

MONDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 4 ISSUE 169 | WWW.POINTVILLE.AG

# EDUCATION OFFICIALS VOICE CONCERNS OVER HEATWAVE

*Story on Page 2*



Senator Dwayne George leads from the front distributing school supplies, bicycles and food hampers to people in the St Mary's South community.

## Education officials voice concerns over heat in the classrooms

Officials in the Ministry of Education are voicing concerns over the recent heat waves that have been affecting the nation and how this will impact teachers and students in classrooms with the reopening of school.

Director of Education, Clare Browne, has revealed that both he and Education Minister, Daryll Matthew, have already discussed the matter with the Board of Education to determine ways in which the matter can be addressed.

Director Browne said the issue of excessive heat is one of the challenges that pop up at the start of the new school year.

“One of the things that we feel will be a challenge is the rising heat. We are looking at it. Already, Minister Matthew and I have been having conversations with the chairman of the Board of Education and we are looking at ways that they might assist us,” he stated.

According to the director, the ministry is doing everything it can to look at ways to alleviate the excessive heat that has been a regular feature of the weather system over the past several weeks.

“It’s not that we can get up and put a cooling system in every classroom, in every school all at once. But, if we can do some little thing

in the major areas, at least that may bring some relief,” he remarked.

Director Browne is also appealing to members of the business community to assist the ministry by adopting a school. “I want to invite our corporate community and others such as the service clubs, that have always helped, to make a special effort to come to the ministry’s aid at this time of need to adopt a school and make a donation. Even private individuals can come forward and assist us,” he urged.

According to the director, climate change ‘is a real thing’ and we know that it will continue to affect our classrooms.



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Pre-registration is required for both online via [acbonline.com](http://acbonline.com) and in-person attendees via email to [acbsecretariat@acbonline.com](mailto:acbsecretariat@acbonline.com) or telephone – 481-4331.

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## Salary increases for public servants next year

Workers in the public sector are in for salary increases that will come into effect during the 'next budget cycle.'

The announcement came from Prime Minister Gaston Browne who said the government had reached agreements with the representative bodies in the public sector for a 14 percent salary increase, dating back to 2018.

The prime minister reported that the increases will come at a significant cost to the government as it will also come with retroactive payments due to public servants. Additionally, he announced that pensioners will also benefit from increases in their pension payments.

However, PM Browne, the country's Finance Minister, hinted that there is also likely to be what he termed, 'a marginal increase in taxes' to allow the government to meet its

new obligations.

"I believe that for the next budget cycle, we have to look at increasing taxes marginally, by one or two percent especially considering that we have agreed to give all public sector workers a 14 percent increase.

"So, if you are struggling to pay salaries and wages now, and you give a 14 percent increase, then you have to do something to raise the money so that you can grant the increase," he disclosed.

He noted that the government had timed the increase to take effect from 2024, as it could not have been done in 2022, in light of the escalating food and fuel prices affected by the war in Ukraine. PM Browne also added that ten years after the government first came to office, the opportunity now provides itself to reset the government's finances.

"We have not raised taxes in the nine years that we have been in office, and by next year, our tenth year, it requires a reset, so that we can meet our obligations. We have creditors who are being paid on time. Where are we going to get the money from? Do we continue to drag our feet and not have a marginal increase in taxes to pay creditors and increase salaries? We have to do it!" he declared.

The three-time prime minister noted that there would be a 'political fight,' but that the government has no other option. Since coming to office, he said his government has been able to stabilize the economy and it has attracted more investments per capita than any other country in the Caribbean. However, these investments need time to mature and to begin to generate large sums of money for the government from taxes and other revenues.



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## Ruling on an injunction involving Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh due today

The High Court is expected to hand down its ruling, early Monday morning, on an injunction filed on behalf of Chief Magistrate Joanne Walsh, asking that it halts the disciplinary action against her.

Attorneys representing the Chief Magistrate have filed a Constitutional motion, asking that the court rule that the suspension of the Chief Magistrate violates the Constitution and therefore cannot stand.

They referenced Section 103 sub-section 2 of the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda, to support their claim. Additionally, they have asked that the court issue an interim injunction to stop the disciplinary action until the Constitutional motion is settled.

The Chief Magistrate was sus-

pending by the Judicial and Legal Services Commission (JLSC), an arm of the regional judicial system, after some ten charges were filed against her, alleging behavior unbecoming of someone holding such an office.

However, Walsh's legal team, comprising Kenny Kentish Wendel Robinson and Leon Chaku Symister, filed a motion in the court arguing that the actions of the JLSC to suspend her was a breach of natural justice.

A spokesman for the team said their research indicated that under the Antigua and Barbuda Constitution, the JLSC has no authority to suspend the Chief Magistrate, as only the Governor General, acting on the advice of the JLSC has the authority to issue the suspension.

They also argued that the Chief Magistrate was never allowed to be heard on the matter before the suspension as natural justice demands.

The case for the interim injunction was argued before a special sitting of the court on Saturday, where Justice Jan Drysdale heard competing arguments for approximately three hours.

Ironically, the team representing Walsh, cited as their case law the matter involving former Commissioner of Police Wendel Robinson versus the Police Services Commission to support their case.

At the hearing on Saturday, the Attorney General was represented by Deputy Solicitor General, Carla Brookes, while the JLSC was represented by John Carrington KC and C. Debra Burnette.

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## A new primary school with new approaches to learning opens its doors

A new primary school – Mill Academy – located near the Buckley’s round-a-bout – is throwing its doors open on Monday for the start of the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Mill Academy’s principal, Kisma Pantier-Jno Baptiste who has nearly two decades of teaching, said the institution will offer new approaches to education, as well as expose students to foreign languages and other subjects that often have to wait until the students reach secondary school.

“Our school will teach students from kindergarten to Grade Six and we will expose them to a number of subjects that will help them to think ‘outside the box.’ Some of the subject areas include coding and robotics, agriculture, projects, sustainability, and journaling where the students will be encouraged to write down their thoughts daily and to be prepared to discuss them with their peers,”

she explained.

The students will also be taught three foreign languages as part of their early development. These are Spanish, French, and Mandarin, the most widely spoken Chinese language.

“We are here to create a different experience for students, parents, and the community. We are seeking not to teach A, B, C, or 1-2-3. Instead, a Mill Academy student ought to know who he or she is as a human being and be immersed in the opportunity to realize his/her full potential. We will have an integrated curriculum where, as an example, when students go on a field trip, every opportunity will be used to teach history, social studies, and even math from the experience,” she explained.

