

# CUBA AND ANTIGUA & BARBUDA HAVE AN 'UNBREAKABLE BOND'



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Prime Minister Gaston Browne, left, and Governor General Sir Rodney Williams, centre, with Cuban Ambassador, Sergio Manuel Martinez Gonzalez, right. Antigua and Barbuda shares an unbreakable bond with Cuba.

# Local News



## Cuba and Antigua & Barbuda have an ‘unbreakable bond’

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has described as ‘unbreakable’ the bonds of friendship between Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba.

PM Browne was at the time speaking at a cocktail reception at the Cuban Ambassador’s official residence to mark the occasion of 30 years of diplomatic ties between the two Caribbean nations.

He emphasized the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for a country’s sovereignty to which both countries strongly adhere.

“Cuba has been quite benevolent and it is a country that has done a significant amount of global good for a number of countries despite its own problems, despite its own limited resources, and we are always very supportive and very appreciative of Cu-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne, left, shakes hands with Cuban Ambassador, Sergio Manuel Matinez Gonzalez  
ban generosity because they continue to give from the little that they have,” he remarked.

He noted Cuba’s contributions to the development of Antigua and Barbuda, most notably, its contributions

in health care and education. “In fact, our healthcare system for the most part, has been supplemented in a very significant way by Cuban doctors and nurses and other specialists. We therefore continue to celebrate with gratitude the contributions that Cuba made during the period of COVID. When other countries banned medical supplies and equipment from leaving their shores, Cuba on the other hand was able to make a number of health-care professionals available to Antigua and Barbuda who arrived here during COVID. I have no doubt that their presence here would have helped to strengthen our own local health care practitioners,” he observed.

He added that he firmly believes that the presence of the Cubans helped to save lives during their time  
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## GG highlights Cuba's many 'gifts' to Antigua and Barbuda

The Governor General Sir Rodney Williams has emphasized the strong bonds of friendship between Cuba and Antigua and Barbuda and thanked the Cuban government for its many 'gifts' to the twin-island nation.

Speaking Wednesday night at a cocktail reception to commemorate 30 years of diplomatic ties between Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba, Sir Rodney said Cuba's assistance to the country has been significant.

"Cuba's contributions in building human capacity through education and healthcare personnel have been instrumental in the progress and growth of many nations in the Caribbean, Africa



and other parts of the world. The support and partnership extended by Cuba in areas such as education, healthcare and human capacity building have been invaluable to our nation's devel-

opment," he noted.

The Governor General also urged both nations to continue working in harmony to achieve human development at all levels. "As we look towards the future, let us address common challenges, promote regional integration, and advance shared interests on the international stage," he stated.

According to Sir Rodney, the new Cuban Ambassador Sergio Manuel Martinez Gonzalez has committed to expanding trade and economic development, exploring cultural exchanges and enhancing bilateral cooperation that align with the shared goals and aspiration.

## 500-thousand cruise passengers... 'within sight'

The countdown (or up) to the 500-thousand cruise passengers for the year is on...with just over 21-thousand more passengers needed to make the target.

This after a total of 3,889 more passengers arrived in the St. John's Harbour on Wednesday aboard two cruise ships that sailed

into port. The vessels are the Norwegian Sky of NCL and Marella Voyager of Marella Cruises.

The visitors spent the day enjoying the many amenities that the country has to offer, including shopping at the Vendors Mall or the Heritage Quay shopping plaza or visiting some of the

main historical sites and attractions.

Operations Manager at Antigua Cruise Port, Rawle Reynolds, recalled that for the entire year 2023, just over 600-thousand cruise passengers visited Antigua and Barbuda. Therefore, reaching the 500-thousand passengers mark within the

first half of the year is not only a remarkable achievement but it also a sign of good things to come.

"This just goes to show that we are ahead of the curve in passenger arrivals for this time of the year. It's already better than anything we have done for any previous year," he noted.

The 500-thousand passenger mark is expected to come on May 9 when the *Celebrity Beyond* of the Celebrity Cruises docks at Heritage Quay. One can expect a major celebration for the achievement of the milestone when it does happen.

Reynolds said the stakeholders in the cruise industry, taxi-drivers, souvenir

*cont'd from pg 2*

here in the country.

In response, the Cuban Ambassador, Sergio Manuel Martinez Gonzalez, thanked the government and people of Antigua and Barbuda for its unwavering stance against the 'criminal and genocidal economic, financial and commercial blockade of Cuba' by the United States.

"Antigua and Barbuda has maintained a vertical attitude in defense of Cuba in all international fora, in favour of the res-

olution against the blockade of Cuba and the return of the illegally occupied territory of the Guantanamo Naval Base," he stated.

The reception was attended by senior government officials, including the Governor General, Sir Rodney Williams, Senior Minister, Sir Molwyn Joseph, and other Cabinet ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, Jamale Pringle and members of the diplomatic corps and other friends of Cuba.'

*cont'd on pg 4*

## CARPHA conducts mission here ahead of several major international events

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is conducting an integrated mission to Antigua and Barbuda this week to build capacity in surveillance, early warning and response systems, laboratory capacity, competence in health and food safety.

The mission comes as preparation for the launch of CARPHA's Regional Tourism and Health Program (THP), ahead of the 4th International Conference of Small Developing Island States (SIDS), the annual Sailing Week, the ICC Men's T20 World Cup and other major upcoming mass gathering (MG) events.

The CARPHA mission, led by Dr. Lisa Indar, includes a list of highly qualified medical specialists and technicians.



Acting Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Kamaria De Castro remarked "The partnership is timely as it helps to improve capacity as it assists in developing a sustainable future. We want to protect our local population as well as our visitors and let them know that we are aware of public health threats and we are preparing, building capacity, training and procuring



resources that will be put in place to effectively prevent major spread of diseases."

She extended her gratitude to CARPHA for the continued support and partnership.

Dr. Lisa Indar indicated, "It is important to prevent public health threats to stop them from becoming emergencies as visitors are coming in from many different countries for Cricket World Cup, SIDS, Sailing Week and we want to make sure our visitors as well as our people are safe.

"We want to put systems in place/strengthen existing systems to be able to identify risks early and begin immediate and more timely responses to mitigate the potential spread of diseases."



*cont'd from pg 3*

shop operators and pleasure boat operators have all been singing the praises of this cruise season and the brisk business they have all been enjoying.

Operations Manager at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Javiar

Jacobs, shared his views of the attainment of 500-thousand passengers. He said this reflects the confidence that the cruise lines have in the level of service, safety and the amenities that are available in Antigua and Barbuda that they continue to send their vessels and passengers here.

## GG receives prestigious award from the UWI

Governor general Sir Rodney Williams has been elevated by the University of the West Indies by being the recipient of an inaugural award from the world-class ranked educational institution.

Government House has announced that Sir Rodney has been singled out for the award for his numerous efforts to advance the advancement of the institution.

“The University of the West Indies (UWI) has bestowed upon His Excellency Sir Rodney Williams, the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, the prestigious inaugural Most Involved Distinguished Alumnus Award. This recognition came following Sir Rodney Williams’ remarkable contributions and active engagement in advancing the mission and impact of UWI,” a Government House statement said.

