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# ICC T20 CRICKET TROPHY WELCOMED IN GRAND STYLE

*Story on Page 2*



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# ICC T20 Cricket Trophy welcomed in grand style

The ICC T20 World Cup Cricket Trophy arrived in Antigua and Barbuda on Tuesday to much fanfare and excitement with a welcoming party that included top government officials, cricket royalty, and representatives of Cricket West Indies and the Leeward Islands Cricket Association.

Antigua and Barbuda was the first stop of the Trophy Tour of all the territories that will host T20 Cricket matches in this major international sporting event that starts on June 1.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne officially welcomed the Trophy to Antigua Tuesday afternoon following a presentation in Barbuda earlier in the day. He said cricket has the ability to bring the world together at a time when there are worrying international conflicts.

“Cricket brings communities together and I have no doubt that this T20 World Cup will bring a number of nations together as we seek to ensure that we have a world that is peaceful and one in which we continue to promote global talents, cricketing talents and I am hoping to see a number of individuals from the region shine during this tournament.

I’m also hoping that the Trophy will be won by the host Cricket West Indies,” he remarked.

He expressed a desire to see the West Indies team, once a mighty cricketing power, return to its glory days. He noted that the talent is there but with application, he is confident that the West Indies will regain its position at the top.

PM Browne thanked the organisers and wished for an exciting cricket tournament that will delight cricket lovers here in Antigua and Barbuda and around the globe where the sport is growing in popularity.

He revealed that the government has invested heavily in the further development of the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium and he expects that the matches staged there will be world class where the culture of Antigua and Barbuda may come to the fore. Following his remarks, PM Browne was invited to engage in a photo-op holding the trophy up for the benefit of the pool of photographers.

In his remarks, Cricket West Indies, Johnny Greaves said it was apt that Antigua and Barbuda was the first stop on



the Trophy Tour as this was the home of West Indies Cricket. “We are happy to call Antigua and Barbuda our home and we are also proud of the partnership we have developed with the government and the T20 World Cup is just another example of that partnership where we work to improve cricket at all levels and to plan events that do much for not just the sport, but for the overall economy as well,” he stated.

He said the T20 World Cup will bring unprecedented investments in the region, and a huge international viewership as he calls for all of society to embrace the tournament.

Greaves also described cricket as the world’s second most popular sport, giving the Caribbean an opportunity to showcase all the region has to offer to the rest of the world.

On hand for the Trophy reception were Sports Minister, Daryl Matthew, Cricket legends, Sir Andy Roberts and Sir Curtly Ambrose, officials of CWI, the LICA, representatives of the Tourism Authority and the Ministry of Tourism as well as local organisers and other well-wishers.



## Environment Division, Bus Association team up to launch transition to electric public buses

The Department of Environment (DOE) has announced its collaboration with the Antigua and Barbuda Bus Association (ABBA), Global Environment Fund (GEF), and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to usher in a new era of sustainable transportation and the associated training of the workforce.

Under the GEF Funded Sustainable Low-carbon Island Management (SLIM) project, the ABBA is procuring seven electric buses from China with the USD\$560,000 grant which was granted to the Association. This marks a significant step towards reducing carbon emissions and promoting eco-friendly transit solutions in the nation by providing vehicles for local



In-session training on EV taking place in China with local representatives included professionals to begin experiencing, supporting and maintaining the vehicles.

In line with this initiative, representatives from ABBA, DOE, Antigua State College (ASC), and Antigua and Barbuda Institute for Continuing Education (AB-

ICE) are currently in Nanning, China, from April 6th to April 18th, 2024. Their mission is to undergo comprehensive training on the operation and maintenance of these electric buses.

This training not only ensures a seamless transition to electric vehicles but also provides an invaluable opportunity for participants to enhance their knowledge and expertise in this emerging field.

Moreover, this endeavor extends beyond the realm of transportation. Cathy Thomas, Lakeea Allen, Shania Bejai, and Jesse Gilpin will be representing the DOE at the 135th China Import and Export Fair Canton Trade Fair in Guangzhou, Guangdong, China, from April 15th to April 28th,

2024. Their participation in Phases 1 & 2 of this prestigious event aims to gain firsthand insights into various materials exhibited, facilitating informed decision-making for green procurement purposes under the DOE's various projects.

By implementing green procurement practices and fostering bulk purchasing, the DOE seeks to enhance sustainability efforts within its projects. The focus is on selecting high-quality, sustainable options that align with the nation's commitment to environmental preservation and climate action.

"The Ministry's commitment to a full transition from ICE to electric vehicles by 2040 is evident through our collaborative

*cont'd on pg 4*



## Government House bestows special honour on two outstanding philanthropists

Two individuals who have made an indelible mark on the lives of hundreds of persons across the Caribbean, including Antigua and Barbuda, were on Tuesday presented with the Governor General's Faithful and Meritorious Service Award.

The two – the Hon. Chesterfield Brewster of Barbados and Christopher Holder, SCM, of Switzerland - are joint founders of the Maria Holder Memorial Trust Award, which is based in Barbados, but which has funded more than one hundred and sixty-three (163) projects across the Caribbean, including twelve (12) of which are here in Antigua and Barbuda.

