

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA SEEKS UK INVESTMENTS

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The Antigua and Barbuda delegation to the third Investment and Business Forum in the UK.

Local News



Antigua and Barbuda is seeking investments and business opportunities from the UK

Antigua and Barbuda is making a major push to attract investments and other business opportunities from the United Kingdom.

Currently, a high-level delegation is in the UK to host the 3rd Business and Investment Forum which has attracted captains of industry, along with senior government officials. The business forum opened in London today, but before the meeting, the Antigua and Barbuda delegations led by Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister E.P. Chet Greene participated in the Ireland - Latin America and Caribbean Business and



Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister E.P Chet Greene addressing the Ireland-Latin American and Caribbean Business and Investment Forum

Economic Forum on Tuesday which was held at the Dublin Castle.

In a media release, the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission said the inau-

gural Ireland-Latin America and the Caribbean Business and Economic Forum (LAC-BEF) was held under the theme, "Ireland and LAC – Expanding Opportunity."

The Forum formed part of Ireland's Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean, encompassed aspects of business trends, and opportunities, and demonstrated innovations with the potential for future growth across a plethora of sectors in Ireland and the Latin America and Caribbean regions.

Minister Greene was a keynote speaker and high-

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lighted the important historical linkages between Ireland and the Caribbean, and the rich Irish presence dating as far back as the 1600s.

The Minister also underscored the attractiveness of the twin island state to discerning investors as he spoke of the recent redevelopments at the airport and seaport, and he advocated for air linkages between Ireland and Antigua and Barbuda, via Aer Lingus airlines, to further cement bilateral ties between both countries.

“With our warm tropical climate, low crime rate, and favourable business incentives, Antigua and Barbuda offers attractive and competitive investment opportunities across a wide range of sectors. From upmarket real estate developments to sports and wellness tourism through to port logistics services, Antigua and Barbuda is brimming with opportunities for the discerning investor,” Greene reiterated.

High Commissioner Hill moderated a forum that explored ways in which connectivity could be strengthened between Ireland and the Latin American and Caribbean territories in the fields of trade, tourism, and people-to-people links.

Finally, the Minister along with UK-based High Commissioner, Karen-Mae Hill, and Citizenship by Investment Unit’s Chief Executive Officer, Charmaine Quinland-Donovan, engaged in a bilateral session with the Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense, Micheál Martin TD, where discussions were centered around the upcoming SIDS conference in 2024, the Citizenship by Investment Programme and the blacklisting of Antigua and Barbuda by the European Union as it related to tax matters.

The delegation was comprised of:

Honourable E.P Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and Barbuda Affairs;

Her Excellency Karen-Mae Hill, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda to the United Kingdom and Ambassador to Ireland;

Ms. Chantal Phillip, Minister Counsellor within the High Commission of Antigua and Barbuda in London;

Ms. Jomica Carbon-Constant, Senior Trade Policy Analyst, Department of Trade

Mr. Garfield Joseph, Executive Director, Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority;

Mrs. Charmaine Quinland-Dono-

van, Chief Executive Officer, Antigua and Barbuda Citizenship by Investment Unit

Mr. Darwin Telemaque, Chief Executive Officer, Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority;

Mr. Gregory Georges, Chief Executive Officer, West Indies Oil Company Ltd.

Mr. Craig Christopher, Legal and Business Consultant, The August Group Ltd.

Dr. Patrick Lay, Advisor for Agriculture to the Cabinet

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No decision yet on ABST increase

The recommendations compiled by the Ministry of Finance for an increase in the percentage of the ABST revenue measure are going before the Cabinet today.

That is according to Prime Minister and Finance Minister Gaston Browne, speaking during the Questions to Prime Minister segment of the meeting of the

House of Representatives on Tuesday.

The prime minister emphasized that these are recommendations, and nothing has been finalized until the Cabinet has decided, one way or the other.

He however noted, that even if the Cabinet accepted the recommendations from the ministry to raise the ABST from 15 percent to 17 percent, Antigua and Barbuda would remain perhaps the lowest taxed jurisdiction in the OECS.

“Our tax to GDP ratio is currently 16 percent of GDP while the average across the region is 24 percent.

“Even if we were to increase the ABST to 17 percent of GDP with the net effect of the 2 percent being

one percent on the tax-to-GDP ratio, the tax base in the country would still be significantly less than any other country in the OECS and beyond. We will therefore still remain at the lowest end of the scale in terms of our tax structure,” he stated.

Up to the point, the recommendations are just that, according to the prime minister.

He said the recommendations have been made as a way to ensure that the government can make good on its commitment to raise the salaries and wages of public sector workers as well as to pay down on the outstanding amounts owed to local suppliers and contractors.

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Health Ministry and PAHO are developing Cervical Cancer screening guidelines

The Ministry of Health, in a joint effort with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), convened a pivotal gathering of key stakeholders to develop national guidelines for cervical screening in Antigua and Barbuda by incorporating high-performance HPV testing.

The meeting, held at Sandals Grande Antigua, was hosted by the Cervical Cancer Taskforce of Antigua and Barbuda and brought together experts, policymakers, healthcare professionals, and advocates, committed to addressing the challenges and advancing initiatives aimed at screening and eradicating cervical cancer.

The Pan American Health Organization facilitated the meeting. Cancer epidemiologist and PAHO consultant Dr. Anna Cabanes guided the process.