It noted that over the years, Sir Rodney has been a steadfast supporter and participant in various initiatives and endeavours of The UWI. His dedication and involvement have been multifaceted, including his role as a UWI Virtual 5K Run/Walk Prize recipient, symbolizing his consistent presence and commitment to The UWI’s activities, events, and initiatives.

“As the Patron of Global Giving, the Governor General led efforts to raise

significant funds, contributing substantially to the philanthropic endeavours of The UWI Five Islands Campus. His exemplary leadership and service also earned him the prestigious UWI Pelican Awardee recognition and Doctor of Science Degree, highlighting his profound impact on the

university community.

“During the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sir Rodney played a pivotal role by creating impactful videos to launch fundraising initiatives, aimed at supporting students and enhancing educational opportunities. Additionally, his represen-

tation at Global Campus accreditation assessment and participation in The UWI Top Tier Talks demonstrated his commitment to ensuring the highest standards of education and institutional excellence,” the release stated.

Sir Rodney’s dedication *cont’d on pg 6*



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## Heritage Trust celebrates World Heritage Day, April 18

The Heritage Trust of Antigua and Barbuda (HTAB) is joining the global community in celebrating World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites, on April 18th.

In commemoration of this occasion, HTAB Project Manager Janey Howell emphasizes the importance of investing in cultural preservation. She said, “World Heritage Day offers an opportunity to raise the public’s awareness about the diversity and vulnerability of cultural heritage and the significant efforts that are required to protect and conserve it.”

Howell continued, “We are grateful for the antique display items that members of the public have donated or lent to the new Government House museum, and we would like to encourage more participation from Antiguans and Barbudans — both at home and abroad.”

Governor General, Sir



The Heritage Trust of Antigua and Barbuda (HTAB) board; From left: Sen. Hon. Kiz Nathaniel, Mrs. Janey Henderson-Howell, Sir David Harrison, Mr. Hendren Parker, H.E. Lady Williams, H.E. Sir Rodney Williams, Ms. Gabriella Howell, Lady Harrison and H.E. Karen-Mae Hill.

Rodney Williams, Governor General and President of HTAB, also highlighted the significance of embracing the nation’s heritage, stating, “We need to remember from whence we came - from a sugar cane and cotton picking primary agricultural economy to the tourism-dependent Mecca that we are today; from simmering coal pots to digital

stove-tops; from wattle and daub homes to sleek concrete structures; and from simple donkey cart transportation to flashy SUV’s.”

HTAB is actively working to secure the beautiful Georgian architectural building, Government House, in its third phase of the restoration project. The board of directors, comprising Lady Williams (Vice

President), High Commissioner, Karen-Mae Hill, Sir David Harrison, Janey Henderson-Howell, Gabriella Howell, and Treasurer and Secretary Hendren Parker and Sen. Kiz Johnson respectively, is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the nation’s cultural legacy.

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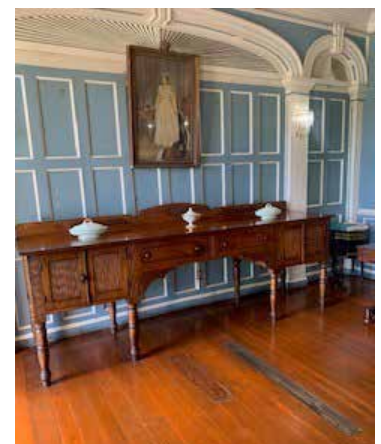
extended to supporting youth development through his lectures to high school students in Barbados as part of the UWI Global Campus initiative, sharing valuable insights and experiences to inspire and educate the next generation of leaders.

The culmination of his outstanding contributions and dedication led to Sir Rodney being the first to receive the Most Distinguished Alumnus by the Alumni

Relations Arm of the Institutional Advancement Division at UWI.

This prestigious award recognizes not only Sir Rodney’s exceptional achievements but also his unwavering support, leadership, and active involvement, which have made a significant impact on The UWI’s mission and vision.

His dedication to advancing education and fostering a culture of engagement and philanthropy serves as an inspiration to the university community and beyond.



One of the antique pieces of furniture inside the historic Government House.

# Taste of Wadadli Pastry Chef Competition returns

The culinary scene is heating up as seven talented local Pastry Chefs take center stage in the Taste of Wadadli Pastry Chef Competition. Presented by the Antigua & Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, this event aims to crown the island's best Pastry Chef, who will represent Team Antigua and Barbuda at the prestigious Taste of the Caribbean in Miami later this year.

Handpicked from the hotels and restaurants within the membership of the ABHTA, these pastry artisans are bringing their A-game to the table. In the preliminary rounds, each chef has been challenged to craft a delectable dessert showcasing the richness of local fruits and tubers. The competition is already underway and will continue until April 25, 2024.

Meet the talented lineup of chefs:

Kimone Stewart, Pastry Chef at Pineapple Beach Club

Tameka Hamilton, Chef De Partie at Blue Waters Resort and Spa

Vivia Ingram, Executive Sous Chef at Jumby Bay Island

Britanya McLaren, Pastry Cook at Hermitage Bay

Johnisha Hixson, Pastry Cook at Royalton Antigua

Sophy Federick, Pastry Cook at Galley Bay Resort & Spa

Tehrca Benta, Chef Tutor at the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute

In the coming weeks, a distinguished panel of judges will visit each chef's kitchen to evaluate their skills within a three-hour timeframe. Scores will be tallied, leading to a thrilling finale on May 11, 2024, hosted at the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute.

Guiding the competition with their expertise are esteemed judges:

Chef Olvanah Richardson-Burnette, Executive Sous Chef at Blue Waters Resort & Spa

Chef Maurine Bowers, Executive Pastry Chef at Curtain Bluff

Cleo Henry, Chef Instructor

Jesse Thomas, Director of

Agri-Tourism at the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation, and Investment

Chef Mark Smith, Head Pastry Chef, Mill Reef Club

Stay tuned as these culinary maestros vie for the title of Taste of Wadadli Pastry Chef, showcasing the island's rich flavours and culinary strength.

*Taste of Wadadli*  
**PASTRY CHEF COMPETITION**  
*Unleash The Flavor*  
Where Local Ingredients Meet Culinary Artistry

 <b>KIMONE STEWART</b> PASTRY CHEF PINEAPPLE BEACH CLUB	 <b>TAMEKA HAMILTON</b> CHEF DE PARTIE BLUE WATERS RESORT & SPA	 <b>VIVIA INGRAM</b> EXECUTIVE SOUS CHEF JUMBY BAY ISLAND	 <b>BRITANYA MCLAREN</b> PASTRY COOK HERMITAGE BAY
 <b>JOHNISHA HIXSON</b> PASTRY COOK ROYALTON ANTIGUA	 <b>SOPHY FEDERICK</b> PASTRY COOK GALLEY BAY RESORT & SPA	 <b>TEHRICA BENTA</b> CHEF TUTOR, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA HOSPITALITY TRAINING INSTITUTE	

**THE TOP TWO CHEFS**  
WILL GO HEAD-TO-HEAD FOR THE CHANCE  
TO REPRESENT ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA AT  
**CHTA'S TASTE OF THE CARIBBEAN**

## Diplomat warns Antigua conference represents last chance to save SIDS

By Staff Writer (CMC)

Antigua and Barbuda's Deputy United Nations Ambassador, Tumasie Blair, Wednesday said the upcoming fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) to be held in the Caribbean country next month is "the last chance to save SIDS."