“Twelve (12) projects were completed in Antigua and Barbuda over the years with some charities being the recipient of long-term funding. The first project

undertaken by The Maria Holder Memorial Trust was the renovation of the Liberta Sports facility that was officially opened on 10 March 2016. Other projects worthy of mention include Island Academy International; Friends of the Care Project and the Maria Holder Early Childhood and Resource Centre in Buckley's that was constructed to provide the administration of Early Childhood Education and was officially opened in April 2022.

Other projects funded were within the sectors of Education and Training and Health,” according to the Citation read at the Investiture Ceremony at Government House.

The Citation added that when one thinks of a person or people who epitomise philanthropy and humanity at its greatest, these two gentlemen are exceptional



examples.

“Separately or collectively both Christopher Holder, SCM and the Hon. Chesterfield Brewster take their roles as Founders of their respective charities seriously as they evaluate each and every project based on its merit, potential benefits and its impact on society,” it added.

The projects undertaken by both Hon. Chesterfield Brewster or Christopher Holder all follow a

common path; the funding of educational initiatives to empower future generations, supporting health-care programmes to ensure access to quality medical services or championing environmental conservation efforts to preserve our planet.

Through strategic giving and active involvement, both recipients strive to address pressing social and cultural issues.

They both leverage their resources strategically across the varied charities to maximise impact and to effect lasting change especially for those persons who are vulnerable or marginalised.

Over the last 15 years they have supported many innovative projects aimed at creating a better world for all project beneficiaries across the Region and beyond through partnerships with various Non-Governmental and Government partnerships.

### *cont'd from pg 3*

efforts with the wider society, including the invaluable experience contributed by the bus association and transportation sector,” stated the Minister of Environment. “Together, we are working tirelessly to meet our target date of 2040, ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable future for Antigua and Barbuda.”

“The collaboration between the Department of Environment, ABBA, GEF, and UNEP marks a pivotal moment in our nation's journey towards sustainable development,” commented Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

“Investing in electric vehicles and

green procurement practices not only reduces our carbon footprint but also positions Antigua and Barbuda as a leader in environmental stewardship.

“This initiative aligns with our vision for a cleaner, greener future, and I commend all involved for their dedication to this important cause.”

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting sustainability and combating climate change. Through innovative initiatives like electric bus procurement and green procurement practices, Antigua and Barbuda is poised to lead the way towards a greener, more sustainable future.

## Health Minister wants OECS procurement arrangements expanded

Officials involved in the medical procurement arrangements between Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are meeting in Antigua and Barbuda to review the programme through which all participating countries benefit.

Speaking at the opening ceremony at the Jolly Beach Hotel on Tuesday, Health Minister Sir Molwyn Joseph called for an expansion of the programme to other areas of sub-regional development.

“In the area of procurement...we need to expand the opportunities for joint procurement in the region. We started out with pharmaceuticals but I think we need to explore what other areas we can explore. We should be looking at building on the success we have achieved and look to do more than we are doing now,” he stated.

One area where he has focused his attention is the need for the procurement of all consumables for the treatment of kidney diseases. Antigua and Barbuda, he reported has seen an increase in kidney diseases and he suggested that this may be the case in other OECS territories.

Sir Molwyn urged participants not to limit themselves to the areas now being served but to expand their minds and their horizons to other possibilities for future cooperation. He noted that the issue of healthcare in many OECS

countries is among the highest costs which underscore the need for cooperation on other items of procurement to lower these costs. The gathering is the OECS - Pharmaceutical Procurement Service Mid Cycle Review Meeting that concludes at the Jolly Beach hotel today.



Sir Molwyn Joseph



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# Local News



## Ministry of Health hosts free HPV screening and vaccination event as part of Vaccination Week 2024

The Ministry of Health will be hosting a special event focused on Human Papillomavirus (HPV) screening and vaccination.

The event is slated for April 27th, when the ministry will organize a free HPV screening and vaccination drive at Freemans Village Primary School to support global vaccination efforts.

Vaccination Week 2024, themed “Protect with Vaccines, Save Lives,” underscores the critical role of vaccination in prevent-

ing diseases and promoting public health.

The Ministry of Health’s event aligns with this theme by providing essential HPV screening and vaccination services to the community.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a prevalent sexually transmitted infection that can lead to various health complications, including cervical cancer.

By offering accessible screening and vaccination services, the Ministry of Health aims to raise

awareness about HPV and empower individuals to protect themselves against HPV-related health issues.

Deputy Superintendent of Public Health Nurses, Nurse Wanda Samuel says “The Ministry is pleased to participate in Vaccination Week 2024 and contribute to the global effort to promote vaccination as a cornerstone of public health.

“Our HPV Screening and Vaccination highlights the importance of HPV prevention and underscores the ministry’s

commitment to improving health outcomes for all.”

Communications Officer at the Ministry of Health, J’noire Smith-Kellman says “The event is open to individuals aged 30 to 59 for screening and individuals aged 9 to 26 for vaccination, with no appointment necessary.

“Participants are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to prioritize their health and take proactive steps towards prevention.”

