

BARBUDA AIRPORT OPENING TO BE FAST-TRACKED



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Participants in a meeting held Monday between a team of government officials led by Prime Minister Gaston Browne and representatives of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA)

Barbuda airport opening to be fast-tracked

The efforts to open the new airport in Barbuda are to be fast-tracked as a dual track approach is being pursued to attain international status for the airport at the same time that domestic flights can commence.

Development Commissioner, Ambassador Daven Joseph said this was one of the outcomes at a meeting held Monday between a team of government officials led by Prime Minister Gaston Browne and representatives of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA).

“The meeting came up with some constructive arrangements for the opening of the airport. One of the arrangements is to have the Barbuda airport become internationally certified while at the same time consider a parallel approach



Development Commissioner, Ambassador Daven Joseph

to ensure that domestic flights can emanate out of Barbuda in the not-too-distant future. This takes into account the fact that the airport is critical for evacuation especially with the hurricane season approaching,” he stated.

According to Ambassador Joseph the plan being envisaged takes into account the need to open up the airport to be able to accept international flight. These arrangements fall within what Ambassador Joseph describes as

an agreement between the ECCAA and the government to quickly finalise all outstanding matters standing in the way of the airport’s opening.

“The government has given the green-light to work along with ECCAA to ensure the smooth opening of the Barbuda airport and to ensure that it attains the required international and domestic standards. This also takes into account that growth is expected in the domestic sector shortly,” he emphasized.

The airport in Barbuda has been completed for several months now but its formal opening has not happened yet as officials here await word from ECCAA regarding the airport meeting its regulatory obligations for the operations of an airport.



Parliament to adopt measures to remove A&B from EU's blacklist

The government is making positive moves to have Antigua and Barbuda removed from the list of countries which the European Union has placed on its 'blacklist' over the issue of non-cooperation on tax matters.

The most recent list was published on February 20 this year and Antigua and Barbuda was among twelve countries featured.

Now, the government is going to parliament today to adopt legislation to bring it in line with what is required by the EU. There have been extensive discussions between both parties in an ef-

fort to come to a common position.

It is believed that the pending legislation is the government's way to meet its obligations in this regard.

The House of Representatives will also discuss the Revenue Miscellaneous Amendment Act that will remove the discretion from ministers to grant tax waivers.

The proposed amendment will affect the Environment Levy and the Revenue Recovery Charge. However, the discretion remains on the import duty, but this will max out at 50 percent.

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Government signs MOU with Japanese company for recycle water systems

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Antigua and Barbuda government and a Japanese company, to set up small-scale systems to recycle grey water from homes in the country.

The signing took place on Monday with Prime Minister Gaston Browne accompanied by Health Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph, and officials of both the National Housing Development and Urban Renewal Company and CHAPA in attendance.

PM Browne noted that Antigua is one of the most water-stressed islands in the Caribbean which has been aggravated by the effects of climate change. He explained that the government's strategy for dealing with the water crisis has been to install water-desalination plants around the island but which are quite costly to operate and to maintain as they require large capital investments.

"We need to pursue new



strategies to complement the reverse osmosis which we have purchased. We also have to look at the whole issue of water conservation by recycling water. This project will therefore help us to tackle one of our critical developmental issues, water management," PM Browne stated.

Under the agreement, the Japanese firm WOTA,

with funding from the Japan Bank For International Cooperation will work along with the two government housing agencies, CHAPA and National Housing to install individual water recycling systems in the homes they will be producing.

Housing Executive Officer, Mark Richards said the agreement calls for a six-months to a year trial basis

for the systems as much depends on just how cost-effective they will be when compared with cisterns and soak-a-ways that are now built into every house they produce.

The idea is for the water from the shower and the kitchen sink to be recycled for use as drinking water, while the water from the septic will be recycled and used for gardening or landscaping.

He noted that the soil structure in some parts of Antigua does not allow the water to properly percolate, creating other issues for the home-owners. This recycling system could be one way for the housing agencies to solve this problem while reducing the reliance on the government-produced water.



A&B makes historic submission on a global climate case before the ICJ

Antigua and Barbuda has made a historic submission before the International Court of Justice seeking an Advisory Opinion on the Obligations of States with respect to climate change.

In a first-of-its-kind move, the twin-island Caribbean state has been catapulted onto the global stage in its pursuit of climate justice when on Monday it made history by submitting written arguments on the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

“This pivotal move signals the first step in a legal process aimed at obtaining a clear framework of obligations for nations amidst the escalating climate crisis. Antigua and Barbuda sees this Advisory Opinion as an opportunity for the ICJ to delineate the imperative for States to elevate their climate ambitions and intensify efforts in critical areas of mitigation, adaptation, finance, and technical sup-



In photo from left are Counsellor in the OECS Permanent Mission to the UNOG Mr. Joel Richards, Deputy Permanent Representative in the Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to the UNOG and UNOV Mr. Timothée Bauer, Agent to the ICJ for Antigua and Barbuda in the Advisory Opinion proceedings Mr. Zachary Phillips and Permanent Observer of OECS to the UNOG, Ambassador Colin Murdoch.

port,” a statement issued by the UN Permanent Representative Office revealed.

According to the statement, the

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Hon. Gaston Browne, lauded the advo-

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Local News



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cacy efforts of small island developing states like Vanuatu and Tuvalu, emphasizing their pivotal role in championing this cause and notes that “there needs to be fair and equitable treatment of nations disproportionately impacted by climate change despite minimal contributions to its genesis. This is the essence of climate justice.”

Ambassador Boris Latour of Antigua and Barbuda emphasized the existential threat facing small island states, remarking, “Without urgent climate action, most, if not all, island states will disappear. This historic sub-

mission underscores our nation’s steadfast commitment to safeguarding our planet for future generations and reaffirms our dedication to multilateralism and the rule of law.” He emphasized the critical need to utilize every available avenue to address this crisis with urgency.