"We framed this conference by saying not only is this the last chance to assist SIDS but also after the end of this 10-year framework, we don't want to see another SIDS conference trying to save SIDS," Blair told the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) on the sidelines of the 14th Session of the two-day International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Assembly which wraps up here on Thursday.

"We want to see a SIDS conference that would allow for a sustained development of SIDS. And so we don't want to address past issues," Blair said, one day after a pre-assembly SIDS Ministerial themed "Charting a Resilient and Sustainable Energy Future for SIDS".

"We are confident that within the contents of the outcome document and its implementation, we'll be able to achieve some level of sustainability going forward. What we need is to just continue to assist us in our sustainability efforts," Blair said.

He said Antigua and Barbuda has taken seriously, the hosting of SIDS4 and has spent the last few years doing the predatory work. St. John's will tackle issues of climate change, access to finance, debt sustainability, and the overall social development of SIDS.

"Those are the big ticket items on the agenda. And they're more in detail in the outcome document that was recently concluded at the preparatory meeting for SIDS4."

While St. John's is hosting the meeting, it is an opportunity to shine the light



Antigua and Barbuda's Deputy UN Ambassador, Tumasie Blair speaking to CMC in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday (CMC photo) on the larger Caribbean region, which is severely affected by many of the issues that will be the focus of deliberations.

"I think more than anything, the Caribbean has been feeling the effects of climate change, of the fallout from economic crisis. But also Because of our close connection with the (global) north, whenever there are spillovers from global unrest, then the Caribbean feels that even more aggressively than perhaps some other region," Blair said, adding that the Caribbean is also a champion for other SIDS regions.

"And so we're taking this opportunity to not only put the voice of the Caribbean on the map, but also to ensure that the other SIDS regions are able to amplify their voice during SIDS4."

The diplomat said that Antigua and Barbuda is hoping that the conference will end with "a firm commitment" from the international community, to really address the needs of SIDS.

"We have long said, during our two to three year preparatory process of this conference, that this is perhaps the last chance to save SIDS," Blair told CMC, adding "we recognise that climate change is spiralling out of control, we recognise that the effects of climate change are even more intense.

"We also recognise that the economic fallout and the high debt burden of

SIDS are now unsustainable. SIDS are on a cliff," Blair said, adding that SIDS are still reeling from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's clear that there needs to be specialised attention to SIDS. And so we're hoping out of this conference that we have a firm commitment from the international community to fully address the needs of SIDS. And these commitments are detailed in the outcome document."

But the SIDS conference is coming to the Caribbean even as developing countries, including many SIDS, have complained about the international community not living up to the commitments made at many international conferences, including the global climate change talks.

Blair said that in efforts to get countries to honour commitments they made at the meeting, his country has spent the last two to three years being strategic "in knocking on doors" and "forming alliances and ensuring that once international partners have decided on commitment, that we're able to hold them accountable.

"And so we have big players on board now, fully on board, in ensuring that they will not only allow to continue to champion for SIDS, but they will hold their counterparts accountable for the implementation and the commitments within this 10-year framework," he told CMC.

"Again, there is a recognition globally that SIDS are the most vulnerable countries. And that recognition concludes that if you save SIDS, you save the world. And so I think there's a firm commitment coming forward from partners now, in ensuring that they live up to their commitments to SIDS."

The conference comes at a time when the World Bank, a major devel-

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opmental financier, has proposed increasing the interest rates and reducing the payment period for loans to some developing countries, including many in the Caribbean that are enjoying a higher standard of living than many other developing countries.

But Blair noted that the World Bank is looking to introduce “vulnerability into their concept of lending and borrowing, and ensuring that those vulnerable countries are able to access concessional financing at a lower rate.

“And those countries, countries like Antigua and Barbuda, who don’t even have access to concessional finances, are able to gain access to concessional financing.”

Blair said the process being used by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) started within the UN system and that this is something that Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston Browne has been championing, “which is the multi-dimensional vulnerable index (MVI).

“And MVI really put forward the case that there needs to be a change in how the international financial institutions look at vulnerable countries, in particular small island developing states.”

On Tuesday, IRENA Director General, Francesco La Camera, told the SIDS ministerial that the outcome of their deliberations would serve as input into SIDS4 and will play an important role in charting SIDS’ energy transition and sustainable develop-

ment for the next decade.

La Camera announced that IRENA will be supporting Antigua and Barbuda in the hosting of SIDS4.

The green energy agency will be co-hosting a side event focusing on “Transforming SIDS Economies through Energy Transition and Climate Action towards Prosperity, Resilience and Sustainable Development” to agree on concrete actions facilitated by action-oriented partnerships that will guide the future course for SIDS, he said.

The SIDS4 outcome document is expected to be a 10-year sustainability map and Blair said the IRENA assembly is important for SIDS 4, whose outcome document articulates “very clearly the renewable energy needs of SIDS, how we transition to renewable, the type of financing we need for renewable, that type of transfer of technology that we need for renewable but also the fact that the SIDS Lighthouse isn’t fit for purpose right now.

“And so, it has to be remodelled and reshaped so it’s fit for purpose, in tandem with the 10-year framework,” he said of the framework for action to support SIDS in their energy transition efforts from fossil fuel dependence to renewables.

“So this assembly is quite important. We have articulated this to the highest levels within IRENA and will continue to do so during the course of this assembly,” Blair told CMC, expressing confidence that SIDS4 will make a difference.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Automotive Service Manager - Summary

An automotive dealership in Antigua is seeking a Service Manager who has in depth knowledge of the automotive industry. The successful candidate should have hands on technical experience working with premium brands and be able to efficiently manage a service center. The manager should be able to adapt to the client - centric culture of the company by enhancing customer satisfaction, through the delivery of first-class service.

### Essential Duties

- Responsible for managing the service department operations, staff and other resources
- Ensuring the efficient and profitable operation of the department to achieve both high levels of customer satisfaction, retention and profitability
- Controlling resources at a level commensurate with profit requirements and enhanced customer relations
- Monitoring and improvement of internal control procedures and systems
- Overseeing and supervising the work technicians to ensure that customers receive consistent and accurate service.
- Managing customer satisfaction levels by ensuring fix-it-right the first-time policy is adhered to.
- Advise staff on mechanical issues or be able to resolve mechanical issues in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Motivating and coaching staff members to ensure high levels of productivity
- Keeping track of the status of vehicle repair and notify customer about same
- Managing the work in progress
- Authorizing and managing leave for all service department personnel
- Planning and managing training needs for all departmental personnel by keeping abreast of what is trending globally for each brand.
- Monitor productivity through hours sold on daily basis
- Making sure that hours sold per RO are in-line with benchmark
- Making sure that workshop parts sales are in-line with bench mark
- Making sure that the average labour rate is above the minimum rate
- Carry-out capacity studies for the workshop
- Monitor utilization and efficiency of Technicians (Units reports) and take suitable actions to improve levels
- Ensure the utilization of workshop resources and assets for excellent rates of productivity and efficiency
- Reviewing monthly sales(hours) and profit performance (Net profit vs gross)
- Any other duties assigned

### Qualifications

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill and/or ability required.

