

NATIONAL POLICY ON MENTAL ILLNESS IN THE MAKING

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Representatives from XandaPay Ltd. present a cheque to Head of Site, UWI Global Campus, Antigua and Barbuda, Coleen Letlow, centre, and Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams. *Story on page 4.*

Local News



A national policy on mental illness is in the making

The Cabinet is currently holding discussions leading to the formulation of a national policy on mental illness.

To this end, the Cabinet invited the Minister of Social Transformation, Senator Samantha Marshall to its meeting on Wednesday, to examine the nation's policy on handling persons suffering from mental health challenges.

"The Sir Lester Bird Medical Center is not designed to treat mental patients. The Clarevue Mental Hospital is the place where mental health issues are to be treated since the psychi-



atrist is assigned to that hospital; however, patients who are in a state of readiness to return to their homes have been abandoned by family members," according to Cabinet sources.

The Minister also reported that Alzheimer's is

affecting a larger population of the nation's elderly citizens. Daycare centers for the elderly are likely to become necessary throughout Antigua and Barbuda.

On a related subject, the Cabinet was reminded that the CARE Project exists to

provide living quarters to children with extreme disabilities. The youthful students attending the Adele School are differently abled. Several are autistic and many can learn to be productive.

It was reported that one of the highest mathematical grades achieved among all students in a particular age group was an autistic student who mastered mathematics.

The Minister also reported that many of our young people are performing really well in NGOs that are training youthful leaders for the future.

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The entry of illegal firearms into the country is still a concern

Following a recent spike in gun-related crimes, the Cabinet is giving serious thought to finding solutions before the situation gets out of hand.

At its weekly meeting on Wednesday, the Cabinet invited the Commissioner of Police, Atlee Rodney, and six of the top brass of the Police Force, along with the Chief of Defense Staff of the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force, Colonel Telbert Benjamin, to the meeting to discuss how the use of illegal firearms can be further curbed.

“The Police reported that 35 unlawful firearms were seized during the stop-and-search operations which have been carried out by joint Police and Military personnel. A number of options were examined for increased sentences of those persons found with unlicensed firearms, whatever may be their purpose,” the Cabinet Notes disclosed.

It was also reported that several businesspersons may have unlawfully acquired firearms, after being denied

an application for a firearm license, to protect themselves.

The Notes added that criminals have both acquired or rented firearms to carry out robberies and other criminal acts that involve the use, or threat of use, of a firearm. There will be further consultations between the Attorney General’s Office and the Royal Police Force to determine the extent to which the law, governing punishment for possession of unlicensed firearms should be strengthened.

New SoE sworn into office

The new Supervisor of Elections (SoE) Ian Hughes has been formally sworn into office, the third person to hold the post since Independence in 1981.

The Oath of Office as SoE was administered at Government House by Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, who noted that Hughes comes to the position with much institutional knowledge and as an officer at the Antigua and Barbuda Election Commission (ABEC) Office for several years, he naturally had an

understanding of the people with whom he would now be supervising.

“Sometimes, because you came up in the ranks there will be times when you have to be firm; however, I trust that your Christian upbringing and your experience will assist you in navigating any issue that may arise from time to time,” he cautioned.

The Governor General noted that in any democracy an organization such as ABEC plays a critical role in giving citizens the con-



fidence that they will be able to freely vote and that their votes will be counted. “Not only are people in the country looking at ABEC with expectations, but also outsiders who are looking in. That is why entities such as CARICOM and the Commonwealth Secretariat send observers to monitor the conduct of our elections. We must therefore operate a system about which our people can be justly proud,” he advised.

Sir Rodney urged Hughes to ‘do good to God

and the people of Antigua and Barbuda’ and to carry out his duties without fear or favour.

The new SoE was named to replace Dame Lorna Simon who retired from the post earlier this year.

One of his first official responsibilities will be to oversee the conduct of the by-election in St. Mary’s South. Hughes said preparations are quite advanced and all he is waiting on is for the announcement of the date and the issuance of the Writ of Election.



Local company makes a significant donation to UWI Global Campus

A local company that operates in the fintech space has made a significant donation to the University of the West Indies Global Campus, formally UWI Open Campus.

The company, XandaPay Ltd. has donated \$60,000 to fund the education of two students – one male and the other female – as they pursue studies at the institution.

A brief ceremony was held at Government House on Wednesday where senior officials of the company made the presentation to the Head of Site, UWI Global Campus, Antigua and Barbuda, Coleen Letlow.

Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, who serves as co-patron for the UWI Global Campus endowment fundraisers, with fellow Alumni, and who participated in the hand-over ceremony, acknowledged the generosity and vision of XandaPay, a Small/Me-

dium Enterprise based right here in Antigua and Barbuda, under the leadership of Director, Jeffrey Dupuis and Chief Operations and Technology Officer Chantel Christian. XandaPay has achieved significant milestones in the realm of online services.

“The XandaPay ‘Youth Empowerment Scholarship’ is a profound initiative that aligns perfectly with our shared belief that investing in education enriches individual lives and propels our society forward. This scholarship program is designed to provide full tuition support to two exceptional students, who not only exhibit outstanding academic merit but also face financial challenges in pursuing their education. Over the course of three years, XandaPay’s contribution will exceed 60,000 EC dollars, bolstering the UWI Global Campus’ Endowment Fund and leaving an enduring impact



Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, right, with Head of Site, UWI Global Campus, Antigua and Barbuda, Coleen Letlow

on our community,” he noted.

In expressing her thanks and appreciation to XandaPay, the UWI Global Campus head spoke of the power of education to transform lives. “We are grateful to XandaPay for this life-changing opportunity. The impact of your contribution to education will be remembered and celebrated in this lifetime, and for a long time to come. This gift is a reminder that the core promise of education is its potential to transform lives,” Letlow added.

Speaking on behalf of his company, Dupuis said the donation to the Youth Empowerment Scholarship, signals his company’s desire to give back to the community and education in particular.

‘After exploring many ideas, we found consensus on this one - investing in the

education of your youth. It is my view, and that of our company – XandaPay Limited - that education is not just a bridge but a key. A key that can unlock doors of opportunities, bringing the seemingly unattainable within grasp and propelling individuals to ascend the ladder of social mobility,” he stated.

The two students who will benefit have not been selected as there is still time for those who are in need and are interested to apply.

