

# A&B AND CHINA AGREE TO NON- VISA ENTRY

*Story on Page 2*



Environment Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph and the Chief Environment Officer, Ambassador Diane Black-Layne, were on hand for the presentation of the Electric Vehicle to the winner of the EV raffle at the Division's headquarters at the Botanical Gardens. *Story on page 8.*

## Antigua and Barbuda and China agree to non-visa entry

Antigua and Barbuda and the People’s Republic of China have signed an Agreement of Mutual Visa Exemption during the official visit to China by a delegation led by Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

Both countries signed on the dotted line ‘with a view to further promoting the friendly relations between their countries and facilitating exchange of visits by their citizens’.

Accordingly, the agreement is borne out of a desire to simplify the entry procedures into their territories for holders of passports for the citizens of both countries.

The preamble states that the agreement was arrived at following what it termed ‘friendly consultations’ on mutual visa exemption on

the basis of equality and reciprocity.

“Citizens of Antigua and Barbuda, holding valid diplomatic, official passports or ordinary passports of Antigua and Barbuda, and citizens of the People’s Republic of China, holding valid diplomatic, service passports, passports for public affairs or ordinary passports of the People’s Republic of China, shall be exempted from visa requirement for entry into, exit from or transit through the territory of the Contracting Party, for a single stay not exceeding thirty (30) days within a period not exceeding ninety (90) days in any 180-day-period,” the agreement states.

Under this agreement, citizens from either country may enter, exit *cont’d on pg 3*



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## PM Browne renews his appeal for more 'south-south' cooperation

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is again making the case for more cooperation among 'south-south' countries, noting that the People's Republic of China is ideally suited to lead the charge.

PM Browne's comments came against the recognition that the countries of the 'global north' have traditionally exploited the countries of the 'south' and with their huge resources, more south-south cooperation would redound to their benefit.

"We all know that the global north has exploited the countries of the south, exploiting their resources to build their economies.

"We have seen that here in the Caribbean region during slavery and colonialism and when you look within the countries of the global south, they have enormous resources, but those resources are not harnessed for the people of the global south," he noted.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

Drawing from the existence of such multilateral groupings such as the G7, G20 and the Group of 77, the prime minister said he is of the view that there should be a grouping of countries comprising coun-

tries from the global south and that China is one country that can provide that leadership to address the geopolitical imbalances.

"I know for example, that there is a small group of vulnerable countries

globally which continue to suffer disproportionately from the effects of climate change; even as you look at the international financial architecture, its skewed against countries of the global south, so in order to have an equitable world, there must be a large grouping of countries of the global south," he emphasized.

Providing the rationale for his choice of China to play a lead role in this enterprise, PM Browne said this is based on China's philosophy of 'a shared future' where all mankind share in the prosperity of the world. He added that by its action, China has demonstrated its belief in the shared future for all of humanity. The prime minister revealed that China provides US\$1 trillion in development finance annually, whereas the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank together supply only half of that amount.

*cont'd from pg 2*

or transit each other's ports open to international travel and adhere to the laws and regulations applicable to non-citizens with respect to entry, exit and transit.

On those occasions where citizens of either country wish to stay in the other Contracting Country for a period more than thirty days to study, reside, or engage in employment or for media activities and other such activities, they are required

to apply for a visa prior to entering that country.

Additionally, those citizens who enter a Contracting Country and are unable to leave within the specified time of 30 days due to circumstances beyond their control, will be required to apply to the local authorities for an extension accompanied with the supporting documents.

The agreement also speaks to the issue relating to the spouses or underage children of those holding dip-

lomatic or service passports who are assigned to work in either Contracting Country.

When traveling with the substantive holder of the diplomatic or service passports, they will not be required to obtain visas for the duration of the accreditation.

This agreement with Antigua and Barbuda, though not the first that the PRC has signed with a Caribbean country, is the first for any country in the OECS.

## NSWMA Chairman: China visit a positive move for young people

The chairman for the National Solid Waste Management Authority Michael Joseph, sees his inclusion in the official delegation that visited the People's Republic of China last week, as a positive move for young people in Antigua and Barbuda.

In particular, Joseph singled out Prime Minister Gaston Browne for his visionary leadership for the decision to include a young person as part of the delegation as this exposed him to new experiences on the diplomatic front.

“From a young individual perspective, I think this is the kind of leadership that the country needs; a government that embraces young people as equals on the diplomatic front, understanding that they are going to be part of the change that our country needs,” Joseph observed.

He added that if Antigua and Barbuda aspires to learn from the lessons of Chinese President Xi Jinping, who he noted understands that change in



Michael Joseph

the future would involve everyone, including those who traditionally did not have a voice, but who ought to have a voice, was a step in the right direction.

The NSWMA chair described the visit as a ‘very successful’ trip during which as many as ten MOU were signed and which will have lasting impacts on Antigua and Barbuda now and well into the future.

Joseph revealed that in discussions

with the Chinese company, Alibaba, which is that country’s equivalent to Amazon, the prime minister was insistent on ensuring that there were benefits that would accrue to young people here in Antigua and Barbuda.