Mill Academy is starting with eight students and a staff complement of ten teachers. Yet Pantier-Jn Baptiste remains undaunted as she points to many institu-



*Kisma Pantier-Jno Baptiste*

tions operating on the island that started with even lower student populations.

“Our focus is on the student. We will not water down our curriculum. We aim to give value first and as word spreads, the parents will come. If we deliver, as we promise, soon our classrooms will be full,” she reiterated.

Pantier-Jn Baptiste first made a name for herself while as a teacher at the All Saints Secondary School, she turned to online teaching and was highly commended for her innovation and her efforts. She also partnered with a former engineer of SpaceX, the Elon Musk company, in teaching robotics at summer school one year ago, where students built rockets that they shot into the air before they returned to the ground.

It is those new approaches that may, over time, attract more students to Mill Academy.



## \$5,000 reward for information on missing Liberta man

The Member of Parliament for St. Paul, E.P Chet Greene is posting a \$5,000.00 reward for information that will help in locating a Liberta man reported missing over a week ago.

Family members report-

ed that the man – Winston ‘Mohammed’ Charles – went missing on Sunday, August 27 and he has not been heard from or seen since.

Greene has reported that there is ‘deep anxiety’ among family members and

others in the Liberta community and across the constituency generally.

“The cash offer is another layer designed to encourage the continuous lookout and recovery of Charles. Many of us have been out in

groups, moving across miles of landscape on and off the beaten path,” he disclosed.

The Member of Parliament is asking the community and the nation as a whole, to bear Charles up in prayers.

## Female soca artists get citations at Antigua-Barbuda Day in the Bronx

Two of the country's top female soca artists have been presented with Citations and Certificates of Appreciation during the Antigua and Barbuda Day festivities held on Saturday in the Bronx, New York City.

Reigning Groovy Soca Monarch, Claudette Peters, along with soca artist, Laurena Davis were both presented with Citations from the Nassau County Legislature for their outstanding contributions to the soca art form, as well as for be-

ing outstanding examples in their community.

Both artists performed at the Antigua and Barbuda Day festivities and were honoured for their participation. The Citation reads in part: 'Whereas it is the desire of the Nassau County Legislature to honour those individuals who exemplify integrity, commitment and outstanding contributions for the benefit of our County and the community they serve; and whereas the Legislature is proud to extend



*Claudette Peters*

this special commendation, you are honoured today for living up to the goals and principles of this prestigious award. Thus, we recognize and honour Claudette Pe-



*Laurena Davis*

ters for your contributions to Music and the Performing Arts on the occasion of Caribbean Splashdown Antigua and Barbuda Day, 2023.' A separate Citation was presented to Laurena Davis with similar sentiments being expressed.

The Certificates of Appreciation were presented by the Caribbean Splashdown Antigua and Barbuda Day committee and honour both artists for their many years of dedication and hard work they gave individually to the growth and popularity of soca music.

Peters travelled to New York courtesy of the Antigua and Barbuda Festivals Commission, and she seemed to have been able to avoid travel mix-ups caused by a local travel agent, according to a release on Saturday from the Commission.

According to sources, the mix-up only affected the Hell's Gate Steel Orchestra, as its delegation was unable to leave.

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## Senator Antonio donates equipment to Pigotts Clinic

On Friday, September 1st, Senator Clement Antonio, Parliamentary Secretary within the Ministry of Works, Housing, Lands, and Urban Renewal, generously donated a much-needed medical device to the Pigotts Clinic, aiming to enhance healthcare services for the numerous patients under their care.

The donated device, a medical-grade sterilizing machine valued at over \$6,000 EC, was officially handed over to the clinic's dedicated nursing staff.

Senator Antonio remarked, "Having grown up in the Pigotts community, I have witnessed firsthand the vital role the clinic plays in serving members within and around our community. From prenatal care to elderly healthcare, the nurses here are the backbone of our



society. This is why I felt it was essential to contribute and continue giving back in any way I can."

Upon receiving the sterilizing machine, the clinic's nurses emphasized its significance. They explained that this long-awaited machine would significantly improve the efficient and time-sensitive cleaning

and sterilization of medical equipment and tools used throughout the day.

Ms. Phara Ambrose, a clinic aide, expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Senator Antonio, stating, "We are truly thankful for this timely donation. With this in-house machine, we will no longer have to depend on sending and receiving ster-

ilized equipment from the hospital, greatly reducing downtime and enhancing efficiency."

District Nurse Midwife Elaine Davis, visiting from the Clarehall district clinic, added that the sterilizing machine would not only benefit Piggotts but also surrounding clinics like Potters and Clarehall.

Community Health Aide Nurse Floyde also extended her appreciation to the young Senator, emphasizing the importance of young people recognizing the value of giving back to their communities.

Senator Antonio concluded by thanking the nurses for their unwavering commitment to delivering high-standard healthcare and assured them of his readiness and willingness to provide further assistance wherever possible.



## Director's School Reopening Address

Students, parents, teachers, principals, all members of the formal education community, welcome to the 2023-24 academic year. In previous years, I have spoken about the unparalleled opportunity that a new school year presents for the establishment of goals, the renewal of commitment, and the realisation of dreams.

I attempted to inspire all stakeholders within our education system to work together with enthusiasm, honesty and a keen sense of responsibility. I presented the transformative ideals that the leadership of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries envisions for education and the future of our twin-island state. I firmly believe that my usual rhetoric is still relevant.

But, you know those things. You know, only too well, the opportuni-

ties that lie before you, the goals you must set, the obstacles that must be overcome and the incontrovertible necessity for all of us to synchronize our efforts for the development of every student in Antigua and Barbuda.

What you may not know, or may not fully appreciate, is the rationale for the address. Why do we, in the Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries consider a school re-opening address to be of critical importance?

This year, I will use the next few minutes to share with you three reasons why this address is an integral part of the commencement of the school year.

Firstly, we consider a school re-opening address to be of paramount importance because we care about the quality of relationship that exists between the Ministry of Education and



*Director of Education Clare Browne the people we serve.*

This address is just one of the many ways in which we seek to nurture a harmonious relationship among all stakeholders. We are striving for an invincible connection through sincere

*cont'd on pg 9*



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*cont'd from pg 8*

communication and the articulation of clear expectations. We expect only your very best even as we strive to constantly take actions that are in the best interest of all.

Secondly, we want you to know how much you are valued. We want every boy, every girl, every parent or guardian, every teacher, every principal, in fact, every person who fulfils a function within our school compounds, including the bus drivers and conductors, to understand that you are special.