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## Legal battle furrows on for passport scandal duo

June 27 is the new date that former Police Superintendent Ray John and his co-accused will return to court to find out if their new case will move on to the High Court.

The saga between John and his former partner, Shakema Charles has been ongoing for several years as both stand accused of passport fraud with several related charges but earlier this month, those charges were dropped as the law does not allow for conspiracy to be tried by judge only.

Many thought that would be the

end of the matter and that the duo would be set free, but those celebrations were cut short as they were both recharged a week later.

Fast forward to Monday and both appeared in the St. John's Magistrate's Court to hear their fate, but it was adjourned.

They will now have to wait.

John and Charles are now jointly accused of conspiring with Vincentian resident Lonzel Jones to create fake passport bio pages using unauthorized Multi-Layered Infilling

Sheets.

John, with Charles' assistance, allegedly sent the necessary documents to Jones through a friend, Lisborn Michael, from the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda.

However, police intercepted Jones and John's nephew, Geraldo James, during a transaction involving the final documents.

The defendants, represented by Defence attorneys Hugh Marshall and Michael Archibald, maintained that they were innocent.

## Rotary Club of Antigua donates Peace Shelf to the St. Michael's Anglican Primary School

The St. Michael's Anglican Primary School is the latest beneficiary of a Peace Shelf donated by the Rotary Club of Antigua.

The "Peace Shelf", which is located in the school's library, features a number of books, which aim to inspire the idea of

peace and a tranquil environment.

In making the presentation of behalf of the Club, President Michael Spencer, explained that Rotary Clubs across the world are playing a critical role in educating persons about the importance of fostering, promot-

ing and maintaining peace.

"We are very fortunate in Antigua and Barbuda to have peaceful environs because I am sure that as students you have learned about countries where there are political tensions and conflicts. I want to encourage you as students to read these books and focus on ways to maintain a peaceful and calm environment in your life today. You are never too old to make a difference", President Michael encouraged.

The school's Principal,

Juielta Samuel thanked the Club for the symbolic donation and assured that the students will be encouraged to make good use of the books. Rotary promotes eight pillars of positive peace.

They include: a well-functioning government, a sound business environment, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, the free flow of information, high levels of human capital, low levels of corruption and the equitable distribution of resources.



# Photo Essay

Antigua and Barbuda was the first stop of the Trophy Tour of all the territories that will host matches in the ICC T20 Cricket World Cup that starts on June 1.





## Haiti: Political analyst shares skepticism over latest move

With the establishment of a transitional council in Haiti, many are hoping that this may be the start of the turnaround that the country needs, but one political analyst remains a bit skeptical.

Haiti created the body to fill a leadership vacuum by choosing a new prime minister, and to restore order in the Caribbean country ravaged by gang violence.

A decree published in the official gazette announced the formation of the Presidential Transitional Council on Friday.

It stipulates that the council be based in the National Palace in central Port-au-Prince, which has come under fire several times in the past weeks.

CARICOM said in a statement that the council's mission "is to put Haiti back on the road to dignity, democratic legitimacy, stability, and sovereignty and to ensure the proper functioning of the State's institutions".

Peter Wickham, the director of the Caribbean Development Research Services (CADRES) explains

that with such a complex situation in Haiti, while he remains hopeful, this new initiative may not bring about much change.

"I don't know if we have the capacity to do a whole lot more. I think it's good that CARICOM as a regional partner is attempting to say let's see if we can have a solution at the political level and then let's see if we can get some military support. The reality is that the military support is going to be absolutely important but none of us really have the

resources to offer in a significant way to deal with the problem.

"I am hopeful that this will work. This idea of a political solution... but the reality is that the political instability in Haiti is frenetic. Simple solutions have been somewhat elusive, and I just have to sit back and see. It's a complex situation," Wickham said.

Questions remain about the nine-member council's viability with no details on a timeframe to install the body and select a new prime minister and cabinet.

The decree also did not name the members of the council.

It said Henry and the council will govern the country until the new body names his replacement.

The decree also said the council would help speed the deployment of international troops that Henry requested in 2022 to aid police in their battles with armed and increasingly powerful gangs.

Haiti has not held elections since 2016 and has been without a president since Jovenel Moise was assassinated in 2021.

Since the violence erupted, nearly 95,000 people have fled the metropolitan area of the capital as armed gangs cemented their control. Haitians lack basic goods as key ports remain closed, while the outgoing government remains absent.

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## Adidas on front foot after exiting Kanye West deal

By **Jemma Dempsey**

Adidas has emerged from its bruising tie-in with rapper Kanye West and says it expects to make profits of €700m (£598m) in 2024.

In February the German sportswear giant said it planned to sell its remaining Yeezy trainers from its partnership with West for at least cost price.

Tuesday's upbeat comments from Adidas come a month after the company posted its first losses in 30 years.

It makes Samba, Gazelle and Campus shoes.

The company said the revised figures were €200m more than initially predicted and down to a better than expected first quarter of the year.

The company said its quarterly

operating profit had reached €336m, up from €60m a year earlier when it was hit by the break-up with West.