### Education and/or Experience

- Bachelor’s degree in management
- Certified auto mechanic
- Certification from training done through dealerships
- 5-10 years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Knowledge of automotive dealership software (especially CDK) would be an assets
- Sound knowledge of the automotive industry
- Recent certification in customer service

### Other Skills

- Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals. Ability to write routine reports and correspondence. Ability to speak effectively before groups of customers or employees of organization.
- Ability to read, analyze and interpret general business periodicals, professional journals, technical procedures, or governmental regulations. Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, clients, customers and the general public.
- Ability to work with mathematical concepts such as probability and statistical inference, and fundamentals of plane and solid geometry and trigonometry. Ability to apply concepts such as fractions, percentages, ratios and proportions to practical situations.

Deadline for the receipt of applications is April 26,2024 with the names and contact information for 2 referees able to provide professional references on your behalf.

Email applications to: [Acting.officer@gmail.com](mailto:Acting.officer@gmail.com)

# Photo Essay

Dignitaries and Government officials were gathered at a cocktail reception at the Cuban Ambassador's official residence to mark the occasion of 30 years of diplomatic ties between the two Caribbean nations.



## Biden calls for tripling tariffs on Chinese metals

US President Joe Biden has called for a tripling of tariffs on some steel and aluminium from China.

It is the latest protectionist policy to be embraced by Mr Biden as he campaigns for re-election against Donald Trump, who was known for his tough trade stance against China.

The White House said the proposal was aimed at protecting US jobs against “unfair” competition.

China has previously denied claims of dumping steel and aluminium overseas.

Dumping is selling excess product in another country for a very cheap price and can often decimate the local industry’s own market of that product.

Speaking to members of the United Steelworkers union in Pennsylvania on Wednesday, the president said the Chinese prices were “unfairly low” due to the government subsidising companies “who don’t need to worry about making a profit”.

“They’re cheating,” Mr Biden said. “And we’ve seen the damage here in America.”

He said tens of thousands of steelworker jobs had been lost in the early 2000s because of Chinese imports.

“We’re not going to let that happen again,” he said.

The Chinese embassy in the US said it “firmly opposes” the measures proposed by Mr Biden.

“Many trading partners of the United States, including China, are strongly dissatisfied with the United States’ frequent use of national security, non-market behaviour, overcapacity and other reasons to impose restrictions and politicise trade issues,” embassy spokesman Liu Pengyu said in a statement to the BBC.

Mr Pengyu added he hopes the US will work with China “to stop actions that violate international economic



and trade rules” and cancel the tariffs.

The International Monetary Fund warned on Tuesday that this kind of geopolitical tension risked damaging global economic growth and pushing inflation in the wrong direction.

The White House has denied that the tariffs - which would lift a key border tax rate from an average of 7.5% to 25% on a tiny fraction of imports - would raise prices in the US.

Mr Biden discussed the proposal - and other pro-manufacturing efforts - at an election rally in Pittsburgh, a key base for the steel industry in the US.

He and Mr Trump are competing for support from working class voters, who could be a deciding voting bloc in November’s election.

As well as the tariffs, the White House said it would launch an investigation into unfair trade practices in the Chinese shipbuilding and logistics sectors, acting on a request from the US Steelworkers union and others.

The White House said it was also pushing for action against Chinese firms looking to avoid US border taxes by shipping through Mexico.

Mr Biden has also spoken out against a proposed takeover of US

Steel by Japan’s Nippon Steel, saying he believed the business should remain US-owned.

The higher tariffs would affect metals imports being reviewed under a so-called 301 investigation, which focuses on policies affecting US commerce.

Many steel and aluminium imports from China already face border taxes, including a 25% duty on certain steel products, which the US put in place under former president Donald Trump using national security justifications.

Those were ruled to be in breach of global trade rules by the World Trade Organization and were later dialled back for many countries.

Those tariffs marked a key turn in Washington’s approach to trade, which had long been dominated by free-market, pro-trade consensus.

Mr Trump, who called himself “tariff man”, has pledged to be even more aggressive on trade should he be re-elected.

He has proposed a 10% border tax on all imports, which would jump to more than 60% for products from China.

# Technology



## EU demands answers on money-for-views version of TikTok

By Imran Rahman-Jones

TikTok has been given 24 hours to respond to the European Commission over a version of the app which pays users for viewing videos.

TikTok Lite launched in France and Spain this week.

European Commissioner Thierry Breton has compared it to the idea of “light” cigarettes, asking whether it was “as addictive and toxic.”

TikTok said in a statement it would “respond to the request for information.”

It says it does not currently have plans to launch the Lite app in other countries in Europe.

A slimmed down version of the normal platform, Lite’s Task & Rewards feature pays users the equivalent of a few pence per day for watching videos and engaging on the app.

The European Commission has asked TikTok for details of the risk assessment it carried out before launching the feature.

Its concerns relate to the impact on children, mental health and addiction.

The Commission says it wants information “about the measures the platform has put in place to mitigate such systemic risks,” and has given a deadline of 26 April.

Under the Task & Rewards feature, users can earn coins for “tasks” such



as watching, liking or sharing videos.

According to TikTok, the maximum daily screen time eligible for rewards is one hour, while users will not be able to earn more than about €1 (£0.85) per day.

Users will also have to prove they are over 18 years old in order to earn rewards.

According to French newspaper *Le Monde*, which has tested the feature, users can only earn rewards on videos suggested by their algorithmic feeds and not videos which they search for specifically.

“The users have no choice,” the newspaper says. “Only viewing content proposed by the application is rewarded.”

The report also compared the feature to a video game, “showing its players with rewards according to their activity to keep

them coming back.”

The rewards programme is a “completely different approach” to pursuing social media’s goal of keeping people engaged, according to Dr Sarah Hodge, a cyberpsychologist at Bath Spa University.

“They’re making it much more explicit and rewarding people... much more openly,” Dr Hodge, who is a specialist in gaming and digital addiction, told the BBC.

She added that the rewards could have a big effect despite being small in financial terms.

“It is very motivating and enjoyable to get rewards, and I think it just keeps pulling us back,” she said.

This may be problematic for those who are trying to reduce their time on the app.

“If [somebody] were

trying to reduce the time they’re spending on it and there are these extra things to try and people keep people engaged, that is going to cause friction,” said Dr Hodge.

The EU’s Digital Services Act, which came into force last year, gave the bloc more power to take on big tech companies.

It is under these new laws that the Commission has demanded answers from TikTok.