“The prime minister was an advocate for young people, particularly with the Alibaba group when we met with them. For although there was a Letter of Intent regarding research, he insisted that he did not want Alibaba to provide the opportunity for research only, but he wanted then to provide opportunities for young people to be merchants on the Alibaba site; for them to be trained in e-commerce, and this was something which the Alibaba group said that they would do,” Joseph reported.

He added that he is excited about the prospects of the nation’s youth taking advantage of these opportunities as already, they are moving more and more into e-commerce.

## Youth summit to form part of SIDS4 in Antigua and Barbuda

The United Nations Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) will attract a strong and formidable presence of young people from around the globe who will participate in a major summit that will ensure their voices are given prominence and their views are represented and articulated to the global leaders who will be present at the international meeting.

The SIDS Global Children and Youth Action Sum-

mit (CYAS) is scheduled to take place from 24-26 May and will be bringing together around 60 youth delegates from around the globe for face-to-face discussions with top government officials, the diplomatic community, experts from the United Nations, partners and observers.

The Summit is a collaborative effort between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Ashley

*cont'd on pg 6*





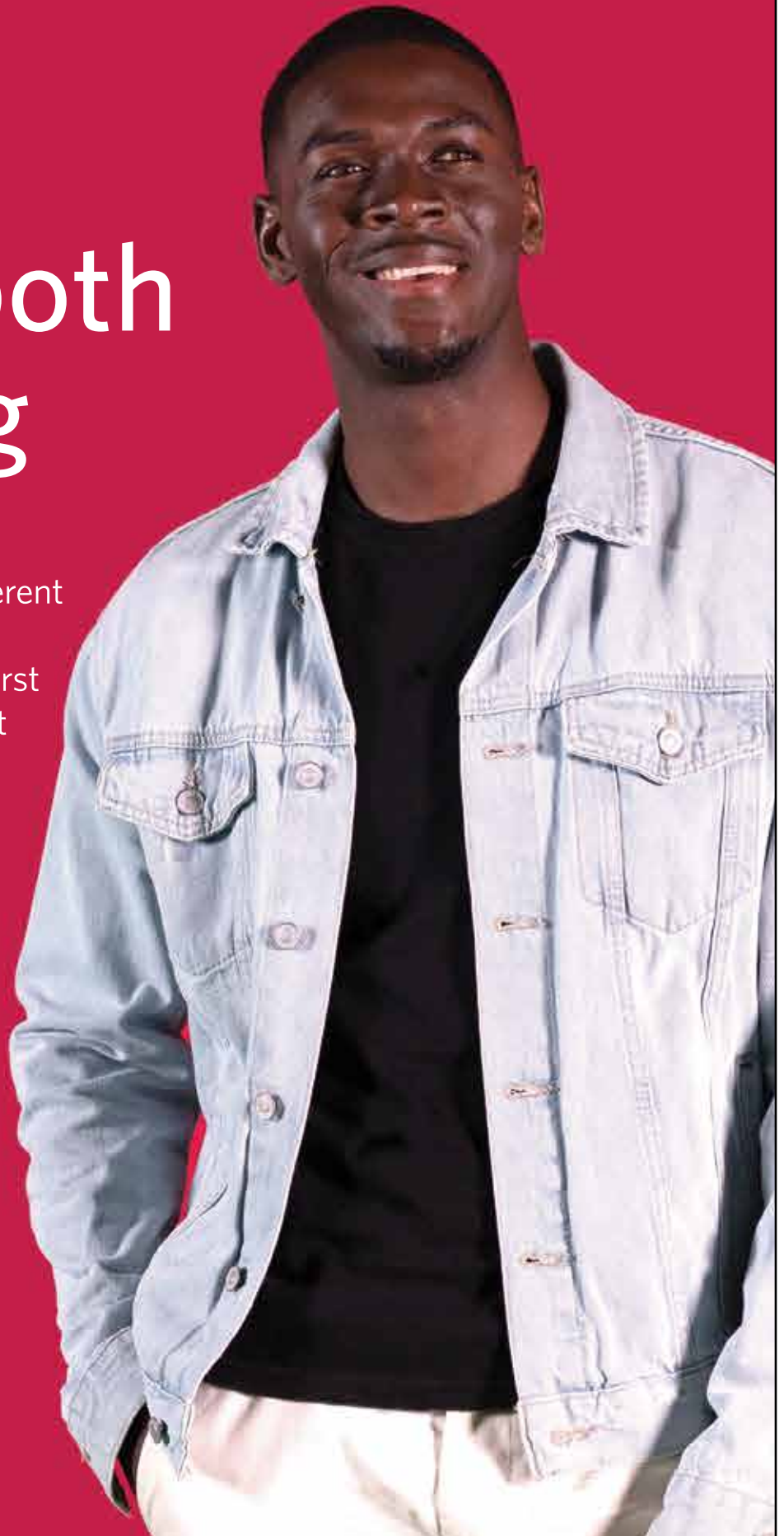
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# Local News



## Prison boss looks ahead to continued improvement of HMP

It's been almost a year since Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Pennyfeather took up the mantle as Superintendent at His Majesty's Prison (HMP).