XandaPay is a Fintech company whose flagship product is XandaPay a Payroll and Human Resources Management software program developed by Mr. Jeffrey Alexander Dupuis starting back in 2006. It is currently being used by various companies and clients to streamline their payroll and human resource operations.



Redonda attains 'protected area' status

Redonda, the small island located west of Antigua, which is officially part of the state of Antigua and Barbuda, has been granted 'protected area' status.

The new designation is the result of the ongoing efforts of the government of Antigua and Barbuda, particularly the Department of Environment (DoE), and local and international conservation NGOs, including the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG), Fauna & Flora, and Rewild.

Executive Director of the EAG, Arica Hill, said the designation was done by the government and it took effect last month when the matter was published in the Official Gazette. It was done under the Environmental Protection and Management Act of Antigua and Barbuda.

"The newly designated Redonda Ecosystem Reserve is the largest marine protected area in the Eastern Caribbean with many species of ani-

mals that are not found elsewhere in the world. Additionally, there are other species near extinction, so we need a complete and consistent management of this fragile area," she explained.

Management of the area, she noted, is critical from a conservation point of view, from a tourism point of view, and for research. She expressed delight that there has been a meeting of the minds with so many different entities involved both locally and internationally. He also expressed the hope that the collaboration exhibited by the different agencies on behalf of Redonda will transfer to similar working relationships on projects here in Antigua.

In a joint statement, the entities described Redonda as 'a Caribbean island that has transformed from a barren moonscape to a lush wildlife sanctuary in just a few short years and has been made one of the biggest protected areas in the Caribbean.'

It explained that the new protected area - the Redonda Ecosystem Reserve - covers almost 30,000 hectares of land and sea, including the entire island, its surrounding seagrass meadows, and a 180 km² coral reef. Though largely unexplored, the new protected area is believed to contain at least 30 globally threatened and near-threatened species, along with globally important seabird colonies.

The designation follows the success of a major restoration programme, launched in 2016, that has transformed Redonda from a barren landscape with the appearance of a 'dusty moonscape' to a thriving haven of biodiversity. The first stages of the programme - led by EAG, DoE, and Fauna & Flora with support from the British Mountaineering Council and other leading conservation groups - primarily involved the removal of invasive species from the island, allowing native species to recover.



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The Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. and Greenbay Primary School enter into partnership

The Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting youth development, has announced the signing of a partnership agreement with the Greenbay Primary School. This agreement aims to provide essential Human Resources support to enhance the school's breakfast program and present an opportunity for the donation of 30 school bags to students.

The collaboration between the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. and the Greenbay Primary School seeks to address the critical need for a nutritious breakfast for all students. Studies have shown, that providing a healthy breakfast improves academic performance, attendance rates, and overall well-being among students. Recognizing the importance of this initiative, the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. has stepped forward to extend its support.

Under this signed agreement, the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. will provide trained Human Resources to assist in preparing and serving the meals as part of the school's breakfast program. The dedicated team will work closely with the school administration, teach-



Michael C. Joseph and Ms. Claudina Charles- Principal (Ag.)

ers, and other stakeholders to ensure a smooth operation and provide guidance in maintaining nutritional standards.

In addition to the committed Human Resources support, the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. will seize this opportunity to donate 30 school bags to the Greenbay Primary School. These school bags are intended to assist students in carrying their books, supplies, and personal belongings, thereby enhancing

their overall educational experience.

"We are thrilled to enter into this partnership with the Greenbay Primary School," said Michael Joseph, Co-founder of the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc.

"By providing Human Resources support for their breakfast program and donating school bags, we hope to contribute to the student's well-being and academic success. We firmly believe that education is the foundation for a prosperous society, and we are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of these young individuals."

The collaboration between the Fire Phoenix Foundation Inc. and the Greenbay Primary School exemplifies the power of community engagement and the importance of cross-sector partnerships. By working together, both organizations aim to create a nurturing environment that fosters educational excellence, health, and well-being among the students.



Antigua and Barbuda to support World Wellness Weekend

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority will join wellness lifestyle enthusiasts in Antigua and Barbuda, to celebrate World Wellness Weekend from September 15 – 17 2023.

A global event, World Wellness Weekend supports the United Nations' third Sustainable Development Goal - "Good Health and Well-being for All" by promoting 5 Pillars of wellness: Sleep and Creativity, Nutrition & Immunity, Movement & Vitality, Mindfulness & Serenity, Sense of Purpose & Solidarity.

One hundred and fifty countries and 8,000 venues will recognize the weekend with free-of-charge, outdoor and indoor activities hosted by World Wellness Weekend Ambassadors, Coordinators, and Wellness Leaders.

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA), is committed to promoting the country's wellness attributes and has partnered with wellness practitioners to enhance and promote the initiative, spearheaded by the World Wellness Weekend Ambassadors in Antigua and Barbuda.

In Antigua and Barbuda, activities will be hosted by the 2023 Wellness Leader in Antigua and Barbuda of World Wellness Weekend



Keisha Schahaff - a Health and Life Coach and Astronaut, and World Wellness Weekend Ambassadors Tricia Greenaway - Founder and CEO of Wellness Footprints Antigua, and Alejandro Leo - Wellness & Spa Professional and Sustainability Patron at Jumby Bay.

Activities will kick off on September 15, with the general public being invited to start their day at Darkwood Beach with an energizing tai chi session at 7 a.m., returning to the beach at 5 p.m. to enjoy the mesmerizing sunset and unwind with a stress-releasing yoga session.

The following day, September 16, a fast-paced so-

carobics session at the Martello Tower in Barbuda will get participants moving, while over in Antigua, mat Pilates, and Vinyasa Flow yoga classes at the Energie Gym in English Harbour from 8 a.m. will invigorate attendees.

The weekend will culminate with an early morning hike starting at 5 a.m. from Galleon Beach, taking a moderate trail to The Blockhouse, and yoga at the magical sunrise hour.

As part of the World Wellness Weekend activities, the Tourism Authority has organized nutritional talks at select primary and secondary schools. Joining the Antigua and Barbuda

Tourism Authority, Wellness Weekend Leader and Ambassadors at the school talks will be guest speakers passionate about wellness and nutrition including Queen of Carnival Ischikelle Corbin, Charity Dublin, and other nutritionists from the Ministry of Health, in addition to a representative from the Barbuda Health and Wellness Clinic.

