

OPENING OF NEW BARBUDA AIRPORT POSSIBLY 'WEEKS AWAY'

Story on Page 2



The twin-island paradise of Antigua and Barbuda will welcome teams from around the World and host eight international matches during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in June 2024. Pictured next to the carnival sensay (L-R) are: CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority – Colin C. James, Cricketing Legend - Sir Richie Richardson, Antigua and Barbuda Minister of Education, Sports and Creative Industries -The Honourable Daryll S. Matthew - Chief Executive Officer at Cricket West Indies - Johnny Grave; and Astronaut Keisha Schahaff) (Photo Courtesy: The Marketing Machine)

Local News



Opening of new Barbuda airport is possibly 'weeks away'

The opening of the new airport in Barbuda which will have the capacity to accommodate jet aircraft is possibly only 'weeks away'.

According to Prime Minister Gaston Browne the opening of the airport has been delayed because of a number of outstanding regulatory issues.

In response to a question from the Barbuda representative, Trevor Walker, regarding the delay in opening the airport, PM Browne said the authorities are awaiting final approval before proceeding with the opening.

"My understanding is that there are some final approvals that are required from the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA) and we still hope that within a matter of possible weeks, we can still have this new airport on Barbuda open so that Barbu-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne

dans can, for the first time in its history, receive jet traffic," he remarked.

The prime minister explained that initially, the feeling was that this matter of the approvals would have been completed within a shorter period of time, but whilst he acknowledges that they have become somewhat protracted, he feels confident that these will be

approved in time.

"These are regulatory matters and obviously ECCAA has to be satisfied. However, I believe that we are close as all of the steps have been completed, I am told, and they are just waiting for the regulators to give the final approval," he stated.

It was initially anticipated that the opening of the airport would have been completed in time for Christmas to take advantage of the usual overflow of private jets that arrive in Antigua during that time and which are parked at Runway 10.

The opening of the airport will open up Barbuda to a new world of possibilities of direct flights to many ports thus saving residents of the island the necessity of having to travel to Antigua for all of their air travels.

TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

2 DAYS WAYS SAVE

\$16.99
- *2 pcs
- Biscuit
- Drink

\$19.99
- Zinger / CCB
- Drink

limitations apply

KEEP A KICK @kfcanu

FOR BICUR/DILIVERY

Available on the App Store

Available on Google Play

FSRC overseeing matters related to the Global Bank of Commerce/Jack Stroll issue

The Financial Services Regulatory Commission is now overseeing issues related to the Global Bank of Commerce and one depositor – Jack Stroll - which has since been taken before the court after the bank has reportedly been experiencing difficulties in meeting some of its obligations in recent times.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Gaston Browne told the House of Representatives on Thursday that the matters surrounding the bank and any customer are fully in the purview of the FSRC, the legal regulators of the banking sector in Antigua and Barbuda.

He said the FSRC is the only au-

thority under the law to undertake a review of any banking institution operating in the country and it does so at its own discretion. He said as the minister of finance he does not have the authority to interfere with the FSRC as it oversees the operations of any bank nor can he comment on the fiduciary responsibilities of the FSRC, a bank and its client.

Any interference could adversely affect the integrity of the FSRC, the prime minister remarked.

In response to other queries under the *Questions to the Prime Minister* at Thursday's meeting, the prime minister revealed that the Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP) no longer

utilizes GBC to process funds derived from its operations.

"The CIP has stopped depositing funds at Global Bank. I know that had at least one arrangement for an escrow account that was funded through Global Bank and this had to do with the PV Energy deal but after it became public that the bank was encountering difficulties they ceased depositing funds in Global Bank," he reported.

The prime minister acknowledged that there is an outstanding issue where a benefactor – Steve Morgan - had deposited US\$1 million into an account at GBC earmarked for Barbuda relief following the passage of Hurricane

cont'd on pg 4

STUDENT SAFETY POLICY



STATE INSURANCE
COMPANY LIMITED

Live in a better State of mind

www.sicantigua.com
info@sicantigua.com
1 (268) 481-7800/04



Antigua and Barbuda takes lead role on OAS declaration condemning Russia's continued war against Ukraine

The Organisation of American States (OAS) has adopted an Antigua and Barbuda declaration condemning Russia for its continued war against Ukraine which on Saturday (February 24) marks the two-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukrainian sovereign territory.

The declaration was introduced by Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the OAS, Sir Ron Sanders at a Regular Session of the OAS Permanent Council in Washington this week.

The declaration, entitled "Two Years on from the Russian Federation's Invasion of Ukraine" was supported by 25 of the voting members of the Council.

"I am honoured, Mr. Chairman, because I am undertaking a noble task on behalf of the overwhelming majority of the OAS member states, which have been prepared to strongly support a declaration that stands up for international law, for peace and for respect for human rights," Sir Ron said in his introductory remarks.

He observed that on February 24 it will be two years since the Russian Federation undermined the foundations of global peace and security by invading the sovereign territory of Ukraine.

"The repercussions of this act of aggression have reverberated around the world, sparing no nation from its

consequences, and eroding the trust and cooperation upon which our international order is built.

"But none has suffered as much as the people of Ukraine, millions of whom have been forced to flee their country abandoning their homes and separating from their families.

"Women have endured degradation and humiliation as many were raped and in contravention of international humanitarian law and even the rules of war as established in Geneva conventions," he detailed.

According to Sir Ron the invasion of Ukraine has not only caused untold human suffering; it has unleashed a dangerous precedent, emboldening tyrants to act in similar fashion and undermining the collective security mechanisms designed to protect all peoples, especially the most vulnerable and powerless among nations.

"In the spirit of solidarity and commitment to the principles and values that define us, 25 of the 32 voting member states of this organization – more than two thirds of our membership - have lent their names to this declaration.

This collective action sends a resolute message that the majority of OAS member states stand in firm condemnation of the invasion and the ongoing violations perpetrated against the Ukrainian people," he added.



Sir Ron Sanders

The declaration, he explained, is a testament to the OAS' continuing solidarity with the people of Ukraine who, have suffered death, destruction and displacement.

Meanwhile, Ukraine Permanent Observer to the OAS, Ambassador Oksana Markarova, has thanked the OAS for its unwavering support for her country during this time of Russian aggression and she especially singled out Antigua and Barbuda for her commendation for its support and for moving the declaration before the OAS Permanent Council.

cont'd from pg 3
Irma.