This landmark submission not only highlights the urgency of climate action but also signifies a historic moment for Antigua and Barbuda and many other developing nations participating in ICJ proceedings for the first time. The gravity of the climate crisis reverberates globally, transcending

geographical boundaries and necessitating collective action. The outcomes of this legal process will shape international efforts to combat climate change, ensuring equitable treatment for nations disproportionately impacted by its effects.

Antigua and Barbuda acknowledges the legal expertise provided by Sidley Austin LLP, enabling its participation in these proceedings. Additionally, the state is represented within the Commission of Small Island States (COSIS), amplifying its voice on the international stage.

While initiated by Van-



Antigua and Barbuda’s Permanent Representative to the UNOG and UNOV, Ambassador Boris Latour.

uatu and adopted by the UN General Assembly on March 29th, 2023, the pursuit of an Advisory Opinion on climate obligations underscores a shared global responsibility. The submissions from diverse nations underscore the universal significance of climate justice and the imperative for concerted action.

Composition of the Delegation to the International Court of Justice (ICJ):

With the guidance of H.E. Boris Latour, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the UNOG and UNOV, the delegation from Antigua and Barbuda include:

H.E. Colin Murdoch, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of OECS to the UNOG

Mr. Zachary Phillips, Agent to ICJ for Antigua and Barbuda in the Advisory Opinion proceedings

Mr. Timothée Bauer, Deputy Permanent Representative in the Permanent Mission of Antigua and Barbuda to UNOG and UNOV

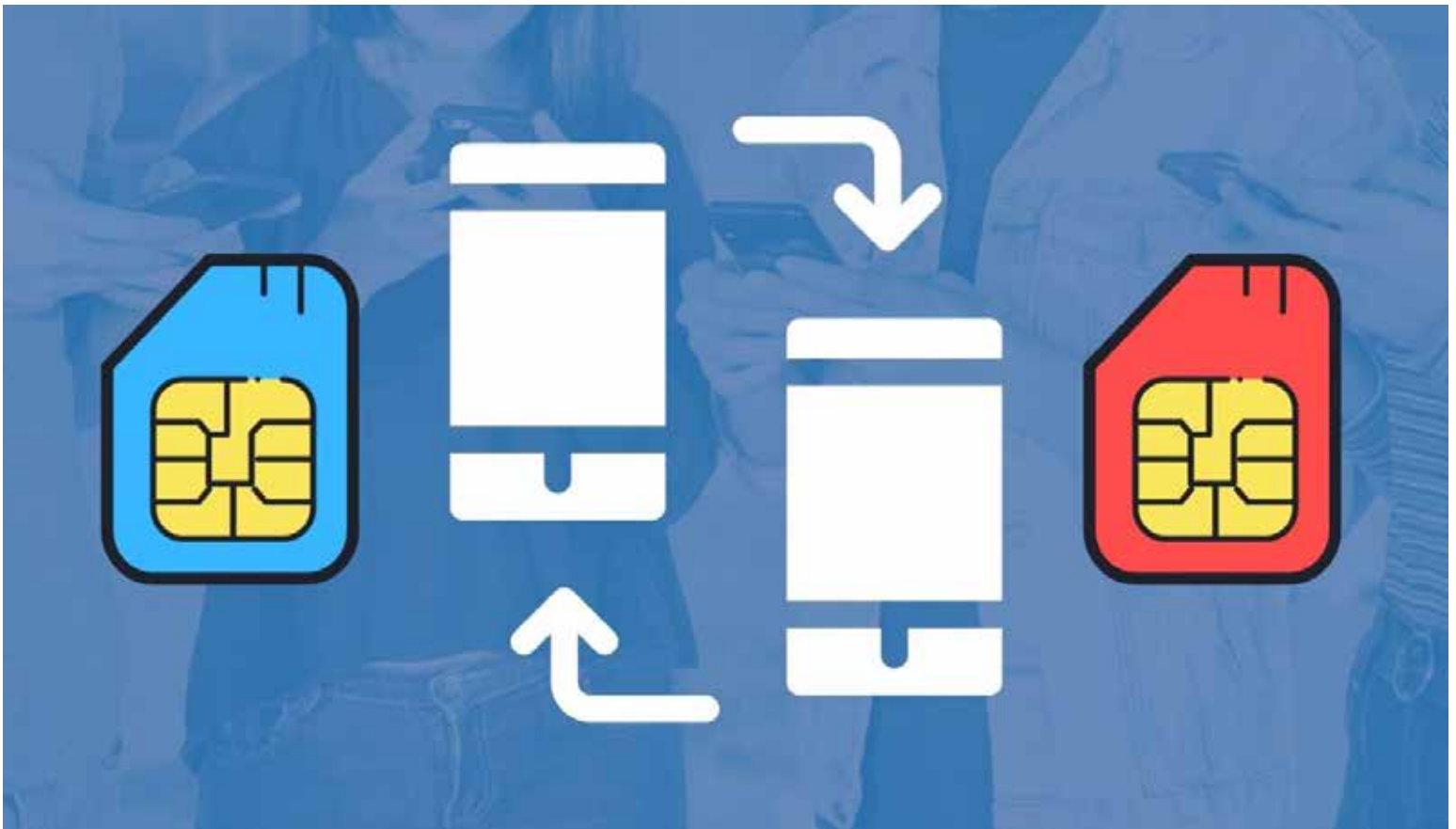
Mr. Joel Richards, Counsellor in the OECS Permanent Mission to the UNOG.