The ABTA's Wellness Pillar Lead, Tameka Wharton said, "World Wellness Weekend allows us to showcase our wellness providers and their services on an international stage. And, most importantly through our promotion of the activities available within the destination, to encourage our residents and visitors to actively pursue wellness and take advantage of the plethora of wellness offerings in Antigua and Barbuda."

Persons wishing to attend the free World Wellness Weekend activities or host their own World Wellness Weekend activity should contact the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority at info@visitaandb.com or call 1 268 562 7600.

Learn more about Antigua and Barbuda's wellness experiences on offer through the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority's Wellness Guide on www.visitantiguabarbuda.com/wellness-guide

More than 100 packages distributed by local resort and philanthropist

Sandals Grande Antigua Resort joined with local philanthropist Koren Norton recently, to make presentations of school supplies to youngsters in various local communities as part of the annual back-to-school initiative.

School items donated included learning flashcards, paint, crayons, pencils, exercise books, and school bags.

Sandals Public Relations Manager Leon Norville said, “This year we opted to collaborate with Koren to further expand the reach of this initiative that is executed annually by our company.

“We do realize that sometimes, to create a substantial impact it is critical to build relationships with those who have direct access to our children in need.

“Koren runs an excellent programme and we were happy to support this very important cause.”

Over 100 packages were created and distributed by Norton and the team to students across the island with a focus on seven communities from Villa to Sea View Farm.

Sandals Grande Antigua and the Sandals Foundation have over the years, contributed significantly to the development of many life-changing projects and initiatives across Antigua and Barbuda.

In September, the Sandals team will take to the island’s beaches to execute an annual coastal clean-up as part of International Coastal Clean-up Day and in October; attention will be focused on Island Run Antigua.



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Statement by the Honourable Gaston A. Browne, Prime Minister, on Africa-Caricom Day 2023

On behalf of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, I wish to join the Caribbean Community in the commemoration of Africa-CARICOM Day 2023. This auspicious event emerged out of the historic Africa-CARICOM Summit held on 7th September, 2021 with an aim to enhance social, economic and cultural connections between the Caribbean and the African continent. I am pleased to recall that the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda led this charge to establish the link between the African continent and the countries of the CARICOM.

In an effort to improve people-to-people relations, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has determined to establish a direct air transport route between the African continent and the Caribbean. This visionary approach will ensure that new trading routes are established along with new opportunities for the tourism sector. My Government views this venture as a necessary element to increase trade, investment and people-to-people connectivity through the Orange Economy. Furthermore, the partnership between LIAT 2020 and Air Peace Limited will result in improved regional connectivity which is critical to the integration movement to which all CARICOM Member States subscribe.

Today, two years following the historic Summit, while the momentum of the Summit propels our binding ties, we are furthering and deepening our relations with our brothers and sisters of Africa through frequent dialogue on a bilateral basis, and collaboration within public-private-partnerships. We have also seen increased coopera-



tion through multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) which has ultimately assisted the citizens of this Region.

The Caribbean and Africa have had a long 500-year history. It has been well documented that many of our forebearers were plucked from Africa during the dark period of the transatlantic slave trade. However, emerging from this horrid history were a resilient people who, to this day, have sought to shape their societies and countries in our own unique manner. Our governments have also sought to improve the lives and livelihood of our people through strategic alliances aimed at lessening our dependence on the global North, while furthering economic prosperity and enabling justifiable pride. With shared values and collaboration based on key principles, the future of African-Caribbean relations will only grow from strength to strength.

It is with pride that, on this day, Antigua and Barbuda can report that it has engaged in deepening relations with the African continent through its

foreign policy initiatives. The establishment of the Embassies of the Eastern Caribbean States in the Kingdom of Morocco, in 2019, along with the Member States of the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States, has highlighted the importance and our determination to engage directly with Africa. Additionally, the opening of the AFREXIMBANK Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Branch in Barbados of this year has facilitated new trade and investment opportunities for the private sector of CARICOM, which will unquestionably strengthen South-South cooperation.

I wish to commend the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission which has organized activities to commemorate this important date in our twin-island nation. These activities which will occur on the 7th and 8th September will comprise of school tours; to a youth led panel discussion; and an evening of poetry, jazz, spoken word, music and song. The inclusion of the youth in these activities will further assist to heighten greater awareness and opportunities between the Caribbean and Africa.

In closing, I wish to encourage all citizens to embrace Africa-CARICOM Day which not only seeks to highlight our historical linkage but will enforce the bonds of our friendship. I believe that the vision of great leaders such as Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, Nelson Mandela and V.C. Bird to see greater unity between the Caribbean and Africa is being realized through our people. Let us explore the opportunities that exist amongst our Regions and embrace all possibilities to drive our development through a shared vision and common purpose.

Africa-CARICOM Day



Africa-CARICOM Day September 7th

By Dorbrene E. O'Marde
Chairperson, Antigua and Barbuda
Reparations Support Commission

The Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission joins the rest of the Caribbean in the celebration of Africa-CARICOM Day on September 07th, 2023.

The Caribbean philosopher CLR James in an essay titled 'Mighty Sparrow' reminds us that 'the recognition of Africanism, the agitation for recognition of Africa, the literary creation of an African ideology, one powerful sphere of African independence, all were directly the creation of West Indians.'

The yearning for a homeland, for Africa - understandably has been strongest among those who were forcibly removed from the continent.

The development of a Pan-African philosophy emerged through the work of great West Indians such as Haitian sociologist Dr. Price Mars, Martiniquan politician and writer Aime Cesaire, and Edward Wilmot Blyden born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Henry Sylvester Williams, Trinidadian born, as early as 1897 had formed the African Association to promote and protect the interests of people of African descent.

Four years later in 1901, he organized the first Pan-African Conference.

It was that thinking that led to a re-centering of Africa and thrust the continent onto the world stage of the twentieth century.

Prophet Marcus Garvey took the baton, he and others including Trinidad-born George Padmore, political organizer and theoretician worked to 'achieve the heroic feat of placing Africa and Africans and the people of African descent upon the map of

modern history'.

There is much to learn about Africa-Caribbean relationships in the study of the period 1890 to 1940 when there seemed to be a pause to the brilliant individual contributions.

Since then, until recently, African-Caribbean relations were conducted 'via an array of different groupings and configurations operating within the structures of multilateral organizations as well as at the regional and national levels.'