In February, the Commission opened formal proceedings against the social media company, investigating whether it had broken rules including those on data protection, protection for children and policing harmful content.

At the time, TikTok said it would cooperate with the investigation and continued to work with experts in on-line safety.

## US reimposes oil sanctions on Venezuela

The Biden administration on Wednesday reimposed crushing oil sanctions on Venezuela, admonishing President Nicolás Maduro's attempts to consolidate his rule just six months after the US eased restrictions in a bid to support now fading hopes for a democratic opening in the OPEC nation.

A senior US official, discussing the decision with reporters, said any US company investing in Venezuela would have 45 days to wind down operations to avoid adding uncertainty to global energy markets. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss US policy deliberations.

In October, the US granted Maduro's government relief from sanctions on its state-run oil, gas and mining sectors after it agreed to work with members of the opposition to hold a free and competitive presidential election this year.

While Maduro went on to schedule an election for July and invite international observers to monitor voting, his inner circle has used the ruling party's total control over Venezuela's institutions to undermine the agreement. Actions include blocking his main rival, ex lawmaker Maria Corina Machado, from registering her candidacy or that of a designated alternative. Numerous gov-



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro attends a meeting at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, February 20, 2024. (AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos, File)

ernment critics have also been jailed over the past six months, including several of Machado's aides.

Wednesday's actions essentially return US policy to what it was prior to the agreement hammered out in the Caribbean island of Barbados, making it illegal for US companies to do business with state-run oil producer *Petróleos de Venezuela SA*, better known as *PDVSA*, without a specific license from the US Treasury Department.

It's unclear what impact the snapback would have on Venezuela's long floundering oil and gas industry — or whether it will pressure Maduro to offer a more level

electoral playing field.

The initial reprieve was issued for only six months. Experts say that's not nearly enough time to attract the major capital investments required to revive long stagnant production in Venezuela, which sits atop the world's largest proven oil reserves.

However, by allowing Venezuela to send oil directly, instead of going through shady middlemen who charge a hefty fee, Maduro's government was able to boost oil revenues and raise badly needed cash during the six months of US sanctions relief.

Additionally, the stiffening of sanctions doesn't

directly impact Chevron, the last major US oil driller in Venezuela, which was allowed to boost shipments thanks to a license it was issued in 2022 amid concerns that Russia's invasion of Ukraine would disrupt global energy supplies.

"The true test of the administration's seriousness about Venezuela is Chevron," said Elliott Abrams, who served as the Trump administration's special envoy to the crisis in Venezuela. "Leaving that license in place suggests the administration cares more about keeping oil prices down until the election, and about Chevron's profits, than

*cont'd on page 14*

## City Council urged to take action after Stabroek Market roof collapse

By Dillon De Shang

Guyana's Minister of Home Affairs, Robeson Benn said the dilapidated section of the Stabroek Market wharf "was and still is an accident waiting to happen".

Speaking with reporters following today's partial collapse of the roof, Benn said the area is a threat to public safety.

He noted the area was previously cordoned off from public access by the Georgetown City Council but those measures were neither followed nor enforced and people continued using the area.

Benn made a public plea to the City Council, which is under opposition control, to close the area and work with the government to rebuild the structure.

Meanwhile, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Sonia Parag, said the roof collapse came as no surprise her as



An aerial view of the collapsed section of the Stabroek Market. Photo: Department of Public Information.

she recently raised concerns about the structure to the mayor and City Council during a recent tour.

"I was here two weeks ago, and I noted and expressed publicly the dangers as people were traversing on that wharf at the time and I know that it was a wharf that

was condemned," she said.

"People brought it to my attention that it was potentially dangerous. So today we saw the effects of that."

Minister within the Ministry of Public Works, Deodat Indar, said work will begin shortly to remove the debris as it poses a fire haz-

ard.

Indar noted cleanup work will have to be done mostly by hand due to the possibility that the weight of heavy equipment could trigger another collapse.

Georgetown Mayor Alfred Mentore said a joint collaborative team will be established to work with the government to find a solution to problems facing the Stabroek Market.

He said issues at the market are a "national issue" as it will require all sectors to come together to work hand in hand.

The mayor said unsafe areas of the market will be cordoned off and the Guyana Police Force will be engaged to keep the public away.

*cont'd from pg 13*

about US national security interests and freedom in Venezuela."

While signaling its growing frustration with Maduro, the Biden administration is unlikely to return to the failed "maximum pressure" campaign tried during the Trump administration, which only strengthened the leftist leader's hand, experts said.

"It became impossible for the White House to pretend that the Maduro government in any way was complying — or even intended to comply — with the implicit deal in the partial lifting of sanctions," said

Christopher Sabatini, a research fellow at the Chatham House in London. "To have ignored that would have made the US look weak and undermined its credibility in leveraging sanctions not just on Venezuela but elsewhere."

Opinion polls show most Venezuelans would eagerly boot Maduro from office if given half a chance. Numerous regional leaders, including the leftist presidents of Colombia and Brazil, have joined the US in criticising the Maduro government's failure to abide by its commitments and allow a competitive election.

## After stalling for months, Ukraine aid heads to vote in US House of Representatives

By Bernd Debusmann Jr

US President Joe Biden has said he “strongly supports” a new \$61bn (£49bn) aid bill for Ukraine, arguing it will “send a message to the world”.

The long-stalled measure is one of four that the House of Representatives will vote on this Saturday.

The legislation will also include funding for Israel as well as the Indo-Pacific.

Opposition from the right wing of the Republican party has stymied potential assistance for Ukraine for months.

Some of those lawmakers have sought to tie Ukraine assistance with funding for US-Mexico border enforcement.

Several Republican lawmakers, including Georgia’s Marjorie Taylor Greene, who wants House Speaker Mike Johnson removed from his post, have already decried his plan.

With Republicans holding their smallest majority in the House in decades, Mr Johnson may have to appeal to Democrats to get the bills passed.

In a statement after Mr Johnson’s announcement, Mr Biden said he would sign the bill into law immediately.

“Israel is facing unprecedented attacks from Iran, and Ukraine is facing continued bombardment from Russia that has intensified dramatically in the last month,” the Democratic president added.

“The House must pass the package this week and the Senate should quickly follow.”

He said the funding would also provide humanitarian aid for Gaza.

Democrats and some centrist Republicans have been calling for months for Ukraine aid to be passed quickly, arguing it is vital for that country’s defence against Russia and US national security.

Mr Johnson’s announcement on Wednesday comes more than two



Mike Johnson has said that the ‘world is watching’ to see whether the US will stand by its allies abroad.

months after a \$95bn (£76.3bn) bill encompassing various aid packages passed the US Senate.

The new plan breaks the aid packages into separate bills, which Mr Johnson said include “a loan structure for aid, and enhanced strategy and accountability”.

The Ukraine bill, totalling nearly \$61bn in aid, includes weapons and other “lethal assistance” for Ukrainian forces.

It also requires cost-matching requirements from other US allies, as well as a repayment agreement from Ukraine’s government.

The announcement comes on the same day as Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance was making “an important effort” to beef up Ukraine’s air defences.