During that reflection, the prison boss has shared that there have been some improvements but he noted that there is still much more that needs to be addressed.

"My greatest issue is dealing with human resource where you have some individuals, who, rather than seeking to have a more professional relationship, its more personal and then the job suffers for it. Trying to defuse conflict and basically show individuals that this is not the way, takes up much time and energy," Pennyfeather explained.

The integrity of officers has been a sore topic in the public as dozens of contraband items continue to

breach the facility and, while there are instances where the physical security measures were not up to par, many in the public domain believe that officers are also carrying in illegal items to prisoners.

Just this month a raid was conducted by police and prison officers which resulted in a number of items being confiscated.

Among the list of contraband found by the lawmen were 24 cellular phones, one PS3, 66 lighters, two electric kettles, 14 speaker boxes, 15 metal forks, 14 metal spoons, a quantity of nails, 70 grams of cannabis, eight grams of crack/cocaine, a quantity of hashish, a quantity of tobacco, five nail clippers, 10 pairs of scissors, a quantity of electrical components, phone chargers and mirrors.

Colonel Pennyfeather has in the past shared his concern

over that matter as well.

To address this issue, he said that stringent measures will be put in place to catch the perpetrators, and that the individuals who are found guilty will face the full brunt of the law.

Last April, Pennyfeather even offered officers the opportunity to participate in voluntary polygraph tests.

Some officers did take part while others didn't as it was not mandatory.

He however remains optimistic that there will be improvements on that front.

"I think it's getting better and with the appropriate training, I think individuals, for the greater part, will change their ways," Pennyfeather added.

His Majesty's Prison, better known as '1735' — the year it was originally built, has seen several superinten-



Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Pennyfeather

ants come and go, each detailing the challenges of managing the prison.

It was in February of 2023 that the army veteran was appointed, taking over from former boss Jermaine Anthony.

Anthony had been acting in the role after taking over from Lieutenant Colonel Eugene Philip during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### cont'd from pg 4

Lashley Foundation working in partnership with UNICEF, GEF and the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) which is the official voice for anyone under the age of 30 in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

Last week, Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Walton Webson led discussion with youth advocate and Founder of the Ashley Lashley Foundation, Ashley Lashley, to discuss preparations and exchange thoughts and ideas about the Summit. Joining him were the Antigua and Barbuda Coordinators of the Summit, First Sec-

retaries Asha Challenger and Claxton Duberry.

"Our discussions and the final outcome of SIDS4 will undoubtedly have significant consequence on the future so it is absolutely crucial that we create the space for those who will be most impacted by our decisions to have their say," noted Ambassador Webson.

A full slate of activities and events have been arranged to ensure the historic gathering of young people will leave its mark in defining and shaping the future for all SIDS. Inter-generational discussions will give the youth delegates the opportunity to engage and dialogue with top officials and leaders on their concerns and a SIDS Children

and Youth Commitment and a Call-to-Action Declaration will be drafted and presented to the Ministerial Delegations during the SIDS4 Conference.

Another major outcome that organisers expect to achieve is the commitment to finance children/youth projects that will address the needs of island nations in alignment with the ten-year Plan of Action that will arise from the 4th SIDS Conference.

Overall, the Summit will provide an essential opportunity for young people to share their perspectives on some of the crucial issues that threaten their future as inhabitants of these islands, devise and present their own solutions and commit to a course of action.

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# Local News



## Crispin Thomas receives his EV prize

The winner of the first-ever raffle for an Electric Vehicle( EV) in Antigua and Barbuda, Crispin Thomas, was on Tuesday presented with his grand prize.

Organised by the Environment Division, the raffle was deigned to create an awareness about EV as part of an overall campaign to introduce alternative means of transportation that do not harm the environment.

Environment Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph and the Chief Environment Officer, Ambassador Diane Black-Layne, were on hand for the presentation that was held at the Division's headquarters at the Botanical Gardens.







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## UPS to cut 12,000 jobs after 'disappointing' year

Parcel delivery firm UPS has said it will cut 12,000 jobs, after it was hit by a softer economy and a labour fight that scared away some customers.

Chief executive Carol Tomé said 2023 was a “difficult and disappointing year”, and the firm was investing in artificial intelligence (AI) as it pushes to become more efficient.

She has also called staff back to the office five days a week.

The job cuts are expected to reduce costs by \$1bn (£790m) this year.

UPS, whose business is seen as an indicator of wider economic health, struggled last year with a fall in sales and profits, as the number of packages handled by the firm declined.

The company said that reflected economic weakness in Europe and parts of Asia, as well as disruption in the US, where a strike threatened by staff over the summer led some customers to shift their business to rivals.

UPS said it had since won back about 60% of that business and expected modest growth to start to return this

year, with average daily volumes flat or up 2% in the US and flat or up 3% internationally.

But its forecast was weaker than analysts had expected, sending shares down more than 7%.