We can name – for example, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) organized around an agenda of solidarity in pursuit of independence; The United Nations: G77+ China; The African, Caribbean Pacific Group of Countries (ACP); The Commonwealth and The WTO. [Much of the following history is due to Dr. Len Ishmael in her essay 'Under Invested The Caribbean-African Relationship]

More specifically however a number of African Union (AU) and & CARICOM frameworks have emerged aimed at promoting more focused region-to-region relations between Africa and the English-speaking Caribbean. The first African Diaspora Forum was held in Washington DC in December 2002.

The South African, African Union and Caribbean Diaspora Conference of 2005, was convened in Jamaica under the theme 'Towards Unity and United Action by Africans and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean for a Better World: The Case of South Africa' where a call was reiterated for the need to revitalize the "historical and cultural bonds between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean, to establish mechanisms for building stronger political and economic relationships.

We have witnessed since 2003 visits to the region by various Heads of African countries starting with that of President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki to attend the CARICOM conference where he proposed an 'African Renaissance' to encompass "all Africans, both in Africa and the Africa Diaspora - addressing poverty, under development and marginalization.' Many CARICOM leaders have staged official visits to the continent.

The Global African Diaspora Summit was held in Johannesburg, South Africa 2012 under the leadership of the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma.

A Development of the Diaspora Initiative which was adopted by the AU's Executive Council in Maputo, Mozambique, in July 2003.

In 2013, the UN launched the International Decade of People of African Descent (2015-2024). CARICOM's Secretary General and the AU's Deputy Chair have met to initiate further action on issues of mutual interest on the global stage – to include climate change.

Space does not allow for a further detailed description of the various attempts over the last five years to reassure both regions of the importance of their relationship, promote cooperation, and strengthen the deep bond of friendship.

Special mention however must be made of the 2018 CARICOM-AU meeting with the International Civil Aviation Organization where objectives included the boosting of trade and tourism between the regions and strategies were discussed to improve connectivity between the Caribbean and Africa.

This journey led to the 2021 inaugural Africa-CARICOM Summit
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under the theme ‘UNITY ACROSS CONTINENTS AND OCEANS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEEPENING INTEGRATION COMMUNIQUÉ’ with the objective ‘to reaffirm the bonds of ancestry and friendship between Africa and CARICOM and to build a foundation for lasting robust socio-economic and political engagements as well as partnerships between the two regions for a collective prosperous future’.

The Summit was chaired by Hon. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda

The inaugural Session of the Africa-CARICOM Summit – inter alia - recalled the spirit and vision of Pan-Africanism championed by African and Caribbean forefathers in the first Pan-African conference of 1900 and affirmed the commitment of the current African-Caribbean leaders to

revive and renew its tenets to affirm the unity and common aspirations of all people of African descent for a fairer more inclusive global order.

The Summit called for Member States to address issues of climate change, reparatory justice/reparations, and the need to foster increased trade, investment, air travel, and maritime shipping links with a view to realizing greater economic integration and enhanced people-to-people contact between Africa and the Caribbean, and to this end committed to establishing a Multilateral Air Services Agreement, to conclude an agreement to abolish double taxation, and to review the requirement for travel visas, and establish regular weekly direct flights between African and Caribbean regions.

Leaders committed to institutionalize cooperation between Africa and CARICOM and the diaspora by

designating September 7th of every year as Africa-CARICOM Day and called on Member States to support this initiative.

ABRSC, in recognition of the day, stages a panel discussion ‘YOUTH and Reparations in the context of AFRICA-CARICOM unity’. Speakers will include representatives of the ABRSC, CARICOM Ambassadors, National Youth Parliamentarians, The Guyana Youth Reparations Movement, and Spoken word artists.

We specifically highlight the commitment of the AU to support the CARICOM reparations claim for historical crimes.

We call on those of us of African descent to give deeper consideration to the wide range of potential social and economic benefits that can accrue from solidifying the relationship between us and the mother continent.

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Africa proposes global carbon taxes to fight climate change

By Wedaeli Chibelushi

African leaders have proposed a global carbon tax regime in a joint declaration.

The Nairobi Declaration capped the three-day Africa Climate Summit in Kenya's capital.

The document, released on Wednesday, demanded that major polluters commit more resources to help poorer nations.

African heads of state said they will use it as the basis of their negotiating position at November's COP28 summit.

The African Climate Summit was dominated by discussions on how to mobilise financing to adapt to increasingly extreme weather, conserve natural resources and develop renewable energy.

Africa is among the most vulnerable continents to the impact of climate change, but according to researchers, it only receives about 12% of the nearly \$300bn (£240bn) in annual financing it needs to cope.

The Nairobi Declaration urged world leaders "to rally behind the proposal for a global carbon taxation regime including a carbon tax on fossil fuel trade, maritime transport and aviation, that may also be augmented by a global financial transaction tax".

It said such measures



Kenyan President William Ruto hosted the Africa Climate Summit.

would ensure large-scale financing for climate-related investments and insulate the issue of tax rises from geopolitical and domestic political pressures.

Around two dozen countries currently impose taxes on carbon, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but the idea of a global carbon tax regime has failed to gain much traction.

On Tuesday, Kenya's President William Ruto referred to past proposals in the European Union for a financial transaction tax.

Conservation groups in 2011 said money raised from the tax should finance environmental priorities, but the European Commission's proposal never won the unanimous approval required from the European Council to become law.

Joab Bwire Okanda, a senior advisor at the Christian Aid charity, said the call for a global carbon tax was welcome but that "to make polluters really pay, false solutions like carbon credits that allow polluters a free ride without taking meaningful action need to be consigned to the dustbin".

Some activists say the credits, which allow polluters to offset emissions by funding green activities, are a pretext for big polluters to keep emitting carbon dioxide.

Mr Ruto said international governments, development banks, private investors and philanthropists committed a combined \$23bn (£18bn) to green projects over the three days, including hundreds of millions to a major carbon

markets initiative.

But African leaders acknowledged that those kinds of investments only scratch the surface of the continent's financial needs and said more systemic changes were needed.

Some analysts said the summit had not focused enough on how to help Africans adapt to extreme weather. Protesters also criticised the conference, demonstrating outside the event against Africa's plan to sell carbon credits to foreign countries.

Several foreign companies and countries have committed hundreds of millions in carbon credit purchases from the Africa Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI), including the United Arab Emirates, which pledged to buy \$450m (£358m).