Seventeen people were killed and 60 people wounded in a Russian missile attack on the city of Chernihiv in northern Ukraine earlier in the day.

The bill focused on Israel would provide \$26bn, partly for replenishing the country’s Iron Dome and David’s Sling defensive systems, while the Indo-Pacific bill is primarily meant to limit China and help Taiwan fend off its “military provocations”, according to the House

Appropriations Committee’s leaders.

A fourth piece of legislation folds in the “Rebuilding Economic Prosperity and Opportunity for Ukrainians”, or Repo Act, to allow seized Russian assets to be given to Ukraine, and a bill meant to crack down on TikTok.

Mr Johnson has then rolled in measures to strengthen security at the US-Mexico border into a separate bill.

That bill includes the “core components” legislation known as HR2, which was passed by the Republican-controlled House last year over significant Democratic opposition, he said.

HR2 stalled in the Democratic-majority Senate.

Members of the staunchly conservative Freedom Caucus have come out against Mr Johnson’s foreign aid plan, in large part over border security.

“The Republican Speaker of the House is seeking a rule to pass almost \$100bn in foreign aid - while unquestionably, dangerous criminals, terrorists [and] fentanyl pour across our border,” Freedom Caucus member and Texas Republican Chip Roy wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

“The border ‘vote’ in this package is *cont’d on pg 16*

## Gaza ceasefire talks hit stumbling block, mediator Qatar says

By David Gritten

Qatar's PM says indirect negotiations on a ceasefire deal and the release of hostages in Gaza have largely stalled.

Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani, whose country along with Egypt and the United States are mediating between Israel and Hamas, said talks were in a "delicate phase".

"We are trying as much as possible to address this stumbling block," he added, without giving further details.

They have proposed a six-week truce during which Hamas would free 40 women, children and elderly or sick hostages.

The US accused the Palestinian armed group of being "the obstacle to a ceasefire" after it publicly rejected the latest offer over the weekend.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said 14 Israeli soldiers had been injured, six of them severely, by anti-tank



Israeli air strikes were reported across the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, including in the southern town of Rafah.

missiles and drones launched from Lebanese territory towards a village in northern Israel.

The Iran-backed Lebanese armed group Hezbollah said it had fired on a military target in the Arab al-Aramshe area in retaliation for recent Israeli strikes that had killed

Hezbollah commanders and other fighters.

Hezbollah - which like Hamas is proscribed as a terrorist organisation by Israel, the US, UK and other countries - has been exchanging fire with Israeli forces almost every day along the border since the start of the war in

Gaza.

That conflict erupted when Hamas gunmen carried out an unprecedented attack on southern Israel on 7 October, killing about 1,200 people, mainly civilians, and taking 253 others back to Gaza as hostages.

More than 33,800 people have been killed in Gaza, the majority of them women and children, during Israel's military campaign to destroy Hamas and release the hostages, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry.

A week-long ceasefire in November saw 105 hostages - most of them women and children - freed in return for some 240 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Israeli officials say 133 hostages are being held in Gaza - including four taken

*cont'd from pg 15*

a watered-down dangerous cover vote," Mr Roy added. "I will oppose."

Mr Johnson is under increasing pressure from the right-wing of the Republican party, which is unhappy about his support for foreign aid and his negotiations with Democrats.

Two conservative representatives, Kentucky Republican Thomas Massie and Georgia's Ms Greene, have called on him to step down or face a motion to vacate, which could lead to his removal.

"You are seriously out of step with Republicans by continuing to pass bills dependent on Democrats," Ms Greene wrote in a post on X directed at him on Wednesday.

"Everyone sees through this."

Mr Johnson, however, has vowed to push ahead with the foreign aid, telling reporters earlier this week that "the world is watching us to see how we react".

"We have terrorists and tyrants and terrible leaders around the world like Putin and Xi and in Iran, and they're watching to see if America will stand up for its allies and our interests around the globe," he said. "And we will." He has also shrugged off the threat of being removed from his position.

"I don't spend my time worrying about motions to vacate," he said on Monday evening. "We're having to govern here, and we're going to do our job."

*cont'd on pg 17*



*cont'd from pg 16*

captive before the war - but that more than 30 of them are dead.

Qatar's Sheikh Mohammed - whose country hosts many of Hamas's political leaders - said mediators were trying to keep the ceasefire negotiations going despite the disagreements between the warring parties.

"We are passing through a delicate phase with some stumbling," he told a news conference with his Romanian counterpart. "We are trying as much as possible to address this stumbling block and to move forward."

On Saturday, Hamas put out a statement saying it was ready to agree a "serious and true" hostage exchange deal with Israel but rejected what was currently on the table.

It also reaffirmed that it was sticking to its demands for a permanent ceasefire that would lead to a full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and the return of displaced Palestinians to their homes.

Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, whose director is leading the Israeli negotiating team, said on Sunday that Hamas's stance showed that its leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, "does not want a humanitarian deal and the return of the hostages, is continuing to exploit the tension with Iran, and is striving to unite the sectors and achieve a general escalation in the region".

US Department of State spokesman Matthew Miller said on Monday: "The bottom line is Hamas needs to take that deal and they need to explain to the world and to the Palestinian people why they aren't taking it."

Last week, a senior Israeli official told US media that Hamas had informed mediators that it did not have 40 living hostages who meet one of the criteria laid out in the latest ceasefire proposal - children, women, including soldiers, men over the age of 50 and those with serious medical conditions.

A senior Hamas official, meanwhile, said it needed a ceasefire to be under

way to provide "enough time and safety" to locate all the hostages.

Sheikh Mohammed called on the international community to "assume its responsibilities and stop this war", warning that that civilians in Gaza faced "siege and starvation", with aid being used as a "tool for political blackmail".

A UN-backed assessment said last month that an 1.1 million people - half the population - were facing catastrophic hunger and that famine was imminent in northern Gaza. The UN has blamed Israeli restrictions on aid deliveries, the ongoing hostilities and the breakdown of order.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Wednesday that he "rejected the claims of international organisations regarding famine in Gaza" and insisted Israel was "going above and beyond in the humanitarian sphere".

The Israeli military also announced that food aid had entered Gaza from Israel's Ashdod container port for the first time, with eight UN World Food Programme lorries transporting flour via the Israeli-controlled Kerem Shalom crossing with the south of the territory on Wednesday.

A new crossing with northern Gaza was also opened last week as Israel sought to meet the demands made by US President Joe Biden following an Israeli air strike in Gaza on 1 April that killed seven World Central Kitchen aid workers.

"In the 12 days following my call with Prime Minister Netanyahu, 3,000 trucks with food and supplies moved into Gaza - a daily increase of over 50% from the week prior," Mr Biden wrote on X, formerly Twitter, on Wednesday.

But he added: "It's still not enough. We continue to urge Israel to ramp up land, air, and sea deliveries for Gaza civilians."

On Tuesday, a senior UN humanitarian official warned that it was still struggling to prevent famine and even though there had been some improvement in

the co-ordination of aid deliveries with Israel.