It also warned that costs associated with its new contract with the Teamsters union would continue to weigh on the company over the next six months.

As part of that deal, the average full-time driver won a pay and benefits package worth about \$170,000 (£135,000) a year by the end of the five-year contract in 2028.

The 12,000 planned job cuts represent about 2.5% of the company’s global workforce, which has already shrunk since the pandemic when a surge in online shopping prompted business to boom.

Executives said most of the positions would be cut from the ranks of its 85,000 management staff, as well as some contractors. Those positions will not return, even as the business mends, executives said.

“It’s a change in the way we work,” said chief financial officer Brian Newman.

The company is also exploring a potential sale of Coyote, a truck load brokerage business it purchased in 2015, which matches truckers to customers.

Ms Tomé said the firm sees many opportunities in the years ahead to boost productivity.

“Technology has changed so much in the past year when you think about the advent of generative AI and applications inside our business,” she said. “I’m really excited about what the changes will mean.”

On its busiest days, UPS sorts 50 million packages in the US and delivers more than 30 million parcels worldwide.

Ms Tomé said the firm was worried about how shipping would be affected by disruption from conflict in the Red Sea, as well as drought in the Panama Canal, which has made it hard for ships to travel typical routes.

## Jam Master Jay: Run-DMC star shot by godson after drug deal dispute, court told

By Ian Youngs

A court has heard that Run-DMC star Jam Master Jay was shot dead more than two decades ago by his godson as revenge for being cut out of a drug deal.

Karl Jordan Jr, 40, and another man, Ronald Washington, 59, have gone on trial in New York accused of murder.

In their opening statements on Monday, prosecutors claimed the pair carried out an “execution” that was “motivated by greed and by revenge”.

However, their lawyers told the jury they did not kill the pioneering DJ.

Jam Master Jay, real name Jason Mizell, was 37 when he was shot in the head at his recording studio in Queens, New York, in October 2002.

He was one third of Run-DMC, the influential hip-hop group known for 1980s tracks such as It's Tricky, It's Like That and Aerosmith collaboration Walk This Way.

They spoke against drug culture, even recording a “Just Say No” public service announcement in 1988. But prosecutors said Mizell had become involved as a middle man in cocaine deals to support



Jam Master Jay's murder shocked the music world in 2002.

his lifestyle and those of others close to him as the group's music career faded.

They said Mr Jordan, who was 18 at the time, and Mr Washington, a friend who was staying with Mizell's sister, thought they would be part of a deal worth nearly \$200,000, and were angered when they were cut out.

They plotted to kill him after being “left with nothing”, New York prosecutor Miranda Gonzalez told the jury, according to the Reuters news agency.

Another man, Jay Bryant, will face a separate trial in 2026. He is accused of entering the studio through

the front door and letting Mr Jordan and Mr Washington in through a locked back fire exit, before Mr Jordan allegedly shot Mizell with a handgun.

“He would be murdered in his own music studio, by people he knew,” Ms Gonzalez told the court, the AFP news agency reported.

But defence lawyer Ezra Spilke called the prosecution's account of events “one version of many”, and said the accused pair “have no clue who did it”.

There is no forensic evidence connecting his client, Mr Washington, to the murder, only “ageing memories”, he said.

Mr Washington was

an alcoholic and relied on Mizell to keep a roof over his head. “Why bite the hand that feeds you?” Mr Spilke said. “Why kill the person you depend on?”

He told the jury: “Mizell was a beloved artist, but convicting the wrong person... does not solve the tragedy. It just adds another one to it.”

Mr Jordan's lawyer John Diaz noted how “the narrative has changed over time” and that some prosecution witnesses had co-operated with federal investigators in exchange for leniency in their own criminal cases.

The trial is expected to last four weeks.

## US threatens to reimpose sanctions on Venezuelan oil sector

By Vanessa Buschschlüter

The US has threatened to reinstate sanctions on Venezuela's oil sector, days after the South American country's top court upheld a ban on opposition candidate María Corina Machado.

Ms Machado won a primary to become the opposition's unity candidate for the 2024 presidential election.

But on Friday, Venezuela's Supreme Court confirmed a 15-year ban on Ms Machado running for public office.

Venezuela rejected the US warning as "rude and improper blackmail".

The oil industry is crucial to Venezuela's economy.

The US imposed sanctions on Venezuela's oil sector after President Nicolás Maduro was sworn in for a second term in 2019, after an election widely dismissed as neither free nor fair.

The US loosened those sanctions in October after the Maduro government reached a deal with the opposition, laying some of the groundwork for free and fair presidential elections to be held in the second half of 2024.

Shortly after the deal was reached in Barbados, the US Treasury issued a licence temporarily allowing transactions involving Venezuela's oil and gas sector.



María Corina Machado says she will stand firm and continue to fight the ban which bars her from running for president.

But it stressed at the time that the licence would only be renewed if Venezuela "met its commitments under the electoral roadmap", which included lifting the bans imposed on María Corina Machado and a number of other opposition candidates.