Without you, our education system would collapse, our national goals would be threatened and Antigua and Barbuda's contribution to the realisation of the United Nations' sustainable development goals would be in jeopardy. You are important. Believe it, and act like you do because, even though

you are important, if you are not diligent in fulfilling your responsibilities, you risk becoming irrelevant. We believe in you and your worth and we anticipate the many instances during the school year when you will prove us right.

Finally, we want you to be cognizant of our mindset at the beginning of the school year. When I started primary school as a young boy, many, many moons ago, I was presented with a slate.

I know many of you have no idea what I am talking about, so you can look it up. I can still remember the excitement I experienced when I was presented with a brand new, clean, unmarred slate.

We view a new school year in the same way I viewed my new slate. We are starting with fresh hope and renewed purpose. There were times,

during the 2022-23 academic year, when I felt like the field of education was an ideological battlefield. We were grappling with issues of every kind. 2022-23 is behind us.

We have new slates. I invite you to join us in viewing the new school year as an opportunity to learn from the past and look to the future with the determination to exercise our potential for growth. We must make a concerted effort to grow, to change, to be transformative in our thrust to succeed.

So, as I close, I challenge all of us to embark on this 2023-24 academic year with the resolve that we will succeed. Let us aim for improved, holistic development, better grades, sharper parenting, more engaging instruction, consistent attention to duty, and leadership that uplifts. I wish you all a brilliant school year. May God be with us all.



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# Opinion

# Temper, temper!

By Tony Deyal

When I was growing up, ‘accra’, for me, was a fried delicacy made of flour, seasonings including pepper, and small pieces of salt fish. It was a case of nearer my cod to thee. In Barbados, it is a beach and a hotel. The difference between a Trinidad ‘accra’ and a Bajan beach hotel of the same name is as wide as that between a Jamaat and a Jamette, a PM and a post-mortem, or a hoe and a ho.”

When it comes to hoes and hos, Jamaicans know the difference. They believe that “Every hoe have dem ‘tick a bush”. This means that the flat-bladed part of the farming tool, or hoe, has a stick (‘tick’ in Patois) to fit it, and, while you’re digging for provisions, there’s always someone out there expecting to become your soul’s companion. A ho is different. Jamaicans see a ho as a ‘sketel’, slut, or really bad girl who has been around the block a few times. Checking Barbados, I didn’t find a hoe. However, I got a ‘hold-down’ (stoop down low), and even a ‘horn’ (cheat on a lover). I also got a The Polished Hoe but it turned out to be a novel by the great Austin Clarke whose “Hoe” was so popular around the world that it won a Scotiabank Giller Prize, the Commonwealth Writers Prize in 2003, and a Trillium Book Award.

Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) is very much like Jamaica when it comes to hoe and ho, except the Jamaican men are more ‘hopen’ and ‘oping’ in their desire to catch up. When one of my Jamaican friends heard about Ho Chi Minh, the president of Vietnam, and found out that the boss was known as ‘Uncle Ho’, he called and boasted without a second thought, “Tony, I going there.” And then, thinking it was plane sailing, he gave me a huge laugh that ended with a “Ho! Ho! Ho!” and asked “You ain’t commin?” I left it at that. He went with great ‘hanticipation’ and ‘hecspecations’.

The humorous downside of Ho is something that happened to me when I was growing up in Trinidad. My neighbours, two houses down, were originally from St Vincent, and the big sister of the family always pulled rank on the smaller sister, constantly threatening her about her behaviour and lack of respect. The big sister, Irene, handed Jane a bucket and demanded, “Go by the standpipe and full this bucket. Don’t waste time with them ‘jaggerbat’ women friends you have and bring the water quick because Mammy tell me to make sure I cook some rice for we to eat this evening.” While in England, a ‘jaggerbat’ could be a much-valued and very valuable gift which is neither vampirical nor a



Tony Deyal

fly-by-night. In Trinidad, a ‘jaggerbat’ is a lady of the evening with very loose virtue, morals and other parts. The younger sister was upset and very angry, “You not my mother and you can’t tell me what to do. Besides, don’t threaten me again, Oh-ho!”

Now this ho when used after Oh in the Caribbean is different from the other usages of the word. One example follows: “Oh-ho!” exclaimed the pirate chief, a gleam of triumphant satisfaction passing over his face for an instant and then vanishing as he again confronted the captain sternly. The preceding sentence is an example of the use of the interjection “Oh-ho!”, which generally expresses surprise, exultation, comprehension, or mock astonishment but can also be a taunt,

a sneer, or insult. However, in the case of the two sisters, blood was not thicker than water and was about to be shed by the bucketful. Next thing I knew, it was fire, brimstone, and a fight to the finish by the two sisters behaving like the biggest jaggerbats in Charlotte Street, Port-of-Spain, Montego Bay in Jamaica or the ‘Red Light’ zone in Bridgetown.

The big sister screamed, “Who you calling a ho? Is me you calling a ho?” and, forgetting for the time being that they shared the same female progenitor, picked up a knife and threatened loudly, “I will kill your mother so-and-so,” or words to that effect. Fortunately, other neighbours rushed to the scene, seized the weapons, calmed the combatants, and explained that it was an er-

*cont’d on pg 11*

*cont'd from pg 10*

ror in communication and not an insult or accusation worth fighting over or, for that matter, doing fatal bodily harm to their mother's genitals.

A few days ago, I thought of the 'bacchanal' of the two sisters and again found that English and Trini are two different cups of tea – one that you have to hold up one finger in the air while drinking from a small cup, and the other in a bigger cup tightly held with all hands on deck. In the English language "a bacchanal is a crazed party with drunken revelry, ecstatic sexual experimentation, and wild music" with lots of "sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll". In Trinidad, unlike the 'jaggerbat', the bacchanal (according to the Caribbean Memory Project) "is rowdy, scandalous behaviour; good party, minding another's business and adding to, thereby causing confusion, back-back, suggestive dance, the male dancer's front rubbing against the fe-

male's' rear, and vice versa." While I think Trinidad is more 'vicey' than anywhere else in the Caribbean, it is still dicey to say that to Jamaicans.

That is because, among Caribbean people, jaggerbats and vice-versas are part of the bigger picture. All of us are "full ah temper", fuelled by it, and totally tempestuous when we're angry, upset or just feeling pressured and need to take it out on whoever is nearest and even dearest. Is there a difference between a quick temper and a short temper in the Caribbean? Only if the person is above or below five feet tall. Some of us and our wives are a temperamental couple. I tease my wife by telling people that I've got a temper and she's mental. We went to a psychiatrist to see whether he could help. He was even more temperamental than we - he had no patients.