"It's much bigger than simply bringing in flour and baking a few loaves of bread. It is really complex," Andrea De Domenico noted. "Water, sanitation and health are fundamental to curb famine."

Cogat, the Israeli defence ministry body that is co-ordinating aid deliveries to Gaza, said 700 lorry loads of supplies were waiting to be collected on the Palestinian side of Kerem Shalom. "We scaled up our capabilities. All the UN did was make up excuses," it added.

In a separate development on the ground in Gaza on Wednesday, the Israeli military said its troops and aircraft had "eliminated a number of terrorists and destroyed terrorist infrastructure" in the centre of the territory.

Palestinian media reported that there had been intense bombardment and fighting in and around Nuseirat refugee camp, where 11 members of the al-Nouri family were reportedly killed in a strike on their home on Tuesday.

The Israeli military also said its forces had carried out a raid "to apprehend terrorists hiding in schools" in the northern town of Beit Hanoun. A number of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives were detained and others who resisted were killed, it added.

Four people were reportedly killed on Tuesday when a house in Beit Hanoun was hit and significantly damaged, according to the UN.

One man in neighbouring Jabalia told BBC Arabic's Gaza Lifeline radio service: "We were shocked by the advance of the occupation [Israeli] forces, which surrounded the entire area and arrested young men, women and children. The forces evacuated us from the area, killed people in Beit Hanoun, entered the shelter schools, and arrested those inside them."

"This is how our life has become unbearable... whenever and wherever we walk, tanks always shower us with shells."

# Sports News



## Flyers II continue to dominate ABBA's Division II League

The EZ Fit Flyers II continued their dominance of the Antigua and Barbuda Basketball Association's (ABBA) Second Division League on Tuesday night.

They extended their unbeaten run, soaring to their sixth win in as many games with a 101-51 drubbing of the Rebels in the second game of a double header at the JSC Sports Complex.

Donte Trimmingham produced 20 points and claimed six rebounds; Craig Massiah sank 16 points; and Harry Rashaun contributed 14 points, eight assists, and six rebounds for the Flyers II.

In support, Javonte Daley had 12 points, five rebounds, five assists, and five steals; David Mensah



scored 11 points; Sadiq Phillip converted 10 points and grabbed 17 rebounds; Shavaun Francis sank eight points and claimed 10 rebounds for the Flyers II.

Buell Henry converted 16 points and snatched 15 rebounds; Ryan Noel sank 14 points and claimed seven rebounds; and Tyndale Telemaque scored 10 points and snatched five rebounds for the Rebels, who lost for the fifth time in eight games.

The Spanish Heat 2 claimed their sixth win in seven games as they romped to a 107-72 victory against MJ Gray's Green Phoenix in the first game on Tuesday night.

Jesus Emmanuel produced 30 points, eight rebounds, and six steals, and Ismael Palemo sank 23 points and grabbed 20 rebounds for the Spanish Heat 2.

*cont'd on pg 19*

## Teenagers win male and female titles in Duathlon

Teenagers Elite Thomas and Anika James captured the male and female titles, respectively, in a duathlon, which was hosted by the Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association at Pensioners Beach on Sunday.

The athletes were required to complete a 600-meter run, a four-kilometer cycling ride, and finish with a 600-meter run.

The 13-year-old Thomas won the event in the male category by completing the three-stage race in 12 minutes and 37 seconds.

Timothy Thomas finished in second place by clocking 14 minutes

and 35 seconds.

The 14-year-old James won the event in the female category by completing the three stages of the race in 17 minutes and 41 seconds.

Nine-year-old Nevaeh Eugene took second place with a time of 25 minutes and 10 seconds.

Kendra Aska won the mixed division in a time of 11 minutes and 44 seconds. Jahniya Cornelius came in second in exactly 12 minutes, and Unique Jeffery finished in third place in 12 minutes and 29 seconds.

Five-year-old Omari King was the youngest competitor. King com-

pleted his 600-meter run, rode his little spider bike for a distance of 1200 meters, and ran another 600 meters in a time of 14 minutes and 30 seconds.

A total of 13 athletes took part in the event, and the Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association is expressing its gratitude to all participants as well as the Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

The Antigua and Barbuda Triathlon Association's next event will take place on May 19. It will be a mini-triathlon at Ffryes Beach, starting at 7 am.

## Massiah, Doherty among winners at Antigua Samaritan Society Fund-raising Golf Tournament

The team comprising Dion Massiah and Kareem Doherty and the father-son duo of former West Indies, Leeward Islands, and Antigua and Barbuda cricketer Sylvester “Bouncing” Joseph and Siyolo Joseph were the overall winners of the Antigua Samaritan Society Fund-raising Golf Tournament at Cedar Valley on Sunday.

Massiah and Doherty were first in net, with the combination of Navin Singh and Ronan Peters finishing second in net.

Massiah and Doherty were also first in net on the front nine, while the duo of Antigua and Barbuda’s national hero, Sir Vivian Richards, and Michelle Millington were first in net on the back nine.

The Joseph’s family duo were first in gross, and the team comprising Marquis George and Levanjo Weeks came in second in gross.

Sylvester and Siyolo Joseph were also first in gross on the front nine, while the team comprising Dion Massiah and Kareem Gibbs was first in gross on the back nine.



From left to right: golfer Kareem Doherty, marketing and communications manager of the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center Salma Crump, and golfer Dion Massiah. Doherty and Massiah were the first net winners of the Antigua Samaritan Society Fund-raising Golf Tournament at Cedar Valley on Sunday, April 14, 2024. They received two airline tickets to attend the St. Kitts Golf Open. (Photo courtesy of the Antigua Samaritan Society)

Michael Gordon won the award in the men’s category for being closest to the pin on hole number two.

The closest to the pin on hole number 11 was Navin Singh in the men’s category; Tom Roach in the seniors division; Ronan Peters in the super seniors class; and Claremont Carrington in the juniors division.

The longest drive on hole 18 was achieved by Eldine “Soca” Baptiste in the men’s category; Sir Richie Richardson in the seniors division; Sir Vivian Richards in the super seniors class; and Michelle Millington in the ladies category.

The duo of Kai Gordon and Ashton Greaux won the

big effort award, while the team of Gregg Quinn and Shawn Dunbreaker claimed the

winner from behind award.

According to the organizers, all proceeds from the recent fund-raising golf tournament will go towards purchasing ultrasound equipment for the Sir Lester Bird Medical Center.