Participants deliberated on com-

prehensive strategies to: improve the current screening program, improve access to quality treatment of pre-cancer lesions (the changes that occur before cancer develops), and increase community awareness, and education.

Discussions also centered around leveraging innovative technologies and advancements to enhance the participation of women in screening, increase early detection and treatment, and improve monitoring and evaluation of the process.

During the meeting, emphasis was placed on forging strong partnerships between governmental and non-governmental entities, fostering collaboration for a unified approach to combat cervical cancer.

The importance of community involvement and education in raising awareness about preventive measures

and promoting regular screenings was also highlighted.

“We are committed to harnessing the collective expertise and resources needed to achieve our goal of eliminating cervical cancer in Antigua and Barbuda.

“This meeting is a pivotal step towards developing a united approach and addressing the challenges we face in cervical cancer prevention,” stated Dr. Cherie Tulloch, Head of the Cervical Cancer Taskforce in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness, Social Transformation, and the Environment and PAHO reaffirm their dedication to supporting initiatives that drive progress towards cervical cancer elimination, ensuring that every woman receives equitable access to preventive measures and quality care.

National Trade Council meets

The National Trade Council (NTC) convened its first meeting on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim.

In a statement, the ministry said the meeting brought together representatives from across the public sector. The NTC acts as a consultative and coordinating resourceful body, aimed at tracking/following trade-related issues, challenges, and opportunities, at all levels, which may have a direct or indirect impact on Antigua and Barbuda.

The ministry statement said the meeting provides a forum for stakeholder consultation, dialogue, engagement, and analysis, among

governmental policymakers, on trade-related policies and their implementation and effect. This will, in turn, aid in maximizing potential benefits for the expansion of the local economy.

“There were discussions held on the Distribution and Price of Goods Cap 138. The price control order is currently under revision, with thirty-six (36) items that are subject to control. Some items are to be removed and others are to be added intending to reduce Non-Communicable Diseases (NDCs) in Antigua and Barbuda. Consultation has been carried out with several focus groups to include a wide cross-section of stakeholders. These consultations are ongoing,” according to



Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Ambassador Clarence Pilgrim

the statement.

The National Trade Council received a report on the Harmonization of Policy, Legislative, and Regulatory Regime for Business Services in the OECS Economic Union. The OECS

Commission has initiated a series of consultations within the OECS Protocol Member States. These consultations are aimed at fulfilling the mandate of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre (RTB) Proto-

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col under Article 26. There are five (5) business services sectors of focus across the Economic Union. These are the Blue Economy, Medical Tourism, Digital Health, Construction and Related Services, and Business Process Outsourcing. The Commission is conducting a series of in-country and virtual missions in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade involving industry stakeholders and representatives from the Attorney General's Office to assess the legislative and regulatory framework governing the business services sector.

Veterinary and Livestock issues were also on the table for discussion. The issues discussed were the restriction on the importation of specific poultry and meat items for the control of the movement of diseases and the safety and protection of health in Antigua and Barbuda.

The veterinary and livestock division representative reported that Antigua and Barbuda is self-sufficient in egg production, however, close monitoring of the handling and sale of eggs are still of some concern for the division. Measures are being formulated to ensure proper guidelines and being followed for care and distribution.

In closing, the Chair commended the Council on its efforts thus far and committed to the continued discourse and collaboration for the distilling, synchronization, and centralizing of trade-related matters.

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Local News



A major project is underway to enhance and redevelop downtown St. John's

Work has started on a major project that has as its long-term goal, the enhancement and redevelopment of downtown St. John's.

Starting with work on a section of Tanner Street, the project seeks to improve the overall look and feel of the city in time for the celebrations of VC Bird Day on December 9.

Director of City Planning and Urban Renewal, Saiid Greene said the work on the repair and cleanup of Tanner Street, is the first phase of the project which will run well into the new year and beyond.

"Our aim is to see the downtown area revitalized and return to that vibrancy

that has characterized the capital for decades. In recent times, our capital city has lost its allure, its attractiveness, and its cleanliness. We have all indiscriminately littered the city streets and gutters and now it has become a national eye-sore. We have to clean it up ourselves; this is our legacy to the upcoming generations," Greene stated.

On Wednesday morning, teams from several agencies including the Ministry of Works will converge where Tanner Street meets Cross Street to begin the work in earnest.

Greene is also calling on private property owners in St. John's to do their part



Work being done on Tanner Street.



by upgrading or otherwise beautifying their properties.

"This has to be a national effort; government and private property owners coming together to uplift our city.

"This is ours; no one is going to come to help us. Let's join hands and do it for ourselves and our children. When the visitors arrive, and they too enjoy it, then that's a bonus; we all win," he declared.

The Director of City Planning and Urban Renewal also wants to see the service clubs fully participate in what is a national endeavor.

our.

"Our service clubs have been integral in our social developments. They have contributed much to national building.

"Here is an opportunity for the Lion's Club, the Rotary Club, the JCI of Antigua and Barbuda, the Kiwanis Club, and others to join us in making St. John's the capital we want it to be, the capital for which will be happy to boast about. Each of these clubs may adopt a street and see to its clean up and beautification as their contribution to the overall project," Greene suggested.