Arm Holdings: Chip giant hopes for market value of more than \$50bn

Arm, the UK-based chip designer, is hoping to clinch a market value of more than \$50bn (£40bn) in its first sale of shares to the public since 2016.

The company, which designs chips for devices including smartphones and game consoles, is seeking to raise nearly \$5bn in the listing in the US.

Expected to be the biggest offering of the year, it is seen as a test of market confidence.

It follows heavy lobbying from the UK government to list in London.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had personally intervened in talks before the decision to pursue the listing on the Nasdaq was announced earlier this year.

Chief executive Rene Haas has said the company will keep its material intellectual property, headquarters and operations in the UK.

Jamie Urquhart is a co-founder of Arm and previously held chief operating officer and chief strategy officer roles at the business.

He told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that it was clear that London was not the right market for Arm and the decision to not list here was "as an indictment of the economics" referring to the UK economic and labour outlook.

Mr Urquhart also sug-



Arm's chips are used in devices such as smartphones.

gested that British export restrictions on technology risked holding back the industry going forward.

A star of the British tech industry, Arm Holdings estimates that 70% of the world's population uses products that rely on its chips, including nearly all of the world's smartphones.

The company is owned by Japanese investment giant Softbank, which took over the company in 2016 in a deal that valued the firm at \$32bn.

Prior to the purchase, it was listed in both London and New York for 18 years.

Softbank will continue to own 90% of the company's shares after the share sale, which is smaller than

initially proposed. Shares are expected to start trading next week.

In a regulatory filing on Tuesday, Arm said it was selling 95,500,000 shares in the deal at a price expected to be between \$47 and \$51 per share. That would put its market value at between roughly \$50bn and \$54bn.

It said it had already lined up some of its big-name customers, including Apple, Google and Nvidia, as investors, who have committed to buying about \$735m worth.

Softbank, which faced big losses on investments such as co-working firm WeWork, had previously explored selling Arm to Nvidia in a deal worth

about \$40bn.

That effort was dropped in 2022 after authorities raised competition concerns.

The latest plan offers a way to gradually reduce its holdings.

With semiconductors at the frontline of the power struggle between the US and China over technology, the share offering is being closely watched.

China accounts for about 25% of the company's sales, which have been hurt by a slump in smartphone shipments in recent months.

The company has previously reported that overall revenue was roughly flat for the year ending 31 March.

Guyana to deploy comprehensive strategy to improve Math score

President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali has expressed concern about the mathematics pass rate of Guyanese students.

Ali told students, parents and stakeholders at the launch of the Victoria Lily Primary School in Tuschen yesterday that his government is deploying a comprehensive strategy, which will involve incorporating additional tools and increasing the number of hours, dedicated to mathematics.

“We cannot continue with the existing pass rates in mathematics. It is unacceptable... I am of the view that perhaps create additional compulsory hours for mathematics in the secondary school system, especially at the exam level,” he said



President Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali is greeted by students of the new Victoria Lily Primary School in Tuschen on Tuesday as he launched the school.

“And for us also to move of learning outcomes in mathematics.”

Ali said the government is also moving to address bureaucracy within

the education system for easier access to basic supplies for classrooms.

Ali told the students and their parents that now is a great time for education in Guyana as the government plans to increase resources so all students have equal access to education.

The new Victoria Lily Primary School was constructed at a cost of GYD\$200 million.

It can accommodate over 300 pupils and is equipped with 12 classrooms, each of which is outfitted with Wi-Fi.

The school is classified as a C grade institution and is the first in Guyana where Spanish will be taught to students from Grades one to five.

Grenada: Opposition Leader defends decision not to hold convention

CMC - The leader of the main opposition New National party (NNP), Dr Keith Mitchell, says the party will not be moved into calling a long overdue convention “because some people’s personal interest is behind a convention”.

Mitchell, who led the party into defeat in the June 2022 general election, said the convention would only take place when the party is satisfied that it is ready for the political event.

September marks 21 months since any constitutionally mandated organ of the party, except the executive has held any caucus and is the longest period since the NNP has either held a

convention or a general council.

“It seems like some people’s concentration is convention, convention, convention,” Mitchell told a news conference, adding “you have to organise your party before you go to a convention.”

“The convention is the final event especially when you are talking about changing of the guards and that’s possible, so the organisation must be in place and the executive of the party, the leadership of the party makes those decisions.

“I get the impression that some people feel is one of us or two of us in the party making a decision,” said



Political leader of the New National Party (NNP), Dr Keith Mitchell.

the 76-year-old Mitchell, who Mitchell, 76, who served as prime minister

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Regional News



Bahamas opposition calls cabinet reshuffle 'lipstick on a pig'

Chairman of the Free National Movement (FNM) Dr Duane Sands has said the Bahamian Prime Minister's recent cabinet reshuffle was "an absolute waste of time".

In a damning response to the reshuffle, Sands said Prime Minister Philip Davis was attempting to put "lipstick on a pig".

Sands, who served as Health Minister under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr Hubert Minnis, said Davis missed an opportunity to alleviate the fears of Bahamians as the country battles with surging crime and violence by leaving Wayne Munroe as minister of national security.

He stated: "Education has produced the worst results in history, yet instead of strengthening the team at education, the prime minister decides to weaken the leadership by removing the parliamentary sec-

retary (Zane Lightbourne). This was an opportunity to send a new message to education, motivate teachers, administrators and parents to regain hope and enthusiasm for this critical area".

Sands questioned why Myles LaRoda was moved from being the minister responsible for the National Insurance Board (NIB) in favour of Alfred Sears.

"Was he punished for warning the public about the truth with his frequent alarm bells with respect to the dangers brewing at NIB? Well, Minister LaRoda is now sitting in the [Office of the Prime Minister] with nothing to do," Sands commented.

"Moving to Sears, who is now responsible for, after his disastrous tenure at works, perhaps he's now being set up to fail at NIB and immigration."

Sands also took the prime minister to task for



Dr Duane Sands, FNM chairman.

saying his government was responsible for the economic boom the country has witnessed in recent months.

"The prime minister started by trying to take credit for a globally recovering economy and the pent up demand in tourism while refusing to acknowledge that the heavy lifting of his predecessors is really what resulted in the success that he's reaping," said Sands.

He stated it's clear that the prime minister has no plan to help Bahamians in their struggle to survive.