That money, according to the prime minister, remains in the bank as efforts to retrieve the money have been futile because of the

corresponding banking and other difficulties currently being faced by the bank.

Apart from the Morgan Trust Fund amounts, the prime minister said there are no other monies allocated

for Barbuda relief that are stuck in the bank.

On that matter, PM Browne said he has met personally with Mr. Morgan in an effort to resolve the matter but the arrangements fell

apart later.

Further he stated that there is correspondence to show that both the financial secretary and he have been in contact with Morgan on several occasions.

Greene thanks New Zealand for its contributions towards the hosting of SIDS

New Zealand is one of several countries and organisations that have contributed funds towards Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Fourth conference from May 27-30.

And to show the appreciation of the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda, Foreign Affairs Minister, E.P Chet Greene expressed a heartfelt 'thank you' to the government and people of New Zealand for their generosity.

Greene's comments were made Thursday when he met with the newly appointed New Zealand High Commissioner to Antigua and Barbuda, E. Linda Te Puni during a courtesy call.

"SIDS4, as you know, is a major global event as we set the agenda for the next ten years for countries such as ours. Let me thank you for your country's support of our hosting of this conference. Over the years, our two countries have grown closer as I recall your assistance to us following the passage of Hurricane Irma that devastated Barbuda. That in itself, is an issue confronting small island states," he noted.

Following assurances from High Commissioner Te Puni that she intends to be present at the conference in May, Greene stated that her attendance there would be further testament to the close relations between the two countries.



Both Minister Greene and High Commissioner Te Puni discussed other areas of cooperation that would be beneficial to both countries. HC Te Puni noted that there are short courses from which Antiguan and Barbudans may benefit and she outlined that research is on-

going in her country into the sargassum weed, the results of which will be shared with countries in the Caribbean such as Antigua and Barbuda.

The two officials also discussed the love for the game of cricket which remains quite popular in the Caribbean as much as it is in New Zealand.

HC Te Puni also referenced New Zealand and Antigua and Barbuda's common history and their current membership of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The meeting between Foreign Minister Greene and High Commissioner Te Puni took place at the margins of Thursday's meeting of the House of Representatives. Following that meeting, the High Commissioner also met with Opposition Leader, Jamale Pringle.



Chief of Staff left confused over recent fall out over Crematorium

“A bit bizarre”.

That was the term used by Chief of Staff in the Prime Minister’s Office Lionel ‘Max’ Hurst to address the recent news that the three women who were interested in building a crematorium in the country would have pulled out.

Earlier this week, the CYW International team comprising Shelley Challenger, Minnelle Williams, and Shari Yearwood expressed their concerns over what they deem as a breach of confidentiality.

“At the core of our concerns is the unfortunate breach of confidentiality that resulted in the leaking of our detailed business proposal to the media,” the team reportedly mentioned over the weekend to another media house.

The CYW International team had been hopeful that they could bring this initiative to fruition, but the leaking of their business plan compromised the project’s integrity and publicly exposed sensitive information that was intended for the government’s eyes only.

The entrepreneurs felt that this act significantly undermined their trust in the project, and they could no longer execute this initiative with full confidence.



Lionel ‘Max’ Hurst

But Hurst believes that no such breach happened.

He said the information shared was only ‘surface level’ data and should be announced to keep the public informed.

“They have issued a statement which we find far from rational. Clearly, there was nothing unusual about what had been written in the report or in the submission to the Cabinet. They are not private documents; this is not a deal that required the Antigua and Barbuda government to remain tight-lipped.

“In fact, we had to reveal what we were doing with these three women if we were not to be unfair to the existing two funeral homes. So, it is a little strange that they would argue that the reason that they are pulling out is because we shared the document with

members of the media. This is what we do and the Antigua and Barbuda government under the Prime Minister Gaston Browne does not have secrets, especially so having to do with any kind of commercial arrangements between itself and others.

“When negotiations are in a delicate stage, we might withhold something until such time but that would not have been the case in this matter,” Hurst said.

According to CYW, the lack of effective communication between the government and themselves also played a factor in the team pulling out.

Originally, the government had turned to the two local funeral homes to assist but the administration later told reporters that the cost of operating the facility seemed to have cooled interest from their owners.

Sometime later, Cabinet announced that the trio proposed to construct a crematorium, the first of its kind in Antigua and Barbuda. The women’s plan included building a crematorium, a garden, a chapel, and a nice place where urns could be kept.

The three Toronto-based women had several decades of experience in the crematorium industry and were willing to invest up to US\$3.5 million.

Progress continues in LIAT 2020 Ltd

It could be just under a matter of weeks before the region sees the first flight from LIAT 2020 taking to the skies.

That’s according to this week’s Cabinet notes which detailed that “in less than 60 days LIAT 2020 is expected to take to the air.”

Plans seem to be mov-

ing forward significantly as additional details regarding the purchasing agreement for several aircraft were shared.

Chief of Staff in the Prime Minister’s Office Lionel ‘Max’ Hurst confirmed during the Post Cabinet Press Briefing on Thursday that all the shareholders are

on board in the acquisition of the planes.

The first aircraft will be purchased for US\$4.1 million; that will allow LIAT 2020 to meet a condition necessary for it to receive an Air Operator Certificate (AOC). An additional US\$12 million will be used to purchase the other two

(2) aircraft.

“Air Peace is expected to add additional aircraft which will expand the LIAT fleet, allowing LIAT to fly long distances since the Air Peace aircraft will have jet engines,” the notes stated.

Air Peace is the second
cont’d on pg 7

Directorate of Gender Affairs commences consultation on BPFA

The Directorate of Gender Affairs is embarking on a nationwide consultative process to compile its report on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA).

The Beijing Declaration, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, outlines twelve critical focus areas for achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls.

As signatories to the convention, every five years Antigua & Barbuda is required to submit a report on Antigua and Barbuda's achievements, challenges, and future strategies for progress in these areas.

The report will be a collaborative effort between governmental agencies, civil society, and the private sector.

Phase one involves a review of

previous reports and other literature relevant to the Beijing Platform.

Phase two entails gathering data about the nation's progress towards gender equality over the past five years from relevant stakeholders in sectors including, but not limited to, finance, education, healthcare and social services.

Phase three will be a consultative review and validation exercise to ensure the report is as comprehensive and accurate as possible.