Teens charged with possession of ammunition and flare gun

The police arrested and jointly charged a 15-year-old boy from Ottos and a 17-year-old from Potters with possession of a modified flare gun and possession of one 9mm round of ammunition.

The older of the two was further charged with discharging a firearm in a public place.

On Tuesday, November 14th, the police received a report of shots being fired in the vicinity of the Clare Hall

School Playing Field. Several students were taken into police custody and questioned. They were released pending further investigations.

Both accused were later arrested by the police and have been charged.

Joyan Davis Baptiste is this week's feature in the Hospitality Professionals series

Joyan Davis Baptiste, once characterized as shy and introverted, has transformed herself into a shining example of exceptional customer service in the hospitality sector. With a career trajectory that has seen her evolve from various roles, Joyan currently holds the esteemed position of Senior Reservations Clerk & Duty Manager at Tropical Adventures Antigua, a testament to her dedication and growth within the industry.

Joyan's journey began with a foundation of sound mentorship and support that propelled her into the

frontline of the hospitality industry. From her humble beginnings as a waitress to diverse roles such as entertainment coordinator, jewelry clerk, gift shop attendant, and guest services representative, each step in her career contributed to the development of her vibrant personality. Throughout this evolution, Joyan thrived on the encouragement she received from both her managers and guests, shaping her into the professional she is today.

Crediting her success to those who challenged her to surpass her expectations,



Joyan Davis Baptiste

Joyan recognizes the pivotal roles played by influential figures in her career. From the spotlight as an entertainment coordinator, guided by the encouragement of her then-manager Garilyn Reis, to the recent influence of the late Pia Baptiste at Tropical Adventures, Joyan acknowledges the significant impact of these strong women in shaping her rise within the hospitality industry.

As she continues to excel in her role, Joyan looks ahead to a promising future, where she aims to further shape guest experiences and create memorable moments for visitors to Antigua and

Barbuda. Her enthusiasm for the opportunities that lie ahead reflects a commitment to making a lasting and positive contribution to the hospitality sector.

The Antigua & Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA) proudly recognizes Joyan Davis-Baptiste's journey and commitment to excellence. Through its "Unveiling Hospitality Professionals" series, the association endeavors to inspire the next generation of professionals aspiring to occupy pivotal positions in the dynamic and rewarding field of hospitality.



ABDF officer completes navigational course in India

Last Friday, Antigua Barbuda Defense Force (ABDF) officer, Lieutenant (Lt.) Aushaun Browne successfully completed an International Long Navigation Course held in India.

The course held over a period of seven months, was conducted at the Navigation and Direction School in Kochi, India.

According to the Indian Honorary Consul in St. John's, Vijay Tewari, the course involved 20 officers from 16 different countries. It was geared towards pre-



paring officers to assume the responsibilities of a Navigating Officer, ensuring the navigational safety and operational readiness

of Naval Warships at all times.

The course also covered other aspects of Maritime Operations, includ-

ing hydrography, aircraft direction, oceanography and meteorology, and naval warfare.

Lt. Browne along with the other 19 Officers were successful in all their endeavors throughout the course and they have all returned to their respective countries, accomplished and certified as Navigation Officers.

The ABDF continues to provide opportunities to its soldiers to better equip them to support and defend the nation.

Indian nationals in Antigua and Barbuda celebrate Divali



Members of the Indian diaspora in Antigua and Barbuda gathered over the weekend to celebrate Divali the Festival Lights with what has been described as 'much energy and enthusiasm' for the Hindu New Year.

Held at the Chimney Restaurant, the event attracted scores of Indian nationals for whom the celebrations formed part of national festivities in India and the Indian diaspora across the globe.

Minister of Tourism and Aviation, Charles Max Fernandez, along with his wife, Jill, joined in the celebrations with the Indian community.



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Microsoft offers to match pay of all OpenAI staff

By Tom Gerken

Microsoft has offered to match the pay of any staff who join it from crisis-ridden OpenAI.

Sam Altman was controversially sacked as CEO on Friday, leading to a job offer at Microsoft to lead “a new advanced AI research team”.

Almost every staff member at OpenAI has threatened to leave unless he and co-founder Greg Brockman are reinstated.

It is still unclear whether Mr Altman will ultimately join Microsoft, which is OpenAI’s biggest investor by far.

Evan Morikawa, an engineering manager at OpenAI, has claimed that 743 out of 770 employees at OpenAI have signed a letter calling on the board to resign - with staff themselves threatening to leave if their demands are not met.

In their letter they claim they had been offered jobs at Microsoft - something the company’s chief technology officer Kevin Scott has now confirmed, telling staff that “if needed” they will be hired by Microsoft in a role that “matches your compensation”.

The uncertainty about people’s futures extend to Mr Altman, with Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella telling CNBC that he might not be joining, adding he was

“committed to OpenAI and Sam, irrespective of what configuration”.

“Obviously that depends on the people at OpenAI staying there or coming to Microsoft, so I’m open to both options,” he said.

On Monday, Mr Nadella told CNBC “something has to change” at OpenAI - creator of the ChatGPT chatbot - but did not specify what that was, or rule out the tech giant getting a seat on the board.

Despite its heavy investment in the firm, and using its technology extensively across its products, Microsoft’s links to OpenAI do not currently extend to its boardroom.

“At this point, I think it’s very, very clear that something has to change around the governance,” said Mr Nadella.