Adidas further said it had sold another €150m worth of Yeezy products in the quarter, at a profit of around €50m.

It said the remainder of its Yeezy stock would probably be sold for about €200m later this year, but without any further profit.

Last year it pledged to donate some of the proceeds of the sales to charities who work on combating hate.

Adidas cut ties with West in November 2022 over antisemitic comments he made on social media, but the company still has a diverse fan base with rich and powerful clients.

Last week Adidas and its Samba brand were thrust into the headlines

after it emerged British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had been one of its customers for "many, many years".

Conscious that his serious reputation might not be to other Samba wearers' liking, Mr Sunak issued a "fulsome" apology on LBC radio but said he was a «long-time devotee» to the Adidas brand.

But while the global firm has warned its profits will be dented by the Yeezy affair it has also drawn attention to the devaluation of the Argentine peso at the end of 2023.

Adidas has been the maker of shirts for Argentina's national football team for decades.

Rival sportswear firm Puma has also said Argentina's currency devaluation hit its financial results as the region was its biggest and fastest-growing market.

# GERM BUSTER

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- After handling rubbish

2

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3

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## Coral bleaching: Fourth global mass stress episode underway - US scientists

Coral around the world is turning white and even dying as recent record ocean heat takes a devastating toll.

It has triggered the fourth global mass coral bleaching event, according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Bleaching happens when coral gets stressed and turns white because the water it lives in is too hot.

Coral sustains ocean life, fishing, and creates trillions of dollars of revenue annually.

Ocean heat records have been falling for months but this is the first global evidence of how this episode is affecting sea life.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) confirmed the mass stress in all oceans (the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Ocean) after weeks of receiving reports from scientists globally.

The bleached coral can look beautiful in pictures but scientists that dive to examine the reefs say that up close the coral is clearly ill and decaying.

Scientists in the US, Australia, Kenya and Bra-



zil told BBC News about feeling dismay and even anger as they watched the coral they love threatened or killed by warm oceans.

The first warning signs were in the Caribbean last year when bathers found the water off the coast of Florida was as warm as a hot tub.

That heat moved into the southern hemisphere. It has now affected more than half the world's coral including in Australia's Great Barrier Reef, and in coastlines in Tanzania, Mauritius, Brazil, Pacific islands, as well as in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf.

Last August the global average ocean temperature broke its all-time record, and has been above average almost every day

since.

Climate change is driving up sea surface temperatures as the warming gases emitted when we burn oil, coal and gas are absorbed by the oceans.

El Niño - a natural climate event - has also contributed to warmer temperatures since last June, though there are signs it is now weakening.

For 10 days in February scientist Neal Cantin flew a plane over the Great Barrier Reef for Australia's Institute of Marine Science. The UN heritage site stretches 2,000km, or roughly the length of the US east coast.

"For the first time ever we've documented very high levels of bleaching in all three areas of the Great

Barrier Reef Marine Park," Dr Cantin says. The levels are likely to kill lots of coral, he adds.

Coral is vital to the planet. Nicknamed the sea's architect, it builds vast structures that house 25% of all marine species.

Stressed coral will probably die if it experiences temperatures 1C above its thermal limit for two months. If waters are 2C higher, it can survive around one month.

Once it has died, creatures like fish that navigate using coral noise can struggle to find their way home.

For three decades scientist Anne Hoggett has dived at Australia's Lizard Island - a beautiful reef that

*cont'd on pg 14*



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## Gunfire rocks St. Maarten nightlife: 1 killed, 3 hospitalised

One man is dead while three other people are nursing gunshot wounds following a shooting at near a popular nightclub in St Maarten on Sunday.

In a social media post yesterday, the Police Force of Sint Maarten (KPSM) said that it received reports of multiple people being shot near the night club in Simpson Bay around 4am.

When officers arrived, they found a young man lifeless on the opposite side of the club.

Bystanders told police two other men and a woman also sustained gunshot wounds during the incident.

Officers searched the area and found one victim behind the supermarket located next to the night club.

He was taken to the Sint Maarten Medical Centre (SMMC) in a serious but stable condition for



treatment.

The man was then transferred to a medical centre on the French side of the island for further treatment.

The other two victims had already been transported to the hospital on the French side before the arrival of police and detectives.

KPSM said it will be doubling down on efforts

to rid the streets of illegal firearms.

“Personnel from the detective department are currently conducting a thorough investigation into this incident.

“It is pertinent to note an increase in the number of persons being arrested with firearms recently. KPSM reminds individuals that firearm possession is a serious offense and will

be dealt with accordingly,” police said.

“Considering the imminent commencement of the main part of Carnival in the coming days, the police will be implementing strict measures against individuals found in possession of weapons or drugs. Measures are being taken to ensure the safety and security of the upcoming Carnival festivities.”

*cont'd from pg 12*

featured in the Netflix film Chasing Coral. She's seen widespread bleaching again since February.

Like many researchers, she was shocked when she saw coral turning white in the first mass bleaching in 1998. “Now I'm just angry that this is being allowed to happen again,” she says from Australian Museum's Lizard Island Research Station.