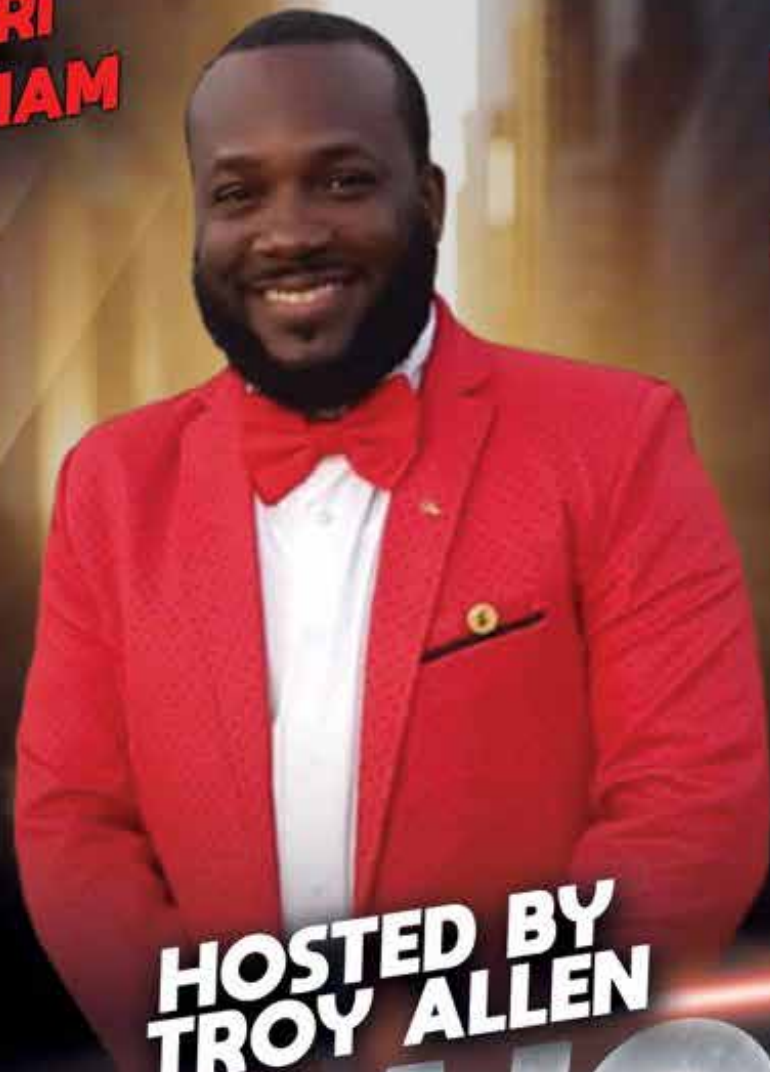
The equipment will be used to enhance the delivery of services to patients in the hemodialysis unit who are catheter-dependent.

### cont’d from pg 18

In support, Gabriel Perez converted 11 points and claimed seven rebounds, and Rohland Hamilton scored nine points and grabbed 13 rebounds for the Spanish Heat 2. Tyreke Lewis produced a game-high 32

points with six assists, five rebounds, and five steals; Kevorn Shirley sank 14 points; and Nicholas Simpson scored 13 points and claimed seven rebounds for MJ Gray’s Green Phoenix, who suffered their eighth loss in as many games.

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## Hayley Matthews named Wisden's leading T20 cricketer in the world

West Indies captain Hayley Matthews has been named Wisden's leading Twenty20 Cricketer for 2023, as she topped all and sundry, including her male counterparts.

Alan Gardner looks at the remarkable performances of this outstanding player – a T20 World Cup champion.

We've all heard the one about the globe-trotting, six-hitting West Indies all-rounder bestriding the T20 stage. But this tale comes with a twist: a first female winner in this award's seven-year history.

Hayley Matthews has long been a star of the game – aged 18, she inspired West Indies to victory in the 2016 World T20 final – but in 2023 she produced an unprecedented red-hot run of form.

Between February and her final game of the year in October, on three different continents, she won eight consecutive T20I match awards. The previous best was four in a row. During that sequence, she averaged 88 with the bat, at a strike-rate of 144, and 12 with the ball.

The pièce de résistance came at North Sydney Oval, game seven in the Matthews Supremacy. Set 213, West Indies were powered to a record chase in women's T20Is by her buccaneering



Hayley Matthews 132 from 64 balls, including 110 in boundaries.

Her score, a West Indies record, was the first century in the second innings of a women's T20I; and it came after she had been the pick of the bowlers, with three for 36 for her off-breaks. That the side on the receiving end were the world champions, playing in their own backyard, added only lustre.

If 2023 was a banner year for the women's game, with the inauguration of the

Women's Premier League in India, then Matthews rode the crest of the wave.

She was a WPL title-winner with Mumbai Indians, the fifth-leading run-scorer in the competition, and captained Barbados Royals to victory in the Caribbean Premier League, scoring 82 from 59 and taking two for 38 in the final. She was also a high-profile pick in The Hundred and the Big Bash.

Her feats could only sporadically lift West Indies,

whom she had captained for the first time in 2022, though she credited the job for helping her, "take responsibility for my game."

The first in her streak of match awards came against Ireland at Cape Town during the T20 World Cup, where West Indies ended a run of 15 defeats.

She followed that with another all-round display, against Pakistan, though two group wins could not put her side in the semifinals. Ireland were again on the receiving end in July, as West Indies won 3-0 in St. Lucia, before their tour of Australia confirmed her status as the ICC's number one all-rounder. In five days, she smashed 99 not out, 132 and 79 – a total of 310 off 178 balls, with 43 fours and 13 sixes – and took five wickets.

Her overall T20I record for the year read 700 runs from 14 matches at 63 (strike-rate 132) and 19 wickets at 16 (economy 6.84). Across men's and women's T20 – domestic and international – her tally of 1,551 runs was topped only by Jos Buttler.

Unlike Matthews, though, he was not the leading wicket-taker in the format. The Caribbean had produced another game-changer.

*Article provided by the Editor of Wisden*



Tanez Francis



Micah McKenzie

## Antigua team to contest LICB U-19 tournament

The Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association (ABCA) has announced a 14-member squad to contest the Leeward Islands Cricket Board's (LICB) Under-19 Tournament in St. Kitts this weekend.

The national under-19 squad for the sub-regional tournament in St. Kitts from April 19 to 21 includes five players who represent Combined Schools in the ABCA's domestic cricket programme.

They are all-rounder J'Quan Athanaze of Princess Margaret School, opening batsman Hosea Roberts of Antigua Grammar School, Xaden Hobson of Antigua State College,

left-arm pacer Yanique Watley of the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, and off-spinner Shamar Pereira, who is the captain of the team.

Also selected are batsman Brent Joseph and all-rounder Wilden Cornwall Jr. of the Liberta Blackhawks, leg-spinner Micah McKenzie and Xaveek Toppin of Empire Nation, and all-rounder Tanez Francis of Jennings Secondary School.

The other players selected are medium pacers Tyree Moore and Jared Jno Baptiste of Pigotts Crushers, pacer Mekali Tonge of Pares Secondary and Bethesda Golden Eagles, and pacer Ozan Williams of the Rising Sun Spar-

tans.

The final 14 members were selected from an initial squad of 19 players who were involved in a short training session at the Factory Ground.

Former Leeward Islands and national middle-order batsman Ian Tittle is the team's head coach, Derrol "Mus-sai" Thomas of All Saints Pythons is the assistant coach, and Dane "Paco" Gustave is the manager and scorer.

The Antigua and Barbuda squad will depart for St. Kitts on Friday to contest the four-team 50-over one-day competition. The other three participating teams will be St. Kitts, Nevis, and St. Maarten.