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Mobile number portability only weeks away

Antigua and Barbuda is only weeks away from mobile number portability for cellphone users. The announcement came from Communications Technologies (ICTs), Minister Hon. Melford Nicholas

Speaking on Focal Point on ABS Radio on Monday, Minister Nicholas said that mobile number portability is “something that the industry and the market have long asked for”.

Mobile number portability (MNP) is a service that allows a cellphone or smartphone customer to change telecom carrier and keep their same phone number.

This will allow customers to easily go through the process of moving from one service provider to another with minimal disruptions and inconvenience. The absence of mobile number portability between service providers

has kept many consumers from changing service providers and/or has led to many bearing the cost of having two or more cellphones.

“We are just about at the point where we will introduce testing, then training and then implementation. So, we are mere weeks away”, Minister Nicholas said. This ensures that the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda continue to have a choice in telecommunications providers.

While preparation works for the staging of the SIDS Conference in May of this year have forced some delays in the move towards mobile number portability, Minister Nicholas foresees better competition amongst providers once MNP is introduced, giving consumers better quality and more affordable access to mobile phone services.

Antigua and Barbuda has led the



Communications Technologies (ICTs), Minister Hon. Melford Nicholas way in the liberalization of the telecoms space within the OECS, dating as far back as the late 1980’s.

The government will also move ahead with the reintroduction of the telecoms bill to parliament later this year. This new bill will give consumers added protection with improvements in technology that drives the telecoms sector.

Three secondary schools to get laboratory equipment from WIOC donation

One of Antigua and Barbuda's leading corporate entities, the West Indies Oil Company, is making 10 thousand dollars' (\$10,000.00) worth of laboratory equipment available to three secondary schools in the St. John's area.

The equipment included test tubes, funnels, beakers among others will go to the Princess Margaret School, the Antigua Grammar School and the Antigua Girls High School.

The first presentation of equipment was made to the Princess Margaret School on Monday when a two-member team from the company presented the equipment to the head of the school's science department, Kanter Rawlins-Charles in the presence of school principal, Dr. Colin Greene and deputy principal, Sharon Kelsick as well as several of the science students.

Making the presentation on behalf of the company were Marketing and Business Development Officer, Drucella Jno Baptiste and Health and Safety Officer, Charma John.

"One of our strategic objectives this year is to give back to the community within our surrounding area and we are



making the first of three donations to government secondary schools. While here at the PMS, we took the opportunity to give a presentation to the students on safety issues surrounding the handling of LPG gas cylinders around the home," Jno Baptiste disclosed.

In addition, Jno Baptiste spoke briefly to the students about career opportunities that may become available at WIOC and the subjects one may need to

pursue a career in this field. She advised them that subjects such as chemistry, physics and mathematics are some of the subjects they would need to explore a career at the company.

Similar presentations will be made to the AGS and AGHS after the Easter holidays. Earlier this month, WIOC presented a 10-thousand-dollar cheque to the Adele School for Special Education to assist with its lunch programme.



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Boeing chief executive Dave Calhoun to leave as firm faces safety crisis

By Theo Leggett

Boeing boss Dave Calhoun will leave at the end of this year amid a deepening crisis over the firm's safety record.

Boeing also said that the head of its commercial airlines division will retire immediately while its chairman will not stand for re-election.

The firm is under pressure after an unused door blew out of a Boeing 737 Max in January shortly after take-off.

No-one was injured but the firm's safety and quality control standards came under renewed scrutiny.

Many analysts said a change in Boeing's leadership was overdue.

"A shake-up at the top is necessary," said Stewart Glickman, equity analyst at CFRA Research, adding that he believed the current crisis stemmed from problems in the firm's corporate culture that only fresh insight would be able to fix.

"I don't think you can change the culture with internal voices because I think this has been *modus operandi* for this company for too long."

Mr Calhoun took on the chief executive role in early 2020 after the previous



Boeing chief executive Dave Calhoun.

boss, Dennis Muilenburg, was ousted in the aftermath of one of the biggest scandals in Boeing's history.

Within the space of five months, two brand new 737 Max planes had been lost in almost identical accidents that claimed the lives of 346 passengers and crew.

A board member at the time, after being made boss Mr Calhoun promised to strengthen Boeing's "safety culture" and "rebuild

trust".

However, in January this year a disused emergency exit door blew off a new Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 Max shortly after take-off from Portland International Airport.

An initial report from the US National Transportation Safety Board concluded that four bolts meant to attach the door securely to the aircraft had not been fitted.

Boeing is facing a crim-

inal investigation into the incident itself, as well as legal action from passengers aboard the plane.

In a letter to staff on Monday, Mr Calhoun described the Alaska Airlines incident as a "watershed moment" for Boeing and said it had to respond with "humility and complete transparency".

"The eyes of the world are on us, and I know that we will come through this

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moment a better company," he said.

Air safety campaigner Ed Pierson, a former senior manager at Boeing's 737 factory in Renton, Washington, said Mr Calhoun had had years to try to boost safety at the company.

"It's been one failure after the other," said Mr Pierson, who is now executive director at The Foundation for Aviation Safety.

"The company deserves much better leadership and the people who get on these airplanes deserve much better leadership."

The blowout had tested Boeing's relationships with its airline customers and regulators in Washington, reviving concerns that the company's corporate culture had focused on speed ahead of safety.

The Federal Aviation Administration said earlier this month that a six-week audit of the 737 Max production process at Boeing and its supplier Spirit Aerosystems had found "multiple instances where the companies failed to comply with manufacturing quality control requirements".

The findings came shortly after another report into Boeing's safety culture by an expert panel found a "disconnect" between senior management and regular staff, as well as signs that staff were hesitant about reporting problems for fear of retaliation.

After the two plane

crashes in October 2018 and 2019, it was found that flawed flight control software caused the incidents - details of which Boeing was accused of deliberately concealing from regulators.