Coral can recover from heat stress but it needs time - ideally several years. When weakened, it is susceptible to disease and can easily

die.

“If given a chance, coral are actually resilient and can recover. But as bleaching becomes more frequent and stronger in intensity, we're really narrowing that window,” says Dr Emma Camp at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia.

The last mass global bleaching was in 2014-2016. Since then, ocean temperatures have become so much warmer that NOAA had to introduce three new heat alert levels.

From Kenya, ecologist David Obura gets messages from hundreds

of rangers, scientists and fishing communities in the Indian Ocean when they see bleaching. In February it started in Madagascar, then spread to Tanzania and Comoros.

Fishermen know the corals intimately, he says, and immediately know when something is wrong. They are worried about the future of fishing, he says because if coral dies, it affects the feeding patterns of fish and in turn their livelihoods.

Research published last week gave some hope that coral that liv-

*cont'd on pg 15*

## Belize: Police officer charged with shoving wife out of moving vehicle

CMC – A police officer has been charged and placed on interdiction after he allegedly shoved his wife out of a moving vehicle last weekend.

According to Assistant Commissioner of Police, Hiberto Romero, Rosa Bol reported to police that she had a domestic dispute with her husband, Arnaldo Ical.

“They got into a vehicle at some point along the highway, Arnaldo Ical pushed her out of the vehicle, after he had punched her in the vehicle.

“An investigation was carried out and Arnaldo Ical has since been arrested and charged for the crimes of harm and threatening words,” Romero said.

He said that the police officer has since been



placed on interdiction.

In a separate incident, American national Joseph Anthony Camp pleaded guilty to spreading false news.

Camp had alleged that the police shot his brother-

in-law, Jaylon Jones, and denied him medical attention.

Police said Joseph Anthony Camp 39, was fined BDZ\$600 (One Belize dollar=US\$0.49 cents) when he appeared in court.

Jones was shot by police on April 10. Police said following the shooting, Camp took to social media alleging that Jones was shot by police and was being denied medical access.

He said he had also intended to sue the police department for violating Jones' rights, but when he appeared in court on Monday accompanied by his lawyer, Sharon Pitts, Camp pleaded guilty and Pitts, in mitigation, pleaded to the court, seeking mercy for her client whom she said did not waste the court's time.

She also argued that the charge for which he was before the court was a misdemeanour.

### *cont'd from pg 14*

ing in cooler, deeper water - at between 30-50m depth - in the Great Barrier Reef can survive for longer than shallow corals as the planet warms.

The research shows that deeper water coral could survive global warming of up to 3C compared to pre-industrial times, says Jennifer McWhorter at NOAA who authored the research with the university of Exeter

But all the coral scientists BBC News spoke to said that we must accept that reefs as we know them will permanently change and small-scale restoration work

cannot save coral globally.

Only a rapid and global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions that limits ocean warming will guarantee we have at least some coral left, they say.

“It's like going from corals providing houses and buildings for marine life to just being scaffolding. What really wants to live in scaffolding?” Dr McWhorter says.

Coral reefs are an early warning system for the impacts of a warming planet on nature. “We need to learn from this to not do this to other ecosystems,” says Dr Obura.

## Historic Copenhagen stock exchange in Denmark goes up in flames

By Paul Kirby

Denmark's historic old stock exchange building in the centre of Copenhagen has been engulfed by fire.

The 17th Century Børsen is one of the city's oldest buildings and onlookers gasped as its iconic dragon spire tumbled into the street below.

Culture minister Jakob Engel-Schmidt said 400 years of Danish cultural heritage had gone up in flames.

Members of the public rushed to rescue historic paintings and it took hours before the fire was under control.

The building, dating back to 1625, is a stone's throw from Denmark's parliament, the Folketing, housed in the old royal palace of Christiansborg castle. Danish media said the nearby square was being evacuated and the main entrance to Christiansborg was closed because of smoke.

The old stock exchange was being renovated and had been shrouded in scaffolding and protective plastic covering.

It currently houses the Danish chamber of commerce, which described the scenes on Tuesday morning as a terrible sight. Its director, Brian Mikkelsen, said as much as half of the old stock exchange had burned down but vowed



Among the works rescued was Peder Severin Krøyer's oil painting From Copenhagen Stock Exchange.

that it would be rebuilt "no matter what".

Local craftsman Henrik Grage told Danish TV that it was a tragic day. "This is our Notre-Dame," he said, comparing it with the fire that engulfed the roof and spire of the cathedral in the centre of Paris almost exactly five years ago.

The Paris fire broke out under the eaves of Notre-Dame on 15 April 2019 when it was also shrouded in scaffolding as part of extensive renovations. Investigators have blamed either a short circuit in the electrics or a worker's cigarette butt that was not properly put out.

The cause of the fire in Copenhagen is also for the moment unknown but emergency services said the scaffolding made their operation more difficult.

Officials said the fire was most intense around the tower.

One of the craftsmen replacing brickwork on the building saw the fire break out on the roof while he was on the scaffolding. Ole Hansen said he shouted to his colleagues they needed to get down and that he left the door unlocked for firemen to get in.