Civil society organisations are invited to submit shadow reports of the nation's progress on the BPfA. Shadow reports allow non-government organisations (NGOs) to supplement and/or present additional information about the national context, challenges, and successes towards implementing the commitments of the BPfA.

Executive Director of the Directorate of Gender Affairs, Jamie Saunders, describes the upcoming submission as a reaffirmation of the nation's commitment to upholding the principles of gender equality, human rights, and social justice, as enshrined in its national development agenda and international obligations.

"Antigua and Barbuda is proud to have been one of the nations who attended the Fourth International Conference on Women in 1995 when the Declaration was signed and it continues to be an honour to show our enduring commitment to the principles of the Platform for Action nearly three decades later."

This year's report on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is scheduled for submission by June 1, 2024.

cont'd from pg 6

Nigerian-based entity with which the government has been seeking to do business concerning air connectivity between Africa and the Caribbean.

LIAT (1974) Ltd officially ceased all operations on January 24, 2024, under the guidance of court-appointed administrator, Cleveland Seaforth.

The airline had long been the premier carrier in the sub-region, but persistent financial challenges led to its downfall, leaving a significant void in the market.

Since then, the Antigua and Barbuda government has been actively working towards revitalizing the



airline through LIAT 2020, forging a partnership with Nigerian carrier Air Peace to rebuild the airline and restore regional connectivity.

The announcement of the purchase was made by Prime Minister Gaston

Browne two weeks ago.

According to the Prime Minister, negotiations between the government and the CDB have been ongoing for several weeks, with the main point of contention being the sale value of

the aircraft.

The market value of the aircraft is 12.1 million (US) dollars, and the government currently has US\$4.1 million in escrow, which will be remitted once the agreement is signed.

Tickets for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup are now on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, which takes place from the 1st – 29th June 2024. Antigua and Barbuda's famous Sir Vivian Richards Stadium will play host to eight thrilling-matches during the tournament, with both Scotland and England scheduled to play matches in Antigua.

Cricket legend, Sir Richie Richardson said, "Antiguans and Barbudans love cricket, we love the celebration, and we are going to make sure that this ICC T20 tournament experience in Antigua and Barbuda will be 'Out of this World'! I am inviting fans and friends from all over the world to join us and be part of the excitement!"

Minister of Tourism, Charles Fernandez. said, "This is an incredible opportunity to showcase the whole

of Antigua and Barbuda. It will be an amazing boost for our economy, as visitors explore the country, and experience our hotels, excursions, restaurants, and support businesses within the communities".

Antigua and Barbuda looks forward to welcoming cricket fans and their families for this thrilling international sporting event, which will be broadcast around the world.

During the month-long competition, visitors and locals can enjoy all the sporting action from the T20, while soaking up island hospitality and the twin-island's rich tapestry of experiences from idyllic beaches to historical sites and culinary delights.

The ICC Men's T20 World Cup isn't the only prestigious cricket tournament coming to Antigua

and Barbuda this year. From 28th August – 6th October the 2024 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL24) will take place across the Caribbean, with key matches scheduled to take place in Antigua, the birthplace of 'party cricket'.

Sir Vivian Richards Stadium will be the home of new franchise, the Antigua & Barbuda Falcons when they compete in CPL24.

Dubbed the 'Biggest Party in Sport', the competition will showcase the talent of the best players from the Caribbean in an exciting and fun-filled competition.

In November, England's Men's Cricket will once again tour the West Indies for a white ball series, with fixtures and matches across Antigua and the Caribbean expected to be announced this spring.

"2024 is truly a major year for cricket in Antigua and Barbuda, and we could

not be more thrilled to be hosting cricket fans for the series of matches. Cricket is a central part of the fabric of who we are.

"Our love for this beautiful game and our vibrant culture will be on full show for all visitors who will be awed in Antigua and Barbuda, and who will create memories that will inspire them to return to our shores, again and again", said CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin C. James.

The full list of T20 Fixtures taking place in Antigua are:

- 9th June, 2024 - Oman vs Scotland
- 11th June, 2024 - Australia vs Namibia
- 13th June, 2024 - England vs Oman
- 15th June, 2024 - Namibia vs England
- 19th June, 2024 – A2 vs D1
- 20th June, 2024 – B2 vs D2
- 22nd June, 2024 – A1 vs D2
- 23rd June, 2024 - C2 vs D1

DEWS

WE'RE ON WHATSAPP!

CONTACT US!

729-3397 / 729-1210

SEND US YOUR ESTIMATES!



 DEWS
  dewspro
  info@dewspro.com
  729-3397/ 729-1210

COMMUNITY SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

A Special Invitation to ALL National Honourees of Antigua and Barbuda

All Members of the Orders of Honours and Decorations of Antigua and Barbuda are cordially invited to the 2024 Commonwealth Day Service of Thanksgiving which is scheduled to take place on Sunday March 3, 2024 st the Ebenezer Methodist Church, St.Mary's Street at 8:30 am.

Kindly take note that medals and decorations are to be worn to the Service

Paula Frederick-Hunte (Mrs.)
 Permanent Secretary
 Office of the Governor General
 Chairperson, Commonwealth Day Planning Committee

BECOME A

GERM BUSTER

GERMS ARE EVERYWHERE!
WASH YOUR
HANDS
REGULARLY
WITH SOAP.



GRAFINKZ



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS
& THE ENVIRONMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

For more information
or assistance:
Call (268) 462-5522
or visit us on Lower High Street,
St. Johns, Antigua.

unicef 
for every child

Opinion



France and the US broke Haiti; they should be the first to mend it

By Sir Ronald Sanders

When the Foreign Ministers of the world's wealthiest nations gathered in Brazil from February 21, 2024, Haiti's dire situation found a brief moment of attention—not in the main agenda but on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Rio de Janeiro. This sidelining is emblematic of the low priority assigned to Haiti by these global powerhouses.