“We’ll have a good dialogue with their board on that.”

The Microsoft chief executive’s calm demeanour in a round of media interviews is in contrast to the tumult at OpenAI itself, where staff are in open revolt at Mr Altman’s departure.

They have demanded he returns and the board is fired - but exactly what is happening with the company’s former chief executive is still unclear.



Kevin Scott is also executive vice president of AI at Microsoft.

Nathan Benaich, partner at Air Street Capital - a firm which has invested in many AI companies - praised Mr Nadella for his decisions in the aftermath of Mr Altman’s sacking.

“This is fantastic deal-making,” he said.

“Microsoft has emerged in an even more compelling position. It has the two leaders of OpenAI, it has the ability to attract talent, it has the balance sheet, and it’s building an insane computing infrastructure to the tune of \$50bn.

“This is larger than some of the most ambitious government-funded research projects.”

In the middle of all of this is Emmett Shear, the former head of Twitch who has been named the new interim head of OpenAI after Mr Altman’s unceremonious exit.

The pair crossed paths years ago when they were involved with start-up investment programme Y

Combinator - with a viral photo of them as part of a group spreading on social media.

The photo includes several others who went on to great careers in tech, including Aaron Swartz, a celebrated internet freedom activist and early developer of the website Reddit, who died in 2013.

Mr Shear co-founded the hit gaming site Twitch, and led it to become the dominant live-streaming website in the world, before selling the business to Amazon for an estimated \$970m (£774m) in 2014.

He remained as CEO under Amazon, but left in March 2023 following the birth of his son.

But some of the tweets he has sent since leaving the firm have caused him to come under scrutiny online, including his public criticism of Microsoft.

Neither Mr Shear nor OpenAI has responded to a request for comment.

Taylor Swift's Rio tour marred by deaths and dangerous heat wave

The deaths of two people, muggings and a dangerous heat wave left legions of Taylor Swift's Brazilian fans angry and disappointed in the three-day Rio de Janeiro leg of the pop superstar's Eras Tour, which concludes Monday night.

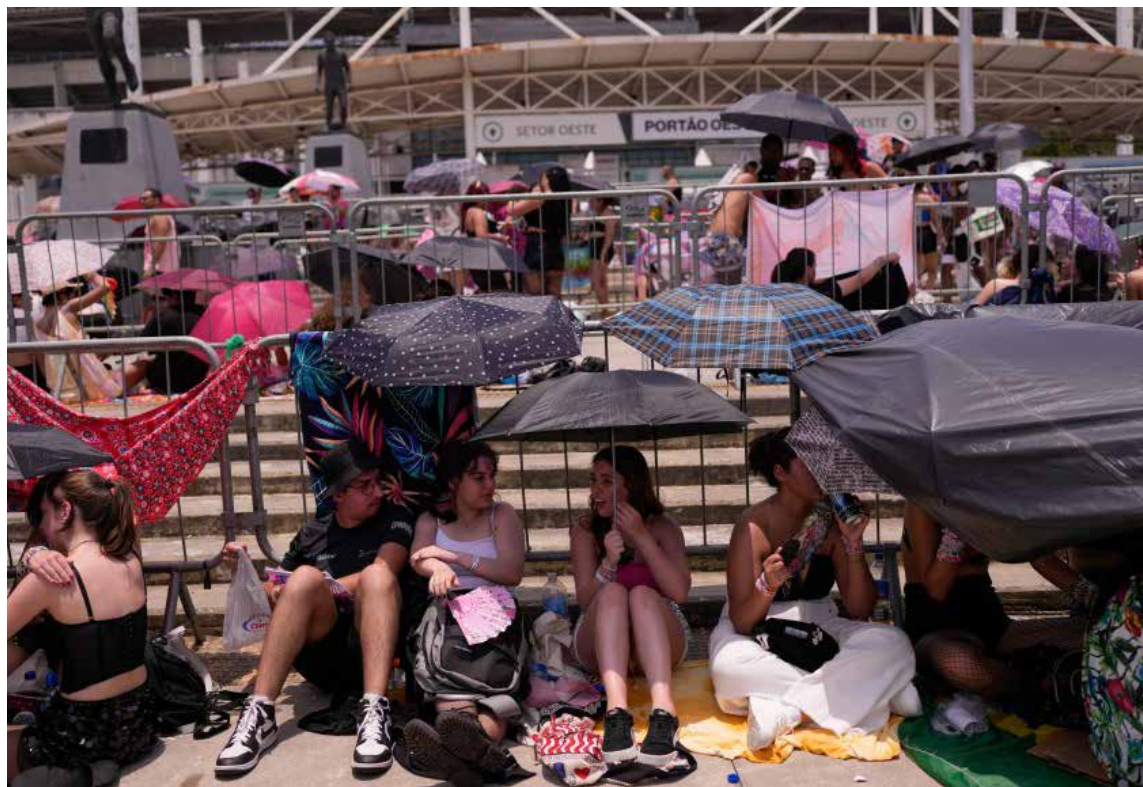
Gabriel Mongenot Santana Milhomem Santos, 25, a fan who had travelled from the country's center-west region to see Swift, was stabbed to death on a Copacabana beach about 3 am on Monday, Rio's police said in a statement.

It was the second death of a Swift fan in four days. On Friday, 23-year-old Ana Clara Benevides Machado fell ill during the singer's first show in the city and died later that evening at a hospital.