Fire department chief Jakob Vedsted Andersen said firefighters faced an almost impossible task accessing the area under the old copper roof. It was not until Tuesday afternoon that he said the fire had been brought under control, although much of the building was burned out.

"Furniture, floor partitions and everything that could burn has been affected by the fire," he said.

"I'm completely

speechless - this is an unparalleled tragedy," one onlooker told Danish media.

Members of the public joined emergency services as well as the head of the chamber of commerce in rushing into the building to save the Børsen building's substantial art collection.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen spoke of "terrible images" and of a piece of Danish history going up in flames.

Local museum inspector Benjamin Asmussen told Denmark's TV2 that the fire was difficult to watch, as the old stock exchange was filled with paintings of Danes who had played important roles since the 17th Century.

Camilla Jul Bastholm from Denmark's National Museum said that sever-

*cont'd on pg 17*



## Police told to shut down right-wing Brussels event

Brussels police were ordered to shut down a conference for right-wing politicians, including Brexiteer Nigel Farage and Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, on Tuesday.

People were stopped from entering the National Conservatism Conference a few hours after it began, organisers said - although it continued for those inside.

The local mayor said he issued the order to ensure public security.

Organisers of the conference said they "overcame attempts to silence" them.

They said they plan to continue with the conference on Wednesday, writing: "See you again tomorrow!" on X, formerly Twitter.

Hungary's Mr Orban - who is due to speak there - has reacted with indignation, posting on Facebook: "Brussels just moved up a gear. If anyone stands up



Nigel Farage said the decision to shut the conference down was as an attempt to stifle free speech.

for peace, they are simply banned.

"No question, on 9 June we have to say clearly: No War!" he added, referring to the date of the European elections.

The move to shut down the conference was also criticised by Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo, who called it "unacceptable".

"Banning political meetings is unconstitutional. Full stop," Mr De Croo wrote on X.

Referring to the fact that it was the local mayor, Emir Kir, who opposed the conference, Mr De Croo said that while municipal autonomy was a cornerstone of Belgium's democracy, it could "never overrule the Belgian con-

stitution guaranteeing the freedom of speech".

And UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak called reports of police action "extremely disturbing".

Mr Sunak's spokesperson said he was a "strong supporter and advocator for free speech" and believed "cancelling events or preventing attendance and no-platforming speakers is damaging to free speech and to democracy as a result".

Mr Sunak's own MP, Suella Braverman, was at the event earlier - with Ms Braverman telling the BBC she was not thrown out and was able to deliver her speech.

The National Conservatism Conference reportedly started at about 08:00

*cont'd on pg 18*

### *cont'd from pg 16*

al hundred works had been rescued and taken into storage under escort. Among the prized works rescued was an 1895 portrait by PS Krøyer of 50 Danish men of commerce standing inside the building in their top hats. Ornate chandeliers, mirrors and some clocks were also recovered.

King Frederik X said the fire was a "sad sight" for such an important part of Denmark's cultural heritage: its characteristic dragon spire had helped define

Copenhagen. He succeeded Queen Margrethe II in January and events for her 84th birthday planned on Tuesday were being toned down because of the fire.

The Dutch Renaissance-style building on the city's Slotsholmen, or palace island, was commissioned by Denmark's King Christian IV with the aim of turning Copenhagen into a major trading centre.

The famous spire featured four dragons whose tails were twisted into a spear and three crowns, symbolising close ties with neighbours Norway and Sweden.

# Sports News



## New domino season get under way with opening ceremony

The 2024 domestic season of the Antigua and Barbuda National Domino Association (ABNDA) got underway with an official opening ceremony at its headquarters in Ottos on Sunday.

A specially invited guest, Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew, attended the event, which included a march past that had to be aborted due to rainy weather.

Following the opening ceremony, over 60 players participated in a pullorama domino competition at the same venue.

A record number of 19 teams, surpassing the previous highest number of 18, will be participating in the 2024 season.

The first competition for the new season will commence with the opening round of matches in a three-hand contest at the ABNDA headquarters in Ottos on Thursday.

The ABNDA, which is being led by newly elected president Carol-Faye Bynoe, will also be renaming one of its classic domino competitions in honour and recognition of the contribution of a former national player.

The King and Queen of Domino competition will be renamed in honour of Heraldo "Lionel" Richards, who is the only domino player to ever win the National Sportsman of the Year Award, a feat he achieved in 2011.



Minister of Sports Honourable Daryll Matthew, second left, participates in a game of domino at the ABNDA headquarters during the official opening of the 2024 domestic season on Sunday, April 14. (ABNDA)

*cont'd from pg 17*

(06:00 GMT) on Tuesday and ran uninterrupted for around three hours until police arrived to enforce the order from Mayor Kir and asked the organisers to make attendees leave.

Police then blocked the entrance to the venue and did not permit anyone to enter, though people were allowed to leave.

Mr Kir, the mayor of the Saint-Josse district of the city, said he issued the ban to ensure public security.

In a message to organisers, Mr Kir said some of the attendees of Tuesday's conference held anti-gay and anti-abortion views. "Among these personalities there are several particularly from the right-conservative, religious right and European extreme

right," his statement said.