I also tell them that my wife is a Guyanese and we went to Kaieteur Falls for a hike. As usual, I lost my

temper and she was so angry and upset she threw the entire map of Guyana at me. I was angry at first but then I realised that it had helped me to know where we stand.

The problem was that we went round and round indulging in really bad-tempered accusations. It was a vicious circle. Sometimes I think it is a pity that I can't manage my anger like the former US president, George Bush. When his dog Millie had pups, he told the large gathering of media big shots, "You may have read that the pups are sleeping on The Washington Post and The New York Times. This is the first time in history that those papers have been used to prevent leaks."

*Tony Deyal was last seen quoting the American comedian, Stephen Wright, "Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until they speak." What did you, my readers, say? "Shut up, Tony?"*

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## IMF approves new programme for Haiti

CMC - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a Staff-Monitored Program (SMP) with Haiti that runs through March 31, next year.

The Washington-based financial institution said the new nine-month SMP was designed by IMF staff and the Haitian authorities, “keeping in mind Haiti’s fragility and capacity constraints while supporting the authorities’ economic policy objectives”.

It said the SMP may be extended by three additional months at the request of the authorities through June 2024.

SMPs are arrangements between country authorities and the IMF to monitor the implementation of the authorities’ economic programme and to establish a track record of policy implementation.

SMPs are not accompanied by IMF financial assistance.

“Haiti faces a challenging macroeconomic outlook amid a dire humanitarian crisis. The country has been hit hard by economic spillovers from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, including food price inflation that has triggered a hunger crisis,” the IMF said in a statement.

“This global shock has been compounded by a highly volatile security situation in Haiti, which has heightened the economy’s fragility.”

It said despite the very challenging environ-



ment, signs of resilience have emerged and that Haiti’s net international reserves have been rebuilt, although from a low base; custom duties helped boost fiscal revenue by 50 per cent in the first six months of the fiscal year of 2023 starting in October 2022, monetary financing of the budget has declined, and the exchange rate has recently stabilized.

The IMF said efforts to further stabilise the macroeconomic outlook should continue under the SMP, as well as reforms aimed at reducing governance vulnerabilities.

“Building on the satisfactory outcome of the previous SMP, which concluded in May, the new SMP should help strengthen Haiti’s domestic revenues mobilization and raise taxes by supporting the implementation of the tax code.

“This should contribute to the continued lowering of the monetary financing of the

budget. The fiscal measures should also help enhance transparency and accountability in the use of public spending, continue to enhance the AML/CFT framework, and build administrative and institutional capacity in Haiti,” the IMF said.

It said sustaining progress on reforms to strengthen governance is “paramount to ensure inclusive growth and build the trust of the private sector and of development partners” and that recent progress in reducing governance vulnerabilities is “welcome and should continue to be effectively addressed”.

The IMF said governance and anti-corruption measures were key components of reforms under the 2022 SMP, adding that it will continue to be key in the new SMP.

The IMF said the authorities have acted to strengthen accountability in the use of public resources and have boosted the transparency of public procurement for emer-

gency resources.

It said the recent finalization of revisions to the Central Bank and to the AML/CFT legal frameworks are also “critical for improving governance and transparency.”

The IMF said Haitian authorities have also recently made a formal request for an IMF Governance Diagnostic, “which is a very welcome development and will help Haiti solidify the early improvements achieved during the recently concluded SMP.”

The diagnostics are designed to help inform governance and anti-corruption strategies, including sequencing of reforms, the IMF said.

In line with the Fund Strategy for Fragile and Conflict-Affected States, the IMF said its staff will also continue to coordinate closely with Haiti’s main development partners, “particularly given the critical role of development partners on capacity development and financing”.

## Jimmy Buffett: Margaritaville singer dies aged 76

By Kathryn Armstrong

US singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett, best known for his 1970's hit Margaritaville, has died aged 76.

"Jimmy passed away peacefully on the night of September 1 surrounded by his family, friends, music and dogs," said a statement on his website.

"He lived his life like a song till the very last breath and will be missed beyond measure by so many."

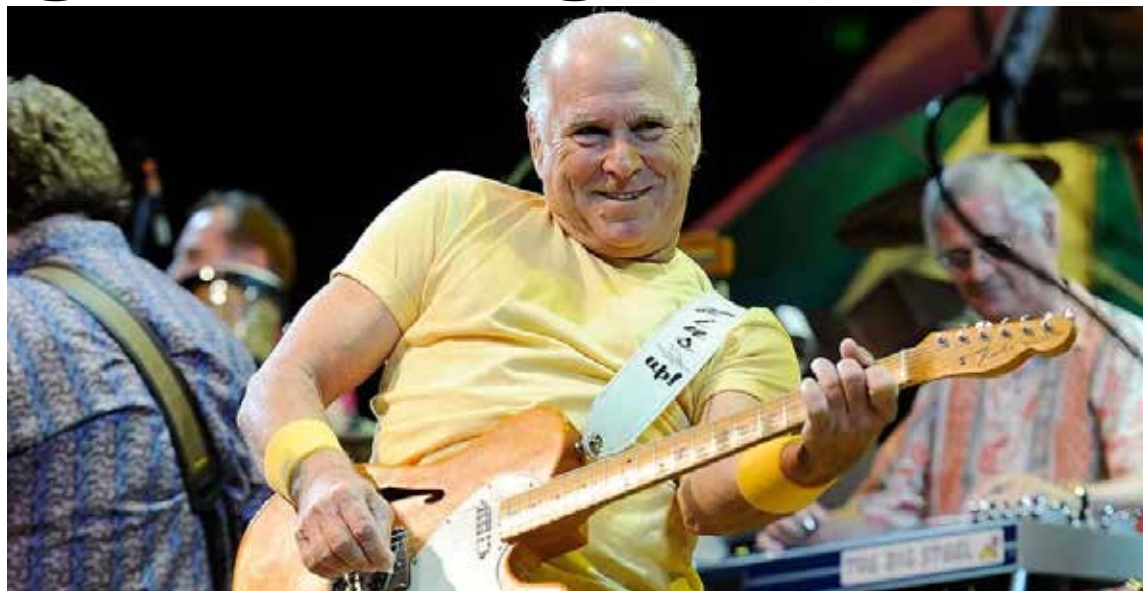
A statement on the singer's official website said he had been diagnosed with skin cancer four years ago.