The company agreed to pay \$2.5bn (£1.8bn) to settle fraud charges and admitted deception, though in later court hearings it formally pleaded not guilty.

It subsequently faced widespread accusations that it had put profits ahead of passengers' lives.

Mark Pegram, whose 25-year-old son Sam died when Ethiopian Airlines 737 Max crashed in 2019, said Mr Calhoun had appeared to have been brought in to say what investors wanted to hear and "not fix the cause of the problems that were making planes fall out of the sky".

He said he was pleased by the change but disappointed it had taken so long.

"It's something we've been calling for for quite some time now," he said.

The crisis at Boeing has caused wider disruption in the travel industry as the company, one of the world's two major jet-makers, slows its manufacturing lines to try to get a grip on the problems.

Airlines, including Ryanair, have warned of higher ticket prices and more limited flight schedules as they face delayed aircraft deliveries.

For Boeing, the slowdown is already generat-

ing multi-billion dollar charges, while rival Airbus gains advantage.

The firm is also facing criticism it has failed to innovate.

Speculation has already started as to who might replace Mr Calhoun, but the pool of people with qualifications for such a job is small.

Air transport consultant John Strickland of JLS Consulting warned that the hard work for the company was still ahead.

"It's all very well to get rid of people but what are you going to do to keep the steering the business," Mr Strickland said. "This is much easier said than

done."

Shares in the company rose more than 1% after the changes were announced.

As well as Mr Calhoun, Stan Deal will leave his role as head of Boeing's commercial airlines division immediately.

He will be replaced by Stephanie Pope who has spent the past three months working as the Boeing's chief operating officer.

Larry Kellner, the firm's chair will also leave and be replaced by Steve Mollenkopf, the former boss of Qualcomm who has been a board member at Boeing since 2020. He will lead the search for a new chief executive.



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Technology



Apple, Meta and Google to be investigated by the EU

The EU has announced investigations into some of the biggest tech firms in the world over uncompetitive practices.

Meta, Apple, and Alphabet, which owns Google, are being looked into for potential breaches of the Digital Markets Act (DMA) introduced in 2022.

If they are found to have broken the rules, the firms can face huge fines of up to 10% of their annual turnover.

EU antitrust boss Margrethe Vestager and industry head Thierry Breton announced the investigations on Monday.

Just six companies have obligations under the DMA, but they are also the world's largest tech firms: Alphabet, Apple, Meta, Amazon, Microsoft and ByteDance.

None of the firms are actually based in Europe - five of them are in the US, while ByteDance has headquarters in Beijing.

Three of them are now facing questions just two weeks after submitting their compliance reports, which will have been meticulously compiled.

It comes three weeks after the EU fined Apple €1.8bn (£1.5bn) for breaking competition laws over music streaming.

Meanwhile, the United States accused Apple of monopolising the smartphone



market in a landmark lawsuit against the tech giant introduced last week.

An Apple spokesperson says the company will constructively engage with the investigation and that they're confident that their plan complies with the Digital Markets Act.

They added that their teams established a variety of mechanisms to comply with the EU's landmark legislation, as well as privacy and security protections for EU users.

"Throughout, we've demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness to the European Commission and developers, listening and incorporating their feedback," they said.

Meanwhile a Meta spokesperson said the firm's use of subscriptions as an alternative to advertising were «a well-established

business model across many industries».

"We designed Subscription for No Ads to address several overlapping regulatory obligations, including the DMA... we will continue to engage constructively with the Commission," they said.

Alphabet has been approached for comment.

The EU said it will investigate five different possible acts of non-compliance in its announcement:

1 & 2 - Whether Apple and Alphabet are not allowing apps to freely communicate with users and make contracts with them

3 - Whether Apple is not giving users enough choice

4 - Whether Meta is unfairly asking people to pay to avoid their data being used for adverts

5 - Whether Google preferences the firm's own

goods and services in search results

The first two of these investigations concern what is known as "anti-steering" - and the EU says it believes the firms are making it difficult for apps to tell users about ways to pay less for their services outside of using app stores' own payment methods.

Under the third point, the EU says that Apple is obliged to allow users to easily uninstall apps on their devices, change default settings and be given "choice screens" to let them use different browsers or search engines.

The EU says Apple's web browser "choice screen" does not give people enough choice, and said that some apps, such as Apple Photos, cannot be deleted at all.

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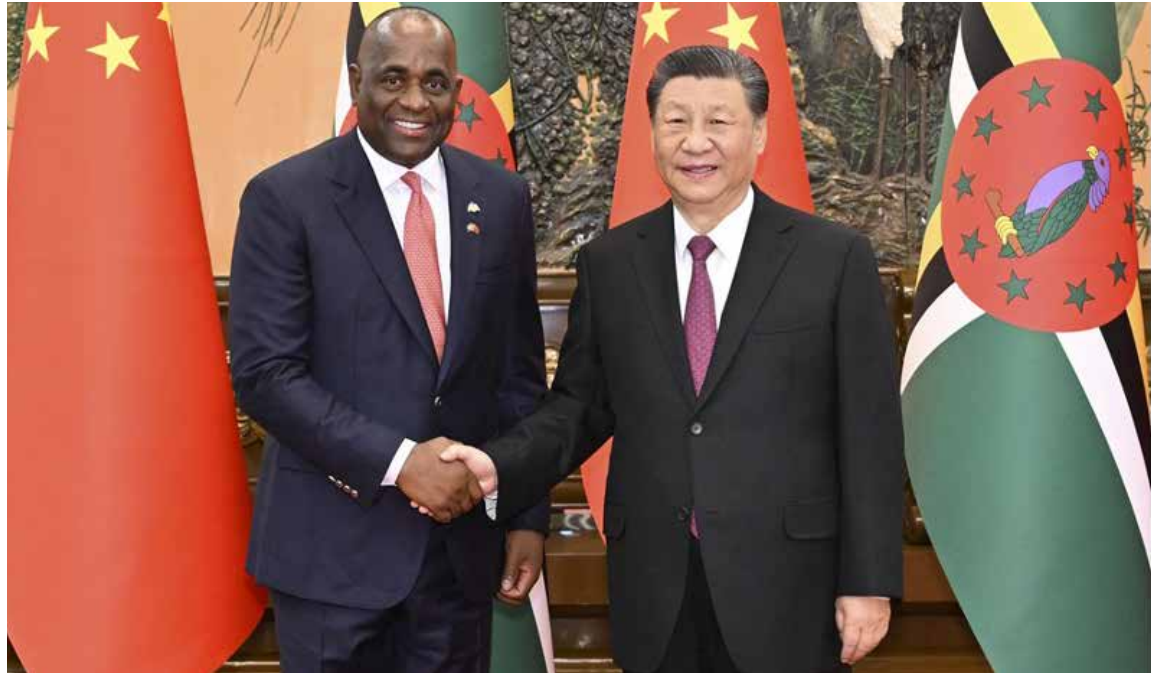
Dominica and Chinese governments hold bilateral talks