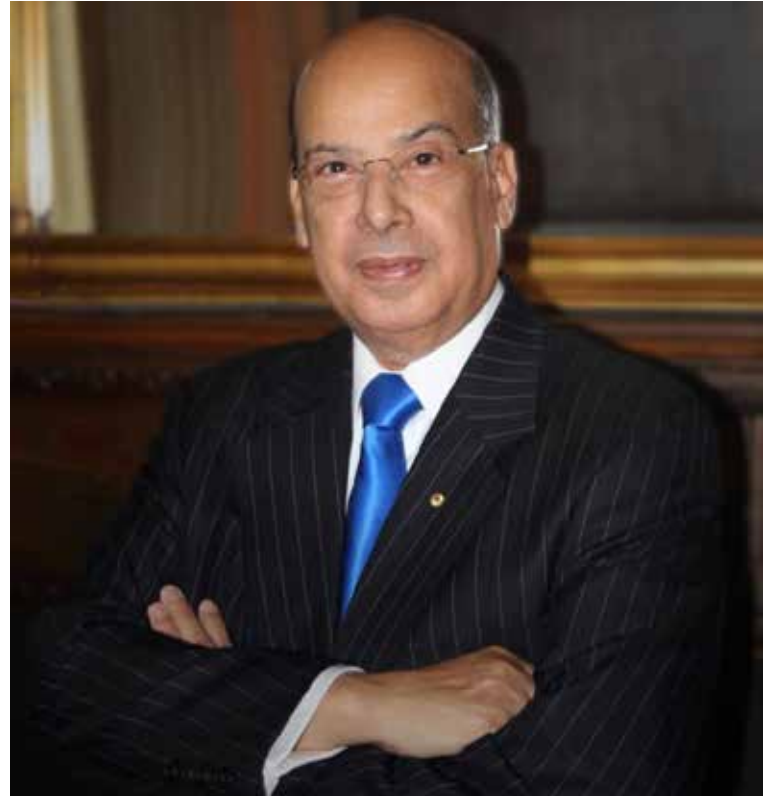
U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken took the initiative to put Haiti on the agenda, highlighting U.S. concerns over the country's instability and the continuous arrival of Haitian refugees to U.S. shores, which has been a contentious issue. Yet, as of February 23, 2024, major G20 nations have not shown an enthusiastic response.

This lack of enthusiasm reflects the acute rivalry of other major G20 countries, particularly Russia and China, with the U.S., as they have differing interests concerning Haiti. In the case of China, it has argued for a multifaceted approach that includes political stability and security support to create a sustainable path forward for Haiti. For its part, Russia has expressed scepticism towards international military interventions without a clear national consensus and detailed operational plans. Russia abstained from

voting on the UN Security Council Resolution, which authorized the deployment of a Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission to Haiti by like-minded countries, led by Kenya.

Nonetheless, Secretary Blinken has continued to encourage G20 and other nations, from both developed and developing regions, to join the MSS mission. To date, the U.S. has not managed to secure troop commitments except from Kenya and a few countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The particularly notable absence of troop commitments from European nations, especially France—a former imperial power in Haiti and a major beneficiary of its slave-produced wealth—underscores this point.

The U.S. itself has committed no troops. Instead, it has concentrated on trying to get African and Caribbean nations to send their military personnel. The Biden administration's reluctance to commit troops to Haiti may be influenced by the stance of Donald Trump, Biden's presidential rival, known for his reluctance to deploy U.S. troops abroad. Nonetheless, it irks some nations that the U.S. is calling on them to provide troops who would be endangered in Haiti, while choosing to keep its soldiers at home.



Sir Ronald Sanders

Further, while the U.S. government is touting its willingness to pay \$200 million to finance an intervention in Haiti, it says half will come from the Department of Defence, but the other half must come from the U.S. Congress. To date, the Congress has not voted to allocate any money. Therefore, the full amount of the U.S. government pledge is not available and is \$100 million short of the Kenyan demand.

Jake Johnson, in his insightful book "Aid State: Elite Panic, Disaster Capitalism, and the battle to control Haiti," suggests that Western perceptions of Haiti are marred by a history of colonialism and racism. While I share Johnson's

view and commend his work for its depth, I argue that the issue is primarily one of passive racism—a disregard for Haiti that likely wouldn't exist if its population were white.

That passive, almost unthinking, reflexive racial attitude is also mixed with the view that Haiti is a corrupt country where billions of dollars of aid has either been mismanaged or stolen. The two elements have been a toxic brew for western policy makers to swallow.

A further unofficial consideration in the minds of many governments, and one that is whispered in the margins of international gatherings, is that tens of billions of dollars have been spent

cont'd on pg 11

cont'd from pg 10

on peacekeeping efforts in Haiti in the past by the United Nations and participating governments. Yet, as soon as peacekeeping forces leave, Haiti returns to instability resulting from conflicts between rival political forces in the country.

It is noteworthy that while Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has generally agreed to support a humanitarian intervention in Haiti, less than five of its 15 members have actually offered troops. In the event, CARICOM lacks the capacity to make any significant military contribution to any intervention in Haiti. The grouping has done so because Haiti is a member state, and, more importantly, because the Haitians were the first nation to rise up against slavery and create a black independent nation in 1804.

But, in any analysis of the Haitian situation, France and the U.S. have a particular responsibility, hav-

ing significantly profited from and subsequently destabilized the country. Neither country, whatever internal political issues they face, cannot be excused from their responsibility for impoverishing Haiti. The heavy debt imposed by France following Haiti's independence and the U.S.'s prolonged financial and political interference have left deep scars on Haiti's ability to self-govern and prosper.

In light of this, the primary onus for aiding Haiti lies with France and the U.S. They should be at the forefront of efforts to restore order and rebuild the nation, contributing not just through police presence now but also by investing in Haiti's infrastructure and social systems, rectifying the historical injustices that continue to impede its progress.

Haiti's relegation to the sidelines of international discourse is a stark reminder of the need for a renewed, committed global effort to address its

crises. It is time for those nations most implicated in its historical exploitation, to fulfil their moral and ethical obligations to Haiti.

There is need for an intervention in Haiti to end the current lawlessness, but the support for such an intervention should come from the broadest representation of the Haitian people. It should also include a timetable and a comprehensive plan, with resources, to build Haiti's much needed physical, social, political and governance infrastructure at the intervention's conclusion.

Only then can we hope to see Haiti as a stable, sovereign, and thriving nation, rather than perpetually labelled as a "failed" state or an "aid" state."

(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the US and the OAS. The views expressed are entirely his own. For comments and previous commentaries, see: www.sirronaldsanders.com)



Curry House

ANTIGUA

A whole new dining experience awaits you.