Buffett was born in the US state of Mississippi but was raised in neighbouring Alabama before moving to Nashville, Tennessee. He worked for the music and entertainment magazine Billboard, with the dream of making it as a country singer.

He later moved to Florida, where he helped to create the tropical rock genre, which would later become more mainstream thanks to artists such as Jack Johnson.

Buffett made his musical breakthrough with his 1977 album Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes, which included the song Margaritaville, which enjoyed 22 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.

His other hits include Fins, Come Monday and Son of a Son of a Sailor.



Jimmy Buffett had suffered ill-health in recent months, forcing him to cancel some of his shows (file image)

Buffett was nominated for two Grammy awards and was a prolific artist - releasing more than 20 albums. Earlier this year he revealed that he had recorded a new work.

His songs were also turned into a musical, Escape to Margaritaville, which made its Broadway debut in 2018.

Buffett's music and the "beach bum" lifestyle he promoted earned him a devoted following of millions of fans who refer to themselves as Parrotheads.

"RIP to the troubadour of my youth," wrote one Parrothead on X, formerly known as Twitter.

"So many great memories at Jimmy's shows. This is a hard one," said another.

Tributes have also been made by some of his fellow musicians, including Elton John, who said Buffett was

"a unique and treasured entertainer" who had "gone away too soon".

Beach Boys' Brian Wilson tweeted a picture of one of Buffett's album covers with the message: "love and mercy, Jimmy Buffett".

"Rest in power @jimmybuffett I'm glad we had time to vibe," wrote the rapper LL Cool J.

"You were and always will be a Truly inspiring human."

Up until recently, Buffett still performed regularly with his Coral Reefer Band but had to cancel shows after being hospitalised in May.

In a post on Facebook, he promised to make it up to fans once he was "in shape".

"I think playing is as therapeutic for me as it is for fans to listen and sing along," he said.

A statement on the sing-

er's official website said Buffett had been diagnosed with a rare type of skin cancer called Merkel cell carcinoma.

"He continued to perform during treatment, playing his last show, a surprise appearance in Rhode Island, in early July," it added.

No official cause of death has been given.

As well as a musician, Buffett was a best-selling author and entrepreneur who opened up a string of popular resorts, clubs, restaurants, merchandise shops and retirement communities based on the Margaritaville brand.

His net worth was estimated by Forbes to be \$1bn (£794m), according to figures released this month.

Buffett is survived by his wife Jane and their three children.

## Grenada: No plan to introduce LGBTQ curriculum in schools

By *Melissa Wong*

Minister of Education for Grenada David Andrew has made it clear that there are no plans to introduce any LGBTQ curriculum in schools nor are there any plans to change any laws or any curriculum in schools.

Andrew made a statement on the issue after rumours began circulating online about alleged changes to the Health and Family Life Education (HLFE) Curriculum.

The Education minister during a Senate sitting this week said: “Within the last few weeks there has been a lot of chatter about the government allegedly having a plan to introduce an LGBTQ curriculum in schools from September.

I struggle to understand that for a number of reasons because I don’t understand what an LGBTQ curriculum is... so I struggled to even conceptualise what was being thought when people saying the minister is hiding... calling out the minister.

I want to put it on record, I want to make it categorically clear that the Ministry of Education... the government, we have no plan to change the curriculum neither to introduce any... well I don’t even know what the LGBTQ curriculum is...(I’m struggling with that)... but we have no plan to introduce any such curriculum and there is no plan to change the law contrary to what is being bandied about and that the HLFE curriculum that is currently in use is the HLFE curriculum that has been adopted since 2009. That’s the same one being used and there’s no plan to change it.”

The Education Minister said the confusion that has been created probably out of mischief, probably surrounds a document which is an international



*Grenada's Minister of Education David Andrew.*

technical guidance on sexuality education and focuses on comprehensive sexuality education.

Andrew said it is a document that was first published in 2009 which Grenada signed onto in 2018 under the former administration.

The Education minister revealed teachers and guidance counsellors were trained in 2019 about the international guidance document (not part of the curriculum) which when read, one would realise it needs to be tailored to suit the culture and values of the various international communities that you might choose to use or guide to. He said there is no exception for Grenada.

If anything has to be used from the document (which is a guidance or reference, not a curriculum) then it has to be adapted and be within values within the cultural norms of society to which it is applied.

“What’s the fear... what’s the worry,” said the Education Minister.

He went on to add: “I want to assure every parent at home... I want to

assure every school teacher...every guardian... any concerned Grenadian citizen, that under this government’s watch, we are committed to the values of the Grenadian people... there is no plan to change the curriculum to introduce sexuality education or to introduce a new LGBTQ curriculum or anything of that sort and we remain committed to the values of the Grenadian people.”

However, the education minister left this message before ending his response on the matter: “I want to say we have an aversion to sexuality that we need to look at because that’s where the scare is coming from... because all those things are right around us... in the news, in the cartoons, in the advertisements, they are everywhere. If we pretend they don’t exist and put our heads in the sand like ostriches, and pretend it does not exist around us and tell education to shut up and tell the church to shut up... who informs our children about the right values... who informs them about how to make the right choices?”

## Cynthia ‘Mother’ Pratt sworn in as Governor General of The Bahamas

By Laura Dowrich-Phillips

The country’s 12 governor general, Cynthia ‘Mother’ Pratt was sworn into office on Friday and promised that during her tenure, she will look around and see where help is needed.

“We shall accomplish great things if we work together,” she said, as she called for good citizenry to achieve the best for all, particularly the young who should be encouraged to rise, those with special needs who can progress to give a positive contribution to nationhood and for older people who need an outstretched arm to help them live in dignity, she said during her address.

“Support the weak, lift up the fallen,” she said. “I pray that with the help of God we shall together lift up our eyes to the rising sun and build up our nation in peace, love and joy.”



Cynthia ‘Mother’ Pratt is the new Governor-General of The Bahamas.

Prime Minister and Minister Philip “Brave” Davis touted the various achievements and character of the newly-appointed Governor-General,

whom he affectionately referred to as “The Lady from Coconut Grove”.

“We are here today to honour a woman who has served in so many capacities – and with such dignity and grace – that she earned the name ‘Mother’, a name that reveals the affection and gratitude of the many, many people she has cared for and helped throughout her storied career,” Davis said, during the Induction Ceremony.

“The lives she has touched number in the thousands,” he added. “I am not alone in believing that she has a special calling – an anointing, to say – to be a protector and comforter for the Coconut Grove community and for many others throughout The Bahamas.”