By Dillon De Shang

Dominican Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit met with Chinese President Xi Jinping earlier today for bilateral and trade talks.

In a post on social media, Skerrit said: “We discussed our long-standing relationship and pledged commitment to deepening the friendship between our two countries through vigorous exchanges and further cooperation in various fields.”

The Chinese Government news agency reported Xi expressed the communist nation’s willingness to work with Dominica to synergise “their development strategies and turn the friendly relations into a driving force for win-win cooperation.”



Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) meets with Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica Roosevelt Skerrit in Beijing, China, March 25, 2024. Photo: Xinhua

Xi hailed Dominica as a “trustworthy good friend and partner of China in the region” and an important country in the Caribbean.

Xi said China stands ready to support Dominica

on its path to development and will assist by sharing experience, expertise and funding in some instances.

More scholarships will be made available to Dominican students as Xi

said China is willing to promote more cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

The Dominican prime minister is in China for an official visit to mark 20 years of diplomatic relations with Beijing after ditching Taiwan.

Today was a busy day for Skerrit as he also met with Chinese Premier Li Qiang and the Chairman of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee, Zhao Leji.

Zhao told the prime minister that he wanted Dominica to join China in implementing the Global Development Initiative, which is a Chinese led project aimed at assisting nations to achieve the 17 sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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According to Ms Vestager, the investigation will take around 12 months to complete - though Mr Breton later clarified it could take slightly longer.

“We suspect that the suggested solutions put forward by the three companies do not fully comply with the DMA,” she said.

“We will now investigate the companies’ compliance with the DMA, to ensure open and contestable digital markets in Europe.”

The five cases are consumer-focused, and highly relatable to most people who use products from these companies, which is collectively billions of people worldwide.

“We’re talking about the protection of

our citizens, we can’t just sit around and wait,” said Thierry Breton, of the EU’s decision to act straight away.

There is however another reason potentially in mind: European Parliament elections are due to be held in June 2024.

Dr Rupperecht Podszun, director of the Institute for Competition Law at Heinrich Heine University in Dusseldorf, called it “a strong signal” from the EU.

“The DMA is designed for quick results,” he said.

“The cases that the Commission has selected go to the heart of the business models; these are not marginal issues for the gatekeepers.

“The legal battles will be tense, but we must always bear in mind that the Court of Justice will have the last word.”

Bermuda: Lawyer jailed for stealing clients' funds

CMC – A High Court judge has sentenced a 37-year-old lawyer, Tyrone Quinn, to 15 years in jail after he was found guilty of stealing almost half a million US dollars from his clients.

Justice Juan Wolffe said Quinn had exploited the good nature and close relationship he had with one of the victims and had taken advantage of a senior.

“He did so at a time when the victims were experiencing excruciating physical pain and mental anguish,” the judge said.

A jury had returned a unanimous verdict against Quinn in November last year on three counts of theft totalling US\$483,000 from compensation payments to three of his clients.

Quinn had said he fully intended to repay his victim, but the High Court was told that this never materialised.

In addition to a 15-year prison sentence, the judge ordered a confiscation inquiry under the Proceeds of Crime Act to determine what assets could be seized to offer compensation to the victims.

“This is a sad, sad case. You have individuals who underwent insurmountable pain as a result of an acci-



Tyrone Quinn.

dent and that pain continued unabated through the actions of the defendant.

“The fact that they are still having to go through the pain, needing the money that is rightfully owed to them for surgery needed to remedy the pain is unconscionable,” Justice Wolffe said, adding that written reasons for the sentence would be handed down in due course.

During the trial, the High Court heard that between May 2020 and February 2021, Quinn received awards on behalf of three clients in separate legal matters.

Of the three clients, two received a small portion of their award, while the third client received nothing.

Quinn admitted in court that he had received the funds for the clients but said he had no intention of permanently depriving them of the money.

He told the court he had been approached by two men in 2019 over a “problem” related to an illegal business transaction and that they had demanded compensation.

Quinn said he did not know the men or their “problem” but he com-

plied with their demands after they threatened him and his family, paying them thousands of dollars and making a range of payments on their behalf.

He admitted that he had also used the funds to make payments unrelated to the threats or the clients but maintained that he had always intended to give his clients what they were owed.

Last month, prosecutor Alan Richards, said Quinn had “robbed Peter to pay Paul”, noting that he had admitted using some of the complainants’ awards to pay other clients.

UN Security Council passes resolution calling for Gaza ceasefire

By Raffi Berg

The UN Security Council has called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, after the US did not veto the measure in a shift from its previous position.