Fans also reported fainting from extreme heat, being mugged or getting caught up in a police raid.

Rio's Municipal Health Department said Benevides, who, according to a friend, passed out during Swift's second song, "Cruel Summer," experienced cardiorespiratory arrest, but the exact cause of her death is not yet known. Rio's Forensic Medical Institute examined the body Saturday and said additional laboratory tests had to be conducted, the online news site G1 reported.

In a statement posted on Instagram, Swift said Benevides' death left her with a



Taylor Swift fans wait for the doors of Nilton Santos Olympic stadium to open for her Eras Tour concert amid a heat wave in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Saturday, November 18, 2023. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

"shattered heart."

Before the show Friday, fans lined up for hours outside the Nilton Santos Olympic Stadium where temperatures soared to 41 degrees Celsius (105 Fahrenheit), with a heat index of nearly 59 C (138 F). Inside the stadium, concertgoers complained of unbearable heat and some said they had difficulty getting access to water.

"I didn't imagine that my dream could turn into a nightmare," said fan Kléssia Menezes, who told R7 TV that she had gotten stuck with hundreds of other people on one of the ramps to a VIP area Saturday as security officers blocked the entrance.

Once security let them through, she said, people started running and she fell on a hot metallic floor that burned her leg and back.

"They took me to the doctor ... and I saw that I wasn't the only person to have fallen in this chaos," she said. "Many people fell and burned themselves."

Ultimately, that night's show was postponed, after tens of thousands of fans had spent hours lining up in the heat. Swift announced on Instagram that it was necessary "due to the extreme temperatures in Rio."

A fan who identified herself as Julia Alvarenga said she was upset that Swift didn't decide to cancel earlier.

"My friend, can you see how much I'm sweating, how all the pores in my body are dilated from the sweat?" Alvarenga asked, visibly angry, in a video posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. She then pointed to her waist, highlighting the extreme measures she had taken to attend a concert for which she knew she would stand in line for hours. "I'm wearing a diaper, a geriatric diaper," she says, urging the artist to appear. "Come on stage, I want to see you!"

The postponement was followed by chaos outside the stadium. Under a light rain, a mass of concertgoers left the area, which is close to one of Rio's work-

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Suriname: Death toll climbs after illegal gold mine collapses

CMC - The death toll from the collapse of an illegal gold mine at Rosebel, one of South America's largest open-pit gold projects, climbed to 14 on Tuesday after more bodies were recovered from the facility.

On Monday evening, President Chandrikapersad Santokhi informed the National assembly that 10 bodies had been pulled from the mine following the accident, which occurred at 3.00 pm (local time) and that the temporary constructed tunnel "with a considerable depth" had buried a number

of gold miners.

"As a government, we are shocked and offer our condolences to the relatives," Santokhi said, adding that the government is considering declaring a day or more days of national mourning.

Santokhi said the accident happened in the gold concession of the Chinese owned Zijing Mining, which acquired Rosebel Goldmines from IamGold earlier this year.

Rosebel is one of South America's largest open-pit gold projects. But that



the presence of illegal gold miners is said to have created an unsafe situation in the area.

Santokhi said that at the request of Zijing Mining, a large number of illegal gold diggers were removed by the police and army a few weeks ago from the place where a large gold vein had been discovered.

However, the group of illegal miners reportedly returned after a few days.

Police officers and soldiers as well as members of the National Disaster Management Coordination Centre have been dispatched to the area to provide assistance. An investigation team led by the Attorney General has been appointed to probe the incident.

The authorities say that if it becomes necessary, Suriname will request assistance from Brazil in the rescue operation.

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ing-class neighbourhoods, known as favelas.

Videos shared on social media showed groups of pickpockets robbing fans of their belongings, scenes not so unusual to Rio residents, but far from the postcards many tourists have seen of the "cidade maravilhosa."

Many took refuge inside a Burger King, ducking for cover under tables and behind the counter in the kitchen area. Heavily armed police raided the fast food restaurant's basement as loud sirens blared and those

stuck outside the restaurant shouted. Some of those who were able to escape in taxis were overcharged by the drivers.

Saturday's show was postponed to Monday night, but many who had travelled from other regions of Brazil and outside the country had already made plans to leave earlier.

"We're not going to be able to make it," said Hely Olivares, a 41-year-old Venezuelan who had travelled from Panama. "A lot of people have wasted their journey."



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CARICOM Eminent Persons Group says Haiti 'continues to hurt'

CMC - The Eminent Persons Group (EPG) says it will provide a draft framework of accord for the consideration by the various stakeholders in Haiti even as it acknowledged that the French-speaking Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country, "continues to hurt".

The EPG is led by the former prime minister of St Lucia, Dr Kenny Anthony, and includes the former prime minister of Jamaica, Bruce Golding, and his former Bahamian counterpart Perry Christie.

The Group will initiate and oversee the Caribbean Community's provision of Good Offices support in designated priority areas, including security, governance, the electoral process, and long-term development planning and advocacy. They will also liaise with key international partners and agencies.

A technical team, comprised of experts from CARICOM member states, the CARICOM Secretariat and regional specialised agencies, is supporting the EPG.

The EPG members paid their third visit to Haiti during the period November 8-14 holding discussions with the various stakeholders with a view to finding a political compromise aimed at stabilising the country and promoting



a democratic transition.