The oil exemption is due to expire on 18 April and on Tuesday the US state department announced it would not renew it unless "political progress" was made between the Maduro government and the opposition "particularly on allowing all presidential candidates to compete in this year's election".

In a post on X, formerly Twitter, Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez rejected the "ultimatum" from the US government as "blackmail".

She threatened to immediately halt deportation flights for Venezuelan migrants who are in the US illegally if the "economic aggression" intensified.

The US had earlier announced that it would also reinstate sanctions on Venezuela's state-run gold mining company - another source of foreign currency for the Maduro government.

Ms Machado's overwhelming victory in October's opposition's primary - she received more than 90% of the votes - has instilled Venezuelans who want to see a change of government with hope that she can become president - if the election is free and fair.

As part of the Barbados deal, the Maduro government agreed to allow international observers to monitor the election.

tor the election.

But the fact that the Supreme Court - dominated by Maduro loyalists - has upheld the ban on Ms Machado has prompted many, including Ms Machado herself, to conclude that the Barbados deal is "dead".

Ms Machado has promised to stand firm, insisting that she has been given a mandate in the primary which she said she would fulfil: "We are going to win and they must prepare to lose... They cannot hold elections without me."

Jorge Rodríguez, a close ally of Mr Maduro who represented the government at the Barbados talks, insisted that the government had upheld its end of the bargain: "Those who wanted to appeal appealed and also pledged to respect the outcome."

## SVG Police investigate alleged beating of a child by police officers

CMC - Police are promising to take “the appropriate action” after they complete their investigation into reports that police officers allegedly beat a 10-year-old child after he removed a bicycle from a yard on Sunday.

A police statement said that the officers involved were “paraded” before the acting Commissioner of Police of the Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force (RSVGPF), Enville Williams, on Monday and that an investigation had been launched into the matter.

“The appropriate action will be taken upon completion of the said investigation,” the statement by the Police Public Relations and Complaints Department said, noting that “a senior police officer” attached to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) had been assigned to conduct the investigation.

On Sunday, a woman, who identified herself as Rosita Phillips appeared in a Facebook live video saying she was outside the Stubbs Police Station and that her 10-year-old son had been locked up after it was alleged that he had gone into someone’s yard and taken their bike.

She said she went to the police station to find out what was going on and



the officers released the child to her and told her they would investigate the matter.

Phillips said that when she was in the yard of the police station, the child told her that his back was hurting.

“Two police officers beat my child. If you see the bruises on his back,” she said.

The child’s back, which was later shown in the video, appeared to have marks on it and he appeared to be bleeding slightly in one area.

“I want to know if they lock up my child,” she said, questioning also why as the guardian, she was not informed of the situation by the police.

She also said the child

should have been questioned in her presence.

In the statement, the police said the allegations of abuse and misbehaviour by police officers towards a minor had been drawn to the attention of the acting Commissioner of Police and other senior-ranking police officers.

“The officers implicated in the allegation were paraded before the Acting Commissioner of Police earlier today (29.01.24) at the Office of the Commissioner of Police,” the statement said, urging the public to allow the investigation to proceed without hindrance.

“While the allegations are painful to listen to, we must strive to be fair to all parties involved. We,

however, wish to reiterate that the police force is an organisation that does not operate outside of the laws of St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) and no officer will be tolerated if he or she chooses to do so,” the statement said.

“Police abuse and allegations of police abuse are not policies of the RSVGPF,” the statement said with the police promising to update the public on the investigation and actions to be taken shortly.

“Once again, we thank our citizens for continuing to work with RSVGPF to keep our nation safe,” the statement said, urging “anyone with information that can assist the investigation is encouraged to contact” them.

## Biden says he has decided US response to Jordan attack

By Madeline Halpert

President Joe Biden says he has decided how the US will respond to a drone strike that killed three American troops in Jordan at the weekend.

Mr Biden did not elaborate in his remarks at the White House, but added: "I don't think we need a wider war in the Middle East."

An Iran-backed militia group has claimed responsibility for the attack at a US military base.

Dozens more were injured in Sunday's strike near the Syrian border.

The overnight drone attack was the first time US soldiers were killed by enemy fire in the Middle East since the Israel Gaza war erupted on 7 October.

Asked by reporters on Tuesday morning if he had decided how to respond to the attack, Mr Biden said: "Yes."

He was also asked if Iran should be blamed. "I do hold them [Iran] responsible in the sense that they're supplying the weapons to the people who did it," he said.

Iran has denied any involvement.

White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said the US might take a "tiered approach" in its response.

"Not just a single action, but potentially multiple



Sergeant William Jerome Rivers, 46, Specialist Kennedy Ladon Sanders, 24 and Specialist Breonna Alexsondria Moffett, 23.



actions... over a period of time," he told reporters on board Air Force One for Mr Biden's trip to attend election fundraisers in Florida.

"The guiding principle is making sure that we continue to degrade the kinds of capabilities that these groups have at their disposal to use against our troops and our facilities," he said.

Mr Kirby added: "The president will do what he has to do to protect our troops and our facilities and to look after our national security."