"We have a cost of living crisis, a crime crisis, a health crisis and this little shuffle around reminds us that even after putting lipstick on a pig, it is still a pig," he said.

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ter from 1995 to 2008 and from 2013 to 2022, and had promised to give up the leadership of the party at the next.

However, he has hinted at remaining at the helm if delegates vote for him to remain as leader.

"So, to go and have a convention without organising your party and putting structures in place will be absolutely politically backward and foolish and we don't operate in that manner. So, we are on the ground," said Mitchell who admitted that the party lost the last general election because it had lost support on the

ground.

The defeat to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) came after the NNP had won the previous two general elections by capturing all 15 seats in the Parliament.

"And it was our fault, in the lack of organisation, the lack of contact with the ground that we lost but the work is taking place now, I cannot tell you that I am extremely happy with the work in every single area but we are certainly working and will continue to do so," he said.

The NDC won the polls by a 9-6 margin, securing 31,432 of the popular votes as against 28,960 votes for the NNP.

Cuba uncovers Russia-Ukraine war trafficking ring

By **Vanessa Buschschröter**

The Cuban foreign ministry says it has uncovered a human trafficking ring aimed at recruiting Cubans to fight for Russia in its war in Ukraine.

It said that Cubans living in Russia and “even some in Cuba” had been “incorporated into the military forces taking part in the war in Ukraine”.

Cuba is a close ally of Russia, but it stressed in its statement “it does not form part of the conflict in Ukraine”.

There has not yet been a response from Russia.

The Cuban foreign ministry did not specify who was behind the operation.

Last August, President Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian military to increase its number of soldiers after its combat forces suffered heavy losses in Ukraine.

A Russian newspaper, Ryazan Gazette, has since reported that Cubans living in Russia had joined Russian combat forces fighting in Ukraine in exchange for a promise to receive Russian citizenship.

There have also been videos claiming to show Serbian volunteers training to fight alongside Russian troops in Ukraine.

While it is not clear if the Cuban foreign ministry statement is linked to the re-



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez (left) met his Russian counterpart in April.

ports in Ryazan Gazette, it states that “Cuba has a firm and clear historical position against the use of mercenaries”.

“We will act decisively against those who... engage in human trafficking with the aim of recruiting Cuban citizens to bear arms in any country,” the statement reads.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez published the statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, adding that Cuba was using “the force of the law” to counter attempts to recruit its citizens.

The statement strikes a rare dissonant note in recent Cuban-Russian relations,

which has seen the two countries forging tighter trade ties.

Just over two months ago, the defence ministers of Cuba and Russia held talks in Moscow, and the Russian foreign minister travelled to the Communist-run island in April as part of a tour of Russia’s Latin American allies.

Cuba has been a close ally of Russia since the Cuban revolution, which saw Fidel Castro seize power in 1959.

Castro - whom the United States tried and failed to overthrow on numerous occasions - sided with Russia in the Cold War. Moscow in turn provided the govern-

ment in Havana with economic, political and military assistance.

A secret deal in 1962 allowing the Soviet Union to station nuclear missiles in Cuba to deter fresh US attempts to invade the island triggered one of the Cold War’s most dangerous confrontations between the US and the Soviet Union.

While the Cuban missile crisis came to an end peacefully after Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and US President John F. Kennedy reached an agreement, Cuba’s relations with the US have remain tense, not least due to the decades-long sanctions the US has imposed on Cuba.

Election tribunal rejects Nigeria presidential election challenge

Nigeria's Appeal Court has rejected challenges to Bola Tinubu's narrow victory in February's presidential election.

After an almost 10-hour verdict, judges said the petitions by his two main challengers were without merit.

Both Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party and Peter Obi of the Labour Party had alleged widespread fraud.

Despite the election challenge, Mr Tinubu was sworn into office on 29 May.

The election was the most fiercely contested since the end of military rule in 1999, with three strong candidates for the first time. Mr Tinubu won with 37% of votes cast, against 29% for Mr Abubakar and 25% for Mr Obi.

A presidential spokesman said President Tinubu welcomed the judgment



Bola Tinubu was not in the country when the verdict was announced.

“with an intense sense of solemn responsibility and preparedness to serve

all Nigerians.”

“[It] reflects the continuing maturation of Nigeria's legal system, and the advancement of Africa's largest democracy at a time when our democratic system of government is under test in other parts of the continent,” Ajuri Ngelale said in a statement.

The country was tense before Wednesday's ruling, with increased security in the capital, Abuja.

Despite warnings from authorities against demonstrations, various political groups gathered outside the courthouse, singing and dancing.

The ruling on the same day he marked 100 days in office will be a huge relief to President Tinubu who will now keep an eye on the Supreme Court where his opponents are likely to appeal against this judgement.

The Labour Party has rejected the ruling.

“We reject the outcome of the judgment in its entirety because justice was not served,” party spokesman Obiora Ifoh said in a statement quoted by local

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Court decriminalises abortion across Mexico

Mexico's supreme court has decriminalised abortion nationwide.

The judgement comes two years after the court ruled in favour of a challenge to the existing law in the northern state of Coahuila. It had ruled that criminal penalties for terminating pregnancies were unconstitutional.

Mexico's states and the federal government had since been slow to repeal penal codes.

The new ruling legalises abortion across all 32 states.

The supreme court said the denial of the possibility of a termination violated the human rights of women.

"In cases of rape, no girl can be forced to become a mother - neither by the state nor by her parents nor her guardians," said the head of the supreme court, Arturo Zaldívar.

"Here, the violation of her rights is more serious, not only because of her status as a victim, but also because of her age, which makes it necessary to analyse the issue from the perspective of the best interests of minors."



The new ruling has been welcomed by women's groups in Mexico (file image).

The judgement opens the door for the federal healthcare system to provide abortions. It has been welcomed by women's rights groups.

Mexico City was the first of the country's states to decriminalise abortion in 2007 and a dozen others followed suit.

But in addition to a lack of facilities to carry out the procedure, "many women don't know that they have this right because local governments have not carried out publicity campaigns about it", women's rights activist Sara Lovera told

AFP news agency.

"That's why today's decision of the Supreme Court is important."

The new ruling is likely to anger Mexico's more conservative politicians and the Catholic Church, in what is Latin America's second largest Catholic nation.

However, the Church's influence has been declining in recent years and the country's government considers itself staunchly secular.