Call us at 562-5724 | Whatsapp 736-7165

Nvidia: Boss says AI at 'tipping point' as revenues soar

By Mariko Oi

The boss of the world's most valuable chip maker Nvidia said artificial intelligence (AI) is at a "tipping point" as it announced record sales.

The technology giant reported that revenues surged by 265% to \$22bn (£17.4bn) in the three months to 28 January, compared to a year earlier.

For the year as a whole, turnover more than doubled to \$60.9bn.

"Accelerated computing and generative AI have hit the tipping point," said Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang.

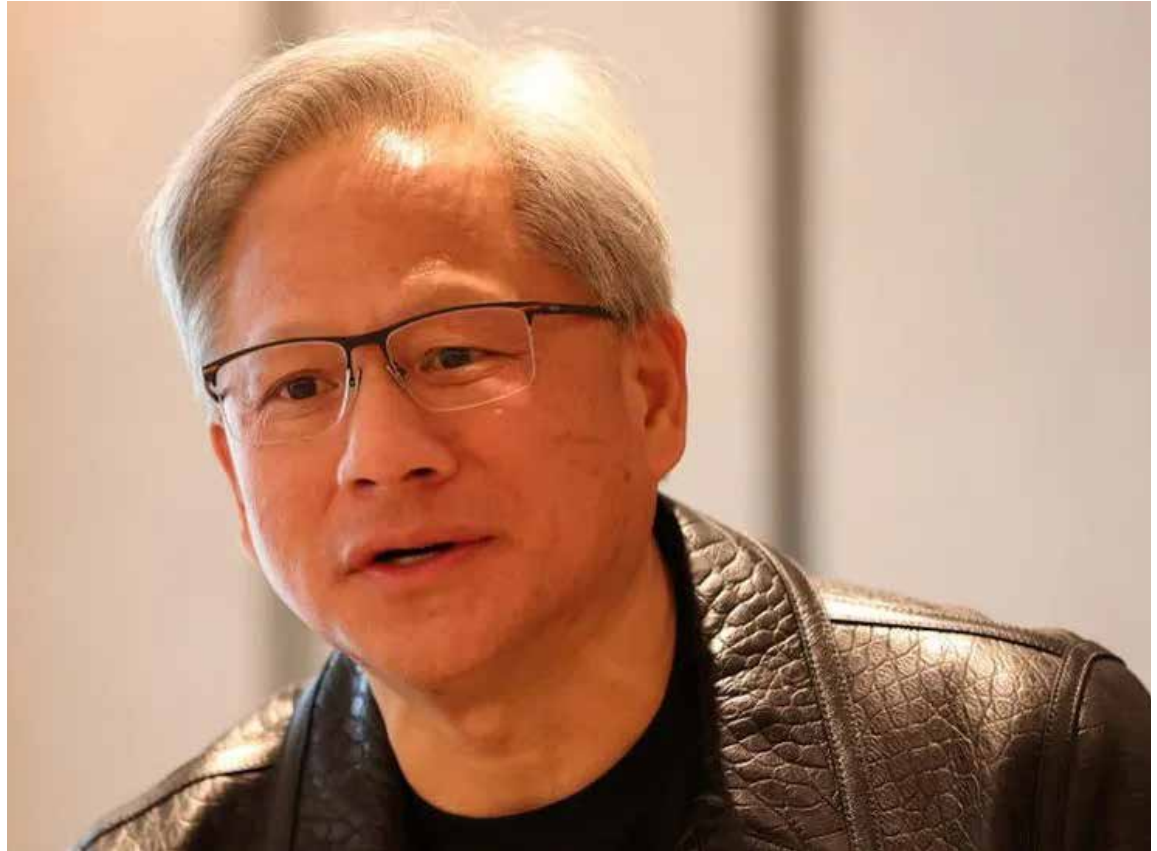
"Demand is surging worldwide across companies, industries and nations."

Nvidia also forecast a 233% jump in its quarterly revenues for the current quarter, beating analysts' estimates.

"There was a lot riding on this last quarter and they actually absolutely knocked it out of the park," Bob O'Donnell of Technalysis Research told the BBC.

"We're starting to see mainstream usage of AI," he added, highlighting that AI is not longer only used by specialised technology companies.

In addition to its AI chips, sales at the firm's data centres have grown



Nvidia co-founder and chief executive Jensen Huang.

rapidly.

Its data centre business contributed the vast majority of its revenues in the most recent quarter after growing more than five-fold over the last year.

Nvidia said gross profit for the final three months of its financial year rose by 338% to \$16.8bn. Annual gross profit rose by 188% to \$44.3bn.

However, the company said it faced several challenges including constraints on its supply chains.

The US has also tightened its restrictions on trade with China, the world's second largest economy.

Ipek Ozkardeska-

ya, a senior analyst at Swissquote, told the BBC that Nvidia's results had been "unusually amazing".

But she added that Nvidia could face difficulties in addition to restrictions in China.

"Nvidia... will see challenges on the way up because first the revenue growth will likely stabilise and the euphoria regarding these growth and growth perceptions will level out," she said.

The company is also likely to face competition and regulation issues, Ms Ozkardeska added, and it could be "constrained by their own capacity to respond to this fast-surging

demand".

AI's public profile has risen sharply since the launch in 2022 of ChatGPT, which was developed by Microsoft-backed OpenAI.

ChatGPT and other similar systems use huge amounts of data to create convincing human-like responses to user queries.

They are expected to dramatically change the way people search for information online.

Nvidia's stock market value has soared by 225% over the last year, making it one of the most valuable companies in the US. Its share price jumped by more than 9% in extended New York trading.



**MON - FRI
9AM TO 11AM**



**HOSTED BY
TROY ALLEN**

TALK YOUR MIND

**CALL: 562-3989 OR 562-2991 | US: 718 285 7889
FACEBOOK LIVE @ POINTE FM99.1**

WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

SVG PM not prepared to comment on situation involving CDB president

CMC - St Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves on Wednesday said he is not prepared to comment on the ongoing situation regarding the embattled President of the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Dr Hyginus "Gene" Leon, who has been sent on administrative leave since January.

"There is a process which is ongoing and the Governors of the bank are engaged in that process. And I wouldn't want to comment while that process is ongoing," Gonsalves said on the state-owned NBC Radio.

On Tuesday, the Vincentian-born acting CDB president, Isaac Solomon, confirmed that there is "an internal administrative process involving the president.