The president has a number of options, including retaliatory strikes on Iran-allied bases and commanders.

The US could also target senior commanders of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps in Iraq or Syr-

ia.

In recent months, several US bases in the Middle East have been attacked by militias trained, funded and equipped by Iran.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq - which is made up of several Iran-affiliated militias operating - has claimed responsibility for Sunday's strike.

It has also said it mounted other attacks against US forces in recent weeks.

Kataib Hezbollah, an armed faction of the Islamic Resistance, said on Tuesday it would suspend all its military operations against US troops in the region to avoid "embarrassment" for the Iraqi government.

The group, also called Brigades of the Party of God, is a powerful Iraqi Shia militia that receives fi-

nancial and military support from Iran.

The weekend's deadly strike in north-eastern Jordan hit an American military base known as Tower 22.

About 350 US forces are stationed at the facility, which US Central Command says is focused on defeating the Islamic State group.

The strike killed Sgt William Jerome Rivers, 46, Specialist Kennedy Ladon Sanders, 24, and Specialist Breonna Alexsondria Moffett, 23.

More than 40 others were wounded, including 34 people who officials say were evaluated for possible traumatic brain injuries.

The White House said on Tuesday Mr Biden had *cont'd on pg 15*

## US lawmakers inch towards impeachment of Alejandro Mayorkas

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

Republicans have taken another step towards impeaching Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for his handling of the US-Mexico border.

Opponents of the Biden administration have accused Mr Mayorkas of failing to fulfil his duties, leading to record migrant arrivals.

If the move goes forward, Mr Mayorkas will become the first cabinet secretary to be impeached since 1876.

More than 6.3 million migrants have entered the US illegally since 2021.

On Tuesday, the Republican-dominated House Committee on Homeland Security met to “mark up” articles of impeachment against Mr Mayorkas, a key procedural step taken before a bill advances to the floor of the wider House of Representatives.

At the outset of the meeting, committee chairman Mark Green - a Repub-



Alejandro Mayorkas has accused House Republicans of making “false accusations” as they move to impeach him.

lican from Tennessee - accused Mr Mayorkas of not living up to his oath “to well and faithfully discharge the duties” of his office by allegedly failing to properly secure the US-Mexico border.

“He has wilfully and systematically refused to comply with the laws passed by Congress, and breached the trust of Congress and the American people,” he

said. “The results have been catastrophic, and have endangered the lives and livelihoods of all Americans.”

Mr Mayorkas - who did not attend the hearing - hit back at the accusations.

In a seven-page letter released the same day, he said “false accusations do not rattle me” and outlined a number of steps taken by the Biden administration to enforce US laws at the bor-

der.

“The problems with our broken and outdated immigration system are not new,” he wrote. “Our immigration laws were simply not built for 21st century migration patterns.”

Mr Mayorkas also wrote that his parents came to the US from Cuba, which instilled in him a “reverence for law enforcement”.

Mr Green called the letter “inadequate and unbecoming of a cabinet secretary”.

Currently, Mr Mayorkas is working with the White House and a bipartisan group of senators to tighten border laws, which Republicans have demanded in exchange for agreeing to President Joe Biden’s request for more aid for Ukraine and Israel.

*cont’d from pg 14*

spoken with the family members of the three troops.

The president will attend the “dignified transfer” of their bodies at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Friday, the national security spokesman told reporters.

Mr Biden told the families “how proud we all are of their service, how we mourn and feel sorrow over their loss”, Mr Kirby said. The enemy drone struck while an American drone was returning to the base from a mission.

Officials say the base’s air defence auto-response features were turned off to avoid shooting down the US drone.

But because of that, there was no warning for troops who were reportedly still in their sleeping quarters.

A supplementary air defence system, called the Coyote, is being sent to Tower 22 to help intercept drones, the BBC’s US partner, CBS News, reported.

Tower 22’s air defences were not as robust as those of other bases in the region, an unnamed official said.

*cont’d on pg 16*

## Anderson to captain Guyana in West Indies four-day championship

Batsman Kevlon Anderson will captain the Guyana Harpy Eagles during the upcoming West Indies four-day cricket championship. The 23-year-old has scored 529 runs in seven First Class games at an average of 44.08.

On Saturday, the Guyana Cricket Board (GCB) named a strong unit, led by the former West Indies Under-19 batsman, consisting of a few familiar faces and a new crop of players.

Leg-pinner Steven Sankar is among the new faces in the squad, following a breakthrough year with the ball at the domestic level. Opener Raymond Perez, following his immaculate



Kevlon Anderson batting form, which rolled over from 2023, will get his chance to play at the senior level.

All-rounder Ronaldo

Alimohamed, returns to the squad after being an injury replacement in 2020 and having played 50-over cricket for Guyana at the se-

nior level.

According to a release from the Guyana Cricket Board, Alimohamed, Perez, *cont'd on pg 17*

*cont'd from pg 15*

The deal already faces an upheaval.

Following criticism from former President Donald Trump, front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, who called the deal a political gift to Democrats, many Republicans have withdrawn support for it.