The Prime Minister stated that Governor-General Pratt was “the living embodiment of a servant leader”.

“We are reminded of how Christ described the path to true leadership: ‘Whoever wants to be great among you, must become a servant’,” he said, adding that “Cynthia ‘Mother’ Pratt has served her way to greatness.”

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## Guyana to get Cuban help in developing honey sector

CMC - The Guyana government Friday said that four Cuban specialists will assist indigenous communities in developing and expanding honey production.

President Dr. Irfaan Ali told the final day of the annual National Toshias Conference that his administration has offered to train 150 people from the indigenous communities in the areas of agriculture and food security.

“We have just yesterday agreed to invest in four specialists from Cuba who will come to Guyana, to work with you in the communities in building out the honey industry and expanding the industry and we want to create a common brand of honey that is associated with Guyana’s rainforest that can be marketed as a specialised product,” Ali said.

He told the conference that the



Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC) will also be working with the Ministry of Agriculture in launching an initiative to support organic honey production.

President Ali said that GUY\$300 million (One Guyana dollar=US\$0.004 cents) will be included in the next national budget to develop food security and agriculture as those have been identified as one of areas of priority

for the indigenous communities.

Ali said a unit will also be set up to deal with hinterland food security and production.

“We want you, every single region, to identify young people, yourselves, who can be trained to become vets, agriculture support staff, extension officers and we are going to train them, we are going to pay for their training and send them back to the communities to work full time with you,” President Ali said.

“We are willing to immediately train 150 of your young people, from your regions and your communities in these areas to support food production, food security and agriculture expansion.”

Ali said the investment will be supported by a very “robust” programme to expand the production of traditional products in Region One.

“We are also working with external markets to have long-term arrangements for large-scale production of sweet cassava to meet those external market needs.

“So before the end of the year, in selected communities, the Ministry of Agriculture will be consulting with you on supporting the development of large-scale cassava production to meet those external markets,” President Ali said.



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## Storm Idalia: Biden pledges support to help Florida recover

By James Gregory

US President Joe Biden has vowed to give Florida any support it needs to rebuild in the wake of Tropical Storm Idalia's destruction.

Mr Biden was speaking during a visit to the state, where at least two people are known to have died after the storm made landfall on Wednesday.

He added that no "intelligent" person could doubt the impact of climate change in the wake of the storm.

Meanwhile, Governor Ron DeSantis chose not to meet the president on his trip.

Mr DeSantis, who is standing to become his Republican party's candidate for president, had earlier suggested Mr Biden's presence could hinder disaster response efforts. Mr Biden, who has spoken to Mr DeSantis multiple times this week, had said they would be meeting in person.

But a spokesperson for Mr DeSantis said on Friday that the governor had no plans to meet with the president, adding that security preparations required for such a meeting would "shut down ongoing recovery efforts".

Mr Biden praised Mr DeSantis during his visit on Saturday and said he was not disappointed by the



President Joe Biden said he was ready to mobilise support for Florida.

Republican governor's absence.

"He sat with Fema (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and decided where we should go, where would be the least disruption," Mr Biden told reporters in front of a storm-damaged house in the town of Live Oak, one of the worst-hit areas.

Mr Biden did meet Rick Scott, one of the state's two Republican senators, and said it was a "reassuring" sign that the state leadership and federal authorities were working well together.

Mr DeSantis spent the day about 50 miles (80km) south, touring small communities along Florida's Gulf Coast, according to his official schedule.

The president and First

Lady Jill Biden also met out for hundreds of thousands of people.

Fema head Deanne Criswell told reporters on Saturday that search and rescue operations had ended and officials were focusing on restoring power to the affected regions.

She added that less than 1% of Floridians were without power, though that figure was significantly higher in some areas directly impacted by the hurricane.

Mr DeSantis has consistently polled second for the Republican presidential primary nomination, trailing far behind frontrunner and former President Donald Trump.

The 2024 election is widely expected to be a repeat of 2020 between Mr Biden and Mr Trump.

As I told your governor, if there's anything your state needs, I'm ready to mobilise that support," Mr Biden said at a news conference afterwards.

"Your nation has your back, and we'll be with you until the job is done."

Idalia landed as a powerful hurricane in Florida's Big Bend area on Wednesday and has been described by officials as the worst storm to hit the region in 100 years. The storm has since travelled north, hitting the neighbouring state of Georgia and the Carolinas.

Homes and businesses have been flooded, and power has been knocked

## Inmates free 57 Ecuador prison guards after stand-off

Inmates in six Ecuadorian prisons have released 50 guards and seven police officers they had taken hostage, the prison service (SNAI) has said.

The 57 freed hostages are “undergoing medical evaluation” but appear to be in good health, according to SNAI.

Officials say the kidnappings were coordinated by criminal gangs angry at attempts to curb their power.

Two car bombs which went off near police buildings in the capital, Quito, have also been blamed on the gangs.

The authorities believe at least one of the incidents could be retaliation for a police search for weapons at one of the country’s biggest jails.

Hundreds of police officers and



Officials say normal activities have resumed in the six facilities.

soldiers carried out the search at Coto-paxi jail in Latacunga, about 55 miles (88km) south of Quito, as part of ef-

orts to prevent further violence at the prison on Wednesday.

*cont'd on pg 19*

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## Sudan conflict: Air strike on Khartoum kills at least 20

An army air strike on the Sudanese capital has killed at least 20 people, including two children, activists say.

Many of the victims of the attack, in the Kalakla al-Qubba neighbourhood of south-west Khartoum, have been buried in the rubble, they said.

Artillery and rocket fire have been reported in several areas on Sunday.

The army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been fighting for control of Khartoum since April. Hundreds have been killed.

The country's health ministry says more than 1,100 people have died across the country, but the real numbers are likely to be much higher.

Many civilians have been caught in the crossfire.

Roughly 2.2 million people have been displaced



*Millions of civilians have been displaced by the fighting.*

within Sudan and more than half a million are sheltering in neighbouring countries, according to the United Nations.

The conflict began after army chief Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the RSF head Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo fell out over the future of the country.

Several ceasefires have

been announced to allow people to escape the fighting but these have not been observed.

The RSF controls much of Khartoum and its twin cities of Omdurman and Bahri.

The army has carried out frequent artillery and air attacks to try and dislodge the paramilitary fighters.

Saturday's strike is one of the heaviest.

Clashes have spread beyond the capital, including to the western Darfur region which has seen an outbreak of ethnic violence.

Across the country, hundreds have been killed and almost three million people have been forced from their homes.