It also demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

It is the first time the council has called for a ceasefire since the war began in October after several failed attempts.

The move by the US signals growing divergence between it and its ally Israel over Israel's offensive in Gaza.

In an unusually strong rebuke, a statement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the US had "abandoned" its previous position which had directly linked a ceasefire to a hostage release.

"Regrettably, the United States did not veto the new resolution," it said.

The statement said this harmed efforts to release hostages by giving Hamas hope it could use international pressure on Israel to achieve a ceasefire without freeing the captives.

It also said Mr Netanyahu had decided to cancel meetings between an Israeli delegation and US officials in Washington that were scheduled for this week.

Israel's defence minister said Israel would not stop the war in Gaza while hos-



The US has pressed Israel to do more to get aid delivered to Gaza, where it says the entire population is suffering from food insecurity.

tages were still being held there.

The Palestinian representative to the UN, Riyad Mansour, welcomed the resolution but said it was overdue.

"It has taken six months, over 100,000 Palestinians killed and maimed, two million displaced, and famine, for this council to finally demand an immediate ceasefire," Mr Mansour said.

Hamas, the Palestinian Islamist group which governs Gaza and which triggered the war with an unprecedented attack on Israel on 7 October, also welcomed the resolution. It said it was ready "to engage in an immediate prisoner exchange process that leads to the release of prisoners on both sides".

The group has made any hostage release conditional on the release by Israel of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons.

In the Security Council vote on Monday, the US ab-

stained, while the remaining 14 members voted in favour.

The US had previously blocked resolutions calling for a ceasefire, saying such a move would be wrong while delicate negotiations for a truce and hostage releases were continuing between Israel and Hamas.

But on Thursday it tabled its own draft, which for the first time called for a ceasefire, marking a hardening of its stance towards Israel.

US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the US' decision to let the resolution pass did not mean a "shift in our policy". He said the US backed a ceasefire but did not vote in favour of the resolution because the text did not condemn Hamas.

Speaking at a press briefing after the resolution was passed, Mr Kirby said: "We have been very clear, we have been very consistent in our support for a ceasefire as part of a hos-

tage deal. That's how the hostage deal is structured, and the resolution acknowledges the ongoing talks."

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said the resolution "must be implemented" to secure a ceasefire and the "immediate and unconditional release of all hostages".

Mark Lyall-Grant, who was the UK ambassador to the UN from 2009 to 2015, told BBC Radio's 4 PM programme that the resolution meant Israel was now "under an obligation, essentially, to stop its military campaign for the next 15 days" - the duration of the remainder of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which the text stipulated for the ceasefire.

He added that the text was legally binding on Israel but not on Hamas, as the Palestinian group is not a state.

The US had previously been accused of using its power of veto to shield Israel at the UN.

However, it has become increasingly critical of Israel over the escalating death toll in Gaza, where more than 32,000 people - mainly women and children - have been killed by Israel's bombardment, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry.

The US has also pressed Israel to do more to get aid

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Ecuador's youngest mayor Brigitte García shot dead

By Vanessa Buschschlüter

Ecuador's youngest mayor, Brigitte García, has been shot dead.

The 27-year-old and her press officer were found dead in a car on Sunday in the town of San Vicente, where she had won the mayoral election last year.

No arrests have been made so far and it is not clear what the motive may be.

Ms García is the latest politician to be killed in the Andean country, which last year was rocked by the assassination of presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio.

The bodies of Ms García and communications director Jairo Loor were found in the early hours of Sunday, local time.

Police said the shots which killed them had been fired from inside the car they had rented.

Ms García, a nurse, had



Forensic experts were on the scene.

been elected mayor of San Vicente for the opposition Citizens' Revolution party last year at the age of 26.

San Vicente, the town she governed, is located in the province of Manabí.

The coastal region has been particularly badly hit by violence linked to drug gangs which smuggle cocaine to lucrative markets in the US and Europe.

Ms García is not the first politician in Manabí to be killed.

In July, a gunman shot dead the mayor of the port

city of Manta, Agustín Intriago, who had been recently re-elected.

And in February of 2023, mayoral candidate Omar Menéndez was murdered just hours before polls opened in the city of Puerto López.

The violence has not been confined to Manabí.

In August, presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio was gunned down as he was leaving a campaign rally in the capital, Quito.

Prosecutors investigat-

ing Villavicencio's murder said it had been planned from inside jail by members of the Los Lobos criminal gang.

The rise of such gangs led President Daniel Noboa in January to declare a two-month-long state of emergency to combat armed groups.

It was extended by another month on 7 March.

The government says the security forces have carried out more than 150,000 operations since the state of emergency was declared and detained more than 10,000 suspects.

However, critics of the government say Ms García's murder shows that more needs to be done to guarantee the safety of elected officials.

Luisa González, who was defeated by Mr Noboa in the presidential election, wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, that "nobody is safe in Ecuador".

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delivered to Gaza, where it says the entire population is suffering severe levels of acute food insecurity.

The UN has accused Israel of obstructing aid; Israel has blamed the UN, accusing it of failing to carry out distributions.

The current war broke out after Hamas gunmen burst through the border and attacked Israeli communities, killing about 1,200 people, according to Israeli tallies, and taking 253 into Gaza as hostages.

Of those taken, 130 remain unaccounted for following a series of releases, res-

cues and the recovery of bodies.

Despite Israel's decision to cancel a planned visit by its delegation to Washington later this week in the wake of the Security Council resolution, Mr Kirby has said that scheduled meetings between Israeli defence minister Yoav Gallant and US national security adviser Jake Sullivan will continue as planned.

"We look forward to making it clear to the defence minister that the United States continues to stand with Israel as they fight Hamas," he said at the press briefing on Monday.



Players of the Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades football team.