Echoing similar Democratic sentiments, Maryland Representative Glenn Ivey said Republicans “know that there’s a bill potentially that would give us new law to help us at the southwestern border”.

“President Trump and many of the House Republicans are fighting to oppose that because they think it would give President Biden some benefit at the elections at the polling places,” Mr Ivey said.

Bennie Thompson, the highest ranking Democrat on the committee,

accused his Republican colleagues of “throwing spaghetti at the wall and seeing what sticks” by pursuing a “sham” impeachment and “baseless political stunt”.

If impeached by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, Mr Mayorkas would be the first cabinet-level official to go through the process since Secretary of War William Balknap in 1876 for his role in a kickback scheme. He was later acquitted by the Senate.

Even if convicted by the House, Mr Mayorkas is unlikely to be found guilty by the Democrat-controlled Senate.

When asked by reporters on this likely outcome, Mr Green told them it is “fine, if that’s what they [the Senate] choose to do, but I have a duty to do”.

Mr Green has said that the full House vote will happen “soon”.

The controversial move to impeach Mr Mayorkas comes amid rising public concern over US immigration and the government’s handling of its southern border.

A January poll conducted by CBS - the BBC’s US partner - suggests that nearly half of Americans view the situation at the border as a crisis, with 63% saying that the administration should adopt “tougher” policies.

Immigration and border security have emerged as a primary electoral issue ahead of the November presidential election, with a Harvard Caps-Harris poll this month suggesting it has overtaken inflation and the economy as the top policy concern among US voters.

Republicans, particularly former President Donald Trump, regularly refer to “chaos” at the border in election speeches attacking Mr Biden.



## PMS make winning start in defense of Senior Boys title

The 2023 Male Player of the Year, Craig Massiah, has continued his and Princess Margaret School's (PMS) dominance of the Senior Boys Division in the 2024 Cool and Smooth Inter-School Basketball Championship.

Massiah, who was also named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) in the division last year, produced the highest individual score thus far this season as Princess Margaret made a winning start in defense of their Senior Boys Division title in their opening game of the 2024 competition at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday.

Massiah, who also plays for his school's junior boys division team, shot a game-high 52 points to lead Princess Margaret School to an emphatic 80-25 victory against Ottos Comprehensive School in the second game of a senior boys division double header.

"I think I performed well, but I missed a lot of



PMS player Craig Massiah, left, and Dimetre Lietch of OCS were the leading scorers for their respective teams in their Senior Boys Division match at the JSC Sports Complex on Monday, January 30, 2024. (Photo courtesy School Basketball Unit)

shots, and I am not too happy with that, but overall I performed well and came through in the end," Massiah stated.

Dimetre Lietch scored 14 points, including an impressive slam dunk, for Ottos Comprehensive School.

"I was really nervous at first, but my head said to just go through and see what the result was," Lietch said

about performing the first slam dunk in this year's competition.

St. Anthony's Secondary School claimed their first win in the Senior Boys Division by cruising to a convincing 60-18 victory against Sir Novelle Richards Academy in the first encounter.

Devonte Carter converted 18 points, and Jabol Sil-

ston and Triston Richards each scored 10 points for St. Anthony's Secondary School. Tiquan Payne had eight points for Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

Carter said that although St. Anthony's Secondary was able to win the game, the players made a lot of errors, which they must correct in their remaining games in the competition.

The Antigua Grammar School prevailed 25-18 against Clare Hall Secondary in their Junior Boys Division encounter on Monday.

Ronaldo Fields sank 12 points, and Dajon George had eight points for Antigua Grammar School, while Richard Anthony also scored eight points for Clare Hall Secondary School.

### cont'd from pg 16

and Sankar will likely make their debut. Additionally, middle-order batsman Akshaya Persaud makes a return to the Harpy Eagles unit.

Matthew Nandu will be Anderson's deputy as "they lead a well-balanced side featuring a few veterans among the new faces." Lead spinner Veerasammy Permaul, Anthony Adams, and West Indies' latest Test player, Kevin Sinclair, will form a quality Harpy Eagles spin bowling

attack.

Fast bowlers Ronsford Beaton, Nial Smith, and Alimohamed will make up the front-line seam unit, adding to their star-studded spin bowling batch.

Test opener Tagenarine Chanderpaul, Nandu, Sinclair, Perez, Anderson, and Persaud will look to carry the Eagle's batting unit. Kemol Savory will be the wicket-keeper for the first two rounds until Tevin Imlach returns from duties with the West Indies in Australia.

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Players of the Jennings Grenades football team. (File photo)

## Grenades extend unbeaten run to stay at top of Premier League

Reigning champions Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades have extended their unbeaten run to open up a three-point gap at the top of the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division.

The unbeaten Premier Division leaders maintained their 100 percent winning record with a five-nil drubbing of former champions SAP at the ABFA Technical Center on Monday night.

Barrington Blake struck a hat trick after his 13th-minute conversion gave the Grenades a one-nil halftime lead.

Following the interval, Blake

scored in the 53rd and 60th minutes to achieve the feat, as the Grenades scored four goals in the second half to secure their ninth win in as many games.