"The bank is extremely focused on preserving the independence, confidentiality and integrity of the process and as you can well appreciate in order for us to maintain the integrity and confidentiality of the process we are unable to provide any other details at this time," Solomon told reporters during the bank's annual news conference.



Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr Ralph Gonsalves.

According to the statement posted on the bank's website, the Board of Governors is the highest policy-making body of CDB and meets once a year.

It said all of the powers of CDB are in the hands of the Board of Governors, which can delegate its powers to the Board of Directors except on certain matters such as the admission of new members, change in capital stock, election of directors and the president as well as an amendment of the Charter and the termination of the operations of CDB.

Leon, the highly regarded St Lucian-born econo-

mist, is the sixth president of the regional development finance institution. He was elected at a special meeting of the CDB Board of Governors held on January 19, 2021, for a five-year term, and assumed office on May 4, 2021.

CMC has been reliably informed that the Board of Governors met last Monday and that 'some members expressed concern no acting appointments were made.

"We did not appoint him, not sure who did," said a source familiar with the meeting with regards to the acting appointment of Solomon.

Gonsalves told radio listeners that his only comment now would be that he would like the CDB to continue its work, saying "the CDB is an organisation with hundreds of persons working, with good quality professionals and the work continues".

Last month, leaders of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) had expressed their "utter disappointment and shock" at the treatment being meted out to the embattled CDB president, who is reported to have been sent on administrative leave until April this year.



USVI Governor Albert Bryan.

USVI advocates for removal from EU blacklist

The US Virgin Islands has voiced its disappointment with the territory being included on the EU's list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions.

Governor Albert Bryan and his administration have vigorously lobbied against this unjust action since 2019 and continue to advocate for the USVI's removal from that list.

During yesterday's Interagency Group on Insular Areas annual meeting at the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC, Governor Bryan reiterated the

urgent need for the State and Treasury departments to take a firm stance against the inclusion of Small Territories on the European Union Blacklist.

Governor Bryan emphasized, "It is unacceptable for us to continue being treated like a foreign country separate and apart from the United States. In the area of territorial tax treatment, especially, we continue to be treated inconsistently across the Territories as a group."

Governor Bryan is scheduled to meet with

State Department officials while in Washington to discuss this and other key issue areas affecting the US Virgin Islands.

"We urge the EU to reconsider its decision and recognise the US Virgin Islands' commitment to international tax cooperation and transparency. Our administration remains steadfast in our efforts to rectify this situation and ensure fair treatment for the people of the US Virgin Islands," said the USVI Governor.

It was added that the Bryan-Roach Administra-

tion is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilising the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible.

Earlier this week the EU removed The Bahamas, Belize and the Turks and Caicos Islands from its blacklist. However, the USVI, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, and Trinidad and Tobago were named among 12 jurisdictions on the most recent EU list.

Honduran ex-president in court accused of leading 'narco-state'

By **Vanessa Buschschlüter**

The former president of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernández, has appeared in a New York courtroom where he stands accused of protecting drug traffickers.

Prosecutors say he ran the Central American nation like a "narco-state", accepting millions of dollars in bribes from cocaine traffickers.

In exchange, he allegedly tipped them off about planned raids and even ordered the army to protect them.

Mr Hernández has denied any wrongdoing and pleaded not guilty.

He is facing three charges: one of conspiring to import cocaine to the US and two of carrying weapons "in furtherance of the cocaine importation conspiracy".

If convicted of all three, he could face life in prison.

Mr Hernández's fall from grace has been swift.

In 2019, then President Donald Trump thanked Juan Orlando Hernández for "working with the United States very closely".

"We're stopping drugs at a level that has never happened," the US president said at an event both he and Mr Hernández attended in Florida.

Mr Hernández in turn thanked President Trump



Juan Orlando Hernández was president from 2014 to 2022.

and the American people "for the support they have given us in the firm fight against drug trafficking".

"My commitment has been clear... we purged the police, we built maximum security prisons, we managed to pass many laws to strengthen the legal framework for the fight against organised crime and the results are tangible: in six years we have dropped from 87% of drug trafficking through Honduran territory to only 3%," Mr Hernández.

Just over two years later - and only weeks after he had left office - Mr Hernández was arrested at his home in the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa.

In his indictment, he was accused by US pros-

ecutors as having "partnered with some of the world's most prolific narcotics traffickers to build a corrupt and brutally violent empire based on the illegal trafficking of tonnes of cocaine to the United States".

He was quickly extradited to New York, where he has been in held in pre-trial detention.

Prosecutors allege his links with drug trafficking date back to 2004, long before he became president.

They say drug traffickers paid Mr Hernández millions of dollars in bribes to allow cocaine to be smuggled from Colombia and Venezuela through Honduras on to the US.

Among the drug traffickers Juan Orlando

Hernández is accused of protecting is his younger brother Tony, who was sentenced in 2012 to life in prison by a court in the US.

In one of the most eye-catching allegations made during the trial of the younger Hernández, prosecutors alleged that Mexican drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán had given Tony Hernández \$1m (£792,400) as a bribe for Juan Orlando Hernández.

The ex-president has vehemently denied the allegations, stating in a public letter he sent from prison that he is "the victim of a vendetta and a conspiracy by organised crime and political enemies".

The judge in the case said the trial was likely to take two to three weeks.



Valencia fire: High-rise building engulfed by flames in Spain

A high-rise residential building in the Spanish city of Valencia has been engulfed by a major fire.

The blaze - which is ongoing - occurred at a 14-storey block in the Campanar neighbourhood and spread to an adjoining building.

Firefighters have been seen rescuing people from balconies, and local media reports others may be trapped inside.

At least 14 people, including six firefighters and a young child, have been injured.

More than 20 fire crews are tackling the fire and people have been urged to stay away from the area.

The building contains 138 flats and was home to 450 residents, newspaper El País reported, citing the building's manager.

Local reports said firefighters had rescued several residents using cranes, including a couple living on the seventh floor.

One woman told TVE she had seen firefighters attempting to rescue a teenage boy trapped on the building's first floor.

In the hours after the fire rapidly took hold, questions have been asked in Spain about the materials used in the building's construction.

Esther Puchades, vice president of the College of Industrial Technical Engineers of Valencia, told Spanish news agency Efe she had previously inspected the building.

