely to be the usual or higher across the ABC (Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao) Islands, The Bahamas, the Greater Antilles and in the Leeward Islands. By contrast, Barbados, Belize, the Guianas, Trinidad and Tobago and the Windward Islands are likely to record the usual rainfall amounts or less.

Long-term drought is evolving in central Belize, Dominica and southern French Guiana, and might possibly develop or continue in Martinique, St. Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago at the end of November.

cont'd from pg 12

solely associated with pornography and some of its biggest creators only post safe-for-work content.

The London-registered firm said in August 2023 that pre-tax profits for the period reached \$525m, up from \$432m the previous year.

In the past year alone the number of creators on OnlyFans jumped by 47% to almost 3.2 million, while the number of

users rose by 27% to close to 239 million.

But the platform has also faced criticism and renewed attention from regulators and governments.

BBC News reported in 2021 that OnlyFans was failing to prevent underage users from selling and appearing in explicit videos.

OnlyFans said at the time that its age verification systems went over and above regulatory requirements.

St Vincent: Eight persons arrested in joint police operation



Drugs seized during joint police operation in SVG.

In St Vincent and the Grenadines, a joint police operation between the Rapid Response Unit, the Narcotics Unit and the Special Services Unit in Paul's Avenue resulted in the arrest of eight persons and the seizure of 182 rocks of Cocaine, a quantity of Cannabis, and the sum of US\$448, EC\$2,270 ECC and BB\$20.

During the operation on August 25, the police searched several persons, houses and businesses, which resulted in the confiscation of the illegal substance.

As a result of the seizures, two suspects were charged. Lemar "Chak" Isaacs, 21, an unemployed man of Mc Kie's Hill was charged with Possession of eight grammes of Cocaine with intent to supply it to another.

Dimron Mc Donald, 33, Self-em-

ployed of New Montrose was charged with possession of eighteen (18) grammes of Cocaine with intent to supply it to another.

The other six persons were discharged pending further investigations.

Both men appeared before the Magistrate Court on Monday and pleaded guilty to the respective charges. McDonald was fined EC\$636 forthwith or two months in prison, while Isaacs was fined \$273 forthwith or one month in prison.

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has opened an investigation into the monies that were confiscated.

These operations are part of the RSVGPF's strategic plan to combat illegal activities throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

St Kitts PM draws inspiration from medical cannabis farm in St. Vincent

CMC - Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis Dr Terrance Drew, recently visited the CANNA SVG Medicinal Cannabis Farm located in St Vincent and the Grenadines, a move seen as a vital step in the endeavours of St Kitts and Nevis to establish its own cannabis sector.

The CANNA SVG Medicinal Cannabis Farm has distinguished itself as a specialist medical-grade cannabis manufacturer, utilising state-of-the-art technologies and a profound understanding of the industry to consistently yield premium medical cannabis products.

"The Prime Minister's visit to CANNA SVG Me-

dicinal Cannabis Farm has provided invaluable insights that will undoubtedly shape the future of Saint Kitts and Nevis' own cannabis industry," said the Prime Minister's office in a statement.

Drew, who was accompanied by the Permanent Secretary in his office, Naeemah Hazelle, witnessed the advanced technologies employed by CANNA SVG.

These technologies have played a pivotal role in ensuring consistent quality, optimal growth conditions, and efficient production processes.

According to the state-
cont'd on pg 15



Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis Dr Terrance Drew in St Vincent and the Grenadines. (Photo via: SKNIS)

Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell renews call for UK apology

CMC - Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell renewed calls for the United Kingdom to apologise for slavery in the Caribbean and its other former colonies, and to pay reparations.

In an interview with the UK magazine, *The Independent*, Mitchell criticised Britain for failing to apologise for capturing and enslaving African people adding that their failure to show remorse, sends a 'bad message'.

"If the UK wants to continue being a country that demonstrates that it upholds the values of justice, fairness, democracy, [and] equal treatment of human beings, then it should be upfront in apologising for slavery," Mitchell said.

Though asked by multiple prime ministers of former colonies, neither King Charles, the British Monarch nor Rishi Sunak, the British Prime Minister have offered apologies or commitments to pay reparations.

Sunak said "trying to unpick our history is not the right way forward" while King Charles recently spoke only of his "sorrow" and deepening "understanding"



Grenada Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell

of slavery.