Latin America has seen a trend towards loosening abortion restrictions that

has been referred to as a "green wave".

Elective abortion is legal in Colombia, Cuba, Uruguay and Argentina though the frontrunner in the campaign for Argentina's presidential election in October, Javier Milei, wants to ban the procedure.

Some countries allow abortions in circumstances such as rape or health risks, while outright bans apply in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The reforms in Mexico and other Latin American countries contrast with the situation in the United States, where a Supreme Court ruling last year overturned the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision guaranteeing the right to abortion nationwide.

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media.

But the unanimous verdict by the judges at the Appeal Court will fill Mr Tinubu with confidence.

This was already on display as he was

not even in the country for Wednesday's ruling, travelling to India for the G20 summit.

Lead justice Haruna Tsammani, who read the verdict, said "the petitioners failed to prove allegations of corrupt practices and over-voting".



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Amazon Warriors beat Knight Riders to stay unbeaten in CPL

Saim Ayub and Shai Hope each scored a half-century as the Guyana Amazon Warriors completed a dominant six-wicket victory over the Trinbago Knight Riders and maintained their unbeaten start to the 2023 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) campaign on Tuesday night.

The Amazon Warriors won the toss and opted to field first. The decision went in their favour when they restricted the Knight Riders to 45 for two at the end of the Power-Play.

However, despite taking regular wickets, the Knight Riders had several useful cameos throughout their innings to post a challenging 173 to win.

The Amazon Warriors timed their chase perfectly in reply and had an excellent partnership between Ayub and Hope to thank, as the two batters scored half centuries to lay the foundation for the Amazon Warriors power hitters to seal the victory.

In the first innings, the Knight Riders got off to a bad start losing Mark Deyal and Nicholas Pooran in the Power-Play, the latter falling to a tremendous one-handed catch from wicket keeper Azam Khan.

When Martin Gupthil skied one off the bowling of Imran Tahir to leave the Knight Riders on 57 for



Shai Hope of Guyana Amazon Warriors on the go during the Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League match against the Trinbago Knight Riders at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. (CPL T20/Getty Images).

three, the innings needed rebuilding.

Akeal Hosein and Lorcan Tucker stepped up to task the and put the Knight Riders back in the game before Tucker was run out for 38 off 25 balls.

Andre Russell kept the momentum up by hitting a couple of Republic Bank maximums before he departed for a quick-fire 14. His dismissal brought Kieron Pollard to the wicket and the captain responded with a brutal 25 from 12 balls, however, like those before him he failed to kick on.

Ultimately, the innings was underpinned by Akeal Hosein. His unbeaten 44 helping to guide the Knight Riders to a competitive score of 172 for eight.

Much like the Knight Riders, the Amazon Warriors were to get their innings off to an inauspicious start. Chandrapaul Hemraj falling inside the first two overs for 10.

However, Ayub and Hope went on to lay the foundation for the Amazon Warriors chase with a brilliantly constructed partnership of 93 from 67 balls.

Despite Ayub (62) and

Hope (51) eventually falling at the back end of the innings. Azam Khan and Shimron Hetmyer hit several Republic Bank maximums to seal the win in style.

The victory means the Amazon Warriors return to the top of the 2023 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) table.

Scores: Guyana Amazon Warriors 175-4 (Ayub 62, Hope 51; Russell 2-29, Khan 2-30) beat Trinbago Knight Riders 172-8 (Hosein 44 not out, Tucker 38; Smith 3-31, Paul 1-17) by six wickets.

Amazon Warriors get first win in WCPL

The Guyana Amazon Warriors Women got their first victory in the 2023 Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL) season with a 21-run triumph over the Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR) Women at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad on Tuesday.

The Amazon Warriors posted 132 all out in 19.5 overs after winning the toss. Sophie Devine continued her good form this season with a top score of 48, while Captain Stafanie Taylor made 32 against four-wicket hauls from Anisa Mohammed and Marie Kelly for TKR.

Knight Riders' Captain Deandra Dottin then led the way with 35, but it wasn't enough as they were restricted to 111 for nine off their 20 overs.

Shreyanka Patil (two for 15 from



Sophie Devine hit a top score for the Amazon Warriors Women in the WCPL match against the Knight Riders Women at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. (CPLT20/Getty Images)

four overs), Karishma Ramharack and Shabnim Ismail (two for 29 from four overs), Sophie Devine (two for 27 from four overs) all bowled well for the Amazon Warriors.

Aryna Sabalenka cruises into the US Open semifinals



Aryna Sabalenka, of Belarus, reacts after defeating Zheng Qinwen, of China, during the quarterfinals of the US Open tennis championships in New York, Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2023. (AP)

NEW YORK (AP) - Aryna Sabalenka moved into the US Open semifinals on Wednesday, looking every bit like a player who soon will be ranked No. 1 while rolling to a 6-1, 6-4 victory over Zheng Qinwen in just over an hour.

Sabalenka, who will take over the top spot in next week's WTA rankings because of the fourth-round loss of current No. 1 and defending champion Iga Swiatek, still has not dropped a set at Flushing Meadows - and has ceded a total of 21 games through five match-

es. Sabalenka cruised through her quarterfinal in heat that approached 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 Celsius), prompting a partial closing of the Arthur Ashe Stadium roof to provide more shade for spectators and players.

The No. 2-seeded Belarusian has made at least the semifinals at the past five Grand Slam tournaments, winning her first major title at the Australian Open in January.

"I just gave myself another opportunity to do bet-

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Hermoso accuses Rubiales of sexual assault for World Cup kiss

MADRID (AP) - Spanish soccer player Jenni Hermoso has accused Luis Rubiales of sexual assault for kissing her on the lips without her consent after the Women's World Cup final, the country's prosecutors' office said Wednesday.

Rubiales, the now-suspended president of the Spanish soccer federation, kissed Hermoso on the lips during the awards ceremony after Spain beat England to win the title on Aug. 20 in Sydney, Australia.

Rubiales has insisted the kiss was consensual. Hermoso has denied that in statements issued by her and her players' union.

She also said she and her family were pressured by the federation to show her support for Rubiales in the immediate aftermath of the scandal caused by the kiss that tarnished her team's victory.

The prosecutors' office in Madrid said that, according to a sexual consent law passed last year, Rubiales could face a fine or a prison sentence of one to four years if found guilty.