She claimed its exterior featured a polyurethane material, which is no longer in wide use because of fears over flammability.

One man who lives on the second floor of the building told TV channel La Sexta that the flames grew rapidly after the fire started, reportedly on the fourth floor.

"The fire spread in a matter of 10 minutes," he said, adding that material on the facade of the building

may have caused the fire to spread.

David Higuera, an engineer, told El País the building's cladding may have been the cause of the rapid spread of the fire.

The aluminium plates with an foam insulator making up the outer layer of the building are "very good at insulating against heat and cold, but very combustible," he said.

Firefighters were called at around 17:30 local time. A field hospital has been set up in the area, RTVE reported.

People displaced from their homes would be housed in hotels, authorities said.

Writing on X (formerly known as Twitter) Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said: "Dismayed by the terrible fire in a building in Valencia... I want to convey my solidarity to all the people affected and recognition to all the emergency personnel already deployed at the scene."

Sports News



PMS ends Clare Hall's unbeaten run in Junior Boys basketball

The Princess Margaret School (PMS) ended the unbeaten run of defending champion Clare Hall Secondary School in the Junior Boys Division of the Cool and Smooth Inter-Schools' Basketball Championships on Wednesday.

Craig Massiah converted 33 points, and Tyrese White scored 12 points to lead Princess Margaret to their 54-45 victory against Clare Hall Secondary at the JSC Sports Complex.

Tajahron Davis shot a game-high 36 points for Clare Hall Secondary School, which lost for the first time in this year's competition.

There were mixed fortunes for St. Anthony's Secondary School in the Junior Boys Division.

St. Anthony's Secondary went under 17-20

against Antigua Grammar School.

Jenicker Lopez scored seven points for Antigua Grammar School, while Justyn Raeburn sank six points and Ean Southwell scored five points for St. Anthony's Secondary School.

However, Ean Southwell shot a game-high 17 points as St. Anthony's Secondary School rebounded to claim a 25-8 victory against Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

There was success as well for St. Mary's Secondary School, which prevailed 35-18 against Ottos Comprehensive School in another Junior Boys Division affair.

Justin Carr converted 10 points for St. Mary's Secondary, while Ajani Adams also scored 10 points for Ottos Comprehensive School.



Clare Hall Secondary's Tajahron Davis, left, and Princess Margaret School's point guard Craig Massiah, right, were the leading scorers for their respective teams in their Junior Boys Division clash at the JSC Sports Complex on Wednesday, February 21, 2024. (Photo courtesy of the School Basketball Unit)

AGS claim first innings honours against OCS in schools' cricket

The defending champion Antigua Grammar School (AGS) captured first innings honours against Ottos Comprehensive School (OCS) in a drawn affair during the latest round of matches, which were affected by rain, in the schools' two-day cricket competition.

Ottos Comprehensive batted first and made 78 all-out. Xaveek Topping hit 40, and Yohance Marcellin chipped in with 11. Hosea Roberts claimed three for 10, and Uvrin Smith picked up two for 10.

In reply, Antigua Grammar School

reached 81 for eight when the match ended. Roberts struck 30, Malik Ambrose made 15 not out, and Khalique Bascombe got 11.

Topping captured four for 22, while J'Qhan Hunte and Tyrese Damon each picked up a wicket.

Leeward Islands Under-15 player Tanez Francis hit an unbeaten century for Jennings Secondary School, but their game against Clare Hall Secondary School ended in a no result.

The diminutive Francis struck 159 not out as Jennings Secondary School

made 263 for two off 32 overs.

Estan Hill scored 31, and Ramez Prince made 19 not out. Jayden Charles captured one for 51, and Amos Christian took one for 90.

There was no play in the other two matches because of the rain. The affected matches were Pares Secondary versus Irene B. Williams Secondary, and Princess Margaret School versus Sir Novelle Richards Academy.

The school cricket competition is slated to continue today with 30-over matches in the Under-15 Division.

Browne off to contest three-stage cycling race in Aruba

Antigua and Barbuda's top junior cyclist, Tahje Browne of the Wadadli Cycling Academy, will once again be contesting the annual warm-up race in Aruba this weekend.

Browne, accompanied by coach and president of the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation (ABCF), St. Clair Williams, left the island on Wednesday to participate in the 10th Annual Warm-Up Race, which is being hosted by the Velocity Cycling Team, in Aruba from February 23-25.

Browne, who will be participating in the event for the third consecutive year, will be contesting the junior men category.

The teenager, who is a student at the Antigua Grammar School, will be seeking more success after winning the pre-junior category during the 9th edition of the three-stage race last year.

The warm-up race is a three-stage event, comprising a criterium race, an individual time trial, and a circuit race.

The Criterium Race will commence at 6:30 pm on Friday, February 23. Competition will also be held in the Youth Class, Open Women, Beginners Men, Master A, B, and C, Elite Men, Pre-Junior Men, and Junior Men categories.

The individual time trial will be held at 7 am on Saturday, February 24. The Elite Men, Master A Class, and Junior Men competitors will compete for a distance of 20 kilometers.

Cyclists in the Pre-Junior Men, Open Women, Masters B and C, Beginner Men, and Youth (boys and girls) categories will race for 10 kilometers.

The Circuit Race will be held at 7 am on Sunday, February 25. The Elite Men, Master A Class, and Junior Men will ride for 70 kilometers or complete 14 laps of the circuit to win the event.

The Master B Class and Open Women will battle for supremacy over 60 kilometers, or 12 laps, while the Pre-Junior Men and Master C Class will compete over 50 kilometers, or 10 laps.

The Beginner Men and the Youth (boys and girls) categories are required to cover 40 kilometers or eight laps.



President of the Wadadli Cycling Academy and the Antigua and Barbuda Cycling Federation St Clair Williams, left, is accompanying Tahje Browne, right, at the 10th edition of the Warm-Up Race, which is being hosted by the Velocity Cycling Team, in Aruba this weekend. (File photo)



Players of the Potters Stealers basketball team. (Photo courtesy of CPTSA Wings)

Steelers get first win in ABBA's Division I League

The Potters Stealers won their first game in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Division I League on Wednesday night.

The Steelers rebounded from an opening-game loss to the Flyers on Sunday by snatching a 70-64 victory against Kennedy's Club Limited Ottos Full Throttle in the second game of a double header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Russell Daley converted 16 points; Devorn Benjamin produced 14 points, six steals, six assists, and five rebounds; Cohen Desouza had

14 points, 20 rebounds, and five assists; and Humroy Wright scored 13 points for the Potters Steelers.