"Reluctance or refusal to do so then sends the opposite message Mitchell told the *British Newspaper*, adding. In Grenada, as a former colony of the UK, we recognise the legacy issues that we're dealing with and therefore I think it's the decent thing to do, frankly," Mitchell told the UK newspaper.

He said that he believes it is critical to improve relations with Britain but that the people of former colonies must be seen as equals by the country that colonised them.

Earlier this year, British Foreign Office minister David Rutley told his parliamentary counterpart, La-

bour MP Clive Lewis, who has family links in Grenada that "We acknowledge the role of British authorities in enabling the slave trade for many years before being the first global force to drive the end of the slave trade in the British empire."

But the Grenadian leader condemned that response saying "that's almost like seeing someone who's committed murder be applauded for having committed murder."

"To my mind, that's nonsensical and, in reality, an attempt to, in a sense, white-wash your own conscience. It was wrong, you should say it's wrong, give a commitment that you will never

support something like that – and then help the victims of the descendants who have to deal with this," Mitchell said.

Mitchell's renewed call for the UK to pay reparations and apologise to former colonies, comes as numerous Caribbean nations, which are former colonies of Britain, signal their intent to ditch the monarchy and become a republic.

Mitchell said he hoped Grenada would make that move – which would require a referendum – but said it was not a priority and would like to avoid the matter being used as a "political football".

"I need to make sure that we get sufficient buy-in from all sectors of society to say 'this is what we want', and the average Grenadian understands the benefits of moving to a republican type of government, rather than just the political class," he said.

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ment, by adopting similar technologies, St. Kitts and Nevis can elevate its medical cannabis production capabilities, ensuring high-quality products for patients and establishing credibility in the global market.

"One of the main benefits of introduc-

ing the cannabis industry to St Kitts and Nevis lies in economic diversification and growth. Establishing a medical cannabis industry can create a multi-faceted impact, including job creation, revenue generation, and global recognition," the statement added.

Protests erupt in Libya over contact with Israel

Libya's PM has suspended his foreign minister after she met with her Israeli counterpart.

Libya - a strong backer of the Palestinian cause - does not recognise Israel, and the meeting has sparked protests in the majority Arab state.

Israeli FM Eli Cohen said the "historic" meeting was "the first step" in establishing relations with Libya.

Israel is working to build closer ties with Arab and Muslim-majority countries which do not officially recognise it.

However Libya's presidential council, which represents its three provinces, said it was illegal to normalise relations with Israel.

The Speaker's Office in parliament accused Najla Mangoush of grand treason, and Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah has referred her for investigation.

The announcement by Israel that talks had taken place was surprising given that it was not known to be courting Libya, a staunch foe and champion of the Palestinian struggle, especially under former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

The statement was also unusual in its level of detail, perhaps intended to offset any anticipated denial from the Libyan side - also by identifying and



Libyan Foreign Minister Najla al-Mangoush has been accused of grand treason and referred for investigation.

acknowledging Italian foreign minister Antonio Tajani for hosting the meeting in Rome.

On Monday, an Israeli official told the BBC that the meeting was planned in advance and was not a chance encounter, like Libya's foreign ministry had portrayed it.

The official stressed that the two sides agreed what would be emphasised in the published statement, which he said had been due to be published on Monday but was released on Sunday after the story was leaked to the Israeli media.

Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid accused the Israeli foreign ministry of being "amateurish [and] irresponsible" and having committed "a serious failure of judgment".

Another opposition leader, Benny Gantz, accused the Israeli government of doing "everything for PR and headlines, with

zero responsibility and forward thinking".

In his statement on Sunday, Mr Cohen said he met Ms Mangoush last week on the sidelines of a summit, and that they discussed "the great potential for the relations" between Israel and Libya.

He said they talked about Israeli aid in humanitarian issues, agriculture, water management and the importance of preserving Jewish heritage in Libya, including renovating synagogues and cemeteries.

Libya's Jewish community was one of the most ancient in the world. However it was persecuted by Nazi occupiers in WWII, and tens of thousands fled to Israel in the wake of antisemitic riots and policies in the decades that followed. Gaddafi repressed the tiny community of Jews which remained until there were none left in Libya by the turn of the century.

Contradicting Mr Cohen's statement, Libya's foreign ministry said Ms Mangoush had rejected a meeting with representatives from Israel, and what had taken place was "an unprepared, casual encounter during a meeting at Italy's foreign affairs ministry".