A statement issued by the EPG on Tuesday noted that the cycle of depredations and violence of the armed gangs continues, expanding to new areas and adding to the already high number of victims.

"The political actors, fully aware of this dire reality, continue their zero-sum approach to the efforts to reach an agreement that would bring an end to the protracted political deadlock, opening the way to address the other facets of the crisis."

The EPG said it was buoyed initially on this latest visit "by the prospects raised by information that tentative agreement had been reached on some critical areas of convergence following concessions

made by Prime Minister Henry during informal discussions, led by a facilitator, which had taken place during their absence."

The EPG said it sought to build on these points of agreement with regard to transitional governance arrangements for free and fair elections.

It said these points included the widening and strengthening of the attributes of the High Transition Council (HTC) to bring about a better balance of executive power, the composition of the Provisional Electoral Council, (CEP), the designation of a body to oversee government action, and the establishment of an inclusive government of national unity.

"It was immediately apparent in the course of the

EPG's discussions that the earlier intransigent position of some sections of the opposition group insisting on the resignation of the Prime Minister as a pre-condition for meaningful discussions still prevailed," the EPG said, adding that the governance concessions the Prime Minister was willing to make "were brushed aside, perceived as an effort to prolong his tenure.

"Based on the encouraging responses of stakeholders to a proposal made by the EPG in the course of the engagements, the Group will provide a draft framework of accord for their consideration and discussion that takes into account the points the stakeholders have raised in the course of these engagements," the EPG said in its statement.

North Korea claims successful launch of spy satellite

North Korea claims it has successfully put a military spy satellite into space, drawing condemnation from neighbouring countries.

State news agency KCNA said the satellite, named Malligyong-1, had accurately entered orbit.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed the launch, the agency added.

Japan's prime minister, Fumio Kishida, decried its launch, which flew over the country's Okinawa prefecture and on towards the Pacific Ocean.

The White House described the step as a "brazen violation" of multiple United Nations resolutions.

The Japanese government briefly issued an emergency warning, telling residents in Okinawa to take shelter. North Korea has twice this year tried and failed to put a military satellite into orbit. It had told Japan it intended to make a third attempt.

Mr Kishida condemned the launch "in the strongest terms" and said a complaint had been lodged with North Korea.

"Even if the purpose is to launch a satellite, using ballistic missile technology is a clear violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions," said Mr Kishida.

"It is also a very serious matter that greatly concerns



A spy satellite is a coveted prize for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

the safety of our people."

Following the launch, South Korea announced it would resume surveillance along its border with the North, thereby taking steps to suspend parts of a deal agreed by the two countries in 2018 aimed at lowering military tensions.

The launch came earlier than anticipated, outside the nine-day window Pyongyang had notified Japan about. This was supposed to start on Wednesday and end at 23:59 local time (14:59 GMT) on 30 November.

KCNA, citing the North's space agency, said the Sohae launch facility in the northwest of the country, close to the border with China, was used for the operation.

North Korea's claim that it has successfully launched

the spy satellite has not yet been verified.

If the rocket is confirmed to be a spy satellite, it would be the third attempt by the North to launch one this year.

Earlier, Japan said it would work with South Korea and the US to "strongly urge" the North not to proceed with the launch, which they said would violate UN resolutions.

The Japan Coast Guard said Pyongyang's notification designated three maritime zones believed to be the areas where debris from the rocket carrying the satellite will fall.

Two are to the west of the Korean Peninsula and the other is to the east of the Philippines' island of Luzon.

Kang Ho-pil, chief di-

rector of operations at the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff, warned that Seoul would take "necessary measures" should the launch proceed.

A spy satellite is a coveted prize for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, as it will allow him to monitor incoming attacks and plot his own more accurately.

However the United Nations Security Council has banned Pyongyang from launching satellites because it sees them as a pretext to test the North's missile technology.

South Korea retrieved debris from the North's first launch in May and said the satellite had "no military utility". After a second attempt in August failed, Pyongyang's space agency

cont'd on pg 17

Four Las Vegas teens charged with murder in schoolmate's beating death

By Nadine Yousif

Four high school students accused of beating a classmate to death in Las Vegas have been formally charged with second-degree murder.

Jonathan Lewis Jr, 17, died after a fight in an alleyway near his school, where as many as 10 of his classmates swarmed him.

Police said nine students in total have been arrested so far.

The first four to be charged are under 18 but will be tried as adults per Nevada law.

Dontral Beaver, 16, Damien Hernandez, 17, Treavion Randolph, 16 and Gianni Robinson, 17 appeared in court on Tuesday where the charges were read.

All are held in jail without bail.

The fight, which was caught on a video shared to social media, took place near Rancho High School on 1 November. Police said the brawl broke out over a set of headphones and a vape that was stolen from the victim or his friends.

Las Vegas Metropolitan



Police say the dispute was over a set of headphones and a vape stolen from the victim or his friends.

Police's homicide lieutenant Jason Johansson declined to show the video to the press, saying it was "very graphic" and "devoid of humanity".

He said the video showed Lewis Jr taking off his shirt to prepare for the fight before he was immediately swarmed by 10 students.

Mr Johnson said the video shows the teens "kicking, punching and stomping" on the victim after he is pulled to the ground.