*cont'd from pg 18*

Normal activities have now been resumed in the six facilities, including a young offenders unit which was badly damaged by an arson attack. Officials have not offered any details as to how or why the officers were released.

"The measures we have taken, especially in the prison system, have generated violent reactions from criminal organisations that seek to intimidate the state," President Guillermo Lasso said on X, formerly Twitter, on Friday night.

Ecuador is facing growing vio-

lence linked to drug-trafficking gangs, which has put a huge strain on the under-resourced and overcrowded prison system.

Hundreds of inmates have been killed in deadly fights in Ecuador's overcrowded jails in recent years.

Such is the influence of narco-politics in Ecuador, its prisons are places of power - it's where those involved in drugs offences get locked away.

But they're also the control centres of many of the cartels and gangs now - so when inmates don't like what the authorities are doing, they make that

known through violence and riots.

The country is less than two months away from the run-off round of presidential elections - a campaign that has been marred by violence and the assassination of a candidate.

Presidential front-runner Luisa Gonzalez said on Friday that she will wear a bulletproof vest while campaigning and will also accept the government's offer of military protection.

Meanwhile, criminal gangs on Friday detonated explosive devices on a bridge in the coastal province of El Oro.

# West Indies lose series decider against Sri Lanka

Antiguan and Leeward Islands batsman Jewel Andrew and Jamaican Adrian Weir both hit half-centuries, but they weren't enough as the West Indies Under-19s came up short by 51 runs in the series-deciding third ODI against Sri Lanka Under-19s at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Friday.

Andrew, a wicket-keeper/batsman, made a top score of 80 from just 64 balls, including eight fours and two four sixes.

Opener Weir hit a 41-ball 52 at the top of the innings, including seven fours and two sixes.

Joshua Dorne also hit 32 as the tourists were restricted to 253 all out in 40.3 overs, 51 runs short of their target.

Vishwa Lahiru starred



West Indies Under-19s batsman Jewel Andrew bats during the third ODI against Sri Lanka Under-19s at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Friday, September 1, 2023. (CWI Media)

with three for 48 from 8.3 overs for Sri Lanka. Si-

Vihes Thewmika (two for 29 from four overs), and Garuka Sanketh (two for 44 from nine) all provided support.

Earlier, Sri Lanka made 304 for eight off their 50 overs after winning the toss and choosing to bat.

Opener Pulindu Perera starred with a mammoth 155 off 140 balls, including 17 fours and four sixes.

Leeward Islands and St. Maarten left-arm pacer Nathan Edward took three for 66 from nine overs for the West Indies, while Deshawn James (two for 70 from 10), and Tarrique Edward (two for 41 from 10) provided good support.

The teams will now turn their attention to a pair of youth Tests with the first beginning today (Monday).

# Rayudu, Muzarabani leave CPL due to personal reasons

Ambati Rayudu has cut his CPL stint with St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots short and left the tournament due to personal reasons.

Rayudu played three innings for Patriots in the ongoing edition, managing 47 runs at 15.66 and a strike rate of 117.50. His scores in the three innings were 0, 32 and 15.

Rayudu was signed up as

a marquee player by Patriots, making him just the second Indian to play in the men's CPL after Pravin Tambe. He had earlier in 2023 retired from international and Indian domestic cricket after helping Chennai Super Kings claim a fifth IPL title.

Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani has also left the tournament for **cont'd on pg 21**



Indian Ambati Rayudu has ended his CPL stint with St. Kitts and Nevis Patriots. (Gettys Images)

## Barbados U-17s clinch two-day title to complete regional double

Barbados came within one wicket of beating Guyana on their way to clinching the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Rising Stars Under-17 Two-Day Championship.

The Bajan youths edged out hosts Trinidad and Tobago on bowling points to complete the Rising Stars 50-over Cup and Two-Day regional youth championship double.

Barbados ended the two-day competition with a total of 42 points, and Trinidad and Tobago finished second with 37.6 points.

The final day of the championship saw both Barbados and T&T pressing for outright wins, however, neither side was able to achieve that target.

Set 237 to win, Guyana ended the match on 199 for nine in their second innings to salvage a draw with Barbados at Inshan Ali Park.

The Guyanese seemed to be batting their way to a com-



Head coach Dexter Toppin, left, and members of the Barbados squad celebrate after winning the CWI Under-17 Rising Stars two-day tournament and being crowned double champions at Inshan Ali Park, Preysal, Trinidad on Thursday, August 31, 2023. (CWI Media)

fortable draw at one stage with Rampersaud Ramnuath steadying things with a half century. But his dismissal for 94 contributed to a tense finish.

Barbados had pressed for an outright win after declaring their second innings on 152 for nine.

The Windward Islands were 155 for four in their second innings to secure a draw against Trinidad and Tobago at the National Cricket Centre in Couva.

T&T resumed on 148 for four in their first innings and were dismissed for 239 to attain a lead of 129 runs.

Promising Windwards all-rounder Kirt Murray, bowling left-arm orthodox spin, was almost single-handedly responsible for dismissing the T&T side, as he ended with outstanding figures of nine for 80. Only No. 10 Alexander Chase escaped being one of his victims.

Murray continued to show his all-round ability in the Windwards' second innings, top-scoring with 53 to frustrate the T&T bowlers, as the Windwards ended the match on 155 for four.

In the other match on Thursday, Jamaica handed the Leeward Islands their third loss in as many matches. The Jamaicans beat the Leewards by 69 runs at Gilbert Park to finish third with 35 points.

### cont'd from pg 20

personal reasons. Muzarabani played three games for Patriots and picked up one wicket at 69 with an economy of 10.61.

The English duo of fast bowler Benny Howell and top order batter Will Smeed have been called up to replace Rayudu and Muzarabani in the Patriots squad.

Patriots are the only team in the competition without a single win in six matches. Since their opening two fixtures got abandoned due to rain, they have lost each of their following four games.

Meanwhile, Carlos Brathwaite has been called up by Barbados Royals as a tempo-

rary replacement for wicketkeeper-batter Donovan Ferreira. Ferreira has been included in South Africa's 16-member squad for their home T20I series against Australia. He is expected to return after his national duties are over.

Ferreira played only one game for Royals in CPL 2023, in which he scored 19 runs. Brathwaite has played 77 CPL matches for four teams and this will be his first stint with Royals.

He has scored 822 runs at 16.11 and picked up 59 wickets at 30.15. This is the first time he will be part of the CPL since the 2021 edition.