A statement also said the interaction did not include "any discussions, agreements or consultations" and the ministry "renews its complete and absolute rejection of normalisation" with Israel.

Protests broke out in the capital Tripoli and some other cities following news of the meeting. Roads were blocked, tyres burnt and demonstrators waved the Palestinian flag, though the protests appear to have been relatively small.

Libya has been in turmoil for years, with the country split between the interim, internationally recognised government in Tripoli and a rival one in the east.

Should any deal between Israel and Libya be brokered, it would be complicated by that political division, which emerged following Gaddafi's overthrow 12 years ago.

Gen Khalifa Haftar of the Libyan National Army (LNA) runs the rival government in the eastern coast-

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Uttar Pradesh: India school shut down over slapping row

Authorities in India's Uttar Pradesh state have sealed a private school after its teacher asked students to slap their Muslim classmate.

Officials said Neha Public School was shut down as it "did not meet the education department's criteria."

The school's students would be shifted to a government school or other nearby schools, officials said.

Meanwhile, the teacher - Tripta Tyagi - has told NDTV news channel that she was "not ashamed" of her actions.

The child's family has said he was beaten up for getting his times tables wrong.

A video of Ms Tyagi telling her pupils to slap their seven-year-old Muslim classmate at a small private school in Muzaffarnagar district went viral on social media at the week-

end.

"Why are you hitting him so lightly? Hit him harder," the teacher is heard telling the children, as the boy stands crying.

"Hit him on the back... His face is turning red, so hit him on the back now," she added.

The victim's father reported the incident to police and took him out of the school. But he did not press charges.

The video sparked outrage on social media, with several users saying that action should be taken against the teacher.

The police have registered a case against Ms Tyagi but she has not been arrested. The charges are bailable.

On Sunday, education officer Shubham Shukla said the authorities were investigating the incident.

An unnamed official told the Indian Express



The teacher has been accused of making anti-Muslim remarks and asking students to hit their classmate.

newspaper that the school had no lights or fans and that there were no proper sections for different classes.

Ms Tyagi has not yet commented on the sealing of the school.

However, in an interview to NDTV news channel, she defended her actions saying that they were necessary to "control" and "tackle" children in school.

The incident has

sparked national outrage, with several opposition politicians calling it a "hate crime". Uttar Pradesh has been governed by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2017.

India's opposition Congress party MP Rahul Gandhi said the BJP had contributed to religious tensions being felt across India.

"Sowing the poison of discrimination in the minds of innocent children, turning a holy place like a school into a marketplace of hatred," he posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. "This is the same kerosene spread by the BJP that has set every corner of India on fire."

In June during a visit to the US, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told journalists that there was "absolutely no space for discrimination" in India.

cont'd from pg 16
al city of Tobruk.

In recent years, Israel has pursued formal ties with Arab League countries with which it does not have official relations - from moderate states to historical foes.

Since 2020, it has signed US-brokered agreements known as the Abraham Accords normalising relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. The agreements have been met with outrage by the Palestinians, who have accused the Arab signatories of betrayal.

On Sunday evening, Libya's Presiden-

tial Council requested "clarification" from the government over what had happened. The Presidential Council carries out the functions of head of state and is in charge of the country's military.

A letter from the body said the meeting between the two foreign ministers "does not reflect the foreign policy of the Libyan state, does not represent the Libyan national constants and is considered a violation of Libyan laws which criminalise normalisation with the 'Zionist entity'".

It also asked Mr Dbeibah "to apply the law if the meeting took place".

Niger coup: France defies ultimatum for ambassador to leave Niamey

By Wedaeli Chibelushi

France's ambassador has remained in Niger despite being given a 48-hour deadline to leave the country last Friday, French President Emmanuel Macron confirmed in a defiant speech.

Ambassador Sylvain Itte had been ordered to go amid rapidly deteriorating bilateral ties.

But hours after the coup leaders' deadline had passed, the president said he "applauds" Mr Itte for staying put.

The junta overthrew Niger's elected president last month.

In a major foreign policy speech to ambassadors gathered in Paris as well as others listening remotely, Mr Macron said: "France and its diplomats have faced particularly difficult situations in some countries in recent months, from Sudan, where France has been exemplary, to Niger at this very moment.

"I applaud your colleague and your colleagues who are listening from their posts."