The victim was left unconscious and was found

by a member of the public who brought him back to school. He was later taken to hospital after school staff attempted CPR on him.

Lewis Jr died six days later after suffering "non-survivable head trauma", police said. An autopsy determined his death a homicide by blunt force trauma.

Police said they have arrested nine students, who are aged 13 to 17, and are still working to identify all those who were involved.

Those who have not yet

been charged are awaiting separate court hearings because they are all under the age of 16.

Clark County District Attorney Steve Wolfson told reporters on Tuesday that his office chose to charge the teens with second-degree murder instead of first-degree murder because the evidence shows that the beating was not premeditated.

Robert Draskovich, a lawyer for one of the students charged, said he believed the videos of the fight were "incomplete".

"I'll be going through all the videos with my investigator to see what really happened," Mr Draskovich told reporters.

Under Nevada law, the accused face 10 years to life in jail.

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said it would try again in October but did not do so.

Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested in September after a meeting with Mr Kim that Moscow could help Pyongyang build satellites, but the details of what was actually promised are unclear.

Earlier this month, South Korea announced plans to launch its own spy satellite by the end of November. The satellite is to be carried by a rocket from US company SpaceX.

This is reportedly the first of five spy satellites Seoul plans to launch into space by 2025.

Record 1.25 million fans attended World Cup, says ICC

BENGALURU (Reuters) - A record 1.25 million fans attended matches during the 13th edition of the World Cup, which concluded on Sunday with Australia beating hosts India for their sixth title, global body the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Tuesday.

A total of 1,250,307 fans watched the Oct. 5-Nov. 19 showpiece event from the stands, surpassing the previous mark of 1.016 million set at the 2015 edition in Australia and New Zealand.

While the early matches not involving runners-up India had plenty of empty seats in venues, overall spectator figures had already surpassed the one million mark with six games to go.

ICC Head of Events Chris Tetley said the one-



Indian fans arrive to watch the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup final match between Australia and India at Narendra Modi stadium in Ahmedabad, India, Sunday, Nov. 19, 2023. (AP)

day international (ODI) tournament had been a "great success."

"The staggering attendance demonstrates the enduring appeal of cricket and

excitement the ODI format continues to offer," Tetley said in a statement, adding that the tournament also broke multiple broadcast and digital viewership re-

ords.

"It has been an event that has not only entertained but also united cricket fans globally in a celebration of the sport."



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A security person is seen outside the Sri Lanka's cricket board, after Sri Lanka Cricket's (SLC) membership of the International Cricket Council (ICC) has been suspended with immediate effect for government interference, in Colombo, Sri Lanka November 11, 2023. (Reuters)

Sri Lanka free to compete internationally, but U-19 World Cup moved to South Africa

DUBAI, UAE (Reuters) - Sri Lanka are free to compete internationally but next year's Under-19 Cricket World Cup will now be hosted by South Africa, as the International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed the terms of suspension of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Tuesday.

Sri Lanka's membership of the ICC was suspended with immediate effect for government interference on Nov. 10, after Sri Lanka's ministry of sport dismissed SLC's board and replaced it with an interim committee.

This followed the country's poor performance at this year's World Cup but the sacking was stayed by Sri Lanka's Court of Appeal.

"After hearing representation from SLC, the ICC Board decided that Sri Lanka can continue to compete internationally both in bilateral cricket and ICC events after being suspended recently for breaching its obligations as a Member in particular the requirement to manage its affairs autonomously and without government interference," the ICC said.

"However, funding to SLC will be controlled by the ICC and the ICC Board confirmed Sri Lanka will no longer host the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2024, which will now be held in South Africa."

The ICC also approved new gender eligibility regulations whereby

any male or female participant who have been through any form of male puberty will not be allowed participate in the international women's game.

The Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) agreed to introduce a stop clock on a trial basis in men's ODI and T20I cricket from December 2023 to April 2024, which will be used to regulate the amount of time taken between overs.

If the bowling team is not ready to bowl the next over within 60 seconds of the previous over being completed, a five-run penalty will be imposed the third time it happens in an innings.



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All Saints crush Jennings in secondary schools' football league

All Saints Secondary School recorded victory by a wide margin in the Ministry of Sports Secondary Schools' Football League on Monday.

Ashavin Pelle scored a hat-trick to lead All Saints Secondary to a 6-1 drubbing of Jennings Secondary School in the only Under-14 Boys Division encounter, which was played at the Princess Margaret School's playing field.

The other matches were not played after three teams failed to show up for their encounters.

Princess Margaret School won by default against Pares Secondary School at the PMS playing field.

The Antigua Grammar School won by default against Sir Novelle Richards

Academy, and Ottos Comprehensive School also won by default against Clare Hall Secondary School.

Both matches were slated to take place at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

The competitions will continue with matches in the Under-14 Boys and Under-20 Girls divisions today (Wednesday).

In a double-header at Clare Hall, St. Joseph's Academy will take on Clare Hall Secondary School in the Under-14 Boys Division at 2:10 pm, and Ottos Comprehensive School will face Clare Hall Secondary School in the Girls Under-20 Division at 3:10 pm.

In a double-header at Princess Mar-

garet School's playing field, Sir Novelle Richards Academy will tackle Princess Margaret School in the Under-14 Boys Division at 2:10 pm, and St. Anthony's Secondary School will clash with Princess Margaret School in the Under-20 Girls Division at 3:10 pm.