"The far right is not welcome," he added on X.

Mr Farage, who took to the stage this morning, told the BBC the decision to close down the conference because there were homophobes in the audience was "cobblers", and that he condemned the decision as an attempt to stifle free speech.

"Thank God For Brexit", he said.

Organised by a think-tank called the Edmund Burke Foundation, the National Conservatism Conference is a global movement embracing what it describes as traditional values, which it claims are being "undermined and overthrown". It also opposes further European integration.

The conference said it aimed to

bring together "public figures, journalists, scholars and students" who understood the connection between conservatism and the idea of nationhood and national traditions.

French far-right politician Eric Zemmour, arriving for the conference after police had blocked the entrance, told journalists that Mr Kir was "using the police as a private militia to prevent... Europeans from taking part freely".

Organisers said Mr Zemmour was not allowed into the venue and that his speech would be postponed.

As well as Mr Orban, former Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki was also due to speak at the event on Wednesday. Mr Orban is due

*cont'd on pg 19*

## Contrasting wins for Court Martials and Fearless Crew in D-2 basketball

Court Martials and Jim Nance Jan Serv Fearless Crew recorded contrasting wins in the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Monday night.

The Court Martials claimed their fifth win in eight encounters by snatching a narrow four-point victory against the Honourable Gaston Browne Pointville Ballers in the first game of a double header at the JSC Sports Complex.

De-Lorngé Jules produced 19 points, six steals, five rebounds, and five assists to lead the Court Martials to their 75-71 victory against the Pointville Ballers in the keenly contested Division 2 affair.

Regillio Cisse had 14 points and five steals; Proctor Truvaurnie converted 12 points and grabbed 13 rebounds; and Baldwin Anthony produced 11 points, 16 rebounds, and five assists for the Court Martials.

Kebo Orford produced a game-high 27 points along with 17 rebounds and six steals; Khalid Shabazz had 16 points, 13 rebounds, and five assists; and Skyy Nedd converted 14 points and claimed 10 rebounds for the Pointville Ballers, who lost for the sixth time in eight

games.

The Fearless Crew grabbed their fifth win in seven games by trouncing Cecil Charles Cristos United 73-51 in the second game of Monday night's double header.

Delano Scotland sank 16 points and snatched seven rebounds; Ronel Gomes converted 15 points and claimed five rebounds; and Delroy Foster also scored 15 points for the Fearless Crew.

Dwayne Samuel converted 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds; Mahkail Gomes also sank 16 points and claimed seven rebounds; and Manlight Simmons scored nine points and snatched 12 rebounds for Cecil Charles Cristos United, which lost for the eighth time in nine games.

### *cont'd from pg 18*

to be in Brussels anyway for a European Council meeting.

Earlier, the organisers said on X that they would challenge the order to shut the conference down.

"The police entered the venue on our invitation, saw the proceedings and the press corps, and quickly withdrew. Is it possible they witnessed how peaceful the event is?" they posted.

The Claridge event space - located near Brussels's European Quarter - can host up to 850 people. Around 250 people were in attendance on Tuesday afternoon.

Mohamed Nemri, the owner of Claridge, told the BBC he had decided to host the event because "we don't reject any party... even if we don't have the same opinion. That's normal".

"I am Muslim and people have different opinion and that's it. We are living in a free country. I'd like people to talk freely," he added.

It is the third venue that was supposed to hold the event, after the previous two fell through. Belgian media reported that one venue pulled out after pressure by a group called the "Antifascist coordination of Belgium".





Reigning champions of the ABCA's Super40 Cup, the Liberta Blackhawks. (File photo)

## Blackhawks start well in quest to retain Super40 Cup

Cup-holders the PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks have made a strong start in their effort to make a successful defense of their title in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super-40 Cup.

The Blackhawks are the sole leaders of the limited-over competition after four rounds of matches. The Blackhawks are perched at the top of the standings after four rounds of matches in the preliminary stage of the 10-team round-robin 40-over one-day competition.

The Liberta Blackhawks are the only unbeaten team so far in the

competition and lead the Super40 Cup with 14 points.

They are four points ahead of five teams that are currently tied in second place with identical records of two wins, one loss, and one no result.

Empire Nation, Combined Schools, the New Winthorpes Lions, Pigotts Crushers, and Jennings Tigers are all tied on 10 points from four matches.

Next are the WES Rising Sun Spartans with six points, and they are closely followed by the All Saints Pythons and the Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles with four points each.

The Bolans Blasters, who are yet to win an encounter but have already lost three of their four matches, occupy the cellar.

The Blasters have just two points that they gained from last weekend's rained-out affair against Combined School in New Winthorpes that was abandoned as no result.

The Blackhawks' all-rounder Kofi James, who slammed an unbeaten double century against the Bolans Blasters on April 13, is currently the leading scorer in the competition.

James has the highest aggregate of 300 runs at an impressive average of 100 in three innings. Kadeem

Henry of Pigotts Crushers is the second-leading scorer with 197 runs at an average of 65.67 in three innings.

Empire Nation all-rounder Tyrone Williams Jr. is the third-leading run scorer with 174 runs at an average of 87 in three innings.