Niger's President Mohamed Bazoum was toppled on 26 July in a coup that has been condemned by France and many of Niger's neighbours, including the West African regional bloc Ecowas.

Ambassador Itte had refused to meet Niger's new



In the wake of July's coup in Niger, protesters tore down the sign of France's embassy in the capital, Niamey.

leaders after the coup, the junta said on Friday, as it announced the French ambassador had 48 hours to leave.

Thousands of Nigeriens in favour of the coup demonstrated on Sunday near the French military base in the capital, Niamey.

Some held signs demanding the departure of French troops, while footage posted on social media appears to show local Muslim imams leading prayers outside the base.

In Monday's speech, Mr Macron defended France's military presence in Niger, stating that without intervention from Paris, the country would "no lon-

ger exist" with its "existing borders".

Neighbours Mali and Burkina Faso would also have suffered the same fate without France, Mr Macron said.

France carried out a decade-long operation to fight Islamic insurgents in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mauritania - all former French colonies - up until last year.

At its high point, around 5,500 French soldiers were stationed in the African countries.

However, anti-French sentiment and protests in the region intensified recently, with some opponents complaining France's

intervention was a modern form of colonialism.

Others noted that the troops have not been able to overcome the threat from jihadists, whose deadly attacks on communities continue.

Amid this insecurity, soldiers in Mali, Burkina Faso and more recently Niger launched coups, saying a change of leadership was necessary to tackle the jihadists.

Mali's military government has called on the Russian mercenary group Wagner to help fight the Islamist militants.

It is suspected that the mercenaries could be active in the wider region.

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The Leeward Islands Under-17 Cricket Team. (File photo)

Leewards lose second two-day match at regional Under-17 tournament

The Leeward Islands suffered defeat in successive matches in the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Rising Stars Under-17 Two-Day Championship in Trinidad and Tobago on Sunday.

The Leewards lost by six wickets against Barbados in their second-round encounter at Ishan Ali Park. Set 74 runs to win, Barbados achieved their victory target by scoring 77 for the loss of four wickets in 14.2 overs.

Jaden Webster slammed 39 off 31 balls with seven fours, and opener Zion Brathwaite chipped in with 21.

The Leeward Islands lost the toss and were sent in to bat, but quickly fell behind after being dismissed for just 88 in 33 overs in their first innings. T'yanick Honore top scored with 25.

Jarario Prescod took four for 15, Shaquan Belle picked up four for 26, and Zishan Motara claimed two for 12.

In reply, Barbados made 184 off 64.4 overs. Belle hit 37 not out, and opener Gadson Bowens contributed 32. Isra-el Morton captured four for

32.

Trailing by 96 runs on first innings, the Leeward Islands were all out for 169 in 46.5 overs in their second innings.

Once again, Honore top scored with 61, and Carlton Puck struck 36. Jatario Prescod claimed three for 25, and Xaundre Baptiste took three for 67.

The Leeward Islands went under by an innings and 63 runs against host Trinidad & Tobago in their first-round two-day encounter at Inshan Ali Park last Thursday.

Pacer Aadian Racha finished with five for 11 in 11 overs as the Leewards were dismissed for 64 in their second innings. Cristian Rampersad supported with two for 11.

This was after the home side had established a lead of 127 on first innings. Resuming on their overnight 142 for four, T&T added only another 58 for the loss of their remaining six wickets to be all out for 200 in 72.3 overs.

Luke Ali hit 47, and Brendan Boodoo made 44. Ozan Williams claimed five for 60 and Israel Morton took three for 40.

As in their first innings of 73 all out, the Leeward batters struggled again to occupy the crease and succumbed in 38.2 overs, unable to keep out Racha.

He finished with match figures of eight for 32.

The T&T victory was the only one in the first round, as the other matches between Barbados and the Windward Islands at the PowerGen ground in Penal, and Jamaica and Guyana at the National Cricket Centre were drawn.

In the other second round matches, Trinidad and Tobago played to a draw with Jamaica at the PowerGen Sports ground in Penal, while at the National Cricket Centre in Couva, Guyana took first innings honours against Windwards Islands.

At NCC: Windward Islands 177 & 101-7 (Kirt Murray 30, Kirtsen Mur-

cont'd on pg 21

Pooran steers TKR to six-wicket victory over Patriots

The Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR) earned their first victory of the 2023 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) with a six-wicket win over St Kitts & Nevis Patriots at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Sunday night.