Grenades and All Saints enjoy goal-spree in Premier League wins

Defending champions Sandals and Inet Jennings Grenades and All Saints United notched up victories by large margins to strengthen their positions in the top two spots in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Premier Division League on Sunday night.

In what can be considered a Premier League goal-fest, the Grenades kept their unbeaten run intact with a 9-1 drubbing of the Greenbay Hoppers in the second game of a triple header at the ABFA Technical Center.

Sherman Augustin (5th and 66th minutes), Rakeem Henry (45th and 50th minutes), and Tev Lawrence (84th and 90+1 minutes) each had double conversions.

Jamalie Steven scored an own goal in the 62nd minute, Kurt Frederick had an 88th-minute conversion, and Rivaldo Johnson scored in added time for the Grenades to record their 13th win

in as many games.

Javorn Stevens scored a consolation goal in the 40th minute for the Greenbay Hoppers, who remain in fifth place on goal difference with 24 points after crashing to their fifth defeat in 13 matches.

The Jennings Grenades maintained their lead in the Premier Division by advancing to 39 points.

All Saints United stayed five points adrift of the Grenades in second place with 34 points by romping to a 7-3 victory against Swetes in the last game of Sunday's triple header.

Sean Tomlinson scored twice with conversions in the 79th and the fifth minute of added time as All Saints United scored all seven goals in the second half after trailing Swetes one-nil at halftime.

Shafeeq Joseph, who also had a double conversion, scored his first goal in the 25th minute to give Swetes

their halftime lead.

But Swetes were reduced to 10 men on the stroke of halftime as Lyndon Goodwin received an automatic red card after committing his second cautionary offence in the 45th minute.

Shortly after the interval, Roneba Cordice scored an equalizer in the 54th minute, and teammate Malcolm Steward gave All Saints United a 2-1 lead with a 59th-minute conversion.

But Swetes equalized in the 65th minute when Karique Knight reacted well to convert the rebound after his penalty kick was saved by the All Saints United goalkeeper.

Nazir McBurnett scored in the 68th minute to put All Saints United 3-2 ahead. Tomlinson then scored his first goal to double their lead, but Joseph had his second conversion in the 82nd minute to reduce the deficit for Swetes.

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Blackhawks claim third successive ABCA two-day title

PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks are now threepeat champions of the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) two-day competitions.

In a repeat of last year's final, the Liberta Blackhawks crushed Empire Nations by nine wickets at the Pigotts playing field on Sunday to claim their third successive title.

Set 24 to win, the Blackhawks achieved their victory target for the loss of a wicket in 5.2 overs.

Empire Nation won the toss and batted, scoring 200 off 52.1 overs in their first innings. Kershaski Jno Lewis top scored with 69, opener Tyrone Williams Jr. got 37, Kenrick Scott hit 28, and Javaughn James made 23 not out.

Off-spinner Kofi James captured four for 65 in 21 overs, and Karima Gore picked up two for 20.

The Liberta Blackhawks responded with 243 off 49.2 overs in their first innings.



All-rounder Kofi James, holding ABCA's two-day championship trophy, played key roles in the Liberta Blackhawks' victory against Empire Nation.

James struck 64 off 35 balls, including nine fours and two sixes, and Gore cracked 45 off 45 balls, with six fours.

Brent Joseph hit an un-

beaten 38; Michael Greaves got 34; and Javier Spencer chipped in with 21. Leg-spinner Micah McKenzie captured five for 83 in

19 overs, Jno Lewis claimed three for 55 in 12.2 overs, and veteran off-spinner Justin Athanaze took two for 62 in 12 overs.

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Goals by Junior Lee in the 88th minute, Tomlinson, and Tiquan Isaac in the fourth minute of added time ensured victory for All Saints United in their 13th match of the league.

It was the 10th defeat for Swetes, who remained second from the bottom of the standings on goal difference with five points from 13 matches.

Ngozie Harvey's 49th-minute conversion gave Green City a one-nil win against the bottom team, Empire, in Sunday's

opening encounter.

Both teams finished the match with 10 men after a player from each team was expelled in the fifth minute of added time for engaging in violent conduct (fighting).

Empire's Nyque Watkins and Green City's Zaire Scott were given red cards and expelled by the referee.

Green City move into seventh place after securing their fifth win in 14 matches, while Empire remain in the cellar on goal difference with five points after suffering their 10th defeat in 13 encounters.

Facing a deficit of 43 runs, Empire Nation crashed to 66 all out in 21.5 overs in their second innings. Teenagers Tanez Francis and Xaveek Toppin, with 14 and 11, respectively, were the only batsmen to reach double figures.

Gore grabbed three wickets for just six runs, Spencer, a left-arm pacer, snapped up three for 16, and James claimed two for 13.

Sports News

Chargers Eagles and Paragons 2 win opening games in volleyball contest

TOA Media and MKUU Tours Chargers Eagles and Paragons 2 made winning starts to their campaigns in the inaugural Division 2 of the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's (ABAVA) Local League on Sunday.

The Chargers Eagles soared past Caribbean Alliance Insurance (CAI) Da Squad 2 with a 3-0 victory in their opening game of the competition at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex.

Jerri-Ann Barnes served three aces as the Chargers Eagles wrapped up the match in approximately one hour and 20 minutes, winning 25-6, 25-11, and 25-21.

The Paragons 2 launched their Division 2 campaign with a 3-0 win against Starz 2 Juniors, winning 25-11, 25-17, and 25-22 in the encounter, which lasted approximately one hour and 45 minutes.



TOA Media and MKUU Tours Chargers Eagles.

Meanwhile, Starz 1 (Seniors) and the Pytonz recorded their second win in as many games in their respective divisions in the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association's Local League.