Combined Schools fast bowler Glen Williams, New Winthorpes Lions skipper and fast bowler Nino Henry, and WES Rising Sun Spartans all-rounder Kerry Mentore are jointly tied as leaders of the bowling aggregate.

All three players have captured 11 wickets each in three matches.

## Narine confirms he will not be in West Indies T20 World Cup squad

Trinidad and Tobago's Sunil Narine has made it clear that he will not be part of the West Indies squad for the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup in the Caribbean in June.

Narine, who has not represented the West Indies since 2019, reiterated his decision after the Kolkata Knight Riders' emphatic victory over the Lucknow Super Giants at Eden Gardens in the Indian Premier League on Sunday.

Former West Indies cricketer turned commentator Samuel Badree asked Narine about his World Cup plans during a post-match interview, to which Narine responded, "I will be watching from home, Badree."

The 35-year-old Narine's absence from the West Indies setup has been notable since 2019, despite invitations to return to the team. Windies white-ball coach Darren Sammy recently indicated that the squad selection process for the World Cup was nearing

completion, highlighting the exposure of over 22 players in preparation for the tournament.

"We've selected squads and exposed about 22 players over the last year in preparation for this main event that is coming," Sammy explained during a press briefing.

"It's based on the measures that we've taken and the strategic roles we have given players."

While Narine has been a key player for the Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL since 2012, contributing significantly to the franchise's two title victories in 2012 and 2014, his focus remains on franchise cricket rather than international duties.

He has played 51 T20 Internationals for the West Indies, showcasing his talent with 52 wickets at an economy rate of 6.01.

Narine made his debut for the West Indies in March 2012 against Australia and played his last match for the Caribbean



Sunil Narine

side in August 2019 against India.

Known for his mystery spin and explosive batting, Narine continues to be a vital asset for the Kolkata Knight Riders, as demonstrated by his recent im-

pactful innings of 85 from 39 balls while opening the batting against the Delhi Capitals.

Despite his absence from international duty, Narine's contributions in franchise cricket underscore his prowess in the T20 format.

As the T20 World Cup approaches, West Indies will proceed with a squad that reflects the strategic planning and player exposure outlined by Coach Sammy, with Narine choosing to focus on his IPL commitments while supporting the regional team from the sidelines.

### cont'd from pg 22

goal-scoring opportunity.

CPTSA Wings will remain in 12th place with 24 points after losing for the fifth time in 15 matches.

Their ninth win in 17 matches carries the Soccer Academy to 32 points, the same as Golden Grove, which has an inferior goal difference.

Golden Grove dropped to eighth place after playing to a 1-1 draw with Real

Blizzard in Golden Grove. Following a goalless first half, Calroy Douglas put Golden Grove ahead in the 54th minute, but Millique London snatched an equalizer for Real Blizzard with an 81st-minute conversion. The result ensures that Golden Grove advances to 32 points after drawing for the first time in 18 matches. The Real Blizzard will move up to 10th place with 28 points after drawing for the seventh time in 18 matches.

## Sea View Farm increase their chances of promotion

Sea View Farm moved a step closer to gaining automatic promotion from the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) Second Division to the next season's First Division on Monday.

Sea View Farm moved into third place and two points behind Second Division Leaders Freeman's Village by trouncing Blackburn Palace 9-1 in a match that was replayed at the ABFA Technical Center.

The game was replayed on Monday after their initial meeting ended prematurely at the Princess Margaret School playing field on Friday, December 8, 2023, with both teams deadlocked at 1-1.

Striker Rhezal Gomes capitalized and scored a hat-trick as Sea View Farm took full advantage of the replay to record their 13th win in 17 matches and advanced to 40 points, two adrift of Freeman's Village.

Gomes had conversions in the 2nd, 24th, and 51st minutes, and six other players each scored once for Sea View Farm during the one-sided affair.



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

Sanje Carr scored a consolation goal for Blackburn Palace, who ended their Second Division campaign with 34 points from their quota of 19 matches.

Urlings ended their round-robin campaign but kept their hopes alive of clinching a spot in the First and Second Division play-offs for promotion by beating the Young Warriors 4-0 at Urlings to go second in the league.

Kion Jackson scored twice with conversions in the 18th and 33rd minutes; Kestone Daley opened the

scoring with a conversion in the 8th minute; and Conrad Willock scored the other goal for Urlings in the 17th minute.

Urlings ended their Second Division campaign with their 12th win from their quota of 19 matches to finish with 41 points. The Young Warriors will remain in 17th place with nine points after suffering their 14th loss in 17 matches.

Soccer Academy moved into eighth place on goal difference after recording a 3-1 win against

the Lingies CPTSA Wings at the ABFA Technical Center.

Keyondre Hewlett scored in the 12th minute, Omar Noble had a 20th-minute conversion, and Michael Peters scored in the 28th minute for Soccer Academy.

Kimani Gyles scored in the 48th minute for CPTSA Wings, which ended the game with 10 players after losing the services of Brian Samuel, who received a red card in the 36th minute for denying an obvious

*cont'd on pg 21*