Sherman Augustin had a 64th-minute conversion, and Kieron Richards scored his team's final goal in the first minute of added time (90+1 minute).

The win ensured that the Grenades extended their lead at the top of the league by advancing to 27 points, three ahead of Old Road, who are in second place.

SAP remained on nine points after suffering their fourth loss in nine

matches.

The Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's domestic season will continue with four matches in the Second Division today at 4:30 pm.

Freemans Ville will face the JSC Progressors at the Freemans Village playing field, and Blackburn Palace will meet the Young Warriors at the Buckleys Primary School playing field.

TAMO FC will tackle Belmont FC at the Golden Grove playing field, and Sea View Farm will oppose ABAYA at the Sea View Farm playing field.



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## ABBA announces new date for start of 2024 domestic season

The 2024 domestic season of the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association (ABBA) is now slated to commence on Sunday, February 18.

The new starting date will take place three weeks after ABBA postponed the commencement of its 2024 domestic season.

Subsequently, the ABBA executive hosted follow-up meetings with all its divisions one and two teams last week.

The divisions one and two leagues were initially slated to commence on Sunday, January 21, with a march past and the official opening ceremony, which will now be held on the new date in February.

According to the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of ABBA Carlena Knight, registration is currently ongoing for teams to confirm their participation in the leagues.

The deadline for registration is February 14, and registered teams will have until February 16 to pay all registration fees.



Coach George Hughes holds the trophy as the Flyers celebrate winning the ABBA Division One Playoff title at the JSC Sports Complex on Tuesday, August 1, 2023. (File photo)

Teams can contact any member of the ABBA executive or make inquiries via the national association's Facebook or Instagram pages about accessing registration forms, which are available online as well as in hard copies.

Knight pointed out that

up until Tuesday, several first and second division teams had verbally notified ABBA of their intention to participate, but no team had been officially registered to take part in the 2024 season.

Knight said a maximum of 12 teams are expected to

compete in this year's second-division league.

"In terms of our second division, we are expecting about 10 to 12 teams to register for this year's competition based on the meetings we would have held with division one and two teams last week," Knight stated.

*cont'd from pg 22*

nership between Nathan Sealy and Tarrique Edward took the Caribbean team to victory.

Sealy finished not out on 27 off 28 balls, while Edward finished 11 not out off 13 balls.

Vishwa Lahiru took two for 32 from his 10 overs, while Dinura Kalupahana and Sineth Jayawardena each captured two for 39 for Sri Lan-

ka.

The West Indies are now second in Group 2 of the Super Six with four points, the same as Australia who play England today (Wednesday). The Caribbean side will play Australia in their final Super Six game on Friday.

The top two teams in the group will advance to the semi-finals.

India and Pakistan also recorded wins in their opening matches in the

Super Six stage of the limited overs tournament on Tuesday.

India trounced New Zealand by 214 runs. India made 295 for eight off their 50 overs, and New Zealand crashed to 81 all out in 28.1 overs.

Pakistan prevailed by three wickets against Ireland. Ireland made 181 in 48.4 overs, and Pakistan achieved victory by scoring 182 for seven in 43.4 overs.

## West Indies beat Sri Lanka at Under-19 World Cup

The West Indies had their third win in a row with a tense three-wicket win over Sri Lanka to open their Super Six campaign at the ICC Under-19 World Cup in South Africa on Tuesday.

Sri Lanka first posted 231 from their 50 overs after winning the toss and choosing to bat first at the Diamond Oval in Kimberley.

Dinura Kalupahana made 53 from 83 balls to lead the Sri Lankan batting effort, while Malsha Tharupathi made 42 off 38 and Supun Waduge struck 31 off 40 balls to provide good support.

Raneico Smith took four for 47 from his 10 overs to



West Indies batsman Steve Wedderburn, left, goes aerial as Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper Sharujan Shanmuganathan looks on during their Super Six stage match of the ICC Under-19 World Cup at the Diamond Oval in Kimberley, South Africa, on Tuesday, January 30, 2024. (Getty Images)

lead the West Indian bowling effort, while Nathan Edward took two for 47 from

his nine overs. Nathan Sealy and Tarrique Edward took a wicket each.

The West Indies then completed a tense chase, reaching 232 for seven from 49.3 overs.

Steven Wedderburn, playing only his second match of the tournament, led the way with a 71-ball 61 at the top of the order. His knock included five fours and three sixes.

He was well supported by Jordan Johnson, who made 39 off 46 balls, including four fours. Captain Stephan Pascal made a swift

26-ball 33, including five fours and a six.

The West Indies were cruising at 147 for two in the 27th over before Wedderburn and Johnson fell in successive overs to leave the West Indies 149 for four in the 28th over.

The subsequent wickets of Mavendra Dindyal (17), Nathan Edward (13) and Jewel Andrew (11) left the West Indies in a tricky position at 206 for seven in the 46th over.

But a match-winning 26-run eighth wicket part-

*cont'd on pg 21*



West Indies Under-19 bowler Raneico Smith