Morlon Davis had 16 points, 12 rebounds, and five steals; Leroy Percival sank 14 points and grabbed 11 rebounds; and Warren Bogle chipped in with 12 points and five assists for the Ottos Full Throttle.

Flyers II soared past Old Road Dagers 66-55 in Division II in the first encounter on Wednesday.

For Flyers II, T-Shawn Lewis produced 22 points, 18 rebounds, and five steals, and Harry Rashaun sank 14 points and grabbed 12 rebounds.

Craig Massiah scored 13 points and snatched six rebounds, and Sadiq Phillip chipped in with 15 rebounds, eight points, and five blocked shots for Flyers II.

For the Old Road Dagers, Jesus Lopez had 13 points and five steals; Braulio Estrada scored 12 points and grabbed nine rebounds; and Devea Aaron produced eight points, 11 rebounds, and five steals.

Teammate Craig Thomas contributed eight points and eight rebounds, and Kareem Jacobs chipped in with eight points and five rebounds for the Old Road Dagers.

Wins for F. Ville and SVF in Second Division football

Freemans Village and Sea View Farm (SVF) secured wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division League on Wednesday.

Malique Charles and Kahlique Kellman each scored twice as leaders Freemans Village opened up a five-point gap at the top of the league by romping to a 5-1 victory against Blackburn Palace at the Freemans Village playing field.

Their ninth win in 10 matches allows Freemans Village to extend their lead at the top of the standings by advancing to 27 points,



Players of the Sea View Farm football team. (File photo)

five more than Bethesda and Sea View Farm.

Blackburn Palace remains in 10th place with 16 points after suffering their fourth loss in 12 matches.

Klyster Rowe scored

twice as Sea View Farm jumped from sixth to third place on goal difference by coming from behind to record a 4-1 victory against TAMO FC at the Golden Grove playing field.

Their seventh win in 10 matches allows Sea View Farm to join Bethesda on 22 points, while TAMO FC remains in 14th place with 10 points after losing for the fifth time in nine matches.

cont'd from pg 22

Round of 16 of the 2022 CMU20 in Honduras and will look to make a statement in front of their home fans. Belize, the BVI, and Anguilla will all be on the hunt for strong performances.

Guatemala heads up Group C, which will be at the Estadio Doroteo Guamuch Flores in Guatemala City. Guatemala will be joined by Curacao, Aruba, St. Martin, and Barbados.

Guatemala have two Under-20 Men's World Cup appearances to their name, doing so in Colombia in 2011 and then again last summer in Argentina in 2023.

Curacao and Aruba have met eight times at the U20 level, with Aruba winning four and losing twice in the series. St. Martin and Barbados will be hoping to qualify for the championship for the first time since USA

2018.

Canada will be the team to watch in Group D, along with Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Dominica, with all matches to be played at the Hasely Crawford Stadium in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Canada participated in eight Under-20 Men's World Cups and will be searching for their first appearance since 2007. Canada was also two-time champions of the CMU20 in 1986 and 1996.

Trinidad and Tobago have been to two Under-20 Men's World Cups, in 1991 and 2009, and were CMU20 runners-up in 1990. Vincy Heat and Dominica each last reached the CMU20 in the USA in 2018.

Both Group E and Group F will take place at the SKNFA (St. Kitts and Nevis Football Association) Techni-

cal Center in Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis.

Haiti, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts and Nevis, and the Cayman Islands make up Group E. Haiti, Puerto Rico, and St. Kitts and Nevis all reached the CMU20 in Honduras in 2022, while the Cayman Islands' previous participation was at USA 2018. Each of the four nations will be pursuing a first-ever Under-20 Men's World Cup qualification.

Rounding out the tournament is Group F, with Jamaica, Bermuda, Grenada, and Martinique. Jamaica are on the hunt for their first Under-20 Men's World Cup since Argentina in 2001 and were CMU20 quarterfinalists in Honduras in 2022.

Bermuda, Grenada, and Martinique all last appeared in a CMU20 in the USA in 2018, with each side finishing in the group stage.

Concacaf Men's Under-20 Championship Qualifying set to start today

Antigua and Barbuda's young Benna Boys will be among the 27 teams that will launch their campaigns across five different venues in Central America and the Caribbean during the start of the 2024 Concacaf Men's Under-20 Championship Qualifying (CMU20Q) competition, set to take place from February 23 to March 2.

The teams have been divided into three groups of five and three groups of four, with the winner of each group advancing to the 2024 Concacaf Men's Under-20 Championship (CMU20) to be held later this summer.

Group B is an intriguing group with El Salvador, host Antigua and Barbuda, Suriname, Guyana, and the Turks and Caicos Islands set to battle at the ABFA Technical Centre, with double headers on match days at 10:30 am and 3 pm.

El Salvador will face the Turks and Caicos Islands, while Antigua and Barbuda's young Benna Boys will take on Guyana in today's



Head coach Kerry 'Arab' Skepple, seated left in blue outfit, assistant coach Auchland 'Pin Up' Jarvis, standing right in blue outfit, team manager Roderick Williams, standing left in blue outfit, and the players of the Antigua and Barbuda Benna Boys Under-20 Football squad. (Photo courtesy of the ABFA)

opening Group B matches.

El Salvador reached their only Under-20 Men's World Cup at Turkey 2013 and will be hoping to take the first step toward a second World Cup, but host nation Antigua and Barbuda will have the crowd's backing, which is sure to make for an exciting atmosphere.

The games will also give a new generation of Turks and Caicos Islands players a great opportunity

for experience.

The second set of matches in Group B will take place on Sunday, with Guyana challenging El Salvador and Antigua and Barbuda facing Suriname.

Group A will take place at the Estadio Nacional in Managua, Nicaragua, and features Cuba, Nicaragua, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, and Anguilla.

Cuba headline the group and are the only team from

the group to have qualified previously for a FIFA Under-20 Men's World Cup, doing so in 2013.

Cuba has also faced all their Group A opponents in either the prior CMU20 or CMU20Q competition and has won every match. Cuba's best finish in a CMU20 was second place in 1970 and 1974.

Meanwhile, group hosts Nicaragua finished in the

cont'd on pg 21