Jennings Secondary School will meet Pares Secondary School at 2:10 pm, and the Antigua Grammar School will oppose Ottos Comprehensive School at 3:10 pm in an Under-14 Boys Division double at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

Antigua Girls High School and Jennings Secondary School will clash in an Under-20 Girls Division encounter at the Golden Grove playing field at 3 pm.

Ticket Outlets Antigua: Landing Strip, Roti King, Eighteen Plus 1 Restaurant, ABCA Office Ticket Outlets Montserrat: Beni's Jewelry, Summer Breeze Restaurant



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APUA Telecoms stay in contention to defend business football league title

Defending champion APUA Telecoms stayed in contention to make a successful defense of their Cool & Smooth JOMA Caribbean Ministry of Sports Business Football League title over the weekend.

APUA Telecoms clinched second place in Group 2 on goal difference by hammering Public Works 7-0 in their final round-robin match at King George V Grounds.

The win allows APUA Telecoms to leapfrog DEWS Pro Builders into second place in Group 2 by virtue of a superior goal difference after both teams finished their quota of seven matches in the preliminary stage tied at 16 points.

Public Works remained in the cellar without a point after crashing to their fifth

loss in as many matches.

The Sandals finished as Group 2 winners with 18 points from their quota of seven matches.

Akeem Isaac scored four times as the CHAPA Warriors romped to a 5-1 victory against West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) in their final Group 2 encounter at the Golden Grove playing field.

Isaac had conversions in the 13th, 48th, 52nd, and 58th minutes, and Meyer Bailey scored the

other goal for the CHAPA Warriors in the 46th minute. Sylvester Joseph scored a consolation goal for WIOC.

The result meant CHAPA Warriors ended their campaign in fourth place in Group 2 with 12 points, while WIOC finished in the lower half of the standings with six points from their quota of seven matches.

A.S. Bryden Green Acres and Antigua Rainforest played to a 1-1 draw in their penultimate Group 2 encounter at the Golden Grove playing field.

The result allows both teams to advance to four points with one game remaining.

Public Works Asphalt finished as runner-up in Group 3 with a total of 15 points after winning their final encounter.

Shaffique Joseph converted twice as Public Works Asphalt prevailed 5-2 against Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in their Group 3 encounter at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

The EMS ended their

Group 3 campaign in fifth place with nine points from their quota of seven matches.

The St. John's Development Corporation finished as Group 3 winners with a total of 16 points from their seven matches.

Royalton Hotel remained in second place on goal difference in Group 1 after battling to a 1-1 draw with Cocos/Keyonna in their penultimate match at King George V Grounds.

The result allows Royalton Hotel to advance to 13 points, the same as Group 1 leader, Ministry of Agriculture, who has a superior goal difference.

Hermitage Hotel and APUA Water Business Unit also played to a 1-1 draw in another Group 1 encounter at the Radio Range playing field in Ottos.

APUA Water Business Unit advances to seven points with two games remaining, and Hermitage Hotel moves on to six points with one game left.

The top four teams in each group will advance to the next round.



Triple Dynamite take over lead in domino contest

Triple Dynamite has taken over the lead after the second round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association's (ABNDA) final three-hand competition of the year.

Triple Dynamite, which was in third place at the end of the opening round of matches in the 14-team accumulated points three-hand competition, advanced to the top of the standings at the end of the second series of games at the ABNDA's headquarters in Ottos.

Triple Dynamite now leads the competition with an overall total of 160 points. Triple Dynamite scored 82 points to win the second match in round 2, with Ramplers finishing second with 77 points and Unstoppables in a distant third with 46 points.

The B team of Bolans Revellers jumped from joint fourth-place to second-place after round 2 with an overall total of 159 points.

The Bolans Revellers B team won the fourth and final match of the second round by scoring 82 points to prevail against the A team of Willikies Super Stars

with 72 points and Double Six Diamonds with 63 points.

The Willikies Super Stars A team jumped into third place with an overall total of 156 points.

The Willikies Super Stars B team remained in fourth place with an overall total of 150 points after finishing in third place in the opening match in round 2.

The B team of Willikies Super Stars could only record 73 points in the match, which was won by Double Six Ice with 84 points. The A team of Bolans Revellers finished second with 77 points.

Dominatrix won the other match in the second round to move into fifth place with an overall total of 148 points.

Dominatrix scored 81 points to prevail against the Parham Strikers with 74 points and the Full Clip B team with 58 points.

The Full Clip A team, which ended the opening round in first place with a total of 88 points, and Moise Eagles had byes in the second round of matches.

Everyday Service Station Double Six prevailed



Players participating in the latest ABNDA's three-hand domino competition at its headquarters in Ottos. (ABNDA)

125-117 in overtime against Willikies Super Stars in the third match of the 125 Four-Hand Competition.

The match was pushed into overtime after Double Six had 123 points and Willikies Super Stars had 117 at the end of the five sets that constitute a match.

Double Six achieved victory by winning the first two games of the five sets in

overtime to secure the winning total of 125 points.

A.S. Bryden and Stingray City Bolans Revellers beat Ramplers 125-107 in the second match of the competition, which is being contested by six clubs.

The Willikies Super Stars prevailed 125-104 against the Ramplers in the opening encounter the previous week.