Starz 1 Seniors, last year's second-place finishers, eased their way to a 3-0 win against the Jets in the Female Division 1 league. They won 25-18, 25-17, and 25-15 in approximately one hour and

nine minutes as the Jets were beaten in their opening match of this year's campaign.

Pytonz secured a morale-boosting win against defending champions Stoneville in the Men's Division 1 competition.

Pytonz, who had to settle for the runner-up spot after losing last year's final against Stoneville, got sweet revenge by beating the defending champions 3-0 in their first meeting of this year's com-

petition.

The Pytonz notched up their second win in as many games with a 25-17, 25-23, and 29-27 victory against Stoneville, who suffered their first loss after winning their opening encounter against the Invaders.

But Stoneville's women's team launched their campaign in the Female Division I competition with a 3-0 win against the Royal Cruisers.

Stoneville prevailed 25-20, 25-22, and 25-22 in approximately one hour and 24 minutes as the Royal Cruisers suffered their second loss in as many games.

High Flyerz 1 opened their campaign in the Men's Division I competition with a 3-0 win against the Invaders.

The High Flyers 1 soared to victory with scores of 25-16, 25-16, and 25-17 in approximately one hour and seven minutes as the Invaders fell to defeat for the third time in as many games.



The Paragons 2 female volleyball team. (ABAVA)

Freetown and Mahico to clash in final of Dave Joseph Limited Overs Championship

Freetown and Mahico have advanced to the final of the Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Parish League Dave Joseph Limited Overs Championship.

Both teams advance to the final, which will be played on Saturday, March 30, by claiming contrasting wins in the semi-finals at Clare Hall over the weekend.

Mahico won their semi-final by

default against Dream 2 Reality Sea View Farm, while Freetown prevailed by four wickets against Masters in their encounter.

The Masters were dismissed for 109 in 27.2 overs, with Wendell Batchelor getting 27. Left-arm pacer Yanique Watley snapped up three wickets for 12 runs in four overs, and off-spinner Austin Richards Jr. grabbed three for 14 in his four

overs.

Freetown achieved victory by scoring 111 for six in 22.5 overs. Jar-el Phillip struck 27, and Austin Richards Jr. cracked 24 not out.

Robert Browne claimed two for 15 in three overs, and Lloyd West captured two for 18 in six overs.

Saturday's final, which will commence at 1:30 pm, will be streamed live via the Parish League Network.

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Tajahron Davis converted 16 points, and Aiden Tonge scored 12 points for Clare Hall Secondary School.

Princess Margaret School also won the league title, and Antigua Grammar School claimed third place.

Imani Hughes scored nine points as Antigua Girls High School defeated St. Anthony's Secondary School 24-15 in the final to win the senior girls division title.

St. Anthony's Secondary captured the league title, and Princess Margaret School claimed third place. Aliana Jack of Antigua Girls High School won the Most Valuable Player Award.

St. Anthony's Secondary School snatched a 55-54 victory in overtime against Clare Hall Secondary in the final to win the senior boys division title.

Devonte Carter, who won the Most Valuable Player award, shot a game-high 23 points for St. Anthony's Secondary School.



Sea View Farm Primary pose with their trophies after capturing the league and playoff titles in the Minigirls Primary Division.

Kevin Pimental converted 15 points, Orion Seraphine sank 11 points, and Aiden Christian and Gladstone Joseph each scored 10 points for Clare Hall Secondary, which won the league title. Princess Margaret School

claimed third place.

Jenah Andrew of St. Anthony's Secondary School was named Female Player of the Year, while Craig Massiah Jr. of Princess Margaret School won the Male Player of the Year

award for the second successive year.

Edward Shaw of Clare Hall Secondary and Tyea Ladoo of Antigua Girls High School were named joint winners of the Coach of the Year award.

SJA retain title during 'Night of Champions'

St. Joseph's Academy (SJA) was the only team to retain their playoff title during the 'Night of Champions' in the 2024 Cool and Smooth Inter-Schools' Basketball Championships at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday.

St. Joseph's Academy prevailed 30-27 in overtime against Antigua Grammar School in the playoff final to retain their title in the Miniboy's Secondary Division.

Jayden Lewis sank 15 points and Nathan Matthew scored 11 points for St. Joseph's Academy, and Daijon George scored 14 points for Antigua Grammar School.

Clare Hall Secondary School claimed third place, while Nathan Matthew of St. Joseph's Academy claimed the Most Valuable Player award.

Sea View Farm Primary was the only school to claim two playoff titles. Sea View Farm defeated JT. Ambrose 13-1 in the final to capture the Minigirls Primary Division crown.

Demetrah Cox, who won the Most Valuable



Principal Rudolph Davis, right, and Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew, right foreground, pose with the St. Joseph's Academy team retain their title in the Miniboy's Secondary Division at the JSC Sports Complex on Sunday, March 24, 2024. (Photos courtesy of the School Basketball Unit)

Player award, converted 10 points for Sea View Farm Primary. Sea View Farm also claimed the league title, and Post Millennial Academy finished in third place.

Sea View Farm Primary prevailed 12-7 over Greenbay Primary in the final to capture the overall Miniboy's Primary Division championship.

Sea View Farm Prima-

ry's Ezekiel Jackson and Keandi Jacobs, who were named co-Most Valuable Player award winners, each scored four points for the winners.

Both teams met in the final after Greenbay Primary won Zone A and Sea View Farm Primary captured Zone B. TN. Kirnon Primary claimed third place.

Princess Margaret School romped to a 71-34

victory against last year's champions, Clare Hall Secondary School, in the final to capture the title in the junior boys division.

Craig Massiah Jr., who won the Most Valuable Player award, shot a game-high 32 points, Tyrese Whyte sank 20 points, and Malinga Bruney scored 12 points for Princess Margaret School.

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