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## Knight Riders edge slumping Tallawahs in two-run thriller

Trinbago Knight Riders recorded a dramatic two-run win over defending champions Jamaica Tallawahs in the 2023 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) at the Kensington Ovals in Barbados on Sunday.

Jamaica Tallawahs won the toss and chose to field first, producing a disciplined bowling performance to restrict Trinbago Knight Riders to 142 for eight after 20 overs.

Young Antiguan fast bowler Kelvin Pitman, making his CPL debut, had an outstanding game as he took three wickets, including that of the opposing captain, Kieron Pollard.

The Tallawahs would have a bright start to their chase but would lose four wickets in the first 10 overs to find themselves in trouble.

Waqar Salamkheil and Andre Russell, would prove decisive, taking five wickets between them and restricting runs as the Tallawahs faltered to 140 for seven, losing by just two runs.

The Jamaican franchise got off to an ideal start to the game with experienced seamer Mohammad Amir delivering an opening maiden over.

Openers Martin Gup-til and Mark Deyal would however bat through the



*Trinbago Knight Riders spinner Sunil Narine, left, celebrate against the Jamaica Tallawahs in their CPL encounter at the Kensington Ovals in Barbados on Sunday, September 3, 2023. (CLP/Gettys Images)*

Power play and build a solid foundation to the Knight Riders innings with a 58-run partnership.

The complexion of the tie would then completely change as the Knight Riders lost three wickets, including that of Nicholas Pooran, for just five runs.

Kelvin Pitman, on debut for the Tallawahs, took two of those wickets within the same over in a brilliant display. The Knight Riders attempts to accelerate the scoring were derailed as they would lose five wickets in the last five overs to

finish on 142 for eight.

Jamaica Tallawahs opened their chase with captain Brandon King and Alex Hales, the duo also batting through the power play as they put on a 57-run partnership.

Brandon King lost his wicket to the leg spin of Salamkheil; Jermaine Blackwood was also dismissed four balls later to a super Nicholas Pooran catch, and when Shamarh Brooks departed the very next ball, the Tallawahs looked in trouble at 58 for three.

More wickets would tumble and despite a late flurry of runs from Chris Green and Imad Wasim, they would ultimately lose by two runs in a nail-biting finish.

Trinbago Knight Riders will look to continue their winning form as they play their next four games in front of a home crowd.

Scores: Trinbago Knight Riders 142-8 (Pollard 33, Tucker 30, Deyal 30; Amir 3-20, Pitman 3-27) beat Jamaica Tallawahs 140-7 (King 36, Green 32; Russell 3-34, Salamkheil 2-21.

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## ABFA adds Ferguson as Benna Boys' interim assistant coach

Manager Fernando Abraham has confirmed that the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association (ABFA) has added Anthony Ferguson of the United Kingdom as interim assistant head coach of the senior men's national team.

Abraham said Ferguson has joined Michael Donaldson and George "Sowa" Dublin as assistant coaches in support of head coach Mikele Leigertwood, who is based in England.

Abraham said Ferguson and Dublin have been working with the senior national training squad for the past three weeks in preparation for Antigua and Barbuda's engagement in League B, Group D of the CONCACAF Nations League (CNL), against Guyana, Puerto Rico, and the Bahamas.

Antigua and Barbuda's Benna Boys will begin their CNL campaign at home against Guyana at the ABFA's Technical Center at Paynters on Saturday, August 9th.

Ferguson has been in charge of the Benna Boys preparations in the absence of Leigertwood, who is fulfilling a contractual commitment as a Professional Development Phase Coach at Reading Football Club in the English Football Championship.

Leigertwood is expected to travel to Antigua this week to take charge of the Benna Boys team during their encounter against Guyana.

Ferguson joined the Antigua and Barbuda setup on a short-term basis earlier this year, but his role has now been made interim until the end of November.

Ferguson has a wealth of experience in coaching, curriculum development, player pathways, and leadership. He will lead talent identification for the association and work with lo-

cal talent in order to develop a consistent programme of delivery.

In his role with the ABFA, Ferguson will work closely with the General Secretary Rohan Hector, Technical Director Sowerby Gomez, and Leigertwood in developing and overseeing a structured programme for players and coaches across all age groups for both the men's and women's pathways.

As assistant head coach, Ferguson will be responsible for local staff management along with session planning and delivery.

He will also work to foster a holistic development programme for the men's under 15s, under 17s, and women's pathway.

Ferguson said of the appointment, "This is an amazing and unique role. It's an exciting opportunity to work

with such talented, enthusiastic, and passionate people who are keen to explore and develop themselves as well as the current and future players. The additional fact that it's such a beautiful and welcoming country makes the whole project much more enjoyable."

In addition to coaching, teaching, and leadership qualifications and expertise, Ferguson holds the Premier League Elite Head of Coaches award and the esteemed League Managers Association Diploma in Management.

He has considerable experience as a Coach Developer, having worked with the Football Association as a leading tutor on various high-level courses and with coaches and players at Reading, AFC Wimbledon, Tottenham Hotspur and the Bangladesh Football Federation.



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The Pigotts Bullets team celebrate after winning the inaugural Parham Super League football competition at the Parham playing field on Saturday, September 2, 2023. (Photo courtesy football profile 268)

## Pigotts Bullets win Parham Super League

The Pigotts Bullets have won the inaugural Parham Super League football competition.

They won the title by prevailing 3-2 against SAP in the final at the Parham playing field on Saturday night.

Akeem Isaac put the Pigotts Bullets ahead with a 24th-minute conversion. But Emmerson Henry scored an equalizer for SAP to ensure both teams finished the first half deadlocked at 1-1 at halftime.

Tijahno Jarvis gave SAP a 2-1 lead with a conversion early in the second half, but the Pigotts Bullets drew level

via a conversion by Tyrique Thwaites.

Vashami Allen then scored the winner to snatch victory for the Pigotts Bullets.

Both teams booked their spots in the final by recording wins in the semi-finals at the same venue on Thursday evening.

SAP beat host Parham 3-0 in the second semi-final. Emmerson Henry, Teriq Highland, and Peter Byers each had a conversion for SAP.

Pigotts Bullets prevailed 2-1 against Greenbay Hoppers in the first semi-final.

Akeem Isaac and Jamarlie Stevens each converted once for the Pigotts Bullets, while Howayne James scored for the Greenbay Hoppers.

Six teams, divided into two zones, participated in the Parham Super League. The top two teams at the end of the preliminary rounds in each zone advanced to the semi-finals.

The teams were using the Parham Super League as part of their ongoing preparations ahead of the official start of the 2023-24 Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) national domestic season.