Trinbago Knight Riders won the toss and chose to field first and a bowling masterclass from Dwayne Bravo and Sunil Narine caused early inroads.

However, a brilliant 66-run partnership between stand-in captain Sherfane Rutherford and Corbin Bosch managed to take the St Kitts & Nevis Patriots to 178 for five.

The Knight Riders lost early wickets in their chase, but Nicholas Pooran produced a sensational innings of 61 and skipper Kieron Pollard struck an unbeaten 37 off 16 balls, with five sixes, to help guide their side to their first win of this campaign.

Patriots openers Andre Fletcher and Evin Lewis got their side off to a quick start in front of a cheering home crowd, scoring 43 runs in the first four overs before



Trinbago Knight Riders batsman Nicholas Pooran bats against the St Kitts and Nevis Patriots in the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Sunday, August 27, 2023. (CPLT20/Getty Images)

Dwayne Bravo, playing in his 100th CPL game, took both of their wickets in the space of three balls.

Sunil Narine would then take the wickets of Joshua da Silva and Jyd Goolie to leave the Patriots struggling. Rutherford scored a 63 off 33 balls with five sixes and four fours, and Corbin Bosch made 30 off 21 balls.

Also, for the first time in Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League history a red card was brandished

as the Trinbago Knight Riders incurred three over-rate penalties, meaning, as per regulations introduced this season, they had to play the final over with just 10 players on the field.

Sunil Narine was the player who was withdrawn from the field of play. Trinbago Knight Riders lost the early wickets of Chadwick Walton and Martin Guptill in their chase.

However, Nicholas Pooran dominated, as he struck four sixes and five

fours, before he was eventually caught out for 61 off 32 balls.

The 14th over proved to be pivotal as Pollard slam four sixes to put his side firmly in control. Pollard ended the game with a final six off a Dominics Drake delivery in the 17th over.

The action now shifts to Barbados as the next round of league games start at Kensington Oval on Wednesday evening.

Scores: Trinbago Knight Riders 180-4 (Pooran 61, Pollard 37; Bosch 3-22, Muzarabani 1-30) beat St Kitts & Nevis Patriots 178-5 (Rutherford 62, Fletcher 32; Narine 3-24, Bravo 2-43) by six wickets.

cont'd from pg 20

ray 26; Golcharran Chulai 5-28) vs Guyana 201 (Kevin Kisten 29, Rampersaud Ramnauth 29, Romeo Deonarain 63; Kirt Murray 3-35, Jahson Vidal 3-54, Joel Durand 2-26) - Match drawn.

At PowerGen Ground: Jamaica 179 & 11-0 vs T&T 197 (Alexander Chase 32, Brendan Boodoo 31, Alvin Sonny 29; Demarco Scott 3-17, O'mari Wedderburn 2-51, Roshawn McKenzie 2-13) - Match drawn.



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Buckleys 3J's make winning start in tape ball cricket classic

Buckleys 3J's were among the winners during the opening round of matches in the LL Supply Limited Island Boys Sports Club (ISBC) T20 Tape Ball Classic on Sunday.

Buckleys 3J's defeated Bryson's Shipping & Insurance Bullets by six wickets in one of two matches at Powells.

The Bullets won the toss and batted, scoring 156 for eight off their 20 overs. Kimani George struck 43, George "Nick" Elvin hit 22, and Tassilo Allen made 21.

Richie Thomas claimed three for 24, Rodney Williams had two for 24, and Demari Benta picked up two for 30.

Steve Martin slammed an unbeaten 51, Kadeem Henry cracked 33, and Benta chipped in with 25 as Buckleys 3J's achieved victory at 160 for four with 5.4 overs to spare.

Rackaman Construction Strictly Business trounced PMS by 109 runs in the other opening-round encounter at Powells.

Strictly Business made 188 for nine from their 20 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Kerry Mentore hammered 49, Kenny Allen cracked 36, and Junior Henry scored 32. Kenny Benjamin captured two for 31, and Terrence Thompson picked up two for 41.

In reply, PMS were bundled out for 79 in 18.2 overs, with Betram Miller getting 17 not out. Adrian Abbott



Buckleys 3J's batsman Steve Martin. (Photos courtesy ABSCA)

snapped up five wickets for 12 runs, and Egbert Francis bagged two wickets for nine runs.