The new law eliminated the difference between "sexual harassment" and "sexual assault," sanctioning any



Spain's Jennifer Hermoso reacts after missing a scoring chance during the Women's World Cup Group C soccer match between Japan and Spain in Wellington, New Zealand, Monday, July 31, 2023. Spanish state prosecutors say soccer player Jenni Hermoso has accused Luis Rubiales of sexual assault for kissing her on the lips without her consent after the Women's World Cup final. (AP)

unconsented sexual act.

Spain's government, players' unions, players and many citizens have come out in support of Hermoso. Rubiales, meanwhile, has become a soccer outcast even while he refuses to resign.

Rubiales was suspended from his post by FIFA on Aug. 27, a day after he refused to step down when he delivered a defiant speech to the general assembly of his

federation in which he said he was victim of a "witch hunt" by "false feminists."

Rubiales was banned from his post for 90 days while the body's disciplinary judges consider his case. FIFA can impose sanctions on individuals ranging from warnings and fines to suspensions from the sport.

The 46-year-old Rubiales also faces action from the Spanish government. A government legal pan-

el overseeing sports has opened a probe to determine if he abused his authority by kissing Hermoso or tainted the image of Spain with his conduct. He faces being deemed unfit to hold his post for up to two years.

He could potentially face a no-confidence vote by the federation, a move that the institution has yet to make despite having asked him to resign.

But the decision by Hermoso represents the biggest challenge to Rubiales so far since it could lead to a criminal case. The prosecutor's office said Hermoso made the accusation on Tuesday.

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ter in the semis," Sabalenka said in her post-match interview.

"I still have things to do in New York. ... I'll think about being the world No. 1

after the US Open."

The other women's semifinal Thursday will be No. 6 Coco Gauff against No. 10 Karolina Muchova in a matchup of the past two runners-up at the French Open.



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Tahje Browne

Jomarie King

Two-member team to represent Antigua and Barbuda at JCCC

A two-member team will be representing Antigua and Barbuda at the Junior Caribbean Cycling Championships (JCCC) in the Dominican Republic from September 15 to 17.

The twin-island nation's top junior cyclists, Tahje Browne of the Wadadli Cycling Academy and Jomarie King of Vipers, will be carrying the Antigua and Barbuda flag at the two-day event in Santo Domingo.

The two cyclists will

be accompanied by trainer/coach St. Clair Williams.

Williams, who is the President of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF) and the Wadadli Cycling Academy (WCA), said he is hopeful that Browne will finish among the top performers in the Dominican Republic.

"We are hoping that Tahje will finish in the medals this time around. Jomarie is a young cyclist that started competing locally this

year, so this is also to give him some added exposure in Santo Domingo," William stated.

Browne will be hoping for an improved performance after finishing well outside of the top positions at the Junior Caribbean Cycling Championships, which was also hosted in the Dominican Republic in November last year.

Browne, contesting the 15 to 16 age group Cadets class, finished 6th in the

individual time trial from a field of 10 riders. He completed the 10-kilometer course in a time of 14 minutes and 41.11 seconds.

Browne finished 18th out of a field of 20 cyclists in the Cadets Class in the 50-kilometer road race. Browne clocked a time of two hours, five minutes, and 33 seconds.

The two Antiguan cyclists will be contesting the age 15 -16 Pre-Junior Class in both the time trial and road race at this year's event.

The 10-kilometer time trial will take place on Saturday, September 16, while the 60-kilometer road race will be held on Sunday, September 17.

Competitions will also be held in both categories for the cadets and female cyclists from across the region.

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The tour of Bermuda will allow for much-needed international exposure for many of the players, including captain Kadeem Henry, who will lead the squad, and Uri Smith.

Henry is a promising all-rounder who bowls left-arm spin and bats right, while Smith is mainly as an explosive batter who also bowls right-arm off-breaks.

"These are some very talented play-

ers," said Benjamin, adding that his hope is for them to put on an exciting show.

"I want them to go out there and apply themselves, just to show the Bermudian public that they can play the game and compete.

"We want to lay a foundation that we can build on. We want to show ourselves as a solid entity that can play together, and this is the type of competition that will allow them to show their skills."

Antiguans win opener in Bermuda Premier League

The Grass Roots Cricket Academy (GRCA) made a successful start to their campaign in the Bermuda Premier League (BPL) yesterday (Wednesday).

The Antiguans launched their campaign by surging to a six-wicket victory over a Bermuda Select XI in the opening match of the four-team T20 tournament at White Hall Field.

Set 75 to win, opener Michael Dover struck an unbeaten half century as the Grass Roots Cricket Academy achieved their victory target for the loss of four wickets with 6.3 overs to spare.

Dover slammed 57 not out off 37 balls, with five sixes and three fours. Mac-Quille Walker captured two wickets for 16 runs.

The Bermuda Select XI batted first and were dismissed for 74 in 14.3 overs. AC Douglas top-scored with 28 off 13 balls, with three sixes and a four.

Miandre James snapped up three wickets for 12 runs, spinner Kadeem Henry claimed two wickets for two runs, and pacer Jedidiah Martin captured two wickets for 18 runs.

The competition also



The Grass Roots Cricket Academy squad that is currently contesting the Bermuda Premier League. (Photo courtesy BPL)

includes a Barbados team, which is captained by West Indies opening batsman Kraigg Braithaite, and the Bermuda senior national team.

The competition is Bermuda's first competitive action since their tour of Argentina, where they were successful in qualifying for the Americas region qualifier for the 2024 ICC T20 World Cup, which will take place in Bermuda later this month.

This year's version of the BPL is designed as a preparatory exercise for the national team in advance of

the upcoming ICC tourney, which has been noted as a critical component of the island's cricketing future, with potential millions of dollars in funding at stake.

The Grassroots Cricket Academy promises to bring positive, quality, and competitive cricket to the inaugural Bermuda Premier League, the island's newest and potentially most exciting version of the T20 formatted competition.

The Antigua and Barbuda outfit contains a mixture of youth and experience. The team is coached by former West Indies fast bowler

Winston Benjamin, who is anticipating a good showing by his charges.

"Our goal is to come and produce some good cricket, classy cricket, and give a good account of ourselves," said Benjamin prior to his squad's departure from Antigua.

"We have a mixture of talent included in the side. We have a lot of young guys, who are ready to showcase what they have. I think our strength will be our batting, and we have some good bowlers in our seam department."

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