A big margin of victory as well for VIP, who crushed Sisserou by 120 runs in one of two opening round matches at the Antigua Grammar School (AGS) Grounds.

VIP amassed 222 for eight off their 20 overs. Elroy Francis Jr. slammed 47, Malique Gerald cracked 34, Conroy Semple hit 33, and Johie Massiah contributed 25. Anthony Mathurin took three for 44.

Sisserou then crashed to 102 all-out in 18.4 overs. Mathurin hit a top score of 23, and Sylvester Scotland got 21. Akeem Blackman bagged three wickets



Strictly Business bowler Adrian Abbott for 10 runs, and Shaquan Reifer took two for 14.

The Dredgers snatched a 16-run win against the TG Welding & Fabricate Underdogs in the other opening-round encounter at AGS.

Chasing 143 to win, the Underdogs were dismissed for 126 in 18.2 overs. Charanlall RamJohn hit 23, and Vishual Gobin made 17. Jedediah Martin had two for 21, and Melvin Charles picked up two for 24.

Dredgers had won the toss and batted, scoring 142 for six from their 20 overs. Martin slammed 72 not out, and Dean Williams hit an unbeaten 24. RamJohn captured three wickets for 14 runs, and Gobin claimed two for 34.

cont'd from pg 24

minutes and 13 seconds.

Butler came ninth in the bike ride by clocking 19 minutes and 49 seconds, while the young Antiguan finished fourth in the run with a time of 12 minutes and one second.

The triathlon in the fe-

male 13-15 age category was won by Valentina Negron of Puerto Rico with an overall time of 37 minutes and 51 seconds.

She finished ahead of fellow compatriot Isabella Fernandez, who claimed silver with an overall time of 38 minutes and four seconds.

Isabella Mayers of Barbados capped off a fine and successful display by capturing the bronze medal with an overall time of 38 minutes and 37 seconds.

The event, which also included mixed relays, was organized under the theme "Sports in Paradise" and fea-

tured about 200 athletes from ages 11 to 21 years old.

The athletes represented 10 Caribbean countries, including Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Butler wins bronze at CARIFTA Aquathlon

Antigua and Barbuda's 13-year-old athlete Maleah Butler claimed a bronze medal at the 2023 CARIFTA Triathlon and Aquathlon, which was hosted by the Bahamas Triathlon Association (BTA) for the first time at Goodman's Bay in Nassau, Bahamas, on Saturday and Sunday.

Butler finished third overall in the female 13-15 category of the aquathlon, which took place on Sunday. Butler clocked an overall time of 22 minutes and 38 seconds in the event that included a 500-meter swim and a 2.5-kilometer run.

Butler had to claw her way from behind after clocking a time of 11 minutes and 42 seconds to finish 13th in the swim. But the young Antiguan made up her time by winning the run in 10 minutes and 39 seconds to finish third overall.

The aquathlon was won by 14-year-old Isabella Mayers of Barbados with an overall time of 21 minutes and 17 seconds. Mayers won the swim in nine minutes and 31 seconds but finished second in the run by clocking 11 minutes and 27 seconds.



From left to right: Second place finisher Somers Estwanik of Bermuda, Aquathlon winner Isabella Mayers of Barbados, and third place finisher Maleah Butler of Antigua and Barbuda on the female 13 to 15 category winners' podium during the presentation of awards at the 2023 CARIFTA Aquathlon at Goodman's Bay in Nassau, Bahamas, on Sunday, August 27, 2023. (Photos courtesy Cordova Simon)

Fourteen-year-old Somers Estwanik of Bermuda claimed the silver medal by finishing second with an overall time of 22 minutes and 21 seconds. Estwanik came third in the swim by clocking 10 minutes and three seconds, while she finished fifth in the run with a time of 12 minutes and four seconds.

However, Butler missed out on a medal in Saturday's triathlon, which comprised a 400-meter swim, a 10-kilometer bike ride, and a 2.5-kilometer run.



Maleah Butler celebrates with her native Antigua and Barbuda flag after finishing third in the 2023 CARIFTA Aquathlon at Goodman's Bay in Nassau, Bahamas, on Sunday, August 27, 2023.

Butler finished in fifth place by clocking an overall time of 41 minutes and 42 seconds. She finished 14th in the swim with a time of nine minutes and 42 seconds.

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